



NICEVILLE - VALPARAISO

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Local Athletes Recognized for Academic and Athletic Success

BY DOUG STAUFFER

The All Sports Association (ASA) recently celebrated its 54th Annual All Sports Association Banquet at the Emerald Coast Convention Center. The auction raised a record-setting \$138,500, amassing an impressive \$319,000 for the year. That support concluded on the fourth Friday in February by recognizing a Who's Who of talented, successful, academically-minded, philanthropic athletes ranging from prep to college to amateur and pro. The banquet serves as one of the year's premier social gatherings, with a Who's-Who from the Emerald Coast in attendance.

Since 1970, the ASA has supported and honored the "Best of the Best" High School, Collegiate, Amateur, Professional, and Special Olympic athletes. The organization also recognizes individuals fostering youth activities in Northwest Florida.

The ASA, composed of



Female Collegiate Award Winner Lauren Miller

dues-paying volunteers, donate their time to raise money for non-profit organizations emphasizing local youth sports programs. These men, clad in their trademark blue blazers, raise awareness and support for area athletes yearround. Gary McCoy serves as this year's All Sports president.

This year's main benefactors included The Boys & Girls Clubs of the Emerald

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Coast, the Eleanor Johnson Youth Center, the Okaloosa County Special Olympics, the Fellowship of Christian Athletes and Northwest Florida State College.

This year's individual award winners:

Male Collegiate The Award winner is Dalton Simpler, the former All-American national champion offensive lineman from Freeport High School who's the first in his



Male Collegiate Award Winner **Dalton Simpler**

family to graduate from college.

The Female Collegiate Award winner and Niceville High School Alum Lauren Miller, who played golf at Mississippi State and SMU, earned three degrees in five years. She is looking forward to the LPGA.

Blake Garland, the Male Scholastic Award winner, is a

> ATHLETES continued on page 2

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Easter Reflections: Then Came Morning



By Gueary Clendenning

In our culture, we think of the day as starting in the morning and ending with night. In the Biblical culture, the opposite is true. Genesis chapter 1, verse 5 reads: "...and the evening and the morning were the first day." In the Jewish calen-

EASTER continued on page 2



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🏇 Community

ATHLETES

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three-sport standout graduating Summa Cum Laude and headed to Spring Hill College to play baseball.

Scholastic The Female Award winner, Caitlin Staudt, a three-sport captain who started an elementary program centered around "26 acts of kindness" and whose life centers around the mantra: "You get out what you put in."

The Taylor Haugen Trophy winner Chi Medina, the first-ever Choctaw recipient, is a twosport athlete who competes in track and cross country. Medina volunteers with the elderly and her church. She is a straight-A student and works as a school photographer.

Conner Snitko was chosen as the Special Olympics Award winner. He is a 29-year-old who plays 11 sports. He has the most infectious personality, with the medals reflecting his drive to be best at everything.

Byron Cotton was selected as the Amateur Award winner. He was a graduate of Choctaw

dar, the sabbath begins in the

evening and ends at sunset the

next day. Often, when we are

sick, it seems the illness worsens

in the evening and we find our-

selves longing for the breaking

of day. The day Christ was cru-

cified, because the Sabbath was

approaching, He, being dead,

they took Him from the cross

and placed Him in a borrowed

tomb. It must have been a hor-

rific, restless night for the dis-

ciples. Their minds were filled

with fear and confusion, and

recorded in Luke's Gospel: "But

very early on Sunday morning

the women came to the tomb.

But then came the morning,

their hopes were shattered.

EASTER

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who left tennis for a couple of decades before picking up the racket and achieving the top 50 national ranks nationally in doubles. He also works as a local attorney.

Michael Carter, a star run-

ning back at Navarre High School before going to UNC, now plays for the New York Jets. At 5-feet 8 inches and 200 pounds, he packs a punch in that small frame. He "preached" about striving for greatness, say-

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ing, "Slow motion is better than no motion."

Wuerffel Trophy winner Dillan Gibbons, an FSU grad who started the non-profit "Big Man Big Heart, "is now gearing up for the NFL draft. Like his father and grandfather, Gibbons keeps a poem called "The Individual" in his pocket to give him perspective and guidance. He was a gentle giant off the field. The Wuerffel Trophy exists to honor college football players who serve others, celebrate their positive impact on society, and inspire greater service worldwide.

The keynote speaker, Chad

Hennings, delayed his NFL dreams, because he had committed to being a fighter pilot in the Air Force. His NFL career began as a 26-year-old NFL rookie. He went on to win three Super Bowls in four years and played nine years in the NFL before retiring. Chad is one of the best inspirational speakers of our day.



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They found the stone covering the entrance had been rolled away."

men, said to them, "Why seek the living among the dead? For He is not here but is risen. "

At an early age, we are filled with dreams and hope for the future. As we grow older and the years pass by, we come to the realization that the night time of our life is fast approaching. It is so different for those whose focus is on God. Their lives begin in the darkness of unbelief, not knowing God. But then life comes alive with meaning and purpose as they come to believe in God's Son. Zacharias, a Jewish priest, prophesied of the coming of Christ: "Because of God's tender mercy, the light from heaven is about to break upon us, to give light to those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, and to guide us to the path of peace."

Jesus, the light of heaven, came to earth, lived a perfect life, fulfilling the laws of God; thus He became qualified to die in our place, receiving the judgement of God for our sins. Three days later, on Easter Sunday, He arose from the grave and said, "Because I live, you shall live also."

What great news!

Whereas, people view life beginning in the morning and ending at night; Christians view life as beginning in darkness but ending in life that lasts forever. For not only do they have hope

where life never ends. "There shall be no night there, and they need no candle, neither light of the sun, for the Lord God giveth them light and they shall reign forever and ever."

There is a lot of darkness in the world. Many people seem to have lost their way and are without hope. Jesus said, "I am the light of the world. He that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life."

When we come to trust and follow Christ, the darkness is lifted and we begin to experience God's love and peace. The light of His presence will guide you now and into the future!

Then came the morning. Are you experiencing it? It's yours for the asking!



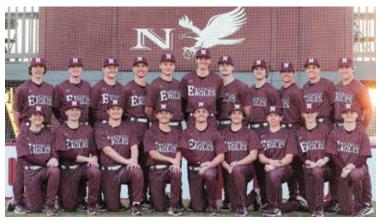
Two angels, appearing as

Contact the Cathy Alley Team: Corin, Cathy, Tiffany & Debbie C: 850.585.2303 | eracj@cox.net Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices PenFed Realty 1073 E John Šims Pkwy, Niceville, FL 32578

now, but they believe in heaven

Hoppy Easter! Hop into your new home with the help of the Cathy Alley Team.

Events Around the Bay



Niceville Eagles The Baseball Team will hold a Golf Fundraising Tournament (4-person scramble) and Silent Auction April 29 at Fort Walton Beach Golf Club. Shotgun start at 8:30 a.m. with registration at 7 a.m.; Silent Auction starts at 3 p.m. at 3rd Planet. Registration is \$110-single and \$440-foursome and includes 18 holes of golf, golf cart, grab'n go Jersey Mike's Subs lunch and gift bags. There are also corporate hole sponsorships - \$500 for returning business with sign; \$550 for new business with no sign. For more information or sponsorship opportunities, contact Jim Bugs "Buglewicz" at (850) 517-7159 or jimbugs@cox.net.

Join **Military Family Appreciation Day** to honor local service members and their families Saturday, April 15, 11 a.m.-5 p.m. at The Landing in downtown Fort Walton Beach, 139 SE Brooks Street. Military Family Appreciation Day is a community event that aims to honor the brave service and sacrifices made by military families and veterans in our area. The event will feature live entertainment on the Eglin Federal Credit Union Stage, a free children's play area and veteran service organizations, including the USO, Healing Paws for Warriors, Food For Vets, and Homes for Heroes. Attendees will enjoy complimentary on-site lunch from Sonny's BBQ, sponsored by Step One Automotive Group and Forever Warriors. Business sponsorship opportunities include Presenting Sponsor, Kids Play Zone Sponsor, Participating Vendor Spots, premier giveaway sponsors and volunteers to serve lunch. For more information or to become a sponsor or volunteer, contact the Greater Fort Walton Beach Chamber of Commerce at (850) 244-8191 or www.fwbchamber.org.

The Heritage Museum of Northwest Florida has two exciting things happening in April: A Free Home School Class presented by Sinfonia will take place at the Heritage Museum on Tuesday, April 10, 10 a.m. Space is limited so call to register and reserve your spot. (850) 678-2615. Recommended ages 6+. Visit www.heritage-museum.org.

The Heritage Museum's 47th Annual Saturday in the Park will be held April 29, 10 a.m.-4 p.m. There will be free admission to the museum, kids crafts, 5K run, bake sale, live music, food vendors, craft vendors and more. 115 Westview Ave. Valparaiso FL. 32580/ Perrine Park.

Spring Up for CALM **2023.** The 7th annual spring fundraiser to benefit CALM will be Saturday, April 15, 5-8 p.m. at Christ our Redeemer Catholic Church, Niceville. Featuring live music by The John Galt Band, food courtesy of local eateries and live and silent auctions, the ticket price reserves your seat and includes food and two beverage tickets. All funds raised benefit CALM, including CALM Village, the exciting new phase of affordable housing. Tickets are \$75 per person. Visit nicevillecalm.com for tickets, donations and more and the Facebook page.

Are you interested in blacksmithing? Think about joining the **Florida Artist Blacksmith Association** (FABA). Its mission is to teach and preserve the noble art of blacksmithing.

Recently popularized by programs like "Forged in Fire" and "Men at Arms," blacksmithing has experienced a renaissance. However, FABA has been teaching and setting up historical blacksmith shops throughout Florida for 35 years. The local chapter, known as "The Far West Panhandle Blacksmiths," is headquartered at Traditions Workshop in Fort Walton Beach and sponsors meetings throughout the Panhandle.

Your first meeting with FABA is always on us. After that, we encourage you to join. For a family to join, visit https:// blacksmithing.org. The cost is \$30 per family, per year. An annual membership allows you and your clan to participate at any FABA event throughout the state (usually one every week-

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Sommunity

Looking for something fun? Shop at the **Raintree Estates Semi-Annual Neighborhood Yard Sale** at Olde Post Road and White Point Road Saturday, April 1, at 8 a.m.

The 5th Annual Mac & Cheese Festival held Sunday, March 5, at Destin Commons raised \$63,000 and welcomed roughly 1,600 attendees throughout the day. Proceeds benefit the Boys and Girls Clubs of the Emerald Coast, a local non-profit organization whose mission is to promote and enhance the development of boys and girls by instilling a sense of competence, usefulness, belonging and influence through its programs focused on academic success, good character and citizenship, and healthy lifestyles. Award winners were:

Judge's Choice: Boathouse Oyster Bar

People's Choice: Jackacuda's Seafood & Sushi

Kid's Choice: Sauce Boss Burger Co.

Destin Charity Wine Auction Foundation's (DCWAF) 2nd Annual Galentine's Day Fundraiser raised a record-breaking \$92,500 for young women in need in Northwest Florida, \$30,000 more than last year's inaugural event. The event brought influential women in the community together to support one another while raising money for programs de-



The Mac & Cheese Festival People's Choice award went to Jackacuda's Seafood & Sushi.

signed to empower young girls through the foundation's 16 partner children's charities. All individuals and businesses affiliated with the production of the event are female owned and operated. The funds raised will benefit the following charity's initiatives: Boys & Girls Clubs of the Emerald Coast, Children in Crisis, Habitat for Humanity of Walton County, Point Washington Medical Clinic, Shelter House of Northwest Florida and Youth Village.

Emerald Coast Autism Center (ECAC) is launching the 11th Annual ONE Campaign to provide scholarships to students with autism. The campaign is an annual effort to raise funds and awareness of autism within Okaloosa and surrounding counties. ECAC will kick off the campaign with the 11th annual ONE Run 5K Satur-

Bay Buzz

day, April 1, 8 a.m., at Emerald Coast Autism Center on the campus of Northwest Florida State College, 80 College Blvd. East. An after party with food, music and raffle drawings will follow. The ONE Campaign will continue with a golf tournament at Blackstone Golf Course in Mossy Head Friday, Sept. 29, with a 9 a.m. shotgun start.

CARFAX, the leading provider of vehicle history information, recently announced that **Buick GMC Cadillac Fort Walton Beach and Volkswagen Fort Walton Beach** have earned the title of 2022 CAR-FAX Top-Rated LIFETIME Dealer. This achievement is based on verified ratings and reviews from customers on CAR-FAX.com.

LiveOak Fiber held a ribbon cutting in February with the Niceville Valparaiso, Destin and Greater Fort Walton Beach chambers of commerce. LiveOak Fiber is a new Internet Service Provider headquartered in Brunswick, Ga., with offices extending west to Niceville. It offers fast Internet speeds, world-class customer service, accessibility and localization. Its application allows you to control all your devices. No contracts are required, and there is no data cap. Find out more at liveoakfiber.com or call (850) 635-6755.

Step One Automotive Group, in partnership with United Way, will give a family in need the gift of mobility with the 2023 Driving Opportunity program and will announce the winner on March 31 on Facebook Live. Recognizing the importance of mobility in changing lives, Step One created the Driving Opportunity program to provide a re-

liable vehicle to families in need. The program has received an overwhelming response from families over the years, prompting the organization to partner with United Way agencies and their partner organizations to create a fair selection process.

In March, State Representative Patt Maney accompanied Niceville Police Chief David Popwell at the Florida Capitol in Tallahassee for Chief Popwell's recognition as Law **Enforcement Officer of the** Day. House Speaker Paul Renner recognized his accomplishments on the House Floor citing Chief Popwell's 20 years in the Airforce, his extensive career in law enforcement which includes hostage negotiations, service on the squad team and protective services. Renner thanked him for his service to our country and state and welcomed him to the Florida house. Congratulations to the Niceville Police



Department and Chief David Popwell. We appreciate you!

The Choctawhatchee Audubon Society invites the public to attend its monthly evening program Thursday, April, 6 - CHINA - BIRDS OF THE PANDA FORESTS. Malcolm Swan will show video clips of marvelous birds that he and Lenny Fenimore saw during a 2018 bird tour of the mountainous Sichuan Province and the Tibetan plateau of central China, and Malcolm's photos will illustrate their travels by bus and shoes in search of Pikas, exotic pheasants and tasty food in extraordinary places. Room 800 on the 2nd floor of the Chandler Center (NW door of 519 Helms Street) at Crosspoint Church, Niceville. Socializing with refreshments begins at 6:30 p.m.; program begins at 7 p.m. Visit Choctawhatcheeaudubon. org for updated information on programs and bird walks.

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118 CARAWAY DRIVE, NICEVILLE, FL 4 Bedroom | 3.5 Bath | 2,775 Sq Ft \$789,900 *Listed by Yeska Sand* 850.368.5936



605 CHAMOMILE COURT, NICEVILLE, FL 3 Bedroom | 3.5 Bath | 2,870 Sq Ft \$949,990 Listed by Yeska Sand 850.368.5936



110 CARAWAY DRIVE, NICEVILLE, FL 4 Bedroom | 3 Bath | 2,514 Sq Ft \$750,000 Listed by Jodie Snell 850.621.6535



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The community

EVENTS

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end). Plus, you get generous discounts at the annual convention as well as an e-copy of the monthly newsletter, The Clinker Breaker, featuring Florida blacksmithing news and events. Upcoming schedule: April 23, 9-3, Location TBD - probably in Navarre. Jordan Borstelmann will demonstrate how to make one of his trademark axes; May 28, 9-3, Timber Creek Distillery, 6451 Lake Ella Rd, Crestview. Project: forging a sea creature. For more information, contact david@traditionsworkshop.com or call/text David at (850) 974-1548.

The **11th Annual Paddle at the Park** will take place in the Gulf of Mexico behind The Boardwalk on Okaloosa Island on Saturday, May 6. It features 1- and 3-mile recreational races, a 6-mile elite race and a kids' fun



out-and-back paddle.

The weekend begins Friday, May 5, with a Racer Welcome Party at Al's Beach Club at The Boardwalk on Okaloosa Island. It continues on Saturday morning with the races, which have staggered start times, beginning at 9 a.m. Racers and spectators alike will enjoy the festive atmosphere with displays and booths set up along the beach. The event will conclude with awards.

Registration is now open at https://paddleguru.com/ races/llthAnnualPaddleatthePark. Find all race details at PaddleAtThePark.com or follow Facebook.com/PaddleAtTheP-ark.

Musical Echoes Festival 2023, a family-friendly, Native American flute, art, music and cultural festival, returns to FWB Landing Friday, April 21-Sunday, April 23, 9 a.m. each day. Admission is free. Experience the unique sounds of the Native American flute as it is brought to life and featuring solo performers and full bands with live music during the entire festival. Dancers offer colorful, rhythmic traditional dances and they share the meaning of each dance offering us a rare experience. Flute makers selling their handcrafted flutes will collaborate with you to find your perfect flute. They'll provide a few tips on playing as well. Visit art and craft vendors as they share their custom jewelry, baskets, leather work, and more. Traditional Native American fry bread and other delicious festival food add to the fun. Visit the silent auction and raffles at the main tent. Purchase the annual festival T-shirt, featuring the butterfly, this year's totem created by artist Kenneth Maines, Tshirtfactoryfwb.com.

Visit www.musicalechoes.org for the complete schedule and lineup.

Dog Harmony's 8th Annual Doggie EGGstravaganza, a hoppin' social where dogs hunt for eggs filled with yummy treats, will be held 5:30 p.m.-7:30 p.m. April 6 at Grand Boulevard at Sandestin. Nearly 800 eggs will be hidden at Grand Park to sniff out. Bunny ears, chick outfits and dainty Easter dresses are encouraged. A \$15 donation per dog provides each participant with a basket for the canine egg hunt and access to professional photos sponsored by Mills Photo Design. For humans, there will be libations, a silent auction and a chance drawing. JC's Gourmet will be serving its delectable smoked

Somethin' Snappy and Poppin' Pimento cheese appetizers. Proceeds benefit Dog-Harmony, a nonprofit 501(c)3 dedicated to reducing the shelter dog population through humane education.

The Easter Egg Dash is back at LuLu's in Destin on Easter Sunday

Hop on over to see the tropically clad Easter Bunny and go on a fun, festive, free and fast Easter Egg Dash. Easter eggs and Egg-citing "golden eggs" with special prizes will be scattered around. The Easter Bunny will be visiting LuLu's to help boys and girls hunt for eggs on the sandy beach overlooking the Choctawhatchee Bay on Easter Sunday, April 9, and to visit with the kids. The Easter Egg Dash will start promptly at 2 p.m. Kids will be divided by age groups for safe fun for all including photo op memories with the Easter Bunny from 1 to 3 p.m. Visit www.lulusfunfoodmusic.com.

Want to Join an Easter Service?

Crosspoint Church

We will journey to the cross to understand what that looked like for Jesus. We are exploring the events that occurred during the last week of Jesus' life to gain insight into who Jesus is. This will culminate with Easter Services as we celebrate Jesus' resurrection! We invite you to come as you are, bring your friends, and be ready to feel the victory that is the resurrection!

Niceville Campus

FRIDAY, APRIL 7 Good Friday Service | 6 p.m. | Community Life Center SATURDAY, APRIL 8 Contemporary Worship Service | 5 p.m. | Sanctuary https://crosspoint.church

Faith Independent Baptist Easter Sunday | APRIL 9 | 11 a.m. Church on Bayshore

FRIDAY, APRIL 7 Good Friday Services | 5:15 and 6:30 p.m. Good Friday Kids Ministry | 5:30 p.m. SUNDAY, APRIL 9

Easter Services | 8 a.m., 9:30 a.m., 11 a.m.

Christ Our Redeemer Catholic Church Upcoming Holy Days Holy Thursday | APRIL 6 |

6:30 p.m. Good Friday | APRIL 7 | 6:30 p.m. Easter Sunday | APRIL 9 | 7:30 a.m. and 10:30 a.m.

Rocky Bayou Baptist Church

Good Friday Service | FRI-DAY, APRIL 7 | 6 p.m. Resurrection Sunday | SUN-DAY, APRIL 9 | 10:15 a.m.





From the Okaloosa County Sheriff's Office Grab the sunscreen! Spring Break 2023 runs through April 23.

Spring Break seems to bring a wide-ranging combination of emotions to residents of Okaloosa County. However, there's no getting past the fact that our beaches continue to be a major Spring Break hot spot for college and high school students, families and locals. The influx brings an economic boost to local businesses, but also the stereotypical crowded beaches and roadways.

Reservation numbers for the 2023 Spring Break season ap-

Break in 2022, 659 Notices to Appear (NTA) were issued for violation of Underage Possession of Alcohol. The 659 issued NTA's during Spring Break 2022 was the second highest number (700 in 2021) of underage possession of alcohol arrests during Spring Break in the history of the Okaloosa County Sheriff's Office.

Those arrests in 2022, consisted of 573 adults and 86 juveniles. 502 took place in Destin,



pear to indicate Spring Break activity will meet or surpass 2022 levels. Okaloosa County focuses on attracting families during the two-month period but is also a popular spot for high school and college Spring Breakers.

In an effort to ensure visitors enjoy our area in a safe, respectful, and lawful manner, we have a plan that includes multiple public safety goals and objectives each Spring Break. That plan begins with designated units monitoring beach and vacation rental areas for unlawful activities and using proactive patrol methods to detect and apprehend anyone involved in criminal activity - which can range from underage possession of alcohol to open house parties, or possession of controlled substances, to violations of Okaloosa County and City of Destin ordinances.

Another top priority is to assist Okaloosa County and City of Destin lifeguards with the prevention of drowning incidents.

During the 58 days of Spring

153 on Okaloosa Island, and 4 were other locations in Okaloosa County.

456 were College students, 144 were in High School, and 59 were not in school.

This protocol will continue in 2023: If caught with alcohol, juveniles ages 17 and under will be issued a notice to appear and released to an adult. Individuals 18, 19 or 20 years of age in possession of an alcoholic beverage will be arrested and given a notice to appear before a judge.

Our public safety efforts are part of a partnership with the Tourist Development Council, the City of Destin and other first responder partners to include Fire, EMS, Florida Fish and Wildlife and the Florida Highway Patrol. This year a dedicated dispatcher will be used to assist with our Spring Break details as well.

Property owners and managers also play a big role. We recommend they take preventative safety measures as well. Good strategies are to have your security disperse larger groups loitering on your property before the situation gets out of hand, monitor for law violations and report those promptly, evict guests who won't comply with the rules and, of course, contact us with any questions.

"Despite the influx of a

younger crowd, our Spring Break beaches are often primarily packed with families," said Sheriff Eric Aden. "We want to see everyone who pays a visit have a SAFE, fun-filled vacation. That means respect others, be courteous and follow the laws. The majority of our Spring Breakers do just that, but for those who cross the line, there will be repercussions. We hope everyone makes safety the top priority."



n Community

Rotary Club Recognizes Local First Responders

The Rotary Club of Niceville-Valparaiso recognized the top police officers, firefighters, and emergency medical technicians for 2022 from each local department for their outstanding service to our community Feb. 20. The award recipients included: Niceville Fire Department Firefighter of the Year, Fireman Gage Reed; Valparaiso Fire Department Firefighter of the Year, Engineer Ethan Randolph; Niceville Police Department Officer of the Year, Officer Christopher Fulford; Valparaiso Police Department Officer of the Year, Officer Charles "Chuck" Dumbaugh; East Niceville Fire District Firefighter of the Year, Firefighter Tyler Lawrence; North Bay Fire District Firefighter of the Year, Firefighter Tyler Gagner; Okaloosa County Sheriff's Office Deputy of the Year, Deputy

Ezekiel Dixon; Eglin Air Force Base (AFB) Security Forces Airman of the Year, Senior Airman Abigail Saterfield; Eglin AFB Security Forces Noncommissioned Officer of the Year, Technical Sergeant Caleb Foy; Eglin AFB Security Forces Senior Noncommissioned Officer of the Year, Master Sergeant Floyd Ford; Eglin AFB Security Forces Category I Civilian of the Year, Officer Jonathan Sowell; Eglin AFB Security Forces Category II Civilian of the Year, Officer Gregory Wise; Eglin AFB Military Firefighter of the Year, Staff Sgt. Josue Rosado Velez; Eglin AFB Fire Department Civilian Firefighter of the Year, Pedro Morales; Eglin AFB Fire Department Military Fire Officer of the Year, Master Sgt. Edward Thomas; and Eglin AFB Fire Department Civilian Fire Officer of the Year, Whitney Stine.



From left: Technical Sergeant Caleb Foy, Eglin AFB Security Forces Noncommissioned Officer of the Year; Fire Chief David Birch, East Niceville Fire District; Senior Airman Abigail Saterfield, Eglin AFB Security Forces Airman of the Year; Officer Christopher Fulford, Niceville Police Department Officer of the Year; Firefighter Tyler Lawrence, East Niceville Fire District Firefighter of the Year; Deputy Ezekiel Dixon, Okaloosa County Sheriff's Office Deputy of the Year; Undersheriff Charlie Nix, Okaloosa County Sheriff's Office; Kevin Sutton, President of Niceville-Valparaiso Rotary Club;

Firefighter Tyler Gagner, North Bay Fire District Firefighter of the Year; Captain Todd Harris, North Bay Fire District; Master Sergeant Edward Thomas, Eglin AFB Fire Department Military Fire Officer of the Year; Mr. Whitney Stine, Eglin AFB Fire Department Civilian Fire Officer of the Year; Officer Charles "Chuck" Dumbaugh, Valparaiso Police Department Officer of the Year; Staff Sergeant Josue Rosado Velez, Eglin AFB Fire Department Military Firefighter of the Year; Officer Gregory Wise, Eglin AFB Security Forces Category II Civilian of the Year; Fire Chief Michael Clayton, Eglin AFB Fire Department. Not Pictured: Engineer Ethan Randolph, Valparaiso Fire Department Firefighter of the Year; Fireman Gage Reed, Niceville Fire Department Firefighter of the Year; Master Sergeant Floyd Ford, Eglin AFB

Rotary & Local Groups Team Up for Charity Truck Pull

Multiple community organizations are teaming up again to complete fundraising which will benefit The Twin Cities Pavilion and Crestview Manor. The event will be hosted by 3rd Planet Brewing Saturday, April 22. It will begin with team check-in at 11 a.m. Competition begins at noon. There will be two food trucks, an ice cream truck, face-painting for children, raffles, a silent auction and music. Last year



sixteen ten-person teams par-

ticipated. Register your team online: https://form.jotform. com/230266457148055. Questions: Contact Bob Hoffman at (850) 428-3261





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The hiring of a lawyer is an important decision that should not be based solely upon advertisements. Before you decide, ask us to send you free written information about our qualifications and experience.



Welcome to Niceville!

Jim & Jane Rainwater welcome you to our real estate office. We have over 20 years experience selling real estate, residential and commercial, working with buyers and sellers in Bluewater Bay, Niceville, Valparaiso, Destin, Crestview and surrounding areas.

Property Management

Jim Rainwater offers full-time property management services as well. If you are a homeowner with a rental property, Jim can assist you in finding tenants, qualifying tenants and lease preparation.

4400 Hwy. 20 E., Suite 314, Bluewater Bay, Niceville (The old Bluewater Bay Post Office) Stop by our office today or call Jane at (850) 830-1976 or Jim at (850) 830-9636

janehr@aol.com | NicevilleHomes.com

Community

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und the Bay tro

 APRIL 2023

 17
 Creative Cooking Workshop with UF IFAS Walton County 4-H 4 pm | Walton County Extension Service | DeFuniak Springs Naomi Shihab Nye 7 pm | Sprint Theater | Niceville

 19
 Anime and Drawing Basics with Chris McLoone 3:30 pm | Artful Things | Niceville

 19
 Concerts in the Village: Post Modern Jukebox 7 pm | MKAF Cultural Arts Village | Destin

 21
 Live Music: Rob Romans 6 pm | 3rd Planet Brewing | Niceville

 22
 Gulf Islands National Seashore Fee Free Day 5 am | Gulf Islands National Seashore | Okaloosa Island Second Annual Rotary Charity Fire Truck Pull 10 am | 3rd Planet Brewing | Niceville Hammock Bay Pickleball Tourney



		/ (I I (I)		
01	Emerald Coast Autism Center ONE Run 5K 7 am Emerald Coast Autism Center Niceville		17	
	35th Annual Morgan Invitational Golf Classic 11 am Eglin Air Force Base Golf Course Niceville			
	Semi-Annual Neighborhood Yard Sale-Raintree Est 8 am Olde Post Rd & White Point Rd Niceville	ates	19	
	Spring Fashion Show & Tea Party at La Luna Childre	en's Boutique	20	
	3 pm Grand Boulevard at Sandestin Miramar Beach Live Music: Lucky Strike Band		21	
	6 pm 3rd Planet Brewing Niceville			
03	Chess Night 6 pm LJ Schooners Dockside Restaurant & Oyster Bar	Niceville	22	
0.4	Oils and Acrylics with Rosalyn O'Grady			
04	10 am Artful Things Niceville			
06	A Dream of America Ellis Island			
	7:30 pm Mattie Kelly Arts Center Niceville Greater FWB Chamber First Friday Coffee			
07	7 am Christian Life Center at First Baptist Church Fort V	Valton Beach		
08	Run for Joy		23	\$
00	8:30 am Church on Bayshore Niceville		~ -	1 1
	Women's Climbing Circle		27	
	9 am Rock Out Climbing Gym Destin Illuminated Letters with Elia Saxer			-
	10:30 am Artful Things Niceville			
	Jacobe Turner Teen Center Bowling Tournament			
	1 pm Fort Walton Beach Bowl Fort Walton Beach	SOUTH WALTON BEACHES WINE & FOOD FESTIVAL		
	Live Music: Sicktight Band 6 pm 3rd Planet Brewing Niceville			
11	Watercolor Techniques with Theresia McInnis		27-	
	12:45 pm Artful Things Niceville		30	'
12	Niceville-Valparaiso Chamber Second Wednesday B 7:30 am Niceville Community Center Niceville	reakfast	28	
13	Niceville Senior Center Health Fair		29	
	10 am Niceville Senior Center Niceville			
13-	A Journey into the 1920s-Florida Chautauqua Asse	mbly		
16	Chipley Park Defuniak Springs DJ Dance Party with DJ Josh			
14	6 pm 3rd Planet Brewing Niceville	BEETHOVEN V. COLDPLAY		
15	Herons in Acrylic with Linda Rouston	SAT, APR. 29 7:00 PM.		
	10:30 am Artful Things Niceville			
	Military Family Appreciation Day 11 am Fort Walton Beach Landing Fort Walton Beach	120		
	CALM 7th Annual Spring Fundraiser	- Castlosus		
	5 pm Christ Our Redeemer Catholic Church Niceville	Survey and		
	Live Music Clinch 46			

Live Music: Clinch 46

	6 pm 3rd Planet Brewing Niceville
22	Gulf Islands National Seashore Fee Free Day 5 am Gulf Islands National Seashore Okaloosa Island
	Second Annual Rotary Charity Fire Truck Pull
	10 am 3rd Planet Brewing Niceville
	Hammock Bay Pickleball Tourney 8 am Hammock Bay Freeport
	Live Music: Shenanigans
	6 pm 3rd Planet Brewing Niceville
23	Spring Vendor Fair
20	11 am 3rd Planet Brewing Niceville
27	Documentary of the Month
	5:30 pm Niceville Public Library Niceville
	Taylor Haugen Foundation Wine Dinner
	6:30 pm The Heritage Room at One20 Niceville
	Concerts in the Village: Roman Street Party Band 7 pm MKAF Cultural Arts Village Destin
	Madagascar: The Musical
	7:30 pm Mattie Kelly Arts Center Niceville
27- 30	South Walton Beaches Wine & Food Festival Grand Boulevard at Sandestin Miramar Beach
28	Live Music: Dismystic
	6 pm 3rd Planet Brewing Niceville
29	Encaustic Wax with Corina Zalace 10:30 am Artful Things Niceville
	18th Annual Destin Charity Wine Auction presented by the Jumonville Family 1 pm Grand Boulevard at Sandestin Miramar Beach
	Live Music: Below Alabama 6 pm 3rd Planet Brewing Niceville
	Spring Soiree
	6:30 pm Bayou Oaks Niceville
—	Beethoven v. Coldplay: A Merging of Musical Giants
	7:30 pm Destin-Fort Walton Beach Convention Center Fort Walton Beach
	Kathleen Madigan Live
	7:30 pm Mattie Kelly Arts Center Niceville

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	6 pm 3rd Planet Brewing	Niceville				
R'S TS	Niceville Community	- Saturdays	H	ammock Bay - 1st & 3rd Sundays	Grand Boulevard - Sa	turdays
-ARMER'S AARKETS	April 1, 8, 15, 22, 29		A	pril 2, 16	April 1, 8, 15, 22, 29	
9am-1pm Palm Plaza Niceville		8a	am Victory Blvd Freeport	9am-1pm Grand Boulevard Miramar Beach		
				Л	LISTEN.	VISIT.
				Frances	Hello Frances Podcast	FrancesRoy.com
STRA	TEGY DESIGN	MEDIA	DIGITAL	FRANCES ROY		

n Community

Heroes Don't Always Wear Capes **PLASMA: A Source of Life to Share**

mapheresis in 1951; this is a

plasma from the donor, sepa-

the red blood along with saline

vein that a whole blood dona-

plying with numerous regula-

agencies for quality assurance

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tation and health screening con-

firming eligibility. A deposit is

automatically applied after your

second donation and thereafter

each time you donate, which

Along with a sense of pride

throughout the year.

By LISA WOODRUM

Are you aware that you possess a source and gift of life inside you that you can share with others? It's called plasma. Fifty-five percent of your blood is made up of plasma and science cannot duplicate it.

People in our community and worldwide experience health conditions which require medicines containing this key component. Plasma donations are used to produce medicines that treat rare and chronic conditions. For example, plasma medicines can be used to treat more than 80 different autoimmune diseases, immunodeficiencies and rare blood disorders, saving lives or improving the quality of life for a multitude of men, women and children in 110 countries!

The Fort Walton Beach Grifols Donor Center is one of 300 Grifols centers in the U.S. and also has a strong global presence. Grifols has the foremost leading plasma collection/ donation centers in the world.

During its five years here in Fort Walton, it has been managed by Kacy Torres who was originally a donor herself in Pensacola. She learned of Grifols' mission, "Improving the health and well-being of people around the world," which resonated with her heart to make a difference. "I saw what it actually entailed and their mission [motivated me to pursue this as a career]," said Kacy.

Grifols is careful to steward every person's wellbeing, from the donor giving the plasma to the millions of patients receiving their life-saving services and medication produced from the plasma.

As a donor, I can testify from personal experience of the strict, consistent adherence to high standards of safety and professionalism of the staff every time I've donated since December of 2022. Every appointment has been a safe, pleasant and positive experience.

Dr. Jose Antonio Grifol de-





can be withdrawn at the participating ATM. (Compensation totals vary; check with center/ website for details).

Healthy individuals between the ages of 18 and 69 must weigh over 110 lbs. to donate. For your initial screening, it is best to come early in the day as it can take approximately two hours. Bring a valid photo ID, proof of social security number or border crossing card and proof of address (such as a bill that matches your ID).

From my experience as a donor, I am motivated to be more conscientious about my diet as donors are required to maintain sufficient levels of iron and protein as well as staying hydrated. From my research, I have also learned some extra benefits of donating plasma: It can potentially reduce bad cholesterol levels (thus lowering blood pressure) and increase good cholesterol!

In your giving, you and multitudes are gaining! It's a "win-win" situation! For more information about Grifols, the process and compensation, visit the website at Grifolsplasma. com (And tell them Bay Life sent you!)

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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,

Have Questions about Property Damage or Insurance Policies? Call Us: (850) 684-4794 You could have it answered in one our columns.

🌸 Community

Do the Math: 100 Men Who Care Emerald Coast

By Christopher Manson

Scott Rude calls himself "the founding member" of 100 Men Who Care Emerald Coast. Rude (pronounced Rudy) is "semi-retired" and spent three years teaching business management at the University of Iowa in Iowa City.

After leaving the university, he worked for Shell Oil in New Orleans. He and his family visited our beaches on the weekends and decided this is where they wanted to live. Jean, Rude's wife of 24 years, was very happy with the choice they made.

In Iowa, Rude was a member of the Hawkeye chapter of 100 Men Who Care. Upon relocating, he looked for a local chapter, but there wasn't one around. "The only thing to do was start one," he says. In 2021, 100 Men Who Care Emerald Coast launched with considerable help from Fort Walton Beach's 100+ Women Who Care honcho Kelly Bomar-Fuller.

Rude recently attended a check presentation for Healing Hoof Steps. "I hadn't heard of them," he says. "I had no idea



how many organizations there were in Okaloosa and Walton counties that are trying to help people in our community." The Crestview-based nonprofit offers horse therapy to veterans with PTSD, as well as young children who have autism.

The 100 Men Who Care have given to Crossroads Medical Center, too. The Valparaiso free clinic serves homeless people and folks trying to make ends meet. "They do an unbelievable service," says Rude. "We gave them a little over \$3,000 and they showed us how they could turn it into \$9,000."

Other nonprofits that have benefited from the 100 Men Who Care include Children in Crisis and A Bed for Me, which provides beds for children – and, in turn, helps them feel "more empowered and have more self-esteem.

"We've learned so much and been able to get involved in so much in less than a year and a half. It's eye-opening."

The process is simple. Members throw in \$100 every quarter and attend quarterly meetings where various charities are pitched, followed by a vote on who will receive that quarter's funds.

Rude and his fellow Men Who Care number 45, a bit short of 100 but well on the right track. Joining up is a breeze. Email 100mwcec@gmail.com or call/text Rude at (319) 325-1025. You can also find 100 Men Who Care Emerald Coast on Facebook and at Grapevine.org.

"If we find a way to get the word out, it's going to be an organization that makes a strong impact on this community at a really meaningful level," he says. "The beauty of it is, everyone is the same. Whether you're a CEO or a maintenance worker, everyone is equal. You don't have to spend a lot of time, but you can make a difference."

The next meeting is set for May 8 at Niceville's 3rd Planet Brewing, starting at 5:30 p.m. "We welcome all to come out, meet new friends and see what we're all about," says Rude. "We're out of there within 90 minutes. Time enough for a couple beers!"



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Education

OLLI Brings Adult Learning to Florida's Panhandle

The Osher Lifelong Learning Institute (OLLI) at Florida State University is an exciting, challenging scholarly program tailored for adults 50 and older who love to learn in a stressfree environment where there are no tests and no homework Designed as a member-centered organization, OLLI allows students to expand their intellectual horizons, engage in social activities, participate in volunteer opportunities and hold key leadership positions within the organization.

Here in Northwest Florida,



OLLI - PC30A began in 2019 with a vision to bring intellectually stimulating university-oriented adult learning educational opportunities to the residents of the 30A corridor. Several longtime residents of the area approached FSU PC to discuss options. FSU Tallahassee already had an active OLLI group, and graciously extended the OLLI option to the FSU PC campus.

What is OLLI? The Osher Lifelong Learning Institute supports 125 Osher campus organizations across the United States. Bernard Osher, an active and engaging 96-year-old, began the institute in 2001. OLLI exists to actively engage seasoned adults in lifelong learning, social interaction, and community building.

The OLLI at FSU PC30A group is dedicated to building

a program that offers opportunities to learn, socialize, and enhance the community through courses and an active speaker series. It is a structured organization, with semester or yearlong memberships available. A membership opens up not just courses and programming locally, but also provides access to the courses offered through the FSU Tallahassee campus. Learning is delivered in person, hybrid or fully online, depending on the subject and instructor. The instructors are in many cases experts in field or university level professors.

The current Spring Semester includes 10 courses offered locally as well as 50+ courses from the Tallahassee campus. Fall Semester for 2023 promises even more offerings.

Call Margaret Walters Gamble, OLLI at FSU PC30A Learning Coordinator at (850) 532-7841 for more information. Follow the group on Facebook at www.facebook.com/OLLIatFSUPC30A/ to keep up with current news and activities.

NWFSC Students Named to All-Florida Academic Team

The Florida College System announced that 10 Northwest Florida State College students are members of the 2023 All-Florida Academic Team - Yvonne Anderson, Ashley Andrews, Sean Arbuckle, Jackson Brazill, Gwendolyn Law, Lillian Nguyen, Jazlyn Polanco, Allyson Singer, Danielle Tomlin and Christopher York. The students were selected by the Phi Theta Kappa (PTK) International Honor Society and will be recognized at an awards ceremony March 31 in Orlando.

Students are nominated to the All-Florida Academic Team competition by their respective colleges in recognition of their academic achievement, leadership and service to the community. "Our Phi Theta Kappa students have earned this recognition with their exemplary service, leadership, and academic



achievements," said NWFSC President Dr. Devin Stephenson.

For more information on the Sigma Mu chapter of Phi Theta Kappa at NWFSC, contact Selin Apak at ptk@nwfsc.edu.

Jason Belcher, Chair of the OCSD Citizens Oversight Committee, addressed the School Board Feb. 27 with a progress report of Half Cent

Education News

SalesTaxspendingandprojects.

Large projects currently in progress include: classroom additions being built at Crestview (8) classrooms), Elliott Point (8 classrooms), Laurel Hill (4 classrooms) and Silver

Sands (4 classrooms); land for cafetoriums is being prepared and construction will begin soon at Edwins, Bob Sikes, Plew, Shalimar, Wright and Ruckel; and multipurpose buildings are under construction at Baker, Choctaw, Crestview, Fort Walton Beach and Niceville.

The Okaloosa County School District seeks qualified personnel to join its team for the 2023-2024 school year. The district's free job fair will take place at Edge Elementary Saturday, April 1, 9-11 a.m. A variety of career paths are available; career changers and veterans are welcome and there are opportunities for military spouses. Principals and other district administrators will interview and possibly hire candidates on the spot. For more information, call (850) 833-5855 or scan the QR code on the flier to register. Edge Elementary School's address is 300 Hwy 85N, Niceville.

Walton County School District welcomed a new addition in January when the school board, Superintendent A. R. Hughes, Principal Nathan Smith and Freeport Middle School students pitched the first shovels of sand to commemorate the groundbreaking of a new Freeport Middle School at Hammock Bay. After a brief ceremony, the group moved to the newly renovated Freeport Elementary School for a ribbon cutting and grand opening of principal Kristen Lewis's new administrative building and student cafetorium.

Girl Scout Cadette Allison is completing her Silver Award, the highest award she can receive as a Cadette, by organizing a before school club that will provide CPR and first responder training for middle school students. She also seeks donations to create first aid kits that will be student accessible and strategically located throughout the school. As of Feb. 24, the after-school club has 30 student participants. If your student is interested in participating and/or if you are able to make either a monetary or item(s) for first aid kits donation, call Allison: (317) 690-7467 or caiken74@yahoo.com.





FROM SUPERINTENDENT MARCUS CHAMBERS

The U.S. Surgeon General declared youth vaping a national epidemic in 2018. During the 2021-2022 school year, the number of reported vaping incidents in Florida schools nearly doubled from the previous year. In Okaloosa County, where the majority of our students make good choices every day, we are not immune to this crisis, as we have seen a spike in the number of students possessing, distributing and/or using electronic cigarettes on our campuses.

Our students' health and safety are my No. 1 priority. I appreciate your active involvement not

OCSD Launches Anti-Vaping Campaign

only in your student's academic success but also in their health. When a student makes the decision to vape at school, both are affected.

My hope is that through the launch of this district anti-vaping campaign, we can all do a better job identifying the signs of vaping among students, know and share information on the negative health effects with our students, and be very clear about the discipline consequences involved with vaping.

I am very grateful if your child has made the decision to not vape, and we will do everything we can to reinforce that wise choice each and every day. For those who are vaping, we will work with parents to provide educational resources and contacts for community agencies that may be able to provide assistance.

According to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention, nearly one out of every 10 middle and high school students uses electronic vaping products. Vaping is the act of inhaling a vapor produced by an electronic vaporizer or electronic cigarette, which heats a liquid to generate an aerosol. The aerosol can contain harmful chemicals and particles that are inhaled deep into the lungs. Common additives used in these devices, depending on brand and type, may include nicotine, caffeine, cannabinoids (such as marijuana) and potentially other illicit drugs. Nicotine is highly addictive and exposure may harm the parts of the adolescent brain that control attention, learning, mood and impulse control. Research has also shown that electronic cigarettes have resulted in a dramatic increase in marijuana use by students in the form of THC oil, which can be vaped.

School administrators often find that parents may not recognize the signs of vaping or the devices themselves. The liquids that are vaporized come in many different flavors and sometimes smell fruity, which may appeal to children. The devices come in different shapes and sizes. Some common styles we see resemble a thick pen, a stylus for an iPad or a USB flash drive. Some devices are disposable, while others



require a refill cartridge. Because of their small size, they can easily be hidden on a person or blend in with a normal backpack or pencil case.

The use and possession of all tobacco and/or intoxicating products is illegal for those under 21. Students are not permitted to use, possess, or distribute tobacco products, electronic smoking devices, or their components (including lighters) while on school property. In an effort to deter students from vaping on campus, vape sensors are being installed in school restrooms. If a student is found to be using, possessing or distributing any tobacco or smoking device, the student will be subject to disciplinary action as outlined in School Board Policy, ranging from the Student Training Program (STP) to expulsion, depending on the content of the smoking device. The goal of this campaign is not to be punitive, but to educate our students on the dangers of vaping and encourage them to make choices that have a positive impact on both their health and education.

Superintendent Marcus Chambers kicked off the Okaloosa County School District's Anti-Vape Campaign alongside Sheriff Aden in a video message on the District's Social Media accounts and Website in February. In the video, Chambers and Aden express their intent with this campaign is to help students make the right choices and deter them from vaping while educating families about the consequences of vaping on school property as outlined in Okaloosa County School Board Policy. The video can be accessed here: https://youtu.be/R7vKeAjcNIY.



Northwest Florida State College is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) to award associate and baccalaureate degrees. Degree-granting institutions also may offer credentials such as certificates and diplomas at approved degree levels. Questions about the accreditation of Northwest Florida State College may be directed in writing to the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges at 1866 Southern Lane, Decatur, GA 30033-4097, by calling (404) 679-4500, or by using information available on SACSCOC's website (www.sacscoc.org).

April 2023

Military

Museum Honors Vietnam POWs

POWs honored that night in-

Brig. Gen. George "Bud"

Col. Richard A. Dutton,

Day, USAF, Ret (Feb 24 1925-

USAF, Ret (April 24, 1930-Dec

The Air Force Armament Museum Foundation held a reception to honor Okaloosa County's Vietnam POWs in March at the Air Force Armament Museum 100 Museum Drive. The event honored all former Vietnam POWs from Okaloosa County who served in the United States Air Force.

All proceeds from the auction benefitted the Air Force Armament Museum Foundation.

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?
- 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.



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PHOTOS: DOUG STAUFFER



Col. Keith Hall, USAF, Ret Col. Howard Hill, USAF, Ret Col. Ed Hubbard, USAF, Ret Col. Ron Webb, USAF, Ret Lt Col. Dave Gray, USAF, Ret

The event was an opportunity for the community to learn more about the contribution of these individuals and the sacrifices they made while serving our country.

Sponsors of the event include the Air Force Armament Museum Foundation, the Greater Fort Walton Beach Chamber of Commerce, Eglin Federal Credit Union, Forever Warriors and the Magnolia Grill.

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You've dedicated your life to service but, in retirement, it's time for us to serve you. After years of short- and long-distance moves, settle down in a place you chose for yourself. With a close proximity to military bases and a like-minded community all around, living at Air Force Enlisted Village feels just like coming home. With our neighbors at Eglin Air Force Base and Hurlburt Field, you can still start each morning with the sound of "Reveille" and end your day with the sound of "Retreat."

cluded:

July 27, 2013)

12, 1999)

From independent living to assisted living and memory care, our community will have you confidently thriving at every age. Call us today to schedule a tour and learn why our residents chose us as their next home base.

SCHEDULE A TOUR TODAY!

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850-612-8684 bobhopevillage.us



HAWTHORN HOUSE 850-517-4323 hawthornhouse.us

Team Hurlburt Announces Honorary Commanders

The new Team Hurlburt Honorary Commanders for 2023-2024 are 1 SOW: Jennifer Conoley, President and CEO, Florida's Great Northwest; 1 SOW/CCC: Dawn Massey, Principal, Florosa Elementary; 1 SOMDG: April Sutton, Council Member, City of Mary Esther; 1 SOMSG: Colton Wright, Santa Rosa County Commissioner District 5 and owner, The Tool Shack; 1 SOG: Alan Baggett, Executive Vice President, Building Industry Association of Okaloosa-Walton Counties, Inc.; 1 SOMXG: Amanda Negron, CEO, HSU Educational Foun-

dation; 505 CCW: Bobby Wagner, Mayor of Destin; 505 TTG: Chanda Ryan, President/CEO, Navarre Beach Area Chamber of Commerce; 492 SOW: Steve Rhodes, Senior Corporate Real Estate Representative, Florida Power and Light; 492 SOW/ CCC: Brittney Patterson, Sales Manager, The Island Resort; 492 SOTRG/CC: Lenny Holloway, Youth Services Divisional Commander (Captain), Okaloosa County Sheriff's Office; 492 SOG/CC: Randy Wise, President/Owner, Randy Wise Homes; and 24 SOW: Dr. David Keuss, Senior Pastor, Wright Baptist Church.

A Superior Air Conditioning Co. To Host Vet Lunch in April

You're invited to the next Veteran's and First Responder's Lunch for Okaloosa/Walton county at Faith Assembly Christian Church (aka "The Rock 'n Roll Church") in Miramar Beach on April 11 at Noon.

A new HVAC system will be given away, and you can learn about opportunities to get in-

volved, or, if you are a veteran or first responder, how you can apply to win a new HVAC system.

Are you interested in getting involved and becoming a sponsor? Cost is \$150 per lunch and sponsor benefits include setting up a table, booth, tent or display at the event that you provide;

opportunity to distribute your marketing materials and swag; having your company's logo included on all print material that promote the event (such as rack cards and poster); and addressing the crowd at the mic for a brief description of the service you provide. Lunch is included for you and a guest. 100% of

sponsor dollars cover the costs of the event. To sponsor, or for any questions regarding sponsorship, contact Jimmy Dallas for Walton/Okaloosa events at (850) 896-2955.

Not able to sponsor? No problem! You can still contribute by bringing a smile, a gift basket, coupons, etc. as raffle

prizes for guests. Come join us - and help get the word out to local Veterans and First Responders - so we can all thank the men and women who keep us safe in our communities and our country.



Gala to Combat Veteran Suicide

SOF Missions, a leading non-profit that helps past and present military members suffering from the visible and invisible scars of war, will hold its 7th Annual SOF Missions Destin Gala April 8 at the Henderson Beach Resort.

With a mission of empowering warriors to find purpose and resiliency, the SOF Missions team works hard to reduce and combat suicide among our nation's heroes.

To date, SOF Missions has provided more than \$5 million in care to more than 2,500 warriors

"We are making a difference with your help," said Dr. Damon Friedman, founder and president of SOFM. "Unfortu-

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nately, there are about 20 veteran suicides a day and that is catastrophic. For someone to take

just breaks our hearts."

All proceeds from the gala will go directly to past and present military members all over the country dealing with mental and physical injuries. The funds raised allow a national network of professionals, through Be Resilient Clinics, to offer collaborative, clinical and coordinated care plans for our Nation's heroes in need at no charge.

The evening will be filled with inspiring stories of bravery and redemption from our warriors who have found healing. Enjoy a delicious sit-down dinner live entertainment as well as a silent and live auction. Key-

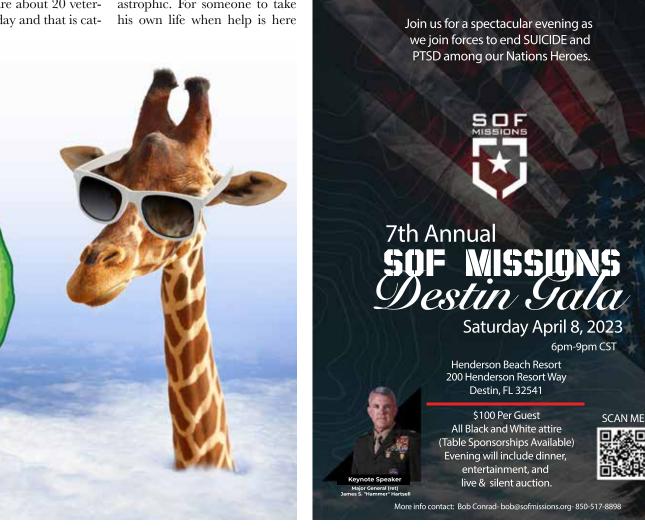
note speaker will be retired Marine Corps Maj. Gen. James S. "Hammer" Hartsell, Executive Director of the Florida Department of Veterans' Affairs.

Tickets are \$100 per person. Info: https://sofmissions.org/ gala/. Attire: black and white

Ticket price includes dinner, dessert, and drinks. Guest speaker and silent auction.

For more information about the SOF Missions Destin Gala. call Kristi Beckman at (850) 503-5201 or email at kristi@ sofmissions.org.





Sifestyle

Fall in Love with Your Home



By Stacy Lingenfelter Sarikanon, Stunning Spaces – Decorating Den Interiors

Redecorating is a great way to make you fall in love with your home all over again! Over time, certain areas can feel stale or might not function as they need to for how you live now. Plus, as often as we are in our homes, our needs change and our house might need to as well.

One of the things many of our clients are doing now is repurposing spaces to suit their needs. Maybe it's a dining room into a relaxation space, or a guest bedroom into a home office.

Start at the Beginning

The front entryway of your home makes the first impression on guests, neighbors and passers-by. Now that spring is in view, there's no excuse to neglect this space. With the hope of entertaining in our homes again, it's worthwhile to make the front entryway just as endearing and welcoming as the rest of your living space.

Here are some tips: Hang new light fixtures.

Beyond functionality, lighting can make or break the mood of your front entryway. If the single pendant light fixture isn't doing it for you anymore, consider a different style, such as sconces.

Add a new piece of furniture.

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TO READ OUR LATEST ISSUE



A bright, beautiful bench can be a great addition. If you don't have enough room for a full bench, add a small chair with a stool that acts as a side table.

Welcome décor.

Accent pieces that complete the entryway play an essential role. An outdoor area rug and/ or welcome mat that greets guests, a gorgeous springtime wreath at the door, flowers and plants are also aromatically and visually stunning.

While a small space, the entryway can be rather intimidating if you've never decorated it before. Don't stress about it or any other space. Call a design consultant from Stunning Spaces - Decorating Den Interiors today. It's your home, so it should feel like yours, not from a showroom. We help bring out your style and vision for your home so you will rekindle why you fell in love with your home in the first place.

Kiwanis Niceville-Valparaiso THANK YOU

The Kiwanis Club of Niceville-Valparaiso, in collaboration with Niceville High School Key Club, would like to thank everyone in the community who participated in our **Pancake Breakfast & Silent Auction.**



We appreciate your support in making our yearly fundraiser successful. Your kindness is invaluable to our mission in helping the needs of the children in our community and local charities.



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clude Sunset Shrimp Boil featuring local wild caught shrimp for Willingham Seafood on April 30 with live music from Parker Willingham, Throwdown Paddle Board Races Thursdays at 6 p.m., Open Mic/Karaoke Wednesdays 6-10 p.m. and a Fun Sailboat Race, Sat., April 8!

Dine-in, pick-up, to-go. Oyster Bar Hours: Monday-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.-9 p.m. Sunday brunch: 9 a.m.-1 p.m.

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Page 18

NWFSC Coach Steve DeMeo Named to FCSAA Men's Basketball Hall of Fame

The Florida College System Activities Association (FCSAA) announced that Steve DeMeo will be inducted in the Men's Basketball Hall of Fame as a member of the Class of 2023. DeMeo is the head coach for the Northwest Florida State College Raiders men's basketball team and will be recognized during this week's FCSAA/NJCAA Region VIII Men's Basketball Tournament at Raider Arena. Spanning three decades and



across all levels of the college game, DeMeo's achievements well-known throughout are

the greater basketball community. In 2015, he took NWFSC to a national title and was named the Spalding NJCAA National Coach

of the Year. Under DeMeo's direction, the Raiders turned in a six-year record of 170-27 (.863),

earned an additional berth in the 2017 NJCAA Final Four, and advanced to the Elite Eight in 2016, 2018, and 2019.

With DeMeo at the helm, the Raiders captured the Panhandle Conference Championship five-straight years (2015-19) and earned four FCSAA State Tournament Championships in 2015, 2016, 2018, and 2019.

"I am extremely proud of Coach DeMeo for earning this recognition as an inductee of the FCSAA Men's Basketball Hall of Fame," said Dr. Devin Stephenson, NWFSC president. "His integrity, passion, and decision-making skills make him one of the best, and this recognition is well-deserved."

For more information on Raider Athletics, please contact Brady Peters, the athletic coordinator, at petersb5@nwfsc.edu.



Off the Hook: Tight Lines

Game Fishing Club (ECBGFC),

Crystal has experience running

marinas, tackle shops, tourna-

ments and events, boat provi-

sions and is passionate about all things fishing. "The momentum of ECBGFC is going strong

and it's exciting to see my vision

first year for ECBGFC, with

more than 225 members and

They held four themed club

meeting events for members to

get together and discuss hot fish-

ing topics, stories and upcoming

events. They also kicked off the

year with a Billfish Extravagan-

za tournament, including 15

boats participating and paying

out more than \$100,000. A

Youth Tournament was next,

with more than 60 youth anglers

participating and tons of prizes

awarded. Then Hit the Gulf, a

month-long tournament where

teams compete by picking two

consecutive days to fish with a

payout over \$20,000. They con-

cluded the year with a black-tie

Sportsman's Ball hosted at the

Destin FWB Convention Cen-

ter, with more than 300 attend-

ees and an awards presentation

to top teams and anglers.

Last year was an incredible

supporting sponsors.

come to life," LaFosse said.

many

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Crystal LaFosse had a vision of starting a fishing club through all her work in the fishing industry, and 2022 was the year she

brought that dream to life: The Emerald Coast Big Game Fishing Club was born.

As the Founder and Director of the Emerald Coast Big

NICEVILLE EAGLES

2023 Golf Fundraising Tournament and Silent Auction

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WHERE: FORT WALTON BEACH GOLF CLUB WHEN: APRIL 29TH. 2023 START TIME: 8:30 AM SHOTGUN START TOURNAMENT FORMAT: 4- PERSON SCRAMBLE SILENT AUCTION: 3:00 PM @ 3rd Planet

REGISTRATION BEGINS AT 0700

Registration Includes: 18 Holes of Golf

- Golf Cart Grab'n Go Jersey Mike's Subs Lunch Gift bags
 - Contests:
 - Putting (from 7:30 am to 2:00 pm)
 - Chipping (from 7:30 am to 2:00 pm)
 - est to the Pin on Hole #6 Clo Longest Drive on Hole #8
 - in-One Contest on Hole #15 (\$10,000
 - Prize!)
 - Hole-in-One Contest on Hole #12 (Surprise!)
 - Surprise!) NOTE: Silent Auction to follow at 3RD PLANET, 3:00 PM 6:00 PM. Finish golfing by 2:00 and meet over a 3rd Planet for Awards Presentations, **Prizes and Silent Auction**

Note: Fort Walton Beach Golf Course will be providing beverage/snack cart during tournament

ponsorship opportunities or for more information ab please contact Jim Bugs "Buglewicz" at (850) 517-7159 or e-mail: jimbugs@cox.net For more information on spo

with sig

ECBGFC's mission is more than just bringing anglers together. It is the only group hosting tournaments on the Gulf Coast that are catch and release for the billfish division to support conservation. "Education, conservation, and giving back to the community is what we strive for," LaFosse said. ECBGFC was able to donate over \$10,000 in 2022 to causes like the Destin High School Fishing Class, and the new Destin For Success Scholarship Program awarding scholarships to art students in Okaloosa and Walton County.

In 2023, LaFosse plans to expand. "We now have a Destin Advisory Board consisting of great people who play a big part in our community and a new



team in Panama City Beach, she said." With plans to add a new chapter in Panama City Beach, more club meetings and tournaments are expected, on top of a new tournament for the Destin Chapter. LaFosse also plans to

Continued on page 20



Know Your Neighbor: Saving a Golf Course Leads to PGA Show

By Lori Leath Smith

Never wanting to learn the game of golf, local resident Barbara Palmgren found herself doing just that when she ended up marrying Lornie, an avid golf player. So, she found a professional and took lessons. "The most important lesson I learned was that golf is a humbling game," Barbara said in her book "Saving a Golf Course." The moment a golfer thinks he or she has the game under control, the next shot lands in the water, the nearby woods or the formidable sand trap, cancelling the illusion of victory. On the plus side, a random long drive or miracle putt can bring the golfer back to play. This cycle of yin and yang continues throughout years of hope and frustration. Golf is a sport that can be enjoyed well in old age if knees and hips cooperate."

Little did Barbara know that years later, not only would she end up helping to save a local golf course, but also write a book about it!

Her book about saving Shalimar Pointe Golf and Country Club is about how the course was almost bulldozed and lost to a developer wanting to build 180 new homes. But Barbara, Lornie and other residents were determined to fight to save it. Many challenges arose as they worked with others to save the course and their way of life for the good of their community.

Barbara's book established her as an expert and caught the attention of the national PGA Merchandising Show organizers. She was invited to teach a class at the largest golf show in the country held in Orlando in



late January. "It's so large that there are golf carts to take folks around!" she said.

Education classes are held for the PGA pros so they can upgrade or document progress as a professional card-carrying PGA pro. "PGA Pros have to accumulate so many points. So, they have to attend the classes," she said. Barbara's class, "Thrive or Survive" was one of those classes. "It was a one-hour class exploring the importance of prioritizing goals as well as being ready for the necessary Plan B's if there is an unforeseen circumstance that could threaten the progress of a course," she said.

Barbara said she wanted

"students" to come away with three main takeaways:

1. The importance of a business plan 2. The importance

of marketing 3. The critical element of communication: verbal, vocal and non-verbal with staff and clients.

"Saving A Golf Course" gave her the background of an actual experience.

Celebrating its 70th anniversary for the largest global golf business gathering of the year, Barbara relayed that all aspects of the golf industry are marketed at the large convention center. "At one end is a huge net with 16-20 range stations where golfers can try out new clubs from all

major manufacturers. Throughout the three days you can see clothing, golf carts, new golf inventions and schedule photoshoots with famous golfers. There are new inventions and you can hit balls." There are various countries merchandising their countries," she said. "Scotland and England are always there." To attend, you must be a PGA Professional, Golf Club Owner or Golf Club Pro, or a Golf Industry Vendor, Pro or Owner. "The golf channel is situated on a high central stage and broadcasts from the event throughout the show," said Barbara.

During the show, people who

were successful during the year receive awards, world-wide golf courses have booths to promote the important courses in their country and, of course, the PGA Pro classes are held.

Closer to home, Barbara is again working with Shalimar Pointe currently under renovation. When she's not trying to save a golf course, you can usually see her hanging around the Heritage Museum of Northwest Florida as board chair working on fundraising events, such as the recent one held at Regatta Bay in Destin. Barbara is also a retired guidance counselor at Niceville High School and an adjunct professor of Communication Arts at the University of West Florida.

Barbara has come a long way since her first aversion to the game. But now she hopes golf will become the center of Okaloosa County. "I want people to see we have a fantastic golf community. We have the presence to be a phenomenal tourism driver," she said.



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Page 20

Turtle Nesting Season Underway Nesting season arrives on our coasts for sea turtles and waterbirds

Nesting season has started for both sea turtles and waterbirds in the Sunshine State. The Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) reminds people they can help protect vulnerable nesting sea turtles and waterbirds this spring and summer while visiting Florida's coastal habitats.

Because our state's shorelines are critical for sea turtle and waterbird nesting, beachgoers can have a big impact on their nesting success. To help nesting sea turtles and waterbirds, give them space, minimize disturbances, and keep beaches clean and dark.

Obstacles on the beach can prevent sea turtles from nesting as they crawl across the sand to lay their eggs. Trash, holes in the sand and other obstacles can also prevent sea turtle hatchlings from reaching the water once they emerge from their nests. Food scraps attract predators, such as raccoons and crows, that prey on sea turtle hatchlings, shorebird eggs and chicks. Litter on beaches can entangle sea turtles, birds and other wildlife. Beachgoers can help our native wildlife by stashing all trash, filling in human-made holes in the sand, and removing boats, beach toys and furniture from the beach before sunset. Fishing line can be deadly to sea turtles, waterbirds and other wildlife, so be sure to dispose of it properly. To find a monofilament recycling station near you, visit mrrp.MyFWC.com.

Any lighting can misdirect and disturb nesting sea turtles and their hatchlings, leading them away from the ocean and toward potential danger. Beachgoers should use natural starlight to see on the beach at night and avoid using flashlights or cellphones. Anyone living along or visiting Florida beaches can do their part by putting porch, parking or deck lights out and closing curtains after dark to avoid harming nesting and hatchling sea turtles on the beach. If lighting could still be visible from the beach, be sure it



is long, low and shielded. Getting too close (50 feet or

less) to nesting sea turtles can cause them to leave the beach

before they complete nesting. Remember - it is illegal to harm or disturb nesting sea turtles and their nests, eggs and hatchlings. Shorebirds, seabirds and wading birds also need plenty of space to prevent them from flushing from their breeding sites, leaving vulnerable eggs and chicks exposed to the elements and predators. Egg temperatures can increase to lethal levels after just a few minutes of direct sun exposure. Shorebirds and seabirds nest in shallow scrapes in the sand and their eggs and chicks are well-camouflaged, making them vulnerable to being stepped on unless people look out for them and avoid walking though flocks of birds.

In general, it is best to keep at least 300 feet from nesting birds and to avoid walking through flocks of birds or entering posted areas. Pet owners can also help by keeping dogs at home or on a short leash and away from wildlife on pet-friendly beaches.

TIGHT LINES

continued from page 18

expand the Hit The Gulf tour- Los Suenos, Costa Rica.

nament by adding a private and charter boat division, along with a tournament later this year in Los Suenos, Costa Rica. Membership is expected to increase as well in 2023. ECB-GFC offers individual and team memberships, which include spouses at a very affordable price. "Don't let the words Big Game fool you! Our Club is open to inshore and offshore anglers and anyone that just wants to be part of a great community organization," said LaFosse. Memberships are inclusive to ECBGFC events and tournaments at all locations and include a ticket to the Sportsman's Ball.

"We truly appreciate the support and welcome everyone on board," said LaFosse. "Our community can get involved by

LIC # CAC1819748

Family, Locally and Veteran owned not only joining the club, but also being a part of our Destin for Success Fundraising Event that makes giving back possible."

For more information, visit the website at www.ECBGFC. com or get social with us on Facebook & Instagram @ecbgfc.

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS Destin Chapter:

April 1 - Inshore Tournament at Boathouse April 13 - Club Meeting at Harbor Docks May 11-13 - Billfish Extravaganza Tournament at Harbor Docks June 1 - Club Meeting at Harbor Docks July 29-30 - Youth Tournament at Harbor Docks Aug. 10 - September 11 - Hit the Gulf Tournament at Harbor Docks Aug. 12 - Destin for Success Fundraising Event at Harbor Docks Sept. 16 - Sportsman's Ball at the DFWBF Convention Center



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Wellness

Governor, First Lady Take On Opioid Crisis

BY DOUG STAUFFER

The governor, first lady, and guests gathered for an Opioid Crisis press conference in Destin recently. Gov. Ron DeSantis has directed the Florida Department of Health, the Florida Department of Children and Families, and the Agency for Health Care Administration to partner together to implement a network of addiction care.

There were more than 8,000 overdose deaths in Florida in 2022. Many families are devastated, and society must implement ever more drastic measures. Successful legal action brought by the DeSantis administration against the pharmaceutical manufacturers has opened the doors to settlement. funds in excess of \$200 million. Those funds are being rolled out throughout the state to aid the fight against opioid addiction. They also focus on education concerning the dangers of fentanyl flowing over the open borders into our streets.

"We want to stop illicit drugs from entering our state, hold dealers accountable, educate

Floridians on the dangers and provide treatment that breaks the addiction cycle," said De-Santis. "Opioid addiction is plaguing our state and nation, and we are seeing more fatalities related to overdose than ever before, with fentanyl being trafficked through the southern border. We will use funds from the opioid settlement in the most efficient and effective way possible to end addiction in Florida."

The Coordinated Opioid Recovery (CORE) is the first in the United States, placing Florida as a leader in sustainable addiction and opioid recovery. Initially trial tested in 12 counties, the CORE program has expanded to 17 counties statewide. The success rates of the program have proven that it is working. First lady DeSantis premiered a clip from the videos created for high school assemblies.

"The urgency to combat substance abuse is only escalating – we are no longer talking about the drugs from 10 years ago, and the key to protecting our children is prevention,"

said Casey De-Santis. "Through 'The Facts. Your Future,' materials like what was shown today, and improved substance abuse prevention instruction in schools, students are educated to make decisions that protect their health and see with their own eyes the dangerous impact of illicit drug use. In Florida, we are equipping stu-

dents with the tools they need to overcome challenges and withstand peer pressure to say no to drug use."

Standard treatment programs have had limited success in creating long-term recoveries for this lifelong illness. This innovative program is the first of its kind in the country, expanding a state-supported cohesive, coordinated addiction care system for individuals suffering

pr. Kyle Simmers



from substance use disorder.

This comprehensive approach expands every aspect of overdose response and treats all primary and secondary impacts of substance use disorder. From care and peer navigators directly within an emergency department to sustainable overall health care, this structure disrupts the revolving door of addiction and overdose.

The network does not solely

depend on emergency response for overdoses and substance use disorder, ensuring patients are also stabilized and treated for coexisting medical and mental health conditions. Patients will need dental care, primary care, psychiatric evaluation, maternal care, and social support services. Social support services can address career training, housing, or food insecurity.

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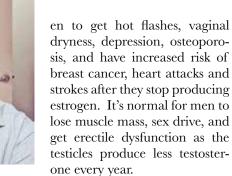


shana Haywood, APRA

() Wellness



By DR. RICHARD CHERN, MD How many times have you been told, "Labs look normal, see ya next year?" But that voice inside says "I don't feel normal." Why is that? Well, because it's normal to age, get tired, gain weight, have achy joints, thinning hair, move slower, and have brain fog. It's normal for wom-



Are you happy with normal? I was living a normal life before I started The Hormone Restoration Center. I had normal testosterone and a normal thyroid. I thought falling asleep after lunch was normal, I thought my cold feet were normal, I thought my brain fog was normal. Let me tell you what most doctors

What is Normal?

don't know, don't understand or don't believe. We don't want to live a normal life. We want to live an optimal life.

After I got treated I realized I had been on the wrong path for years. Living every day feeling optimal is something that cannot be described, it has to be experienced. I felt so indescribably fantastic that I stopped everything else and opened The Hormone Restoration Center. Our goal at The Hormone Restoration Center is not to get you back to normal, go see your doctor for that. We want you to feel optimal! Do you remember the last time you had a great day? How about two great days? How about a month of great days? Can you even imagine how that feels?

The Hormone Restoration Center starts with a simple blood draw done right here in our office. You can choose from the \$99 basic or the \$295 comprehensive lab which includes nearly 60 different tests and a genetic test. The "big labs" charge \$1700 for the same tests. You can see the doctor the next week! At the consultation you will receive an in-depth lesson about what is going on, why you feel like you do and how to fix it.

Many patients (and doctors) have no idea that a normal testosterone, estrogen and thyroid can wreak havoc to the body. When was the last time a doctor listened to you instead of the piece of paper with the normal labs?

"Great news Mrs Jones, the labs are normal, you just need to diet and exercise."

"But I feel..."

"Now, now, Mrs Jones, you're not getting any younger. This is just a normal part of aging."

Yes, it is, and I don't want any part of it!

Dr. Richard Chern, MD uses bio-identical hormone pellet therapy and his staff and providers are all BioTE certified. Call 850-837-1271 to make an appointment.



By Kay Leaman, Health Architect

Controlling Acid Reflux

Acid Reflux happens occasionally to many of us and for many others it is a consistent problem and concern. So, what is it?

Acid Reflux happens when the sphincter muscle located at the lower end of the esophagus relaxes at the wrong time (fails to close), allowing stomach acid to back up into the esophagus. We can experience a burning in the chest (heartburn), belching, nausea, a bitter taste, discomfort in the upper abdomen or a dry cough. Complications that can arise from regular episodes such as ulcers (stomach lining is exposed to bacteria that damages the cells which create the ulcer), inflammation or difficulty swallowing.

Risk factors include obesity, Hiatal hernia (bulging at top of stomach above the diaphragm), connective tissue disorders like scleroderma or delayed stomach



thehormonerestorationcenter.com



emptying. If you smoke, overeat (clean your plate syndrome), eat late at night, use aspirin on a regular basis or enjoy a frequent diet of coffee, alcohol or fried and fatty foods, you can aggravate this condition.

Rolaids/Tums, etc. are not the answer. These products neutralize stomach acid, which hampers the absorption of nutrients such as iron and B12. The same occurs with medications that coat the stomach. Taking these products on a regular basis can increase the chance of becoming anemic or developing osteoporosis. NOTE: If you're experiencing the first signs of GERD, consuming these for a short period of time can give the esophagus time to heal.

From a holistic view, GERD is caused by low stomach acid. To determine if you have low stomach acid: On an empty stomach drink 1/4 tsp. baking soda in 1 cup cold water. If you burp within five minutes, your stomach acids are low. Some things you can do to increase stomach acids: never drink during a meal, relax and focus on breathing before eating, don't overeat, only take medications/supplements with food unless the directions specifically say otherwise.

Natural medications:

Aloe: Decolorized and purified aloe vera juice may be a safe and effective treatment for reducing reflux symptoms. It also has gastro protective proper-

ties and can help us protect our esophagus from reflux. If the reflux has already caused damage the healing capacity of aloe vera will also come in handy to combat those small ulcers that may have resulted.

Digestive Enzymes with or without HCL or Pylori Plex (deglycyrrhizinated) and lastly,

Gaviscon-Advanced (alginate). If you consider the Gaviscon-Advanced, verify it has only this name. This product creates a physical barrier preventing the stomach acid from coming up. After taking this medication drink no more than one or two swallows of water to ensure the foam is not watered down.

Diet:

Less fatty food, alcohol, spicy foods, coffee :(.

More whole grains and fibers such as ginger, leafy greens, brown rice, coconut, celery, berries, melon bananas, fennel, avocado, apples and pears.

As we learn more we can become better advocates for our health. To your health.

HealthyDay HealthyLife succeed@hdhl@gmail.com

Page 23

Fitness: Traditional vs. Functional



By LISA LEATH TURPIN, HEALTH & WELLNESS COACH

Many of you set New Year's resolutions to lose weight and get healthier. Through diets, cleanses and exercise, some are well on their way to success.

Is this you? If it is, you're probably ready to: A) bump it up a notch, or B) freshen and change things up to keep it interesting. If this is not you, and you've struggled with what to do, read on, because the following should help either way—and it's never too late to start.

We've all heard of weight training or lifting weights to gain strength and increase muscle size. Traditionally, athletes, body builders and power lifters have used machines, dumbbells and various bars to focus on targeting and isolating certain muscles individually to create size and optimal change to that single muscle. They work in very specific rep ranges and repeated sets. This is now coined, Traditional Fitness Training.

But, fairly recently, the buzz word, Functional Fitness Training, came about and many be-

came confused. The differences between the two are their goals and outcomes. Where traditional fitness focuses on the single muscle dynamically, functional fitness focuses on movements that help prepare the body for everyday life activities. Functional exercises are compound, multi-joint combinations that when done frequently, will create synergy, balance and coordination for overall body strength. So, functional training focuses on the body as a whole, instead of focusing on any single muscle alone. Examples of traditional training would be resistance exercises, such as arm curls, leg presses, dip machines, bench press, lat pulldowns, etc. Examples of functional training would body-weight movements such as pushups, planks, squats, lunges, power movements or using an apparatus such as battle ropes, kettle bells, medicine balls, etc. Push, pull, twist, bend and balance are concepts used in functional training. It's about movement and developing core muscles and muscle movement balance. Pilates and Yoga are great examples of functional training.

Both functional and traditional expend calories; both strengthen muscles, so which is better? It depends on your goals, but I feel that both are important and both should be incorporated to create a balanced exercise regime. This is called cross training (not to be confused with CrossFit, which is a franchise). Cross training means to change up your training styles so that you get benefits from a mixture of modalities to become well-rounded. Cross training is commonly used in cardio fitness to keep your workouts challenging and more interesting. Rotating through running, biking, swimming or rowing, for example, will ultimately burn more calories and minimize overuse injuries one gets from performing the same motion over and over again.

When I was studying Exercise Science in college, the term "functional training" didn't exist. We used the term, "sports specific training,"which meant you use certain exercises that mimic and will enhance/train an athlete for THEIR sport. You train a line-backer differently than you train a gymnast; and you train a gymnast differently than a swimmer. So, in the same way, functional training is for everyday "lifestyle athletes" such as moms, dads, teachers, carpenters, fishermen, etc. If you lifestyle athletes cross train the two methods, traditional training will develop more strength in each muscle and then functional training will teach those muscles how to use that strength more fluidly and precisely. In doing this, your body will be more prepared and less caught off guard when life throws a curve ball.

My advice? Mix it up, be active and enjoy life more!

Do you want a personal trainer or have a fitness question for Lisa? Email BeActive850@gmail. com. Lisa Leath Turpin is a degreed and certified health and fitness lifestyle coach and consultant who has devoted her life to motivating and strengthening the body and mind of others. With almost 30 years' experience, Lisa has a B.S. degree in Sports & Fitness Management from the University of Alabama, developed and managed the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' Health & Wellness Facility and programs in Huntsville, Ala., is board certified by the National Board of Fitness Examiners and possesses

certifications from AFAA, Polestar/ Balanced Body, Reebok U, SCW Fitness and American Heart Association. She is currently a group exercise leader at Destin Health & Fitness and an in-



dependent personal trainer in the Destin area, diversely and extensively trained in classical and modern Pilates, lifestyle management, personal training, group exercise and post-rehabilitation.





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Business



By MAURICE STOUSE, FINANCIAL Advisor and Branch Manager

As we head into March, we are seeing some early trends or patterns for investors. First among these are short-term interest rates. The Federal Reserve raised rates to 4.75 percent in early February. That was a .25 percent smaller rate increase than in its previous meeting. We are seeing short-term savings rates and CDs yielding at or near this level as well. Investors are left wondering if rates will continue to climb.

The Federal Reserve is keeping a close watch on inflation which, after the February report, has prices going sideways for now (as opposed to continuing to go down). Digging deep into those numbers, we see that goods are down to 3 percent

D TheFirst

and wages are now growing at working again. 4.3 percent.

The cost of services continues to be resilient in the face of inflation. Wages may continue to wane as the white-collar labor force is seen as over employed and the same for many blue-collar professions. Restaurant and hospitality businesses continue to be seen as under-employed. There has been a lot of news about layoffs in the tech sector. While significant, those workers account for less than 2 percent of the workforce. Many of those returning to the workforce also see being productive and industrious as a key to a happy and fulfilled life.

We are also learning more about the Great Unretirement or the growth of the so-called "unretiring." Many Americans who retired during the pandemic are coming back to work. That is a sign of relief to employers who report they need the talent and more workers. The recent passing of Secure Act 2.0 pushes back for many the required minimum distribution from their retirement savings. Perhaps they can let those assets grow longer if they are

RAYMOND JAMES

Nowhere is the need greater for workers than in health care - nurses and other medical professionals are in demand. Next, we see the growing interest and return in bonds or the bond market. Bond prices have continued to firm, and many investment institutions recommend that investors look at bonds or fixed income again as they see the total return potential much brighter for investors. They also continue to suggest that investors keep their duration at or around six years, which is in line with the Barclays bond index. That would indicate intermediate maturities or average life of bonds.

We continue to suggest investors will see greater potential with longer term bonds and duration, particularly in municipal bonds. We take note that issuance of municipal bonds is down significantly year over year with a decline of over 20 percent. Many issuers may not want to lock themselves in to long-term rates and might still be in the condition where they do not have the pressing need to issue new bonds.

We also see and hear a lot about higher yielding lower quality bonds. While those can be attractive, we suggest caution because if the economy were to weaken, that could hurt the market value of these securities.

Next, are returns. The S&P (which is tech-heavy) is up 6.8 percent, the Dow is up 1.7 percent, the Nasdaq 13.3 percent. Bonds are up approximately 1 percent and the U.S. dollar is up .3 percent (that is a bit of recovery after the dollar has been down for the last few months). Gold is up 1.4 percent. Note - we recently learned, after researching the World Gold Council, that the U.S. by far has the highest stores of gold in the world at more than 8,000 tons.

The strongest performing sectors are consumer discretionary (Tesla, Amazon, Lowes are examples of that) at 16.4 percent. Tesla, and now Ford, have announced price cuts of their electrical vehicles. The adoption of EVs worldwide has been strong but has yet to catch on in the USA. Automotive News reported recently on potential concern among dealers with regard to EVs.

Communication Services with stocks like Disney, Meta (Facebook) and Alphabet (Google) are up 13.9 percent and technology (with stocks like Apple and Microsoft) is up 13.8 percent at this writing. We observe there are just a few stocks where investor appetite has helped drive these strong returns. It is interesting that socalled growth stocks are off to a stronger start than value stocks. Value stocks would tend to have lower volatility and higher dividends but obviously they have not had as strong returns. The Dow, it could be argued, is more value-oriented and is off to one of its slowest starts since 1934.

Real estate (many being made up of REITS like Realty Income Corp, financials (banks) and materials (like Alcoa for example) have had strong starts to the year as well. Banks, both large and small, have seen loans growing. It is interesting to note that with layoffs in the tech sector, rising federal funds and mortgage rates and decreasing money supply have not hurt the jobs sector. Unemployment in the USA is near a 53-year low.

Energy, after almost two strong years, is flat for the year. The winter in Europe has been milder, the release of the strategic petroleum reserve and other factors have contributed to a strong supply and hence the prices of oil and natural gas have come down, natural gas the most dramatically of the two. We continue to watch the future of alternative sources of energy and see that many firms (Raymond James, Energy Stat, Jan. 30) openly wonder if nuclear energy is to start growing again. Construction of nuclear plants, mainly outside the USA, is growing. Within the USA, only one utility has a new nuclear facility coming online, that is Southern Company.

Health Care (pharmaceuticals like Johnson and Johnson, or broad based like CVS), utilities and consumer staples (like Walmart or Coca Cola) have lagged the market. In an environment such as this, we would expect consumer staples and healthcare to outperform so we suggest that investors be sure they include these in their equity plans.

Please note that this is not a recommendation to purchase or

sell the stocks of the companies mentioned. As investors contemplate their needs and objectives, we add that we believe that a portfolio should be diversified by security selection as well as asset class and that time frame, risk tolerance, tax status and ultimate objective should be the guiding light in a well-balanced portfolio.

There are special risks associated with investing with bonds such as interest rate risk, market risk, call risk, prepayment risk, credit risk, reinvestment risk and unique tax consequences. Investments in municipal securities may not be appropriate for all investors, particularly those who do not stand to benefit from the tax status of the investment. Municipal bond interest is not subject to federal income tax but may be subject to AMT, state or local taxes. U.S. government bonds and Treasuries are guaranteed by the government and, if held to maturity, offer a fixed rate of return and guaranteed principal value. CDs are insured by the FDIC and offer a fixed rate of return, whereas the return and principal value of investment securities fluctuate with changes in market conditions. An investment in a money market fund is neither insured nor guaranteed by the FDIC or any other government agency. Although the fund seeks to preserve the value of your investment at \$1 per share, it is possible to lose money by investing in the fund. A fixed annuity is a long-term, tax-deferred insurance contract designed for retirement. Fixed annuities have limitations. If you decide to take your money out early, you may face fees called surrender charges. Plus, if you're not yet 59¹/₂, you may also have to pay an additional 10 percent tax penalty on top of ordinary income taxes. You should also know that a fixed annuity contains guarantees and protections that are subject to the issuing insurance company's ability to pay for them. The S&P 500 is an unmanaged index of 500 widely held stocks that is generally considered representative of the U.S. stock market. Inclusion of this index is for illustrative purposes only. Keep in mind that individuals cannot

Maurice Stouse

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Amy Parrish

Will Interest Rates Continue to Climb?



BY JOE CAPERS

Although I encourage everyone to engage in an insurance review at any time during the year, this time of year is the perfect time to resolve to better protect your family's home and belongings.

When was the last time you reviewed your insurance?

The review should include an analysis of current exposures, a review current policies and limits, with recommendations to maximize protection by offering competitive alternatives.

As a good rule of thumb, when there's a change in your life, more likely than not, your insurance will need to change, too. Some of the more common events that you may have experienced are if you have gotten married, had a baby, added a four-legged friend to your family, sent a kid off to college, a major renovation, bought a car, boat, RV, ATV or trampoline, replaced your roof, added a pool, made a big purchase like a diamond ring, fine art or a set of golf clubs, or started a business, your insurance is most likely out-of-date and it is time for a review.

There are many benefits to an annual insurance review.

First of all, in the instance of a loss, you'll want your policy to be up-to-date to ensure that you're covered. During an insurance review, your agent will go over specific details about your life and insurance policies to make sure that all your needs are met. Secondly, you may find something that you don't currently have covered, a discount that you aren't taking advantage of, or an extra coverage to add at no additional cost. Finally, your agent can help you understand your current coverages and go over any changes in your premium cost.

Below are a few important items to address in an annual review and this checklist will keep you prepared:

• Your Auto Policy. Don't make the mistake of setting it and forgetting it and letting the policy automatically renew every period.

• Change in Vehicle Use. Maybe you no longer commute to work or the distance may be shorter.

• Older Vehicles. Vehicles depreciate so review increasing deductibles or eliminating coverage.

• New Drivers. Additional or youthful drivers should always be added to prevent gaps.

Your Home Policy. Like the Auto Policy, don't renew without a review each year.

• Home Value. Reconstruction costs have risen significantly, so the limits need to increase.

• Renovations. This cost must be considered and coverages adjusted accordingly.

• New Collections and Valuables. Did you add valuables to insure?

Your Annual Insurance Review is Vital

• Home Inventory Checklist. This comprehensive list should be extremely detailed with photos and receipts, updated often and securely stored

• Umbrella and Flood should be evaluated as well.

• Your Life Insurance. Placing life insurance on those we care most about is a perfect act of love.

• Life Events. Marriage, children, and retirement should trigger a coverage change.

• Beneficiaries. Knowing who should receive the benefits sometimes without any disputes is the key.

• Lifestyle Changes. As are

income, assets and standard of living increase, so should the amount of benefit.

• The time is now. The best time to establish or expand the protection foundations is when we are the youngest and healthiest.

There's a reason to review your insurance policies each year. And there's an even better reason to listen to your agent's professional recommendations based on your situation and their experience and expertise. Your insurance policies are there to protect not just your life and property, but your bank account as well.

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INTEREST RATES

continued from previous page

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🔅 Musing



By Pastor Doug Stauffer

During this time of year, Christians celebrate Christ's resurrection (called Easter). Upon dying, the soul of the Lord Jesus Christ left his dead body and spent three days and nights in the heart of the earth. On Sunday morning, his soul was resurrected and reunited with his

A Pastor's Ponderings: **Do You Have Resurrection Contentment?**

body in the tomb. Christians are promised a future day when the departed souls will again gloriously reunite with their bodies. The Bible calls this the Blessed Hope. But I want to focus on the here and now – another topic in light of God's promises – contentment. The Apostle Paul tells us that we should be content no matter our state.

"Not that I speak in respect of want: for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content" (Philippians 4:11).

The words content and contentment infer that one is satisfied with life's conditions. Living contently is the opposite of wanting and covetousness and is strongly associated with godliness (1 Timothy 6:6). No one is born into the world content. Contentment is a learned behavior that believers must practice consistently throughout life. Yet, once learned and regularly practiced, Christians will experience contentment despite their circumstance. Unfortunately, far too often. Christians exhibit no more contentment than non-Christians, coveting the things of the world more and more with each passing year. Imagine a world where everyone emulates Job.

Seemingly, Job possessed many of man's most treasured possessions: health, wealth and a strong family unit. Suddenly, he lost them all. Job lost his health, his possessions, and his children. He also lost the esteem and approbation of his wife and friends. These events very quickly could have devastated and embittered him. Yet, rather than expressions of doom and gloom, Job's words offer a profound glimpse into the depths of his contentment.

Amid his heartache, Job exhibited an essential truth. A Christian's material and physical blessings are entirely within the Lord's control and should never influence one's relationship with the Lord or others. Job also pointed out that man will depart



this world in the same condition he entered: without one shred of material wealth. Ultimately, a Christian's possessions or the lack thereof reflect God's provisions; therefore, a lack of contentment demonstrates an unwillingness to trust the Lord.

Since God is responsible for man's possessions or the lack thereof, some Christians question why God gives some things while He withholds from others. Romans 8:28 contains one of the answers as it points out that "all things work together for good." This truth does not imply that everything in the believer's life is enjoyable or good. It means that the summation of all things combined is good! God works in every segment of a believer's life. He merges every aspect so that even the supposed bad things result in what is "good" according to the will of God. So long as God is in control, contentment teaches satisfaction. A person's conditions, circumstances, and possessions are appropriate because God has worked everything together for that individual's good.

The Lord expressed His care for Israel during the 40 years of its wilderness wanderings. Few people would consider the wilderness a place of plenty. Yet, the wilderness was the place where God furnished Israel "a table" (Psalm 78:19), "brought streams also out of the rock" (Psalm 78:16), and kept their shoes and clothes from deteriorating (Deuteronomy 29:5). God could honestly say to His people that they wandered in a barren but "lacked nothing" (Deuteronomy 2:7).

Why not renew your commitment to serve the Lord even more in the coming days? Things are changing fast, but God is unchanging. God is still in control, and prayer changes things. The Bible says to look up because your redemption draweth nigh. (Luke 21:28).

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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BY SEAN DIETRICH

Dan Lovette became an usher at the Baptist church on Easter Sunday, March 26th, 1961. He stood at the door shaking hands, passing out bulletins. Nobody knew Dan.

Weeks earlier, Pastor Lovette had introduced Dan as his older brother.

Dan was a tall man with a soft voice and rough skin. He wore a brown suit that was too small. He hardly spoke. He sat on the front row during sermons. After service, he smoked cigarettes behind the church. People asked the pastor questions about Dan, but he was quiet when it came to his older brother.

Over the years, folks saw a lot of Dan Lovette. He could be seen pushing a mower, changing the church sign, painting clapboards, passing out bulletins on Sundays, or cleaning the sanctuary on Mondays.

Dan lived in a back room of the church. His earthly belongings were: a cot, a hot plate, a coffee pot, a transistor radio, a shaving kit, and one brown suit.

Nobody can forget the Sunday that the pastor announced he would be baptizing Dan after service. This surprised people. Most thought it was strange that the pastor's own brother had never been baptized. But no explanation was given.

So, sixty-four church members stood near the creek, watching the tall quiet man wade into shallow water behind his younger brother.

It was a simple ordeal. Down Dan went. Up he came. Applause. Bring on the banana pudding.

But life was not all pudding and baptisms. In 1974, tragedy hit the church. The pastor was in a car accident on his way home from Montgomery, doctors thought he'd had a stroke while driving. Dan sat beside his brother's hospital bed without sleep or food. He lived beside his brother's bed, taking care of



his brother's every need.

The next Sunday, Dan Lovette took the pulpit with tired eyes. It was a hushed room. It was the first time any members of the church ever heard more than a sentence from old Dan.

"Most of you know me as Dan Lovette," he began. "But that ain't my name. Real name's Springfield. Daniel Springfield..."

It was so quiet you could hear a Bible drop.

Dan went on to tell the story about how in 1961, Pastor Lovette had been walking into a department store when he saw Dan standing outside, begging for money. Dan was homeless, looking for handouts-or a bottle to cure his shakes.

Pastor Lovette treated Dan to supper. Then the pastor carried Dan home to live with his wife and kids. He helped Dan. He sat with him through hard withdrawals, he took Dan to sobriety meetings, he bought Dan a brown suit for Sundays.

Dan went on: "I felt so bad for all his charity, I came close to leaving. But the pastor just told me one night, 'You can't leave us, Dan. Why, we're brothers, you'n me."

Dan had never been anyone's brother before. He'd never been anyone's anything. All he'd ever been was hard up. But not anymore.

So he got rid of his old name, and his old habits. And if I had room to tell you the rest of the story, I would. But there's no need. You already have the important parts.

What I will tell you is this: If you're ever driving a lonesome two-lane highway in the middle-of-nowhere, Alabama, and you see a dilapidated, clapboard meeting house, pull over.

Go to the rear cemetery. A few graves have flowers. Most don't. There's a marker for Pastor Lovette, and one for his wife. And there's a headstone for a man who died sober, with

his adopted family surrounding him.

The stone reads: "Big Brother Dan."

guy at a department store. But now he has a mansion.

He was just some homeless







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Sean of the South

🀞 Arts & Music

The Hills are Alive with the Sound of Music!

BY ANNA FISHER, ASSOCIATE ARTISTIC DIRECTOR, ECTC

Raise your hand if you've ever come upon an open grassy field and spread your arms out while twirling and singing, "The hills are alive, with the sound of music?" No one? Just me? Okay even if you ignored that impulse, I know you wanted to breathe in the fresh spring air and twirl with abandon as you embodied one of your favorite moments from "Sound of Music." We all have our favorite memories from this beautiful Rodgers and Hammerstein classic stage play and

movie. Everyone learned to sing the notes along to "doe, a deer, a female deer" and find our dreams when we "climb every mountain."

I am so excited to bring this beautiful, based-ontrue-events story to life this spring at Emerald Coast Theatre Company. We have a cast of extremely talented adult and child actors who are already working hard in rehearsals to bring this gorgeous musical to our stage.



Three of Anna's children from left to right: Selah, Naomi and Vera

One of the greatest challenges of casting is finding the right actress to play Maria. She has to not only be able to sing like an angel, but to also be angelic in her demeanor. We have to believe that she would come to love a group of children as her own and embrace a life that she did not plan for herself. If you have met Anna Joy Powell, you know that she is the perfect actress to tell this story of love, family and

overcoming. She is a pastor's wife and mother of four with the voice of an angel.

You won't want to miss Anna Joy and the rest of this incredible cast as they create all of those beautiful moments we cherish from this beloved classic. This family-friendly show opens May 5th and runs through the 14th. Green flag beach days, the scent of fresh lemons and The Sound of Music at ECTC-these are a few of my favorite things.

Local Author Bookshelf **Author Project Winner Launches Fantasy Series**

With his final novel, Time's Orphan, officially launched this month, Niceville local award-winning author Hayley Reese Chow now offers the complete Odriel's Heirs series, a fast-paced, young adult fantasy adventure.

The Odriel's Heirs series tells the story of a world in which the powers of fire, invisibility and healing are passed down to three Heirs to protect their land from a demon necromancer and his armies of undead. Spanning

decades and generations, the Odriel's Heirs series features three stand-alone novels connected by two bridge novellas to comprise a darkly epic saga across a new world both extraordinary and perilous.

Walking in the footsteps of Sabriel, Graceling, and Avatar: The Last Airbender, Odriel's Heirs features strong female protagonists, slow burn romance and high stakes fantasy in a new world of magic, monsters and the undead, where the lives of



all depend on the strength of three.

Hayley Reese Chow is an Air Force veteran, reservist, engineer, ex-ultramarathoner, retired fencer, mother of two and up-and-coming author, publishing seven books in the last three years. Her books have won the

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Teen Version of 'Chicago' Coming to NHS

The Niceville High School Theatre Department will present "Chicago: Teen Edition" at the NHS Auditorium March 31, April 1 and April 6 and 7. With music by John Kander and lyrics by Fred Ebb, "Chicago: Teen Edition" has been edited for teen audiences but still reflects its Broadway namesake closely with its jazz-filled score, storyline and 1920s setting. The show's more adult content has been tamed for teen audiences and older

NHS Theatre Director Ritchie Jackson says, "This is the biggest show that we have ever produced, and we are tremendously excited. We have spent just over \$10K on it, and one look at our massive two-story set, gorgeous costumes, wigs and Fosse-inspired choreography will tell you why. Directing this show has long been a dream of mine, and after our success last year with our massive production of 'A Chorus Line,' I knew that the time was right to tackle this musical classic.'

Jackson says that the Theatre Department at NHS has



exploded in the last few years. "After our tremendous success with 'Mamma Mia!' in 2019, the student body and our community became aware of the college level quality productions that we do at our school. High school theater at NHS is not the high school theater you remember from your days in high school."

"Chicago" tells the story of Roxie Hart and Velma Kelly and the headline-grabbing murders that propel them into media stardom in 1920s Chicago newspapers. The show examines the fickle nature of notoriety and fame, abuse of the press, the use of the justice system, con jobs, corruption and greed. The teen version of this show is suitable for teen audiences and older.

The show is choreographed by Nicci Fahle. NHS seniors

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Ashley Decker and Avery Cleveland serve as co-vocal directors, with Owen Pogany as technical director and co-production designer. The cast includes McKenna Mau as Roxie Hart, Jaiden Strange as Velma Kelly, Kyler Bess as Billy Flynn, Addison Starett as Matron Mama Morton and Ashley Decker as Mary Sunshine. An ensemble of more than 20 students help round out the cast.

The shows will run March 31, April 1, April 7 and 8. Friday shows are at 7 p.m., Saturdays shows are 2 p.m. and 7 p.m. VIP tickets are \$20 and include early seating, a free bag or popcorn, and a bottled water. General admission is \$15. Doors open at 6:30 for VIP's and 6:40 for general admission ticket holders. Tickets are available on www. gofan.co (not .com)



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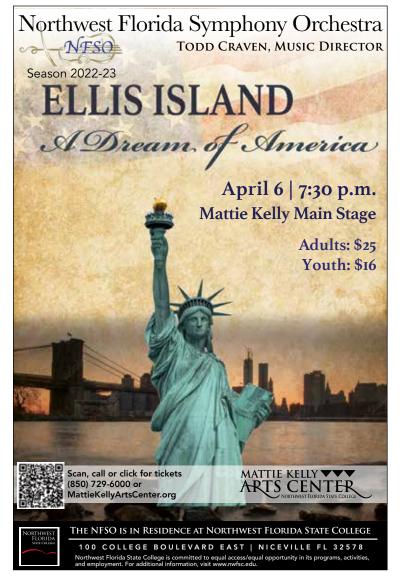
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🐞 Arts & Music



A Dream of America!



On April 6th, the Northwest Florida Symphony Orchestra (NFSO), under the leadership of Music Director and Conductor Todd Craven, will perform its final classic of the season at the Mattie Kelly Arts Center in Niceville.

The concert, entitled "A Dream of America," features all works by American composers. Beginning with Samuel Barber's first work for full orchestra written in 1931, the Overture to The School for Scandal, the first half also spotlights George Gershwin's jazzy and vivacious Piano Concerto in F featuring internationally-acclaimed pianist Brian Ganz. Brian Ganz is widely regarded as one of the leading pianists of his generation. A laureate of the Marguerite Long Jacques Thibaud and the Queen Elisabeth of Belgium International Piano Competitions, Mr. Ganz has appeared as soloist with the St. Petersburg Philharmonic, the Baltimore Symphony, the London Sinfonia and the Taipei Philharmonic Orchestra, and has performed with such conductors as Leonard Slatkin, Marin Alsop, Mstislav Rostropovich, Piotr Gajewski and Yoel Levi.

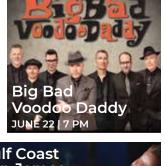


The second half of the program presents young actors from the Northwest Florida State

College (NWFSC) theater department portraying early 20th century immigrants reaching the United States for the first time. The music of Los Angeles based composer Peter Boyer provides the emotional backdrop to these powerful stories drawn from the Ellis Island archives; the perilous journeys across the Atlantic to reach Ellis Island and the relief and emotion of seeing the Statue of Liberty for the first time.

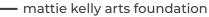












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