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Lakeside Songwriters Concerts Feature Renowned Country Songwriters and Performers

Fridays through May 3 | Old Florida Fish House on 30A

BY LORI LEATH SMITH

Over the past few years, our area has become known as one of the best for songwriters to gather and perform some of their heartfelt lyrics and amazing vocals. Each has a story with a passion to tell in song to their listeners. How blessed we are to have this most beautiful and unique coastal backdrop, impeccable dining and magnificent musical mecca. As music lovers, we crave it — no experience is better!

That's why Old Florida Fish House, already known as an acclaimed, exceptional dining and live entertainment venue, is bringing a brand-new concert series to your door—the Lakeside Songwriters Concert Series! Each Friday this spring through May 3, this intimate concert series, set against the picturesque backdrop of Eastern



Lake and 30A, will showcase creators and performers of some of the best-known music of our time.

“Our new Lakeside Songwriters Concert Series promises to be an extraordinary experience for music enthusiasts,

offering them a unique opportunity to engage with acclaimed artists in an intimate setting,” said Old Florida Fish House owner Keith O’Leary. Locals and visitors alike will not only have the chance to enjoy captivating musical



performances, but also get to know them by participating in pre-show meet and greets with the artists themselves. “We are thrilled to provide a platform

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Forever Warriors Brings Help and Hope to Northwest Florida’s Military Families and Veterans

BY WILL ESTELL

Forever Warriors is a Florida private charitable organization, established in 2021, and made possible by the generosity of Northwest Florida based Step One Automotive Group. The primary focus of Forever Warriors is to better equip current and past military members, and their family members, with an array of tools meant to aid them in their lives outside of, and beyond, their military roles.

Though most of us as residents of these beautiful coastal communities realize we have a large military population across our immediate five county area (which serves as home to numerous military families from every U.S. military branch), what we may not often consider is the hardships and trying times that

FOREVER WARRIORS
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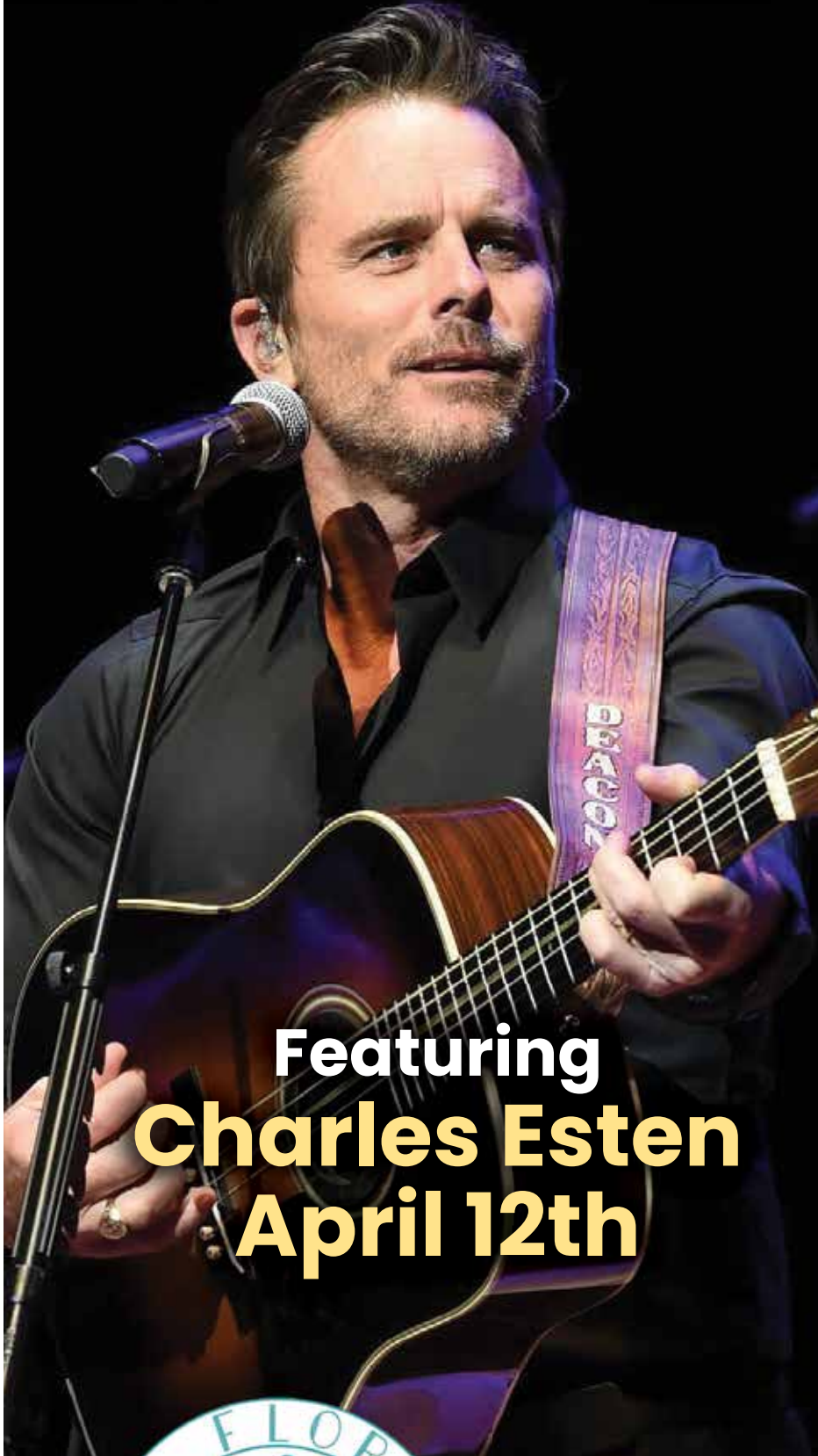


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April 12th



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Craig Campbell



March 29
Keith Stegall &
Bradley Gasken



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Kevin Mac



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LAKESIDE

continued from page 1

for these incredibly talented artists to share their creations and connect with their fans in a more intimate way,” he said.

Featuring a lineup of top-notch, popular talent, the Lakeside Songwriters Concert Series kicked off with Craig Campbell and Bradley Gaskin continue the series on March 29th, Michael Morgan on April 5th, Charles Esten on April 12th, Leslie Satcher and Kevin Mac on April 19th and Bryan White on May 3rd.

Each artist brings their own distinct style and expertise, promising an array of musical genres and captivating tunes. As the first in the series, Craig Campbell is a renowned country singer and songwriter from Georgia known for his distinctive voice and heartfelt lyrics. Developing a passion for music at an early age and influenced by classic country legends, his career spans over two decades and Craig has established himself as a talented artist with a genuine connection to his audience. His debut self-titled album, “Craig Campbell,” released in 2011, features hit singles like “Family Man” and “Fish,” earning him recognition and praise within the country music community.

Craig’s music is characterized by its authenticity, often drawing inspiration from personal experiences and relatable themes. He has a knack for crafting songs that resonate with listeners, blending traditional country sounds with a modern twist. In addition to his success as a solo artist, Craig has also contributed his songwriting talents by penning hits for other artists. Whether performing on the Grand Ole Opry stage

or connecting with audiences during live shows, he continues to leave a lasting impression with his soulful performances and relatable storytelling.

On March 29th, Keith Stegall and Bradley Gaskin take the stage. Keith is a Grammy award winning producer and writer of multiple #1 hits including “I hate everything” by George Strait, “Don’t Rock The Jukebox” by Alan Jackson, and “I Do (Cherish You)” by 98 Degrees. Keith Stegall is one of Nashville’s most celebrated men behind the scenes. As Alan Jackson’s longtime producer, the pairing has sold over 60 million records. With the Zac Brown band, Stegall produced the group’s first three albums, resulting in the group’s first nine singles to reach #1 on the country charts. Stegall is currently president of Dreamlined Entertainment Group, a Nashville-based production and publishing company specializing in songwriter/artist development.

Singer-songwriter Bradley Gaskin signed with Columbia Nashville in 2010 and released his debut single, “Mr. Bartender,” which he wrote solely by himself. Bradley’s single charted on country radio for 20 weeks that led him to a Top 40 country hit. Soon after his immediate success, Sony shelved the artist along with the rest of the music. The spotlight for Bradley slowly

faded, so he decided to take a break and focus on other options for a career. The artist put down his Gibson J45 and went back to a life he’d known before his music stardom, being a normal working man. He filled his days hanging sheetrock and later worked as a full-time janitor at an elementary school. Bradley could have settled into a normal life, but he knew that wasn’t what he was supposed to do. There were plenty of others cheering him on when Jack Cole, a seasoned friend, offered him a deal of a lifetime. “Why don’t we record the music you want to write?” Jack said. Jack started 30A Life Records sealing the deal with Bradley Gaskin as his very first signed artist. Bradley is currently tracking his first full-length record in over a decade with Grammy Award winning producer Keith Stegall. The first single will be released this summer.

The Lakeside Songwriters Concert Series not only offers an exceptional musical experience, but also provides an opportunity for attendees to indulge in a delectable dining experience. For those looking to enhance their evening, the Dinner and Show VIP Package offers premium seating, a delicious five-course



dinner during the show, and a glass of beer, wine or champagne.

Tickets are available for purchase at www.oldflfishhouse.com/lakesidesongwritersconcert. Early booking is recommended to secure the best seats for this highly anticipated event. The artist meet and greet will begin at 6 p.m., with the show starting at 7 p.m.

Located at 33 Heron’s Watch Way in Santa Rosa Beach, Old Florida Fish House is a renowned dining and entertainment destination offering exceptional food, live music and unique experiences in Santa Rosa Beach. With a commitment to providing unforgettable moments for guests, Old Florida Fish House continues to be the go-to destination for food and entertainment enthusiasts on 30A and the Emerald Coast. For more information, visit OldFloridaFishHouse.com.



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 Community

FOREVER WARRIORS

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many of these men, women and families go through—financially and otherwise—both during their time of service and especially when transitioning into civilian life afterward.

I spoke with Tiffany Orner, Military Engagement Manager of Forever Warriors, as well as Greg Lambert, the organization's Logistics Support Leader, to find out a little more about what makes this foundation tick and just how determined they both are to find and provide the help necessary for the men, women and families they serve.

Tiffany is passionate about the organization's pillars. Transition, sustainment, mental health and community immersion are the reason Forever Warriors was born—brought into existence to fill a need to lighten these burdens and circumvent the stigma that often surrounds a military family having to seek help. "As an organization, Forever Warriors realizes that our military heroes often face post service challenges in obtaining the necessary requirements to transition into the civilian workforce," Tiffany said.

Tiffany says she felt a calling to make a difference for others because of her personal experience coming out of her past military service. "I had a ridiculously tough time, both during and after my service to our country. I am determined to ensure no service member ever feels the way I did. I am thankful for the opportunity to be the change



that's so desperately needed in our local military community. I won't stop until EVERY veteran wants for nothing; and that starts with supporting those still serving in America's military," she said.

Forever Warriors works to multiply the awareness of the number of current community-based and military programs in place for this segment and to make navigating the road to help much more efficient. Additionally, Tiffany and Greg talked about the importance of making members of our coastal community more aware of deficits in the aide this segment of our population might need. All in hopes of uniting to create new ways to best help this ever-growing group of Northwest Florida Gulf Coast families. "Less than 1% of Americans serve in the military. We have to set the standard and have each



other's backs. We are Vets helping our brothers and sisters that have and continue to serve," said Greg.

Through their connection and close-knit work alongside other local, state and federal agencies, Tiffany, Greg and the volunteers and partner companies of Forever Warriors are often able to help secure resources from companies and private stakeholders, that are driven and dedicated to serving those who have served our country. In many instances these are companies who are owned or managed by prior service members; thus they see and understand the need they are helping to fill.

By bridging this gap to civilian life and introducing this population of our neighbors to resources and opportunities, Forever Warriors makes it possible for these families to experience a faster, smoother and less burdened transition to the world many of us live in yet take for granted.

As part of their mission statement, Forever Warriors states that their pillars of success are built on compassionate empathy, unyielding integrity, unwavering unity and shared humility and respect. These strong values are the determining strength behind the organization's support for the military community they serve, and through this



service they hope to enlighten and educate all of us as to the importance of doing our part to support Forever Warriors' endeavor.

Remember, real compassionate empathy is more than a mere acknowledgement of what someone else might be experiencing. It goes beyond walking in another's shoes; it entails walking beside them in order to lift their burden, help carry their load and best ready them to build a better tomorrow.

For those of you interested in being a part of the upcoming events of this life-changing organization, Forever Warriors, in conjunction with the generous support of Step One Automotive Group, invite you to come out and be a part of one of these events:

March 30: Eggstravaganza, Hurlburt Field

Expectation: Aiming to support military and military family retention efforts, this family-friendly event is expected to welcome 1,500 attendees.

April 13: The Savage Loop: 42 Mile Ultra Marathon, Across five cities and one Air Force Base

Expectation: Conceived by local Green Berets to support terminally ill children and local Gold Star Families, this grueling

challenge is anticipated to attract over 500 participants.

April 20: FWB Chamber Military Appreciation Day, The Landing

Expectation: A celebration of local military members with free activities and services, expected to draw 4,000 attendees in a grand gesture of appreciation.

May 3: Commando Games, Hurlburt Field

Expectation: Focused on active duty military retention efforts, this event is projected to attract over 1,000 participants.

May 4: Operation Battle Laugh in partnership with Barracks Legend Foundation, The Island

Expectation: A night of laughter and camaraderie, supporting military and military family retention efforts with an expected attendance of approximately 350.

May 11: 6th RTB Open House, Onsite at 6th RTB

Expectation: Showcasing Army activities in the swamp, this open house aims to connect the community with military efforts, expecting 2,000 attendees.

June 21: Air Force/Space Force Silkies Swear In, DOD Beach

Expectation: Swearing in of Panhandle Future Air Force and Space Force Members followed by a day on the Gulf to include Veteran Owned food trucks, VSO's MSO's and other Military Focused Partners with an expected attendance of approximately 200+ Airman, Guardians and their families.

June 28: Freedom Fest, Hurlburt Field

Expectation: A celebration of freedom and support for military and military family retention efforts, anticipating 3,000 attendees.

For more information about supporting Forever Warriors and attending these activities, visit <https://www.forever-warriors.org>.

Will Estell is a writer, media entrepreneur and real estate professional with over 600 published magazine features in an array of publications from tourism, real estate, and automobile editorials to celebrity interview cover features. Will Estell is the chief creative officer of Estell Hussey Media, LLC, and over the past 26 years has been instrumental in co-founding 12 new magazine titles, as well as serving as editor in chief for numerous others, both locally and for nationally sold newsstand titles. Originally from the backwoods of rural Mississippi, Will is a father of three who splits his time between Destin and Navarre, along with his wife, WEAR ABC 3 Pensacola news anchor, Laura Hussey-Estell. Will is a regular contributor and media consultant to Life Media's family of publications.

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 Community

Impact100: Aid Multiplied by Collective Giving

BY MICHELLE RUSCHMAN

When Joni Wallace, the current President of Impact100 of Northwest Florida, thinks about the hope this organization can bring to our community, it comes down to this: Multiply success by collective giving.

The goal in 2024 is for Impact100 NWF to have 500 members by April 30th, all paying a \$1000 membership, to change the trajectory of a non-profit in each of these five key areas:

- Arts and Culture
- Education
- Environment, Recreation, and Preservation
- Family
- Health and Wellness

With 500 members, it means that a \$100,000 grant can be given to five non-profit organizations that will multiply the health of the community it serves in ways that will have generational impact. As Joni points out, “You could certainly write a check for \$1000 and give it to a non-profit who would certainly appreciate it and use it. But when you give \$100,000 as a collective gift, that is what takes a nonprofit to the next level. It’s transformational, no matter how transformational is defined. \$100,000 is a big investment.”

The local chapter started in 2012 with 12 women from both Okaloosa and Walton counties. They dreamed about the changes that could happen when this level of generosity is given to local nonprofits and decided they wanted to be part of this inter-

national movement. Its mission: To be a collective force for good; uniting and empowering women to give together, creating transformational impact, locally and globally.

One such recipient in 2023 was the EOD Warrior Foundation under the Health and Wellness category. They strive to support the quality of life and reduce the challenges that come from volunteering to take on one of the most dangerous jobs in the military, the safe disarming and disposal of bombs and other explosives. EODWF recognizes that members of the Special Forces have the highest rate of suicide and mental health struggles that can lead to physical and familial instability. The grant from Impact100 NWF allowed them to expand their care by directly affecting two critical parts: Updating and renovating the EODWF building and expanding existing support as well as creating new programmatic support.

It’s not just locally started non-profits who benefit. Even more well-known international organizations who want to serve locally, such as The Salvation Army, applied to Impact100 under the “Family” category. With its grant, The Salvation Army bought a disaster response vehicle and went to Northern Florida after Hurricane Idalia, serving 500 meals per sitting. The truck was equipped with Starlink, and it gave those who were affected a chance to reach out to family, offering some peace of mind



during a devastating time. The truck doesn’t just operate during natural disasters. Every week, the truck goes to Crestview on Tuesdays to feed the hungry, a day when meals aren’t so readily available.

Both of these programs would have been impossible to grow with a single \$1000 donation, and it would have delayed critical services as funds were gathered. However, with 100 people linking arms in each of these categories, members of our military and those who face food insecurity are already feeling the benefits of these grants.

Impact100 is also designed to vet those who are seeking a grant to ensure the money is used as outlined in the proposal. “Any organization has to be a 501c3 for at least two years upon application. So, there’s some financial history that can be reviewed. We also need them to be registered with the Florida Department of Agriculture which provides the license to solicit contributions. They also have to be registered with the Florida Division of Corporations and file their reports regularly with SunBiz. We also ask that they have directors’ and officers’ insurance as well as

general liability. We don’t want to fund someone who could get sued and then lose it. If it’s a religious organization, they can’t require that recipients of their services prescribe to their particular faith even if they identify to one in particular. Forcing that would disqualify them from applying for our grant. Same with mandatory political affiliation.”

If you are an organization ready to make a massive headway for the people you serve, then note that the Letter of Intent deadline is May 15, 2024, and the application deadline is July 15, 2024. Interested nonprofits must submit the letter of intent and meet those qualifications before being given the grant application.

How does membership work for those who want to be part of Impact100 NWF? “Many of our members will write a check and that is the extent of their involvement. That contribution, however, allows them a vote for the organization they want to offer a grant to. For those who want to get more involved, there are committees under each category and it’s those people who will have a more intimate knowledge of each applicant as they get to

know the founders and tour facilities.

“We want members to be able to participate in the non-profits and activities where they want to see change. Many women join us because they want to make a difference in specific areas like education or environmental preservation. The reason we are promoting membership is each person has one vote for every \$100,000 that’s available. This means if we don’t have the full amount in each category, members have to vote for the categories they feel most passionate about. With less money available, critical areas will go unserved. Last year we only had four grants to give, so members had to choose the four categories that they wanted to vote in. This is why five grants is so important. We want every category to have a chance to grow.”

With all 500 membership slots filled, exponential good could be injected into Okaloosa and Walton County. Join by April 30th and, together, positive change will be inevitable.

For additional information on applying for a grant or joining as a member, visit impactnwf.org.

Impact100 has become an international organization since its start in 2001. Its founder, Wendy Steele, launched the organization to activate women through large grants that would make a massive impact. In February of this year, Wendy was named Florida’s honoree for USA TODAY’s Woman of the Year.

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Update on Saving the Green Space at Bluewater Bay

By BARBARA PALMGREN

It is exciting to report to the community that Preserve Bluewater Bay, Inc., has submitted a purchase sales agreement with Bluewater Bay Development Venture to purchase the 150 acres of green space in Bluewater Bay. All parties have signed the agreement to buy the land. There is still a need for funds to reach the goal of \$2.3 million by the projected closing date of not later than April 30.

Preserve Bluewater Bay (PBWB), a not-for-profit organization created by community members who want to save 150 acres of green space in Bluewater Bay that defines this special spot of paradise, previously set a goal of raising \$2.3 million by April 30, 2024, in order to pur-

chase the land and save it from developers. Officers and members of PBWB have worked tirelessly over the past months to raise funds. So far, they've raised over \$2 million in pledges, and have been granted 501(c)(3) status, meaning that donations can be tax deductible.

Yes, you are almost there. Since Preserve Bluewater Bay, Inc., has been granted the non-profit 501C3 status, more residents are making the important decision to help Bluewater Bay. The "Hi Ho Sliver" campaign to extend property lines on the golf course for those who live on the golf course is also available as a way to become a serious and needed donor.

To receive specific information and become a part of re-



alizing this American Dream, please attend any of the community update meetings at 6 p.m. held at the clubhouse at Bluewater Bay. The dates for these meetings are: March 26, April 9 and April 23.

The green space will be saved from further housing development and preserved for future generations, because a community is coming together with donations to sustain the area. I congratulate the leader-

ship of Preserve Bluewater Bay, Inc., and all the donors for their tireless dedication to this unique community.

To those who have already pledged their commitment, thank you for your proactive support. To the rest of our community, we encourage you take advantage of this collective opportunity for preservation. Less than \$300,000 is still needed to make this happen. With your help, we can cross the finish line!

Contact David Rauch at 850-865-0897 or visit "Welcome to Preserve Bluewater Bay | A Community Effort" at preservebwb.com to learn more and make a pledge.

Now, let's go the extra mile and achieve this goal!

Learn how to Keep Our Green Spaces *Green* Today!

Which Describes You?



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We live here for the **wide-open places, the water, green, and gathering spaces that make Bluewater Bay a sanctuary** for all who reside, visit, pass through, and enjoy. This is our community, and this is our opportunity to preserve the magic for ourselves, the wildlife, and the recreational use of the greens for everyone.

We are working together to preserve the openness and nature the 150 acres of green space provides us all. Whether you live next to the green space, drive by it, walk throughout, enjoy fishing inside, pick blackberries along the water, or listen to birds who live here because of thm, our green spaces are an indelible part of Bluewater Bay. You may protect the bears, the bobcats, and the alligators who sometimes travel through as well.

Preserve and protect the green space today. Bluewater Bay green spaces are what make Bluewater Bay magical. We **resort** here. We **live** here. We **thrive** here.


Consider donating to save the green space today. The deadline of **April 30th** for contributing and securing the space for future recreation is almost here.

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Community

Love and Legacy: NWFMOA's Valentines for Veterans

BY DOUG STAUFFER

In a touching tribute to community and service, the Northwest Florida Military Officers Association (NWFMOA) celebrated its 2nd Annual Valentines for Veterans event, a gesture of love and respect to the veterans residing at the Bob Hope Village, part of the Air Force Enlisted Village. This special event, founded in 2023 on the initiative of General Ron Fologeman, former Air Force Chief of Staff, is becoming a tradition, embodying the spirit of Valentine's Day through community outreach and intergenerational connections. Retired Brigadier General Fran Hendricks resurrected Valentines for Veterans for NWFMOA last year following the community outreach initiative he did while he was the 96th Wing Commander at Eglin (2002-2004).

Under the guidance of their teachers and Principal Lisa Tucker, Longwood Elementary School students made the heartwarming journey to Bob Hope Village, delivering over 300 handmade Valentines to

the eagerly waiting residents. The children's efforts ensured that no one was left out of this celebration of love and appreciation, marking the event with smiles, laughter, and an abundance of hugs, solidifying it as a resounding success for the second year.

The musical contributions of the Emerald Coast Chorus further enhanced the celebration by adding a layer of festive joy to the atmosphere. Yet, it was not just the performances and Valentines that made the day memorable. The presence and words of Dr. Lamar White, an Okaloosa County School Board member, lent a deep resonance to the occasion. His connections to the military are awe-inspiring. "I love the military, but also have deep military connections in my family," said Dr. White. "I am the son of a U.S. Army Korean War Veteran and married to Connie, whose father was a retired U.S. Air Force pilot. Connie's dad flew the P-47 against the Nazis when he was nineteen at the beginning of his career and ended his career in



Vietnam, flying the F-105. I was blessed to see these school children providing the valentines and the association's participation with the Bob Hope Village residents."

Key members of the NWFMOA, including Tom Azar, Ray Alexander, Dick Solt, Dave Parisot, Fred Westfall, Rod Gerdes, Mel Claxton, Bob Allen, Kim Wintner and Fran Hendricks, were in attendance. Their support underscored the collective effort behind the association's endeavors. The unveiling of the new NWFMOA Chapter

Banner, led by Jim Shoff, was a proud moment, symbolizing the association's growth and ongoing commitment to its mission.

The NWFMOA, a non-profit organization comprising over 200 active, retired and separated officers from the Uniformed Services, along with surviving spouses, invites individuals to join its ranks and partake in a broad spectrum of social, cultural, professional and service activities. With a history of excellence and service, the association remains dedicated to advocating for military rights

and benefits and supporting legislative actions in favor of all veterans through its affiliation with the Military Officers Association of America (MOAA).

For those inspired by service, community and legacy values, the NWFMOA offers a welcoming platform for engagement and support. Additional information about the association and its activities can be found at www.nwfmoa.org, inviting all interested parties to explore how they can contribute to and benefit from this distinguished community.



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The Magic Ingredients of The Boys & Girls Club

By LISA WOODRUM

The atmosphere was electric as I entered the gymnasium: confetti falling from above, balloons floating around, popping, the smell of pizza, rousing music resounding above the din of laughter and chatter of young and old! Youth were running about, others playing foosball, hoops and presenters at their stations ready to enthusiastically share their Club theme and expertise on their subjects.

It certainly was a great reason for this celebratory atmosphere at the Boys & Girls Club of the Emerald Coast (BGCEC). The ribbon was just cut at the front door of the Jacobe Turner Teen Center (hosted by the Fort Walton Beach Chamber of Commerce). This act initiated a new season of serving the community's youth with their Grand Re-opening—a new beginning with a name that honors a youth from the recent past. Jacobe Turner's life modeled and exemplified the values espoused at BGCEC. He was a longtime member who was their 2019 Organizational Youth of the Year. He tragically lost his life in a car



Layna McBride & Sebastian McDonald — Robotics



Clayton Goehl, Dewayne Dixon, Sherman Cain, Jonathan Hamilton — Manhood Club



Taylor Davis & Danica Fears — Smart Girls Club



Elizabeth Jackson — Community Club

accident in 2020. His life and legacy are appropriately commemorated through this organization.

While I spoke with the youth, they each referred to the center's prior rundown condition, but then gleamed as they expressed pride in the facility's upgrade and new face.

The mission of the BGCEC is: "To enable all young people, especially those that need us most, to reach their full potential as productive, caring and responsible citizens." It is evident that the staff and volunteers of this organization have successfully taught this as I spoke to the youth.

Shervin Rassa, the Chief Ex-

ecutive Officer shared, "I am a firm believer that our magic ingredient in our Boys and Girls Club mission is the amazing, informal mentorship young people get from dynamic and caring adults."

Here are samples of a few Clubs they offer:

Passport to Manhood Club: Jonathan Hamilton and Dwayne Dixon shared they learn maturity, responsibility, respect for elders and all individuals. Smart Girls: Taylor Davis and Danica Fears spoke of learning self-esteem, healthy relationships and nutrition. They said they now felt more confident about their futures.



Madison Turner — Art Club



Layna McBride — Career Club

Robotics: Sebastian McDonald and Layna McBride explained the cooperation of two groups to successfully have fully functional robots, of which they take to competitions! Good Luck!

Career Fields: Layna McBride recounted her experience with Old Navy guest instructors

teaching interviewing skills, cashiering, etc. They also learn of (in part) budgeting, public speaking, etiquette and networking.

Some outstanding qualities I noted in the youth as I spoke with them were articulate, knowledgeable, leaders, mature,

Continued on page 13

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Bay Buzz Events

MKAF Showcases A Range Of Music at 2024 Concerts In The Village

Mattie Kelly Arts Foundation's (MKAF) Concerts in the Village, the area's first live concert series, is held each spring on Thursday evenings at the MKAF Dugas Pavilion in Destin. This year's 29th annual family-friendly series will run from April 4 to June 6. The 10-concert live music series will feature premier regional and national musicians and bands performing everything from rhythm & blues, classic and hard rock to disco to modern pop.

The series kicks off on Thursday, April 4, 2024, with must-not-miss entertainers Postmodern Jukebox. One part celebration of vintage music and culture, one part Saturday Night Live for singers, a Postmodern Jukebox show is an unforgettable trip back in time sure to make pop music history in Destin. This isn't just a concert; this is a must-

not-miss music experience. Tickets are \$35 adults/\$30 active-duty military.

April 11 features Wendy Moten from The Voice! Hailing from Memphis, Wendy Moten is an American R&B-infused pop singer based in Nashville. Best known for the UK hit Come In Out of the Rain, Moten has released major-label solo records, achieved international hits, and toured extensively. At 56, she took a bold step, entering The Voice and finishing as the runner-up. Tickets are \$25 adults/\$20 active-duty military in advance.

April 18 Black Jacket Symphony presents Prince's Purple Rain. Relive the awesome '80s and celebrate the 40th anniversary of Prince's most celebrated album from start to finish. Dance to hits like Purple Rain, When Dove's Cry, I Would Die 4 U while experiencing a visual feast of rock and roll magic. Doors open at 6 p.m. and concerts start at 7 p.m. Tickets are \$35 adults/\$30 active-duty military in advance.

April 25 get ready to chart



your course to set sail for concert fun with Yacht Rock Revue. These top-notch musicians who have rocked onstage with John Oates, Eddie Money and now headline sold-out shows, personify the smooth sounds of West Coast '70s and '80s. Doors open at 6 p.m. and concerts start at 7 p.m. Tickets are \$35 adults/\$30 active-duty military in advance.

May 2 The Mulligans perform everyone's rock 'n roll favorites. The diversified song list of this seasoned six-member Emerald Coast-based band founded by Edwin Watts in-

cludes The Beatles, Tom Petty, Eric Clapton, Elvis, the Eagles, Bee Gees, the Ventures, Rolling Stones, Buddy Holly, The Monkees, Roy Orbison, Moody Blues, Young Rascals, Billy Joel, The Outsiders and many others. Doors open at 6 p.m. and concerts start at 7 p.m. Tickets are \$25 adults/\$20 active-duty military.

May 9 Rumours ATL: A Fleetwood Mac Tribute takes the stage. Since 2014, Rumours ATL has set stages ablaze across the U.S. with their scorching Fleetwood Mac renditions. With meticulous attention

to detail and infectious energy, Rumours sells out venues and leaves fans dancing, singing, and discovering new facets of Fleetwood Mac's magic at every performance. Believe in miracles and join the unforgettable experience of Rumours. Doors open at 6 p.m. and concerts start at 7 p.m. Tickets are \$25 adults/\$20 active-duty military in advance.

May 16 Gotta Groove Band will put a fresh spin on popular cover tunes from the '60s to today. With outstanding vocals and top-shelf musicianship, they feature their own arrangements and mixing many popular tunes together to create a fun flow of entertaining energy. You will not want to miss the party this Land O Lakes, Florida, band throws down. Tickets are \$25 adults/\$20 active-duty military.

May 23 Mitch Malloy will rock Destin. Former frontman of Great White, rocker Mitch Malloy is a studio veteran and award-winning songwriter. With a career spanning decades, he's navigated the music scene since the '80s, achieving chart success and even turning down a role as Van Halen's lead singer in the '90s. Doors open at 6 p.m. and concerts start at 7 p.m. Tickets are \$35 adults/\$30 active-duty military in advance.

May 30 Haley Reinhart's timeless voice will transport you. With talent that transcends eras, blending pop, rock, and jazz in her 2019 album, Lo-Fi Soul. A finalist on American Idol, this Chicago-born singer is influenced by '50s music and enjoys playful lyrics. With a decade-long grind, platinum hits, and diverse collaborations,

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Happenings Around the Bay

2024 EVENTS

APRIL

- 01** Niceville Young Professionals Lunch
11:30 am | Niceville Valparaiso Chamber | Niceville
Chess Night
6 pm | LJ Schooners Restaurant | Niceville
- 04** Sofia Talvik in Concert
6 pm | Niceville Community Center | Niceville
Concerts in the Village: Postmodern Jukebox
7 pm | Mattie Kelly Arts Foundation | Destin

- 05** Choctawhatchee Audubon Natural History Hotspots Down Under
6:30 pm | Crosspoint Church | Niceville
- 05** Live Music: John McKinney
6 pm | 3rd Planet Brewing | Niceville
Dinosaur World LIVE
7 pm | Mattie Kelly Arts Center | Niceville
- 06** Kenwood Disc Golf Tournament benefiting Boys and Girls Clubs of the Emerald Coast
9 am | Ferry Park | FWB
3rd Annual Fire Truck Pull
10:30 am | 3rd Planet Brewing | Niceville
2024 Emerald Ball
6 pm | Hilton Sandestin Beach Resort
- 07** Live Music: Bluegrass Jam
12 pm | 3rd Planet Brewing | Niceville
Women's Climbing Circle
5 pm | Rock Out Climbing Gym | Destin
Okaloosa's Got Talent!
5 pm | Enlightened Studios
- 10** Niceville-Valparaiso Chamber Second Wednesday Breakfast
7:15 am | Niceville Community Center | Niceville
- 11** An Introduction to Therapy Dog Teams by Dog-Harmony
10 am | Pets Behave Dog Training | Niceville
Bluewater Bay Garden Club Meeting
10 am | Crosspoint Comm. Life Center, 909-911 | Niceville
Concerts in the Village: Wendy Moten
7 pm | Mattie Kelly Arts Foundation | Destin


- 11** CONT. Chloe Arnold's Syncopated Ladies
7 pm | Mattie Kelly Arts Center | Niceville
CALM Village Ribbon Cutting
4:30 pm | 201 Redwood Ave. | Niceville
- 13** ONE Run 5K benefiting Emerald Coast Autism Center
8 am | Northwest Florida State College | Niceville
Diana Gagne Pop-up Shop
11 am | Artful Things | Niceville
Jacobe Turner Teen Center Bowling Tournament
1 pm | Fort Walton Beach Bowl | FWB
Live Music: Below Alabama
6 pm | 3rd Planet Brewing | Niceville
CALM Furniture Resale
9 am - 1 pm | 201 Redwood Ave | Niceville
- 14** Mommy & Me Picnic benefiting Caring & Sharing of South Walton
2 pm | Grand Boulevard at Sandestin | Miramar Beach
- 18** Concerts in the Village: Black Jacket Symphony Presents Prince's Purple Rain
7 pm | Mattie Kelly Arts Foundation | Destin

- 19** Family Move Night: The Lion King
6 pm | Freeport Sports Complex | Freeport
Live Music: Radio Star
6 pm | 3rd Planet Brewing | Niceville
- 20** Greater FWB Chamber Military Family Appreciation Day
11 am | The Landing | Fort Walton Beach

Spring Vendor Fair benefiting Fisher House
11 am | 3rd Planet Brewing | Niceville
International Festival
11 am-7 pm | The Landing | FWB

- 23** Chicago
7 pm | Mattie Kelly Arts Center | Niceville
- 24** Concerts in the Village: Yacht Rock Revue
7 pm | Mattie Kelly Arts Foundation | Destin

- 25-28** South Walton Beaches Food & Wine Festival
Various Times | Grand Boulevard | Miramar Beach
- 26** Niceville Valparaiso Chamber Golf Classic
1 pm | Rocky Bayou Country Club | Niceville
Tacos, Tequila, & Tees
5:30 pm | Eglin AFB Golf Course | Niceville
Live Music: Corey Fernandez
6 pm | 3rd Planet Brewing | Niceville
- 26-28** Destin Charity Wine Auction presented by the Jumonville Family
Various Times & Locations

- 27** 48th Annual Saturday in the Park
10 am - 4 pm/5K 8 am | Heritage Museum | Valp
- 28** Sunset Shrimp Boil
4 pm | LJ Schooners Restaurant | Niceville

ONGOING EVENTS

- Oils and Acrylics with Rosalyn O'Grady
10 am | Tuesdays | Artful Things | Niceville
- Watercolor Techniques with Theresia McInnis
1 pm | Tuesdays | Artful Things | Niceville
- Anime & Drawing Basics with Chris McLoone
3:30 pm | Wednesdays | Artful Things | Niceville
- Trivia Night
6 pm | Thursdays | Strange Colt Brewery | Niceville
- Brunch on the Bayou
9 am | Sundays | LJ Schooners Restaurant | Niceville

| | | | |
|------------------------|---|---|--|
| FARMERS MARKETS | Niceville Community Saturdays 9 am - 1 pm Palm Plaza Niceville | Hammock Bay 1st & 3rd Sundays 8 am Victory Blvd Freeport | Grand Boulevard Saturdays 9 am - 1 pm Grand Boulevard Miramar Beach |
|------------------------|---|---|--|

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BAY BUZZ EVENTS

continued from page 10

Reinhart's multifaceted artistry shines, promising a lasting connection with her audience. Doors open at 6 p.m. and concerts start at 7 p.m. Tickets are \$35 adults/\$30 active-duty military in advance.

June 6 Adam Ezra Group closes out the series. Fusing folk intimacy and rock energy with

soul power and pop charm, the band first emerged from Boston in the early 2000s and quickly garnered widespread acclaim for their bold, insightful songwriting and interactive, euphoric performances. Tickets are \$25 adults/\$20 active-duty military.

Gates open at 6 p.m. with concerts beginning at 7 p.m. for this come-as-you-are family-friendly outdoor concert series. Bring a lawn chair, pic-

nic, wine, or purchase food and beverages on-site prepared by featured restaurants and food trucks. A drawing will be held at each concert to award valuable raffle prizes donated by local businesses.

Proceeds will fund the MKAF's community outreach mission to provide cultural outreach programs through ArtsReach serving K-12 students, adults and children with special needs, at-risk youth, and through MKAF's Warrior Arts program serving active/veteran military.

Purchase tickets online at MKAF.org/events—\$20 to \$35 for adults. Discounts offered for active-duty military (must show ID). Purchase tickets in advance of concert day and save \$5 per ticket at the door. Children (12 and under) are free. A limited number of VIP tables (reserved table for eight guests for the entire season) are available for \$2,250. Corporate VIP tables are \$2,750.

MKAF members enjoy early entry and free admission to every concert as well as discounted pricing to other MKAF events. For more information, visit MKAF.org.

Concert lineup is subject to change. All sales are final; sorry, no refunds. Pets, tables larger than two feet, and drones are not permitted. Children 17 and under must be accompanied by a parent or guardian.

Attend the International Festival! April 21

You are invited to Conexión Media Group's (CMG) 6th An-



nual International Festival at the beautiful Landing Park in Fort Walton Beach, Sunday, April 21, 11 a.m. – 7 p.m. More than 60 nations will present with music, food, folklore and art with attendees traveling from as far as Tallahassee, Panama City, Pensacola and the surrounding states of Georgia, Mississippi and Alabama!

For this year's festival, CMG selected the Advanced Sacred Hope Academy (ASHA) as the local non-profit to benefit. ASHA is a 501c3 non-profit independent private school dedicated to the individualized learning of students with autism or other neurological disorders that prevent them from succeeding in a traditional school setting. Visit ASHA at advancedsacredhopeacademy.org.

Corporate sponsorships and vendor opportunities available. Contact David at 850-368-3505

or via conexionflorida@gmail.com.

Arnie Hart Student & Faculty Exhibitions Opening April 4, 6-8 p.m.

Celebrate the 2024 Arnie Hart Juried Student & Art Faculty Exhibitions with Mattie Kelly Art Center and The Division of Humanities, Fine & Performing Arts at Northwest Florida State College at the annual Arnie Hart Show. The festivities include a week of workshops where students learn professional skills such as matting and framing. Followed by a visit from this year's guest judge Pavel Amromin, the Gallery Director at Gulf Coast State College, will select Best-in-Show, first through third place in two-dimensional and three-dimensional art, culminating in an awards ceremony celebration, with cash awards and scholarship nominations, which will be announced at the opening. Attendance is free. Everyone is welcome!

Exhibition Dates: April 4-June 27. Gallery Hours: Monday – Thursday 10 a.m. – 4 p.m. and 90 minutes before most Mainstage and Sprint Theater Performances.

Chamber Golf Classic April 26

Join the Niceville/Valparaiso Chamber of Commerce for its annual Chamber Golf Classic on Friday, April 26th at Rocky Bayou Country Club. Registration opens at 12:30 p.m. and the best ball tournament starts at 1 p.m. with a shotgun start! Rain Date is Monday, April 29th. Register at <https://www.nicevillechamber.com/events>.

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Covering Your Assets



BY JULIE A. MARTIN

Insurance is everywhere, and there are so many different kinds, it gets confusing. What kind of coverage are you supposed to have to cover your homes, cars, boats and other fun things that you and your family use? Is it Property Insurance or Casualty Insurance?

The answer is both. **Property Insurance** covers your

homes, your condos, your furniture, electronics and all the things you use in your home that is not permanently attached to your home. **Casualty Insurance** usually refers to the items that move, such as your cars, motorcycles, boats and jet skis.

Both Property insurance and Casualty insurance include coverage for your covered items as well as liability. The liability coverage levels may go as high as 500K on a single policy. When you feel it isn't enough to protect you and your family, there is the Umbrella policy.

Umbrella policies include coverage for liability losses over and above what your primary underlying policies would pay. For instance, if you are playing golf and you accidentally hit someone in the head with a golf ball, that person can sue you if they are hurt, even if you yelled "Fore." The incident would need to be sudden and acciden-



tal in nature, as no intentional acts are covered.

The umbrella policy covers in levels from \$1M to 5M, with requirements to maintain a minimum level of liability on the underlying policies for auto, boat, etc. of 250/500 Bodily Injury Liability and 100K Property Damage Liability. The minimum underlying liability requirement for home insurance or any property policies the umbrella covers would be 300K.

It is a common misconception that if someone has an umbrella policy, that its primary function is to pay out what is

demand. That is not how this works. The umbrella policy acts to defend its policyholder and attempt to keep the client from financial ruin. Many standard carriers offer umbrella coverage, and it is even possible to bundle your auto insurance with your umbrella in many cases for an extra multi-policy discount.

If you have more than one home, two cars and even one toy, whether it's a motorcycle, boat or wave runner, it would be a good idea for you to have an umbrella to cover excess liability over all of your assets. Speaking with an independent agent to find out what kind of coverage is right for you will give you the peace of mind in knowing that there are no coverage gaps. And you can live your life not worrying about your insurance!

Covering your assets is only a phone call away. For more, contact me, Client Advocate at Abora Insurance Group, at 1-800-494-1333, Julie@GetAbora.com or visit www.GetAbora.com.

BOYS & GIRLS CLUB

continued from page 9

authentic, enthusiastic, confident and exemplary, to name a few descriptive words. I am confident each has a bright future!

The BGCEC is positioning itself in this new chapter to once again serve many more teenagers. They can't do it alone. BGCEC welcomes new volunteers, mentors and potential staff candidates to apply online. If it is in your heart to partner with them, visit the website at <https://emeraldcoastbgc.org/> to inquire as well as learn the history and details of the organization.

The new face lift could not have happened without Florida Power & Light and the ALL Sports Association, Inc. Thank you for your generosity!

As one would expect, to continue with their mission, funds continue to be needed and welcome. There are upcoming fundraisers you can enjoy attending while contributing to a very worthy cause, such as the Bowling Tournament, Saturday, April 13. Tickets are \$160 per four-person team; FWB Bowling Center, 745 Beal Parkway. View all the events and purchase tickets at <https://www.facebook.com/BGCEC/>.

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Welcome to Niceville!

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Bay Buzz

Rotary Club Recognizes Local First Responders

Recently the Rotary Club of Niceville-Valparaiso said thank you to a few of our everyday heroes for all the great work they do to keep our community safe and secure. These first responders live the Rotary motto of Service Above Self. Recently, the Rotary Club of Niceville-Valparaiso recognized the top police officers, firefighters and emergency medical technicians for 2023 from each of our local departments for their outstanding service to our community. The award recipients included Niceville and Valparaiso Fire Departments Firefighter of the Year, Firefighter Mack Regans; Niceville Police Department Officer of the Year, Officer John Newby; Valparaiso Police Department Officer of the Year, Officer Glen Michaels; East Niceville Fire District Firefighter of the Year, Fire Engineer Landon Bigner; North Bay Fire District Firefighter of the Year, Captain James Harris; Okaloosa County Sheriff's Office Deputy of the Year, Deputy Gregory Rubo; Okaloosa County Emergency Medical Services Person of the Year, Paramedic Ambria Irlbeck; Eglin Air Force Base (AFB) Security Forces Airman of the Year, Senior Airman Alexis Dallacosta; Eglin AFB Security Forces Noncommissioned Officer of the Year, Technical Sergeant Chelsea Drake-Green; Eglin AFB Security Forces Senior Noncommissioned Officer of the Year, Senior Master Sergeant Vanessa Perkins; Eglin AFB Security Forces Company Grade Officer of the Year, Captain Marquis Taylor; Eglin AFB Fire Department Civilian Fire Officer of the Year, Mr. Todd Lawrence.



Pictured from left to right: Capt Marquis Taylor, Eglin AFB Security Forces Company Grade Officer of the Year; Technical Sergeant Chelsea Drake-Green, Eglin AFB Security Forces Noncommissioned Officer of the Year; Battalion Chief Brian Thomas, North Bay Fire District; Captain James Harris, North Bay Fire District Firefighter of the Year; Captain Michael Aaron, Eglin AFB Fire Department Civilian Firefighter of the Year; Fire Engineer Landon Bigner, East Niceville Fire District Firefighter of the Year; Officer Gregory Wise, Eglin AFB Security Forces Category II Civilian of the Year; Senior Master Sergeant Vanessa Perkins, Eglin AFB Security Forces Senior Noncommissioned Officer of the Year; Corporal Timothy Briglia, Eglin AFB Security Forces Category I Civilian of the Year; Officer Glen Michaels, Valparaiso Police Department Officer of the Year; Paramedic Ambria Irlbeck, Okaloosa County Emergency Medical Services Person of the Year; Lieutenant Diane Fiellin, Okaloosa County Emergency Medical Services; Senior Airman Justin Henry, Eglin AFB Military Firefighter of the Year; Technical Sergeant Matthew Miller, Eglin AFB Fire Department Military Fire Officer of the Year; Deputy Gregory Rubo, Okaloosa County Sheriff's Office Deputy of the Year; Officer John Newby, Niceville Police Department Officer of the Year. Not Pictured: Firefighter Mack Regans, Niceville and Valparaiso Fire Departments Firefighter of the Year; Senior Airman Alexis Dallacosta, Eglin AFB Security Forces Airman of the Year; Mr. Todd Lawrence, Eglin AFB Fire Department Civilian Fire Officer of the Year.

nior Noncommissioned Officer of the Year, Senior Master Sergeant Vanessa Perkins; Eglin AFB Security Forces Company Grade Officer of the Year, Captain Marquis Taylor; Eglin AFB Security Forces Category I Civilian of the Year, Corporal Timothy Briglia; Eglin AFB Security Forces Category II Civilian of the Year, Officer Gregory Wise; Eglin AFB Military

Firefighter of the Year, Senior Airman Justin Henry; Eglin AFB Fire Department Civilian Firefighter of the Year, Captain Michael Aaron; Eglin AFB Fire Department Military Fire Officer of the Year, Technical Sergeant Matthew Miller; Eglin AFB Fire Department Civilian Fire Officer of the Year, Mr. Todd Lawrence.



Niceville City Council Decides New Member by Coin Flip

In the Jan. 29 Niceville City Council meeting, a coin flip decided Doug Stauffer as its newest member after a tied vote. The vote was actually deadlocked twice on whether Stauffer or Doug Tolbert would fill the seat left vacant by former Councilman Abner Williams, who resigned due to personal circumstances. With council members not wavering on their votes, Niceville Mayor Daniel Henkel stepped in and used a coin toss to break the tie. Stauffer chose tails and tails it was!

ECAR Celebrates National Association of REALTORS® RPAC Hall of Fame Inductees

The National Association of REALTORS® (NAR) is honoring three Emerald Coast Association of REALTORS® (ECAR) past Presidents with membership in the 2023 REALTOR® Party (RPAC) Hall of Fame. Past ECAR Presidents Robert "Bob" Hudgens (2001), Mary Anne Windes (2010) and Cathy Alley (2016) will be inducted into the NAR 2023 RPAC Hall of Fame at the REALTORS® Legislative Meetings in Washington D.C. this May. The RPAC Hall of Fame recognizes dedicated members who have made a significant commitment to RPAC over the years by investing an aggregate lifetime amount of at least \$25,000. Among the Hall of Fame benefits are name plaques on the RPAC Hall of Fame wall located on NAR's Washington, D.C. building rooftop. "Cathy, Mary Anne, and Bob's unwavering commitment to RPAC underscores the vital role REALTORS® play in shaping policies that safeguard property interests and promote thriving communities," commented 2024 ECAR President

Keith Wood. He continued, "This honor is a testament to their dedication and service to our industry and the communities we serve." RPAC is a voluntary political action committee whose membership consists of REALTORS® interested in actively and effectively protecting the real estate industry and the dream of homeownership by participating in government affairs at the local, state and federal levels. RPAC advances public policies and candidates that build strong communities, protect property interests, and promote a vibrant business environment—the only political action committee in the country that is organized by REALTORS® to promote and protect the dream of home-ownership in America.

Niceville Valparaiso Chamber of Commerce Annual Awards Celebration

The Niceville Valparaiso Chamber of Commerce held its Annual Awards Celebration at the Mattie Kelly Arts Center in February. Master of Ceremonies for the evening was Jeff Jourdan, SmallCakes of Destin. 2023 Chair of the Board Heather Jourdan, Carr, Riggs & Ingram, LLC, recognized several area businesses and individuals for their contributions to Chamber and community.

Annual Award Recipients:

Young Professional of the Year: Ariel Danley, 4-H Camp Timpooshee

Community Enrichment - Individual Category: Chef Dan Pettis

Community Enrichment - Organization Category: C.A.L.M. (Crisis Aids to

Little's and Moms) Inc.

Small Business of the Year:

Katie's House of Flowers & Gifts Dylan & Emily Clarrey

Continued on next page

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Residential and Commercial





Bay Buzz

Large Business of the Year:
CHELCO (Choctawhatchee Electric Cooperative, Inc.)
You Rock Award:
Patreece Hinley Early
Volunteer of the Year:
Tiffany Turner, Spine Life

Chiropractic
Chair of the Board Star
Achiever Award:
Dana Topel, NextHome
Cornerstone Realty
Rev. Dennis Brown Servant
Leadership Award:

Ken Hair, Children in Crisis
2024 Board Members:

Ariel B. Danley, 4-H Camp
Timpoochee
Brian Haugen, Raymond
James & Associates
Chris Shinnick, Manna
Church
Christine Six, Cox Commu-
nications

Emily Clarrey, Katie's House
of Flowers & Gifts
Emily Cowan, CHELCO
Jacob Jaworski, Canvas Inc.
Lisa Wright, Okaloosa Gas
District
Mack Busbee, Okaloosa
County Property Appraiser
Michael Beedie, P.E., WM
of the Gulf Coast
Paige Floyd Hart, Bright
Light Land Title Company,
LLC

Pam Ellisor, Chick-fil-A at
Niceville
Randy Wise, Randy Wise
Homes, Inc.
Richard Pruitt, DS2, LLC
Todd Jackson, HCA Florida
Twin Cities Hospital

Life Directors:
Dr. David Goetsch, Individ-
ual Member
Dave Morrow, The Ryland/
Morrow Allstate Agency

Okaloosa County Jail Celebrates Inmate Success with 'Anchored' Program

A significant milestone was achieved within the walls of the Okaloosa County Jail in March as 34 men successfully completed Phase I of the transformative "Anchored" program, administered by the Emerald Coast Life Center. This faith-based initiative is designed to equip participants with the tools and mindset necessary to break the cycle of recidivism and substance abuse.

During the rigorous three-month curriculum, these dedicated individuals devoted them-

selves to 425 hours of intensive classwork, encompassing specialized coursework aimed at dismantling barriers to rehabilitation. Additionally, they undertook the challenge of crafting three 1,200-word essays, committing three scripture verses to memory, and delivering a comprehensive book report from the Phase I reading material. The accomplishments of these men extend beyond academic achievement; they signify a profound commitment to personal growth and transformation. Through the "Anchored" program, participants embraced the opportunity to confront past traumas, discover their true identities, and cultivate positive change within themselves. Their dedication serves as a testament to their desire to become valued members of our community, as well as devoted husbands and fathers to their families. Upon completion of all program requirements, they will emerge equipped with a newfound mindset and a comprehensive understanding of the resources available to support them during challenging times post-release.

Children of the American Revolution Receive Awards

The Snowden-Horne Society currently has 36 members, eight of whom are Dual DAR/C.A.R. or SAR/C.A.R. members. The F.S.C.A.R. State Conference, held in February, found the Snowden-Horne Society leading the way, not only locally, but also at the state level:

- F.S.C.A.R. 2024 State Conference Awards**
Snowden-Horne Society
- 1st Place Most Life Members
 - 2nd Place American Heritage Best Program
 - 2nd Place Best Newsletter
 - 2nd Place Best Newsletter Article
 - 2nd Place Best Government Studies Program
 - 2nd Place Best Kids Helping Kids Program
 - 2nd Place Most State Life Members
 - 3rd Place Conservation Best Program
 - Honorable Mention Best American History Program
 - Honorable Mention Best American Indian Program



City Council: Councilman Doug Stauffer, Councilman Sal Nodjomian, Councilwoman Cathy Alley, Lannie Corbin, Mayor Daniel Henkel and Councilman Bill Schaeztle.

Any young person under 22 is eligible for membership in The National Society of the Children of the American Revolution. Any child who can prove lineage to a patriot of the American Revolution is welcome and may join the National

Society by invitation of a local society or as a member-at-large and becomes a member upon verification of the application. Email Snowden-Horne Senior Society Registrar, Linda McCooey, at mccooeys@bellsouth.net.

Niceville Ceremonial Sign Change

The City of Niceville honored Mr. Lannie Corbin, retired Niceville City Manager of 52 years, in a ceremonial sign change recently. "What a pleasure it is to recognize outstanding service, which is exactly what Mr. Lannie Corbin provided during his remarkable 52 years of service to the City Council and the citizens of Niceville" expressed Mr. Dan Doucet, City Clerk who worked alongside Mr. Corbin for 30 years.

Photo Caption:

City Council: Councilman Doug Stauffer, Councilman Sal Nodjomian, Councilwoman Cathy Alley (Lannie Corbin), Mayor Daniel Henkel and Councilman Bill Schaeztle.

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Record Fundraising at Annual All-Sports Banquet

BY DOUG STAUFFER

The recent 55th Annual All Sports Banquet on the picturesque Okaloosa Island celebrated athletic combined with academic excellence and demonstrated the power of philanthropy as the community joined together to give. The Em-

erald Coast Convention Center was alive with the spirit of competition, not just on the fields and courts, but in the bidding war that saw donations soar to a record-breaking \$126,200 from the evening auction. By the night's end, nearly \$400,000 had been raised, surpassing the

2022-2023 total and setting a new benchmark for support towards area athletics.

The award winners of the evening ranged from high school sensations to professional athletes, all of whom share a commitment to academic excellence and philanthropy with a spiritual emphasis. The banquet, known for recognizing the who's-who of local talent, did not disappoint, spotlighting individuals from prep to college and the amateur ranks to the professional stage.

The evening's emotional pinnacle arrived when the Thomas brothers, Azareye'h and Juanyeh, took the stage. Azareye'h Thomas, an FSU defensive back lauded for helping to lead the Seminoles to an unbeaten regular season record, won the Male Collegiate Award. Meanwhile, his brother, Juanyeh Thomas, a defensive back for the Dallas Cowboys, who helped lead his team to a 12-5 season and the NFC East title, clinched the Professional Award.

Their success on and off the field was recognized by their tribute to their mother, whom they invited on stage to a standing ovation. The brothers, both Niceville High School graduates, honored her for the sac-



rifices that paved their paths to personal and professional achievements. One phase by Momma Thomas encapsulated the depth of her influence, "Every lesson is a blessing."

The banquet also highlighted the stars of tomorrow, with Lauren Bage and Titus Thornell winning the Female and Male Scholastic awards, respectively. Bage, a multi-sport star from Choctaw, broke barriers as the first female in town to play tackle football. She is No. 5 in her graduating class and told the crowd, "With God and hard work, all things are possible."

Thornell, a three-sport letterman, also excelled at Choc-

taw in football, wrestling and weightlifting. He earned a 4.36 GPA and volunteers in mentoring youth at his local church. Their stories of determination and faith echoed the sentiment that hard work and divine guidance overcome all obstacles.

Further accolades were bestowed upon Liliana Fernandez, the Female Collegiate award winner from Tulsa, and Garrison Lemire, the Taylor Haugen winner, embodying perseverance and dedication ideals.

Lemire, a Niceville senior originally from Abilene, has set his sights on Texas A&M, studying Psychology and exercise physiology. "We look up to Coach Lou and Coach Dusault, both retired marines who believe in tough love."

Other award winners include Blake Orr, an FIU javelin thrower aiming for the Junior Olympics, and Shane Patty, a Special Olympics multi-sport star and the voice of NWF State Raiders baseball and softball.

The banquet concluded on a high note, with FSU and NFL legend Warrick Dunn delivering a keynote speech resonating with his journey of overcoming adversity through faith, hard work and community support.

The 55th Annual All Sports Banquet not only celebrated the achievements of these remarkable athletes, but also underscored the importance of giving back, setting a precedent for future generations to aspire to greatness both on and off the field.



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- \$30 9 Hole Rate/Twilight
- \$39 Military Rate (Active Or Retired Only)
- \$25 Junior Rate

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Hosted By 3rd Planet Brewing

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- Knights of Columbus
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- Niceville/ValP Rotary Club
- Crestview Rotary Club
- Destin Rotary Club
- Knights of Columbus Council: 7667
- Knights of Columbus Council: 13527
- 3rd Planet Brewing
- DS2
- Okaloosa County Fire-Rescue Org.
- Valparaiso Realty

\$250.00 Per Team of 10

10:30 am - Check-in
12:00 pm - 1st Pull

Register Online: <https://form.jotform.com/240494111268150>

Baldwin Turf Expands Services and Opens The Shop at Baldwin Turf

By MICHELLE RUSCHMAN

After eight years of working in the Manhattan fashion industry, Jenny Herndon, one of the co-owners of Baldwin Turf's Lawn and Landscaping, is excited to be back home where she can enjoy the sunshine and beaches year-round again. "My brother and sister, Matthew, and Leigh Anna, have managed the landscaping side of our business for several years. With the opening of our retail store in November, it was the perfect time for me to join the family and use my merchandising background to help open the new store."

Baldwin Turf was originally acquired by their father, Tim Herndon, and his partners in 2002 to service Niceville, Ft. Walton Beach and Destin. When the company first opened, the primary business was selling sod and offering minimal landscaping services. Now, 22 years later, Tim and Wynn's three kids manage Baldwin Turf. They purchased Grass Roots Lawn & Landscape in 2020 and as a result, they've been able to expand their service area into Walton County. Their goal is to be a one-stop destination for all of our area's outdoor needs. "When Baldwin Turf started, we were mainly providing materials to other landscaping companies. Now that we've grown, our focus is on full-service lawn care. We continue to offer sod, but now we also provide lawn and landscape maintenance, irrigation installation and repairs, landscaping installations, lawn and shrub care, and turf and landscape materials. Specialty fertilizers can also be purchased."

Baldwin Turf's client base is predominantly residential, but they do have a team that can handle commercial projects as well. "Leigh Anna manages the crew, the timing of all our jobs, and takes care of schedules. Matthew meets potential customers, assesses the work needed, and oversees the projects. We have a full-time head landscaper, truck driver, and customer specialist who helps with sales and operations. In the spring and summer, we also participate in the H-2B program which provides a great crew that does



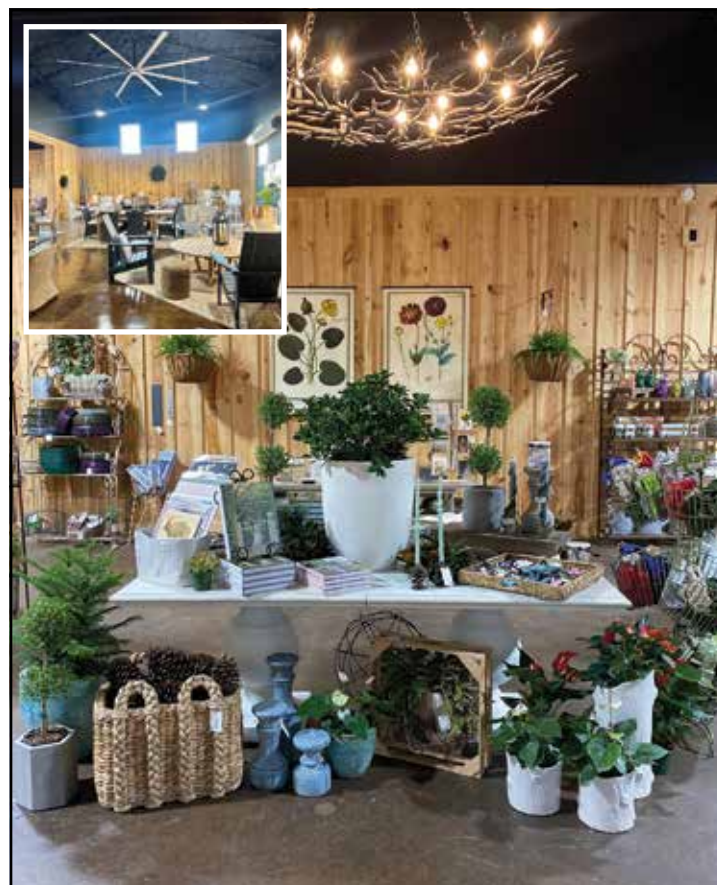
incredible work."

The newest addition to their business, The Shop at Baldwin Turf, offers botanical gifts, unique gardening supplies, ambient lighting and outdoor entertainment. The inventory of furniture has also been thoughtfully selected so that it's durable and long-lasting, even with the bright sun and salty air, which can make outdoor furniture hard to maintain. The Herndon family grew up loving the outdoors and truly wants our community to enjoy it as much as they do. "We live in such an amazing place and want to help bring that to homes and businesses throughout our community. We want to help elevate your outdoor space and provide those final touches."

As Jenny settles into her new role as the manager of Baldwin Turf's retail division, she reflects on what makes this area so special to her and her family. "What I love most about coming back to Niceville is our sense of community. Being able to provide great customer service is my favorite part of the job. I'm getting to meet people and talk about their new homes and projects, and we get to be part of that. The Shop has only been open a few months and I can already see how special it is that

people want to support local businesses and local businesses want to be there for people in this area. I've become involved with the Chamber of Commerce as well as The Young Professionals group. We enjoy sponsoring local youth activities and helping with charitable donations. Our community encourages all of us to step up."

Baldwin Turf's Lawn and Landscaping office is located at 1440 Live Oak Street. Call 850-897-9060 to schedule a free estimate or ask about their services. The Shop at Baldwin Turf is located at 739 John Sims Parkway.



BALDWIN TURF

lawn • garden • home

Baldwin Turf is a family owned company offering the full scope of service and supplies in lawn care and landscape, and has most recently expanded with a retail location in Niceville. The Shop at Baldwin Turf is your new go-to for everything outdoor entertainment and décor for your patio and garden. We have carefully curated a selection of high-quality outdoor décor, furniture, lighting, unique supplies, and special touches fit to enhance any and all al fresco needs. Come shop with us!

The Shop, NOW OPEN
739 John Sims Pkwy, Niceville
 Open Monday-Saturday 10-5
 850-842-2221
shop@baldwinturfniceville.com

Lawn & Landscape Location
1440 Live Oak Street, Niceville
 Open Monday-Friday 7:30-4
 850-897-9060
office@baldwinturfniceville.com

Absolute Thai Cafe (Valparaiso)

Spice things up at Absolute Thai Restaurant, serving up an authentic taste of Thailand. Under new ownership since June 2023, owner Dao welcomes you to a mix of Thai elegance and simplicity, first rate and creative food, with experienced and skilled chefs in the kitchen straight from Thailand. The menu features classic Thai dishes, but also some creative specialties that are well worth trying. Blending exotic condiments and diverse spices that will whet any appetite, try the garlic fish, Thai Sweet & Sour or one of the popular Curries. House specialties include Crying Tiger: Thai style grilled steak with chili powder dipping sauce served with vegetables; Teriyaki Salmon: Grilled salmon topped with teriyaki sauce served with steam vegetables; and Sizzling Chiangmai: Mushroom, onion, raisins, pineapple, bell pepper and cashew nut with your choice of meat served in hot pan.

"We are pleased to invite all customers to come and try our food which are all special menu," said Dao. "We flew over 10,000 miles from our country and we are now ready to serve you here!"

Dine in, Pick up or Delivery. Lunch Specials Mon-Fri 11 a.m. - 2:30 p.m.

Order all menu items online from Absolute Thai Cafe (Valparaiso) for takeout. Hours:



Mon. - Fri. 11 a.m. - 2:30 p.m., 4 p.m. - 8.30 p.m.; Closed Sat.-Sun.

139 N John Sims Pkwy.
Valparaiso, FL 32580
(850) 389-4813

Fudpucker's Beachside Bar & Grill

Locally owned and operated since inception in 1982, Fudpucker's restaurant stands out by being dedicated to its owners' three favorite "F" words: Food, Fun and Family. Featuring live alligators, family entertainment and teen nights, Fudpucker's is the only place in Destin where you can see, feed and even get your picture taken with a live alligator, shop for "World Famous" t-shirts, write your names on the walls, play arcade games and enjoy quality casual food in an upbeat and family friendly atmosphere. There's even a special kids' menu and a playground with lots of space to play. Stop by Fudpucker's Destin for a relaxing



meal, a cold drink and a friendly locals' smile. Fudpucker's is not just a restaurant, it's not just a bar, and it's certainly not just a "tourist" place - it's a one-of-a-kind entertainment experience, and one that can be enjoyed by kids and families of all ages. Special: World Famous Fudpucker Punch - \$8 'til 4 p.m. every day: Father Fud's special cure-all elixer and legendary medicinal concoction made with a combination of orange and pineapple juices, four types of rum and a splash of Grenadine—\$8 'til 4 p.m. every day.

(850) 654-4200
20001 Emerald Coast Pkwy.
Destin
fudpucker.com

Landshark's Pizza

Hungry? Thirsty? Maybe a little of both? Come in and visit Landshark's Pizza. Owners Brian and Sue Hassmann have created the locals' favorite pizza, buffalo wings and sports pub and

bar that serves great pizza and awesome wings, plus many other scrumptious eats for folks of all ages. There's plenty of seating for everyone and TVs galore, plus fun and games all week long. Sports fans from all over come and watch all their favorite teams on countless regional and national sports networks. With a fully stocked bar serving up dozens of different bourbons and many different cold beers on draft, it's no secret why the locals love Landshark's Pizza Company.

(850) 424-6743
1128 E John Sims Pkwy.,
Niceville
landsharkspizza.com

JoJo's Coffee and Goodness

An iconic favorite of locals, owner and operator of Jojo's Coffee and Goodness Angela "JoJo" Stevenson invites you to enter her cafe and relaxed coffee shop atmosphere for a daily dose of "goodness." Stop in for mouth-watering cinnamon rolls; scones: cranberry orange, chocolate caramel and cheddar thyme; strawberry coffee cake; cranberry orange muffins; red velvet cookies; brownies with espresso ganache or caramelitas. Try a breakfast special with a piece of quiche or kolache-hashbrown casserole. Breakfast burritos are rolled and ready daily! Choose from andouille, bacon, chorizo or veggie. Or tantalize your taste buds with a made-to-order breakfast sandwich on croissants or bagel with two eggs and cheese and then choose if you want to add Jojo's homemade smoked jalapeño beef bologna, bacon, house smoked barbecue or ham. Cinnamon rolls and kaloches still hold the top spot for sell outs. Stop in for featured muffins, coffee cake or pound cake, which go great with maple cinnamon latte or caramel macchiato. And,

oh, the freshly roasted coffee. Get what you're craving! Order ahead and pick up some for the office or breakfast to start your day off right!

Hours 7:30 a.m.-2 p.m. Tuesday-Saturday.
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bigorangehousedesigns.com

LJ Schooners Dockside Restaurant

Suds, Songs and Sunsets! Welcome to LJ Schooners Dockside Restaurant at the Bluewater Bay Marina Complex. Named after "LJ Schooner" (the LJ is for Lazy Jack), a cherished four-legged icon on Bluewater Bay Marina docks, the open-air oyster bar and restaurant offers a magnificent view of the water, marina and unparalleled sunset any time of year. There are, of course, oysters and a delicious varied menu with dinner specials such as blackened mahi and grilled shrimp with hollandaise, served over cheese grits.

This month:
April 6: 10% of food sales will be donated to Niceville Fireworks Fund.

April 28: Shrimp Boil Sunday 4-7 p.m.

Live entertainment each weekend. See ad for lineup.

Sundays: Brunch 9 a.m. - 1 p.m.

Wednesdays: Sailboat Race 6 p.m.

Thursdays: Paddleboard Race 6 p.m.

Dine-in, pick-up, to-go.

Oyster bar hours: Mon-Thurs 3-10 p.m.; Fri-Sat 11 a.m.-midnight; Sun 9 a.m.-9 p.m.

Restaurant hours: Mon-Tues closed. Wed-Sat, 11 a.m.-9 p.m. Sun, 9 a.m.-1 p.m.

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Wine Fests on Tap!

Sandestin Wine Festival April 11-14

The 37th Annual Sandestin Wine Festival at the Village of Baytowne Wharf at Sandestin Golf and Beach Resort will take place April 11-14, 2024. Topping area polls as a must-experience event, this beloved festival offers four full days of unique events including wine dinners with celebrity chefs, yoga, live music, interactive experiences, culinary tents, and of course wine tastings.

The event is the most established and continuously running wine festival on the Gulf coast and known as the "Kentucky Derby of Wine Festivals." Always a picture perfect event complete with white tents, grand wine tastings, culinary experiences and live music.

Tickets, schedule and more information: www.sandestin-winefestival.com.

The Annual Destin Charity Wine Auction April 26-28

Destin Charity Wine Auction Foundation (DCWAF) presents the 19th Annual Destin Charity Wine Auction April 26-28 to benefit children in need in Northwest Florida through the Foundation's 17 partner children's charities. In 2023, DCWAF donated \$3.4 million to charity following one of its most successful auctions to date.

This year's auction will feature an impressive line-up of celebrity chefs and vintners from throughout the world, hosted by philanthropic couples within the local community.

Presented by the Jumonville Family, expect a weekend filled with exclusive wines and excellent food from a variety of celebrity chefs beginning Friday,



April 26 with the patron dinner experience. Each dinner features a nationally recognized chef paired with world-class vintners.

The Destin Charity Wine Auction is the main event of the weekend at 1 p.m. on Saturday, April 27 held under an air-conditioned tent at Grand Boulevard Sandestin Town Center and will feature distinctive wines from internationally acclaimed vintners poured and paired with cuisine curated by a selection of the area's top restaurants. The

event culminates with a high-energy, live auction boasting rare and distinctive wines, spectacular trips and other incredible one-of-a-kind items.

Hosted in conjunction with the South Walton Beaches Wine and Food Festival in Grand Boulevard

Town Center the same weekend, the Festival will showcase hundreds of premium wines along with a diverse selection of spirits and culinary creations. Auction attendees also have access to South Walton Beaches Wine & Food Festival's Grand Tasting on Sunday, April 30 at 1 p.m. Patron packages: dcwaf.org/tickets.

South Walton Beaches Wine & Food Festival April 25-28

A dazzling roster of celebri-

ty winemakers, mixologists, and chefs will converge April 25 - 28, 2024 for the South Walton Beaches Wine & Food Festival in Grand Boulevard Town Center to wine, dine, educate and entertain guests as part of the four-day celebration of wine, spirits, food, music, fun and goodwill.

South Walton Beaches Wine & Food Festival festival features a stunning showcase of some of the best wines in the world. Celebrity wine producers and chefs present fine wine and food

pairings from the world's most famous appellations. the Willamette Valley Wineries Association will be featured in 2024 and more than a dozen of their noted winemakers and winery VIPs will participate in the festival. The Culinary Village offers a sumptuous array of foods to taste, wines to pair, as well as wine and food tasting seminars.

For more information and to purchase tickets, visit www.SoWalWine.com.



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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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Docksides Restaurant & Oyster Bar

Sunset Shrimp Boil

LAST SUNDAY OF THE MONTH
April 28, May 26, June 30, July 28,
Aug. 25, Sept. 29, Oct. 27

Shrimp, Sausage, Corn on the Cob, Potatoes, Bread (Market price per plate)

Featuring Shrimp from Byrd's Seafood Market,
440 John Sims Pkwy., Niceville

Saturday, April 8: 10% of food sales will be donated to the Niceville Fireworks Fund



More Fun

- April 1: Chess Night 6pm
- April 5: John Galt Dance Band 6-10pm
- April 6: Jody Lucas 6-9pm
- April 12: Alston Weeks 6-10pm
- April 13: Parker & Ivory Willingham 6-10pm
- April 16: The Traveling Painter 5:30pm
- April 19: The Aces Band 6-10pm
- April 20: Dive Cleanup Day and Rockers for Life & Hippie Party
- April 26: Delta Current Band 6-10pm
- April 27: Dismystic 6-10pm
- April 28: Shrimp Boil & Ronny Dean Garrett 4-8pm
- Every Wednesday: Sailboat Race 6pm
- Every Thursday: Paddle Board Race 6pm

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

290 Yacht Club Dr., Niceville • Bluewater Bay • (850) 897-6400 • Visit www.bluewaterbaymarina.com for more events!

 Outdoors

Wildlife Is More Active in Spring

Several species of wildlife become more active in the springtime for important needs such as migration, breeding, feeding and nesting. This increased natural activity often results in people being more likely to encounter our wildlife while enjoying the outdoors. To avoid disrupting important natural behavior and to prevent conflicts with native species, following some simple tips will help conserve wildlife during spring and beyond:

Injured and Orphaned Wildlife – Generally, if you find a young animal, such as a fawn or fledgling, it is best to leave it alone. Young animals are rarely orphaned; a parent may be nearby searching for food. You can report common wildlife you think could be in-

jured or orphaned to a licensed wildlife rehabilitator.

Nesting Waterbirds – Shorebirds, sea birds and wading birds start nesting this time of year and you can help by keeping your distance while on the beach or on the water. If birds become agitated or leave their nests, you are too close. When on the beach, keep an eye out for and avoid shorebird eggs and chicks, which are well-camouflaged in shallow nests in the sand and shells. Wading birds, such as herons and egrets, and pelicans also are nesting now on mangroves and tree islands.

Bats – Bat maternity season, the time when bats start to give birth and raise their young, runs from April 16 through Aug. 14. During bat maternity season,

it is illegal to block bats from their roosts. If bats are excluded during maternity season, flightless baby bats could be trapped inside structures. April 15 is the last day to legally exclude bats from your home or building without a permit. This is the time to do final spring checks of your home for any entry points, ensure that no bats are present and make any necessary repairs. If bats are found, take steps to properly install a bat exclusion device before bat maternity season begins. Exclusion devices, which allow bats to exit a structure but block them from returning to roosts, are the only legal and appropriate method to remove bats from your home or building.

Sea Turtles – These large



marine turtles start nesting on Florida beaches in spring. You can help by keeping beaches dark at night and free of obstacles during their March through October nesting season. Artificial lighting can disturb nesting turtles and disorient hatchlings, so avoid using flashlights or cellphones on the beach at night. Turn out lights or close curtains and shades in buildings along the beach after dark to ensure nesting turtles aren't disturbed. Clear away beach gear at the end of the day and fill in holes dug in the sand that could entrap turtles.

Manatees – As manatees leave their winter habitats and travel the waterways along the Atlantic and Gulf coasts and other inland waters, chances of close encounters between manatees and boaters increase. Go slow and look out below for manatees when boating or using personal watercraft. For boaters and personal watercraft users, it is a critical time to be on the lookout for manatees to avoid collisions with these large aquatic mammals. Boaters should follow posted speed limits as many areas have seasonal zones in spring that reflect manatee migration patterns.

Bears – As spring temperatures warm, bears become more active. During this time of year, females are teaching their cubs what to eat and the skills necessary to survive. To help prevent conflicts and make sure that eating garbage, pet food or bird seed in your yard is not part of that learning experience, remove or secure attractants around your property. If bears can't find food sources in your yard or neighborhood, they will

move on.

Gopher Tortoises – Florida's only native tortoise becomes more active this time of year, foraging for food and searching for a mate. If you see gopher tortoises or their half-moon shaped burrow entrances, it is best to leave them alone. Spotted a gopher tortoise crossing a road? If it is safe to do so, you may move it out of the road in the direction it was heading (but don't put the tortoise in your vehicle). Remember the tortoise is a land animal that can't swim, so never attempt to put it into water.

Snakes – Keep an eye out for our native snakes in your yard or when hiking, as they could be encountered more as the weather warms. What should you do if you come upon a native snake? Just give it space, as snakes usually try to avoid encounters.

Wildlife and Roads – With increased wildlife activity, keep an eye out for animals crossing roadways, including larger species such as Florida panthers, bears and deer. Slowing down and obeying all posted speed limits, particularly in panther zones and areas with road signage identifying known wildlife crossings, helps keep you, other motorists and wildlife safe.

For more information, visit MyFWC.com/News and click on "Spring Wildlife News."

If you witness someone committing a wildlife violation, contact the FWC's Wildlife Alert Hotline: 888-404-FWCC (3922) or text 847411 (Tip411) with keyword "FWC" and information about the violation.

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Off the Hook: Spring Fishing!



BY CALI HLAVAC,
TO DO IN DESTIN

As the vibrant colors of spring emerge, fishermen and families flock to our piece of paradise around the Bay and the “World’s Luckiest Fishing Village,” for a spring fishing adventure. With the warming temperatures and inviting waters, springtime offers anglers an unparalleled experience filled with a variety of species and thrilling catches.

One of the most appealing aspects of spring fishing in our area is the weather. During this time of the year, temperatures range from the comfortable mid-60s to the mid-80s, creating an ideal environment for both fish and anglers alike.

Spring brings the arrival of various species to the waters off our coast, presenting anglers with a plethora of opportunities. Among the prized catches during this season are Cobia, King Mackerel, Spanish Mackerel, Sheepshead and Mahi-Mahi. These species thrive in the Gulf of Mexico’s nutrient-rich waters, making them abundant targets for eager fishermen.

To reel in these coveted catches, anglers employ a variety of tried-and-tested techniques tailored to each species.

For red snapper, bottom fishing near natural reefs, wrecks and ledges proves highly effective. Using live bait such as cigar minnows, pinfish or squid can entice these elusive creatures to bite.

King mackerel and Spanish mackerel, known for their speed and agility, are commonly targeted using trolling techniques. Anglers troll various lures and baits behind boats at different depths, mimicking the movement of baitfish to attract these predatory species.

Mahi-mahi, with their vibrant colors and acrobatic displays, are often encountered near floating debris, weed lines, and temperature breaks. Anglers cast live bait or brightly colored lures to entice these majestic fish, which are known for their willingness to strike ag-

gressively.

Spring fishing offers an unforgettable experience for anglers of all skill levels. Whether you’re seeking the thrill of battling a trophy fish or simply enjoying a day on the water amidst stunning natural surroundings, our Emerald Coast waters never disappoint.

In conclusion, as spring breathes new life into the world, it also kicks off the beginning of an exciting fishing season in our area. With its beautiful weather, abundant species, and versatile techniques, it remains a premier destination for anglers seeking adventure and unforgettable fishing experiences. So, grab your gear, chart your course, and embark on a memorable spring fishing excursion in the jewel of Florida’s Emerald Coast.



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Does Hearing Loss Impact Cognition?

BY DOUGLAS L. BECK, AU.D.
DOCTOR OF AUDIOLOGY

This is an often-asked question among professionals and among people with hearing loss.

The answer is variable and not as straightforward as any of us would like. One of the reasons this question is so difficult is that it may be the wrong question (see below). The answer which I have published previously, and with which I am very comfortable goes like this: “Untreated hearing loss may exacerbate cognitive decline, and even more so as hearing loss increases.”

Hearing is simply detecting or perceiving sound. Listening is comprehending or understanding, or applying meaning to sounds. Listening involves auditory processing, information processing and is more-or-less a ‘whole brain’ event. Cognition can be defined as knowing and acquiring knowledge through sensory input (like vision and hearing) experience and thought processes. As such, the distinction between hearing and listening is pivotal in that

listening and cognition involve active and intricate brain-based processing, whereas hearing is simply a detection task, requiring almost no processing at all.

Leavitt, Beck and Flexer (2023) noted the more appropriate question might have been “Would the correlation between listening and cognitive decline be even greater than those reported for hearing and cognition?” Probably yes. But measuring listening is very difficult, and measuring hearing is very easy.

As noted above, untreated hearing loss does appear to increase the risk of cognitive decline. This is not a new observation. Peters et al (1988) reported cognitive decline was greater in hearing impaired individuals and for those with Alzheimer’s Disease, hearing impairment predicted a more rapid cognitive decline. Gold and colleagues (1996) reported a high prevalence of hearing loss in individuals with cognitive deficits.

Beck & Clark (2009) wrote that patients live in a world where cognition, attention,



memory, and hearing interact and each plays a critical role in listening. They reported that people with hearing loss must dig deep into their cognitive reserve and cognitive abilities to make sense of a world delivered to them via compromised auditory input. Beck & Clark stated “audition matters more as cognitive ability decreases, and cognition matters more as auditory ability decreases.”

Edwards (2013) reported there exists increasing evidence that hearing loss can result in cascading cognitive and psycho-social declines as well as increased cognitive load, mental fatigue, poor memory, worse

auditory scene analysis, reduced attention, less focus, worse mental health, social withdrawal, and depression. He noted hearing aids may be beneficial as they may improve

the quality of the auditory signal impacting the cognitive system.

Amieva, Ouvrard, Giulioli and colleagues (2015) studied 3,670 people over a 25-year period, based on self-perceived hearing loss and hearing aid use. They concluded that those who reported hearing loss had lower cognitive screening scores and they declined more rapidly than those who did not report hearing loss. Interestingly, for those with hearing loss who used a hearing aid, there was no difference in cognitive decline from the control group. The authors stated “Self-reported hearing loss is associated with accelerated cognitive decline in older adults; hearing aid use attenuates such decline.”

More recently, Livingston, Huntley, Summerland and colleagues (2020) published a ground-breaking article on dementia. They reported that some 60% of your risk for dementia was due to aging and deoxyribonucleic acid (DNA), and the other 40% was due to 12 potentially modifiable risk factors. Of the 12, untreated hearing loss was the most significant with an 8.2% population attributable factor (PAF). The complete list includes; “Risk factors in early life (education), midlife (hypertension, obesity, hearing loss, traumatic brain injury, and alcohol misuse) and later life (smoking, depression, physical inactivity, social isolation, diabetes, and air pollution).”

Jiang, Mishra, Shrestha (2023) reviewed data from 430 thousand people who participated in the UK Bio Bank study. Participants were asked “Do you have any difficulty with your hearing?” and “Do you use a hearing aid most of the time?” There were three groups of responses. (1) no reported hearing difficulties; (2) hearing difficulties with hearing aid use

(3) hearing difficulties without hearing aid use. The authors reported study participants with hearing difficulties who did not use a hearing aid had a higher risk of later being diagnosed with all-cause dementia than those without hearing loss. Participants with hearing difficulties who used a hearing aid did not. They also reported “up to 8% of dementia cases could be prevented with proper hearing loss management, our findings highlight the urgent need to take measures to address hearing loss to improve cognitive decline.”

Bottom Line: It appears extremely likely that untreated hearing loss increases the risk of cognitive decline in many people—not all. The risk of cognitive decline varies tremendously based on DNA, age, overall cognitive, emotional, physical health, the type and degree of hearing loss and much, much more.

Regarding whether hearing aid fittings slow cognitive decline, and if so, would OTC and prescription hearing aids offer the same benefit? No one knows. There are certainly studies which have found that treating hearing loss with professionally fit hearing aids appears to have a “normalizing effect” (see Amieva, 2015, and see Jiang, Mishra and Shrestha 2023), but this did not occur with every single participant. Further, there are no peer-reviewed studies regarding OTC and long-term cognitive outcomes.

If I had to make a strong statement on these matters in Fall 2023, I am comfortable saying the following:

- Untreated hearing loss increases the risk of cognitive decline in many people.
- Professionally fit hearing aids often appear to be useful regarding altering the trajectory of cognitive decline in high risk, willing and able people.
- Just like in all other areas of medicine and healthcare, early detection and treatment is the most successful and most likely to succeed.

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By KELLY STALNAKER, J&B MEDICAL

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sports, school events and charitable organizations.

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Emotionally Charged Conversations



BY STEPHENIE CRAIG

Are you ever moving through life and find yourself feeling very angry or hurt by someone? Maybe you are experiencing anger or hurt at a level 10 intensity and you are noticing the situation intensity level seems to be much lower than your feeling. You might then realize you're making up a story in your head about the negative, insensitive intentions of the other person. As a result, you may find yourself withdrawing, putting up walls or being confrontational in ways that compromise connection.

Emotionally charged conversations are complex to navigate and often result in people not showing up as their best version of self. Intense feelings can fuel reactivity, shutting down, harsh words, judgment, unkindness, shame and condescending tone. While you know it feels bad to experience someone's emotional reaction, you may still find yourself reacting at times. Intense emotions are inevitable but, with practice, you can create a healthy pattern of working through your own and others' reactions.

10 Ways to Approach Emotionally Charged Conversations

1. Notice when you are triggered. Pay attention to your feelings and your body. Notice changes in body temperature, stomach, chest, feeling shaky, clenching fists, grinding teeth, tears, change in heart rate. Name feelings if you are able. "I feel embarrassed, ashamed, humiliated, angry, hurt, sad, unsafe."

2. Calm your nervous system. Take 10-20 deep breaths, step away from the situation, journal, take a walk, nurture your pet. Engage in healthy calming skills to help your body move out of fight, flight or freeze so you can think more clearly.

3. Notice the negative intention story you are making up in your head. She didn't text me back because I'm not important. He didn't make eye contact so he must not care. My child is selfish, disrespectful and trying to irritate me. Challenge the story in your head. Is it possible their behavior has another meaning than intent to hurt you?

4. Sort past and present feelings. Intense feelings are often a sign that the present situation has triggered past wounds. Reflect on whether you are bringing memories from past interactions into the current situation. Acknowledge and allow past feelings to exist in a space separate from the current situation/relationship.

5. Remember the humanity of and your history with the person. Try remembering you do not have negative intentions toward others when you emotionally react. You also do not intentionally emotionally react. Perhaps the other person had a difficult emotional moment and did not have negative intentions toward you. Remember the ongoing character of your relationship with this person. Are their intentions and behavior toward you typically positive?

6. Approach with compassionate curiosity instead of shame. Instead of, "You don't get to talk to me that way and you are being so rude and out of line," try, "You seem really overwhelmed. What's happening for you right now?" People often feel bad inside about reacting poorly. What helps them move forward is compassionate understanding rather than judgmental correction. When people feel understood with compassion, they will often apologize and move toward change.

7. Validate and support. Communicate understanding of the other's emotional state. Ask what support might be helpful on your end.

8. Own your part. Humbly seek to understand whether you contributed an unhelpful part in the relationship dynamic. Take responsibility by naming and apologizing for your part.

9. Address boundaries with vulnerability. Communicate kindly and directly how you were hurt and what would work better for you in the future. "When you snapped at me, that hurt my feelings and felt like you were blaming me. Now that we've talked, I understand that you were snapping because you were overwhelmed and it was not about me. I get overwhelmed, too. When you are getting overwhelmed, it would help me if you would let me know what you need rather than snapping at me. I will be able to support you better and that will help us stay connected."

10. Listen and repeat. Listen with an open mind to the other person's experience and repeat this process regularly when you feel triggered in relationships.

Emotionally charged conversations are difficult and can also be some of our most connecting and trust building moments when navigated with intention. Try practicing these tools and connect with us along your journey for counseling and coaching at Journeybravely.com.





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 Business

Meet Local Pros Trevor and Tina Kasten of Beachside Sliding Glass Door Maintenance

By MICHELLE RUSCHMAN

If you are struggling with a sliding glass door, then you need Beachside Sliding Glass Door Maintenance, LLC. Starting in October 2023, it's owned and operated by long-time Destin residents and high school sweethearts, Trevor and Tina Kasten. "We have learned to work very well together in handling all business responsibilities and balance each other out. Our daughter, Samantha, even helps with the creative and social media aspects of the business and we have a great crew that helps us with the larger projects."

Having been in the automotive restoration business for more than 30 years, Trevor has become an expert in metal repair. Wanting to retire from the fumes and chemicals, however, opened new opportunities. "I decided after all these years, it was the perfect time to make a change. My childhood friend owns and operates a very successful business similar to ours in central Florida. We immediately saw the need for this service in our area. I went down and trained with him, learned the business and the rest is history."

So, what is it about our area



that makes this business so valuable? "Most people don't realize that sliding glass doors require routine maintenance, especially in our coastal area. Sand, salt water, salty air and chlorine cause excessive corrosion to the wheel system underneath the door. The doors have to be lifted off and the bottom panels removed to see this damage.

Sliding doors are very heavy doors. They sit on a roller system that consists of a set of wheels that sit on a track. This system is designed to balance the weight of the doors and make them glide smoothly and easily. When this system starts to fail, the doors start to feel heavy.

Over time the wheels and

bearings go bad and need to be changed. Once this occurs, almost everyone assumes they need new doors. The doors just keep getting heavier and harder to open with time. This progression eventually breaks handles and damages the track the rollers sit on. There are different levels of track damage, but the longer you let it go the more extensive and expensive the repairs can get.

We get stuck, noisy, difficult-to-open sliding glass doors rolling open like new again. This includes roller replacement, track repair, door handles, security locks, alignment, and lubrication of the door."

During a time when everything has gone up in price, including brand-new sliding glass doors, repairs are a much more



cost-effective alternative.

Trevor and Tina have lived in the same neighborhood in Destin for over 25 years and have seen a lot of changes. They know and love our coastal beach towns and feel privileged to serve a community that gives so much. "Our neighbors look out for each other, and we love to be a part of that through our business as well. We've partnered with some fantastic property managers who immediately saw the value and skill in the work we provide."

Since opening, what has been the best part of starting their business? "We love the surprise homeowners experience once they see the functionality of their doors. You will be amazed by the peace you feel just by being able to stop fighting with your door daily."

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BY SEAN DIETRICH

Easter Sunday. An Episcopal church in Birmingham. Vaulted ceilings. Ornate masonry. A pipe organ. A choir dressed in lacework cottas. Individual stained-glass windows that cost more than tactical government helicopters. The whole works.

My wife and I arrived late. The place was loaded with parishioners in pastel colors. There were no available seats in the back.

“We have room on the front row,” said the usher.

“The front row?” I said. “Isn’t there anywhere else? Somewhere less... Frontal?”

He shook his head. “Full house today, sir.”

I am not a front pew guy. I come from mild, soft-spoken fundamentalist people who hug each other sideways; we prefer to fill up the sanctuary from the back to the front.

He guided us to the front pew so that we were practically sitting in the priest’s lap. The whole church was looking at us.

Service began. The organ bellowed. People stood.

Before we sang the first song, a kid in the pew behind me started making flatulent sounds with his mouth. I could not concentrate.

As a former little boy, I am qualified to tell you that these were not just your run-of-the-mill mouth-based sound effects. These were long, juicy, squirty sounds that, if I hadn’t known better, sounded like minor digestive issues.

And he never quit. During the communal singing, the kid made this noise. During the call to worship: The Noise. During the Lord’s Prayer: nuclear blasts.

Spittle was flying onto the back of my neck as the boy’s sustained raspberry sounds reverberated off the stone walls. I was certain someone would tell the boy to knock it off, but it never happened.

So I turned around to give

the child a stern look.

He might have been 3 years old. The kid was blond, plump, dressed festively in a seersucker jumpsuit adorned with lace.

His mother smiled. I grinned back, hoping she’d get my drift and put an end to her son’s new-found talent. But she didn’t.

So I tried to deal with it. Throughout the service, the kid made even louder sounds and I made greater attempts to ignore him. But it was difficult, inasmuch as I could feel the wind-speeds from his mouth-trombone moving the hair on the back of my head.

Occasionally, I would look around at other parishioners to gauge their reactions, but nobody was paying attention to the kid. It was incredible. Even though this boy’s sphincter-like tones were rattling the windows, I was the only one in the Western Hemisphere who noticed this child.

When the choir stood for the offertory song, I tried to tune the kid out completely. I focused on the music. I closed my eyes. I listened to the a capella choral arrangement, bowing my head, reflecting on spiritual matters, when all of a sudden...

Somebody ripped one.

At least that’s what it sounded like. The kid had upped the ante this time. He wasn’t just making basic mouth sounds anymore. He was raspberrying the national anthem. The back of my neck was painted in a fine spray of toddler saliva.

I leaned over to my wife. “I



can’t concentrate,” I said.

“Hmmm?” she said.

“That kid. He’s making noise.”

“What kid?”

“What kid? Junior the Incredible Tooting Toddler. Don’t you hear him?”

“Just don’t pay attention to him.”

“He’s spitting on me.”

Someone across the aisle shushed me.

Finally, it was time for communion. Several hundred of us filed toward the altar, and who do you think was standing behind me? That’s right. Toot-Zilla.

The kid was making his lip noises while standing in line, bouncing on his mother’s hip.

I’d had enough. I was just about to say something to the kid’s mother when she spoke first. She told me she didn’t have a free hand for receiving communion. So she asked if I would watch her son for a moment while she approached the altar and took the Sacrament. I said sure.

So she left him with me for a moment. He stood beside my leg and looked up at me with

tap-water blue eyes. And I have to admit, this child was cute.

“You shouldn’t be making those sounds in church,” I told him.

“Raah baah baah waah,” he

said.

“That’s no excuse.”

“Aaagghhh.”

“People are trying to be reverent here.”

“Waaah daah haah baah faaah.”

“You’re not even sorry, are you?”

He drooled on himself.

When his mother finished receiving the Eucharist, she came back to us and lifted her son into her arms. I wished her a happy Easter. She returned the favor. Then I wished the kid a happy Easter and his little face erupted in a smile.

“Haaappah eeeee-saaaah!” he shouted.

My heart officially melted. I pinched his nose, and the kid responded by making that familiar loud sound again.

Only this time his lips didn’t move.

I hope you had a happy Easter. I know he did.

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A Pastor's Ponderings: Remembering a Time When Your Word Was Your Bond



BY DOUG STAUFFER, PASTOR
FAITH INDEPENDENT BAPTIST
CHURCH

In a world where dependability seems to be waning, the stories of biblical figures such as Abraham, Moses, Peter and Mary Magdalene stand out as examples of biblical faithfulness. Their lives offer profound lessons on its importance. These accounts illuminate the past and offer timeless



transformation. This example reminds us that faithfulness is not about perfection, but learning from past failures and moving forward with renewed commitment.

Mary Magdalene's unwavering loyalty to Jesus, especially during the crucifixion and as the first witness to His resurrection, exemplifies faithfulness in the face of utter despair. Her story is a testament to the power of steadfast love and loyalty, even when days for her were darkest. It reminds us that true faithfulness often shines brightest against trials and tribulations.

At the core of these narratives is a profound understanding of faithfulness, not just as a religious virtue, but as a guiding principle throughout life. The Proverb, "Confidence in an unfaithful man in time of trouble is like a broken tooth, and a foot out of joint," vividly illustrates the pain and dysfunction unfaithfulness brings, further emphasizing the value of being dependable and true to one's word and commitments. Some of us are old enough to remember the meaning of a "Gentleman's Agreement" and "when a handshake sealed the deal." A man's word was his bond, but, today, talk seems cheap, and bonds are easily broken when a more lucrative deal passes by.

In an era where commitments can be fleeting and reliability is often in short supply, these stories beckon us to consider the depth of OUR faithfulness. The biblical emphasis on faithfulness as a virtue essential for a fulfilling and righteous life encourages us to evaluate our reliability and integrity in every aspect of life.

The biblical narratives of faithfulness teach us valuable lessons about trust, perseverance, redemption and loyalty. As we navigate life's complexities, these stories should inspire us to cultivate a deeper sense of faithfulness in our relationships, pursuits, and spiritual journey. Doing so enriches our lives and all those within our sphere of influence.

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.

wisdom for life today.

Abraham exemplifies faithfulness by obeying God's call to leave his homeland without knowing his destination. His journey from Ur of the Chaldees symbolizes a leap of faith grounded in trust and commitment to God's promise. This act of faithfulness is not just about Abraham's departure, but his steadfast belief in God's promise to make of him a great nation. His story teaches us that faithfulness involves trust AND ACTION, even when the path ahead is completely unknown.

Moses, another model of faithfulness, led the Israelites out of Egyptian bondage and received the Ten Commandments, foundational to the Judeo-Christian faith. Despite significant chal-

lenges and setbacks, Moses' perseverance teaches us the importance of steadfastness in pursuing a greater purpose, even when the journey is fraught with extreme difficulties. His persistence in leading his people, despite their disobedience, demonstrates the power of enduring faith in leadership.

One of the 12 apostles, Peter, exhibits a different dimension of faithfulness. Despite his initial denial of Jesus, repentance and subsequent role as an early Church leader, his life highlights the themes of forgiveness and redemption. Peter's journey from denial to devotion underscores that faithfulness can involve growth, learning from past failures and embracing a blessed

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2024-2025 Academic Year Auditions

Incoming 3rd Grade Student Auditions:
April 20 - 10am to 2pm
April 21 - 2:30pm to 4:30pm

Incoming 4th Grade Student Auditions:
April 20 - 2:30 pm to 4:00pm

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In Partnership with the Okaloosa County School District

NFBallet.org/Auditions
All auditions are by appointment only.

Sinfonia Becomes Orchestra of Nearly 3,000 Students During Link Up: The Orchestra Rocks

On March 6, the Destin-Fort Walton Beach Convention Center in Fort Walton Beach was transformed into an electrifying concert hall when Sinfonia Gulf Coast — the only fully professional non-profit orchestra on the Emerald Coast founded in 2005 by music and artistic director Demetrius Fuller — presented its 12th live Link Up concert performance “The Orchestra Rocks,” a national program it presented in partnership with New York’s Carnegie Hall Weill Institute of Music.

This year’s Link Up program showcased the talents of nearly 3,000 local 3rd-5th grade students from Okaloosa and Walton Counties performing on recorder and singing. The concert was conducted by Sinfonia Gulf Coast Maestro Fuller.

With recorders in hand, the students performed from their seats when given their cue by Maestro Fuller to join the Sinfonia Gulf Coast orchestra for a range of pieces from Come

to Play by Thomas Cabanis, La Follia by Antonio Vivaldi, excerpts from Igor Stravinsky’s The Rite of Spring, O Fortuna from Carmina Burana and others. But these inspired kids didn’t stay in their seats at this spirited performance which ended with a celebration of Chuck Berry’s Johnny B. Goode they were up out of their chairs singing, dancing moves and parts they have been practicing for months.

This curriculum is geared towards 3rd-5th grade students, and in many cases locally, is the only music education that they receive during the school year. The theme of this year’s Link Up program was centered around discovering how elements of rhythm and time can unite musicians, singers and audiences.

Sinfonia’s Link Up program is funded in part by the St. Joe Community Foundation, the Dugas Family Foundation and the Emeril Lagasse Family Foundation. Additional fund-



ing from Sinfonia Gulf Coast’s Crescendo! annual fundraiser, Treble Makers, an honorary membership committee of Crescendo! and community donors,

has helped Link Up steadily grow to the Sinfonia’s largest education initiative.

For more information on Sinfonia Gulf Coast visit Sin-

foniaGulfCoast.org, call (850) 460-8800 or e-mail info@sinfoniagulfcoast.org.



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Arts & Music

ECTC Presents Mother Goose on the Loose

Emerald Coast Theatre Company (ECTC) presents Mother Goose on the Loose, a production of ECTC's Theatre for Young Audiences Program, April 4 - April 7, 2024. Where's Mother Goose? Where could she have gone? Did she jump over the moon? Is she visiting the old lady who lived in a shoe? Did she follow Jack and Jill up that hill? No one knows! Join her children as they try to find their beloved Mother Goose, and sing and dance along the way! It's an "ECTC Theatre for the Very Young" production. Big fun for the very little!

Jack - Alexander Koehler
 Jill - Tabitha Sheldon
 Narrator / Cat / Spider - Arianna Malai
 Littlepig / Old King Cole - Caden Gray
 Miss Muffet / Mother Goose - Maggie Bingham
 Old Woman Yolanda / Big Bad Wolf - Mercie Taylor
 Brother Pig / Royal Crier / Witch - Alicia Jurek
 Director/Author - Heath Carroll
 Set Designer/Music Director - Rebeca Lake
 Costume Designer - Taylor Walker
 Properties - Ora Wolfgram
 Stage Manager - Ben Bathula
 Tech Crew - Solomon Miller,



Selah Metzger, Leya Bathula

Nathanael Fisher, co-founder and producing artistic director of ECTC says, "Mother Goose on the Loose gives the youngest of theatre goers an entertaining good time! The kids will laugh, get involved in the story and leave with a smile."

Mother Goose on the Loose will be staged in ECTC's main space located on the second floor of 560 Grand Boulevard in Grand Boulevard Town Center in Miramar Beach. Tickets range from \$15 - \$20 depending on the show time/day. There is an additional processing fee for ticket purchases. Purchase tickets online at www.emeraldcoasttheatre.org. You can now choose your seats when you purchase your tickets. Field trips are offered April 4 and 5 and public days are April 6 at 9:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. and April 7 at 2.30 p.m. ECTC will also be

providing field trip opportunities for local school groups for Mary Poppins. For booking information please call 850-684-0323. For more information about Emerald Coast Theatre Company and its educational programs, please visit www.emeraldcoasttheatre.org.

Become a VIP! Membership support allows ECTC to offer a variety of high-quality productions for audiences of all ages as well as reach hundreds of children through our Educational Theatre programs and field trips. Each VIP Membership includes tickets to shows as listed with each membership level, a VIP name tag, early access to reserved seats, access to the VIP Lounge, eight complimentary drinks (wine, beer, or water) for the season, recognition on the ECTC website and in the printed programs, and 10% off all classes, camps, and additional tickets for shows. The VIP

Membership is a special community of supporters for ECTC.

To make a tax-deductible donation, volunteer or learn more about Emerald Coast Theatre

Company, call (850) 684-0323 and visit www.emeraldcoasttheatre.org. Engage with ECTC as well on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and YouTube.

Stage Crafters Announces Agatha Christie's "The Mousetrap"!

For almost 70 years, Agatha Christie's "The Mousetrap" has kept millions of people from every corner of the globe on the edge of their seats. As news spreads of a murder in London, a group of seven strangers find themselves snowed in at a remote countryside guesthouse. When a police sergeant arrives, the guests discover – to their horror – that a killer is in their midst! One by one, the suspicious characters reveal their sordid pasts.

Auditions:

Stage Crafters Rehearsal Hall, 40 Robinwood Dr. SW, Fort Walton Beach

April 1st & 2nd, 2024

- Script perusal at 6 p.m.
- Auditions begin at 6:30 p.m.

For questions or other information, you may contact the director, Gail Hurley, at ghurley2175@gmail.com or visit our website at: www.stagecraftersfwb.com/join-the-cast.

Performances:

June 7, 8, 9 & 14, 15, 16
 Fridays & Saturdays at 7:30 p.m.
 Sunday matinees at 2 p.m.
 Tickets are \$25 and available at the door before the show or online at: www.stagecraftersfwb.com/buy-tickets.

ON STAGE
APRIL 4TH - 7TH

MOTHER GOOSE ON THE LOOSE!

Join her children as they try to find their beloved Mother Goose, and sing and dance along the way. Big fun for the very little!

ON STAGE
MAY 3RD - 19TH

MARY POPPINS

This show is "practically perfect in every way" for all ages and feels like a "jolly holiday" with friends and family. Don't miss this supercalifragilisticexpialidocious show that will lift your spirits and leave you feeling like you want to go "fly a kite!"

Tickets or Info, call 850.684.0323 or visit EMERALDCOASTTHEATRE.ORG

AUDITIONS

THE AGATHA CHRISTIE'S MOUSETRAP

SUSPECT EVERYONE

APRIL 1-2, 2024

Doors open at 6:00pm for script perusal
 Auditions begin at 6:30pm

At Stage Crafters Rehearsal Hall
 40 Robinwood Dr. SW
 Fort Walton Beach, FL 32548

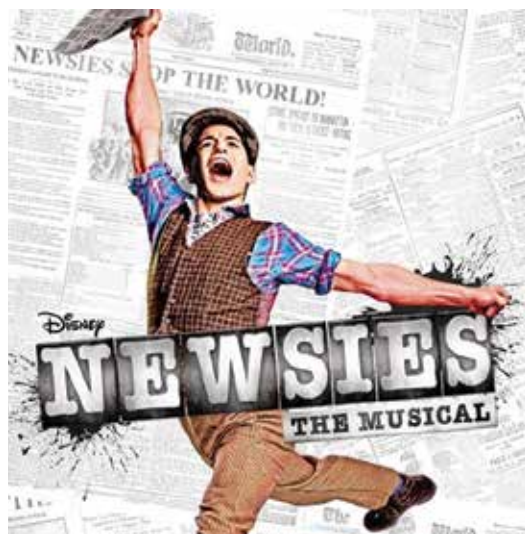
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www.StageCraftersFWB.com

Disney's Newsies Coming to NHS Stage!

Niceville High School (NHS) Theatre Department will present Disney's Broadway musical Newsies this May in the Niceville High School auditorium. "We are so excited about this production," says NHS Theatre Department Director, Ritchie Jackson. "Newsies is a high energy, feel good musical that is an audience favorite for those who have seen it, and becomes an audience favorite for those who never had."

With a score by Alan Menken and Jack Feldman and book by Harvey Firestein, the lavish production is directed and produced by Jackson, with choreography by Nicci Fahle and vocal direction by Michael Walker. The musical, based on the 1992 film and real-life events of the 1899 New York city paperboy strike, Newsies tells the story of a band of newspaper boys and girls who rally to strike against



Joseph Pulitzer and other publishing titans to protest the unfair conditions that they work under. "Thanks to our amazing choreographer, Nicci Fahle and our Vocal Director Michael Walker, NHS Theatre has once again brought out the very best for our cast and crew, and the

students involved in this show have done an amazing job bringing this story to life. Nicci has acted as our Choreographer in the past on 2022's A Chorus Line and last year's production of Chicago. This year we brought Michael Walker on board, and the three of us have proven to be quite a team."

NHS' Theatre Department has enjoyed tremendous successes with their past musical productions including The Little Mermaid Jr., Mamma Mia!, She Loves Me, A Chorus Line, and Chicago, and Jackson says, "I really think this show will be our highest grossing show yet.

After all, it's Disney and a crowd pleaser whose message shows the power of standing up for what you believe in and what's right. Of course, it doesn't hurt that a sweet love story is woven into the show's script as well."

"If you haven't been to a NHS Theatre production before, you will find that high school theatre is not what you remember it to be. NHS produces college caliber shows, and we strive for theatrical excellence in every production that we do – that commitment is even a part of our official motto, 'Bringing theatrical excellence to the stage'. We instill in our cast and crew a real sense of doing top notch, quality theatre that not only gives our audiences an amazing show, but teaches our theatrical arts students that theatre education is no joke at NHS. The work is hard and a major time commitment for the

students, with student lead and student run production teams, so that the kids get real world involvement in the creative process. These enormous productions don't just happen; you have to build them step by step and piece by piece. The kids in my department work hard to produce the high-quality shows that NHS has become known for."

Newsies is produced with permission by MTI and opens May 3rd at 7 p.m. and plays again May 4th (2 p.m. and 7 p.m.), May 10th (7 p.m.) and 11th (2 p.m. and 7 p.m.). VIP tickets are available for \$20 which include early seating 10 minutes before the general public, a small bottle of water and a bag of popcorn. General admission tickets are also available for \$15. All tickets are sold exclusively through www.gofan.co (not .com).

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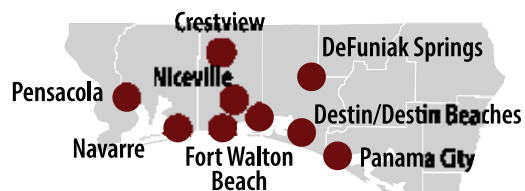


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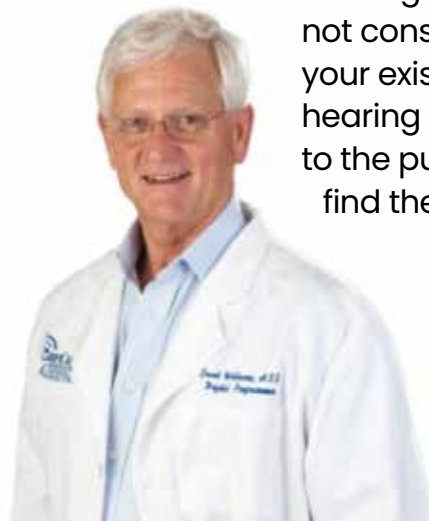
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