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# SOWAL Life

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Postal Customer Local

## Saving Lives at Both Ends of the Leash

BY HEATHER BENNETT EYE

The Emerald Coast is home to numerous military bases and we are proud of the service members who call our community home. We deeply appreciate these brave men and women who have chosen a path of service and sacrifice. As we express our gratitude for their dedication, let's not forget the challenges many veterans face.

Statistics reveal that 11-20% of veterans who served in Operations Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom suffer from PTSD, and around 12% of Gulf War veterans are affected by the same condition. Mental health issues extend beyond PTSD with nearly 30% of veterans reporting symptoms of depression and anxiety. Tragically, these challenges contribute to a high rate of suicide among veterans with 22 veterans taking their own lives each day.

Healing Paws for Warriors, Inc. is a veteran-founded, veteran-led 501(c)(3) in Fort Walton Beach that works to bring awareness to veteran suicide



and reduce these statistics by rescuing and training service dogs to pair with combat veterans faced with PTSD (Post Traumatic Stress Disorder), TBI (Traumatic Brain Injury) and MST (Military Sexual Trauma) along Northwest Florida from Panama City to Pensacola. Through reducing the number of dogs in shelters and empowering veterans,

Healing Paws for Warriors is working to "help save lives at both ends of the leash."

Trainer Lisa Russell finds dogs from local shelters that have the potential to make great service dogs. The dogs undergo 12 weeks of training. This training includes learning to pick up items like credit cards and keys, and the ability to stabilize someone who

needs to stand. Once the dogs are trained, veterans are paired with a dog and the two of them, as a team, undergo 8-10 weeks of training at their own pace. "It takes some time," said volunteer and Interim Executive Director Dennis

**SAVING LIVES**  
*continued on page 2*

## Walton County Tourism Provides Complimentary Day-Use Admission to Topsail Hill Preserve and Grayton Beach State Parks

Summer visitors to Walton County will once again be able to enjoy complimentary day-use admission to Grayton Beach State Park and Topsail Hill Preserve State Park from Memorial Day weekend through Labor Day.



The Walton County Tourism Department is covering the cost of entry for day-use visitors to increase available parking for beachgoers during the peak visitation season, as well as raise

**TOPSAIL**  
*continued on page 2*



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 **Community**

**SAVING LIVES**

*continued from page 1*

Krebs. "They have to get used to each other, they have to know each other, and how they act and react." Sometimes initial pairings don't work, and they'll find the veteran another dog. "The big key for us is we're trying to set veterans up for success."

Studies have shown that veterans with service dogs reported a 22% higher reduction in PTSD symptoms compared to those without, and 82% of veterans reported a decrease in suicidal thoughts after getting a service dog. Some have reported improved sleep patterns, increased social interactions, and shown significant improvements in quality of life.

The service dog program through Healing Paws for Warriors, Inc. is completely free to veterans who qualify. Veterans can apply directly on their web-

site. There are basic criteria that applicants must meet, but those who qualify won't be turned away. If a dog cannot be found immediately, they will keep looking for a perfect match. Additionally, if a dog paired with a previous graduate terms out of their service abilities, the veteran will be invited back to train with a new dog and the old dog can become a comfort/emotional support animal.

If you've ever been interested in fostering a dog, this would be a great opportunity for you to honor veterans. "The great thing about our foster program is we provide the food, the crate, dog toys, and a 24/7 connection in case there's a problem with the dog, so the trainer can be notified," said Dennis. "If we have the right amount of fosters, for the amount of dogs we have, that saves us money from having to pay for kenneling them, so it can go back into the program."



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Dogs usually need a foster home from one to three months, and everything they need is provided. If the foster needs to go on vacation or a weekend off, they will go to another foster home while they are away. While the fosters are not responsible for training the dog, it is recommended that they continue with basic commands and reinforce positive behaviors.

Another way you can help Healing Paws for Warriors, Inc. is through volunteering. "We have so many events, and we need volunteers all the time," said Dennis. Outreach in the

community is typically military-oriented, such as hosting events at the American Legion. Volunteers are needed to hand out brochures and merchandise and discuss the application process.

Graduation for the next round of veterans and service dogs will be on June 22 at 11 a.m. at the Air Force Armament Museum. Volunteers will be needed to assist with the coordination of graduates and guests and photography of the ceremony. Graduation will be open to the public.

Healing Paws for Warriors, Inc. is also reaching out to other organizations such as One Hope-

ful Place, a local homeless shelter, in order to pay it forward. "The community has been so supportive of us," stated Dennis. "We all need to support each other. It's a great community that we live in and we can do so much by pooling our resources together. We're starting to reach out to other organizations to assist them."

If you are interested in the application process, fostering, volunteering or donating, please visit the Healing Paws for Warriors, Inc. website at <https://www.healingpawsforwarriors.org>.

**TOPSAIL**

*continued from page 1*

awareness of the variety of eco-tourism activities South Walton offers. This year marks the tenth year of admission coverage for Topsail Hill Preserve State Park and the eighth for Grayton Beach State Park.

"Our state parks are truly magical, and we encourage our visitors and residents to explore all that they have to offer," says Matt Algarin, tourism director



for Walton County. "This program offers an opportunity to experience a different side of Walton County." Complimentary day-use admission is available during normal operating

hours, generally 8 a.m. to sunset, and this year's program will begin on Memorial Day weekend, starting Friday, May 24, and run through Labor Day, Monday, Sept. 2.

For more information on Topsail Hill Preserve State Park visit: [visitsouthwalton.com/listing/topsail-hill-preserve-state-park](http://visitsouthwalton.com/listing/topsail-hill-preserve-state-park).

For more information on Grayton Beach State Park visit: [visitsouthwalton.com/listing/grayton-beach-state-park](http://visitsouthwalton.com/listing/grayton-beach-state-park).





# Eagle Springs Golf Course Celebrates 100th Anniversary

## Future discussed at recent BCC meeting

The 192-acre Eagle Springs Golf Course in Defuniak Springs is celebrating its 100th Anniversary this year, having opened in 1924. The facility opened as a 9-hole course and the greens were sanded, which was common in the early days of golf. The golf course remained a 9-hole layout until the late 1960s when land was cleared for an additional 9 holes. The 18-hole course was completed in 1996.

Today, the former DeFuniak Springs Country Club includes an 18-hole, par-72 course featuring five sets of tees playing from 4,100 to 6,600 yards. Carved from gently rolling hills and pine forests, the course includes five spring-fed lakes, 23 sand-traps and natural hazards, including towering trees, sandy scrub brush, hardpan and a variety of flowering shrubs.

Tree-lined, tight fairways lead to small Bermuda grass greens that are not only elevated, but pitched and undulating enough to make the very best of putters a bit nervous. Eagle Springs is also quite affordable, boasting some of the lowest green fees in the area!

Truly a hidden gem of a course with beautiful views from every vantage point.

In 2019, Walton County purchased the course and surrounding property. The 190-acre site included an 18-hole golf course, public swimming pool and clubhouse at a



cost to the county of only \$50,000. Future expansion plans include fishing docks, walking trails, basketball courts, tennis courts and

more. “We’re trying to make it a recreational facility where people can come out and enjoy the family, be outdoors; it’s safe and not



expensive,” said Parks and Recreation director Shane Supple. The county has already begun making improvements to the course and plans on renovating the golf club in the coming years.

Supple is the former Park and Rec director for the city of Freeport. Having grown up in Defuniak Springs, Shane was instrumental in the acquisition of the property and the reopening of Eagle Springs Golf Course in 2019.

Although the cost to acquire the property was only \$50,000, the renovation has not been without controversy. Some South Walton residents and commissioners would like to see it closed as it’s still losing money. But at a recent BCC meeting held May 14th, the consensus seemed to be that the gap between revenue and expenses was narrowing and the value to the community far outweighed the cost. BCC commissioner Donna Johns believes “it’s wonderful the county owns the property and people I’ve heard from ‘love it.’”

Commissioner Danny Glide-

well noted the operating cost per acre was less than other parks in Walton County and was the only park generating substantial revenue. Commissioner William “Boots” McCormick” for his part would like to see a marketing program that includes a full-fledged recreational and parks facility program that just happens to have an 18 hole golf course and includes: pickleball courts, basketball courts, olympic-sized pool and senior center.

The Eagle Restaurant is a wonderful addition with reasonably priced food. Breakfast is served from 8:30-10:30 and Lunch is served from 11 a.m.-close, Wednesday to Monday.

While celebrating its 100th anniversary, it seems Eagle Springs Park and Recreational Facility and Golf Course has a bright future!

Find Eagle Springs Golf and Recreation Center at 171 Country Club Ln

Defuniak Springs, FL 32435. Reach them by phone at (850) 892-3812 or visit their website, [www.eaglespringsgolf.com](http://www.eaglespringsgolf.com).

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# Walton County School District



**Superintendent A. Russell Hughes**

ing forward to a new chapter in their lives, moving on to college, careers, or the military. We applaud each graduate for the hard work they've committed to and their dedication to completing the task. Please check your graduate's school website for details on capping, baccalaureate, and graduation dates. Congratulations to all of our district seniors!

Assessments are wrapping up around the district as students showcase the academic capability they've acquired from expert teachers! Student success comes through the partnership of parents, volunteers, and the community! We look forward to celebrating each student and school as reports of their excellence are posted!

The Walton County School District and Superintendent Hughes value teachers as evident during Teacher Appreciation Week 2024. In partnership with local businesses, Superintendent Hughes asked local

establishments to participate in the recognition of educators and educational staff by offering discounts, gifts or prizes. Businesses responded overwhelmingly, and teachers and staff were appreciative. In return, Walton School District employees were asked to patronize local businesses to support local owners. Thank you to each partner who contributed or made special offers to our educators!

Walton County School District has proven its commitment to being the #1 school district in the state, but this competitive dedication flows into our extracurricular activities as well. We are proud to announce district finalists in baseball, basketball, tennis, track, and weightlifting. Congratulations to South Walton High School, Walton High School, and Paxton schools!

We want to continue on the road to academic excellence and our schools are committed to helping students maintain the

learning they've gained. Summer Bridge and Summer Reading Camps will begin around the District on June 10 - July 18 to prevent the "summer slide." This is the loss that occurs for student over the summer months when they are not practicing or applying the skills they've learned during the year. Check your student's school website for more information. These extended learning opportunities will be suspended for the week of July 1-5 to observe the Fourth of July holiday. Summer VPK begins on June 5, Please contact Ms. Pam Jones at (850) 892-1100 for further information regarding these students. Looking for summer fun for your child, contact Ms. Wyndy Crozier regarding dates and times for SPICE in your area.

Our EPIC Van will begin summer learning tours from June 10 through July 11. If you would like more information, please use the Let's Talk feature on our Dis-

trict web page. This community digital tool automatically delivers your text questions to the appropriate personnel for a speedy reply. Text 850.204.9667 or click "contact us" on the WCSD webpage.

Superintendent Hughes wishes everyone a safe and fun summer but want to remind you to stay vigilant and keep safe over the break. Mr. Hughes reminds students to:

- Swim with a friend, never alone
- Wear sunscreen to protect yourself while out enjoying the sunny weather
- Stay hydrated during your summer games
- And for our students who drive, practice defensive driving.

Our school year will resume on August 2 for teachers and August 12 for students. Have a safe and fun break!



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# Coastal Seniors Update for June



## Chair Yoga Classes at the Blake in Miramar Beach

– Tuesdays, June 4, 18 and July 2 at 9:45 am. at 90 Ponce De Leon St. in Miramar Beach. RSVP at (850) 650-5000 to register.

## Game Day at Somerby on Wednesdays

– Wednesdays, June 5, 12, 19, 26, and July 3 from 2-4 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.

## Coastal Seniors Social Hour at North Beach Social

– 24200 US 331, Santa Rosa Beach on Wednesday, June 12 at 5:30 p.m. Chef Joyce cooks her special paella. Tickets are available for purchase at the register or order from the menu. R.S.V.P. (850) 280-5342 or email: coastalseniorsofsouthwalton@gmail.com.

## Monthly Meeting

– Coastal Seniors Bicentennial Celebration Event for Walton County, Friday, June 14th from 11 a.m. -1 p.m. at 70 Logan Lane. Guest speaker is Brenda Rees and music by Don Kupski. Barbecue, fun and games.

## Exercise Classes

– Angela Gibson will lead classes on Tuesdays, June 4, 11, 18, 25, and July 2 at 10 a.m. and Thursdays, June 6, 13, 20, 27, and July 11 at 10 a.m., at 70 Logan Lane in Gray-

ton Beach. Cost is \$5 per session. R.S.V.P. to coastalseniorsofsouthwalton@gmail.com.

## Water Aerobics at Watersound Fountains

– Join us Mondays and Wednesdays. Mondays, June 3, 10, 17, 24 and July 1 at 9 a.m. and 10:15 a.m. Wednesdays, June 5, 12, 19, 26 and July 3 at 9:00 a.m. and 10:15 a.m. All sessions are at Watersound Fountains, 65 Origins Pkwy, Inlet Beach. Cost is \$5 per class, cash or check preferred. A hat, sunscreen, and towel are suggested. Space is limited and reservations are required. Call (850) 280-5342 or email: coastalseniorsofsouthwalton@gmail.com.

## Pickleball

– Beginner Pickleball 101 at Walton Sports Complex courts Wednesdays, June 19, and 26 at 6:00 p.m. Registration required. Register for one date only at www.waltonrec.com by choosing field and court rentals. Open to Walton County residents only. Email Sandy Gulak at sowalpickleball@gmail.com for more info and with questions. 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 \$30 for individuals, \$40 for family, and \$75 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© (3) organization for active adults and we are

looking for dedicated, enthusiastic persons to join our Board of Directors. Media Contact: Jim Wilson, Director, Coastal Seniors of South Walton, Inc. T: 404-432-6037 Email: jim\_wilson@bellsouth.net





# Walton County Property Appraiser Gary Gregor Announces Reelection Bid

Gary Gregor, a long-time resident of Walton County, is running for reelection to the office of Walton County Property Appraiser. In a public statement he says, "Walton County is one of the most unique and diverse

counties in Florida. With 29 years of experience in the appraisal field, and now a strong four-year record as your Walton County Property Appraiser, I believe I'm the most qualified to best serve our county during

this time of growth and diversity. Most importantly, I will continue to prioritize serving the public and assisting property owners to address any questions or concerns they may have."

As noted, Gary now has a

4-year record to run on.

## Goals achieved since being elected:

"First, we brought advanced appraisal technology to Walton County which enabled us to be more efficient and effective than ever before, also equipping us with the tools to provide the best possible customer service and the most advanced services available to Walton County. These improvements have also enabled us to be more effective in achieving our goal to be in compliance with Florida Statutes and Florida Department of Revenue Guidelines, as required by the Florida Constitution. With the emphasis on providing outstanding customer service for the citizens and property owners of Walton County, we have also implemented online services for the ability to file homestead exemption and tangible personal property returns.

We continue to restructure the office to improve workflow and timelines. We have created a system that consistently stays ahead of schedule and allows for a better appraisal process and additional time for field inspections to meet required mandates by Florida law. In addition, we've increased the outreach efforts and services of the office through the website, social media, and online services.

*In a statement to South Walton Life Gary stated:*

"I believe I am the **Best** qualified candidate for this position, having 29 years of experience, approximately 10 of those in a management / supervisory role and the past 4 years as your Property Appraiser. In this time, the office complied with Florida Statutes, made technology and workflow process improvements while experiencing unprecedented growth in Walton County. I have the most appraisal experience having done hundreds of USPAP (industry standard)



compliant appraisals. I have the most appraisal education having completed over 300 credit hours and 15+ classes related to the appraisal practice. I am the only candidate that is a Certified Florida Appraiser. I am the only candidate that holds a professional appraisal designation in mass appraisal. I look forward to continuing to bring advanced technology and professional appraisal knowledge and practices, along with an emphasis on outstanding customer service to the citizens of Walton County. It would be a tremendous honor to serve another term as your Walton County Property Appraiser. My promise is to continue to comply with all Florida Statutes, produce **Honest, Fair** and **Equitable** assessments and exceptional customer service for all Walton County property owners.

Gregor has been married to Brianne Gregor for 20 years and together they share two children. His family is actively involved at New Harmony Baptist Church and they enjoy spending their free time outdoors, at the beach, playing softball, hunting, fishing, and going on new adventures. They are so happy to call Walton County home and he hopes to continue to share his knowledge and passion by serving as the Walton County Property Appraiser for the next four years.

## GARY J. GREGOR WALTON COUNTY PROPERTY APPRAISER

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- Apply for Homestead Exemption online
- File your TPP Return online
- See the Annual Average Daily Traffic
- Visit our FAQs page for more information
- Tax Estimator

The Walton County Property Appraiser's office is dedicated to following Florida Statutes and strives to provide excellent service to the public.

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



# Stinky's Bait Shack Announces Winners Of The 14th Annual Pompano Fishing Tournament

The team at Stinky's Bait Shack has tallied the results of the 14th Annual Stinky's Pompano Fishing Tournament. The tournament registered more participants this year than ever - ranging from recreational fisher folks to professionals - locals and visitors alike. The tournament spanned over the course of five difficult weeks of fishing.

The purse for the annual tournament was the highest payout ever with \$7670 in cash and prizes. "We love hosting our two annual fishing tournaments. It's exciting to see returning and new participants compete for the win," said Chef Jim Richard, tournament originator and Stinky's owner.

In the Stinky's Pompano Fishing Tournament, the anglers fish for pompano foremost while entering in the calcuttas for Redfish and Whiting. Making the catch a little more challenging, several weeks of the tournament were tainted with unfavorable weather conditions. Local fisherman Scott Risher took the largest portion of the purse this year. While winning the biggest purse of the longest-running fishing tournament with the greatest amount of participation ever is an accomplishment worth celebrating, Risher also touts the championship title for Stinky's Fall Pompano Beach to Bay Grand Slam Fishing Tournament in 2023. "For the first time ever we had a back-to-back winner and we think that is pretty cool," said Richard.

Back-to-back wins are not the only history-making news of the tournament. For the first time in Stinky's Fishing Tournament history, tournament calcutta winners are mother and daughter. An extraordinary 7.16 pound Redfish caught by Susan Predella had the tournament weigh in team buzzing. "It's always fun weighing in a fish that big. Everyone is happy," says Lori Janowski, longtime tournament manager at Stinky's Bait Shack. Predella's daughter, Megan Todd landed the winning Whiting weighing in at 2.18 pounds.

"My Mom caught her winning redfish at night. It was a funny story. She called to tell me she caught a near 27" redfish but she sounded disappointed. I asked her why and she told me it weighed only 3 pounds. I told her no way that is possible - Your scale is bro-

ken mom! Sure enough, it was broken," laughed Todd.

"I was with Megan when she caught her winning Whiting on the last day of the tournament. Neither of us could believe how big it was and we were both jumping up and down and shouting on the beach," says Predella. The two were holding out for a hail mary hoping they would both be on the final leaderboard together. "We couldn't believe it! We got my scale out - actually functioning properly - and started cheering when we saw it was a real contender. Then we quickly high-tailed it to Stinky's for a last-minute weigh in and some celebratory margari-



tas," says Todd. The mother and daughter winnings are a serendipitous segue to Mother's Day celebrations aptly proceeding their leaderboard debut.

With a portion of proceeds benefiting South Walton Artificial Reef Association, the sponsors and hosts have created fun opportunities to support unique resources in Walton County. "It's a win-win no matter the catch," says Richard.

### The 14th Annual Stinky's Pompano Tournament Winners:

- 1st Place Adult, Scott Risher - 3.61 lbs.
- 2nd Place Adult,

- Jeff Bryan - 3.54 lbs.
- 3rd Place Adult, Lauren Gaughan - 3.43 lbs.
- 1st Place Youth, Graham Streeter- 2.71 lbs.
- 2nd Place Youth, Jaxson Meijer - 2.49 lbs.
- 3rd Place Youth, Parker Martic - 2.09 lbs.
- 1st Place Professional, Sid Little - 3.85 lbs.
- 2nd Place Professional, Blake Hunter - 3.79lbs.
- 3rd Place Professional, Cody Clauson - 3.74lbs.

**STINKY'S BAIT**  
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Community

# Spotlight on Marisol Gullo of Not Too Shabby

When it comes to a coastal contemporary design, there are very few people who know how to put it together better than Marisol Gullo of Not too Shabby. Marisol has owned and operated, Not too Shabby by Marisol, located in Miramar Beach, and Inlet Beach FL.

There's not much that Marisol can't do when she puts her mind to it. An attorney by trade, she moved to the area over twenty years ago. She is the 2017 South Walton artist of the year, and an accomplished interior designer who has personally built and designed over ten homes here for herself and family. Marisol and Tony had a very large construction company. When we caught up with Marisol, we wanted to ask her a few questions about what she felt were some of the important aspects about designing a coast home. This is what she had to say. "The most important thing I tell my clients is that we want to design a beautiful, yet relaxed setting. I always convey to them that we are not going for Beachy, we are doing Coastal, and there happens to be a big difference." "It's not easy to move to a

specialized area like we live in and expect that you will be able to put the look together right away or without a designer from our area, and that's why our clients come to us. And with our construction background, it is very easy for our clients to be able to hand over the entire project to us" says Marisol.

"Think about that for a minute, the fact that we can not only design and furnish the entire house, but we also handle the entire remodel if necessary. That makes life so much easier for our clients to be able to have their entire project, regardless of how big or small, all done through us instead of having to go and find a builder and then also have to find a designer as well. We do it all" she said.

The retail shops and showrooms continue to provide Marisol with her own source of furnishings and accessories, but they also serve other designers in the area. "We welcome both homeowners and other designers who shop with us," says Marisol. "We are very fortunate to have a large warehouse - people can see things, and get things quickly.



The women usually know what they want when they see it, but the men in particular want to sit in the actual chair before committing to it!"

When asked if she and Tony had any plans on opening a third location, she laughed and said "you know, between the Miramar and Inlet locations, we've pretty much have it covered no matter where you may live, whether it be Pensacola, Destin, Santa Rosa Beach, or Panama City Beach, it's never more than a short car ride to be at one of the stores. We've never really been concerned about being the 'biggest.' We've always just cared about being the best that we can be." Whether you visit Not Too Shabby in Inlet Beach or the Miramar Beach location, it won't take long for you to fall in love with the unique style of design by Marisol Gullo.

Not Too Shabby, 9755 Highway 98 West, Miramar Beach, 850-419-3976.

30Avenue Design Studio, 12805 Highway 98 Unit P201, Inlet Beach, 850-520-2390. [nottooshabbybymarisolgullo.com](http://nottooshabbybymarisolgullo.com).



  
**Not Too Shabby**  
*by Marisol Gullo*

30Avenue Design Studio,  
12805 U.S. Hwy. 98, #P201, Inlet Beach | 850.520.2390  
and  
9755 Hwy. 98 West, Miramar Beach | 850.419.3976  
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## STINKY'S BAIT

continued from page 7

### Calcutta Categories:

Red, Susan Predella 7.16 lbs.

Whiting, Megan Todd - 1.63 lbs.

Pompano, Sid Little - 3.85 lbs.

If you missed out on the Stinky's Pompano Tournament, be sure to mark your calendar for each chance to join in on the action. The 11th Annual Stinky's Fall Pompano Beach to Bay Grand Slam Tournament will kick off in October, 2024.

The 15th Annual Stinky's Pompano Tournament will kick off as Stinky's Fish Camp celebrates its 18th Anniversary, March 30, 2025. The kick off party is the event of the year for those who love live music, a crawfish boil and a good time. Both tournament registration notices will be announced on their social channels and website. You can follow Stinky's Bait Shack on Instagram @stinkysbaitshop and Facebook @stinkysbaitshack and visit their website at www.stinkysbaitshop.com.

For more information about the Stinky's Pompano Tournament, please contact Lori at Stinky's Bait Shack, (850) 622-2248. Hours of operation daily from 7 a.m. to 9 p.m..

# Emerald Coast Technical College Expands to Watersound

Emerald Coast Technical College in DeFuniak Springs has expanded and is now offering programs at their south campus located at the Magnet Innovation Center – Watersound. One exciting part about the new campus is that for a limited time, tuition in the programs offered is tuition free. The tuition portion of the program is being covered by the Triumph Grant, and other grants are also being used to cover any additional costs to students, all in an effort to build enrollment and get the new facility up and running and available to as many students as possible. This means you could obtain an industry certification for free or at least with minimal cost!!

E.C.T.C. has opened the new facility to offer the residents in the south end of the county an opportunity to further their education and obtain promising career opportunities through Industry Certifications available upon the completion of their programs. One of the programs available is Ap-



plied Information Technology (A.I.T.), where students receive the CompTIA A+ certification. The A+ Certification is a technology industry standard and is in high demand with I.T. business owners who are looking for prospective employees.

The A.I.T. program instructor, Dave Duvall, just completed the first full school year and has had great success with all enrolled students obtaining the CompTIA A+ certification. All these students have been employed in the local I.T. business com-

munity or are continuing their education at the E.C.T.C. main campus.

The Watersound Campus of E.C.T.C. also offers a Patient Care Technician program, and in January will be offering a Practical Nursing program, with other programs in the works to open in the future. All programs are open to adult learners ages 16 and up and are also available for dual enrollment students from our district high schools. More information is available at etc.edu or you can contact I. T. Instructor Dave Duvall directly at (850) 557-2804 or glen.duvall@walton.k12.fl.us

The new facility is located at 133 S. Watersound Parkway on the campus of the Magnet Innovation Center – right across HWY 98 from the Watersound Town Center and the new Publix.

Don't miss out on this fantastic opportunity, enrollment for the fall term which begins in August, is now open with several schedule options available.



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# Green Thumb Garden Club Awards \$6,000 in Scholarships to Outstanding Walton Students

By KATHLEEN EDGE, PUBLICITY & WEBSITE CHAIR

Walton County's Green Thumb Garden Club wrapped up their 2023/2024 year with a special brunch and announced this year's Mercer and other scholarship award winners. Casey McClaine, receiving her second scholarship, will use her \$2,000. award to continue her plant science studies at the University of Florida West Florida Research Center, Milton Campus. Saddlar Berrey will use his \$1,000 tuition award to study biology and marine biology at the University of West Florida, Pensacola. Ollinca Soto-Yovis will attend the University of Florida, Gainesville, applying her \$1,000. tuition award to her Biology major.

The well-deserving students



were honored at the May meeting. Green Thumb members met the winners and learned about each student's achievements, current plans and future career goals as related to the mission of the Garden Club.

Two additional \$1,000 scholarships were also awarded at the Club's May meeting. Local youths that participate in Walton County 4-H Camp Tim-poochee summer and other programs benefit from scholarship assistance funded by



GTGC. E.O. Wilson Biophilia Naturalists Outdoors program will also receive a \$1,000 education scholarship to support Walton County students. GTGC has funded local scholarship programs for decades and, through the generous donations of its members and the community, is proud to increase the amount of these awards every year.

Green Thumb Garden Club always welcomes new members. Please visit the Green Thumb Garden Club website to learn about our charitable mission, how to join and details on meetings, activities, and events. The website address is greenthumbgardenclubinc.org or send an email to greenthumbgardenclubinc@gmail.com.



Community

# Walk to End Alzheimer's Scheduled for Oct 27th

## Planning Committee Formed

Are you passionate about the fight against Alzheimer's? Do you want to get more involved with the Alzheimer's Association and Walk to End Alzheimer's - Air Force Armament Museum? Join the Air Force Armament Museum Walk Planning Committee and help shape the movement to end this

disease. Committee members are the heart of the event, planning everything from the kick-off to the wrap-up. Some members focus on growing the event by recruiting teams and sponsors, others coordinate logistics and some work on promoting the event in the community. There's a role for everyone! To learn more about

joining our volunteer Walk Planning Committee, contact: Tina Henson, (850) 502-5947 or email [thenson@alz.org](mailto:thenson@alz.org) or visit [www.act.alz.org/goto/panhandleassistant-carefl](http://www.act.alz.org/goto/panhandleassistant-carefl). New members are welcome to join any time throughout the year. Subcommittees may meet separately as needed.



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## Support The WCSO Back-To-School Splash Bash Through Amazon Registry Or Paypal Donation

The Walton County Sheriff's Office's annual Back-to-School Splash Bash is sending students back to school with a splash!

The Back-to-School Splash Bash is an annual event that provides backpacks and supplies to hundreds of families in need before students head back to the classroom.

This year, the event will be held at Wee Care Park in DeFuniak Springs on Saturday, July 27 from 11 a.m. - 2 p.m.

Walton County Sheriff's Of-

fice is asking for the community to come together to purchase supplies and backpacks for students either through Amazon Registry or PayPal donation.

No student should go without as they begin a new school year. We appreciate all donations, big or small!



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# 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



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 Captured 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!

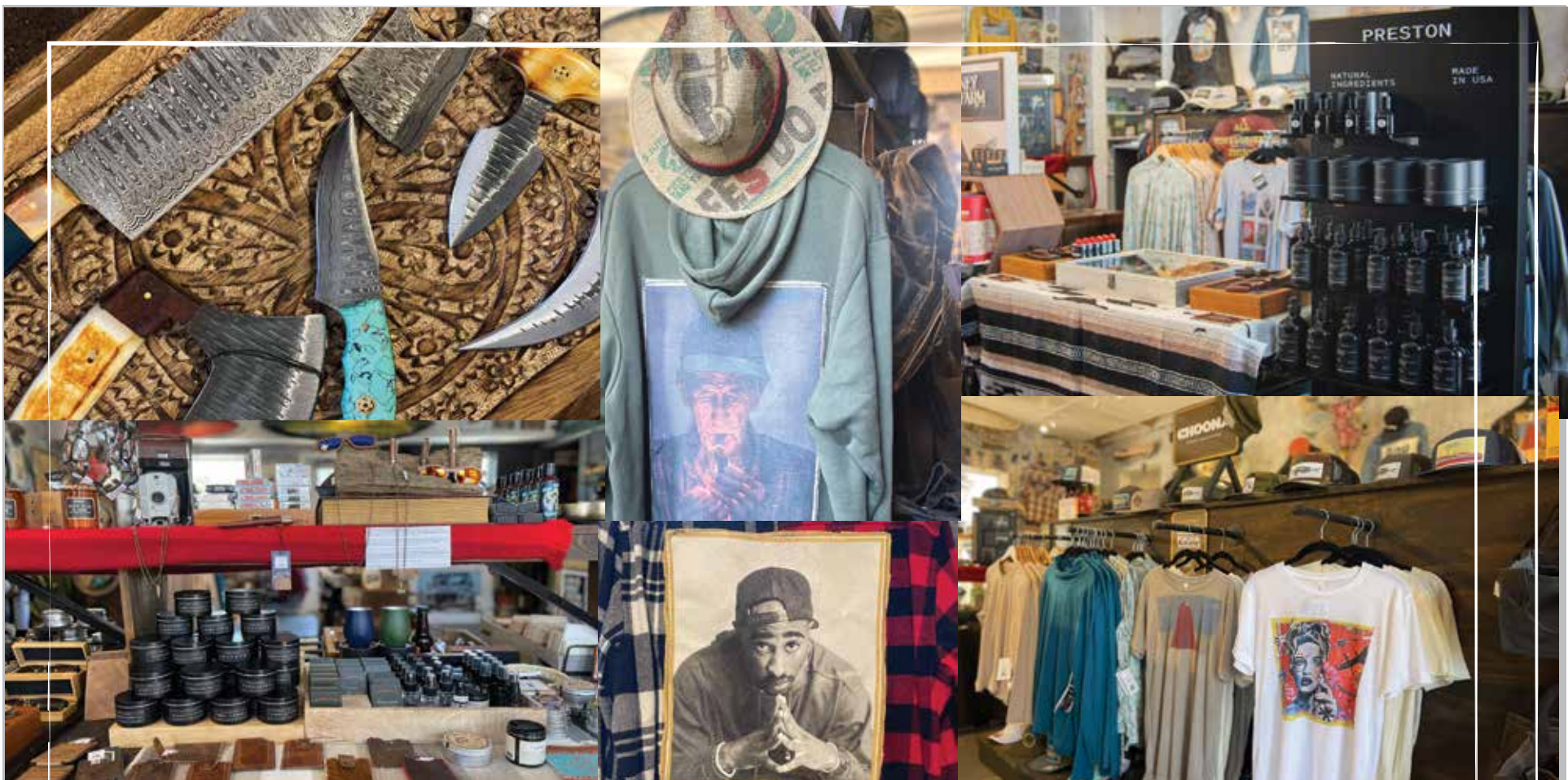
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counterparts, these stores prioritize individualized service, with knowledgeable staff members who are passionate about being able to help customers. The

"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



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BY MAURICE STOUSE, FINANCIAL ADVISOR AND BRANCH MANAGER

America and Americans are the most generous on earth. Up until a few years ago, gifts to charities (churches, medical organizations, schools) could be deducted from income at tax filing time. The tax laws changed and many of the tax deductions went down or away with tax reform in 2017. Despite that, Americans continue to donate their hard-earned money and assets to their churches, schools, civic organizations, hospitals and other non-profits. What many folks might not realize is that years ago (over 30 years ago), giving became more convenient and efficient with the innovation or advent of donor advised funds (or DAFs for short). A charitable or nonprofit organization is also known as 501(c)3. Anyone donating to a cause should always confirm that the organization to which they want to give is registered as such. DAFs are also 501(c)3 organizations.

It is suggested that would be donors do a little research upon considering a gift or donation to a charitable organization. A DAF could help simplify that for them. On their own, granters to charity could turn to several sources available online. There are several known choices such as give.org, charitywatch.org or charitynavigator.org. These sites can give you an assessment as well as commentary, if that is available. They even rate or score the organization. Many charitably inclined individuals could benefit from the additional knowledge that can be obtained. Often the DAF will assist the donor when they want to gift out of their fund and have the research available on an organization of choice available to them before they donate.

So, what are ways to give? The straightest is by cash, check, securities (such as stock) or some other asset. Real estate (land or

homes or buildings) as well as art and perhaps even businesses. While most people write a check (to their church, for example) or have it auto drafted or even put on a credit card, there are other things/ways for them to consider, which is why we are covering donor advised funds.

Many charitable organizations, and most investment firms, set these up for the ease of giving and the simplicity of administration over time, of their gifts. Donor advised funds are in and of themselves 501(c)3 organizations — public charities. So, once a contribution is made, that is the gift. What is flexible is when the money moves to a church, or school, hospital or other non-profit, from the donor advised fund. That could be done now or in years to come, allowing the gift to potentially grow because it is invested. While the money is in the DAF, it is often invested into mutual funds. The objective and hope are that it grows over time and that can lead to even greater gifts to future charities. The key is to realize that by making the donation now, the gift is made, in this tax year, regardless of when the funds move to a non-profit or charity.

What about the impact on taxes? It is important to reiterate that the tax law changes in 2017 meant that the standard deduction went up substantially, so that a charitable contribution would have to exceed that deduction limit and the tax filer would have to itemize. Nonetheless, it is important to point out that should someone qualify (gifting exceeds standard deduction of \$14,600 for single filers and \$29,200 for joint filers), they could potentially have a deduction from income: 60% of the value of total cash gifts for the year and 30% of the value of appreciated securities for the year. Some people who have stocks that have appreciated in value contribute that and are not be impacted with the taxable gains. A donor advised fund might also be a useful tool in estate planning as well should someone be looking for ways to lessen the impact of taxes on

## Insights for Investors: Should You Consider a Donor Advised Fund for Your Charitable Giving?



their estates when they pass on.

To sum it all up, a donor advised fund allows the contributor to advise where grants or gifts go and can appoint a successor donor advisor or a charity of choice to receive any residual at their passing. Most DAFs also use technology to aid the giver; whereas someone could make grants directly from their smart phone while they are on the go.

To learn more, talk to your advisor or go to [Raymondjamescharitable.org](http://Raymondjamescharitable.org).

*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 32451. Phone 850.654.8124. Raymond James advisors do not offer tax or legal advice. Please see your tax professionals. Email: [Maurice.stouse@raymondjames.com](mailto:Maurice.stouse@raymondjames.com).*

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Community

# Florida Power & Light enhances energy grid with planned upgrades in Walton County

*The company provided excellent reliability in 2023*

**How we're upgrading your neighborhood:** FPL plans to make the following upgrades throughout 2024 in Walton County as part of its ongoing commitment to avoid outages and restore power faster following severe weather:

- Maintaining trees and vegetation – a common cause of power outages, particularly during hurricanes and severe weather -- along 184 miles of power lines.
- Installing smart grid technology, including three automated switches on main and neighborhood power lines. These devices identify outages and reroute power around trouble spots, preventing more widespread interruptions.

**New this year:** FPL continuously leverages new and innovative technologies to improve reliability for its customers and is implementing the following innovations this year:

- Piloting the installation of automated underground switches which will help detect

and isolate outages, further enhancing the reliability of underground lines.

• Using "smart trimming" technology to identify and trim a leading cause of power outages: trees and other vegetation contacting power lines. Smart trimming also helps the company identify areas of concern and assign the work electronically, saving inspection time.

**Cumulative improvements in the Walton County area:** FPL made the following improvements from 2019 – 2023:



**Crews install a concrete power pole in Northwest Florida to improve resiliency during hurricanes and severe weather and also enhance reliability year-round.**

• Inspected 1,952 power poles for strength.

• Installed smart grid technology, including 304 automated switches on main and neighborhood power lines.

"We are so pleased to be able to offer these system upgrades to our customers in Walton County. Our dedicated team at FPL is committed to providing you with safe and reliable electric service. These upgrades, including the very latest grid technology, will help get the lights back on faster after storms," says **Johnathan Gates, local area manager at FPL.**

An annual report filed March 1 with the Florida Public Service Commission details how FPL delivered the best service reliability in company history last year. In the most recent statistics from the U.S. Energy Information Administration, FPL's service reliability was nearly three times better than the national average.

- Strengthened 14 main power lines, including those that serve critical services.

## Walton County Democratic Women's Club Joins With Others to Celebrate Juneteenth

The Walton County Democratic Women's Club (WCDWC) will join with the Walton County Democratic Black Caucus, the NAACP, the Tivoli Historical Society, and Ladies of Distinc-

tion to celebrate Juneteenth. The event will be at Douglass Crossroad Park in Ponce De Leon Fl on June 15 starting at 10 a.m. There will be music, singing, poetry, speakers, food and dancing. The WCDWC

is honored to support the community and participate in what has become a national holiday. Please come out and bring the kids for a little history and a lot of fun.



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# William "Boots" McCormick Announces re-election bid for District 1 Board of County Commissioners

## The Republican Primary is August 20

William "Boots" McCormick is a third-generation Walton County resident, unwavering in his community service. McCormick began his career as a Deputy Sheriff of Walton County and served for over 30 years, the last 14 years as a criminal investigator while also serving as a volunteer fireman. Upon retirement, he began a new career in politics at Freeport City Council, after which he won the election and was voted in as a Commissioner for Walton County, District 1.



Clubhouse dues are quite moderately priced.

"Shane is well qualified in this role and has done an excellent job," notes McCormick. However, McCormick would like to see marketing include that it is a regional Parks and Recreation property that happens to have a golf course. There are two county commissioners who say it is costing too much money. These and some other citizens say it should be shut down. In any event, Boots envisions a ball field, pickle ball courts, basketball courts, and per-

haps an Olympic Pool complex and a senior center in the near future.

Much has gone on in the past four years, from the death of his high school sweetheart, Barbara, from cancer in 2021 to a hang-gliding accident that almost took his life. The Walton County Commissioners election is November 5, 2024. Boots would like to continue serving his community for one more 4-year term and then retire. Regarding the beach access controversy Boots noted, "Walton

purchase of the 130-acre Defuniak Springs Golf course in 2019 has also stirred some sentiment. The purchase price was a mere \$50,000 with the only stipulation that it otherwise not be developed (The property must remain "green").

Shane Supple, a former parks director from Freeport headed up improvements at a cost of \$2 million dollars. The Eagle Springs municipal course is open for business and boasts some of the lowest greens fees in the area, and the

County is the only county in Florida that has this controversy where approximately 1,400 beachfront

**BOOTS**  
*continued on page 16*

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Community

# Reel Ladies Sportfishing To Crown Ms. Reel Lady PCB

On June 27, 2024, one bright young female angler will win the title of Ms. Reel Lady Panama City Beach, becoming the next Community Ambassador of fishing and fishing events taking place all over Bay County, FL. The Reel Lady PCB Pageant is being held at this year's Bay Point Billfish Open, taking place at Point South Marina at Bay Point (baypointbillfishopen.com) on the stage during the Thursday evening Ladies Night Concert With all Female Lineup, starting at 7:30 p.m. To apply for the pageant, and to view pageant



rules and details, please visit reel-ladiessportfishing.com.

In 2013, local Panama City Beach resident Suzy Nichols created Reel Ladies of Panama City Beach (later named Reel Ladies

Sportfishing to allow nonresident ladies the opportunity to participate) as a means of encouraging more women to fish. The club was made official in 2018 and launched in June 2021. "We are a diverse group of ladies who enjoy fishing, boating and the great outdoors," says Suzy. "We all share the passion to promote and educate sustainable fishing with special attention to encouraging other ladies to give fishing a try." Nichols' mission of empowering women is a component of the Pageant, which will award the winner an academic scholarship for furthering her education.

Nichols is also passionate about promoting conservation and sustainable fishing through education. The club connects with today's youth by offering fishing clinics and providing starter kits for kids consisting of a fishing pole, tackle and a fun-filled day of fishing lessons. "We're all about inspiring outdoor activities and encouraging children to get outside and get online with a fish," says Suzy. "Let's get kids off their devices and out fishing and boating!" she says. For more information on Reel Ladies Sportfishing and the Ms. Reel Lady PCB Pageant, visit reelladiessportfishing.com.

## Ascension Sacred Heart Foundation Emerald Ball raises \$159K for Neonatal Intensive Care Unit Level II NICU cares for infants from Walton, Okaloosa, and surrounding counties

The Ascension Sacred Heart Foundation announced today that the Emerald Ball raised approximately \$159,131 benefiting Ascension Sacred Heart Emerald Coast's Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU).

The Foundation hosted the Emerald Ball at the Hilton Sandestin Beach Golf Resort & Spa on Saturday, April 6. Guests enjoyed a curated dinner with filet and grouper, danced to Mr. Big and the Rhythm Sisters, and commemorated the experience with a photo booth. The black-tie event was presented by Howard Group, Grand Boulevard Sandestin Town Center and Silver Sands Premium Outlets.

"The Emerald Ball raised critical funds that will directly benefit every child and family relying on our community's only Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU)," said Adrienne Maygarden, President, Sacred Heart Foundation. "This special place of hope and healing is making a difference in the lives of our youngest, most vulnerable patients and will make kids better today and healthier tomorrow."

Since becoming the only



NICU in the tri-county area last year, the hospital has seen many families be transferred to their care so they can stay in the communities where they live. This includes babies that were at a higher level of NICU care but still needed to be hospitalized. In 2024, the NICU also expanded services and care teams are now capable of caring for babies as early as 10 weeks premature and weighing slightly under three pounds. The Family Birth Place is continually recognized nationally as a top maternity hospital.

For more information about the Ascension Sacred Heart Foundation or upcoming events, visit GiveSacredHeart.org, call (850) 278-3702 or contact Lisa Wainwright at Lisa.Wainwright@ascension.org.

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### BOOTS

*continued from page 15*

parcels are preventing access to the beach. I find it odd

that for the past seven years this has been going on, as soon as it gets close to a hearing in Tallahassee, there is a motion filed which results in a further delay. There have been 360 motions filed so far. The state of Florida has thirty-six attorneys at the cost to taxpayers of an estimated \$90 million dollars, whereas Walton County has only five attorneys. The opponents to beach access are clearly trying to wear us down. But it won't work," he said.

Boots wanted to make a few things clear that the only way he will leave his position as commissioner is: one, if he is voted out by the citizens of Walton County or two, the Governor of Florida removes him. "I believe in community service, and as long as I'm a Commissioner that's what I'll do."





# Cultural Arts Alliance of Walton County Announces Nine-State South Arts Special Exhibition at The Foster Gallery

## All Are Invited To Attend The Exhibition Grand Opening on Thursday, June 20

The Cultural Arts Alliance (CAA) of Walton County is excited to welcome the 2023 Southern Prize and State Fellowships for Visual Arts touring exhibition. The public is invited to attend an opening reception for the exhibit on Thursday, June 20 from 5 -7pm at The Foster Gallery.



The Southern Prize and State Fellowships for Visual Arts program showcases the talents of nine Southeastern visual artists — competitively selected by a panel of jurors from a pool of 800-plus applicants — who represent various disciplines and career levels. The fellowships are awarded in cooperation with the state arts agencies in Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina and Tennessee — and with additional funding from other public and private donors.

The touring exhibition is available through South Arts, a nonprofit regional organization

that advances Southern vitality through the arts. South Arts fulfills that mission by supporting artists and organizations through a rich and responsive portfolio of grants, fellowships and programs. The organization has developed and installed exhibitions across the region featuring the Southern Prize and State Fellowship recipients since 2019.

“It is an honor for the CAA to have been selected as a host partner for the Southern Prize exhibition,” said Jennifer Steele, CAA Executive Director. “South Arts has a stellar reputation for its support of

Southeastern artists and organizations, and the CAA is proud to partner in bringing the incredible work of these nine artists to Walton County.”

“South Arts is so pleased to be working with the Cultural Arts Alliance of Walton County,” said South Arts’ Vice President of Programs, Joy Young, PhD. “They have a long history of presenting artists and producing engaging arts and cultural activities for the community, so they are an ideal partner. Hosting this exhibit of regional artists is an example of a regional and local collaboration that brings the community

both a unique arts experience and the resultant economic benefits.”

The 2023 featured artists include Beizar Aradini (craft, Tennessee Fellow), Kelly Bryant (drawing, Alabama Fellow), Victoria Dugger (multidisciplinary, Georgia, Fellow and Southern Prize Winner), Chris Friday (multidisciplinary, Florida Fellow), Alexis McGrigg (multidisciplinary, Mississippi Fellow), Nadia Meadows (sculpture, North Carolina Fellow), Rachel Moser (multidisciplinary, Kentucky Fellow), Carlie Trosclair (sculpture, Louisiana Fellow), and Michael Webster (sculpture, South Carolina Fellow and Southern Prize Finalist).

The Southern Prize and State Fellowships for Visual Arts exhibition will be on display exclusively at the gallery from June 20 to August 31, 2024. Admission to the opening reception is free and open to all. We encourage all art enthusiasts, collectors, and community

members to join us for an evening of creativity, inspiration, and celebration.

The Foster Gallery is located at 13370 Emerald Coast Parkway (US Hwy 98) and is part of the Miramar Beach Creative Campus featuring regional artist rotations on a quarterly basis as well as special exhibitions. The Foster Gallery at the Miramar Beach Creative Campus will also host artist receptions and openings, workshops in J. Leon Studio, events, and serve as a community gathering point symbolizing the support the CAA strives to give artists in our community, including those who are members of the CAA.

The gallery is open Tuesday - Saturday from 11 a.m. until 5 p.m. For more information, including class schedule, ceramics services and space rental of the Miramar Beach Creative Campus for private events, call (850) 842.3051 or visit CulturalArtsAlliance.com.



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# SEASIDE Institute™ Presents an Evening of Cocktails + Conversations

BY KIMBERLY STANLEY

Seaside Institute™, in collaboration with Jonah Allen Gallery, C.A.S.T. (Coastal Art & Science Trust), and Walton County Emergency Management presented an evening of dynamic conversations about how we could become better stewards of our local area and help preserve its rich biodiversity.

“Creative Conservation: Cultivating Conversations Through Art and Science” was held at Jonah Allen Gallery on May 23. Drink sponsors for the evening were Distillery 98 and Odd Pelican Beer Company, while Wild Olives sponsored light bites for the crowd.

The free public event brought the community together and focused on the importance of

safeguarding our coastal treasures and celebrating the natural beauty of the Panhandle’s coastline. Throughout the evening, attendees engaged in discussions and shared insights on how to tackle various challenges facing our coastal ecosystem.

One key takeaway was the importance of adopting a multifaceted approach to conservation. Art has the power to inspire



and spark dialogue, while science provides us with the tools and knowledge needed to better understand the intricate workings of our ecosystem. By merging the two, attendees gained a deeper understanding of vulnerable areas and discussed general strategies for conservation.

Jonah Allen, a photographic artist local to our area, shared insights about how his art contributes to an understanding of the importance of preserving the unique landscapes of Santa Rosa Beach and surrounding areas. He has mastered the art of capturing movement in his photography. The talk covered the inspiration behind his most impactful pieces and how his artwork reflects the resilience of our community. He also discussed the role of community in sustaining our natural beauty for generations to come.

C.A.S.T. founders were on hand to discuss how we can all contribute to the effort to advance public awareness of ecological issues and take preventative actions to preserve the cultural integrity of our natural resources. Jeff Goldberg, Walton County Emergency Management Director, spoke about specific steps our community can take to be proactive when faced

with environmental challenges. He also stated the importance of being prepared for situations that may threaten our area and shared information about how to be more informed about local environmental threats to ensure resilience from the entire community. Alyssa Dausman and Abby Littman from The Water Institute discussed the importance of research and implementation tools that can be used to make a positive impact on our local environment.

The Seaside Institute’s Cocktails & Conversations series serves to promote unity between individuals as they become more involved with environmental stewardship. The nonprofit organization, founded in 1983, has long been a hub for cultural enrichment in the region. With a mission to inspire livable communities, the Institute advocates for walkable, inclusive neighborhoods that live in harmony with their natural surroundings. Through educational programs, seminars, and community events, they work towards fostering a deeper connection between residents and their environment. To make a donation to the Institute or become a member, visit their website at seasideinstitute.org.

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# A New Season Begins with Jersey Boys

Emerald Coast Theatre Company (ECTC) has unveiled the Season 12 lineup of Professional Shows and Theatre for Young Audiences. Kicking off the season in spectacular fashion is the electrifying production of Jersey Boys, Sept. 20 to Oct. 13, 2024. This iconic show promises to captivate audiences with its timeless music and compelling storytelling.

## 2024 Shows:

### Jersey Boys, Sept. 20 – Oct. 13

Jersey Boys takes you behind the music of Frankie Valli and The Four Seasons to discover the secret of a 40-year friendship as the foursome work their way from the streets of New Jersey to the heights of stardom. Enjoy chart-topping hits like “Sherry,” “Big Girls Don’t Cry,” and “Can’t Take My Eyes Off You.” This Tony Award-winning true-life musical phenomenon takes you from the streets of New Jersey to the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame, a musical that’s just too good to be true.

### Baskerville: A Sherlock Holmes Mystery, Oct. 24 – Nov. 3

The play’s afoot in Ken Ludwig’s murderously funny twist on Arthur Conan Doyle’s The Hound of the Baskervilles. The male Baskerville heirs are being dispatched one by one. To find their ingenious killer, Holmes and Watson must brave the desolate moors before a family curse dooms the next heir. Our intrepid investigators try to escape a dizzying web of clues, silly accents, and disguises, as five actors deftly portray more than forty characters. Can our heroes discover the truth in time? Join the fun and see how far from el-

ementary the truth can be.

\*Field Trip Thursday, Oct 24, 10am

### All Is Calm: the Christmas Truce of 1914, Dec. 6 - 22

The Western Front: Christmas 1914. Out of the violence of World War I, a silence, then a song. A German soldier steps into No Man’s Land singing “Stille Nacht.” Thus begins an extraordinary night of camaraderie, music, and peace. All Is Calm: The Christmas Truce of 1914 tells the true story of the first Christmas Eve of World War I, when soldiers across the Western Front laid down their weapons to celebrate Christmas together. Based on the first-hand accounts of soldiers who lived it, this beautifully staged play with music brings these stories to life with traditional carols and patriotic songs, sung a cappella by a cast of 12, celebrating the unique way that the holiday season can bring us all together.

Stay tuned for 2025 offerings which include **Every Brilliant Thing** Jan. 9-17, **Little Shop Of Horrors** Jan. 24-Feb. 9, **Always A Bridesmaid** Feb. 20-March 2, **Go, Dog. Go!** March 11-March 16, **The Tortoise and the Hare: Fast Friends, Slow Foes** March 27-29 and **Legally Blonde The Musical** May 2-18.

Nathanael Fisher, Producing Artistic Director and co-founder of ECTC says, “This year we go from Frankie Valli to Elle Woods in a matter of months. Bringing high quality entertainment of many genres to the area is what we love to do! We believe the community will be very pleased with this year’s lineup! There re-



PHOTO BY NIKKI HEADRICK

ally is something for every audience and we hope to see YOU at the theatre.”

For information about ECTC, including details about upcoming shows and other

programs, opportunity for VIP membership, ECTC educational programs and local school field trip opportunities, visit [emeraldcoasttheatre.org](http://emeraldcoasttheatre.org) or call (850) 684-0323. You can also

make a tax-deductible donation, volunteer and engage with ECTC on Facebook, Instagram, X (Twitter) and YouTube.

See you at the theatre!

WALTON COUNTY

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# Family-Friendly Events in South Walton June 2024

## Topsail Hill Preserve State Park Guided Plant Stroll June 17

Join Topsail Hill Preserve State Park and Master Gardener Bill Kuenstler on the third Monday each month from 9-11 a.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, visit topsailpark-friends.org.

## Family Sunset Social @ Baytowne June 28th

Prepare for an incredible evening filled with live music, a mesmerizing pirate magician, an exhilarating hydroflyer, and much more! What's even better? All our kids' activities are absolutely FREE! From face painting to balloon sculpting and captivating animal encounters, children of all ages are in for a treat! And the best part? Your enjoyment contributes to a worthy cause as

proceeds from the event will support Habitat for Humanity Walton County.

## Scallyway Sundays at Baytowne Wharf

Join Sandestin's Village of Baytowne Wharf for magic, music, and mayhem! Watch as featured pirate Captain Davy takes you on an adventure with two magic shows on stage at 7 p.m. & 8 p.m. Sundays, May 19 - August 4. Admission is FREE and open to the public.

## Movie Mondays at The Village of Baytowne Wharf

Bring your lawn chair or blanket and cozy up on the Events Plaza Lawn for a featured film. Free and open to the public. Movies start at 7:15 p.m. June 17: Cars, June 24: Vivo, July 1: Secretariat, July 8: Holes, July 15: Mummies.

## Huck & Lilly @ Seaside Amphitheater Tuesdays and Thursdays

Huck & Lilly will perform



LIVE in the Seaside Amphitheater Tuesdays and Thursdays at 5 p.m. 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!

## Rapunzel at Alys Beach Amphitheatre Tuesdays

Join The REP as they perform Rapunzel on Tuesday evenings at 6 p.m. at the Alys Beach Amphitheatre. This twist on the beloved storybook runs from May 28 through July 30. A complimentary event proudly presented by the Alys Foundation. Get ready to untangle your imagination with this hair-raising rendition of Rapunzel that's full of fun and adventure for the whole family. For more information, visit LoveTheREP.com.

## Baytowne Wharf Boomin' Tuesdays & DJ Dance Party

The Village of Baytowne Wharf is hosting a Boomin' Tuesday extravaganza every week. Enjoy singing and dancing with DJ Mike Whitty in the Events Plaza from 7:15-9:15 p.m. Then watch as they light up the night sky with a breathtaking fireworks show over the lagoon

### EVENTS

*continued to page 21*



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**EVENTS**

*continued from page 20*

at 9:15 p.m.!

**The REP: Adventures in Alys Tuesday and Thursday Mornings**

Proudly presented by the Alys Foundation, Adventures in Alys, a completely original storytelling experience for children of all ages takes place Monday & Thursday at 10 a.m. through August 1 in the Amphitheatre. Watch as The REP Theatre actors perform a masterfully improvised story based on audience suggestions.

**Wild Sea Turtle Wednesdays at The Big Chill 30A**

Join South Walton Turtle Watch on Wednesday mornings through July 31st for Wild Sea Turtle Wednesday at The Big Chill 30A from 9-11 a.m. 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. For more info,

visit [www.southwaltonturtlewatch.org](http://www.southwaltonturtlewatch.org).

**The REP Pinocchio in Rosemary Beach on Wednesdays**

The Seaside REP Theatre presents Pinocchio, kids theatre every Wednesday at St. Augustine Green in Rosemary Beach at 6:30 p.m., May 22 - August 7. Presented by The Merchants of Rosemary Beach, this complimentary event will entertain the entire family. Join Pinocchio as he embarks on a journey like no other, encountering a cast of unforgettable characters and getting into trouble at every turn.

**Alys Improv Hour Wednesday Mornings**

Alys Improv Hour takes place Wednesdays at 10 a.m., in the Alys Beach Amphitheater through July 31. Join The REP's improv troupe, The Awkward Oxen, as they play improv games, and make up scenes and songs on the spot based on audience suggestions. Don't worry, if you suffer from a bit of stage fright you're free to hang out and watch and get some laughs.



**Emerald Coast Theatre Company: Broadway on the Boulevard Thursdays**

Emerald Coast Theatre Company presents Broadway on the Boulevard: Oh What a Night every Thursday night in Grand Park at Grand Boulevard. The show opened on May 23 with ongoing performances through August 8. The show starts at 7:30 p.m. This event is free and open to the public. Bring your lawn chair and dancing shoes! Meet the local and regional actors that grace our ECTC stage in this intimate cabaret setting.

**Watersound Sounds Like Summer Series Thursday Nights**

The Watersound community invites you to Sounds Like Summer, a series on Thursday nights through August 15, featuring live music, theater, outdoor movies and more under the shade of The Pavilion at Watersound Town Center. Featuring ample parking, a covered pavilion, and ceiling fans, all family-friendly events are free and open to the public. JUNE 20 at 6 p.m. - Neighborhood Fun Run with Fleet Feet! Start

at the new Fleet Feet storefront at Watersound Town Center and enjoy a neighborhood run around the Watersound Origins community.

**Fly Guy Thursdays at Baytowne Wharf**

Enjoy shows from fly-board extraordinaire Ben Merrell over the lagoon on Thursdays, May 23rd - August 8th from 6:30 - 8:30 p.m. Watch as he soars to the sky and makes waves on Thursday nights in The Village of Baytowne Wharf. Admission is FREE and open to the public.

**Grand Boulevard Lawn Games**

Grand Boulevard invites you to bring the entire family out to enjoy some fun in the sun! Summer Lawn Games will take over Grand Park from 5 - 8:30 p.m. daily, May 25 thru August 10th. Grab some food and drinks from one of the many restaurants in Grand Boulevard before you settle in to a fun round of corn hole, giant lawn chess, checkers and more.

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Arts

# Exploring the Fascinating World of Clint Eagar's Latest Artwork



Clint Eagar, renowned for his captivating and imaginative art, has once again mesmerized the art community with his latest series of works. Known for blending realism with a touch of the fantastical, Clint's new pieces focus on themes of adventure, exploration, and futuristic visions, each telling a unique and compelling story.

### AdventureQuest Series: A Journey Through Time and Space

AdventureQuest series is a remarkable blend of wildlife, adventure, and historical elements that creates a narrative both intriguing and visually stunning. One of the standout pieces fea-

tures a baboon dressed as an explorer complete with a vintage motorcycle loaded with travel gear set against the backdrop of the African savannah. This artwork captures the spirit of exploration and the untamed beauty of the natural world.

Another piece from the series portrays a gorilla, geared up like an experienced adventurer, standing before a world map, symbolizing global exploration. The meticulous detail in the gorilla's equipment, from the compass to the binoculars, and the serene ibis flying overhead, adds layers of depth and meaning to the artwork. The AdventureQuest series not only showcases Clint Eagar's technical prowess but also his ability to evoke a

sense of wonder and curiosity in the viewer.

### Futuristic Visions: The Intersection of Humanity and Technology

Clint Eagar's futuristic pieces offer a striking contrast to the AdventureQuest series, exploring themes of technology and human evolution. These artworks are characterized by their sleek, modern aesthetics and thought-provoking concepts. One of the notable pieces features a woman in a high-tech suit, her reflective visor hinting at a world of advanced technology and urban landscapes. The use of vibrant colors and dynamic compositions draws the viewer into a futuristic world where the boundaries between humanity and technology blur.

### Ducks Unlimited Art Package 2025: Celebrating Wildlife Conservation

Adding to his accolades, Clint Eagar's artworks "Red-head Ducks" and "Hunter's Heaven" have been selected for the Ducks Unlimited Art Package for 2025. Ducks Unlimited is an organization dedicated to the conservation of wetlands and associated habitats for waterfowl. Being chosen for this prestigious art package is a testament to Clint Eagar's talent

and his dedication to wildlife conservation.

"Red-head Ducks" is a stunning depiction of these beautiful birds in their natural habitat. The attention to detail in the feathers and the lifelike portrayal of the ducks' interactions with the water showcase Clint Eagar's mastery of wildlife art. "Hunter's Heaven"

of Barnyard Fabric. This new line of fabric designs reflects his artistic style, featuring intricate patterns and vibrant colors inspired by rural life and nature. The Barnyard Fabric collection is perfect for those looking to bring a touch of countryside charm into their homes.

Moreover, Clint Eagar is set to



complements this with a scene that captures the serene beauty of a hunter's surroundings, emphasizing the harmonious relationship between humans and nature.

### Barnyard Fabric and Japanese-Themed Textile Collection: New Ventures

In addition to his visual art, Clint Eagar has expanded his creative portfolio with the release

release a Japanese-themed textile collection, "Nami," this fall. This collection offers a unique blend of traditional Japanese aesthetics and modern design elements, further showcasing Clint Eagar's versatility and creativity. The Japanese-themed textiles will undoubtedly add an exotic and elegant touch to any interior space.

### EAGAR

*continued on page 24*



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# Smash Your Way to Fun & Fitness: The Amazing Benefits of Pickleball

By COLLEEN RIDDLE,  
ACE CERTIFIED PERSONAL TRAINER

Are you looking for a new sport that combines fun, fitness, and socializing? Well, pickleball delivers! This quirky newcomer combines elements of tennis, badminton, and ping-pong for the ultimate court experience. It can transform lives, foster friendships, and promote overall well-being. No wonder it's taking the world by storm. Let's dive into the abundant benefits of picking up a paddle and smashing your way to a happier, healthier you!

**1. It's Fun to Play & Easy to Learn:** Pickleball welcomes everyone, regardless of age or athletic ability. With a small court size, it's simple for beginners to get started and progress at their own pace. It's easily accessible and brings people of all ages together. Whether you're a young professional looking for a new hobby or a retiree seeking an active lifestyle, pickleball offers something for everyone.

**2. Stress Reduction & Mental Well-being:** Physical activity releases endorphins, the body's natural mood elevators. Playing

pickleball helps reduce stress, anxiety, and depression while promoting a positive outlook on life. The focus required during gameplay also provides a mental escape from daily worries.

**3. Improved Cardiovascular Health:** Pickleball involves quick movements, agility, balance, and bursts of energy. Whether playing singles or doubles, it's a great cardiovascular workout disguised as fun. It's low-impact and high-energy.

**4. Improve Brain Health:** "As with any form of exercise, pickleball has been shown to increase Brain-Derived Neurotrophic Factor (BDNF) levels in the brain. Pickleball does much more than provide a fun, competitive outlet – it serves as an effective, enjoyable tool for boosting brain health," shares Dr. David Perlmutter, Board-Certified Neurologist and six-time New York Times bestselling author. It's a mental game changer!

**5. Weight Management:** One of the remarkable stories within the pickleball community is that of Robby Lee, who experienced a massive weight loss journey (40

lbs.) thanks to his dedication to the sport. "Playing pickleball has provided a fun, social component that makes exercising enjoyable. With my weight reduction and improved cardio conditioning, my wife has the husband that she married back. She can be more confident that I'll be "around" longer!"

**6. Social Interaction & Community:** Pickleball isn't just about the game; it's also about the people you play with. The sport fosters community and belonging. The camaraderie on and off the court is infectious! Local player Amanda Morgan shared, "After mostly hibernating in my house while raising three small children, pickleball has helped me connect and create wonderful friendships with people all over the country! These connections have given my family and me a much-needed positive impact in our lives that I did not realize that we needed. Also, a side bonus I've lost over 65 pounds without feeling like it is a chore!"

**7. Joint Health and Flexibility:** Pickleball offers a fantastic way to



sustain body movement and vitality in a fun and engaging manner. While it's generally gentle on joints compared to high-impact sports, taking precautions to avoid injuries is still essential. Incorporating proper warm-up exercises before playing can help prepare your muscles and joints for the dynamic movements involved in the game.

**Places to Play:** If you're eager to experience the benefits of pickleball firsthand, there are numerous places where you can join in on the fun. Here are some local options:

**Sandestin Tennis & Pickleball Center** (850) 267-7060, 9300 US Highway 98 W. Miramar Beach, FL 32550

**Hidden Dunes Tennis & Pickleball Center:** (850) 269-2590, 9815 Hwy 98 W. Miramar Beach, FL 32550

**Walton Sports Complex:** [www.WaltonRec.com](http://www.WaltonRec.com) Open play from 7 -11 a.m. and 5-9 p.m. and reserve a court between those times.


Twice a month, the Coastal

Seniors of South Walton holds a free PB 101 class that explains all the basics of playing. It's a great place to start your journey! You can visit [www.WaltonRec.com](http://www.WaltonRec.com) to find the next class.

Be sure to also check out the app Pickleheads to find nearby courts and connect with fellow players.


As you can see, pickleball isn't just a sport; it's a lifestyle that promotes health, vitality, and a sense of community. Whether you're drawn to the competitive aspect or simply enjoy the social aspects of the game, pickleball has something to offer everyone. So, grab a paddle, hit the court, and experience the pickleball power for yourself!

Colleen Riddle is an ACE Certified Personal Trainer and the creator of the Fit Pickleballer Injury Prevention Program. Learn more at [www.FitPickleballer.com](http://www.FitPickleballer.com). Connect with Colleen via email [Colleen@ColleenRiddle.com](mailto:Colleen@ColleenRiddle.com) or phone at (850) 598-7263.



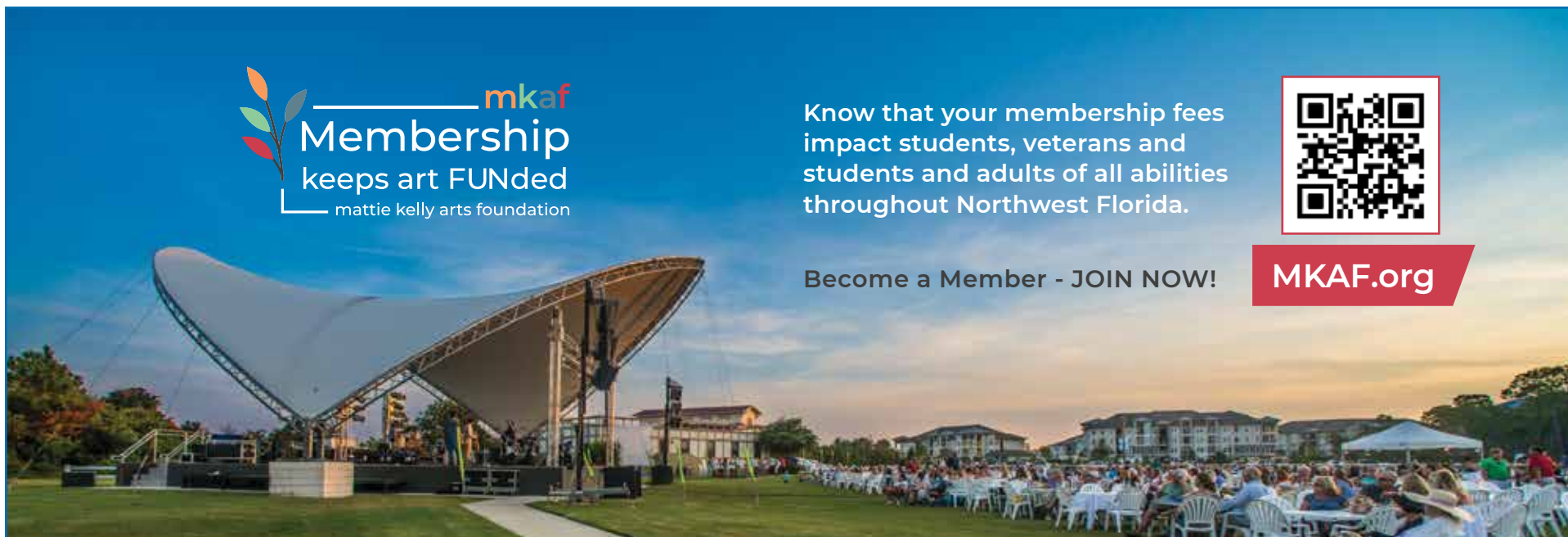
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**Wellness**

**EAGAR**

*continued from page 22*

Clint Eagar continues to push the boundaries of creativity with his diverse range of artworks. From the adventurous and historical themes of the AdventureQuest series to the sleek, futuristic visions of human-technology integration, and his contributions to wildlife conservation through Ducks Unlimited, Clint Eagar's art captivates and inspires. His recent ventures, including the Barnyard Fabric line and the upcoming Japanese-themed textile collection, further showcase his versatility and dedication to his craft. Whether you're a longtime fan or new to his work, Clint Eagar's art offers something truly extraordinary for everyone.



BY STEPHENIE CRAIG

"We are limiting screen time because future research is going to show negative impacts of screens and social media on developing brains." Insert eye roll from 3 boys who sometimes wish I wasn't a therapist. Kids born in 2007, the iPhone release year, are now 17 and old enough for us to begin understanding the impact of smartphones and social media on the brain moving through puberty. In the book *The Anxious Generation*, Jonathan Haidt explores research emerging since 2016 showing a drastic (up to 150%) increase in anxiety, depression, and suicidal thoughts/behavior related specifically to smartphone and social media access before and during puberty.

Most people are seeking dopamine through smartphones and most are struggling to manage phone use well. However, there is a unique detrimental effect of smartphones and social media on those below 16. Parents encourage kids to set boundaries for themselves but developing brains

are not capable of setting boundaries with devices and platforms designed for addiction.

Culture has shifted toward giving kids smartphones earlier as tools to communicate, track location, and to feel safe. The resulting cultural norm isolates kids from significant social interaction when families delay introducing smartphones. No parent wants their child to be excluded, socially isolated, or bullied for being the "only one." Parents find themselves in a no-win situation of choosing between earlier phone access or their child being left out.

Often when change is needed, the "change is me." You have the power to make a change for yourself without external input. For example, you can decide your child needs phone boundaries and you can use Screen Time or other software to create time and app boundaries. You have the power to decide the age your children will get smartphones. On some level, managing smartphone exposure for kids is a "change is me" situation for each family.

Other times when change is needed, the "change is we." You make decisions for individual change and still find yourself within systems challenging the change you're working to make.

For example, you decide not to grant smartphone access until age 14 resulting in social isolation for your child. You can make the decision despite uncomfortable results. However, it could be more effective to take a "change is we" approach," banding together with other parents to postpone smartphone access helping reduce social isolation as a group.

Embracing personal empowerment in decision making is important and, in many cases, exactly what you need to make meaningful change. The combination of individual change and collective change is sometimes necessary to create large-scale cultural movement around issues like how phones and social media are impacting the mental health of kids. So, you see the challenge, but how do you start to engage change on a "me" and "we" level?

**5 "Me" and "We" Ways to Address Challenges of Smartphones and Social Media for Kids:**

**1. Educate.** Read *The Anxious Generation* by Johnathan Haidt. Listen to recent podcasts featuring the book. Invite other parents to read the book and discuss. Talk with kids about the

**JOURNEY**  
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**JOURNEY**

*continued from page 24*



research and upcoming boundary changes you will be making.

**2. Evaluate.** Evaluate current values and boundaries around phones/social media in light of research-based recommendations to delay smartphones until 14 and social media until 16. Notice daily screen hours. Observe and investigate without shame. Shame is not necessary for change.

**3. Implement.** Put values-based boundaries into place using whatever supports needed including Screen Time, boundary software, timers.

**4. Collaborate.** Collaborate with other parents to re-

duce social isolation for kids. Make parent pacts and follow through together.

**5. Empathize.** Change is hard. Let your kids know you see it is hard for them to have new boundaries and listen to their complaints with empathy while still holding your boundaries. Empathize with other parents as you all navigate parenting through hard decisions.

Individual and collective change can be challenging but very possible when you own your part and connect with others. Previously, parents didn't know giving kids smartphone access could be damaging to mental health. New information provides new opportunities to set kids up for better emotional health foundations for life. As you navigate challenges of implementing change along your journey, connect with us at [Journeybravely.com](http://Journeybravely.com) for counseling and coaching.

# Navigating Medicare Changes



BY CHRISTIAN REGALADO

Benjamin Franklin has a famous quote, "Nothing is certain except death and taxes". If he were alive today he may have also added "...and changes to Medicare". Medicare is a benefit from paying into the Social Security taxes during our working careers. Unfortunately, it is not a "set it and forget it" situation. Every year as new rules and policies are implemented, it is very important to be familiar with how the new changes may affect your care and costs.

Although we are still only halfway through 2024, we already know of new changes in Prescription Drug Plans set to begin next year. The most notable is the elimination of the Coverage Gap, commonly

known as the "Donut Hole". Medicare beneficiaries will now see an annual cap of \$2,000 on out-of-pocket spending for prescription drugs. While this is great news for many who have expensive drug costs, it is likely going to result in higher costs for Prescription Drug Plan (PDP) premiums. There will also be improved access to generics and biosimilars, so we can anticipate some changes in the specific drug brands that will be included in PDP formularies. One way or another the insurance companies will be making changes to adjust to the new higher costs. This may be a very important year to verify your PDP plan is still right for your specific needs and preferences.

When it comes to Medicare Advantage Plans, one of the main concerns is complaints regarding prior approval. When you stay on Original Medicare, your doctor can approve whatever procedures he recommends. This is not the case with Medicare Advantage Plans. Prior approval is needed from the insurance company. Your doctor is no longer your "gatekeeper" regarding prior authorizations, it's the insurance company. However, be aware recent studies have shown that as low as 30% of appeals are overturned and prior years' studies have shown up to a 75% approval of appeals. So, if your doctor tells you that their request for prior approval was denied, tell them to appeal the decision. There is a good chance the appeal will be granted. Lastly, most of the problems with prior authorization denials have been in rural areas where there are few doctors and hospitals. This problem has been noted by members of Congress and they are working on improving the situation.

If you are reading this article because you will soon be aging into Medicare, my strongest advice to you is to not procrastinate on applying for Medicare (you should submit your application to [ssa.gov](http://ssa.gov) 3 months before the month you turn 65) as well as decide whether you will choose a Medicare Advantage Plan or a Supplement Plan. There is a lot to consider, but you have a local connection (not

**MEDICARE**

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# A Pastor's Ponderings: Father's Day



BY PETE HYDE

They stood at opposite ends of a long dark hallway - one in his 70s and the other in his 40s. It was a tense meeting. They had met once before when the younger was less than two years old, but there were no memories, only questions tucked away in the younger one's mind and heart. The elder had wondered throughout his life what had be-

come of this young life he had dropped off at the orphanage so many years before.

The meeting took place after much prayer and discussion. God had a hand in the arrangements for the meeting - the right contacts had been made, information was easy to acquire, and thousands of miles had been traveled easily. A language barrier separated the two men - strangers but yet related - making the meeting even more difficult and tense. It was father and son meeting for the first time since the father had given up the younger for adoption at the age of two. Over the next few days, a relationship was built - not a deep one, but a relationship. Answers came that led to more questions. Given his life circumstances, the father had done the best and loving thing for his son as a single parent

with little prospect of being able to raise a child successfully.

A man stands at a graveside in the sweltering Oklahoma August heat. Only about ten people came to the service including family. Taps played in the distance. The firing squad squeezes off the 21-gun salute that pierces the quiet of the small town cemetery. He stands by the grave. Everyone is gone except his immediate family. He reflects on the life of his father - his adopted father. He was a strict man, a flawed man, a driven man. Being number one was his only option. The typical son things ran through his mind as he stood by the final resting place of the man who had raised him - baseball games, golf, fishing, camping, military life, anger, temper, drinking, the final months as this one who had shared his life began to deteriorate.

He turns and gets in the car and seldom returns to the quiet of that place. It's been almost forty years, but the hole in the son's heart is still there. He knows in his mind and his training has taught him it won't go away. Perhaps he needs to return to that spot more often.

He now takes a few minutes to reflect on his role as a husband and father. He hopes he hasn't done irreparable damage to his children. He hopes he has been the husband he has worked so hard to be. He said and did the things he said he would never say and do from his childhood. He is sorry sometimes. He is so proud of how they turned out and how his children have handled life. And now grandchildren bless his life. He knows he is blessed beyond measure to have a woman at his

side whom God placed there specifically for him. He doesn't tell them enough. Now he is a grandpa and a whole new role opens up.

He sits in the quiet of the church sanctuary before anyone else is there, before the phone begins to ring and before the week's schedule begins to cloud his perspective. His Father is there - his Father in heaven. He has been blessed. No, life hasn't always been easy and struggles are at the same time past, immediate and long-range. But God's fatherly hand has been on his shoulder for a long time, even when he didn't acknowledge it. He pauses in these few quiet moments to give thanks on this Father's Day to his heavenly Father for the blessing, guidance and protection granted to him throughout his years.

Regardless of your experience or your relationship with your father, remember the influence, touch and presence of your heavenly Father before Father's Day buzzes off the calendar and is forgotten until next year. He is with you every day and that's all we really need to face whatever is before us.

*Rev. Pete Hyde is the retired Pastor of the Santa Rosa Beach Community Church*

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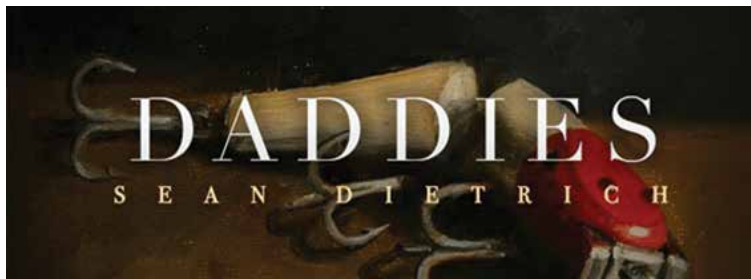
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# Sean of the South



BY SEAN DIETRICH

The boy holds his fish as high as he can. His father hugs him and kisses his hair. They make a fine picture together.

I'm watching a father and son fish in a state park. They stand shoulder-to-shoulder.

After a few minutes, the boy's rod starts to bend.

He screams, "I GOT ONE DAD!" His voice carries on the water all the way to Birmingham.

And I am a nine-year-old again.

In fact, if I were to shut my eyes right now, I would see my father, shirtless, standing on a sandy teshore, smiling. A beer can by his feet.

"Quit messing with your reel so much," he'd say. "You'll scare fish away if you don't relax."

On one particular day, my father caught three bass and a shellcracker. Mister Unrelaxed had not been so fortunate—I'd caught one Penzoil can and a medium-sized turtle.

But my luck changed. My rod nearly jerked out of my hands. I tugged and cranked.

And it happened. I caught a bass bigger than most residential water heaters. Daddy whooped and hollered.

He let me take a sip of his lukewarm beer. He discussed how to clean a fish.

He handed me a Buck knife

to cut off the head. He made me swear to keep both hands on the handle.

The next thing I remember is a puddle of my own blood. I nearly fainted.

Daddy wasted no time. He tossed my flopping fish into the truck bed. He pressed a wadded T-shirt against my cut hand. We sped to the Emergency room.

I glanced through the back window and saw my fish flopping in the pickup bed.

"Your mama's gonna kill me," said Daddy.

The doctor was an old man. He looked at my hand and said, "What kinda fish you catch, old timer?"

Old timer.

I told him. He smiled, then removed a needle as big as a turkey baster. He jammed it into my palm and said, "I hope it was worth it."

I screamed. Daddy held me against himself and kissed my hair while the doc stitched me. And for as long my mind stays sharp, I'll never forget the way Daddy smelled.

It's funny, the things you remember about dead people.

For instance, I remember the way Daddy ate his eggs. I remember his long-legged walk—like a heron. I remember how he used to sit in a chair after work, crying for no apparent reason.

And the night before he took

his own life, I remember a blank look on his face.

"Remember that time we went fishing and you cut your

hand?" he said.

Do I ever.

The kid and his father want their photo taken. The man asks if I'll do the honors.

He hands me his phone. I tell them both to say, "cheese." They do.

The boy holds his fish as high as he can. His father hugs him and kisses his hair. They make a fine picture together.

I'm not sad about the way my life turned out. God help me,

I'm not. I don't wish for different circumstances. I don't want anything more than what I have.

But if God were taking requests...

I wouldn't mind fishing with Daddy again.

Or a kiss on the hair.

*Sean Dietrich is a writer, humorist, novelist, and biscuit connoisseur, known for his commentary and stories on life in the American South.*



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Musing

# Road to Redemption: Danica Lopez – Let the Children Come to Me

BY VICTORIA OSTROSKY

Lucy Pevensie, from C.S. Lewis' classic seven-book series, The Chronicles of Narnia, was especially close to Aslan, the Son of the Emperor Over the Sea. She met Aslan in the first book written in the series, The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe,

and her heart only grew to love the huge golden lion – the same lion who sang Narnia into existence - more as the series progressed. As a matter of fact, in Prince Caspian, for a time, she was the only one who could see Aslan – to her brothers Peter and Edmund. and sister Susan, he

remained invisible. In this sense, she was the one with faith.

You can't help but think of the scriptures about children and Jesus. Jesus has a special love for little ones and, you may remember, was incensed when His disciples attempted to prevent children from coming to Him to be blessed.

You may also recall that Jesus said we must become like little children to enter the Kingdom. In another place, Jesus revealed the unique standing infants and children have when He spoke of how each one has an angel who 'always beholds the face of My Father.' His haunting visual of the judgment that awaits those who abuse children is terrifying.

So, it shouldn't be a surprise when children, who tend to be the most trusting and open-hearted, are used by God to manifest His Gospel.

Young Danica Lopez is one of these precious children in whom God has placed an especially open heart. Her dad says that every day she wakes up and starts singing. She loves reaching out to people, "you can come to church with me and come with me and pray and worship God with me."

Danica's dad says that no matter what they're doing or where they're at, if she hears sirens, "she stops what she's doing and prays for the people that no one is hurt."

She loves to worship God in song. She has some favorites among popular contemporary Christian music, but she has also written a few songs of her own that she sings in her own private worship time.

Danica also loves helping the poor and homeless. One day she asked her dad for some money, and when he handed it to her,

she took it over to a man on the street and gave it to him. "And he told me, 'God bless you!'"

One of the many important truths Danica has learned in her school, Gateway Academy, is that "every time you fall down, you can get back up with Jesus."

Danica's family has learned quite a bit from her. Her dad states, "We used to focus more on our problems, but now we are learning not to bother her when she is on her knees and worshipping. Everyone needs to learn not to worry."

That absolute faith and pure trust that a child has is precious in God's sight. His desire is that we become more and more like children, resting and trusting in His protection and unconditional love. God is using young Danica as an example of the type of faith walk that pleases Him.

Danica says, "Jesus loves you no matter what situation you're in right now." So, step back from your worry and learn how to rest and trust in your Heavenly Father. Lucy Pevensie also learned this crucial lesson from her time in Narnia, and once her brothers and sister learned it too, their faith grew to the point where they could also see Aslan guiding them safely to their destination.

You can hear Danica Lopez's entire interview and listen to many other incredible stories on the weekly Road to Redemption radio show and podcast at [www.rtrdestiny.com](http://www.rtrdestiny.com).



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# Regrets of the Dying



BY KIRK MCCARLEY

Bronnie Ware has lived a fascinating life in her 57 years.

An Australian author, songwriter, and motivational speaker, she is best known for the top deathbed regrets she heard during her time as a palliative care provider. They are described in her bestselling book, "The Top Five Regrets of the Dying."

Although the book is essentially a compilation of what was communicated to Ms. Ware by those in their last several weeks on earth, the implications are poignant for anyone, causing examination of our courage, priorities, and zest. For many readers, it has brought about profound change, aroused new or dormant passions, and awakened set-aside dreams.

The common themes:

**1. I wish I'd had the courage to live a life true to myself, not the life others expected of me.**

This regret was the most common. Within each of us,

how many dreams have gone unfulfilled? There are obviously some to where talent or now age is going to be a limit such as becoming a professional athlete or actor. Might some of those passions be reinvented? Can you write about sports? Might you become a referee or umpire, even at the youth level? What about coaching?

**2. I wish I hadn't worked so hard.**

How often have we heard the bloatings of the "I work 70-80 hours a week." Great! What have been the costs? In marriages and other relationships? For kids? Health?

This statement came from every male patient that Bonnie Ware nursed. Women also spoke of this regret, yet it was the men who were most wistful about so much of life spent on the treadmill of a work existence.

**3. I wish I'd had the courage to express my feelings.**

According to Ware, many people suppressed their feelings to keep peace with others. I would not dismiss that sometimes "discretion is the better part of valor," however to what extent has it contributed to a mediocre existence?

People are going to think what they're going to think and the reaction of others is beyond our control. However, what is the cost of things left unsaid? To you? To the other person? To others who may be close to the situation and thereby impacted? Does something need to be said,

an apology given, forgiveness asked, or a pain or frustration finally shared?

**4. I wish I had stayed in touch with my friends.**

In an increasingly mobile and fast-paced world, how would you rate the intimacy of relationships with friends? I'm talking about those friends who you can actually pick up the phone and call, easily picking up on conversation as if you'd spoken within the past few days. How long have those relationships now lasted?

It is common for anyone with a busy lifestyle to allow friendships to slip. Yet when faced with approaching death, the physical details of life fall away. Although those dying want to have financial affairs in order, it is not the money or status that holds true importance for them. In the end, it all comes down to love and relationships. Who needs to hear from you today?

**5. I wish that I had let myself be happier.**

Fundamentally, happiness is a choice. Old patterns and habits are easy to get stuck in. Fear of change helps to complement the comfort of familiarity. It stifles our spontaneity while we pretend to be others and accept a "false" identity. Deep within, there is a yearning to properly laugh and experience silliness again to release that innermost child.

My buddy, Toad, used to challenge me to a game when we were young teens. The premise of the contest was to randomly select an entry from the white pages of the Fort Worth Texas phone directory and "dial" the number. When the person responded with "hello," the objective was to record how many times you could get the receiver to respond back with "hello," before they hung up. After an exchange of ten connections each, scores were tallied and the player with the most "hellos" was deemed champion.

Toad's been my friend for now some 55 years. I need to call him up...and say hello.

Kirk McCarley



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

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Dining

# Hartley Restaurant Group Introduces New Culinary Talent At Watersound Village Market

Hartley Restaurant Group proudly announces the appointment of two esteemed chefs to lead the culinary team at Watersound Village Market. Brandy Brown assumes the role of Chef

de Cuisine, while Rachele McCulley takes on the position of Pastry Chef.

Brandy Brown is a seasoned chef with over 30 years of experience in Walton County's hospital-

ity scene. Born and raised in Defuniak Springs, Brown's culinary journey is rooted in the traditions of Southern cuisine passed

down through generations. As Chef de Cuisine, she brings a deep appreciation for local flavors and a commitment to delivering exceptional dining experiences.

"I am honored to continue my culinary journey with the Hartley Restaurant Group at Watersound Village Market," said Brandy Brown. "For me, cooking is about more than just creating delicious dishes, it's also about sharing stories, traditions, and the warmth of the South."

Complementing Brown's expertise is Rachele McCulley, who brings a wealth of experience and passion for the pastry world to Watersound Village Market. As a graduate of Keiser University with a degree in Baking & Pastry, she honed her skills at establishments such as The Pearl in Rosemary Beach and Watersound Village Market's sister restaurant, Surfing Deer. Inspired by her grandmother's traditions and fueled by her own creativity, McCulley infuses classic desserts with

a modern twist.

"I am excited to join the Hartley Restaurant Group at their new concept, Watersound Village Market,

after previously being the Pastry Chef at Surfing Deer for the past seven years," said McCulley. "My family and mentors have influenced my career as a pastry chef, and I can't wait to bring my ideas to life for our guests."

Watersound Village Market invites guests to dine on fresh new dishes and pastries that Brown and McCulley create as they lead new culinary innovations. At Watersound Village Market, every dish tells a story steeped in tradition and crafted with care.

"We are excited to welcome Rachele and Brandy to the Watersound Village Market family," said Ann and George Hartley. "Their talent, dedication, and passion for exceptional meals and service align perfectly with our vision for Watersound Village Market, and we look forward to sharing their extraordinary creations with our guests."

One of the newest additions Brown and McCulley are bringing to life at Watersound Vil-



lage Market is their Saturday brunch featuring items like Fried Chicken & Dutch Baby, Emely's Chilaquiles, and Steak & Eggs.

Additionally, the new chefs have elevated the offerings in the takeaway cooler, now featuring an array of convenient ready-to-eat and take-and-bake items. Whether you're looking for a quick family dinner on hectic days or a post-beach meal, there's something for everyone. Guests can drop by at their convenience during operating hours and browse the takeout selection, which now includes desserts crafted by McCulley, the new Pastry Chef. With these new exquisite dessert offerings, it's almost as if a pastry shop is in the market. From cookies and bars to mouthwatering pies and more, there's no shortage of sweet treats to satisfy cravings.

For more information about Watersound Village Market and Hartley Restaurant Group, please visit [watersoundvillagemarket.com](http://watersoundvillagemarket.com) and follow us on social media at @watersoundvillagemarket.



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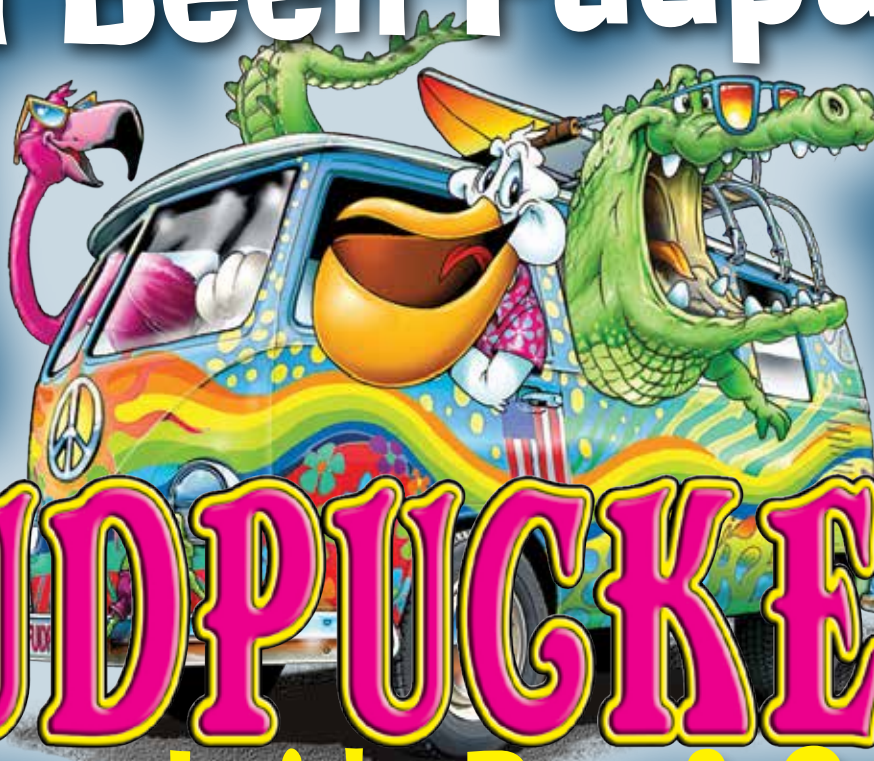







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Music

# South Walton Live Music Scene

### Old Florida Fish House Weekdays

For over a decade, Old Florida Fish House has proudly featured local live music. Catch artists playing inside the coveted bar and lounge area as well as in the large outdoor dining space situated among the palm and oak trees under the twinkling lights next to Eastern Lake. Visit [www.oldfloridafishhouse.com](http://www.oldfloridafishhouse.com).

### FOOW Live Music Fridays and Sunday Brunch

Enjoy live music on Fridays and for Sunday Brunch at FOOW - Fish Out of Water. The Gulf front restaurant invites you to delicious dining paired with live music. Visit [foow30a.com](http://foow30a.com).

### AJ's Grayton Brunch, Live Music & Crawfish Boil Sunday Funday

AJ's is the place to be to celebrate all things Sunday Funday in Grayton Beach! Come for brunch, stay for the music and dancing. Every Sunday from 11 a.m. til 3 p.m., AJ's brunch is not to be missed. Complete your meal with a mimosa or go all in with their famous Build Your Own Bloody Mary bar. Enjoy live music with Will & Linda 12-4 p.m. and Pickled Pickers on the Main Stage at 5 p.m. Check [ajs-grayton.com](http://ajs-grayton.com) for other live music throughout the week.

### Shunk Gulley

Shunk Gulley is a premier location on 30A for live music, brining in artists from around the gulf coast, and furthe. Whether you just want to relax to indie guitar players or upbeat party songs, the talented musicians know the vibe of the area. Visit [www.shunkgulley.com](http://www.shunkgulley.com).

### The Bay

Come out to The Bay with family and friends every Wednesday night starting at 5 p.m. for dinner, cold drinks and a bonfire with various musicians on the beach of the Choctawhatchee Bay. It's a midweek tradition in South Walton. Sunday Pickin' @ The Bay features The Sand Ole' Opry with Mike Whitty & Friends on stage from 4-8 p.m. 2415 South Hwy 331, Santa Rosa Beach.

### Sounds of Seaside Concert Series

Enjoy an evening of live music in the Seaside Amphitheater on Wednesdays. 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. June 19: Roman Street, June 26: Max McCann. Visit [seasidefl.com](http://seasidefl.com) for more details.

### Rosemary Beach Summer Concert Series

The Summer Concert Series returns on Monday nights, May 20 - August 5, beginning at 7 p.m. held on St. Augustine Green in Rosemary Beach. Bring your chairs and blankets and enjoy the night filled with great music. Each week is a different show so catch as many as you can!

- Lineup:
- June 17: Still Standing (Elton John Tribute)
  - June 24: JSG Band
  - July 1: Sons of Saints
  - July 8: Run Katie Run
  - July 15: MECO
  - July 22: Joey Shaling & the Paisley Blues Band
  - July 29: Boukou Groove
  - August 5: Anthony Peebles Band

### Alys Beach Concert Series

Come on out for great live music during the Alys Beach Concert Series from 6-8 p.m. on Wednesday nights through July 31. Bring a blanket or your favorite chair to the Alys Beach Am-

phitheatre. Concerts are free and open to the public. Learn more at [www.AlysBeach.com](http://www.AlysBeach.com).

- Lineup:
- June 19: Prodigal Blues Band
  - June 26: Sand Ole Opry with Mike Whitty
  - July 3: Corey Hall
  - July 10: Weston Hine & the Palmettos
  - July 17: Cadillac Willy
  - July 24: Beach Mountain Blues Band
  - July 31: Anthony Peebles

### Baytowne Wednesday Night Concert Series

Live music concerts take place in the Baytowne Events Plaza every Wednesday night from 7-9 p.m. Various local and regional artists perform throughout the year - see the lineup. Bring your lawn chairs and blankets. Free and open to the public. June 19: The High Aces, June 26: Six Piece Suits, July 3: Horseshoe Kitty, July 10: Dion Jones & The Neon Tears, July 17: The Hoo-Doos.

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# Summer Music Lessons at Studio 237

Summer is a great time to keep your playing skills sharp, try a new instrument, or begin your music-learning journey. This summer beginning on June 3, Studio 237 Music Lessons is offering lessons on piano, keyboards, guitar (acoustic, electric, and bass), ukulele, voice, and violin. During the summer, there is more room for flexibility for the student to choose days and weeks that fit best with their needs. Teachers have provided the studio with their available times and are excited to help people of all ages develop their unique musical passion and skills. We are also open in the summer Monday through Friday.

Unlike our spring and winter semesters, the summer semester is a more relaxed and carefree time of learning without the added stress of daily school and sports activities. As a result, we have created some idea packages below for you to consider:

**The Basics** Our first package is for those who desire to



attend their lesson once a week (for the weeks of your availability) as a continuation of lessons, an opportunity to try a new instrument, a refresher of previous skills, or even a sort of advanced class such as learning riffs, scales, and new performance techniques for already accomplished performers. Those who might have an audition coming up for this fall would benefit greatly from a basics or the next package which is a master class.

**Master Class** is for those early intermediate to advanced players who desire to go to take their performances to the next level. This level may dive a lit-

tle deeper into topics such as proper technique, theory as it applies to your instrument, practice, stage performance, songwriting, how to sing and play at the same time, balance, interpretation, understanding and feeling rhythm, developing your voice and/or style, focus, and memorization techniques. Master Class can be taken several times a week or as a weekly lesson concept.

**A Taste of Music** This package is for those who would like to take a month's worth of lessons in one week! No instrument, no worries, we have instruments here during the lesson for you to use. Some of our students started this way. Beginners will begin learning how to play an in-

strument or instruments for several days in an entire week (two or as many as five days). This is a great way to discover your interest and reveal what you may be in for if you desire to continue lessons in the fall semester.

Let us help you shape your package to fit your summertime schedule. There are a multitude of options to meet your needs such as taking a 30, 45, or 60-minute lesson as many times a week as you desire beginning when you are ready in June and/or July. You may take lessons on one, two, or more different instruments. There are instruments that tend to complement each other such as voice lessons along with piano or guitar/ukulele.

Here is our listing of available teachers this summer: (lessons are paused during the week of July 4)

Mary Kate Cary: voice and beginner piano lessons.

Don Dirkin Jr.: electric lead guitar and acoustic guitar,

Helmut Dimmel: piano

Linda Chung: violin, viola

Scott Gilmore: (June only) classical or acoustic guitar and ukulele, songwriting for kids.

Gregg Shapiro: bass guitar and beginner guitar.

We are ready today, for you to call us to reserve your special time. Our teachers' bios are located on our website at [Studio237Music.com/all-teachers-listing](http://Studio237Music.com/all-teachers-listing). Call (850) 231-3199 or (850) 797-3546 or email [Studio237Music@gmail.com](mailto:Studio237Music@gmail.com).



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# Motorized Screens in Florida: A Comprehensive Guide



By CHRIS BALZER

Motorized screens have become increasingly popular in Florida, offering a convenient and effective way to protect homes and businesses from the sun, insects and other pests. In this guide, we will explore the benefits of motorized screens, the different types available and

## ENERGY TIPS

by Emerald Coast Energy Solutions

the factors to consider when choosing and installing them in Florida.

Motorized screens provide numerous benefits for Florida residents.

**Sun protection:** Motorized screens block out harmful UV rays, reducing the risk of skin cancer and protecting furniture and flooring from fading.

**Insect protection:** Motorized screens keep out insects, such as mosquitoes, yellow flies and no-see-ums, making outdoor spaces more enjoyable and com-

fortable.

**Privacy:** Motorized screens provide privacy from neighbors and passersby, allowing you to relax and enjoy your outdoor space without feeling exposed.

**Energy efficiency:** Motorized screens can help reduce energy costs by blocking out the sun's heat and allowing for better airflow.

**Convenience:** Motorized screens can be operated with a remote control or smartphone app, making them easy to use and adjust.

### Types of Motorized Screens

There are several different types of motorized screens available, including the following:

**Retractable screens:** Retractable screens are a type of motorized screen that can be rolled up and down as needed. They are a good option for patios, porches, outdoor eating, and other areas where you want to be able to open and close the screens as needed.

**Solar screens:** Solar screens are made of a special mesh fabric that blocks out UV rays while still allowing for visibility.

### Factors to Consider When Choosing Motorized Screens

When choosing motorized screens for your home or business, there are several factors to consider:

**Size:** The size of the screens will depend on the size of the openings you need to cover.

**Type:** The type of screen you choose will depend on your specific needs and preferences.

**Material:** The material of the screen will affect its durability and performance.

**Motor:** The motor is a vital component of the screen, so it is important to choose a high-quality motor that is powerful enough to operate the screen smoothly and reliably.

**Installation:** It is important



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# Is Your Insurance Ready for Hurricane Season?

June 1st marks the beginning of the 2024 hurricane season, which could be one of the most active on record. Colorado State University's tropical meteorology project team is forecasting 23 storms, 11 of which will become hurricanes and five of which will reach Category 3 status or stronger, in their first outlook for 2024 recently released. That's because of two main factors: El Niño is expected to become La Niña, which usually enhances storms; and the Atlantic Ocean water is record warm in most areas, which also could enhance storms.

So, it is time to make sure you're ready for the next round of tropical depressions, storms and hurricanes that have potential to affect the Gulf Coast every year.

Do you have what you need when it comes to homeowner's and flood insurance and hurricanes? There are a few things that should be on your radar. If you have these coverages in place, you'll be better equipped to ride out whatever storm blows through.

First on the list is hurricane/wind coverage. Most home policies (HO3, DP3, HO6, HO4) in Florida include either hurricane, named storm, or wind/hail under a separate deductible. This is preferred since coordination and consistency of coverages is important. Some carriers don't write wind coverage close to the water. So, a

stand-alone wind-only policy would be needed. If this is the case, extra care must be taken to avoid any coverage inconsistencies. In previous articles, we've addressed the differences in hurricane, named storm and wind/hail coverage. But suffice it to say, when it comes to wind coverage, the best option is hurricane. Under this coverage scenario, the larger deductible in the policy, usually a percentage of the Dwelling Limit, applies to declared hurricane activity, while the smaller deductible in the policy would apply to other wind losses and all other perils in the policy. There are several deductible options available that can have a large impact on what would be your out-of-pocket responsibility if you file a claim.

Make sure you know you have sufficient Dwelling Limit (Coverage A) coverage to rebuild your home in the event of a loss. Local and national data indicates that nearly two out of three homes and structures are underinsured.

Another important coverage is Loss of Use that pays for you to live somewhere else while repairs are being done to your temporarily unlivable home. This goes for rental properties with Loss of Rents coverage as well. Remember, there needs to be direct physical damage to trigger this coverage. Some rental policies don't include Loss of Rents so you will want to read

your policy or call your insurance agent so you know for sure.

Another often misunderstood coverage not offered with each carrier, but always recommended, is Law or Ordinance coverage. Most carriers, if they have it available, offer either 10%, 25% or 50% coverage. This percentage is tied to your Dwelling Limit. If you have extensive hurricane damage, like we saw with Hurricane Michael, there may be new building codes you must adhere to in order to rebuild. The additional Law or Ordinance coverage is crucial to your protection, since your policy is designed to rebuild your home as it was before the damage, with similar materials and quality, and not with more costly materials that could now be required by more stringent construction codes that may have come into play.

Another vital policy to have, especially during hurricane season, is flood insurance. Flood and water damage from a wind event are not necessarily the same thing. This coverage is so vital that we will again devote our next month's article to this topic. Although there are a few carriers who will add flood coverage as an endorsement to a home policy, it is infrequent. For most insureds, your flood policy will be a separate policy written through the NFIP (National Flood Insurance Program), and, unless your lender requires the



policy, or you're closing on a new purchase, there is a standard 30-day waiting period through the NFIP before your flood policy will become effective. Private flood insurance is an alternative. Many of the private markets in the country, and especially in Florida, offer broader coverages than the NFIP and these should be considered as an alternative to maximize your protection.

We hope this helps ease your concerns this hurricane season,

in terms of coverage.

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**Business**

**ENERGY**

*continued from page 34*

to have motorized screens installed by a qualified professional to ensure proper operation.

Motorized screens offer many benefits for Florida residents, including sun protection, insect protection, privacy, energy efficiency and convenience. By considering the factors discussed in this guide, you can choose and install the right motorized screens for your home or business. If you would like to learn more about motorized screens and if they are good solutions, call Chris at 850-588-2870.

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




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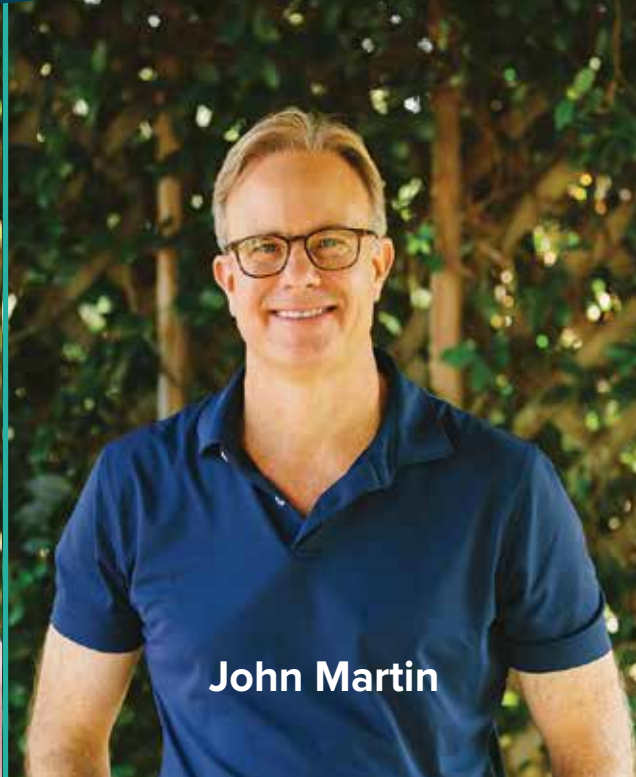


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