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Postal Customer Local

### When the Impossible Happens

By Gueary Clendening

How is it that geese fly south in the winter? Who gives them instructions for the trip? Why can an ant carry 50 times its weight, the equivalent of a 180-pound man carrying a full-grown cow? It seems to me God is in the business of making the impossible happen!

In Luke's gospel, we are given the story of a young lady named Mary, who is visited by an angel; She's told she would give birth to the Son of God. It's found in Luke, chapter one, verse thirty-four through thirty-eight.

Mary asked the angel, "But how can I have a baby? I'm a virgin." The angel replied, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; So the baby born to you will be holy, and He will be called the Son of God. What's more, your relative, Elizabeth, has become pregnant in her old age! People used to say she was barren, but she is already in her sixth month, for nothing shall be impossible with God.'

God's timing is always per-



fect! Elizabeth's pregnancy was used by God to encourage Mary to believe that God would fulfil His promise.

Another impossibility happened to me personally. On May 2, 2024, I made an appointment for my annual appointment with my cardiologist in Pensacola, Florida, for May 8, 2025. During the first few days of May, in the week before my appointment, I began to suffer extreme pain

in my throat and chest. On the day of my appointment, I was sitting in my car preparing to leave, when the pain came back again. I sat there for a few minutes, and I decided to go to Crestview. If the pain lessened, I would drive on to Pensacola, but if not, I would return home. Well, the pain decreased, so I started driving to Pensacola. I explained to the doctor what had happened. He took me up a flight of

stairs. By the time we reached the third floor, the pain in my throat and chest exploded. Thankfully, the cardiologist's office was in the hospital. They immediately ordered a heart cath. The next morning, he said to me, "You had a ninety-five percent blockage in your main artery. You had a widow-maker and are a very

### continued on page 2

**IMPOSSIBLE** 



### Grateful for a Year of Giving

By Heather Bennett Eye

We want to recognize the compassion and tireless work the volunteers and organizers of our local food banks, churches, and nonprofits pour into addressing food insecurity by providing meals for our community. You provide more than meals; you provide dignity, hope, and comfort for families during their hardest moments. Your kindness strengthens our neighborhoods and reminds us that even in challenging times, generosity and care can make a

#### **YEAR OF GIVING**

continued on page 2





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#### **IMPOSSIBLE**

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lucky man."

Later, after thinking about his words, I realized the entire episode was a lot more than just dumb luck. If I had not made that appointment a year ago, I would not have thought about going to Pensacola. God knew a year in advance what was coming, and because of that, I am alive today and writing this article. The impossible happened, God gave me a miracle!

Soon, I will be celebrating the miracle God gave to Mary. The Son of God was born and came into the world to die for our sins. He lived a perfect life, something you and I can not even dream of. And yet, a savior was born to a virgin. What God did in sending His Son was to empower Him to have the ability to forgive and remove the blockage and bondage of sin in our lives, so we can live in freedom now, and have life eternal forever!

If you haven't already done

so, I encourage you to receive Christ now through prayer. He will hear you and remove the past, and give you a new beginning! "If the Son therefore shall make you free, you shall be free indeed." John 8:36.

May the joy of knowing God's Son make this Christmas the greatest ever for you and your family, because receiving Jesus Christ into your life makes the impossible happen!

Merry Christmas!

Pastor Gueary Clendening is a retired minister with the Assemblies of God. He has ministered for over 50 years and resides in Valparaiso, Florida.

#### YEAR OF GIVING

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profound difference.

Food insecurity is not a distant issue. It affects families, neighbors, coworkers, and friends in Walton County. It's not always visible and can touch more lives than we realize. It can affect anyone – families working multiple jobs, seniors on fixed incomes, students, single parents, and those facing sudden illnesses, job loss or other hardships. It's a reminder that life can shift unexpectedly.

Caring and Sharing of South Walton fed 1,000 families in October, which was the largest number in their 30 years of operation. As of the end of October, Emerald Coast Food Rescue had distributed 2.35 million pounds of rescued food, which is a 23% increase compared to that time in 2024. Food for Thought is expecting a 20% increase in requests for support this holiday season, which is 140 more families in addition to the 700 they already serve.

When someone in our community struggles to access healthy food, it can affect their physical health, mental and emotional health, and overall well-being. Acknowledging that food insecurity exists close to home reminds us that compassion, awareness, and support matter. We are deeply grateful for the hearts of those serving others, and for the positive impact you continue to

create. Thank you for all that you do. By standing together, we can help ensure that no one in our community faces hunger alone.

Please consider reaching out to an organization near you to see how you can serve our community through donating or volunteering.

Caring and Sharing of South Walton – 112 Lynn Drive, Santa Rosa Beach, (850) 267-2866: Food distributions are twice a month on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, 9 a.m. – 2 p.m.

Hearts & Hands Food Pantry by First Baptist Church of DeFuniak Springs – Tri-County Building at 105 W Main Avenue, DeFuniak Springs, (850) 892-2722: Food distribution is every Friday 9 a.m. – 11 a.m.

First Methodist Church of

DeFuniak Springs – 88 Circle Drive, DeFuniak Springs, (850) 892-5332: Upcoming food distributions will be on November 20 and December 18, 9 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.; otherwise, distributions are on the second and fourth Thursdays of the month, 9 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.

Food for Thought – 2132 US-90, DeFuniak Springs, (850) 290-4056: Food distribution to students on the Free/Reduced Lunch Program are Mondays, 4 p.m. – 6 p.m. at 132 Market Street, Santa Rosa Beach and Tuesdays, 8:30 a.m. – 10:30 a.m. at 2132 US Hwy 90 W DeFuniak Springs.

Helping Hands (Southwide Baptist) – 1307 Coy Burgess Loop, DeFuniak Springs, (850) 892-3835: Food distribution is on Mondays, 12 p.m. – 3 p.m., based on when the food truck arrives, and on availability.

The Matrix COC – 37 North 9th Street, DeFuniak Springs, (850) 892-1090: Food distributions are weekly, but not on a fixed schedule due to timing and availability of food deliveries. Call (850) 892-1090 Monday – Friday 9 a.m. – 4 p.m. for more information.

New Life Adventist – 532 Lakeview Drive, DeFuniak Springs, (850) 892-7777: Food distribution is on Mondays, and registration starts at 4:30 p.m.

Open Door Food Pantry – 24388 US 331, Santa Rosa Beach, (850) 685-0684: Food distribution is very Saturday from 9 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.







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# Celebrating Success and Looking Ahead to a Bright New Year

By Dr. Joshua Bledsoe, Public Information Officer, Walton County School District

As we enter the final month of 2025, the Walton County School District is excited to highlight the incredible achievements and celebrations that made November a standout month across our campuses. From academic and artistic accomplishments to athletic excellence and major facility upgrades, our students and staff showcased the EPIC spirit that defines Walton County schools.

November began with one of our most anticipated recognitions of the year: the announcement of each school's Teacher of the Year and Educational Support Professional of the Year. These honorees represent the Excellence, Professionalism, Innovation, and Collaboration that define our District. We invite families and community members to visit individual school websites and social media platforms to view photos of the

winners and help celebrate these exceptional staff members.

Athletics also shone brightly this month. In golf, Brody McCormick claimed the District Tournament Championship, an accomplishment that also earned him an individual spot at the Regional Tournament. Both the South Walton boys' and girls' golf teams advanced to Regionals as well, joined by individual qualifiers Aiden Anderson (WHS) and Haley Chapman and Isabella Dickens (FHS). Their hard work and perseverance throughout the season earned them well-deserved recognition at the regional level.

On the football field, all three district high schools advanced to the regional quarterfinals, marking a successful season for each program. South Walton High School carried its momentum even further, making an exciting run that concluded at the Regional Semifinals. Their teamwork and determination exemplified the competitive spirit we are proud to see in all our



student-athletes.

In volleyball, South Walton High School continued to raise the bar with an outstanding season that landed the Lady Seahawks in the State Semifinals. Their grit and passion throughout the year made this deep playoff run possible, and we congratulate them on this extraordinary achievement.

November also brought significant campus milestones.

South Walton High School celebrated the ribbon-cutting of its new state-of-the-art stadium, providing students and athletes with a cutting-edge facility for years to come. The Magnet Innovation Center unveiled a major campus addition that is as innovative as the faculty and staff who occupy its halls. At the same time, Emerald Coast Technical College revealed newly completed renovations

to its Watersound campus. These enhancements highlight the district's commitment to expanding innovative learning opportunities and ensuring that students have access to exceptional educational environments.

Creativity shone as well through the accomplishments of Piper Wood from Freeport Middle School, who won the Art in the Capitol contest. Her work will be proudly displayed at the Florida State Capitol during the upcoming legislative session, beginning in January. This is a tremendous honor for a talented young artist.

Across the district, schools held heartfelt Veterans Day ceremonies, honoring the courage and sacrifice of the men and women who have served in our armed forces. We extend our sincere gratitude to our veterans for their service and for inspiring our students and families.

WCSD

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### **Coastal Seniors December Updates**

Exercise Classes – Angela Gibson will lead classes every Tuesday and Thursday at 10 a.m. at 70 Logan Lane, Grayton Beach. NO CLASS ON DECEMBER 25 Cost is \$5 per class for CSSW members and \$10 for non-members. Sign up on the email list. If you are not already on the email list, call (850) 280-5342 or email coastalseniorsofsouthwalton@gmail. com

Core Class - Angela Gibson will lead a 30-minute core class every Tuesday at 9:15 a.m. Participants will be screened to meet the safety and health requirements of this class. A yoga mat and Pilates ring are used for this class. Cost is \$5 per class for CSSW members and \$10 for non-members. For information or screening, call (850) 280-5342 or email coastalseniorsofsouthwalton@gmail.com

### **COASTAL SENIORS**

OF SOUTH WALTON

Chair Yoga - Amy Lindsey with Santa Rosa Physical Therapy, will lead a one-hour Therapeutic Chair Yoga class on Thursdays, December 11 and 18, and January 8 and 15, at 8:45 a.m. at 70 Logan Lane, Grayton Beach. Cost is \$5 per class for CSSW members and \$10 for non-members. 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, December 5 and January 2 and 9, from 8:45 a.m. – 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 signup list, call (850) 280-5342 or email coastalseniorsofsouthwalton@gmail.com . All supplies are included.

Pickleball - Beginner Pickleball 101 at Walton Sports Complex Courts on December 3 at 6 p.m. Please Check The Sites Listed Below for updates. This beginner class is open to Walton County residents only. (Ages 18 and up) Registration is required. Register through Parks and Rec Website at secure. recl.com. Email Sandy Gulak at sowalpickleball@gmail.com for more information. Class is FREE, and equipment is provided or use your own. Boys and Girls Club fall session play runs through DECEMBER 18 on Tuesday, Wednesday Thursday, 9:30-12:30. Beginners welcome. Come learn how to play. Demo paddles available. 6 indoor courts. Cost is \$5 per day plus \$35 waiver fee at initial registration. Please join the SolWal 30A Pickleball Association on Facebook for more information and weekly updates and check the CSSW calendar at www.coastalseniorsofsouthwalton.org.

Northwest Florida Health Council - Free Health Screenings, Wednesday, December 3, from 1-4 p.m., 70 Logan Lane, Grayton Beach.

Monthly Meeting and Potluck Lunch - Friday, December 19, from 11-1 p.m. Contact CSSW to sign up for food category. Guest speakers from FSU include a doctor and residents to educate seniors about heart health. Sign up by email coastalseniorsofsouthwalton@gmail.com

**Lawless Coast Brewery Get Together** Friday, December 12 from 4-7 p.m., Location is 350 S. County Hwy 393, Santa Rosa Beach.

Line Dancing Is Back with Sue Westpahl on Wednesdays January 7 and 14, from 3-4 p.m. at 70 Logan Lane, Grayton Beach. Registration required as space is limited. Call (850) 280-5342 or email coastalseniorsof-southwalton@gmail.com

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  $www. coastal seniors of south\ walton.$ 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. Media Contact: Melinda Finney, Director, Coastal Seniors of South Walton, Inc. T: 615-477-3417 Email mkfinney24@gmail.com



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### **Christmas Reflections on Lake DeFuniak**

### A small Southern town finds its glow again

By Kerri Parker

There's a moment — just as the sun slips behind historic buildings and mature trees when Lake DeFuniak becomes a mirror. The century-old homes that curve around its shore soften into silhouette, and then suddenly, with the flick of a switch, Christmas Reflections comes to life. Tens of thousands of twinkling lights ripple across the water of one of only two nearly perfect spring-fed lakes in the world.

DeFuniak Springs was built for gatherings. The L&N

railroad once delivered thinkers, teachers, and travelers to this very lakefront, where the Florida Chautauqua flourished in a flurry of lectures, concerts, and conversation. It was a hub of culture. a place where ideas arrived before the rest of the state caught up. Time moves on, as it does. The rails quieted. The world chased the beaches to the south the sugar-white ones along the Gulf that made Walton County famous

But here in the county seat, around this improbably round lake, the glow never faded — it simply waited.

Today, visitors are drifting back from across the Southeast

— families who've heard that something special is happening here again — discovering what locals have quietly known all along: DeFuniak Springs is stirring.

Along Baldwin Avenue, old brick storefronts are waking up again, many with the careful confidence of a place rediscovering its footing. Chef Todd Misener, who recently opened Iron & Grape Italian Kitchen, has quietly elevated the town's culinary heartbeat. His scratch-made pasta and attention

#### **Christmas Reflections Santa**





**Dan & Kerri Parker** 

to detail draw locals and visitors alike, not with flash or fanfare, but with the steady rhythm of well-crafted meals and the kind of hospitality that doesn't announce itself. Nearby, other kitchens are quietly staking their claim: Southern comfort cooked with care, flavors that echo New Orleans, and fresh, inventive fare

that makes even a quick meal feel like part of the evening's experience. It shows up in the clatter of plates, the murmur of familiar voices, and the soft glow of dining rooms. It feels less like a restaurant scene and more like

a town remembering how good it is to linger around a table.

And for those who arrive from farther afield - and many do-

#### REFLECTIONS

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#### By Helen Petre

Welcome to fall! It is time for us humans to break out the blankets and jackets, but what do our wild animals do to prepare? Fortunately, they have everything they need to stay warm. In the fall, most animals start eating a lot. They need to add a layer of fat to keep them warm and provide energy to sustain them through the winter when there is little food.

#### The Florida black bear, Ursus americanus floridanus

The Florida black bear is the only bear in Florida. There are about 4,000 in all of Florida, but only about 120 in the western Panhandle, mostly in Eglin. They prefer dense undergrowth in scrub oak ecosystems, swamps, and flatwoods. One was seen in Grayton Beach State Park recently, and it was not small. Should we be worried about large, dangerous animals while walking in the woods or on the beach? Probably not. As with all wildlife you encounter in their habitats, give them room and do not try to interact with them. If you are hiking in an area that

Wildlife in Fall is bear habitat, make noise. If 20,000 calories a day in order you

likely move away from you.

Bears mate in the summer, but the eggs do not implant until November, and then, only if the female has gained enough weight. The cubs are born in January as tiny, helpless things weighing less than a pound. Females feed and protect them denned in the saw palmetto understory until spring.

the bear hears you, he will most

Males are much larger than females, weighing about 350 pounds, while females weigh in at around 200 pounds. Bears that eat garbage, pet and wildlife food are much larger because those foods are higher in calories than the normal diet of mostly plants and insects. Bears eat bees, wasps, and other insects, soft mast consisting of saw palmetto and holly berries, and hard mast, a variety of acorns and hickory nuts.



Common foods. FWC.
In the fall, bears eat about

20,000 calories a day in order to prepare for the winter when there is less food, and females are denned with their offspring. That's as much as a normal person should eat in ten days, or the caloric count of about eight pizzas. In fall, bears feed

for about 18 hours a day, so the

chance of seeing a bear is rather

It is illegal to feed bears in Florida. Considering they are trying to gain weight in fall, if a bear finds your garbage, he will happily eat it. This is not good for many reasons. Human garbage and dog food is not very nutritious for bears. Bears that



are accustomed to eating your garbage and dog food lose their fear of humans and become aggressive if you do not have food for them. To prevent bears from wanting to be in your yard, keep garbage in the garage or lock

your containers. Take in pet and bird feeders. Bears are usually solitary and quiet animals, but if they smell your tasty buffet, they will come to get it.

Florida black bear on turf.

### White-tailed deer (Odocoileus virginianus)

Deer are actually more dangerous than bears, not because they attack people, but because they tend to run out on the road right in front of moving vehicles. Deer feed along the edge of the highway, especially in fall, when they, like bears, are trying to fatten up. Males are about 115 pounds and have antlers, and females are about 90 pounds. White-tailed deer are edge species, choosing to browse low-growing vegetation along an edge where they can see predators. This makes the side of highways and yards that back to woods, or the edge of fields, great places to see deer. When they are alarmed, they lift their white tails, stamp their feet, and

Deer are crepuscular, active at dawn and dusk, like mosquitoes, making driving during those times a bit tricky. Deer often follow each other, so if one deer crosses the road, be prepared for the next.

If you come across a silent, bedded fawn while walking in high grass or woods, please leave it alone. Does teach their fawns to sit silently, not move, and wait for their return. If humans intervene and try to help the fawn, it usually does not end well.



Buck. FWC

### Eastern Gray Squirrel (Sciurus carolinensis)

Even if you do not get out into the forest and see bears, you will see squirrels, busily collecting their favorite foods, acorns and hickory nuts, getting ready for

#### **WILDLIFE IN FALL**

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# Tickets Now on Sale for Taste of the Race with Headliner Rubiks Groove

Tickets are officially on sale for Taste of the Race, one of the most anticipated culinary and entertainment events along 30A, returning Friday, February 13, 2026, at the iconic SEASIDE® Lyceum. This high-energy evening kicks off the 24th Annual SEASIDE SCHOOL™ Half Marathon + 5K Race Weekend with incredible food, electrifying live music, and unforgettable community spirit all to benefit the SEASIDE SCHOOL FOUNDATION™.

This year's Taste of the Race will be headlined by Rubiks Groove, a nationally acclaimed, character-driven musical act known for their "outside of the box" performances featuring iconic hits from the 80s, 90s, and 00s. With full-costume throwback characters, high-energy choreography, immersive video elements, and live mashups of fan-favorite songs, Rubiks Groove delivers a 360-degree entertainment experience. Their performances have lit up legendary venues like The Wildhorse Saloon, The Tabernacle, Skydeck on Broadway, and professional sporting events for the Nashville Predators, Tennessee Titans, and more, making them the perfect headliner for an electric night in SEA-SIDE®

Taste of the Race begins with the VIP Experience at 6 p.m., featuring early entry, an exclusive VIP gift, culinary tastings, complimentary wine and craft beverages, and a special live performance from the SEASIDE NEIGHBOR-HOOD SCHOOL™ Performance Band. VIP ticket holders will also receive exclusive side-stage access during Rubiks Groove's performance. General Admission opens at 7 p.m., with Rubiks Groove taking the stage for a high-energy show guaranteed to have the entire Lyceum dancing under the

Guests will indulge in tastings from over a dozen of the Gulf Coast's top chefs and restaurants, each bringing their best as they compete for coveted awards including People's Choice, Judges' Choice, and Chef's Choice. Complemented by premium wine selections, craft cocktails, and local





brews, the evening promises a delectable and dynamic culinary celebration.

"Taste of the Race is a night that brings our community together in the most meaningful way through food, fun, and a shared commitment to our students," said Callie Cox, Director of Advancement & Donor Relations for the SEASIDE SCHOOL<sup>TM</sup>.





"Every ticket purchased helps support innovative academic and extracurricular programs at SEASIDE NEIGHBORHOOD SCHOOL™ and Seacoast Collegiate High School. It's an evening where every moment, and every

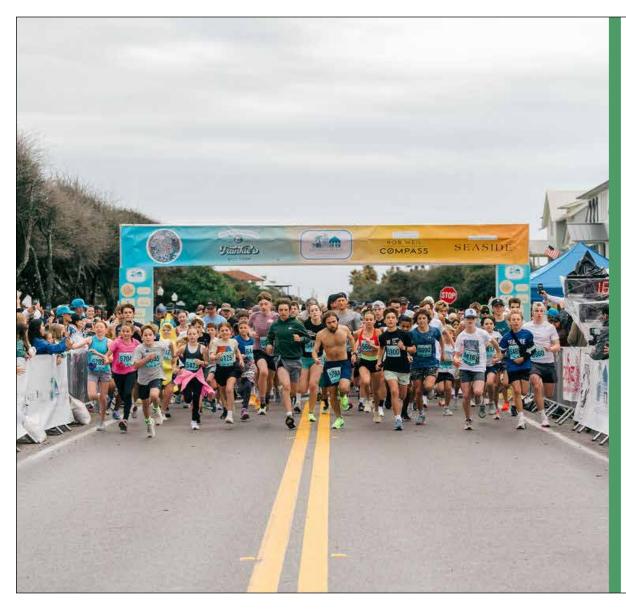
bite, makes a real impact."

Tickets are limited, and Early Bird pricing is available through December 31, 2025 at 11:59 p.m. CST. New this year, couples can enjoy a special discounted rate with the Couples Ticket Package. Taste of the Race is a 21+ event and rain or shine.

Proceeds from Taste of the Race benefit the SEASIDE SCHOOL FOUNDATION™, supporting programs that elevate education for students at SEASIDE NEIGHBOR-HOOD SCHOOL™ and SEACOAST COLLEGIATE HIGH SCHOOL™, including arts, technology, culinary programs, and hands-on learning initiatives.

To purchase tickets to Taste of the Race or learn more about the SEASIDE SCHOOL™ Half Marathon + 5K Race Weekend, visit RunSeasideFL.com.

Local chefs or restaurants interested in participating may contact Callie Cox at coxc@seasideschools.net.





The 24th annual running of the

#### SEASIDE SCHOOL HALF MARATHON + 5K

is back on Sunday, February 15, 2026, in beautiful Seaside, Florida.

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# Captured Clothing & Modus Photography Celebrate the Season with Their Biggest Sale Yet

# CAPTURED CUSTOM APPAREL & CURATED GOODS

As the holiday season unfolds along Scenic 30A, local artist and entrepreneur Chandler Williams is giving both locals and visitors something to look forward to. His two Grayton-based brands Captured Clothing 30A and Modus Photography — have launched a massive end-of-year celebration, kicking off with Veterans Day and Black Friday and continuing through the rest of 2025. What started as two creative outlets — one for art, one for lifestyle — with a combined 550 five-star Google reviews, it has become a cornerstone of the Grayton Beach community.

Captured Clothing 30A brings Chandler's artistic eye to wearable goods, offering coastalinspired apparel, leather accessories, and curated gifts that reflect the laid-back spirit of life along



the Gulf. From Modus Made hoodies and soft-washed tees to candles and journals, each piece carries that signature "Statements, not Souvenirs" message



the brand has become known for.

During the holiday season, Captured Clothing will feature site-wide discounts and free shipping on qualifying online orders at 30amenstore.com, along with exclusive in-store promotions at their Grayton Beach shop.

Head upstairs, and you'll find Modus Photography — Williams' award-winning fine-art studio — hosting its largest instock art sale ever. This includes artist proofs, limited-edition prints, and some of the most recognizable imagery of the 30A coastline and beyond. "I'm just excited to move my artist proofs and make room for what's coming in 2026," Williams said. "So why wait?" For Williams, the sale isn't just about moving inventory—it's about connection. "Every piece I make has a story tied to this place," he said. "Sharing that with people who love 30A as much as I do is what keeps it meaningful."

Whether you're looking for a one-of-a-kind gift or a piece of

local art that captures the beauty of the coast, this is the season to stop by Grayton Beach and see what Chandler and his team are creating. Shop online at 30amenstore.com and modusphotography.com or visit Modus Photography and Captured Clothing in Grayton beach

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

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### CAPTURED



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**Community** 

# Forever Warriors Donates \$50,000 to Support United Way Emerald Coast's Mission United

United Way Emerald Coast (UWEC) is honored to receive a generous \$50,000 investment from Forever Warriors, powered by Step One Automotive Group, in support of Mission United, a program serving active-duty service members, veterans, reservists, and their families.

This funding comes at a critical time as recent challenges have created heightened needs across our community. In this first month of partnership, UWEC and Forever Warriors hosted a drive-through food distribution with the Hurlburt Field First Sergeants and allocated more than \$10,000 in emergency financial assistance to help military families cover essential expenses.

One recipient shared the impact of Mission United, stating, "We are profoundly grateful for their essential support. Their financial assistance came at a critical moment for an Airman who was grieving the loss of a family member and welcoming a new baby, all while being the sole provider for his three children and veteran partner. (This) aid provided a much-needed sense of security, allowing him to focus on his family; a testament to your dedication to our military members."

Mission United connects military-affiliated individuals with critical resources when other funding is unavailable. Support has included emergency assistance, mental health services,







housing support, and employment or career transition assistance. Since its launch in 2023, the program has served more than 5,000 service members and veterans across Okaloosa and Walton counties.

"We are deeply grateful to Forever Warriors for stepping forward when our military families need it most," said Kelly Jasen, President & CEO of United Way Emerald Coast. "This invest-



Photos by: Mission United and United Way Emerald Coast.

ment allows us to meet urgent needs today while continuing to provide long-term stability and support through Mission United. It's a powerful example of the strength of our community."

To learn more about United Way Emerald Coast or get involved, visit www.united-way.org or follow @uwemeraldcoast on social media. Military members in need of support can also connect with United Way's Florida Veterans Support Line by dialing 2-1-1 and selecting option 5 or 1-844-MyFLVet.









# Fore Her's Annual Pink Run 5K and Walk Set for January 31st

Fore Her welcomes all "walks of life" to lace up and "pink out" on Saturday, January 31 at 8:30 a.m. at the Village of Baytowne Wharf in Miramar Beach for their annual Pink Run 5K, presented by Emerald Coast Hospice Care, a signature event that raises funds to provide essential financial assistance to breast cancer patients undergoing treatment.

Whether racing to support a friend, walking to remember a loved one, strolling as a Survivor or simply for the love of a good race, all are welcome to join in the day's festivities. Registrants may walk or run the timed 5k Race.

The Survivors' Stroll immediately follows the 5K and is one of the more memorable parts of the Pink Run festivities, offering survivors a way to celebrate by taking a stroll around the Village of Baytowne Wharf with fellow survivors.

After the race, participants can trade running shoes for dancing shoes at the official After Party complete with DJ, photo booth, a



sampling of breakfast bites, prizes and more!

Early-Bird Registration for the 5K is \$50 now through January 5th and includes a free race T-shirt. (Registration is \$60 after January 6th plus the cost of a race T-shirt.) Also, Fore Her offers a discounted rate of \$45 for breast cancer survivors and the Survivors' Stroll is free of charge. Visit https://PinkRunBenefitingForeHer. itsyourrace.com to register. Additional race T-shirts will be available for purchase day of race while quantities last.

Packet pick-up will take place on Friday, January 30th from 3-5 p.m. and on race day during registration from 7:00 to 8:00 a.m. at Baytowne Wharf's Village Stage. The 5k will start on Saturday, January 31st at 8:30 am

sharp. Also, registrants will find complimentary parking at the lot located North of the Village at Baytowne Wharf, past Hotel Effie with signage in place to help direct.

A warm round of applause to the 2026 Pink Run Sponsors and Donors (to date): Presenting - Emerald Coast Hospice, Medal - Rosemary Beach Holdings, Survivors' Lounge - Spa Lilliana, Medical Tent Sponsor - Emerald Bay Plumbing and Registration Table - Diana Health. Pink Run's 2025 generous donors include Village of Baytowne Wharf, Mingle, Seaside Snaps, Ruby Slipper Cafe and Diamond Dan DJ Services.

Additional sponsorships remain available for this high-profile event, with numerous opportunities for local businesses and services to create maximum exposure and reach. For more information and available sponsorship opportunities, visit foreher.org/pinkrun or email Amy@foreher.org.

#### REFLECTIONS

continued from page 5

the night has a way of convincing them to linger a little longer. Travelers who prefer something more tucked-away often find themselves settling into century-old homes now offered as guest stays. It isn't hard to stay the night here. In fact, it feels almost expected — as if Christmas Reflections was meant to be savored slowly, long after the last lights shimmer across the water.

Just down the street, a his-

toric theater has found its breath again, too. National recording artists slip into its intimate acoustics — drawn by the purity of a true listening room — thanks to songwriter

Tim Jackson, a full-time resident championing live music as part of the town's very pulse.

These aren't manufactured attractions. They're the signs of a place remembering exactly who it is.

But the crown jewel — the reason families pack up thermoses of cocoa and make the drive — is Christmas Reflections.

The community has transformed its iconic lakefront into a glowing wonderland every holiday season. Through December nights, the breeze carries laughter from the horse-drawn carriage rides. Families stroll the

mile-long promenade beneath archways of evergreen and light, the water throwing their reflection right back at them — a reminder that some moments can only happen here.

Every weekend in December, Baldwin Avenue becomes the sort of scene casting directors scout for holiday films — carolers in the street, small-batch hot chocolate, shop windows frosted just enough to catch a sparkle. It's charming, yes — but never contrived. What's happening in



Chance & Maia Huff with sister Alice Fleeman

this town isn't a revival — it's a return. A return to gathering for inspiration and connection.

If you're not here on a December night, standing on the edge of a perfect circle of spring water watching stars and Christmas lights mingle as one — well, you'll feel like you've missed something. Something rare.

And if you come once? You'll circle back.

Check the HWY331.com/my-calendar for event details.





Community



Make this holiday season one to remember in a new home built around you at NatureWalk at Watersound Origins by Kolter Homes. With beautifully designed, Move-In Ready homes available now, you can settle in and celebrate the season your way, without the wait.

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MODELS OPEN DAILY | New Homes from the \$500s to \$1M NatureWalkWatersound.com







### Money Matters: Investing - Too Much of a Good Thing

By CLINT GHARIB, AIF®, CFED®

Too much of a good thing, a victim of its own success, glut, overkill. These are all phrases that make me think of the stock market in 2025, especially Nvidia and the past two years plus of its published growth. It's human nature to acclimate; even more so as we get bored from repetition. I mean, I love Sugar Cream Pie; I consider myself an unofficial ambassador for it. But if I eat a piece or two each day for several days, I can't eat any more of it for a while; not just because of my raised blood pressure, but even I start to grow tired of it. Well, the day after Nvidia released their earnings in November, that's how the market seemed to me: too much sugar cream pie for too long. Nvidia has made it seem normal to release recordbreaking earnings so often that the markets seem to have become bored, even though it was one of the greatest quarterly earnings reports and forecast updates I have ever come across. It, along with many tech stocks, made a big reversal from pre-market gains to high single-digit percentage losses

by the end of the day. I know one day does not make a trend, but a reversal often signals a shortterm point of inflection. CFRA Research Chief Strategist Sam Stovall wrote that day, "Since the bear market of 2022, the S&P 500 has endured two corrections. However following the bears of 1948, 1973, 1990 and 2007, the S&P 500 weathered from 3 to 5 corrections before finally surrendering to a new bear market. So even if this decline is merely in its infancy, investors should remember that digestions of prior gains are common within the life span of a bull market." This basically means that markets, no matter how good they are, don't go straight up. I view the current race for energy to power the seemingly insatiable demands of self-driving cars, plant automation, AI models and machines (and possibly soon personal robots) similar to the infrastructure buildout opportunity after World War II with the rebuilding of Europe and Japan in particular. In the US alone, the proposed project buildouts that have been announced amount to roughly



building 20 Denvers. That can be many years, not months or a couple of quarters, but many years of opportunity. I think this is a fact that too many are missing. Spending projections for 2026 from the largest technology companies that provide cloud and data services generally increased from 2025 levels. When sell-offs come, regardless of the size and depth, it can be worrying. This is why I want to remind you of what I wrote in my Update 'Miles and Miles and Miles' believing a profit taking was likely: "So when the next big sell-off comes (a sale), remember this idea of so many proposed data-center projects to shop during the sale.

I don't know the future, but I can see 'miles and miles' of proposed spending ahead. "

Remember, panic sells set the stage for big rallies. If you've been reading my updates, you know I've been trying to prepare folks for a real correction. During a sale, you can find great bargains. I have made my career out of this. If you don't have confidence in your approach to the markets, then contact us for a no obligation review and plan design. I've seen the stock markets make many dreams come true, and we love working with clients to chase theirs.

Please Note: Opinions expressed are that of the author and are not endorsed

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#### **Clint Gharib**

AIF®, CFEd® Investment Advisor 404-479-8341

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Community

### Last Chance to Save the Iconic 30A License Plate"

by December 31, Florida will retire this plate forever—cutting critical funding for Scenic Walton's safety and beautification projects.

Scenic Walton, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit that works to preserve and enhance the safety and natural beauty of Walton County, is the beneficiary of the iconic 30A/Scenic Walton charity license plate. This is likely your last chance to get one of these beautiful plates.

For every one of these plates on the road, Scenic Walton receives \$25/year of the specialty plate fees. Over 3,000 locals preordered these tags to support safety and beautification projects right here at home, but not enough people have picked them up. If 3,000 plates aren't on cars

If 3,000 plates aren't on the road by December 31st of this year, the State will discontinue their plate. That means no more 30A tags, and Scenic Walton loses the funding that helps keep our community safe and beautiful.

Fun Facts:

• The plate can be ordered for any regular vehicle, golf cart, low-speed vehicle, trailer, or RV registered in the state of Florida!

You can order it whether you are renewing your vehicle registration or not!

- It is quick and easy to order the plate for yourself. The entire online ordering process only takes a few minutes!
- It is just as quick and easy to order the plate as a gift for someone else. What a great Christmas present!

With projects like the pedestrian and cyclist underpass in Inlet Beach, multiple roadway landscaping projects, and their current initiative to get overhead utilities undergrounded throughout the county, Scenic Walton is truly making a difference, and they need your help to continue this game-changing work. If you already have the Scenic Walton 30A plate, you can keep it for ten years. But after December 31st, they will be retired forever. And they will no doubt become collector's items that only true locals have. So don't wait. If you believe in protecting the place we all love, go to any Florida tax collector's office or visit www. Scenic.org/waltonplates now to get your tag before it's too late.

#### WILDLIFE IN FALL

continued from page 6

the winter. The Eastern Gray Squirrel is our backyard squirrel, and has adapted to feeding from bird feeders, if available. These are our friends, as their habit of burying nuts leads to forest regeneration. If you are quiet, you can hear them chattering to each other as they search, bury and eat mast.

As we enjoy the cooler weather and fall colors, this is a good time to go out and walk in the woods or along the dunes at one of our parks. Our animal friends are busy preparing for winter, eating lots of calories and putting on an extra layer of fat to keep them warm in the coming cold. This is a great time to explore nature and learn how animals prepare for the lean season to come. Remember to give them space and let them show you how their world works.



Wikipedia

Helen Petre is a retired USDA biologist and college biology professor. She spends her time volunteering, teaching, and writing science articles to share her interests with future genera-

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Lee Campbell



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# Emerald Coast Theatre Company Presents The Holiday Classic "Annie" Through December 21st

Emerald Coast Theatre Company (ECTC) lights up the season with Annie, running Nov. 28—Dec. 21 at Grand Boulevard in Miramar Beach. Join Annie, Daddy Warbucks and the unforgettable Miss Hannigan in this beloved, feel-good musical filled with classics like "You're Never Fully Dressed Without a Smile," "It's the Hard Knock Life," and "Tomorrow."

Directed by Nathanael Fisher, the show features choreography by Emily Bainbridge and Vincent Pellegrino, music direction by Martha Wingfield, and design work by Rebeca Lake, Taylor Walker, Gavin Young and Cailey Mize, with additional production support from Ora Wolfgram, Carl Hendin and Bella Fisher.

The cast includes Evelyn Brooks and Lanier Hooper as Annie; Adam Du Plessis as Warbucks; Darla Briganti as Miss Hannigan; Rachel Morse as Grace Farrell; Gavin Parmley as Rooster; and Martha Wingfield as Lily St. Regis, along with a talented ensemble and a large cast of Orphans. Bruce Collier portrays President Franklin D. Roosevelt, with Kingston Mixson as Child Actor Supervisor.

Performances take place at ECTC, 560 Grand Boulevard, Suite 200, with tickets priced \$30–\$65. ECTC's 2025–2026 season is supported by Grand Boulevard Town Center, St. Joe Community Foundation, South Walton, Howard Group and Jerry and Alice Zich.

Engage with ECTC on Facebook, Instagram and YouTube | (850) 684-0323 | emeraldcoasttheatre.org

# Dog-Harmony Receives Generous Q4 Donation from 100+ Women Who Care Emerald Coast

Dog-Harmony, Inc. is honored to announce that it has received a generous Q4 donation of \$18,800 from 100+ Women Who Care Emerald Coast, a philanthropic group dedicated to making a meaningful, local impact through collective giving.

This gift will directly support the expansion of Dog-Harmony's evaluated Therapy Dog Teams across Okaloosa, Walton, and Bay Counties, allowing more children to benefit from the comfort, confidence, and emotional support these volunteer teams provide. Therapy Dog Teams are essential for Dog-Harmony's caring mission to provide literacy and wellness programs, including READing Paws, humane education classes, and visits with at-risk youth.

The donation will also help sustain current Therapy Dog Teams by supporting specialty insurance, handler and dog uniforms, training, and essential operational needs that keep the program running safely and effectively.

"We are deeply grateful to the members of 100+ Women Who Care Emerald Coast for believing in our mission," said Nancy Bown, Executive Director of Dog-Harmony. "Their generosity allows us to reach even more children with the healing presence of Therapy Dogs and helps ensure our teams can continue serving the community with excellence."

Women interested in joining this incredible local giving circle and supporting local nonprofits can learn more at facebook. com/100WWCEC.

For more information on Dog-Harmony or to learn how to get involved as a volunteer, visit dogharmony.org.



### Green Thumb Garden Club Thanks the Community for Their Support

By Kathleen Edge, Publicity & Website Chair

Green Thumb Garden Club is deeply grateful for the largest turnout of Walton County residents and visitors for their fifth annual Holiday Ba-

zaar. The record donations will increase funding for 2026 scholarships, local non-profit organizations and community projects.

Special thanks to the very dedicated Green Thumb members and volunteers who made the Bazaar an unprecedented success by contributing their time and talent to the event over many months.

During the last month of 2025, Walton County Sheriff's Santa Patrol will receive gifts and gift cards for young children and teenagers at the GTGC Holiday Luncheon on December 10, 2025, at Bricktop's Grand Boulevard.

The Club has chosen a well-deserving Walton County family as their 2025 Habitat holiday family. The family will receive monetary donations and gifts to help ensure a great holiday season for everyone. The donations will be delivered to the family in mid-December.

The 70-year anniversary of the Green Thumb Garden Club's founding will be celebrated in



January 2026 with a member program and luncheon. Plans will be announced soon as well as the 2026 scholarship application details

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

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



### Fresh Interiors for a Fresh Start: Why Winter is Perfect for Whole-Home Painting



By Kyle Sparks OVATION PAINTING

As the year winds down, many of us naturally start thinking about fresh starts. We clean out closets, reorganize spaces, and set goals for the new year. One of the most powerful ways to reset your environment is with a fullhome interior painting project.

Unlike small touch-ups, whole-home projects transform the way you experience your space. Fresh walls, ceilings, and trim don't just look better - they feel better. Clean, even finishes create a sense of order and calm, turning rooms into places you actually want to spend more time in. It's the kind of change that quietly uplifts daily life.

Winter is an especially smart time for interior painting. With shorter days and cooler evenings, we naturally gather indoors

more. This means kitchens, living rooms, and bedrooms see heavier use — and also benefit most from a refresh. Taking on a large project now ensures these spaces feel welcoming and renewed for both your family and your holiday guests.

For homeowners with second properties or rentals, December and January are often slower months. That makes it the perfect window to complete a big project without disrupting bookings. By spring, the property is not only guest-ready but also protected and polished for the busy season ahead.

Think of winter painting as a gift to yourself - a way to step into the new year with clean, bright spaces that reflect the life you want to live. It's not just about paint on the walls; it's about starting fresh in a home that feels truly yours.

Ready to give your home the loving protection it deserves? Reach out to Ovation Painting and let's start planning your refresh. Call or text us at (850) 830-9668 to get started....And as a thank you to those who serve, we proudly offer a military and first responder discount by mentioning this article!









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### **WCDWC Bestows Honors** at Annual Banquet

The Ladies of Distinction of Walton County honored Walton County Democratic Women's Club President Karen McGee at their Annual Banquet on Nov. 8, 2025. Ms. McGee was given a Certificate of Achievement for services done within the Black community.









### The Restaurant Fix: How Coast 2 Coast Payroll & Payments Helps Solve the Problems Owners Face Every Day

By Kris Ford

Anyone who has worked a Friday night shift knows the truth: restaurants run on rhythm. When the rhythm is good, everything flows. When it's off—one

wrong modifier, one backed-up month. POS station, one tech glitch—everyone feels it. What seems small on the surface becomes a costly chain reaction: wasted food, unhappy guests, frazzled staff and margins that shrink month after

These daily pressures are exactly why so many local operators along the Emerald Coast turn to Coast 2 Coast Payroll & Payments, a homegrown team that understands the pace and realities of restaurant life. Their Handhelds That Bring Back focus isn't selling equipmentit's solving the little pain points that make the biggest difference.

#### **Order Accuracy Starts with Better Modifiers**

Ask any chef what derails service, and they'll mention modifiers. When they aren't set up correctly, tickets come in unclear or incomplete. Coast 2 Coast helps restaurants simplify the process with POS systems that improve communication between front and back of house. Cleaner screens, smarter workflows and accurate orders mean fewer remakes and a happier kitchen.

#### **Cash Discounting:** A Simple Way to Keep More of Your Revenue

Processing fees take up to 4% of your revenue! Coast 2 Coast offers programs that are Visa/ MC compliant and can eliminate up to 100% of those fees, allowing operators to keep more of their own revenue while servers effectively earn more per shift. It's a quiet change with a big impact on morale and the bottom line.

### the Flow

If you've ever watched a server stuck in line at a POS station, you know how quickly momentum disappears. Table-side handhelds fix this issue instantly. Servers stay on the floor, checks close out faster and guests feel taken care of. Many local owners report a 20% increase in covers just by switching to handheld ordering and checkout. Efficiency goes up, tips rise, and the dining room feels more connected.

#### **Local Matters More Than Ever**

Technology is great—until it stops working during a dinner rush. When that happens, 1-800-Good-Luck won't save the night. Coast 2 Coast is built on local, same-day support. They install systems in person, train your team on-site and show up when something goes wrong. No waiting days for an out-of-state tech. No ticket numbers. No guessing. Just real support from real people who know your market.

#### **Systems Built for Your Style** of Service

A small café doesn't operate like a high-volume bar. A food truck doesn't look anything like a multi-location restaurant group. With 35+ POS solutions, Coast 2 Coast matches the system to the operation—not the other way around. They also support owners with payroll, HR services, business capital, and high-risk workers' comp options, recognizing how interconnected those needs are in the restaurant world.

#### A Partner Who Gets It

Most restaurant owners say the same thing: they don't want another vendor; they want someone in their corner—someone who understands that the rhythm of a dining room matters. Someone who helps create smoother shifts, less stress and happier

That's what Coast 2 Coast aims to provide—practical, local solutions that let restaurants focus on hospitality, not headaches.

Learn more at www.c2cpayroll.com, call (586) 260-7453 or email william@c2cpayroll.com. Coast 2 Coast Payroll & Payments — Local Serving Local.







### **Subscribing to Hope**

By Heather Bennett Eye

Some stories begin with conflict. Some begin with hope. This one begins with resilience.

Across the hills of Judea, the fields of Samaria, and the ancient villages of Israel, families wake each morning committed to revitalizing their land, to rebuilding their livelihoods and their future. Their hands craft olive oil from ancestral groves, mold clay inspired by scripture, and harvest ingredients from soil their ancestors tended. These are not factory-made goods. They are lifelines.

Many of these small businesses face constant economic strain, uncertainty, and challenges created by distance, politics, and shifting global markets. They continue to produce goods, not because it is easy, but because their work connects their identity, legacy, and survival. They are working to create job opportunities they can sustain

Lev Haolam is based near Jerusalem in Israel. It's a global community dedicated to supporting these Israeli artisans, small businesses and farmers. It's not charity, but a partnership. When you join, your membership doesn't just allow you to receive beautiful products, you're stepping into a mission to uplift families and strengthen communities across Israel.

A membership with Lev Haolam gives you access to their private community, exclusive content, and entry to the members-only shop featuring unique Israeli-made goods. You'll have the opportunity to order a monthly curated Surprise Box filled with hand crafted good such as organic cosmetics, natural soaps, olive oil, spices, snacks, works of art, Judaica, ceramics, jewelry, and teas. Each box includes stories of the families you are directly helping. You'll be able to follow their progress, and watch hope grow where there was once struggle.

With over 300 producers supported, your membership ensures that Lev Haolam can help the most in need at any given moment, and rotate support among the artisans to significantly impact the lives of many underserved Israeli small businesses.

Lev Haolam has connected thousands of people with Israel for almost a decade and shipped over 1 million boxes worldwide. By visiting https://tl.levhaolam. com, you can learn more about the membership options, and also learn more about the culture and history of Israel, and the producers who benefit from Lev Haolam members. You can also read reviews from other members and watch them unbox their purchases.

If you believe in supporting families by helping to give them the tools to continue self-reliance and grow their communities, then this mission was made for you. Become a member today and support family businesses. Let every box you receive tell the story of hope you're helping to build.



Published Monthly
Mailed FREE to the Communities
of 32459, 32461 and 32413
Circulation: 12,500 households
P.O. Box 1424
Santa Rosa Beach, FL 32459

#### **Editor & Publisher**

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

#### **Production & Layout**

Dawna Shackley graphics@southwalton.life

### Advertising Department 850-399-0228

#### Advertising Manager

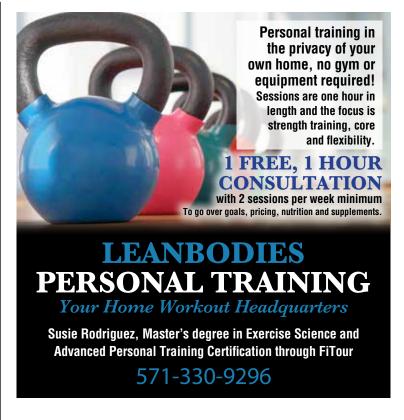
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#### **Contributing Writers**

Heather Bennett 850-399-0228

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### Making Time for You: Why the Holidays Can Be the Perfect Season for Cosmetic Surgery



By Dr. Clark. BLUEWATER PLASTIC SURGERY

The holidays are filled with shopping, travel, and family gatherings. But, for many people along the Emerald Coast, this season also presents a unique opportunity: the chance to finally schedule a surgical procedure they've been considering. While it may seem counterintuitive to think about cosmetic surgery during the busiest time of year,

December often provides the ideal window for both recovery and renewal. For many of our patients at Bluewater Plastic Surgery, this season becomes the perfect moment to invest in themselvessomething we see often as patients appreciate both the flexibility the holidays allow and the attentive, expert care we offer throughout

#### **Built-In Recovery Time**

Most cosmetic surgeries require at least a few days of rest and limited activity. The holiday season often includes builtin vacation days, office closures and school breaks. This natural downtime makes it easier to schedule procedures like breast augmentation, liposuction, tummy tucks or facelifts without missing significant work or family obligations. Many patients find it comforting to recover while surrounded by supportive loved ones at home.

#### Starting the New Year with Confidence

January is naturally a season of fresh starts. For patients who undergo procedures in December, the new year often begins with renewed energy and con-

fidence. Whether it's restoring body contours with liposuction, rejuvenating facial features with a facelift, or reclaiming prepregnancy shape with a mommy makeover, surgical solutions can provide dramatic, long-lasting results that align with new year

#### **Combining Procedures** for Comprehensive **Results**

The holiday season is also a time when patients consider combining procedures. For example, pairing a tummy tuck with breast surgery in a mommy makeover can provide more balanced, transformative results while limiting recovery to a single period. Similarly, combining facial surgery with non-surgical treatments like injectables or medical-grade skincare can help maximize and maintain results.



#### **Privacy and Discretion**

Another benefit we value at Bluewater Plastic Surgery is discretion. With many friends and colleagues traveling or celebrating, it's easier to step back for a short period without raising questions. Many patients appreciate the opportunity to move forward discreetly during the season, knowing that holiday schedules naturally provide privacy. By the time normal routines resume in January, swelling and bruising have often subsided, leaving only the refreshed results. Choosing a board-certified plastic surgeon is essential in ensuring these procedures are performed safely, discreetly, and with exceptional outcomes, especially during a busy season.

To schedule a private consultation and explore your options, contact Bluewater Plastic Surgery today. As a board-certified plastic surgeon, my practice is dedicated exclusively to cosmetic surgery, and I have performed thousands of procedures over the last 25 years. My surgical focus includes the face, breast,

and body, allowing me to tailor I let my patients' experiences procedures to each patient's goals with precision and experience. My highest priorities are patient safety and superior results. With more than 300 five-star reviews,

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### 2025 Year End Reflection

South Walton Life www.southwalton.life



By Stephenie Craig

2025 is rushing to a close. Maybe you find yourself overscheduled and weighed down by your own expectations or those of others this month. Maybe your mind is busy with gift planning, meal planning and travel planning. What will your kids do while out of school? How will you manage time away from work? How will you navigate awkward and difficult relationships through the holidays? What will you wear? What pictures will you post? How will you love others well?

December is a brain-busy month. It's easy to fill the days forgetting to slow down, rest, and reflect on what 2025 has meant to you. Reflecting on what you have experienced and learned each year creates an opportunity for you to approach the next year with intentionality about living life according to your values. Here are some questions and instructions to guide personal reflection regarding the past year, the present, and what you want for 2026.

Create space – Set aside a couple of hours to work through these questions without distraction (including your phone).

Record reflections - Honestly and vulnerably record your answers so you can refer back to them throughout the year and review them at the end of next

Share it - Share your responses with one or two trusted people. Sharing intentions with others solidifies them internally and increases your chances of following through.

**Live from it** – Use the responses to these questions as a daily compass directing your next steps.

#### THE PAST YEAR

- 1. What did you accomplish personally and professionally that you feel really good about?
- 2. What challenges, struggles and fears did you work through?
- 3. What did you hope to accomplish or change but weren't able to? What kept you from doing so?
- 4. How are you different from 12 months ago? What did you learn? How did you grow? 5. How did you make a positive difference in the world around you?
- 6. What and who brought you the most joy?
- 7. What and who were the greatest stressors?
- 8. What did you tolerate this vear
- 9. What are you thankful for from the past year?
- 10. What are your top 3 insights?

#### THE PRESENT

Life is made up of multiple domains. Take time to check in with yourself by rating each of the following areas on a scale of

**Personal** – How do you feel about yourself?

Physical – How are you taking care of your body (diet, exercise, rest, etc.)?

Financial – How is your financial situation (income, budget, spending, savings, giving, etc.)?

**Spiritual** – How satisfied are you with the way faith is integrated into your life?

**Vocational** – How do you feel about your work/career?

**Family** – How are you doing as a partner and/or parent?

Friends - How do you feel about your social relationships?

**Fun** – How well are you creating time for enjoyment and recreation?

What 2-3 areas of life do you most want to improve in the next year? What steps will you take to make those improvements?

#### THE UPCOMING YEAR

- 1. If it were two years from now and you were living your best life, how would you know?
- 2. If it were two years from now

#### YEAR END

continued on page 22



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### HOLIDAY HAPPENINGS IN SOUTH WALTON

#### Santa Paws at AJ's Grayton Beach Dec. 14

Santa Paws will be making his annual stop at AJ's Grayton Beach from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. Bring your fur babies out for Sunday brunch in the outdoor courtyard and get their photo taken with Santa! Enjoy Tito's Drink specials and live music. Road Dogg Rescue will be joining in all the fun and providing information on how you can adopt or foster this holiday season. The team from Tito's Vodka will be on site to see if Fido made Santa's nice list this year, giving out some swag to all those on the nice list! Visit ajsgrayton.com.

### ECTC A Christmas Carol at Seaside Post Office Dec. 13-14 and 18-23

This holiday season, experience the magic of Charles Dickens' timeless classic like never before! Emerald Coast Theatre Company in collaboration with SEASIDE, proudly presents a forty-five-minute adaptation by Nathanael Fisher of A Christmas



Carol. All performances are free to the public and begin at 11 a.m.

#### Baytowne Wednesday Night Concert Series -Holiday Edition + Visits with Santa Dec. 17

Find the holiday spirit at The Village of Baytowne Wharf as you tap your feet to some of your favorite sing-along classics. Enjoy a Holiday edition of the Wednesday Night Concert Series, 6-8 p.m., featuring visits with Santa. Bring your lawn chairs and blankets. Free and open to the public.

#### Grand Boulevard Horse-Drawn Carriage Rides, Music Review & Photos with Santa Dec. 18-23

Join the holiday celebrations at Grand Boulevard with a week of holiday cheer, featuring magical horse-drawn carriage rides through the Town Center, beautifully illuminated by the Coastal White Christmas lights and the stunning Festival of Trees display. Add to the festivities with a professional photo with Santa, and enjoy the lively sounds of the Emerald Coast Theatre Company's Holiday Musical Revue live on the fountain stage — a joyful soundtrack to your holiday experience.

#### Old Florida Fish House Brunch with Santa Dec. 20

Celebrate the season at Old Florida Fish House as they host a Brunch Buffet with Santa on Dec. 20 from 10 a.m. - 2 p.m. Reservations encouraged (850) 524-3045.

### Louis Louis Ugly Sweater Party & Benefit Dec. 20

'Tis the Season! Louis Louis will host their Annual Ugly Sweater Party on Saturday, December 20, from 8 p.m. 'til late. Be prepared to get your groove

on with DJ Michael Desciple! Bring one new, unwrapped gift for Toys 4 Tots to receive a drink ticket. Show up in your best Ugly Christmas Sweater to party in Santa Claus style!

#### New Year's Eve Celebrations Dec. 31

Alys Beach Noon Year's Eve Party 10 a.m.-12 p.m.

Stinky's Bait Shack Noon Year's Eve & Live Music 12-3 p.m.

Red Fish Taco Noon Year's Eve 12-3 p.m.

Seaside NYE Celebration 4-9

Pescado New Year's Eve Soirée 4-6 p.m.

The Red Bar Jazz Band 5:30-9 p.m.

Baytowne Wharf New Year's Eve Countdown 6 p.m.

New Year's Eve at North Beach Social 6-9 p.m.

Pescado's NYE 'Wicked'ly Celebration 7-10 p.m.

The Courtyard at Pescado New Year's Eve Party 8 p.m.

Old Florida Fish House New Year's Eve Party 9:30 p.m.



### Holiday Pops SPECTACULAR!

SATURDAY, DEC. 13 | 7:30 PM DESTIN-FWB CONVENTION CENTER

This festive concert features full orchestra, vocalists and everything from timeless favorites like *Winter Wonderland* to chart-topping hits such as Mariah Carey's *All I Want for Christmas is You*, along with beloved holiday songs from Broadway and film like *It's Beginning to Look a Lot Like Christmas*.





THE "CALLA-WAY"

SUNDAY, DEC. 7 | 10:30 AM HOTEL EFFIE SANDESTIN

Enjoy a sparkling Sunday brunch concert with Broadway sisters Ann Hampton Callaway and Liz Callaway as they bring their acclaimed show to Destin. This celebrated cabaret performance blends their extraordinary voices. From Broadway classics to pop standards.







#### **SWFD Polar Bear Plunge** Jan. 1

Rinse off the old and welcome the new! South Walton Fire District will hold its Annual Polar Bear Plunge on New Year's Day at Ed Walline Public Beach Access. In-person sign-up starts at 11 a.m. at Shunk Gulley Oyster Bar on January 1, 2026, which will be followed by a costume contest at 12 p.m., and the Plunge itself at 1 p.m. Online registration is now open; check out the link here to

sign up: https://tinyurl.com/ SWFDPBP26. Proceeds benefit SWFD Community Risk Reduction Programs like free CPR

Cost of attendance for plunge participants will be \$20 per person and you receive a free event towel with your entry fee. Children 12 years old and under plunge for FREE, but they do not receive the event towel. After the plunge is over, join back at Shunk Gulley Oyster Bar to celebrate the start of the New Year.





### **Embrace Florida Kids Receives Community Investment Funding** from United Way Emerald Coast

United Way Emerald Coast is partnering with 25 organizations in Okaloosa and Walton counties to award over \$550,000 in grants through UWEC Community Investment funding.

proud to announce it has been selected as a United Way Emerald Coast funded partner agency for 2025-2026, making this the fourth consecutive year. Through the partnership, Embrace Florida Kids will receive funding for their Family Preservation program, helping families in Okaloosa and Walton counties access essential resources to strengthen their families and prevent separation.

"We're grateful to United Way Emerald Coast and Eglin Federal Credit Union for believing in our mission and investing in the future of our families,' said Ramsey Lawrence, director of development and community relations, Embrace Florida Kids. "Because of their support, we're able to continue providing homes, healing and hope for families who need it most in Okaloosa and Walton counties."

United Way Emerald Coast

Embrace Florida Kids is awarded \$550,000 in community grants to 25 organizations in Okaloosa and Walton counties whose missions align with healthy communities, youth opportunities and financial security. United Way Emerald Coast believes all communities across Okaloosa and Walton counties should be safe and thriving no matter their zip

code. Embrace Florida Kids' awarded funds are supported by United Way Emerald Coast donors and investments by Eglin Federal Credit Union.

Embrace Florida Kids was awarded \$20,000 toward their Family Preservation program. Family Preservation is a licensed and accredited program designed to strengthen and preserve families by teaching, challenging and helping families learn the skills they need to stay together and help each other grow successfully.

"We understand that family is

the most fundamental influence on children. Our philosophy is that it is usually best for children to be able to stay with their own families and for families to learn how to handle their own challenges in a healthy, loving way." said Blake Horne, president and CEO, Embrace Florida Kids. "We have more than a 95%success rate in our Family Preservation program, which means families are staying together in lieu of their children entering the foster care system."

To learn more about Embrace Florida Kids, please visit embraceflkids.org/. For inquiries about Family Preservation or other Embrace programs, contact Ramsey Lawrence at ramsey.lawrence@embraceflkids.org or (850) 533-9968.

To learn more about United Way Emerald Coast, please visit united-way.org/.



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### Social Media Feels Your Hot Flashes



By Dr. Richard Chern, MD

Social media has a way of knowing when a woman has matured. As a woman enters her 40's, her social media accounts are flooded with advertisements touting magical remedies promising to make life bearable again. Night sweats? Solution. Hot flashes? Solution. Mental Fog? Weight Gain? Decreased libido? Solution. Solution. Solution. And if you're struggling.

you'll click every link offering a way out. Before you know it, your bathroom counter is overflowing with wellness products and supplements. Just keeping track of it all becomes a daily challenge. Unfortunately, these products rarely treat the root of the problem—changing hormones. This is exactly what we do at the Hormone Restoration Center.

Hormone levels in women are constantly changing. Even women in their 20's and 30's can exhibit early signs of estrogen loss, and they often don't recognize the symptoms. Acne, irregular menstruation, fatigue and mood swings are just a few. As women approach perimenopause and menopause, their symptoms are dismissed as "normal." Detailed hormone panels are rarely ordered by primary

**CLINICIANS** 

care doctors or OB-GYNs, and in reality, doctors receive very little training on hormones or menopause in medical school. Some report as little as one hour of formal instruction. At The Hormone Restoration Center, our mission is to provide the highest quality medical service with a level of personalized care not available anywhere else. Our highly skilled providers have extensive training in bioidentical hormone therapy and tailor treatments to each patient's individual needs. Bioidentical hormone therapy offers significant benefits for women, particularly those experiencing menopause or hormonal disruption. It effectively alleviates common menopausal symptoms, enhances overall quality of life, and helps prevent longterm health complications.

Hormone therapy is highly effective in reducing menopause symptoms like hot flashes, night sweats, vaginal dryness, mood swings, irritability, and the dreaded "brain fog." These symptoms severely disrupt your daily life. Hormone therapy restores comfort quickly, often within weeks of starting treatment. Hormone therapy alleviates vaginal dryness and pain during intercourse, thereby improving sexual health. Hormone therapy also improves pelvic floor strength, thereby reducing leakage. Hormones are vital for maintaining bone density; hormone therapy reverses osteoporosis and decreases your risk for fractures. This contribution to bone health reduces long-term disability associated with osteoporosis and increases mobility in later years.

The Hormone Restoration Clinic is the premiere hormone clinic in the region. We invite you to make an appointment with us at (850) 837-1271 to schedule a consultation, so you can experience the benefits of hormone therapy for yourself. Forget making life bearable again. Make life spectacular!

January is Thyroid Awareness Month! Call (850) 837-1271 to optimize your thyroid. Follow us on Facebook!



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#### YEAR END

continued from page 19

and you weren't living your best life, what got in the way?

- 3. Who do you want to be by the end of the year? In what areas would you like to grow?
- 4. What 2-3 things, if completed, would generate feelings of pride and fulfillment at the end of the year?
- 5. What is one thing that, if you

accomplished it next year, would make all your other goals easier or unnecessary?

- 6. What do you want to start in the next year?
- 7. What do you want to stop in the next year?
- 8. How will you make a positive difference in the world around you next year? 9. If this next year was a chapter in a book, what would you title it?

As you reflect, take time to

celebrate and be thankful for the good and growth in 2025 wherever you can find it. And, as you look toward 2026, remember that no one is perfect and you have the ability to grow and gather wisdom each day. Your journey is traveled over a lifetime and all of your growth adds to the depth and beauty of your story. For support along your journey, connect with us at www.journeybravely.com.



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### **Book Review:** The Body Keeps the Score



REVIEWED BY MICHAEL McManus, MSW, LCSW

"The Body Keeps the Score" by Bessel van der Kolk, M.D., stands as a landmark exploration of trauma's enduring effects on the brain and body, presenting the results of several decades of clinical work and research in compelling, accessible prose. Van der Kolk's narrative is both scientific and deeply human, drawing the reader into stories of patients whose struggles illuminate the intricate ways trauma imprints itself physically as well as mentally. The book's central thesis is clear: traumatic experiences disconnect the mind from the body, yet the body continues to hold the raw sensations and survival instincts of those experiences, manifesting in lasting emotional and physical symptoms.

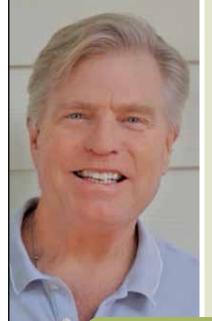
The author, recognized as a pioneer in trauma research, details how traditional "talk therapy" often fails to reach the deep, wordless injuries trauma inflicts. Instead, van der Kolk blends neuroscience with bodyoriented practices and ancient healing techniques, advocating for an integrative approach that offers hope for recovery—an approach that includes mindfulness, yoga, and innovative therapies geared toward restoring agency and ownership of one's

Van der Kolk's writing, while occasionally technical, remains remarkably empathetic and articulate, allowing even readers without specialized knowledge to understand the science behind trauma and its somatic consequences. The case studies presented, including those related to childhood abuse, war, and post-pandemic anxiety, ensure the book resonates widely, revealing trauma's prevalence and impact across generations and communities.

Ultimately, "The Body Keeps the Score" is not just a medical text but a call for compassion in the treatment and understanding of trauma survivors. Its vivid storytelling and authoritative science make it essential reading for therapists,

survivors, and anyone interested in the resilience and healing of the human spirit.

Michael McManus LCSW is a psychotherapist in private practice in Santa Rosa Beach, Florida. He and his wife, Angela, who's also a therapist, have lived in the area for approximately 40 years and raised four children together. They enjoy hiking, biking, yoga, reading, and cooking. For more information or to set an appointment, reach Michael by text or phone at (850) 837-0123 or at his website: Psychotherapy30A.com



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**Michael McManus LCSW** 

#### WCSD

continued from page 3

As we look ahead, December is a short but festive month. Christmas Break begins December 22, with teachers returning on January 5 and students back in class on January 7.

Stay connected with district news and celebrations by following us on Facebook, Instagram, and X, and by listening to our official podcast, EPIC Exchanges, available on Spotify and Apple

We wish all our families a joyful and restful holiday season!

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### The Unsightly Medical Condition: Actinic Purpura

By Bridget Sullivan, PA-C, COASTAL SKIN CANCER SURGERY AND DERMATOLOGY

Actinic Purpura, also known as bruising, is a common skin condition seen in older adults that causes red or purple patches on the skin, typically on sun-exposed areas - arms and hands. These red and purple patches are caused by fragile blood ves-

sels that rupture beneath the skin and from skin being thin. These patches are harmless, though unsightly, and will fade between one to four weeks.

There are certain medications that can make a person more susceptible to bruising easily. These include, but are not limited to, blood thinners, aspirin, and fish oil supplements. Also, there are certain medical conditions, blood disorders and nutritional deficiencies that can contribute to bruising, so it is important to get your annual blood work from your Primary Care Provider in order to rule these out. In addition, sun damage over the years is a large contributor to our skin thinning, making it more susceptible to bruising. Make sure you









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wear vour sunscreen and sun protective clothing to ensure that you don't contribute to more sun damage and skin fragility.

Treatments for bruising that I recommend to my patients are over-the-counter Dermend Anti Bruise cream, two times daily. This cream has great ingredients that I have found help fade bruising quickly. Also, arnica supplements and topical cream have been proven to help with bruising and inflammation.

I hope this article has helped relieve anxiety about the unsightly condition of Actinic Purpura and can ease your mind knowing it is not harmful, the common contributing factors and some easy and effective overthe-counter solutions. As always, please contact your dermatology medical provider if you have any questions or concerns regarding your skin conditions.

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

Musing

### Sean of the South: Christmas Cheer



By Sean Dietrich

I was 15 years old. I walked into the rural library. My father was freshly dead. I was a middleschool dropout. We were poor. It was Christmastime.

The small, public library was decorated for the holiday season. There was plastic holiday crapola everywhere. It was cold outside. I had no winter coat.

I stepped into the library with a blast of sleet and rain. I was wearing a T-shirt. My hair was soaked.

"Where's your coat?" said the librarian.

"I don't have one."

"You don't have a coat!? It's 30 degrees outside!"

Shrug.

The librarian's name was Miss

Terry. She was old enough to predate the Roosevelt administration. Her hair was cotton white. Her shoes were Reeboks. Her embroidered sweatshirt read: 'Dear Santa, I can explain."

The library was a converted residential house. And I was a regular here.

"You can't go around without a coat," Miss Terry said. "You'll freeze."

Shrug Number Two.

I wandered to the fiction section. Fiction was all I was interested in. I read fiction each morning, afternoon, and night. It was escapism, I see that now. And I was a classic escapist. But then, there were very few happy things in my life. Who wouldn't want to escape?

That day, I checked out two Louis L'Amour books, a few Dick Francis novels. When I brought my selection up to the counter, Miss Terry just looked at me with warm eyes.

"I have a book I want you to read," she said.

"You do?"

She placed a leather-bound book atop my stack of books. Written by Lucy Maud Montgomery.

"I think you'll appreciate this one."

"It looks like a girl book."

"Try to keep an open mind."

I took the books home, I read them the way I always read books. Ferociously. But when I read the Lucy Maud Montgomery book, time stood still. And my heart moved sideways in my chest. I had never read a book with more tenderness.

When I returned to the library a week later, Miss Terry asked how I liked the book. I told her it was maybe the best book I ever

I returned my books, and checked out more. This time, she placed another book atop my stack. This one was written by Laura Ingalls Wilder.

I took the books home. I read them in a frenzy, just like before. But Laura Ingalls Wilder was immediately my favorite.

I brought the books back to the library.

"How did you like the book I gave you?" she asked.

"I read it twice."

She smiled.

Then it happened. After Miss Terry accepted my stack of books, in return, she gave me a gift-wrapped box. The box was wrapped in glittery red paper, with a green ribbon.

"What's this?" I asked. "It's for you," she said.

"Is it another book?"

"Just open it.

I tore the paper. There was a coat inside. Warm and fluffy. I cried when I put it on.

"We can't have you catching a cold and getting sick," she said. "There are too many books left for you to read. You might even

write one of your own someday."

I wiped my face. "One day I'm going to grow up and write a book," I told her. "And when I do, I'm going to write something about you, and how you gave me this coat."

She smiled and straightened the collar of my jacket. "You won't even remember me when you're all grown up."

Well.

I showed her.







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.







### Society of St. Vincent de Paul Saint Rita Conference, Saint Rita Catholic Church

The Society of St. Vincent to-person contact and by the gift inspired by the same vocation. de Paul, Saint Rita Conference, is a voluntary ministry dedicated to serving those in need within our community. Inspired by the mission of St. Vincent de Paul, we strive to provide compassionate assistance, hope, and support to our neighbors in Santa Rosa Beach, Freeport, Destin and within the city limits of DeFuniak Springs.

Being a "Vincentian" (a Member) within The Society of St. Vincent de Paul is for those who hear a special calling by God. Members are more than volunteers; this is not merely something that we do, but something that we are: "Vincentians".

As Vincentians, we put our faith into action. We love God, as St. Vincent said, "with the strength of our arms and the sweat of our brow." The Vincentian vocation calls us to participate personally and directly in helping the needy by personof our hearts and friendship, within the communal spirit of a Conference of lay persons each

We seek to respond to the call every Vincentian receives, to bring the love of Christ to

those in despair. We accomplish affiliation. 40-50 home visits each week, helping our neighbors who are in need, regardless of religious

One of the most beneficial ways we help our neighbors is through car donations. Reliable transportation is essential for individuals and families to access vital resources such as work, medical appointments, groceries, and other essential services. By assisting with transportation, we aim to promote independence, improve quality of life, and help people overcome barriers that keep them in poverty.

In the past year, we provided over \$335,000 in assistance, helping more than 1,600 people with car expenses, utility payments, and housing assistance.

Join us in making a difference — whether through volunteering, donations, or prayer. Together, we can bring hope and kindness to those who need it most.

To learn more, please visit our website at nwfsvdp.com. Thank you, and God Bless.







### A Pastor's Ponderings: Christmas Light



By Rev. Pete Hyde

The night was cold and raw when he stepped out onto the balcony of the fifth-floor hotel room. A persistent, spitting rain added a chill to the biting breeze and the gloominess of the evening. The penetrating darkness of Mobile Bay stretched out before him. Irregular points of

orange lights dotted the far shore of the Bay, a couple of miles in the distance. The eerie glow of the Mobile's lights blanketed the far shore of the bay with an iridescent mix of orange and white. The faint smell of burgers and fries drifted from the Burger King next to the hotel, adding a whole new dimension to the evening. The evening was not quiet. The constant traffic on I-10 filled the evening with tire noise and the rumble of diesel engines.

He shivered a little from the cold and damp but stayed on the balcony. This would be his only opportunity to have a break in the busyness for a while. The activities of the Christmas season had piled up again this year. What happened to not letting it happen again this year?

His eyes tracked along the

rations to be seen. But then something caught his attention. Stretching across the bay was a double line of red lights disappearing into the far side of the bay. Coming from the far side of the bay was a double line of white lights. Like an unwrapped candy cane, the lights lazily curved their way across the bay on the long bay bridge. With an occasional break, the lights mostly moved in an unbroken line with no noticeable beginning or end. So there were Christmas lights after all on this cold, damp evening.

But where were they all going? Confined by the railings of the bridge with no recourse except to follow the crowd – go with the flow. No options to go in a different direction, just get in line and try not to get run over. He fantasized that they were all singwas just a wishful fantasy. Some were stewing over struggles at work or with family. Some were surely stressing over the upcoming travel and family visits. Some were grieving over a recent loss. Some were basking in the blessings of the season.

Down the highway, across the bridge they went. Leaving not only a string of red and white lights but a trail of thoughts, issues, smiles, tears, laughter and joy as they joined the crowd of strangers all on the same journey, but going in different directions.

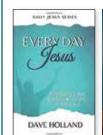
Wherever your journey takes you this Christmas season, go, knowing the baby born in the manger goes with you. Whether there is a smile on your face in

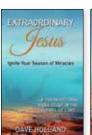
anticipation of the holiday or tears running down your cheeks, wishing it was all over, Jesus journeys with you. When you journey with Him, you will leave a trail of light for all to see. For that is what the season is all about THE LIGHT OF CHRIST!

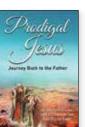
He steps out of the cold and back into the warmth of the hotel room. His heart is refreshed in the anticipation of a couple of days away from the race. His soul is refreshed knowing that The Baby walks or runs through the season with him. Because it's all about HIM!

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

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#### **ABOUT THE AUTHOR**

Dave Holland loves Jesus and has dedicated his life to sharing God's love. While studying at Gordon-Conwell Seminary and pastoring churches for almost forty years, he discovered Jesus is so much more than school and church—Jesus is life. Genuine faith is not about organizations, denominations, or personalities, but it is about discovering the depths of God's love and grace. Dave and his wife Jonie live in Destin, Florida. Contact Dave by email at davidvholland54@gmail.com.







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By Kirk McCarley

The Dictionary.com word of the year for 2025 was actually comprised of numbers rather than letters. One might ask, "Should numbers even qualify?," but apparently, from the perspective of the leading online dictionary and reference website, it passed the standard.

So, what is "6-7?"

Pronounced "six seven" it is an internet meme and slang term that emerged this year on Tik Tok and Instagram Reels. It stemmed from lyrics in a song by rapper Skrilla, with a backdrop of "tall" NBA players in the music video.

The meaning of the term is

### **Finding Commonality**

subject to conjecture; it can arguably coincide with multiple interpretations, including the most non-committal of all elucidations: "whatever."

Hearing the term transported me back to my freshman year in college and an appealing course alternative entitled "Theater of the Absurd," a study of a series of unusual and provocative plays including classics such as "Our Town" and "Waiting for Godot." Tossed into the mix was a 1942 product by Thornton Wilder, 'The Skin of Our Teeth," which envisioned a very cold future earth on the precipice of a new ice age. It was so cold in fact that "dogs are sticking to the sidewalks" and so chaotic and confused that the 'world is at sixes and sevens."

With so many varieties of interpretation and juxtaposition, is it no wonder that we live in a state of consistent misunderstanding? Where is that place where we find a common language with others? How might we make that happen?

First, seek to build connection. That can be discovered through a journey of exploring common places one may have lived, visited, or attended school. Maybe it includes a consideration of family similarities such as kids and grand-kids, perhaps hobbies or interests.

In school, substitute teachers are assigned the unenviable task of gaining both the respect and control of the classroom when scheming pupils might have ulterior motives. A consistent sub for me at school was Ms. Winkelman.

Ms. Winkelman would begin class with a "thought question," such as "when does 9 + 5 = 2?" She would immediately challenge our intellect for one, while at the same time branding herself as a curious and thoughtful adult worthy of respect. She built a connection.

Second, aim for curiosity.

Let's face it, most of us enjoy talking about ourselves when given the opportunity. Why not appeal to someone's primal instincts by providing that gift by asking questions of them? Besides, I've often heard it said that the way in which we ourselves become interesting is through interest in others.

Third, appeal to the differences you may have with others in an encouraging way. The entertainer Penn Jillette is part of the Penn & Teller duo, who for years have performed feats of magic and illusion to audiences of millions.

Jillette is also an avowed athe-

Despite his agnosticism, he makes a compelling challenge to those of faith. "If you believe there is a heaven and hell, and you think it's not worth telling someone about it, how much do you have to hate him to not proselvtize?"

Ms. Winkelman had her thought questions. We can capitalize on building relationships by how we take interest in the stories of others. Non-believer Penn Jillette makes an appeal to those of spiritual faith. One other thing we might consider in outreach to others is to embrace uniqueness, however quirky it might be.

The summer of 1976 was memorable. The US was celebrating its bicentennial. It was a presidential election year, Ford vs. Carter. The Olympic games were happening just across our border in Montreal. And rookie pitcher Mark "The Bird" Fidyrich was

dominating batters in the American League as the phenom ace of the Detroit Tigers.

Fidyrich appealed to the "everyman" in each of us through his enthusiastic bouncing around the infield following an out, his precise tending of the dirt around the pitcher's mound, and his animated verbal communication with an inanimate object—the baseball.

Quirky though the Bird was, he pecked a way into our consciousness.

Let's each of us seek commonality. Be encouraged and be an encourager.

As to the answer to the "9 + 5 = 2," find it by locating a regular old non-digital clock.

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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### Christian Capitalist Jason Becker: Entrepreneur and Pastor



By RICH SANDERS

Jason Becker is the epitome of a Christian Capitalist. From small business owner to pastor of a church, to host of a podcast that has become a YouTube sen-

sation, he brings God into his work every day.

Jason, his wife Danielle, and their three children moved to the Emerald Coast nearly ten years ago from metro Atlanta. As they settled into the SOWAL Life, they could tell that things were different here. Managing a diverse portfolio including real estate, equities and venture capital is enough to keep most business people fully occupied.

"I love to find great entrepreneurs with great ideas," Jason says. For the Beckers, though, the "freedom that comes with entrepreneurship" allowed them to try something new and different.

Like most fathers of teenage children, Jason noticed the tendency of his kids to ignore or downplay the advice that he gave them. Unlike most dads, he would follow his child's eye roll or shrug with a simple rhetorical question: "Here's my advice, but what the hell do I know?" Jason turned this cynical comeback into a podcast focusing on real-life issues that now has nearly 30,000 subscribers on YouTube!

The path to successful pod-

caster wasn't linear, however, as Danielle and Jason worked tirelessly in her family's sanitation business near Atlanta for over a decade before the opportunity to sell it arose. As they dramatically grew that business, they worked to bring their faith into day-to-day operations. Jason notes that prayer and faith in the workplace allowed him to lead with "kindness, consideration, and deliberation", resulting in programs like taking Christmas presents to families in need.

Like selling the business, the opportunity to work in ministry was unplanned. The Beckers attended a large church half an hour south of Atlanta. With time on his hands, Jason was focused on real estate investment



and playing golf. When he started to notice all the people in need around him, though, "Jesus broke my golf game!" Jason took on greater roles in his church, then led the effort to plant a church in downtown Atlanta. As Jason negotiated with the potential landlord for their church location, he told Jason, "There's just one problem: I hate churches!" The landlord rented the space to Jason anyway. Jason knew he was in the right place and successfully led that ministry's location for nearly five years.

Today, Jason uses his podcast to continue to spread the Good News. His guest to open Season Three of What the Hell Do I Know? is Meaghan Hampton, who shares lessons on how to biblically parent @soulcareforfamilies, challenging old norms like "spare the rod, spoil the child".

Jason recently appeared on the Christian Capitalist podcast, and you can listen to the entire episode on SOWAL Life's website. We are excited to share inspirational stories of hard work and generous giving to the poor and needy in the name of Jesus Christ, like Jason and Danielle Becker!

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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### Beignets & Brew Grayton Beach: Spreading Sweetness to Grayton Beach

Beignets & Brew, the Florida-based café renowned for its made-to-order New Orleans-style beignets and specialty coffee creations, has officially opened its second Sweet Spot in Santa Rosa

Beach, welcoming the community to even more sweetness and connection.

Beignets & Brew Grayton Beach soft-opened on Thursday, November 13, and hosted its grand opening celebration on Saturday, November 15, quickly becoming a local favorite for sweet treats and specialty coffee. The café is led by franchise partners Chris and Shannon Kramo-

lis, marking Chris's second Sweet Spot with Beignets & Brew.

"As a local, it's incredibly exciting to bring Beignets & Brew to Grayton Beach and share a little sweetness with our com-

munity," said Chris Kramolis. "We're thrilled to welcome neighbors, friends, and visitors into a place where everyone can find their sweet spot!"

The café offers fresh, madeto-order beignets, specialty coffee creations, and a cozy, Instagramworthy space where guests can gather, relax, and enjoy sweet moments together. It's the perfect place to catch up with friends, treat yourself, or simply savor a little sweetness any time of day.

Beignets & Brew Grayton Beach continues the brand's mission to create spaces for connection, comfort, and sweetness in every visit.









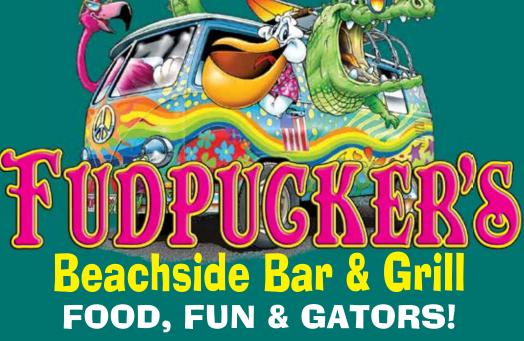
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### South Walton Live Music Scene December 2025

#### 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 throughout the week. Dueling pianos are every Thursday. Don't miss: Christmas Carolers Dec. 20, 4:30-7:30 p.m. Visit www.oldfloridafishhouse. com for more info.

#### FOOW Live Music Fridays and Sunday Brunch

Enjoy live music on Friday nights, as well as Sundays for Brunch, featuring bottomless mimosas at FOOW - Fish Out of Water. The Gulf-front restaurant invites you to



enjoy delicious dining paired with live music. Visit foow30a. com.

### AJ's Grayton Brunch and Live Music

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 live music and dancing. Have a mimosa or go all in with their famous Build Your Own Bloody Mary bar. Join in the fun on Karaoke Night starting at 8 p.m. every Thursday night (also Prime Rib Night). Check ajsgrayton.com for live music throughout the week.

#### **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 the Catalyst Dance Band every Sunday, Brett Stafford Smith every Monday, 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' @ 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. Check The Bay's Facebook or Instagram pages for details.

### Sounds of Seaside Concert Series Wednesdays

Enjoy an evening of live music in the Seaside Amphitheater from 5-7 p.m. Sounds of SEASIDE features musicians ready to entertain the whole family. Bring a chair or blanket, snacks and drinks, and enjoy the show. Free and open to all ages.

Dec. 17: Boukou Groove Dec. 24: Fred Domulot

### 30A Songwriters Festival Jan. 15-19

The festival, held in venues along Scenic Highway 30A in Florida's South Walton County, is the perfect mix of cool beach weather and red-hot music on MLK holiday weekend each year. More than 175 artists perform in this truly wonderful weekend of music. Artists will perform multitudes of live performances in intimate venues and large amphitheaters throughout South Walton. For more information, visit www.30asongwritersfestival. com.









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### Sinfonia Gulf Coast Celebrates The Season With Festive Holiday Concerts

Sinfonia Gulf Coast continues its 20th anniversary celebration with two beloved holiday performances that showcase the spirit of the season through dazzling orchestral sound and the inspiring talent of young local musicians.

Sinfonia Gulf Coast continues to celebrate its 20th anniversary

season with festive performances that promise to fill the holidays with harmony, heart, and community spirit. From a glamorous Broadway brunch to a full orchestral spectacular and a showcase of young talent, these concerts capture the joy of the season and the magic of live music.

Get in the holiday spirit Saturday, Dec. 13, at 7:30 p.m. at the Destin–Fort Walton Beach Convention Center with the Holiday Pops Spectacular! This beloved annual community tradition features the full Sinfonia Gulf Coast orchestra, talented vocalists, and a lineup of holiday favorites ranging from timeless classics like Winter Wonderland and It's Beginning to Look a Lot Like Christmas to contemporary hits such as Christmas (Baby, Please Come Home) and Mariah Carey's All I Want for Christmas Is You. The concert also features spirited performances by Studio6 Twenty5, the Holiday Chamber Chorus, and other surprise



guests. Tickets range from \$40 to \$75 and are available through the box office or online.

Rounding out the holiday celebrations is the annual Sinfonia Youth Orchestra Winter Concert on Sunday, Dec. 14, at 5 p.m. at Fort Walton Beach High School. This free community event showcases all ensembles of the Sinfo-



nia Youth Orchestra—including Sinfonietta Strings, Intermediate Strings, Symphonic Orchestra, and the After School Beginning Strings students—from Okaloosa and Walton counties. Each year, this performance highlights the incredible talent of the region's young musicians and the impact

of Sinfonia's commitment to music education. This year, they will be performing your favorite holiday tunes including selections from Nut-The cracker and Leroy Anderson's Sleigh Ride.

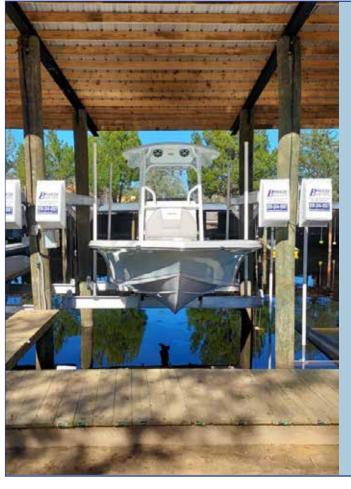
"For me, the holidays are about gathering together with friends, family, and our community to celebrate what truly matters—connection, giving, and the shared joy of live music," said Demetrius Fuller, founder and music and artistic director of Sinfonia Gulf Coast. "There's

something extra special about this time of year when our audiences come together to experience the magic of the season through music that uplifts and inspires."

As Sinfonia Gulf Coast continues its milestone 20th season, these holiday performances offer something for everyone—from Broadway and pop enthusiasts to families looking to embrace the spirit of the season.

Proceeds from all ticketed concerts benefit Sinfonia Gulf Coast's music education and community engagement initiatives throughout Northwest Florida.

For more information or to purchase tickets, visit SinfoniaGulfCoast.org or call the box office at (850) 460-8800.



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### **Studio 237 Music Lessons Winter Recital:** Saturday, December 13th

A winter student music recital holds a kind of magic that sets it apart from any other performance of the year. As the season brings a sense of reflection, celebration, and togetherness, these recitals become more than just musical showcases; they transform into heartfelt gatherings that highlight growth, creativity, and community spirit.

One of the most special aspects of a winter recital is its timing. Occurring near the end of the calendar year, it serves as a meaningful milestone for students. Months of practice, perseverance, and learning culminate in a single evening where they can share their progress with family and friends. The cozy, festive atmosphere of winter enhances this moment of accomplishment. Decorations, soft lighting, and even a touch of holiday music add to the warmth and wonder, creating a setting where both performers and audiences feel connected and inspired.

The music itself often takes on a distinct character during winter recitals. Seasonal pieces, whether traditional carols, classical works, or modern songs with wintry themes, help capture the mood of the season. Performing these familiar melodies invites audiences to participate emotionally, often evoking nostalgia and joy.

For many students, it's also an opportunity to explore different genres and styles, broadening their musical horizons while celebrating the diversity of seasonal traditions.

Equally important is the sense of community that blossoms at a winter recital. Parents, teachers, and fellow students gather not only to listen, but to encourage and celebrate each other. Younger students look up to older performers, finding motivation for their own musical journeys. Teachers see the tangible results of their dedication reflected in each confident note and expressive phrase. The recital becomes a shared experience, reinforcing the bonds that make a music school or studio feel like a family.

Beyond the performances, winter recitals often

tude and hope. Students learn to appreciate the process of creat-

ing art, embracing the beauty of imperfection, and the joy of expression. They also discover the gift of giving back through

music, whether performing for loved ones, nursing homes, or community events.

Ultimately, what makes a winter student music recital truly special is the combination of music, meaning, and memory. It's a time when hard work meets heart, when the notes of each song echo with warmth, despite the chill outside, a celebration not just of the season, but of growth, creativity, and the enduring power of music to bring people together.

The local community is invited to attend Studio 237 Music Lesson's Student Winter Recital on Saturday, December 13th at Christ the King Episcopal Church, 480 N County Hwy 393, Santa Rosa Beach, Florida. The first recital begins at 10:30 am and the second one begins at 1:00 p.m. Join and support our students as they share a mixture of holiday, classic, and contemporary songs performed on piano, guitar, ukulele, voice, and drums. The event is free to attend. To contact the Studio call or text: 850.231.3199. Visit our website at www.Studio237Music.com. Wish-

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### **Engel & Völkers Florida Launches New Phase** of Growth Along the Emerald Coast



Seasoned real estate professional and entrepreneur Robert Weil to guide the brand's next chapter in 30A Beaches region

Engel & Völkers Florida today announced that Robert Weil has acquired the franchise license for Engel & Völkers 30A Beaches. A longtime resident with a proven record of success in the 30A market, Weil brings more than a decade of experience, an MBA from The George Washington University, and specialized training from the KARRASS School of Effective Negotiating to the role. His vision is to expand Engel & Völkers' luxury presence along Florida's Emerald Coast while cultivating a collaborative and mentorship-driven culture among advisors.

"To be both a broker and a business owner is a calling," Weil said. "After more than 30 years of visiting and 14 years living and working in the 30A area, the opportunity to lead Engel & Völkers 30A Beaches felt like the right next step. I've always believed in the power of collaboration and mentorship in real estate, and this is a chance to foster that culture while raising the bar for service, professionalism and integrity in our market."

**VISIT SOUTH** WALTON. LIFE

Weil has already secured the brokerage's location at 43 Cassine Way, Suite 101 in the heart of Seagrove Beach. Seagrove Beach is central to 30A, in close proximity to its most popular neighborhoods. The space is now being built out to reflect Engel & Völkers' iconic shop concept, with a grand opening celebration planned upon completion.

Weil, a licensed real estate professional since 2012, brings more than a decade of experience and over \$300 million in lifetime sales to Engel & Völkers 30A Beaches. His career includes affiliations with Compass, Scenic Sotheby's International Realty, and Corcoran Reverie, where he established himself as a trusted name along 30A. With expertise spanning new construction sales, land devel-

opment, and luxury beachfront resales, Weil offers a deep understanding of the area's diverse property landscape—closing more than \$15 million in transactions last year alone.

"Rob's unique combination of market knowledge, leadership and passion for the 30A lifestyle is a perfect match for Engel & Völkers," said Peter Giese, CEO of Engel & Völkers Florida. "His thoughtful, long-term approach to business ownership and client service reflects the exact qualities we seek in our leaders, and we're excited to support him as he takes the brand to a new level of market share gains."

Under Weil's leadership, Engel & Völkers 30A Beaches will focus on selective advisor recruitment, prioritizing professionals who embody the brand's

global standards of competence, exclusivity, and passion. He plans to equip his advisors with the mentorship, business tools, and international reach needed to thrive in the high-end market. Drawing on his formal business education and practical experience, Weil aims to balance data-driven strategy with the intuition and emotional intelligence essential for serving highnet-worth clients. His approach underscores Engel & Völkers' commitment to combining global reach with local expertise—delivering the boutique experience of a neighborhood brokerage with the resources of an international brand.

For more information about Engel & Völkers 30A Beaches, visit 30Abeaches.evrealestate.





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### Last-Minute Gifts That Make a Big Local Impact

### Skip the Shipping Stress: 20+ Thoughtful Finds Discovered Right Here on the Emerald Coast



By Danica LaFaire, Fish Window Cleaning

The holidays always seem to move faster than we do. One minute we're planning ahead, and the next we're thinking, "Wait... I still need a gift."

The good news? Some of the

most meaningful last-minute gifts aren't ordered online — they're discovered right here at home. When we shop local, we invest in the Emerald Coast, support families, and strengthen the small businesses that give our communities their personality and heart.

At Fish Window Cleaning, we have the unique perspective of seeing the Emerald Coast community and its vibrant businesses up close every day. It's honestly the best part of the job! We love being part of a community filled with incredible local shops and creators. Here are just a handful of places that make last-minute gifting both easy and genuinely enjoyable.

### Jewelry, Boutiques & Apparel

Klara Haloho — Destin: Known for her signature freshwater pearls and simple, elegant designs, Klara's pieces feel timeless and meaningful.

Kiss the Sky Boutique — Destin: A lively, uplifting boutique full of colorful apparel, accessories, and personality-filled finds.

A Christmas to Remember — Destin: A seasonal wonderland of ornaments, décor, and festive treasures — perfect for sentimental gifts.

Ophelia Swimwear — Sandestin: A beautifully curated swim and resort wear boutique for the beach lover or traveler in your life.

Path of Grace Thrift Store & Boutique — Miramar Beach: A thrift boutique with heart and mission. Unique finds and fashionable gems, with proceeds supporting addiction recovery for women.

#### Beauty, Spa & Self-Care

Blissful Beauty Bar — Niceville: High-quality facials, glowing results, and a soothing atmosphere. Their gift cards are perfect for someone in need of true self-care.

Luxe Nail Bar — Destin: A modern, relaxing spot for polished pampering.

Magnolia Soap & Bath Co.

— Destin: Hand-poured soaps, bath bombs, lotions, and custom scents — perfect for building a self-care bundle.

Hand & Stone Massage & Facial Spa — Destin: Professional massages, facials, and monthly memberships that offer a genuine reset.

### Home, Décor & Local

Artful Things — Niceville: A beautiful mix of local art, pottery, jewelry, and handcrafted gifts full of meaning.

Salt & Story — Niceville: A

cozy independent bookstore with carefully curated titles for every age—perfect for escaping the winter rush with a great read.

Sea Glass Interiors — Miramar Beach: Coastal-inspired décor and refined accents for the design-minded person on your list.

Risa's Interiors — Fort Walton Beach: Elegant furniture pieces, art, and unique décor — perfect for someone who loves a thoughtfully designed home.

Hobbies, Collectibles & Specialty Shops

TBS Comics — Fort Walton Beach: Comics, collectibles, and graphic novels — you'll find the inner kid in anyone with these wonderful finds for hobbyists and teens.

Caddies Corner — Fort Walton Beach: Golf accessories, apparel, and gear — ideal for the golfer in your life.

Fort Walton Vintage Records
— Fort Walton Beach: A local treasure with thousands of vinyl records, rare finds, and new releases — a dream for music lovers

H&B Army Navy Store — Fort Walton Beach: A longtime local staple with rugged gear, tools, outdoor essentials, and practical finds.

Health, Wellness & Experience-Based Gifts

Paradise Fit Jiu Jitsu — Destin: An empowering experience that builds confidence, discipline, and strength — wonderful for both adults and kids.

CRYO 850 — Miramar Beach: Cryotherapy, red-light therapy, and recovery services are perfect for wellness lovers and anyone needing a boost.

Island Time Mobile Detailing — Destin: A practical, thoughtful gift that comes straight to the driveway — everyone appreciates a freshly detailed vehicle.

Solasta 30A — Santa Rosa Beach: A holistic wellness sanctuary offering far more than just a workout. From hot power yoga and sculpting classes to restorative infrared sauna sessions and salt chamber therapy.

Stretch Zone — Santa Rosa Beach: Assisted stretching designed to improve mobility, reduce tension, and support active

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continued on page 38





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#### TINA FADER, INSURANCE BROKER

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#### **Kitchens & Cabinets**

### KITCHEN DESIGNS OF THE EMERALD COAST

2890 US Hwy. 98 West Next to Ace Hardware Santa Rosa Beach 850-213-4505

#### **COASTAL CABINETS**

12889 Emerald Coast Pkwy. Miramar Beach, FL 32550 CoastalCabinetsandCounters.com 850-424-3940

#### Kennel

#### EMERAL COAST KENNEL, INC.

190 Shannon Lane Santa Rosa Beach, FL 850-267-1679 - eckennel.com

#### **Lawncare & Landscaping**

#### **BLUE GREEN LANDSCAPE**

Plant Nursery Store and Landscaping Service. 6844 County Hwy. 30A, Santa Rosa Beach 850-660-1934

continued on next page

### **DESTIN SMOKE SHOP**

16055 Emerald Coast Pkwy., Destin

**Next to the Destin Walmart** 

CBD - Delta 8 - Kratom - E-Cig - Walking Humidors Hookah - Pipe - Vape - Cigarette - Tobacco - Novelty Items

850.837.0237
DestinSmokeShop@gmail.com



#### 10% Off Purchase

w/Coupon (Excluding cigarettes)

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### 2nd Homeowner / VRBO Resource Directory / Business Directory

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#### **RESORTS LOCKSMITHS SERVICES**

4942 US Hwy 98 W, Suite 16 Santa Rosa Beach 850-660-6901 www.resortlocksmithservices.com

#### Lodging

#### **30A SUITES**

6904 County Rd 30A Santa Rosa Beach 850-499-5058 - 30Asuites.com

#### **Massage Therapists**

#### FOR THE HEALTH OF IT

2217 W County Hwy. 30A Blue Mountain Beach 850-267-0558 shopforthehealthofit.com

### CARING TOUCH JANET HARDY, MYOFASCIAL RELEASE

2217 W County Hwy. 30A 140 Wild Blueberry Way, Santa Rosa Beach, FL 850-231-9131 ww.caringtouchtherapy.net

#### **Music Instruction**

#### STUDIO 237 SCHOOL OF MUSIC

Santa Rosa Beach, FL Musical instruction for all ages. Call 850-231-3199 or visit www.studio237music.com

#### **Painting Contractors**

#### **GY PAINTING & RENOVATION**

Painting, Home Renovations, Custom Interior Shutters 850-714-7502 gypaintingandreno.com

#### PAINTERS BY THE SEA

636-236-5839

#### **Pet Supplies**

#### WHAT'S UP DOG

Pet supplies, Dog Care & Training. 9970 US-98, Miramar Beach - (850) 420-2894

#### **Plumbing**

#### **BEACH TO BAYOU PLUMBING**

www.beachtobayouplumbing.com

#### **Pools & Spas**

#### **TAMTECH POOLS & SPA**

185 N Holiday Rd Miramar Beach - 850-650-3747 www.tamtechpools.net

#### **Pressure Washing**

#### POMPANO PRESSURE WASHING

Miramar Beach 850-849-4499

#### **Property Management**

#### TROPICAL SANDS REALTY

US Military Member Owned 3754 West County Hwy. 30A Santa Rosa Beach 850-278-6994 www.tropicalsandsrealty.com

#### **Real Estate**

#### **DESTIN PROPERTY EXPERT**

Danny Magagliano Grayton Beach 850-830-4747 DestinPropertExpert.com

#### **EXP REALTY**

Bobby Johnson and the Bobby J. Team 850-865-7798 www.bobbyj30a.com

#### **RESORT QUEST-NANCY WILLS**

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#### Roofing

#### **BEL-MAC ROOFING**

Serving all of South Walton & Beyond 850-267-0900 bel-macroofing.com

#### Tile and Grout Cleaning

#### THE GROUTSMITH

Cleaning, color restoration, repair, shower repairs, granite cleaning, repair & sealing. call 850-367-3100

#### **Tree Service**

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#### **Water Filters**

#### **ECOWATER OF SANTA ROSA BEACH**

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#### **Website Design**

#### **DESIGNWORKS**

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#### **Window Treatments**

#### **CARROW WINDOW FILMS**

A premier provider of world-class Window Films 850-974-2264

#### **FISH**

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living — ideal for anyone wanting to feel better in their body.

Robin's Bikes & Fitness — Miramar Beach: Bikes, accessories, and active-lifestyle essentials — perfect for outdoor enthusiasts and individuals embracing movement.

Fish Window Cleaning — Serving the Emerald Coast: Freshly cleaned windows at home or at your business is a gift everyone feels immediately. It's thoughtful, practical, and gives people the gift of time — something we could all use more of.

### Why Shopping Local Matters

Every local purchase creates ripple effects:

- Supports local jobs and families
- Builds real community con-
  - Helps preserve the Emerald

Coast's unique character

- Reduces shipping waste
- Strengthens businesses that strengthen others Last-minute gifting doesn't

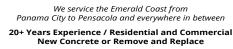
have to feel rushed or impersonal. Our area is full of amazing, hard-working local businesses ready to help you find

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This season, let your gifts reflect connection, gratitude, and pride in the place we call home. From our team at Fish Window Cleaning, we wish you a wonderfully bright and stress-free holiday!



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# \$300 OFF WHEN YOU MENTION THIS COUPON

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Offer expires 12/31/25 12805 US Hwy. 98 # R102, Inlet Beach 850-909-0405

### **LOCAL COUPONS**

YOUR COUPON COULD BE HERE CALL 850-399-0228

## **EMERALD COAST ENERGY SOLUTIONS**

### SPECIAL! NO INTEREST IF PAID IN FULL IN 12 MONTHS\*

\*Subject to credit approval. Minimum purchase required. Interest is billed during the promotional period, but all interest is waived if the purchase amount is paid in full before the expiration of the promotional period.

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WE CELEBRATE AND HONOR OUR MILITARY AND FIRST RESPONDERS WITH A 5% DISOUNT!

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www.ovationpaint.com

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Serving the Destin 30A Community
850-517-5745 | www.panhandleassistantcare.com
Q

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