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DESTIN Life

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Unprecedented Times Bring Out the Best

BY LORI LEATH SMITH,
PUBLISHER

Yes, our world has changed, at least temporarily.

Local schools remain closed. Education for students is conducted from home. Many continue to work from home, while others may gradually return to their business as it opens.

Stores close early to disinfect. Other stores are gradually opening limiting numbers of customers; there are arrows and tape on the floor to keep people six feet apart. Plexiglass has been added between customers and cashiers at checkouts and in waiting rooms. Local breweries are making hand sanitizer.

Drive-through lines at food banks are miles long. Food pick-up and delivery continues. Area bars, nightclubs, gyms and fitness centers are still closed.

Concerts, fairs, graduations and proms have been cancelled or rescheduled. Family celebrations, weddings like my daughter's, birthday parties, bridal and baby show-



ers have been cancelled or rescheduled.

Zoom is the norm for how everyone gathers in a virtual world—teachers, families, friends, work, even happy hour! Birthdays are celebrated with drive-by parades.

Many churches meet virtually. People wear masks. Some places require them. If you get sick, you go to the ER alone. Toilet paper and hand sanitizer purchases are limited. Banking is drive-through only. Families visit grandparents through windows.

Countries have closed their borders; vacations have been put on hold. Vacation rentals are still prohibited.

Roadside checkpoints are set up on interstates and main thoroughfares to check for potential COVID-19 cases coming into the state. No cash is used for tolls including the Mid-Bay Bridge, but still collected via SunPass or toll-by-plate.

The Good News?

In the midst of quarantine and chaos, hoarding toilet pa-

per and hand sanitizer, maybe we're rediscovering that our lives are gifts—that we're blessed to be here in the first place. Everything we have in life is a blessing. Our families. Our friends. Our homes. Our jobs.

As we begin to slowly re-open society, perhaps we'll do so with more gladness for the simple things in life—true blessings.

Destin and Okaloosa County beaches are open. The Okaloosa Island Fishing Pier, too.

Restaurants and food establishments have been allowed to re-open, with full outdoor seating and indoor seating allowed at 25 percent of building capacity.

Our local grocery stores continue to be open. A number of hiking trails within our parks have also remained open. Boating is permitted and most boat ramps are currently open as are some fishing charters and water sports, pending the number of people

BEST

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See p. 43 for special offer!

63rd Annual

Blessing of the Fleet



As one of Destin's long-standing traditions, the Blessing of the Fleet brings out locals and tourists each year for a ceremony unlike any other on the Destin Harbor. However, amidst all the uncertainty surrounding our reopening agenda, this year's

BLESSING

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 Community

Congratulations 2020 High School Seniors!

This has been an unprecedented time for us all, especially the graduation class of 2020. But they have endured and overcome! This year's Senior class motto: 2GETHER AS ONE is very fitting for the time.

Since Senior year was cut short and our children and students are missing out on so many memorable senior events, perhaps you'd like to show them

some love and care and "Adopt A Senior" or a few if you'd like. You can decorate their yard, send a gift card, flowers or a graduation card—anything to put a smile on their face and let them know we're incredibly proud of them.

There's also a cool, new Facebook page that allows



you to "Adopt" a senior. Sim-

ply visit "Adopt" A Senior Okaloosa County and type "Adopt" in the comments. Then send a private message to the person who posted the picture to work out the details with them. There can be more than one person to adopt a senior.

To place your senior up for adoption, they must be

a senior at an Okaloosa County high school. Visit "Adopt" A Senior Okaloosa County. Then post a picture of them with their name and high school. Type "UP FOR ADOPTION" at the top, and list a few of their likes. Then share this page with as many as you wish.

#SeniorStrong

BEST

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on board, including crew, does not exceed 10.

And our communities are rising to the occasion! Within the deepest longings of our hearts, are we being convicted to live life all the more, even in this time of crisis, biding time by engaging in experiences to help others? From encouragement to "buy local," to companies donating funds for business grants or food to feed the hungry, to locals purchasing gift certificates for future dining or shopping all contributes to cash flow and keeps our economy moving.

And some are simply doing their best to cheer folks up! After finishing homeschool work, local resident Diana Graham (a.k.a. Nana) and her grandson, Conor, were discussing how some people are feeling down and the little things people can do to help them feel better. "When I told him about kids up north creating chalk messages, he immediately started making up his own and drawing ideas on the driveway." The result? An uplifting message that gave passersby by a comforting pause. Nana noticed that almost all letters were capitalized, except the t's. "They stood out to me like crosses and I'm sure he brightened the day for anyone who drove by and waved." Mission Accomplished!

Gregory Dedicke, a local au-

thor, copywriter for the Frances Roy Agency and co-founder of survival apparel brand American Renegades, has been using his 3D printer to make surgical mask straps for frontline medical professionals. Using a borrowed design, he prints and provides the mask straps to local professionals at no cost.

Fudpucker's received a generous donation of over \$2000 that is feeding First Responders and hospital staff. They'll even match your donation at www.fudpucker.com.

Destiny Worship Center is feeding hospitals by sending more than 200 healthcare workers a meal each week. Cafe Destin (formerly Just Love Coffee Cafe) has been serving meals to the homeless each day. American Lunch continues to serve free lunches to those in need, Monday-Friday from 11 a.m. - 1 p.m. at the following restaurants: Harbor Docks - Monday, Wednesday and Friday; La Paz/Local Market - Tuesday; and Camille's at Crystal Beach - Thursday. Mellow Mushroom and Shoreline Church sponsored free pizzas available for pick up. Sea Chase Water Sports and various sponsors distributed pizza, soda and popcorn every Wednesday in April. Landsharks has given out free pizzas. Culvers of Destin, The Destin Fishermen for Christ, The Destin Fishermen's Foundation and Shoreline Church sponsored meal vouchers at Culvers and



Destiny Worship Center sending meals to healthcare workers

have fed over 150+ families. Immanuel Anglican Church gave out pre-cooked BBQ Butts and Ribs for over 100 families.

Not only are schools providing virtual education for your children through in-home learning, they're providing food for students, several meals on a weekly basis. The Okaloosa County Sheriff's Office is providing extra patrol and security checks for closed businesses to deter crime and burglaries. Contact Ashley Bailey at abaily@sheriff-okaloosa.org.

Chambers have partnered with a new initiative, Save Florida Business. By visiting savefloridabusiness.com, you can choose a business from which to purchase a gift card. For \$75, you'll receive a \$100 gift card for later use.

Yes, we are indeed experiencing community like never before—this is but a small sampling of the fortitude, generosity and willingness to help. We've been forced to stop. And think. And through this physical quarantine, I believe we've actually enlarged our territory. I believe we continue to be changed, formed and forced to think in new ways. And while our physical security has been threatened, I believe we're discovering something more inside our hearts, drawing strength from our creator, and, thus, helping others bravely carve their way through. We are aware that things can change in an instant. But we can live each day now as if it were our last. And, personally, I hope hugs and hand-

shakes aren't a thing of the past.

Thank you for allowing Destin Life to continue to serve our community.

Thank you, Bonnie Manthey, for inspiration and contribution to this article.

Resource: Governor's Step-by-Step phases—flgov.com.



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COVID-19 Heroes, Big and Small

BY RITA L. SHERWOOD

What a different time we have all lived in the past few weeks! Schools, restaurants, gyms, movie theaters, hair and nail salons, all non-essential businesses (too many to name), and even our beautiful beaches were temporarily closed.

What was our reality in the beginning of March is no longer, and as we take the time to reflect upon our past few weeks, many heroes big and small emerge.

At DESTIN Life, we have read and appreciate all of your comments and nominations for local heroes during this unprecedented crisis. Some might stand out and come to mind more quickly, while others are “unsung” heroes, the everyday kind and might even go unnoticed.

The most obvious heroes are the brave men and women from our healthcare system. They’re on the front line of this pandemic countless hours everyday for not only days, but also weeks on end. Tirelessly caring for those affected by the virus, with some even getting infected and dying. How can we ever express our gratitude for these special people? They’re all a gift from Heaven, that’s for sure. Hannah Gord, a COVID-19 nurse at Sacred Heart hospital says, “Our hospital has prepared us so well for this, we feel safe and have plenty of personal protection equipment (PPE). It’s sometimes hard because you don’t know what you’re going to walk into each day. But the support that our community has shown by donating lunches and dinners everyday, not only for our ER, but the entire hospital, has really helped keep our spirits up. We live in such a great community!”

Harvest House’s food pantry located at 300 Mountain Drive

in Destin has continued its regular hours M-F 10 a.m.-12 p.m. and is open and available to serve our local community. To pick up much needed food and essential items, please call for assistance the day of at 850.837.2277, they will ask for some brief information. Harvest House serves our area from Destin to Miramar Beach, to Mack Bayou Rd. Call when you arrive, give them your name; they will open the cable gate, and place your groceries on a parking lot table. You load your own groceries, and then drive away. Executive Director Lori Joyner says, “We live in such an amazing community that rallies through any crisis, whether it’s the oil spill, or now the COVID-19 virus, that generously provides help and donations in every single situation, and I’d like to personally thank everyone.” Lori says to please “like” their Facebook page so you can access more information updated daily re: other local organizations who can also donate food and other items. Monetary donations are still needed through HarvestHouseDestin.org or by mail. The website has a shopping cart of items needed which is updated weekly.

And what about the extra curricular activities for our children that have been can-



celled? One local dance instructor, Shaye Smith, also a full-time Marketing Manager, has hopped on the virtual train by teaching her students online dance classes from her garage every week. Shaye says, “When Verve Dance Company first took our dance program online, I was worried that students wouldn’t connect, show up, or try. But just the opposite has happened. Class numbers have stayed consistent, and students are working harder than ever. They’re learning and growing and seizing opportunities they might not have had if classes weren’t virtual.” Shaye laments that she can’t wait to hug her kids and give them high fives when classes resume in person. But for now, she will keep challenging them online. I’m sure as

parents we can agree Shaye is a hero!

Even moms are getting into the act. Just when you thought being mom is the hardest but most rewarding job, now we’re educators as well by teaching and helping our children online by virtual home schooling. If you’ve never had an appreciation for our teachers before, I’m sure you do now! Adrienne Brackett, owner of Pure & Couture Hair Salon, says it’s definitely a challenge teaching her advanced 12-year-old middle schooler and her 7-year-old on a daily basis. She says, “I really appreciate our teachers and all they do. I’m impressed by how the schools got the online platform up and running so quickly, and how students retrieve and turn in their assignments. I’m amazed at the pure scope of what my son is learning in advanced math and how challenging it is. Emerald Coast Middle School teachers have

created more of a high school type course, instead of a middle school course.” Adrienne says it’s been interesting to still have projects going on at the salon, whether it’s been cleaning or organizing, while still conducting online school with her two children. She also says they’ve stayed busy by offering curbside pickup for all of their hair products. Just call ahead to order at 850.424.3935.

There’s too little time, any too many local heroes to mention. Come back next month and check out the next edition of DESTIN Life and the many more local heroes who make our community here in Destin the absolute BEST!!

Destin Life’s “Hometown Heroes” are sponsored by Better Homes and Gardens Real Estate Emerald Coast. To find out if you qualify for cash back rewards, call 850.837.8880 or visit www.BeALocalDestin.com.

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 Community

ECCAC Working with Community: Kids in Crisis Can't Wait!

By KAY PHELAN

“When children are isolated, they can't tell anyone until the end of the crisis, but it is still happening. Child abuse was an epidemic before the pandemic.”

—Julie Porterfield, CEO ECCAC

According to the non-profit information and networking resource that deals with all aspects of criminal justice, The Crime Report, with school closures lasting through this school year because of the COVID-19 pandemic, a worrisome trend has been reported in numerous states — dramatic decreases by one-third to one-half in child abuse hotline reporting.

It isn't that there's less abuse — these declines are similar to the decline in normal summer months, when mandated reporters such as classroom teachers, guidance counselors, school nurses and others required by law to report suspected abuse, see less of the children they care for or teach. Those are all opportunities to notice behavioral signs of abuse, like diminished school

performance or social relationships, or in limited cases, physical evidence such as bruises. As both layoffs and alcohol usage climb in the U.S. and families are confined together to comply with stay-at-home orders, the risk of physical, emotional, and sexual violence climbs. The more stress an offender is under, the less able they are to control and manage their behavior. When this is over, a major increase in child abuse reports are expected.

The Emerald Coast Children's Advocacy Centers (ECCAC) are anticipating the same increase to happen with this crisis. In these unprecedented pandemic times, the centers in Niceville and the Pierce Family Center in DeFuniak Springs are dealing directly with these issues. They have already adapted and stepped up with the community to help children. This has been a time to acknowledge the importance of the community working together to help prevent child abuse and neglect, and also to promote the social and emotional well-being of impacted children and their families.



Clinical therapy supervisor, Jacqui Broadus and her therapy dog Cody are doing virtual “tele-therapy” sessions with children.

For the safety of the children ECCAC serves, their centers' lobbies have closed until it is deemed safe to re-open. Although the lobbies are closed, the centers and its agency partners are still responding to and investigating child abuse cases.

Their therapists are conducting virtual “tele-therapy” sessions with children and staff is hard at work from home. Many members of ECCAC's team partners are considered essential workers, such as law enforcement, prosecutors, child protection teams and the Department of Children and Families. Even ECCAC's therapy dogs have been on the tele-therapy sessions which has been a big hit with the children and a big help for them to open up to their therapist.


Distillery 98, located in Santa Rosa Beach, was kind enough to donate five gallons of sanitizer. Velia Lala, an ECCAC board member and owner of Velia Lala Designs in Ft. Walton Beach, along with her team, have been making face masks. They have donated more than 70 face masks in the past several weeks. Then there is long-time volunteer at the Niceville Center, Bernadette Williams. For the past five years, she has been an admin volunteer helping the staff. Now that she is adhering to Florida's stay-at-home directive, she got busy and has made over

50 face masks for ECCAC and their partners.

In addition, because schools have been closed, many, if not most, students in Okaloosa and Walton Counties either had, or have received Internet devices so they can continue the learning process on-line.

So, ECCAC has created child abuse prevention information videos that include internet safety that are designed just for students and hopes to have them available in the near future. Please visit the website at www.ECCAC.org and Facebook page for updates.

ECCAC is in its 20th year of operation. It has provided more than 150,000 services at no cost to include mental health therapy, crisis intervention, referrals to other community providers, interviews and medical services to more than 14,000 children and their families. They will be hosting a 20th year celebration at the Niceville Center on October 27. If abuse is suspected, call the anonymous Florida Abuse Hotline at 1-800-96-ABUSE.



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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

Futures Begin at Northwest Florida State College

By STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS, NWFSC

Although the world is filled with much uncertainty, Northwest Florida State College (NWFSC) is working diligently to continue providing a safe, affordable foundation on which you can build your career, your next chapter, your future. We're more than just a campus of buildings, we're a close-knit family that's dedicated to your success.

NWF State College opened its doors in 1964 and has become one of Florida's premier state colleges – nationally recognized for educational excellence and community engagement. Working every day to provide a trained workforce for the next generation, NWFSC is ensuring our community's economic future by way of launching and maintaining relevant, high-quality academic programming. We offer 27 associate degrees, five bachelor degrees and 35 certificate/other programs. To highlight a few:

- NWFSC's Welding Program was named top educational institute in the nation in 2018 and is also recognized as an Accredited

Test Facility (ATF) by American Welding Society.

- Our Nursing program consistently ranks among Florida's top 10 amongst all Florida colleges and universities according to percentage of licensure pass rates by RegisteredNursing.org (currently #8). Our graduates boast a 99% pass rate on the NCLEX certification exam.

- NWFSC Fire and Safety Program grads achieved a 100% pass rating on both the state practical and written exams, and our Public Safety Institute is ranked #6 in Florida.

- Our Teacher Education program received an "A" grade in the area of Early Reading Instruction for the 7th year in a row along with the distinction of "consistently high-performing undergraduate program" from the National Council on Teacher Quality's Teacher Prep Review.

Committed to transformation across Northwest Florida, our mission is to improve lives by providing a high-quality, globally competitive education that is a catalyst for cultural, civic and economic development through-

out this region. Ultimately, we aim to inspire our students to become something greater than themselves and move our local community forward. More than 84% of our graduates enter the job market right here in Okaloosa and Walton Counties, keeping homegrown talent in our backyard. According to EMSI Impact Report 2018, Northwest Florida State College's annual economic impact to the region is \$326.2 million of added income with more than 7,335 jobs supported.

At Northwest Florida State College, we produce leaders, artists, champions and hometown heroes who come from our diverse educational programming - welders, nurses, musicians, project managers, chefs, teachers, radiography technicians, medical coders, law enforcement officers, firefighters, emergency medical technicians, paramedics and high performing students who matriculate to a number of four-year universities.

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Cali's To Do In Destin! MAY 2020

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Farmer's Market | 9am | Grand Boulevard

OneBlood Drive | 10am | The Market Shops

HooDoos Live Music | 8pm | Harbor Tavern

Ladies Night | 9pm | Enlightened Studios

..... 9

Crawfish Boil | 12pm | Boathouse Oyster Bar

Crawfish Boil | 1pm | GI Jade Tiki Bar

Dogs & Drinks Fundraiser | 10am-4pm | Boathouse Oyster Bar

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Beach Church | 7:30am | Crab Trap Destin

Mother's Day Brunch | 11am | 790 on the Gulf

Mother's Day Brunch | 12pm | The Gulf Restaurant

Crawfish Boil | 12pm | Boathouse Oyster Bar

Crawfish Boil | 1pm | GI Jade Tiki Bar

Crawfish Boil | 1pm | AJ's Destin

Group Therapy Band | 5pm | Boshamp's Oyster House

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Tacos & Tequila | 5pm | Henderson Resort

Ladies Night Out | 5pm | Downtown FWB

..... 15

Farmer's Market | 9am | Grand Boulevard

..... 16

Annual Go Topless Jeep Ride for Autism | 9:30am | Fudpucker's

Crawfish Boil | 12pm | Boathouse Oyster Bar

Crawfish Boil | 1pm | GI Jade Tiki Bar

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Beach Church | 7:30am | Crab Trap Destin

Crawfish Boil | 12pm | Boathouse Oyster Bar

Crawfish Boil | 1pm | GI Jade Tiki Bar

Crawfish Boil | 1pm | AJ's Destin

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VIRTUAL: NWFL FPRA Luncheon | 11:30am

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VIRTUAL: Destin Chamber of Commerce Tourism Industry Interest Group | 12pm

Trivia | 7pm | World of Beer

..... 21

Blessing of the Fleet | 4pm | Brotula's on Destin Harbor

Tacos & Tequila | 5pm | Henderson Resort

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Farmer's Market | 9am | Grand Boulevard

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Slacker 0.5K Fundraiser | 10am | Boathouse Oyster Bar

Crawfish Boil | 12pm | Boathouse Oyster Bar

Crawfish Boil | 1pm | GI Jade Tiki Bar

Wag the Flag Dog Social | 5:30pm | Grand Boulevard Sandestin

Memorial Day Celebration | 7pm | Harborwalk Village

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Beach Church | 7:30am | Crab Trap Destin

Crawfish Boil | 12pm | Boathouse Oyster Bar

Crawfish Boil | 1pm | GI Jade Tiki Bar

Crawfish Boil | 1pm | AJ's Destin

Memorial Day Celebration | 7pm | Harborwalk Village

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Fat Tuesday Parade | 6:30pm | Harborwalk Village

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Tacos & Tequila | 5pm | Henderson Resort

..... 29

Farmer's Market | 9am | Grand Boulevard

..... 30

Crawfish Boil | 12pm | Boathouse Oyster Bar

Crawfish Boil | 1pm | GI Jade Tiki Bar

Rock the Docks Concert Series | 7pm | Harborwalk Village

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Beach Church | 7:30am | Crab Trap Destin

Crawfish Boil | 12pm | Boathouse Oyster Bar

Crawfish Boil | 1pm | GI Jade Tiki Bar

Crawfish Boil | 1pm | AJ's Destin

Urban Air Adventure Park Opens Soon

Urban Air, the premier indoor family entertainment company, announced it is expanding to include a new Urban Air Adventure Park in Destin. Urban Air Adventure Parks usher in a new dimension of active entertainment including wall-to-wall trampolines and aerial sports offering a vast range of activities that appeal to all ages and skill sets. The new park will open at 14081 Emerald Coast Parkway in Destin near Beall's in late spring/early summer.

"We look forward to bringing the Urban Air brand to Destin," said Michael Browning, Chief Executive Officer of Urban Air Adventure Parks. "As the leader in indoor family entertainment, we bring challenging indoor activities to new heights, year-round everyday. Driven by a focus on active play, we could not think of a better place for expansion than Destin. We are excited to be opening our doors in Destin soon!"

The Urban Air Adventure Park will be a state-of-the-art

destination for Destin and the surrounding areas of the Emerald Coast. Urban Air provides over 42,000 square feet of high-octane activities from dodgeball and rock climbing to the best indoor playgrounds, all under one roof. The centerpiece of the family entertainment center will feature expansive open play arenas where guests can jump, play, bounce, flip, spin and dunk to their hearts' delight! The park will also feature its signature competitive attractions, The Urban Warrior Course™, and Battle Beam where guests can compete with one another for bragging rights. Additionally, the exclusive Urban Air Sky Rider Indoor Coaster will be a venue highlight; a one-of-a kind experience that allows riders to soar overhead all the attractions with a birds-eye view of all Urban Air entails. And as if that wasn't enough, there is also a 4500 square foot laser tag are-

URBAN AIR
continued on page 14





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DESTIN

 Community

IMPACT 100 Responds to Community Need

508 women of Northwest Florida were responsible for awarding five \$101,608 grants to area nonprofits for transformational projects last fall totaling \$508,000. They are hoping to do the same in 2020. But, as we all know, NOTHING is the same about 2020. Our local economy has been torn apart by COVID-19 and its restrictions on businesses and individuals in our hospitality-driven economy. But, it's also put a strain on the many area nonprofits.

IMPACT 100 wants to rise to the challenge. It will be an uphill climb, but it is a summit the driven leaders are determined to reach. IMPACT 100 derives funds for grants from \$1,000 individual donations. Since 100% of the funds raised are awarded in grants each

fall, every spring the organization starts at zero members and \$0 seeking to renew memberships and add new members. It holds fun, informational events at community partner restaurants and nonprofit locations in the spring. Sadly, many of these had to be cancelled due to social distancing.

"One of the things I have loved about my membership in IMPACT 100 is that it has enhanced my awareness of the needs of our community and how they are served by the many nonprofits of Okaloosa and Walton Counties," said Teresa Allen, IMPACT 100 Membership Co-Chair. "Part of the grant application process is that we form committees to visit area nonprofits in our five areas of focus. Our finance committee vets the applicants and we then



Teresa Allen, IMPACT 100 Membership Co-Chair

see first-hand evidence of the desired transformational project." Allen participated in one such site visit to A Bed for Me, a Niceville nonprofit which provides beds to children without one in Okaloosa County. "When I saw the video of a little boy running to

and hugging his bed for the first time, my heart melted. There is so much that those of us more fortunate take for granted in everyday life," noted Allen. Since receiving its grant, A Bed for Me has been able to purchase a truck to deliver the beds even in inclement weather and has been able to donate even more beds than in previous years. While IMPACT 100 would like to award a grant to every applicant, that is obviously not possible. But all is not lost for applicants who do not receive an award. Each grant applicant identifies a wish list. The Crestview Area Shelter for the Homeless wish list included bunk beds to shelter homeless overnight and a vehicle to help transport clients to job interviews and other appointments. Although they didn't

receive a grant, individual members of the organization stepped up providing the bunk beds and a vehicle! Recognizing that there are now many short-term needs faced by area nonprofits, IMPACT 100 has compiled a wish list that area residents can access: www.ImpactNWF.org/EmergencyWishlists

If you are looking for a way to make a significant difference in your community, think about joining IMPACT 100 this year. As one member put it, "We are not looking for wealthy women, we are looking for generous women." It will take a lot of generosity to address the needs of area nonprofits in 2020. To join TODAY and truly make an IMPACT, visit www.ImpactNWF.org!

Peace

BY DAVE SAVIOLA, ARBORBROOK FINANCIAL CONSULTING FIRM

Have you ever watched a great thriller or drama and found yourself emotionally wound-up during

the show? You might have said, "That was a real cliffhanger!" or, "I was on the edge of my seat the whole time!"

We probably don't give it

much thought, but did you find yourself a bit more relaxed the second time you watched it? How about the third? Fifteenth time?

I have been thinking a lot

about peace lately. It seems we are wired to be anxious and worried when there is uncertainty. Just like watching that movie, when someone turns to me and says (in their most assuring tone), "Don't worry, it's going to be OK," I feel good for about one second, and then the moment the story twists again, I'm right back on the edge of my seat.

Many of us are feeling like we are living through a block-buster thriller movie right now that no one has seen before. I've also noticed that there seems to be this subset of the population that has a tremendous calm and peace about them. These folks couldn't have seen this movie before; so, how are they so relaxed? So confident?

The answer is quite simple; they all have one thing in common: They know how this story eventually ends. In John 16, Jesus is telling his friends about trials they will face and about the love of God the Father. At the end of this exhortation he says, "I have told you these things, so that in



me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world."

Peace. What an incredible gift that washes away worry and anxiety. Not because trials don't exist; not because difficult decisions don't need to be made; but because when you are confident in who Jesus is and what he did for you, you know how the movie ends. You know what is to come. And knowing the truth of that glorious future gives us a peace that surpasses human understanding.



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Adapting to the New Normal



BY SHANE A. MOODY, CCE, FCCP, PRESIDENT & CEO OF THE DESTIN CHAMBER

As I write this, we have just received Governor Ron DeSantis' Executive Order for Phase 1 of reopening Florida's economy. If Florida were its own country, our 1.2 trillion-dollar economy would be the 17th largest in the world. It's very important to have this powerful economy up and running again. We are a little surprised and disappointed in how little change and "opening" there actually is in this order. Many of our small businesses will continue to suffer. While safety for Florida's residents must be at the forefront, we must also be aware that the economy will collapse without our small businesses.

In the past six weeks, I have been on numerous statewide web meetings, numerous local web meetings, and numerous Destin Chamber board web meetings. One common theme on all of the meetings has been to restart the economy the correct way so that we can recover the correct way, while maintaining a "safety first" philosophy for Florida's residents.

The Okaloosa County Board of Commissioners, upon recom-

mendation from Commissioner Kelly Windes, formed a task force to look at how to reopen our economy. The task force will have one representative of each of the four Okaloosa County chambers and one appointment from each commissioner. This task force will have to move quickly and accurately to assist in restarting our economy, advising the commissioners on ideas, thoughts and plans.

In addition, the four chambers and the EDC of Okaloosa County formed a task force. We will work together to provide suggestions and ideas to the county task force. This is the best way for the business community to have input into the best practices we need to put in place.

The Destin Chamber board is also considering forming a local task force to focus on Destin's economy. Restarting our economy in a safety-first direction, based on facts and science and not fear, is our main focus. Stay tuned to DestinChamber.com and our Weekly Wave e-newsletter so you will know how this is developing.

As we begin the phase-in of reopening both Florida's economy and our local economy, it must be safety first for employers, employees and customers. It's vital that we reopen the economy for the good of all businesses in Florida, their employees and the families of those employees. We look forward to working with the Governor, our local elected officials, our local businesses and those who create the great quality of life we have. It's important we follow all guidelines put into place for the reopening of Florida's economy so that the quality of life we all

enjoy can be reopened as well. Working together, we can rebuild our economy and continue to build this world-class community one business at a time.

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 Community


Tips to Reduce Household Energy Use

ENERGY TIPS

by Emerald Coast Energy Solutions

By CHRIS BALZAR, ECES

In my household, energy consumption has increased with the stay-at-home order and e-learning with my children. We are streaming more, using devices more. We are using and occupying living spaces more, cooking more, washing hands more, using major appliances more. We can't avoid more, so below are some tips to save more:

Living & Family Room

Lower the brightness on all TV screens. This saves energy and is good for your eyes.

If your electronic devices have energy-saving features use them. Remember, just because devices are not plugged in, they still need to be charged. Using energy-saving features allows the battery to last longer.

When streaming content, choose the smallest device that makes sense for the number of people watching. Avoid streaming on game consoles, which use 10 times more power than streaming through a tablet or laptop.

Always be sure to turn off lights, fans and electronics when you leave the room.

Bathroom

Check the temperature on your water heater and set it to 120 degrees. The DOE estimates that a heater set at 140 degrees, which is typically the manufacturer setting, can waste up to \$60 annually.

Use the exhaust fan when showering and leave on for 10 minutes to remove hot humid air.

Check faucets for leaks.

Laundry Room

Use cold water in your clothes washer. Most newer washers are designed for cold water.

Throw a few dryer balls into the dryer with your load to reduce drying time.

If your dryer has an auto dry option (moisture sensing), use that option instead of timed dry.

Clean the lint trap between loads—this improves air circulation and increases the efficiency of the dryer.

Kitchen

Dust off the top of your refrigerator and coils to keep it running efficiently and cool.

Cover liquids and wrap foods stored in the refrigerator. Uncovered foods release moisture and make the compressor work harder.

Don't open the oven door while food is cooking. You can lose up to 50 degrees in temperature and waste energy.

Run the dishwasher only when you have enough dirty dishes accumulated for a full load.

Use small appliances such as toaster ovens, electric pressure cookers, microwave ovens or convection ovens for small meals rather than your large stove or oven. They will save energy and can save on cooling costs, because they generate less heat.

General Household

Set the air conditioning thermostat on the highest comfortable setting. (We recommend 78-80 degrees, and no higher than 84.) Raising the temperature just two degrees can reduce cooling costs by as much as five percent.

If your home has two units (upstairs and downstairs), raise the temperature on the thermostat to 84 degrees in the area not occupied.

Upgrade your lighting to ENERGY STAR certified LED bulbs, which use 70-90% less energy than standard bulbs.

Change or clean air conditioner filters monthly. Dirty filters can increase operating costs by 20 percent.

Chris Balzar 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.trustees.com or email wecare@trustees.com and Beat the Heat.



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Edward Jones Moves Its Office to The Market Shops

The Market Shops, located at the entrance to Sandestin Golf and Beach Resort, welcomes Edward Jones, a leading financial services firm and FORTUNE 500 company.

John Stevenson, a local financial advisor who has worked for Star Real Estate, Wells Fargo, Merrill Lynch, and the St. Joe Company, is the sole financial advisor for the new, 1,640-square foot Market Shops location of Edward Jones, 9375 U.S. Highway 98 W., Suite 26. After being with the company since 2017, Stevenson decided



to move his office from Santa Rosa Beach in order to better serve Miramar Beach and the surrounding communities. Based upon his own goals and the Edward Jones' founding principles, Stevenson strives to help individual investors and business owners develop an investment strategy geared toward

their unique, long-term goals while also providing the highest quality of customer service.

"With all of my clients, I want to listen and understand what is most important to them, follow an established process, and then customize financial strategies to help them achieve their overall goals," John said. "That is what drives each day in order for my clients and their families to live their lives in the best possible way they can."

EDWARD JONES
continued on page 36

Around Town

Rotary Club of Destin

Though The Rotary Club of Destin had to cancel the 8th Annual Destin Rotary Cajun Crawfish Bash Charity Fundraiser due to the Coronavirus pandemic, its sponsors generously agreed to donate their sponsorship fees (totaling \$19,500!) to the club's designated charities (Food For Thought Outreach Inc, Harvest House Destin, Mattie Kelly Arts Foundation and Boys & Girls Clubs of the Emerald Coast) so those charitable organizations can put the funds to immediate use during this difficult time. "We therefore want to thank the following sponsors for their selfless generosity: McGill Escrow & Title, Newman-Dailey Resort Properties, Destin Commons, Institute of Diagnostic Imaging, the Kroeger Mainland Foundation, Destin Life, Beach Community Bank, BBVA, Community Management Associates, Coastal Accounting of NW Florida, Destin Stucco Repair, Emerald Coast Title Services, Gulf Coast Shutters, Hand Arendall Harrison Sale LLC - Florida, Harmony

Beach Vacations, Carl & Sally Harris, Hays Companies, Crawford & Sally Jones, Robert LaMotte, Liufau McCall Insurance Group, MidSouth Bank, Les and Julie Sacco Porterfield, The Premier Property Group, Progress Bank, Dave Morrow: Allstate Insurance, and Simple HR," said club president, John Toombs.

Destin Rotary looks forward to next year at Mezcal Mexican Grill and Seascape Towne Centre as co-hosts, providing an event suitable for all ages, May 7, 2021!

Our Local United Way

United Way Emerald Coast and its community partners have provided COVID19 relief funds for those in need: 183,000 lbs. of food, 3,920 adults served, 55 children served, 139 prescriptions filled, 9 families remained in stable housing, five families avoided utility disconnection, 1,360 volunteer hours coordinated.

Donors include: Gulf Power, Beach Community Bank, Beast Code, Florida Blue, Truist Foundation, Wind Creek Hospitality,



U.S. AIR FORCE PHOTO

Wells Fargo and more than 30 individual donors.

Community Partners Impacted: Bridgeway Center, Catholic Charities, Feeding the Gulf Coast, Mental Health Association, and Sharing & Caring.

Blue Angels partner with Thunderbirds to Honor Frontline Workers

In a show of national unity, the U.S. Navy's Blue Angels and the U.S. Air Force's Thunderbirds have been honoring front

line workers in the COVID-19 pandemic with joint flyovers in locations such as New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Maryland, Virginia and Washington, D.C. and Atlanta as a tribute to health care workers, first responders, military and other essential workers there. "Our nation's healthcare workers and first responders who are on the frontlines combatting COVID-19 are a representation of American resolve and the American spirit. They are an inspiration for

the entire country during these challenging times. We were filled with joy when we saw the outpouring of love and excitement from these heroes and the many other Americans as they watched the flyover. We can't thank them enough for their hard work and dedication during this difficult time in our nation. We're in this together. America Strong!"

Food For Thought

Food For Thought (FFT) outreach, is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization serving Walton and Okaloosa Counties. This group of dedicated volunteers works to fight child hunger through five, year-round programs with a goal to fight the negative impacts of Child Hunger in the lives of Food Insecure children in grades K-12. Their goal is to support a child's development and educational experience by bridging the gap between school meals during weekends, Summer and Holiday breaks, as well as

AROUND TOWN

continued on page 42



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 Community


BY MAURICE STOUSE,
BRANCH MANAGER AND
FINANCIAL ADVISOR

Many investors today worry about identity theft, which can mean the loss of some or all of their assets. Identity theft

Cybersecurity for Yourself and For Your Investments

is often reported to the work of a known attacker, making defense that much more difficult. It is more difficult because the known attacker might be a friend, associate or relative or family member.

What about cyber security? While you hear the term often, there does not seem to be a lot of substance provided. Just what is it and what does it mean? Should investors look to just be

aware or look to cybersecurity as another area for investment?

Many people today are growing in their concern over the security for the very devices they rely so heavily upon in their everyday lives. Every time someone turns on his or her phone or logs in to a computer, the person is potentially exposed, we are told. Malware is the general term used for all sorts of malicious software that can attach to

your computer or phone. There is a variety of types which include those with names like ransomware, adware, crypto ware, scareware and logic bomb.

It seems to be a repeat of an age-old pursuit: to hold something up and in this case the efforts and treasure of the user of a computer device. Ransomware has grown, and it is quite simply a program that encrypts or locks up your files until a ransom can be collected. Businesses and governments are increasingly at risk as they are bombarded daily with threats to their systems.

This is not only a national and international threat, but one that investors, for protection as well as opportunity, might take note of. The Department of Homeland Security is hard at work protecting the internet and preventing cybercrime. In 2018, the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Agency Act was signed into law. According to a DHS release: "CISA builds the national capacity to defend against cyberattacks and works with the federal government to provide cybersecurity tools, incident response services and assessment capabilities to safeguard the 'gov' networks that support the essential operations of partner departments and agencies."

Many colleges and universities today offer courses in cyber security and some offer a degree in the discipline. It is also considered a fast-growing career opportunity. The U.S. Department of Defense has also given cybersecurity much attention, not only in education, but also in training as well.

Extra caution is usually suggested for most folks in that they should consistently back up their files and, as an added measure, periodically print out copies of needed files.

Investors today can find opportunities to invest in cybersecurity in a variety of ways. There are companies that specialize in it and there are also exchange traded funds that focus on companies that specialize in cyber security. This is what is

known as a growth opportunity and of course comes with commensurate risk.

Find out more about cyber security by visiting with an advisor or conducting your own research and see if this can play a part in your investment portfolio.

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 32 years. His main office is located at First Florida Bank, a division of The First Bank, ANBA, 2000 98 Palms Blvd, Destin, FL 32451. Branch offices in Niceville, Mary Esther, Miramar Beach, Freeport and Panama City. Phone 850.654.8124. Raymond James advisors do not offer tax advice. Please see your tax professionals. Email: Maurice.stouse@raymond-james.com.

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Holding stocks for the long term does not insure a profitable outcome. Diversification and asset allocation do not ensure a profit or protect against a loss. Every type of investment, including mutual funds, involves risk. Risk refers to the possibility that you will lose money (both principal and any earnings) or fail to make money on an investment. Changing market conditions can create fluctuations in the value of a mutual fund investment. In addition, there are fees and expenses associated with investing in mutual funds that do not usually occur when purchasing individual securities directly. An investment in a money market mutual fund is not insured or guaranteed by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation or any other government agency. Although it seeks to preserve the value of your investment at \$1.00 per share, it is possible to lose money by investing in the Fund. A fixed annuity is a long-term, tax-deferred insurance contract designed for retirement. It allows you to create a fixed stream of income through a process called annuitization and provides a fixed rate of return based on the terms of the contract. Fixed annuities have limitations. If you decide to take your money out early, you may face fees called surrender charges. Plus, if you're not yet 59½, you may also have to pay an additional 10% tax penalty on top of ordinary income taxes. You should also know that a fixed annuity contains guarantees and protections that are subject to the issuing insurance company's ability to pay for them. Investing in the energy sector involves special risks, including the potential adverse effects of state and federal regulation and may not be suitable for all investors.



Up, down or sideways: Keep your head on straight when markets move.

Some investors have learned how to ride out the most stomach-churning market cycles. Others follow the urge to jump out mid-ride. So what can you do to play it smart in a roller coaster of a market?

For starters, you can turn to us. We can help you find a clear way forward before fear or concerns take over with a strategy tailored to your situation. In our experience, perspective is the ticket to helping endure the ups and downs as you pursue your financial goals. Contact us to learn how we can help.



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Covid-19: Should I Wait to Buy and/or Sell Real Estate?



BY GAIL PELTO

It's a crazy time right now, for sure. And because it's a crazy time, we're getting a lot of people calling and asking questions similar to the title of this article. Most folks just want to know what's happening in our real estate market. And what I can do is tell them, and you, that in the market today (I'm writing this on March 25th), there were 323 closed sales that occurred and another 271 properties went under contract in just the last week; property did sell and buyers did feel comfortable to buy. Now, my crystal ball is currently in the shop. So, to be honest, I can also tell you that I don't know what's going to hap-

pen in the next 3,7, 10...30 days. However, what I do know is:

- Unlike 2008, this market shift isn't being caused by the financial market, it's by a health event which, by historical standards, should pass.
- There are still buyers out there who want to buy. Remember, 271 properties went under contract this past week.
- For buyers, interest rates are still (currently) historically low, which means more buyers can afford higher priced homes that they won't be able to afford when interest rates rise.
- And for sellers, that means there's a bigger pool of buyers

which increases their chance to sell.

- For active and potential real estate investors, there's more opportunities popping up daily for them to take advantage of.

If there's absolutely anything we can do to be a resource for you, reach out to us—your professional real estate agents. Don't have one? Then call me at 850.374.0454. I'm working in my home office, or talking to a current or past client, conducting or participating in a meeting through a web meeting service, facilitating virtual tours or out at a property by myself face-timing with my serious buyers.

Crazy times right now, for

sure—stay cool, stay calm, be smart and above all, stay healthy!

Gail Pelto is a Rotary Club of Destin and Mattie Kelly Arts Foundation Board Member...and yes, a powerful, full-time real estate agent with Keller Williams Realty Emerald Coast. Call

her with any real estate questions you have, and she'll guide you in the right direction. Call her direct at (850) 374-0454 or email to Gail.Pelto@kwc.com. Want to know what the value of your property is today? Go to www.DestinAgent.com.

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 Community

Destin Harbor Pump Ready for the 2020 Season



By MICHAEL BURGESS,
DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC SERVICES
& EMERGENCY MANAGER

Did you know that Destin's Harbor Pump System is capable of moving approximately 44,000 gallons of water every minute? The Harbor in Destin,

home of Florida's largest commercial fishing fleet, is a functionally closed (meaning that creeks and other waterways do not flow into it) 240-acre waterbody with historic water-quality issues that include higher than normal nitrogen and phosphorous concentrations. Nutrients like these, commonly found in chemical fertilizers, along with warmer water temperatures, can lead to algal blooms, fish kills, cloudy water and odor complaints if allowed to accumulate over time. To combat the effects of urbanization and the water quality issues it can create, the Destin Harbor Pump System, in operation since 1992, brings low-nutrient water from the



Gulf into the Harbor to flush out pollutants and also helps raise the dissolved oxygen levels

for fish and other aquatic life. The Harbor Pump System consists of an 84-inch diameter

pipe (~1600 feet long) that extends into the Gulf of Mexico connecting a submerged intake box to a 200-HP motor and pump assembly located at the City's facility on Gulf Shore Drive. The system is operated from early March until the end of October and brings almost 22 million gallons of fresh Gulf water into the Harbor nightly. During early 2020, closed-circuit television cameras were installed at the facility so staff may monitor the facility 24-7.

To view the harbor pump running, please visit the City of Destin YouTube channel. <https://youtu.be/LQ-CKZou-8Bo>

URBAN AIR

continued from page 7

na and HoloGate virtual reality station for truly next level play.

With all this activity, guests are sure to work up an appetite. The Urban Café offers meal, snack and beverage service, allowing guests to refuel and re-

charge without leaving the facility. Urban Air is also an ideal venue for the most unique and memorable birthday parties for kids. Urban Air parties are a junior thrill-seekers dream day.

All the group fun is not just for kids; Urban Air is the ideal location for exciting youth group outings, corporate events



and team building activities for adults who also love the rush of adrenaline Urban Air elicits.

Residents can track the site progress of Urban Air Destin on Facebook and sign up for updates, coupon offers and view the parks' various attractions at UrbanAirDestin.com

Urban Air Destin is also ex-

cited to announce it will hire 80-100 residents for its newest location. For more information on Urban Air job openings, please visit the career page at hralliance.net and visit their website for more information; urbanair-trampolinepark.com.



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Is Your Insurance Ready for Hurricane Season?



BY VICTORIA OSTROSKY

Our local retail shops and restaurants are cautiously re-opening, with limitations. Our beaches are once again being enjoyed by residents and vacationers while (hopefully) adhering to social distancing. We are moving forward, closely monitoring the ongoing pandemic threat and hoping to slowly put it behind us.

Andrea caught the headline in her Facebook feed. “Great!” she exclaimed to no one in particular. “Now hurricane season is beginning again.” Yes, June 1st marks the beginning of hurricane season. So, it is time to make sure you’re ready for the next round of tropical depressions, storms and hurricanes that visit the Gulf Coast every year.

Andrea called her agent for some insight. “Good morning, Andrea!” said Jack. “Have you been staying healthy during this pandemic?”

“Thankfully, yes,” she replied. “Hey, I just saw a reminder that hurricane season starts on June 1st. Do I have what I need, you know, just in case?” This was Jack’s third call already that day, so he was prepared for her questions.

“When it comes to homeowner’s and flood insurance and hurricanes,” he told her, “there are a few things that should be on your radar. If you have these coverages in place, you’ll be better equipped to ride out whatever storm blows through.” Then he went on to explain a few things to her.

First on the list is hurricane/wind coverage. Most home policies (HO3, DP3, HO6, HO4) in Florida include either hurricane, named storm, or wind/hail under a separate deductible. This is preferred since coordination and consistency of coverages is important. Some carriers don’t write wind coverage close to the water. So, a stand-alone

wind-only policy would be needed. If this is the case, extra care must be taken to avoid any coverage inconsistencies. In a previous article last year, we addressed the differences in hurricane, named storm, and wind/hail coverage. But suffice it to say, when it comes to wind coverage, the best option is hurricane. Under this coverage scenario, the larger deductible in the policy, usually a percentage of the Dwelling Limit, applies to declared hurricane activity, while the smaller deductible in the policy would apply to other wind losses and all other perils in the policy. There are several deductible options available that can have a large impact on what would be your out-of-pocket responsibility if you file a claim.

Make sure you know you have sufficient Dwelling Limit (Coverage A) coverage to rebuild your home in the event of a loss. Local and national data indicates that nearly 2 out of 3 homes and structures are underinsured.

Another important coverage is Loss of Use that pays for you to live somewhere else while repairs are being done to your temporarily unlivable home. This goes for rental properties with Loss of Rents coverage as well. Remember, there needs to be direct physical damage to trigger this coverage. Some rental policies don’t include Loss of Rents so you will want to read your policy or call your insurance agent so you know for sure.

Another often misunderstood coverage not offered with each carrier, but always recommended, is Law or Ordinance coverage. Most carriers, if they have it available, offer either 10%, 25%, or 50% coverage. This percentage is tied to your Dwelling Limit. If you have extensive hurricane damage, like we saw with Hurricane Michael, there may be new building codes you must adhere to in order to rebuild. The additional Law or Ordinance coverage is crucial to your protection, since your policy is designed to rebuild your home as it was before the damage, with similar materials and quality, and not with more costly materials that could now be required by more stringent construction codes that may have come into play.

Another vital policy to have, especially during hurricane sea-

son, is flood insurance. Flood and water damage from a wind event are not necessarily the same thing. This coverage is so vital that we will again devote our next month’s article to this topic. Although there are a few carriers who will add flood coverage as an endorsement to a home policy, it is infrequent. For most insureds, your flood policy will be a separate policy written through the NFIP (National Flood Insurance Program), and, unless your lender requires the policy, or you’re closing on a new purchase, there is a standard 30-day waiting period through the NFIP before your flood policy will become effective. Private

flood insurance is an alternative. Many of the private markets in the country, and especially in Florida, offer broader coverages than the NFIP and these should be considered as an alternative to maximize your protection.

“I hope this helped ease your concerns a little, Andrea,” said Jack.

“Thanks! This does make me feel better. I think I understand it more now. Whew, what a year!” she said.

“You got that right!”

Insurance Zone, owned by Joe and Lea Capers, is a full service commercial and personal lines insurance agency serving Destin, Miramar Beach, Santa



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 Community

Trends & Treasures

Word on the street was—you or your BFF need a Social Distancing treat! What?!?!?

Frill Seekers Gifts



If someone you know needs a little encouragement, a bit of sunshine and some positive vibes, look no further than the gift shop voted, “BEST IN DESTIN,” Frill Seekers Gifts in City Market Bayside—a feast for the eyes, but also inspirational and fun gifts good for the soul.

Personalize. Inspire. Make your heart happy. As temps rise, sunshine in full force, it feels like brighter days are just ahead. Meet one of Frill Seekers’ most popular go-to products—the Funfetti Confetti Clear Tote Bag! Oh, she is fabulous, with her bright colored confetti floating between the bag’s clear sides, trimmed with metallic gold piping and shoulder straps. This bag will be your tag along for beach and pool visits as it’s water resistant. Add your name or monogram in durable vinyl to the outside. As fall approaches, “tote” it to football games, as it is stadium approved.

Help stay six feet apart with your very own personalized beach towel! This will not only

claim your space, it will be the ideal spot for photo ops and cool beach and pool shots. Hint! Hint! Towels make THE best graduation gifts for the girl on the go.

And let’s talk about the shop’s zip top Funfetti Confetti pouch. Add this item to a Gift Box Set—a package of happy mail filled with treats. Simply log onto their website: FrillSeekersGifts.com, pick a Gift Box set, enter the each Gift Box bundle purchase provides 50 meals to those in need through Feeding America! Like we told you, brighter days ARE ahead when you shop at Frill Seekers Gifts. Ready. Set. Shop!

(850) 460-2700

frillseekersgifts.com

Purely Beautiful Even at Home! Pure & Couture Salon



Pure & Couture misses all of its clients and wants to express its gratitude to the community for sticking by them. “With all the stress of not being able to see our clients during this time,” says owner Adrienne Brackett, “we’re proud to have created an environment in which our stylists value growing continuously.

Working on a new certification is just what some of us creatives needed!” Pure & Couture is happy to now have certified Invisible beaded extension (IBE) stylists and excited to serve its guests with the most up-to-date certification in hair extensions. IBE extensions were created to solve obstacles encountered with the different types of hand-tied hair extension methods available. “Adjusting to our clients’ needs and comfort are the biggest concern. Offering versatility and styling options for our clients’ experience is key,” says Adrienne.

Pure & Couture will be practicing safe methods of service and offering extended hours to accommodate customers’ needs once open. They will also continue curbside pickup. So, get Mom what she wants for Mother’s Day—a gift card from Pure & Couture! You can also purchase your favorite shampoo, conditioner or other products all online at pureandcouture.com, snapcerts.com, too! You were made to do beautiful things! Feel beautiful doing them even at home—BE PURELY BEAUTIFUL!

(850) 424-3935

pureandcouture.com

May Means Maximum Merriment! Smallcakes Destin

Bring the fun and tastiness of the shop to your home! Smallcakes has cupcake and/or cookie decorating kits.



\$25 includes:

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By Special Order only. To order call 850-460-7487.

May Specials include Apple-stuffed French Toast, Caramel Latte, Coconut, German Chocolate, Kentucky Bourbon, Key Lime, Mint Cookies, and Raspberry Cheesecake! And did you know they ship? Send someone a large, fresh-baked cupcake with layers of icing in a reusable mason jar! \$5.95 each, plus shipping. Choose from 13 signature flavors.

Smallcakes Destin is beyond humbled and thankful for all the love and support locals have shown this Veteran family-owned and operated business in this difficult time. It is currently open for To-Go orders and purchases from Mon. – Fri., 11 a.m. – 5 p.m. to continue to bring you smiles. Personalize your cupcakes with custom edible logos and images on just

about any flavor creation you can think of! Call ahead for pre-orders or curbside pickup!

(850) 460-7487

www.smallcakes.net

Shoes ✓ Shorts ✓ Summer Accessories ✓ Dressing Room Boutique & Art Gallery



The Dressing Room misses all its Dressing Room Babes! But, is looking forward to seeing you all again soon. In the meantime, now is the perfect opportunity to go through your closets to donate your gently-loved upscale clothing shoes and accessories to be “re-loved.” The Style + Wellness Series is hosting a Swap + Shop benefiting Friends of South Walton Sea Turtles. Co-hosted by Dressing Room Boutique, Destin Life, La Maison Creative and Friends of South Walton Sea Turtles, the virtual event will occur Sat., June 27, 2020 at 1 – 3 p.m. With each accepted donation, you’ll receive a voucher of monetary value to be used toward purchases with Dressing Room Boutique, La Maison Creative, Essential Beauty by Tonya, or Friends of South Walton Sea Turtles. The Style + Wellness Series was co-founded by Abbie Reeves, Liliam Yates and Tonya Allen, with a mission of building a stronger community by embracing relationships + knowledge for a healthier, happier lifestyle. Share with your friends and RSVP for your free ticket and reserve your seat on Eventbrite: swapandshop.eventbrite.com.

Shop The Dressing Room online for handbags, bracelets, belts, beautiful wardrobe and artistic jewelry pieces and scarves for that put-together look once you venture out! And don’t forget that special gift for mom on Mother’s Day—the more accessories the better, so we think mom deserves a bunch! Mix and match with her favorite colors for a great Mother’s Day surprise!

(850) 218-8776

dressing-room-boutique.shoptiques.com

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www.dressing-room-boutique.shoptiques.com



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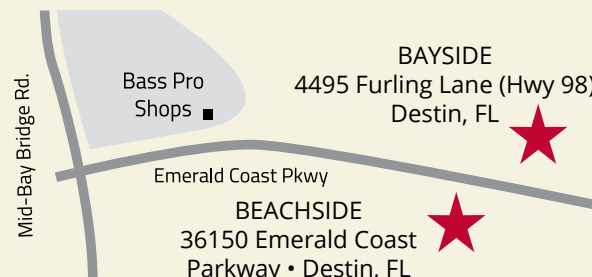


Swap + Shop
Dressing Room Boutique
Virtual Event
Saturday, June 27, 1–3 PM

RSVP [swapandshop.eventbrite.com](https://www.eventbrite.com)
Part of The Style + Wellness Series, co-founded by Abbie Reeves, Liliam Yates and Tonya Allen, with a mission of building a stronger community by embracing relationships + knowledge for a healthier, happier lifestyle.

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Alaqua Animal Refuge Rescues Animals From Grim Environments

Even though the world has changed, animals are still being abused and are in dire need of help.

Recently, Alaqua Animal Refuge assisted in the rescue and removal of animals that were living in a horrific environment in Geneva, Alabama. The scene was described as “hell on earth” as animals were left to fend for themselves after their terminally ill owner was taken to the hospital. The animals, consisting of dogs and puppies, had been without food or water for over a week. Making matters worse, Geneva County, located in rural South Alabama, does not have

an animal control agency or nearby shelter available to assist with these types of situations.

Upon arrival, Alaqua found that two dogs were already deceased, and the ones confined inside the home and in surrounding yards were in a very bad, almost indescribable, condition. “I have worked a lot of these cases, but this was probably the worst I have ever seen. From young puppies to several very old dogs, most had visible cuts, scars, skin and eye issues.

But they are being rehabilitated and will be put up for adoption when medically cleared. Alaqua was also joined by three



adding for their care and treating their medical needs, including the provision of intensive care for nine puppies that were just delivered Sunday. When medically released, all of the animals will be up for adoption.

“Unfortunately, these cases are a common occurrence in the Southeastern U.S. as there are so many counties without resources to help people and animals in these situations,” says Alaqua founder Laurie Hood.

While Alaqua is currently closed to the public, the organization is still functioning with a skeleton staff to ensure the animals at the refuge are being cared for. “Our team has really pulled together during this crisis to continue our mission to provide shelter, safety, and second chances to animals in our care,” says Laurie.

The adoption process has moved to curbside service, complete with documents and meetings done virtually, and adopters do not have to get out of their car when they pick up their new pets. Animals that are up for adoption can be found on the Refuge’s website at www.Alaqua.org.

In the past few weeks, Alaqua has been faced with pleas for help from so many people that have lost their jobs and are not able to feed or provide medical care to their pets. “I know we are living in a challenging, almost surreal, time right now and we are happy to do whatever we can help to others,” said Hood. “Our funding has been shortened because the Refuge is essentially closed for visitors, volunteers, and we had to cancel two fundraisers that were essential to day-to-day operations. But our mission is to help animals in a time of need. I can’t forget that.”

Alaqua hopes to reopen to visitors and volunteers as soon as it is deemed safe for all. Any donation during this time can help bridge the organization’s funding gap until they can get back to normal. Just \$25 can buy food for a dog or cat per month. A micro-gift of \$5 or \$10 can also help with food or cost of a vaccine. Donations to the Refuge can be made here: <http://bit.ly/AlaquaDonate>

Rescue Me

Alaqua is excited to introduce its newest event, Rescue Me, which will take place May 14-17, 2020. It includes an Online Silent Auction and an Exclusive Live Webcast.

Mark your calendars and stay up-to-date on the latest information by visiting the Alaqua Facebook Event Page. Learn more about the event and how you can participate in the fun.

Rescue Me was created to help Alaqua supplement the loss of two signature fundraisers this past spring which were canceled due to the need for social distancing and ensuring our patrons’ safety. “These annual events were a devastating blow to our organization, as they provided a significant portion of critical funding to be able to meet the needs of animals in our care and keep the Refuge functional, including its day-to-day operations and provision of services and programs to continue our mission,” says Alaqua founder Laurie Hood. With your continued support, we can make sure that every abused, neglected, and homeless animal gets a second chance at life, happiness, and most of all, love.”

additional rescue organizations, including the Wiregrass Animal Group, The Lucky Puppy Rescue, and two officers arranged by The Humane Society of the United States. The sheriff’s department was also called and was on the scene as the animals were removed from the home.

The dogs are all currently at Alaqua, and are being evaluated and treated for their medical conditions. The good news is that despite their previous grim living conditions, all of them have a promising chance of surviving and thriving. Aptly named after her sweet nature, one of the dogs, Miss Martha, is already flourishing at Alaqua and snuggled in her bed for the

first time after being given a second chance at life and happiness, and most of all love.

Another case involved Alaqua Animal Refuge assisting the Calhoun County Sheriff’s Office (Florida) by helping rescue and take in 15 dogs that were in poor condition. The following day, the numbers increased to 24 dogs, as a very pregnant dog delivered nine puppies. The animals consisted of dogs and puppies that were extremely infected with a skin disease causing severe itching and hair loss. The owner is now being charged with cruelty to animals after depriving them of basic, necessary care and treatment. Alaqua is currently pro-

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BY JODELL HAVERFIELD, LUXURY TRAVEL CONSULTANT ACC

Start packing your bags; statistics in the industry are showing that 92% of cruisers will cruise again with 10% of them saying they will cruise even more. I am happy to report that passengers are busy booking their cruises in anticipation of brighter days just around the corner.

Last month, I described the bygone golden era of cruising from San Francisco to Honolulu in the 50's. I had no idea when I wrote it just how much the cruise industry would change yet again, in just the last 30 days. The truth is, it would come to a halt throughout the world!

This unprecedented pause in travel is only temporary. Estimates are passengers will be making their way to their next adventure before too much longer. Naturally, some things will be different and that is not all bad.

I believe good things often come from tough experiences. It all depends on what we learn from them. After 9/11, airports became perhaps more inconvenient, but air travel has never been safer. We now know that the illness we carry inside us can be as dangerous as what we carry with us. Because of this fact, medical scientists are working on vaccines and medications, not to mention early and easy detection. We might even see more flexible, last-minute cancellation policies to allow for rescheduling due sudden illness without fear of losing money.

While we obediently social distance and work from home, safety measures are being put

into place to ensure heightened health screening and sanitation of planes, ships and terminals. We will forever be prepared as much as possible for future issues and outbreaks should they occur.

Cruise lines are busy upping their game by making their on-board medical centers larger and more complex with added medical experts, supplies and equipment ready to address passenger needs, making cruising safer than nearly any other form of travel. Health screening will be as important as your ID and buffets will be, shall we say, at lot less hands on. There might even be less crowd-

ing and more personal space, whether you're on a cruise ship or a plane.

When this is all over, groups will be the first to travel. There will be pent-up demand and people will perceive travel and time spent with friends and family as something not to be taken for granted. Our family has enjoyed reminiscing and sharing our travel memories with each other and on social media through videos, photos and stories. Our most recent family cruise was to the Southern Caribbean just last spring. But we have shared memories spanning the last 18 years. Most of us derive happiness not only

The Sun Will Shine on Cruising Again



Snorkeling in West Indies



Cruise Ship to West Indies

from memories, but also from anticipating an upcoming event and we are looking forward to our next cruise.

I have confidence that travel will eventually resume and be as rewarding as ever. While it may look and feel different, we

can count on the transformative and positive impact of travel to improve our quality of life and leave us with memories that last forever. So, start planning your next trip and looking forward to what you're going to do when this is all over.



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 **Mother's Day**

Blessed by Mom: Happy Mother's Day!



I am beyond blessed that God chose **Rosalia Sacco** to be my mom. Her love never waivers. Her love is unconditional.

-Julie Porterfield, *Emerald Coast Children's Advocacy Center*

My Mother, **Yvonne Bennett** (1930-2016), was a



sweet woman who rarely raised her voice at her two daughters. She made our childhood amazing and full of happy memories. My little sister passed away in 2000, so I always take comfort in knowing they are together. I love you Mom!

-JoDell Haverfield, *Have Travel Memories Vacations*

will always hold a special place in her heart. Now that my own daughter, Peyton LoCicero, has moved out of state, this sentiment resonates so profoundly in my own heart. And the best part is, when the three of us are back together, it's as though no time has passed. The laughter returns, time stands still and my heart is happy. I truly believe that is a blessing.

-Heidi LoCicero, *Frill Seekers Gifts*



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JOIN US FOR ONLINE GROUP SUPPORT

www.NAMIsupportgroups.org

NAMI Family Support Group is a peer-led support group for any adult 18+ with a loved one who has experienced symptoms of a mental health condition. Participants gain insight from the challenges and successes of others facing similar experiences.

2nd TUESDAY and 4th THURSDAY

6:00-7:30 PM Central Time/7:00-8:30 PM Eastern Time

NAMI Connection Recovery Support Group is a free, peer-led support group for any adult 18+ who has experienced symptoms of a mental health condition. Participants will gain insight from hearing the challenges and successes of others, and the groups are led by trained leaders who've been there.

Every TUESDAY

6:00 - 7:30 Pm Central Time/7:00-8:30 PM Eastern Time

Every WEDNESDAY

5:00 – 6:30 PM Central Time/6:00-7:30 PM Eastern Time

In efforts to ensure online safety and with guidance from our national organization, NAMI is now requiring advance registration for online support groups. We simply want to protect our support group participants from "Zoom-bombing" and any other cyber security risks. The registration process allows NAMI facilitators to ensure that the people in our support groups are actually there FOR our support groups.

You only need to register once to receive information on how to join the meetings.

NAMI Support Groups remain confidential but we do require that you register with your first name, email, phone number, and county. We also request (not require) you submit emergency contact information. This is for your own safety and for the safety of others. Your personal information will not be shared for any reason other than an emergency situation.

By registering for NAMI Support Groups you will be subscribed to meeting reminder and notification emails. These emails will contain links, Zoom meeting room numbers and passwords, which are subject to change periodically. You can unsubscribe at any time, but you may miss a meeting room change and will have to re-register to receive new details.

Full details and registration link: www.namisupportgroups.org

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NAMI Pensacola (850) 208-1609
 NAMI Okaloosa/Walton Co. (850) 684-5259
 NAMI Bay County (850) 865-2387
 NAMI Tallahassee (850) 841-3386



My mom, **Anna Vaggalis**, calls me every Friday night to pray over me before the weekend, blessing my family and our church. When I can't pick up, she leaves a full 4-minute voice prayer blessing. She's determined to bless no matter what!

-Steve Vaggalis, *Lead Pastor, Destiny Worship Center*



The most important blessing is from my children to their Grandmother, **Oma**, and I had them answer the question. Emm: She's always there for me. She always makes strawberries with chocolate. I love when I am with her because she makes her Oma bread. Reid: I think Oma is great because she makes me comfortable and she's really nice and sweet and cares about everybody. Brant: I love that my Grandmother is there to talk too. I also love that Oma brings the family together.

-Chris Balzar, *Emerald Coast Energy Solutions*



My Mom, **Jane Dunlap**, (now with the Lord) blessed me as a living example of the Proverbs 31 woman: She feared the Lord, had a beautiful laugh, worked vigorously, had noble character and traded profitably.

-Debby (with a Y) McKinney, *Optimum Health Alliance*



My mother, **Betty Sue Smith**, has always been a rock for me. She cares deeply for her family and others and is always there when someone needs a hand. She's a blessing to everyone who has the benefit of knowing her!

-Robyn Hicks, *Community Management Associates, Inc.*



Three Generations: My mother, **Betty Jane Rudiger**, (left) taught me, that no matter how many miles are between us, no matter how far apart, I

Continued on page 42

Destin Dining Guide



BY SCOTT MILLER

Who's hungry? And not just for take out. Please don't get me wrong; I have really appreciated and enjoyed being able to order to-go and take out these last 30 to 40+ days. I've lost count really, but it seems like an eternity. If you're anything like me, you've been itching to get back to living life Destin style. And that means getting out and enjoying our amazing and beautiful hometown with all it has to offer. Of course, that definitely includes visiting our favorite restaurants. Oh, how we miss them. And they miss us, too!

Through God's grace, we have turned the corner and are now slowly, but surely, opening back up our state. Amen, Amen, Amen! As of Monday, May 4, we are cleared for take off—slow and gradual, but a take off nonetheless.

I have made a number of phone calls to some of my favorite restaurants here in Destin to get the scoop, and the message has been very similar across the board. Local restaurant owners and employees alike have been working very hard during this time to prepare their establishments to welcome us back. And most importantly, they're doing it in a safe and secure manner, keeping in mind all we have learned and following the guidance our leaders are providing. Alleluia!!! We can again go out to eat, drink and be merry at some of the best restaurants in the world right here in our backyard.

Check Facebook, websites or call ahead to check on hours of operation and other details before going as we are all still learning on the fly. If you're more of the spontaneous type, just pick a destination and head on over.

Read on Destin Life family—here's a few of our favorite places.

And we can't wait to get back and see them all.

AJ's Destin

The original location on the Destin Harbor, AJ's Seafood & Oyster Bar features deliciously fresh seafood and oysters and a menu that's sure to please everyone. Along with great dining, AJ's boasts three stages for live entertainment and events, typically held seven days a week. For now the live music and events will be a gradual rollout, so be sure to check their Facebook page or give them a call. Their one-of-a-kind massive Jumbo-Tron screen on the deck will have lots of surprises, too, for your viewing pleasure and entertainment. So, be sure to stop by soon and enjoy everything AJ's has to offer.

(850) 837-1913
116 Harbor Blvd., Destin
ajdestin.com

The Beach House

Located next to the Hilton Sandestin, you'll enjoy the magnificent view of the white sandy beaches and emerald waters from every seat, indoors or out! And there are a variety of delectable dishes including Grouper tacos, perfectly charred chicken wings or, we're sure, the soon to be famous Beach House burger. Join them for a great meal 7 days a week. Check their Facebook page or call in for more information. Interested in booking a private event? Contact events@thebeachhousesd.com. Open daily.

(850) 608-6300
4009 S. Sandestin Blvd.,
Miramar Beach
Thebeachhousesd.com

Beachwalk Café

Located directly on the beautiful beaches of Destin, Beach Walk Café offers a stunning selection of fresh seafood dishes that will have your taste buds dancing with delight. Beach Walk Café's Executive Chef Daniel Peters recently created a new take out menu you absolutely don't want to miss. In addition to its many awards and accolades from national and local brands alike, Beach Walk Café in Destin has become a staple in the Emerald Coast's fine dining culture. You're sure to be impressed by any dish you order. So, if you're looking to

dine on delectable take out and to-go cuisine in Destin, call to place your order today.

(850) 650-7100
2700 Scenic Hwy 98, Destin
beachwalkcafe.com

Boathouse Oyster Bar

Boathouse Oyster Bar has been one of Destin's favorite best kept secrets; but the word is out! Located in the heart of Destin on the Destin Harbor, the Boathouse specializes 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! Come on by and enjoy the best food in town in a fun and friendly atmosphere.

(850) 837-3645
288 Harbor Blvd., Destin
boathouseoysterbardestin.com

Bric a` Brac Restaurant & Night Club

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. Bric a` Brac is well known for its super



tasty food selections served up in a fun, artsy atmosphere.

(850) 424-6369
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Bricabraccdestin.com

Brotula's Seafood House & Steamer

Brotula's specializes in fresh, locally sourced seafood, produce, and a wide array of steamed and boiled shellfish platters that are integrated into a fun and rustic, yet sophisticated southern fish house.

Please check the Facebook page for updates throughout May. For now we will be open from Wednesday through Sun-

day from 12 p.m. - 8 p.m. We will be closed on Mondays and Tuesdays for now.

(850) 460-8900
210D Harbor Blvd., Destin
brotulas.com

Fudpucker's

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continued next page



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DINING GUIDE

continued from previous page

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(850) 837-2999

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

La Famiglia Restaurant

La Famiglia has earned a reputation for serving some of the finest homemade Italian dishes, including Veal Parmesan, homemade pastas and raviolis, and antipasto. La Famiglia is a local favorite for authentic, brick oven Italian pizza, topped with a variety of traditional and specialty ingredients. Open Tuesday through Sunday, 11 a.m.-9 p.m., offering a lunch menu till 3 p.m. To-go and curbside still available.

(850) 279.4527

16055 Emerald Coast Pkwy.,
Ste. 114, Destin
lafamigliadestin.com

Landshark's Pizza

Owners Brian and Sue Hasmann have created the local's



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. People from all over come to enjoy the best sports bar in Florida. And there's a fully stocked bar with 95 different bourbons and 30 beers on draft!

(850) 424-6743

300 Harbor Blvd., Destin
landsharkspizza.com

The Melting Pot

Truly a one-of-a-kind dining experience, The Melting Pot provides an unforgettable, interactive night out that turns moments into memories. From the time the first piece of bread is dipped to when the last nibble of dessert is savored, you'll learn something new. The menu has fare for every taste, a delicious meal guaranteed. Visit meltingpot.com/destin-fl to view the full menu or make reservations.

(850) 269-2227

11394 U.S. Hwy 98,
Miramar Beach
meltingpot.com/destin-fl/

Tailfins Alehouse & Oyster Bar

With stunning views of the Destin Harbor and your favorite foods and drinks, Tailfins' Entertainment Complex delivers an incredible mix of friendly and fun atmosphere along with breathtaking views. Tailfins offers three levels of indoor and outdoor dining overlooking the Destin Boardwalk. Featuring live music on the docks with Rusty Hammerstrom, BT Turner and Alexa Burroughs, Tailfins is back open, Monday - Friday from 10:30 a.m. until midnight and Saturday and Sunday from 8:30 a.m. until midnight.

(850) 650-1200

On the Harbor in Destin
tailfinsdestin.com

Tequila's Sports Bar & Grill

Come in and enjoy a unique fusion of sports bar food and delightful Mexican dishes, lunch specials offered daily Monday through Friday for \$8.99. EAT, DRINK, FIESTA!! Open 7 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,
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restaurantji.com/fl/destin/tequilas-/

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As of May 5, 2020. Please find updates at DestinChamber.com and at MyDestinLife.com.

790 On The Gulf—Open for indoor and outdoor seating and take out. Our hours are 11 a.m. - 8 p.m. daily. Call (850) 650-4853.

Acme Oyster House—Open for take-out and will be opening for indoor and outdoor seating on May 7. Call (850) 460-7773.

Aegean Restaurant—Open for indoor and outdoor seating and take out. Call (850) 460-2728.

AJ's on the Bayou—Open for curbside to-go orders as well as dine-in with social distancing on our outdoor deck and 25% capacity inside. We will be doing our famous Crawfish boil every Saturday at noon for dine-in on our deck or carry out, and we'll feature a daily prime rib dinner special starting at 4 p.m. Call (850) 362-7738 for curbside orders; online ordering option will soon be available.

AJ's Seafood & Oyster Bar—Open in outdoor Jumbotron seating area. The Jumbotron TV will be playing all of your favorite sports bloopers, kids movies, and movie classics. Call (850) 837-0404 ahead for all curbside orders.

Angler's Beachside Bar & Grill—Open for indoor and outdoor seating and take out. Call (850) 796-0260.

The Back Porch Seafood & Oyster House—Open for indoor and outdoor seating and take out. Call (850) 837-2022.

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The Beach House — (850) 608-6300, 11:30 a.m. - 9 p.m. The Beach House is open for Take Out. Call in your order or walk up. Beer/Wine/Liquor as well.

Beach Walk Café—Limited menu available for take-out from 3 - 8:30 p.m., indoor and outdoor dining available from 5 - 9 p.m.

Ben & Jerry's—Operating curbside service. Call (850) 460-8884.

Bijoux—(850) 622-0760 - Family Style Dinners. Place to-go orders through GrubHub or call.—Pick-up inside or curbside.

Bonefish Grill—Open for carryout and delivery. Call (850) 650-3161.

Brotula's Seafood House & Steamer—Open for indoor and outdoor seating and take out, Wednesday - Sunday from 12 - 8 p.m. Call (850) 460-8900.

Bubba Gump Shrimp Company—Open for indoor and outdoor seating, take-out and delivery. Call (850) 650-1881.

Buffalo Jack's—Open for To-go orders. (850) 424-6288 @Buffalo_Jacks BuffaloJacksLegendaryWings.com

Cafe Thirty-A—Open for indoor and outdoor seating and takeout. Call (850) 231-2166. Reservations are required.

Camille's — (850) 337-8860 - Dining Room & Cafe Closed. Take out for breakfast and lunch beginning at 10 a.m. including Bloody Mary's + Mimosas. Place to-go orders over phone, pick-up inside.

Chick-fil-A Destin (1063 Highway 98 E, Destin, FL) — Temporary operating hours of 7 a.m. - 9 p.m. Serving via Drive Thru and Carry-Out.

Cantina Laredo—Offering curbside pickup. Call (850) 654-5649 to order.

Capt. Dave's on the Gulf—Open for dine in and takeout. Call (850) 837-2627.

Carrabba's Italian Grill—Open for dine in and takeout. Please visit Carrabas.com or call (850) 837-1140 to place your order.

Chick-fil-A—Offering drive thru, mobile curbside and DoorDash delivery. Use the Chick-fil-A One app for curbside service.

The Crab Trap Destin—Open for indoor and outdoor dining and takeout. Call (850) 654-2722.

Culver's of Destin—Our drive thru is open.

Dairy Queen (Miramar Beach)—Open for to go orders.

The Donut Hole—Open for dine in and takeout. Call (850) 837-8824.

Everkrisp—Open for indoor and outdoor dining and takeout. Call (850) 460-8881.

Fat Clemenza's—(850) 650-5980 - Place to-go orders over phone, pick-up inside.

Fleming's Prime Steakhouse & Wine Bar—Offering carryout and delivery from 12 - 8 p.m. Order online for delivery. Call (850) 269-0830.

Fudpucker's Beachside Bar & Grill—Open for indoor and outdoor dining and takeout. Call (850) 654-4200.

The Gulf—Open for indoor and outdoor dining and takeout. Call (850) 387-1300.

Half Shell Oyster House Destin—Open for indoor and outdoor dining and takeout. Call (850) 842-4788.

Harbor Docks—12-8 p.m. for to go sushi orders, large platters and Build Your Own Sushi Kits also available. (850) 837-2506

Harry T's Lighthouse—Open for indoor and outdoor dining and takeout. Call (850) 654-4800.

Healthy Coast Meals—Open in our new Destin location at the City Market Shops Beachside for grab and go meals. Call (850) 496-6470.

Hooters—Open for dine in and takeout. Call (850) 654-1007.

Jackacudas Seafood/Sushi—Opening May 6, for indoor and outdoor seating and take out. We will be open Wednesday - Sunday from 12 - 8 p.m. Call (850) 424-3507.

Joe's Crab Shack—Open for take-out, curbside pickup and reopened dining room with social distancing. Call (850) 650-1882.

La Famiglia Italian Restaurant Located by The Destin Walmart — (850) 279-4527 — 11 a.m. - 9 p.m. To go Orders that can be picked up Curbside!

La Paz — (850) 837-2247 - Place to-go orders over phone, pick-up inside or curbside. LaPazaritas in jugs available to go.

The Local Market—(850) 460-8979 - Place to-go orders over phone, pick-up inside.

Longhorn Steakhouse—Offering curbside and delivery when available and for orders more than \$100. Our hours are Sunday - Thursday until 9 p.m. and Friday - Saturday until 10 p.m. Call (850) 654-9115.

Louisiana Lagniappe—Open for indoor and outdoor dining and takeout. Call (850) 837-0881.

Marlin Grill—(850) 351-1990 - Place to-go orders over phone, pick-up inside.

Mama Clemenza's European Breakfast - (850) 424-3157 - Place to-go orders over phone, pick-up inside or curbside.

McGuire's—Open 12-8 p.m. for to go orders. Tip jar at their ordering tent, proceeds benefit the laid off employees.

Margaritaville—Open for indoor and outdoor dining and takeout. Call (850) 460-7700.

McDonald's—Carry out and drive thru services are being offered for breakfast, lunch and dinner.

McGuire's Irish Pub of Destin—Open for dine in and takeout. Call (850) 650-0000.

Miller's Ale House of Destin—Open beginning May 5 for Pickup, Curbside and Delivery! Place order online or on our mobile app. Order at millersalehouse.com.

Continued next page

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Beach Walk Café Reopens

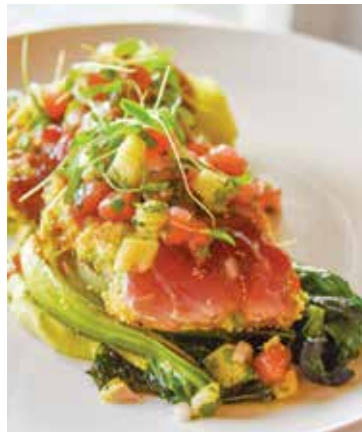
Beach Walk Café, located within Henderson Park Inn, will reopen to the public on Thursday, May 7, for take-out and delivery service. Take-out and delivery services will be available daily from 3-8:30 p.m. On Friday, May 8, Beach Walk Café will then open their dining room for their normal business hours, 5-9 p.m., while operating at a 25 percent capacity inside. The outdoor seating area will be open, but tables will be spaced accordingly to maintain a safe social distance in compliance with the governor's orders.

Guests dining in will have the

opportunity to order off the new spring menu developed by executive chef, Daniel Peters. Featuring fresh gulf seafood, prime cuts of steak, and new flavor profiles centered around seasonal ingredients.

Beach Walk Café will offer take-out and delivery service within a 10-mile radius of the restaurant. Each to-go order will include a coupon for one complimentary appetizer or dessert valid for dine-in only.

On Mondays in May and June, Beach Walk Café will be donating 10 percent of sales to Destin Charity Wine Auction



Foundation (DCWAF) and their recently launched COVID-19 Relief Community Children's Fund.

In an effort to give back even further, Beach Walk will also be offering 10% off for all first responders, healthcare workers, and hospital employees on Wednesdays as part of their Workforce Wednesday program. Customers can call or text (850) 650-7100 to place an order.

"We want to be able to do something to take care of those who take care of us," said Beach Walk's food and beverage manager, Melissa Malcom. "We're just so glad to be back, and we're ready to serve our guests once again all while abiding by the strictest of sanitation and so-

cial distancing measures."

Beach Walk Café will be giving away a \$100 gift card to one lucky patron. Guests can enter to win by posting a picture on Facebook of themselves enjoying a Beach Walk to-go dinner at home. Simply tag Beach Walk Café at Henderson Park Inn, and one lucky winner will be chosen at random on June 1.

To see the full spring menu or learn more about Beach Walk Cafe, visit www.beachwalkcafe.com. Please call 850-650-7100 to make a reservation.

PICK UP

continued from previous page

Moe's Original Bar B Que—Our full menu is available to go, and haul it home packages plus boxed meals are available for delivery with GrubHub. Call (850) 837-3600.

Nothing Bundt Cakes—We have increased delivery and offered curbside pick up for guests. Call (850) 830-5031.

Osaka Japanese Steakhouse—Call to order to-go/carry out from Destin location (850) 650-4688

O'Quigley's Seafood Steamer—Offering takeout from 12 - 7:30 p.m. everyday. Call (850) 837-1015 and pick up at our outside bar.

Olive Garden—Open for takeout. Order online for curbside pickup or call for free delivery. Call (850) 650-2307.

The Palms Bistro—Open for indoor and outdoor dining and takeout. Call (850) 351-0900.

The Pancakery—Open for indoor and outdoor dining and takeout. Call (850) 269-0791.

Panera Bread—Offering drive thru, delivery, ToGo and Rapid Pickup (order online and pick-up). Monday - Saturday from 7 a.m. - 8 p.m., and Sunday from 8 a.m. - 8 p.m. Call (850) 837-2486.

Pazzo Italiano Ristorante & Bar—Open for dine in and takeout. Call (850) 974-5484.

Pepito's Cantina & Grill - Destin—Open for dine in and takeout. Call (850) 650-7734.

Pepito's Mexican Restaurant & Cantina - Miramar Beach—Open for dine in and takeout. Call (850) 269-7788.

Pepito's Mexican Bar & Grill - Niceville—Open for dine in and takeout. Call (850) 279-4949.

PF Changs, Grand Boulevard—(850) 269-1806 11 a.m. - 9 p.m. daily. Take out only. Call ahead.

Pompano Joe's—Open for indoor and outdoor dining and takeout. Call (850) 837-2224.

QuePasa Destin—Open for to-go orders.

The Red Door Saloon—Open for to go orders from 11 a.m. - 10 p.m. Call (850) 424-5974.

Royal Palm Grille—Open 4-8 p.m. daily, for curbside pickups-go orders at their Beach Bar. 2 for 1 Sushi Rolls from 4-5 p.m., as well as Prime Rib Sundays. To go cocktails are also available with a food purchase.

Shrimp Basket—Open for curbside pickup. Call (850) 502-2280.

Slick Lips Seafood & Oyster House—(850) 347-5060 - Place to-go orders over phone, pick-up inside.

Stanley's Street Treat—Food truck

open in new locations weekly. Text your order and pay via Venmo/Paypal/Cash App to be as safe as possible.

Starbucks—The drive thru is open from 5 a.m. - 6 p.m.

The Surf Hut—Open for dine in and take out. Call (850) 460-7750.

Tailfins—(850) 650-1200 — OPEN (www.tailfinsdestin.com).

VIN'TIJ Food and Wine — (850) 650-9820 - Place to-go orders over phone, pick-up inside or curbside, Sandestin delivery available with specific delivery menu.

Vue on 30A—Open for takeout. Call (850) 267-1240.

Wendy's—Wendy's is offering drive through, online ordering, take out and delivery.

Whale's Tail—Open for indoor and outdoor dining and takeout. Call (850) 650-4377.

Whataburger—Our kitchen and

drive thru are open 24/7. Curbside pickup is available Monday - Friday from 8 a.m. - 8 p.m. Order from our app and set your pickup time anywhere from 5 minutes to 24 hours.

The Wine Bar, Grand Boulevard—(850) 622-0804 Open 4 p.m. - 8 p.m. Mon - Sat. Call ahead for curbside delivery. Serving special menu family style online.

PIZZA

Grimaldi's, Grand Boulevard — (850) 837-3095 11 a.m. - 9 p.m. Take out and delivery via Door Dash and Uber Eats.

Landshark's Pizza Company—Open for Carry Out or Delivery. Call (850) 424-6743.

Merlin's Pizza — Open for Carry Out or Delivery.

PJ's Pasta, Pizza, Ice Cream—(850) 842-2294 — Pick up or Delivery. 11 a.m. - 2:30 p.m. for Lunch and 4:15 p.m. till around 9 p.m. Family meals, Pizzas, Specials & Salads. (Pick 2) Shrimp Scampi, Large 3 regular toppings or Pastistio only \$25.

Red Brick Pizza — Open Tuesday-Saturday for carry out and delivery.

Jet's Pizza—Open for carry out and delivery.

Mimmos—Open for To Go orders/ Carry out.

BREAKFAST

Café Destin—Open at the end of May.

First Watch, The Daytime Cafe—Open for take out only during our normal business hours. Call (850) 460-9800.

Maple Street Biscuit Company — (850) 279-6358 - Selling pantry items, family-sized portions of hot sides, regular menu. Order online or with Door-Dash, pick up inside or curbside pickup. Sandestin delivery; Open for breakfast orders to go, along with Mimosa Kits

Tropical Smoothie Destin — Open 10 a.m.-7 p.m.

Palms Coffee House — Open 7:30 a.m.-4 p.m. for to go coffee orders.

2 Birds Coffee & Cafe — Open for to go orders, call ahead family style meals available. Same day pickup if you order before 10 a.m.

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BLESSING

continued from page 1

tradition will look a bit different.

On Ascension Day every year, local pastors gather behind Brotula's on the Harbor to bless 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. This tradition 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.

From only a handful of small boats, the fleet has grown and prospered into the largest fishing fleet in North America. The Blessing of the Fleet was begun by St. Andrews Episcopal Church in 1958 with around 12 boats and has since grown to over 150 boats in 2019. Numbers like this make it the largest Blessing of the Fleet in the country, with families making it tradition and participating every year. Boats line up in a parade like fashion, being called up by name to be blessed. Any vessel and its crew who make their living on the sea are encouraged to participate, and will be welcomed on the water. The impact has been far reaching.

This year, however, as we practice social distancing and avoid gathering in large groups, some changes have to be implemented. The usual church service, where fisherman and their families would have gathered giving thanks and asking for safety, protection and prayers prior to the blessing, has been canceled. The fish fry that happens in conjunction with the Blessing of the Fleet has also been canceled and participants are encouraged to dine at local operating restaurants.

Ascension Day this year falls on May 21, 2020 and the Blessing of the Fleet is open to the public to watch. The blessings will begin at 4 p.m. on the docks behind Brotula's Restaurant. Commercial boats are encouraged to register their vessel prior to the event, by emailing their information to immanuel@iacdestin.org or by calling the church at 850-837-6324.



Photo by iacdestin.org



2020 Destin's Week of Blessings

Challenging circumstances remind us just how dependent we are on the bestowment of blessings. It's when we reach the other side, that we know we've arrived through faith, prayer and, yes, being blessed!

A few years ago, our growing community wanted to include families, youth, industries and businesses in addition to the annual Blessing of the Destin Fishing Fleet; thus an expansion into a "week of blessings" which includes the Blessing of the Marketplace.

Despite COVID-19, the annual Blessing of the Marketplace will take place on May 20, from 7:30 - 9 a.m., but different than in past years; it will be hosted as "drive through blessing" events at three different church locations based on industry type.

Blessing of the Marketplace 2020 | Wednesday, May 20th from 7:30-9 a.m.

Drive By Blessing By Industry

Location 1: Shoreline Church, 140 Palmetto St, Destin, FL 32541

Fishing, Boating, Water Sports, Recreation, Miscellaneous

Location 2: Destin United Methodist Church, 200 Beach Dr, Destin, FL 32541

Government/Schools, Retail, Real Estate & Construction

Location 3: Coastline Calvary Chapel, 310 Mountain Dr, Destin, FL 32541

Not for Profit, Health, Fitness, Beauty, Medical, Hospitality, Professional

Destin's Week of Blessing 2020 Schedule:

Sunday, May 17 - Blessing of the Families - Each individual church

Monday, May 18 - "Day of Fasting & Prayer" - Pray over your neighborhood.

Tuesday, May 19 - Blessing of the 1st Responders and Government Agencies - Teams go out to pray over the fire station, Sheriffs dept., coast guard stations, etc.

Wed, May 20 - Blessing of the Marketplace- 7:30-9 a.m. - Drive By Blessings in 3 Locations

Blessing of the Youth- 3-7 p.m.- Blessings in the Neighborhoods - Youth Pastors come to students!

Thursday, May 21 - Blessing of the Fleet - 63rd Annual



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 Wellness

Sean Dietrich Shares His Own Story for the First Time

Publishes "Will the Circle be Unbroken?"

Longtime local and Destin favorite Sean Dietrich (sometimes better known as "Sean of the South") is a traveling storyteller, podcaster, and Southern living writer known for his daily column filled with stories of steel workers, church potlucks, and trusty bloodhounds, which always give his readers a reason to believe there is good in the world—despite what they may have experienced to the contrary.

In his new book, *Will the Circle Be Unbroken?: A Memoir of Learning to Believe You're Gonna Be Okay*, Dietrich is telling his own story—for the very first time. It is one that has been marked by both loss and love and has taken him on an unlikely path. Sean was only twelve years old when he scattered his father's



"A self-declared simple storyteller who champions finding a way to shine the light of positivity, Dietrich shifts the lens a bit as he unpacks his own tragedy. What could easily have been a heavy read is uplifted with Dietrich's quirky one-liners told with a big-hearted, Southern voice."

—Library Journal

ashes from a mountain range. His father had been a man who lived for baseball. He was a steel worker with a ready wink, who once scaled a fifty-foot tree just to hang a tire swing for his son. But he also had been the stranger who tried to kidnap and kill Dietrich's mother before pulling the trigger on himself. He was a childhood hero who was now reduced to a man in a box. After his father's death, Dietrich dropped out of

SEAN

continued on page 29

My Name is Matthew Vanderford



My name is Matthew Vanderford. I am a public adjuster. If you don't know what that is, you can call me to find out or read more of my columns. Because this article isn't about public adjusting.

My name is Matthew Vanderford. I am a father of four children. But this article isn't about me being a dad either. Nor is it about being anything that anyone might think they know me as.

If you've read my columns here in Destin Life, you'd know that I work in the insurance industry. I write articles about insurance; stories of people affected by property damage and the ups and downs of filing insurance claims. You'd know the reason I pursued my insurance adjusting license was because I saw too many being taken advantage of; people with licenses saying things weren't covered when they really were. But that's not what this article is about.

My name is Matthew Vanderford. I am a victim of childhood sexual abuse. That's what this article is about.

I don't even know where to begin. I'm not even sure why this has to come out. But, it does.

I used to work in the cemetery business, dealing with the dead... although I was living, I felt so dead. Maybe that's why I worked there. Perhaps I wanted to see if there was life beyond the grave, because inside, I was dead. Dead to myself; dead to the world around me; dead to those who I knew – or thought I knew ... and empty. Dead because life was sucked out of me at such an early age. Dead because those I trusted turned their backs on me. Dead because I became a victim of those who were able to take advantage of a small child, who

were able to use fear and aggression to make the quiet voice of this small boy even smaller... even quieter...even smaller and quieter still. Silenced.

My name is Matthew Vanderford. I am a victim of childhood sexual abuse. But that's not what this article is about.

I was sexually abused as a child. I attempted suicide three times by age 13. I checked myself into rehab at age 16. I held a gun to my head at age 21, but was too afraid of ending up as a vegetable, sitting in a wheelchair, drool hanging from my chin—left in the care of those who already abused me and tossed me to the streets. I'm married. I have four children. I adjust insurance claims for policyholders. I've been hospitalized in my 40's for suicide, because life got way too big. Way too big, way too fast for a small boy of three years old.

"Daddy, can you come and measure me?" my daughter playfully laughs as she hops across the dining room chairs. She stops me writing. It's the second time this week she's wanted to check.

"Three feet, four inches – you're getting soo big!"

She dances in a circle. Hair and arms spinning in the air.

That's what this article is about.

***Author's Note:** *Trauma in life comes to all. Sometimes as children, sometimes as adults, and takes many different forms. But we all experience our own pain in life. My mom used to talk about Jonah of the Bible – how it was such a good story. When I asked her why, she replied, "Because he made it to the end – he got to write the story." Well, in this way, I, too, like Jonah, get to tell my story – that I didn't come this far only to come this far. That there is healing and that there is joy in this world. Joy that makes life worth living. Like the joy of watching my three-year old who is full of laughter and dance.*

Editor's note: *More than 1 million children are victims of child abuse and neglect each year, according to state child protective service agencies. Many victims don't receive help because they are not reported to the system. These abused and neglected children span all ages, races, religions and socio-economic backgrounds. Child maltreatment includes actions that result in imminent risk of serious harm, death, serious physical or emotional harm, sexual abuse or exploitation of a child under age 18 by a parent or caretaker. Reporter information is confidential.*

The Emerald Coast Children's Advocacy Center is the best way to get abused kids all the services they need. If you know or suspect child abuse, please call the Florida Child Abuse Hotline at 1.800.962.2873.

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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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Prevention and Treatment of COVID-19

Dr. Richard Chern, M.D., communicated with several experts and wrote the following statements to let the community know the latest information on ways to combat COVID-19:

- Highest risk individuals are those who have diabetes, high blood pressure (especially on ACE inhibitors), COPD, cardiovascular disease, age over 65 and males. Each adds significant risk. If you have any of these risk factors or have regular contact with someone who does, be extremely cautious. In the United States as of March 26, the death rate in diabetics with COVID-19 is over 10%.

- COVID-19 can stay aerosolized (airborne) for three hours and alive on surfaces for 10 days. It is found in blood, stool, tears and of course respiratory secretions. It can be shed 10 days before a person displays symptoms and 20 days after recovery from infection, although 6 to 10 days is typical. People under age 20 can display symptoms as mild as a headache, sore throat, mild cough or just diarrhea. It's best to consider every stranger infected.

- Step one is avoidance. This infection is in our community. Stay at home if possible and use social distancing if not. Be aware of people around you and give them space. Kids want to touch everything. Be aware of any surface kids can reach. Wearing masks, gloves and glasses does not eliminate your risk. They can give a false sense of security and often encourage you to touch your face. Be careful when wearing these and avoid touching your face. When wearing gloves, it is easy to contaminate clean surfaces. Be aware of what surfaces you want to keep clean and do not touch them with gloved hands.

- Doorknobs, doorknobs, doorknobs... They may be a primary transfer method of COVID-19. Be careful where you place your hands after touching a doorknob.

- COVID-19 is an enveloped virus which means it is easily destroyed with soap and water. Soap and water can be used on countertops, food containers and many other surfaces, not just your hands. Alcohol is also effective but the killing action occurs during evaporation. Let alcohol dry and avoid wiping it up before it's job is done. In Italy, non perishable groceries are quarantined outside for at least a day and perishables are sanitized with either soap and water or alcohol before being put away.

What can you do to reduce the severity of infection?

T cells, B cells and Natural Killer cells are white blood cells that help prevent and fight infection.

Vitamin A is critical for T cell and B cell function and reduces mortality in infection.

Vitamin C directs white blood cells to the infection site for a quick response.

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Optimizing hormones and thyroid can boost immunity by inhibiting the ability of viruses to enter our cells and decreasing the severity of respiratory infections.

Avoid ibuprofen, Advil, Motrin and possibly naprosyn or Aleve. This is based on preliminary findings but is becoming a common recommendation.

Lastly, the combination of chloroquine and azithromycin works well. Chloroquine inhibits the virus's ability to enter the cell while azithromycin inhibits its ability to replicate. Unfortunately, these drugs have multiple drug to

drug interactions and possible severe adverse effects. Chloroquine can cause retinal damage, hearing loss and in those with particular heart abnormalities, sudden death. It is not for everyone.

All these preventative measures need proper dosing and

patient selection. They should be discussed with your doctor or myself during an appointment. Something as simple as zinc lozenges can cause loss of smell, kidney and liver damage, or death. Speak with a doctor before using these.

We are still seeing patients and can also do telemedicine appointments if desired. We are adhering to all CDC guidelines. Please call Dr. Richard Chern at 850-837-1271 for an appointment.



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 Wellness



BY LISA LEATH TURPIN, HEALTH AND WELLNESS COACH

As I sat down to compose something profound after what we have been through and are still contending with, I felt I must share something important.

Due to the quarantine, we've been unable to do the things or the work we have been doing routinely all our lives. This caused me to go from denial to elevated concern to slight fear to confusion and uncertainty, then topped off with anger about the situation. All of a sudden, it took pure self-discipline to do mediocre tasks and chores. Even exercise—my job that brings so much joy—turned to apathy, because stimulation has been at its lowest.

My lack of motivation has been a daunting revelation. As a fitness professional, I have always had tons of energy and drive! I can still turn it on, but

it's not natural for me to have to TRY at it. Are you feeling the same way? Have you become less motivated? That's NOT GOOD for our bodies or well-being.

I started wondering if there was something wrong; I had slightly retreated, which is SO not like me! I'm sharing, because, I thought, if it can happen to me, someone who's profession is to motivate others and cheer people on, it's probably happening to many! I simply want to be transparent in hopes it will help someone.

Through research, I found a really cool article in Entrepreneur Magazine called, "Science Discovers Why Some People Are Motivated to Succeed While Others Aren't" written by John Rampton. Please Google it and read it as I am unable to relay everything here. The gist of the article is, when it comes specifically to motivation, one of the most important neurotransmitters in the brain is dopamine. Neurotransmitters spark messages to keep us alert and on task. "Dopamine is what enables you to make the decision to be active," explains John Salamone, Ph.D. How you handle your thinking and your personal reward system either positively or negatively affects your

dopamine level. Dopamine rises when you feel accomplished and praise-worthy. The article goes on to explain more facts about dopamine and how you can increase it. But a couple of them jumped out that pinpoint why, during quarantine, we might be feeling unmotivated.

Professional Development Manager, Ken Trass wrote in New England Law Society publication, "Positive...environments, where colleagues regularly praise each other as they work together, will have higher levels of dopamine, and therefore motivation, than people working in isolation. Dopamine, along with another neurotransmitter, serotonin, play a large part in the occurrence of depressive episodes." He goes on to say that when people feel they have purpose, they will have increased dopamine. AH-HA! No wonder we all lack motivation right now. We have an innate need to help others, but also receive praise, however your mind perceives praise, because it's an individual thing. For me, being around friends, clients, participants and social environments motivates me to keep on. It's the very reason I chose fitness and wellness as my career! And I realized, there's nothing wrong with me, only the way I'm allowing my brain to think. So, if you feel any type of lack of motivation and drive, perhaps you're not broken, just dopamine imbalanced! What we have gone through has been un-



Mind Over Matter

controllable, because laws were enforced. Mindful, purposeful meditation is key!

Philippians 4 speaks on steadfastness. It warns us to be mindful of our thoughts, especially in verses 4:8-9. Meditate on everything you're thankful for; keep your mind on these things only. That's it! I have been thinking negatively, because I was focused on the negative situation and how it was affecting me.

There are some things we can all do to raise and keep dopamine levels balanced. Think of your brain as a piggy bank—with each token, it gets fuller. In this case, the more dopamine in the right area of the brain, the easier it is to do the things that were difficult in the first place. So, count your blessings—it'll bring a smile to your face. Accomplish getting small things done. Find out what drives your personality. (A great read on personality types is The Four Tendencies by Gretchen Rubin.)

As we slowly come out of quarantine, help yourself by helping others. And remember,

people have an innate need for affirmation; don't be fake, but give compliments when deserved.

I welcome you to join me on the journey of getting back to living; I'd love to become your own personal trainer—exercise and eating right is necessary. Try some workouts, more ideas and recipes on my Facebook page: Lisa Turpin-Be Active Health & Fitness (@LisaTurpinFitness).

Lisa Turpin is a degreed and certified health and fitness lifestyle coach who has devoted her life to motivating and strengthening the body and minds of others. With over 20 years' experience as a group exercise leader, currently at Destin Health & Fitness 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. She is currently taking on new clients/participants; text only to 850-974-2005 or message from her Facebook Page.

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BY MELANIE STEWART,
YUM TUM NUTRITION

Be Your Own Health Warrior

at least two chronic diseases. In the most recent study of 5,700 cases of COVID-19 in N.Y., 94.3% of them had one or more of these health problems.

Presently, doctors are telling us that the highest mortality with Covid19 occurs in patients who are diabetic, pre-diabetic, hypertensive, have heart disease and/or are obese or morbidly obese. What do these health conditions all have in common? They all involve **INSULIN RESISTANCE**. Insulin Resistance is also known as Metabolic Syndrome and is inversely related to Vitamin D; when one is up the other is down.

Vitamin D is what mediates the systems that the COVID-19 virus attaches to and uses to get into the cells to start the infection. Once there, depending on the person's health factors, the cascade and decline can take off. I do recommend supplementing with vitamin D. In addition, you can implement the following:

Eat real/whole LIVE foods that consist of non-starchy vegetables, whole fruits,

nuts, seeds, lean and clean sources of protein and healthy fats.

AVOID immune lowering/insulin raising DEAD foods including high sugar junk foods, fast foods, processed and packaged convenience foods, and all man made oils (margarine and vegetable, soy, corn, safflower or sunflower oils) due to the inflammatory response they create and how long they stay in your system.

Drink half your body weight in ounces of water to not only keep you hydrated, but also to detoxify, energize and keep you healthy.

Breathe Deeply to enhance blood circulation.

Walk barefooted on fresh dewy grass or wet sand to increase the flow of oxygen to the brain, reduce stress and pain, provide feelings of well-being, improve sleep and resolve chronic inflammation.

Meditate: Sit or lie down in a comfortable position, keeping your spine straight. Close your eyes and breathe.

Singing is surprisingly ben-

eficial to your health. Studies show that singing boosts immunity, elevates endorphins, improves circulation and lowers stress by reducing cortisol and releasing stored muscle tension.

"For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind."

2nd Timothy 1:7

Melanie Stewart has written two books for children (Yum Tum, Good Food is Fun! and Yum Tum, We Get it Done!) and one for adults (Yum Tum For Everyone!) all available on Amazon or at: <https://www.yumtumnutrition.com/>. All content is commentary or opinion and is protected under Free Speech laws. It's not meant to give individual medical advice or to make any health claims on the prevention or curing of diseases.

Life in the age of Covid19 can have us feeling fearful and unsure of how to protect ourselves. Would you believe me if I told you that a virus is not a living thing? It has no nucleus, no respiratory or digestive system, and does not multiply on its own. At best, it teeters on the boundaries of what is considered life. And yet, we are held hostage.

Human viruses are created within our cells and are little more than a strand of DNA or RNA covered by a protein coating that works as a solvent in response to toxicity. They are cell-specific, meaning they do not cross travel from one organ to the next. That's why you don't find Hepatitis in the kidneys, for example, as it is liver specific. One thing is for sure; viruses are very much a part of life on Earth and the human experience.

Covid19 is called a novel virus, not previously seen in humans. However, it certainly is very present in all of our lives and I think begs the question: Why doesn't everyone get it? Could it be because not everyone is in the same state of toxicity and not all immune systems are functioning equally?

"Bernard was right; the pathogen is nothing; the terrain is everything"
— Louis Pasteur

When the immune system is weakened by poor food and lifestyle choices, stress (including fear), by pre-existing and/or other co-morbid conditions, it can become dysfunctional and that's when we get into trouble. According to a 2016 Health and Retirement study, 38% of people between the ages of 50 and 59 had a least one of four serious diseases (diabetes, cancer, heart disease or obesity). According to the CDC, 21% of people between the ages of 45 and 64 had

SEAN

continued from page 26

seventh grade and became a dishwasher, a newspaper deliverer, and then a construction worker, to help his mother and sister scrape by. As a self-described "nobody with a sad story behind him," Dietrich still could not deny the glimmers of life's goodness. Such goodness became even harder to deny when Sean met the love of his life, Jamie, at a fried chicken church potluck, and harder still when his lifelong love of storytelling led him to stages across the country, where he is known and loved as "Sean of the South."

A story that will stay with you long after the final page, Will the Circle Be Unbroken? testifies to the strength that lives within us all to stop the cycles of the past from laying claim to our future.

Sean Dietrich is a columnist, podcaster, speaker, and novelist, known for his commentary on life in the American South. His work has appeared in Newsweek, Southern Living, The Tallahassee Democrat, Good Grit, South Magazine, The Bitter Southerner, Thom Magazine, and The Mobile Press Register. He has authored eleven books, including the novel Stars of Alabama. Dietrich will be on a multi-city book tour this spring. Learn more at www.WillTheCircleBook.com. Web Site: www.SeanDietrich.com, Facebook: @seanofthesouth, Instagram: @seanofthesouth, Twitter: @seanofthesouth1, Show/Podcast: www.SeanoftheSouthShow.com.

Long-time readers are well familiar with Sean's monthly column in Destin Life.

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 Wellness



BY STEPHANIE CRAIG

Do you find yourself struggling through Groundhog's Day Syndrome in the midst of COVID-19? Each day you wake up and it's another home day surrounded by the same people. This week, I wasn't sure what day it was, what I had accomplished in the past four days, or what I needed to do that day. It was uncomfortable and disorienting. Most days in the midst of quarantine look and feel similar without the common structures that separate weekdays from weekends, work days from home days, school days from family days. Your brain doesn't quite know how to make sense of these new life rhythms or lack thereof.

In addition to lack of rhythms, it's very difficult to get your bearings when you have no idea how long the pandemic will last or what life is going to look like for the next many months

and years following these events. It brings up feelings of anxiety, stress, overwhelm and the necessary, but very uncomfortable, acknowledgement that you are out of control of many things surrounding the pandemic.

Though your traditional ways of making daily meaning in life are being challenged, you are still wired to seek a sense of purpose, value and connection. And, though you have a significant lack of control over the pandemic circumstances, your brain will continue to encourage you to engage self-control to sustain some personal health and balance in the midst of cultural chaos. So, what can you do to combat the Groundhog's Day pull into a numbed out, stressed out existence?

5 Ways to Survive Groundhog's Day Syndrome

Create daily anchors. Your brain makes sense of your daily rhythms by recognizing the difference between what you do on any given day of the week. For example: On Monday, I do laundry; On Tuesday, I go to the store; On Saturday, I go on a nature walk; On Sunday, I watch a church podcast. Find one activity to do on the same day each week. This will help your brain

Surviving Groundhog's Day



begin to differentiate Monday from Saturday.

Create two tasks for the day. At the end of each day, take two minutes to reflect on what you would like to accomplish the following day to feel a sense of forward movement in your life. Write down the two things and do them the next day. For example: Tomorrow I will pay the electric bill and clean the bathroom.

Reach for gratitude. Choose one thing you are thankful for each day. Though the pandemic is very stressful, it has created some opportunities for slowing down, spending more time with family, remembering to pray for others, taking more walks, taking time for personal reflection, considering how you can help others, etc.

Keep consistent self-care routines. It's easy when you aren't leaving the house to skip the shower, teeth-brushing, getting dressed activities of the day. Though, most of us have given up on makeup and fash-

ion, keeping up with your basic daily hygiene practices communicates a sense of personal value to yourself.

Sunday check in. Take five minutes to check in with yourself each week. Ask yourself, "How am I doing emotionally this week?" "Have I connected with a friend this week?" "Have I gotten outdoors this week?" "Do I need to ask for support from someone?" "Do I need to make any adjustments in the coming week to feel more grounded and positive?"

Nothing about COVID-19 is simple. It is creating chaos, grief and the daily uncomfortable sense of unknown. If you can, release what you cannot control, and engage your energy in using self-control in small, targeted ar-

eas in your daily life to guide you toward a greater sense of peace in the midst of the struggle.

Remember, there is wisdom in asking for additional support from family, friends or a counselor as you navigate the pandemic along with other stresses you might be experiencing. Many counselors are providing online sessions during quarantine including Journey Bravely Counseling.

Stephanie Craig is a Licensed Clinical Social Worker in practice for over 16 years providing counseling to those ages 11 and up for issues like stress, anxiety, depression, life transition, divorce, boundaries, managing emotions, and healthy coping. She recently moved cross country with her husband, Todd, and their three sons 14, 11, and 7 to make a home in our area. She loves to support individuals, families, and the community in being emotionally, physically, and spiritually well. Connect with Stephanie at her private practice, Journey Bravely, at journeybravely.com, stepheniecraig@journeybravely.com or (918) 221-9987.

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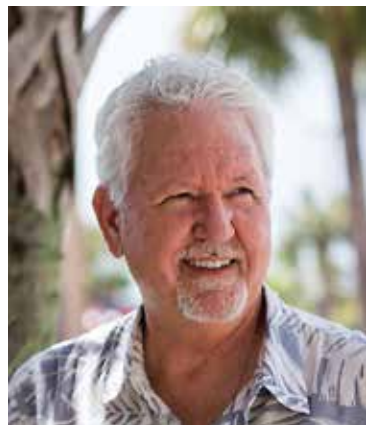
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A Pastor's Ponderings: Who Will Weep?

her many sins have been forgiven — for she loved much. But he who has been forgiven little loves little.”

—Luke 7:39-7:48

I became a Christian as a teenager during the height of the Jesus Movement in 1970. In those days, altar calls were standard in churches and sinners would come forward to pray the prayer of faith. Often people would cry tears of repentance and express other emotions. When I went to the altar, I prayed the prayer and felt nothing. I knew I had decided to follow Christ and was now a Christian, but on an emotional level, I was unmoved.

I rationalized the emotionless experience with, Well, I'm a man and men don't show feelings, I don't want my faith based on emotions anyways. Yet, I knew I was missing out on a vital component of spirituality and humanity. We are human, and people have feelings that form an essential part of our personalities. Luke brings this element of our faith front and center in this passage.

The contrast between the sinful woman who weeps as she worships and Simon the Pharisee who coldly criticizes standing aloof could hardly be more severe. Tears of repentance rolled off her face as she worshipped at Christ's feet. Meanwhile, the Pharisee doesn't offer Jesus simple courtesies. He seems to say, "Who is this young rabbi anyway?"

The judgment of the Pharisee weighs in heavily against Christ, "If this man were a prophet, he would know who is touching him and what kind of woman she is — that she is a sinner" (7:39).

Simon had not shown Jesus the respect due to a household guest—compare that to the adoration the woman had showered upon Christ. The Pharisee judged Jesus as falling short of his standard for a man of God. The woman knew her need for forgiveness, but Simon was ignorant concerning the state of his soul.

Proverbs 21:4 (TPT) speaks to Simon and many of us, "Arrogance, superiority, and pride are

the fruits of wickedness and the true definition of sin." People have the terrible habit of comparing themselves to others to lift themselves in the comparison. Simon has fallen into this trap. Once entangled, he feels justified in judging the woman. Man's judgment kills and drains us of feelings and compassion. Mercy makes room for forgiveness, and joy is the inevitable result.

Many years ago, divorce brought me to my lowest point. I felt like a failure and guilt dripped off the edges of my life. Yet, God seemed to be so near to me, like he was in the room with me and my pain. While God's forgiveness was instant, grief haunted me. At age 50, I finally went to a counselor who taught me to grieve my losses. The therapist suggested I journal my thoughts regarding these losses and then cry for 15 minutes. I thought she must be crazier than me.

Since I had paid the counselor, I felt I should at least try her medicine. For three days I journaled each morning and

cried genuine tears. Then it happened, I was set free, the tears dried up, and the grief was gone. The side effect of this freedom was a new-found ability to feel appropriate emotions.

Finally, I had discovered the rich joy of gratitude and worship. I joined the ranks of people, like the weeping woman in our passage, who love Jesus for the forgiveness he imparts and the freedom he releases.

Were it not for the grace of God I would have died a cold, lonely man. By the mercy of God, I am free to weep tears of thanksgiving.

Dave and Jonie Holland pastored churches for over 38 years before retiring in Destin. He recently released his new devotional-Bible study based on the Gospel of Luke called "Every Day Jesus: Experience the Jesus Who Ignites Your Soul." You can get a copy of his book from his website, DaveHolland.org or by contacting him at davidholland54@gmail.com. Pastor Dave is available to preach in churches and conferences or to serve as an interim pastor.

BY PASTOR DAVE HOLLAND

When the Pharisee who had invited him saw this, he said to himself, "If this man were a prophet, he would know who is touching him and what kind of woman she is — that she is a sinner..."

Then he turned toward the woman and said to Simon, "Do you see this woman? I came into your house. You did not give me any water for my feet, but she wet my feet with her tears and wiped them with her hair. You did not give me a kiss, but this woman, from the time I entered, has not stopped kissing my feet. You did not put oil on my head, but she has poured perfume on my feet. Therefore, I tell you,

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 Musing



By SEAN DIETRICH

To whom it may concern:

I wanted to say this in person, but this whole social distancing thing makes that impossible. So I decided to write you a letter. I won't take up too much of your time.

I just wanted to say that I've been so moved by the work you're doing lately. During this whole coronavirus thing you've really gone the extra mile. I wish I could write each one of you. Sadly, there are bajillions of you, and only one of me. So this will have to do.

Anyway, you don't know me. I'm one of the faceless Americans you've been helping when you wake up every morning and do what you do.

Yesterday, for instance, I saw you through the burger-joint window, manning the grill. You wore a surgical mask and latex gloves. You had a line of to-go orders a mile long. Cars were

lined up in the drive-thru lane stretching back to Bangladesh. You just did your job.

This letter is for you, and your fellow cooks, cashiers, and even your grumpy manager, Kate, who made you work last Fourth of July because she is about as much fun as getting slapped with a spatula.

Also, to the woman who wrote to me yesterday whose daughter is a nurse, treating people with COVID-19 in New York. Even though her daughter is young and healthy, she puts herself on the front lines every day.

This is written to hospital custodial workers who clean every inch of every surface. Even the ceilings. To the cafeteria workers. The greeters. The security guards. Maintenance men. Triage. ICU. X-ray techs.

To the guy who drives our local UPS delivery truck. That guy is my hero. Every day he's making deliveries around town. It makes me wonder how many hundreds of millions of gazillions of people are working every day, packaging boxes, loading trucks, driving forklifts, fulfilling online orders, and organizing the complex microcosmic symphony of daily deliveries.

While I'm at it, this is also for my mail lady who is always on

time. Even on weekends.

To janitors. To anyone who mans a mop and a pushbroom. To people who keep public places disinfected even though the world is anything but disinfected right now.

To grocery store employees, who wear face masks for nine hours per day. Who deal with the General Public. We, the public, who aren't exactly shiny customers right now, if you catch my drift.

To the cashiers. To the bag boys. To grocery delivery services. To the guys in the loading department, wearing back braces.

To anyone who has to scrub themselves down with rubbing alcohol before taking a simple lunch break.

To the man who still operates his Massey Ferguson tractor on a 480-acre farm in Alabama, Florida, Georgia, or Mississippi. To men who till the plains of Nebraska, Kansas, Oklahoma, Indiana, Texas, and Illinois.

The farmers of Louisiana, Tennessee, the Carolinas, and every other wonderous state I didn't mention. Even South Dakota—although, technically, I am not sure anyone actually lives there.

I write to those who raise beef, pigs, cotton, wheat, corn,

alfalfa, carrots, iceberg lettuce, and—even though I could go the rest of my life without eating another godforsaken stick of the stuff—celery.

To poultry farmers in Ohio. Dairy farmers in Wisconsin. To anyone who makes it possible for me to eat a tomato.

To all South Dakotans who resent the cheap joke I just made about them.

To the guy who scrubs the public buses with bleach after every use. To the Marines, the Army, the Navy, the Air Force, the National Guard, the Coast Guard, the Civil Service, and their spouses.

To Tyler, a 9-year-old who colors pictures and sends them to random nursing homes with the enclosed words: "Thinking of you!" He's sent 400 pictures so far.

To school teachers. Men and women who deserve a break, but are taking none. Many of whom wake up early each morning to sit in front of a cheap, school-district-issue, unflattering webcam that could make even Sophia Loren look like a walking corpse.

To childcare workers. To road crews. To out-of-work factory workers.

To emergency workers, who know that the world doesn't stop for viruses. John Q. Public still has toaster-oven fires that need a fire department. Dads still injure themselves on table saws and call EMTs. Children still break

their arms when climbing trees and need ER docs.

To police departments, nationwide, who make sure that anyone with criminal intentions, who tries to take advantage of others during this unusual time, will not succeed.

To those who perform church services via the internet. To the tireless church ladies who still bake hot casseroles and deliver them to elderly shut-ins, and have been doing this long before "coronavirus" was a household term.

To my friends who have been sending emails and text messages reminding me to get out of bed and put on real pants.

To anyone who has been video-phoning loved ones just to let them know they love them. To my mother who checks on me and reminds me that she's praying for me.

To artists. Engineers. Struggling musicians. To foster parents. To those in nursing homes. To the underprivileged kids whose only meals were the ones they got at school.

To the lady on the sidewalk, walking her dog, wearing her surgical mask. Who, when she passed me this morning, said, "Gosh, I wish I could thank the whole world for coming together and helping their fellow man, don't you?"

Yes, I do.

Thank you. From the bottom of my heart. And may God bless you.

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BY MYRNA CONRAD

What Ever Happened To Patience?

them, sometimes even when it could put ourselves or others in danger. Our laptops are too slow; deliveries are too slow; our device streaming is too slow; our appliances are too slow; promotions at work are too slow, and often it is slow people that irritate us the most.

We have become so impatient that we are willing to pay more for speed. We are willing to pay more for next day delivery. We pay more at Disney World for a fast pass so we don't have to wait in line as long. We pay to have a higher speed internet. We pay to use the commuter lane on our highways. There is a lot of money spent yearly on the newest method to lose weight quickly, and we are willing to pay high interest rates to get what we want now instead of saving to buy it later.

Impatience leads to stress, anger, shorter attention spans, unhappiness, missed opportunities, and damaged relationships.

We are told that patience is important and that everything

worthwhile requires time and effort. Most people that have reached their goals in life have had to practice patience. An athlete does not become a winner without a lot of time and work. Great leaders had to work hard and learn skills that led to their positions. Parenting well requires quality time and an enormous amount of patience. Great marriages take time, hard work and patience with each other.

Patience has many more benefits than impatience. It relieves stress and replaces it with peace. Patience gives us the opportunity to pay attention to what is happening around us. It gives us time to think, to observe, and to appreciate. Patience leads to better decisions, closer relationships and opportunities that we might otherwise miss.

Patience is something we have to choose to develop and practice.

Do you want to practice more patience? Here are a few strategies:

Be Aware:

Learn to recognize the signs of your impatience. Be aware when your anxiety starts to rise.

Choose to believe that most delays have a reason and often it is for your protection or for a better opportunity at a later time.

Realize that the stress that you experience from impatience is a lot worse for you than the benefits that you can experience from waiting.

Think about which has cost you more, impatience or patience.

Realize that impatience is not going to make things happen any faster.

Be Intentional:

Start your morning early enough to give yourself time to get ready for your day within a comfortable time frame. Starting your morning in a rush often leads to impatience throughout your day.

Always give yourself time for delays in your schedule. Build

in time for possible delays.

When you find yourself losing patience, take a few deep breaths and think of something positive that might come from your wait.

While waiting, whether in a line, on the road, on the phone, for an appointment, in the office or at home, focus on what is going on around you. Talk more to those who are also waiting; observe and see if there are ways you can help others. If you believe in prayer, pray for those around you. Think of all the things in your day you are thankful for. Think of something nice you can do for those you love.

Learn to laugh at interruptions.

Patience starts with you! You alone can decide whether you want to react with patience or impatience. Choosing patience will benefit you and those around you.

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 Musing



By E. JENNIFER ESSES, M.D., FACOG

I have to admit before this year, I really didn't give "Earth Day" too much thought. Sure, I love the beach, the outdoors and nature as much as anyone who lives in our area. And I want to continue to enjoy all the beauty our Emerald Coast has to offer for generations to come. However, true introspection of how all of creation is intimately connected has taken on new meaning in the past few months.

This year is very different. All would agree 2020 has seen unprecedented events worldwide. Corona virus has changed our daily lives in ways that most of us have never experienced. What is interesting, however, is not only how this pandemic is

affecting human behaviors, but also the effect it has had globally on the environment. It isn't uncommon at all for natural disasters to affect human behavior. After Hurricane Michael, our entire community experienced significant ripple effects to the economy and livelihood. Lives were uprooted in a moment, and neighboring communities responded with compassion. The difference between what we are seeing with Corona virus and other natural disasters, is that all the changes we are making now are voluntary. Rather than humans changing their behavior because of nature, it has been reversed. Humans changing their behavior has directly impacted the Earth. And guess what? That is truly what Earth day is all about. Let me provide some specific examples.

The nitrogen dioxide emissions and production of greenhouse gasses over China have dropped over 25% since the Corona virus pandemic began significantly reducing air pollution. This can also be seen

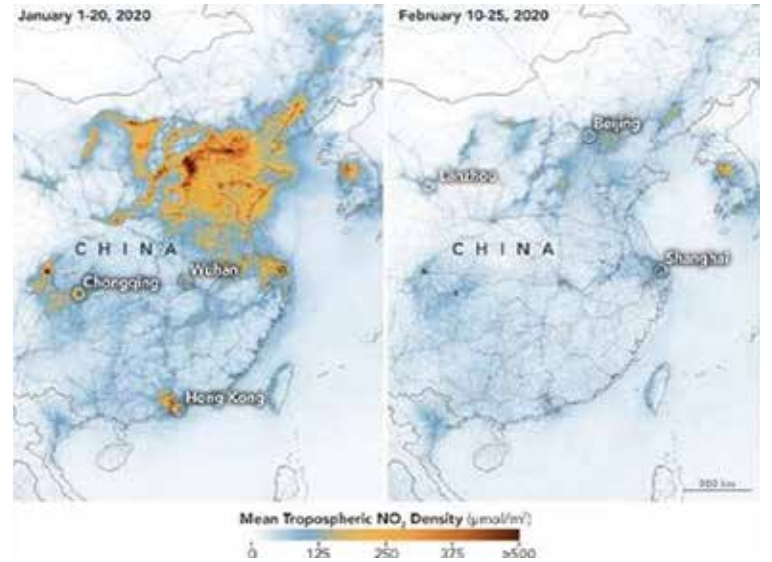
in the smog over Los Angeles and all of Northern California. Historical data from the EPA suggests that this may be the longest stretch of clean air there since 1980. Beirut Lebanon, a city known for high levels of pollution, has also shown much clearer skies and improved air quality. Similarly, it is said that inhabitants in India can see Mt. Everest and the peaks of the Himalayan mountains which haven't been visible for thirty years due to pollution.

The same improved air quality has also been demonstrated in Italy. With decreased commuting and transportation, the canals of Venice are crystal clear again and fish are seen swimming there. Residents cannot remember a time when this was true. Although these are potentially temporary outcomes, they are significant, and should be noted.

In India, the lack of human pollution and intrusion has allowed Olive Ridley Turtles to nest undisturbed. Last year in 2019, they did not come to this beach at all. But now in 2020, with Corona virus limiting human activities, over 70,000 turtles came en masse to lay their eggs. Experts predict the same might be true here in the southern United States this year. The first Leatherback turtle has already nested on Hutchinson Island which is the earliest nesting recorded in Florida to date.

Out west in our National Parks, rangers report more

Earth Day



visible wildlife than they can remember. Some estimate the visible bear population has quadrupled in Yosemite; without people, they are coming out of the shadows along with other wildlife enjoying the new freedom to roam.

Observing these phenomenon, how should we interpret what we see? The Earth and the pace of our lives are intricately connected. Our voluntary captivity in our homes during this time of social distancing has caused the pace of life to markedly slow down. Families are spending more quality time together. Churches and individuals have stretched themselves to think outside the traditional confines of four walls to help others. There is a genuine returning of people to the Lord worldwide and distractions have been removed to allow our faith to deepen and mature. In essence, the Earth has been given a Sabbath.

Prioritizing rest is important; in fact God commanded it. Exodus 20:6, "Remember the Sabbath by keeping it holy. Six days you shall labor and do all your work. But the seventh day is Sabbath to the Lord your God." Also read Leviticus chapter 25. Leviticus 25: sabbath year. God

also commanded that the land be allowed to have a sabbath rest every seven years.

And truthfully, humans and the land are far more productive when allowed periods of rest. Farmers know this; you must allow your fields a fallow year to be more productive. The Bible assures us you will accomplish more in six days, with one day devoted to your family, others, and the Lord than you can accomplish in seven days working at full steam. There was a time when the people of Israel for generations did not honor this command, among many others. In fact, 2nd Chronicles tells us they neglected the Sabbath for 490 years. In their disobedience to Him, the Lord allowed them to be taken to Babylon into captivity. So, if you do the math, that is 70 years of missed Sabbaths owed to the land.

"(But if you will not listen to me and carry out all these commands, and if you reject my decrees and abhor my laws and fail to carry out all my commands and so violate my covenant)... Then the land will enjoy its sabbath years all the time that it lies desolate and you are in the

Continued next page



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Distant Connection and Our Social Wellbeing



BY SHANTELE DEDICKE, CMP

Introvert or extrovert, humans are social by nature. We crave social connectedness and historically, tribal disconnection has held serious ramifications. It is no surprise that during this time of social isolation, many are experiencing higher levels of depression and anxiety. The good news is that we do not have to struggle in silence; technology offers solutions and opportunities to create, connect, and engage. Here are a few ideas as you seek to be social.

Virtual Calls: Pick a platform, any platform and you

can instantly connect with your friends and family via mobile phone, tablet, laptop, or desktop. Zoom and FaceTime emerge as popular choices due to accessibility but there are others out there - a quick Google search will bring forth a plethora of options.

Write a Letter: Newsflash, letter writing is not “old school;” it’s a common courtesy and one that deserves a resurgence. Bring back the pen pal revolution, pick someone, and begin a distant conversation. Feel free to go off-road here and send your favorite quotes, excerpts from a beloved book, jot down a list of memories, or begin a plan for the future. There are no rules here - go crazy!

Tap into Your Talents: More than likely you are brilliant or at least good at something that could help or benefit someone else. Make a list and reach out! Are you a musician? Offer sessions for your listeners and have fun while doing it! Are you an empty-nester and missing your grown



children? Why not reach out to a friend who is now homeschooling their children and offer to take over a lesson or a story reading session? Small offers to assist offer big rewards to everyone - including you!

Help Someone Get Connected: Reach out to elderly grandparents, neighbors, etc. and ask if they need assistance with technology and social connectedness. This is a bit more challenging as you’ll need to walk them through the steps over the phone or across the fence line, but be patient and know that you are help-

ing someone else connect to their loved ones. My Memaw says, “I taught you to use the toilet, you can help me with my iPhone.” Fair enough.

Start a Social Community: Need a tribe? Take to Facebook Groups and start a community of like-minded people. Miss your book club? Take it to social media and begin a virtual book club. Don’t be afraid to think small here—you don’t need the next brilliant idea to begin a social community, and most people are looking for a place to belong.

Physical distancing doesn’t

have to mean social isolation and there are numerous ways to connect while adhering to safety recommendations. Check on your people who are “essential” employees, text or email an old friend or family member, have a long phone conversation (remember those?), write a thank you note to someone who has made a difference in your life, offer to connect people who may be able to help each other, and look for your own ways to connect.

Ironically, this is a time to open up our minds and focus on our social well-being. There is so much pressure to emerge from this with a grand new idea; maybe all we need to worry about coming out of this ordeal with a lesson on how to make one or two new friends.

Shantelle P. Dedicke, CMP, is President and Chief Creative Officer of Frances Roy Agency. Visit the website at www.francesroy.com or text her at 307.631.7644.

EARTH DAY

continued from previous page

country of your enemies; then the land will rest and enjoy its sabbaths. All the time that it lies desolate, the land will have the rest it did not have during the sabbaths you lived in it.” (Leviticus 26:34-35)

Guess how many years Israel was in captivity? If you guessed 70, you guessed correctly. As the writer of 2nd Chronicles tells us, “The land finally enjoyed its Sabbath rest, lying desolate until the 70 years were fulfilled.” (2 Chron. 36:21) The bill came due and the captivity wasn’t lifted until it was paid in full. In the book by Pastor Robert Morris, “Take the Day Off,” he makes the case that the people of Is-

rael may have wrongly assumed God wasn’t serious about all of this, because they had gotten away with it for so long. Similarly, we make the same assumption about our lives and the Earth around us until the bill is due and demands to be paid.

Perhaps we should choose to take notice during our confinement what God is trying to teach us by drawing us closer to Himself and allowing the Earth to heal. And when life returns to a more “normal” pace, as we are allowed to come out of our voluntary captivity, I pray as a nation we choose to remember the value of obedience to the Lord and His Sabbath. The health of the Earth and our own lives are directly connected both physically and spiritually. Corona virus

has revealed that to us.

Dr. E. Jennifer Esses, OB/GYN, has been in private practice in Okaloosa/Walton Counties since 2001. She has delivered well over 3,000 babies in her career. Prior to private practice, she served active duty in the U.S. Air Force stationed at Eglin AFB as the Eglin OB/GYN Flight Commander. She is currently affiliated with Sacred Heart Hospital on the Emerald Coast and delivers at ‘The Family Birth Place.’ She loves to run and meditate on God’s word. Dr. Esses says her faith keeps her running and she keeps running because of her faith. You can read her blog, ‘Running on Faith,’ at runningon-faith-beachstork.blogspot.com.

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 Business

Looking at The Law: Give Your Family the Gift of Clarity



BY GREG D. CROSSLIN

Estate Planning isn't just about what happens to your assets after you have passed. It is also about protecting yourself and your loved ones now! This includes having a plan for making critical decisions in the event you are unable to make them yourself. This can be from a crit-

ical medical condition, a terminal condition or other incapacity. As with all aspects of your Estate Plan, the time is now- to act while you are able to do so. Unfortunately, if an illness or injury render you unconscious or otherwise incapacitated, it is then too late to begin this process.

If you don't have a plan that expresses your wishes, your family may have to make medical decisions on your behalf or petition the Court for guidance, even going as far as having to get a Guardianship created and a Guardian appointed for you. Either way, there is ab-



sure your family is spared the burden of guessing or worse, arguing about what you would have decided under unknowable circumstances, we suggest you put these wishes in writing. This means at a minimum, having a Living Will and a Healthcare Power of Attorney, and in all likelihood a Durable Power of Attorney.

All of these documents are known by many names in different places which sometimes lead to confusion. Regardless of the terminology, these documents serve critical purposes:

1. They guide your healthcare providers in the event you become terminally ill or permanently unconscious;
2. They allow you to appoint someone you trust to make medical decisions on your behalf; and
3. They provide someone to make other decisions on your

behalf with regard to your property and finances in the event you are incapacitated.

It is extremely important to put your plan into action. No matter how carefully you plan your day-to-day activities, no matter how careful you are, or what you do, Living Wills, Healthcare Directives, Durable Powers of Attorney, and Powers of Attorney are effective only if your documents are readily accessible, healthcare providers honor them and financial institutions or others dealing with your agent recognize them as being proper.

Especially in these times, it is important to have these documents prepared to meet the statutory requirements of Florida law. Your family deserves it!

Greg D. Crosslin is the Principal Attorney at the Law Office of Greg D. Crosslin, 3999 Commons Drive West, Suite D, in Destin. Call 850-650-7378 or visit www.destinlegal.com for more information.

solutely no guarantee that the decisions made by a Court or a Guardian or even family members will be made the way you want to have them made, or by the person that you would have selected doing the choosing for you.

To ensure that your wishes are carried out and to en-

EDWARD JONES

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Meet our Local Pros: **The Gasaways** **American Eagle Fence Company**



BY RITA L. SHERWOOD

Meet Kimberly and Blake Gasaway from Niceville's own American Eagle Fence Company. Blake and his family grew up vacationing here as his mom's side of the family lived in Laurel Hill since the 1840s. Not many locals can say that!

A member of the American Fence Association, Certified Fence Contactors, and Certified Fence Professionals, Blake has more than 10 years' experience in business consulting. He and his wife pride themselves in being highly professional as well as highly trained. He states their mission is "To provide excellent customer service, sales and installation with quality products to protect people, pets and property. We don't just sell fences, we sell peace of mind and security."

Kimberly Gasaway is president and Blake is executive vice president of the company, and it's been established for three years. And what a three-year run it's been, with 200% growth every year since they have started.

They build commercial and residential fences, working with local builders such as Randy Wise, local developments like HarborWalk and the Palms in Destin, government contractors from Eglin and Hurlburt, national companies like Target, local Okaloosa county schools, residential customers from Hammock Bay to Kelly Plantation, and even to Grayton Beach.

Aluminum fences are the company's number one seller because they are rust resistant, which is important in being so



close to the beach. Custom and higher end wood fences come in at second and tend to be more prominent in beautiful residential settings. Commercial heavy-duty chain link fences are the norm for military bases and private companies, as is industrial grade aluminum fencing.

Their contract last year was to build 37 fences for Okaloosa County schools. Six high school fences were completed with the addition of security fences and safety aluminum fences at the front entrances, and bus ramps and chain link fences around the back entrances. They also installed security doors and gates with panic bars.

Kimberly and Blake are members of Crosspoint church and are active volunteers in the community. They have donated and installed 20-30 gates for PAWS, and volunteer their time for the Calm house in Niceville, a home for single mothers and their children who are living in crisis.

When not working and helping the local community, the Gasaways enjoy spending their weekends boating, fishing and hunting.



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 Business

5 Ways to Protect Yourself from Identity Theft

BY NELLIE SCHLAGTER, VICE PRESIDENT-RETAIL MARKET MANAGER, SYNOVUS BANK

Writers have spun countless books and movie plots around the theme of one person pretending to be another. But the real-life crime of identity theft is serious business. The impact

on victims can include damaged credit, financial ruin and a lengthy, frustrating recovery process.

Here's what you should know about how identity theft can put your financial safety at risk — and what you can do to protect yourself.



Review your credit reports at least once a year.

You can get a free copy of your credit report once each year from the three national credit-reporting agencies: Experian, Equifax and TransUnion. Be sure to check the reports for errors, especially any accounts listed that you didn't open yourself. You can request your free credit reports through this central website: www.annualcreditreport.com/index.action.

Use strong, complex passwords.

It's especially important to use strong passwords for sensitive information, such as your bank, credit card, shopping and other financial accounts. Enable the security features on any mobile devices where you have downloaded any banking apps.

Keep important documents in a safe.

Instead of carrying your Social Security card in your wallet, lock it away in a safe, along with your passport. Keep copies of your driver's license and credit cards in a secure place so that if the original items are lost or stolen, you can quickly have them cancelled and replaced.

Freeze your credit reports.

If you learn about a data breach or other event that may have exposed your personal information to potential theft, one option for stemming the damage is contacting the three main credit bureaus to freeze your credit reports, notes the Better Business Bureau. This prevents any fake "you" from applying for new credit in your name. If you want to apply for credit later, you will need to temporarily "thaw" the reports so lenders can access them. Credit freezes and thaws are usually free for victims of identity theft. The Better Business Bureau notes that if you're taking this step as a precautionary measure, you'll pay a \$3 to \$10 fee in most states.

Watch out for mobile accounts.

Even the armor of a credit freeze can have chinks, as cybersecurity expert Brian Krebs points out. For instance, many identity thieves have managed to open mobile phone accounts in the names of people who had frozen their credit reports. That's

because, instead of using Equifax, Experian or TransUnion to vet customers, some mobile companies check applicants' credit through the National Consumer Telecommunications and Utilities Exchange (NCTUE).

To prevent this problem, be sure to place a separate freeze with the NCTUE as well as the big three.

A Good Defense

The long list of things you must do to protect yourself against identity theft shows that a good defense requires significant effort. Each of these steps, though, will make identity theft attempts that much more difficult. Get into the habit of blocking identity thieves wherever you can, and your financial security will be that much stronger. If you believe you've been the victim of identity theft, follow steps from the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau: www.consumerfinance.gov.

Important Disclosure Information

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Below is a list of go-to resources from agencies providing assistance and answering questions concerning COVID-19. The safety and well-being of our community is our top priority, and ensuring everyone in need of assistance has information available to them is crucial.

RE-EMPLOYMENT ASSISTANCE

www.floridajobs.org

SMALL BUSINESS LOANS

floridadisasterloan.org

PRICE-GOUGING HOTLINE

www.myfloridalegal.com

CORONAVIRUS TAX RELIEF

www.irs.gov/coronavirus

SCHOOL CLOSURES UPDATE

www.fldoe.org/em-response/index.shtml

FOOD & EDUCATION RESOURCES FOR DISTANCE LEARNING

www.fldoe.org/em-response/resources-families.shtml

FREE MEALS FOR KIDS & TEENS

summerbreakspot.freshfromflorida.com/

FLORIDA HEALTH INTERACTIVE DATA DASHBOARD

fdoh.maps.arcgis.com/apps/opsdashboard/index.html#/8d0de33f260d444c852a615dc7837c86

What is identity theft?

According to the Federal Trade Commission, identity theft occurs when someone uses your personal information (such as your name, address, Social Security number, your bank account or credit card information) without your permission.

Tip: Be sure to check your credit report for errors or fraud at least once a year.

Frequently encountered forms of identity theft include:

Tax ID theft - Using another person's Social Security number to file a phony tax return and steal the refund

Medical ID theft - Using someone else's personal information to obtain medical services or submit fraudulent bills to a health insurance company

Child ID theft - Stealing the identities of minors (who may not catch up to the deception until they become adults) and using their Social Security number to open bank or credit card accounts or apply for a loan, government benefits, rent or utilities

Senior ID theft - Using a senior citizen's personal information to fraudulently access their financial assets or benefits (a crime usually committed by medical and long-term care services employees or caregivers who have access to a victim's personal information)

Social ID theft - Setting up a bogus social media account with another person's name, photo and personal data

The best defense against identity theft is to be on alert for warning signs, use available technical safeguards, and react promptly to any potential breach of your personal data. USA.gov offers several guidelines.



Local Business Highlight: SimpleHR Offers Solutions

Managing an organization is a full-time commitment and a business owner's top priority. The day to day can become easily consumed by administrative responsibilities, vast amounts of paperwork, government compliance and detailed accounting. Unless your business specializes in these areas, that does not leave much time for the heart of your business model.

For the past 18 years, locally owned and operated, SimpleHR has made it their mission to relieve these complicated burdens. They focus on human resource needs so their clients can focus on building their businesses. As a Professional Employer Organization (PEO), SimpleHR provides employee management solutions and administrative relief for small to mid-sized business owners.

What is the secret to their success, particularly during such unprecedented times? If you ask



SimpleHR President, Bill Lindley, putting people first and establishing a strong corporate culture has built a strong and lasting foundation, "SimpleHR is blessed with an outstanding team of professionals. We are thankful for their remarkable efforts during such an unparalleled time in our history. We are equally thankful for the loyalty of our clients that entrust our expertise to help navigate life's celebrations, as well as difficulties. And for the last 18 years, we have been grateful to call this amazing community home. Working collectively, our team, clients, and community have overcome past adversity, will

successfully manage today's challenges, and look forward to facing the future together."

What can a client expect from a relationship with this community partner? A dedicated account representative who is based locally and a team of certified experts available day or night, providing quality services that meet the initial and ongoing needs and expectations of their clients. The team at SimpleHR breaks it down in three manageable categories.

Simple Payroll

SimpleHR provides accurate, reliable payroll services. A team of experts has the knowledge of

all applicable laws that govern compensation. They effectively administer your payroll, report payroll taxes, and deliver timely paychecks to your employees.

Simple Benefits

SimpleHR meets the specific needs of a small to medium-sized business. A team of benefits experts provide comprehensive, low-cost benefit packages tailored to an organization. By offering a broad range of choices, SimpleHR ensures employees receive the best benefits at the most cost-effective prices.

Simple Protection

SimpleHR helps protect your business. Staying compliant with federal and state regulations can be daunting. Human resource and risk management specialists ensure that you and your employees are protected.

While COVID-19 has pre-

sented many businesses with a number of challenges, SimpleHR has responded with critical resources and information including hosting free webinars to local chambers of commerce and launching a dedicated website where business owners can find a plethora of tools and resources via quick links.

SimpleHR is not only considered an essential business, it is vital to all businesses, essential or otherwise. For more information and for access to a list of resources and to sign up for the newsletter, please visit SimpleHR.com/Newsletter. You can also follow SimpleHR on Facebook, LinkedIn, and Twitter. SimpleHR is a licensed Florida Professional Employer Organization (PEO), license number #EL374.



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Hope Through Art Remembering Whose We Are

BY RON SANDSTEAD,
FLUTTERBY ANTIQUES

Lately, I have had a song stuck in my head. I don't know why this happens, it just does. Maybe it is the tune – or the words – but Garth Brooks' song "The River" is the one I keep hearing and singing to myself. Garth sings about dreams and compares them to a river that is constantly changing. In these crazy times, maybe we need to find our river — our dream — and follow it.

"You know a dream is like a river, ever changin' as it flows.

And a dreamer's just a vessel that must follow where it goes. I'll never reach my destination if I never try.

So I will sail my vessel 'til the river runs dry."

Cindy Putman is one of those artists who is following her dream. In the 25 years I have known her, she has reinvented herself several times — and is now on her way to a new life in Phoenix, Arizona. Throughout it all, my longtime friend has always been an artist.

Cindy was born and raised in

Houston, Texas. She attended Brooks Institute of Photography in California and went to Auburn's School of Commercial Art. She has worked for CBS as Manager of Advertising and later owned an advertising agency with her husband Steve. Cindy has always been a dynamo of energy and creative ideas and now spends her time painting portraits of people and animals. For her, the epitome of any portrait is capturing a person's movements and emotions in a way that you know what they are thinking.

For Cindy, creating art is a form of meditation. It is how she relaxes. Cindy prefers using oils when she paints and typically works on six paintings at once. She has had many satisfied clients and her portrait of a Fort Walton Beach High School band member is hanging in the high school.

For her banner, Cindy painted a grinning boy standing in the surf with a snorkel and mask on his head. In this oil on canvas, you can tell he is loving being in the water. She titled this



Kelly Pierre

painting "Joyful Play" — and it is.

Kelly Pierre is from a small town in southern Louisiana and grew up in the family business of shrimping. He learned a strong work ethic from his father, grandfather and uncles who all had shrimp boats. It was always a point of pride that the boats were works of art and often photographed by tourists. He says that even with all the hard work, there was always "lots of laughter."

Kelly and his wife Jennifer have two teenagers whom they are encouraging to find their dreams. Being a professional



Cindy Putnam

artist is how he has supported himself and his family for the last 25 years. He and his family moved to Destin in 2013. At first, he set up his easel in the alcove near the stairs of the Emerald Grande. He currently has a small building/studio on the Destin Harbor where he paints and displays his artwork for sale.

When Kelly was younger, he didn't know he wanted to be an artist. Although he had been sketching since a child, he didn't pick up a paintbrush until he was 19. Kelly has a unique style of painting that he credits to watching Bob Ross as a kid. He calls it "Kelly Style" which

is a combination of realism of and impressionism. Whatever it is — it is special and very cool.

Kelly chose to paint a white heron for his banner artwork. The heron stands in the shallows of a swamp surrounded by an early morning mist. A rising sun glows through the fog with the shoreline and palm trees just becoming visible. The heron is the picture of calm and graceful motionless. Only the eye of the heron shows the intensity of the bird.

Both of our artists are pursuing their dreams. As Garth says in his song to all of us:

"There's bound to be rough waters, and I know I'll take some falls.

With the good Lord as my captain, I can make it through them all...

...Like a bird upon the wind, these waters are my sky...

Lord, I will sail my vessel 'til the river runs dry."

During this time of isolation, we need to have hope and remember Whose we are. We must all keep following that river of dreams.

2020 OAA Poster Contest!

The Okaloosa Arts Alliance (OAA) invites all K-12th grade Okaloosa County School students to participate in the 11th Annual OAA Okaloosa County School Poster Contest. Due to school closures and COVID-19, this year will be a virtual contest and gallery.

The OAA wants to know what your favorite thing has been during this time of social distancing. It can be family time (like riding bikes) or seeing someone doing a good deed (like doctors and nurses) or your favorite activity (like reading a good book) or whatever you consider special during the COVID-19 pandemic. The artwork can be anything you can create on paper with markers, pencils, paint, pastels, charcoal, or crayons.

Any K-12th grade Okaloosa County School student is eligible; entries can be submitted by any Okaloosa County School or any individual student. The



poster contest deadline is May 22, 2020. Please submit only one entry per student. Posters should be saved with the student's name and grade as a .pdf or .jpg at the highest quality. Please submit your entry via email attachment to amybaty1@gmail.com and "OAA Poster Contest" in the subject line; put your name, grade, and

school name in the email body. Please note that by entering the contest you are giving the Okaloosa Arts Alliance permission to add your poster contest entry on the OAA website and social media. All the entries will be on the Okaloosa Arts Alliance website.

There will be a 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place winner for three elementary school students (K-4), for three middle school students (5-7), and for three high school students (8-12) in Okaloosa County. Each 1st place winner will receive a \$75 gift card, each 2nd place winner will receive a \$50 gift card and each 3rd place winner will receive a \$25 gift card in the mail. Winners of the contest will be announced via email, Facebook and the OAA website on Thurs, May 28, 2020 by 5 p.m.

For information on the Okaloosa Arts Alliance, go to www.okaloosaarts.org.



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Musical Distancing



By LISA CYR

Here I am social distancing on my back porch. A light breeze gently shaking the leaves, while puffy white clouds float beneath a blue sky. School is out and I can hear children playing in the streets, hopefully social distancing themselves from each other. Our outdoor cat, Mocha, is relaxing into a deep sleep. She is one big brown oblivious poof ball of fluff. Not a care in the world. So, now what? I can only drink so much sweet tea while waiting for the official “ok” for my piano students to return.

Just think, two weeks ago our primary focus was toilet paper and hand sanitizer gel. Now we are waiting for a virus to tell us when we are returning to normal, like in the “Twilight Zone.” I just received a message on my cell phone that those age 65 and over should not even leave their front door. It reminded me of those emergency announcements we used to see on TV saying, “This is a test. This station is conducting a test of the Emergency Broadcasting System. If this had been an actual emergency...” It usually interrupted my “favorite program.”

When the emergency is over, do we really want to return to our same “favorite program?” Our fast-paced society reminds me of the now outlawed “roundabouts” at playgrounds. Spinning so fast, centrifugal force eventually taking over sending us flying off or just barely holding on. Life can be that way.

There are ways to reduce centrifugal force. Slow down. Playing a musical instrument is soothing, challenging, fun, productively time consuming, and rewarding. An activity we can do inside or outside, privately or in a group setting. Some of us have musical instruments around our home. Now is a good time to open them up and begin experimenting. You can’t go wrong, just have fun and a free spirit. Try finding the notes from your favorite song.

If you have several children, try forming a stomp percussion group using things like a wood block, coffee can, bucket, shaker, or yes, those empty toilet paper rolls! Get on YouTube and pick out stomp type music with a fun beat. Have them play along with it. Encourage them to create their own music from that example. For older children, they can get together and try to form their

own “band.” Our three children did that every summer break. During their college years, they performed together regularly around Tallahassee and recorded two original albums. The band’s name was “Quiet People.”

There are a variety of online websites that have keyboards and music learning games such as:

- www.onlinepianist.com/virtual-piano (online keyboard with letters on keys)
- www.classicsforkids.com/games.html (games)
- www.musictechteacher.com/music_quizzes/music_quizzes.htm (games)

For middle schoolers and up:

- www.musictheory.net/exercises

There does come a time when a teacher is needed to refine and define musical skills. Some students study with a teacher right away. While others, develop an interest and then seek greater

ability and understanding from a teacher. During this “at home time” our teachers offer online lessons with platforms such as: Zoom, Skype, or Facetime. Eventually, you may change over to “in-person lessons” here at the studio or remain online. The best scenario is an in-person private lesson because teachers are able to tweak hand positions, fingers, and help a student quickly resolve a playing problem.

Studio 237 Music Lessons is located in Santa Rosa Beach. Our teachers seek to patiently help you succeed on your instrument. Give the studio a call to schedule a visit, ask questions, or get started with lessons at 850-231-3199. Our website is www.Studio237Music.com where you can learn more about our teachers, instruments, studio, rates, and more. Email is Studio237Dawson@gmail.com.

The Day The Music Died, Again.

By SHANNON IRELAND

This article title is not meant to compare to the meaning of Don McLean’s song American Pie, referring to the loss of some iconic musicians. However, there is something happening here, and it is affecting our local music scene. There is no denying that what is going on in the world today has directly affected many industries, some more than others. The COVID-19 pandemic has shut down virtually every industry except grocery stores. The dine-in restaurants that can be open for delivery or takeout, have still been mostly operating at a loss. Bars, rentals, retail, beaches and a lot of what Florida is loved for have been closed. (Although at the time of this writing some, like the beaches and retail, are re-opening or determining strategies for opening.

Let’s talk about the music and the day it died...again. The musicians in this area make the vast majority of their money during spring break and in the summer. Yes, there are off season gigs, but they are few and far between. Normally, during the off season, the musicians master their art, write songs, collaborate with others, and pick up any gig they can. Most of them are smart about saving during the busy season to make it through the off season.



I have seen on social networks, people making comments to the musicians such as “well I guess they will need to go out and get a real job now.” Those folks have no clue. First of all, the majority of the local musicians already supplement their incomes with “real jobs.” The lucky ones are working in the music business while also performing when they can. Secondly, the musicians aren’t striking it rich out there. They are not doing it for the money, but to support the passion they have for music, and entertaining all of us.

Today is the day the music died, again. We are all on the struggle bus, together here. Here’s a solution for those of you that want to help out. Most people are still working from home, or are at home and out of work for now. Let’s all make that extra effort on social networks to watch our favorite musicians and their live

feeds performing. SHARE those feeds live, ENCOURAGE your friends to share it too! Let’s have as many people as we can blast this out everywhere as it happens. Most of the live feeds I see are on Facebook, simply click share. The single most helpful thing you can do is tip these musicians online. It

is easy; they usually have a sign or a link to click connecting to their funding source such as Venmo or PayPal. If you are unable to chip in financially, Share, Share and Share some more!!

We can all help to bring the music back to life! When everything is back to normal, and it will

be, I hope to help these extremely talented and dedicated musicians be able to jump back in and do what they do best. Create, perform and entertain.

Shannon Ireland is co-founder of 30A Songwriter Radio Music & Coffee in Santa Rosa Beach.

MATTIE KELLY ARTS FOUNDATION

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EVERY THURSDAY

Concerts through May 28 have been postponed

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MKAF.org

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<div style="background-color: #0070C0; color: white; padding: 2px 5px; font-weight: bold;">APR 23</div> <p style="font-size: 0.8em;">Jeffrey Steele</p>	<div style="background-color: #0070C0; color: white; padding: 2px 5px; font-weight: bold;">MAY 28</div> <p style="font-size: 0.8em;">Forrest Williams Band</p>
<div style="background-color: #0070C0; color: white; padding: 2px 5px; font-weight: bold;">APR 30</div> <p style="font-size: 0.8em;">M80's</p>	<div style="background-color: #0070C0; color: white; padding: 2px 5px; font-weight: bold;">JUNE 04</div> <p style="font-size: 0.8em;">Velcro Pygmies</p>
<div style="background-color: #0070C0; color: white; padding: 2px 5px; font-weight: bold;">MAY 07</div> <p style="font-size: 0.8em;">Accent</p>	<div style="background-color: #0070C0; color: white; padding: 2px 5px; font-weight: bold;">JUNE 11</div> <p style="font-size: 0.8em;">Rumours Fleetwood Mac Tribute</p>
<div style="background-color: #0070C0; color: white; padding: 2px 5px; font-weight: bold;">MAY 14</div> <p style="font-size: 0.8em;">Shania Twin (Shania Twain Tribute)</p>	<div style="background-color: #0070C0; color: white; padding: 2px 5px; font-weight: bold;">JUNE 18</div> <p style="font-size: 0.8em;">The Return The Beatles Experience</p>
<div style="background-color: #0070C0; color: white; padding: 2px 5px; font-weight: bold;">MAY 21</div> <p style="font-size: 0.8em;">The Ultimate Eagles Tribute - On The Border</p>	<div style="background-color: #0070C0; color: white; padding: 2px 5px; font-weight: bold;">JUNE 25</div> <p style="font-size: 0.8em;">DEPARTURE The Journey Tribute</p>

 **Around Town**

AROUND TOWN

continued from page 11

offering learning and life-skill resources through the Emeril Lagasse Full-Circle Kitchen and our Full-Circle Gardens.

Since the onset of the Covid-19 crisis, FFT has had to change the way they operate the backpack program and volunteers. Prior to schools closing due to the pandemic, FFT created a set of health standards and guidelines for their volunteer staff to follow upon starting a volunteer shift. Guidelines include not volunteering if sick (even a little), wash hands/sanitize before entering pantry, setting up additional hand sanitizing stations, and the group moved to only plastic bags instead of backpacks to help prevent the spread of the virus.

Once schools closed, FFT has continued the same protocols/ standards to keep volunteers and staff healthy, but have modified food distribution to a direct pick-up service, where families can come to one of the three pantry locations to pick up a bag of food for the week.

FFT continues to work with the school districts to help bridge the meal gap and provide food to families during this time of crisis. For more information about the Food for Thought Outreach, please call Tiffanie at (850) 290-4056 or visit www.fftl.org.

DCWAF

Destin Charity Wine Auction Foundation (DCWAF) donated \$21,600 to children in need through its COVID-19 Relief Fund launched to assist its network of Northwest Florida children's charities who were experiencing additional strain on their resources due to the pandemic. The relief fund, which launched April 6, raised over \$20,000 and will be distributed to three organizations in the form of grants to assist in their sustainability:

Opportunity Place: \$1,800, Food for Thought: \$9,900, Youth Village: \$9,900

Note: Grants from the COVID-19 Relief Community Children's Fund are separate from the annual funding that each charity receives from

DCWAF.

"We are grateful to our supporters who have generously donated funds to help our charity partners as they work to assist those most impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. We look forward to doing much more when we are able to once again join together to raise our paddles high in late August," DCWAF President John Russell said. DCWAF is one of the nation's premier fundraising organizations, donating more than \$21 million to children in need in Northwest Florida since its inception in 2005. Its largest annual fundraiser, the Destin Charity Wine Auction, was originally scheduled for April 24-25 in Grand Boulevard and has been rescheduled for Aug. 21-22. DCWAF is currently ranked #5 on the list of "Top Charity Wine Auctions in the U.S." by Wine Spectator Magazine.

Boys & Girls Clubs Youth of the Year

Selected among numerous outstanding youth, Jacinda Rassa has been named the Youth of the



Year by the Boys & Girls Clubs of the Emerald Coast. The Youth of the Year title is a prestigious honor bestowed upon an exemplary young person in recognition of leadership, service, academic excellence and dedication to live a healthy lifestyle. Now in its 73rd year, the Youth of the Year program honors our nation's most awe-inspiring young people on their path to great futures and encourages all kids to lead, succeed and inspire. Jacinda will go on to contend for the Florida Youth of the Year title and a \$2,500 college scholarship from Boys & Girls Clubs of America. Jacinda's involvement over the last four years with the Keystone Club, including serving as president, has been instrumental in her leadership development. Keystone Club is

a teen group dedicated to leadership and community service. Jacinda is always the first one to sign up for community service or volunteer opportunities. In the wake of Hurricane Michael, she worked with other Club members to make and distribute hygiene kits to families affected by the storm. After graduation, Jacinda plans to attend Santa Fe Community College in Gainesville, Fla., and then transfer to the University of Florida.

As one of 26 nominees from throughout the state, ages 14-to-18, who will be recognized, Jacinda will compete for the title of the Southeast Region Youth of the Year and an additional \$20,000 college scholarship. Five regional winners will advance to Washington, D.C., in fall 2020, to compete for the title of Boys & Girls Clubs of America's National Youth of the Year. The National Youth of the Year will receive an additional scholarship of \$50,000. For more information about the Youth of the Year program, visit www.youthoftheyear.org.

MOTHER'S DAY

continued from page 20



As a beautiful Mother, Grand Mother and Great Grand Mother, my Mom, **Margue-**

rite Austin Joyner, blesses us all with her strong love, kindness and support.

-Marguerite Parker, Silver King Charters of Destin



My Mom, **Janice Smith**, always has been and continues

to be my biggest supporter. She instilled in me the philosophy that "If I can dream it, I can achieve it."

-Nellie Schlachter, Synovus Bank



My Mom, **Donna Walker**, blesses me in so many ways, but

I think the best quality she has is being my greatest confidante. She's always ready and willing to listen and be loving and supportive!

-Rita Sherwood, DESTIN Life/SOWAL Life



My Mom, **Iselda Richards**, blesses me with her wisdom, strength of character and "Mama Bear" protection. She exemplifies what a strong wom-

an and good mother should be.

-Rachel Russell, Vision Consultant



My Mom, **Carol**, was a blessing in so many ways. She was compassionate and loving yet firm. She instilled in me to be a gentleman, to always give my best and to never quit.

-Scott Miller, Director of Sales, Destin Life/Bay Life

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