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SO W A L Life

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Postal Customer Local

On a Wave and a Prayer

BY HEATHER BENNETT EYE

It's easy to see God's blessings along the Emerald Coast, and Katie Campbell of 30A Prays has witnessed first-hand the work of God moving in this area. The nonprofit organization's vision is "to revive the heart of prayer and equip the next generation to passionately pray and boldly share the gospel," and they're creating a wave of prayer within our community.

Did you notice the red tents along the beach in Seaside during spring break? Katie and other members of 30A Prays spent hours on the beaches praying and answering questions for interested guests. "God really moved on the beaches during spring break. We prayed for so many young people," said Katie. "Our tents were never empty the whole entire time. We had a continuous flow of people wanting to be prayed for. There is a generation of young people that are hungry to be prayed for, and to know the truth."



Katie and her family moved to 30A from Washington state two years ago after she received a calling in her heart to start the prayer movement along the Emerald Coast. Katie and her husband, Branden, were active in their church in Washington where she led a prayer ministry and he assisted in preaching. After making the big

move, it didn't take Katie long to connect with other like-minded individuals through Instagram. Connections that would eventually help form 30A Prays.

The organization is non denominational. Members don't have to be affiliated with a particular church. "They attend all different types of churches, all along this area," Katie

stated. It's the diversity in the members that resonates with interested guests that come to the tents for prayer. "It's a great bridge builder with people at the beach," said Katie. "People are so diverse, and most people when they come down to the tents, they ask what de-

WAVE

continued on page 3

Moon Crush Returns to Seascape Resort

Moon Crush returns to Miramar Beach for the 5th installment of Topeka Live's music vacations. Moon Crush, Blue Moon takes place next month over the Labor Day Weekend and will feature Ben Rector and NeedToBreathe headline the 3 nights. Single Day passes are on sale now.

Friday will open with Switchfoot and Stephen Day before Ben Rector takes the stage to end the night. Day two features opening artist Mat Kearney and Stephen Kellogg and ends with NeedToBreathe, who are making their second appearance on the Moon Crush stage after appearing during the inaugural Moon Crush, Pink Moon in 2021. Day Three you will see Johnnyswim and Jordy Searcy open the evening before Ben Rector returns with his Old Friends to close out the weekend.

Topeka Live and Moon Crush have made quite a name for themselves. In just 3 years and 4 shows behind them, they have quickly turned a

MOON CRUSH

continued on page 2



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MOON CRUSH

continued from page 1

lot of heads in the music festival industry. In their recent April issue Southern Living recently named Moon Crush #12 of The Best Music Festivals to Attend. That is an impressive accomplishment, as they rank high on a list that features nationally recognized festivals such as Austin City Limits, Bonnaroo and the New Orleans Jazz & Heritage Festival. Topeka Live's CEO, Andy Levine was recently interviewed by Forbes Magazine about Topeka Live and what sets them apart from all the other festivals. The article was based on Brandi Carlile's Mothership Weekend over Mothers Day.

Moon Crush is a unique music experience, where everyone is equal. All guests experience the same level of service throughout the venue. The intimate 5000 max capacity venue offers assigned seating in your own COVE (Contained Openair Viewing Environment). COVE's come in 2-, 4- or 6-person capacity. They are large and roomy allowing you to move freely, dance or sit. Moving around the venue is easy without having to elbow your way through crowds to get to your seat, food, or the air-conditioned comfort stations. A major item that sets Moon Crush apart is Delivery. Yes, they deliver Food, Beverage, and Merchandise directly to your seat! Simply place an order on your phone and in an average time of 5 minutes, your order appears at your COVE. Moon Crush makes it a point to have a good variety of food and beverage by partnering with local food trucks and restaurants.

But the real reason Topeka Live and Moon Crush is making a name for themselves is "Real Topeka People". Levine believes a great event starts with great people and he has assembled a team that genuinely cares about the guests. You can say that Topeka is really a customer service company that produces excellent music shows.

Seascope Golf Beach & Tennis Resort is home to Moon Crush and other shows produced by Topeka Live. Seascope and Topeka have partnered to bring a unique music experience to Miramar Beach in South Walton. Seascope Resort's Director of Sales & Events, Michael Whalen says "I have worked with many people that produce concerts and

events, but I have never worked with a producer that truly puts the guests first, ahead of making profits". Whalen continued "It's a joy to work alongside Andy and his team". It appears they have created something special that South Walton has been longing for. Levine stated that we should be on the lookout for

new announcements, as Topeka and Seascope have planned for 8 shows in 2024. The first will be April 18-21, 2024 with Pink Moon and tickets are on sale now.

You can keep up to date on all announced shows and lineups by checking Topeka.Live.



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Psalm 18:28

"It is you who lights a lamp for me. The Lord, my God, lights up my darkness."



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WAVE

continued from page 1

nomination are you, and we let them know we're from different churches and it really disarms people."

Currently, they are building their prayer team. Katie and her husband host a 2-hour prayer training where team members

learn how to write a testimony, practice sharing that testimony with each other, learn how to pray for strangers - to pause and listen for the Holy Spirit, practice praying for each other, and how to share The Gospel. "There are four different ways they get to participate, to equip them to feel like they have the tools and resources to go out and pray with

strangers on the beach," stated Katie. "We're inspiring people to be bold in their faith and to pray. It's fun to watch people come alive."

You can catch Katie every Thursday morning in Seaside for a prayer walk with 30A Prays at 7:15am. There are some regulars that join, and also new faces, people who've seen her on In-

stagram. "I never know who's coming. It's a surprise to me so I love that," stated Katie. "I want people to feel welcomed to join us in prayer."

You can find 30A Prays on Instagram @30aprays or visit their website at 30aprays.com if you are interested in joining or learning more. They are set to hold another prayer event the week of

October 8th. There will be red prayer tents set up on the beach in Seaside every day that week, and at the end of the week there will be an outreach event. Just look for the red tent. You won't be able to miss them! Be sure to follow them for more information and announcements.



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 Community

August 2023 WCSD Superintendent's Update



Superintendent A. Russell Hughes

Teachers will begin a new year on August 3, 2023, with the annual EPIC district-wide event hosted at Freeport High School. This event is a grand affair of professional development, ranking updates, and the Superin-

endent's address. Our teachers will enjoy seeing colleagues they have not seen over the summer while attending break-out sessions where they will hear from speakers who provide best practices within their content and grade areas. The day focuses on unifying the district toward the goal of being a number one school district.

Our leadership team attended a professional development training in Tallahassee, Florida, July 17-20, 2023, at the Dunlap Champion's Club on the FSU campus. The Panhandle Area Educational Consortium (PAEC) hosted this week of

training, celebrating 56 years of support for our local Panhandle school districts. PAEC brings leaders together to provide legislative updates, Florida Department of Education initiatives, and academic support.

On July 24, 2023, Walton County School District administrators, school improvement teams, teachers, students, community partners, and parents participated in Manufacturing Day. This annual event is geared toward cementing the upcoming year's strategies and initiatives that will help catapult Walton County School District into becoming the number one school district in the state! School teams review data and examine current practices using resources from every functioning department in the district. The room buzzed with excitement and expectation about the upcoming school year!

Teachers prepare to receive students on their first day, August 10, 2023. We hope everyone enjoyed their time away and now look forward to an EPIC new school year! Parents, please remain informed concerning your child's teachers, school procedures, and guidelines. Check our Facebook page and website regularly for current information and our Superintendent's

School Start and End Times 2023-2024		
SCHOOL	START	END
Bay (BES)	7:45 a.m.	1:15 p.m.
Dune Lakes (DLE)	7:35 a.m.	2:15 p.m.
ECTC (office hours)	7:30 a.m.	9:00 p.m.
Emerald Coast (ECMS)	8:25 a.m.	3:25 p.m.
Magnet Innovation Center (MIC)	7:45 a.m.	2:30 p.m.
South Walton High (SWHS)	7:45 a.m.	2:50 p.m.
Van R. Butler Elem (VRB)	7:35 a.m.	2:15 p.m.



updates. A schedule of school start and end times is below.

Remember, you may always reach out and ask questions through the Let's Talk platform. This community digital tool automatically delivers your text questions to the appropriate per-

sonnel for a speedy reply. Text 850.204.9667 or click "contact us" on the WCSD webpage.

We are looking for the safe return of all students and look forward to an incredible 2023-24!



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August 2023 Coastal Seniors Update

COASTAL SENIORS

OF SOUTH WALTON

Water Aerobics at the Arium Apartments Pool

30 MC Davis Loop, Santa Rosa Beach - Mondays, August 7, 14, 21, 28 and Thursdays, August 10, 17, 24, and 31 from 9 a.m. - 10 a.m. Reservations are required. Call/text (850) 280-5342 or email coastalseniorsofsouthwalton@gmail.com. Cost is \$5.00. Cash only please. Pool noodles are available for purchase for an additional \$2.00. A waiver must be signed if you're attending class for the first time. Please arrive at least 15 minutes early to begin class promptly at 10:00. Suggestions for class: Bring a pool noodle, towel, sunscreen, hat, and water shoes (optional).

Friday's with Friends

August 11 and September 8 from 10 a.m. - Noon - Come play Bridge and Mahjong with friends at 70 Logan Lane in Grayton Beach from 10 am - Noon. RSVP to reserve your spot by calling 850-280-5342, or by sending an email to: coastalseniorsofsouthwalton@gmail.com.

com. August 25 at 3 p.m. at Palm Folly Hard Seltzer Brewery - 2602 W. Hwy 98 Suite 203 in Santa Rosa Beach. Take a tour and taste samples. \$10 per person.

Game Day at At Somerby

Wednesdays, August 9, 16, 23, and 30th from 2:00-4:00 p.m. Somerby of Santa Rosa Beach is located at 164 W. Hewett Rd., Santa Rosa Beach. Melissa Bailey, CSSW member, will host game day. Melissa teaches and plays many games such as Hand & Foot, 5 Crowns, Euchre, Mexican Train Dominoes, and more. Refresh your skills or learn a new game. Local seniors and Walton County snowbirds are welcome! Call/text Sonia at 850-280-5342 or email coastalseniorsofsouthwalton@gmail.com if you have questions.

Game Day at Coastal Branch Library

Thursdays, August 10, 17, 24 and 31st from 2-4:00 p.m hosted by Melissa Bailey, CSSW member, 437 Greenway Trail, Santa Rosa Beach.

Chair Yoga Classes at the Blake in Miramar Beach - Tuesdays, August 1 and 15 at 9:45 am - Join us for our chair yoga classes led by Colleen at The Blake at 90 Ponce De Leon St. in Miramar Beach.

Art Classes

Karen Peterson will teach Beginner Watercolor Painting on Tuesdays, August 8, 22 and September 5 from 9am-Noon. Cost is \$20 for CSSW members/\$30 for non-members. Sign up by calling 850-280-5342, or by sending an email to: coastalseniorsofsouthwalton@gmail.com.

gmail.com. All supplies are included.

Monthly Meeting

Friday, August 18 - 11A.M. - 1:00 P.M. Guest speakers are Steven Brown with the Walton County Prevention Coalition to talk about drug prevention; Casey Davis B.S. RN from Ascension will explain Ascension's Senior Spirit program; Daniel Keeton, a local vocalist will entertain us and join attendees in karaoke. A light lunch will be served.

Pickleball

Beginner Pickleball 101 at Walton Sports Complex courts - August 16 and 30 at 6:00 pm. Registration required. Please register for one date only at www.waltonrec.com by choosing field and court rentals. Email Sandra Gulak at sowal-

pickleball@gmail.com for more information. Open to Walton County residents only. Please join the SoWal 30A Pickleball Association on Facebook for more information and weekly updates and check the CSSW calendar at www.coastalseniorsofsouthwalton.org.

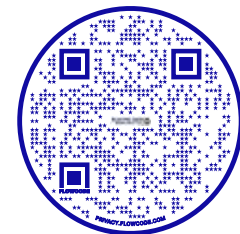
Seniors 50 years of age and up residing in or visiting Walton County are invited to join CSSW. Membership is \$20 for individuals, \$30 for family, and \$50 for businesses (your business will be listed on our home webpage and our Facebook page). You can become a member via email at coastalseniorsofsouthwalton@gmail.com, or on the website at www.coastalseniorsofsouthwalton.org. Also, follow us on Facebook at Coastal Seniors of South Walton. Coastal Seniors of South Walton, Inc. is a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization for active adults and we're looking for dedicated, enthusiastic persons to join our Board of Directors.



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Flood Water Mosquitoes!!!

With the recent rain events here in South Walton, residents have become concerned with the influence of nuisance mosquitoes. There are a few species of mosquitoes, we call Floodwater species. These mosquitoes usually show up about 2 weeks after a big rain event and continue to show up in our traps until the end of summer. This gives them plenty of time to lay more eggs for the following year.

Floodwater mosquitoes lay their eggs in the soil of lower areas of land that will hold water after a rain event. These eggs are laid individually, by the hundreds, and can lay dormant for 3 years. Once water is introduced, it causes large amounts of mosquitoes to emerge all at once. Some prefer dry woodland pools, ditches, grassy fields, or farmlands which make them difficult to control. Due to the variety of habitats of these mosquitoes, our best defense is county wide larvicide missions. This is when the mosquito control trucks will treat ditches and any area, they can reach from the roadside with a truck mounted hose and treatment to kill mosquitoes in their immature phase.

As the adults emerge, there are many reasons they become so apparent to us for a few weeks after a rain event. For one, they are aggressive people biters. They prefer blood meals from

mammals, including livestock and people. They will stay close to the areas where they have access to these blood meals, usually resting in a shaded area. Second, they are mainly active during the day, which is when most people are outside and being bitten.

Even though there is an influx of mosquitoes, the floodwater species are not considered an "important vector" species meaning they do not normally pass mosquito-borne diseases to people.

They are also difficult to control as adults, due to their most active time being during the day. Mosquito controls in Florida do not treat with adulticide trucks during the day for a few reasons, unless there is a public health emergency. One main reason is to protect pollinators. Another reason is during the day, heat makes the adulticide treatment lighter and will make it float away. There is a temperature inversion at dusk and dawn that holds the products closer to the ground and allows our treatments to do what they are designed to do.

The best defense against the day-time biters is to practice the 5 D's of protection against mosquitoes:

Drain – Many mosquito problems in your neighborhood are likely to come from water that you, the resident, can help

to eliminate. All mosquitoes need water in which to breed. Be sure to drain any standing water around your house.

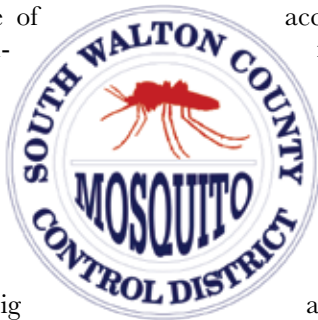
Dress – Wear light-colored, loose-fitting clothing. Many of the 176 mosquito species are attracted to dark clothing and some can bite through tight-fitting clothes. When practical, wear long sleeves and pants.

Dusk to Dawn – Avoid mosquito mealtimes – early evening to early morning hours. If at all possible, avoid outdoor activities during these times.

Defend – Choose a mosquito repellent that has been registered by the Environmental Protection Agency, such as DEET, Picaridin, or oil of lemon eucalyptus. Registered products have been

reviewed, approved, and pose minimal risk for human safety when used according to label directions.

Visit our website at, www.southwaltonmosquitocontrol.org or follow us on Facebook at, South Walton Mosquito District for more information.



Understanding Your Notice of Proposed Property Taxes

WALTON COUNTY TAXING AUTHORITIES
PO BOX 691
DEFUNIAK SPRING, FL 32433

2023 REAL ESTATE PROPERTY
XXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

1 38000 "A" 14000 "B"

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Notice of Proposed Property Taxes and Proposed or Adopted Non-Ad Valorem Assessments

DO NOT PAY THIS IS NOT A BILL

The following information is for informational purposes only and does not constitute a bill. It is subject to change without notice and is not to be used for any other purpose. The District of South Walton has the honor to inform you of the proposed changes to the property taxes for the year 2023. This notice is being mailed to you 10 days before the meeting.

SEE THE PUBLIC HEARING IS HELD SEPTEMBER 12, 2023 AT 7:00 PM IN THE BOARD ROOM OF THE WALTON COUNTY COURTHOUSE, 301 W. WALTON BLVD., DEFUNIAK SPRING, FL 32433. YOU MAY ATTEND AND COMMENT ON THE PROPOSED CHANGES TO THE PROPERTY TAXES.

Taxing Authority	2022	2023	Change	2023	2023	2023
WALTON COUNTY COMMUNITY	1,000	1,000	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
SCHOOL DISTRICT	1,000	1,000	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
SCHOOL DISTRICT	1,000	1,000	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
STATE	1,000	1,000	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
MUNICIPAL	1,000	1,000	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
TOTAL PROPERTY TAXES	4,000	4,000	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00

SAMPLE

Assessment Roll

Assessed Value	Applicable Tax	Exemption	Applicable Tax
100,000	1,000	0.00	1,000
200,000	2,000	0.00	2,000
300,000	3,000	0.00	3,000
400,000	4,000	0.00	4,000
500,000	5,000	0.00	5,000

WALTON COUNTY PROPERTY VALUE TOTALS

Year	Property Value Totals (Billions)
2019	21.6
2020	28.6
2021	27.0
2022	38.4
2023	46.3

The Walton County Property Appraiser's Office will be mailing the TRIM (Truth in Millage) Notices to all property owners in the county on behalf of the taxing authorities in this jurisdiction in the month of August.

Gary J. Gregor, Walton County Property Appraiser, asks property owners to review their TRIM Notices carefully. While the Notice of Proposed Property Taxes is not a bill, it does contain essential information about your property and should be examined for accuracy.

If you have any questions about your property value or exemptions, please do not hesitate to contact us. If you wish to appeal your property value, you may file a Value Adjustment Board (VAB) petition with the Clerk of Courts & County Comptroller's Office. The deadline to file is September 12, 2023.

We are here to serve you and consider it a privilege to do so.

Yours truly,
Gary J. Gregor
Gary J. Gregor
Walton County Property Appraiser

Questions regarding **Tax Rates** and/or **Property Taxes** should be directed towards the Taxing Authorities. Contact information provided in section 6 of TRIM.

Questions regarding your **Assessed Value** and/or **Property Exemptions** should be directed towards the Property Appraiser's Office.

Our offices are open Monday - Friday, 8:00 a.m. until 4:30 p.m. Call or Visit for more information or questions.

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Hotel Effie and Dog Harmony Host Treatos & Tito's National Dog Day Celebration

Hotel Effie, the boutique luxury hotel managed by Highgate at Sandestin Golf and Beach Resort, and Dog-Harmony, a Miramar Beach nonprofit dedi-

ated to reducing the shelter dog population through ongoing humane education, are excited to announce their partnership event, Treatos and Tito's, in celebration of National Dog Day. This event aims to honor our furry friends and the people that care for them.

On August 25, 2023, from 4:30-6:30 p.m., Hotel Effie and Dog-Harmony invite dog lovers and enthusiasts to join in the festivities. Attendees can look forward to exciting activities and opportunities to connect with fellow dog enthusiasts. Highlights of the Treatos and Tito's activation include:

Five "Barkeries" with Canine Taste Testing: Doggy Bag, 3 Dogs and a Chick, Sea Dog Barkery, Dog-Harmony and Hot

Dog, will provide tasty treats for our furry friends. Celebrity guest dog judges will judge the treats in a blind taste test. The barkery that is the canine favorite will have barking rights and exclusive rights to sell their treats at Hotel Effie's Sweetbay Coffee.

Tito's Tasting and Specialty Cocktails: Tito's Vodka will offer samples of specialty cocktails. (Additional Tito's drinks will be available for purchase at Hotel Effie in The Lobby Bar.)

Dog Photo Booth: A photo booth specifically for our furry friends will be set up to capture their day out!

Dog Menu at Ovide: Ovide, the destination restaurant at Hotel Effie, will be serving fresh doggie meals on the menu for brunch Saturday and Sunday morning so guests with pets can dine on the patio and their pups get a special meal for purchase.

DJ on Ovide Patio: A DJ will be on the Ovide patio, allowing for outdoor socialization for the canines and their humans.

Dog Skills Contest: Each canine will have the opportunity to participate in a contest to see who can catch the most dog treats in a row.

Entry into Giveaway: Each ticket purchased enters you into a drawing for a free two-night stay at Hotel Effie.

This National Dog Day activation is open to hotel guests and the public. Tickets for the event



are \$50 and can be purchased on Eventbrite. A ticket includes Tito's specialty cocktail samples, treats from each Barkery, access to the photo booth, doggie socializing, and entrance into a drawing for a free stay at Hotel Effie. Only 30 tickets will be available for purchase for owners and their dogs. An additional 20 tickets will be available for purchase for dog lovers who do not have a dog to bring to the event. All ticket proceeds will go to Dog-Harmony.

Parking is available at Baytowne parking garage or valet at Hotel Effie. If you spend at least \$50 at any outlet in Hotel Effie, valet parking will be validated.

Additionally, on August 26 the Baytowne Marina Beach at the Sandestin Golf and Beach Resort will offer a special dog menu at Marina Bar and Grill, Baytowne Marina bonfire show,

Captain Davy Magic Show, pet grooming bus, dog kissing booth, photo booth and live DJ! Humans will receive a free beer with a donation to Alaqua Animal Refuge and every furry friend gets a tennis ball and treats! Show your love for dogs and support for Alaqua Animal Refuge.

Sandestin is proud to partner with Alaqua Animal Refuge, a no-kill animal shelter and sanctuary, located in Northwest Florida. As the Southeast's premier 501(c)3 refuge and sanctuary, Alaqua believes that every abused, neglected and homeless animal deserves a second chance. Since its inception in 2007, Alaqua has become a recognized leader in animal rescue, welfare, cruelty prevention, and advocacy in our region, state and around the country.

Dog-Harmony, based in Miramar Beach, is a nonprofit organization that enhances the relationship between dogs and humans through community education. Founded by Nancy Bown, a Certified Professional Dog Trainer, Knowledge-Assessed (CPDT-KA), its goal is to keep dogs from being abandoned, surrendered to shelters and/or euthanized due to lack of human knowledge. Visit dog-harmony.org to learn more and follow them on Facebook.



ated to reducing the shelter dog population through ongoing humane education, are excited to announce their partnership event, Treatos and Tito's, in cel-

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Green Thumb Garden Club Preparing for Another Year of Charitable Giving

By KATHLEEN EDGE

The Green Thumb Garden Club's (GTGC) 2023-24 year is kicking off with a full program at their September meeting. The September meeting is very popular for returning members to reconnect and share stories about their adventures over the long, hot summer as well as welcome new members. Attendees can sign up for committees and learn about the exciting programs planned for the year including the scholarship awards and the charities the Club will support through the generosity



of its members and fundraising events. A craft making session is also planned.

The meeting is scheduled for September 20, 2023; the location is Westwinds at Sandestin Conference Center, 4700 Westwinds Drive, Miramar Beach, FL. Doors open at 9:00 am and the meeting begins at 9:30 am, concluding with lunch. The cost is \$30.00 per person.

Numerous Walton County organizations receive donations from GTGC. Among them are Eden Gardens State Park, Habitat for Humanity, Walton County

Sheriff's Office Santa Patrol, John Horton Senior Center, Legion Park Garden, and Caring & Sharing. The Junior Gardeners program at Butler Elementary School will continue in 2023-24 as well as tuition scholarship awards to college students majoring in horticulture, 4H Camp Timpoochee and the Naturalist Outdoor program at E.O. Wilson Biophilia Center.

Floral design instruction, the third annual Holiday Bazaar fundraiser at Cantina Laredo Grand Boulevard in November and an Earth Day program in April are

planned in the upcoming year. Additional program and event information will be shared at the September meeting.

The Green Thumb Garden Club welcomes new members. The GTGC website www.greenthumbgardenclubinc.org contains detailed information about how to join the Club, support its charitable mission and details on meetings, activities, and events. For additional information, please visit the website or email greenthumbgardenclubinc@gmail.com.

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Camp Helen State Park Ranger-Guided Nature Hike Sept. 7

First Thursday of Each Month | 10AM - 11AM
Camp Helen State Park invites you to go beyond your park visit, joining Park Ranger staff for a nature hike held each first Thursday of the month at 10AM on Camp Helen's user-friendly trail system. Learn about the park's flora and fauna and the larger ecosystem of the Florida Panhandle. The hike is great

for all experience levels and requires moderate endurance. The Oak Canopy and North trails have a combination of paved, sand and packed-earth terrain. Wear comfortable clothing and shoes, and bring a water bottle, sunscreen and bug repellent, as well as your adventurous spirit. Camp Helen State Park is located at 23937 Panama City Beach Parkway, just west of the

Phillips Inlet Bridge on the Bay County and Walton County line. Camp Helen State Park is bordered on three sides by the Gulf of Mexico and Lake Powell, one of the largest coastal dune lakes in Florida. Activities include swimming, beachcombing, nature study, hiking, and both freshwater and saltwater fishing.

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Insights for Investors: Past, Present and Future in Investing



BY MAURICE STOUSE, FINANCIAL ADVISOR AND BRANCH MANAGER

“If you want to know the past, look at your present. If you want to know the future, look at your present” – Marcus Aurelius

Reports came out this past week over the continued resilience of the U.S. economy. GDP growth for the second quarter was 2.4 percent. According to the Associated Press, that was led by a strong increase in business spending and continued strength in consumer spending. This is in the face of 11 federal rate hikes in the past 17 months. Inflation has continued to decline and is now down almost 70 percent in the past 12 months.

We have seen it before in the quote from the great John Templeton: The four most expensive words in investing are: “This time it’s different.” Indeed, we agree, and this time it is not different. The stock market sank to its lowest level in October 2022. It has since rebounded quite substantially. That is right in line with past slowdowns or declines in earnings brought on by higher interest rates, inflation, and a slowing economy.

It has been interesting and concerning at the same time, the rapid rise in inflation over most of 2022. And what goes up often comes down – we have seen inflation come down 70 percent over the past 12 months. Raymond James, in its most recent edition of “Investment Strategy Quarterly” presents two scenarios which can drive inflation: Supply push inflation or demand push inflation. Inflation pushed by an interruption or decrease in production can raise prices. Stimulated demand brought on by a significant increase in the money supply can drive inflation. We may have

just experienced the two simultaneously.

The interesting thing about inflation is that it was mostly nonexistent from 2010 to 2020. That was with an abundant supply of money and a strong economy for the most part. How could inflation have been so tame? Goldman Sachs points out that two key factors were 1) the low cost of energy during that time and 2) the continued advances in automation and other technological innovations that drove the cost of doing business out of the system. It was quite incredible to see the low cost of money and low inflation. The question, as we hear non-stop communication about artificial intelligence, or AI, is that about to happen again and at an even faster rate? The impact of technological advances cannot be overstated in our opinion. They not only drive costs out of the system as Goldman points out, but they also create new opportunities, industries, and jobs. Of course, some jobs go away (think telephone operators or typists) but are typically replaced by more and higher-paying jobs. Is the market seeing that? We think so. Goldman Sachs also shared some numbers to further illustrate these points. In 1850, two thirds of the workforce was devoted to agriculture or food production. The leading cause of death at that time was malnutrition. Today, less than 2 percent of the workforce is dedicated to food production – and productivity, or output, has never been greater. One of the leading causes of death today is a diet that is too rich.

Even though most stocks are up only slightly in 2023, many of these companies are coming out of earnings slumps and, like past growth spurts in stocks, they have recovered after hitting lows. The markets, however, present a different picture. At this writing the S&P 500 index is up almost 19 percent ytd, the Dow, 6.5 percent and the NASDAQ, 35 percent. Investors should take note that a small number of stocks, fewer than 10, have driven most of the performance of S&P and the NASDAQ. Taking those out leaves those indexes with a much dif-

ferent result.

The same can be said for so-called market valuation: looking at the price to earnings ratio (PE) of the S&P. Historically, that number has been 16 to 1. Most recently it is 26 to 1, indicating a somewhat overvalued market. If you experiment and take out the small number of outperforming stocks, you will find that ratio drops down somewhat, making it slightly undervalued. Throughout most of July, the market seemed to be responding to that and the larger group of stocks performed quite strongly and many of those firms have been reporting their second quarter results, which are proving to be better than expected.

We are also encouraging investors to look more closely at bonds or fixed income investments. If the Fed is close to or at the end of its rate hike efforts and if inflation continues to wane, locking in yields for longer term than short-term CDs and money markets might make a lot of sense. It can diversify or reduce risk to a portfolio, and it can be a source of income as well. Cash rates are at their highest levels in well over a decade; however we remind investors that these rates are intended for a very short-term time horizon.

If you haven’t reviewed your portfolio and or reassessed the big three: investment objective, risk tolerance, and time frame, contact your adviser and do so today.

Diversification and asset allocation does not ensure a profit or protect against a loss. Holding investments for the long term does not ensure a profitable outcome.

The S&P 500 is an unmanaged index of 500 widely held stocks that is generally considered representative of the U.S. stock market.

The NASDAQ composite is an unmanaged index of securities traded on the NASDAQ system.

The Dow Jones Industrial Average (DJIA), commonly known as “The Dow” is an index representing 30 stocks of companies maintained and reviewed by the editors of the “Wall Street



Journal.”

Keep in mind that individuals cannot invest directly in any index, and index performance does not include transaction costs or other fees, which will affect actual investment performance. Individual investor’s results will vary.

Maurice Stouse is a Financial Advisor and the branch manager of The First Wealth Management/Raymond James. Main office located at The First Bank, 2000 98 Palms Blvd, Destin, FL 32541. Phone 850.654.8124. Raymond James advisors do not offer -tax advice. Please see your tax professionals. Email: Maurice.stouse@raymondjames.com.

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Cava and Cakes in Gulf Place Offers a Unique Culinary Pairing

Santa Rosa Beach is a charming and picturesque destination known for its stunning beaches, crystal-clear waters, and vibrant culinary scene. Many of the delightful treats that locals

and tourists alike indulge in are found at Cava and Cakes, located in Gulf Place.

The shop is owned by Alison & Will Nazarowski, and Jillian Raines. "Will and I moved

to 30A almost 5 years ago from Atlanta, after traveling here for 10 years as often as we could." Alison says, "I finally told him, 'we are moving' and he said 'yes, dear'." Alison is a closing attorney by trade, and Will is a real estate Broker.

Cava and Cupcakes, an interesting pair!

For those of you who are unfamiliar, Cava is a sparkling wine (the Spanish version of champagne) originating from the Catalonia region in Spain. It has gained popularity worldwide as a celebratory drink. Its effervescence, lightness, and fruity flavors make it a delightful choice for any occasion, whether it be a romantic beachside dinner, a family gathering, or simply a moment of relaxation by the Gulf.

But, I wondered how the idea of pairing Cava and Cupcakes came together?

"Will and I were traveling in Spain last spring and came up on a place that sold Cava and Cupcakes. We learned that in Spain they pair their desserts with Cava due to its low sugar content. We knew there were no bakeries on the west end of 30A that produced custom cakes, and I am only aware of 1 "champagne and cupcake shop"



called her to ask if she wanted to go into business with us, even though we barely knew her, and she said yes!"

The shop serves 6 "house" flavors of cupcakes - wedding cake, chocolate wedding cake, birthday cake, cookies and cream, peanut butter delight and chocolate lovers'. In addition, there are seasonal flavors as well. Cava and Cakes specializes in custom birthday cakes, wedding cakes and cakes for any other occasion.

Born out of Will's love of Cava, Alison's love of cupcakes, and Jillian's talent for baking, Cava and Cakes is quickly establishing itself as the place-to-go when the goal is to celebrate in style!

Cava is the perfect complement for all of the sweet treats baked on site daily. Come visit the resident mermaid, and stay to enjoy a glass of sparkling Cava and the best cupcakes 30A has ever seen. A full coffee and latte bar is available all day as well!

Located in Gulf Place at 56 Spires Lane, Santa Rosa Beach. Open Tuesday through Saturday from 9am to 7pm. Call 850-931-2253 for more information or visit www.cavaandcakes.com. To place an order, please email info@cavaandcakes.com.




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Community

Rise of the "Bro-tique": Redefining Men's Retail Experience in South Walton

The world of men's fashion has witnessed a significant transformation in recent years, and with it, a new term has emerged to describe a unique breed of stores: the "Brotique." Combining the words "bro" and "boutique," this catchy nickname perfectly encapsulates the essence of a new era in men's retail. These establishments are not merely stores; they are immersive spaces that cater to the modern man's evolving needs, preferences, and sense of style.

Gone are the days when men's shopping was limited to a few basic options. The emergence of the "brotique" concept marks a departure from the traditional and paves the way for an elevated and personalized shopping experience. These stores have become synonymous with a fresh take on men's fashion, grooming, and lifestyle, providing a haven where men can explore their individuality without compromise. So, what sets Captured Clothing apart

from conventional men's stores? It starts with the ambiance. Step into this brotique, and you'll find yourself in an atmosphere carefully crafted to radiate style, sophistication and masculine energy. The decor, lighting, and overall aesthetic are designed to create an inviting space that appeals to the sensibilities, making you right at home.

The selection of merchandise in Captured is equally distinctive. Curated with experience for the latest trends and timeless classics, offering a range of high-quality clothing, accessories, grooming products, and lifestyle essentials. Every item is handpicked to reflect the desires and aspirations of the discerning gentleman, ensuring that he can find everything he needs to express his unique style and personality.

Perhaps one of the most appealing aspects of the "brotique" phenomenon is the personalized attention provided to customers. Unlike their mass-market



counterparts, these stores prioritize individualized service, with knowledgeable staff members who are passionate about being able to help customers. The

"brotique" is more than just a place to buy clothes or grooming products; it has become a destination for men seeking inspiration, community, and a sense of

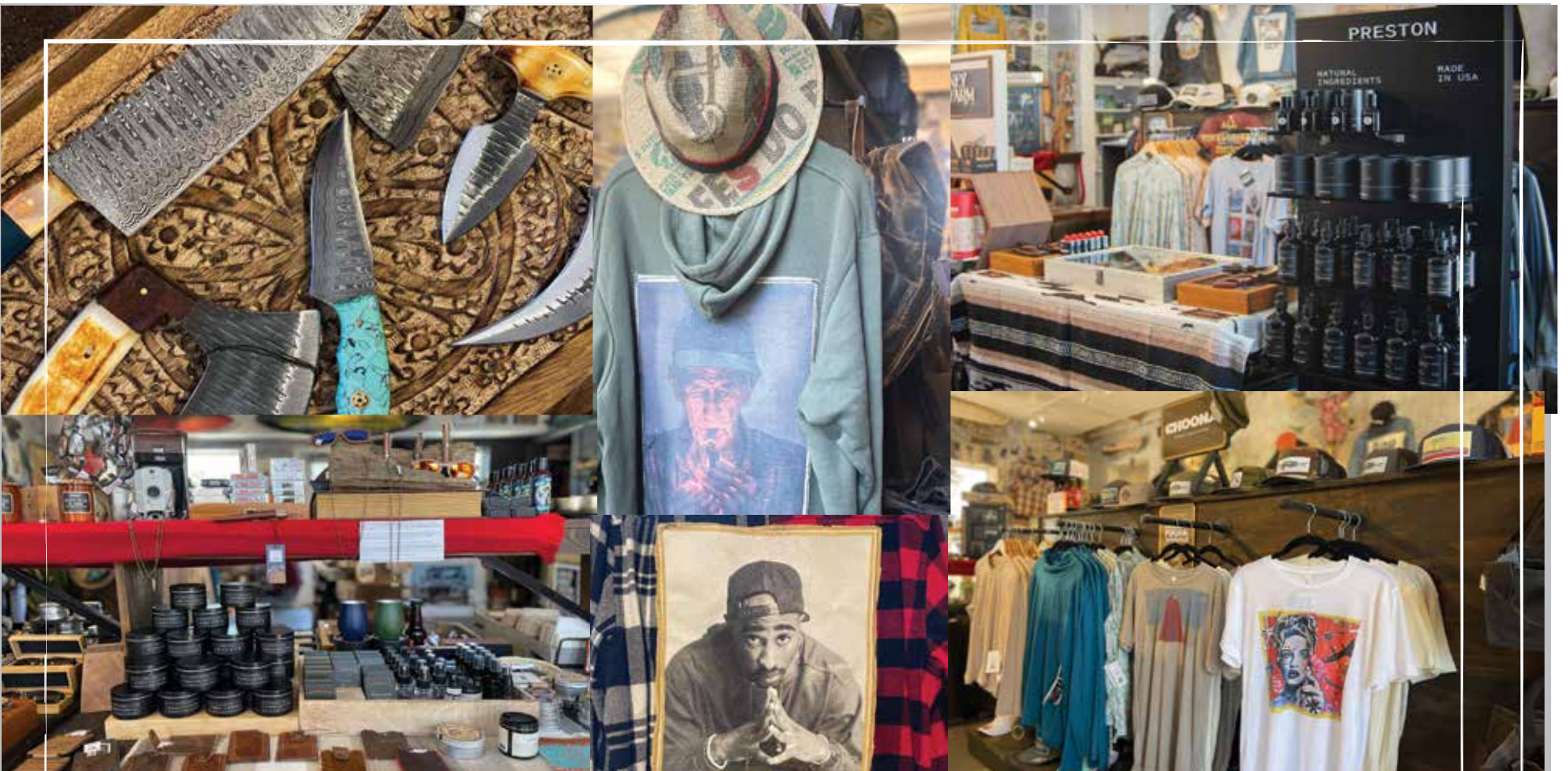
belonging. Many of these stores host events, workshops, and collaborations, creating a platform for men to connect, network, and share their experiences and interests. As the popularity of the "brotique" continues to rise, it has become a game-changer in the retail industry. Its success can be attributed to its ability to adapt to the changing demands and expectations of the modern man, individualized service, and a vibrant community atmosphere.

Here at Capture Clothing we are excited and proud to embrace this new era of mens retail and known as 30A's Bro-tique!

Stay tuned for father son workshops, the launch of the on-line store and much more!

Captured Clothing has custom apparel and curated goods from all over the globe.

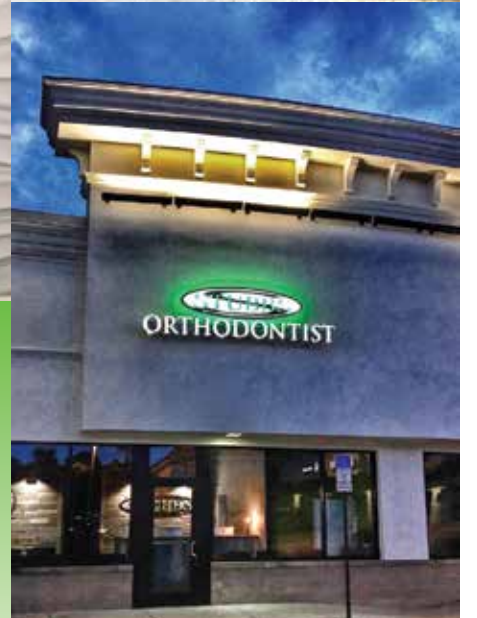
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Community

Run for the Rosemary 5K Fun Run and Walk Slated for October 2023

As if South Walton residents needed an excuse to spend time in Rosemary Beach in October, the 3rd Annual Run for Rosemary certainly fits the bill. "Our goal is to highlight the beauty of our town, and this year, more than ever the route will reflect that," says race director Kimberly Weekes. "This year, we are happy to add mile markers, a split timer, better signage and more volunteers. For those of you who are returning welcome back. For those new to our run we are so happy you will be joining us." Early registration is open now. Google Run for the



Rosemary 5k for more information or scan the qr code below. Race start/finish line is located at the intersection of E Water St and Hwy 30A just west of the tennis courts. Prizes will be offered to the top three male and female finishers. Early packet pickup is at the Rosemary Beach Owners

Pavilion located at the corner of Kingston Road and Georgetown Avenue on Friday October 6th between 2:00 pm - 5:00 pm. Register Early for Early Bird Pricing - Shirts are available to people that register online prior to Wednesday September 13th, 2023. In person registration is \$40 (cash, check or Venmo only) and is available at Early Packet Pickup and from 6-6:30 am race day. Parking is available in limited spaces throughout Rosemary Beach. If you would like to volunteer for the race, please contact Kimberly at khweekes@me.com - Thank you!)



Democratic Women's Club Monthly Meeting August 20

The Democratic Women's Club of Walton County will hold its monthly meeting on Tuesday, August 22 from 5:30-7:30pm at the Coastal Branch Library.

Veronica Durling, Democratic Women's Club of Walton County LGBTQ+ outreach coordinator will present an overview of Florida legislation affecting the LGBTQ + community.

A review of local resources for LGBTQ + community members, friends and family will be presented. An open discussion on initiatives the club can take to improve communication, education and support for the LGBTQ + community in Walton County will follow the presentation.

Please RSVP to susanbowden4321@yahoo.com by August 20 if you plan to attend. There will be a \$5 charge for refreshments.

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Nominations Open for 2024 Perfect in Walton County Awards

The nomination period for the 2024 Perfect in Walton County Awards will be open from Aug. 1-18. Anyone can nominate their favorite businesses, events, and activities in an online form on perfectinwaltoncounty.com.

“From our residents to our visitors, we all have our favorite shops, restaurants, activities and places to explore,” said Matt Algarin, Walton County tourism director. “The Perfect in Walton County Awards allow us to celebrate these businesses, events and activities, and keep people talking about their favorites throughout the year.”

Nominations can be made in as many or as few categories as you wish, but only one online form per email address will be accepted. Every nomination counts and every vote counts. Visitor-facing businesses may encourage their guests, customers, followers, friends, and family to nominate them in any of the thirty categories. Graphics for social media use can be found [HERE](#).

Businesses and/or individuals must be located and serve/do business in Walton County to qualify, and businesses and/or individuals who provide beach services (i.e., photographer, yoga, bonfires, chair vendor, etc.) must hold a current vendor permit with the Walton County Code Compliance Department to be considered.

The top five nominees in each category will move on to the final voting round, which will be held online at [\[waltoncounty.com\]\(http://waltoncounty.com\) Sept. 5-22. The top three businesses with the highest number of votes in each category will be recognized as Diamond, Platinum or Gold winners at the Perfect in Walton County Awards presentation in January 2024. These winners will be promoted in print and online by Walton County Tourism throughout the year.](http://perfectin-</p>
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Some of last year’s Diamond winners included The Blue Giraffe for Best Art Gallery/ Studio, Indigo Watercolor for Best Retailer, and Black Bear Bread Co. for Best Coffee House. To view a complete list of last year’s winners, go to visitsouthwalton.com/2023-perfect-south-walton-awards or view the online version of the Perfect guide.

For more information about the Perfect in Walton County Awards program, please contact Industry Relations Specialist Lisa Foster at Lisa@WCFL-Tourism.com or (850) 333-2728.

The 2024 categories include:

Activity/Shopping

- Best Art Gallery/Studio
- Best Event
- Best Golf Course
- Best Kids Attraction
- Best Nature Locale
- Best Retailer
- Best Shopping Area
- Best Tennis Facility
- Accommodations

- Best Boutique Vacation Rental Company (Less than 50 units)
- Best Hotel/Resort
- Best Rental Management Company (More than 50 units)
- Food & Drinks
- Best Breakfast
- Best Casual Dining
- Best Coffee House
- Best Craft Beer/Spirits Selection

- Best Fine Dining
- Best Happy Hour
- Best Lunch
- Best Personal Chef/Catering Service
- Best Sweet Treats
- Best Wine Selection
- Services
- Best Beach/Event Services Provider
- Best Fishing Charter
- Best Local Musician/Band
- Best Outdoor Adventure

- Activity
- Best Photographer
- Best Spa/Salon
- Venues
- Best Meeting/Conference Space
- Best Live Music Venue
- Best Wedding Venue




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 Community

Local Reident's Thrill of a Lifetime: Background Extra for The Chosen

By VICTORIA OSTROSKY

Take yourself back in time. It's sweltering and dusty. The sun beats down and your sandals kick up dirt. The Temple looms large, its massive stone columns and steps filled with people going about their business. The smell of penned sheep and goats mingle with the scent of spices and fruit. And the heat is suffocating.



Being a background extra on the set of the globally popular TV series *The Chosen* for four days filming Season 4's finale was, in a word, memorable. The Jerusalem set in Goshen, Utah is spectacular. The stone walls are imposing. And when the sun

kisses them late in the day, they turn pink.

There were 600 of us dressed as first century Jews, Greeks, and Nabateans sweating in the sun, drinking tons of water, and smiling in between takes, just because.

We arrived at 6:15 am, the crew checked us in, and we were given lanyards dividing us up into 5 teams. Oh, and to make a note – we were strictly forbidden to divulge any specifics on the actual scenes being filmed. While we waited for our turn on set, we sat in a spacious air-conditioned holding tent, stocked with water, juices, sodas, snacks and electrolytes, not to mention breakfast, lunch and a box dinner handed out at the end of a 12-hour day. We were well taken care of as we sat around getting to know each other.

I mentioned the heat. It was in the upper 90s each day, and although the humidity is lower there than here, when that sun is beating down on you it feels like a laser boring into your brain. So, we used umbrellas and sunglasses in between takes. There was a lot of waiting and when it was the most uncomfortable, a wonderful young man, dressed as a Jewish peasant, walked around spritzing us in the face with water. He was

quite popular, being the one who made everyone feel better even if only for a minute or two.

When our color group was called and we arrived on set, Mitch, the 2nd 2nd Assistant Director, gave us instructions and taught us some new ABCs – Always Be Crossing. That means, when “Background!” is called out, you never stop moving until you hear “Cut!” Seeing the actors up close was amazing, although we weren't allowed to make eye contact or approach them since they were in character, although I did make sure I walked near Jesus (Jonathan Roumie) for a few of the takes so I could hear him deliver his lines (which were awesome, by the way). Everyone was sweating and uncomfortable, and gracious. The actors would joke a little with each other as we all waited.

“Pictures up!” Time to put everything that wasn't first century approved away in our bags.

“Rolling, rolling!” Get ready.

“Background!” Our cue to start walking or shoving or milling around.

“Action!” Now the actors begin delivering their lines while background continues backgrounding without looking at the actors.

“Cut!” Everyone stops in



their tracks.

“Reset!” Everyone goes back to where they started. And we do it again. And again. And again. Until Dallas Jenkins is happy with the shot.

By the end of day 4, my feet were blistered and my toes were rubbed raw. My nose and shoulders were sunburned, and I was exhausted. But it was worth every uncomfortable moment.

When you think about it, a film set is a microcosm of the body of Christ. Each person has their part. Some parts are bigger or more visible than others. But the scene wouldn't be complete without everyone's participation. The actors need background extras to make the scenes realistic.

The camera operators need not just the actors and background extras, but the props to make the picture authentic. Everyone needs the staff and crew to set up the props and clean up the set and provide the food and the water and the umbrellas and so much more. The Director is needed to oversee and direct, instruct and troubleshoot the entire production.

We are all necessary, no matter what part we have been assigned to play.

There are 3 more seasons to film, and if I could, I would be a permanent BG extra and move to Texas, where most of the filming is done. We'll have to wait and see what happens.



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OneBlood Drive at The Market Shops Aug 18

The Market Shops will host a OneBlood Drive on Friday, August 18 from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. The OneBlood Big Red Bus® will be parked in The Market Shops parking lot, adjacent to Highway 98. All donors will receive a free wellness checkup including blood pressure, temperature, iron count, pulse, cholesterol screening, and exclusive



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It's time to get organized....

BY DONNA DAUGHERTY

Are you planning to sell your home soon or tired of looking at the same outdated couch? If so, start thinking about a remodel budget and how to get the most bang for your buck! Set yourself up for financial success by making a few strategic updates before putting up that "for sale" sign in the yard. The key to any project update is understanding your budget and maximizing your resources. Not all updates lead to a return on your investment (ROI) and it's important for you to talk to a professional, do research to find out surrounding comps and understand potential buyers' needs before making pricey updates to your home. Maybe you're not selling your home but instead you're longing for an updated space, here are some things that you should consider that will increase the value of your home and not break the bank!

Make a list of all the things you dream about doing, break your list down into categories based on cost and write down how much time each project may take. This will help you prioritize your changes and get results. If you only have a day or a weekend, choose a project that fits within your time frame, comfort level and financial commitment.

Of course, investing resources into updating or renovating your kitchen or bathroom is always a safe bet to boost the value of your home and increase your ROI. The cost to remodel can widely vary depending on the scope of the project and where you live. Think about whether you can refresh the cabinets with a coat of paint, change the look of the kitchen with an updated backsplash, swap out kitchen hardware or lighting, or is it time for a complete gut job? Sometimes, just a simple appliance update can make an enormous difference in a kitchen. Make sure that you get multiple quotes for each project and check with your fam-

ily and friends to see which vendors they've found most reliable and whether their projects were reasonably priced. If using a professional designer, these tasks are what he or she does best. Designers typically have a list of preferred vendors, will manage the project for you and can certainly help you maximize your budget.

Another way to increase the value of your home is to create an outdoor living or entertainment space that feels like an extension of your home's interior. Adding your dream pool, deck, or pergola can not only make being at home more enjoyable, but also, it appeals to potential buyers and renters. Give your backyard an impressive entry with an inviting gate, new lighting and spruce up your landscaping by adding outdoor planters with seasonal flowers. Small improvements can have a significant impact on the aesthetic feel of your outdoor space.

Find ways to improve space by adding laundry shelving or closet organizers. Having a neat and spacious home is appealing to home buyers and helps you hide unnecessary clutter. Clean out those closets and donate unwanted items. Storage space is a commodity that all buyers look for in homes they are considering.

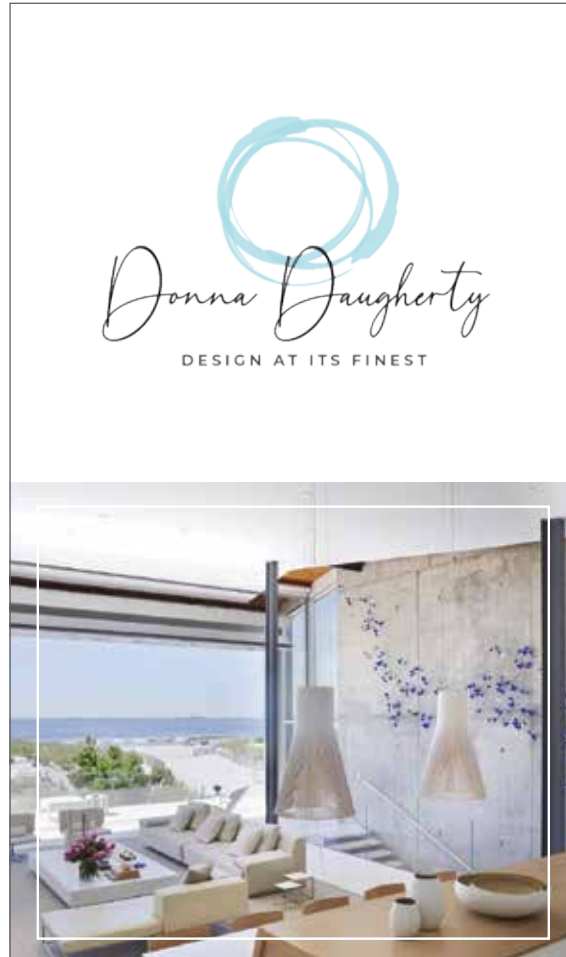
Create a list of the decorative upgrades you would like to make for yourself (like that updated vanity mirror) and another list outlining upgrades you'd like to make in order to boost your home's value (window treatments). Use your lists and your timeline as parameters and slate the projects and your budget accordingly.

Regardless of your budget, money spent on your home is not only a return on your investment but also improves your lifestyle and everyday routine. Your trusted interior designer can help you prioritize your improvements and maximize your ROI. I'm Donna Daugherty and I would love to help you with your next design project!

Donna Daugherty is the owner of Design At Its Finest, located in Santa Rosa Beach Florida. If you're tackling a de-

sign project, I'd love to help! Stay tuned for the next several publications where I will share some design tips that will help turn your

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 Community

August 2023 Family Friendly Events in South Walton

August 12, 19, 26

Sounds of Seaside Concert Series

Enjoy an afternoon of LIVE music in the Seaside Amphitheater on Saturdays from 3 - 6PM. Sounds of SEASIDE features musicians ready to entertain the whole family. Bring a chair or blanket, snacks and drinks, and enjoy the show. Free and open to all ages. Seaside's Amphitheater is a beautiful green space in the heart of Central Square where families will often gather for live music, outdoor movies, annual celebrations, children's activities and other fun events. Seaside Amphitheater, 25 Central Square, Seaside. Visit www.seasidefl.com for more information.

August 16

Wild Sea Turtle Wednesdays at The Big Chill 30A

Join South Walton Turtle Watch on Wednesday mornings for "Wild Sea Turtle Wednesday" at The Big Chill 30A from 9AM - 11AM. Learn about sea turtles, paint, adopt a hatchling

and take the Jr. Ocean Ranger pledge to help keep our beaches clean, dark and flat for nesting sea turtles and baby hatchlings. The event is free and open to the public. The South Walton Turtle Watch is a group of volunteers whose purpose is to locate endangered and threatened sea turtle nests and to protect them along the beaches of NW Florida during the crucial nesting and hatching season. Visit www.southwaltonturtlewatch.org. The Big Chill 30A, 7000 E County Hwy 30A, Santa Rosa Beach.

August 16, 23, 30

Baytowne Wednesday Night Concert Series

Welcome to The Village of Baytowne Wharf where live music concerts take place in the Baytowne Events Plaza every Wednesday night from 7-9pm. Various local and regional artists perform throughout the year - see the lineup. Bring your lawn chairs and blankets. Free and open to the public. August 16: Cadillac Willy, August 23:

Catalyst, August 30: Dion Jones & The Neon Tears. The Village of Baytowne Wharf, Sandestin Golf & Beach Resort, 9300 Emerald Coast Parkway, Miramar Beach.



August 17

Huck & Lilly @ Seaside Amphitheater

Huck & Lilly will perform LIVE in the Seaside Amphitheater Tuesdays and Thursdays at 6:00PM. Bring a chair or blanket, snacks and drinks, and enjoy the show. Free and open to all ages. Singer/songwriters Ken Johnson and Andi Zack-Johnson as Huck and Lilly specialize in music for kids AND the grown ups who love them! Seaside Amphitheater, 25 Central Square, Seaside.

August 18-20

Black Creek Music Festival: Kickoff Party

Southern Sound Music Alliance presents Black Creek Music Festival on Friday, August 18th - Sunday, August 20th at The Outpost on Black Creek in Freeport, FL. Rock out with local & regional musicians at this three-day event while enjoying food trucks, craft vendors and more! Proceeds from the festival will benefit Habitat for Humanity and Alaqua Animal Rescue. Purchase Tickets: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/black-creek-music-festival-tickets> Boat slips are also available, with a select few being offered as a weekend rental with a VIP ticket. Let's Meet at the Creek! Event is rain or shine. Friday, August 18th, 6 - 10PM | Kickoff Party

This event is open to the public. Artists Lineup: Tanglewood & Deltaphonic Saturday, August 19th, NOON - 10PM | Festival Day.

Ticketed event with general admission and VIP tickets available.

Artist Lineup: Mike Whitty Trio, Josh Zook Duo, Dion Jones & The Neon Tears, Big Phun, 12Eleven, Cadillac Willy, Boukou Groove, and Tim Jackson's Storyteller's Tour Sunday, August 20th, 11AM - 4PM | Festival Day

Family Day - Adult tickets are only \$10 and all kids are free!

Artist Lineup: Jeff Silvey Gospel Hour, Chris Alvarado, and the Southdown Souls

The Outpost on Black Creek, 4576 County Highway 3280, Freeport.

August 19

Operation Outdoor Freedom: Freedom Run

Spend your morning in the Point Washington State Forest! The 5th annual Freedom Run, benefitting Operation Outdoor Freedom, will take place Saturday, August 19th. The event begins at the Eastern Lake Trail located in Santa Rosa Beach off of 395 South. Learn more & register at: outdoorfreedomrun.redpodium.com/operation-

Continued on next page



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Continued from previous page

outdoor-freedom-runwalk. 5th Annual Freedom Run, Saturday, August 19th (Rain or Shine), 11 Mile Start Time || 7:30AM, 6 Mile Start Time || 7:45AM, 3.5 Mile Start Time || 8AM. All proceeds benefit Operation Outdoor Freedom to help fund efforts with providing hunts, fishing trips, and special family trips to our area for Florida Wounded Veterans who have a rating of service-connected disability rating of 30% or greater from the U.S. Dept. of Veteran Affairs or a Purple Heart recipient. Eastern Lake Trail, Point Washington State Forest, 395 South, Santa Rosa Beach.

August 20

Celebrating Women in Fly Fishing

Join FlyTide30A as they host the Celebrating Women in Fly Fishing Seminar and pay tribute to incredible angler, Meredith McCord. The seminar will take place at the Seaside Assembly Hall on Sunday, August 20th at 6PM. This event is free and open to the public. Attendees

are encouraged to use the free Grayton Shuttle Bus. Seaside Assembly Hall, 168 Smolian Circle, Seaside.

August 21

Topsail Hill Preserve State Park Guided Plant Stroll

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. The stroll begins at Tram Stop #2. This program is free with regular park admission.



Park programs are made possible by Friends of Topsail Hill Preserve State Park. For more information about the Friends of Topsail Hill Preserve State Park, please visit: www.topsail-parkfriends.org or email friendsofthsp@gmail.com. Topsail Hill Preserve State Park, located



on the west side of Scenic 30A in South Walton, offers a wide variety of natural resources including 3.2 miles of secluded, white sand beaches with majestic dunes over 25 feet tall. Three rare coastal dune lakes provide excellent freshwater fishing. Topsail Hill Preserve State Park, 7525 W County Hwy 30A, Santa Rosa Beach.

August 26

CCA Kids Fishing Tournament in Grayton Beach

The annual CCA South Walton Kids Fishing Tournament takes place on Saturday, August 26th at Grayton Beach, Florida. Sponsored by the Coastal Conservation Association Florida, the fun begins at 12:00 p.m. Online registration is open, visit: www.ccaflorida.org/event/south-walton-kids-fishing-tournament-2023/. Online pre-registration is RE-

QUIRED this year. There will be no walk-ups allowed. Registration is limited to the first 200 kids, ages 2-14. Kids receive a rod&reel combo, tshirt, lunch, bait, and instruction! CCA Florida is a statewide, non-profit marine organization working in an advocacy role to protect the state's marine resources and interests of saltwater anglers. Follow Coastal Conservation of Florida on Facebook for updates on events. Location: Grayton Dunes Beach Access, Defuniak Street South, Grayton Beach.

August 26

Dog Day Pawty at Sandestin Baytowne Marina

Celebrate International Dog

Day with us at the beach at Baytowne Marina on August 26th from 6:30 - 8:30PM! Enjoy this FREE event with live music, a doggy kissing booth, a special dog menu at Marina Bar and Grill, photo booth, and more! Bring along your furry friend for an unforgettable event! Located in the Sandestin Golf & Beach Resort, Marina Bar & Grill overlooks the Baytowne Marina and Choctawhatchee Bay. This is the spot to relax with family and friends to enjoy a hearty breakfast or maybe trade fish stories with friends over an ice cold beer after the tackle has been put away. Baytowne Marina, 9300 Emerald Coast Parkway, Miramar Beach.



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Theatre: Real and in Real Time; No AI Here

By ANNA FISHER, ASSOCIATE ARTISTIC DIRECTOR, EMERALD COAST THEATRE COMPANY

The instinct to roll my eyes to the very back of my head was absolutely overwhelming when I read the headlines about the recent SAG-AFTRA actor's strike. The writer's strike I can understand—I mean how often do writers get the same recognition and pay as celebrities for giving us stories like Yellowstone and Succession. But actors? The ones making millions upon millions every year? As my teenage-

ers would say, "Bruh." But then I did a little research and now I'm almost embarrassed at my initial reaction.

What we're really talking about are those thousands of hard-working actors who barely make a livable wage each year and just have to keep their fingers crossed for the next gig. The strike is about a lot of things—lack of residual pay due to streaming platforms, health insurance, cost of living increase, and here's the



kicker—Artificial Intelligence. What guarantee does any actor have that their likeness won't be repackaged artificially and served up as an authentically disguised work of art? Fran Drescher, president of SAG-AFTRA (yes, the Fran Drescher with the laugh)

having their identity and talent exploited without consent and pay."1

The more I researched (and when I say researched, I mean spiraled further and further into an existential crisis) the more I wrestled with questions like, How can we as humans compete with the many tentacled machine we have wrought? Will anyone ever have an original thought again? Are human beings as we know them obsolete?

And then, I had a singular, glorious ray of realization: Theatre.

You know I had to bring it back to theatre, right? But really, theatre is the answer. For that matter any gathering of real human beings doing real things in real time is the answer. Actors, writers, storytellers, dancers, painters, chefs, garden club ladies, grocery shoppers and babies making weird noises in restaurants- we need you! We need your real authentic voices that can only come from you. And if you're looking for light and life and texture and people and real authentic human experiences, come to Emerald Coast Theatre Company. There's something transformational about experiencing live theatre with other audience members, breathing the same air as the actors, and taking in a show that will always be a unique, one-time event.

And on that note, we have

an incredible Season 11 this fall opening with Elvis Presley, Johnny Cash, Jerry Lee Lewis and Carl Perkins in Million Dollar Quartet and closing with the beloved classic Mary Poppins in the spring. You can catch a wide array of shows in between like The Play that Goes Wrong, The Marvelous Wonderettes: Caps and Gowns, Crimes of the Heart and the holiday favorite A Christmas Carol in between. For the younger audience members, we have Junie B Jones in October and Yes Virginia, There is a Santa Claus performed by our talented Junior Company members in December, as well as an original Theatre for the Very Young show Mother Goose on the Loose by Heath Carroll, ECTC Education and Outreach Director, premiering in April 2024. Our fall programming for children and teens starts at the beginning of August with Finding Nemo, Mean Girls and so many other musical theatre workshops, tap, jazz, and ballet classes, and acting opportunities for children of all ages.

All of these things are happening in real time at Emerald Coast Theatre Company. You won't find anything artificial here. It takes a lot more passion, skill, talent, people, time, resources and hard work to create an event that can only truly be experienced live. And it also takes all of you, because you are the heart of ECTC.

1 Collier, Kevin. "Actors vs. AI: Strike Brings Focus to Emerging Use of Advanced Tech." NBC News, 14 July 2023, <https://www.nbcnews.com/tech/tech-news/hollywood-actor-sag-aftra-ai-artificial-intelligence-strike-rca94191>. Accessed 18 July 2023.

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CRIMES OF THE HEART (February 18 - 24, 2024)
MARY POPPINS (May 3 - 12, 2024)
THEATRE FOR YOUNG AUDIENCES
JUNIE B JONES (October 13 - 21, 2023)
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Underwater Museum of Art Expands

It may have been a cloudy and rainy day, but the UMA deployment team was all smiles last week as six new sculptures were added to the nation's first permanent Underwater Museum of Art (UMA) in the Gulf of Mexico off the coast of Grayton Beach State Park in South Walton, Fla.

Named by TIME Magazine as one of 100 "World's Greatest Places," the UMA is the first presentation of the Cultural Arts Alliance of Walton County (CAA)'s Art In Public Spaces Program and is produced in collaboration with the South Walton Artificial Reef Association (SWARA). The purpose of the UMA is to create art that becomes marine habitat, expanding fishery populations and providing enhanced creative, cultural, economic and educational opportunities for the benefit, education and enjoyment of residents, students and visitors in South Walton.

The 2023 installation includes the following pieces of sculpture: Quantum Reef by Chris Chubb (Tallahassee, FL), Space Nest by Frank Henderson

(Evanston, IL), Welcome Home by Zachery Long (Oklahoma City, OK), Cetacean Remains by Pat Mclain (Stone Mountain, GA), One Tree by Ann Moeller Steverson (Huntsville, AL) Opus by Allison Wickey (Santa Rosa Beach, FL).

On July 13th, more than 75

onlookers, including several of the artists and project partners, were on site to view the historic deployment. New this year, the team was able to livestream all of the action to the UMA website and is still available for viewing at umafl.org.



Photos by Spring Run Media

This installation joins the 34 sculptures previously deployed on a one-acre permit patch of seabed off Grayton Beach State Park, expanding the nation's first permanent underwater museum to a total of 40 sculptures. The UMA patch will continue to be filled with several new sculptures annually.

"The UMA installation is always awe inspiring and this year was no exception. The collabo-

ration amongst all of the groups and individuals who make the deployment happen annually is incredible," said CAA Executive Director Jennifer Steele. "As the UMA continues to expand, the CAA is grateful for the excitement and dedication of the artists, fabricators, deployment team and partners. We are so proud to work alongside project co-founders Allison Wickey and SWARA to build this unique environment for creativity and education."

"This year's UMA deployment was one for the books," said SWARA President and Dive30A owner Walt Hartley. "These six new sculptures will truly enrich the personality and character of the Museum. It was also our very first time livestreaming the full deployment online so folks all around the world were able to watch! 'Cetacean Remains' is definitely going to become a diver's favorite with its fantastic swim-through. Fish began to congregate around all the sculptures almost immediately. 'If you build it, they will come!' With 40 total sculptures now, the Underwater Museum of Art is really coming into its own, and it's been nothing short of inspirational to watch it grow over the years. None of this would be possible without the continued support



from our community, the WalterMarine/Reefmaker Crew, and our collaborative partnership with the Cultural Arts Alliance of Walton County. Big thanks to all involved! We can't wait to do it again next year!"

Admission to the UMA is free, however, the site is only accessible in person as a dive location. Divers who wish to visit the site can take a dive boat .93 miles off the coast of Grayton Beach State Park. The coordinates for the new Super Reef UMA entrance are N 30°18.754 / W 86°09.521. Out of respect for the art, boaters are asked to anchor on or near the Super Reef Anchor Point to protect the sculptures from unintended contact or damage.

Visit UMAFL.org for more information about dive tours. Artists interested in submitting artwork for consideration to the 2024 UMA installation can visit UMAFL.org to sign up for notification of an Artist Call announcement later this Fall.

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Journey Bravely; Tackling Transition



BY STEPHENIE CRAIG, LCSW

When did you last experience tense shoulders, sighing breaths, irritability, exhaustion, trying to keep it positive, being overscheduled and overwhelmed? It's back to school transition time and August tends to sneak up each year with an unending list of buying things and attending events for the new school year. Back to school is only one of many transitional times. Sometimes, you experience major transitions such as moving homes, starting college, adding children to the family, changing jobs, divorce, or loss. Other times, you experience regular life transitions like starting middle school, changing schedules, school breaks, or daylight savings time. Regardless of the brand, transition tends to disrupt physical and emotional routines leaving you confused, less productive, and stressed.

Transition is an inevitable certainty of life, but, what can you do to manage stress effectively in the process?

8 Ways to Manage Transitional Stress

1. Notice and acknowledge the presence of stress.

Listen to your body. Pay attention to bodily sensations, thoughts, and behavior you connect with stress such as tension, headaches, stomachaches, energy level, obsessive worry, irritability, heart rate, sweating, sighing, grumping, sleep problems, or pessimism.

2. Look for life transitions to connect with stress.

Notice your recent life circumstances that could be contributing to stress. Are you walking through a major or regular life change? Is someone you love going through a life change? Do the changes feel out of your control? Name the transition and remind yourself stress in transition is normal. You may not have control over the circumstances but you do have control over how you care for yourself.

3. Acknowledge mixed feelings that accompany life transitions.

Some transitions feel primarily sad. Most transitions create both excitement for the new future reality

and grief to leave the previous way behind. Give yourself space to hold conflicting emotions and remind yourself it's normal and okay to feel confused.

4. Engage in intentional, more frequent self care.

Talk to a trusted person about your feelings, go for a walk, take a nap, create art, go for a run. Engage in activities that feel caring and calming as regularly as possible during transitional times.

5. Set boundaries where possible.

Reduce unnecessary commitments. Say no to new commitments. Lower any excessively high or perfectionistic expectations you have for yourself. Prioritize rest. Less is more during times of stress.

6. Plan ahead for repetitive transitions.

Make lists and use calendars for transitions like school starting to remind yourself not to procrastinate needed tasks.

7. Mindfully do one thing at a time.

As you walk through the necessary tasks during life stress, try not to overthink or get ahead of yourself. Plan far enough to be responsible then focus on what you are doing right now, today. Be present in the moment knowing each moment builds into a history of you

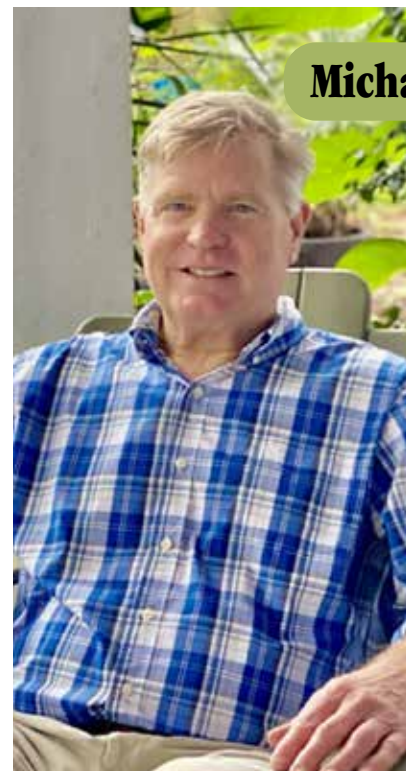
moving through and out of your current transitional stress.

8. Accept and don't judge. Transition is inevitable.

Stress happens. Notice the transition and the stress without judging yourself or the circumstance. Engage in healthy self-control and do what you can to practice health. Remember where you have power to act rather than viewing yourself as a victim which creates more stress. Your body and brain will adjust

to the new normal over time.

Transitions are as common as steady, calm moments in life. Be intentional and kind to yourself in your process. As you navigate life transitions, connect with us at journeybravely.com for counseling and coaching support along your journey.



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Wellness

South Walton Junior Lifeguard Program building community-wide surf rescue culture

By MACKENZIE MCCLINTOCK, SWFD PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICER

In South Walton, the summertime wave of enthusiasm for surf rescue is undeniably contagious.

This wave first started building 20 years ago, when the Emerald Coast experienced one of its darkest days, known locally as Black Sunday. Numerous people fatally drowned due to rough surf and rip currents along a coastline where professional lifeguard programs were not yet established.

The community desperately needed a change, and public safety agencies along the coast began cultivating resources and implementing beach safety programs. Fast-forward to 2008, when a few dozen of South Walton's youngest community members took a chance and participated in the first-ever South Walton Fire District (SWFD) Junior Lifeguard Program.

Their community was lacking general knowledge and respect for safety in the open water, but their willingness to learn created a ripple at the right time for a successful and strong initiative to grow.

Fifteen years later, more than 150 children, ages 9-16 years old,

spend weeks of their summer learning what it takes to protect a beach community that boasts more than 6 million annual visitors.

"As soon as we think we have reached the limit of potential interest in our program, it explodes with popularity once again," said SWFD Beach Safety Director David Vaughan. "We have seen record registration numbers now for several years in a row without doing much advertising. The community has embraced us. The demand for this program is leaps and bounds beyond what most of us ever expected."

The SWFD Junior Lifeguard Program not only experienced massive registration numbers in 2023, but it also evolved to offer a pathway to future employment for its oldest participants.

For the first time, 16-year-old junior lifeguards had the opportunity to participate and earn their Open Water Lifeguard Certification through SWFD Beach Safety and the United States Lifesaving Association (USLA).

SWFD's goal through this certification process is to make the transition from junior lifeguard to professional lifeguard as seamless as possible. Once a certified junior lifeguard turns 17-years-old,

they can move from the summer program into a paid lifeguarding job with SWFD Beach Safety.

"My experience as a Junior Lifeguard on the Emerald Coast is a major reason why I considered a job in surf rescue after college," said SWFD Beach Safety Lieutenant and Program Instructor Brandon Brown. "The Junior Lifeguard Program is our chance to shape the future of beach safety. Along with that, it gives kids a fun way to spend their summer while making friends and enjoying the beach."

The current program consists of two, three-week sessions throughout June and July. Brown and the cohort of program instructors- Lifeguards Cameron Clements, Joey Strubhar, Erin Hartsel, and Rory Leaf- create hours of training activities for the participants based on the day's surf conditions. The training aims to test not only a junior lifeguard's physical abilities, but also their mental stamina and character.

At the conclusion of the three-week program, the junior lifeguards develop an irreplaceable skill set that will serve them well for the rest of their life on the Gulf Coast. They can identify and explain rip currents, rescue



swimmers in distress, understand and follow the beach flag warning system, perform CPR and lifesaving first aid, and swim confidently in the open water.

"Ultimately, we want these kids to take what they have learned and tell their friends, tell their families, tell people who they have never met before if they are down at the beach and see people getting into trouble," explained Director Vaughan. "We are reaching these children at an impressionable and crucial time in their lives, they develop the confidence they need to be difference makers in our community and advocate for beach safety."

Despite the growth of local junior lifeguard programs, the understanding of the value of beach safety efforts is still growing along the Emerald Coast. Adversity comes nearly every summer

for area public safety agencies when millions of people who are unfamiliar with the innate hazards of open water flock to Emerald Coast beaches. It only takes a few weeks of this tourism bump for drowning fatalities to begin splashing across local and national news headlines.

Families visiting the area ultimately return home without a loved one in tow, despite relentless messaging from local lifeguards about the dangers of rip currents, swimming near a lifeguard, and the beach flag warning system.

It is the smiling face of an exuberant junior lifeguard, covered in sand and breathless while begging for another round of practice rescues, that serves as an inspiring reminder for even the most seasoned surf rescue professionals that the future of beach safety is in capable hands.



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Pros and Cons of Medicare Advantage Plans



BY CHRISTIAN REGALADO

Will you be turning 65 this year? For people becoming Medicare eligible for the first time, making choices regarding healthcare moving forward can feel overwhelming. To receive comprehensive coverage, for most people, there are two main buckets to choose from: Enroll in Medicare Parts A&B and add a Medigap and Prescription Drug Plan (along with their premiums) to make up for what Medicare does not cover, or enroll in A&B and then switch to a Medicare Advantage plan. As of last year, over 45% of Medicare beneficiaries chose a Medicare Advantage plan, and expectations are that number will rise to more than 50% by 2025. So what are some of the pros and cons of Advantage plans?

First for the pros: Advantage plans offer simplicity. Both medical and prescription drugs are covered under the same plan. Sticking with original Medicare requires the purchase of a Supplement/Medigap

plan plus an additional PDP plan in order to get comprehensive coverage. Beneficiaries continue to pay the Medicare Part B premium, \$164.90 for most in 2023, either way.

Medicare Advantage plans are typically low or \$0 premium plans, so they appear less expensive. Additionally, unlike original Medicare, Advantage plans max out-of-pocket expenses. In 2023, excluding prescriptions, HMO plans in our area max out between \$3500-4900 in network. You'll pay more if you have a PPO plan and use out-of-network providers. A Medigap and PDP plan added to traditional Medicare includes an additional monthly premium for each. With a Medigap (also called a Supplement) plan, after monthly premiums are paid there is generally very little additional cost, depending on the plan chosen.

Advantage plans often offer benefits that traditional Medicare cannot offer. Limited vision, dental, and/or hearing benefits are often included in Advantage plans as well as additional perks like gym memberships, transportation, or over-the-counter benefits that vary from plan to plan. Medigap plans do not offer these perks or services at all.

On the downside, most Advantage plans are HMO plans, and pre-authorizations may be required for many procedures and

some prescription drugs. So your doctor may recommend more care, but the plan can limit what it approves. This doesn't happen with traditional Medicare, supplemented or not.

Patients with higher needs or chronic conditions are often inclined to stick with traditional Medicare as they generally have better access to the best hospitals and cancer centers. Advantage plan members are half as likely to use the highest-rated cancer cen-

ters for complex surgeries than similar patients in their zip code. Over 90% of physicians nationwide accept traditional Medicare, though fewer and fewer are accepting new Medicare patients. This will likely continue to decline as reimbursement rates paid by Medicare to physicians are set to reduce even further this year while Advantage plans are being given more funding by the federal government.

Making the right decisions when you're ready to enroll in Medicare

will depend on your personal circumstances. What is important is to understand all of your options. Give us a call if we can help!

One way to make sure that you receive a plan that fits your needs best is to work with a local and independent, certified Medicare broker like us. Give us a call if we can help! Our services are free and we are happy to answer any question you may have. Christian Regalado, christian@evergreenhealthins.com, 850.687.7606.



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 Musing


BY PASTOR DAVID HOLLAND

“Jesus said to his disciples: ‘Things that cause people to sin are bound to come, but woe to that person through whom they come. It would be better for him to be thrown into the sea with a millstone tied around his neck than for him to cause one of these little ones to sin. So watch yourselves.’”

“If your brother sins, rebuke him, and if he repents, forgive him.

If he sins against you seven times in a day, and seven times comes back to you and says, ‘I repent,’ forgive him.”

“The apostles said to the Lord, ‘Increase our faith!’”

“He replied, ‘If you have faith as small as a mustard seed, you can say to this mulberry tree, be uprooted and planted in the sea, and it will obey you.’” Luke 17: 1-7

Mouse Traps and Mustard Seeds

“Snap!” The mousetrap snatched the writhing creature. I hate mice. My favorite part is baiting the trap. Planning the murder is so exciting. I plotted to trap him, baited the snare, and now I have the filthy animal writhing in the

clutches of my trap.

Christ warns His disciples in Luke 17:1-10 concerning the nasty trap of temptation.

The Greek word Christ uses for “sin” in this passage is scandalon, referring to the part of the trap where you attach the bait. It means “offense,” or “snare” and describes the behaviors that provoke others to sin.

Christ’s indictment is not on the sinner as much as the person who causes someone to stumble. He says it would be better for that person to have a millstone hung around their neck and thrown into the sea than to cause someone to falter. Judgment awaits those people.

Jesus warns us because our behavior can lead people to the Lord or drive them away. I think there are few Christians who wake up in the morning asking themselves, “How can I tempt others to sin today?” But people scrutinize our behavior every day, watching how we behave. Will they see real Christianity in action?

What about when you are the offended person? What do you do when you are tempted or hurt? The idea of forgiving the people who offended them overwhelmed the disciples. Forgive them seven times a day? Was Christ kidding?

No, Jesus wasn’t kidding. Jesus shows them the liberating power of forgiveness released through faith. Even faith as tiny as a mustard seed.

Jesus is saying He came to forgive all who come to Him. If you follow Jesus, you will need to learn to forgive. If you have enough faith to believe in the Lord, you have enough faith to forgive others. Forgiveness sets people free and displays real Christianity for all to see.

Rebecca Pippert tells the story in her book “Out of the Salt Shaker and Into the World,” concerning one man’s demonstration of thoughtful love. She knew a young man named Bill who had become a Christian on her college campus in Oregon. He was a free spirit with long, messy hair, who never wore shoes, ever. Snow, sleet,

or rain – he walked barefoot.

Bill soon attended the church across the street from the campus. He walked into the rather formal church wearing denim jeans, a T-shirt, and his signature look – no shoes. As he walked down the center aisle looking for a seat in the crowded church, none was available. So, he squatted down on the floor near the front pew as the service was about to begin.

Unnerved, the church people didn’t know what to do. Tension hung in the air as an elderly member began walking down the aisle toward the boy. What would he do? Scold him? Offer him his seat? Ask the young man to leave? All eyes focused on the silent drama unfolding before them.

The old man lumbered down the aisle, and when he reached Bill, he awkwardly plopped down on the carpet next to him. They worshiped together on the floor as people witnessed real love fleshed out before them. The elderly gentleman did what Christ would do in that situation, and it enveloped everyone in the loving arms of God.

We want our lives to draw people to Christ, to catch them in the net of God’s grace rather than the death-like snap of evil’s trap. We can choose to live in the grip of grace rather than temptation.

Faced with such forgiveness and love, the disciples cried out, “Increase our faith!”

Christ challenged them to faith as small as a mustard seed. These words throw me back over sixty years to a conversation I had with my mother. As a little boy, I remember my mother wearing a heart-shaped, glass necklace.

“Momma, why does your necklace have that speck of dirt in it?”

“Oh honey, that’s not dirt. It’s a precious mustard seed.”

“Why did they put it in there, Momma?”

“It reminds me to always have faith in God, no matter what happens. God will always bring me through.”

In the end, God is looking for people with faith. The Master desires followers who have the faith to forgive people, over and over – just as He does.

Dave Holland pastored churches for 38 years before retiring in Destin. He recently released his new devotional-Bible study based on the Gospel of Luke titled “Prodigal Jesus, Journey Back to the Father.” You can get a copy of this book from his website, DaveHolland.org, or at Amazon.com. Pastor Dave is available to preach and teach in churches and conferences. Contact him at DavidHolland54@gmail.com.

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The Road to Redemption: Jason and Casey Draughn – A Journey of Fostering

BY VICTORIA OSTROSKY

“Follow Me.” Those were life-changing words to the Twelve Disciples. Each one heard the invitation, and each one answered. But what did those words really mean to those men? They walked away from their professions and homes, friends and ambitions. They traded their dreams for Jesus. And they eventually gave the ultimate – their lives.

Jesus’ invitation is the same today as it was then. When we profess to be Jesus followers that means we’ve been called to give up who we are and what we want out of life, for whatever God wants. We’re called, like the Twelve, to die. Die to ourselves and live for Him. “It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me.” (Galatians 2:20)

In our society we don’t particularly like the idea of giving up anything. We’re independent and strong and bow to no one. That’s what Americans are. Except – didn’t Jesus Himself say, “If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself, take up his

cross daily, and follow me.” (Luke 9:23) Yes, He most certainly did.

“Once you taste the fruit of obedience, you can’t go back. It’s like nothing else.” Jason and Casey Draughn made a promise to God some years ago. They told God that if He allowed them to buy a larger house, they would use it for His glory. Five bedrooms gave them plenty of space for plenty of children.

They followed through on their promise and became licensed foster parents. At one point, they were taking in so many kids Jason had to have bunk beds made. As their house filled with not just the laughter of children, but the issues and sorrows and brokenness they brought with them, Jason and Casey discovered their great need for God’s guidance and provision. “We found ourselves on our knees nightly.”

Jason and Casey’s two boys were quite young at the time, but were always involved in the decision making. As Jason says, “God honors our ‘yes’ to Him.



Jason and Casey Draughn – A Journey of Fostering.

God would show us time and time again how He protected our boys. ‘I’ve got them, Casey. I’m protecting them.’”

One of the many children they fostered was a 15 year old

girl who had endured horrendous abuse. She was only with them for a few months, then ended up moving from one group home to another. When she was 18 and aged-out of the system, Jason and Casey reached out to her. “It was the beginning of a beautiful redemption story.” She now calls them mom and dad. Casey was there for the birth of this young woman’s son, who chose life for him in very difficult circumstances. Jason and Casey refer to themselves as this little one’s grandparents.

And the young mother is now an advocate for children in care. She’s using her voice for others.

Casey remembers how, over the years, they would reach out to friends at church for help and they would show up laden with food and clothes. “We couldn’t have done it without the help of our friends.”

The need for more foster families is great – in the nine years Jason and Casey have been fostering, the number of foster homes has not increased in

Walton County. “These children need the love of Jesus. God said – don’t guard your heart with them. Love them as I love you. Cover them with prayer.”

I can imagine the smile on God’s face as He watched Jason and Casey bringing these precious broken and hurting children to church to hear about Jesus, throwing birthday parties to celebrate their lives, and spending time eating meals together. God desires a relationship – with Himself and us with each other.

We already know that children have a special place in Jesus’ heart. “I love how God does a hundred things in the one thing. Pray about being a foster parent, but don’t let that be an excuse to hold you back.”

You can hear Jason and Casey’s entire story and listen to many other incredible interviews on the weekly Road to Redemption radio show and podcast at www.rtrdestiny.com

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Musing



BY SEAN DIETRICH

Willie Nelson is on my radio. He is singing one of my favorite songs.

"In the twilight glow I see her,
"Blue eyes crying in the rain,
"When we kissed goodbye and parted,

"I knew we'd never meet again..."

I turn it up because I am a sucker for this tune. Though, I'm not sure why. When I was a boy, the lyrics never made sense to me.

After all, nobody with blue eyes ever cried in the rain for me. And I certainly didn't have blue eyes. My eyes are gray. My mother used to say my eyes were the color of our pump shed.

Even so, there's something about this tune that moves me. I can close my gray eyes and go

back in time.

And I see my father's work bench in the garage. A radio sits beside a chest of mini-drawers that is filled with bolts, nuts, screws, washers, and rubber grommets.

Crystal Gayle is singing "Don't it Make my Brown Eyes Blue?"

Then Willie begins playing over the speaker. My father turns it up.

"Love is but a dying ember,

"Only memories remain,

"Through the ages, I'll remember,

"Blue eyes crying in the rain..."

And I am holding a GI Joe doll, watching a tall, skinny man work on something beneath a shop lamp, holding a screwdriver.

He does all his own repairs, this man. Because he believes it is wasteful to hire people to do work you could do yourself. Just like it's disgraceful, and even unforgivable, to throw away refrigerator leftovers.

The people I come from are proud and self-sufficient, and they are not above eating ten-week old meatloaf that has turned Sea Foam Green. They

Sean of the South

cut their own hair. And their own lawns.

When I started traveling a lot for work, I hired a yardman to cut my grass. It only made sense. But it felt wrong. I was so guilty about it that I couldn't sleep. If my father were alive, it would kill him to know I pay a guy to mow my lawn.

I don't know why I just told you that.

Things have changed a lot since the days when I played with GI Joe. Today's radios have replaced Willie's style of music with country singers who have backup dancers.

Over the years, country music kept sinking lower, until it sounded about as interesting as your Uncle Lou using the bathroom in his RV.

Almost every song on modern country stations seems to be about girls in tank tops, or



beer, or knocking boots. Much of this music is performed by young men wearing jeans that have been pre-ripped, or young women dressed like centerfolds.

They can have it.

Because I still remember Loretta, and George, and Johnny, and Merle. And I will always remember Willie.

I remember sitting in Chastain Park, in Atlanta. I watched Willie Nelson play to a tame crowd. It was drizzling rain. And Willie invited Jimmy Carter and his wife Rosalynn onto the stage.

People went crazy. It sounded like the crowd was going to tear

the place apart. Then a hush fell over the audience.

The rain fell harder.

In this moment, Willie could have played any song and we would have loved him for it. He played "Amazing Grace."

Though, to tell you the truth, I couldn't hear Willie's voice because Jimmy and Rosalynn were singing too loud.

It was a great moment, seeing Jimmy and Rosalynn singing a hymn in inclement weather. It was like watching your grandparents warm the front pew.

Jimmy and Rosalynn weren't twirling, waving hands, or hopping up and down like the young people do at the megachurch my cousin attends. They were just singing.

I don't have anything against megachurches, but my cousin's church has a fog machine.

Before Willie, Jimmy, and Rosalynn got to the third verse of the hymn, they were joined by Kris Kristofferson, and Merle Haggard's boys, and seven thousand other people singing.

No fog machines.

And it reminded me of growing up the way I did, with simple people who were not fancy dressers. People who used weekends to do work around the house.

I come from a father who, just for fun, would separate bolts and screws and put them into little Dixie cups. A father who loved Jimmy Carter. And Willie Nelson.

After Willie sang a few more hymns, Jimmy and the others left the stage. It was still drizzling. And we all knew Willie was going to play it. All seven thousand of us. We just knew.

He started playing the familiar song.

I closed my eyes. All of a sudden, I was in my father's garage. Holding a GI Joe doll. Watching a skinny man. He was alive again, and he was beautiful. Even if only in my memory. He was happy. And so was I.

"Someday when we meet up yonder,

"We'll stroll hand-in-hand again,

"In a land where there's no parting,

"Blue eyes crying in the rain."

Don't it make my gray eyes blue.

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Escaping the Scrum



BY KIRK MCCARLEY

If you have been around young children much, you'll know that one of their first organized athletic activities is soccer. At the ages of four or five, their attention is centralized. That is to say that the tendency of the young girls and boys is to gravitate towards the crowd, whatever place on the field has attracted the largest concentration of bodies. Soccer, at this stage, more resembles a rugby scrum and the rugged physical contact.

Amidst the conglomeration of chaos there always seems to be a kid or two who coyly slips away from the magnetic force of the crowd almost influenced by a sense that causes them to linger or wait. Occasionally, when the ball squirts out from the scrum the intrepid ones find themselves with an unimpeded path to their opponent's goal. They score! Even at such a tender age a certain intuition, an indefinable something, begins to have an impact.

It was said of hockey legend Wayne Gretzky that what made him arguably the greatest is that he had the unique ability "to skate to where he thought the puck would be."

Arguably there will never be another Gretzky. In fact most of us likely congregated around the scrum in our youth; perhaps still do, yet have an earnest desire to make an impact in our world,

places of work, neighborhoods, or even just our families How do we?

- **Do what you say you are going to do.** I am convinced that the odds of business and personal success multiply dramatically by just this one credo. It remains perplexing, however, how often businesses don't follow up with customers, potential clients don't show up for appointments, and an enterprise is closed even though their website hours would indicate they are open. Recently a potential client scheduled a meeting seeking my coaching assistance to ameliorate frustration at being denied "a seat at the table." She did not show up for the appointment. In order to get a seat at the table you must first be at the table.
- **Understand the needs of others.** Whether it is a customer, a spouse, a child, a friend, or a new acquaintance, learn their story. Ask open-ended questions that begot more than a yes/no/fine answer. Repeat back what you have heard them say.
- **The solution may be beyond your expertise.** There is a fascination with those who possess expert

knowledge. Any of us, though, can confess we don't have the answer. Admiration is greater for those who admit that, but then learn the solution.

- **Admit your mistakes; accept the admittance.** When you're wrong, say it. If someone has the humility to admit it, forgive them. There are few things worse than when we are transparent with our errors, only to have someone else gloat over it and remind us of it.
- **Exceed expectations.** Guys, if we're cooking dinner for our spouses, include some flowers with the table setting. Gals, you treat for the dinner date and movie sometime. Neighbors, prepare an extra batch for dinner tonight to deliver to someone who may be ill or "shut in" down the street. Younger people, what about a technology lesson for that same person?
- **Time.** Many of us are over-scheduled and each day's greatest challenge is to stay on task and complete our "To Do" lists. Yet, someone who just walked through the doors of your store needs to be listened to more than sold something. Your teenager may simply want you to watch a TV

show with them. A long-time friend would love to hear the sound of your voice and to share a few laughs; call them.

Fred Rogers, AKA Mr. Rogers said, "If you could only sense how important you are to the lives of those you meet; how important you can be to the people you may never even dream of. There is something of yourself that you leave at every meeting with another person."

Get away from the scrum. The

clear path is to the side. The goal is ahead, waiting for you to score.

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



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 Dining

30AEats.com Recipe of the Month: Red Rice

BY SUSAN BENTON

Cast-iron pots and pans have a long-standing tradition in American cookery, and Lodge Cast Iron has stood the test of time. I completed a project with this great company for The Lodge Cast Iron Cookbook-Cooking from Coast to Coast,



that includes two of my recipes.

Chef Steven Satterfield made this recipe for Red Rice using Carolina Gold, an heirloom va-

riety of long-grain rice that is hand-harvested by its producer Anson Mills. Sautéing the rice in fat for a good five minutes helps to infuse flavor into the individual grains. Lastly, no peeking while the rice is cooking — the covered cast-iron pot is key to the development of the crust



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on the bottom.”

You can order Carolina Gold Rice from Anson Mills, or give this dish a whirl using your favorite paella rice.

Red Rice featured in The Lodge Cast Iron Cookbook

Serves: 6

Ingredients:

- 4 tablespoons bacon drippings
- 5 tablespoons butter
- 1 small yellow onion, diced
- 1 cup diced celery (inner leaves included)
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- 2 tablespoons plus 1 teaspoon kosher salt (or more to taste)
- 2 cups canned organic whole plum tomatoes (undrained and chopped)
- 2 cups chicken stock
- 2 tablespoons pepper vinegar or cider vinegar (if you use cider vinegar, add a pinch of red pepper flakes)
- 1 1/4 teaspoons freshly ground black pepper
- 3/4 teaspoon dried thyme
- 2 bay leaves
- 2 dried chiles de arbol, chopped (or a pinch of red pepper flakes)
- 2 cups long-grain rice, such as Carolina Gold
- 3/4 pound andouille or chorizo sausage, grilled and sliced 1/2-inch thick
- 1 1/2 pounds shrimp (peeled, deveined, and cut into bite-sized pieces)

Instructions:

In a medium saucepan over medium heat, melt 2 tablespoons bacon drippings and 2 tablespoons butter. Add the

onion, celery, garlic, and 1 tablespoon salt. Cook, stirring often, until the onion and garlic are tender. Add the tomatoes, chicken stock, vinegar, 1 tablespoon salt, and 1 teaspoon black pepper, along with the thyme, bay leaves, and chiles. Simmer for 15 to 20 minutes, tasting for seasoning.

In a large cast-iron skillet over medium heat, add remaining 2 tablespoons bacon drippings and 2 tablespoons butter and cook until foamy. Add the rice and cook, stirring frequently, until it is opaque (about 5 minutes). This step is very important to the final flavor of the dish, so don't skimp on the time — but also don't let the rice burn.

Add 4 cups of the tomato mixture to the rice. Stir and cover. Set a timer and cook the rice for 25 minutes over very low heat. Do not lift the lid. After 25 minutes, turn off the heat and let the rice stand for 5 more minutes. Again, do not lift the lid. While the rice cooks, add the sausage to the remaining tomato mixture in the pan. Cover and keep warm over very low heat.

While the rice stands, in a medium sauté pan over medium-high heat, melt the remaining 1 tablespoon butter until foamy. Add the shrimp, stirring just until cooked through. Add the remaining 1 teaspoon salt and 1/4 teaspoon black pepper. Combine the shrimp to the sausage and tomato mixture. Stir well.

Pour the shrimp and sausage mixture over the rice. Remove and discard bay leaves. Without breaking the grains, gently fluff the rice. Serve immediately.

Sinfonia Gulf Coast Launches 2023-2024 Season

BY ZANDRA WOLFGAM

Sinfonia Gulf Coast continues its tradition of “redefining” the symphony experience as it enters its 18th season. With a mission to entertain, educate and inspire the Northwest Florida Gulf Coast, the region’s only fully professional symphony orchestra, led by Music & Artistic Director Demetrius Fuller, presents a stellar lineup of concerts for 2023-2024.

From A-list guest artists including Broadway, film and TV star Laura Benanti and leading man Brian Stokes Mitchell, to the soulful sounds of Trombone Shorty & Orleans Avenue and classical saxophonist Steven Banks, plus Jurassic Park’s adventurous film score concert 65 million years in the making, this season surely has something for everyone.”

Season 18 kicks off with the annual Sinfonia Cabaret at



Seagar’s, featuring Tony Award-winning Benanti on Wednesday, Sept. 27, at 5:30 p.m.. Known for her brilliant performances in iconic musicals like “The Sound of Music” (Maria), “Into the Woods” (Cinderella) and “Gypsy” (Louise), as well as TV and film (“The Sound



of Music Live!,” “Life & Beth,” “Worth,” “The Gilded Age” and more) her brilliant vocals and diverse repertoire will captivate you as she performs your favorites from the American Songbook to Broadway’s best in a one-night-only concert. Tickets for “An Evening with Laura Benanti” are \$295 per person and include valet parking, a sparkling wine reception, a four-course meal prepared by Seagar’s executive chef Fleetwood Covington, wine and all gratuities.

The excitement continues Saturday, Nov. 4, at 6 p.m. with Sinfonia Gulf Coast’s Gala Event staged in the Juniper Ballroom at Hotel Effie in Sandestin: “Trombone Shorty & Orleans Avenue,” live in concert. With a fusion of

funk, soul, R&B, and psychedelic rock, Grammy-nominated it will deliver an explosive performance that will make you move. Tickets to this one-night-only evening are from \$250 per person and include valet, reception, silent auction, dinner, performance, taxes and gratuities. Preferred seating and tables of 10 are available.

Celebrate the Main Stage concert season with “Holiday Pops” Friday, Dec. 8, at the Destin-Fort Walton Beach Convention Center in Fort Walton Beach. Dubbed “the last leading man” by The New York Times, Brian Stokes Mitchell is a two-time Tony Award-winner with a versatile career spanning Broadway, television, film and concerts. Receiving critical acclaim and awards for his performances in “Kiss Me, Kate,” “Man of La Mancha” and “Ragtime,” Stokes has collaborated with renowned conductors John Williams and Gustavo Dudamel for performances at Carnegie Hall and the White House. You may remember him as Trevor in “The Fresh Prince of Bel-Air.”

Sinfonia also introduces Toast ‘n’ Jam, a new concert series, held at the Henderson Beach Resort in Destin. Sunday, Dec. 3 will feature Time for Three (TF3) and Sunday, Feb. 11 will showcase the Brubeck Brothers Quartet. This

fun new series includes valet, elegant brunch fare with a Bloody Mary & Mimosa bar.

Main Season concert tickets are on sale NOW! Prices vary per event, ranging from \$15 to \$75 per person. Special savings are offered to active-duty military and students with proper ID. Purchase and download tickets online or call the box office at (850) 460-8800.

Proceeds from all events benefit Sinfonia Gulf Coast and its music education programs, which include musicians/guest artists in schools, free orchestra concerts, bus transportation for students, the Sinfonia Youth Orchestra program, Arts in Medicine with Sacred Heart Hospital on the Emerald Coast, Link Up concerts with third through fifth grades in participation with Carnegie Hall’s Weill Institute of Music, the annual Paint the Music Project and more.

For more information or to purchase tickets, go to SinfoniaGulfCoast.org and call (850) 460-8800. To volunteer, email Sinfonia at info@sinfoniagulfcoast.org or call (850) 460-8800. Follow Sinfonia Gulf Coast on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. Join us and be a part of the conversation using #SinfoniaGulfCoast.

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 Music

Live Music Highlights August 2023

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The Red Bar Jazz Band

SoWal visitors and locals love the Red Bar, a jumpin' little joint off of Scenic 30A in the cozy laid back beach town of Grayton Beach. The Red Bar Jazz Band plays almost nightly. The party gets cranked up a notch after the dinner crowd thins creating a more funky atmosphere. Follow The Red Bar on Facebook to see what Oli's talking about today. The Red Bar, 70 Hotz Ave. Grayton Beach.

August 13, 20, 27

FOOW Sunday Brunch & Live Music

Sunday Brunch at FOOW - Fish Out of Water in WaterColor, FL means live music and bottomless mimosas. The Gulf front restaurant invites you to dine on brunch favorites from 8AM - 2PM paired with live music from 11AM - 2PM. Sunday Brunch | 8AM - 2PM

August LIVE MUSIC | 11AM - 1PM, August 13: Weston Hines, August 20: Kyle Lamon-

ica, August 27: Stevie Monce. Foow30a.com, FOOW Restaurant, 34 Goldenrod Circle, Santa rosa Beach.

August 12, 20 & 27

Sand Ole' Opry w/ Mike Whitty & Friends @ The Ba

Sunday Pickin' @ The Bay features The Sand Ole' Opry with Mike Whitty & Friends on stage from 4 - 8PM. It's a weekly jam session outdoors overlooking the Choctawhatchee Bay. Follow The Bay on Facebook for the weekly musician lineup. Sunday Funday at The Bay, 2415 South Hwy 331, Santa Rosa Beach.

August 15, 22, 29

Wine & Song at NEAT

Join NEAT in Alys Beach for Wine & Song every Tuesday from 6 - 8PM. Enjoy 4 wines for \$30 per person or choose a bottle from the Uncorked wine list and enjoy it with your small plate and shareables from open to close. Wines will be posted every Tuesday on Facebook & Instagram. NEAT is a unique bottle

shop and tasting room in Alys Beach, Florida. Sip and snack indoors or al fresco on an alluring patio under a canopy of majestic palms bordering Scenic Highway 30A.. Learn More: alysbeach.com/neat/. 11 N Castle Harbour Dr. Alys Beach.

August 16, 23 & 30

Joey Shaling @ Scratch Biscuit Kitchen

Scratch Biscuit Kitchen, located in WaterColor Town Center, invites you to enjoy brunch featuring live music every Wednesday from 11AM - 2PM. It's hard to compete with biscuits, brunch and beats near the beach! August Lineup: 16 | Christon Birge 23 | Joey Shaling, 30 | Weston Hines. Follow Scratch Biscuit Kitchen on Facebook for updates on music, events, and more! Learn more at scratchbk.com.

August 18



local & regional musicians at this three-day event while enjoying food trucks, craft vendors and more! Proceeds from the festival will benefit Habitat for Humanity and Alaqua Animal Rescue. Purchase Tickets: www.eventbrite.com/e/black-creek-music-festival-tickets. The Outpost on Black Creek, 4576 County Highway 3280, Freeport.

August 20 & 27

Stinky's Fish Camp Brunch + Live Music

Head to Stinky's Fish Camp for Sunday Brunch featuring delicious food and drinks highlighted by live music. Brunch is offered from 10:00AM til 3:30PM every Sunday in addition to the regular lunch menu. Music begins at 11AM. Try a house-made bloody mary with fresh pickled okra, green beans and even a shrimp! 11AM - 2PM | Duck Phat. Visit:stinkysfishcamp.com, Stinky's Fish Camp, 5960 W County Hwy 30A, Dune Allen Beach.

Black Creek Music Festival: Kickoff Party

Southern Sound Music Alliance presents Black Creek Music Festival on Friday, August 18th - Sunday, August 20th at The Outpost on Black Creek in Freeport, FL. Rock out with



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Studio 237 Music Lessons: Promote Balance and Harmony

We're all hoping to provide our children with a well-rounded education which not only reaps the benefits of technical subjects, like math and science, but also nurtures essential life skills and personal growth. An undeniably powerful tool to help achieve this goal is to include music lessons in one's day-to-day learning. Let's explore how the study of music can help bring balance into a student's educational experience.

1. Embellishes Learning

By far, the best thing about music lessons is that they are unlike any other subject in school. Students get to take a break from their daily class routine, relax a little, and tap into their creativity.

A 2021 study, which looked at the effect of music activities on health and wellbeing, found that positive effects on mood and emotion regulation were reported by participants across all music activity categories (including playing instruments, group singing, dancing, songwriting, and more). In particular, a decrease in anxiety and increased optimism were commonly reported. It's clear that music is a great class for reducing stress.

Music classes provide a nurturing environment for students to be more social. When children participate in group activities like

choir, orchestra, or band, they learn the value of teamwork, cooperation, communication, plus have a chance to make new friends.

2. Synergizes the 3 R's

Despite being uniquely different from typical classroom subjects, music naturally incorporates the use of other academic skills to give the brain a full workout. Learning how to play a musical instrument (including voice) activates the brain's neural pathways associated with language, problem-solving, critical-thinking, and more. Studies reveal that students engaged in music programs perform better in reading, writing, and arithmetic compared to those who are not.

3. Physical Coordination

Playing an instrument involves bilateral coordination, where both hands, fingers, or feet work independently. A study on the fine motor skills of children after two years of piano lessons found significant improvements compared to those who didn't receive lessons. The development of strong fine motor skills opens up pathways to careers which require "an eye" for physical detail such as: jewelers, electricians, mechanics, painters, architects, doctors and surgeons.



Getting Started with Lessons

There's no wrong time to begin learning an instrument, however, we recommend age 6 and up. Here are three ideas to guide you towards a harmonious result:

1. Explore Your Child's Interests:

Observe what instru-

ments or musical styles they're naturally drawn to. You can try listening to different genres together, visit a music store, or attend a live musical performance either locally at a restaurant, school, church, special event, or at a concert hall. Our area is especially full of amazing and gifted musicians who perform on a regular basis.

2. Consult Music Teachers:

Reach out to a teacher and visit their studio/classroom to understand the various instrument options and which might suit you best.

3. Create a Practice Routine:

Encourage regular practice by establishing a consistent rou-

time. Short and frequent practice sessions at the same time of day (several days a week) are more effective than irregular ones that happen "maybe" twice a week.

So, as you enter this new school year, consider creating a balance in your child's educational plan with music lessons.

Studio 237 Music is now open for lessons. Our teachers are ready to instruct you on: piano, guitar (acoustic, electric, bass, classical), ukulele, voice, drums, and song writing. For more information, call Ray or Lisa Cyr at 850.231.3199 LL or 850.797.3546 cell. Visit our site at www.Studio237Music.com.

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Community

Autos in August Auto Show August 12 in Baytowne

Emerald Coast Customs (ECC) & 3M Window Tinting Presents the 4th Annual AUTOS IN AUGUST Auto Show Saturday August 12th at The Village of Baytowne Wharf in Sandestin Resort with all proceeds from entry fees, donations & raffle are for the benefit of Children in

Crisis Charity. Calling all Imports, Hot Rods, Exotics, Muscle Cars, Offroad Jeeps & Trucks, Corvettes! Join us for a day of fun, sun, and cars! Awards & Trophies will be Awarded in 7 Classes and there will be an award for Best of Show well!



In addition, there will be two separate Raffles. One for auto

entry participants and one for the general public. ECC will be giving away a free set of custom wheels, Sony in dash Car Stereos & Electronics, 3M Window Tinting and More!

Admission is free for the general public and there will be a participant Registration Limit



of 100 vehicles. First come, first serve. Each auto entry receives a free ECC T-shirt. Pre Entry Fee is \$20 per vehicle and \$30 after July 21st. Registration and vehicle load in is from 8am-10:45 am on the day of the event.



Come join in for a fun day and help raise money for Children in Crisis!

www.childrenincrisisfl.org. For participation information, please email eccdestin@gmail.com or call 850.424.3821

Saturday, August 12, 11:00



am - 3:00 pm. The Village of Baytowne Wharf, 9100 Baytowne Blvd. Miramar Beach.

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Tallahassee PC30A



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PC 30A Class Topics Include:

- Florida Friendly Landscaping
- Wildlife for Newcomers
- The Pacific Air War
- Tech Trends: ChatGPT and Artificial Intelligence
- The Magic of the Memoir

Tallahassee ZOOM Topics Include:

- Race Matters in the Supreme Court 1787-2023
- Immigrants Stories of Jazz, Rock and Popular Culture
- Write, Speak, Listen to French for Regional Travel
- Goya: The Birth of a Modern Artist

More Classes Being Added!

~Exciting News and Bonus Offers~

- Author Events
- Gift Basket Drawing (Valued at over \$1,000) – All Registered Members Will Be Entered
- Current Members Refer a NEW Member and Receive a Discounted Class
- ALL NEW MEMBERS Receive One Free Class

Fall Semester Kick Off on Sept 12

featuring Dr. Tim Chapin Presenting "People and Housing and Jobs, Oh My!: A Look at the Sunshine State"

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Our Ad & Editorial Deadline is the 20th of each month for the following month's issue.

Glory Mortgage Introduces Live 30's Wolfpack Real Estate Group

In June, I introduced you to us here at Glory Mortgage. In July we conducted a question and answer. This month I would like to take the time to introduce you to a local real-estate team: The Wolf Pack, they are a distinguished team of five local real estate experts who met at Tuesday night bible study. Their favorite thing to do as a team is to take part in an annual scalloping trip to Port St. Joe in August. With a shared passion for faith, families, and real estate, they strive to deliver excellence in everything they do. As fathers, they understand the significance of creating a space that's all about comfort, security, and building a legacy for their family. Backed by an extensive network, deep-rooted local knowledge, and years of experience, their team stands ready to cater to your needs. They like to say: "With us, the process is seamless and transparent, leaving you to focus on what matters most, family".

Question: Why should a homeowner choose you to list their house? -Destin Holland,

With a team-based approach, we offer a unique advantage that sets us apart from others. Each of us brings distinct strengths and expertise to the table, ensuring that your property receives well-rounded representation.



From marketing to negotiation, our diverse skill set covers all aspects of the real estate process. Beyond our individual strengths, our team dynamic creates a supportive and seamless experience for our clients.

Question: Why is it important for a buyer to get a pre-approved mortgage? - Pete McLellan,

Getting pre-approved before buying a home is essential. It sets a realistic budget, boosts negoti-

ating power and provides a competitive edge in a hot market. It speeds up the process, avoids disappointment, and allows buyers to address any issues beforehand. Pre-approval is the first step that empowers buyers and streamlines their home buying journey.

Question: Do you work with buyers and sellers? -Andrew Farmer,

Yes, we proudly cater to both buyers and sellers. Our dedicated team of real estate professionals is committed to understanding the distinct goals of each client, whether it's finding the perfect home or maximizing the value of a property.

Question: Why is investing on

30A a wise choice? -Travis Wilburn

Investing on 30A is a smart choice due to its prime location,

strong rental market, and appreciation potential. Our local partnerships and trusted contractors give you a competitive edge, ensuring informed decisions and excellent property care.

Question: Do you work in the commercial market as well? -Colby Anderson

Yes, in addition to our expertise in the residential market we also work hard at finding opportunities that work for our clients/investors. We do this by having strong relationships and expertise in all the moving parts, complexities and negotiations that are involved in these types of real-estate transactions. Most of these projects are unique to each deal. So please give us a call to discuss.



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By CHRIS BALZER,

Summer is officially here and so are our visiting guests. Beaches are getting crowded, restaurant lines are getting longer and traffic can be a challenge most days. This is a good time to think about creating your own outdoor escape. When it comes to increasing comfort, I get excited. At some point, we may have considered expanding our outdoor living spaces, but didn't know where to start. We can help. I personally have gone through several 10' hand crank umbrellas in my backyard. They are expensive, take up space and can never find that perfect color. We have a solution. Our motorized awnings have hundreds of colors to match any design and several custom lengths, to fit any lifestyle. We also include built in dimmable LED lights to enhance

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the outdoor nightlife, integrated cassette housing, I call it the garage, which protects the awning fabric from weather damage, extending the life of the fabric and looks sleek when retracted. Each awning comes with a wireless remote and built-in wind sensors. Wind sensors are a necessity here because we never know when that gust of wind will appear. Once triggered, the wind sensor retracts the awning automatically, ensuring the awning and your home stay protected. With a touch of a button, you will be enjoying your outdoor space day or night. There are also many add on options available, but most, just enjoy the features which are included in our packages.

Another option to create an outdoor escape are motorized screens. With a custom motorized screen you can increase your comfort and style, indoor and out. Yellow fly season is here and now you can finally take control of your back porch. Lifestyle op-

tions include insect protection which prevent pesky insects from invading your space. Weather protection, creating an attractive defense to the elements, without hindering your view. Privacy protection, increasing privacy when you need it, while maintaining superior ventilation, outward visibility and the ability to retract the screens with the touch of a button. If your home is located on a golf course or close to your neighbor and you want to enjoy relaxing in your pool or backyard without the world watching, just a click of a button, instant privacy. Or if you wanted to upgrade that garage space with a motorized screen which allows that breeze to come in and creates privacy, just a click of a button. Wouldn't that be incredible? So if you are looking to create or enhance your outdoor escape with a custom motorized awning or screen, give us a call and we can explore the options together.

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 appointment by calling (850) 588-2870, visit www.trusteces.com or email wecare@trusteces.com and Beat the Heat.



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