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Holidays 'Round the Bay

Visits with Santa, Living Nativity and Much More!

By Lori Leath Smith

For many years, our piece of Paradise has ignited the holiday spirit in each of us and allowed the season to come to life for the young and young at heart. With a unique blend of theatrical storytelling, musical notes and beautiful and whimsical Christmas lights, we are welcomed into a world of yuletide nostalgia and local flavor and personalities where reindeer fly, sugarplums dance in our heads and Christmas comes alive in our own bay area, coastal style. I invite you to explore the vast, unique holiday traditions, some many years in the making and new ones to delight our senses and usher in the "reason for the season" - the celebrated birth of Jesus, our Savior. Join Bay Life in some of these holiday celebrations where you can create some new family traditions of your own while rekindling your favorites.

You can visit St. Nick at The Village of Baytowne



Wharf at his sleigh Wed. Dec. 7, 14 and 21 from 6-8 p.m. Tap your feet to some of your favorite sing-along classics each Wednesday during the holiday edition of the Wed. Night Concert Series. Dec. 7 - Gateway Academy and Fort Walton Beach

High School Choir; Dec. 14 - Niceville High School; Dec. 21 - Matt McCarty Band. Plus, visit with Santa from 5-7 p.m. Dec. 4 during Tuba Christmas! Visit baytownewharf.com.

Visit Santa at Harbor-

Walk Village weekends until Dec. 18 from 1-4 p.m.

Visit Santa at Bass Pro **Shop** at Destin Commons through Dec. 24. There are also free games, crafts and a

> **HOLIDAYS** continued on page 2

Heroes:

The Horse Soldiers of **ODA 595**

(Part 1)

By Doug Stauffer

Sept. 11, 2001: the first enemy attack upon American soil since Pearl Harbor. World attention immediately focused on the innocent victims of the attack and the first responders who gave the ultimate sacrifice. Until recently, another heroic part of the story remained classified and hidden from public view. The release of a Warner Bros. movie called "12 Strong" gave the world a glimpse into the secret missions that took place in the aftermath of 9/11. The film depicts the true story of the retaliatory attack by the first Special Forces soldiers entering Afghanistan.

These soldiers were tasked with a broad mission: defeat the Taliban; eliminate the terrorist haven in Afghanistan. The Special Forces team chosen to lead the offensive was the Operational Detachment-Alpha 595 (ODA 595). The mission,

> **SOLDIERS** continued on page 2





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Community

SOLDIERS

continued from page 1

expected to take several years, toppled the Taliban in just a matter of months. ODA 595 led an unconventional warfare campaign by partnering with indigenous forces to topple the terrorist-supporting Afghan government. The Western media appropriately labeled ODA 595 "The Horse Soldiers."

The Greater FWB Chamber of Commerce, with President and CEO Ted Corcoran at the helm, celebrated history by making history. The Fort Walton Beach gathering was the first time the Horse Soldiers reunited. Remarkable as that is, the Chamber is the only organization in the world to host the final reunion of the Doolit-

tle Raiders in 2013 and the first reunion of the ODA 595 Horse Soldiers

Backstory: conflicts have raged in Afghanistan for more than 100 years. Ethnic factions have been continuously at war. The ODA 595 operation was aptly described as a 19th century Afghan military using horse cavalry with 20th century weapons systems. When ODA 595 arrived, it added 21st century technology and the might of the most powerful nation on earth to eradicate the threat. The mission brought devastating air power with the full force of the United States military's advanced weapon systems. The mission of ODA 595 was not accomplished with tanks or mechanized vehicles but on horseback with only one man



PHOTOS BY TIM WOODRUM, EXCEPTIONAL PHOTOGRAPHY

experienced with horses. Horseback riding lessons started as the men traveled through the treacherous terrain.

ODA 595 was inserted about 100 miles from Mazar-i-Sharif, which linked up with ethnic Uzbek fighters under Gen. Abdul Rashid Dostum. They had to earn Dostum's trust and help him capture Mazar-i-Sharif, opening a beachhead into the rest of the country.

Ted said the Chamber is no stranger to honoring our brave military heroes. Earlier this year, it held the Final Goblet Ceremony honoring the Doolittle Raiders. Just like the goblets for the Raiders, the Horse Soldiers will have silver canteen cups, the Army equivalent of goblets. The Chamber commissioned these mementos, which were unveiled at the banquet, with the support of the local business community.

"The United States of America has been attacked twice," said Ted. "Pearl Harbor, with the first group to retaliate being The Doolittle Raiders. Sept. 11, 2001, with ODA 595 being the first in Afghanistan to defend

Continued on page 6

HOLIDAYS

continued from page 1

free 4-by-6 professional photo with Santa, as well as a free digital download. To book, visit basspro.com.

It's almost time for the Ice Skating Extravaganza at The Village of Baytowne **Wharf,** Fri., Dec. 2, 6-8 p.m. at the Baytowne skating pavilion. You can watch free, featured performances from well-known skaters at 6 and 7:30 p.m., who will also share tips and tricks. Before and in between the shows, lace up those skates and skate around with the pros. The Village of Baytowne Wharf's ice rink is open through Feb.5. Hours vary daily. Visit BaytowneWharf.com.

The The sixth annual **Troon Goon Christmas Lightshow in Bluewater Bay,**Dec. 3 – Jan. 6, 6- 9:30 p.m.,

uses the highest technology of programmable LED lights and features house lights, a mega tree, bouncing arches, floodlights, pixel matrices and other



standalone features for an unlimited amount of pixel combinations and graphic animations. Taking place on Troon Drive East, the show loops every 30 minutes. Watch the show from your vehicle and listen to the accompanying music by tuning your radio to 103.1 FM. Vote online for your favorite song versions while you watch. No show during inclement weather.

Everyone who loves Yuletide décor, joyful holiday music and festive Christmas lights should make the 2022 "Geek Lights" show through Jan. 6, at the corner of Bluewater Boulevard and Antiqua Way in Bluewater Bay. Shows loop every 30 minutes starting at 6 p.m.,

with the last show starting at 9:30 p.m. Sun.-Thurs., and 10:30 p.m. Fri., Sat. and holiday eves. Now in its 15th year, the free show consists of Christmas lights and other themed display elements, all under computer control and synchronized to music. All donations support Crestview Area Shelter for the Homeless. The show is the technical and creative wizardry of Jeff Werner, the "Northwest Florida Geek" and Wendy Werner, his "spouse peripheral." FaceBook.com/GeekLightsOn-TheCorner

Emerald Coast Theatre Company presents fantastic shows to get you in the holiday spirit! A Charlie Brown

Christmas: Live On Stage by Charles M. Schulz, adapted by Eric Schaeffer with special arrangement by Arthur Whitelaw and Ruby Persson. Sat., Dec. 3, 9:30 a.m., Sun., Dec. 4, 2:30 p.m., and Sat., Dec. 10, 9:30 a.m. The Best Christmas Pageant Ever: The Musical runs from Dec. 8 – 18. Thurs. Sat., 7:30 p.m., Sundays at 2:30 p.m., and Wed., Dec. 14, 2:30 p.m. Christmas Cabaret at the Boulevard will sing you into the Christmas spirit, Wed., Dec. 14, 7:30 p.m. and Sat., Dec. 17, 2:30 p.m. Enjoy classic holiday songs and join in some carols as well. All will be held on the second floor of 560 Grand Boulevard in Grand Boulevard Town Center in Miramar Beach. Purchase tickets online at emeraldcoasttheatre.org.

The City of Freeport will host its annual Christmas Parade and Tree Lighting Sat., Dec. 3. The parade starts at 5:15 p.m. at Freeport Elementary School. The tree lighting will take place after the parade

Continued on next page



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P.O. Box 1424 Santa Rosa Beach, FL 32459

Publisher/Executive Editor

Lori Leath Smith Lori@LifeMediaGrp.com

Director, Advertising Sales

Scott Miller Scott@LifeMediaGrp.com

Production & Layout Kim Harper

Editor

Kenneth Books

Writers

Michelle Ruschman
Doug Stauffer
Lisa Woodrum
Heather Bennett
Mark Messerly
Samuel King Jr.

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HOLIDAYS

continued from page 2

at Freeport City Hall where you can enjoy live music, food and craft vendors and photos with Santa. If you, your business or organization would like to participate submit an application and liability form at freeport-florida.gov.

studio6twenty5 presents **The Nutcracker** Dec. 9, 5:30 p.m. at the Destin Community Center and features the studio6twenty5 Children's Program as well as Adult/Open Division dancers.

Staging, arrangement and choreography by artistic director Rachel Prescott, with original choreography by Shaye Smith; guest performances by Luminary Entertainment Company and choreography by Lydia Faith. Reservations are recommended with a suggested donation of \$10/ticket with 100 percent of proceeds benefiting the studio6twenty5 Children's Program.

Donations can be made at Will Call upon check-in. Reserve seats at studio6twenty5. com/events.



LJ Schooners' 5th Annual Santa Paddle Parade is back Sat., Dec. 17, at Bluewater Bay Marina. All paddlers are welcome; if you can paddle it, bring it! Paddle on a stand-up paddle board, canoe, kayak, paddle boat or surf skis. Group photo is at noon with paddle starting at 12:10 p.m. when the group of Santa Clauses leave Blue-Water Bay Marina and paddle East to Rocky Bayou Bridge, North to North Shore of Rocky Bayou and back to the marina. Registration (\$30) includes your Sunny Santa Suit, which must be worn during the paddle. The first 75 to register are guaranteed Santa suits. Proceeds benefit Sharing and Caring of Niceville. To register, call Bluewater Bay Marina Ship Store at (850) 897-2821 or visit bluewaterbaymarina.com.

Bluewater Bay Marina will host its annual Christmas Boat Parade Sat., Dec. 17, at 5:30 p.m. (Skippers meeting at 4 p.m.; parade staging at 5 p.m.) The parade course exits Bluewater Bay Marina north to Nelson's Cove, around Rocky Bayou, south to the Rocky One marker and then returns to Bluewater Bay Marina. Boats must pre-register. After the Boat Parade, LJ Schooners Dockside Restaurant will host a Christmas party, with live music from Fathom, 7-10 p.m., and an ugly sweater contest at 9 p.m. For more information, email: frontdesk@bwb-marina.com

Sun., Dec. 18, 5:30 p.m., the annual 2022 Niceville Valparaiso Rotary Club Christmas Boat Parade, presented by Emerald Coast Marine, will feature a traditional display of fun onboard holiday-themed lights and decorations. Festivities include complimentary hot cocoa, a visit from Santa Claus and Mrs. Claus and the elves, provided by the Rotary. The parade route travels southwest from Emerald Coast Marine to Tom's Bayou, past Lincoln Park, then east toward Lions Park, returning back to Emerald Coast Marine. Boat entries are \$30 each. All proceeds raised will benefit Sharing and Caring Niceville. For more information, visit nicevillevalparaisorotary.org.

The Village of Baytowne Wharf at Sandestin will hold a special light show Wed., Fri. and Sat. nights Dec. 2-23 during the 12 Nights of Lights. The tree lights in the events plaza

will dance and blink to music at 6, 7 and 8 p.m. Visit Baytowne-Wharf.com.

Join **Sinfonia's Holiday Pops,** featuring The Doo Wop Project Dec. 9, 7:30 p.m. at the Destin-Fort Walton Beach Convention Center. The Doo Wop Project boys will get you into the holiday spirit! Hear old-school holiday classics like The

Continued on next page

Toy Room

Emerald Coast Children's Advocacy Center is creating a toy room for their families and agency partners to "shop" for children from newborn up to 18 years old. Bring unwrapped gifts, and Christmas wrapping paper for the gifts, by Dec. 23. Check out gift ideas to purchase for all age groups in the events section of ECCAC's website, www.eccac.org. Deliver to either the Pierce Family Center in De-Funiak Springs, 336 College Ave., or the Niceville Chamber of Commerce office, 1055 John Sims Parkway East. EC-



CAC is also accepting 2022 year-end tax-deductible donations. For further information or assistance with deliveries, email Ana Michalzik at ana@eccac.org to ECCAC, or call her at 850-420-4639.



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HOLIDAYS

continued from page 3

Drifters' White Christmas, The Temptations' Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer, along with "Doowopified" contemporary hits like This Christmas and Last Christmas. It's sure to be a jolly good time! Tickets at SinfoniaGulfCoast.org.

The 2022 Niceville Valparaiso Christmas Parade is coming to town Sat., Dec. 10, 10 a.m. The 2022 theme is "Imagine Peace on Earth." Sponsored each year by the Niceville Valparaiso Rotary Club, the annual Christmas parade is made up of civic and youth groups, organizations, churches, businesses, and individuals take part in the festive procession. Watch the parade on John Sims Parkway and Partin Drive along the route. The Eagle Pride Marching Band will be in the lead. Visit NicevilleValparaisoRotary.org or its Facebook page to participate or for more info.

The Heritage Museum of Northwest Florida presents the Yule of Yesteryear Annual Christmas Event Sat., Dec. 10, 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Gather together to enjoy the carols and other festivities after the Niceville Christmas Parade ends for free admission to the museum, food vendors, craft vendors, walton guard reenactors, school choir groups, bake sale, raffle ticket prizes, letters to Santa and more! 115 Westview Ave., Perrine Park, Valparaiso.

The **EO** Wilson Biophilia Center will hold its Winter Extravaganza from 9 a.m.-2 p.m. Sat., Dec. 10. There will be a special visit from Santa, a

hot chocolate bar, food trucks, games, and more. Please bring any canned food and nonperishable goods you can spare.

Enjoy a memorable family holiday experience at LuLu's (at the foot of the Mid-Bay Bridge) for its seventh annual Billy Claus free event Sun., Dec. 11, 1-3 p.m. Billy Claus is Santa's warm weather-loving brother who lives in the Caribbean, but comes this way every year to help Santa during the Holiday season. The Lu-LuBelles are Billy's version of Santa's elves. Billy will pass children's wishes on to Santa and will be available for photos. In addition to kid's arts and crafts activities, there will also be a reading of the children's book authored by Lucy Buffett, Billy Claus and the Spirit of Christmas. LulusFunFoodMusic.com/ destin/ (850) 710-5858.



Don't miss the **33rd Blessing of the Live Nativity** at the corner of 2nd Street and Church Avenue, hosted by **First Baptist Church in Fort Walton Beach,** Thurs., Dec. 15-Wed., Dec. 21, 6 - 8:30 p.m. each night. Drive through or participate in direct interaction with Mary, Joseph and baby Jesus and pet and feed the animals. Get your photo taken in the nativity scene and enjoy a cookie, coffee or hot chocolate!

Children receive a candy cane and learn the Christian story behind its invention. To illustrate the complete salvation story from Jesus' miraculous birth to his crucifixion and resurrection, there are Roman soldiers at the Cross and angels at the empty tomb. fbcfwb.org.

Visit the **Festival of Trees** at **Grand Boulevard at Sandestin** through Christmas Day, an annual event in the park at Grand Boulevard shopping center showcasing uniquely decorated Christmas trees from 12 local, non-profit organizations. Participating non-profit organizations compete to win cash prizes totaling \$7,000 for beautifully decorated Christmas trees. Cast your vote for the People's Choice award.

Enjoy free horse-drawn carriage rides around the Town **Center at Grand Boulevard** at Sandestin while taking in the Coastal White Christmas lights and the Festival of the Trees display. To add to the festivities, get a professional photo with Santa while listening to the seasonal sounds of the Emerald Coast Theatre Company's Dickensian Carolers singing popular holiday carols, Dec. 2 -17 Fridays and Saturdays from 5 to 8 p.m.; Dec. 19 - 23 all week from 5 to 8 p.m.

Eden Gardens State Park will be illuminated Sat., Dec. 10, 5-8 p.m. More than 2,000 luminaries will light the garden paths of Eden Gardens at nightfall. The Historic Wesley House will be decorated for Christmas and visitors can see all the rooms decorated by local organizations from throughout the community. Music and carolers voices will fill the air throughout

the evening and cookies and hot beverages will be provided by the Friends of Eden Gardens. The event is free and park entry fees will be waived from 5-8 p.m.

Movie lovers will delight in this year's Northwest Florida Symphony Orchestra's Holiday Pops: "Christmas at the Movies" at the Mattie Kelly Arts Center in Niceville on Fri., Dec 9 at 7:30 p.m. It includes a mix of film favorites from past to present as well as traditional holiday selections, featuring guest soloist Lakisha Jones, and the NFSO chorale and artists from our college community.

Hosted by the City of De-Funiak Springs through New Year's Eve, Chipley Park lights up with the annual Christmas Reflection Displays, a light display like no other in our area with more than 10 million lights reflecting on the lake and throughout the park. You can view the lights by walking, driving or even taking a horsedrawn carriage ride. Admission is \$5 per person and children 5 and under are free. Fri.-Sat., 5:30 - 9:30 p.m.; Sun.-Thurs., 5:30-9 p.m. nightly. \$5 per person, free for children under 5, Tues. discount for military; \$10 for carload up to five people. Carriage rides are available on select nights. \$10/person. (850) 978-2999.

Main Street DeFuniak Springs brings back Merry Main Street! Free to attend, Merry Main Street boasts live music and theatrical performances, an outdoor market, food trucks, rides on the Choctaw Express Train, visits with Santa and Mrs. Claus, kids character appearances and more family fun — all taking place outdoors along Baldwin Avenue in downtown DeFuniak Springs. Events occur every Friday and Saturday until Christmas. https://bit.ly/MSD_MerryMain, Info@mainstreetdfs.org, (850) 296-9051.

To kick off your new year, get your "Glitter and Glam" on with Diamond Dan at LJ Schooners' New Year's Eve party! Dinner specials will run from 5–10 p.m.

The Village of Baytowne Wharf will host Baytowne Countdown, Sat., Dec. 31, 6 p.m.-1 a.m., with two breathtaking fireworks displays at 8 p.m. and midnight. Enjoy a family-friendly evening from 6-8 p.m. The first fireworks display happens at 8 p.m. Dance the night away with live music from Bay Kings Band 7 p.m-1 a.m. End the night with a spectacular midnight fireworks show.



Noon Year's Eve is just for kids at LuLu's Destin. It's the 7th annual Noon Year's Eve celebration Tues., Dec. 31, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. with non-stop, free kid-friendly fun. There will be arts and crafts, inflatables, face painting, live music and more. Kids can have their fun by counting down to Noon with kid-safe "fireworks" and a huge Beach Ball Drop. Visit Lulus-FunFoodMusic.com/destin or call (850) 710-5858.





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Built by JP Carducci Construction

- Craftsman-Style 1-story home
- Samsung, black appliances, black and white, solid wood cabinets with black hardware and fixtures
- · Gas range, gas grill, and tankless hot water heater
- Old Chicago-Style, brick gas fireplace and brick hallway
- Free standing tub and tile shower in Master bath
- Washer and gas dryer, whole house water filter/softener system
- Spray foam in the attic and BIPS wall insulation

Phase 2 | Lot 127 407 SWEETGRASS LANE NICEVILLE, FL 32578

2,663 Sq Ft | 4 Bedroom | 2.5 Bath

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Built by Tidwell Development



- 2-story home
- · Master bedroom on the first floor
- Master bathroom walk-in shower and freestanding tub
- 1 bedroom / office on the first floor
- 2 bedrooms on the second floor with loft
- Beautiful kitchen island and gas range
- 9' ceilings
- 2 car garage and fenced backyard
- Conveniently located near future amenities area



- 2 car garage
- Southern style front porch
- Large living room with fireplace
- Gourmet kitchen with custom, solid wood cabinetry
- Kitchen sland with farmhouse apron sink
- Coffee bar and pantry with antique doors
- Upscale appliances featuring an Italian ILVE gas range
- HUGE bonus room with wet bar
- Laundry room, mudroom bench and a powder room

Phase 2 | Lot 126

409 SWEETGRASS LANE NICEVILLE, FL 32578

3,445 Sq Ft | 4 Bedroom | 4.5 Bath

Listed by Kelly Shephard 850.543.7353
Built by Janssen Construction

Phase 2 | Lot 82

152 CARAWAY DRIVE

NICEVILLE, FL 32578

2,586 Sq Ft | 4 Bedroom | 3.5 Bath

Listed by Jodie Snell 850.621.6535
Built by Grand American Enterprises



- 2 car garage
- Open floor plan offers a large living room
- Large kitchen island with a metal farmhouse sink
- Upgraded appliances, including a French door refrigerator and gas range
- Master spa-like bathroom with a massive walk-in shower and large vanity
- Back patio is perfect for entertaining
- Backyard is flat with plenty of room for a pool



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SOLDIERS

continued from page 1

our country. Brave bombers, heroic horsemen." The Green Berets advised Afghan commanders for two months and directed a massive air campaign to rout the Taliban from power. This retaliatory mission is considered the most successful unconventional warfare campaign in modern history. It is hard to describe what it was like to meet 10 of the soldiers gathered together in the room.

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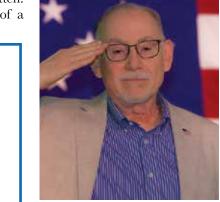
statue near Ground Zero. It depicts a Special Forces soldier on horseback, honoring the special operations teams who headed

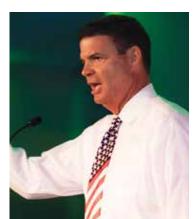
following the 9/11 attacks. Now America has the Silver Canteen memorabilia to serve as a reminder, never to be forgotten. This is only the beginning of a

historic story yet to be finished. (To be continued)









into Afghanistan in the weeks





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Community

DECEMBER 2022

Sequins and Suits 01

7 pm | Northwest Florida State College | Niceville

Anastasia: The New Broadway Musical 7:30 pm | Mattie Kelly Arts Center | Niceville

02 | Ice Skating Extravaganza

6-8 pm | Baytowne Wharf | Miramar Beach

Grand Boulevard Horse Drawn Carriage Rides, Carolers, & 02-

Photos with Santa

Fridays & Saturdays | 5 pm

Grand Boulevard at Sandestin | Miramar Beach

Christmas Parade & Tree Lighting 03

5:15 pm | Freeport City Hall | Freeport

7th Annual Niceville Ugly Sweater Run/Walk

8 am | Hurricane Grill and Wings | Niceville

Pictures with Pups and Santa

9 am | Niceville Dog Park | Niceville

Kids' Christmas Ornaments with Marla Armstrong

10:30 am | Artful Things | Niceville

Christmas Cookie Decorating Class

12 pm | Estelle Studio & Gallery | Freeport

| Freeport Christmas Parade and Tree Lighting 06

5:15 pm | Freeport

Christmas Deco-Mesh Wreath Class

6 pm | Estelle Studio & Gallery | Freeport

08 | Yule of Yesteryear

10 am | Heritage Museum of Northwest Florida | Valparaiso

Northwest Florida Symphony Orchestra's Holiday Pops: 09

"Christmas at the Movies"

7:30 pm | Mattie Kelly Arts Center | Niceville

Sinfonia Gulf Coast's Holiday Pops featuring The Doo **Wop Project**

7:30 pm | Destin-Fort Walton Beach Convention Center

09-**Building Industry Association's Parade of Homes**

12 pm | Multiple Locations

10 Women's Climbing Circle

9 am | Rock Out Climbing Gym | Destin

Niceville Valparaiso Community Christmas Parade

10 am | Marc Smith Boulevard | Niceville

Heritage Museum of NWFL's Yule of Yesteryear 10

10 am-4 pm | Perrine Park | Valparaiso

Florida Pint Glass Day

11 am | 3rd Planet Brewing | Niceville

Christmas CuddleCot Concert benefiting Asher's Hope

2 pm | Crosspoint Bluewater Bay | Niceville

Winter Extravaganza

9 am-2 pm | EO Wilson Biophilia Center | Freeport

Holiday Pops Concert featuring Sinfonia Gulf Coast

5 pm | Seaside Amphitheatre | Seaside

Niceville Valparaiso Chamber of Commerce Second Wednesday 14

Breakfast

7:30 am | Niceville Community Center | Niceville

Wine Tasting & Prime Rib Night

5 pm | LJ Schooners Dockside Restaurant & Oyster Bar | Niceville

Ugly Sweater Themed Wine Tasting

5:30 pm | Toast Wine Bar | Niceville

15-**Blessing of the Live Nativity**

21 6:30-8:30 pm each night | First Baptist Church | Fort Walton Beach

Santa Paddle Parade 17

Noon | LJ Schooners | Bluewater Bay

Christmas Boat Parade

5:30 pm | Bluewater Bay Marina, Nelson's Cove and Rocky Bayou

Wreaths Across America - Wreath Laying Ceremony

11 am | Heritage Gardens Funeral Home | Niceville

Niceville-Valparaiso Rotary Christmas Boat Parade 18

5:30 pm | Emerald Coast Marine, Tom's Bayou, Lincoln Park, Lions Park

Grand Boulevard Horse Drawn Carriage Rides, Carolers, & 19-

Photos with Santa 23

5 pm | Grand Boulevard at Sandestin | Miramar Beach

Paint the Bay 21

5:30 pm | LJ Schooners Dockside Restaurant & Oyster Bar | Niceville

Glitter & Glam NYE Party 31

Begins 5 pm | LJ Schooners| Bluewater Bay

Baytowne Countdown

6 pm-1 am | Baytowne Wharf | Miramar Beach

NYE Masquerade Party

5:30 pm | Toast Wine Bar | Niceville

Niceville Community - Saturdays December 3, 10, 17, 24, 31 9am-1pm | Palm Plaza | Niceville

Freeport Farmers Market - 1st & 3rd Sundays December 4, 18

8am | Victory Blvd | Freeport

Grand Boulevard Farmers Market - Saturdays December 3, 10, 17, 21, 24, 28, 31

9am-1pm | Grand Boulevard | Miramar Beach









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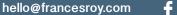
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Bay Buzz

The 27th Annual Mattie Kelly Arts Foundation (MKAF) Festival of the Arts held Oct. 29-30 in the Mattie Kelly Cultural Arts Village in Destin featured exhibits of more than 100 artists from throughout the U.S. showcasing a diverse palette of artistic styles in nearly 20 different art mediums. Guest judges Anna Killian Cavnar, artist and adjunct faculty member at Pensacola State College, and Dan Taylor, artist and art advocate of Tallahassee, awarded 29 ribbons and cash prizes. Recognizing artists whose work reflected exceptional talent and craftsmanship, the judges awarded "Best in Show," three Awards of Excellence, five Awards of Merit, and 10 Judges' Recognition Awards. Best in Show Winner (\$2,000) - Curtis Whitwam, Tampa - Watercolor; Award of Excellence Winners (\$850) - Valerie Walchek, Ocoee - Ceramics; Michael Fagan, Pensacola - Mixed Media; and Phillip Fiuza Lima, Mariett, Ga. - Wood.

Vertex Solutions, a lead-

ing developer of high-fidelity learning technology, including extended reality (XR) training, was selected by the Defense Innovation Unit (DIU) to develop a reconfigurable Multi-Place Mixed Reality (MPMR) flight simulator. The MPMR flight simulator will replace the currently fielded Weapon Systems Trainers (WSTs) and save several times their initial fielding, modification and sustainment costs, all while providing greater access to pilot training for students. This is exciting news for the USAF, who will be able to train more pilots effectively, at a lower cost, to help address the pilot shortage! Vertex Solutions' Immersive Training Devices are a great example of dual-use technology that benefits both the military and commercial industry. This technology not only satisfies U.S. DoD pilot training needs, but is directly applicable to commercial aviation training in passenger and cargo flight operations.

The City of Niceville recently celebrated the grand

opening of the new Recreation Area adjacent to the Niceville Senior Center. Serving as the foundation of Niceville's vibrant community of adults over 55, the new Senior Center Recreation Area will deliver on the community's desire to create an outdoor activity space for senior Adults. Begun in November 2018, the City had the vision to establish a lively mixed-use, recreation area at the core of Niceville's City Complex. The new Recreation Area consists of the courtyard, dedicated to Gary Allen Brown in recognition for his 30+ years of community service to the City of Niceville. Mr. Brown honorably served in the Air Force for 20 years at Eglin Air Force Base and served for 24 consecutive years as a City of Niceville Council Member. Mr. Brown was known as a n accomplished community leader with great integrity, passion, and dedication for preserving the heritage of Niceville Florida. The Recreation area also has pickleball courts, a putting green, two gazebos, shuffleboard courts, and restroom facilities for the enjoyment of Senior Center members and may be rented out to private groups. The pickleball courts are open to the public outside of the Senior Center hours of 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

The Republican Women of Okaloosa Federated held its 4th Annual Veterans Appreciation Luncheon on November 2nd at the Wyndham Gardens on Okaloosa Island with 155 guests in attendance. Flags from all services were provided by the Shalimar United Methodist Church and made a beautiful backdrop for the ceremony. Thanks to Scott Newbold and Pat Brantley for making this happen. Retired 4-star General Charles Horner was the special guest speaker. The Emerald Coast Chorus, led by Kevin Wilson, sang all the service anthems, patriotic and songs from the past. Corlene Ziegler, with the American Legion, presented the VietNam Era veterans and veteran's widows in attendance with commemorative pins and



L-R: Deborah Stone, President Republican Women of Okaloosa Federated, General Horner, Maddie McNeal, Immediate Past President of RWOF

certificates. As in previous years, the program was coordinated and emceed by Immediate Past President Maddie McNeal.

Recently, the Heritage Museum held its annual Night at the Museum featuring live performances from the cast celebrating the 100th anniversary of Valparaiso. Participants enjoyed wine tastings paired with appetizers from local restaurants while they heard about the lives of our founding fathers; John Prine, Lula Edge, Addie Lewis

Continued on next page





Remember our Seniors During the Holidays

Caring for Those that Cared for Us

The holidays are here and once again, we are most thankful to live, work and play along the Emerald Coast. It is also time to remember to spend time with those that have cared for us. The holidays can be a depressing time for a lot of people, especially seniors. It tends to serve as a reminder about who is not there to celebrate anymore and how they cannot often go to where everyone else is gathering. Long-Term Care/Skilled Nursing and Assisted Living facilities often have seniors without any

extended family in the area. Little to no visitors, birthdays and holidays often leaves an empty feeling for our aging population. While caregivers do their best to make every occasion special, having a visitor, friend and/or family member visit makes all the difference in the world to each individual. It is human nature to feel loved, appreciated and cared for.

One reason why the holidays are so important to seniors, is they give them time to reflect on their lives. Looking through photo albums is a great way to reminisce about the past. Taking time to look at photos and ask questions creates an opportunity for one to "tell a story." Becoming a "senior" is an achievement in life. We need to remind them how blessed they are and how much richer our lives are for spending time with them.

Perhaps it is time to start a new tradition this holiday season and carry it through 2023. All facilities have a volunteer

program. Have you considered including in your holiday plans to adopt a "grandmother or grandfather" in a facility? Maybe your church or civic group

would be interested in volunteering and spending time with seniors. Spare a little time to help bring joy to others during this joyous time of the year.

Perhaps this holiday season is your year to "make a difference" the lives of others. Happy Holidays!

~ Teresa Halverson
Director of Business Development
& Community Relations
The Manor at Blue Water Bay

BAY BUZZ

continued from previous page



Arthur Edgar, Heritage Museum Manager

and James Plew. The Museum had a successful event thanks to the volunteers, members, staff and board that helped put together this guided tour. A special thanks to the Members of the Museum as well as the community that signed up for the event and came out to show their support for local history.

The 8th Annual Big Green Egg cooking competition, Eggs on the Beach, raised **\$45,000** for local non-profits. The event, held Oct. 15 at Seascape Towne Center, featured a diverse array of deliciously creative bites. Presented by Bay Breeze Patio, 20 cook teams served culinary creations while tasters voted for their favorites. Proceeds from the event are divided between the winning non-profit cook teams and the two benefitting charities, Food for Thought and Fisher House of the Emerald Coast. This year, they both received a \$19,500 donation to support their mission. In addition, non-profit cook teams competed for a donation toward their cause. This year's non-profit winners include First Place: Healing Paws for Warriors partnered with Swiftly Catering and presented a Korean Brisket burnt end with pickled veggies bite earning the non-profit \$3,000; Second Place: The Eggstrahs for South Walton Academy won for their bacon bites and earned the charity a \$2,000 donation; Third Place: Food for Thought won for their handmade meatballs and earned the organization an additional \$1,000.

The Market Shops hosted its Seventh Annual Bloody Mary Festival in October raising a record-breaking \$50,000 for Habitat for Humanity—Walton County. 1st Place People's Choice Award—The Beach House; 2nd Place People's Choice Award—Camille's at Crystal Beach; 3rd Place People's Choice Award—Chiringo; Judge's Choice Award—Chiringo; Best Accoutrement—Camille's at Crystal Beach. All awards were custom made by local artist, Maxine Orange.

Choctawhatchee The Audubon invites to "Birding with Noah Stryker" in Utah and a quick stop at High Island Thursday, Dec. 1st in Room 800 on the 2nd floor of the Chandler Center (NW door of 519 Helms St.) at the Crosspoint Church in Niceville. Socializing with refreshments begins at 6:30 PM, and the program begins at 7:00. Admission is free and open to the public. Hear Donna Cronwell who was fortunate to go birding for three days in northern and central Utah with Noah Styrcker, a renowned world birder. On the flight back home to Florida, she and her husband, Dale

Cronwell, were able to stop over in Houston and visit High Island during bird migration. During their trip to Utah and Texas, they recorded a total of 185 species of birds. For more information, email choctawhatchee-audubon@gmail.com.

There will be a **Christmas Bird Count** coordinated by

Malcolm Swan, on Sat., Dec. 17. To participate, contact Malcolm at 210-452-4899 so that he can configure birding assignment areas.





Make a Difference with Guardian ad Litem

By Michelle Ruschman

One of the greatest gifts you can give to a child is the knowledge they have someone on their side. Carita Smith, Volunteer Recruiter, for the Florida Guardian ad Litem, is on a mission to ensure that local children who find themselves displaced from their homes know there is someone they can still count on to advocate for their best interests. In our area, there should be 136 volunteers. There are currently only 43.

The Guardian ad Litem is



made up of a three-pronged system that becomes part of a child's team when a judge rules they need to be sheltered, or removed from the home. One part of Guardian ad Litem is the Case Advocacy Manager, who maintains the level of care from the office and supports the volunteers to ensure they can advocate effectively. These man-



agers are on staff along with the child's Best Interest Attorney to make sure the team is running smoothly. At the center of the trio, is the Volunteer Child Advocate. It is this volunteer who visits the children to make sure their needs are being met. If they find the children are in need they report back to the Case Advocacy Manager and the attorney to see if services can be put in place. They are the thread that connects the child to the judge and all other agencies that work with the court. Their sole mission is to take care of the child. It is this Volunteer Child Advocate position that Carita is working hard to fill and it is mission-critical.

"We work alongside any agency that's in contact with that child," Carita said." If the child is in foster care, we visit with them at least once a month, but our volunteers usually go more often. We talk to the child, make sure they're getting what they need, and ask how they feel. We want to make sure their innermost person is taken care of.

"We also talk with the foster parent to get a sense of how the child is behaving and what their day looks like," she continued. "If the child has interactions with their parents, we want to know how they responded to the visitation so we can keep an eye out for any triggers. If they're visiting with a parent twice a week for 30 minutes to an hour, how's that child's behavior when they come back? There are a lot of

variables that go into a visit like how the visits are maintained and observing how the child feels after these visits. What we observe then becomes information that we provide to the court."

Due to the shortage of volunteers, Case Managers often have to fill the additional role of the Child Advocate Volunteer, which is far from ideal. Carita shares the steps to becoming a CAV.

"There's a three-phase training process," she said. "The first phase is talking with me, submitting your application, and having your fingerprints taken at no cost to the volunteer. You must also pass a level two background screening because of the confidentiality that is required and the places you're going to. You're part of the court system and officially taking care of the needs of a child on the state level. Have a clean background.

"Phase two is the classroom portion which is 30 hours, so you do get a lot of training before you get started. Volunteers can choose to do it all online or in two parts by doing the majority online and then coming to a one-day class from 9a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

"Phase three is the most important because it's when you

go out and do the work," Carita said. "This is when you're visiting with a child, going to court, seeing how the parents react, and seeing how the judges behave. Just going into court can be scary but when you just observe and start building an understanding of what people are doing, then it becomes easier. You understand that you're just putting down on paper what you observed and passing it on to someone else. You understand your role in the process of helping these children.'

So who would make the ideal volunteer?

"Someone who loves children," Carita said. "You have to want to see children get beyond traumatic situations. Children remember what's happened to them so you have to be patient. Be confident in your abilities so you can ask critical questions."

Carita stresses that once someone becomes a volunteer, they have plenty of support from the case manager and attorney on their team. In addition to their immediate team, there are also mentors who have been in the position for multiple years, and events are put together so volunteers can be together and make a connection.

As for community support, Carita asks that you contact her to speak about Guardian ad Litem to your churches, small groups, networking groups, businesses, classrooms, etc. She will talk to any group that can help grow the volunteer base.

If you're interested in talking to Carita about being a Child Advocate Volunteer or would like to book a speaking engagement, call (850) 461-3877 or email carita.smith@gal.fl.gov.





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45 Buried in Lazarus Field Service

By Kenneth Books

One of the most solemn rituals of our civilization is the respectful burial of the dead. But some, whether for lack of family or loved ones' lack of funds, are deprived of this final, sacred rite. The Lazarus Field Service provides these souls, whose bodies have been cremated, with a respectful service and final resting place at Beal Memorial Cemetery.

"When I became a county commissioner, I knew the county was responsible for unclaimed persons," Okaloosa County Commissioner Carolyn Ketchel said. Thus, was born the annual Lazarus Field Service, which took place Wednesday, Nov. 2, before roughly 100 spectators and participants. Clergy from several Okaloosa County churches participated with prayers and talks.

To date, seven burial plots have been obtained, Ketchel said, only one of which has been used so far. At the annual service, 45 cremains were honored and interred. All 67 Florida counties share the cost of the plots.

"We're hoping this catches on throughout Florida," Ketchel said. Each person's name is entered into a Book of Life. "The Lord, we believe, honors

Florida Inc. awarded five \$100,000 grants to nonprofits in

Okaloosa and Walton counties.

Stage Crafters Community

Crestview Area Shelter for

Pyramid, Inc. - Outdoor

The Salvation Army - Mobile Kitchen for Disaster &

Recreation Equity for Individu-

Recre-

the Homeless – The Impact Vil-

lage Opportunity Zone (Phase

Theatre Inc. - "The Show Must

Go On..." Save Our Communi-

The 2022 grants are:

Arts & Culture

ty Theatre's Home

Education

Environment. ation & Preservation

als with Disabilities **Family**

One)



Okaloosa County Commissioner Carolyn Ketchel opens the Book of Life, containing the names of 45 people who were buried at the Nov. 2 Lazarus Field Service.

them by giving them this sendoff," she said.

In her introductory remarks, Ketchel said of the 45, "Your life was important. You walked among us. We believe all lives matter."

The names were read from the Book of Life by Deacon Wayne Walker of Saint Mary Catholic Church and the Rev. Herstel Carter of Crosspoint Church. As each name was read, retired Army Master Sgt. Tom Rice sounded the bell on the Veterans Tower, which cost about half a million dollars, raised locally over three years.

The ceremony is in reference to Luke 16:19-31, in which Jesus tells a parable of the contrast between the afterlife of a rich but aloof man and that of a spiritual but poor man. The Rev. Doug Martin of Saint Peter Catholic Church, stressed that the parable focused on acts of commission and omission.

"This is a beautiful thing we're doing here today," Martin said. But, he added, "No one in our world feels responsibility for our brothers and sisters... We fail to notice the Lazaruses God places at our doorstep."

Music for the ceremony was provided by the chancel choir of First United Methodist Church of Fort Walton Beach and a soulful rendition of "Amazing Grace" was sung by Natalie McClure, accompanied by Joey Ferreira on the organ.

"This was a good, sacred, holy thing here today," Ketchel said. "Such a beautiful outpouring from our community. It was like a veil was parted just a little bit and we saw what Heaven

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Impact100 Awards

Five \$100,000 Grants

Health & Wellness

Healing Paws for Warriors -Save a Veteran, Rescue a Dog: Mobile Support

Since the creation of Impact100 NWF in 2012, it has granted \$4.1 million to 501(c) (3) nonprofits in Okaloosa and Walton counties. Every membership dollar goes toward the grant award fund. The concept is simple. Each member contributes \$1,000 to fund the grants. This year, the organization has 532 members, making possible five \$100,000 grants. Members evaluate and vote on grant applications submitted by nonprofits in our area.





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By Chris Balzer, ECES

I cannot believe the holiday season is here. It has been nice getting a break from the high humidity and I am especially enjoying those attic inspections this time of year. With the holiday season comes more energy use. Here are a few holiday energy savings tips to help brighten your nights and lower your energy bills.

Ways to Save this Holiday Season

ENERGY TIPS

by Emerald Coast Energy Solutions

Switch to LED lights when decorating and in general. LED lights use 80 to 90 percent less energy than incandescent lights. It is estimated that four strands of LED lights will save \$30 this month, compared to four strands of the traditional lighting. When I changed out my landscape lighting bulbs to LED, they were brighter, looked great, will last longer and use less energy. It is also a clever idea to use

timers to reduce the amount of time holiday lighting stays on.

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



your oven at 375 degrees to bake both dishes.

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

Do not run dishwashers when they are half full; this wastes energy. Fill up those baskets and try adding a drying agent. These agents help lower the surface tension of water, causing it to sheet off dishes, use less drying time and save you money. Also, use cold water in your clothes washer. Most new clothes washers and detergents are designed for cold water and get your clothes just as clean. When drying clothes, throw a few dryer balls into the dryer with your load. This will reduce drying time by preventing laundry from clumping, allowing the warm air to circulate better. If your dryer has an auto dry option (moisture sensing), use that option instead of timed dry and clean the lint trap between loads – this improves air circulation and increases the efficiency of the dryIf you plan to leave this holiday season, think about automating your home. Put exterior and interior lighting on timers to avoid being on all day and night. Add a thermostat that you can control via Wi-Fi and your smart phone, so, in the event we get a cold streak or heat wave during the time you are away, you can control your home's temperature. Also remember to unplug those energy vampire electronics which use energy even when turned off.

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

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

We wish you and your loved ones a happy, safe and energy-efficient holiday season.

Chris Balzer is Founder and President of Emerald Coast Energy Solutions, which is a Smile Provider Company. For more information on how to save and become energy efficient, schedule an inspection by calling (850) 588-2870, visit trusteces. com or email wecare@trusteces.com and Beat the Heat.

Wealth Building Strategy #5

Leverage Your Investment Money





What is leverage?

Leverage is used to amplify investment gains and losses on money invested. Using other people's money to increase the earning power of your own creates financial leverage.

In personal finance, leverage is most encountered in the economics of buying a home. Here's a simple example:

Let's say you want to buy a house for \$300,000. Typically, you would pay for that house by putting 20% (\$60,000) down in cash and borrowing the balance from the bank. The \$60,000 is your starting "equity," the net value of what you own. In other words, the difference between the value of the house and what you owe someone else is your equity. The bank loan (what you owe someone else) is what creates the leverage. It is called leverage because you are using someone else's money to make your money more productive - it "leverages" your investment. When leverage is created by borrowing money from someone else, there is a cost for the leverage. In a home purchase that cost is the interest you pay on the loan. Because of leverage, in this example, if the value of the house goes up by 10% in the next year, your equity goes up by 27%!

	Purchase	One Year Later	% Change
Value of Home	300,000	330,000	+10%
Loan Balance	-240,000	-240,000	0
Equity	60,000	90,000	+30%

Because the amount of the bank loan doesn't change, a \$60,000 or 10% increase (\$300,000 to \$330,000) in the value of the home results in a \$90,000 or 30% increase (\$60,000 to \$30,000) in your equity in the home!

Most wealth is created in real estate ownership. By leveraging your investment into rental properties, you can gain a steady passive income stream for life. Owning rental properties can be challenging and scary for many people. However, once you learn the ins and outs to rental properties, you will wonder why everyone doesn't do this.

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

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

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



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

Ways You can Help This Holiday Season

The average food insecure child will miss 10 meals over the Thanksgiving Break and 20 meals over the Christmas Break while removed from the Free/

Reduced Meal Plan they depend upon at School. Our holiday services bridge the meal gap in the lives of the children we serve while also providing the families food for holiday meals.

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

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

You may sponsor a family

44321.

Santa Brunch

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

Holiday Help

If your family, business or organization is looking for opportunities to support your local community, all of our services are provided in Walton and

for \$40: Text FFTHOLIDAY to Okaloosa Counties and You Can Help. Sponsor a Service -Use Link To Learn More: www. bitly.ws/vAEp.

Volunteer Opportunities

"Volunteerism is a core value of FFT outreach. Promote Volunteerism. We strengthen our volunteer-base almost daily, which brings new ideas, energy, support, and love into our organization. It is our goal to provide our communities with a local, positive, hands-on volunteer experience. We welcome volunteers of all ages and encourage student and team volunteerism. Our volunteer base packs and distributes food, organizes our pantry, and supports our events. We depend on our volunteers to help make our work possible.

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



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Sorting Through the Noise of Medicare Annual Enrollment



By Greg Durette

For those folks new to the Medicare Annual Enrollment Period (AEP), the overwhelming volume of mailing pieces, emails and phone calls are dizzying. For those folks more experienced in this time, the sigh of despair and cries of "Oh no, not again!" can be heard from every balcony and rooftop.

Keep in mind, the closer we get to Dec. 7 (the official end of the AEP), the more intense it will get if you let it. Regardless of your experience level, there are some things you can do to quell the noise and help make the best possible decision for you.

First, make sure you pay attention to the mail and phone calls you receive from your existing insurance company. These communications will be very valuable to you as they likely will be about the changes to your current plan in the new year. Too often, because of the volume of clutter mail, folks tend to throw these out along with everything else just to try and keep the kitchen counter clear. As the saying goes, don't throw the baby out with the bath water!

Next, try to make a real effort to understand everything you can about your current plan. Know the exact name and type of plan as well as how much you are paying in premiums. Is it a Supplement Plan? If so, which one; M, N, G, F, etc.? Know which type of Part D or, Stand-Alone Prescription plan (if any) you have, to go along with this Supplement Plan. Know your deductibles, co-insurance and copays. Know if you are able to use your pharmacy of choice. Know how the coverage Gap (commonly known as the "Donut Hole") works in your plan.

Perhaps you have an Advantage Plan instead. Again, know the exact name and type of plan as well as how much you are paying in premiums. Being that



most Advantage plans have the Prescription coverage built in, you will likely not have a separate premium for Part D. However, you will need to know the deductibles and co-insurances for the entire plan. Oftentimes, there will be a separate deductible for the Advantage Plan and the Prescription coverage within the plan. Also, know your copays and whatever Extra Coverages your plan offers such as Dental,

Hearing, Vision, Rewards Programs, Silver Sneakers, etc.

The two last, most important pieces of information you will need to know about your current plan is, what your premium will be and are your doctors/medications going to be on the plan in 2023. Will you have in-network options in other States? Some plans get better, some plans not so much. Some get more expensive and some reduce to as low as \$0 per month. Some doctors stay and some doctors go. Some medications get more expensive, less expensive or simply are not covered. It all depends on where you live and the plan you have.

Now, finally, you are armed and ready to attack that onslaught of external information. Be careful of where you look! Many of those ads you see on TV with famous sports figures/ actors are nothing more than marketing companies looking to get your information to sell to anyone willing to pay for it. If you respond to those ads, you will only make the onslaught of mail, emails, texts and calls that much bigger.

Work with people you know and/or reputable insurance companies you know and recognize. Deal directly and don't be afraid to let someone know you would prefer they not contact you again if you have settled on what you want to do.

That is the final important point. Now that you are well informed and have made a well-informed decision, you will feel much better about changing the channel when the next Medicare ad shows up on TV. You can sort your mail over the trash barrel. Talk about stressfree living!

Greg Durette is a qualified, licensed agent with Florida Health Connector providing Medicare throughout the State and is based in Niceville. He has been in the insurance industry for over 39 years and can be reached at his office at 850-842-2400 or his mobile at 978-509-2941.

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Okaloosa Schools Shine: Gov. DeSantis Announces Inaugural Purple Star Campuses of Distinction

Gov. Ron DeSantis made a surprise visit to Okaloosa County recently to announce the inaugural group of schools to receive Florida Purple Star recognition. The Purple Star designation recognizes schools that provide extra support for children of military families. Once the school names were released, it was apparent why Okaloosa County was chosen for the announcement. Thirty-five of the 114 schools receiving the recognition were from right here in Okaloosa County.

"Purple Star Schools have the tools and knowledgeable faculty needed to help children of military families succeed regardless of the obstacles they face," said Governor DeSantis. According to militarychild.org, a child whose parents are in the military can "expect to move six to nine times from kindergarten through their high school graduation, with approximately 200,000 students transitioning to a new school in any given year." To

qualify for Purple Star status, a school must have a trained staff member who helps ease entry into the new academic environment, a student-led program to help create social connections, a military family webpage on the school website to inform parents, and hold school-wide military recognition events that encourage tolerance and inclusion.

The Okaloosa County School District is privileged to support the highest percentage of military students of any county in the state of Florida. With that privilege comes a commitment to serve the students and families of those who serve our country. Superintendent Marcus Chambers said the district began tracking the Purple Star program when it was first proposed during the 2021 legislative session. "Our own Representative, Pat Maney, was key in bringing The Purple Star program to Florida, and we are excited to see our schools recognized for the great work they are doing to



support our military children."

Chambers continued, "Our schools have programs in place to make students comfortable and to make the transition from a school in another state or even another country less stressful. I could not be more proud of our teachers, staff, and administrators for earning this distinction. Their commitment and dedication to our military students, as well as all of our students, is making a difference. We are

proud in Okaloosa to support our military students as their parents support and defend our nation!"

Congratulations on one or more of the schools in your district being designated by the Florida Department of Education as a Purple Star School of Distinction!

Antioch Elementary School Baker School, Bluewater High School, Bob Sikes Elementary School, Choctawhatchee High

School, Crestview High School, Davidson Middle School, Destin Elementary School, Destin Middle School, Edge Elementary School, Edwins Elementary School, Eglin Elementary School. Florosa Elementary School, Fort Walton Beach High School, Kenwood Elementary School, Laurel Hill Elementary School, Lewis School, Longwood Elementary School, Mary Esther Elementary School, Meigs Middle School, Niceville High School, Northwest Florida Ballet Academie, Northwood Elementary School, Okaloosa STEMM Academy, Plew Elementary School, Pryor Middle School, Richbourg School/Fast Track, North Riverside Elementary School, Ruckel Middle School, Shalimar Elementary School, Shoal River Middle School, Silver Sands School, Southside Primary School, Walker Elementary School and Wright Elementary School.



Local Diving, Drinks and Coffee



Brozinni Pizzeria

Brozinni Pizzeria is a family-friendly pizza place where you can get a taste of New York right here in Niceville. Now featuring the Big Apple's signature crust, their famous buttery garlic knuckles will leave you wanting more, including appetizers such as buttery garlic knuckles, bread sticks, homemade stuffed pepperoni or sausage sticks, cheese bread, meatball sticks, pizza, Cocoons Famous smoked tuna

dip, and crackers/pita chips. There are also salads, build your own pizza, specialty pizzas, pasta/spaghetti, calzones, drinks and desserts. Every ingredient used has been hand-selected. Call to Order or Order Online at bronzinnis.revelup.online and have delivered. Open Mon - Sat 11 a.m. - 9 p.m.

850-678-7778 brozinnispizza.com 144 Palm Blvd N., Niceville, 32578

JoJo's Coffee and Goodness

Owner and operator Angela "JoJo" Stevenson invites you to enter a cafe and relaxed coffee shop atmosphere for a daily dose of "goodness" this holiday season. Stop in for cinnamon rolls; scones: cranberry orange,



chocolate caramel and cheddar thyme; strawberry coffee cake; cranberry orange muffins; red velvet cookies; brownies with espresso ganache or caramelitas. Try a breakfast special with a piece of quiche or kolache-hashbrown casserole. Breakfast burritos are rolled and ready daily. Choose from andouille, bacon, chorizo or veggie. Or tantalize your taste buds with a made-to-order breakfast sandwich on crois-

sants or bagel with two eggs and cheese and then choose if you want to add Jojo's homemade smoked jalapeño beef bologna, bacon, house smoked barbecue or ham. Cinnamon rolls and kaloches still hold the top spot for sell outs. Stop in for featured muffins, coffee cake or pound cake, which go great with maple cinnamon latte or caramel macchiato. Some of Jojo's most popular coffees are COLD. Nitro, Cold Brew, fruit smoothies and frozen affogatos are the way to go. And, oh, the freshly roasted coffee. Order ahead and pick up some for the office, or Christmas or New Year's breakfast to accompany your Holiday offerings! Tickets are available for Elve's Workshop with Reiko on Dec. 17th! Book online at bigorangehousedesigns.com.

Hours 7:30 a.m. – 2 p.m. Tuesday - Saturday (850) 737-6194 4652 Hwy. 20 East, Niceville bigorangehousedesigns.com

LJ Schooners Dockside Restaurant

Welcome to LJ Schooners Dockside Restaurant located at the spectacular Bluewater Bay Marina Complex. Named after "LJ Schooner" (the LJ is for Lazy Jack), a cherished fourlegged icon on Bluewater Bay Marina docks, the open air Oyster Bar and restaurant is open to serve you. Almost all seats offer a magnificent view of the water, marina and unparalleled sunset with, of course, oysters and a delicious varied menu with dinner specials such as Blackened Mahi and grilled shrimp with hollandaise, served over cheese grits. Join L.J. Schooners for Sunday Brunch, 9 a.m.-1 p.m. and drink your bottomless Mimosas for \$10. Adults \$13.95; Children 7-12 \$4.50; Children under age 6 free.



LJ Schooners' 5th Annual Santa Paddle Parade is back Sat. Dec. 17, Noon, at Bluewater Bay Marina to benefit Sharing & Caring of Niceville. Ruckel Chorus will be doing Christmas Karaoke at 12:30 and 10% of lunch sales will be donated to Ruckel Chorus.

Then stay for Bluewater Bay Marina's Annual Christmas Boat Parade Sat., Dec. 17 at 5:30 p.m. After the Boat Parade, LJ Schooners is throwing a Christmas Party from 7-10 p.m. with live music from Fathom and an ugly sweater contest at 9 p.m. For more information, email: frontdesk@bwb-marina.

Brunch with Santa is Dec. 18, 10 a.m. - 1 p.m.

To kick off your new year, get your "Glitter and Glam" on with Diamond Dan at the New Year's Eve party. Dinner specials will run from 5–9 p.m.

More December fun includes Bartenders Cocktail Special every Wednesday, October – February, 3 – 9 p.m., Prime Rib night Dec. 14, Open Mic & Karaoke Thursdays at 6 p.m., The Traveling Painter, Emily Day Dec. 21 at 5 p.m. and live music all month long. (See ad for dates and times.)

Dine-in, pick-up, to-go. Now taking reservations for holiday parties and events. Contact Patty at 850-897-6400 or patty@bwb-marina.com.

Continued on next page





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TUESDAY Taco Tuesday All Day Two Crispy Tacos,

Two Crispy Tacos, Rice & Beans \$6.99 Beef or chicken only

All Bottle Beers \$2 4-9:30

WEDNESDAY family Night Kids Eat Free!

4-9:30 Age 10 and under. Drink not included.

Drink not included.
One free kid meal
with each purchase
of adult meal &
beverage.

THURSDAY Chicken Fajitas \$10.99 Dinner only

LUNCH SPECIALS Mon.-Fri. 11-2 Military Discount 10%

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2x1 Margaritas, Wine & Well Mixed Drinks. Nachos Especiales \$6.

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Tisano's New Owners Celebrate First Anniversary

One year ago, the Trinity Coleman family purchased Tisano's restaurant in Bluewater Bay through Emerald Coast Business Brokers, and by all accounts, it has been a tremendous success for the family and the Bluewater community.

Trinity grew up in a restaurant family. Her mother and her grandfather both owned restaurants in their hometown of Stroud, Okla., and her brother owns a restaurant there. She's always dreamed of owning her own restaurant.

Her dream was postponed when she met her husband, Trey Coleman, who was an Air Force officer. After getting married in 2002, Trinity and Trey started a family and moved around the world with the Air Force. When they moved to Niceville in 2021. Trinity knew it was time to take action on her dream.

"I immediately fell in love with Niceville," said Trinity. Within months she told Trey that this was the place she wanted to start her own restaurant.

However, she was immediately faced with the challenges





of commercial real estate. "I couldn't find anything in the area that worked for us," she said. After being stymied by the commercial real estate market, Trinity and Trey came to Emerald Coast Business Brokers for



help. "Instead of starting a new business, we thought we'd see what the team at ECBB had to offer," she said.

Trinity and Trey learned that Tisano's was for sale, and they decided to take the plunge.

"I've always known this was Trinity's dream. And after dragging her around the world with me for the past 22 years so I can chase my dreams with the Air Force, we decided it was her turn," said Trey.

One year later, the restaurant is flourishing. Not only are sales up significantly, but they've been able to reinvest in the facility and support the local community. Over the past year, they've donated profits to local charities like Sharing and Caring, C.A.L.M., and Wreaths Across America.

Trinity says their recipe for success is simple. "We just want to provide a clean restaurant, with awesome food and friendly staff, at a fair price," said Trinity. When you come visit Tisano's, Trinity and Trey want you to feel like you're just going to a friend's house for a great meal and good company.



Breakfast: Bakery - Quiche - Breakfast Sandwiches Lunch: Chicken Salad - BLTs - Paninis - And MORE

Inside & Outside Seating Available 7:30 a.m. - 2 p.m. Tues. - Sat. Worried about getting out? NO CONTACT pick up still available. Looking for event space? Give us a call!







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LOCAL DINING

continued from previous page

Oyster Bar Hours: Wednesday-Thursday 3-10 p.m., Friday-Saturday 11 a.m.-midnight, Sunday 9 a.m.-9 p.m. Happy hour daily 3-6 p.m. Restaurant hours: Monday-Tuesday, closed. Wednesday-Saturday, 11 a.m.-9 p.m.. Sunday,. 9 a.m.-4 p.m.. Sunday brunch: 9 a.m.-1 p.m.

(850) 897-6400

https://bluewaterbaymarina. com/schooners/

290 Yacht Club Dr., Unit 200, Niceville in Bluewater Bay

Chapala Mexican Restaurant

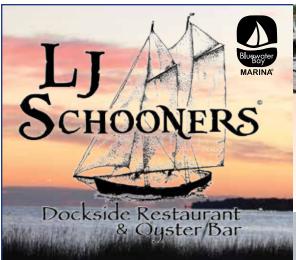
In 2014 Chapala Authentic Restaurant and Grill opened its doors with the vision of bringing authentic Mexican cuisine to the people of Fort Walton Beach and surrounding areas with traditional flavors from Chapala, Mexico. It offers more than 76 entrée choices and 11 specialty margaritas along with daily lunch specials and 2-for-1 small draft beers and small margaritas every day.

1027 John Sims Pkwy., Niceville Chapalafl.com



info@chapalarestaurant.com





Let's fill Rocky Bayou with Santas!

Registration \$10 or donation of 10 canned goods. Paddle in Santa suit/costume. Santa costume contest! 12 PM Group Photo | 12:10 Start **Benefits Caring & Sharing**

Christmas Boat

Join the 11th Annual Bluewater **Bay Christmas Boat Parade!**

Call (850) 897-2821 to register. Visit our website for more info. Skipper's Meeting 4 PM | Staging 5 PM

Parade 5:30 PM | Fathom 7-10 PM Ugly Sweater Contest 9 PM

More Upcoming Fun!

Every Thursday: Open Mic/Karaoke 6pm Every Wednesday: Bartenders Cocktail Special Every Sunday: Sunday Brunch

December 3: John Galt Dance Band 6-10pm December 7: Chess Night 6pm

December 10: Ronny Dean Garrett 6-10pm December 14: Prime Rib Night - Reservations Required

5-9pm

December 17: Fathom 7-10pm December 21: Traveling Painter 5:30pm December 31: Glitz & Glam New Year's Eve with

Diamond Dan 9pm-1am

Oyster Bar Hours: Mon.-Tues. Closed, Wed.-Thurs. 3pm-10pm, Fri.-Sat. 11am to midnight, Sun. 9am to 9pm Restaurant Hours: Mon.-Tues. Closed, Weds.-Sat. 11am to 9pm, Sun. 9am to 4pm, Sunday Brunch 9am to 1pm



It's Manatee Awareness Month:

Go Slow, Look Out Below

This time of year, it's important for boaters to go slow and lookout below to watch for manatees as they travel to warmer water sites around the state.

Manatees depend on water generally warmer than 68 degrees Fahrenheit to survive the winter. So, in the fall they travel to Florida springs, power plant discharges and other warm-water sites.

While manatees are large, they can be difficult to see in the

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to: follow guidelines and follow all manatee protection zones; look out while boating; wear polarized glasses and always give them space. Manatee protection zones are marked by waterway signs and maps of manatee protection zones are available online at MyFWC.com/Manatee by clicking on "Data and Maps."

During the colder months, seasonal manatee zones require boaters to slow down in certain areas to prevent manatees from torboats or personal watercraft. Boat strikes continue to be a major threat to Florida manatees. Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) law enforcement officers are on patrol in state waters to inform boaters of the seasonal manatee speed zones and take appropriate enforcement actions. Boaters are reminded to abide by the regulatory signs they see on the

Remember, disturbing man-

6 0

2022 Marks the 74th

Annual Destin Fishing

cause them to swim out of protected areas and into potentially life-threatening cold water. Manatees are a protected species and it is illegal to feed, harass, disturb or harm them.

Physically handling a distressed or stranded manatee can cause more harm. Instead, report injured, distressed, sick or dead manatees to the FWC's Wildlife Alert Hotline at 888-404-FWCC (3922) or by dialing #FWC or *FWC on a cellphone so trained responders can assist.

The FWC and USFWS take manatee conservation seriously by actively implementing science-based conservation measures that are making a difference for manatees and habitat. Learn more about how officials are responding to this event by visiting MyFWC.com/Manatee and clicking on "Learn More"

in the banner at the top of the

Resources for boaters, educators and other interested members of the public are available at MyFWC.com/Manatee. What should you do if you see a manatee? The Viewing Guidelines page provides helpful tips on respectfully viewing manatees, additional guidelines for boat and personal watercraft operators, and information on what you can do to help these amazing aquatic mammals.

Are you interested in supporting the FWC's manatee research, rescue and management efforts? You can purchase a Florida manatee license plate or donate \$5 to receive a collectable FWC manatee decal. Both are available from your local Tax Collector's office.



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Raider Athletes Join the Florida College System Activities Association's 2021-2022 All-Academic Team

Northwest Florida State College (NWFSC) is pleased to announce that 16 Raider athletes have been named as members of the Florida College System Activities Association's (FCSAA) 2021-2022 All-Academic Team.

The FCSAA is a statewide non-profit corporation that regulates, coordinates, and promotes intercollegiate activities in athletics, brain bowls, forensics, model united nations, music, student governments, student publications, and theatre.

This year, 1,161 students participating in FCSAA programs were recognized for maintaining

a minimum 3.30 GPA throughout the 2021-2022 academic year.

"We are proud of our Raider athletes for their commitment to excellence in everything they do," said NWFSC President Dr. Devin Stephenson. "I look forward to seeing what they accomplish as they continue working toward their academic goals and hone their talents and skills this season."

Below are the current NWFSC student-athletes who achieved this honor:

Softball: Gracie Bellard, Brilee Broussard, Riley Gibson, Maycie Hardy, Kassidy Hood, Emma Langston, Julia Petty, Abigail Pippen, and Layla Thompson

Baseball: Samuel Wyatt Castoe, Will Cannon, Kelly Crumpton, and Cade Easterbrook

Women's Basketball: Marissa Gasaway and Zyniah Thomas

Men's Basketball: Jaylon Mc-

For more information on Northwest Florida State College Athletics, please contact Ramsey Ross, Northwest Florida State College Athletic Director, at (850) 729-5358 or ramseyr@ nwfsc.edu.

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Niceville High School begins its 2022-2023 athletic season with six signees on National Early Signing Day representing Track & Field, Baseball, Girls Lacrosse and Boys Soccer.





Wellness



By Todd Craig, JOURNEY BRAVELY

I grew up believing emotions were inefficient and to be avoided. Emotions, even the "good" ones, were not to be trusted. They were to be overcome by being tough and powering through. So, I learned how to ignore emotions for the sake of efficiency. While this approach enabled me to perform and accomplish many tasks, it didn't allow me to enjoy those accomplishments. It also left me feeling disconnected from myself and others, including my wife and boys. When I avoided emotions, I lived with low-grade anger and discontentment that, ironically, demanded more of my time

The Efficiency of Emotions

and energy than the original emotions I was avoiding.

Maybe you, too, were taught feelings aren't safe and should be suppressed. But, what if that isn't true? What if there is a purpose to emotions? What if acknowledging them is a pathway to growth and progress? What if there is a depth of life and relationship to be experienced through emotional awareness? What if emotions aren't something to escape but the path to the life, relationships and influence you have been searching

Four Steps to Allow Emotions to Work for You: Slow down to speed up

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

Name the emotion

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

What's the story

After naming the emotion, consider the narrative behind the emotion. How are your beliefs shaping your emotional interpretation. If you are feeling rejected when your friend turned you down for lunch, try investigating your story about your friend's intentions. Are you believing you aren't important to your friend? When you identify your emotional story, it is important to test the story with three questions. Is the story true? Is it kind? Is it helpful? If the answer to any of these questions is "no," it's time to adopt a new narrative. Try challenging the original story with a version that gives your friend the benefit of the doubt. Perhaps he would like to get together another time because your friendship is important to him.

What are your action steps?

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

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





CVHN and Youth Mental Health **Project Become Partners**

Get the Smile You Deserve

Smile with Confidence Again

- · Are you embarrassed about smiling in front of people?
- Do you ever put your hand up to cover your smile?
- Do you dislike your smile in photographs?
- · When you look through magazines, do you envy the models' smiles?
- Do you wish your teeth were whiter?

Niceville, FL 32578

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- · Do you think you show too much or too little of your teeth when you smile?
- · Would you like to change the way your teeth or gums are shaped?
- · Do you have gaps or spaces in between your teeth?

If the answer is "yes" to any of these questions, you may be a good candidate for A Smile Makeover.





Children's Volunteer Health Network (CVHN) and The Youth Mental Health Project have introduced regional chapters of The Parent Support Network to the panhandle. The new resources will provide local parents and caregivers who are concerned about their children's mental health with an opportunity to find and support each other in a confidential and safe space.

Children's

"Our youth mental health crisis continues, so it is critical that caregivers who are struggling to raise children with mental health challenges tell their stories to others who have "been there" and get the support and information they need to cope,"said Valerie Barton, Executive Director.

Wellness

CarePatrol Helps Find the Right Assisted Living Facility – Free

By Kenneth Books

Transitioning to an assisted living facility can be traumatic, an onerous chore that no one really wants to undertake. It can be expensive, time-consuming and, sometimes, dangerous.

But where to turn for advice, help and protection?

"We help steer our clients to resources to help pay for assisted living," said Cynthia Gilley, 57, a Senior Care Consultant with CarePatrol, an organization with some 150 outlets around the country, serving more than 20,000 communities. It was founded in 1993 by a social worker who observed the personal trauma experienced by



a family whose loved one had been placed in the wrong type of facility. "I've been in the field caring for people pretty much most of my career," she said. She has spent 35 years in caring for people, mainly older adults and those with cognitive difficulties, last two of which were spent working for CarePatrol.

Gilley's compassion is homegrown. Her father suffered with Alzheimer's Disease for 13 years before dying, and caring for him was an ordeal for all concerned.

CarePatrol not only finds financing for those destined for assisted living, it helps find facilities, as well as home health care, for its clients. And the service is completely free for the client. "We have contacts within the community which pay for the service," the Fort Walton Beach native said. "We've contracted with probably 95 percent of the communities. They see this as a benefit to them."

Gilley said she "tours clients around like a Realtor. We evaluate a facility's violations, which can include lack of maintenance, state regulation violations, insufficient staff, medical errors, abuse and neglect."

Among the criteria Gilley examines in order to serve her clients are location ("They want to be close to family"), finances and the needs of the client. Not all facilities can handle certain medical issues, she said. And, if a client wishes to remain in his home, she finds resources to provide whatever help he needs to retain a reasonable quality of life.

"The hardest thing is try-

ing to find affordable memory care," she said. "There's a huge lack in that area."

Gilley has a passion for her work and her company. "I can't think of anything I don't like," she said. "My boss is great, my co-workers are wonderful. They share a common passion with me. There's a cohesiveness."

The most interesting aspect of her job, Gilley said, is "being able to place Alzheimer's clients. Alzheimer's is my passion because of my father having it. I know how hard it is on the families."

To reach CarePatrol, call (850) 898-1401 or email cgilley@carepatrol.com.

CVHN

continued from previous page

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

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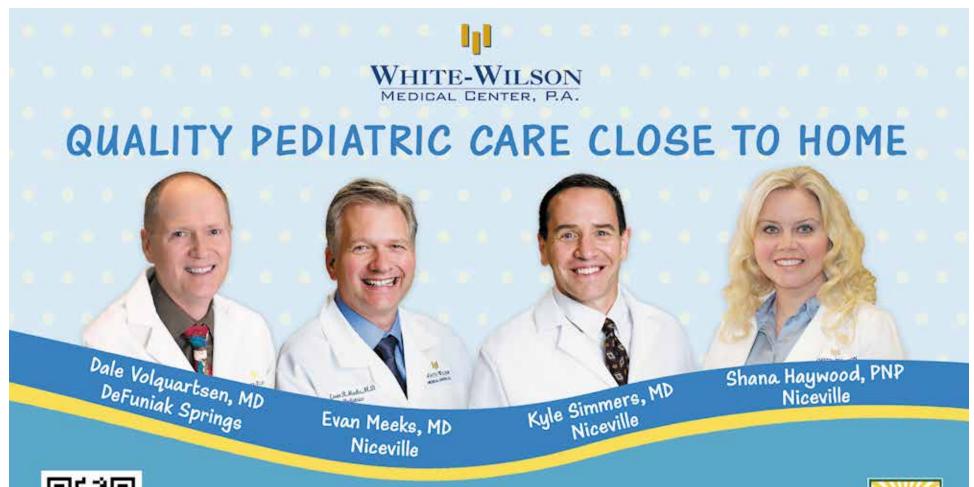
ers to accessible and affordable healthcare for children in need, the nonprofit decided to collaborate once again to officially bring The Parent Support Network to the panhandle.

"The mission and work of the Youth Mental Health Project perfectly aligns with what we hope to offer to the families in our community," said Associate Executive Director of CVHN, Megan Trent.

"Introducing The Parent Support Network will allow caregivers to find others who understand, who have the same struggles, and share support and resources to help all of our kids in their mental wellness journey."

For more information, follow CVHN on Facebook and visit www.cvhnkids.org.









By RICHARD CHERN M.D.

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

Depression During the Holidays

substance abuse, relapse, or other worsening medical conditions.

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

What many of our patients

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

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

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

Dr Richard Chern, MD provides hormone therapy to men and women who travel from across the globe to be treated here in Miramar Beach. He is on staff at BioTE Medical as an instructor to teach hormone therapy to new providers including providers right here in our local area. Dr Richard Chern treats many of the providers in the community and might even be treating your doctor. Dr Richard Chern, MD is a platinum BioTE provider and runs one of the largest BioTE hormone clinics in the country right here in Miramar Beach. Call Dr Richard Chern, MD today at 850-837-1271 for an appointment.

Arthritis Is A Pain

By Kay Leaman, HEALTH ARCHITECT arthritis: Osteo, Rheumatoid,

There are several types of Lupus Erythematosus, Gout, Infectious and Reactive, and

Psoriatic. The American Arthritis Foundation shows 58.5 million Americans suffer with this disease and annual costs for medical care and lost earnings is \$303.5 billion.

Osteoarthritis is a degenerative joint disease and affects the hands, feet, knees, hips and spine. Oxidative stress is a pathological process that leads to osteoarthritis. Wear and tear over the years or traumatic injury generates oxidative stress/damage which in turn creates excessive inflammation which spirals to even more oxidative damage. This is why once present, the disease accelerates without treatment.

Antioxidants become the most effective antidote for further progression of the disease. A high quality, full spectrum, pure supplement can be more effective than prescribed medications (which are prescribed to treat "symptoms") without any side effects (This statement is not intended to be medical advice and was extrapolated from a scientific article.).

Rheumatoid arthritis is a type of autoimmune disease in



which the body attacks healthy joint tissue. It is characterized by auto-antibodies created against the specific proteins in the connective tissues in and around the joints. The immune response causes high levels of inflammation, swelling, pain, damage, scarring and distortion to affected joints. Symptoms include morning stiffness and joint pain, typically in the same joints on both sides of the body. This disease can also affect the heart, lungs, eyes and skin.

To be fully explained here would require a much deeper dive into the science of the

Continued on page 31







Becoming a Smarter Giver



By Maurice Stouse, Financial Advisor and Branch Manager

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

It all starts with a review of today's givers, the "who." In 2018, Raymond James produced a white paper on charitable giving, and we are sharing some of that insight for you here. If you looked at some numbers, you would find that a giver is typically a mature American (88 percent) and 72 percent of all givers are classified as baby boomers. Next, what are their causes? The study says the top four are: 31 percent to religious institutions; 14 percent for education; 12 percent to human services and 11 percent to foundations. And lastly, where do the givers typically come from? The leaders are Utah, D.C., Mississippi and Tennessee

So, how and why are people giving? People want to make a difference, to create a legacy and to act upon a sense of moral duty. There are incentives as well: Potentially lower taxes, managing their wealth and guidance on estate planning. Giving can be as straightforward as a cash, check or even stock donation. Other assets might qualify as well. This can be cumbersome, however, if you have several nonprofits you want to support.

An idea growing in popularity is the Donor Advised Fund or DAF. Raymond James calls it "the new face of giving' and it is the fastest growing charitable vehicle in America. DAFs are pub-

lic charities and qualify under IRS section 501(c)3. They take in contributions from the giver by way of cash (or check) but also securities (stocks and bonds, for example). Depending on someone's situation, a tax deduction might even apply. The DAF in turn invests the contributions into mutual funds for growth or income or preservation of capital.

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

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

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Business



By Joe Capers, Insurance Zone

Every time a storm threatens our state, we are reminded of how many homeowners and

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

business owners either do not carry flood and wind insurance at all, or have inadequate limits to cover their loss. Unfortunately, the 2022 Atlantic hurricane season runs to Nov. 30.

When Hurricane Ian hit our state, the property insurance market was already in peril. The market was the most volatile in the U.S. well before Hurricane Ian formed, and will most likely become even more unstable in the wake of the storm. The market has been strained under billion-dollar losses, insolvencies and skyrocketing premiums. The massive storm barreled into southwest Florida, delivering catastrophic winds, rain and flooding. The majority of the estimated losses in Florida come from wind damage, estimated between \$22 billion and \$32 billion, while insured storm surge losses in the state are expected to be an additional \$6 billion to \$15 billion.

The increasing unpredictability of hurricane threats underscores the need for property owners - especially those close to water – to raise their standard of preparation. The most significant risks for these homeowners are wind and water. Windows are particularly vulnerable points during a hurricane, but any exterior points including shingles, gutters, and railings - are at risk from wind. Homes, in general, should have window protection in advance. Owners should either board up the windows or install hurricane shutters. This is one of the more important decisions individuals

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

The NFIP's Dwelling Form offers coverage up to a maximum of \$250,000 for building property and up to \$100,000 for contents and the Commercial Form provides up to a maximum of \$500,000 for building and/or contents. Both should be purchased as well as excess



make. flood for limits up to the re-

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

Although most standard homeowners and business insurance policies can include wind coverage, they do not cover flooding. So it is important to have protection from flooding associated with tropical storms, hurricanes, heavy rains, broken levees, outdated or clogged drainage systems, rapid accumulation of rainfall and other conditions that impact our area. Almost everyone in a participating community of the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) can buy flood insurance. Recently, Florida has become the leader in the country in encouraging private markets to respond to our needs with competitive alternatives, but the prevailing market condition will slow down this development.

placement cost of the dwelling and personal property over the basic limits. Recent storms and predictions of a future with bigger and stronger storms highlight more than ever the importance of flood insurance.

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

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

Insurance Zone, founded by Joe and Lea Capers, is a full-service commercial and personal lines insurance agency serving Destin, Miramar Beach, Santa Rosa Beach (30A) and Inlet Beach. Visit its Video Library on ins-zone.com and watch the informative video on "Flood Insurance," or call (850) 424-6979.







A Pastor's Ponderings:

God's Compassion Never Falters or Fails



By Pastor Doug Stauffer

God expects every true child of God to demonstrate compassion. But, even more impressive is the thought that the Lord Jesus Christ manifested compassion during His earthly ministry. What an amazing truth—the Lord of glory willingly humbled Himself to suffer with and for others.

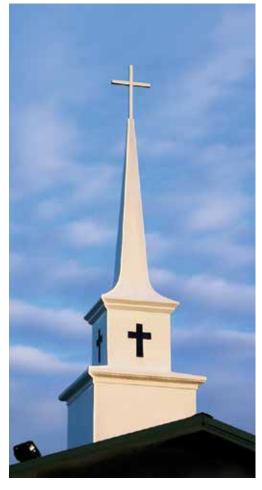
One might assume God's compassion only became possible because Christ took the likeness of sinful flesh upon Himself. Yet, the Bible attributes compassion to God before Christ's First Coming. Repeatedly the Old Testament records: "But thou, O Lord, art a God full of compassion, and gracious, longsuffering, and plenteous in mercy and truth" (Psalm 86:15).

The scripture declares that God was compassionate before the coming of Christ. His First Coming to earth in a body of flesh confirmed that He is a compassionate Savior. The Coming of Christ, in the likeness of sinful flesh, enabled God the Son to experience humanity's temptations and struggles. The Bible says He was "touched with the feeling of our infirmities" (Hebrews 4:15).

Christ's compassion on earth reveals that He suffered WITH man, but more importantly, He suffered FOR man. He took the world's sins upon Himself and gave man His righteousness. One of the most incredible demonstrations of His compassion is that God Himself loved us enough to be housed in a body of flesh.

God's compassion originates from His mercy and grace, and how He deals with man displays this compassion. For example, He is "slow to anger" and "good to all," along with many other manifestations of His character.

The Bible emphasizes the importance of this truth in the book of Psalms by stating that God is "full of compassion" on five sep-



arate occasions. God's actions (past, present, or future) can all be traced back to His compassion, including His acts of judgment. When the Bible refers to God's longsuffering, this indicates He will suffer for a long time before bringing judgment against a person, nation or the whole world. America is a prime example of God's compassion.

God is a compassionate Lord.

The earthly ministry of Christ repeatedly demonstrated this truth. In Luke chapter 7, the Lord entered a city only to find that a widow woman had also lost her only son to death. It was a sorrowful time for this dear lady. The loss of her husband had been hard to bear. but her son was a daily reminder of the husband whose love she treasured so greatly.

Yet, now the son, too, was gone. Perhaps the young man worked to help support his mother. But, now she was alone without her husband and without their son. Fortunately for this woman, God is rich in mercy. Christ intervened on behalf

of the woman bringing her son back to life. Her tears of mourning turned into tears of joy. Read this testament by God of God: "It is of the LORD'S mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not. They are new every morning: great is thy faithfulness" (Lamentations 3:22-23).

When your heart is pained and the way grows weary, re-

member the words of the song, "Does Jesus Care?" I promise you He cares and He will give you relief for that deep grief. Soon you will be saying, "O, yes, He cares; I know He cares." Christians are not promised the easy life, but a relationship with a caring, loving, compassionate Savior.

Dr. Doug Stauffer is pastor of Faith Independent Baptist Church. He was saved July 6, 1980, in Niceville, while stationed at the 33rd Tactical Fighter Wing at Eglin Air Force Base and has now been in the ministry for over 35 years. He has written 20 books including the best selling "One Book" trilogy ("One Book Rightly Divided, One Book Stands Alone, One Book One Authority"); along with several devotionals ("Daily Strength" series); and prophecy books ("Reviving the Blessed Hope, When the End Begins")





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Musing



By Sean Dietrich

Christmas Eve night. The mountains of North Carolina were giant silhouettes in the darkness. Sheriff Andy Taylor sat on the bench outside the courthouse, watching the stars.

It had been a hard year. Maybe the hardest of his career. The sheriff was downhearted, which didn't happen often. But then, sheriffs have feelings too.

When it started to snow, Taylor shoved his hands deep into his coat pockets and slipped into a trance. Christmas morning was only a few hours away, and he wanted to feel cheerful, but he couldn't seem to make it happen.

His deputy joined him on the bench. The scrawny, highstrung lawman had just finished doing his nightly rounds, shining a flashlight into storefront windows; checking doorknobs. All quiet in Mayberry.

"Whatcha doing, Ange?" said his deputy. "Why the long face?"

Taylor flashed a fake smile. "I'm just looking at stars."

The deputy was obviously concerned, but Taylor hardly

noticed. He was too busy thinking about all he'd seen during his years serving this sleepy hamlet. He'd seen it all. Or just about.

He'd once seen the town drunk ride a cow down mainstreet. He'd seen a local goat eat dynamite. He'd jailed bank robbers, swindlers, chicken thieves, speeders, escaped convicts, moonshiners, and Danny Thomas.

Life was moving too fast. The world had gone from AM radios to color TVs. He'd watched the tailfins on Chevys and Fords get taller each year. He'd seen skirts get shorter, hairstyles get shaggier, music get louder, and people get meaner. Airplanes gave way to rocketships. A man hit a golf ball on the moon. Divorce was becoming more fashionable than blue jeans.

But this year...

This year was a humdinger. It was worse than the rest. This was the year the world fell apart. People in town were more frightened and skittish than ever before. And sometimes it seemed like nothing in Mayberry was going right.

Taylor looked at the nightscape and tried to figure out which constellations he was looking at. But he was never very good with astronomy. A single star hung in the distance over the nearby backwater of Mount Dilot

"You see that star?" said Taylor to his deputy.

Sean of the South

"Which star?"

"That one."

"Yeah. I see it."

"You reckon that's how the Bethlehem star looked?"

"Bethlehem? Are you sure you're okay? You worry me."

The sheriff never took his eyes from the sky. "What do you think it was like, Barney? Bethlehem and everything?"

The deputy seemed to be thinking about this. The sheriff could hear the cogs in his friend's head.

His deputy said, "Well, I think it would been darn crowded in that stable, for one thing. All them goat herders and wise guys."

"Men. You mean wise men."
"Correct. Males. No ladies were present."

The sheriff paused. "No women? It was a childbirth."

"Well, except for Mary. She stopped in for a little bit."

Good old Barney.

The deputy went on, "I, for one, think it would been pretty dang exciting to see the Three Kings bearing their gifts, the gold, the silver, and the bronze."

"You mean the frankincense and myrrh."

"Exactly."

"Do you even know what myrrh is, Barn?"

"Do I? What do you take me for? What I know is that it was quite an important night. There were angels in the sky, and cherubs proclaiming, 'Peace on



earth! Goodwill to men! Glory on the eggshells day-oh!"

"Eggshells?"

"It's French. Read the book, Ange."

The sheriff and the deputy fell silent. They watched their tiny hometown do what it did best. Which was nothing at all. Wreaths adorned each window. Shopfronts featured twinkling lights. The snow was picking up tempo

Sheriff Taylor asked his deputy, "You think we'll get through this year, Barney? It's been a difficult one."

It was a serious question indeed. And it hung between them for a while. Even the sheriff could feel the weight within his own voice. There was doubt in it.

"Yes, I do," said his deputy. "I know we're gonna get through it. In fact, I'm certain."

"What makes you so sure?"

"What makes me sure?" The deputy raised his voice. "Because, Andy. I just know it."

"But how? How do you know?"

His deputy looked away like he was blowing a fuse. "You beat everything, you know that? Because I know, Ange. I just do. You wanna know how I know?"

"Yes."

"You really wanna know?" He nodded.

"Well, then I'll tell you. I know because this morning I drove to pick up Miss Emma Brand from her hospital checkup. And do you know what I saw when I walked into the hospital?"

Taylor shook his head.

"Babies, Ange. I passed the maternity ward and saw all kinds of babies. Lots. The nurse even let me hold a few. They spit up on me and everything."

"Is that right?"

"It was beautiful. And last week, when I directed traffic for the school crossing, do you know what every boy and girl did when they passed me? They said 'Merry Christmas, Barney,' and gave me handmade Christmas cards."

"They didn't."

"Every last one. I got forty-three cards. It's enough to make a grown man go all to pieces."

The sheriff looked at his shoes. The somber silence made his deputy uncomfortable.

"Andy..." The deputy's voice was breaking now. "You can't be sad. Cheer up, pal. You're the heart of this town. You're my best friend. I need you. If we lose you, we've lost everything. C'est la vie, man! E pluribus unum! Status quo! Non sequitur! Et cetera, defacto!"

"Huh?̈́

"It's Latin, it means 'tit for tat,' and qué será será, and livin' la vida loca."

Taylor was laughing now. "What are you talking about?"

"It means we're gonna get through this, Ange. One day we won't even remember this horrible year, and it'll be like old times."

Then the skinny deputy threw his arms around his old pal in an embrace and slapped the sheriff's back so hard it stung. Taylor could hear his deputy sniffling in his ear. The sheriff smiled, then squeezed his oldest friend in earnest.

And somehow Andy Taylor knew that no matter what happens in this raggedy world, a person can face anything if they have a friend.

Anything.



Arts & Music

Sinfonia Gulf Coast Music & Artistic Director Appointed to Prestigious Young Concert Artists Board of Directors

Young Concert Artists (YCA), the prestigious New York-based international advocacy organization to champion young classical musicians, has appointed Sinfonia Gulf Coast Music & Artistic Director Demetrius Fuller to its board of directors.

"Maestro Fuller has a long association with our organization and has engaged many YCA artists over the years," said YCA president Dan Kellogg. "He cares deeply for our mission and supporting young artists. It will be a gift to have his voice on our board as we begin the many bold initiatives outlined in our new strategic plan. He not only brings the passion and expertise of an accomplished conductor, Demetrius is also a skilled administrator and fundraiser. His many skills and long dedication to our work make him an excellent addition to our board of directors."

A versatile conductor and accomplished musician, Fuller founded Sinfonia Gulf Coast in 2005 to "redefine" the symphony experience in Northwest Florida. The nonprofit orchestra is in its 17th season of innovative musical programming, designed to entertain, educate and inspire the community. Since 2020, he has also served as CEO of the Mattie Kelly Arts Foundation in Destin.

A Fort Walton Beach native, Fuller trained at the University of Cincinnati College Conservatory of Music, earning both bachelor and master of music degrees. An innovative and energetic conductor, Fuller has been chosen to work with some of the world's most prestigious conductors and orchestras. A champion of contemporary music, he has premiered, commissioned, and/or collaborated with numerous international composers from Augusta Read-Thomas, Dorothy Hindman, and Nico Muhly to Tan Dun and Chris Brubeck. Fuller is an award recipient from the National Foundation for the Advancement in the Arts, the Werner Foundation, and the International Music Foundation.

"I am honored to join the board of the Young Concert



Maestro Demetrius Fuller awarding the Sinfonia Gulf Coast Prize to saxophonist Steven Banks in 2019.

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winner, Sinfonia already has a standing relationship with YCA and I am excited to serve in this additional capacity to help the organization continue to be a leading and guiding force in the development of young musicians."

YCA was founded in 1961 to discover and launch the careers of brilliant but unknown young classical musicians from all over the world. Each year, the organization holds its international auditions in New York City and hears hundreds of applicants. The winners are presented in their New York debuts as part of the Young Concert Artists Series. The list of YCA's discoveries includes some of the most illustrious names in the classical music world today: Pinchas Zukerman, Emanuel Ax, Dawn Upshaw, and Jean-Yves Thibaudet.For information, contact info@sinfoniagulfcoast.org or (850) 460-8800.

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For over a decade, Matthew Vanderford has worked in the Construction, Restoration and Insurance Industries as an Insurance Company Preferred Vendor, Insurance Industry Continuing Education Instructor, Public Adjuster/ Policy Holder Advocate and Licensed Contractor. He's proud to call Destin his home, with his wife Candice and four children: Matthew, Blake, Jordan and Scarlett.

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30A Songwriters Festival Announces 2023 Headliners

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

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

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

Returning to perform two

shows each throughout the weekend are songwriting Legends John Paul White (The Civil Wars), Shawn Mullins, Kathleen Edwards, Tinsley Ellis, Darrell Scott, Adia Victoria, Chuck Prophet, Livingston Taylor, Abe Partridge, Lilly Hiatt, John Fullbright, Sarah Lee Guthrie, Paul Thorn and James McMurtry. An Additional 100+ Artists Will Be Announced Over the Next Few Weeks—Stay Tuned

The following are confirmed artists: Hayes Carll, Glenn Phillips, Jeffrey Steele, Pat McGee, Bob Schneider, Abe Partridge, Cousin Curtiss, Mary Gauthier, Dan Navarro, Mark Erelli, Jonathan Byrd, Peter Holsapple & Chris Stamey, Will Hoge, Don Dixon & Marti Jones, , Nicole Chillemi and the Jazz Legacy Project, Amanda Platt & The Honeycutters, Griffin House, Gretchen Peters, Kim Richey, Amy LaVere & Will Sexton, Will Kimbrough, Leigh Nash, Garrison Starr, Michael Tolcher, Mary Bragg, Tim Easton, Kalen & Aslyn, Cooper Carter, Crys Matthews, Florence Dore. Carter, John Lowell, Heather Mae, Charlie Michael Dermott, Mendelson, Amy Rigby, Danielle Howle, Side Pony, Darden The Kennedys, Pat Byrne, Levi Lowery, Certainly So, Eddie 9V, Tall Pines, Meaghan Farrell, Jesse Lynn Madera, Nicholis, tainly So, Alice Peacock, Hannah Miller, Sammi Accola and Goldpine.

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

Adrian Mars, Mc-Leslie Smith, Danni Cer-







JANUARY 13-16







Festival Weekend Passes are currently available at www.30asongwritersfestival.com. VIP tickets that include premium seating on the lawn at Grand Boulevard for the headline shows on Saturday and Sunday afternoons along with access to the VIP tent serving complimentary food, beer, wine

and cocktails are also available. For a full description of each ticket package including VIP mainstage and transportation packages for groups of 2 up to 12, visit www.30asongwritersfestival.com.





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Arts & Music

ECTC: Christmas Time is Here

By NATHANAEL FISHER

"Christmas time is here. Happiness and cheer. Fun for all that children call their favorite time of year."

It doesn't matter if I am in the car, in a store, or walking down the street at Grand Boulevard listening to their outdoor music...this song makes me stop and feel the holiday season. Back in 1994, as an intern at Jupiter Theatre, I was in a production of A Charlie Brown Christmas in Jupiter, Florida. We sang this song as part of the production. I played Linus with those famous lines of, "Lights please! And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night." One of my favorite parts of the play was when Snoopy and I were choreographed to "skate" across the stage as if suddenly the stage was ice and we had skates on. One of the other interns that played Charlie Brown and I became friends through the process. I'd always loved the cartoon A Charlie Brown Christmas, but from that wonderful song to "skating" across the stage to playing Linus to becoming friends with the guy playing Charlie Brown... all of these are such fond memories. We are so thrilled to be bringing this classic show live on stage at Emerald Coast Theatre Company, and our high school program (Jr. Company) students are doing such a wonderful job with this play. You are guaranteed to feel ALL the happiness and cheer.

Our professional holiday production is The Best Christmas Pageant Ever: the Musical. This is directly taken from the holiday novel that was written in the 1970s by Barbara Robinson. This musical adaptation of the book originated at the Charlotte Children's Theatre in 2016. One of the things I am most excited about this production is that it is a collaboration between ECTC's growing educational program and our professional company. With songs like "Our Perfect Little Town" contrasted







with "Die Herod Die," this musical is full of fun comedic moments and finishes with all the heart and warmth we all want for the holiday season. Many of the children in this production will be making their professional debut. We always get really excited about milestones here at ECTC. Anna and I sometimes talk about how we get to see our community's children grow up. You can be a part of that too while enjoying a night of exceptional professional theatre. If you have or know a child that would be interested in taking a theatre class or having a part in our spring educational program productions check out our website for a full list of classes and programs: emeraldcoasttheatre. org/youthclasses

Another offering this holiday season is our Christmas Cabaret. Vincent Pelligrinowill be hosting again this year and if you want to see a musical theatre guy living his best life, then this holiday cabaret is a must. We have a talented cast of singers to perform some classic holiday songs you will definitely know and others you may not. Vincent pulls it all together with some jokes and a song or two himself. It's more fun than a stocking full of puppies.

Finally, since this is the giving season, we thought it would be nice to share that we helped 38 children through our scholarship program this past fall. This means that these families were helped with anything from a \$200 to \$600 scholarship towards educational theatre class tuition. Our goal is to make sure that anyone who wants to can participate, and that cost does not prevent any child from experiencing the joy of theatre.

This holiday season, if you can make a contribution to help a child out, please go to our website and donate to the scholarship fund. You can also call the box office for ways to sponsor, donate, or volunteer. We hope you'll let us usher in the holiday season with you and yours. We happen to love Christmas around here... and we love our community. As Charlie Brown and his friends would say, "Christmas time is here, families drawing near, oh that we could always see such spirit through the year."

Happy Holidays, Nathanael Fisher, Producing Artistic Director and CoFounder

A Charlie Brown Christmas

By Charles M. Schulz, Adapted by Eric Schaeffer with special arrangement by Arthur Whitelaw and Ruby Persson

December 2-10: Saturdays at 9:30 a.m. & Sunday, December 4 at 2:30 p.m.

Discover the true meaning of Christmas with Charlie Brown, Snoopy and the rest of the Peanuts Gang in this classic adaptation of "A Charlie Brown Christmas." Presented by ECTC's talented Junior Company teen players.

The Best Christmas Pageant Ever: The Musical

Book and Lyrics by Jahnna Beecham, Music and Lyrics by Malcom Hillgartner, Based on the play by Barbara Robinson, Orchestrations and vocal arrangements by Deborah Wicks LaPuma

December 8 - 18: Thursday - Saturday at 7:30 p.m., Sundays at 2:30 p.m., Wednesday, December 14 at 2:30 p.m.

The Herdmans are the worst kids in the history of the world-so when they crash Sunday school and demand parts in the Christmas pageant, the whole town panics. There's not supposed to be biting or cigar-smoking in Bethlehem and soon everyone is calling for reluctant director Grace Bradley to cancel the whole thing. It's now up to the Bradleys to help the community see the Herdman kids through new eyes in this buoyant musical adaptation of the funny and touching holiday classic.

Christmas Cabaret at the Boulevard

Wednesday, December 14 at 7:30 p.m. and Saturday, December 17 at 2:30 p.m.

Mix, mingle and enjoy live musical selections performed by our talented actors. Enjoy classic holiday songs and join in some carols as well. Like a mug of hot cocoa, this limited-run event will warm your heart and get you in the holiday spirit!

For more information or to purchase tickets go to emeraldcoasttheatre.org or call 850-684-0323.



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The November calendar offers a variety of paintingsfrom seasonally-inspired landscapes to decorative DIY wood board signs, funny self-portraits, and more! Sign up at paintingwithatwist.com/studio/fortwalton-beach/calendar.

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Visit www.artfulthingsniceville.com for the most up to date schedule. Call the gallery at 850-729-2600 to reserve seating for the following workshops:

December

3-Kids' Ornament Decorating with Marla Arm**strong.** 10:00-12:30 pm. Kids' Ornaments with Marla Armstrong. Seating is very limited so get in early! \$30 includes all supplies.

17-Kitchen People with Jeanette Herron. 10:30-2:00 pm. Learn to paint Jeanette Herron's iconic and whimsical "kitchen people" or "little chefs" in a fun and informative class. \$65 with supplies included, \$37.50 with your own supplies.

Contact the Gallery at 850-729-2600 to book private parties or grab gift certificates—both of which make perfect holiday gifts!

Artful Things will be closed Dec. 24 for Christmas Eve and Dec. 31 for New Years Eve!

Ongoing Classes:

Rosalyn O'Grady - Oil

or Acrylics. Tuesday mornings 10 am - noon, \$20 per session plus supplies. ogradytr@cox.net. www.RosalynOgrady.com

Theresia Mcinnis - Watercolor Techniques. Tuesday afternoons 12:45-3 pm. \$27.50 plus supplies. www. TheresiaMcInnis.com. Email theresiamcinnis@gmail.com to register.

Charlotte Arnold - Open Studio with Live Model. Wednesday mornings 10:30am-1:30pm. Uninstructed-\$15, limited to 6 seats. Bring your own supplies, your medium and an easel. Sign up: 850-729-2600

Chris Mcloone - Animé and Drawing Basics. Wednesday afternoons 3:30-4:30pm. \$15. Bring a sketchbook and pencil. Learn to draw your favorite anime characters. Sign up at gallery: 850-729-2600

Sheila Mahony- One-Stroke Basics-Part 1: Friday mornings. 10:30am- 12:30pm; Part 2: Thursday afternoons. 2:30-4:30pm \$37.50. Certain supplies required to be purchased from instructor at a discount from retail. Further info or sign

up 850-687-8288.

Hours: Tues-Fri 10am – 5pm | Sat 10am - 3pm | Appointments Available

(850) 729-2600 artfulthingsniceville.com 1087 East, E. John Sims Pkwy in Niceville

Big Orange House Designs

December

Dec 1-Open Studio Glass Art. Come make GLASS ART with JoJo! \$26.62.

Dec 1-Evening Wire Crochet Bracelet. Come spend an evening Creating with Sherrie! \$48.15

View remaining December schedule and Book Classes at bigorangehousedesigns.com.

Want to book a private table in a class or host a party? Contact JoJo AT 334-320-6658 or bigorangehousedesigns@gmail. com.

> bigorange house designs. com(850) 737-6193. 4652 Hwy. 20E, Pineapple Plaza, Bluewater Bay in Niceville



255 Miracle Strip Pkwy SE.

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ARTHRITIS

continued from page 22

body's functions of the autoimmune process. This process has disclosed the possibility that consuming harmful immunosuppressant drugs may not be the answer.

Psoriatic arthritis is the result of chronic inflammation where

an overactive immune system attacks the joints and skin. It can include either or both plaque or nail psoriasis. It varies in severity, from mild to crippling.

Essential oils can aid in relieving symptoms of arthritis. Some curb inflammation or have numbing effects. Others can interrupt pain receptors in the brain and others work in a combination of ways. Some of these oils are eucalyptus oil, ginger oil, curcumin, copaiba oil mix, orange oil and lavender oil mix. Be sure to choose a pure oil (no additives such as alcohol) and ones that are stored in dark containers. Oils can degrade in strength when exposed to light. Always talk to a knowledgeable oils expert before using.

As mentioned above, a high quality, full-spectrum pure supplement can be effective as well. Nourishing the body with the minerals, micronutrients and antioxidants that it needs to combat inflammation can make a noticeable difference in the quality of life when living with arthritis.

As always, you can reach out with questions or requests for

more information.

Have a fun, healthy and joy filled Thanksgiving.

HealthyDay HealthyLife succeed.hdhl@gmail.com



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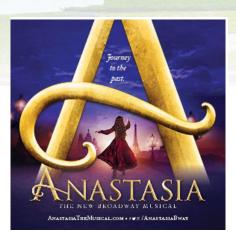
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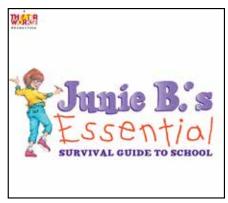
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2022-2023 SEASON



Anastasia

December 1, 2022



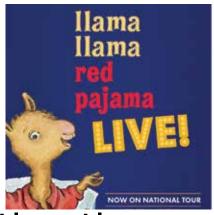
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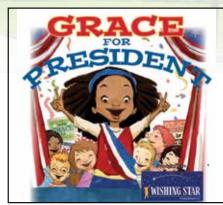
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Go to **MattieKellyArtsCenter.org** or call the Box Office at **850.729.6000** for tickets.

