



MAY 2021
VOL. 3, NO. 10

DESTIN Life

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Santa Rosa Beach, FL
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Who Doesn't Want to Be Blessed?

BY JOHN SKILES, CHURCH OF DESTIN PRESIDENT

I think if we ask the question, "Do you want to be blessed?", everyone would raise their hand and say, "Yes I do!"

Have you ever stopped to ponder why Destin is called the "World's Luckiest Fishing Village?" Perhaps it truly began with the Blessing of the Fleet which started in 1958 with St. Andrews Church right here in what was just a small fishing village at the time. From a tiny fleet of 4-5 boats, the Blessing of the Fleet has now grown and prospered into the largest fishing fleet in North America. Men of God who led the church began to believe for peoples' fishing catches and for boats to be blessed. God's people came together to believe for something great, and in faith for blessings. Today, for many captains in Destin's fishing fleet, their success doesn't ride on luck—it rides on prayer.

As the Blessing of the Fleet has grown, so have the hundreds of people, families and businesses in the area who



COURTESY IMMANUEL ANGLICAN CHURCH

have also wanted to be blessed. And now, for Destin fisherman, locals, businesses and area professionals, success has nothing to do with luck and everything to do with blessings. That is what makes continuing the "blessing" tradition so special.

Destin's Week of Blessings will be held May 9-15. (See 2021 Week of Blessings schedule on page 24.) So, what is the Destin Week of Blessings

and how can I be a part of it? This most special week is where as many churches that want to participate come together to conduct a "Week of Blessings." Representative pastors, as many as we can get, join together for an entire week as we bless our city through prayers, blessings, declarations and painting a picture that the greatest blessing we have is following Jesus, knowing He is with us so mat-

ter what might come our way. We hope to instill in our local community that we are not alone and we agree and believe that we can be lifted up, have hope, and believe great things for our businesses, our lives, our families, our boats, our children...and the list goes on and on.

Does it mean that we gain

BLESSING
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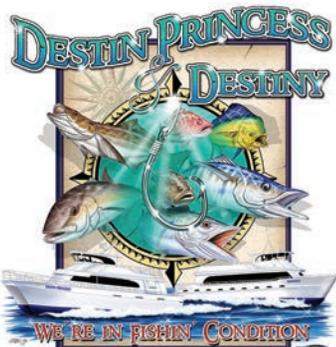
F-15EX Eagle II: Unveiled and Ready for Testing at Eglin Air Force Base!

BY 1ST LT. KARISSA RODRIGUEZ

Recently, the name and the official role of the Air Force's newest fighter was unveiled at Eglin Air Force Base. Lt. Gen. Duke Richardson, Office of the Assistant Secretary of the Air Force for Acquisition, Technology, and Logistics military deputy, presented the F-15EX Eagle II during an unveiling and naming ceremony on April 7 to celebrate the historic arrival of the dynamic new fighter aircraft.

"Undefeated in aerial combat, the F-15 Eagle epitomized air superiority in the minds of our enemies,

F-15EX
continued on page 2



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 Community
BLESSING*continued from page 1*

riches and prosperity when this happens? Certainly not. But it does give us hope that our prayers are heard in faith. I love that Scripture says in John 14:13, “Whatever you ask in my name, I’ll do it.” We believe in the power of prayer and we PRAY over anyone who wants it during this amazing week.

We, as the Church of Destin, are a brotherhood/sisterhood of pastors of all denomina-

tions and affiliations right here in Destin—our motto is “One Church, Many Congregations.” We not only come together to do the Week of Blessings each May, but also for our community in times of need. Most recently we served those who were impacted by Hurricane Michael, providing supplies by boat, truck or other vehicles. It was amazing to watch the churches of Destin come together and strategize to be what God called us to be, THE church, and supply all that we can as the city of Destin.

So, what’s different this year? Well, it’s been two years since we’ve all been able to come together due to Covid 19. But this year, we are very excited to hold the Marketplace Blessing on Wednesday, May 12, at a new location—Destin High School. It will be a luncheon and time of “blessing” where you, in whatever profession you’re in, will receive a Chick-fil-a lunch and we’ll pray and speak blessings over your business. Donations will go toward the new high school.

The week kicks off with the “Family Blessing” on May 9th, very fittingly, Mother’s Day. This is conducted by individual “Church of Destin” churches. See schedule for the rest of the week’s blessed activities, culminating in the original “Blessing of the Fleet,” May 13. If you haven’t participated or come to watch this before, you will be more than blessed!

As President, I want to share my excitement for the unity with our fellow pastors, sensing this is on the heart of God: for

our churches and community to work together. May we as the Church of Destin (“One Church, Many Congregations”) continue to offer hope to our city and community. We don’t care what church you go to, or if you don’t have one, come out and let us connect with you, believe with you and bless you!

Pastor John Skiles is the newly elected president of the Church of Destin. He and his wife, Sula, pastor Impact Life Church in Destin.

F-15EX*continued from page 1*

allies and the American people for over 45 years, but it was not meant to fly forever,” says Lt. Gen. Richardson. “At an average age of more than 37 years, the F-15C/D fleet is fast approaching the end of its useful life and operating on the margins of structural integrity. The F-15EX provides a cost-effective and expedient solution to refresh the F-15C/D fleet and augment the F-15E fleet to meet National Defense Strategy capability and capacity requirements well into the 2040s, while preserving aircraft availability from significant impacts that service life extension and modernization programs would have on the F-15C/D fleet. We heard the demand signal from our warfighters. I’m pleased to say we’ve responded boldly and decisively, with a proven platform that’s modernized and optimized to maintain air superiority now and into the future.”

The U.S. Air Force officially accepted the first F-15EX from the Boeing Co. March 10 at the company’s St. Louis facility. But the process began several years ago as a combined Air Force effort to bring the best in response capability. “It has taken a team effort to get to this point,” says Col. Sean Dorey, F-15EX program manager with the Air Force

(U.S. AIR FORCE PHOTO BY SAMUEL KING JR.)

The Air Force’s newest fighter, the F-15EX Eagle II, was revealed and named during a ceremony, April 7, 2021, at Eglin Air Force Base, Fla. The aircraft will be the first Air Force aircraft to be tested and fielded from beginning to end, through combined developmental and operational tests.

Life Cycle Management Center’s Fighters and Advanced Aircraft Directorate, responsible for the acquisition, modernization and sustainment of the aircraft. “I’m extremely proud of the team, to include members of the Propulsion Directorate, Simulators Program Office, Air Combat Command, Air National Guard, Air Force Materiel Command, Defense Contract Management Agency, the Air Staff, and our industry partners for achieving this first milestone.”

The EX provides a unique opportunity for the test enterprise as it is the first Air Force aircraft to be completely tested

and fielded through combined developmental and operational test efforts. Its official role is to meet capacity requirements while bringing diverse technology ensuring the platform’s relevance for decades to come. The 96th TW and the 53rd Wing are set to begin test and evaluation efforts. The 85th Test and Evaluation Squadron will work closely with the 40th Flight Test Squadron to integrate testing, from start to finish. “Team Eglin and the 96th Test Wing are proud to be a part of the rich history of this legendary aircraft,” says Brig. Gen. Scott Cain, 96th Test Wing commander.

The new fighter is a two-seat aircraft—though operable by a single pilot—with fly-by-wire flight controls, digital cockpit displays, and advanced avionics systems, to include the Eagle Passive/Active Warning and Survivability System, an electronic warfare upgrade also being fielded on F-15E Strike Eagle models. The Air Force will procure up to 144 F-15EXs from Boeing, to replace F-15C/D models with a goal of increasing the F-15 fleet fighter readiness. “With its large weapons capacity, digital backbone, and open architecture, the F-15EX will be a key element of our tactical fighter fleet and complement 5th-generation assets. In addition, it’s capable of carrying hypersonic weapons, giving it a niche role in future near-peer conflicts,” says Col. Dorey.

The other six Lot 1 aircraft will be delivered to Eglin AFB in fiscal year 2023 and will undergo operational testing. To expedite the testing needed to declare the F-15EX ready for operations, the team will use previous testing data from F-15 foreign military sales variants and U.S.-only subsystems and Operational Flight Program software.

“Since 1985 the F-15 has had a home in the Guard and Guard Airmen have flown these amazing aircraft both in the defense of the homeland and in

every major international conflict since the first Gulf War in 1991,” says Lt. Gen. Michael Loh, ANG director. “Now that is the battle-tested legacy of Guard F-15s – first to the fight, always ready and always there.”

Published Monthly
Mailed FREE to the communities
of Destin, FL (32541)

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

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Lights Out, Stash the Trash. It's Sea Turtle Nesting Season!

Life Media's own "Theo," Emerald Coast Turtle Watch and the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) remind locals and visitors they can help protect nesting sea turtles by practicing some simple tips.

Each year, thousands of sea turtles nest on Florida's beaches. Florida beaches are the No. 1 place for sea turtle nests in North America from May to October. Northwest Florida beaches attract many endangered species including Green, Loggerhead, Leatherback and Kemp's Ridley. A female will return to the beach where she was born to lay her eggs. "If you're lucky enough to see it, it's incredible to watch a 300-400 lb. Loggerhead sea turtle crawl up the beach which is no easy task, dig an 18-20-inch hole with only her back flippers, deposit her eggs, and then cover them back up with sand and pat it all down (all with only her back flippers)," says Sara Gray of Emerald Coast Turtle Watch. The whole process takes 30 to 60 minutes.

There are many hazards and further complications if a sea turtle hatches during the daytime. For example, a sea gull's favorite snack is a baby sea turtle. The nest, also, is at risk of predation by animals as well as of high tides during storms, which can wash out and drown nests. Once hatched, they must make it to the water without becoming disoriented by artificial light or killed by predators. Finally, they arrive to their home in the Gulf where they are at risk of sharks, fish, fishing lines, ingesting debris and trash, boats and pollution. For the females who survive and return to shore to nest, it is a great victory. By the way, once she lays her eggs on the beach, the sea turtle mama never returns.

Because our state is so important to these special animals, beachgoers can help keep our beaches clean and dark, so sea turtles nest successfully. Everyone benefits from clean beaches and, since most of Florida's sea turtles nest at night, it is important to keep our beaches dark because bright lights can disorient nesting turtles.

Stash the trash! Obsta-

cles on the beach can prevent sea turtles from nesting as they crawl from the water, across the sand, to lay their eggs. They can also prevent sea turtle hatchlings from reaching the water once they emerge from their nests. Beachgoers can help sea turtles by properly disposing of all trash, filling in holes in the sand and putting away boats, beach toys and furniture. Fishing line can be deadly to sea turtles and other wildlife, so be sure to dispose of it properly. To find a monofilament recycling station near you, visit mrrp.myfwc.com.

Lights out! Bright lighting can misdirect and disturb nesting sea turtles and their hatchlings, leading them away from the ocean and toward potential danger. So, beachgoers should avoid using flashlights or cell-phones on the beach at night. Anyone living along or visiting Florida beaches can do their part by turning out lights or closing curtains after dark to ensure nesting turtles are not disturbed as they come ashore and hatchlings will not become disoriented when they emerge from their nests. If lighting could still be visible from the beach, be sure it is long, low and shielded. And use turtle safe flashlights or flashlight covers when on the beach at night.

Fill in any holes you dig and smooth out sandcastles when you leave the beach each day.

"As beachgoers, we can all do our part to help sea turtles survive," said Dr. Robbin Trindell, who heads the FWC's sea turtle management program. "By keeping beaches dark and clearing the way at the end of the day, we can help ensure that these amazing animals keep returning to our beautiful state."

What's the most important thing to remember if you see a mama sea turtle on the beach? Sara says, "Be respectful, stay quiet and stay back at least 50 feet. Don't get excited or be loud or take pictures with the flash on your cell phone which disorient the turtles and stress them out. They return to the water unable to lay their eggs."

To learn more about sea turtles or to attend a class and see a nest, fill out an application at Emeraldcoastfl.com. Click



on Explore, Eco-tourism and then Beach Walks or visit the Facebook page.

Other ways to help sea turtles include reporting those that are sick, injured, entangled or dead to Emerald Coast Turtle

Watch at (850) 865-0868 or the FWC's Wildlife Alert Hotline at 888-404-FWCC (3922).

Locals can also purchase a "Helping Sea Turtles Survive" Florida license plate at myfwc.com which contributes to sea turtle research, rescue and conservation efforts. Or donate \$5 and receive an FWC sea turtle decal.

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Community

Cali's To Do In Destin! MAY 2021

Farmer's Market | 8am-1pm | FWB Landing
Farmer's Market | 9am-1pm | Grand Boulevard
Women's Climbing Circle | 9am | Rock Out Climbing Gym
Bikes and Breakfast | 10am | Emerald Coast Harley Davidson
Derby Party | 11am | North Beach Social
Latin Spring Festival Block Party | 12pm | El Jalisco Destin



Tequila & Taco Festival | 1pm-5pm | Baytowne Wharf
Billy Bowlegs Festival | 2pm | Downtown Fort Walton Beach
Karaoke Night | 6pm | Village Door Music Hall
Karaoke Night | 8pm | World Of Beer Destin

Beach Church Service | 7:30am | Crab Trap Destin
Bob Ross Day | 12pm | Enlightened Studios
Billy Bowlegs Festival | 2pm | Downtown Fort Walton Beach
Karaoke | 6pm | Village Door Restaurant (Baytowne)
Karaoke | 7pm | The Palms Bistro

Free Beach Bonfire/SIN Night | 5pm | Royal Palm Grille
Music Bingo | 7pm | Pallet Bar and Grill

Singo Music Bingo | 5:30pm | LuLu's Destin
Karaoke | 6pm | Enlightened Studios FWB
Trivia Night | 6:30pm | Village Door Music Hall
Baytowne Live Music | 6:30pm | Village of Baytowne Wharf
Trivia Night | 7pm | Village Door at Seascape

Game Night | 7pm | Landsharks Pizza
Music Bingo | 7pm | World of Beer
Bonfire on the Beach | 6pm | The Bay
Rock'n Bingo | 7pm | FATBoys Destin
Free Concert Series | 7pm | Village of Baytowne Wharf

Open Mic Night | 7pm | Enlightened Studios
Trivia | 7pm | World of Beer
Sunset Party | 5pm | Rhumcay
Karaoke Night | 6pm | Village Door Music Hall
Live Music - Modern Eldorados | 6pm | Mattie Kelly Arts Foundation
Little Black Dress Ladies Night | 6pm | Palms Bistro
Baytowne Live Music | 6:30pm | Village of Baytowne Wharf
Dueling Pianos | 7pm | The Palms Bistro

Locals On The Harbor | 4pm | Boathouse Oyster Bar
Free Beach Bonfire | 5pm | Royal Palm Grille



Rotary Cajun Crawfish Boil | 5:30pm | Seascape Towne Centre
Karaoke Night | 8pm | Village Door Music Hall
Latin Night | 9pm | Bric a Brac

Farmer's Market | 8am-1pm | FWB Landing
Farmer's Market | 9am-1pm | Grand Boulevard
Toast on the Coast | 2pm | Harborwalk Village
Karaoke Night | 6pm | Village Door Music Hall
Karaoke Night | 8pm | World Of Beer Destin

Beach Church Service | 7:30am | Crab Trap Destin
Karaoke | 6pm | Village Door Restaurant (Baytowne)
Karaoke | 7pm | The Palms Bistro

Free Beach Bonfire/SIN Night | 5pm | Royal Palm Grille
Music Bingo | 7pm | Pallet Bar and Grill
Singo Music Bingo | 5:30pm | LuLu's Destin
Karaoke | 6pm | Enlightened Studios FWB

Trivia Night | 6:30pm | Village Door Music Hall
Trivia Night | 7pm | Village Door at Seascape
Game Night | 7pm | Landsharks Pizza

Music Bingo | 7pm | World of Beer
Bonfire on the Beach | 6pm | The Bay
Rock'n Bingo | 7pm | FATBoys Destin
Free Concert Series | 7pm | Village of Baytowne Wharf
Open Mic Night | 7pm | Enlightened Studios
Trivia | 7pm | World of Beer

Blessing of the Fleet | 4pm | Destin Harbor
Sunset Party | 5pm | Rhumcay Harborwalk
Live Music - The M80s | 6pm | Mattie Kelly Arts Foundation
Karaoke Night | 6pm | Village Door Music Hall
Little Black Dress Ladies Night | 6pm | Palms Bistro
Dueling Pianos | 7pm | The Palms Bistro

Free Beach Bonfire | 5pm | Royal Palm Grille
Name That Tune | 6:30pm | Village Door Music Hall
Karaoke Night | 8pm | Village Door Music Hall
Latin Night | 9pm | Bric a Brac

Farmer's Market | 8am-1pm | FWB Landing
Farmer's Market | 9am-1pm | Grand Boulevard
Lionfish Removal & Awareness Day | 10am | Harborwalk Village
Karaoke Night | 6pm | Village Door Music Hall
Karaoke Night | 8pm | World Of Beer Destin

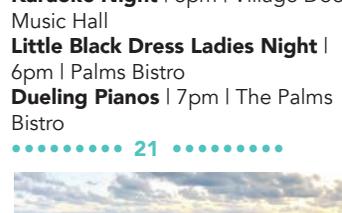
Beach Church Service | 7:30am | Crab Trap Destin
Lionfish Removal & Awareness Day | 10am | Harborwalk Village
Karaoke | 6pm | Village Door Restaurant (Baytowne)
Karaoke | 7pm | The Palms Bistro

Free Beach Bonfire/SIN Night | 5pm | Royal Palm Grille
Music Bingo | 7pm | Pallet Bar and Grill
Singo Music Bingo | 5:30pm | LuLu's Destin
Karaoke | 6pm | Enlightened Studios FWB

Trivia Night | 6:30pm | Village Door Music Hall
Trivia Night | 7pm | Village Door at Seascape
Game Night | 7pm | Landsharks Pizza

Music Bingo | 7pm | World of Beer
Bonfire on the Beach | 6pm | The Bay
Rock'n Bingo | 7pm | FATBoys Destin
Free Concert Series | 7pm | Village of Baytowne Wharf
Open Mic Night | 7pm | Enlightened Studios
Trivia | 7pm | World of Beer

Sunset Party | 5pm | Rhumcay Harborwalk
Live Music - A Brother's Revival | 6pm | Mattie Kelly Arts Foundation
Karaoke Night | 6pm | Village Door Music Hall
Little Black Dress Ladies Night | 6pm | Palms Bistro
Dueling Pianos | 7pm | The Palms Bistro



Free Beach Bonfire | 5pm | Royal Palm Grille
Bowties & Bling Fundraiser | 6pm | Hilton Sandestin
Name That Tune | 6:30pm | Village Door Music Hall
Karaoke Night | 8pm | Village Door Music Hall
Latin Night | 9pm | Bric a Brac

Farmer's Market | 8am-1pm | FWB Landing
Farmer's Market | 9am-1pm | Grand Boulevard
Karaoke Night | 6pm | Village Door Music Hall
Karaoke Night | 8pm | World Of Beer Destin

Beach Church Service | 7:30am | Crab Trap Destin
Karaoke | 6pm | Village Door Restaurant (Baytowne)
Free Beach Bonfire/SIN Night | 5pm | Royal Palm Grille
Music Bingo | 7pm | Pallet Bar and Grill

Singo Music Bingo | 5:30pm | LuLu's Destin
Karaoke | 6pm | Enlightened Studios FWB
Trivia Night | 6:30pm | Village Door Music Hall
Trivia Night | 7pm | Village Door at Seascape
Game Night | 7pm | Landsharks Pizza

Trivia Night | 7pm | Village Door at Seascape
Game Night | 7pm | Landsharks Pizza
Music Bingo | 7pm | World of Beer
Bonfire on the Beach | 6pm | The Bay
Rock'n Bingo | 7pm | FATBoys Destin
Free Concert Series | 7pm | Village of Baytowne Wharf
Open Mic Night | 7pm | Enlightened Studios
Trivia | 7pm | World of Beer
Comedy Zone | 7:30pm | Palms Bistro

Sunset Party | 5pm | Rhumcay Harborwalk
Live Music - Deana Carter | 6pm | Mattie Kelly Arts Foundation
Karaoke Night | 6pm | Village Door Music Hall
Little Black Dress Ladies Night | 6pm | Palms Bistro
Dueling Pianos | 7pm | The Palms Bistro

Blood Drive | 11am | Lulu's Destin
Free Beach Bonfire | 5pm | Royal Palm Grille
Name That Tune | 6:30pm | Village Door Music Hall
Karaoke Night | 8pm | Village Door Music Hall
Latin Night | 9pm | Bric a Brac

Farmer's Market | 8am-1pm | FWB Landing
Farmer's Market | 9am-1pm | Grand Boulevard
East Pass Slacker 0.5K | 10am | Boathouse Oyster Bar
Karaoke Night | 6pm | Village Door Music Hall
Memorial Day Celebration | 7pm | Harborwalk Village
Karaoke Night | 8pm | World Of Beer Destin

Beach Church Service | 7:30am | Crab Trap Destin
Karaoke | 6pm | Village Door Restaurant (Baytowne)
Memorial Day Celebration | 7pm | Harborwalk Village
Fireworks | 9pm | Harborwalk Village

Free Beach Bonfire/SIN Night | 5pm | Royal Palm Grille
Memorial Day Celebration | 7pm | Harborwalk Village
Music Bingo | 7pm | Pallet Bar and Grill



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Spring Into an Event-Filled May at Baytowne Wharf!

There's something BIG going on every month it seems at The Village of Baytowne Wharf. And May is no exception!

Welcome summer at the Memorial Day Celebration!
Saturday, May 29th
7-9 p.m.
Sunday, May 30th
6-9 p.m.
FREE

Kick off the 100 days of summer as festivities begin on Saturday, May 29th, when a true locals' favorite, Forrest Williams Band, takes the stage at the Events plaza from 7-9 p.m. Free children activities will be from 6-9 p.m. and fireworks at 9 p.m. On Sunday, enjoy live music from Jarred McConnell and The High Aces from 7-9 p.m. You won't want to miss the fireworks, live music, shopping, dining and fun all weekend long!

Baytowne is boomin' all month long with events, activities and fun! The Village and its merchants welcome you to come shop, dine and play! Celebrate, escape and embrace some of the best of Baytowne Wharf at one of the most gorgeous times of the year!

A Can't Miss Wednesday Night Concert Series!
Wednesdays | May 5th - May 26th
7-9 p.m. | FREE
Events Plaza Stage

Wednesday Night Concerts at The Village of Baytowne Wharf are BACK! Sit back and relax with an outdoor concert and enjoy LIVE entertainment. The concert series features both local and regional talent from a variety of genres. Don't forget your lawn chairs and blankets.

Live Music Lineup:

- May 5: Sainte Jane
- May 12: Shenanigans
- May 19: Chris Alvarado
- May 26: Flash Flood

Welcome to "A Night to Remember" Spring Showcase
Thursday, May 6th
6-8 p.m.
Events Plaza Stage | FREE

Alissa Steffens Vocal Academy/Studios Presents their Spring Showcase - A Night to Remember. Singer/songwriter students age 12 to adult will take over the Events Plaza Stage!



Join us for a great evening filled with various solos and duets in a variety of music styles. Come and show your support for your favorite singer, and meet some of the best talent on the Emerald Coast!

Champagne While You Shop at Bubbly Baytowne
Thursday, May 13th
5-7 p.m. | FREE

Join Baytowne Wharf for an evening full of FREE champagne and shopping during the always popular Bubbly Baytowne! Sip and Shop through the Village streets! Stop into various retail merchants while you savor a selection of premium champagnes.

* This event is free and for 21 and up only. The Village will be open to the public during this event.

Sunday Cinema - A Tradition for Families
Sunday, May 16th - Sunday, August 1
8 p.m. | FREE
Events Plaza

Grab a lawn chair or blanket and cozy up on the Events Plaza Lawn for a featured film on the big screen!

May Movies:

- May 16 | Coco
- May 23 | Ralph Breaks the Internet

Hydroflight Mondays are Back!
Mondays | May 17th - August 2nd
6:30 p.m. & 8:30 p.m.
FREE

Enjoy amazing and daring shows from fly-board extraordinaire Ben Merrell over the Village Lagoon! Watch as he soars to the sky and makes waves at Baytowne Wharf.

Boomin' Tuesdays
Tuesdays, May 18th - August 3rd
7:15 p.m.-9:15 p.m.
FREE

Turn your eyes on the sky and watch as Baytowne Wharf lights up the night with a breath-taking fireworks show over the Village Lagoon at 9:15 p.m. PLUS now enjoy a DJ Dance Party with DJ Mike Whitty in the Events Plaza at 7 p.m.

Magical Thursdays
Thursdays, May 20th - August 5th
7 p.m. and 8 p.m. Show Times! | FREE

Join Baytowne Wharf for magic, music and mayhem! Watch as their featured pirate Captain Davy takes you on an adventure with two magic shows on stage!



Memorial Day
Saturday, May 29th 7-9 p.m.
Sunday, May 30th 6-9 p.m.

LIVE MUSIC ALL WEEKEND!

Saturday: Forest Williams Band

Sunday: Jarred McConnell and The High Aces

FREE CHILDREN'S ACTIVITIES 6-9 P.M.

FIREWORKS 9 p.m.



The Village of
BAYTOWNE WHARF
 at SANDESTIN



 Community

Trends & Treasures



For Health-Minded Moms and the Whole Family! Healthy Coast Meals Destin

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Spiritual items make for a sentimental gift for Grammys and Mommies, too. Frill Seekers' custom porcelain ring boxes are a sweet gift for Grandmothers, mothers or besties, too! The box lid features a custom monogram and a personal note can be tucked inside.

It's no secret that moms love to write notes and letters. Plan ahead and order a set of notecards, notepads, stationery or calling cards engraved with her name and monogram. From letter sheets to fold over notes, it's a lovely way to show Mom your love. Speaking of love, your Mother will fall head over heels for a fragrant Volcano scented candle by designer Capri Blue. With its familiar citrus and sugar Volcano scent and cult following, it will fill her home with the simple pleasures in life.

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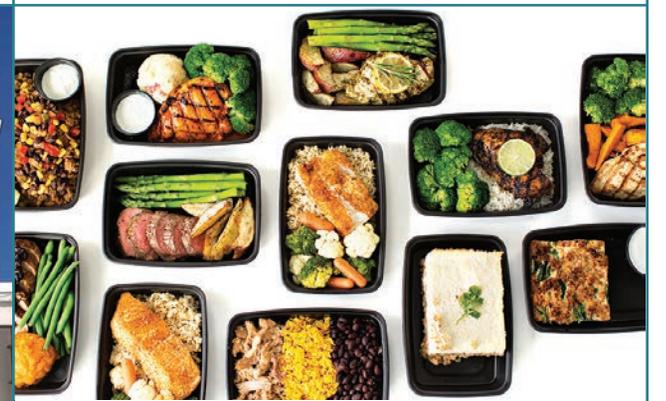
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 Community

Meet our Hometown Hero: Laurie Hood

BY MARY CHRIS MURRAY

Her belief that “every abused, neglected and homeless animal deserves a second chance” is what makes Laurie Hood, founder and president of Alaqua Animal Refuge, a Hometown Hero.

A true visionary and passionate animal lover since childhood, Laurie, somewhat of a “Mom” to these animals, founded Alaqua in Freeport, the Southeast’s premier, no-kill animal refuge and sanctuary for both domestic and farm animals located in Northwest Florida, more than 14 years ago. “I discovered that untold numbers of animals, at a rate of nearly 100%, were being euthanized in a five-county area due to the lack of a no-kill shelter or adoption center of any kind in the region,” says Laurie.

Initially providing shelter to only 38 animals, Alaqua has since placed tens of thousands of animals into loving homes and environments and helped countless others through partnerships and community outreach.

With Laurie at the helm,

Alaqua is currently undertaking a bold endeavor to build a one-of-kind facility and sanctuary on 100 acres of land. The new Alaqua home will be the first of its kind in the U.S., with an expanded footprint to continue to do the important work of animal rescue and rehab, as well as be an educational and training center for animal welfare advocates as a place that will inspire, empower and educate others to make change in our society.

And Alaqua’s new home isn’t just for animals. It will also be a place to help heal people through the powerful effects that interactions with animals have on the human spirit and body.

Alaqua’s mission is to provide protection, shelter and care to animals in need; a full-service adoption center; and numer-



ous educational outreach and community programs including Equine Interactions, an equine assisted therapy program for children and individuals with special needs, and for veterans and military service members who may be battling a variety of physical or emotional issues, such as PTSD.

A recognized leader in animal care, protection and advocacy,

Laurie has authored a curriculum to assist law enforcement across the State of Florida for investigating and prosecuting animal abuse cases. And she has starred in “Animal PD,” a television series on Nat Geo WILD showcasing stories of Alaqua’s animal rescue efforts in conjunction with law enforcement.

In addition, she serves on many non-profit boards and community organizations including State Director for Florida for Animal Wellness Action; Founding Board Member of The E.O. Wilson Biophilia Center and Nokuse Education, Inc.; District Leader for Northwest Florida for The Humane Society of the U.S.; and Board of Directors for the Florida Wildlife Federation. She has served as the Vice Chair for the Committee to Protect Greyhounds in Florida and the

Advisory Board for The Restore Act for Walton County.

Laurie has received numerous awards, including “Daily Point of Light Award” from President George H. W. Bush; the Pinnacle Award from 850 Magazine for her community service and leadership; and Communicator of the Year for Non-Profit from the Florida Public Relations Association, Northwest Florida Coast Chapter. Laurie is currently featured in the “Female Disrupters” series in Authority Magazine and Thrive Global. Under her leadership, Alaqua has also been recognized as “one of the best overall organizations in the U.S.” by The Humane Society of the U. S., and as a “prime example of what a sanctuary should be” from the Global Federation of Animal Sanctuaries.

Laurie says, “I’ve made a lifelong commitment to improve animals’ lives as we continue to journey into bold, uncharted territory in an effort to educate others about the importance of animals in our lives and their overall welfare.”

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Our daughter just completed her second phase and had her braces removed today, what a milestone!! This experience has been amazing. We love Dr. Stubbs and her staff. Always friendly and always went above and beyond for my daughter's comfort. ~ Micha K.

 Community

Moving into a New Home? What Do You Do NOW?



BY GAIL PELTO

You have just completed one of the biggest financial transactions of your life and can now call yourself a “homeowner.” With the help of a realtor, like me, you purchased your first home, you’ve signed all the necessary paperwork and are about to walk up to your new front door, keys in hand.

As you walk through your new house, you are probably thinking, now what? This is a common question that new homeowners ask themselves when the time comes to settling into a new home. With all the excitement and work involved in finding a property, buyers might not have a transition plan or a

checklist for the first few days of ownership.

Some checklist items are as simple as steam cleaning the carpets and doing a deep clean while others involve familiarizing yourself with your home’s circuit breakers and water valves, and some might include finding out about the homeowners’ association rules. Having a game plan for your new property will give you peace of mind and allow you to settle in quickly and stress free.

Here’s a few to focus on:

Set-up service. This may not sound like a top priority, but it is important to contact local utilities and service providers to set-up a new account and avoid disruption. This should be done in advance to closing. Call them and have the utilities transferred effective the date of closing. And don’t forget to change your address with the post office! Your realtor should provide you with the list of utility companies in your area. Make sure to familiarize yourself with the pick-up schedule for trash and recyclables to avoid garbage stacking up during the first week in your

new home—especially when you have a ton of boxes to unpack!

Change the locks. You never know who else has keys to your home. So, it is a good idea to change the locks on all doors, or if they are touch-key locks, change the combinations. This will help you sleep at night knowing that you are the only person who has access to your home. You can install new deadbolts yourself for less or call a locksmith to ensure proper installation.

Know the circuit breaker. It is a good idea to figure out which fuses control what parts of your house and label them accordingly. You will need two people for this exercise: one person monitoring the power as it goes on and off and the other tripping the fuse in order to test the breakers.

Do any improvement or repairs before moving in. It is sooooo much easier to paint, remove popcorn ceilings, refinish hardwood floors, etc. without furniture or people in the house. It’s also easier to clean up. Whether you’re doing it yourself

or hiring a pro, save yourself the headache by doing it before you move in if you can.

Buy the right tools. It is likely you own the basic tools, such as a drill, screwdriver, hammer, level and tape measure. Yet, homeownership might require a few new ones you might not have needed before, such as a pry bar for removing nails, trim or tiles and a ratchet set for adjusting nuts and bolts in hard-to-reach places. When hanging pictures or shelving on the walls, be sure to have a stud sensor handy to detect studs, cables and ducts.

Plan for Emergencies. Get your list of reputable vendors together complete with emergency contact information such as a plumber, electrician, HVAC company, handymen, etc. When an emergency strikes, you’ll have their info at your fingertips. Ask your neighbors and your realtor for recommendations.

Use your home inspection. This is a great tool to use to plan future upgrades and improvements. Make a list of what items the inspector noted as needing attention or are close to

needing to be replaced i.e., roof, HVAC system, water heater, etc. For big ticket items, you can start your plan to be able to cover the costs.

Create a Seasonal Maintenance Checklist. Include items such as when to test the smoke detectors, clean gutters, dryer vents, and ceiling fans, when to fertilize the lawn, etc. Making the list and putting it on your calendar will keep your home in good, working condition.

When you are new to homeownership, the list of responsibilities can feel overwhelming at first. But with the help of a realtor, like me, you can be sure to transition into a new home in a smooth and hassle-free fashion.

If you have questions or are interested in selling or buying a home, call me – I’m here to help! Call me, 850-374-0454 or send me an email, Gail.Pelto@KW.com.

Gail Pelto is a full-time real estate agent with Keller Williams and a board member with both the Mattie Kelly Arts Foundation and The Rotary Club of Destin. If you have questions about real estate, call her at (850) 374-0454.



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~ Blessed by Mom ~

To celebrate this Mother's Day, Destin Life asked, "What blesses (or blessed) you about your mom?"



Here's a photo of us in Mexico a few years ago. She won that trip as a top producer for her company.

My Mom has truly taught me to "work hard and play hard." She's still working today at the age of 71. Not because she has to. But because she wants to continue to play hard.

Happy Mother's Day Mom. I hope I can teach my kids what you've taught me.

- Jared O'Neal, Financial Advisor Raymond James & Associates

The greatest thing my Mother, Betty Lee, ever did for me was to teach me about God and



taught me to be of good character and the importance of having morals and values. She taught me about sacrifice and selflessness. I cherish the fact that we are also now best friends and I am truly blessed to have her in my life.

- Patricia Lee, Destinities



for me. I am incredibly grateful to have her as my Mother!

- Melanie Gray, Beachworx

take me to church. That provided the most important foundation in my life. She taught me to be of good character and the importance of having morals and values. She taught me about sacrifice and selflessness. I cherish the fact that we are also now best friends and I am truly blessed to have her in my life.

My Mother blesses me in many ways. She is extremely kind, caring, and is always there

I remember thinking it would be many years before I had to say goodbye, but it came so fast. Quoting Paul 'Bear' Bryant, "Call your mama. I wish I could."

-Ricky Harper, C12



which brought my family to live in this paradise!

- Greg Durette, Florida Health Connector



My mom has been the spiritual rock of our family. She is a prayer

warrior, praying for me, my sisters and our kids every single day! Her favorite prayer is to name us one by one and pray for ministering angels to surround us everywhere we go!!

-Gina Weidie, Powur



businesswoman who focused a lot of energy on her little project.

-Mary Anne Windes, Real Estate Professionals

My mother, Lois Dokey, has not only been a blessing, but an inspiration. Despite insurmountable odds, she not only beat cancer once, but twice. She is a remarkable example of what it



means to be a "fighter" and not give up. Pictured is my mom on her 80th birthday with me and two daughters, Elizabeth (left) and Jenna (right).

-Catherine Card, City of Destin



single mom who encouraged me to have a good time, as long as it didn't hurt anybody, and to go after my dreams. Thank you, Verna Pelto.

-Gail Pelto, Realtor, Keller Williams Realty Emerald Coast



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 Community

Benefits of a Customized Condo Unit Owners Policy



By JOE CAPERS

The current condo laws in Florida places fiduciary responsibilities on Unit Owners and Board Members. It is very important to understand the requirements and design your policy to maximize your condo insurance program protection whether used as your primary, secondary residence or rental. And make sure your packages include Hurricane/Wind coverages and flood insurance as well.

Because the association is responsible for maintaining and insuring the exterior of the building (shell), condo owners need coverage for the replacement cost of Structural Elements Within – from the paint in, including flooring, fixtures, cabinets, built-in appliances and more. This coverage amount is arrived at by calculating the cost per square foot to rebuild multiplied by the square footage of the unit. Sometimes the developer will provide this number and typically the range

starts at \$60 per square foot, and depending on the quality of construction, that can go up significantly. Your condo policy should always include Special Coverage A. This is broader coverage, changing the policy from a named peril to an open peril policy.

Another important coverage to consider is Personal Property coverage which is replacement cost on furniture, accessories, clothing, appliances, electronics and other valuables, basically anything that's not attached. Replacement cost insurance is defined as the cost to replace and/or repair the building with materials of like kind and quality following a loss. If policyholders have replacement cost insurance, they may receive advance payments for the depreciated value for furniture, televisions, clothing and other household items.

Loss of Use/Loss of Rents is an important feature as well. Depending on the carrier, they may offer loss of use, but not loss of rent. If your unit is damaged and you can't use it for a period of time, you may be able to collect under loss of use if it's your primary or secondary residence. If you're losing out on rental income, check your policy to see if you have the Loss of Rents coverage. You should

always make sure you have the correct policy for the right risk.

Loss Assessment is another important coverage on condo policies that Florida law requires. Its purpose is to pay up to your loss assessment coverage amount (typically \$2,000) for an assessment levied by the association for covered losses to the common elements. An example of this coverage coming into play was when Hurricane Michael knocked down most of the fencing and damaged the roofs of an administration building and conference center that was covered under the master policy. Because these perils were covered under the association's policy, they had the option to assess each condo owner to help re-coup their out-of-pocket expense.

Flood coverage, which is typically a separate policy is also crucial. The unit owner should carry flood insurance even if their unit is not on the ground floor. Some condo associations purchase a master program through the National Flood Insurance Program called the RCBAP (residential condominium building association policy). This policy does cover many of the interior build-out items for a unit owner, but it does not cover the personal property. So, does the unit owner still need their

own condo flood policy? David Thompson with the FAIA (Florida Association of Insurance Agents) says this: "If there is no RCBAP in place the unit owner needs his own primary flood coverage. If the RCBAP has a large deductible and the unit owner sustained building damage, then their [flood] policy will respond. Should the unit owner be assessed by the association for a flood loss, the unit owner's policy will cover the loss assess-

ment up to their building limit with no deductible. This alone is a compelling reason for all condo unit owners to have their own building flood coverage."

Liability and Mold and Water Backup, which are also important coverages on condo policies, should be properly structured. And if you rent your unit, always consider excess of higher limits of liability protection. The bottom line is this - when it

Continued on next page

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The "Gateway to Crystal Beach" Slated to Become a Reality

and visitors," stated Mayor Gary Jarvis. "We recognize the desire for more beach access," said Okaloosa Board of County Commissioners Chairman, Carolyn Ketchel. "Through this acquisition and partnership, we can accommodate the need for our community to enjoy the beaches year-round."

BY CATHERINE CARD, PUBLIC INFORMATION MANAGER, CITY OF DESTIN

The "Gateway to Crystal Beach" is now on its way to becoming a reality thanks to the partnership between the City of Destin, the Okaloosa County

The City of Destin has pledged \$9,000,000 and Okaloosa County \$13,000,000 for potential beach acquisitions to expand beach access in Destin. The Trust for Public Land, which the City of Destin has partnered with to aid in the pro-

dollars while the City's comes from 1/2 cent sales tax dollars.

Due to the hard work and partnership between the entities listed above, the groundbreaking ceremony was the first step

in creating more access to public beaches for residents and visitors. Following demolition, the partners will fine-tune park elements. Completion of the project is anticipated for the main

2022 tourism season. For videos and photos of the groundbreaking, please visit <https://www.facebook.com/cityofdestin>.



Board of County Commissioners, the Tourist Development Council and Trust for Public Land. Elected officials, city and county staff, members of the public and media, participated in a groundbreaking ceremony for the Shore at Crystal Beach Park Expansion in April..

"This initiative is one of the highest priorities for the City of Destin. Our tourist tax dollars are being reinvested back into public beaches so that we can deliver on the promise of the Destin brand and meet the expectations of our residents

cess, has negotiated to purchase three properties adjacent to the Shore of Crystal Beach Park. Two have closed with a third pending. The combined cost of these acquisitions is \$10.6 Million plus some ancillary closing costs which are (estimated under \$50,000). Funding for the initial set of acquisitions is proposed to be funded with the following ratio: 59% County (\$6.28+ Million) and 41% City (\$4.37-Million), based on the dollars pledged by the city and the county. The County's funding comes from the tourism bed tax

BENEFITS

continued from previous page

comes to condo insurance policies, the average consumer isn't aware of their exposures and responsibilities. You should always talk to an experienced insurance agent so you can make the best coverage decisions for your situation.

Insurance Zone, founded by Joe and Lea Capers, is a full service commercial and personal lines insurance agency serving Destin, Miramar Beach, Santa Rosa Beach (30A) and Inlet Beach. Visit their Video Library on www.ins-zone.com and watch the informative video on 'Condo Insurance Made Easy' or call 850.424.6979 and talk with one of their experienced agents.

 Community

No Prom, No Problem

After hearing that there would be “no High School Prom” this year, a group of Choctawhatchee High School seniors came together to rectify that. Even though Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis has lifted all COVID restrictions, and the State of Florida is open and thriving, due to a mix up between the school board, principals and local CDC, the decision was made to cancel many senior activities—including this year’s Prom.



The school’s solution was to have an ice cream social includ-

ing six-foot social distancing, four-people per table, masks and no music! The same kids that walk the hallways between every class every day being unable to have a senior Prom just did not sit well with these kids.

So, students set out to put together their own “MORP,” Prom spelled backwards. The community has rallied also. Between one of the student’s parents and several community businesses, these kids will have their senior Prom on May 15 from 7:30-10:30. Fort Walton Beach High School students are also invited. Tickets are \$10.

Shoreline Church has graciously provided its space. AJ’s has offered to provide refreshments. A local DJ, photographer and balloon artist have also jumped on board the planning process.

These kids have also selflessly decided that all proceeds from the ticket sales shall be provided to age 19 honor student Kristian Murray and his family. Kristian has been diagnosed with a rare and extremely aggressive form of cancer.

If you would like to offer your services or a donation, please contact us at MFG Events LLC, 850-420-9076 or mfgevents@yahoo.com.

Gulf Power Presents Area’s First Solar Trees

In celebration of Earth Day, the City of Pensacola and Gulf Power officially welcomed Pensacola’s first-ever solar trees to downtown Pensacola during a ceremonial untying of a green ribbon. Instead of the traditional cutting of a red ribbon, a green ribbon was used to represent sustainability and will be used again as other solar trees and canopies are welcomed in our area and throughout Northwest Florida.



Gulf Power Vice President Mike Spoor (in blue polo) and Pensacola Mayor Grover Robinson (in suit) along with the Greater Pensacola Area Chamber of Commerce Ambassadors and Blue Wahoos’ Kazoo, welcomed the first solar trees in Northwest Florida.

The trees are capable of generating 3.7 kilowatts of clean, renewable energy that is flowing into the power grid for the benefit of the City of Pensacola. That’s enough energy to power three school classrooms on a daily basis.

Important for our com-

munity is that other Gulf Power solar projects slated for Northwest Florida include a solar tree at the Newman C. Brackin Wayside Park boardwalk in Fort Walton Beach and two solar trees at the HarborWalk Village Boardwalk in Destin.

“As part of the FPL family, Gulf Power is working hard to build an even brighter energy future for Northwest Florida – delivering electricity that is cleaner, more reliable and more affordable over time,” Gulf Power Vice President Mike Spoor said. “We are committed to increasing ways to harness zero-emissions energy from the sun that keeps costs down for our customers and keeps the region beautiful for all of us.”

The trees provide fun, eye-catching and interactive learning attractions to the landscape. Each tree inspires conversations about clean energy and offers an element of education. They provide an opportunity for the public to see working solar energy technology and to use each tree’s QR code to access information about the benefits of solar, Gulf Power’s solar trees and canopy projects, and the company’s large-scale solar energy centers.

The trees in the city of Pensacola are trimmed in color-changing lights that, with the click of a remote control, can change for different events and holiday celebrations.

For more information, visit: www.GulfPower.com/solar.

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City of Destin Challenges You to "Leave No Trace"

By CATHERINE CARD, CITY OF DESTIN PUBLIC INFORMATION MANAGER

On April 22nd, City of Destin staff took a few moments out of their day and collected and hauled away 20 bags filled with cigarette butts, business signs, take out trash, beer bottles/cans, and car parts, in honor of Earth Day. Staff members cleaned the area along U.S. Highway



98 from Big Kahuna's to Gulf Shore Dr. as well as Matthew Blvd. to Henderson Beach State Park. Deputy City Manager Webb Warren stated, "This is

how we effect change and set the example by taking pride in our community and know that we are part of a team that keeps Destin beautiful." Many thanks to Big Kahunas for supporting the effort and allowing the use of its parking lot as a rally point.

Each month City of Destin staff will be participating in a litter clean-up around city facilities. Through a collaborative

effort, we can all make a positive difference in the appearance and health of this great city. The City of Destin would like to thank the Compass Resorts team for being a member of the city's Adopt-A-Street program and cleaning Beach Drive from U.S. Highway 98 to Legion Dr. on Earth Day. For more information about the program please visit www.cityof-destin.com/adoptastreet.

If you are a business, private organization or entity that would like to participate in this challenge, please share your photos and your efforts on social media with the following hashtag #LeaveNoTraceChallenge, so we can track and share this challenge's efforts to make our community more beautiful.

ECWR Receives \$10,000 to Support Pelican Rehabilitation Center

Saltwater Restaurants, Inc. has donated \$10,000 to cover the rehabilitation costs for pelicans that have become injured or orphaned along the Destin-Fort Walton Beach area. The funds will assist with the treatment costs at Emerald Coast Wildlife Refuge (ECWR) where trained specialists work to help the pelicans heal with their injury and be returned back to their environment.

"Our refuge center treats



over 200 seabirds annually and the average cost for rehabilitation for one of these birds' can be up to \$75 a day for up to 14-days depending on their injuries and care. The support from Saltwater Restaurants will help fund the medications and professional veterinary attention needed specifically for our brown pelicans, which make up more than half of the seabirds brought to our center each year."

Modern threats to brown pelicans include oil spills and pollution, human disturbance of nesting colonies, entanglement in fishing gear, swallowing fishing hooks or debris. The partnership will include signage along local piers with a rescue hotline and helpful instructions for when people come across an injured or entangled seabird or animal.

The donation is a part of Saltwater Restaurant's ongoing

S.E.A. initiative that assists in programs that support beach conservation and welfare campaigns along the Emerald Coast. The restaurants include Surf Hut, Rockin Tacos, Floyd's Shrimp House, Al's Beach Club, and the three Crab Trap locations in Destin, Fort Walton Beach, and Perdido Key.

For more information about ECWR and their mission, please visit emeraldcoastwildliferefuge.org.



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BY MAURICE STOUSE, FINANCIAL ADVISOR AND BRANCH MANAGER

When an asset of any kind starts appreciating quickly, it gets a lot of people's attention. Such has been the case with crypto currency. Many refer to it as Bitcoin. Bitcoin, of course, is just one of several crypto currencies available, but it has nonetheless become the vernacular when someone is referring to it. There are other crypto currencies such as Ethereum, dogecoin and they continue to grow. We think investors and savers alike should take caution with regards to crypto currency as a store of value (an asset class) or as a transaction medium.

The total market value of just Bitcoin in the world is believed to be at or close to \$1 trillion dollars. As a basis of comparison, the market value

Is Cryptocurrency an Investment or the Coming of New Currency?

of all the gold in the world is believed to be at or close to about \$3 trillion dollars. What is it that is driving some investors to it? Is it demand, supply, the new currency, an inflation hedge? There is some validity to all of these.

First, let us look at Bitcoin as a (potential) addition to or replacement of the dollar. It is gaining more acceptance in trade and even Tesla has decided to accept Bitcoin as payment for a vehicle. One Bitcoin is worth about \$56,000 and that could help someone purchase a new electric vehicle from the automaker. There are a few important details that we have learned.

Janet Yellen, the U.S. Treasury Secretary, as reported by CNBC in February sees it as "an extremely inefficient way to conduct monetary transactions." (Her comments also to the "legitimacy and stability" of cryptocurrencies.)

Currently, several major U.S. investment firms are moving forward with programs making the investment in crypto currency available to clients who meet



certain net worth minimums they set out.

How are crypto currency transactions taxed? Investors should consult with a tax advisor and they can also see the IRS guidance on Crypto taxation. Forbes also (in 2019) published information on how crypto currency is taxed. Forbes also, in its February/March issue has a feature on Crypto Currency.

Another consideration is the amount of power it consumes. Research from the International Energy Agency (IEA) among others is replete with data that point this out. Digiconomist.net estimates on its website that one Bitcoin transaction leaves the carbon footprint of more than 1 million Visa transactions, or 78,000 hours of watching YouTube. It also estimates that the same transaction uses the equivalent of 34 days of electricity for the average U.S. household. Given this, it is hard to see that crypto currency is an efficient method of payment.

Some investors (more likely professional investors) see Bitcoin as a replacement of or in addition to precious metals (like gold) as a hedge against inflation. This past year central banks the world over released trillions of additional monies into the worldwide financial system. The more something is available as the saying goes, the less it is worth. In other words, that could mean price inflation (brought on by monetary policy).

What are other central banks in the world currently doing? CNBC reported recently that China is proceeding with a digital currency and with that, could that have implications for

the strength of the U.S. dollar?

Inflation can erode purchasing power as well as eat into the return on an asset. While savings rates are near 0%, once inflation is factored in, is the saver or investor losing purchasing power?

Inflation fears continue to grow with so much stimulus having been released and with economic growth starting to emerge from the pandemic. If cryptocurrency is in limited supply, that in and of itself can also help drive the price. Cryptocurrency (wherever it comes from) must be mined online, with computing power. It is not easily created. That adds to the attraction and the speculation.

Reports are now emerging that many recipients of stimulus payments (as many as 40% as recently cited in a report from Mizuho Securities) intend to put at least a portion of their stimulus checks in to crypto or Bitcoin. Speculation is a driver of an asset's appreciation, because it creates momentum. Does this suggest that the appreciated asset has risen in value? The price of any asset is always determined by what someone is willing to pay for it.

The world of cryptocurrency, like any investment is subject to regulation little of which currently exists. It is difficult to determine at this point what that regulation might be and just how much of it is coming.

Investors are encouraged to work with their financial services firms to get the research and the insight they need to make informed decisions if they are considering venturing in the world of cryptocurrency. Knowing what you own, why you own,

how you own and where you own it are all critical elements of that discovery process.

Cryptocurrency issuers are not registered with the SEC, and the cryptocurrency marketplace is currently unregulated. Bitcoin and other cryptocurrencies are a very speculative investment and involves a high degree of risk. Securities that have been classified as Bitcoin-related cannot be purchased or deposited in Raymond James client accounts.

Maurice Stouse is a Financial Advisor and the branch manager of The First Wealth Management and Raymond James and he resides in Grayton Beach. He has been in financial services for over 33 years. His main office is located at First Florida Bank, a division of the First, A National Banking Association, 2000 98 Palms Blvd, Destin, FL 32541, with branch offices in Niceville, Mary Esther, Miramar Beach, Freeport and Panama City, Pensacola, Tallahassee and Moultrie, Ga.—Phone 850.654.8124. Raymond James advisors do not offer tax advice. Please see your tax professionals. Email: Maurice.stouse@raymond-james.com. Securities offered through Raymond James Financial Services, Inc. Member FINRA/SIPC, and are not insured by bank insurance, the FDIC or any other government agency, are not deposits or obligations of the bank, are not guaranteed by the bank, and are subject to risks, including the possible loss of principal. Investment Advisory Services are offered through Raymond James Financial Services Advisors, Inc. The First Wealth Management First Florida Bank, and The First, A National Banking Association are not registered broker/dealers and are independent of Raymond James Financial Services. Views expressed are the current opinion of the author, not necessarily those of RJFS or Raymond James, and are subject to change without notice. Information provided is general in nature and is not a complete statement of all information necessary for making an investment decision and is not a recommendation or a solicitation to buy or sell any security. Past performance is not indicative of future results.

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Maurice Stouse
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Protect Your Family with a Family Protection Dog

BY ELENA BEPLAY,
COASTLINE K9

In today's world of uncertainty, many people are searching for protection options and have gone down the road of selecting a family protection dog. As a mother, I can understand the concern for protecting your family. I am here to bring that passion and knowledge beyond the walls of our business and to our community.

There are a lot of misconceptions involving what defines a "family protection dog." A family protection dog is one that is highly trained to fend off threats against your family, but at the same time is a social companion.

Coastline K9 is founded by Erick Innis, a former Army Ranger dog trainer and handler. In six years of dog training and providing world class family protection dogs, our team has stayed busy answering questions regarding family protection dog selection and training.

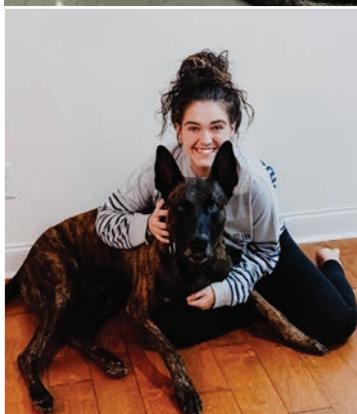
Selection starts with correct breed selection and temperament testing. Common breeds of family protection dogs are German Shepherds, Belgian Malinois and Dutch Shepherds. While there are other breeds that can be potential candidates, it is argued that these three breeds are the best for performance, prey drive, intelligence and temperament. The bloodline of the parents is important and the parents of the dog should be active working



dogs or family protection dogs also.

Unfortunately, many people waste time and money training a dog they "hope" will make the cut. When in reality, not all dogs can be family protection dogs. A dog that just looks scary or big is not always the best answer. It can sometimes take up to the two-year mark of professional training to know if the dog will graduate the program. The only way to guarantee your dog will perform to the standard is to purchase a fully finished family protection dog. Getting a puppy and raising it to perform protection work is a "roll of the dice."

Due to the extensive training, the national average cost of a family protection dog ranges from \$35,000 to upwards of \$125,000. Specific commands the dog should be able to perform include asking the dog to "watch" a potential aggressor,



"There have now been five real life situations in which I have needed Brad. He has read every

situation perfectly and acted according to each."

Family protection dogs are not guard dogs, military or police dogs—nor are they attack dogs. A properly trained dog will never act out of defensive aggression. Every move is controlled by the owner. The dog can differentiate between a social family setting and an active threat. A family protection dog is a highly trained guardian, a companion and defender of the family nucleus.

For more information on how to protect your family with a protection dog, visit CoastlineK9.com or call (850) 307-7771.



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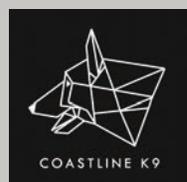
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 Environment



By CHRIS BALZER, ECES

Mom's Earth Day? Sounds made up, right? Earth Day was April 22nd and Mother's Day is May 9th, only 17 days apart. So,

Mom's Earth Day

ENERGY TIPS

by Emerald Coast Energy Solutions

I thought I would combine the two and make Mom's Earth Day. Here at Emerald Coast Energy Solutions (ECES,) every day is Earth Day; we increase comfort and lower CO2 emissions

saving the planet one home at a time, and perhaps maybe everyday should be Mother's Day. With these two great holidays so close together, I had to offer suggestions more than just flowers and home-made cards for mom this Spring.

Air conditioning is vital, the States are getting warmer and we want mom to be comfortable. When you're over, change the air condition filter. Clogged filters cause strain on the system and can lead to more service calls, costing mom money. Many HVAC professionals suggest using the less expensive filters to allow more air flow and efficiency. These filters do need to be changed more often, but cost less. After replacing the air filter, you can pour distilled vinegar down the condensate drain line to remove mildew and grime from the line, also extending time between service calls. If you're uncomfortable or unfamiliar with this process, consult a professional. Be sure to dust HVAC vents and fans—these areas build up dust quickly and could be hurting the circulation of airflow as well.

What better way to show your mother love than with sav-



ings on energy costs. One of the easiest ways to save energy is to change out incandescent light bulbs with LED bulbs. LED bulbs can save as much as 75-80% on lighting cost and they can last 10-20 times longer than incandescent bulbs. Replacing five frequently used inefficient incandescent bulbs in your home with energy savings LED bulbs could save you about \$75 per year and reduce your CO2 footprint. It's also your turn to tell your mom to shut off the lights when leaving the room. Even with LED bulbs, when you are not in the room, switch off the lights and save energy.

What's tall, green, made of wood and can save energy for your mother? (Hint: a tree) Doing a little landscaping and planting a tree can cut energy costs in the long run by adding shade during the summer

months. Trees also help purify the air we breathe by absorbing pollutants and providing habitats for birds and other wildlife, maintaining a balance with nature.

Buy mom a power strip and plug energy vampire electronics like cell phone charges and other electronics which don't need to be powered on all the time. By switching these off at the power strip when not in use or unplugging them can save up to \$100 a year. When cell phone and tablet charges are not in use, they still consume energy, costing money and wasting energy.

If your mom says that her HVAC constantly runs or there are rooms which never get cool, it may be time to schedule an energy inspection by a professional. These professionals can pin point areas which are losing energy and costing money. By addressing these areas with energy efficient solutions, you can increase comfort, lower energy bills and lower your CO2 footprint.

Also, try keeping our Earth and your Mom in your daily activities and actions.

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



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2021 Expected to Be Active Hurricane Season

BY ERIN BAKKER,
SPECIALTY ROOFERS INC.

Last year was a record-breaking hurricane season and forecasters are expecting another overactive season in 2021.

Colorado State University's Tropical Meteorology Project is predicting a total of 17 named storms, eight hurricanes and four major hurricanes Category 3 or above this season. This is above the 30-year average of 14 named storms, seven hurricanes and three major hurricanes according to NOAA. AccuWeather is predicting 16 to 20 named storms, seven to 10 hurricanes and three to five of which are Category 3 or even higher.

Emergency experts are saying to prepare now. "We anticipate an above-average probability for major hurricanes making landfall along the continental U.S. coastline and in the Caribbean," Dr. Phil Klotzbach of Colorado St. Univ. said. "As is the case with all hurri-



cane seasons, coastal residents are reminded that it only takes one hurricane making landfall to make it an active season for them. They should prepare the same for every season, regardless of how much activity is predicted."

Check out the Disaster Supply Checklist from local business Specialty Roofers that can help make sure you're prepared: www.specialtyroofers.com/post/disaster-supply-kit-checklist.

Putting Solar to Work for You and the Environment



BY GINA WEIDIE

Not only is now a great time to consider solar options for many reasons (See article in March 2021 Destin Life (<https://mydestinlife.com/news-a-great-time-to-consider-solar-options/>), if you're active in and concerned about our environment, we have good news!

I work with Powur, the first solar company to offset 100% of the emissions from the manufacturing and installation of a solar system. With a vision to accelerate the adoption of sustainable energy worldwide, we strive to live by our values, and set an example for others to follow. For transparency, we publish the details of every project we support monthly in our

open ledger, so everyone can see exactly what we are doing. Visit powur.com/offset.

In addition, Powur has partnered with Offset.Earth to offset the carbon emissions.

HOW? Carbon offsets can be purchased to counter the emissions produced through the manufacturing process.

WHY? While solar is a clean energy technology, the industrial process used to manufacture the panels and inverters still relies on dirty energy. This is a problem we need to solve.

WHEN? Every month, Powur calculates the total number of solar systems installed, and the total carbon used to create those systems. We then support as many projects as we need to offset 100% of those emissions.

WHAT? Powur supports diverse projects across the globe ranging from funding for additional renewable energy projects, preventing deforestation, limiting methane pollution and simply planting lots of trees which is the #1 way to get the carbon back from the atmosphere.

The reductions from these projects can be calculated and matched to the original emissions.

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Currently, we are conducting electric bill evaluations. See our coupon on p. 43. Feel free to call me, Gina Weidie, with your questions at (985) 317-9583. I want to assist you in any way. Put the sun to work for you!

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*"I'd put my money on the sun and solar energy. What a source of power! I hope we don't have to wait until oil and coal run out before we tackle that."
— Thomas Edison*

Travel

Finding Yourself and Your Ancestors



By JODELL HAVERFIELD,
HAVE TRAVEL MEMORIES

As we begin planning trips again, many of us will be seeking opportunities to explore who we are, how we got here, and what we can learn from those who came before us. Whether

you're tracing your genealogical history, or simply seeking a more meaningful connection with your family, knowing your heritage is one of the most valuable possessions you can have.

Many mothers may have recently been forced to be alone, their children and grandchildren keeping their distance to protect them. Most of us have learned to appreciate many things we formerly took for granted, like visiting a loved one. My mother passed away a few years ago—how I miss her. When she was alive, I would often ask her to tell me about her life and her family. I loved her stories about her childhood play on a ranch in



Texas as well as details about my grandparents, their parents and even their parents. Family history was important to her.

Mother's long-term memory was sharp with vivid recall. Not long before she died, we were watching an old movie together when she insisted the lead character was Bette Davis, to which I disagreed. After all, Bette was one of my favorite actresses and I had seen nearly all her movies. I could hardly wait for the credits at the end so I could gloat with glee. However, there it was in black and white—Bette Davis—I was absolutely stunned!

My granddaughters loved to spend time with my mother and hear her stories; they even learned the lost art of crocheting from her. She was quite a comedian, too, although I don't think she really meant to be funny. She would always break out in a big smile when she made us laugh.

I feel it is so important that we know our story, even if it's not perfect one. The discovery process is much easier today than it was when my mother was researching her family tree. I



fore you. Other excellent websites are available for an annual fee as well. I use both FamilySearch.org and Ancestry.com. There are many other search sites available for specific requests such as graves or events.

You can also log into rootstech.org, the world's largest family gone viral. This free virtual RootsTech Conference will be available for the rest of this year for you to enjoy keynote sessions, hands on instruction and other people's stories. Discover your unique story.

My husband and I teach a free Family History class as well as offer free one-on-one help by appointment. Just email (JoDell@havetravelmemories.com) or call me (406-544-8365) for more information.

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Boathouse Oyster Bar

Destin's best kept secret—it's where the locals go with live music every night! Located in the heart of Destin on the Destin Harbor, the Boathouse special-

izes in making oysters a delicacy. Boathouse's Gumbo recipe was written by Mama Gumbo herself. And, of course, the oysters are raw, steamed or baked just the way you like 'em! The first Friday of every month the Boathouse hosts locals on the Destin Harbor from 5pm - 7pm. Who wants a free keg? Bring a donation for the Emerald Coast Foundation to qualify for entry.

SPECIALS

Daily Lunch Specials M-F \$9.99

Slacker Sunday Oyster Brunch - 11am

LIVE ENTERTAINMENT DAILY. See ad for bands and times.

Music schedule subject to change. Follow us on FaceBook for updates! Enjoy...

(850) 837-3645

288-B Harbor Blvd., Destin
boathouseoysterbardestin.com

Bric a` Brac Restaurant & Night Club

Now celebrating seven amazing years in the Destin community, colorful, eclectic fun is to be had at Bric a` Brac! They can help with your parties, promotions, birthdays, business events or really any private event! Voted "Best Crab Cakes in Destin" five years in a row, Bric a` Brac is the true definition of something for

everyone—a family friendly, kid friendly, American-style restaurant well known for its tasty and colorful food selections served up in a fun, artsy atmosphere by professional and friendly staff. Locally-owned and operated since 2014 by twin brothers Rodolfo and Fernando Petit, their

hands on, fun loving style, engaging charisma and true passion set them apart. But it doesn't stop there. Enjoy delicious locally-approved entrées while you listen to some lively tunes, dance or sing along. There's something for everyone!

SPECIALS

11pm - 4am Latin Night Fridays & Saturdays - Music and Dancing upstairs/downstairs. 18+ to enter, 21+ to drink. GUYS \$10, LADIES \$5.

LIVE ENTERTAINMENT

Thursday: Live Music from 6pm to 9pm

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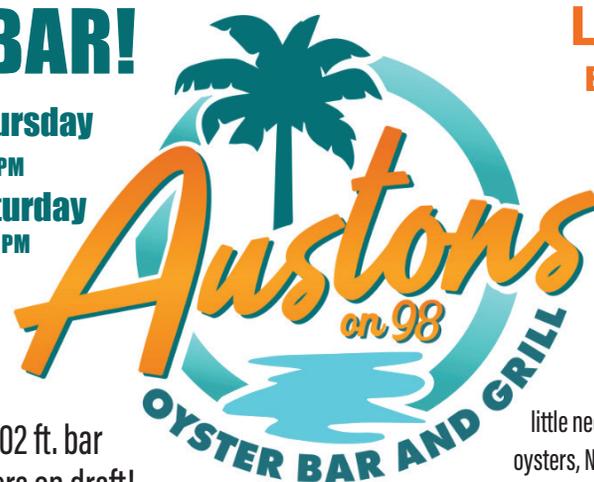
RAW BAR!

Sunday - Thursday

11 AM - 9 PM

Friday & Saturday

11 AM - 10 PM



Home of the 102 ft. bar including 32 beers on draft!

LIVE MUSIC!

Every Wed. 6-9 pm

and Fri. 7-10 pm

STICKY TOO

(Every Wed)

HAPPY HOUR!

3-6 pm Daily

Specialties include little neck clams, freshly shucked raw oysters, New England style clam chowder and jumbo shrimp cocktail!



(850) 842-3200 | 125 Poinciana Blvd | Miramar Beach | austonson98.com



Mi Gente
SUPERMARKET
TAQUERIA & CANTINA



Micheladas



Taco Tuesday



Domingo Sunday

OPEN FOR LUNCH & DINNER
MEXICAN BREAKFAST COMING SOON ON SAT. & SUN. MORNINGS!

Latin Supermarket, Taqueria & Cantina

SPECIALTY MEATS SOLD HERE!

Great selection available daily. We will grill your meats to perfection for you for only \$1.99.

We offer a diverse selection of food and groceries from different Latin-America countries!

Private Party Room Available.

Mi Gente

733 Harbor Blvd. • Destin

(850) 842-2992



Friday: Jones & Co from 7pm to 10pm

Saturday: Live Music from 6pm to 9pm

(850) 424-6369
Shoreline Village Plaza
824 Hwy 98 E, Destin
Bricabracdestin.com

Café Destin

Café Destin offers an expanded menu serving breakfast staples such as pancakes, waffles with Nutella, omelets, Eggs Benedicts, biscuits & gravy and more. For a lighter take, they also have a variety of Fancy Toasts (avocado, salmon and more) along with pastries and muffins. For lunch, choose from a variety of burgers, sandwiches and salads. You will love the full-service coffee shop, offering everything from hot or iced fresh, local Amavida coffee to espresso and lattes. And there's diverse fresh fruit smoothies and a variety of tantalizing teas. Open for breakfast and lunch 7 days a week from 7am-2pm. and has free WiFi, encouraging you to bring your laptops and work during the day. There's

also a conference room available for small groups, and the dining area can be rented for larger groups for networking, luncheons and more. If you haven't stopped in recently to check out the new menu, be sure to make breakfast or lunch plans soon! And don't forget the coffee!

(850) 424-6777

985 US-98 E, Destin
cafedestin.com

Island Wing Company Grill & Bar

Voted "Best Wings" four years running, Island Wing Co. is calling your name. NOTHING is fried! Everything is baked, grilled or steamed! Come in and find your favorite beer among the 58 selections on tap or enjoy a cocktail and savor some of the tastiest food you've ever eaten. Are you ready for some sports? With big screen TVs situated all around the bar and restaurant, Island Wing Company invites you in to watch, cheer and enjoy the 2021 seasons. Need to feed the whole family? Family meals to go with curbside delivery has you cov-

ered. Your Island awaits you...

SPECIALS

Daily Happy hour 3-7pm and 7pm-close. Happy Monday! Kids eat free. (Free kids meal with adult entrée purchase) and Happy Hour All day long. TWOsday was made for TACOS! Enjoy two tacos with reggae rice for \$8.95 Choose from Jah'mon Jerk, Maui Wowwie Mahi, Buffalo Chicken and Baja Fish. Wednesday is flatbread special day. Enjoy \$3 off their five famous flatbreads. Pairs well with \$3 house wine or 1/2-priced bottles.

(850) 837-2999

981 U.S. Hwy. 98, Destin
islandwing.com

Landshark's Pizza

Hey Sports Fans... 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 including college and pro football, basketball and more. And there's a fully stocked

bar with 95 different bourbons and 30 beers on draft!

SPECIALS

Weekly specials include music bingo on Tuesdays at 7pm; Wingsday and Bourbon Club Wednesdays! Award-winning wings all you can eat for \$.99 cents each, and \$2 off top shelf bourbon selections!

(850) 424-6743

300 Harbor Blvd., Destin
landsharkspizza.com

Supermarket & Taqueria Mi Gente'

Open for breakfast, lunch and dinner, Mi Gente' is one of Destin's hottest dining spots for the whole family and friends to enjoy. With fresh ingredients and homemade recipes, this fun and festive

restaurant will instantly capture your heart. Serving up huge portions, you can choose from an incredible select menu offering a diverse selection of delicious food from different Latin-America countries. Taqueria Mi Gente' is a treat you just have to experience for yourself. Enjoy a drink from the cantina, try a few tasty options on the menu such as rich and flavorful! Quesa-Birria Tacos topped with fresh diced onion, cilantro and a squeeze of lime juice served with the broth on the side to dip your tacos! Take a walk through their amazing and diverse supermarket and fresh meat department where you can buy a variety of Latin America groceries to take home. Get your

Continued next page

Entertainment, Specials

fresh Tamales here! Open 7 days, 9am-9pm daily.

SPECIALS

Chili Relleno Tuesdays!
Menudo Domingo de
Menudo Sundays!
(850) 842-2992
733 Harbor Blvd., Destin

Tailfins Waterfront Grill

Announcing the GRAND OPENING of Tailfins' Sushi & Raw Bar with amazing Happy Hour Sushi prices including: \$5 Sake Bombs and \$7 Select Sushi Rolls! Watch the Sushi chef make it right in front of your eyes! And, with multiple levels offering stunning views of the Destin Harbor and your favorite foods and drinks, locally-owned Tailfins' Waterfront Grill delivers an incredible mix of friendly and fun atmosphere—a magical

combination for watching your favorite teams and enjoying the entertainment with Live Music to kick back and enjoy. Rusty Hammerstrom performs every Monday, Wednesday & Friday. Daniel Boone is live every Tuesday, Thursday & Saturday. Featuring multiple levels of indoor and outdoor dining overlooking the Destin Boardwalk, Tailfins is your go-to destination for all sports fans with Huge Big Screen TV's everywhere you look so you can watch your favorite teams all season long. Start your day off right with Tailfins breakfast every day from 9am - 11am! Enjoy a classic breakfast with bacon and eggs or add a little flair to your morning with Chicken & Pancakes, a Seafood or Cajun Omelette and even a Kids Smiley Pancake! So, come on in for

Sushi, breakfast or regular menu all day long!

SPECIALS

Happy Hour Sushi: \$5 Sake Bombs and \$7 Select Sushi Rolls!
Scrumptious Early Bird Dinner Specials M-F from 4-6pm. Happy Hour from 4-6pm Mon. - Fri. featuring \$17 Domestic Bottle Buckets and \$7.99 Pitchers, \$5 House Wines and Well Drinks and \$5 Long Island Iced Teas.

(850) 650-1200

On the Harbor in Destin

172 Harbor Blvd.

tailfinsdestin.com

Tequila's Sports Bar & Grill

EAT, DRINK, FIESTA!

There's always a sport in season all year long! Tequila's is open and ready for you so on game day or any day, stop in. Ready to



shake it up a little? And we mean literally - Tequila's Sports Bar and Grill has quickly become a local favorite. Let them serve up some of their world class, jumbo sized Margaritas, sure to set the mood to watch your favorite game. Tequila's has some of the best seats in the neighborhood. Everyone's got a favorite...find your Mexican food fave here inspired by years of tradition and authentic spices such as the Tequila's Plate, Chili Con Carne, The Three Amigos and the new MASTER PARILLADA—a

unique fusion of sports bar food and delightful Mexican dishes.

SPECIALS

Celebrate Taco Tuesdays with 2-4-1 Margaritas!

Lunch specials offered daily Monday - Friday for \$8.99. Open seven days a week for lunch, dinner or call ahead to place your take out and to-go orders.

(850) 279.6402

11225 U.S. 98 W,

Miramar Beach

tequilasmiramarbeach.com

Destin Snorkel's "Locals First Weekend" a Success!

In April, Destin Snorkel held a food drive and offered free Dolphin Cruises for locals to help Harvest House's food pantry as well as give back to our locals with a free Dolphin Tour weekend. "We at Destin Snorkel realize that our local neighbors work hard and rarely get a chance to get out with their families on the water and enjoy where we live," said Tina Velez with Destin Snorkel.

"It is wonderful to be able to help our community's food bank at the same time."

"We are excited that Destin Snorkel supported The Harvest

House in its second annual 'Locals First Weekend.' Their collection efforts are needed now more than ever," said Lori Joyner, Executive Director of The Harvest House. The drive also helped get the word out to people in need in our local Destin and Miramar Beach communities.

Last year, Destin Snorkel was able to donate more than 5000 pounds of food to The Harvest House with 1600 locals participating!

Each local that booked a spot on one of the weekend's dolphin cruises was asked to bring in non-perishable food items



to help feed our local hungry. Their thank you? They received

the most beautiful, fun dolphin tour! "Thank you, Destin Snorkel! We, at Destin Life, wanted to also participate for this cause and chose a sunset tour," said Lori Smith, Publisher. "We saw many Dolphin and had the most wonderful time!. My age 4 grandson Josiah was delighted; he even got to help "drive" the Reefrunner at one point (Thank you Captain.). And the view was breathtaking!

What a great way to spend an hour and a half in the fresh air along our beautiful Destin Harbor."

Even though the locals' weekend happens only once a year, you can book a tour year-round and experience the same amazing cruise. Visit Facebook and Instagram, #destinsnorkel, @destinsnorkel, or DestinSnorkel.com.

LANDSHARK'S PIZZA
Award-Winning Menu, Sports, Full Bar, 3 Dining Areas, Game Room, Dog & Cigar Friendly Harborside Deck!
www.landsharkspizza.com

Pizza|Wings|Subs|Calzones|Salad|Desserts & Cocktails
AMAZING SPECIALS EVERY DAY OF THE WEEK!

MULTI-YEAR AWARD WINNER
BEST PIZZA IN DESTIN & BEST SUB IN DESTIN
PLUS BEST WINGS IN DESTIN
BEST TACOS IN DESTIN
FULL BAR, & GAME ROOM!
STOGIE & DOGGY FRIENDLY BACK DECK!

300 HARBOR BOULEVARD IN DESTIN (850)424-6743
NHL | NBA | NCAA College Hoops
on an Army of Big Screen TVs!
Destin's Official Green Bay Packers HQ!

Voted Best Sports Bar!
Amazing Food Fresh Seafood

Now Serving SUSHI & RAW BAR
Happy Hour 4-6 Enjoy \$7 Select Rolls

\$9.99 LUNCH SPECIALS
Monday thru Friday 11 am-3 pm

EARLY BIRD DINNER SPECIALS
Monday - Friday 4-6 pm
Fresh Catch \$17.95
New Orleans Cajun Shrimp \$15.95
Kansas City Baby Back Ribs
1/2 Rack \$12.95 | Full Rack \$21.95

172 Harbor Blvd. Destin
(850) 650-1200 | TailfinsDestin.com

Tailfins WATERFRONT Grill
Destin Harbor

Live Music on the Docks
Daniel Boone
Rusty Hammerstrom

BREAKFAST SERVED DAILY
7 Days a Week, 8 am until 11 am

Destin Dining, Entertainment, Specials

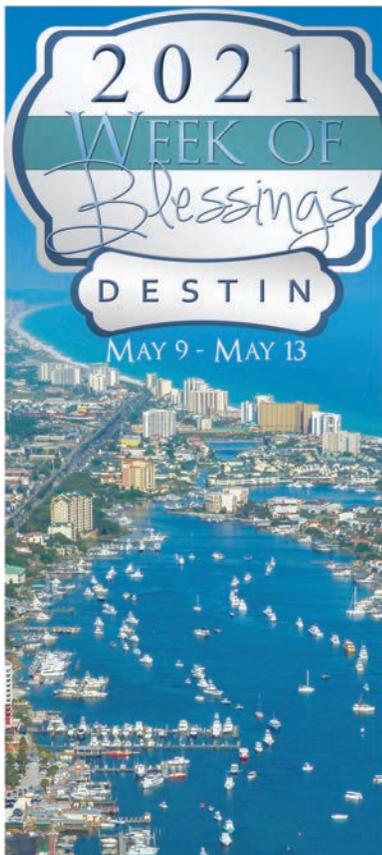
Wear Your "Bow Ties & Bling" Friday, May 21, 6 p.m.

The Emerald Coast Children's Advocacy Center (ECCAC) is presenting its 22nd annual signature Gala. The "Bow Ties and Bling" themed Gala is at 6 p.m. on Friday, May 21, at the Hilton Sandestin Beach Golf Resort & Spa. Emceed by David Seering,



guests will enjoy dinner and live entertainment by the popular Mr. Big and the Rhythm Sisters, along with live and silent auc-

tions. The Gala is an energetic, yet important ECCAC fundraiser to benefit children by providing services at no cost to help identify, treat and support child victims in abusive situations. CDC safety guidelines will be practiced at the event. Gala tickets are \$250 per couple, \$125 for individual ticket and \$800 for a table for eight. Please make reservations on-line at www.eccac.org. Sponsorships are still available. Contact Chelsea Fox at 850-833-9237, Ext. 283, or email her at Chelsea@eccac.org.



SUNDAY, MAY 9TH
· BLESSING OF THE FAMILIES AT PARTICIPATING LOCAL CHURCHES

MONDAY, MAY 10TH
· DAY OF PRAYER AND FASTING WALK THE STREETS AND PRAY FOR YOUR NEIGHBORS AND NEIGHBORHOOD

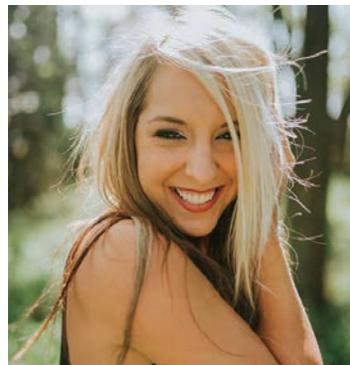
TUESDAY, MAY 11TH
· PASTORAL MINISTRY DAY

WEDNESDAY, MAY 12TH
· BLESSING OF THE MARKETPLACE 11:30 AM - 1:30PM - LUNCH PROVIDED BY CHIC-FIL-A DESTIN HIGH SCHOOL 4325 COMMONS DR. WEST

· BLESSING OF THE YOUTH 6-7PM - PIZZA/WORSHIP/PRAYER CLEMENT TAYLOR PARK 131 CALHOUN AVENUE - DESTIN

THURSDAY, MAY 13TH
· 64TH ANNUAL BLESSING OF THE FLEET DESTIN FISHING FLEET MARINA, BEHIND BROTLAS SEAFOOD HOUSE AND STEAMER 210 HARBOR BLVD. BOAT BLESSING - 4PM - 7PM

TO REGISTER, CALL 850-837-6324 (THOSE WHO MAKE THEIR LIVING ON THE SEA)



By CALI HLAVAC,
TO DO IN DESTIN

As one of Destin's long-standing traditions, the Blessing of

Off the Hook: 64th Annual Blessing of the Fleet

the Fleet brings out locals and tourists each year for a ceremony unlike any other on the Destin Harbor. It has become one that many locals and visitors look forward to attending this time of year, as we kick off our summer season.

The Blessing of the Fleet is an annual tradition honoring the men and women who utilize the resources of the sea as a means of survival. As a centuries-old ritual, these types of fleet blessings are common in ports in other countries.

Fleet blessings worldwide have long been established as a time of prayer and faith—a tradition where locals and churches come together to pray over each fleet vessel, the captains and crew members, and their families for safe passages, bountiful catches and prosperity.

Locally, on Ascension Day each year, local pastors gather behind Brotula's on the Harbor to bless commercial charter fishing boats, boat captains, crews and passengers for a safe and bountiful busy season. Many captains attribute the success of their season not to luck, but to these blessings—a tradition that has held for many years, even as Destin evolved from a small fishing community to the World's Luckiest Little Fishing Village it is today. The fleet has continued to grow and now the Destin Harbor is recognized as home to the largest fishing fleet, perhaps, in the country.

BOATHOUSE
OYSTER BAR

A Locals Favorite For Over 30 Years!

MAY LIVE MUSIC!

- Mondays:** 5pm Cole Jordan
9pm Roshambo
- Tuesdays:** 5pm Kyle LaMonica
8pm Austin Jennings
- Wednesdays:** 4pm Hunter & Tony
9pm Squeely Dan
- Thursdays:** 4pm Shane Curle
8pm Austin Jennings
- Fridays:** 4pm Jason Findley
8pm Airavata
- Saturdays:** 12pm Kelly Byrd
8pm Gunner
- Sundays:** 12pm Kelly Byrd
4pm Jason Findley
8pm Squeely Dan

Open Daily from 11 am-2 am
Lunch Specials M-F for \$9.99
Slacker Sunday Oyster Brunch 11 am

288 Harbor Blvd, Destin
(850) 837-3645

Facebook: www.facebook.com/BoathouseOysterBar
www.boathouseoysterbardestin.com

Continued on next page

64TH BLESSING

continued from previous page

The Blessing of the Fleet began in May 1957 with about 20 boats and has since grown to some years over 150 boats. Numbers like this make it the largest Blessing of the Fleet in the country. Commercial boats line up in a parade like fashion and take turns stopping in front of the barge where Destin's pastors call them up by name to be blessed and prayed over. Any boat or captain that makes their living on the water is encouraged to participate, and will be welcomed. Here we are reminded of the significant role fishermen and their families, both past and present, have played in building and strengthening our Destin community.

Over the years, it's easy to see Destin's fleet has been prosperous and protected. It seems God continues to watch over and bless the fishermen of Destin's Harbor.

Ascension Day this year falls on May 13, 2021, and the "blessings" will begin at 4 p.m. on the docks behind Brotula's Restaurant with a Captains' Worship and Prayer Service. Following the service, local clergy will process to the dock to bless those vessels which have pre-registered.

A community fish fry will follow the Blessing around 5:30 p.m. at Brotulas. The public is encouraged to join in and support the local sponsors who make the Blessing of the Fleet possible, including Aerial Sea-



COURTESY IMMANUEL ANGLICAN CHURCH



food and Brotula's Seafood House and Steamer.

All commercial fishing, safety and recreational vessels that make their living on the sea are invited to participate. Boats can pre-register their vessel, by

emailing their vessel and contact information to immanuel@iacdestin.org or by calling the church at 850-837-6324. The Blessing of the Fleet is open to the public to watch.

Lions Tale
ADVENTURES
DESTIN FISHING CHARTER

850.585.4747
WWW.LIONSTALEADVENTURES.COM

FAMILY FRIENDLY TRIPS AVAILABLE!

Greater Amberjack Reopens to Recreational Harvest in Gulf Waters May 1-31

In the Gulf, greater amberjack reopens to recreational harvest and runs through May 31. If you plan to fish for greater amberjack or certain other reef fish species in Gulf or Atlantic state or federal waters from a private recreational vessel (includes anglers over 65 years of age), you must sign up as a State Reef Fish Angler prior to your fishing trip. If you are already a Gulf Reef Fish Angler, your Gulf designation meets the new statewide requirement until it expires. To learn more, please visit myfwc.com.

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Pain Management for Athletes

By AMY HOGAN MILLIGAN

Pain can put your life on pause, or at least significantly slow you down, which is a problem for athletes who are often in constant motion. Many athletes feel that they don't have time for pain, but injuries can happen in high activity situations, and chronic pain conditions can happen to anyone. As an athlete, it's more important than ever to manage your pain and to know how to take care of yourself so that your body can recover.

Here are some tips when it comes to pain management in athletes:

Take Enough Time Off

For many athletes, it's not just the injury itself that hurts, but it's also the time taken from their beloved sport. They might be impatient to get back out to the court or field, but it's crucial to take a sufficient amount of time to heal before returning to the sport. For a simple

sprained ankle, this could be no more than a week. Calf strains can take between two weeks and three months to heal depending on the severity. Neck strains and concussions can take between two and six weeks. Severe injuries like ACL tears can take six months to heal. Trying to return to the game too soon can exacerbate an injury and leave the body vulnerable to other injuries.

Pain Management That Works

Pain affects different athletes in a variety of ways depending on the sport and the person. That said, there are a few tried and true methods that work for most athletes trying to recover from an injury or manage pain. These include:

- **Infrared Sauna and Cryotherapy** – Elasticity of temperature from 140 degrees to negative 140 degrees pulls inflammation.



- **Yoga** – particularly for athletes who struggle with chronic pain in the neck or back.

- **Massage and Physical Therapy** – increases muscle strength and ease of motion for acute and chronic injuries.

How to Prevent Injuries

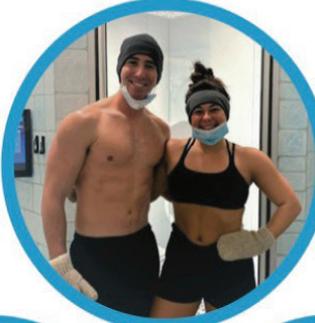
As an athlete, you want to avoid pain whenever possible. While you can't wrap yourself in a bubble in the middle of a game to ward off any impact, you can take steps to prepare and protect your body. These include stretching before and after the game to loosen your muscles and range of motion, wearing appropriate protective gear, and sticking to a healthy

diet and sleep schedule. As an athlete, you constantly push your body to its limits. Staying in shape is key to ensuring that you don't snap in doing so.

We know how important it is for athletes to take care of themselves. It's important to weave in proper recovery to protect the body from injury and the importance of managing chronic pain. At CRYO850, we have a full line up of services for prevention, injury response and overall pain management. Contact CRYO850 at (850) 279-4145 or visit cryo850.com for more information. No appointment necessary. Just stop by!









LESS PAIN. MORE LIFE.

Take time to chill. Come try the Emerald Coast Igloo, the only safe and nitrogen-free electric cryotherapy chamber in North Florida.



@cryo850



850-279-4145

cryo850.com 

City Market Bayside,
4495 Furling Lane, Suite 10, Destin 

Living Your Optimum Life!

By CJ LYDON, SENIOR LIVING COMMUNITY ADVISOR

“WHO” are some of the people who choose to live in a Senior Living Community and “WHY” and “WHEN” is the right time to make that transition?



Meet Jeanetta! She was a 30-year resident of the Sandestin Resort Community. Her husband, who was a Marine veteran, passed years ago. She remained in their home for years after his passing. But as the years went by, she realized taking care of a home by herself was going to be too much. She had neighbors that moved to Brookdale which is located right within the Sandestin Resort and were very happy there. She visited often and heard stories of how much

fun they were having with their new friends. She liked how spacious the apartments were and especially liked their screened in patios. “I came for a tour and the rest is history. I never even considered any other community. What I really like is that I am still making new friends. I love the staff and I just love our Sandestin community and all that this area offers. We have a great selection of restaurants, shopping and activities nearby as well as all of the activities and events that Brookdale offers each day.” Jeanetta is a retired RN and worked at a Veterans Hospital in Tennessee. She was a volunteer with Caring & Sharing after she retired. She enjoys playing bridge, bingo, bible study, happy hour, trivia, socializing with her neighbors and talking about her extended family. She said transitioning to a senior living community was the right choice for her. She said some people wait too long and become a burden to their loved ones. She didn’t want that and is glad her health is still very good.



Meet Ed & Pat! They recently celebrated their 63rd wedding anniversary. They were both living in Niceville, but in two separate communities. Pat was living in an Independent Living complex that didn’t allow her husband to reside with her, because of his care needs. They didn’t offer any clinical or nursing staff to assist seniors as they age. Pat was very depressed that she could not even visit her husband. She shared her despair with her two sons and they realized they needed to do something for their parents. That’s when they contacted Brookdale Destin, which offers both an Assisted Living Community and a Memory Care Community. This was the answer they were looking for. So, the process be-

gan of moving them both from their different locations to their new forever home. Here they can age in place and spend the rest of their days together! Ed is a retired Air Force Veteran. Pat has been by his side since they met in High School.

Each day Pat spends time with Ed and shares happy memories with him about their life together. Pat and her four-legged buddy Romeo share a first-floor apartment and Romeo has his own backyard. They enjoyed playing golf, traveling and playing bridge with friends. Pat and Ed certainly have that special kind of love!



Meet Sally! She was also a long-time resident of Sandestin Resort Community. After her husband passed she, too, was

wondering when would be the right time to make the transition to a senior living community. Both of her daughters recommended Brookdale Destin. One of her daughters is in health-care and the other is involved in real estate. Sally came for a visit and signed a contract that same week. “I was getting lonely and wanted a community where I could socialize with people on a regular basis. I met several of the staff and really liked all of the activity I saw going on. I really like how friendly and helpful the staff is and I especially like all of the new friends I have made here.”

Sally resides in a beautifully appointed two-bedroom apartment with her pal Joey. He really enjoys being able to sit outside with her on the patio. Sally is a very talented artist. She also crochets, enjoys bingo, happy hours and riding in the Community Golf Cart to one of the many restaurants or shops next door at Grand Boulevard. She says, “Don’t wait, move in sooner rather than later. You’ll be so glad you did!”



EXCEPTIONAL SENIOR LIVING

Have you reached the point in your life where you’re ready to leave the housekeeping, laundry and daily chores to someone else and enjoy life? Then Brookdale Destin is the place for you. Our assisted living and memory care community is located on Florida’s Emerald Coast, a tourist destination known for its white beaches and emerald green waters. It’s convenient to shopping and restaurants, and there’s not a chore in sight.

As a resident you can jump into a busy social calendar and a life of leisure and independence while still receiving the personal assistance you need. Should your needs change over time, and you require memory care, you have the assurance of knowing you can remain here. You and your family will have peace of mind knowing that we have trained staff on-site 24 hours a day, seven days a week.



2400 Crystal Cove Ln, Destin, FL 32550 | (850) 267-1600 | www.brookdale.com



What About My Skin?



BY KAY LEAMAN, HEALTHYDAY
HEALTHYLIFE

Last month, I spoke briefly about spring cleaning, but I didn't include the bathroom. The bathroom can be a calming place, but it can also contain an abundance of chemicals. From body wash to shampoo, conditioner, deodorant, lotions, makeup, shaving cream, after-

shave, perfume and the list goes on. How many different scents can you discover?

I bring this up because all of this goes on our skin and the skin, being the largest organ of the body, plays a very important role in our health.

Roughly 15% of our body weight is our skin. The three main functions are protection, regulation and sensation/immune response respectively. The primary function is to act as a barrier. It provides protection from various environmental elements—temperature, bacteria, chemicals, the sun and more.

So, paying attention to your skin and what you put on it is important. What would you prefer, a chemical that does something to your skin or a natural product that supports your normal skin functions? And men, we ladies like looking at healthy soft skin

as much as you do. So, please take care of it.

Some tips for keeping your skin healthy:

Stay hydrated—Water provides your skin with moisture and helps to flush out toxins. It provides a smooth appearance and helps your skin look plump.

Healthy Foods—Foods such as oranges, apples, strawberries, spinach and broccoli nourish the skin from the inside. Foods loaded with sugar, bad fats, etc. can do the opposite (blemishes, dullness, etc.)

Excess Sun Exposure—We are all aware of these dangers. Seek out healthy skin care without chemicals and ones that include a natural sunblock (especially for the face).

Sleep—Our bodies are busy while we sleep repairing and regenerating—just a few of

the body's nighttime functions. Choose loose-fitting pajamas made from natural materials.

Care for your skin—Consistency is key. Moisturize your skin with a high-quality moisturizer. The face takes a lot of abuse every day and it's the first thing we look at. Exfoliating, moisturizing and nurturing your face with the nutrients it needs not only boosts your beauty (or handsomeness) but your skin's defenses as well (H₂O, Curcumin, Alpha-lipoic Acid, Lutein and Zeaxanthin, Glucosamine, Vitamin C).

With Mother's Day just around the corner, why not surprise her with a special spa evening? Join her with your favorite beverage, music/movie and appetizer while enjoying a scrub mask and moisture rich, restoring serum. If you don't know where to start, give me a

shout at succeed@healthyday-healthylife.com. I can help.

Fun facts: Every single day we shed more than 30,000 skin cells. Each square inch of our skin is made up of about 19 million cells. All of the skin we are looking at right now is dead. (Dig down about 20 layers and you'll find a living skin cell.) Dead cells are flat and hard and create layer upon layer of protection (like roof shingles). These dead cells literally turn into dust. In fact, a lot of the dust in our homes is actually DEAD SKIN! We produce roughly eight pounds of skin-cell dust per year. Thank your dust the next time you wipe it away and remember that the skin you look at in the mirror is not the skin you looked at yesterday. It is constantly renewing itself.

Happy Mother's Day! Take time to enjoy your skin.

Self-Care Corner

Get that Clean, Healthy Glow for Summer!

BY KRISY ANDERSON

Have you considered your daily skin-care routine? Are there small improvements you can make that will add up to big

changes over time?

For example, do you use clean skincare, haircare and body care? If not, switch out toxic items for clean, cruelty-free

products. At the spa, we work to always maintain the skin's natural barrier. Your at-home products should be efficient naturally—ones which support your

wellness from the inside out. Aloe Source products could be a solution for you. I chose unique Aloe Vera cleansers to carry at the spa and serum, because they

are designed to treat a variety of skin concerns for all facial skin types. This Paraben-free line was created by pairing stabilized Aloe Vera with effective ingredients such as peptides, vitamin C and plant stem cells—all designed to enhance your inner and outer glow and to shield against visible signs of aging such as fine lines, wrinkles, loss of firmness and skin discolorations. The peptides work by signaling receptors in skin to behave in certain ways mainly to encourage collagen production. They're safe for all skin types, especially those suffering from environmental damage. I've carried these in the Spa for about seven years and have witnessed very positive results.

Are you getting plenty of quality sleep? Without it each night, your body and skin (your largest organ) cannot repair, rest and restore.

Do you create a balance between work, play and rest? You need times of refreshing and rest, even in small ways, that go a long way to helping you maintain facial radiance.

Do you touch your face a lot?

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Continued on next page

Exercise is a Mom's Best Friend



BY LISA LEATH TURPIN,
HEALTH & FITNESS COACH

It's hard to find time to exercise when you are a mom. I know this from my own experience and through dealing with my clients' schedules. Many moms have a lot of guilt taking the time for themselves; thus, feeling selfish for doing so. Viewing exercise as a luxury instead of a necessity couldn't be more wrong. Just like the instructions on an airplane to put the oxygen mask on yourself first, because that way you

can be alert and helpful to your loved ones, you must take care of your health and well-being in order to have strength, endurance, stamina and a clear mind to meet your heavy demands as a mother. What you commit to now will either make your life better, happier and strong, or cumbersome and tiresome as you age. Small children have tons of energy and need to be held. Grandparents are finally learning that exercise is essential to be able to keep up. Moms, while young, take this for granted. But, no matter what your age, staying active and exercising makes all stages of life easier.

Set a goal: General Fitness is a GREAT overall "life goal," but on top of that, set a goal such as a family trip or class reunion you want to look and feel good for.

Time/Day: Set a routine. Make your workouts on the same days at a consistent time of the week, just like a work appointment. Schedule it so that it makes sense and you won't have



to stress over it. This way you can work your other appointments and life around it. Even if you work out at home, this will give you the most success in your efforts. Nothing can get in the way.

Comradery: Work out with your kids, some friends or a partner. I am a witness to the benefits of working out with your friends in a private group. I have several groups I train and they keep each other accountable as well as catch up on life events and buddie time. Many of my groups have been together now more than 10 years! I'm so proud of them, and they look great and have fun together!

They very rarely miss, because they are there for each other to cheer and encourage.

Moms are wonderful and wear so many hats. Keep yourself healthy for the sake of your family! They will thank you for being the best, most calm you, because you took the time to detach just long enough to train yourself to handle the rest of what comes your way!

Happy Mother's Day! Be Active – Stay Active!!

Lisa Turpin is a degreed and certified health and fitness lifestyle coach who has devoted her life to motivating and strengthening the bodies and minds of others. With more than 20 years' experience as a group exercise leader and an independent personal trainer in the Destin area, she is diverse and extensively trained in classical and modern Pilates, lifestyle management, personal training, group exercise and post-rehabilitation.

SELF CARE

continued from previous page

If so, you might be promoting acne breakouts.

Tips:

To re-calibrate, start your day by drinking hot lemon water, which is also an immunity booster. Or create a simple ritual each day, such as brewing a

cup of tea—a fantastic way to hydrate, too.

Men and women, cleanse, tone and hydrate morning and evening. Apply your moisturizer immediately after washing your face every morning and night. Skin best absorbs the moisture and locks it in for a longer time when applied when skin is still damp.

It's proven the better we look

and feel, the more productive we are. Drop into Beverly Hills Day Spa or visit online and purchase a gift certificate. Available for pickup during normal business hours, visit www.beverlyhillsdayspa.com or call me at (850) 654-8544. 114 Palmetto Dr., Suite 6, Destin, 32541, on Tuesday – Saturday 10 a.m.- 5 p.m.

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 Wellness

How to Respect Your Emotions and the Emotions of Others



BY STEPHENIE CRAIG, JOURNEY BRAVELY

Do you find it complicated balancing your emotions while emotionally supporting others? Maybe you're struggling with infertility and a sibling just had a baby. Maybe you're grieving a heart-breaking loss/ending and a friend is celebrating a new beginning.

You want to be compassionate and caring toward those you love and, at the same time, you have your own, unique emo-

tional experience to manage. This tension may leave you wondering: Is it okay for me to feel stressed about my problems when others' problems are so much bigger? Is it okay for me to be happy when someone else is so deeply sad? Is it okay for me to feel sad when someone else wishes I was celebrating with them?

While navigating emotions in community with others can feel very complicated, emotional connection to others is essential to your emotional health. So, how can you respect both your emotional experience and the emotional experience of others?

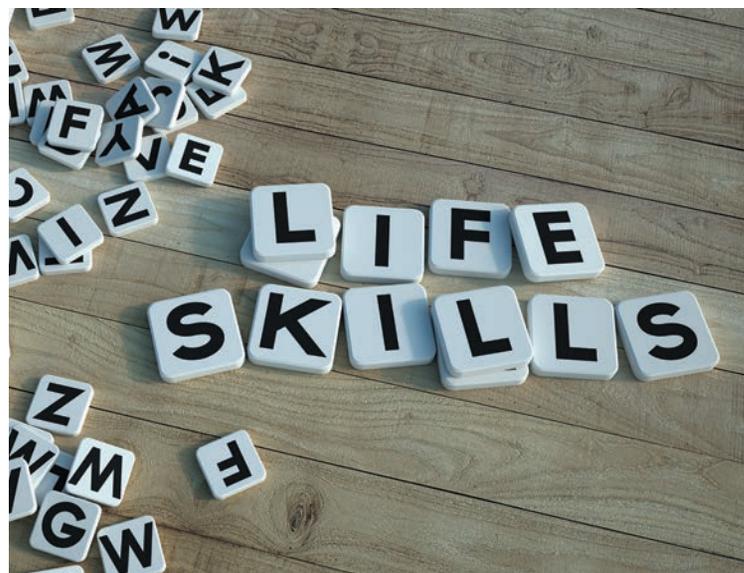
5 Ways to Respect Both Your Emotions and the Emotions of Others:

Remember all feelings are normal. You are human and every human has a range of small, medium and large feelings. Different people have

different emotional responses to various circumstances. Being a compassionate person does not require you to sync your emotional responses to anyone else. You can feel happy, sad, angry, humiliated, disappointed, ashamed, exhausted, guilty, jealous, etc., and all of these are 100% normal even if someone around you is experiencing different feelings. You are normal. They are normal. No judgment necessary!

Remember feelings are not true or false. Feelings are biological messengers designed to draw attention to what's happening in your environment or in your thought life. You might hear a friend's great news as you're walking through pain and initially think, "I wish that was my news instead of theirs." Immediately guilt and shame follow as you judge yourself for feeling jealous. Instead of judging, remember jealousy is not telling you the truth that you are a terrible person, because you didn't immediately feel happy for your friends. Jealousy is drawing attention to your desire to see positivity in your life which is normal. Sit with your emotion without judging and you'll find you can be both happy for someone else and sad for yourself at the same time.

Give pain it's proper



space. Avoid comparing/ranking your suffering with that of others. "My problems aren't real problems, because we aren't living in poverty." All pain hurts. Your pain is valid even if it doesn't seem as catastrophic.

Be compassionate, not codependent. Compassion is when you care about what others are experiencing and come alongside them in their joy and pain in loving support. Compassion looks like a kind note, providing meals, listening, praying, feeling sad with a friend while also feeling freedom to celebrate the joys in your life. Codependency is when you take on someone else's emotions as if they are your own lead-

ing you to abandon your own feelings and responsibility for yourself. Codependency looks like "I'm not okay if you're not okay," feeling guilty for the good things in your life, hiding positive events in your life, because you're afraid it will make your friend feel bad, being preoccupied with the problems and feelings of others.

Validate the emotions of yourself and others. When people are in emotional pain, they don't want advice, a silver lining platitude or someone to fix it. Most people want to feel seen, heard and understood. They want to know they aren't crazy or alone. Instead of trying to solve pain, try saying to yourself and others, "You're normal for feeling how you feel. That's so painful. I see how you would be feeling hurt, sad, depressed, overwhelmed..." Validate, then remember there is no quick fix to emotional pain. It comes and goes in life. It won't last at a high intensity forever. Being present is much more helpful than adopting someone else's emotions.

Feelings are normal and healthy. Having your own feelings that are separate and distinct from the feelings of others is normal and healthy. Be patient with yourself as you take steps to honor your emotions while also showing up emotionally for your loved ones. As you grow in learning to balance emotions, remember Journey Bravely has coaching sessions available to help you along your journey. Connect with us at journeybravely.com.



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Breast Health and More for Mother's Day



BY DR. RICHARD CHERN, M.D.

Exciting news just in time for Mother's Day. A new study was published in the European Journal of Breast Health. This study was performed over 10 years and looked at the rate of breast cancer in women using hormone pellet therapy compared to women in the general public and also compared to previous studies such as the Women's Health Initiative (WHI) and the Million Women Study. The results?

The use of BioTE bio-identical hormone pellet therapy significantly reduces the risk of breast cancer! In fact...

The use of BioTE bio-identical hormone pellet therapy reduces the risk of breast cancer by more than 35% compared to the general population of women. And...

The use of BioTE bio-identical hormone pellet therapy reduces the risk of breast cancer by more than 50% when compared to women WHO DO NOT USE ANY hormone replacement!

This is not the first study with these results. In fact, it's the sec-

ond and the largest study of its kind. Are you really going to wait another 10 years for the next study to come out before getting your hormones?

Add this to the list of already proven benefits that our hormone pellet therapy provides. This includes resolution of hot flashes, insomnia, aging skin, sexual dysfunction, fatigue, joint pain, decreased muscle tone, vaginal dryness, depression, anxiety, osteoporosis and reduced rates of other cancers as well.

I have a hard time understanding why we don't have every post-menopausal or peri-menopausal woman in our clinic already. But, hopefully this will help convince the rest of you to come in.

Now that we hopefully have the women on board, let's revisit some statements from the Mayo Clinic in regarding testosterone in men. Are you ready?

"Mortality rates are reduced by half in men with Testosterone Deficiency who received Testosterone therapy compared with untreated men." This means if you have untreated low testosterone you are twice as likely to die!

"Lower serum Testosterone concentrations are associated with increased Cardiovascular risk" while "higher levels are protective." This means if you have untreated low testosterone you more likely to have a heart attack!

"Aggressive/high-grade Prostate Cancer is associated with low serum Testosterone levels." This means if you have low testosterone and get prostate cancer

you will likely die from it! Keep in mind there is no study that has ever shown increased prostate cancer with testosterone therapy.

This doesn't even mention the increase in energy, focus, concentration, sex drive and function you get from testosterone therapy. Moms, don't you want

your spouses to be functioning at 100% and live a longer, happier and healthier life?

Please come see us. Get your labs done at our clinic and let Sue or I discuss your labs and all the benefits our therapies provide.

Dr. Richard Chern, MD has been seeing patients for 30 years. He has

been dealing with hormones nearly the entire time. His clinic is the only Platinum BioTE clinic in the region and he teaches doctors throughout the U.S. how to properly provide hormone therapy. He wants to help you live your best life. So, please call for an appointment. 850-837-1271.



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Special Olympics Tag Redesigned

The Florida Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles (FLHSMV) is pleased to announce that the Special Olympics specialty license plate has been redesigned. The delivery of these plates to all tax collector offices and license plate agencies across the state is currently underway and is expected to be completed by April 14.

As of March 1, 2021, there were 2,734 valid registrations of the Special Olympics specialty license plate.

Floridians interested in purchasing the new Special Olympics plate are encouraged to visit

their local tax collector or license plate agency. A list of locations can be found online at flhsmv.gov/locations. There will be a \$15 specialty plate fee in addition to other registration fees. The first \$5 million in revenue collected annually from the sale of this plate is allocated to Special Olympics Florida to be used for Special Olympics purposes.

The Special Olympics specialty license plate was enacted by the Florida Legislature in 1993. This is the first redesign of the plate. A complete list of Florida's specialty license plates can be found on the department's website.

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Are You Convinced Your Marketing Strategy Is the One to Bet On?



By JASON HALL,
FIVECHANNELS.COM

More than 50% of marketers agree that inbound marketing gives them more return on investment (ROI) than outbound marketing. Yet, 60% of polled respondents indicate that billboards (a mainstay of outbound marketing) are an excellent way for them to learn about brands. Such statistics have led to marketers wondering what the right mix is for inbound and outbound marketing strategies. Here is a look at both strategies to help you navigate the inbound vs. outbound marketing question profitably.

What is Inbound Marketing?

Inbound marketing refers to the kind of digital marketing strategy that relies on quality content you create to draw customers to your business. In es-



sence, inbound marketing (also known as content marketing) plays on your aligning your content with what the customer desires. As a result, your target audience comes across the content that seems just right for their needs, naturally drawing them to your business. When you turn to inbound marketing, you recognize that it's not enough to only sell. You need to continue delivering solutions and value to your customers after they buy from you. That way, you can ensure the long-term benefits of building a relationship through content marketing.

What is Outbound Marketing?

Outbound marketing, on the other hand, is the more traditional form of marketing that relays your messaging to customers at large. With outbound marketing, you talk about your brand, product or service, leveraging a large swatch of the audience. You rely on mass marketing tools to help you reach as many people as possible. It is from this large number that you will attract people interested in what you have to offer.

Inbound vs. Outbound Marketing

By their very nature, inbound and outbound marketing differ, even though they both drive your sales. It is that difference that can help you understand which strategy can best work for your business before settling on which to deploy:

Outbound marketing utilizes many mediums from which to choose when reaching a target audience—some of these include radio, television (TV), sponsorships, print, billboards and direct mail. Here you begin by determining which mediums best work for your target audience. Once you rate each medium with the potential impact it can deliver, you then roll out your strategy while ticking each box. That helps you to distribute your funding from most to least effective. When done, or even ongoing, you can assess the performance data for each medium and shift your funding accordingly.

Outbound marketing develops material that attracts at any cost, but you can't entirely confirm if the message you are sending out will resonate with the audience or not. With inbound marketing, you focus on meeting the customer where they are. Since the messaging in inbound marketing campaigns is personalized to meet the audience's needs, it stands a higher

chance of resonating with them. Thus, you gain a higher level of control over the relationship with them.

Outbound marketing relies on mass marketing media; in stark contrast, inbound marketing gives you ways to distribute your messaging that can deliver compounding benefits.

In your marketing strategy, it's the metrics that tell you how close or far you are from hitting your target. With outbound marketing, you're bound to make some assumptions. In comparison, with inbound marketing, you have more ways to track your progress as well as connect with customers who are already into what you have to offer.

An outbound marketing strategy focuses on leveraging a medium that has a large following to deliver the messaging—once you study your demographics and plan things out carefully, you can attract a portion of the masses. Inbound, content-driven marketing is permission-based; that is, a customer discovers your content organically and chooses to find your site and learn more. As you communicate through the medium that a customer has pro-

vided you permission to, there is a more significant chance of them converting.

Outbound marketing aims to reach everyone. Inbound marketing flows towards leads interested in what is on offer. Once you tailor-make the content to speak to your persona's need, you then disseminate it to the world. It is the audience that searches for and comes upon the information you put out. As a result, leads end up chasing you.

Outbound marketing seeks to be indiscriminate in the audience—your ads reaching the target audience at any time. Therefore, in certain circumstances outbound marketing can create a need that a client did not know existed. Inbound marketing focuses only on those who have shown an interest in the subject at hand.

Inbound vs. Outbound Marketing: Which Way to Go?

You are only as good as your last marketing campaign results. In the quest for success, it is essential to weigh the inbound vs. outbound marketing question in light of your objectives to find out which approach can best give you the ROI you crave.

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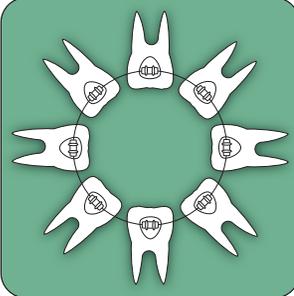


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Focus on the One Thing to Win the Race



BY RICKY HARPER, C12

The day having turned to night hours earlier, there was still more than an hour left in the 14-hour race at twisty, hilly Road Atlanta.

Nearing the end of a grueling two-hour stint, I was battling another car for position. I reeled in my adversary two laps earlier and was watching his line through each corner, looking for a weakness I could exploit to make a pass. I found it and was ready to pounce; he was taking the very fast turn-one a little wide, failing to drive fully to the corner's apex.

Approaching the corner in fifth gear, throttle flat to the floor and

only a couple of feet behind my opponent, I waited a split second longer than usual before I briefly stabbed the middle pedal and downshifted a gear. The car settled and I steered for a late apex, expecting to power inside of my opponent and pass him going up the hill to the next corner. I rolled on the power and began the pass when I saw my opponent swing even wider than before, perhaps distracted or blinded by my headlights which filled his mirrors. As I accelerated, his strange line caught my attention and I glanced at his car and watched him drive straight off the track—and then I drove off the track right behind him. His taillights disappeared in a cloud of dust, dirt, grass and small stones. The noise of the debris pelting my car was deafening and drowned out the raspy whine of my engine.

I had just violated one of racing's basic rules, 'Always look where you want the car to be, because your hands will follow your eyes.'

Business is no different—what has our attention is where our energy and focus will go.

I recently talked with a small business owner that had a disruptive idea. Through experimentation he found a much better product to replace one that is commonly used in his industry. This new product was readily available from a different trade, and far exceeded the performance of the one used in his industry. He set up supply contracts, developed a marketing plan, and built an ordering and distribution system.

He should have stopped there and went to market. Instead, he lost focus on the primary goal; he decided to create other products to bolster sales of his idea. He spent enormous amounts of time developing training systems and new tools to use with his product. Competitors heard what he was doing and being savvy businesspeople, they quickly found and began selling the product. Worse yet, his primary business of more than 20 years was suffering due his lack of attention on it. Taking his eyes off the target, he tried to do too much. Bill Gates said, "My success, part of it certainly, is that I have focused in on a few things."

Business is about focus, the ability to effectively pursue a few things to conclusion and without distraction. A lot of people like to say they are good at multi-task-

ing. I disagree. On the crucible of a racetrack where everything happens fast, almost instantly, we can easily see how the slightest distraction leads to all kinds of bad things. The same is true in business and in life: you can do one thing with great clarity and efficiency, or you can do multiple

things with mediocrity.

Gary Keller, author the must-read book *The One Thing*, says, "Multitasking is a lie." Get focused on your one thing, because every racer knows that you must finish the race before you can win the race.

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 Business

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(An Excerpt of Who's on First: By Abbot and Costello)



You know Bucky Harris, the Yankee's manager, gave me a job as coach for as long as you're on the team.

Costello: Look Abbott, if you're the coach, you must know all the players.

Abbott: I certainly do.

Costello: Well you know I've never met the guys. So, you'll have to tell me their names, and then I'll know who's playing on the team.

Abbott: Oh, I'll tell you their names, but you know it seems to me they give these ball players now-a-days very peculiar names.

BY MATTHEW VANDERFORD,
CLAIMOLOGY

Abbott: Well Costello, I'm going to New York with you.



Abbott: Well, let's see, we have on the bags, Who's on first, What's on second, I Don't Know is on third...

Costello: That's what I want to find out.

Abbott: I say Who's on first, What's on second, I Don't Know's on third.

Costello: Are you the manager?

Abbott: Yes.

Costello: You gonna be the coach too?

Abbott: Yes.

Costello: And you don't know the fellow's names?

Abbott: Well I should.

Costello: Well then who's on first?

Abbott: Yes.

Costello: I mean the fellow's name.

Abbott: Who.

Costello: The guy on first.

Abbott: Who.

Costello: The first baseman.

Abbott: Who.

Costello: The guy playing...

Abbott: Who is on first!

Costello: I'm asking YOU who's on first.

Abbott: That's the man's name.

Costello: That's who's name?

Abbott: Yes.

Costello: Well go ahead and tell me.

Abbott: That's it.

Costello: That's who?

Abbott: Yes.

Costello: Look, you gotta first baseman?

Abbott: Certainly.

Costello: Who's playing first?

Abbott: That's right.

Costello: When you pay off the first baseman every month, who gets the money?

Abbott: Every dollar of it.

Costello: All I'm trying to

find out is the fellow's name on first base.

Abbott: Who.

Costello: The guy that gets...

Abbott: That's it.

Costello: Who gets the money...

Abbott: He does, every dollar. Sometimes his wife comes down and collects it.

Costello: Who's wife?

Abbott: Yes

Abbott: What's wrong with that?

Costello: Look, all I wanna know is when you sign up the first baseman, how does he sign his name?

Abbott: Who.

Costello: The guy.

Abbott: Who.

Costello: How does he sign...

Abbott: That's how he signs it.

Costello: Who?

Abbott: Yes.

PAUSE

Costello: All I'm trying to find out is what's the guy's name on first base.

Abbott: No. What is on second base.

Costello: I'm not asking you who's on second.

Abbott: Who's on first.

Costello: One base at a time!

Abbott: Well, don't change the players around.

Costello: I'm not changing nobody!

Abbott: Take it easy, buddy.

Costello: I'm only asking you, who's the guy on first base?

Abbott: That's right.

Costello: Ok.

Abbott: All right.

PAUSE

Costello: What's the guy's name on first base?

Abbott: No. What is on second.

Costello: I'm not asking you who's on second.

Abbott: Who's on first.

Costello: I don't know.

Abbott: He's on third, we're not talking about him.

Costello: Now how did I get on third base?

Abbott: Why you mentioned his name.

Costello: If I mentioned the third baseman's name, who did I say is playing third?

Abbott: No. Who's playing first.

Costello: What's on first?

Abbott: What's on second.

Costello: I don't know.

Abbott: He's on third.

Costello: There I go, back on third again!

PAUSE

Costello: Would you just stay on third base and don't go off it.

Abbott: All right, what do you want to know?

Costello: Now who's playing third base?

Abbott: Why do you insist on putting Who on third base?

Costello: What am I putting on third.

Abbott: No. What is on second.

Costello: You don't want who on second?

Abbott: Who is on first.

Costello: I don't know.

Abbott & Costello Together: Third base!

Did you get that – did you make it to the end: Who's the guy on first – no seriously – Who's the guy on first?

Filing insurance claims can seem as comical as this routine—only if you can get the joke. And knowing Who's on your team to help you recover when you need it most is key, so you don't end up being the punchline at the end of the claim filing process. If you've suffered property loss, make sure you reach out to get advice before you finalize your claim. You never want to be on the end of a bad joke – especially when it comes to protecting your home and businesses when loss happens.

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

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Destin Stumps and Trees

BY RITA L. SHERWOOD

Dylan Carney can tell you a thing or two about cutting down trees; after all, it's a family affair. He grew up watching his dad, Steve, run a tree business called Petaluma Stumps and Trees about 30 minutes from Marin County, California, and at age 15 started working for him. Soon after, he worked for Swift Tree Care in Marin County.

Now 35, Dylan owns his own company, Destin Stumps and Trees. He states, "My goal is to provide the best quality work at an affordable price." Dylan also works with an expert climber when the situation warrants it, named Brandon Culpan, who's from Navarre. Dylan says, "I'm so grateful for Brandon's help when I need it. He's a great guy who is very safe and excels at the crane removal of trees, as no job is too big or too small."

Dylan says every day is different when working in this business, and he likes the variety. Some days he drives around and provides free estimates, and on others he might have one or two jobs per day. He says every job is like a puzzle, as he safely cuts down each tree overhanging a



roof or obstructing a particular view etc. Generally speaking, it could be a problematic situation, or something as simple as fine pruning to get that beautiful view back. One thing he knows for sure, with his vast experience, he can cut down a tree in 30 minutes vs. a homeowner spending five hours on it, as the job typically is something that needs his expertise.

And how did this California guy get to Destin? That's easy he says, "I met my wife, Rachel

Prescott, while she was modeling in California. The interesting part is not only did I meet her at a Grateful Dead concert, but also she was from Destin! My uncle played bass for the band, and they hired me to photograph them from 2005-2008 at many of their big concerts." He says they played at big venues like Madison Square Garden and Radio City Music Hall. Rachel at the time was modeling for Gap, Toyota and Levi's. They lived together for several years before having a destination wedding in Destin. Fast forward, Rachel became pregnant and they both decided to make the move to Destin, as Califor-

nia rent and the cost of living was just too expensive.

For the next five years, Dylan was able to take advantage of his photography experience and shoot beach and wedding photos in Destin. But when COVID hit, that business dried up, as well as his part time bartending. He realized that as much as California was shut down because of COVID, that his family's tree business was still going strong. He says, "It really was a no brainer to get back into the tree service, because I missed it anyway. It truly was a blessing in disguise."

His wife Rachel is also a local business owner and opened

a ballet studio almost one year ago. Studio6twenty5 is on 625 Harbor Blvd., and focuses more on classical ballet instead of competition ballet. Rachel, a former Northwest Ballet student, is thrilled to be back home in Destin teaching her students ranging in age from 2-76. Her own dad (76) takes a class! Check out her website at studio6twenty5.com to find a class and register.

Dylan and Rachel are proud parents of Beatrice who's age 5, and by the way she loves Koalas!

To get more information about the services Dylan provides, go to Destintrees.com, or contact him at 850-889-8700.

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—Denise Kendust, Fort Walton Beach Medical Center

"The things I found valuable about the Destin Forward experience were the behind the scenes look we got at so many of the businesses and organizations, not only in the city, but the county and state as well. I also met and worked with other class members that have become close friends of mine. Almost all the organizations I'm involved with now are a result of what I learned and who I met while in the Destin Forward class."

—Skip Overdier, Destin City Councilman

For an application, visit DestinChamber.org.

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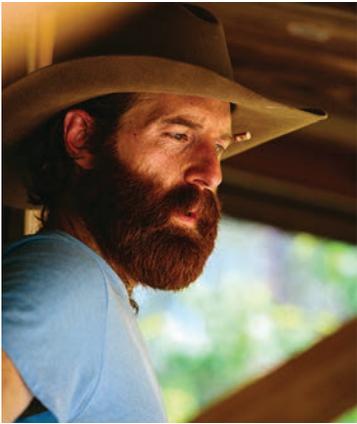
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 Musing


BY SEAN DIETRICH

My wife and I are going out to dinner tonight. I am waiting for her to get ready. She is in the bathroom, standing before a mirror, pinching her tummy. She asks if I think she is fat.

“No,” I say.

She frowns. “You sure?”

“Yes.”

“Well, I feel fat.” She pinches a new region. “This doesn’t look fat to you?”

“Still no.”

She readjusts. “What about from this angle?”

Negative.

“How about when I turn around?”

“Are you kidding?”

“How about when I stand like this and hold my neck like this?”

“You look extremely uncomfortable.”

I can feel her getting ready to say it. And she most certainly does. “But... I feel so fat.”

My whole life has been spent in the company of women. When my father died, he left

me in a house of estrogen. I was raised by a village of females. And in my life I have learned one basic thing about the opposite gender.

Many women think they are fat.

And they are always wrong about this, no matter what their size. Because the word “fat” is a disgraceful term, unless it’s being used to describe a ribeye. When applied to humans, this word is a synonym for “disgusting.” And I refuse to believe any human is disgusting.

Although it is almost impossible not to feel fat in today’s world of airbrushed spokes-models. Every printed advertisement and beer commercial tells us we are fat.

But it wasn’t always like this. Things were different 75 years ago. You never heard anyone saying Marilyn Monroe needed to try keto.

No. People weren’t obsessed with being skinny. Consequently, American families ate more bacon. And according to the wise old timers who came before us: The family that eats bacon together, stays together.

But things have changed. By today’s impossible standards Marilyn Monroe would be considered a Clydesdale. Barbara Eden, a Holstein. Ginger and Mary Ann would be kicked off the island.

Last week, I got a letter from Myra, who is 19. Myra confided in me that she feels overweight,

and has felt this way since middle school. She has been on a diet for six months but it’s not working.

So she went to the doctor. He did what all doctors do. He ran tests and did blood work. This led to more tests, more blood work, then, just for the heck of it, an MRI.

Then came an obligatory consult with a high-priced specialist, a visit to a dermatologist, an herbologist, a zoologist, an ornithologist, and a qualified priest. And do you know what the doc concluded? Myra was in perfect health.

In the doc’s own words: “You’re a little on the skinny side, Myra.”

How can a girl who is skinny by medical standards still believe she is fat? How, I ask?

But then it’s not your fault, Myra. We’re all in the same boat here. And it’s not just women, it’s us guys too.

We live in a culture that tells us we’re ugly, fat, boring, and we need better insurance. We live in a civilization where people drive to the gym to walk on a treadmill.

Ours is a world where underwear models are selling everything from iced tea to retirement plans. It’s a world where regular-looking people aren’t considered regular anymore.

Yesterday, for example, I was watching a commercial that showed four or five young people frolicking on the beach without their clothes on.

The young men were shirtless and looked like Sylvester Stalone on diuretics. The females were clad in swimwear so skimpy it wouldn’t have fit on a pasta fork.

After 30 seconds of this, I still



had no idea what the commercial was advertising—although I did feel like a North Atlantic whale.

Not that anyone asked me, but I don’t believe in these kinds of TV people. I believe in real-life people. And when it comes to the gentler sex, I believe in the brand of woman who raised me; regular women who were brave enough to be just that.

My people didn’t go in for fad diets. They believed in eating regular food like fresh okra, summer tomatoes, and biscuits cut with an upside-down coffee cup.

Certainly, I believe in health and nutrition, but I also believe in living a rich, full life that occasionally includes Almond Joys.

Also, I believe in loving what is in the mirror. I believe in keeping the television off more than it’s on. And I don’t believe true love has anything to do with tight abs, nice thighs, or bronze butts.

I believe in authentic love. The kind of love found among old married couples who are

so comfortable with each other they take a six-day cruise to the Bahamas and go all week without saying anything more than, “Shut up, Herb, you’re snoring again.”

I don’t believe in TV-Commercial Guy, or Magazine-Advertisement Gal. And when it comes to women, I may be old fashioned, but I believe a woman’s magnificence has nothing to do with her body mass index calculation.

And here’s the thing: there are a lot of guys out there who feel this way about the opposite gender. We just don’t get much airtime.

So I choose to believe in the internal beauty of Womankind instead of her dress size. I believe in her quiet power, her bravery, her kindness, and self-assuredness. I believe in Myra. I believe in my wife.

And whoever you are, reading this, male or female, I believe in you, too. So in case someone hasn’t told you today...

You are not fat.



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Thanks, Mom

BY COURTNEY LINDBERG,
ARBORBROOK FINANCIAL

I made a lot of bad decisions as a teenager. I neglected my education, many of my friends were not the best, and I was increasingly disrespectful to my parents. In hindsight, we see things clearer. I didn't see then that their breaking marriage was breaking me.

Then, and for many years following, I blamed my father for anything wrong in my life. Over the years, I realized that my mother wasn't perfect either, her compassion while being a great strength, often found its fault as it bailed me out again and again.

My father had been the disciplinarian. She was my key out of prison. He locked me up. She set me free. And round and round it went. It's not hard to see why as a teenager I sided with mom.

In my 20's, those bad decisions led me halfway across the country, shackled up with two ex-girlfriends, \$20,000 in debt, working six days a week, yet somehow never having enough. I didn't give much thought to my spending until the week rent was due, always scrambling to find a way to pay. I was never ahead. I was always chasing. Worst case scenario, I could call mom. She'd bail me out. Worst case happened. My job was letting me go.



My life was a mess.

When I called for my bailout, I could hear the struggle in her voice. I didn't understand what was happening, but she chose not to help me. At least I saw it that way. I hadn't spoken with my father for some time. I had no intention of calling him, so I was certainly surprised when he called me. I answered the phone, ready to receive his judgment, but it never came. Instead, my father came to my rescue. He paid for it all, but I had to come home, to him.

Had the roles suddenly changed? Or had I been seeing it wrong all these years? Was this man I saw as judge and executioner actually a father that longed for his child? Maybe it was the shock or maybe it was something else, a quiet voice inside me leading me to my father. That Spring, I found myself setting up my bedroom in his home.

The time that followed was at times excruciating. Truths

came out, words I wish I could take back, and with the grace of God, forgiveness. My mother's compassion had led me to my father and reconciliation. It is a debt I will never be able to repay. Only three years, days before Christmas, I lost my dad to

Pulmonary Fibrosis. I held him in my arms as he went home to his Father.

I would have never found my dad, if it hadn't been for my mom. I wouldn't have gotten my life together, discovered a desire for finance, or become

the man I am today if it hadn't of been for my dad. In it all, I discovered that everything in life comes back to relationships. It's built my life and now helps build a business to help others see the same.

Thanks, Mom.

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 Musing

What Ever Happened to Touch?



BY MYRNA CONRAD

Covid 19 has changed so much of our world and how it functions. But, one of the most devastating changes has been how it has so drastically impacted human-to-human interaction.

It seems that face-to-face interaction, close connection and contact had already started to diminish even before Covid. So,

many people were already using smart devices, emails or social media to communicate, rather than face-to-face interaction.

From a warm handshake, to a loving hug, to a congratulatory pat on the back, people have developed a variety of means of communication and emotional expression through physical contact. But, in this tech-saturated world, appropriate, non-sexual touch is in danger of becoming rare. Despite some of the benefits of technology, it is vital to preserve human touch for people to be able to truly thrive.

There have been many studies done on the importance of human touch. The science of touch and how it affects people began to gather more interest in the mid-1990s, when two scientists traveled to Romania to examine the sensory deprivation of children in understaffed orphanages. These touch-deprived children had much lower cortisol and lower growth development levels compared to other children in their age group. Many other studies have found a correlation between touch and healthy development as well as the ability to fight diseases.



Tiffany Field, head of the Touch Research Institute at the University of Miami's Miller School of Medicine, has studied touch for over four decades. When asked what has been the most surprising findings from her research, she said, "We found that massage actually increases natural killer cells. Natural killer cells are the front lines of the immune system. They kill viral cells and bacteria cells."

When researching for this article, I found another study that was done to test the positive effects of hugging. A cold germ was injected into a study group and those who had more hugs had a better immune response to the cold virus than those who were isolated.

From the time we are in the womb through our elderly years, appropriate touch plays a very important role in our development as well as our physical and mental well-being.

This last year, people have been continuously warned against close contact and touch. Social distancing has become a common word. People have been isolated and indoctrinated with fear of contact. We've been told that we must wear a mask; that we must stay six feet apart. Hardly anyone greets with a hand shake or hug any more. I am a hugger and I really miss it. I am sorry, but fist bumps or elbow bumps just don't work the same for me!

There are a large number of people in our society that live alone. This last year of isolation has kept them from much of their normal means of interaction. People were not created to live in isolation. At the very beginning of God's Word in Genesis 2:18, we read, "The Lord God said, 'It is not good that man should be alone.'" Medical

News Today reported on the results of a study associating lack of human contact or living alone as a contributing factor to mood disorders, anxiety and depression.

If appropriate touch is so important to both a person's physical and mental well-being, then what will be the long-term effects of this new norm of social distancing? We already see many people experiencing depression, mental health issues and increased suicides among all ages. I believe, if all of the research on the importance of touch is accurate, then we will see more physical repercussions from this period of social distancing also. In fact, could we have prolonged the period of physical recovery and immunity by the mandate of social distancing and isolation?

I in no way want to advocate behavior that is unwise or unsafe, nor do I mean to treat lightly or demean the real fear and devastating effects of this virus. However, I believe we need to start thinking more about how we can begin to interact with others again in such a way that incorporates the important element of touch. We need to reach out to the elderly, to the lonely and to the isolated and make sure they are safely experiencing the love and interaction needed with others.

Be Aware:

Be aware of your fears concerning close contact with others.

Think about how you are interacting with others after this year of isolation.

Understand your own, as well as others', need for human contact.

Be alert for those who might need help with depression or fear.

Be Intentional:

Make sure those in your family are feeling loved and cared for.

Find ways to start having more contact with others.

If you feel safe, start giving more hugs.

Get out more, interact more and show more appropriate affection.

Let faith replace fear and interaction replace isolation!

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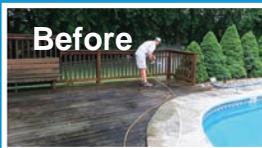


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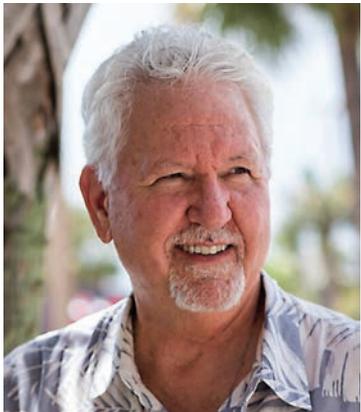
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A Pastor's Ponderings: Yeah, My Momma Was Right



BY DAVE HOLLAND

"She's the most beautiful girl in the world with the prettiest voice I've ever heard," mused my seven-year-old boy brain as Mom sat at the piano singing "What a Friend We have in Jesus."

Tragic events, two failed marriages, and alcohol battered Mom's life, but I never lost that boyhood wonder of my mother. Such a mysterious creature—so loving and nurturing yet possessing words that could cut you to shreds in moments. I remember her with sentimental awe

mingled with a tinge of fear.

The Bible describes the first mother, "Adam named his wife Eve, because she would become the mother of all the living," -Genesis 3:20, NIV. Eve's name means "life-giver, to breathe, to live or to give life." Every mother since Eve has served as the epicenter of a life-giving cycle.

From the moment of conception, the mother gives sustenance and protection to the unborn fetus. She nurtures the child until she releases the young person into adulthood. Her role in a person's development is immense. She is figuratively the hand of God in this process.

In her book "Rise Up and Salute the Sun: The Writings of Suzy Kassem," the author writes:

*MOTHER IS WATER
I wish I could
Shower your head with flowers
And anoint your feet with my tears,
For I know I have caused you
So much heartache, frustration and despair—*

*Throughout my youthful years.
I wish I could give you
The remainder of my life
To add to yours,
Or simply erase
The lines on your face,
And mend all that has been torn.
For next to God,
You are the fire
That has given light
To the flame in each of my eyes.
You are the fountain
That nourished my growth,
And from your chalice—
Gave me life.
Without the wetness of your love,
The fragrance of your water,
Or the trickling sounds of
Your voice,
I shall always feel
thirsty."*

My mother passed a number of years ago and I "feel thirsty for Mom's tender care. At age 66, I regret I did not treat my mother better. I wish I had called her more often, visited her more frequently in the nursing home, and treasured her for the value she invested in my life.

Mom was certainly flawed, but she was my mother. Ultimately, her inner godliness outshined her outward struggles.

"Elevation Worship" recently recorded the hit-song, "Talking to Jesus," putting to melody a contemporary vision of a godly mother:

*Mama use to drag me to church
Sunday mornings and Wednesday
nights
Khaki pants and a polo shirt
Boy, I put up a fight
She said, son, one day you'll thank
me
For having God in your life
And yeah, I know she was right
Yeah, my mama was right

Cause now I'm talking to Jesus
She got me talking to Jesus.*

It is godly to honor your mother. Showing gratitude is good for her and for you. When the doctors called to inform us mother had only hours left to live, my brother, sister and I rushed to her side. She improved

immediately as she basked in our attention. Ultimately, she lingered for over a week before she went to be with Jesus. We shared our favorite memories mingled with funny stories that you just can't make up.

From the foundation of our lives, Mom was the source of our character, pains and joys. She holds a central place in our lives and in our hearts. Happy Mother's Day.

Dave Holland pastored churches for thirty-eight years before retiring in Destin, Florida. He recently released his new devotional-Bible study based on the Gospel of Luke titled "Extraordinary Jesus: Ignite Your Season of Miracles." You can get a copy of this book from his website, DaveHolland.org, or at Amazon.com. Pastor Dave is available to preach and teach in churches and conferences. Contact him at DavidHolland54@gmail.com.



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 Arts & Music

Local Country Musician Teams with Grammy-Winning Songwriters to Release "The Sand And The Sea"

By WHITNEY LEE

Local singer-songwriter, Jes-

sie Ritter officially released her newest single "The Sand And

The Sea" on April 9, a song written days before the nationwide quarantine to inspire healing and hope. The uplifting, beach vibe track was written with Grammy-winning writers Robin Rudy and Leslie Ellis. In the past, Rudy and Ellis have worked with names like Celine Dion, Rod Stewart, Thomas Dolby and Terry Clark. Free to the public, the official single release celebration was held at The Village Door in The Village of Baytowne Wharf in April.

Based in both North-west Florida and Nashville, Jessie writes, plays and performs a heartfelt brand of country-pop with a breezy, romantic feel and plenty of charm. She released her debut album, *Coffee Every Morning*, in 2018. Later that year, she entered the Nash Next Competition, rising from a regional Florida Panhandle win to eventually take the national prize. The victory earned her a record deal with Big Machine (home to heavy-hitters like Taylor Swift and Florida Georgia Line). She made her label debut in May 2019 with the single "Nothing But You." She has



the feelings in the writing room, Jessie said "I think the word "pandemic" had appeared in the news for the first time that day, and we were really scared. We didn't want to write a sad

song or a song about what might happen, we were looking for hope while on the brink of fear."

Rather than dwell on the unknown, the team came together to write a song about the healing power of the sunshine and water. Ritter found inspiration from her home on the Emerald Coast and the carefree spirit that the area inspires. While working on her new single and navigating a music career during a pandemic, Jessie's music video for her song "Home" was featured on CMT and most recently broke into The Country Network's Top 20 Countdown.

In addition, Jessie has also been preparing to welcome a new life into the world. On release day, Jessie will be eight months pregnant with her first child. No worries though—you'll still see this new mom performing along the Emerald Coast this spring and summer, baby boy in tow! An inspiration for mothers pursuing their passions, she will continue releasing new music while also enjoying the adventure of motherhood.

In honor of "Sand and the Sea," Jessie has also released special merchandise and a lyric video (https://youtu.be/EX5_hh-hj5r0) and the song is available on all streaming platforms. To purchase the upcoming single and beachy merchandise, head to www.jessieritter.com. A native of Cape Girardeau, Missouri, Jessie continues to tour heavily through the Midwest and Gulf Coast regions as well.

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mkaf

Festival of the Arts
mattie kelly arts foundation

OCT 30-31 Annual arts festival featuring fine artists exhibiting their original art, live music, food trucks, beer & wine.

mkaf

Artful Dining Series
mattie kelly arts foundation

MAY 25 & SEPT 14 Vin'tij Food & Wine Dinner series in Grand Boulevard with selected visiting vintners.

NOV 11 Annual wine walkabout at Ruth's Chris Steak House at Silver Shells Resort in Destin.

mkaf

Concerts in the Village
mattie kelly arts foundation

SPRING SERIES APRIL 22 - JUNE 24	FALL SERIES SEPT 9 - OCT 7
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Annual concert series featuring a diverse genre of music suitable for all ages and families.
GATES OPEN AT 6PM | CONCERT AT 7PM

FREE for Members - JOIN NOW! MKAF.org
850.650.2226 | INFO@MKAF.ORG | 4323 COMMONS DR W, DESTIN, FLORIDA 32541

 **Support ArtsReach programs in our community.**

MKAF's ArtsReach and Magician Kevin Spencer Transform the Emerald Coast

It took a little magic, but after five days visiting Florida's Emerald Coast as part of the Mattie Kelly ArtsReach program, Kevin Spencer has left a lasting mark for so many. The master magician and illusionist visited a number of local schools and nonprofit organizations in April with the highlight of the tour at the Mattie Kelly Arts Foundation "Hocus Focus: Spotlight on Education" Lunch hosted at the new Hotel Effie. Proceeds from all MKAF events benefit the organization and its outreach and community engagement initiatives throughout Northwest Florida.

dents, children and adults with special needs, and the military community along the Emerald Coast, to the following schools and organizations:

- Walton Middle School
- Walton High School
- Lotus Learning
- Beyond Expectations
- Exceptional Parents of Incredible Children (EPIC)
- MKAF "Hocus Focus: Spotlight on Education" Arts Guild Luncheon
- Westonwood Ranch
- South Walton Academy
- Emerald Coast Middle School
- South Walton High School

the largest and most successful theatrical illusion productions in the U.S. He left behind a trail of accolades in his wake including 2009 International Illusionist of the Year, 2015 International

Magician of the Year, and six-time recipient of Performing Arts Entertainer of the Year. Kevin Spencer has dedicated his life to making a difference in communities around the world

- both on and off the stage. He is a pioneer who addresses the inequality of individuals with disabilities with creativity, confidence and courage.

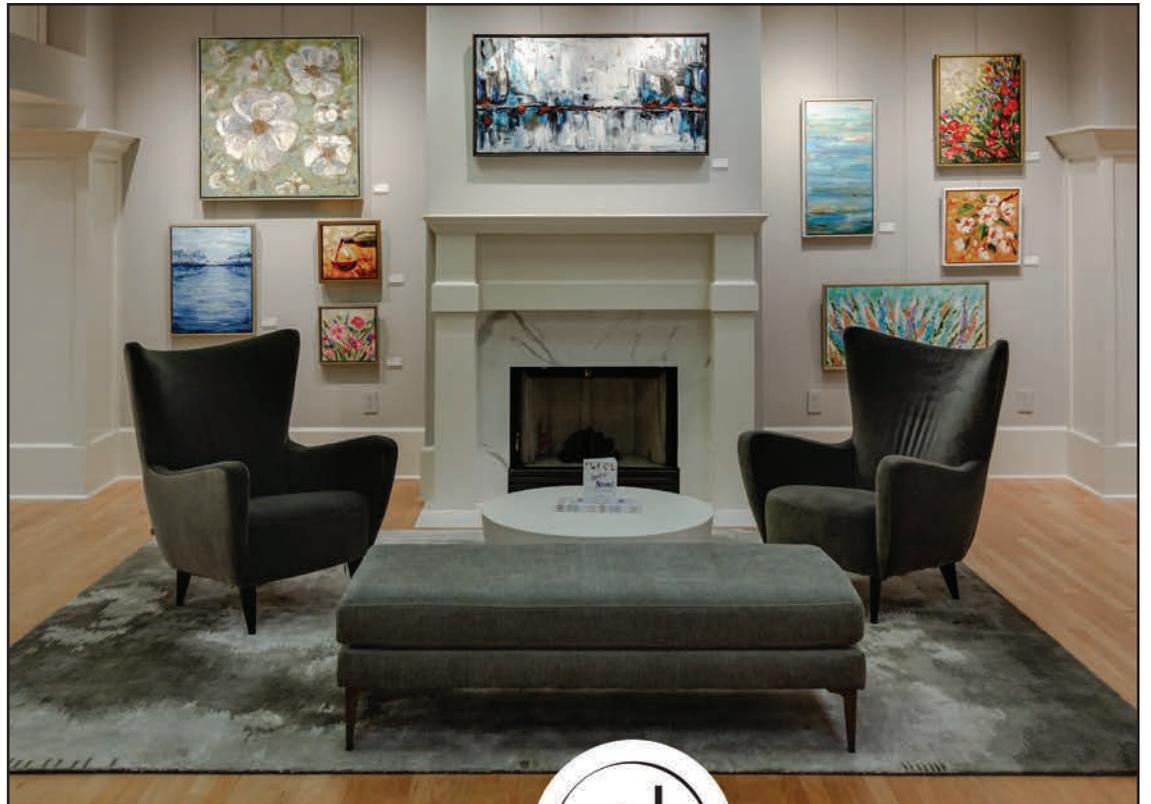


"Once again, it was truly inspiring to see how Kevin transforms people of all abilities into magicians! Clearly, his groundbreaking work celebrates capability and shatters our illusions about disability." - Melanie Moore, Education Director, Mattie Kelly Arts Foundation

Kevin Spencer and MKAF successfully brought ArtsReach programming, a creatively curated array of performing and visual arts inspiring K-12 stu-

ArtsReach is a creatively curated array of performing and visual arts inspiring K-12 students, children and adults with special needs, and the military community along the Emerald Coast. Teaming up with community partners, ArtsReach produces dynamic learning opportunities through the arts.

Kevin Spencer is an award-winning performing artist who, for more than 25 years, toured the world with one of



J. LEON
GALLERY + STUDIO



**ONE YEAR
CELEBRATION!**

FRIDAY, JUNE 4TH

AT FIVE O'CLOCK IN THE EVENING

13370 US HIGHWAY 98
MIRAMAR BEACH, FL 32550

Cocktail Attire | Light Hors D'Oeuvres and Beverages

RSVP Jason at jason@jleongallery.com or 850.842.3051

J Leon Gallery Sip n' Stroll!

Enjoy an evening of art at J.Leon Gallery and Studio, May 7 from 5-7 p.m., with wine, champagne, and light snacks. Get the chance to meet local artists and view work from artists both regionally and from the Okaloosa/Walton area, including painters, mixed media artists, ceramics artists and illustrators. Tour the gallery and fully functioning ceramics studio and delight in a night of creativity. Held the first Friday of each month at 13370 U.S. Hwy. 98,



Miramar Beach, 32550. Jleongallery.com.

 **Around Town**

From the Okaloosa County Sheriff's Office and Sheriff Eric Aden

LOCK YOUR VEHICLE!

Did you know there were 408 vehicle burglaries & 176 firearms stolen in Okaloosa County in 2020. 95% of the vehicles were left unlocked.

Auto Burglary & Theft Prevention Tips

- Close your windows & Lock your doors (the simplest & easiest prevention technique.)
- Take your keys with you.
- Remove (Hide) valuables or place them in the trunk of your auto- mobile.
- Remove "pull-out" style radio face plates (if equipped.)
- Park in well-lit areas when possible.
- Park where your car will be easily & frequently viewed.
- Park in your garage if you have one.
- Use a car alarm, it will alert anyone nearby.



Burglary & Neighborhood Watch Information

Report It: Register all your valuable property online. The information you enter is completely secure and you can access the information from anywhere with the internet access using username and password. reportit.leadsonline.com.

Nextdoor.com: Make your neighborhood safer by commu-

nicating safely with your neighbors and receiving crime information from the Sheriff's Office. nextdoor.com.

Neighbors by Ring: Real time crime and safety alerts from your neighbors. Always know when and where things are happening in your area, and share updates to keep your community informed. ring.com/neighbors.

Neighborhood Watch: Neighbors working with law enforcement to prevent crime and improve their neighborhoods.

If you are interested in more information about neighborhood watch or burglary prevention information, contact Ashley Bailey at the OCSO Crime Prevention Unit, cpu@sheriff-okaloosa.org, (850) 259-0031.

Destinites

By PATRICIA LEE

This question was posed to the locals only Destinites Facebook group (www.Facebook.com/groups/Destinites). Responses were overwhelming, and below are some of the answers received. If you are not on Facebook and have a question you would like to ask this community group, email me (Patricia) at DestinitesQandA@gmail.com. Local opinions are important and can help our community!



Question:

What type of business or service is Destin lacking which you would like to see open here?

Many responses were mentioned multiple times or received kudos from other members in the group:

- Trader Joe's, Costco and Aldi's.
- Top Golf.
- Drive-In Theater with high tech screen that rolls up into itself in case of bad storms.
- Skating Rink.
- Large indoor concert facility.
- Indoor Youth Basketball and athletic training facility.
- Dave and Busters because we need more rainy-day options.
- Drop-in Daycare facility. Would be especially great for people on vacation.
- Beach Club for locals only.
- Vacation Kids Club like they have on the islands.
- Upscale Nightclub/Piano Bar.
- Tutoring Center.
- Markerspace: Basically

it's a shared space for everything you can think of. They have a wood shop. Metal shop. Graphic design. Robotics. Electronics. Car shop. Pottery. Etc. You pay a membership like a gym membership for use of the facility.

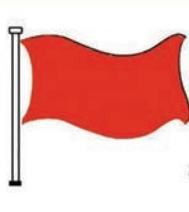
- Submarine Cruises.
- Petting Farm for children with a playground.
- Trolley bus service up and down 98 to help alleviate traffic. Kind of like the Safari service/dollar bus that is in St. Thomas, USVI.
- More car rental businesses. I work in a condominium (tourist) business. We are getting booked more and more this year than in the past.

Concerns:

- Destin land is too expensive for new businesses to build here.
 - I don't want Destin turning into to another Panama City.
- As you can see, there were some very good and even unique ideas presented. Hopefully, some entrepreneurs will see these responses and take action!

Creator - www.Facebook.com/groups/Destinites
Owner - www.Destinites.com

BEACH FLAG WARNING SYSTEM

	Double Red Water Closed to Public Use		Red High Hazard (rough conditions, such as strong surf and or currents)
	Yellow Medium Hazard (light surf and or currents)		Green Low Hazard (calm conditions)
			Purple Marine Pest (jellyfish, stingrays & dangerous fish)

Local Coupons

EMERALD COAST ENERGY SOLUTIONS
SPRING SPECIAL! NO INTEREST IF PAID IN FULL IN 12 MONTHS*

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

Offer expires 5/31/21
(850) 588-2870
www.TrustECES.com

HOLT PHILLIPS
SPRING SPECIAL \$68
Regular \$88

Offer expires 5/31/21
4618 E Hwy 20, Niceville
(850) 897.5559

YOUR COUPON COULD BE HERE

CALL (850) 688-9886

Local Coupons

AUSTONS ON 98

**1/2 PRICE APP
WITH FOOD PURCHASE**
1 per table

Offer expires 5/31/21
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A NEW "GO SOLAR" SYSTEM**

FREE CONSULTATION

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Gina Weidie (985) 317-9583
paneltheplanet24@gmail.com

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OUR OPTIMUM OR ELITE PROACTIVE PERFORMANCE PLAN

Offer expires 5/31/21
(850) 897-6540
gulfshoreair.com

**CAFÉ DESTIN AND
KWENCH**

**10% OFF PURCHASE
WITH COUPON**

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985 Highway 98, Destin, 850-424 6777, CafeDestin.com
Kwench: 981 US Hwy. 98, 850-842-2802

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**FREE HOMEMADE
SMOKED TUNA DIP**
W/PURCHASE OF 2 ADULT ENTREES
(Limit 1 per order)

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850-424-6369

ECCO MOTORS

**\$300 OFF
PURCHASE OF A NEW CART**
WHEN YOU MENTION THIS AD

Offer expires 5/31/21
36058 Emerald Coast Pkwy. Destin
850-837-2600

**AFFORDABLE
PRESSURE WASHING**

\$50 OFF SERVICES
CALL TODAY TO SCHEDULE YOUR FREE ESTIMATE!

Offer expires 5/31/21
Phone: 850-688-9886

OTTO'S CAR WASH

WASH CLUB MEMBERSHIP
THE ULTIMATE WASH PACKAGE \$54.98/MONTH
THE SUPREME WASH PACKAGE \$43.98/MONTH
THE EXPRESS WASH PACKAGE \$29.98/MONTH

Offer expires 5/31/21
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850-974-9994

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SPA**

April Special:
10% OFF
Rezenerate, Dermazen or Hydra Facials

Offer expires 5/31/21
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850-654-8544 | BeverlyHillsDaySpa.com

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Let us get the dirt you can't see!

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www.aireservec.com

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Offer expires 5/31/21
981 U.S. Hwy. 98, Destin
850-837-2999 | islandwing.com

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MEALS**

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Not valid with other promotions or discounts.

Offer expires 5/31/21
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healthycoastmeals.com | 850-496-9877

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**FREE TUNA DIP
WITH PURCHASE OF ENTREE**
(Limit one per table)

Offer expires 5/31/21
172 Harbor Boulevard, Destin
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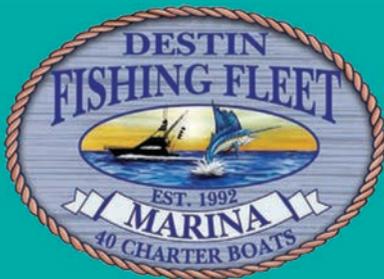
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If you're looking for the locals' choice for a fishing trip, call one of our boats. If you're looking for the locals' choice for buying or selling real estate, call Real Estate Professionals at (850) 837-2211.



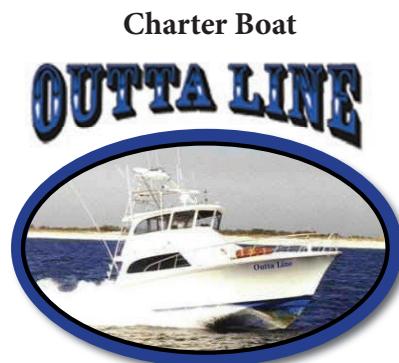
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Finest Charter Boats



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210 Harbor Blvd.



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Book on-line at
www.CharterBoatOuttaLine.com



850.837.5088
Purchase Individual or Group Tickets
Book On-line at
www.DestinPartyBoatFishing.com