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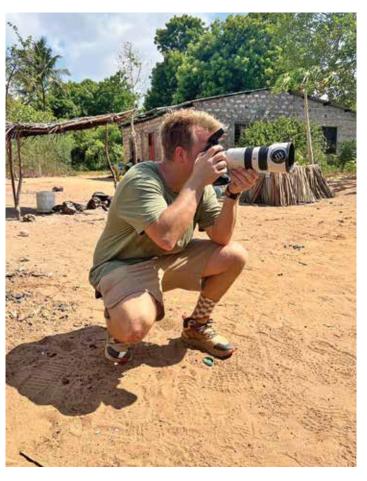
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Local Photographer Chandler Williams Embarks on Kenyan Expedition to Support Education and Conservation Efforts

Chandler Williams, a renowned local photographer and the 2021 South Walton Artist of the Year, has recently returned from a transformative journey to Kenya, where he dedicated his talents to support two impactful nonprofit organizations: Holding Hands Africa and Tsavo Trust.

For photographer Chandler Williams, travel has always been more than a vacation—it's been a bridge to deeper connections and new opportunities. With each journey, he not only captures the world through his lens but builds lasting relationships, finds purpose in unexpected places, and discovers stories that continue to shape both his art and his life.

In 2024, Williams spent a month in Tanzania summiting Mt. Kilimanjaro and traveling the country to create content for a new kids' education program. This year, Wil-



liams found himself with the opportunity to create content in Kenya. When meeting Santa Rosa beach local Sonya O'Brien, director of Holding-Hands Africa, he knew he had made another lifetime connection—one rooted in shared purpose and a deep commitment to nonprofit work and a love for Africa.

Capturing Hope in Watamu

In the coastal town of Watamu, Williams collaborated with O'Brien and Holding Hands Africa, a nonprofit committed to partnering with the local community to educate and feed children. The organization operates schools, provides daily meals, and ensures access to safe water, working hand-in-hand with local leaders and families to foster economic development (hhafrica.org). O'Brien launched a pen pal pro-PHOTOGRAPHER

continued on page 2



Accepting Applications for 2025 Walton County Artist of the Year

The Walton County Tourism Department will accept applications for the 2025 Artist of the Year Award beginning Thursday, May 1. Currently in its 23nd year, this accolade aims to honor a local artist of Walton County whose unique artistic expression captures the essence of the region's renowned creativity and beauty.

The deadline for submissions for the Artist of the Year program is Saturday, May 31, at 5 p.m. CDT. The winner will be announced during the Walton County Tourism Annual Meeting in October 2025. Artists can find instructions and apply online at waltoncountyaoy.com. Download the rules and application for more details

ARTIST OF THE YEAR







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Community

PHOTOGRAPHER

continued from page 1

gram that connects students in Watamu, Kenya, with children at Seaside Charter School in South Walton, Florida. Her vision was to foster cross-cultural understanding and empathy through shared stories, letters, and experiences. The program has become a meaningful bridge between communities, inspiring students on both sides of the globe.

Williams documented the vibrant life at Bluebells Primary School and Gede Middle School, capturing moments of learning, play, and community engagement. His photographs aim to bring awareness to the organization's mission and the children's aspirations. But for Williams, the reward is not just in the images captured—each time he donates his work, he experiences a deeper sense of connection, humility, and personal growth.

"Every project with HH Africa reminds me why I picked up a camera in the first place. It's about being present, listening, and sharing the beauty of lives that might otherwise go unseen," Williams shared.

Protecting the Giants of Tsavo

Venturing inland, Williams joined forces with Tsavo Trust, a Kenyan nonprofit focused on wildlife conservation in the Tsavo Conservation Area. The organization is renowned for its efforts to protect the world's last big tuskers—elephants with tusks weighing over 100 pounds on each side. (tsavotrust.org)

Through his lens, Williams captured the majesty of these iconic creatures and the dedicated work of conservationists striving to safeguard biodiversity and empower local communities. His images highlight the delicate balance between wildlife preservation and human development.

"Spending time alongside the rangers and the elephants is an experience that changes you," Williams said. "Unlike a typical safari, you are spending time tracking and trying to find certain tuskers. We spent over 4 hours searching for one trek and came up empty handed. I guess that's kind of the beauty of it all, you just never know what you will find on the next trek."





A Journey of Purpose and Reflection

Reflecting on his experience, Williams explained, "This journey was more than a photographic expedition; it was a personal pilgrimage. The resilience of the communities and the grandeur of the wildlife in Kenya are truly inspiring. Each time I donate my work to these nonprofits, I get back something priceless in return: clarity, purpose, and the reminder that creativity can serve a greater good. I have always felt that creating with a camera has been the right fit for me. These travels really allow me to really live in the moment and appreciate the now.

His work serves as a bridge, connecting audiences in Santa Rosa Beach and beyond to the vital efforts of these organizations. By showcasing the realities and triumphs of communities and conservationists in Kenya, Williams hopes to foster greater support and understanding.

Chandler Williams' photographic journey underscores the power of visual storytelling in driving awareness and change. But more than that, it illustrates

Continued on next page







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Page 3



PHOTOGRAPHER

continued from previous page

how giving through art can enrich not only communities around the world-but also the artist's own life in return.

With funding being pulled from nonprofits and emergency meetings taking priority, Williams suddenly found himself with a few unexpected days on his hands. So, in true spontaneous spirit, he decided to go to Egypt. What followed was a journey through ancient wonders, quiet reflection, and unexpected inspiration. Chandler

Williams set off on a new path that didn't disappoint-but that... is a story for another time.

Supporting the Cause

For those interested in learning more or contributing to these causes:

Holding Hands Africa: Visit hhafrica.org to explore their educational initiatives and community programs.

Tsavo Trust: Learn about their conservation efforts at tsavotrust.org, including the Big Tusker Project and community conservancies.



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on submission.

The Artist of the Year Award is a community initiative highlighting local artists, spotlighting their work through diverse publicity channels and events throughout the year. The recipient will be granted \$4,000 for creating a commissioned artwork to be showcased in Walton County.

"Walton County is home to incredibly talented individuals

creative mediums," said Matt Algarin, tourism director for the Walton County Tourism Department. "Through our Artist of the Year program, we are not only able to showcase and highlight a truly deserving individual, but we are able to promote and share their work with a larger audience."

Artwork submissions will be evaluated based on criteria such as originality, authenticity, and overall appeal. Finalists will participate in in-person interviews where they will be required to present three examples of artwork during a panel discussion.

Past Artist of the Year winners include Sarah Page, Bradley Copeland, Joseph Messer, Chandler Williams, Doug Foltz, Jenna Varney, Kathleen Broaderick, Marisol Gullo, Melody Bogle and Juan Adaro. For a complete list of winners, visit waltoncountvaov.com.

To learn more about the Artist of the Year program, download the informational flyer or contact Lisa Foster at (850) 333-2728 or Lisa@WCFLTourism.com.

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ARTIST OF THE YEAR who showcase their craft through continued from page 1

The community

Saddling Up for Success with Westonwood Ranch

By Heather Bennett Eye

Whether you're navigating a new diagnosis or have recently moved to the Emerald Coast, finding the right resources for a child or family member with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (IDD) can feel overwhelming. Knowing where to turn for therapy, education, social support and recreational opportunities can make all the difference. Our community offers several resources to help you connect, advocate and thrive.

Lindy Wood, founder of Westonwood Ranch in Freeport, was once in your shoes. Her 15-year-old son Weston was diagnosed with autism when he was two. "It's overwhelming. You do not get a lot of guidance from the diagnostic physician. They tell you that you need to start therapy, but you walk away, and you don't know where to turn



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to," said Lindy.

In rural Alabama, where they lived, extensive therapy was limited. After visiting several schools, they decided the Emerald Coast Autism Center in Niceville was the best choice for Weston, and they moved to Freeport to give Weston better opportunities. Here, they navigated a new community and new opportunities.

Now Lindy and her family work to help others. "The most important, or critical thing, when they're young, is that you're more aggressive with therapy. It's shown to have the best outcomes as they continue to age," stated Lindy. "Take advantage of that time ahead of the game. Be proactive. You have to advocate for alternate learning opportunities. Because those are critical." Westonwood Ranch started as a vision of a place where individuals with disabilities could learn, grow and thrive, and since opening in 2019, they've worked hard to help teens and young adults with IDD realize their potential and develop life skills to foster independent and productive lives.

While there are numerous therapy and skill-building opportunities available for young children with autism and other developmental disabilities, resources tend to become more limited as children grow older. For adolescents and young adults, access to developmentally appropriate services, such as life skills training, social development programs, or transition support, can be significantly harder to find. Additionally, insurance coverage for these types of services may be restricted, leaving families to navigate financial barriers during a critical period of growth and independence.

Westonwood Ranch works hard to raise money and find community support to help offset costs for participants through financial aid. "We never want finances to be a barrier to obtaining this higher level of programs," said Lindy. They also have an aquaponic farm where they grow and sell produce. They currently have seven local restaurants sourcing lettuce from them regularly. They also have a bakery where they produce their own Brew Chews Gourmet Dog Treats. Proceeds from those businesses are reinvested back into the ranch.

There are several programs to assist children and young adults



with IDD offered at Westonwood Ranch. The Transitional Services Day Program is full-time, year-round for those 12 and up, providing opportunities to gain critical skills to be more independent. The LIFT OFF Program for those 18 and older is designed to help those exiting the school system and focuses on developing soft skills with real hands-on learning at the aquaponics farm and pet treat bakery. The program culminates in an internship and an opportunity to be employed. The ranch also provides an Afterschool Equine Therapy on Mondays and Wednesdays for ages four to adult.

"No matter where you are on your walk with autism or other developmental disabilities, don't let their age be a limit on their ability to learn. No matter what age you are, you're still capable of learning whether you have a disability or not," added Lindy. "They are still able and capable of learning and capable of doing amazing things if given the right opportunities and pathways."

Many cities and counties face the challenge of affordable housing for people with IDD, and the Emerald Coast is no different. Westonwood Ranch is looking to change that. They are currently working on securing funding for a supportive living community for 44 young adults that will include apartments, townhomes and tiny homes with a pool and a clubhouse. This community will be 180 degrees from the traditional group homes.

In addition to Westonwood Ranch, there are a variety of resources available along the Emerald Coast to support individuals with IDD, as well as their families and caregivers. These resources

Page 5

Coastal Seniors Update for May

Chair Yoga Classes – Tuesdays, May 6, 20, and June 3, 17, at 9:45 a.m. at the Blake, 90 Ponce De Leon St. in Miramar Beach. RSVP by calling (850)-650-5000.

Exercise Classes – Angela Gibson will lead classes every Tuesday and Thursday at 10:00 a.m. at 70 Logan Lane in Grayton Beach. Note the May 8 class only will be at noon. Cost is \$5 per session for CSSW members and \$10 for non-members. Registration is required as space is limited. To be added to the email sign up list, call (850) 280-5342 or email: coastalseniorsofsouthwalton@ gmail.com

Art Classes –Watercolor Painting Class – Karen Peterson will teach classes on Fridays, May 2, 9, 23, 30 and June 6, 13, 27, from 8:45 am – Noon. Classes held at 70 Logan Lane in Grayton Beach. Cost is \$15 for CSSW members and \$30 for non-members. Registration required as space is limited. To be added to the email sign up list, call (850) 280-5342 or email: coastalsenior-sofsouthwalton@gmail.com. All supplies are included.

Pickleball - Beginner Pickleball 101 at Walton Sports Complex courts at 6 p.m. The May dates will be determined at later time. This beginner class is open to Walton County residents only. (18+)Registration required. Register at www.waltonrec.com. Email Sandy Gulak at sowalpickleball@gmail.com for more info and with questions. Class is free and equipment is provided or use your own. Play at Boys and Girls Club will resume after Labor Day 2025. Please join the SoWal 30A Pickleball Association on Face- OF SOUTH WALTON

COASTAL SENIORS

book for more information and weekly updates and check the CSSW calendar at www.coastalseniorsofsouthwalton.org.

Water Aerobics - at Watersound Fountains, 65 Origins Pkwy, Inlet Beach. May and June classes will be held Mondays and Wednesdays at 10 and 11:15 a.m. There will be no class on May 26, Memorial Day. Cost is \$5 for CSSW members and \$10 for non-members. A pool noodle and water dumbbells are used for class. Please bring a towel, sunglasses, and sunscreen. Registration is required as space is limited. To be added to the email sign up list, call (850) 280-5342 or email: coastalseniorsofsouthwalton@gmail.com **Monthly Meeting** - Friday, April 18 from 11 a.m. - 1 p.m. at 70 Logan Lane, Grayton Beach. A light lunch will be served, and the program will be announced at a later date. R.S.V.P. by replying to the Sign Up email. To be added to the email sign up list, call 850-280-5342 or email coastalseniorsofsouthwalton@gmail.com.

CSSW Artwork and Supplies Sale - May 15 from 5 - 7 p.m. This sale will coincide with the Grayton Wine Walk. The sale will include artwork and gently used art supplies. All proceeds will benefit Coastal Seniors. Donations of gently used art supplies are greatly appreciated. Please contact CSSW for more information at (850) 280-5342.

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 \$100 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: Melinda Finney, Director, Coastal Seniors of South Walton, Inc. T: 615-477-3417 Email: mkfinney24@ gmail.com

RANCH

continued from page 4 span early intervention services, educational supports, therapy providers, community programs, and advocacy organizations. Notable organizations include the Emerald Coast Autism Center, Great Gains Behavioral, Project 10, the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, the Florida Center for Students with Unique Abilities, Centers for Autism and Related Disabilities, Autism Society of Florida, Walton County Arc, Grace Rides, and the Special Olympics of Walton County. If you would like to learn more about Westonwood Ranch, visit www.westonwood.org or contact them at info@westonwood.org or (850) 880-2220.





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Community



Junior Golfers Shine at Walton County **Qualifier for Optimist** International

Ealier this month, 19 young Attaway praised the event, notgolfers from the East Coast Junior Golf Tour earned their spots to compete in the prestigious Optimist International at Trump Doral. The qualifying event, held at a local course, was a success thanks to the warm hospitality of course manager Shane and his dedicated staff.

Tournament Director Dennis

ing, "Everyone had a great time, and the staff did an outstanding job." Special thanks went to the cart attendant who went above and beyond, helping Attaway retrieve tees after dark.

For more information on the tour, visit ECJRGOLFTOUR. COM or contact Attaway at (678) 994-3367.

Ornate Terrapins (Malaclemys Terrapin Macrospilota) in Walton County?

Diamondback terrapins (Malaclemys terrapin) are the only brackish water turtles in the United States. Terrapins spend most sunny days basking in the sun and eating snails and other shellfish. On sunny days in late April, gravid females leave the salt marshes and move to sandy beaches for nesting. Each female lays eight or nine eggs, which incubate for about two months. Hatchlings stay hidden in the beach wrack, eating invertebrates, before heading to the salt marsh. Each spring, volunteers survey salt marshes and beaches in and around Walton County for ornate terrapin nesting sites and search dune lakes for the characteristic white heads.

Figure 1. Top is an adult female and bottom is a hatchling. O'Connor, M. https://www. flseagrant.org/citizenscience/ panhandle-terrapin-project/.





2024. Sea Grant. Panhandle Terrapin Project.

Terrapins are mediumsized turtles, about the size of a box turtle. Female terrapins are about 10 inches long and weigh about a pound. Males

are smaller, only about five inches and weighing about half a pound.

Figure 2. White head of terrapin swimming near marsh grass. O'Connor, M. University of Florida Extension. 2021. https://nwdistrict.ifas. ufl.edu/nat/2021/12/22/ searching-for-terrapins-in-theflorida-panhandle/. Searching for terrapins in the Florida Panhandle.

Terrapins need both salt marsh grass and sandy beaches in proximity. Females begin nesting in April, and tracks are visible in the sand. Terrapins are much smaller than gopher tortoises. Terrapin tracks are only about six inches wide.

If you see a terrapin, tracks, or the white head of a swimming turtle in brackish water, please contact Helen Petre by emailing petrehelen@gmail. com.

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Scholarship Awards and Board Induction Will Wrap Up the Year for Green Thumb Garden Club

By Kathleen Edge, Publicity & Website Chair

In honor of Mrs. Frank Mercer, a former President of Green Thumb Garden Club, the Mercer Scholarship has been awarded to Walton County students for over four decades. Qualified students must be currently enrolled or have been accepted by a college, university, or technical school and have a major in horticulture.

The \$4,000 scholarship is funded through donations from GTGC members, fundraising events and the Walton County community. The 2025 recipients will receive their awards at the May 21, 2025, meeting. An additional \$3,000 in scholarships will be given to 4H Camp Timpoochee, E.O. Wilson Biophilia Naturalists Outdoor Program and first-time recipient, Westonwood Ranch.

Green Thumb Garden has also donated \$10,000 this past year to organizations and projects in Walton County. Recipients include Caring & Sharing of South Walton, Walton County Sheriff's Santa Patrol, Gulf Coast Cemetery, Junior Gardeners at Butler Elementary School, Eden Gardens State Park, and many others.

GTGC is hosting an educational event on May 15, 2025 –"From the French Coast to the Emerald Coast – Floral Designing with Laura". Former White House floral designer, Laura Dowling, will demonstrate the art of creating stunning floral arrangements. The all-day event is available to the public with paid registration. Please visit the website, www.greenthumbgardenclubinc.org, for more details.

The meeting on May 21 will be held at Westwinds Conference Center, Miramar Beach, Florida. Check-in is 9:30 a.m. and lunch is included in the \$30 fee. There will also be an induction ceremony for the Club's 2025/2026 Officers.

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 Green Thumb Garden Club, Inc., located in Walton County, Florida, is a tax-exempt, 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. Its mission is to stimulate interest in the beautification of Walton County, furthering the education of its members and the public in botany, community beautification, conservation of natural resources, environmental awareness, floral design, gardening, horticulture, and nature studies and instill in our youth the love of gardening and respect for the environment.



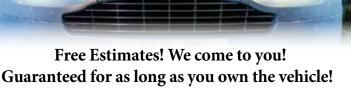
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South Walton Fire District places Engine 6 into Service in Inlet Beach

BY MACKENZIE MCCLINTOCK, SWFD Public Information Officer

South Walton Fire District reached a historic milestone on April 19, 2025, by placing its new Engine 6 into service at the Inlet Beach Fire Station.

This additional engine was a multi-year project in the making and translates to improved emergency medical response and fire suppression capabilities for the South Walton community.

This is the first time the District has put an additional fire engine into service since the early 2000s. The strategic decision to make this investment comes from increased residential development and call volume.

"Our primary goal with the



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staffing of this new engine is to improve our response times within the eastern portion of South Walton," said SWFD Fire Chief Ryan Crawford. "Prior to this addition, the next available firefighters were traveling from WaterColor to the Inlet Beach area in the event of multiple 911 calls. Engine 6 now fills that gap for our taxpayers and brings at least three additional personnel to any scene."

The scope of work to design, order, equip, and staff a new fire engine involves several years' worth of budgeting and planning, however, the pay-off is significant for the community.

While Engine 6 was under construction, SWFD set out to hire nine additional dual-certified firefighters, meaning each firefighter is either a Firefighter/ EMT or Firefighter/Paramedic. This staffing allows Engine 6 to carry at least three firefighters per shift who are capable of handling fire-based emergencies, as well as providing Advanced Life Support-level care.

"We respond to all hazards, but our call volume is primarily medical based, with the busiest time of year being in the summer," Crawford said. "It's imperative to us that our frontline apparatus are ALS-capable and staffed with at least one Firefighter/Paramedic who can perform medical skills such as airway management and administering an IV and medications, as well as advanced cardiac interventions."

Adding another fire engine be

also resulted in promotional opportunities for existing SWFD firefighters to become "company officers" and lead the engine through its first days responding to calls.

In the future, SWFD is planning to build its sixth fire station near Serenoa Road, which is situated halfway between the existing Fire Stations 1 and 2. Once the sixth station is built, Engine 6 and its staffing will be relocated to that new station and respond to calls from that location in order to best fill response gaps.

The District wants to thank its Board of Fire Commissioners and the South Walton community for the continued support, which allows additional apparatus and staffing enhancements to be possible.

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The Community

Business Profile: Spotlight on Phoenix Restoration

Travis Kring has come a long way on his inspiring 4-year journey marked by faith, dedication, and an unshakable commitment to serving God and others. Just one year ago, he was recruited from the real estate world and joined Phoenix Restoration and Catastrophe. In that short time, by the grace of God, Travis and his team, led by Bobby Cates, have generated \$1.2 million in revenue. But beyond the numbers, this

season has been about building meaningful, spiritual, and professional relationships that continue to grow and bear fruit. Travis, Bobby, and the Phoenix team bring a passion for people and excellence into every home and project.

From his days on the court as a basketball player to his time coaching and mentoring players, Travis has always carried a strong sense of leadership and heart. That same spirit now fuels his



work with Phoenix Restoration, where he's become known across the Florida Panhandle for reliability, integrity, and genuine care for the community. His journey has been nothing short of incredible, transforming lives through service, bringing comfort in crisis, and building a reputation that speaks louder than words.

We truly believe that the Phoenix Restoration team is just scratching the surface of what's to come. The growth, the connections, and the opportunities to serve are only beginning. Our Kingdom-focused team at Phoenix is excited to continue impacting our community with care, skill, and faith at the center of it all. Whether you're in need of a free HVAC ductwork mold inspection or help with restoration after a storm or fire, we are ready to show up and help, just like we would for our own family.

Everyone on our team lives here in the Santa Rosa Beach, Destin, and Freeport area. You'll see us around—at Destiny Worship Center, in Grand Fitness, or grabbing groceries at Publix. We're your neighbors, your friends, and your trusted professionals. Honest, caring, and Kingdom-driven, we're here to serve you with excellence. Thank you for letting us be a part of your community. We'd love the opportunity to earn your trust and do business with you.

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National Garden Week Celebration Across America

By Kathleen Edge for District 1 Florida Federation of Garden Clubs

Sponsored by National Garden Clubs, Inc., the 2025 National Garden Week Celebration is June 1-7. Garden clubs across America will be conducting educational programs, garden tours and beautifying the environment.

The ten Panhandle garden clubs in the four counties of District 1 of the Florida Federation of Garden Clubs will offer a variety of activities focused on promoting a healthy gardening lifestyle that lasts a lifetime by reducing stress and showcasing the rewards that come from diligent efforts.

In Walton County, Green Thumb Garden Club's beautification project will be the refurbishment of the Butterfly Garden at Eden Gardens State Park in Point Washington.

On June 6, District 1 of the Florida Federation of Garden Clubs will host a ceremony to commemorate the refurbishing of the William Bartram Trail Marker at Fort Pickens Gulf Island National Park, Pensacola Beach. The prominent Philadelphia Bartram family was deeply involved in horticulture during colonial times. The ceremony begins at 10 a.m. and the exact location will be available via signs at the entrance gate.

Please join NGC and FFGC in the celebration of National Garden Week.

To find events near you, go to https://gardenclubsnwfl.com/ localclubs.



The community

Spotlight On Elizabeth Erin Designs

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At Elizabeth Erin Designs, we are more than just a full-service Residential, Commercial, and Vacation Rental Interior Design Firm – we bring your dreams to life. For over 21 years, clients across the U.S. have trusted us to transform their spaces into functional, beautiful reflections of their vision, and we take that responsibility to heart. While we proudly serve clients nationwide, we have local design experts right here in your community, with designers in the Destin area of Florida, the Rochester area of New York, and central Iowa. No matter where you're located, our team is ready to bring our trusted design process to you.



When I founded Elizabeth Erin Designs, my mission was clear: to exceed expectations and be a trusted partner throughout the design process. From luxury vacation rentals in Florida to commercial spaces in New York, our nationwide and local clientele count on us to deliver high-end designs that perfectly reflect their goals. Acting as the crucial bridge between you and your contractor, we ensure every aspect of your project is executed with precision, care, and excellence – down to the smallest detail, including stunning 3-D walkthroughs and documentation that rival HGTV.



More Than Just Interiors / The EED Process

Our Ensured Ease Design (EED) process is built around you – offering flexibility and customization at every turn. With flat-fee design packages, you can tailor your experience to perfectly match your needs, whether you're embarking on new construction or a complete redesign.

From the first consultation to the final accent, we're with you every step of the way. Our team of designers brings both nationwide expertise and local knowledge to every project, ensuring that the design process is as seamless as it is inspiring. We take immense pride in creating spaces that not only function seamlessly but reflect your personal style and fulfill your vision.

Experience Trust, Integrity, and Lasting Design – Locally and Beyond. With over two decades of experience and projects spanning from coast to coast, we've earned a reputation for trust, integrity, and extraordinary design. As featured in [Insert Major Publication], our trendsetting designs continue to push the boundaries of what's possible. At Elizabeth Erin Designs, it's not just about creating beautiful spaces – it's about building lasting relationships. When you choose us, you're not just hiring a design firm – you're gaining a lifelong partner dedicated to making your current and future projects truly unforgettable.





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Turn your dream space into a reality today. Whether you're right here in Florida, New York, Iowa, or anywhere in between, we're ready to bring your vision to life. Call Natalie, our Account Executive, at (702) 292-4370. She'll guide you through the first steps of transforming your space into something spectacular. Your vision is our mission – let's achieve it together.



🀞 Community

Brick and Mortar Again: Nicole Paloma is Back

turous road of recovery. "One

of the best gifts you can give to

people is to inspire them to see

the beauty and find gratitude

for exactly who they are," she

says. Her growing selection of hand-painted quote t-shirts with

lines like "Gratitude changes

everything" and "Be fearless in

pursuit of what sets your soul on fire" have a devoted follow-

Deftly directing an armful finding their way on the advenof rich shantung silk under the needle, designer Nicole Paloma finishes the seam, stands up, and shakes out a fully formed Seville skirt. For those of us who reached our sewing apogee making three-pleat masks, this is something akin to magic. For Paloma, this is just another day and another skirt, one of many that define her decade-plus as a boundary-pushing designer. After a foray into the online

retail world, she's brought her skills back to terra firma with a bright and airy store in Seacreast on 30A, now open daily.

Paloma is more than just a designer and creator of handsewn clothes.



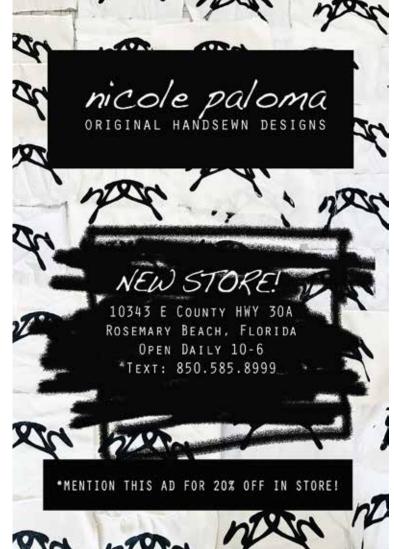
ing amongst many.

She's also a champion of women its beachy aesthetic, Paloma's and, as a recovering alcoholic, a designs stand out. For one thing, great supporter of those who are she doesn't shy away from black,



and her work often includes pieces with a real edge (in the case of a gala gown made of metal mesh, quite literally). For another, she makes apparel with comfort in mind, often choosing fabrics in soft knits that suit a variety of body types and a range of ages without losing their cool factor. Paloma says, "Personally

> **NICOLE PALOMA** continued on page 20



SOUTHERN GRACE RESTORATION The Premier Home Improvement Company on 30A



The community

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

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

Gone are the days when men's shopping was limited to a few basic options. The emergence of the "brotique" concept marks a departure from the traditional and paves the way for an elevated and personalized shopping experience. These stores have become synonymous with a fresh take on men's fashion, grooming, and lifestyle, providing a haven where men can explore their individuality without compromise. So, what sets Captured Clothing apart from conventional men's stores? It starts with the ambiance. Step into this brotique, and you'll find yourself in an atmosphere carefully crafted to radiate style, sophistication and masculine energy. The decor, lighting, and overall aesthetic are designed to create an inviting space that appeals to the sensibilities, making you right at home.

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

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



counterparts, these stores prioritize individualized service, with knowledgeable staff members who are passionate about being able to help customers. The "brotique" is more than just a place to buy clothes or grooming products; it has become a desti-

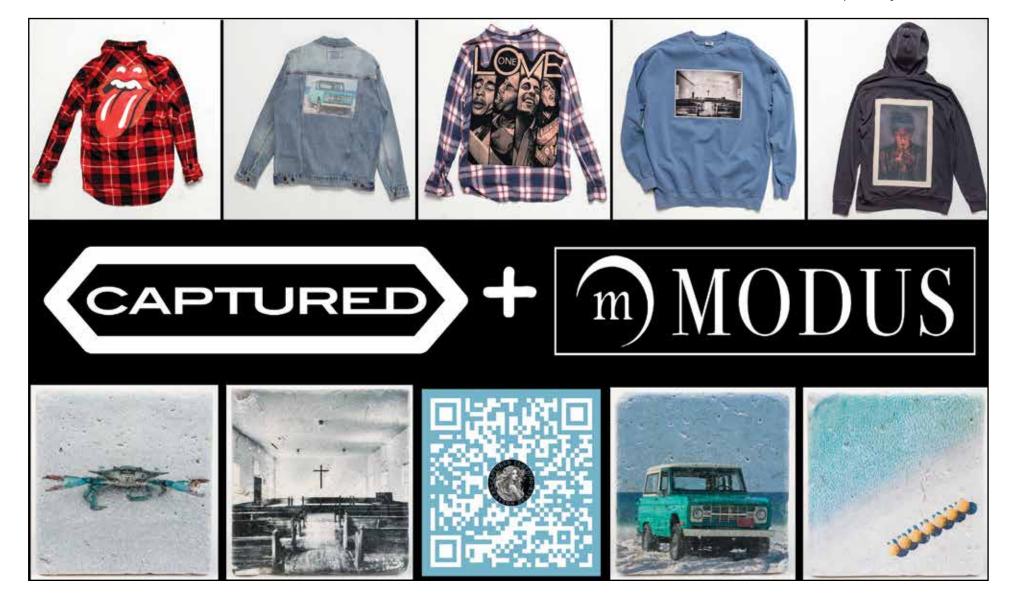
nation for men seeking inspiration, community, and a sense of belonging. Many of these stores host events, workshops, and collaborations, creating a platform for men to connect, network, and share their experiences and interests. As the popularity of the "brotique" continues to rise, it has become a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

Here at Captured Clothing we are excited and proud to embrace this new era of mens retail and known as 30A's Brotique!

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

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

37 Logan Ln Suite 3, Santa Rosa Beach, FL 32459 | (850) 461-9098 | moduscaptured



The community

Page 13

Emerald Coast Hospice Care Presents Fore Her Organization with Significant Contribution for 2025

Fore Her is proud to announce a generous donation of \$11,000 from Emerald Coast Hospice Care, who has once again stepped forward as a key community partner.

Over the last several years, Emerald Coast Hospice Care has shown unwavering support for Fore Her, serving as the Presenting Sponsor for the organization's signature fundraising events, including the annual Pink Walk, Tea for Her, and Golf Outing. This year, Emerald Coast Hospice Care awarded Fore Her a generous contribution to serve as the Presenting Sponsor for all of its 2025 signature fundraisers.

"Emerald Coast Hospice Care is so pleased to be able to help support all of the wonderful work that Fore Her does for our community," says Melody Joy, Hospice and Palliative Care Consultant with Emerald Coast Hospice Care. "It is an honor to be associated with such a noble charitable cause. We are grateful for all of the support that they provide to local residents."

A check presentation took place on April 16 at Emerald



Coast Hospice Care's executive office to commemorate this significant contribution. Sandi Dehner, Executive Director of Emerald Coast Hospice Care and Melody Joy presented the check to Amy Walsh, Fore Her Founder and Ginny Richerson, Fore Her Patient Liaison.

"We are so grateful to Melody Joy and Emerald Coast Hospice Care for their incredibly generous gift to Fore Her," says Ginny Richerson, Fore Her Patient Liaison. "Their donation will make a significant difference in the lives of our breast cancer applicants by allowing us to provide financial assistance during their most challenging times."

Fore Her, a local nonprofit organization, offers financial assistance, resources, hope, and compassion for all who are affected by breast cancer along the Gulf Coast, with their signature fundraisers which include Pink Run, Golf Outing and Tea Fore Her.

For more information about Fore Her or how you can contribute, sponsor their events or get involved, contact amy@foreher. org or visit www.foreher.org/teafore-her.

Walton County Board of County Commissioners Officially Designates May as 'Art Month Walton County'

At the April 22 Board of County Commissioners (BCC) meeting, the Walton County Board of County Commissioners officially proclaimed May as Art Month Walton County, highlighting the county's ongoing commitment to fostering the arts, supporting local artists, and enriching the cultural landscape of the community.

Commissioner Donna Johns shared her thoughts on the importance of the Arts in Walton County, stating, "The Arts are central to Walton County's identity, enriching our community culturally, socially, and economically. Art Month celebrates the creativity that brings us together and enhances the quality of life for all who live in and visit our county. We are proud to support the Cultural Arts Alliance and all who contribute to the vibrant ar-

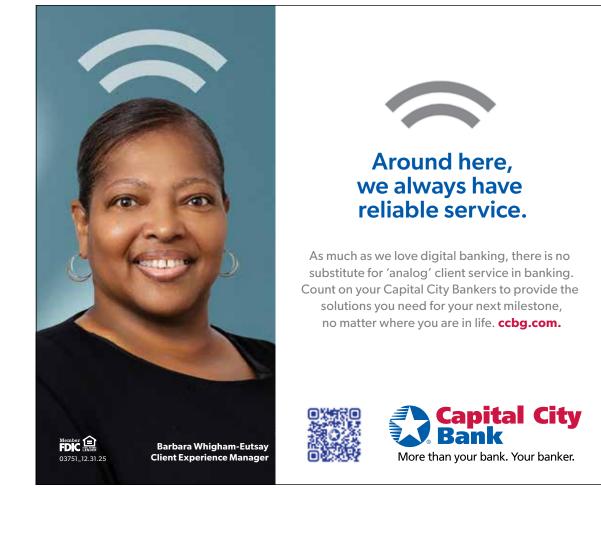
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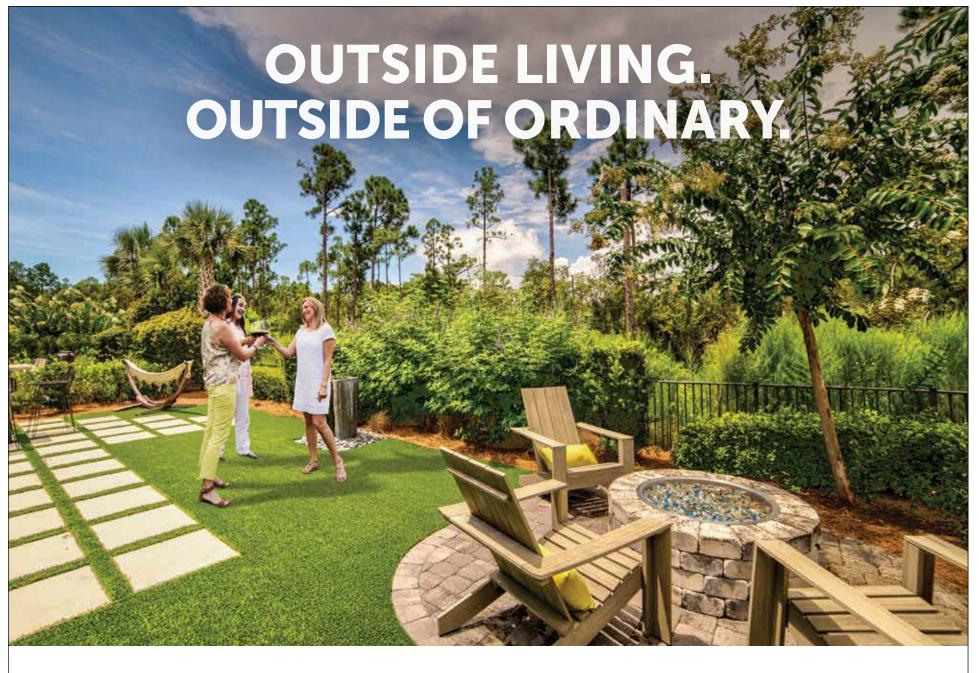
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The Community



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KOLTERHOMES[®]

Is Your Storefront Silently Sending Customers Away This Season?



By DANICA LAFAIRE

In the heart of Northwest Florida, from the streets of Destin to the shops in Fort Walton Beach and the growing businesses of Walton County, local pride runs deep-and so does the importance of first impressions. While quality products and top-tier service are the backbone of any successful business, many owners overlook a simple but powerful factor: how your business looks from the outside. A clean, well-maintained exterior-clear windows, swept walkways and fresh signage—is key to turning foot traffic into revenue.

And why does this focus on a pristine exterior hold such significance here in the heart of Northwest Florida? It's because we understand the fabric of our community. Our businesses aren't just storefronts, but integral parts of the local landscape, reflecting the pride we collectively hold for our beautiful surroundings

Think about it: visitors flock to our stunning beaches and charming towns seeking an escape, a breath of fresh air. When they encounter businesses that mirror this beauty and care through their clean and welcoming exteriors, they reinforce their positive impression of our entire region. It signals that we, as local business owners, are custodians of this beauty, extending the same level of care to our establishments as we do to our natural treasures.

Customers often decide where to shop, dine or do business in a matter of seconds. And in that brief moment, appearances matter. Multiple studies show that people are more likely to trust and spend money with businesses that look clean, organized and professional. This sends a quiet but powerful message: "We care about the details."

On the flip side, a cluttered or dirty storefront can turn people away-sometimes for good. In fact, many consumers admit to avoiding businesses with poorly maintained exteriors or negative cleanliness reviews. In today's connected world, word travels fast, and a single bad impression can impact your reputation more than you might expect.

But here's the good news: making your business stand out doesn't have to be complicated or expensive. Often, it's the simple things-like sparkling windows or a tidy entrance-that create the most welcoming atmosphere. These small touches not only draw people in, but also show that you're ready and eager to serve.

Let's not forget, in a closeknit community like ours, wordof-mouth also travels quickly. A business that presents itself with pride and attention to detail earns the trust and loyalty of locals who are the lifeblood of our economy year-round. A clean exterior isn't just about attracting tourists; it's about fostering a sense of community pride and mutual respect among neighbors. It says, 'We care about our business, and we care about our community.'

Interestingly, customers tend to be more forgiving of small service hiccups when they feel like they're in a clean, cared-for space. It builds trust, which is at the heart of every lasting customer relationship.

Investing in a clean exterior is more than just good business sense; it's an investment in the very essence of what makes Northwest Florida, and especially our corner, so special. It's



about contributing to the overall appeal of our region, strengthening our local economy, and showcasing the pride we all share in calling this beautiful place home. And that, ultimately, is why a clear view from the outside can lead to a clearer path to success on the inside.

Whether you're looking to attract foot traffic, earn repeat business, or simply reflect the pride you take in your work, keeping your exterior clean is a smart and lasting investment.

At Fish Window Cleaning, we understand that First Impressions Start Here.

Call 850.842.2162 or visit fishwindowcleaning.com/3249 to schedule a free estimate. We're proud to serve our local community and help fellow business owners shine—literally.



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LOCALLY OWNED & OPERATED

Community

How 850 Midlife Health & Wellness is **Redefining Aging in the Local Community**

Did you know the average life expectancy in the U.S. is 78.6 years? Here in sunny Florida, we edge just a little higher at 79.6 years. Not bad-but what good is living longer if we aren't feeling our best along the way?

Here's the truth: no one plans to develop a chronic illness, but how many of us are actively thinking about aging well? Some, sure. But probably not enough. At 850 Midlife Health & Wellness, the focus is clear: prevention, independence, and helping people in midlife stay well, feel strong, and thrive through the years.

Healthcare that is Individualized

850 Midlife was founded by local nurse practitioner Margaret Turk Russell, APRN, AGACNP-BC, who brings not just years of experience in acute and chronic care, but also a deep personal connection to the local community, with her upbringing along the Emerald Coast. As both a provider and a patient, Margaret knows firsthand how overwhelming the healthcare system can be, and how easy it is for prevention to take a backseat in the rush of everyday life.

That's why she created a practice centered around what really matters: personal connection, thoughtful care, and helping people stay healthy before issues become chronic. Perhaps you are already experiencing some chronic issues. Margaret will assist in the management and modification of risk to prevent exacerbation. Margaret is

truly invested in this community-and in your health and well-being.

A Different Kind of **Healthcare Experience**

At 850 Midlife, bigger isn't better. It's the details that count-time spent listening, educating, and creating a personalized care plan that works for your lifestyle and your goals.

This isn't rushed, insurancedriven care. You'll have a full hour for your first visit, so Margaret can understand your concerns, your health history, and where you want to go from here.

What Does 850 Midlife **Offer?**

A hybrid concierge-style, Direct Primary Care (DPC) model designed specifically for adults 18+, including:

- Primary & preventive care
- Sick visits & telehealth
- Weight loss support with **GLP-1** medications (like semaglutide)
- Bioidentical hormone therapy for women (HRT) and men (TRT)
- Cash-pay lab work with 24-48 hour results (with itemized receipts if requested for self-submitting insurance reimbursement)
- Local referrals when needed

Why Midlife Is the Perfect Time to Invest in Your Health

Noticing shifts in energy, mood, weight, or just a nagging "something's off"? Margaret is here to help you decode the questions we all have but don't always get answers to:

• Could it be my thyroid or cortisol?

- Am I dealing with insulin resistance—is this diabetes?
- Is this perimenopause-or menopause?
- Are GLP-1 medications right for me? Is there another option?
- Is low testosterone affecting my energy and drive?
- How much protein do I really need?
- Am I at risk for heart disease?
- What can I do now to avoid chronic illness later?
- ately?

The truth is, midlife is the time to fine-tune—before little problems become big ones. Prevention now pays off in strength, vitality, and independence later.



Margaret Turk Russell, APRN, AGACNP-BC **Owner & Practitioner of 850** Midlife Health & Wellness

Bioidentical Hormones: Tailored to the Individual

Interested in hormone therapy but unsure where to start? Unlike synthetic birth control hormones, bioidentical HRT/ TRT uses natural compounds and comes in many formscreams, patches, sprays, injections, even pellets (850 Midlife is not inserting pellets at this time).

Margaret's approach is step-by-step and individualized-starting conservatively, monitoring closely, and adjusting when needed.

You Deserve More Than 10 Minutes and a Prescription

In Walton County, 59% of the population is aged 18-64, and this is the group 850 Midlife is made for. If you're

ready to take charge of your health and feel empowered in your body again, Margaret and 850 Midlife are here to support you.

Book Today & Start Feeling Like You Again

Ready for care that sees the full picture—and actually takes the time to understand yours? 850 Midlife is by appointment only, offering flexible later afternoon and evening appointments, plus select Saturday availability-because your health shouldn't have to compete with your calendar: your work schedule, your children's team practice, date night. You can book directly online anytime at: www.850Midlife.Janeapp.com

Because midlife isn't a crisis-it's a comeback! And Margaret Turk Russell APRN, is here to help you live it well. Find Margaret on Instagram @850midlife. 850 Midlife Health & Wellness is located at 3754 Hwy 30a, Unit A in Santa Rosa Beach, Florida. Margaret shares a space with local nurse practitioner Katherine Porter APRN, ACNP-BC who is the owner/operator of Hydrate 30A & Intrepid Health. Katie offers IV therapy, Botox, Medical/Wellness, Sick care and can be reached at www.Hydrate 30A.com.

Mention this article and receive a complimentary B12 injection.

Margaret Turk Russell, APRN, AGACNP-BC Owner & Practitioner of 850 Midlife Health & Wellness



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Relaxation and Wellness: Bringing Health and Wellness to the Community With Viking Spas

Did you know that when it comes to relaxation, recovery, and overall well-being, few things compare to the soothing experience of a high-quality hot tub! Rob Abel is your dedicated local hot tub dealer for Viking Spas and has witnessed the health benefits of high quality relaxation firsthand. With a passion for fitness and health, Rob isn't just selling hot tubs—he's promoting a lifestyle of wellness that benefits both the body and mind.

The Health Benefits of Hot Tubs

As someone who values fitness, Rob understands how crucial recovery is after workouts. Hot tubs offer a natural way to relax muscles, reduce stress, and improve circulation. Whether you're an athlete looking for muscle recovery or someone who simply wants to unwind after a long day, soaking in a hot tub can provide numerous benefits, including:

• Muscle Relaxation & Pain Relief -- Viking hot tubs also offer significant advantages for muscle recovery and pain management. The strategically placed jets target key muscle groups, enhancing circulation and helping flush out lactic acid buildup. This makes the tubs especially beneficial for athletes or individuals with chronic pain conditions like arthritis or fibromyalgia. The heat soothes aches, while the massaging action stimulates blood flow, promoting faster healing.

• **Improved Circulation** –The heat from a hot tub promotes better blood flow, which can help with muscle recovery and overall cardiovascular health. Soaking in hot water can mimic the effects of light exercise by increasing heart rate and lowering blood pressure. Regular use may contribute to better heart health over time.

• Stress Reduction – One of the primary health benefits of Viking Series hot tubs is stress relief. The combination of warm water and hydrotherapy jets helps relax tense muscles, lowers cortisol levels and reduces anxiety. The buoyancy of the water supports the body, easing pressure on joints and allowing the mind to unwind. This stress



reduction can lead to improved sleep quality and overall mental health.

• **Better Sleep** – A nighttime soak can improve sleep quality by relaxing the body and mind before bed.

Why a Viking Spas?

Family-owned and Americanbuilt, high quality material and superior components are the cornerstone of every Viking tub. Each spa is meticulously crafted with careful workmanship and an unwavering attention to detail, ensuring that every aspect of the hot tub is designed to last for years to come.



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Editor & Publisher Dave White dave@southwalton.life editor@southwalton.life

Production & Layout Dawna Shackley

graphics@southwalton.life Advertising Department

850-399-0228

Advertising Manager Raymond Cyr 850 797-3546 sales@southwalton.life

Contributing Writers Heather Bennett 850-399-0228

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More Than Just a Hot Tub Dealer

Viking Series hot tubs offer a blend of luxury, durability, and wellness, making them a popular choice for those seeking both relaxation and health benefits. These hot tubs are designed with therapeutic features that promote physical and mental wellbeing, turning a simple soak into a holistic health experience. And for Rob, selling hot tubs isn't just about making a sale—it's about helping improve the health and quality of life of every customer!. Whether you're looking for relief from sore muscles, a way to enhance your fitness routine, or simply a place to relax with family and friends, Rob is here to help you find the perfect hot tub to fit your needs.

If you're interested in experiencing the therapeutic benefits of a Viking Spa, reach out to Rob today. Your journey to relaxation and wellness starts here! For more information, visit www.30ahottubs.com, email Rob@30ahottubs.com or call (850) 830-0003





100 Years of Golf!

Eagle Springs Golf Course and Recreational Center is a 190 acre site located in DeFuniak Springs. The Club currently offers an 18-hole Golf Course, Public Swimming Pool and Clubhouse. Future expansion will include fishing docks, walking trails, basketball courts, tennis courts and much more. Eagle Springs Golf Course is available to host your tournaments and the Clubhouse is available for rent for parties, birthdays and weddings.

All Junior Golfers (15 and Under) play golf FREE.

Eagle Springs Golf & Recreation 117 Country Club Lane, Defuniak Springs

www.eaglespringsgolf.com

() Community

Watersound Fountains to host "Fashion Show for a Cause" benefiting Make-A-Wish® Central and Northern Florida

Join Make-A-Wish Northwest Region of Florida for a charity fashion show to benefit Make-A-Wish Central and Northern Florida on May 16 from 5-8 p.m. Hosted by Watersound Fountains, a vibrant senior living community in Inlet Beach, the event will feature local seniors and residents of the community modeling clothes from nearby

stores, including J. McLaughlin in Watersound.

During the event, attendees will learn more about Make-A-Wish and hear from a local Wish Alumni and her family as they share their story and wish experience. Proceeds will support Make-A-Wish Northwest Region of Florida as they create life-changing wishes for local children battling critical illnesses. The reception begins at 5 p.m., followed by the fashion show at 6 p.m.

Watersound Fountains is located at 65 Origins Parkway in Inlet Beach.

Tickets are on sale for \$35 per person available at https://bit. ly/MAWfashionshow .



Silver Sands Premium Outlets



"A Walk Down Magnolia Lane Raises \$80,000 to Support Vulnerable Children in Northwest Florida"



Golf-themed soiree draws community support, sponsors, and donors to provide homes, healing, and hope through Embrace Florida Kids.

Embrace Florida Kids, a nonprofit faith-based organization, has announced that its second annual A Walk Down Magnolia Lane event raised over \$80,000 to provide homes, healing, and hope for vulnerable children across the Florida Panhandle. The annual event took place on Monday, April 7, 2025, at the WaterColor Lake-House in Santa Rosa Beach.

A Walk Down Magnolia Lane is a golf-themed soiree celebrating the environment of The Masters and features a tournament-themed menu, golf-related activities with toptier prizes for the winners, signature cocktails, outstanding company and music by Jacob Mohr.

"There is a tremendous need in Northwest Florida and events like A Walk Down Magnolia Lane help close a critical gap," said Blake Horne, Ph.D., president and CEO, Embrace Florida Kids. "We are especially grateful to our sponsors, who supported this evening; our community, who joined us as we celebrated this special event; and our staff and volunteers, who are steadfast in their dedication to the families we serve."

The event's Nicklaus sponsor, Good News Church, was joined by Tiger sponsors Peaceful Family Oklahoma and Shoreline Title. Palmer sponsors were Hancock Whitney, Hill Coleman LLC, La Free Film, Liufau McCall, Jennifer and Larry Mintman and Kim and Paul Stagner, while Hogan sponsors were A-1 Storage South Walton, Emerald Wellness, LLC, Florida Haus, Mona and Mark LaBranche, Review Harvest, Tallahassee Orthopedic Clinic, Tracewater Homes and the United Methodist Foundation.

"I proudly attended and sponsored Embrace Florida Kids' A Walk Down Magnolia Lane - a fundraiser held to support the organization's mission of empowering and uplifting Florida's communities," said Mike Barcum, Chairman Emeritus, Peaceful Oklahoma. " The event brought together supporters for an evening of philanthropy, networking, and golf-inspired festivities. It was an honor to support Embrace Florida Kids' vital work at such a creative and inspiring event."

Embrace Florida Kids' mission is to embrace and nurture vulnerable children and families by providing homes, healing and hope through foster care, family preservation and residential services. The organization meets kids experiencing neglect, abuse and abandonment where they are and provides them with an individualized support system to help them flourish.

To learn more about A Walk Down Magnolia Lane and Embrace Florida Kids, visit WalkDownMagnoliaLane.org and EmbraceFLKids. org or follow Embrace Florida Kids on social media at @EmbraceFLKids. **New FM Station**

By Rick Moore

We are excited to share some wonderful news with you. A new radio station, WODR, FM 90.3, Destiny Radio, has just been launched in our area. This new station reaches from Panama City Beach to Saint George Island. With special programming tailored specifically for this region, the Forgotten Coast is forgotten no more! Our mis-

sion statement is "Encouraging Connection With God And Our Community," and we are indeed proud to be a part of this great community.

The core message of Destiny Radio is: "There is great potential locked up in each and every one of us; a destiny in heaven and a destiny on earth." These are the words of our founder, Steve Vaggalis. He was part of the team that launched what is now Destiny Radio decades ago. Our agenda is in no way a secret agenda. Our values are crystal clear. We desire to help transform communities by exercising goodness, generosity, and love.

Destiny Radio is family focused. There are few things these days that families can enjoy together. Even going to church, you will find the family splits up as soon as they arrive. Children go to children's church, teenagers go to youth groups, adults go to their classes, and senior citizens hang out with each other. However, when everyone is in the car driving down the street, they can all enjoy the upbeat, positive music on Destiny Radio. It truly bridges generations.

90.3 FM is commercial free. No one ever asks for money over the air. We proudly play uplifting music twenty-four hours a day. Though we do not air sermons, some airtime is dedicated to short inspirational nuggets. A great example of this would be the segments we call Mile Markers. These are short messages that pack a punch. They consist of multiple guest speakers, multiple styles, multiple topics and multiple lengths ranging from thirty seconds to two minutes. Topics and locations will change, but each message will help direct you to your destination.

Destiny Radio is made up of several media outlets: 90.3 FM, 91.1 FM in Fort Walton Beach, a website at DestinyRadio.live, and Destiny Visual Radio (DVR) which is our multi-platform app. The Destiny Visual Radio app is available from the Apple App Store, Google Play Store, Apple TV, Roku TV and Fire TV. This new app features your favorite Christian music videos. It allows pausing and rewinding in ways FM Radio cannot. The app also lists the name of the song playing, the name of the artist, and shows the album cover. The app features several one-minute inspirational messages, quizzes, a blog, and upcoming events highlighting concerts that are coming to our area. To download the app visit: https://subsplash.com/destinyworshipcenter-fl/app

A recent survey showed a vast majority of those who listen to music on FM Radio do not want AI technology deciding the songs they hear. They want more than just the top twenty songs from a countdown generated by a computer. They prefer a curated list from someone they trust. We feel like we're someone the region can trust and we take our song selection seriously. One of our goals is for FM 90.3 to become a primary source in the region for discovering new music and new artists. Listeners can request certain songs to be played on air by emailing contact@destinyradio. live or using the "Call In" feature on our app.

Though there are many ways we can listen to our favorite music, FM radio remains a staple for listening in vehicles. It's a medium people look to. People find a sense of comfort from their local radio station because they know they have the heartbeat of their community. We want FM 90.3 to have the heartbeat of this community, to inform the community, to encourage the community, and to inspire the community.

Rick Moore is Communication Pastor at Destiny Worship Center

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The community

The Blessings of Theatre Education

By Heath Carroll, Education and Outreach Director, Emerald Coast Theatre Company

I've been blessed enough to work in theatre education for 13 years. I've seen children learn and grow. They've learned about themselves, learned to work as a team, learned to build skills that aren't only beneficial to the stage, but truly follow them into their adult lives. These are skills of confidence, communication, and empathy. Surely, learning the process of theatre is fun, but that hidden by-product--the thing they don't yet clock in their young eyes--is that it makes them better people. It's transformative.

One of the biggest transformations I see in my students is confidence. Whether my students are 5 or 75, and I've got both, that first step on stage can be daunting. But as I tell all my students: those butterflies in the tummy? That stage fright? That's a good thing! It means that you care! But, for my kids, there is no need to fear. Because our audiences want to see them succeed! And no matter who is in that audience they can know, without doubt, that they have someone behind them--cheering them on. That's me. It's more than my job. It is my true passion. Because I know what comes next. I see it time and time again; every time that student speaks up, tries-tries again, and feels supported by the group, they start to realize something important: that their voice matters. They're seen. They're heard. That kind of self-assurance? It sticks with them, way beyond the curtain call. And,



parents have repeatedly testified to that fact over the years.

And speaking of parenthood... In a few short weeks, my wife and I will be blessed to welcome our first child into our family. And I want this for my daughter. I want her to have a sense of community. I want her to see the different perspectives that theatre offers. I want her to be wise, and above all, empathetic to those around her. I know that studying theatre and being involved in the art can make this happen. I've lived it myself. I fell in love with theatre in high school. It allowed me a scholarship for college, the ability to travel and meet and work with new people, chiefly among them was the woman who would become her mother. Our shared love of the art brought us together, brought us to this place. It's life altering and life affirming.

And it's so much fun in the summertime. There is magic in the summer for kids. It's two short months that can feel like a year for a child. There's no school. Kids are looking for a way to connect with their friends. Camps of any kind kindle that flame of socialization. I'd want my daughter in a theatre camp. Dancing wildly--even if off beat. Singing loudly--even if off key. Playing. Learning. Pretending. Finding a place to belong.

This summer at Emerald Coast Theatre Company we have a wonderful selection of titles to choose from. Snow White and Seussical the Musical for grades 2nd to 5th. Too Many Detectives, Chicago (audition only) and Beetlejuice for our Teens 6th-12th grade. And our Mini Players, K-1st, have titles like Moana, Encanto, Trolls, and more! There are also several Show Choir Camps available for multiple age groups.

If your kid's looking for a place to belong, I'd love to welcome them to our stage. Maybe they, too, will grow, connect, and fall in love with the arts. There is no way of knowing just where it could take them. It could very well be a blessing.

mkaf THURSDAY NIGHT CONCERTS APRIL 10 - JUNE 12 APRIL 10 - JUNE 12 Annual Thursday evening concert live music series featuring family-friendly premier musicians and bands performing everything from classic rock, reggae and disco to modern pop oncerts in the Village nattie kelly arts foundation April 10 | The Fabulous Thunderbirds April 17 | Journeyman: An Eric Clapton Tribute April 24 | Yacht Rock Revue May 1 | Black Jacket Symphony: Journey's Escape May 8 | Dear Amy: Amy Winehouse Tribute May 15 | Kickstand Jenny May 22 | Molly Ringwalds May 29 | Petty Hearts June 5 | A1A: Jimmy Buffet Tribute an EREE June 12 | Adrenalize: Music of Def Leppard Purchase Tickets at MKAF.org/Events RESENTING SEASO PRESENTING SEASON Proceeds from all events benefit MKA nd its ArtsReach educati \mathbf{TSC} nity engage ent initiativ



NICOLE PALOMA continued from page 11

I don't want to get out of my yoga pants or my sweat pants, so I try to make my clothes fit like that, but look like they're ready for a stroll down Fifth Avenue with the right shoes of course!"

In the past, you could find her bathing-suit clad, a toddler attached at the hip, stopping in on a rare day off to custom fit a client's dress. Back again on 30A, you'll still spot kids in tow, older now, but thoroughly part of the process. Though her couture pieces can be found at galas and other formal events, Paloma herself is decidedly down to earth. Wandering barefoot between bolts of fabric, there's a good chance she's been hard at work since the early morning hours and will be there long after everyone else has called it a day, subsisting on her three c's: chocolate, cheese, and coffee.

Nicole Paloma is located at 10343 E County Highway 30A in Seacreast. She's open daily from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Follow @ nicole_paloma_handsewn_designs on Instagram or text (850) 585-8999 for more information.

🎪 Arts

Sinfonia Gulf Coast's Demetrius Fuller Accepted Into Florida Chapter Of The Recording Academy and Appointed To Education Committee

Fuller is currently the only professional member from Northwest Florida in the prestigious organization

Sinfonia Gulf Coast, the region's only fully professional orchestra, proudly announces that its Founder and Music & Artistic Director, Demetrius Fuller, has been accepted as a Professional Member into the Florida Chapter of the Recording Academy.

Furthermore, Fuller has been appointed to the Education Committee of the Florida Chapter, playing an integral role in steering statewide decisions that affect music education initiatives and scholarship opportunities, including those supported through the Academy's charitable arm, MusiCares.

Fuller, who founded Sinfonia Gulf Coast in 2004 at the age of just 24 and joined the Recording Academy in 2024, is currently the only professional member from Northwest Florida in the prestigious organization. This accolade is especially exciting as Sinfonia prepares to celebrate its milestone 20th anniversary season in 2025-2026.

Established in November 1995, the Florida Chapter of the Recording Academy represents the vibrant and diverse music communities of Florida and Puerto Rico. The Chapter provides programming, networking, and growth opportunities for artists and industry professionals across genres, from Latin American and traditional



rock to urban and electronic music. It connects iconic figures such as Gloria Estefan, DJ Khaled, Lynyrd Skynyrd, Tom Petty, and Bad Bunny, reflecting Florida's rich musical heritage and dynamic contemporary scene.

"Joining the Florida Chapter of the Recording Academy is an honor that places Sinfonia Gulf Coast within an influential global network of music industry professionals," says Fuller. "This affiliation aligns perfectly with our mission at Sinfonia to not only redefine the symphony experience but to actively support and elevate music education and professional growth opportunities within our community

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and beyond."

In addition to his professional membership, Fuller has been actively involved with the Recording Academy as a mentor for GRAMMY U, a program designed to connect music industry professionals with college students nearing graduation who are pursuing careers in various sectors of the music field.

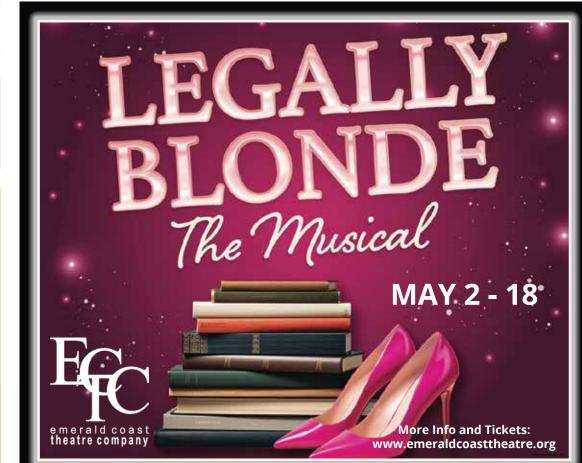
An advocate for contemporary music, throughout his two-decade career, Fuller has premiered, commissioned, or collaborated with acclaimed composers and artists, significantly impacting the cultural landscape regionally and internationally.

"We are beyond proud of this stellar accomplishment," says Elizabeth Boswell, president of the Sinfonia Gulf Coast board of directors. "It demonstrates, once again, that Demetrius Fuller is not only a distinguished music professional but a relevant and actively engaged industry leader."

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🔅 Arts

SEASIDE Institute™ Welcomes CEO

By Christy Milliken xecutive Director, SEASIDE Institute^TM

The SEASIDE Institute[™] welcomes Rob Parker to their Board of Governors. Parker is President & CEO of the Town at Trilith, an award-winning,

master planned residential and mixed-use community located in south metro Atlanta, Georgia, adjacent to Trilith Studios. Town at Trilith accolades and honors include mixed-use Com-

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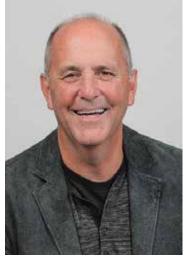




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munity of the Year from the OBIEs, "Best American Living Award" from the National Association of Homebuilders and "Community of the Year" from Builder & Developer Magazine. Rob has a master's degree in organizational leadership from Gonzaga University and over thirty-five years of experience in executive leadership on a local, national, and international level. He currently serves as the President of the National Town **Builders** Association (NTBA) and is on the national board of

directors for the Congress for the New Urbanism (CNU). Prior to his work as a town builder/place maker, Rob served as a chief executive in a variety of industries, including music entertainment, charitable organizations, and community development.

The Seaside Institute will be attending the inaugural Flourishing Summit in May, hosted by the Trilith Foundation. The Flourishing Summit is in partnership with the Global Flourishing Study Team, where select leaders will explore the impact of a meaningful life focused on mental and physical wellness, artistic expression, and social impact. We will dive deep into every dimension of human potential and how best to unlock it. This gathering will be about more than learning - it is about experiencing, connecting, and co-creating a future where being well and doing good go hand in hand. Speakers will include Dan Cathy, Chief Vision Officer; Chairman of Chick-fil-A, Byron Johnson, Baylor University; Matthew Lee, PH.D., Harvard University; and more on May 12 and 13 at the Town at Trilith.

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ECP and Delta Air Lines Expand Service to New York City with Daily Nonstop Flights Starting in November

New Route Enhances Year-Round Connectivity Between the Big Apple and Northwest Florida's Beautiful Beaches

Northwest Florida Beaches International Airport (ECP) announces that Delta Air Lines will be expanding its service to include new daily flights between New York-LaGuardia Airport (LGA) and ECP starting November 6, 2025. This announcement follows the news that Delta will offer seasonal Saturday service between LGA and ECP for Summer 2025. The new year-round route will be operated with an Embraer 175 aircraft, providing passengers with a comfortable and efficient travel experience.

"This expanded nonstop service announcement is a testament to the growing demand for travel to our Region," said Parker W. McClellan Jr., A.A.E., Executive Director of ECP. "Partnering with Delta Air Lines to offer this year-round service will provide our passengers with more convenient travel options and enhance connectivity between New York City and the beautiful beaches of Northwest Florida. We are proud to bring this exciting opportunity to our Region and look forward to welcoming travelers from the Big Apple."

Delta is America's mostawarded airline leading the way to deliver a world-class customer experience on up to 5,000 daily flights to more than 290 destinations on six continents, connecting people to places and to each other.

Passengers can book their flights directly through Delta or by using the new FlyMyAirport booking tool available on the ECP website.



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Arts 🔅



Fort Panic Beach Access Tiny Library

Find this tiny library at Fort Panic Beach Access on 30A, part of a broader project to promote the love of reading in the community. This new, incredibly small library was sponsored by Michelle Bailey and painted by Jenna Varney, the 2019 Walton County Artist of the Year. Find out more about 30A Tiny Library founder, Victoria Sellers, on Instagram @30ATinylibrary. Pictured are founder Victoria Sellers, sponsor Michelle **Bailey, and artist Jenna Varney.**

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Events

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Upcoming Events

Billy Bowlegs Pirate Festival May 15-19

The Billy Bowlegs Pirate Festival returns to Fort Walton Beach May 15-19 with fireworks, a parade, fun family activities and much more. This is the 69th festival benefiting the William Augustus Bowles Historical Foundation, a 501(c)(3)organization that promotes a love for local history.

The Bowlegs Treasure Hunt begins in April, with clues being announced on local radio. Participants can search for Bowlegs coins and win a piece of Captain Billy's treasure. Look for updates at kreweofbowlegs.com, along with an irresistible poem.

Digital Graffiti Festival May 16-17

Digital Graffiti at Alys Beach is an innovative and dynamic event that celebrates the intersection of projection art and architecture. During the event,



international artists display their original digital art upon the white walls of Alys Beach, transforming the SoWal town into a vibrant canvas of motion, color, light, and fun! The draws digital artists from across the globe to explore how their fluid forms connect with people and architecture to create spontaneous and wondrous experiences. Purchase Tickets: https://digitalgraffiti.com.

Friday, May 16 | 8 - 11 p.m.: Digital Graffiti at Alys Beach opens with an adult-only (21+), all-inclusive food and beverage experience. Stroll the festival path, lined with art installations intermixed with festive food and beverage presentations from the best local and regional chefs, restaurants, winemakers, distilleries, and breweries. This eve-



ning will be a spectacle for the senses!

Saturday, May 17 | 8 - 11p.m.: For the finale of the 17th Annual Digital Graffiti event, we welcome families and guests of all ages to experience the projection art installed along the festival path. Engage and interact with the artwork in the immersive festival experience, with food trucks and beverage stands positioned throughout the path with fun eats and drinks for purchase.

Destin Rotary Crawfish Bash May 16

Get ready for a flavorful evening at the Rotary Club of Destin's 13th Annual Cajun Crawfish Bash on Friday, May 16, 2025, from 5:30 to 9 p.m. at The Towne Centre at Seascape. This family-friendly event promises authentic Cajun cuisine, including fresh Louisiana crawfish served with traditional fixings like potatoes, sausage, and corn on the cob. For those preferring alternatives, grilled hamburgers,



🌸 Events

SOUTH WALTON EVENTS

hot dogs, and rotisserie chicken will be available. Enjoy live music from the Fais Do-Do Band, bringing their unique blend of zydeco and R&B to keep you dancing all night. Tickets are priced at \$40 for a regular crawfish meal, \$50 for all-you-can-eat crawfish, and \$15 for kids and non-crawfish meals. Proceeds support young families in need and the Rotary Club of Destin Scholarship Fund. For more information and to purchase tickets, visit www.DestinRotary.com or Facebook/RotaryClubofDestin or contact any Destin Rotarian.

Lionfish Festival May 17-18

The area is once again diving into conservation and coastal celebration with the highly anticipated 2025 Lionfish Festival, returning this spring with a splash. Set to take place May 17–18, 2025, along the Destin Harbor Boardwalk, this vibrant, familyfriendly event merges environmental awareness with fun, food, music, and marine education. The festival will run from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. on both Saturday and Sunday, transforming the Destin Harbor into a bustling celebration of local culture and ecological stewardship. The event is free and open to the public, making it the perfect weekend destination for families, divers and seafood lovers alike.

Memorial Day Service at Gulf Cemetery May 26

Gulf Cemetery will host the annual Memorial Day Ceremony on Monday, May 26 at 10 a.m. in Santa Rosa Beach. The approximately 150 veterans interred in the cemetery will be honored in a service. Folks are encouraged to bring umbrellas and/or personal lawn chairs. A limited number of folding chairs will be provided. The speaker for the 2025 Memorial Day Ceremony will be Colonel Ed Hubbard (edhubbardpow.com/ biography/). Gulf Cemetery is located at 1466 S County Highway 393, Santa Rosa Beach.



The REP Rumpelstiltskin in Seaside Mondays

The Seaside REP Theatre presents Rumpelstiltskin Mondays in May at 6 p.m. at the Seaside Amphitheater. This complimentary event will entertain the entire family. Step into the magical storybook world of Rumpelstiltskin where young Biddy, a humble peasant girl, must spin straw into gold. There is only one problem. Biddy has no magical powers! In a desperate race against time, Biddy forms an unlikely alliance with the mischievous trickster Rumpelstiltskin. Visit LoveTheRep. com.

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!

Frog's Leap Wine Dinner at Burnt Pine Sandestin June 7

Get ready for a show to die for—join in the fun at Sandestin Golf and Beach Resort's Burnt Pine for an unforgettable Murder Mystery Wine Dinner on Saturday, June 7th from 6-9 p.m. featuring the renowned wines of Frog's Leap Winery. RSVP to Julie.Lewis@sandestin.com to secure your seat—space is limited, and this is one dinner you don't want to miss.

Kick off the evening with a lavender champagne toast before diving into a multi-course menu paired with wines from one of Napa Valley's most iconic and sustainably driven estates. From scallops on a rice paper flower to lamb lollipops and chocolate-dipped strawberries, each course is as dramatic and delightful as the mystery that will unfold around you.

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Wellness



BY CHRISTIAN REGALADO

So you're turning 65 this year. You've been anticipating life transitions that start happening around this time, and you know you'll be eligible for Medicare Parts A and B soon. Like many of the 10,000 Baby

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New year, new you! "Get the shape you want."

Boomers who turn 65 each day, you're wondering, "What do I do next?'

Spring Cleaning and Medicare

One thing you want to make sure to do is enroll in Medicare Parts A and B. If you're already receiving Social Security benefits, you will automatically get your Medicare card about 3 months before your birth month. But if you're like most folks and don't plan to collect social security benefits until a later date, you have to request your card from ssa.gov or in person and, ideally, you'll apply about 3 months before you turn 65. For many, this process is easy but for some, it's quite challenging.

If you don't already have an online Social Security account set up, you'll need to get that done at ssa.gov and go through their multi-step authentication process. I have noticed recently when helping clients request their card for Medicare Parts A & B that the site seems easier to use. Just be prepared to receive many texts verifying your identity. Social Security guards your information carefully and wants to make sure they are dealing with the right person.

Once you get into your SS account, there are two options, and this is where things can start to get complicated. The first option simply says, "Sign up for Medicare." There is a little blue box with an (APPLY ONLINE) option. Most people should select this and start their application. The second option says, "Sign up for Part B Only," and that blue box will say, "Get Started." This is for folks who already have Part A or who delayed enrolling in Medicare because they stayed on their employer group plan. After this selection, verify your identity

and complete your application. If you need assistance, give me a call. I would be glad to help vou.

Keep in mind that once you complete your application, it will take 2-4 weeks before you receive your Medicare card. When you receive a letter showing that your application is being processed, it means you may already be in the system and your Medicare number is accessible.

Once you get your card and even before, you will want to know about the many options you have so you can consider which will be best for you. Call me, I can help.

I am available any day that's best for you to schedule a consultation in person at my office, your home or office, or via Zoom to get many of your Medicare questions answered in person.

Don't be fooled by advertising that may enroll you in the wrong plan.

Folks living in the Panhandle area actually have many excellent Medicare plans to choose from. Which is best will depend on your personal situation. Let me help you select the one that is right for you. Should you have any questions or need help, please contact me. My services are no cost to you and I am always happy to help a neighbor. Reach out anytime! Email Christian@evergreenhealthins. com or call (850) 687- 7606.



Check out the new beach towels at **Pecan Jacks** in Santa Rosa Beach. All Theo-inspired products benefit the educational mission of the Friends South Walton Sea Turtles nonprofit organization.

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Beyond Routine: Innovative Testing for Proactive Health



By Dr. Karen DeVore

Healthcare should be proactive, not just reactive. You shouldn't have to wait until something is "wrong" to start paying attention to your body. This is the foundation of our integrative approach—focusing on prevention, understanding the root cause of symptoms and delivering care that's personalized to you.

Although often a great first step, conventional lab work often doesn't tell the full story. Maybe you've been told your results are "normal," but you still don't feel like yourself. Fatigue, brain fog, bloating, mood swings or trouble sleeping—these aren't just in your head. They're signals from your body that deserve to be explored, not dismissed.

That's why we offer a deeper level of testing at the Tortoise Clinic. Our specialty diagnostics are designed to find answers, target care more effectively, and give you the insights you need to feel empowered on your wellness journey.

Precision Testing for Personalized Care

Specialty testing goes beyond the basics. It helps us detect hidden imbalances, identify early warning signs, and tailor a treatment plan specifically for you. This isn't about chasing symptoms—it's about uncovering what's really going on beneath the surface so we can support your health in a meaningful, lasting way.

Here are a few of the impactful tests we use to support your whole-body wellness:

• Galleri® Multi-Cancer Early Detection Test

This groundbreaking blood test screens for over 50 types of aggressive cancer—many of which don't have routine screening options. It detects tiny fragments of tumor DNA in your blood before symptoms ever appear. It's a great option for those with a family history of cancer, unexplained symptoms, or anyone who wants to take a proactive approach.

• Genova GI Effects® Comprehensive Stool Analysis

Your gut tells a bigger story than you might think. This test looks at digestion, inflammation, your microbiome (the bacteria living in your gut), and even signs of infection. Because your gut health is connected to your immune system, mood, energy levels, and more, this test can be a game-changer if you're struggling with things like bloating, fatigue, skin issues, or autoimmune concerns.

• Hormone Testing (Serum & DUTCH)

We offer both traditional blood work and the more advanced DUTCH test, to give us a fuller picture of your hormone patterns. DUTCH helps us see how your body makes, uses, and clears hormones like cortisol, estrogen, and testosterone. It's especially useful for symptoms like low energy, irregular cycles, sleep issues, and mood swings.

• Food Sensitivity Testing

Unlike allergy tests, which check for immediate reactions, this test looks at delayed immune responses that can cause chronic inflammation. That includes symptoms like brain fog, joint pain, headaches, or breakouts often tied to foods you'd never suspect. Knowing your sensitivities helps us craft a dietary strategy that truly supports your body.

• Methylation & Genetic Wellness Testing

This test looks at the genes that affect detox, hormone balance, mood, and how your body uses nutrients. A common example is the MTHFR gene, which plays a role in how you process folate and B vitamins. With this info, we can fine-tune your supplements and lifestyle to work with your genetics, not against them.

• Functional Lab Panels

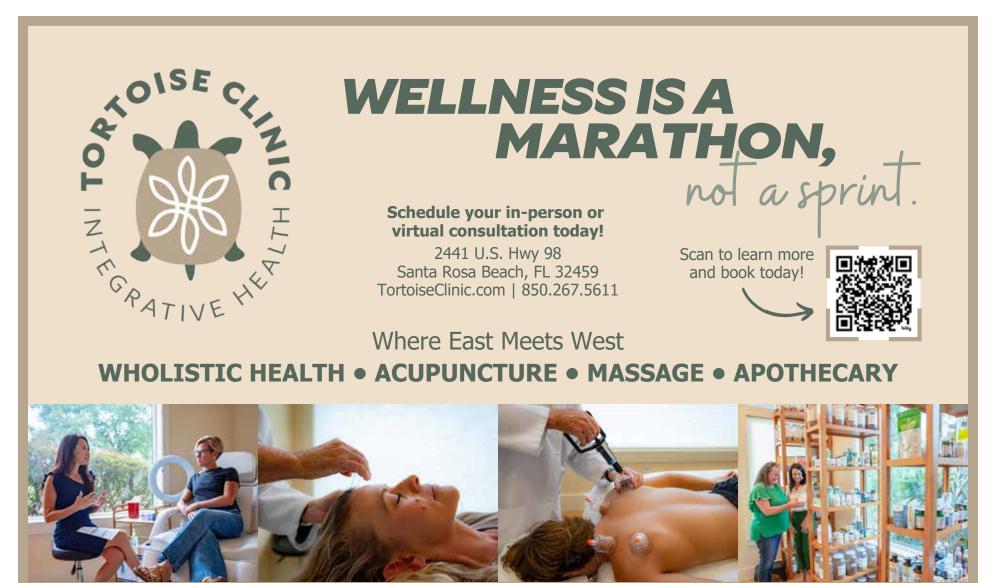
We also look at standard labs—like vitamins, minerals, cholesterol and inflammatory markers—through a functional lens. That means we're not just checking if you're in a "normal" range; we're asking, is this optimal for you? These panels help us assess your metabolic health, nutrient levels, and inflammation in more meaningful ways.

Empowering Your Wellness Journey

Specialty testing isn't about collecting more data—it's about getting the right insights. By understanding your body's unique rhythms and needs, we can create a plan that's truly tailored to you. Whether you're managing symptoms or staying ahead of potential issues, we're here to guide you with clarity and care.

At the Tortoise Clinic, we believe wellness is built over time not rushed. Our approach helps you slow down, look deeper and make informed decisions without pressure or guesswork.

Because real healing isn't a quick fix—it's progress, not perfection. It's clarity over confusion. Prevention over reaction. And above all, wellness is a marathon, not a sprint.



Wellness

Beach Dermatology Skin Wellness Clinic offers Many Aesthetic Services That Are Safe in the Summer



By Jessica Clark, MD FAAD

Summer is the time when things finally slow down, and hopefully, most of us can take a few days of vacation. With the nicer weather, we tend to be more active and get motivated to try to start taking better care of ourselves. Many people want to try low downtime treatments to diminish old sun damage and the signs of aging, but are often told that they will have to wait until the fall. Beach Dermatology Skin Wellness Clinic is happy to provide several treatments that are safe all year round. We are especially excited about our new laser, the Cyanosure Lutronic Ultra LaseMD. This unique technology is considered a standout in the field of laser skin resurfacing due to its advanced technology, versatility, and patient-friendly features.

1. Advanced Non-Ablative Fractional Technology

Utilizing a 1927 nm Thulium wavelength, the LaseMD Ultra is a non-ablative fractional laser that creates microthermal zones in the skin. This process stimulates collagen and elastin production, improving skin texture and tone without removing the top layer of skin. This approach reduces recovery time and minimizes the risk of complications compared to traditional ablative lasers. There are other 1927 lasers like the Moxi, but Ultra LaseMD offers superior results with less downtime and fewer sessions.

2. Customizable Treatment Options

The system offers adjustable settings, allowing practitioners to tailor treatments from mild to aggressive based on individual skin concerns and goals. This customization makes it suitable for a wide range of issues, including fine lines, pigmentation, and sun damage. This laser is ideal for brown spots, wrinkles, dull texture, even acne, and acne scarring. Hair loss is very hard to treat, but this laser can also help with thinning hair and alopecia.

3. Quick and Comfortable Sessions

Treatments are typically fast, with full-face sessions lasting around 10-15 minutes. Commonly treated areas are the face, neck, chest, arms, and scalp. Most patients experience minimal discomfort, often describing the sensation as mild warmth or tingling. Topical numbing cream can be applied for added comfort during more intense treatments. Dr. Clark offers patients their own prescription for numbing cream if they prefer to apply at home to save waiting time in the office.

4. Minimal Downtime

Post-treatment, patients may experience mild redness, similar to a sunburn, but can resume normal activities almost immediately. Complete healing usually occurs within 7-10 days.

5. Safe for All Skin Types

The LaseMD Ultra is designed to be safe and effective for all skin types, including darker tones, which are often more prone to pigmentation issues. This broad applicability allows for year-round treatments without the risk of hyperpigmentation.

******This is HUGE!! Most lasers are only safe for white skin. This laser is safe for all skin tones and ethnicities.

6. Enhanced Results with Cosmeceutical Ampoules

Following laser treatment, cosmeceutical ampoules containing active ingredients like Exosomes, Vitamin C, Tranexamic Acid, Retinol, or Resveratrol can be applied. These ingredients penetrate the skin through the microchannels created by the laser, enhancing the treatment's effectiveness in addressing pigmentation, aging signs, and skin texture.

7. Cost-Effective and Efficient

The LaseMD Ultra offers high performance at a lower cost compared to many competitors. Its efficiency allows for quick treatments with consistent results, making it a valuable addition to aesthetic practices. This is the laser that a teenager with acne and hyperpigmentation and her grandmother with sun damage and wrinkles can both get before a wedding to reduce the appearance of stubborn concerns. We are so excited to be one of the first to offer this laser in the panhandle!

We also offer a variety of low downtime procedures that can be done in the summer. Of course, you always want to use sunscreen before and after any cosmetic treatments. We offer many options, including neurotoxins like Botox and Dysport, soft tissue fillers like JUVÉDERM and Restylane, Hydrafacials, customized facials, microneedling with Skinpen, dermaplaning and more. With every procedure, ideal results are seen after a series of 3-6 treatments, but many patients are thrilled with results even after one treatment.

Please visit our website www. beachskinclinic.com or call (850) 238-8511 for more details.

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Page 29

Book Review: Max Strom's A Life Worth Breathing

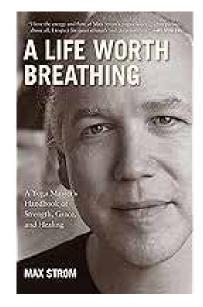


REVIEWED BY MICHAEL MCMANUS, LCSW

Max Strom's "A Life Worth Breathing" is an inspiring and thought-provoking exploration of personal transformation through mindfulness and conscious living. Drawing on his extensive background as a yoga teacher and speaker, Strom presents a comprehensive guide that encourages readers to reflect on their lives and embrace their true selves.

The central theme of the book revolves around the significance of breath—not merely as a biological function but as a powerful tool for emotional and spiritual well-being. Strom eloquently explains how conscious breathing can foster selfawareness, reduce anxiety, and facilitate personal growth. He provides practical exercises and insights that empower readers to harness the power of their breath to navigate challenges and cultivate a more fulfilling life.

Throughout the book, Strom shares personal anecdotes and relatable stories that illustrate his points, making the concepts accessible to a wide audience. I love his warm and engaging writing style, which invites readers to embark on their own journeys



of self-discovery, urging them to confront fears, embrace vulnerability, and seek deeper connections with others. This emphasis on community and relationships adds a rich layer to his message, underscoring the idea that personal growth is often intertwined with our connections to those around us.

In summary, "A Life Worth Breathing" is a beautifully crafted book that offers valuable insights for anyone seeking to lead a more intentional and meaningful life. Max Strom's blend of practical wisdom and philosophical reflection makes this a compelling read, inspiring readers to embrace each breath as an opportunity for growth and connection. Whether you are new to mindfulness practices or looking to deepen your understanding, this book is a worthwhile addition to your personal development journey.

This book was especially meaningful to me since my wife Angela has been trying to get me to go to Yoga for over 10 years, and I finally started going about a year ago. I love going and especially enjoy the positive physical, emotional and community benefits – it's also a wonderful time to pray silently.

Michael McManus LCSW is a psychotherapist in private practice for over 30 years. He and his wife Angela live in Santa Rosa Beach, Florida. He can be reached for an appointment by text or phone at (850) 837-0123 or visit his website: Psychotherapy30A.com

Point Washington Medical Clinic Expands Services and Hours

The Point Washington Medical Clinic is excited to announce that beginning May 6th, the Clinic will expand its operations to include a fourth day of service on Tuesdays from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

The expanded operations are thanks in part to a newly established partnership with the University of Florida Emerald Coast Family Medicine Residency program and will allow the clinic to increase its care for more patients and also offer an opportunity for additional volunteers wishing to serve.

PWMC's Executive Director, Hillary Glenn, DNP, worked together with local and regional community partners to establish a partnership enabling medical residents to provide patient care at the Point Washington Medical Clinic. In August, residents toured the PWMC facility and were eager to begin the collaborative effort. Roger Hall facilitated an introduction between PWMC and Dr. Joshua Hodge, the residency program director.

This comes just following the launch of the PWMC's dental, physical therapy, and mental health programs. These programs are available exclusively by appointment for existing patients. "When we first opened the



clinic, we offered services one day a week," said Glenn. "But, as demand has grown in the community, so have the services we are providing."

The PWMC began as a pop-up, mobile clinic in 2017 and moved into its permanent building in early 2024. In the eight years since their founding, PWMC has provided the equivalent of \$4 million in health care services across more than 18,000 patient visits. Today, PWMC sees more than 300 patients a month and serves as the area's only nofee-for-service, volunteer-driven primary care clinic. To learn more about how you can help, visit thepwmc.org or email Jackie Ward at jackie@thepwmc.org

CAA

continued from page 13

tistic spirit of our county."

Art Month Walton County is a collaborative initiative led by the Cultural Arts Alliance of Walton County (CAA), bringing together a variety of art-focused events throughout the month of May. The celebration includes the Dine + Dive fundraiser for the Underwater Museum of Art, the 37th Annual ArtsQuest Fine Arts Festival, Longleaf Writers Conference, Digital Graffiti at Alys Beach, Legally Blonde at Emerald Coast Theatre Company, special gatherings from Emerald Coast Storytellers, Sinfonia Salutes, and much more. Art Month unites artists, organizations, businesses, and audiences in a shared mission to showcase high-quality, diverse arts experiences across the region.

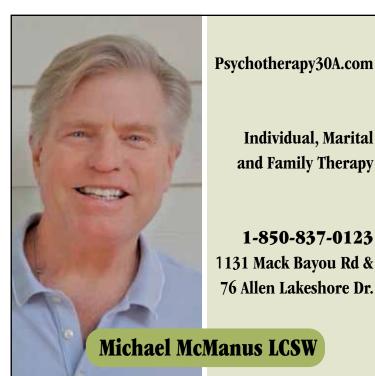


Commissioners unanimously approved the designation during Tuesday's meeting, recognizing the important role the arts play in economic development, tourism, education, and overall quality of life in Walton County.

"We are honored and excited that the Walton County Board of County Commissioners continues to support Art Month Walton County," said Jennifer Steele, President and CEO of the Cultural Arts Alliance of Walton County. "This official designation amplifies the value of the Arts in our community and helps us spotlight the many talented artists, cultural experiences, and creative opportunities available to both residents and visitors throughout the month of May and beyond."

The proclamation serves as an invitation for all to engage in and support the diverse artistic offerings happening countywide.

For more information about Art Month Walton County and a full schedule of events, visit CulturalArtsAlliance.com.



Wellness

The Small Tube With a Powerful Punch –

The Wonders of Tretinoin Cream

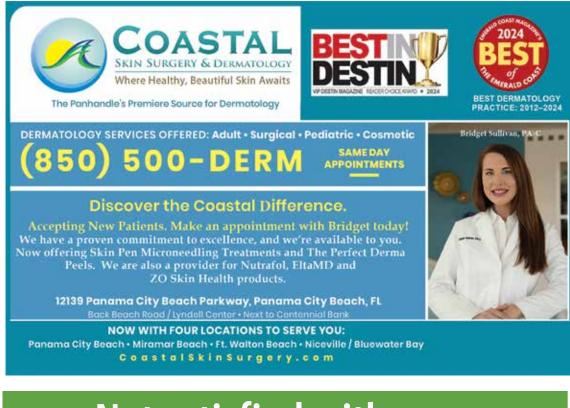
By Bridget Sullivan, PA-C, Coastal Skin Surgery and Dermatology

Having a proper skin care routine is key to having healthy skin and, in turn, cosmetically pleasing skin. A product that can be used in a basic skincare routine is tretinoin cream. When a patient first uses this, it can take a while for their skin to adjust, so we recommend going "low and slow." This means starting with a low strength (0.025%) and slowly building your way up to applying every night. There are different tips and tricks depending on how sensitive your skin is. For example, use it 2-3 nights a week for a few months until it doesn't irritate your skin anymore, and gradually build your way up to every other night, and then every night. If it still causes irritation, you can mix it with your moisturizer or do a "moisturizer sandwich": wait a few minutes and apply your moisturizer afterwards.. There are many differ-

ent tips and tricks for easing tretinoin into your daily routine without causing too much irritation. Tretinoin cream is a Vitamin A derivative and is a form of retinoic acid. If there is anything close to what some may call a "miracle cream," it's tretinoin, because it packs a plethora of benefits in one tube.

Tretinoin cream applied at nighttime increases our skin cell turnover rate. This leads to many benefits, including reducing and helping in the treatment of acne





TRETINOIN Image: Stress Stre

- Reduces Wrinkles
- Smoothes Skin Texture

and unclogging pores. It also stimulates collagen and elastin production. The stimulation of collagen and elastin will improve the texture of our skin and help with scarring and fine lines and wrinkles. Tretinoin has also been shown to improve UV or sun damage. It also decreases photo damage and helps with cosmetic concerns, including evening out skin tone and lightening dark spots.

With the myriad of benefits listed above, it is no wonder that this cream and ingredient are recommended to most patients in a basic skincare routine. This cream should be applied only at nighttime to a clean and dry face. This particular cream can only be found at a medical office and is not over the counter. It is important to note that not everyone is a candidate for Tretinoin cream. For example, you cannot use it during pregnancy and it might not be recommended if you have sensitive skin. There are other alternatives that can be used. Therefore, it is important to have a discussion of treatment options with your medical provider.

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Lee Campbell

Important Conversations



BY STEPHENIE CRAIG

You know that feeling when it's time to have a conversation about something important but you aren't sure how to approach it? You feel the urgency to speak but your hands get sweaty, your chest gets tight, and you tell yourself it's not really a big enough issue to discuss resulting in avoidance. Or, you feel anger bubbling up and you speak up with aggression, anger and intensity that turn the conversation in an unintended direction.

Avoiding important conversations may keep the peace in the short term, however, in the long-term avoidance creates unresolved tension, lack of change, feeling unseen, resentment and bitterness. Approaching important conversations with anger and aggression most often results in defensiveness, not being heard, escalation, alienation and seeing the other person as a villain. What if there was another way to talk about things that are important to you? What if there was a way to be calm, clear, direct, and curious, while also being heard?

7 Healthy Ways to Have Important Conversations

1. Notice your emotional activation. When are you feeling upset, bothered or emotionally reactive? Notice big feelings, body tension, irritability, headaches, stomachaches, exhaustion, anxiety, depression.

2. Regulate yourself. Use intentional calming skills to move your brain from emergency, overwhelmed mode to rational mode. Breathe slowly for 2 min-



utes, take a brief walk, journal, yell into your pillow, punch a punching bag, etc. Use coping skills that don't hurt yourself, others, or property.

3. Engage internal sorting. Notice if past emotion about previous situations/relationships is intermingled with the present. Determine the real issue in the present moment separate from other emotional situations.

4. Own your part. Remember that while you may feel upset with someone, you are not a victim. You have power and selfcontrol. You have a voice and it is healthy to use it. Notice when you are being defensive or making up negative stories in your head (we all make up negative stories that aren't accurate). Determine and clarify what negative contribution you might be making to the situation at hand. Determine how you can communicate your willingness to take responsibility for your part.

5. Reach for vulnerability instead of blame and finger pointing. Notice if you are feeling hurt, misunderstood, invalidated, rejected, afraid, unsupported, insecure, unappreciated, or unseen. Look underneath anger as vulnerable feelings often hide beneath.

6. Outline your approach to the conversation. Start by asking

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the other person if they would be willing to take a few undistracted minutes to talk about something important to you. Then use "I" statements and feeling words to describe what is feeling difficult for you. Follow up by communicating a clear alternative that would feel better to you. "I feel hurt and dismissed when I tell you I am overwhelmed in parenting and you respond by telling me I just need to get more organized. What I'm really needing in those moments is some validation that parenting can be hard. I'm also needing to know you understand my feelings and can be curious about support I might be needing."

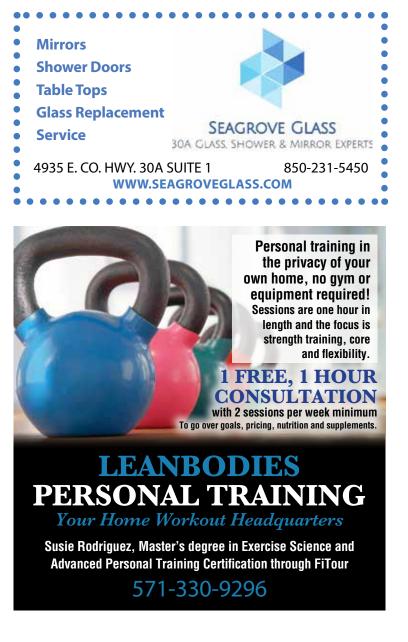
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CLINICIANS

7. Practice your outline, then gather your courage or calm and initiate the conversation.

Remember to regulate yourself before and during the conversation with calm breathing. Your approach will influence the tone of the discussion. Also, try to listen to the other person with curiosity rather than defensiveness when they respond to your thoughts. The other person may or may not respond the way you are hoping. However, it feels empowering to know you handled your side of the conversation well. Practice is needed much more than perfection when it comes to learning new communication skills. Keep working at it consistently and it will become more natural. Connect with us along your journey for counseling at coaching at Journeybravely.com.



Musing

The Road to Redemption: Billy Milan – Learning to Abide

By Victoria Ostrosky

In the Gospel of John, the Beloved Disciple records Jesus' invitation to 'abide in Him.' Jesus masterfully used descriptive imagery to drive His point home. "Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself unless it abides in

the vine, so neither can you, unless you abide in Me. I am the vine, you are the branches." (John 15:4-5a) Many years later, the Apostle John penned his first letter to young churches in Asia Minor. He encouraged them to walk as Jesus walked, "...the one who says he abides in Him







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www.BeachsideSlide.com BEACHSIDE SLIDING GLASS DOOR MAINTENANCE, LLC. ought himself to walk in the same manner as He walked." (I John 2:6) John also inspired them to "not love the world nor the things in the world," (I John 2:15) and heartened them with these words: "Now, little children, abide in Him, so that when He appears, we may have confidence and not shrink away from Him in shame at His coming." (I John 2:28)

In Kenneth Wuest's expanded translation of the New Testament from the Greek, John 15:4 reads like this: "Maintain a living communion with me, and I with you." To Jesus, abiding means living with, making your home with, and being in con-

stant communion with Him. When it comes to Jesus, abiding in Him is where our effectiveness power, and ministry flow from.

Billy Milan grew up in New York City in a single parent Catholic household. His mother worked hard to care for her children, and when he was 22, Billy joined the New York Police Department. Some years later, he and his wife ended up living in Texas for her job, and in 2014, while vacationing in Destin and celebrating his retirement from the police force, Billy and his wife ended up purchasing a



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Before coming to the Lord in 2003, Billy's difficult job in the homicide division of the police force led him to drink excessively, which led to other bad behavior. "My household was broken on the inside. The exterior was beautiful, but the interior was broken. When the Lord got ahold of me in 2003, it

was a radical change." After his conversion, Billy, along with his wife, got plugged in and participated in a strong ministry in Long Island where they served faithfully for years. But when

they came to Destin and attended Destiny Worship, he felt an automatic peace. "I feel like we're home."

PODCAST

Billy explains how his life changed after meeting Jesus, and his fellow officers saw it too. "Police culture is not healthy and needs balance. Jesus culture is so much better." Billy has learned over the years of walking with God, the importance of staying in the Word. "I stand on my faith and stay in the Word. Stay covered and find good Biblical counsel. We have to step outside of ourselves and let God do what He does. Remain faithful in prayer and in the Word. Bad things will continue to happen, but God is true."

Complacency is the opposite of abiding. As Billy says, "In the spiritual world, complacency can cause spiritual death. Stay consistent in the Word and prayer and in the church and fellowship. Do not allow complacency to set in."

Believers are called to maintain a living communion with Jesus. When we walk in His footsteps, breathe in the Word, bathe our days in prayer, and actively search for opportunities to serve, that's when we become what God designed us to be. Salt and light; useful and effective for the Kingdom.

You can listen to Billy Milan's entire interview and many other incredible stories on the weekly Road to Redemption radio show and podcast at www. rtrdestiny.com.

🐲 Musing

What is a Christian Capitalist?



BY RICH SANDERS

Christian Capitalists walk a path that blends two powerful forces: unwavering faith in God through following His Son, Jesus Christ, and a deep commitment to sharing the blessings we have received from God with our poor and needy neighbors. It is not a contradiction to work hard and build financial prosperity—in fact, it is a sacred obligation to reflect God's image, honor His blessings, and bless others in return. The Christian

Capitalist Ethic offers a road-

map for living out a calling to work hard and give generously to the poor and needy in the name of Jesus Christ.

At the foundation of Christian Capitalism is the belief that everything belongs to God. All we earn, build, buy, or save originates from His creation. Our wealth is not our own—it is entrusted to us by God for a time, and with it comes the responsibility to use it wisely and generously.

Christian Capitalists work because God works. Made in His image, we are created to labor, not just to provide for ourselves, but to glorify God in all that we do. Jesus came to complete God's work on earth, and now it is our duty to continue that work by making disciples, living with purpose, and transforming communities through faith-powered enterprise.

From the fruits of that labor, we are called to manage our financial resources with wisdom: saving for the future, investing with discernment, and protecting our families. Yet we are equally called to resist idolizing wealth.

As Christian Capitalists, we do not serve money—we serve God with our money. "The more we make, the more we give" is the slogan of this movement, and it invites people to pursue a spiritual discipline of giving. Financial gain is not a personal trophy—it's a tool to advance God's kingdom and serve others in need.

The Christian Capitalist Ethic reminds us that love of God and neighbor must guide every financial decision. We give to the poor and needy not for recognition or self-congratulation, but with humility, understanding that all gifts originate with God. In every gift, we shine the light of Christ, declaring not our own success, but His generosity.

Leadership, too, is redefined through this spiritual discipline.

Christian Capitalists are servant leaders, placing the needs of others before their own. Whether as CEOs or entrylevel workers, in every industry and walk of life, we are called to model Christ in every role, to lead with compassion, and to pursue excellence, not for our glory but for His.

Importantly, wealth is never the measure of worth for a Christian Capitalist. Whether we give two coins or millions of dollars, God loves the heart behind the offering. True wealth lies in wisdom, joy, and a closer walk with God. While earthly riches are fleeting, heavenly treasures endure.

Finally, the Christian Capitalist understands that the reward for hard work and generous giving is not status or comfort—it is joy in this life and a place in the Kingdom of Heaven in the future. Our time on Earth is brief, but what we do with it—how we work, how we give, and how we loveechoes into eternity.

To be a Christian Capitalist is to embrace the Gospel of Hard Work and Generous Giving. It's to use every gift, every opportunity, and every dollar to love God, love people, and change the world in Jesus' name. The more we make, the more we give!

Rich Sanders is a pastor, small business owner, retired healthcare attorney and adjunct professor at Emory University, and former intelligence officer in the U.S. Navy. He and his wife, Rebekah, met at church in 1996, have been blessed with three children (James, William and Caroline), and live in Destin with their large golden retriever, Cowboy.





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Musing

By KIRK MCCARLEY

Self-admittedly, James Lawrence is rather ordinary. He lives in Utah with his wife and their five kids. Like many of us, he seeks to eke out a living, in his case as a coach and motivational speaker.

Despite his "every man" existence, Lawrence has garnered quite a few accolades. He completed 22 half triathlons in one year, establishing a world record. That would be 1.2 miles swimming and 56 miles cycling, fol-

Pain and Discomfort

lowed by a half marathon of 13.1 miles, all in one day. Two years later, in 2012, he upped his game, achieving 30 full-distance triathlons (2.4 miles swimming, 112 miles cycling, and 26.2 miles running), another world record. He was the first person to cycle to the top of Mount Kilimanjaro,

19,340 feet in elevation. In 2021, he completed his ultimate feat of 100 triathlons in the same number of days... consecutively. His achievements have earned him the title of "Iron Cowboy," attributed to the Stetson-like headwear he often wears in his marathon segments.

One would think that he possesses an extraordinary genetic marker that enables him to accomplish these ultra-human triumphs. In fact, physicians and scientists have performed 21 different medical and genetic tests on Lawrence. The results: James Lawrence possesses exactly zero special physical attributes. Physi-

cally, there are no markers that distinguish him from any other 46-year-old male.

In his book, "Iron Hope," Lawrence speaks of both the physical and mental pain that he experienced. It was not uncommon that during some of his runs, he blacked out, only to be revived by a member of his support team. The torment could be excruciating at times: blisters, shin splints, strains; pain levels described as much as 18 or 20 on a "scale of one to 10." Swimming at temperatures below freezing, cycling into head winds gusting up to 50 mph, running in snow, turning to rain, then deteriorating to ice were characteristic of his March to June 100 triathlons.

Lawrence's experiences provide lessons for the less physically driven. "Whenever you struggle, you have a choice-slip into victim mentality or learn and grow and become better from the struggle. You must remind yourself that you are not a victim, not in this season, not in your mindset, and not in this moment of intense difficulty," he tells us.

It was almost a year ago, at a nearby location off the Gulf of Mexico that 15-year-old Lulu Gribben encountered a shark while swimming just off the shore during a family vacation. Bit multiple times, and with her life very much hanging in the balance, Lulu was airlifted to a hospital, where life-saving surgery was performed that included amputations of her right leg below the hip and left hand. Lulu inspired many of us by first surviving the attack, but then accepting the realities of amputation, adjusting to prosthetic devices, and remarkably returning to school just 15 weeks following the incident.

Today, she inspires us and even joined professional golfer Justin Thomas to knock down a putt during a Pro-Am event. Of that opportunity, Lulu commented, "This has been an experience of a lifetime." Thomas added, "There aren't many kids her age that'd be that positive. You're affecting and inspiring more people than you realize.'

None of us are in James Lawrence's league; likely, very few will ever run a marathon or cycle a hundred miles in a day. Most of us will not experience the pain that both Lulu and he have gone through. They do inspire us, though, to consider our own stories. For example, what may have been the struggle to raise a family on limited resources? What was the impetus to persevere? What was it like to lose a spouse or a child? How do you overcome an inequity, be it a wrongful job loss, an unfair settlement, or another kind of injustice? What are the lessons to be learned? Most importantly, what is sensed as a duty to be shared for the benefit of others?

While we may be ordinary like James Lawrence or Lulu Gribben, there is not one of us who is not special. What is your "specialty?" What is something you can do today to have an impact and provide the wisdom of that experience to someone? For sure, it may be a stretch, a discomfort maybe, but it's always the first plunge in the cold water, the initial pedal stroke on the bike, or the first step in the race that's the most difficult. What's holding you back today? Let's go!

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 is also a Production Assistant for both college football and basketball for ESPN and leads group cycling classes as a Certified Spinning instructor. Contact kirk@theseedsowercoach.com, theseedsowercoach. com, or call 314-677-8779.



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🌸 Musing

Sean of the South: Memorial Day Weekend



By Sean Dietrich

Memorial Day is the unofficial start to summer, and summer was in full bloom in America. The nation experienced mostly beautiful weather.

The Midwest had highs in the 80s, The Southeast experienced temps even higher. Temperatures in the Florida panhandle exceeded approximately 173 degrees.

But it's important to remember that it wasn't a great Memorial Day weekend for everyone.

Yesterday in Saint Louis, for example, a man named Phillip was playing baseball with his kids while his wife, Lindsey, was making potato salad inside. The day was going swimmingly.

"Guys in my family have always played baseball on Memorial Day weekend," Philip wrote to me this morning in an email. "It's a longstanding tradition for us."

Phillip was pitching. His 11-yearold son, Austin, was at the plate. Phillip delivered an easy pitch underhand. His son swung the bat like the baseball had personally insulted his mother. The bat connected.

PING!

The good news is that Phillip's son hit a line drive. The bad news is: it was a line drive which struck a part of Phillip's anatomy most often associated with procreation.

The ball nailed Phillip. He howled in pain. He went down under the power. His kids all gathered around him and asked if he was okay. All Phillip could utter was, "Go get your mom, please."

It bears mentioning, Phillip's son was using an aluminum bat not a wooden bat. Which might not sound like an important detail to this story except that the exit velocity of a ball hit by an aluminum bat is a LOT higher than that of one hit by a wooden bat.

A ball hit by a wooden bat has an average velocity of 60 to 80 mph. Whereas a ball hit by an aluminum bat is capable of breaking the sonic barrier.

Phillip's wife approached her husband and asked her children what had happened. Her 4-year-old son remarked, "Austin hit daddy in the Twinkie." His wife had to excuse herself

for a moment. When she returned, her face was red and she looked like she'd been laughing.

"I wasn't laughing," said Phillip's wife. "It's allergies."

Then, his wife single-handedly loaded Phillip into their SUV. She placed him in the cargo hold because Phillip was incapable of sitting. Phillip laid on on his side throughout the long ride to the hospital and tried to remind himself to breathe.

Occasionally, he heard a cackling sound coming from the front seat, but his wife swears that her allergies get so bad this time of year.

"My wife doesn't even have allergies," Phillip writes.

At the hospital, a doctor checked him out. The nurse removed Phillip's trousers and the medical professionals inspected the bruising. The doctor asked how it happened.

Phillip's 4-year-old spoke again. "My brother hit my daddy in the Twinkie."

The doctor nodded, covered his mouth, then excused himself briefly. The medical man left the exam room and Phillip swears he heard the sound of the doctor's allergies acting up.

When the doctor returned, he was out of breath and he had four other male medical colleagues with him who were available to offer their expertise. Also, the janitor said he wanted to see, too.

One of the veteran ER doctors, male, inspected the bruising and wore a grave face. Whereupon he looked Phillip square in the eye and said, "Son, I'm afraid we're going to have to remove it."

At which point, all medical staffers excused themselves again and Phillip heard more allergies in the hallway.

"What kind of world is this we live in," Phillip wrote to me, "when doctors and nurses can't even act professionally?"

Thankfully, as it turns out, Phillip will make a full recovery. The main advice the doctor gave Phillip was to use frozen vegetables—either corn or peas work best—to de-inflame the affected netherregions. Once the bruising goes away, the doctor recommends that Phillip retire his jersey and quit baseball altogether.

Phillip spent most of today in the supine position, lying on his sofa. All day, Philip's friends have been stopping by to wish him well.

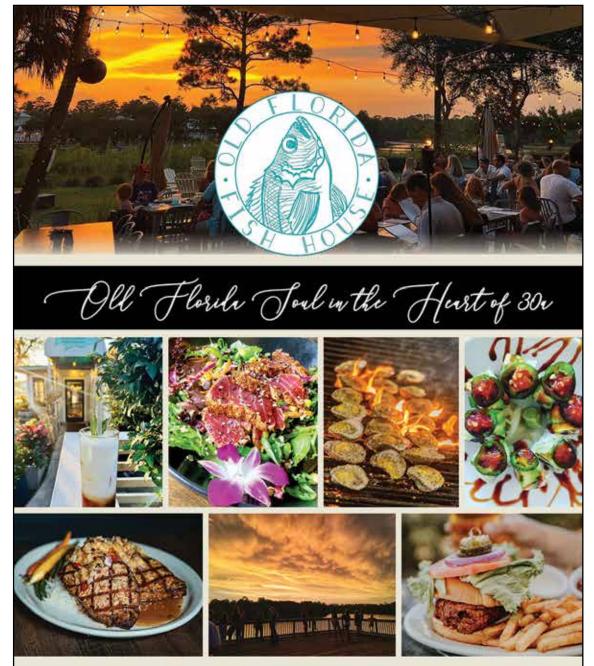
"They've been bringing me a lot of Hostess products," said Phillip. He hopes that by sharing his sto-



ry he can warn fathers out there to take the proper protective measures when playing backyard sports.

"I just don't wanna see this happen to someone else," he added. "I think it's time we talked openly about this painfully sensitive subject." Now if you'll excuse me, my al-

lergies are acting up.



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Musing

A Pastor's Ponderings: A Time for Everything



By Reverand Pete Hyde

"There is time for everything, and a season for every activity under heaven." (Ecclesiastes 3:1)

Even though the hospital room is dark, it is filled with excitement, anticipation, anxiety, discomfort, joy, worry, and happiness. Though the air conditioning has made the room cool, it is filled with warmth.

The new mom and dad dote over the newborn child. Dad does his best to take care of his wife and the new baby. His face is lined with worry and the bags under his eyes reveal his lack of sleep. Emotions are on edge. Grandma holds the child as she squeaks and coos. Grandpa takes a turn when it's offered. Other family and friends filter in and out. The new parents try to rest when they can, knowing that their schedule is no longer their own. Surrounding all of it is JOY-not happiness, but JOY. Goodbyes were hard. Tears were choked back.

The nursing home hallway is filled with lonely souls in wheelchairs. Some faces are blank while others offer a smile and wave as people walk by. The uncomfortable fragrances come and go as they make their way down the hallway to Mom's room. Her face lights up as she recognizes her visitors, even if it is just for a moment. The conversation drifts in and out as memories come and go like surfing the channels on the TV. Long ago memories are shared while keeping track of recent events (even today's) is hard. The visit was long enough, but wasn't long enough. Goodbyes were hard. Tears were choked back.

He makes his way around the house with his new friend- the walker. Though struggling with his health and independence, he dutifully does the exercises the physical therapist has prescribed, hoping and praying to regain his independence. He likes having the kids around, but probably feels like he is causing an imposition. If truth be spoken, he would rather have the house to himself again. Yet, he is enduring this time without complaint, still trying to be the rock of the family. He is a proud man of deep faith who sits in the front room in the sun each morning reading his daily devotion. Goodbyes were hard. Tears were choked back.

I marvel at the way God is working in each situation. Wishing circumstances might be different, I am still thankful for God's hand in all of this, even though I don't understand His timing. But yet, the passage from Ecclesiastes jumps from the page.

"There is time for everything and a season for every activity under the heavens: A time to be born and a time to die, a time to plant and a time to uproot, a time to kill and a time to heal, a time to tear down and a time to build, a time to weep and a time to laugh, a time to mourn and time and a time to dance. A time to scatter stones and a time to gather them, a time to embrace and a time to refrain from embracing, a time to tear and a time to mend, a time to be silent and a time to speak, a time to love and a time to hate, a time for war and a time for peace." (Ecclesiastes 3: 1-8)

Whatever your time in life or whatever your experience of where others are in the times of their lives, be assured that it is all God's timing, even though we may not understand it. May you be filled with God's timing and blessing.

Rev. Pete Hyde serves as chaplain with the South Walton Fire District

Ascension Sacred Heart Emerald Coast Family Birth Place Earns National Recognition

For the fifth year in a row, Ascension Sacred Heart Emerald Coast has earned the honor of being on Newsweek's list of America's Best Maternity Care Hospitals at the highest five ribbon level.

"The doctors, nurses, and associates that work in the Family Birth Place consider their jobs as a calling to serve our community," said Trey Abshier, CEO and President of Sacred Heart Emerald Coast. "We thank them for their commitment to quality, personalized care that earns these awards."

The Best Maternity Care distinction recognizes facilities that have provided exceptional care to mothers, newborns, and their families based on three data sources. These include nationwide online surveys of hospital managers and maternity healthcare professionals, medical key performance indicators relevant to maternity care and patient satisfaction data.

The hospital also earned the distinction of being a U.S. News & World Report 2025 High Performing hospital for Maternity Care. This is the highest recognition a hospital can earn in the Best Hospitals for Maternity Care annual ratings. Additionally, U.S. News recognized Sacred Heart Emerald Coast as a Maternity Care Access Hospital, for its essential role in serving underserved communities at risk of becoming maternity care deserts. Only 118 hospitals – representing just 14% of all evaluated hospitals – earned this distinction for their critical contributions to maternity care access.

"One of the cornerstones of our mission is the care of moms and babies," said Erica Bottom, MSN, RN-C, OB, Family Birth Place Manager for Sacred Heart Emerald Coast. "Our Family Birth Place team actively participates in initiatives to improve maternal health outcomes."

Sacred Heart Emerald Coast's Family Birth Place recently became a Maternal Levels of Care verified hospital by The Joint Commission through its collaboration with the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG) and support from the Florida Perinatal Quality Collaborative. The hospital is Baby-Friendly designated for its commitment to the highest level of breastfeeding support and education. It is the only hospital in the area to hold this accreditation.

One year ago, Sacred Heart's facilities in Pensacola and Miramar Beach began participating in the state's first postpartum wristband initiative. The new program involves giving a silver rubber wristband to mothers to voluntarily wear for up to a year postpartum. This has helped prioritize them as patients and spotlight their medical history when they seek care through EMS, ERs or other medical sites.

Ascension Sacred Heart Emerald Coast Family Birth Place is the home to the only neonatal intensive care unit (NICU) serving families from Walton and Okaloosa counties close to home. The NICU celebrated five years of serving the community last week with more than 1,000 families served. Neonatal specialists are available 24/7 for neonates needing routine and specialty care.





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Dining

Redd's Pub Debuts New Menu

Redd's Pub, the Emerald Coast's go-to destination for exceptional food and unforgettable entertainment, is excited to announce the debut of its new weekly menu feature: the "Celebrity Sandwich." Every Tuesday, Redd's will unveil a unique sandwich inspired by the favorite foods of iconic celebrities, giving diners a chance to savor star-worthy flavors alongside the pub's renowned live performances.

The series launched with

the "Elton John," a vibrant masterpiece featuring candied bacon tucked between raisin toast, layered with melted Swiss and Muenster cheeses, grilled pear, and finished with a sweet hot honey drizzle—a nod to the Rocket Man's flamboyant and unforgettable style. Next came the "Bryan Kennedy," a hearty after-gig classic: a cheddar-packed Texas toast grilled cheese served with a zesty slaw side, perfect for satisfying latenight cravings with a Southern twist. This week, Redd's turns up the glamour with the "Liberace Showstopper," a dazzling tribute to the legendary performer's extravagant taste, packed with premium ingredients that steal the show, think savory marinara meatballs on Texas toast with local farm tomato cucumber salad.

Stepping into Redd's Pub is like walking onto a Hollywood set, with walls adorned with movie stars, musicians, and artists who've left their mark on the world. This star-studded decor provides endless inspiration for the Celebrity Sandwich series, ensuring no shortage of options as the menu pays homage to the legends who grace the restaurant's ambiance. From silver screen icons to chart-topping hitmakers, the possibilities are as limitless as the talent on display. "We're all about creating memorable experiences at Redd's, and the Celebrity Sandwich series is our latest way to bring some fun to the table," said Redd, owner of Redd's Pub. "From Elton's sweet-andspicy rockstar vibes to Bryan's down-home comfort and Liberace's over-the-top flair, these sandwiches are a hit—especially when you enjoy them with a song from our singing bartender!"

Redd, the Singing Bartender, takes the stage on Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Saturdays at 6:30 p.m., delivering soulful performances from a 400-song repertoire while slinging drinks. Her shows have made Redd's Pub the hottest reservation in town, with guests raving about the one-of-a-kind dinner-anda-show vibe. The "Liberace Showstopper" will be available through April 14, with a new celebrity-inspired sandwich dropping every Tuesday.

Locals and visitors are encouraged to reserve a table for dinner with 4+ guests, taste the star-studded menu, and soak in the energy of Redd's live entertainment. Pair your sandwich with a signature cocktail or cold brew, and discover why Redd's Pub can be Santa Rosa Beach's toughest ticket.

Redd's Pub is located at 3906 Hwy 98 W Unit 1, Santa Rosa Beach, FL, and is open 4-10 p.m. Tues-Sats. For reservations or more details, visit reddspub. com or call (850) 325-0252. Stay in the loop on the next Celebrity Sandwich reveal by following Redd's Pub on social media or signing up for the newsletter at reddspub.com.





🏚 Music

Sinfonia Gulf Coast Concludes 2024-2025 Season With Hypnotic Tchaikovsky X Drake, May 17

Northwest Florida's only fully professional orchestra in the region concludes main event season with boundary-pushing orchestral mash-up "when symphony meets hip hop"

Sinfonia Gulf Coast continues its mission to entertain, educate and inspire with a genre-defying season finale that lives up to its tagline: Your Symphony Experience ... Redefined.

On Saturday, May 17 at 7:30 p.m., Sinfonia presents Tchaikovsky X Drake at the Destin– Fort Walton Beach Convention Center. This electrifying concert reimagines Tchaikovsky's Symphony No. 5 through the lyrical lens of hip-hop icon Aubrey "Drake" Graham.

Conceived and arranged by acclaimed composer/conductor Steve Hackman, the work seamlessly weaves together 22 of Drake's melodic hits, including God's Plan, One Dance and In My Feelings with the romantic brilliance of Tchaikovsky's orchestration. The result is a symphonic experience that is both musically cinematic and soul-stirring.

Joining Sinfonia Gulf Coast on stage are three powerhouse vocalists—India Carney, Mario Jose, and Denise Carite—alongside Louisville rapper Jecorey Arthur ("1200"), Braylen Lacy on bass, and New York-based percussionist Gabriel Globus-Hoenich.

The performance will be conducted by David Baker, a New York-based conductor and arranger whose work bridges classical and contemporary genres. Baker serves as assistant conductor for Hackman's SYM-PHONYFUSE productions and has appeared with the Detroit, Oregon, and Baltimore Symphony Orchestras. He recently made his debut with the Louisville Orchestra and conducted at SF Jazz and the Lake George Music Festival. He holds degrees from the San Francisco Conservatory of Music, the Eastman School of Music, and the Crane School of Music at SUNY Potsdam.

"Whether you are familiar with either name, this is a concert that you can attend and thoroughly enjoy from the sheer



vantage point that it is an incredible concert experience," said Sinfonia Gulf Coast Music & Artistic Director Demetrius Fuller. "Steve Hackman is an impresario of the mash-up. He

ingeniously takes Tchaikovsky's epic Fifth Symphony and intertwines elements of Drake's music and lyrics. It's like nothing else you've witnessed."

General admission tickets range from \$40-\$65 and may be purchased and downloaded at SinfoniaGulfCoast.org or by calling the box office at (850) 460-8800. Special savings for each concert are offered to active-duty military and students with valid ID.

The 2024–2025 season is made possible by the generous support of individuals, local businesses, and community partners.









Page 40

Since 2011, Studio 237 Music Lessons has become a beacon of musical growth, creativity and home to a passionate group of instructors with decades of experience and dedication to their craft. Each teacher contributes a unique background and skill set, creating a well-rounded learning environment for students of all ages and levels. Our teachers, from left to right in picture, are: Max McCann, Scott Gilmore, Helmut Dimmel, Ray Cyr, Kimberly Burke, Lisa Cyr, and MaryKate Cary-Dooly. Studio 237 Music provides a place for teachers to teach and for students to learn.

Max McCann is a graduate of the Guitar Institute of Technology (GIT) in California. As an accomplished guitarist with over 30 years of experience, he offers students quality technical instruction and insight for live performance. His teaching style and personality is favored by students of guitar and bass. Max seeks to get one's musical gifting flowing in a simple and fun way via knowledge, technique, and feel. He believes all students have potential.

Scott Gilmore has been with Studio 237 since 2016, and has over 16 years of teaching students of all ages and levels on guitar (acoustic and classical), ukulele, songwriting, and theory. Known for his patient, kind, and

The Talented Teaching Team at Studio 237 Music Lessons



detailed instruction, Scott emphasizes technique, music theory, and developing sight-reading skills. He teaches a variety of styles such as classical, Latin, jazz, and pop, each lesson is personally designed.

Helmut Dimmel is an accomplished pianist, keyboardist, and church worship leader for 29+ years. He earned his bachelor's degree of education in Germany, which brings his European classical training and appreciation for musical expression to the student. Along with reading music, Helmut teaches playing piano by ear, identifying chords, and tabs. Keyboard improvisation encourages learning, flexibility, and musicianship.

Ray Cyr is the co-owner, administrator, and teacher of drums/percussion. Ray has 60+ years of experience in the music industry, in live concerts, recording, and owning a talent agency. Ray is known for his technical precision, fun, and supportive teaching style. He has trained over 100 drummers to play marching band, rock, blues, boogie, gospel, swing and big band music.

Kimberly Burke, with 30+ years of experience as a singer/ songwriter and Nashville recording artist, is a classically trained musician with a degree in voice performance. Kimberly performs as a solo artist and with bands covering country, classic rock, beach town favorites and old R&B. Her original music is published online, including her new single titled "The Girl I Was Before." Kimberly emphasizes technique, breath support, developing skills, range, and confidence.

Lisa Cyr, the co-owner, administrator, and teacher, brings a wealth of 35 years of teaching experience in piano, music theory, chord method, and general music education. Her gentle demeanor and creative teaching methods make her an excellent fit for beginners through advanced learners of all ages 6 and up. Lisa uses fun, time-proven techniques to keep students motivated and progressing. As a member of the National Federation of Music Clubs, she encourages and prepares her students to perform at music events, auditions, and competitions.

MaryKate Cary-Dooly is a classically trained vocalist with studies in gospel, jazz, and pop who teaches voice and piano. She earned her Bachelor of Arts Music and Entrepreneurship degree from Florida State University. With her experience and vocal performance, she helps students unlock their potential and develop stage presence using classical and contemporary techniques. As a versatile and dynamic teacher, MaryKate is thrilled to share the joyful experience of music with others.

Together, the teachers at Studio 237 form a passionate and supportive music community. Whether a student dreams of performing on stage, composing original music, or music appreciation, our talented group of instructors can help make one's dreams a reality. To find out more about Studio 237 Music, visit our website at www.Studio-237Music.com. Or call (850) 231-3199.





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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.

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.

AJ's Grayton Brunch, Live Music & Crawfish Boil

AJ's is the place to be to celebrate all things Sunday Funday in Grayton Beach! Come for brunch starting at 11 a.m., and stay for the music and dancing. Have a mimosa or go all in with their famous Build Your Own Bloody Mary bar. Sunday afternoon essentials include crawfish and cold beers starting at noon. Enjoy live music with the Christon Birge Duo 12-4 p.m., the Pickled Pickers at 5 p.m., and The Heatherlys at 8 p.m. Check ajsgrayton.com for other live music throughout the week.

Karaoke Night @ AJ's Grayton Beach Thursdays

Join in the fun on Karaoke Night starting at 8 p.m. every Thursday night at AJ's Grayton Beach.

Thursday night is also Prime Rib Night at AJ's. Enjoy a 10oz cut of Prime Rib with au jus and horseradish cream sauce. Served with side salad and baked potato for \$22.95.

Shunk Gulley

Shunk Gulley is a premier location on 30A for live music, bringing in artists from around the Gulf Coast and beyond. 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.

Red Fish Taco

Live music is a central component of Red Fish Taco's festive atmosphere. Rock out to local and visiting musicians in their outdoor covered Garden Room. Catch Brett Stafford Smith every Monday in May and Casey Kearney every Tuesday. Check redfishtaco.com for other featured musicians every day of the week.

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' (a) The Bay features The Sand Ole' Opry with Mike Whitty & Friends on stage from 4-8 p.m. Mike brings in new musicians to play every week. Wednesday nights: May 14: The Sunshine Wranglers with Scott Rockwood May 21: Tanner Gray May 28: Martin Lane

Forrest Williams Band May 15, 18, 20

Catch Forrest Williams Band at Local Catch on Thursday, May 15th and 20th from 6-9 p.m. and at the Red Bar May 18 from 12-3 p.m. Previously South Walton locals, Forrest Williams Band is an award-winning favorite on stage among locals and visitors to the area. The band performs a variety of music from southern rock to country and blues. A guaranteed good time.

The Velvet Jazz Collective Series at SOWAL House

SOWAL House continues its tradition of celebrating jazz with a rotating cast of nationally recognized musicians and Velvet Jazz Collective members throughout May. Doors open at 6 p.m. for all performances. More information at: sowalhouse.com/ performers. SOWAL House is where art comes to life.

May 16–17: Jaque Buss & Luke Pinegar

May 23–24: Stephen Cospar, Luke Pinegar & Steve Gilmore May 30: Sheila Ford & Cam Ray May 31: Sheila Ford & Luke Pinegar

SEASIDE Memorial Day Concert May 25

Celebrate Memorial Day with a performance by Ken & Andi on Sunday, May 25 in the Seaside Amphitheater from 7 to 8:30 p.m. Bring a chair or blanket, snacks and drinks, and enjoy the show. Free and open to all ages.

Sinfonia Salutes at Alys Beach May 25

Alys Beach presents Sinfonia Salutes on Sunday, May 25 at 7:30 p.m. Enjoy the orchestral sounds of Sinfonia Gulf Coast under the palm trees in the Alys Beach Amphitheatre, accompanied by a mesmerizing drone show lighting up the night sky. Bring blankets and low-back chairs. This event and free and open to the public.

Rosemary Beach Memorial Day Concert May 26

Come out to the St. Augustine Green for an evening of music by Rubiks Groove. The free and open to the public show starts at 7 p.m. Bring your chairs, blankets, picnics, friends and family. Rubiks Groove is the premier "Outside of the Box" 80s, 90s & 00s Tribute Band with a complete 360-degree interactive experience.

Gulf Coast Jam May 29-June 1

Gulf Coast Jam is a multi-day country music festival in PCB at Frank Brown Park. Tickets and info at gulfcoastjam.com. The 2025 Artist Lineup includes Lainey Wilson, Sam Hunt, Jordan Davis and more!



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What You Should Do Right After An Auto Accident



By Julie A. Martin

Publisher's Note:

Recently, my daughter was involved in a rear-end collision, and the experience opened my eyes to just how overwhelming and confusing the aftermath of an auto accident can be. The article that follows offers essential steps to take after an accident — information that proved incredibly helpful to my family during a stressful time. I felt it was important to share it again, in hopes that it may serve you as well, should you ever find yourself in a similar situation.

It can be scary to be driving along one minute, and the next, either you've been run off the road, or spun out into the intersection, or even into a ditch. You or your passenger might even be injured, and need medical attention. Here is the short version of how to handle auto accidents so that you know you handled everything correctly and your stress level can come down.

Pull over safely to the side of the road and call 911. Calling for help is the first essential step in making sure that any injuries



are treated in a timely fashion, as well as making sure the police arrive to do a full accident report.

Take photos of the other vehicle(s) involved including the drivers, as the position of the vehicles, for your insurance company, so that there is photo evidence of all damage as well as an accurate representation of who was in which car, as well who was driving.

Make sure you have your license, registration and insurance information on hand. I recommend keeping a copy of your declarations page, your auto id cards and your registration in your glove box.

If your vehicle is not drivable after the accident, you have two choices. If you have AAA, you can have them pick up your vehicle and drop it off at your preferred auto repair shop. If you have towing on your auto policy, and the site of

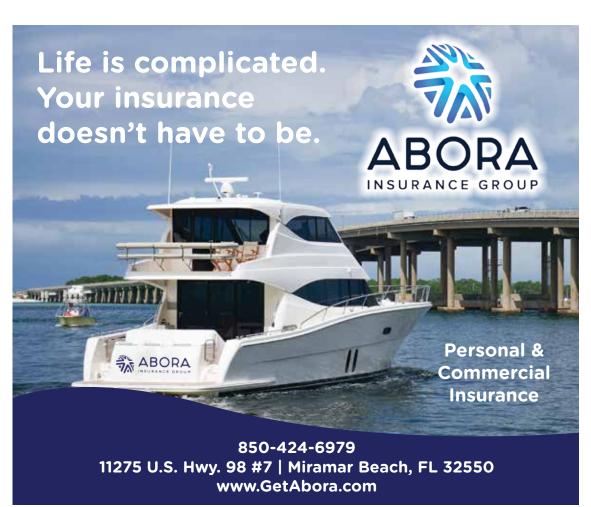


your accident is less than five miles away from your repair shop, you can potentially use the towing coverage on your policy for this accident.

If you are injured, go to the hospital to get checked out or your primary care physician, if your injuries are not serious. Personal Injury Protection in the state of Florida pays 80% of your \$10,000 coverage, minus the deductible. This includes hospital bills, medical bills relating to your accident injuries, physical therapy, casts, crutches, etc. If you have medical payments on your policy as well, they will start where the Personal Injury Protection ends. If the at fault driver is not you, and they either have no bodily injury liability coverage, or not enough to cover your injuries, this is where uninsured/underinsured motorist coverage comes in. You insure for those times that you get hit, you're hurt, but the person who causes the accident does not have enough coverage to cover your medical expenses.

If you have not already called your insurance company to put in the claim, do so now, calling your agent and explaining to them what happened. Answer their questions and do not guess if you do not know the answer. Let them know that the police have been on the scene. Give them the case number the police give you and they will get the accident report when it becomes available. Write down the claim number and any other instructions the claims representative, and your agent give you for the accident.

Dear reader, we all get into a scrape from time to time, and hopefully this list is helpful when you need to know what to do. Call 850-424-6979.







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BY CHRIS BALZER

I have been in the home improvement industry for over 17 years and have heard just about all the sales gimmicks and cheeky techniques used by salespeople to wow customers. One slightly stretched story I heard about radiant barrier is that it was developed by NASA from alien technology! If only radiant barrier were so glamorous. Actually, in 1925, two German businessmen filed patents on reflective surfaces for use as building insulation. This became the launching pad for reflective insulation. NASA did help to improve this technology and adopted it for the Apollo program, but its origins were perfectly human.. This metalized film was used to protect spacecraft, equipment and astronauts from the extreme heat of space. Even the student housing at MIT (Massachusetts Institute of Technology), Princeton, and

Frank Sinatra's residence in Palm Springs have used radiant barriers to become more energy efficient. In 1996, Radiant barrier was even inducted into the Space Technology Hall of Fame, now that's pretty cool.

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

Why is that important? Many of our attics will reach into the 140° F to 150° F range this summer, lately in fall too, heating up insulation, ductwork, and many times, our stored belongings. Anyone who has stored candles in the attic knows what I mean. This extreme heat makes our current insulation and air conditioners work harder to keep our homes cool, costing us money, comfort and lessening the life of our HVAC systems. Properly installed radiant barrier on the roof rafters will reflect 97% of the radiant heat, reducing the attic temper-

e in diant endiant ENERGY TIPS

Radiant Barrier, Alien Technology?

by Emerald Coast Energy Solutions



ature during this extreme heat by 40° to 50° degrees, allowing your insulation, ductwork and HVAC systems to perform better, saving you money and increasing your comfort.

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

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

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



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🐞 Business

Billabong Local Launch Event Supports Food for Thought Outreach

Billabong, located in Grand Boulevard at Sandestin®, raised \$500 for Food for Thought Outreach during their recent Local Launch party held on Saturday, April 12, honoring the store's new look and new owner.

New owner, Tony Crisafi, invited the community to Billabong to meet his staff, shop the latest spring arrivals, enjoy complimentary food and beverages provided by his Grand Boulevard neighbors, including Black Bear Bread Company, Cantina Laredo, Emeril's Coastal, Kilwins, and Vin'tij Food + Wine, and enter for a chance to win an over-the-top Grand Giveaway valued over \$2,500 including a surfboard, Krewe sunglasses, Stallworth gift card, Kendra Scott necklace, tickets to South Walton Beach Wine & Food Festival, gift card to La Luna Children's Boutique, Maui Jim Sunglasses, Nixon Watch, and much more. All proceeds raised from the giveaway entries benefited Food for Thought Outreach, a local 501(c)3 organization that works to bridge the meal gap in the lives of food insecure children in Walton and Okaloosa counties and empower them to get the most out of their education.

"The programs provided by Food for Thought Outreach serve the food-insecure children of Walton and Okaloosa Counties," said Tiffanie Nelson, founder and CEO of Food for Thought. "Local partnerships such as this play a critical role in our capacity to meet the needs



Painted Bumper Restoration



of the 3,600 enrolled in our services. We are thankful for this opportunity."

Billabong also hosted an official ribbon cutting ceremony with the Walton Area Chamber of Commerce to commemorate the store's new look. Crisafi and his team have worked throughout the past few months to redesign the store layout and add in new merchandise, brands, and sizes to target a wider variety of customers who live or visit the Emerald Coast throughout the year.

"We've added an entire children's section to the store and reworked the layout, so each section flows into another," Crisafi said. "It just makes sense. We have a lot more planned for the Fall when we enter our second phase of renovations, but I think customers will be pleased with the modifications we've made to provide a more enjoyable shopping experience."

To stay up to date on the latest arrivals, events, and in-store happenings, follow Billabong Destin on Instagram and Facebook.

THEO BEACH TOWELS



Check out the new beach towels at **Pecan Jacks** in Santa Rosa Beach. All Theo-inspired products benefit the educational mission of the **Friends South Walton Sea Turtles** nonprofit organization.

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