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# 27th Annual MKAF Festival of the Arts Celebrates Art, Music, Food and Fun

By Zandra Wolfgram

How do you frame up a festive, fall weekend on the Emerald Coast? Come take part in Mattie Kelly Arts Foundation's 27th annual Festival of the Arts.

With dozens of artists taking part, this year's free event, set for Saturday, Oct. 29 and Sunday, Oct. 30 at the scenic MKAF Cultural Arts Village in Destin, again promises to be a true celebration of art, music, food and fun.

One of the Southeast's premier art festivals, the two-day signature event features exhibits of more than 100 artists venturing from 17 states showcasing a diverse palette of artistic styles in a range of different art mediums from oil, watercolor and glass art paintings to clay pottery, ceramics, metal sculpture, mixed media, jewelry art and much more.

Art lovers of all ages can watch artists demonstrating their techniques in their tented booths, browse art from



dozens of emerging new and student artists, and get handson in the interactive Creative Kids station and more.

This year's poster art features Seascape, a lushly layered coastal-inspired acrylic work of award-winning 30A artist Justin Gaffrey, South Walton 2005 artist of the year. As a professional, self-taught, artist since 2001, Gaffrey draws inspiration from

nature, human nature and life experiences.

Beyond the visual arts, the Festival will feature two days of continual live music and a sampling of the local culinary arts scene. Entertaining street performers, art-themed photo opportunities, lively art drawings and the sale of colorful keepsake souvenirs — all create a family-friendly festival feel.





Esteemed judges will award \$10,000 in artist prizes in the juried and collaborative art categories. On Saturday, Festivalgoers are invited to vote for the "People's Choice" Artist Award by casting a ballot located at the Main Festival Entrance.

One must-not-miss feature

**MKAF** continued on page 2

# Okaloosa County Celebrates its Military Heroes in 75th Air Force Anniversary

By Doug Stauffer

Okaloosa County gathered together to celebrate the military, first with the U.S. Air Force's 75th Anniversary celebration, followed the next day with a salute to several veterans inducted into the Florida Veterans' Hall of Fame at the Northwest Florida State College Mattie Kelly Arts Center in Niceville. The Hall of Fame event took place at Magnolia Grill in Fort Walton Beach.

Eglin Federal Credit Union and the Greater Fort Walton Beach Chamber of Commerce hosted both events. Boeing and Northwest Florida State College also sponsored the 75th-anniversary celebration.

Nine panelists discussed the role played by the Air Force during major events in U.S. military history. Topics featured many first-hand accounts

HEROES continued on page 2





# Community

# **MKAF**

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is the Collaborative Art Exhibit, which showcases the work of both emerging and seasoned artists competing for the McIlroy Awards.

Six sensational local and regional musicians and bands will perform live throughout the weekend on stage at The Dugas Pavilion. The lineup includes The Wavy Winstons, Jones &

Company, Tillman & Taff, Now & Then, Roman Street Trio and Casey Kearney.

The Festival celebrates the art of dining, too. Foodies will enjoy samplings of savory cuisine and sweet bites from area restaurants and food trucks along with craft beer and cocktails in the Beer & Wine Garden. Gather with family and friends to enjoy your meal seated at tables al fresco, while taking in the scene and listening to the stellar music line up.

Festival producer Deb Nissley guarantees there will be plenty of "new surprises" to enjoy. As for advice on how best to enjoy the Festival, she says, "Plan to spend the day and come prepared to see a lot of great art, hear great music, enjoy the outdoors and meet talented artists."

The Festival is open to the public and runs Saturday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Sunday 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Daily admission is free! Proceeds from MKAF

cultural events help fund ArtsReach MKAF's arts education community outreach programs serving K-12 students, children and adults with special

needs, and the military community along the Emerald Coast.

For more details follow



MKAF on social media channels and visit MKAF.org.

# **HEROES**

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from people involved in training for the Doolittle Raid on Tokyo, Operation Desert Storm, the Iran Hostage Rescue Mission, Osama bin Laden Raid, Vietnam War, Korean War, Operation Enduring Freedom Afghanistan and more.

The celebration included several special guests, including SEAC Ramón "CZ" Colón-López, the senior enlisted adviser to the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and Retired Capt. Dale Dv. a decorated Vietnam War Marine. Dye is the founder and head of Warriors, Inc., a technical advisory company specializing in portraying realistic military action in Hollywood films. He has offered his expertise to television shows such as the HBO miniseries "Band of Brothers" and "The Pacific."

Ted Corcoran Corcoran IOM, President/CEO of the Greater FWB Chamber, stated, "It's just amazing that our neighbors and friends were involved in these crucial military operations throughout the world."

Corcoran pointed out that the Air Force, and the military as a whole, are loved in Okaloosa County. "Our community loves the Air Force. In honor of their 75th Anniversary, we wanted to show them how much we appreciate what they do for our world—by focusing on some of the military operations based



on Eglin and Hurlburt. Having some of the Air Force reps involved with the operations tell the story from their perspective—really made it personal," said Ted.

Among the featured speakers were Cindy Cole Chal (the daughter of the late Colonel Dick Cole, who served as Col. Jimmy Doolittle's co-pilot in the lead B-25 in the April of 1942 bombing raid on Toyko, Japan), Col. Howard Hill, Col. Larry Ropka, Col. Bill Keeler, Chief Master Sergeant Bill Walter, Lt. Col. Kirby Locklear, Lt. Col. Corby Martin, Col. Allison Black, L. Gen. Marshall "Brad" Webb. and well-known actor, author, and military film consultant. Dale Dve.

"To be with the United States



PHOTOS BY DOUG STAUFFER

Air Force in a place like Fort Walton Beach was like going home again," said Dye." You could see the heritage of 75 years of service to this nation. Congratulations to the Fort Walton Beach Chamber of Commerce for being the "stick stirrer" of this successful event." The riveting stories brought the news headlines to life.

The state established the Florida Veterans' Hall of Fame in 2013 to recognize and honor military veterans who have made a significant contribution to Florida through their years of service. Nine Okaloosa County veterans have been inducted since 2016.

Florida Department of Veterans' Affairs representative Bob Asztalos spoke about the importance of the Veteran's Hall of

Fame. The chamber presented two plaques to Okaloosa County Commissioner Trey Goodwin to display in the county's two courthouses.

"This is not to recognize the veteran for their military service, it's their post-military service. It's for what they did when they came back," said Asztalos. "It's incredible to me how veterans will go off to war, will serve this county, will do all of that, and then come back and continue to keep giving. And that is who we are honoring tonight."

Corcoran concluded by saying, "The quiet professionals that we have here in the Air Force don't pat themselves on the back very often; it's our job to do that."



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# Stories by Eglin, Duke & Hurlburt Personnel at the 75th Anniversary Air Force Celebration



By Kelly Murphy-Redd, Official Storyteller of the Fort Walton Beach Chamber

Descending by parachute, Howard Hill saw someone with a rifle running down the dirt road in his direction. When he landed, two men in militia outfits and pith helmets stood 10 feet away, looking down the sights of their rifles with bayonets. Forty to fifty more came out from the brush hollering. The Vietnamese government was offering villagers 110 lbs. of rice for every prisoner. It was December 1967.

Trying to take off Howard's gear, the militia couldn't figure out the buckles, so they cut the straps with knives. Accidentally hitting the life preserver, the CO2 cartridges exploded. The militia stabbed wildly at the preservers to deflate them. Howard hoped they wouldn't stab him. They took his flight suit and boots. They returned them minus the boot laces.

His front-seater Jim landed in the woods, was captured, and brought in wearing only underwear and a t-shirt. Elbows bound behind his back, walking along the road to the village, they passed a group of women and children at a gate staring at them. Howard felt embarrassed for Jim and signaled to a guard asking about Jim's flight suit. The guard said, "Him shoot, you no shoot."

Led to an open area, told to sit and bow their heads, people gathered around them. An old man hit Howard in the head. The crowd loved it. At night, they were taken to a room, given a cup of water, a dish of brownish coarse sugar with dried pumpkin powder, and a piece of baguette. Then, tied up even tighter and blindfolded for hours, Howard massaged his numb left arm with his right hand. He couldn't lose circulation and possibly get gangrene.

The guards stood him up and walked him to the door, where he felt cool air and heard the crowd noise. Still blindfolded, Howard was punched and kicked as they led him outside. A woman screamed and slapped his face. The crowd roared approval.

Guards threw Howard on top of Jim in a jeep and drove to a creek. When he asked if anyone spoke English, the guards whacked him. They crossed the creek flanked on both sides by villagers. Kids threw dirt clods at them and kept hitting the guard. Howard wondered if he could overpower his guard, but had no gear and no place to go.

A helicopter took them to the Hanoi Hilton. It was hard to believe only four months and one day earlier, Howard married his wife Libby.

Arriving at the Hanoi Hilton, he was blindfolded again and taken to a room where he stood for a long time. Then the blindfold was taken off, he was untied, and interrogated through the night. Military information is perishable. They need to get it quickly. When he refused to



answer questions, he was bound into a tight ball with ropes. Morning came, the interrogation stopped, and he laid down in the corner to sleep. They returned in the afternoon to begin again.

In February 1968, three prisoners were released early. They violated the code of conduct by accepting special favors from the enemy and signing propaganda statements. In August, Howard's front-seater Jim and two others violated the code and were released. It was meant to demoralize the rest of them.

Howard and his roommate were shown copies of the signed statements and given quill pens. Told they could go home too; they refused. Twelve prisoners were given early release. Only one was honorable because the POW senior ranking officer or-



dered him to go and make public what was going on. Howard believed this helped their treatment. Those who left in February memorized names on 104 flight suits from doing laundry and provided the names to the U.S. Upon release, Jim confirmed Howard was captured.

Howard began prison life in a 5 x 7-foot room and subsequently, moved to an 8 x 8 and a 14 x 14. POWs slept on raised concrete slabs or hardwood slats. A bare light bulb was always on so the guards could see them.

POWs were given a rice mat, two blankets, a mosquito net, (Guards took that away if they were mad at you.), two pairs of underwear, two t-shirts, two pairs of trousers, two jackets, one pair of socks, and a pair of sandals made out of tires with inner tube straps. They also received a hand towel, a liter jug of boiled water twice a day, a bar of lye soap, a tube of toothpaste to last three months, an enamel dish, three cigarettes a day, and a fan on a bamboo stick.

A five-gallon galvanized bucket was the toilet and coarse paper was used for toilet paper.

They figured out that using their sandals as toilet seats could prevent the inevitable ringworm from the rim of the bucket and the imprint of the rim on their butts. Toothpaste also killed ringworm. They emptied the buckets into the open sewage ditch in the shower area. A shower was usually allowed every morning in an open-air, bamboo-walled area using a small rubber bucket with a rope attached to scoop water out of a cistern or well to pour on themselves. No showers on Sundays when they weren't allowed out or if the guards were mad at

At 6 a.m. the gong rang for the POWs to get up, fold their blankets, nets, and mat, and set them at the head of the bed. The guards played the same Radio Hanoi program from the night before about the glorious victories of the Vietnamese. After lunch, the guards took a siesta. Not allowed to communicate with each other, the POWS secretly communicated during siesta, but the guards got smart

Continued on next page





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# **STORIES**

continued from page 1

and tried to listen. Supper was in the evening. At 8 p.m. taps played, and it was time to go to bed. The POWs developed a tap code to communicate when in their rooms. Keeping watch on the guards from their windows, they would communicate verbally as much as possible.

After the Son Tay Raid in November 1970, the POWs moved into Hoa Lo, the central prison in Hanoi. With 50 in a room once and no room for everyone to lay out their mats, some of the men taught classes. There were language classes, math, and even ballroom dancing.

Meals consisted of soup made with pumpkin, kohlrabi, or turnips, a bowl of rice, or baguette. There might be meat or flat fermented fish. One room washed dishes for a building housing 20. They figured out they could write on the bottom of the bowls. They also used the end of toothpaste tubes to write on the coarse paper.

Work detail included dredging sludge from the sewage ditch for the garden, washing dishes, making coal balls out of mud



and soft coal used in the kitchen, or sweeping. Dredging sludge or making coal balls entitled you to a second shower. Guards asked three rooms of POWs to dig bomb shelters for the guards. Two said they would. The third refused. The third room POWs were beaten and had to dig. The POWs saying they would dig were left alone. The guards like to keep them off balance.

Interrogations were called "quizzes" by POWs. Sitting on a small stool, if the guards didn't like what they said, they were hit and knocked off the stool. They had to "stand" on their knees with their arms up in the air for hours. During surprise room

inspections, guards would frisk them, throw around their belongings, and plant contraband. Senior officers got it the worst. Treatment depended on which camp you were in.

Howard moved camps a few times. In 1969, he was in an old French movie studio where the Vietnamese held Christmas Eve Service for propaganda. East Germans filmed it. U.S. Intelligence obtained a copy and blew up every other frame into 5x7 still photos. At a gathering in 1970, the League of American Families spread the photos out on tables. Howard's wife, Libby, walked by and saw a picture of Howard.

One of the nicknames given to the interrogators was Judas-Maker. Another, Stag, spoke fluent English. Stag would stand outside under the POWs' windows and try to get them to talk by sounding like an American to get them in trouble.

In May 1972, four-and-a-half years into captivity, How-ard and others were discussing how long the war would continue. They agreed it would go on for another 10-15 years. How-ard said they knew they would go home, they just didn't know when. They had faith in their country. That faith was rewarded when in March 1973 they were released.

Howard says it was worse for the families not knowing whether their loved ones were alive or dead. Divorces and suicides were common among those returning. Howard says he was just so glad to be home.

He has no hatred or animosity for the Vietnamese. He says they were doing their jobs, and he was doing his. "There is no sense in feeling sorry for yourself. Someone always has it worse. And good can be found in everything," says Howard.

He still feels the same senti-

ment used to sign off each time he and his fellow prisoners communicated by tap code, GBU GBA, for "God Bless You, God Bless America."

Howard Hill moved to Okaloosa County in 1991. He served as an Okaloosa County school board member from November 1996 to November 2010. He has served as President of the PAL Soccer League since January 24, 1994. The Niceville soccer field is named in his honor.



Writer/Marketing Consultant Certified Economic Developer Florida Real Estate Broker Official Storyteller of the Fort Walton Beach Chamber of Commerce





# **Picking a Professional**



By Melissa Forte-Litscher

If you're planning on buying or selling your home in this rapidly changing market, you're going to want to work with a real estate professional. But what kind of professionals are available to help you buy or sell your home, and what are the differences between them?

A recent article from realtor. com answered key questions about the different types of real estate professionals, including real estate agents, brokers and REALTORS®—and the differences between the three.

First let's look at a real estate agent. This is a real estate professional that has completed the

basic educational, training and licensing requirements (including passing a licensing exam), which allows them to help people buy, sell and rent real estate. Real estate agents must affiliate themselves with a broker to legally transact real estate business in the state of Florida.

A REALTOR® is a licensed real estate agent that's also a member of the National Association of REALTORS® (NAR), an industry group that holds agents to a certain set of standards and ethics. Essentially, REALTORS are real estate agents, but with an extra level of accountability thanks to their association with NAR. The national association membership as well as the state, Florida Realtors, and local, Emerald Coast Association of Realtors, hold all members to a higher standard and have processes in place to protect the public in real estate transactions. We currently have more than five thousand REAL-TOR® members in the ECAR.

A real estate broker is a real estate agent that has pursued further education on a variety



of real estate-related issues, including ethics, contracts, taxes and real estate law—and has passed a broker's license exam. In order to get their broker's license, candidates need a certain level of experience and tenure as a licensed agent for twenty-four months in Florida. As such, real estate brokers are generally more experienced and wellversed in all things real estate. Some brokers use their license to manage or run a company or an office of other agents, and do not work with clients anymore.

Others continue to help buyers and sellers. A good broker helps train a new agent, supports the agent in their growth and education and is a reliable resource for their agents. The broker is liable for the agent's actions, file keeping and is the entity through which commissions are paid when a transaction is com-

Understanding the different types of real estate professionals that are available to help you buy or sell real estate can ensure that you partner with the right

professional for you. Ask your friends, neighbors and family, look to local business relationships you may have, and ask them who served them well. Buying and/or selling a home is one of the largest financial decisions you will make, and you will spend considerable time with the person assisting you. We are blessed to have a great number of REALTORS® in our area. Take some time to meet with them and see which one is a good fit for you and your needs.

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# Melissa Forte-Litscher

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# **Around Town Events**

# **Festival of Fears Now** through Oct. 31



Your haunted attraction has returned to Fort Walton Beach at the Santa Rosa Mall, featuring three all-new and unique haunted houses. The first one is the 'Protocol Z,' a military versus zombies theme walking inside a bunker. The second is the 'Shriek Show,' a circus themed clown maze. And the third is a more magical show with special effects, 'Lazarus Toys,' an abandoned toy shop." There's also carnival games, a concession stand, photo ops and more.

If you're a local, you know Alex and Andrew Wentz, owners, have been hosting the Festival of Fears for 10 years and each haunted house has its own unique story that has been in development all these years. The houses include state of the art special and practical effects, professional sound design, incredible theming and dozens of live actors.

Open on Friday and Saturday nights through Oct. 1; beginning Thurs., Oct. 6, open Thursday-Saturday. Time: 6-11 p.m. Special open days on Sun., Oct. 30 and Mon., Oct. 31.

Each house requires a separate ticket for entry-3 houses (\$45), two houses (\$35), or one house (\$20). Ticket purchases include access to the midway and photo ops for the night the tickets are good. Festival of Fears is located at the Southwest entrance of the Santa Rosa

The Wentz Brothers' Festival of Fears offers limited private group outings; contact Andrew Wentz at andrew@wentzindustries.com or at (850) 803-1310.

To learn more or purchase tickets: www.wbfestivaloffears.

Choctawhatchee Audubon Society will be exploring the Panhandle looking for the latest migrating birds that pass through our area. All walks and programs are free and open to people of all ages to learn about birding and various nature topics. For a full fall schedule, visit Choctawhatcheeaudubon.org for dates

Oct. 6 - Lionfish in the Gulf of Mexico with Michael Norberg, Coastal Resource Coordinator in Okaloosa County.

Oct. 8 - Field Trip to Fort Pickens, Gulf Islands National Seashore with bird expert Jim Anderton, 850-543-2223. Choctawhatchee Audubon monthly programs are held on the first Thursday of each month at Crosspoint Church in Niceville, room 800 on the 2nd floor of the Chandler Center, NW door of 519 Helms St. at 7:00 pm.

Oct. 15 - Mid-Migration Birds at the Wright Landfill and the Okaloosa Holding Ponds with rarity-spotter Leader Malcolm Swan, 210-452-4899.

Oct. 22 - Field trip to Conservation Park in Southwestern Bay County, 7:30 a.m., with



leader Ron Houser, 850-774-9733.

Oct. 29 – Field Trip to Camp Helen State Park with CAS expert, Emily Ellis, 850-818-2262.

# **Baytowne Beer Fest** Oct. 7 and 8

Time to roll out the barrel and discover unique suds and ales. The Village of Baytowne Wharf at Sandestin presents the 14th Annual Baytowne Wharf Beer Fest Oct. 7-8. American specialty beers from throughout the nation will be available for participants to sample and savor. The main event on Saturday, Oct. 8, will feature more than 200 domestic and international craft beers available for sampling. Brewery representatives will be available at the event, offering an opportunity to learn about the different types of lagers and ales from a variety of styles, and live music will be featured during the festival.

Tickets: Baytownbeerfest.

### **BrunchFest Oct. 9**

The Second Annual Brunch-Fest will be held at Seville Quarter in Downtown Pensacola Sunday, Oct. 9, 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. A brunch-themed festival benefiting the Boys & Girls Clubs of the Emerald Coast, competing teams provide sam-

ples to attendees and judges to battle it out for the Best Brunch in Town. All proceeds benefit the Boys & Girls Clubs of the Emerald Coast, a non-profit organization with clubs in Pensacola, Crestview, South Walton, Defuniak Springs, Destin and Fort Walton Beach. Limited spots for teams to compete are available and restaurants, food trucks, coffee carts and more are invited to bring their best brunch item to the competition. Those interested in competing as a cook team, volunteering and sponsoring, email hello@ francesroy.com.

# **Big Green Egg EggFest** Oct. 15

The 8th annual Big Green Egg EggFest Cooking Competition returns to Seascape Resort in Miramar Beach on Oct. 15 from 10 a.m.- 1:30 pm, celebrating the delicious results of cooking on the Big Green Egg. Benefiting Fisher House of the Emerald Coast and Food For Thought, Eggs on the Beach features unlimited bites, 5-taster votes, Knob Creek samples, Seasonal beer samples by Grayton Brewery & Abita Brewery, a chance to win a Mini-Max Big Green Egg, and more. Watch top college football games at the tiki bar while cook teams, including area non-profits, compete for your support. More Purchase tickets at www.EggsontheBeach.com

# Walk to End Alzheimer's **Emerald Coast Oct. 29**

Register for the 2022 Walk to End Alzheimer's being held Sat., Oct. 29, at Northwest Florida State College, 100 College Blvd. in Niceville. Registration is at 9 a.m. with ceremony at 10 a.m. Walk to immediately follow. Contact Tina Henson, 618-292-9583 or thenson@alz. org, for more information or to sign up!

# **Bloody Mary Festival** Oct. 22

On Saturday, Oct. 22, The Market Shops will hold its 7th Annual Bloody Mary Festival benefiting Habitat for Humanity - Walton County. Over the past six years, the annual event has raised more than \$80,000 for local charities. The annual event, powered by Step One Automotive Group, will feature unlimited tastes of South Walton's most creative and innovative bloody marys, made with Distillery 98's Dune Laker Vodka, and served by the finest restaurants and bars on the Emerald Coast. For a \$60 donation to attend, guests are invited from 11 a.m.- 2 p.m. to enjoy as many as 20 of South Walton's most coveted bloody marys. Restaurants will compete for the 2022 title of "Best Bloody Mary in South Walton." Visit 850Tix for the pre-sale price of \$60 or can be purchased the day of the event at the door for \$75. For more information or to purchase tickets, visit www.themarketshops.com.

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EcoView Windows, Doors and Siding is one of the South's leading providers of factory-direct replacement home windows. EcoView Windows, with locations in Pensacola and Daphne, Ala., offers both impact windows and energy efficient windows in a variety of styles, colors, and grid patterns that can be customized to suit any home.

The company, headquartered in Bay Minette, Alabama, has been in operation since 1986 and now has over 40 locations nationwide. The founder started EcoView with goals of progressing the industry from plain wood windows to the exceptionally energy efficient vinyl replacement windows installed today.

In 2013, a local Pensacola office was established bringing a nationally respected manufacturer to the area with the added benefit of working with a local company. The local dealership has been servicing the Emerald Coast since and continues to provide quality product and guarantees on not just the lowest



pricing, but also on the performance of their work.

EcoView is the only company in this region that offers a true lifetime warranty that includes labor. Their Lifetime Warranty is as long as you own your home and can be transferred once. The company wanted to offer more as typical warranties in the market were including limits and restrictions on their warranties. EcoView makes sure their customers can trust their purchase and experience with the company.

Having foundations in the south, EcoView offers products specifically designed for the region and climate. Each window features high-performing glass that can prevent up to 72% of



the sun's heat from warming the home during the long summer months, while also reducing heat loss during the cold fronts of winter. This can mean reducing heating and cooling bills by at least 35%. The result is a comfortable home year-round with minimized energy costs.

As EcoView focuses on what is best for homes in the Southeast, they set themselves apart by providing customers with top-of-the-line products in storm protection: the ViWintech Shoreline Series of windows. This product has been engineered specifically for Florida homes to meet one of the most stringent building code specifications ever made in the USA:

The HVHZ Specification. This certification is given by the State of Florida for elite products that meet or exceed the HVHZ criteria. Made to endure and protect, the Shoreline Double Hung windows, which, like all Shoreline Series windows, are made with an internal metal core, latches, and locks, and have a Structural Wind Load Capacity of 205.1mph.

It's all about what the customer needs at EcoView Windows, Doors and Siding. This philosophy is reflected in the products, pricing and experience offered. From the very start, the customer gets 15% just for calling for a free estimate and from there they get the best product and a lifetime warranty including labor. A combination of benefits not happening anywhere else.

To schedule a free, in-home estimate, plus receive 20% off the guaranteed lowest price call Fred at (850) 876-3032. Visit www.EcoView-WDS.com to learn more and see examples of the many varieties and styles of windows available to you.





# FWB Happenings OCTOBER 2022

**38th Northwest Florida Fair Fine Arts Show** | C.H. "Bull" Rigdon Fairgrounds Exhibition Hall | FWB

•••• Sep 27-Oct 1 •••••

**Downtown FWB Farmers Market |** 8am-1pm | 2nd & 4th
Saturdays | Fort Walton Beach
Landing Park

• 1-31 •••••

Okaloosa County Farmers'
Market | 7am-2pm | Saturdays
| 1954 Lewis Turner Blvd, FWB
Destin Fishing Rodeo |
Weigh-ins daily at AJ's Destin |

Wentz Brothers' Festival of Fears | 6-11pm | Santa Rosa Mall | FWB

Destin Harbor

Dog Daze-Friendship Veterinary Hospital | 9am-3pm | 139 Brooks St. | FWB Easy, Fast and Loose 3-brush Watercolor Landscape, Instructor: John Groah | 10am-12:30pm | 17 1st St. SE, FWB

Downtown FWB Art Walk sponsored by Artesano Boutique | 5-9pm Okaloosa Cars and Coffee | 8am-1pm | Okaloosa Convention Center | FWB Bowling Pin Shoot | 10am | Emerald Coast Indoor

Shooting & Sport | Niceville

Lightwire Theater's The Ugly Duckling | 7:30pm | Grand Boulevard | Miramar Beach Fall Flix: The Goonies | 7:30pm | Mattie Kelly Arts Foundation | Destin Godspell | 7:30pm | Emerald Coast Theatre Co. | Grand

Ink Masters Tattoo Show | Sat, Oct 1-Mon, Oct 3 | Destin-FWB Convention Center Garden Fest | 9am - 4pm | 6 10th Ave | Shalimar

Blvd

**Godspell** | 2:30pm | Emerald Coast Theatre Co. | Grand Blvd.

Dinner of Dreams | 5-8:30pm | 201 Campbell Dr, Niceville Destin Food Truck Fest | 11am-7pm | Mattie Kelly Cultural Arts Village

**2022 National Night Out (FWB Police Dept.)** | 5:30–8:30pm | Chester Pruitt Softball Park | FWB

**Acoustic Gig** | 6-10pm | Al's Beach Club FWB

Maker Days: Wonders of Weather | 9am-12pm | Emerald Coast Science Center | FWB

Power Your Parenting -Awkward Conversations | 5:30-6:30pm | White-Wilson Medical Center, P.A. | FWB



Bike Night at Helen Back
Pizza | 6-8pm | Helen Back
Pizza | FWB
Acoustic Gig | 4-8pm | Al's
Beach Club | FWB
Jeff Solo | 5pm | G.I. Jade Tiki

Bar & Bistro | FWB

44th Annual Destin Seafood Festival | HarborWalk Village | Destin

FWB Chamber First Friday Coffee | 7-9am | Christian Life Center of FWB | First Baptist Church

Emerald Coast Autism
Center's Hole In One Golf
Tournament | 9am | Blackstone
Golf Course | DeFuniak Springs
Baytowne Wharf Beer Fest |
6pm | Baytowne Wharf Events

**Savor the Sound** | 2pm | Mattie Kelly Arts Center | Niceville

**Baytowne Wharf Beer Fest** | 2pm | Baytowne Wharf Events Plaza

**Sea Turtle Extravaganza** | 10am-2pm | Navarre Beach

Sea Turtle Conservation Center Introduction to Blacksmithing | 9am-1pm | 418 Green Acres Rd | FWB

2022 Fall Wheel & Wings Car Show | 10am-2pm | Air Force Armament Museum | Eglin AFB

**Live Music: Blue Levee** | Al's Beach Club | FWB

2nd Annual BrunchFest | 11am | Seville Quarter | Pensacola

**October Moondust** | 6:30-8:30pm | Painting with a Twist | FWB

10 .....

11 ••••••

**Acoustic Gig** | 6-10pm | Al's Beach Club | FWB

Sinfonia Gala featuring Patti LaBelle | 6pm | Sandestin Golf and Beach Resort | Miramar

**Concerts in the Village: Taylor Dayne** | 7pm | Mattie
Kelly Arts Foundation | Destin

Kash'd Out @ Downtown Music Hall | 7pm-12am | FWB Spirit Night Fundraiser | 5-8pm | Chicago Hotdogs & More

Arrogant Steak Off | 6pm | Seville Quarter | Pensacola A Vintage Street Market | 5am-12pm | Northwest Florida Fair Association 1958 Lewis Turner Blvd | FWB

Eggs on the Beach | 10am | Seascape Resort | Miramar Beach

Best of the Emerald Coast I 6pm | Grand Boulevard | Miramar Beach

Viva Ciclovia Latin Street Fest | 12-8pm | Ferry Rd. SE | FWB

**Duchess Live** | 6pm | 3rd Planet Brewing | Niceville **Terror in the Theatre** | 10am-11pm | 6866 Caroline St. | Milton

IMEC Monthly Latin Dance Social | 9pm-12am | The Sound Cafe + Enlightened Studios | FWB

Family Day Open Studio | 1-3pm | Painting with a Twist | FWB

New Domains in
Cybersecurity T&E | Embassy
Suites by Hilton | Destin

Suites by Hilton | Destin

19-23

Emerald Coast Bike Fest
| Emerald Coast Harley-

Jeff Solo | 5pm | G.I. Jade Tiki Bar & Bistro | FWB

Davidson | FWB

Special Dinner Show at Tuscany with Ron Adams I 7pm I 9375 Emerald Coast Pkwy I Miramar Beach

**Greek Festival** | Fri 4-9pm, Sat 11-9pm, Sun Noon-6pm | Destin-FWB Convention | Center

• 21-22 • •

Business Industry
Association's Home Show
2022 | 12pm | Destin-FWB
Convention Center

FWB Chamber Honors the ODA 595 Horse Soldiers | 5:30pm | FWB Fairgrounds

Bloody Mary Festival | 11am | The Market Shops at Sandestin **Northwest Florida Symphony** Orchestra: Halloween Spooktacular! | 7pm | Mattie Kelly Arts Center | Niceville Bride of Frankenstein: Film in Concert with Sinfonia Gulf Coast | 7:30pm | Mattie Kelly Cultural Arts Village | Destin **Irreverent Warriors Silkies Hike** | 8:30am-5pm | 1500 Miracle Strip Pkwy SE I FWB Family Day/Blacklight Neon Octopus | 1-3pm | Painting with a Twist Hoptoberfest 2022 | 11am-4pm | Fort Walton Brewing Co.

Helping Heroes Black Tie Gala for Fisher House | 5:30-10pm | Destin-FWB

l FWB

Convention Center

Planetarium: Spooky Secrets
of the Stars | Shows 5, 6, and
7 p.m. | Emerald Coast Science
Center | FWB

Shrek The Musical | Stage Crafters Community Theatre |

4-H Camp Timpoochee's 3rd Annual Family Trick Or Treat Night | 4:30-7:30pm | Camp Timpoochee Niceville

Ron Adams | Johnny Cash & Elvis Tribute + Halloween Costume Contest | 7pm Seascape | Destin

Trunk-Or-Treat Fall Fest | 5-7pml Eglin Outdoor Recreation | Eglin AFB

**Gospel Explosion** I 6-9pml Greater Peace Baptist Church I FWB

2022 Halloween Crypt Crawl | 6-10pml Downtown FWB Cosmic Vibrations Music Festival | noon-11pm | Mattie Kelly Arts Center | Niceville Trunk-or-Treat | 7-9pml Trinity

UMC | FWB

Walk to End Alzheimer's |
9aml Northwest Florida State

College | Niceville
Cosmic Vibrations Music
Festival | 12pm | Mattie Kelly
Cultural Arts Village | Niceville
29-30

**27th Annual Festival of the Arts** 9aml Mattie Kelly Cultural
Arts Village | Destin

**Trunk or Treat** | 5-8pm | Emerald Coast Church | 117 Jonquil Ave NW, FWB







# United Way Emerald Coast's '40 Under 40' Awards

United Way Emerald Coast (UWEC) hosted its '40 Under 40' awards celebration September 16 at The Island Resort. Presented by Florida Power & Light, nearly 200 people attended the sold-out awards celebration which recognized Okaloosa and Walton counties' top young leaders.

"FPL is honored to partner with United Way Emerald Coast as the Presenting Sponsor of the '40 under 40' event to recognize our local up-and-coming leaders," offered Bernard Johnson, Florida Power & Light's Regional Manager. "The evening was full of creativity and fun, and our team is excited to support all of the honorees as well as learn about the organizations and causes that they support in our communities."

UWEC received more than 150 nominations for the award. The applications were reviewed by a selection committee comprised of professionals from a variety of local businesses and nonprofit organizations. The 40 Under 40 were selected for their excellence in the areas of leadership, community involvement and professional accomplishment.

"40 Under 40 is my favorite annual event," said UWEC President & CEO, Kelly Jasen. "It is incredibly inspiring to see the great work being done by this group of young professionals. We are proud to recognize these awardees for their outstanding contributions and are grateful to the many volunteers and sponsors who made the event possible."

At the event, UWEC also recognized the 'Emerging Leader of the Year' and presented the first 'Forever Young' award.

Ryan Mims, Chief Health Strategist and Public Health Services Manager at the Florida Department of Health in Walton County was recognized as the 'Emerging Leader of the Year.' Ryan Mims volunteers as a ReadingPal, serves on the Emerging Leaders committee, and is a champion of United Way Emerald Coast's work in the community.

40 Under 40 awardees were invited to nominate a mentor over the age of 40 who lives and/or works in Okaloosa/Walton that has contributed to their success. Several nomi-



nations were received, and the Emerging Leaders Committee selected Tim Bolduc, City of Crestview City Manager as the first 'Forever Young' award recipient. Tim was selected for the outstanding leadership, mentorship, and guidance he offers young professionals throughout the community.

The second annual event was planned and coordinated by UWEC's Emerging Leaders committee. Emerging Leaders are young professionals under the age of 40 dedicated to creating a lasting impact in our community. These professionals make an annual contribution of \$120+ to UWEC and receive opportunities to connect, serve, and lead throughout the year.

To learn more about Emerging Leaders, including eligibility requirements, upcoming socials, and volunteer opportunities, please contact Aubrey Robbie (aubrey@united-way.org) or Briley Kennedy (briley@united-way.org)

# United Way Emerald Coast's 40 Under 40, Class of 2022

Alexander Fogg, Okaloosa County, Destin - Fort Walton Beach Arielle May, Catholic Charities of Northwest Florida Ashley McCallum, Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University Brieanne Raines, Vitas Health-

care

Brittnee Orr, Fort Walton Beach Housing Authority

Carrie Parker, Bridgeway Center Inc.

Chrissy Hartley, Dream Team Realty of Northwest Florida Courtney Dollson, Eglin Federal Credit Union

Deanna Simonsen, Waste Management

Eva Wise, Catholic Charities of Northwest Florida

Hillaree Durso, Frances Roy Agency

Jenna Seebeck, Okaloosa County Sheriff's Office

Jessica Speas, Northwest Florida State College

Jessica Trimboli, Okaloosa County Sheriff's Office

Joanna Soria, Waterstone Mortgage

Jordan Staggs, VIE Magazine/ The Idea Boutique

Joseph Richardson, Richardson Realty International

Kaitlyn Sanchez, Habitat for Humanity of Walton County Katie Anderson, Let's Get Social Society + Bleached Babes

Kelly Cash, Westonwood Ranch, Inc. Kelly Curry, The Idea Boutique Kevin Henderson, CHELCO Matt Langford, Shalimar United Methodist Church

McKayla Hale, Extra Ordinary Delights

Megan Harrison, Walton Area Chamber of Commerce

Melissa Ehlers, Hurlburt Field Airman & Family Readiness Center

Misty Rae Ruthrauff, Saltwater Restaurants, Inc.

Mitch Anderson, Okaloosa Gas District

Nic Dezinski, Vertex Solutions Pamela Clarke, Cox Media Reid Soria, Autism Sings, LLC Robin Donlon, SmartBank Shiri Brandenburg, Air Force Enlisted Village, Inc.

Stephanie Wedel, Coca-Cola United

Ta'ki Brown, United States Air Force

Taylor M. Goode, Boys & Girls Clubs of the Emerald Coast Terry Mauer, SBDC at UWF Thomas Everidge, Publix Tim Haney, Fresh Prints of South Walton

Whitney Lee, Sociallee PR & Digital Media



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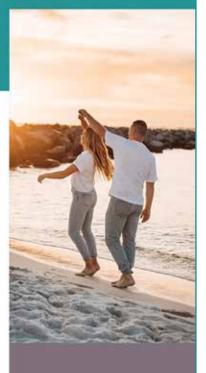
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# Hero and True American Patriot: Rear Admiral Philip Dur

By Doug Stauffer

Rear Adm. Philip Dur was this month's speaker at The Fort Walton Yacht Club. Members and guests of the Okaloosa County Republican Club sat enthralled by his speech and the depth of knowledge, which covered a wide range of historical subjects and contemporary insights. He mentioned feeling at home among a group of like-minded patriotic Americans

COASTLINE K9

He applauded all those who served during the Cold War (1945–1991), the last war that America won. His speech was peppered with insights into the past, but his primary focus was on the dangerous future we face.

Philip Dur was born to a diplomat and spent most of his early years overseas. He was educated in the United States, earning undergraduate degrees in international studies followed by a Ph.D. from Harvard. As a

33-year-old commander in United States Navy, he briefed President Ronald Reagan every day for 30 minutes for months. He thought of the president as a genuine American, brave with love for this country and its people that knew no bounds. He believes this country needs such a leader with Reagan's stature to take us through

the troubled times ahead.

He served our nation and the Navy for 30 years at the height of the Cold War and in its aftermath as the Navy struggled to redefine itself in the post-Soviet era world. Dur's career as a surface warfare officer — with a specialization in national policy — took him through a series of exceptional assignments ashore and afloat, where he was both a witness to history — and had a hand in shaping its course.

Dur provided a front-row seat to some of the pivotal events in our nation's history, from the Israeli attack on the USS Liberty during the Arab-Israeli War in 1967 to the high-stakes diplomacy as an adviser to President Reagan during the Beirut Crisis of 1983. He was also a participant in the last great act of the Cold War with the Black Sea

bumping incident between a Soviet frigate and the ship Dur was commanding — the USS Yorktown.

As a flag officer, he was the chief architect of the Navy's strategy. Admiral Dur's story provides a concise description of the Navy's role in the Cold War from the 1960s to its end with the fall of the Soviet Union. His seat at the table during most of the critical events of that period offers an insightful perspective of policy formation and execution. His insights are vital to understanding how the United States dealt with the complex issues in maintaining a fragile peace with the Soviet Union, which is again headline news.

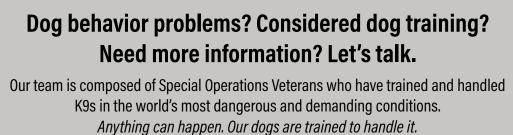
Dur is a highly decorated military officer, including the Defense Distinguished Service Medal, the Navy Distinguished

Service Medal, the Defense Superior Service Medal and many others. Some people in the audience are old enough to remember the headlines of numerous events from the Cold War era, but Dur offered "The Rest of the Story." He stressed understanding the importance of freedom of choice and limits of government, and the limits of governance.

He stressed that the most critical role of government is the defense of the American people. It is a defense against foreign and internal threats — crimes against persons and property rampant in this country today. It is essential to focus on the uncertainty and dangerous future ahead. We live in a far more dangerous situation than the one inherited at the end of World War II.

As someone completely unfamiliar with the workings of the Navy, his commanding two great warships — a destroyer and a cruiser—was mind-boggling and fascinating. His stories caused his audience to sit on the edge of their seats, wanting more. His book "Between Land and Sea" is remarkable. A true American hero that I am blessed to call a friend.





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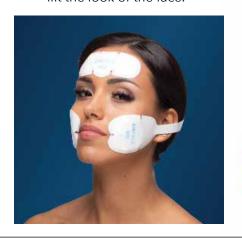
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# Simplifying Medicare Advantage Plans for Seniors



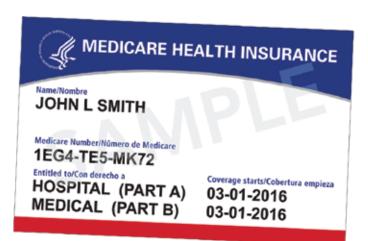
By Greg Durette

What could be more simple than picking the right Medicare Advantage or Medicare Supplement plan for you?! HAH! When you stop laughing (or crying), understand, you are not alone. This is the time of year

when you have the opportunity to review your Medicare coverage and make important decisions about what you will have for this coming year.

One of the suggestions I offer to beneficiaries every year is to get started on this process now. By doing so, you'll have plenty of time to review your options before the Annual Election Period beginning on October 15th, ends on December 7th.

Choosing the right health insurance benefits can be confusing at any age but, understanding healthcare options for those 65 and older can be even more difficult. This already complex system is further muddied by the barrage of annual



advertising from insurance and marketing companies. TV, snail mail, email and a whole host of celebrities are coming at you in a full-scale onslaught. Let the buyer beware!!!

I suggest these important points be considered when shopping for Medicare Advantage plans:

**Choice:** When it comes to Medicare, one size does not fit all - what works for your neighbor may not work for you. Take the time to learn and understand the benefits and costs of each plan so you can feel confident in your decision and health care coverage.

Care: Care starts with a

strong relationship with your primary care provider. If your plan has a network, make sure to confirm your doctors and hospitals are in the network.

**Reach:** Make sure your plan will follow you around the country should a need or desire for travel exists. Out-of-network costs can be very high if this risk is not managed upfront.

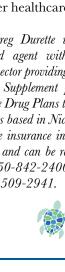
**Medications:** Make sure to confirm you know your medications are not only covered but also, what copay costs may be associated with each.

**Experience:** Medicare can be complex and confusing. It's important to find a seasoned agent that works for you and supports you throughout your health care journey with plan benefits and resources that can help you live more and worry

Since Medicare Advantage Plans are offered by insurance companies, one excellent feature is they have more freedom and motivation to include extra benefits such as vision, gym memberships, dental, hearing and more.

Celebrities are great at acting or playing sports. They do not know anything about Medicare except for what they have been told to say to a camera. Find someone local you can ask the important questions you have about your personal situation, and you will likely have a much better healthcare outcome.

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











# **Estate Planning Council Offers Free Seminar**

More than half of Americans, an estimated 56 percent, do not have an estate plan in place, making estate planning a critically overlooked component of financial wellness. This creates hardship, financial or otherwise, that can be avoided by planning.

The Estate Planning Council of the Emerald Coast, Inc. (EPCEC) invites the public to join them on Thursday, Oct. 20, 1-5:30 p.m. at The Island, Fort Walton Beach, for the Fifth Annual Estate Planning Day.

No matter how large or how modest, nearly everyone has an estate, but all too often individuals, couples, and families put off estate planning. People put off estate planning because they think they do not own enough, they are not old enough, it will be costly or confusing, they will have plenty of time to do it later, they do not know where to begin or who can help them, or they just do not want to think about it. Then when something happens to them, their families have to pick up the pieces.

This free event will host a panel of local professionals on topics of interest regarding estate planning. Complimentary snacks and refreshments will be provided to all attendees and the day will culminate with a cocktail reception at The Island lobby bar. RSVP is strongly encouraged. You can register for the free event at: www.estateplanningday.eventbrite.com.

Estate planning encompasses the growth, conservation, and transfer of an individual's wealth through the creation and maintenance of an "estate plan." The purpose of estate planning is to develop a strategy that will maintain the financial security of individuals through their lifetime and ensure the intended transfer of their property and assets at death, while taking into consideration the unique circumstances of the family and the potential costs of different methods.

"Working in this industry for more than 10 years, I have seen the importance of having a proper estate plan in place," says James Wright of Carr Riggs & Ingram, and president of EP-CEC." I have seen the relief in family member's eyes when their loved ones had their affairs in order and I have also witnessed the agony and frustration of people when their loved ones did not have their affairs in order." "The purpose of Estate Planning Day is to bring awareness to everyone, no matter the person's



**ESTATE PLANNING COUNCIL** 

age, profession or income level, the importance of having their affairs in order so they do not leave their loved ones frustrated and in agony."

To support and encourage the future of estate planning, the EPCEC founded the Kevin Helmich Restricted Scholarship, which awards \$1,500 to Northwest Florida State College students majoring in accounting, finance, or pre-law. The EP-CEC has chosen to name this scholarship in memory of Kevin Helmich who, until his untimely death, was an active member and past president of the organization. Kevin was a well-regarded estate planner, a trusted adviser to his clients, and a mentor to others in his firm.

The Estate Planning Council of the Emerald Coast, Inc. (EPCEC) is the professional "organization of choice" for multi-disciplinary estate planning professionals from across Florida's Emerald Coast. Members include accomplished Estate and Elder Law Attorneys, CPAs, Financial Advisors, Insurance Consultants and Trust Officers. The EPCEC is an affiliated council of the National

Association of Estate Planners & Councils, the leading professional organization for estate planners, which provides its 2,000 Accredited Estate Planner® designees, and 275 affiliated local estate planning councils and their 30,000 members with ongoing education and a forum for professional networking. National Estate Planning Awareness Week was adopted in 2008 to help consumers understand estate planning and its need, along with how best to create a qualified team of professionals to assist in the planning process. For additional information visit www.emeraldcoastestate.org.







# **Around Town**

### **Brooks Bridge Update**

Several buildings have now been removed to make way for the construction of the new Brooks Bridge to replace the 56-year-old Brooks Bridge that connects the island to Fort Walton Beach, a project slated to take roughly five years. So far, they include several Oak Breeze Apartment units, Pat's Bait and Tackle Shop, a building in front of the old Giovanni's One89 restaurant, Waffle House restaurant, Tropical Waves store on Okaloosa Island, six units of the Playground Inn on Brooks Street, Bamboo's Jamaican Restaurant and Diva Nails and Spa. Demolition has also begun on the Emerald Coast Inn & Suites on Okaloosa Island. The \$171 million project, which will expand the bridge from four to six lanes over two spans, is set to



begin next summer. The completed project will include three, 11-foot-wide driving lanes, two 10-foot-wide shoulders and a 12-foot-wide shared-use bicycle and pedestrian path will be included on each direction. The contract for the new construction was awarded to Superior

Construction Co. Southeast, headquartered in Jacksonville, in June.

# This is the HERO! This is Mykel Gordon!



At Chick-fil-A our mission is to "Serve" and today Mykel took it further...to "Save," says a Facebook post from Chick-fil-A of Fort Walton Beach. Chicfil-A employee Mykel prevented the carjacking of a woman traveling with her baby. A trending video shows Mykel tackling and restraining 43-year-old William Branch in the parking lot until sheriffs arrived and arrested him. According to a statement from the Okaloosa County Sheriff's Office (OCSO), Mykel rushed to help a screaming woman holding a baby after a man grabbed her keys and tried to take her car. The victim was getting the infant out of her car when she says 43-year old William Branch approached her wielding a stick and demanding her keys. He then grabbed the keys from the waistband of her pants, opened her car door and got inside. OCSO recently honored Mykel at the restaurant, saying, "We're grateful for the courage of people like Mykel."

# Destin-Fort Walton Beach Airport has a New Concourse!

A recent ribbon-cutting ceremony hosted by Okaloosa County, Destin-Fort Walton Beach Airport and Allegiant Air highlighted a new \$11.4 million concourse for Allegiant Air passengers, Allegiant having contributed to the bulk of concourse construction costs. Located on the west side of the airport's main terminal, the 26,000-square-foot Concourse C serves Allegiant Air passengers exclusively and offers five new gates, multiple food and beverage options, a gift store and bar as well as its own TSA security checkpoint. Allegiant began service at the Destin-Fort Walton Beach Airport in 2016 and in 2018, it was servicing 22 destinations. Currently, Allegiant Air provides service to 35 destinations from the Destin-Fort Walton Beach Airport.



Children in Crisis (CIC) reached a milestone of giving a home to over 1.000 children since 2008. Children in Crisis has five family foster homes, an Emergency Shelter, and eight studio apartments for young adults transitioning through foster care. In addition, Kays Cupboard, provides a food pantry and clothing center for children. CIC is excited to announce the opening of its King Whitmire Therapy Center and the public to its ribbon cutting October 20, 2 p.m. at 1000 Luke's Way, Fort Walton Beach.

# Visit Florida Awards Destin-Fort Walton Beach for Tourism Campaign

Okaloosa County's Tourist Development Department, Destin- Fort Walton Beach, has



been recognized with six awards for its recent tourism campaign - Little Adventures – developed to inspire families to get outside on the water, and out of their comfort zones. The honors, which were presented by VIS-IT FLORIDA on the state level and the U.S. Travel Association on the national level, recognize the department's efforts over the past year. The 2022 Little Adventures campaign featured a variety of tactics to inspire families to explore and try water-based activities. Destin-Fort Walton Beach received a total of five Flagler Awards for outstanding Florida tourism marketing at the state's Governor's Conference on Tourism. As in previous years, the 2022 Flagler Awards drew entries from tourism partners throughout the state and were determined by an independent panel of judges evaluating the creativity, innovation, production quality, and effectiveness of each entry.

**Step One Automotive Group** recently announced that it has acquired its 19th and 20th new car dealerships, Chrysler, Dodge, Jeep, Ram Andalusia and Nissan Andaluisa. Nissan Andalusia is the first Nissan dealership in Step One's portfolio. The new dealerships provide new and used vehicle sales as well as parts and service.

As part of its 2022 philanthropic initiatives, **Bit-Wizards' Be the Magic Foundation** selected two organizations at Choctawhatchee High School (CHS) as donation recipients: Choctawhatchee Style Marchers Director of Bands, Anthony Denaro, and Choctawhatchee High School Theatre Director, Karen Monroe, each received \$2,500 checks for the 2022-2023 school year.



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# The Emerald Coast's Favorite Car Buying Service

We all need personal transportation, but most find the process of purchasing a vehicle to be a difficult, time-consuming experience. Emerald Coast Motor Cars Destin provides a car buying service that takes all the hassle away. Stan Hall and Devon Kiss provide a car buying service where customers tell them about their needs for a vehicle, and they search the market for the car, truck or SUV that precisely fits their customer's needs.

Stan began this unique type of car buying experience in 2012, and has had a major success with not only his local customer base, but also in filling customer's orders across the United States. Devon, Stan's associate, is a computer programmer and IT professional who can search for and locate vehicles from all over the United States based on each customer's individual requirements. Each vehicle purchased is graded on a five-point scale from zero to five, and only vehicles in the finest condition are chosen for Emerald Coast Motor Cars' customers.

With many years of experience in providing the highest quality cars delivered to their customers, Stan and Devon work tirelessly to ensure that each customer's unique desires are fulfilled when a vehicle is purchased through Emerald Coast Motor Cars' buying service. The success of this service can be seen by looking through their pages of stellar reviews on their website at ecmotorcars. com! A photo of the customer at the time of purchase and the customer's review are listed. These reviews are always interesting, and they show all kinds of customers and the wide variety of the vehicles sold, each uniquely fitting their customer's needs.

Over the years, Stan Hall has perfected the process of ensuring that both value and reliability are provided to customers by recommending that his customers purchase vehicles one to two years old, so that the initial depreciation of a new car purchase is realized before his sale, but with a remainder of the manufacturer's warranty still going with the vehicle. Stan believes this provides a winwin scenario for his customers looking to purchase the newest vehicle possible, while providing



the best value in the car buying experience. Fulfilling customer's vehicle orders is a top priority for Emerald Coast Motor Cars Destin. They also accept trades, purchase vehicles, and are always looking for vehicles to consign.

Stan Hall and Devon Kiss encourage everyone to check out their current inventory selection at ecmotorcars.com. If you are looking for the perfect car, truck or SUV, call Emerald Coast Motor Cars today. You will appreciate the old-fashioned customer service and incredible deals! The easiest way to get started is to call them directly: Stan Hall, (850) 830-3083, or Devon Kiss, (901) 275-1847.



# Car of the Month:

# 2008 Porsche 911 Turbo Convertible AWD

PRICE: \$95,900 PLUS

Just arrived, gorgeous 2008 Porsche 911 Turbo Convertible AWD automatic (with Tiptronic S) in Macadamia Metallic with sand beige full leather, and the Cabriolet roof is in cocoa. This 911 was produced December 1st of 2007, and has an upgraded Kenwood audio unit, heated front seats, has been meticulously preserved as a collector's vehicle, clean CarFax, no issues, nonsmoker, showroom condition, with only 4k miles on this cherry of a Porsche. It's price is only \$95,900 plus. Call Stan Hall at (850) 830-3083 or Devon Kiss at (901) 275-1487 today. Or visit us online at ecmotorcars.com for your next purchase. This is the finest 2008 911 Turbo of its kind, condition and mileage.



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# **Governor Funds Future Trucking Needs**

By Doug Stauffer

Dr. Devin Stephenson and Northwest Florida State College hosted Gov. Ron DeSantis and his entourage for an concerning announcement a sizable expansion of Florida's Commercial Driver's License (CDL) training. DeSantis also announced the creation of new opportunities for apprenticeships in Florida. De-Santis awarded \$1.5 million to NWFSC to expand the capacity of CDL training programs. These funds aim to enhance the existing CDL driver training program at its Chautauqua Center in DeFuniak Springs, including the purchase of equipment, to potentially serve 250 students in the program's first

He also announced nearly \$12 million to Florida school districts, colleges, state universities, and private training entities to further support the governor's workforce development initiatives. These funds are intended to start or expand registered apprenticeship and pre-apprenticeship programs

throughout the state through the Florida Pathways to Career Opportunities Grant (PCOG).

"In Florida, over the past three years, we have made significant investments into workforce education, with an emphasis on trucking and the entire transportation industry," DeSantis said. "With today's announcements, we have now increased our CDL training capacity at state institutions from less than 1,000 prior to 2019 to more than 3,500. These investments are driving the growth of our rural communities and state as a whole."

"We already know that a traditional university path is not for every student," said Manny Diaz, Jr., Commissioner of Education . "Thanks to the leadership of Gov. DeSantis, students now have a variety of options to get on the road in a new career. With the governor's continued support, our state colleges are perfectly positioned to meet industry demand and advance Florida's economic independence and prosperity."

DEO Secretary Dane Eagle



PHOTO BY DOUG STAUFFER

remarked, "The Florida Department of Economic Opportunity is proud to support Gov. DeSantis in his ongoing commitment to investing in workforce development and training initiatives in high-demand industries. Nearly everything we depend on in daily life is made possible through the trucking

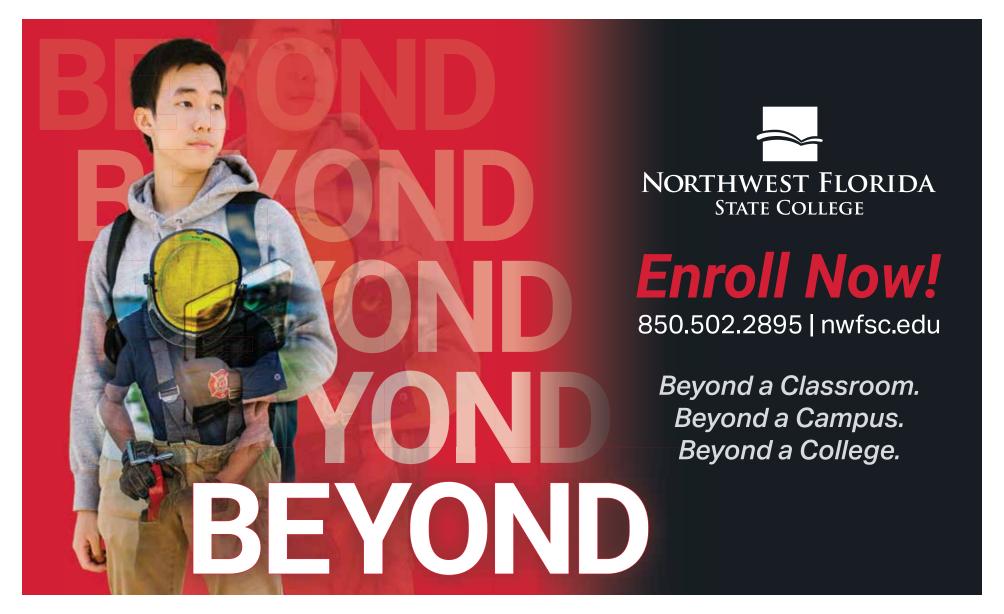
industry, and these strategic investments will positively impact hardworking Floridians, the trucking industry and the state's economy, while also ensuring that Florida is No. 1 in workforce development by 2030."

Michelle Dennard, Career-Source Florida President and CEO spoke next: "Florida is a

critical link in our nation's supply chain, and the demand is soaring for Commercial Driver's License holders. With the leadership of Gov. Ron DeSantis and our education partners, the CareerSource Florida network is honored to help connect Floridians with the vital training needed for careers in transportation and logistics."

Michelle Burns, Career-Source Okaloosa Walton Executive Director, said, "Commercial vehicle drivers are a backbone of our economy and crucial to our continued economic growth. We are blessed to be able to increase our support for this industry and thank Gov. DeSantis for his support for our region and this vital industry."

The Governor then spoke on Biden's border policies and his reasons for sending immigrants to Martha's Vineyard."We are taking what is happening at the southern border very seriously, unlike some," he said. He pointed out that Florida is not a sanctuary state, but other states receiving these immigrants claim to be such.





# It's Almost Time for the Destin Seafood Festival 2022!

Now in its 44th year, the three-day Destin Seafood Fest attracts more than 60,000 locals and visitors to our beautiful and historic Destin Harbor and the Harbor Board Walk on Harbor Blvd. during the weekend. With a sampling of Destin's finest, you'll find freshly caught local varieties of grouper, shrimp, lobster, crab cakes, gumbo, sides and even crawfish all provided by local eateries and restaurants.

Happening Fri. through Sun., Oct. 7-9, the Festival kicks off October's month-long Destin Fishing Rodeo. You need no ticket to attend and you'll get the opportunity to take in some of the best local and coastal musicians at the beach with four stages beckoning you to a variety of live rock, reggae, country, tropical tunes and more. Local Destin restaurants and eateries will be serving up their scrumptious seafood specialties on the docks and along the Harbor Boardwalk. Cold drinks, including beer and wine, are available and will keep you cooled off while you take it all in. You can stroll along the Destin Harbor enjoying the arts and crafts where artists and vendors display their jewelry, clothing, sculpture, glass, watercolors, oil paintings, designs and more.

\*\* New for 2022! The Call To Chef - A Local Seafood Experience brings back the flare of local seafood to our Destin Seafood Festival. Located inside the larger festival, the Call to Chef will require a paid ticket to browse the local restaurant tents, sample their flavors and vote for your favorites. Chefs, bring your best app, entrée or dessert for attendees to sample, and win up to \$5000 in prizes! The winning chefs will be invited to/honored at a Village Supper at a later date.

Learn more: https://www.destinseafoodfest.com/lo-cal-seafood-experience

### **The Festival's Roots**

All of the yum and fun began in 1978 when the Destin Charter Boat Ladies Auxiliary decided to establish a festival to celebrate local fishermen. Now a Destin tradition, it used to be only a one-day festival on "Kelly's Hill," a unique and beautiful location where folks could overlook the Destin Harbor, the current site of HarborWalk Village.



It has always been held in conjunction with the Destin Fishing Rodeo during October.

To this day, portions of the proceeds are donated to the Destin Fisherman's Fund to help those in need and today is hosted by area businesses in conjunction with sponsors and countless volunteers. While the festival has grown into its new home on the Destin Harbor Boardwalk, the Destin Seafood Festival remains the primary fundraiser for the non-profit, Destin Charter Boat Association formed in 1954.

# Tips for your best experience:

To Listen: This year's musical entertainment, with four different stages, will have you singing, tapping and swaying to the beat. Harborwalk Village, Boathouse Oyster, AJs, and Harbor Tavern will all host local bands playing and entertaining throughout the festival. Harbor restaurants and bars will offer a full line-up of local favorites as well performing throughout the day and evening. You can bring a chair and chill or don your dancing shoes! Bands and schedule can be found online at DestinSeafoodFest.com.

To Play (For the Kids): There are Kids Zones for all ages. The East Pass Marina Kids Zone will have an array of kids vendors. There is a seating tent nearby so that you can take a break and cool down while the kids play. The HarborWalk Kids Fun Zone has Hamster balls, a rock-climbing wall and a zip line. There is a seating tent nearby also. Kids will delight in face-painting and tattoos as well.

**To Park:** Parking will be available at Heron Harbor, the HarborWalk Village, the Destin Community Center, the Destin Fishing Museum as well as all local public parking lots in the area. There will also be a shuttle running through town. More



information on times / routes available online.

**To Attend:** Admission to the Destin Seafood Festival is totally free! You will want some "moolah," however, for all of the

mouthwatering food and drinks you'll find. Or, purchase tickets to the \*new\* Call To Chef event inside the East Pass Marina Parking Lot where you can sample a variety of food from local vendors for your ticket price and vote on your favorite!

Hours are Friday 4 p.m. – 10 p.m., Saturday 10 a.m. – 10 p.m. and Sunday 11 a.m. – 6 p.m.

For a site map, to participate as a chef, become a vendor and other information, visit Destin-SeafoodFest.com. Email info@ destinseafoodfest.com. And no matter what you do, just get to the Destin Seafood Festival for some great feasting, frolicking and fun!





# College Football Schedule

SEC	Sept 10	Sept 17	Sept 24	Oct 1	Oct 8	Oct 15	Oct 22	Oct 29	Nov 5	Nov 12	Nov 19	Nov 26
Alabama	@TEXAS	ULM	VANDY	@ARK	TEX A&M	@TENN	MISS ST	OPEN	@LSU	@OLE MISS	APSU	AUBURN
Arkansas	SC	MOST	@TEX A&M	ALABAMA	@MISS ST	@BYU	OPEN	@AUBURN	LIBERTY	LSU	OLE MISS	@MIZZOU (25)
Auburn	MERCER	PENN ST	MIZZOU	LSU	@GEORGIA	@OLE MISS	OPEN	ARK	@MISS ST	TEXAS A&M	WKU	@BAMA
Florida	KENTUCKY	USF	@TENN	E WASH	MIZZOU	LSU	OPEN	@GEORGIA	@A&M	S CAR	@VANDY	FSU (25)
Georgia	SAMFORD	@S CAR	KENT ST	@MIZZOU	AUBURN	VANDY	OPEN	FLORIDA	TENN	@MISS ST	@KENTUCKY	GA TECH
Kentucky	@FLORIDA	YOUNG ST	N ILLINOIS	@OLE MISS	S CAR	MISS ST	OPEN	@TENN	@MIZZOU	VANDY	GEORGIA	L'VILLE
LSU	SOUTHERN	MISS ST	N MEXICO	@AUBURN	TENN	@FLORIDA	OLE MISS	OPEN	ALABAMA	@ARK	UAB	@TEX A&M
Miss St	@ARIZONA	@LSU	BOWLING GR	TEX A&M	ARK	@KENTUCKY	@BAMA	OPEN	AUBURN	GEORGIA	ETSU	@OLE MISS (24)
Missouri	@KAN ST	ABILENE CH	@AUBURN	GEORGIA	@FLORIDA	OPEN	VANDY	@S CAR	KENTUCKY	@TENN	N MEX ST	ARK
Ole Miss	CEN ARK	@GA TECH	TULSA	KENTUCKY	@VANDY	AUBURN	LSU	@TEX A&M	OPEN	ALABAMA	@ARK	MISS ST (24)
sc	@ARK	GEORGIA	CHARLOTTE	SC STATE	@KEN	OPEN	TEX A&M	MIZZOU	@VANDY	@FLORIDA	TENN	@CLEMSON
Tenn	@PITT	AKRON	FLORIDA	OPEN	@LSU	ALABAMA	UT MARTIN	KENTUCKY	@GEORGIA	MIZZOU	@S CAR	@VANDY
TEX A&M	APP ST	MIAMI	ARK	@MISS ST	@BAMA	OPEN	@sc	OLE MISS	FLORIDA	@AUBURN	UMASS	LSU
VAN	WAKE	@N ILLINOIS	@ALABAMA	OPEN	OLE MISS	@GEORGIA	@MIZZOU	OPEN	S CAR	@KENTUCKY	FLORIDA	TENN

# Emerald Coast Classic College Tournament Tickets Go On Sale

Tickets for the eighth annual Emerald Coast Classic college basketball tournament, presented by Global Sports, are on sale at the official tournament website www.emeraldcoastclassic.com

Tickets start at \$20 per twogame session. The Classic will be played Thanksgiving weekend Nov. 25-26, at The Arena on the campus of Northwest Florida State College.

Iowa will face Clemson in a semifinal round game at 6 p.m.

Friday, Nov. 25, while TCU will play Cal at 8:30 p.m. The third-place game will be played at 3 p.m. Saturday, Nov. 26, with the championship game scheduled for a 6 p.m. tip off that Saturday.

Both Iowa and TCU played in the 2022 NCAA Tournament, with the Horned Frogs beating Seton Hall, 69-42, in the first round. TCU fell to top-seeded Arizona, 85-80, in overtime in the second round.

Iowa captured the 2022 Big

Ten Conference Tournament championship, tied for fourth in the conference standings and won 26 games, the second most wins in a season in program history.

Fran McCaffery has coached Iowa to 20-plus wins eight of the last 10 seasons, including four straight years.

The Hawkeyes have competed in the last three NCAA Tournaments and have been ranked in the final Associated Press Poll

each of the last three years: No. 16 in 2020, No. 8 in 2021 and No. 25 in 2022.

The Horned Frogs' second NCAA Tournament bid under coach Jamie Dixon was their fourth postseason appearance in the five seasons that postseason was held, the best in program history.

TCU has all five starters returning from its 2021-22 team, which finished 21-13, its fourth 20-win season in six years under

Dixon with a program-record five wins over AP Top 25 teams. TCU surged late with consecutive victories over top-10 opponents in Texas Tech and Kansas to secure a NCAA Tournament berth.

Returning starting forwards Hunter Tyson and PJ Hall will key the fortunes for Clemson, which won five of its last six games to close out the 2021-22 campaign. Brad Brownell is the winningest coach in Clemson history, earning 218 victories in 12 years while guiding the Tigers to the 2021 NCAA Tournament, 2018 Sweet 16, 2011 NCAA Tournament and three NIT appearances.

Mark Fox will enter his fourth season as the head men's basketball coach at Cal and has averaged nearly 19 wins each year in his 17-year coaching career. In previous stops at Nevada and Georgia, Fox has guided teams to five appearances in the NCAA Tournament. Cal boasts 28 postseason appearances, including 19 NCAA Tournament appearances.

Other games at Northwest Florida State College on Friday Nov. 25 have Southern playing Loyola Maryland at 11 a.m. while Louisiana Monroe meets Omaha at 1:30 p.m.





# Pro Football Schedule

# WEEK 4

*******		
Thursday, Sept. 29		
Dolphins vs. Bengals	7:15 p.m.	Amazon
Sunday, Oct. 2		
Vikings vs. Saints (London)	8:30 a.m.	NFL Ntwk
Browns vs. Falcons	Noon	CBS
Bills vs. Ravens	Noon	CBS
Commanders vs. Cowboys	Noon	Fox
Seahawks vs. Lions	Noon	Fox
Chargers vs. Texans	Noon	CBS
Titans vs. Colts	Noon	Fox
Bears vs. Giants	Noon	Fox
Jaguars vs. Eagles	Noon	CBS
Jets vs. Steelers	Noon	CBS
Cardinals vs. Panthers	3:05 p.m.	Fox
Patriots vs. Packers	3:25 p.m.	CBS
Broncos vs. Raiders	3:25 p.m.	CBS
Chiefs vs. Buccaneers	7:20 p.m.	NBC
Monday, Oct. 3		
Rams vs. 49ers	7:15 p.m.	ESPN

# WEEK 5

Thursday,	Oct.	7
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riidi Saay, Octi 1			
Rams vs Seahawks AMAZON	7:20 p.m. FOX/NFLN/		
—			
Sunday, Oct. 10			
Jets vs Falcons London	8:30 a.m.	NFLN	
Eagles vs Panthers	Noon	FOX	
Packers vs Bengals	Noon	FOX	
Patriots vs Texans	Noon	CBS	
Titans vs Jaguars	Noon	CBS	
Lions vs Vikings	Noon	FOX	
Broncos vs Steelers	Noon	FOX	
Dolphins vs Buccaneers	Noon	CBS	
Saints vs Washington	Noon	CBS	
Browns vs Chargers	3:05 p.m.	CBS	
Bears vs Las Vegas Raide	rs		
· ·	3:05 p.m.	CBS	
49ers vs Cardinals	3:25 p.m.	FOX	
Giants vs Cowboys	3:25 p.m.	FOX	
Bills vs Chiefs	7:20 p.m.	NBC	
Monday, Oct. 11	•		

# WEEK 6

# Thursday, Oct. 14

7:20 p.m.FOX/ NFLN/ Buccaneers vs Eagles AMAZON

7:15 p.m.

ESPN

Sunday, Oct. 17		
Dolphins vs Jaguars Lond	lon 8:30 a.m.	CBS
Chargers vs Ravens	Noon	CBS
Vikings vs Panthers	Noon	FOX
Packers vs Bears	Noon	FOX
Bengals vs Lions	Noon	FOX
Texans vs Colts	Noon	CBS
Rams vs Giants	Noon	FOX
Chiefs vs Commanders	Noon	CBS
Cardinals vs Browns	3:05 p.m.	FOX
Las Vegas Raiders vs Bro	ncos	
	3:25 p.m.	CBS
Cowboys vs Patriots	3:25 p.m.	CBS
Seahawks vs Steelers	7:20 p.m.	NBC
Monday, Oct. 18		
Bills vs Titans	7:15 p.m.	ESPN

# WEEK 7

# Thursday, Oct. 21

Broncos vs Browns AMAZON	7:20 p.m. FOX/NFLN	
Sunday, Oct. 24		
Bengals vs Ravens	Noon	CBS
Commanders vs Packers	Noon	FOX
Falcons vs Dolphins	Noon FOX	
Jets vs Patriots	Noon CBS	
Panthers vs Giants	Noon FOX	
Chiefs vs Titans	Noon CBS	
Lions vs Rams	3:05 p.m.	FOX
Eagles vs Las Vegas Raide	ers	
	3:05 p.m.	FOX
Texans vs Cardinals	3:25 p.m.	CBS
Bears vs Buccaneers	3:25 p.m.	CBS
Colts vs 49ers	7:20 p.m.	NBC
Monday, Oct. 25	•	
Saints vs Seahawks	7:15 p.m.	ESPN

# WEEK 8

### Thursday, Oct. 28

AMAZON	7.20 p	O70111 E11
Sunday, Oct. 31		
Panthers vs Falcons	Noon	FOX
Dolphins vs Bills	Noon	CBS
49ers vs Bears	Noon	FOX
Steelers vs Browns	Noon	CBS
Eagles vs Lions	Noon	FOX
Rams vs Texans	Noon	FOX

FOX

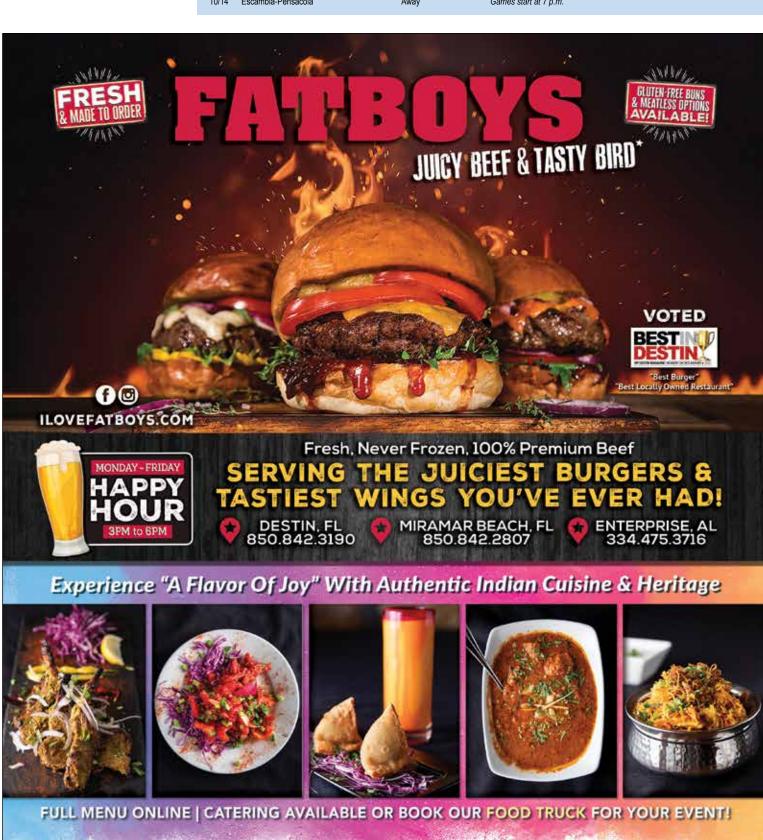
Titans vs Colts	Noon	CBS
Bengals vs Jets	Noon	CBS
Patriots vs Chargers	3:05 p.m.	CBS
Jaguars vs Seahawks	3:05 p.m.	CBS
Commanders vs Broncos	3:25 p.m.	FOX
Buccaneers vs Saints	3:25 p.m.	FOX
Cowboys vs Vikings	7:20 p.m.	NBC
Monday, Nov. 1		
Giants vs Chiefs	7:15 p.m. E	SPN

# **FWB High School Football**

9/2	South Walton-Santa Rosa Beach Home		10/14	Booker T. Washington-Pensacola	Away
9/9	Niceville	Away	10/21	Bay-Panama City	Home
9/16	Escambia-Pensacola	Away	10/28	Choctawhatchee-FWB	Away
9/23	Panama City Beach	Away	11/4	Crestview	Home
9/30	Pine Forest-Pensacola	Home			

# **Choctawhatchee High School Football**

9/9	Crestview Bulldogs	Home	10/21	Booker T. Washington	Home
9/16	Pine Forest-Pensacola	Away	10/28	Choctawhatchee-FWB	Home
9/23	Niceville	Home	11/4	Mosley-Panama City	Away
10/14	Escambia-Pensacola	Away	Games	start at 7 n m	





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# 2022 Marks the 74th Annual Destin Fishing Rodeo!

By Cali Hlavac

For us locals, it's time to begin getting ready for this year's Fishing Rodeo season—a local tradition since 1948! And each year it gets better and better with several new events in the upcoming lineup.

New for 2022: The Extended Voyage Division will get an expansion, adding five extra species of fish for a total of ten eligible fish. The previous leaderboard included grouper, amberjack, scamp, yellowfin tuna and big eye tuna. Being added for this year are dolphin, wahoo, Almaco Jack, snowy grouper and yellowedge grouper.

Alongside the expansion comes another award addition: The **Captain's Award** for the Extended Voyage Division. The board of Directors hopes this expansion will allow more Captains to compete in the tournament.

And yet another addition to the Rodeo in 2022 is a **Ladies**, **Seniors and Junior Divisions** for wahoo — alongside king mackerel, grouper, amberjack and blackfin tuna. The weigh station saw a fair amount of wahoo last year, a real crowd pleaser.

The weigh-ins happen on the docks behind AJs Seafood and Oyster bar, located on the Destin Harbor. They are free to the public and open daily from 10 a.m.-7 p.m. For boats to participate, charter and private boats must be registered at least 24 hours prior to weighing in a fish. There is no fee for anglers fishing on a registered vessel (private or charter) and shore fisherman can participate by simply bringing their catch to the scales. You can fish by kayak, paddle board, pier, bridge, jetty, shoreline and surf – whichever you prefer.

If you're planning to make a trip down to the docks, expect to see a broad spectrum of fish being weighed in. From Sharks to Amberjacks, Grouper to King Mackerel, Tunas to Marlin, the rodeo has it all. Anglers are competing for more than \$100,000 in cash and prizes, awarded for both daily and overall catches.

Even if you're not a fisherman, the energy level and excitement that comes from being at the docks for weigh ins is like nothing else you've ever experienced. Boats back into the scales, pull the fish from their boat while the announcer hypes up the



crowd. Fish are strung up on the scale while the crowds cheer and applaud the boat and their team. For the best seat in the house, get there early, grab a few beers and snag a seat on the bleachers by the leaderboard or above on AJ's upper deck.

Halloween on the Harbor will signify the end of weigh-ins on Wednesday. Oct. 31, when the captains, anglers, volunteers and even Miss Destin will be dressed in their favorite costume. Everyone is invited to partake in the fun!

The Rodeo began as a way to repay the loan given for the then new community center. Since its inception, the Destin Fishing Rodeo has expanded into one of the largest fishing tournaments along the Emerald Coast—an entire month long, spanning October 1-31st with approximately 30,000 anglers competing each year!

# **Events**

# October 2022 74th Annual Destin Fishing Rodeo (1st - 31st)

• Weigh-Ins are everyday behind A.J.'s from 10 a.m. – 7 p.m.

# Sunday, October 2

- Destin 5K Rodeo Run October 7th, 8th, & 9th
- 44th Annual Destin Seafood Festival



# Monday, October 10th

- Kids Fall Movie Festival **Sunday, October 16th**
- Bruce Cheves Day
- Ringing of the Bell

**Saturday, October 22nd** Larry Hatchett Fishing Foundation Day

Monday, October 31st

• Halloween on the Harbor

# 74th Annual Destin Fishing Rodeo October I - 31, AJ/s PRODE ANNUAL RMHC Big Mac Classic: \$10,000 Largest King Mackerel AJ's Bonus Amberjack Division \$3000 Largest Amberjack Register now! DESTINFISHINGRODEO.ORG | 8508374734

# Okaloosa Island's Boat Basin Now Open!

A \$1 million makeover has resulted in a new prime location for boaters and paddlers to hit Destin and Fort Walton Beach beaches.

In September, the Okaloosa County Board of County Commissioners held the grand opening of the Okaloosa Island Boat Basin and ADA Accessible Kayak Launch. The boat basin is located at Soundside Access Two on Santa Rosa Blvd. between Bluefish Dr. and Caviar Dr.

Roughly five years ago, Commissioner Carolyn Ketchel learned about the boat basin and that it needed to be refurbished. Okaloosa County tourism and a \$150,000 boating improvement grant from the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) helped fund the new ADA-compliant water access point on the Santa Rosa Sound area on Okaloosa Island.





Once considered rundown and unsafe, the boat basin now



has plenty of parking, side-walks, new landscaping, kayak/paddleboard mount, a fishing pier and docs, living shoreline installed and green space, as well as amenities such as huge beach bikes. It also features a boardwalk that accommodates up to eight, 25-foot boats and is the only ADA-accessible kayak launch in Okaloosa County.

M Off the Hook

# More Deployments Add to Our Artificial Reefs

In Okaloosa County, an artificial reef is a fun and satisfying site for fishing, diving and snorkeling that is easily accessible for us all. Our area's artificial reefs consist of anything from concrete piles to specifically designed modules and even large shipwrecks.

Our area has one of the most active artificial reef programs in the nation. Each year, more artificial reefs are deployed off our

# **MISS NELLIE and CORDONAZO** Deployed

Over the past few weeks, the Coastal Resource team successfully lead another two reef deployments — the MISS NEL-LIE and CORDONAZO. On August 23, the MISS NELLIE was deployed about 21 nautical miles southeast of the Destin East Pass. You can find the donated tugboat sitting on the bottom of the Gulf of Mexico about 112-feet down. This 62.5foot vessel will provide habitat







for marine life, as well as an excellent dive and fishing spot. And on September 7, 2022, the CORDONAZO was deployed approximately 14.8 nautical

miles south of Destin's East Pass. The 67-foot sailboat caught fire and was donated to Okaloosa County to become a part of the artificial reef program.

# **Upcoming Deployments**

Destin-Fort Walton Beach Tourism's Coastal Resource Team is in the process of preparing several new vessels for deployment (dates and precise locations TBD).

· 1,000 tons of concrete was donated by Destin Water Users, Eglin Airforce Base and local stakeholders to be deployed as a

The 100-foot supply vessels ATLANTIS and CYCLOPS will be inspected with a possible deployment soon.

The 190-foot MANTA and DOLPHIN research vessels are currently being prepared for a late September deployment.

AJ's Seafood & Oyster Bar donated a 70-foot sailboat that was previously used for sunset and dolphin cruises. The boat

should be deployed before the end of the year and will be the start of "Boatyard West."

MISS NELLIE Coordinates: 30° 07.916' N, 86° 17.512' W **CORDONAZO** Coordinates: 30° 08.346'N, 86° 33.882'W

Check out an amazing 3D interactive model of a recent deployment on www.destinfwb.com/explore/ecotourism-hotspots/artificial-reefs, courtesy of ReefSmartGuides. com. Visit destinfwb.com.



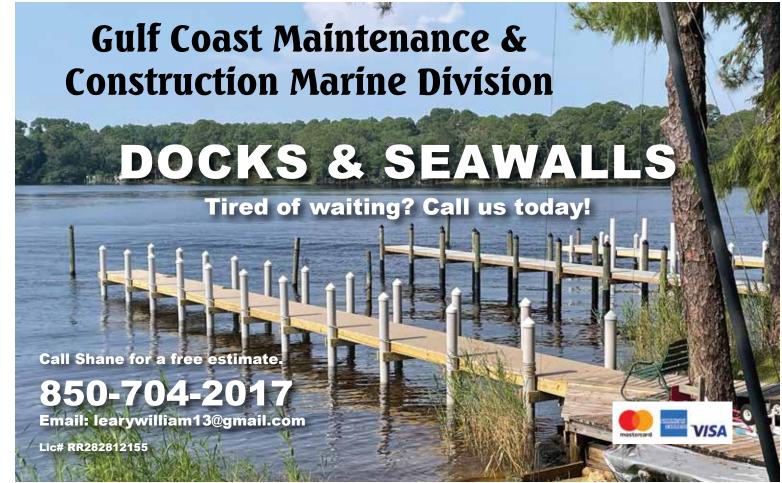
# **Okaloosa County Divers Place** in Statewide Lionfish Challenge

The Florida Fish and Wild- an invasive species that threatlife Conservation Commission (FWC) recently named the winners of the summer-long, statewide, lionfish tournament which ended Sept. 6 and two Okaloosa County residents placed first and second in the 7th Annual Lionfish Challenge. Congratulations to Isaac Jones who won first place in the recreational division with 1,018 lionfish; and local Alex Fogg, coastal resource manager for Okaloosa County, who won second place in the commercial division with 1,090 pounds of lionfish, just 2 lbs. shy of the division winner.

In just three months, nearly 200 divers searched and removed thousands of lionfish from our waters - bringing in a whopping 25,299 lionfish, the most since 2018. Further, this year's tournament broke the record for the most participants in the program's history with 707 registered divers.

The Lionfish Challenge, an FWC program, is sponsored by FloGrown, and open to competitors throughout Florida. It challenges divers to kill lionfish, ens to crowd out native fish.

Continued on page 31







By Dr. Richard Chern, M.D. How often does this happen? You wake up but don't feel rested. You won't be productive so maybe just skip the day. You drag yourself out of bed and go through the motions. The goal is to get back home and end the day. You can watch TV, play on the phone, eat dinner and head

# There May Be a Cure for the "Blahs"

back to bed. Surely tomorrow you'll wake up with some motivation to accomplish those longterm goals.

This happens to all of us and occurs more often the older we get. Luckily we can increase the number of those motivated days.

Before I started treating patients with hormone pellets, I first became a patient. I was hesitant initially because my levels were in the normal range and I thought I felt normal. Sometimes I lacked motivation, sometimes I took naps, sometimes I didn't want to go to work, sometimes I fell asleep on the couch. Regardless, I still took care of

my responsibilities, I got the bills paid, I had some fun, and I was pretty comfortable. I did notice over time it was getting harder to have fun, harder to feel rested, and harder to take care of the responsibilities.

After some convincing, I decided to get treated. My levels prior to treatment were in the reference range or "normal range" but they were nowhere near the optimal range. After treatment, I quickly understood I had been missing out on more than I could imagine. It's hard to describe but almost immediately I began to feel healthier, I started getting more energy, I had a de-

sire and drive to be more active. I slept so well that the afternoon naps were no longer needed. The fog lifted and I was finally able to focus and concentrate on the important things in life.

Most people think about libido when you mention hormones but that's just one of the many many benefits of treatment. There are so many benefits to getting your hormones right it's difficult to figure out why anyone would want to go without.

Don't miss out on your opportunity to feel healthy and alive again. Come get tested and let us talk to you about your levels. Remember, just because your levels are "normal" doesn't mean they are healthy or optimal.

Dr Richard Chern, MD, provides hormone therapy to men and women from across the country. He is also on staff at BioTE Medical and teaches hormone therapy to new providers including providers right here in our local area. Dr Richard Chern, MD treats many of the medical community in the area. Dr Richard Chern, MD is a platinum BioTE provider and runs one of the largest BioTE hormone clinics in the country in Miramar Beach. Call Dr Richard Chern, MD today for an appointment at The Hormone Restoration Center at (850) 837-1271.

# **Hospital Completes First Leg of Expansion**

HCA Florida Fort Walton-Destin Hospital celebrated the completion of the first phase of its \$100 million expansion Aug. 30, which includes a new four-story, 95,000-squarepatient tower and 10,000-square-foot renovated dietary space.

This phase of the expansion adds 10 ICU beds, eight cardiovascular ICU beds and 24 surgical care beds - increasing the hospital's capacity from 267 to 309 beds.

"By equipping our team



with the latest technologies in an updated, modern space, we hope to provide a more healing environment for our team and the people we serve," said CEO Zach McCluskey.

The hospital celebrated the expansion with a ribbon-cutting ceremony and tours of the newly-completed spaces. The

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Fort Walton Beach Chamber of Commerce, the Destin Chamber of Commerce, the Walton Area Chamber of Commerce

and various community leaders attended.



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Dr. Richard Chern, MD 12889 Hwy 98W, Suite 107B



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

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By Kay Leaman, Health Architect

I've dealt with sleep issues over the years. What I've discovered is that getting quality sleep means developing a routine and sticking with it. I have also found a couple nutritionals that have helped me sleep better. As our lives ebb and flow, so does our sleep. However, sleep is critical for our health and ignoring it, hoping it will get better, is not a healthy choice to make. Mine is a work in progress with stress being the main interrupter. So, let's dive in and learn a little more about sleep.

What is sleep? It's restful if we sleep well. It's not an idle mode. Our body and brain are working. It activates a process that helps us rest, repair and recharge.

# There are 4 stages in the sleep cycle:

Between wakefulness and sleep – Everything slows down and muscles soften, heart and breathing rates decrease and brain patterns begin to change.

**Light sleep** – The process continues and body temperature drops

**Deepest state** – It's hard to be awakened. Our heart and breathing are at their lowest point, muscles extremely relaxed. It's integral to quality sleep. If this stage is cut short we don't wake up feeling rested.

**REM** – Rapid eye movement sleep. In many ways it's the opposite of the other three stages. It's the dreaming stage; heart rate increases, breathing rate can quicken and become irregular, eyes move rapidly behind eyelids

# A Focus on Sleep

and brain activity livens. As a protective measure the body can experience temporary paralysis of limbs preventing the body from acting out movement about which we dream.

All 4 stages run through in succession until we wake

All 4 stages run through in succession until we wake up. Without both NREM and REM sleep our memory consolidation is harmed.

# Things that can interrupt our sleep:

Caffeine, alcohol, diet (sugar intake) or eating too close to bedtime. Physical activity, stress level or emotional state, bright lights or blue light.

# Things we can do:

- Put away electronics at least 30 minutes prior to going to bed. Consider removing electronics from the bedroom as the electromagnetic waves can interfere with sleep.
- Develop a consistent bedtime as this will develop a rhythm of our internal clock
- Relax by doing some light stretching
  - Dim lights
  - Play soft music, etc.
- Use blackout curtains (Light is the signal that turns on and off our sleep hormones.).

• Instead of tossing and turning, consider getting up, take a slow walk around the house, have a sip of warm water, read for a few minutes or stretch using slow movements to relax the body. Then return to bed and focus on your breathing.

Sleep is important for a healthy immune system. Here are a few things that happen when we sleep:

- During sleep immune cells move around, creating memories.
- Immune cell effectiveness is being preserved, proliferation of white blood cells and protective immune proteins (cytokines).
  - Activation of immune cells
- Differentiation of new white blood cells
- Optimization of natural killer cell function (quick-acting

white blood cells of the innate immune system)

When your cells are cared for with quality sleep your supply of bodyguards are stocked, locked and ready to protect you properly.

The American College of Physi-

cians does not recommend taking sleeping pills for a long time as they sedate the mind rather than help to naturally induce sleep. Here are some holistic options:

### • Essential Oils:

Methods of use: Inhaling – diffused.

**Direct application** – to skin, dilution recommended using avocado oil, almond oil, etc.

**Ingesting** – added to food or drink, get professional advice before utilizing this method

• Oils to consider:

Lavender (diffuse), bergamot (can lower heart rate and BP and help with anxiety and

stress), clary sage (may reduce cortisol levels), valerian, sandalwood, ylang ylang, jasmine, frankincense (expensive), chamomile (tea can be used in place of the oil)

# • Nutrients (I can help you with these):

A high quality melatonin, magnesium tea or a stress relief supplement

Some age-related sleep issues are due to:

First part of the brain to suffer from the aging process is the same region that allows for deep sleep. This can begin as early as our 30s.

Sleep issues are linked to heart disease, Alzheimer's, diabetes, stroke and obesity. (It's important to exercise the mind and the body. There are myriad puzzles and games that exercise the mind. Learn something new like a new hobby, exercise, take a class, etc. or read.)

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# **Insights for Investors**



By Maurice Stouse, Financial Advisor and Branch Manager

# Inflation, interest rates and the current state of things

Inflation has had more impact over the past than at any time in almost the past 40 years. After peaking at 9.1 percent in July, inflation came in a little lower in August at 8.5 percent. Producer and import prices remained high and the supply change problems persisted. The chip shortage affected just about everything (would you believe more than 300 chips go into a car?).

Going back in history, inflation in 1981 was above 10 percent and by 1982 the unem-

ployment rate was over 10 percent and interest rates were well above that. The USA and the world experienced two recessions in the early '80s and those followed a very difficult period of the 1970s where the markets underperformed and the economy struggled. The Dow Jones Industrials Average was higher in 1972 than it was in 1982. And then, things began to change. It started with changes in tax legislation, private and public investment and believe it or not, the decline of the US dollar. The economy grew, interest rates came down, unemployment came down, and inflation made its way down to less than 2 percent over the past two decades. Prosperity was more that norm than the exception. Fast forward to today and the Dow is over 33,000 at this writing, which is up from 742 in August of 1982.

# Today, a lasting labor shortage

Investors are right to wonder just how we ended up here. There is no one answer – it is a combination of things. First is the tremendous monetary and fiscal stimulus throughout the

pandemic. That unleashed a lot of capital which many still have saved, invested or can borrow and at still historically low rates. Next, many left their jobs (38 million in 2021) and either went to other jobs or, at a significant pace, started their own businesses. Third, the combined impact of stock market and real estate markets over the past few years had many people feeling more confident of retiring early. What do these things add up to? Wage pressures, which keep inflation elevated. Investors should take note to consider those investments that have historically outpaced inflation.

# Real Rates of Return or more important now

The real rate of return is what is left after inflation (and don't forget taxes). As inflation has risen many investments (cash, CDs, many bonds) have had a low to negative real return. That is not always easy to realize so investors and savers are encouraged to take a step back and consider the real return. Most people want to keep pace with inflation at the very least and to outpace it at the very best. Stocks and real estate still command the lead for returns vs inflation and other asset classes. Of course those asset classes come with higher degrees of risk and volatility.

# Vanguard says bonds are back

In its recent paper "Active Fixed Income Perspectives Q3 2022: Bonds are back," Vanguard points out several key things for investors to consider. Most important of these is that bonds have had the worst performance in history over the first six months of 2022. They point out however that real returns, or positive returns, now exist. They argue "with bond yields higher than expected inflation over the next five years and beyond." We agree with their sentiment that bonds once again offer diversification and less risk for investors' portfolios after not having done so in the recent past. We also look at the returns on municipals (for those in higher tax brackets), and according to Raymond James, some of the best values may exist with maturities in the 8-20 maturity range. Raymond James also makes available to in-



vestors the important statistic of duration, which is a measure of risk for a given bond which considers its maturity and call dates.

Europe continues to adapt

to the crisis and is bringing

# **Energy Commentary**

some coal-fired plants back and Norway recently vowed to outproduce Russia in natural gas supply as long as the crisis lasts. Natural gas prices at this writing are at their highest levels in the past 14 years. The implication for investors in our opinion is to continue to overweight holdings in the energy sector relative to its current weighting (in the S&P 500) which is 4.4 percent. That is significantly lower than it was just 10 years ago. Another way we see it is that despite the pandemic, and the crisis in Europe, the world continues to grow and more and more people in emerging and developing countries are increasing their standards of living. The demand for electricity might continue to grow significantly in the US. In a recent editorial, the Los Angeles Times pointed out that California alone could see energy consumption grow as much as 68 percent by 2045. They argue that in line with the electrification of cars, that would be a key driver. The world will need more energy from whatever form it may come. We also think investors should pay attention to the reemergence of nuclear power. States and countries are hard at work solving for waste storage and there is also the long-term promise of small modular reactors which create a fraction of the waste. While a lot of companies are working on that technology it is not near being scalable.

# Interest rates and savings rates

Investors can finally enjoy

more competitive returns on their most conservative investments. Many brokerage firms and financial institutions are now offering CDs over 3 percent for one year and many money market fund yields have increased as short-term rates have increased. Many are left wondering how long rates will continue to climb. We are not convinced that it will become a long-term trend. We agree with a lot of the sentiment we hear and read that short term rates are likely to peak at 3.5 percent. We will have to see what the future brings.

Important Disclosures

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There is an inverse relationship between interest rate movements and fixed income prices. When interest rates rise, fixed income prices fall and when interest rates fall, fixed income prices rise.

Bitcoin and other cryptocurrency issuers are not registered with the SEC, and the Bitcoin marketplace is currently unregulated. Bitcoin and other cryptocurrencies are a very speculative investment and involves a high degree of risk.

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# Your Customized Auto Policy Just Got More Expensive



By Joe Capers, Insurance Zone

In July, we learned that Florida has the highest homeowner premiums in the country. And today it's official, we now have the highest auto rates too! The average annual premium in 2022 is \$2,560, compared to the national average of \$1,682.

In Florida and most states, auto insurance is required to register and legally operate a vehicle. Like most lines of insurance in Florida, rates have been on a rise for the past few years. It may be tempting to only purchase enough coverage to meet our state's minimum requirements. Don't do it! These low limits are not enough to protect you and your family if the worst circumstances happen.

Your car insurance policy is an important financial tool. If your car or you are involved in a wreck, theft or natural disaster (hurricane, flood or fire), the impact on your financial viability can be substantial. Your car insurance should be tailored to protect you, other people and assets from most of the associated expenses and costs in the event you are involved in an accident. Your lender, who legally owns the car, may have their own requirements and will want to be financially protected if there is a collision or other damage.

There are six basic types of coverages for your auto, motor home, motorcycle and LSV's that are registered with the state.

**Liability** — Coverage that offers protection against claims alleging that a driver's negligence resulted in bodily injury or property damage to another party. This can include the driver and passengers of the other vehicle or vehicles involved, injured pedestrians and owners of the property where the accident occurred.

The more assets you need

to protect, the higher the limits should be. For those with significant assets, an Umbrella policy is recommended for increased protection. In most cases the Umbrella will require minimum underlying Liability limits of \$250,000/\$500,000.

**Medical Expenses** – Coverage for medical expenses because of bodily injury sustained by an insured caused by an accident. This covers your medical bills (not lost wages), regardless of who is at fault in a crash. Usual limits offered \$1,000, \$5,000 and \$10,000.

# Uninsured/Underinsured Motorist Coverage –

This coverage pays for your and your passengers' medical bills and property damage if the driver at fault in an accident doesn't have insurance, has insufficient coverage, or the incident is a hit-and-run. It is recommended to carry limits equal to the liability limits on a Stacked (broader) Basis rather than Non-Stacked.

**PIP/Personal Injury Protection** - Mandated by Florida, provides medical, disability, and death benefits to you and any passengers in your vehicle. Basic PIP covers up to 80 percent of your medical expenses and 60 percent of your lost wages.

**Collision** – Physical damage coverage for your vehicle if it is impacted by another vehicle or damaged in an accident. This coverage is usually required by a lienholder on a leased or financed vehicle.

**Comprehensive** — Covers damage to your vehicle caused by an event other than a collision, such as fire, theft, vandalism, hail and flood damage. Like collision, this coverage is usually required by a lienholder on a leased or financed vehicle.

Other Recommended Coverages – There are many other coverages that should be considered when reviewing your Personal Insurance Program. Included are Loss of Use or Rental Reimbursement, Roadside Assistance, Accident Forgiveness, Gap, New Car Replacement, Diminishing Deductible, Pay-Per Mile Coverage, Customized Equipment and Original Equipment Coverage.

With the popularity of Uber and Lyft, one can now obtain Rideshare Insurance. This is



supplemental coverage for drivers of the ride-hauling services, which is typically inexpensive. It provides valuable coverage for situations that are not covered by a driver's personal car insurance policy. If you are a ride-share driver, please discuss options with your insurance agent.

Many of our neighbors and customers have golf carts, or LSVs (low speed vehicles). As long as they're not rented, they can be written as a separate policy, or added to your auto policy if they are licensed for road use. The rental exposure can sometimes be written under a commercial liability policy, but the coverage is not as broad as an auto policy.

Many of our neighbors and

customers have teenagers who are approaching the driving age and wonder how best to insure these exposures. If you have a new driver in the household, all insurance companies recognize the increase in risk with a new driver. Some insurance carriers will not insure new drivers, while others will charge higher premiums to make up for the increased exposure. There are some measures you can take to lower your insurance rate, like taking a driving course. This will help your new driver become more familiar with the rules of the road and educate him on ways to avoid accidents. When you are a new driver, it is worth taking it slow, stick to the roads you are familiar with, and

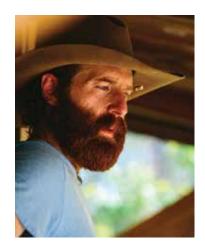
avoid getting into stressful traffic situations.

The bottom line is to talk to your agent and get customized auto coverages that fit your personal needs. Make sure you are aware of all discounts that are available. According to industry statistics, one of every three drivers are underinsured!

Insurance Zone, founded by Joe and Lea Capers, is a full-service commercial and personal lines insurance agency serving Destin, Miramar Beach, Santa Rosa Beach (30A) and Inlet Beach. Visit its Video Library on www.ins-zone.com to watch informative videos on 'Auto Insurance Made Easy & What To Do in An Accident', or call (850) 424-6979 and talk with one of its experienced Team Members.



# Sean of the South



By SEAN DIETRICH

This is not my story. It was told to me. In fact, I'm hearing it for the first time, just like you are.

The year was 1982. The old man climbed out of a rust-red Ford. He was ancient. He walked with a shuffle as he hobbled into the supermarket. Struggling to walk. Fighting to breathe.

A young man in the parking lot saw him get out of the rust-red Ford. He rushed ahead to help. The kid was wearing a black sports coat. Black tie. Hair slicked back. Lots of cheap cologne.

"Thank you," the old man said. "Would you be kind enough to get me a buggy?"

The kid pulled a cart from the stockyard of buggies. The

old man hooked his cane over the handle and tried to catch his breath.

"What are you so dressed up for?" the old man asked.

"I'm going to a funeral."

"I'm sorry," said the man. "Family or friend?"

"Neither. It was my dad."

The old man nodded, but said nothing. He pushed his buggy into the store. Past the pneumatic doors. The store was filled with the paralyzingly lush sound of muzak. Death by violins.

The kid was following him closely because he was a good kid, and the old man was wheezing badly. He looked like he was about to fall over. Pale and gaunt. Shaky and frail.

"I'll help you shop," said the kid. "I've got some time before the funeral starts."

"Thank you," said the old man, whose face lit up like Christmas.

They puttered through the A&P together. Two strangers. When they reached the Campbell's soup aisle the old man asked a question.

"You weren't close with your father?"

"No. He left my mom when I was little. He didn't want anything to do with me. I didn't even like him."



The old man nodded.

"Did you stay in touch?" he asked.

"Not really. I called him sometimes, but he never had much time for me. He had lots of problems. I was just one more."

"I'll bet that hurt you."

The kid shrugged. "I guess."

And that's when the air got weird. Everything became weird. The old man lowered his gaze at the kid. The old voice was suddenly very strong and rich. A deep baritone. And he did not sound like an oldster anymore.

"Your father loves you," said the man.

The kid looked around. He was wondering where the Allen Funt and the hidden cameras were. But the old man was still looking at him with those tap-water blue eyes.

"Your father is sorry he hurt you," said the old man. "And he loves you very much. And he wants to know if you will forgive him."

The old man was speaking present tense. Not past tense.

The kid was sufficiently weirded out now. They didn't speak to each other much after that. Shopping was pretty awkward. The old man just pointed and the kid fetched his items. But nobody spoke.

When they got to the checkout aisle, the kid left the old man briefly to use the restroom. He jogged into the john and was gone for maybe three minutes. When he returned, the old man was gone.

The kid asked the lone cashier if she had already rang up the old man.

"What old man?" she answered. "There hasn't been anybody in this store but you."

So the young man trotted out of the building. He wandered into the vacant parking lot. There was no rust-red Ford. In fact, there weren't many cars in the parking lot at all.

The kid drove to the funeral that evening. He found his father lying in a pinewood box. He wept all over his old man. He whispered things into his father's ear. Healing things. Things he had been waiting a long time to say.

And 40 years later, when the kid told this story to me, he did so with red rings around his eyes. He is no longer a kid anymore, but a father of three.

I asked the kid whether he thought the old man in the grocery store was an angel.

"No," the kid said. "I don't think he was. I know he was."

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# Musing

# A Pastor's Ponderings: **Limited**



By Rick Moore

On September 22, 1993, Amtrak experienced the deadliest crash in American history. Just north of Mobile, Alabama, the Amtrak train known as the Sunset Limited derailed in the swampland near the Mobile River. At that time, I was the owner of a video production company in West Mobile, not far from the airport. When the call came around 7am for me to capture the breaking news of the wreck for Inside Edition and for Fox News, no news team had filmed it yet. It would be noon before the network film crews from New York and Miami would arrive.

Because this was so long ago, the iPhone had not yet been dreamed of. No images were coming in from the scene of the derailment. There were no roads for miles around, and the area waterways were closed down. I was asked to take my professional camcorder to the local airport where a plane would be waiting to fly me over the wreck site. It wasn't until arriving at the horrific scene I began to grasp the magnitude of what had happened. Forty-seven passengers and crew were killed that morning. Though I had a job to do, I felt an immense sense of inadequacy to help those trying to survive. Other than some shaky Coast Guard footage, what I had filmed was the first video the world saw of the devastating event. After dropping off the video tapes to the satellite truck (YouTube did not exist then either) I waited to hear from the network to see if they needed me to film anything else.

When the "A Team" of producers and directors arrived from Miami and New York, they asked me to stay on the story for another day, and to capture the human elements while they tried to break the news of how the people were killed and who was to blame. The rumor among the locals was that the wreck was caused by displacement of the rails when a heavy barge collid-



ed with the rail-bridge minutes before the train was to cross. That rumor was later confirmed by tugboat operator Willie C. Odom who didn't know what had happened until it was too late. This is where I began to hear two sides of the same story.

While at the hospital filming testimonials from passengers and employees who were on the train, I constantly heard how awesome the crew members of the tugboat were, and how they had helped save dozens of lives. These survivors told of the brave men who jumped into the alligator infested water risking their own lives to save others. Yet, at that same time, the network news team was uncovering details of the crash that would implicate the captain and crew of the tugboat in the deaths of dozens of people. As it turns out, it appeared both accounts were true. News broke that those on the tugboat saving others lives from the fiery wreck were also the ones responsible for causing the train to derail in the first place.

There are two sides to every coin. You can tell facts about yourself to make others believe you are a complete failure. Your

family and friends can tell facts about you to make others believe you are awesome. There are always two sides to everyone's life story. But no matter how bad you blow it, or how many times you mess up, you must refuse to let your mistakes define you. While the men on the tugboat may have been responsible for the death of others, that didn't stop them from saving whoever they could. What we do after we make a mistake speaks volumes. Don't let your mistakes stop you from fulfilling your destiny. Someone else's life may depend

Rick Moore is Communications Pastor at Destiny Worship Center.





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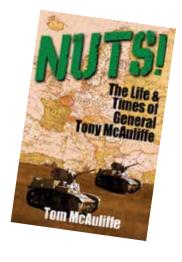
# **Exciting Real-Life Stories from Local Author**

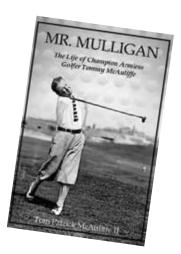
Local award-winning Author Tom Patrick McAuliffe of Fort Walton Beach has been a busy writer of late! He has not one but two new books out now: Mr. Mulligan-The Life of Champion Armless Golfer Tommy McAuliffe and his latest effort, NUTS! The Life and Times of General Tony McAuliffe. Both titles are available as Paperbacks, eBooks and Audiobooks at Amazon, Kindle, Apple Books and at the local FWB Books-A-Million book-

"Mr. Mulligan is about my Grandfather who lost both arms in a tragic street car accident at age nine, yet taught himself how to play PAR golf and lead a suc-



cessful life. He played with Golf greats like Walter Hagen, Bobby Jones and Arnold Palmer. In the 1930s, the elder McAuliffe traveled the country as a Vaudeville entertainer and later was involved with helping to pass legislation to protect the rights of the handicapped," said Tom. "In the 40s and 50's, he would travel the country and give positive thinking talks about overcoming life's obstacles. His motto was, 'The only handicap in life is a mental one! The armless Golfer was featured in newspapers, on TV, on radio and in 'Ripley's Believe it or Not' where he was featured twice, once in 1956 and again in 2013. Tom has also edited and published a companion volume called 'No Handicaps' which was first written by his





# Watercolor Class

ADSO's Easy, Fast, and Loose, 3-Brush Watercolor Class, October 1, Instructor: John Groah

The Arts and Design Society continues its series of watercolor classes with "Easy, Fast and Loose, 3-Brush Class," in which, using just three brushes, students will paint classic landscapes, on Saturday, October 1, 10 am-12:30 pm. The class, led by award-winning Instructor John Groah, is geared to beginning and experienced watercolorists. Cost of the workshop is \$30/members; \$35/non-members. Students bring their own supplies. For further information and to sign up for this workshop, vis-



it the ADSO website at www. artsdesignsociety.org, or call 850-244-1271 during office hours (Tuesday-Friday, 12 noon-4 pm). The Arts and Design Society is located at 17 First Street, SE, Fort Walton Beach, FL.

(Note: Photo shown is sample of style, not necessarily the scene to be painted in the workshop.)

Grandpa Tommy in 1939 more than 25,000 words via a pencil in his mouth and one typewriter key at a time!

The second new title has just been published and Nuts! The Life of General Tony McAuliffe is now available. It chronicles the life of one of the U.S. Army's most colorful Generals from WWII documenting the Battle of the Bulge, the true version of the 'Nuts' message to the German's demanding our surrender at Bastogne and the General's 35+ year career defending America. "We would all be speaking German now if it wasn't for the brave men and women of 'The Greatest Generation," Tom said.

Tom, 65, lives in Elliot's Pointe with his realtor wife, Sharon, and cat, Gigi, and loves his new home town. "Moving from Hawaii almost 10 years ago, we found another kind of paradise in Fort Walton Beach and from the local culture to the beach. we love it here!" he said. He's a former Photojournalist with the U.S. Navy's Combat Camera Group and a graduate of the DOD's Mass Communications Program at Syracuse University. He is also a former magazine editor and writer with more than 25 years of bylines.

"I truly love writing and have always been an ol' Irish story teller," he said. "In these crazy times, there's nothing better than sitting down with a good Book, eBook or Audiobook!"

Tom has three more books planned for this year-one on teacher astronaut Christa McAuliffe called Throttle Up!; another on MLB World Champion baseball player Dick McAuliffe called Mad Dog; and a final title in the five book McAuliffe Series. "Book 5 is about my cousin, former Virginia Governor and possible presidential candidate, Terry McAuliffe, called Life of the Party," said Tom. "All of the McAuliffe clan is related and traces its roots back to County Cork, Ireland in 1680," he said. "What a crazy family, eh?" Tom will be the featured author at the FWB Library Open House on Oct. 10th from 4-7 p.m. For more information, visit: www. authortommcauliffe.com.



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# **Emerald Coast Theatre Company's Centerline of Love**

In high school, my drama teacher showed me how to draw a ground plan to design a set. He taught me that every set designer starts their ground plan by drawing a centerline. This is a vertical dotted line down the center of the page, ending with the letters CL, usually drawn with the top of the Linside the C and the horizontal part below. In my youth and exuberance of learning all about theater, that image always stuck with me... the centerline.

Fast forward a few decades (or more) to a spring day last year... I was taking a walk out in the open air, enjoying nature and making a valiant effort to relax. I enjoy listening to music when I walk sometimes worship music, sometimes indie folk or sometimes laid back jazz like Jamie Cullum. On this particular day, I was allowing Spotify to present some new songs alongside my usual favorites. Rebeca Lake, ECTC's Set and Lighting Designer, had recently introduced the wonders of Spotify to me (showing my age here) as a great way to learn about other artists and songs that are similar to what I'm already listening to.

This particular day I was deep in thought, meditating and contemplating through a particular work puzzle that needed solving. As I'm walking along this beautiful trail, deep in reverie and listening to this new music, a song came on that provided an astounding moment of clarity. I had an astounding moment of clarity.

Here are the captivating words to this song that brought such an incredible feeling in that moment:

Everyday

We go to war again

We assume we know so much more

Before we hear what they have to

Headline breaks We start to hate again Calling them names again We give our peace away I hope they see it Cause I wanna see it I hope we believe it I wanna see I wanna see the love



All around you All around you I wanna know I wanna know That love Is all around you It's all around you

My mind's eye went to seeing all the children and teens who come to ECTC on a weekly basis. I want to see the love all around them. I thought of the volunteers and other patrons that come and find community at ECTC...I want to see the love all around them, too. The families who come for shows or to support siblings...I want them to see the love there too. My beautiful staff who pour their heart and soul into ECTC everyday...I want to see the love all around them too!

I had to find out who wrote these soul piercing words. The song is See the Love by The Brilliance. As the song continued it was like I was having a divine moment with the Creator, and my thoughts went back to high school and what my drama teacher had taught me.

The image of the centerline materialized in my mind as I listened intently. I pondered the centerline of that early set design draft, and then thought of the carpenter's plumbline and cornerstone. As these images were going through my head the thought very clearly came to me that the centerline of ECTC is love! If whatever we do operates out of love, then we are on the right track.

Fast forward several years, and as we are planning our 10th-season, Godspell comes up in discussion. Godspell is based on the teachings of Jesus which, as presented in Godspell, challenge us to love and build community.

The entire premise of the show is based on this foundational commandement, "Thou shalt love the Lord, your God, with all your heart and all your soul. This is the greatest commandment. And the second is like it: Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. All the rest of the law, and all the prophets have written, is based on these first two."

The connection between Godspell and the building of ECTC over the last nine years is undeniably the building of community and the loving of others, the centerline of love. As we build the set, enact the Godspell story, and sing the songs, our whole focus has been just that a centerline of love. Our mission through Godspell and ECTC is to create a community of love. When Rebeca drew that CL for the Godspell ground plan and when she does it for every other set that our professional actors and our students perform on, every show that our patrons and families come see, all of it starts with the centerline of love.

When you come to Emerald Coast Theatre Company, will you see the love? Gosh, I hope so.

~ Nathanael Fisher, Producing Artistic Director/CoFounder, Godspell Director



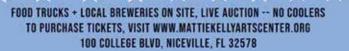






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# A Conversation with the Conductor

# Demetrius Fuller Gives His Take on Sinfonia Gulf Coast's 17th Season

By Zandra Wolfgram

Sinfonia Gulf Coast has a stellar 2022-2023 season line up. From world-renowned vocalists and violinists to Broadway's brightest stars, Beethoven musically mashed with rock bands. Curating a season that "sings" is an artform and Sinfonia Music & Artistic Director Demetrius Fuller is pitch perfect for the 17th year. With celebrity appearances, classical connections and innovative Northwest Florida debuts, this year's offerings redefine the symphony experience and offer something for everyone. Zandra Wolfgram recently sat down with maestro Fuller to get his take on Season

**ZW:** Jeremy Jordan is the Sinfonia Cabaret offering at Seagar's (Sept. 15). Why did you invite this particular performer to wow us?

**DF:** Jeremy is really a multifaceted artist. He got his start on Broadway in the original cast of Newsies, which is a wonderful show. He is a Tony and Grammy nominated artist, but more

recently, he's done a lot of film and drama. Most recently with Kerry Washington in a play on Broadway, and in the hit TV show Supergirl. He's sort of a "triple threat" — he can sing, act and dance. Plus, he's just an amazing artist. He transcends all of the music genres: classical, Broadway and pop. Jeremy is a talented artist, a great musician and a nice person. I think people will really love him.

**ZW:** October 11 is the highly anticipated Gala Event with the incomparable Patti LaBelle. Do tell us more.

**DF:** Who doesn't know Patti LaBelle? And to know her is to like her. To bring "the godmother of soul" to the stage with her 60 years in the business is a feather in our cap and an absolute thrill. She's just as nice as she could be, and she's simply incomparable. That's really the only word. There is nobody like Patti LaBelle. We're honored to be able to present her and her whole band on the Sinfonia stage. She joins our special exclusive Sinfonia sorority join-



ing Vanessa Williams, Roberta Flack, Kristin Chenoweth, Patti LuPone and Bernadette Peters.

**ZW:** What motivated you to create the Gala Event experience? Bernadette Peters was a showstopper for Sinfonia's inaugural season and set at a very high bar. What prompted you stage a celebrity-studded Gala Event in a major hall like the Destin-Fort Walton Beach Convention Center?

**DF:** It's a standalone event. It really has separated Sinfonia from anything else, not only in our community but along the



Gulf coast, because none of the other regional orchestras bring in the caliber of artists that Sinfonia does. Sinfonia is what I call one-stop symphony shopping. It runs the gamut we have the gala, which is a pinnacle event, the full orchestra, Pops, chamber orchestra, chamber music, education programs, non-orchestra events, like the Cabaret and Crescendo! and wine events. So, the Gala Event really is just part of the puzzle piece that is sort of the angel on the Christmas tree, so to speak.

**ZW:** On October 22, the full orchestra will accompany the full film showing of the 1931 horror film based on Mary Shelley's book, The Bride of Frankenstein. This is a different experience than a typical concert.

**DF:** The Bride of Frankenstein has one of the most amazing orchestral scores in film history. It's full orchestra, so we'll have 65 to 70 musicians on stage in the Mattie Kelly Arts Foundation's Cultural Arts Village al fresco just before Halloween. It's about 90 minutes. It will be fun.

**ZW:** December 9 we have a popular offering that is always changing. Holiday Pops is a tradition, but you always put a twist on it.

**DF:** Yes, this year, we "doowopify" our Holiday Pops with the Doo Wop Project. This is a group of guys who were originals in the Jersey Boys off Broadway. Doo Wop is just a great art form. It is as much an American musical staple as jazz, and rock and roll. These guys

Continued on next page





# Sing Along with Shrek

"Shrek The Musical," directed by Craig Ewing. Based on the Oscar-winning DreamWorks Animation film, Shrek The Musical is a Tony Award-winning fairy tale adventure. Irreverently fun for the whole family, this local Stagecrafters show proves that beauty is truly in the eye of the ogre.

Performances are Oct. 28-30 and Nov. 4-6 at the Fort Walton Beach Civic Auditorium, 109 Miracle Strip Pkwy. SW, Fort Walton Beach. Friday and Saturday shows are at 7:30 p.m. and Sunday matinees are at 2 p.m. Tickets are available online at www. stagecraftersfwb.com or at the door.

# Arts & Music

# **DEMETRIUS**

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take a piece of music and make it their own. They will perform everybody's favorite holiday tunes but will also take pop songs and a handful of popular tunes and "doowopify" them. They will perform a wide gamut of songs that people from all age groups are going to know. Plus, the full orchestra will play favorites like Stille Nacht and more, so it will be a great seasonal concert.

**ZW:** January 21 we shake off the winter blues with Get Happy and celebrate the centennial of Judy Garland's birth.

**DF:** Who doesn't love the legend, Judy Garland? This is a great production because it showcases the string section of the orchestra and basically a jazz band along with superstar vocalist Jessica Vosk. She performed Elphaba in Wicked on Broadway. If you've heard her sing, you know she has amazing pipes, and is just a powerhouse. You will feel as though you are

seeing Judy Garland singing live with the orchestra. There's a multimedia component that showcases vintage footage of The Judy Garland Show with tons of outtakes with Dean Martin, Sammy Davis Jr. and Frank Sinatra that make an entertaining trip down memory lane. It will be a fun concert to experience because we are creating a clubby, dinner theater atmosphere with café tables. You can do that or opt for regular seating.

**ZW:** March 11 is the Classical Connections concert featuring violinist Geneva Lewis. Tell us about her.

**DF:** Classical Connections is the "meat and potatoes" classical portion of what Sinfonia does and Geneva Lewis is an extraordinary young talented violinist. She's the winner of the 2020 Concert Artist Guild annual competition and a recipient of a 2021 Avery Fisher career grant, which is a major award and a big deal in the classical music world. She's a remarkable artist and she's do-

ing Mendelssohn's Concerto for Violin which is one of the staples of the violin repertoire. Her performance is one not to miss. She is going to working with the Sinfonia Youth Orchestra doing outreach in our local schools as well.

**ZW:** Capping the season (April 29) is Beethoven versus Coldplay. This sounds like another perfect example of how you are redefining the symphony experience. Tell us what people can expect.

**DF:** Beethoven is immortal. When you pair or mash Beethoven up with something on the pop scene, like Coldplay it's unexpected. For this concert, they're not just playing a piece by Beethoven and a piece by Coldplay side by side. This is a melding, a mashup of the internal, interwoven musical notation with vocalists and it is remarkable. It's an incredible way to listen to and rethink how music is connected. Steve Hackman, the producer, is a brilliant musician, composer, and arranger. It's totally unique, but it's accessible. How many people from the age of 15 don't know Coldplay? So, again, we hope this innovative offering brings in some new faces.

**ZW:** At the heart of Sinfonia's mission is music education. Tell us why.

**DF:** Our mission states succinctly that we "entertain, educate, inspire the community" and we aim to do that with everything we do. Education is the centerpiece of Sinfonia. It was founded not only for its entertainment value, but for the fact that Northwest Florida needed an organization that could be the proponent for arts education in schools, specifically music education. We all know arts education is on a continual decline in all public schools. We've been more fortunate here in Northwest Florida, compared to some areas but in many cases our Link Up program, which is a year-long curriculum, is sometimes the only arts education these students receive.

We have a String Quartet, a resident Brass Quintet, and a

Woodwind Quintet in residence — all going out to schools and the community and providing outreach and community engagement.

This year, we are reintroducing the Paint the Music project, which is a great cross-genre program that includes both visual arts and the musical arts. Kids receive a recording of what they will ultimately hear live at a Sinfonia concert, and they visually interpret what they hear on to paper. We take their artwork and display it at a concert. (Look for the Paint the Music exhibit at Get Happy in January.) The following Monday, the kids will sit in the convention center to see Beethoven Lives Upstairs, a theatrical mini musical featuring actors and singers sharing the lifetime of Beethoven with more than 30 excerpts of his

**ZW:** Congratulations, this is indeed a stellar 17th season.

Purchase tickets online at SinfoniaGulfCoast.org or call (850) 460-8800.

# **LIONFISH**

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Since they're covered in venomous spines that can inflict painful stings, harvesting them usually requires a spear or slingshot, although nets are also allowed. The goal is for participants to remove as many lionfish as they can in just 3.5 months. It's free to enter and participants can compete for the title of the Lionfish King/Queen or Commercial Champion anywhere in Florida.

Lionfish can be found yearround off our coast and the Carolinas, though no one really knows how they arrived. Native to the Red Sea and the Indo-Pacific, there's a theory that aquarium owners have been releasing them from home aquariums for about 25 years. (Source: National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration)

According to the FWC, lionfish are known to prey on more than 70 marine fish and invertebrate species. They also compete for food with native predatory fish such as grouper and snapper, which are vital to the commercial fishing business.

# Winners:

# **Recreational Division**

Lionfish King (first place, Recreational Division): **Isaac Jones, Okaloosa County** – 1,018 lionfish

Second place Recreational Division: Baye Beauford, Duval County – 863 lionfish

Third place Recreational Division: Helen Rodney, Broward County – 800 lionfish

### **Commercial Division**

Commercial Champion (First place Commercial Division): Paul DeCuir, Gulf Shores, Ala. (dives Escambia County) – 1,092 pounds of lionfish

Second place Commercial Division: **Alex Fogg, Okaloo-sa County** – 1,090 pounds of lionfish

Third place Commercial Division: Isidoro Bedoya, Duval County – 1,008 pounds of lionfish



Alex Fogg, 2nd Place Winner Commercial Division

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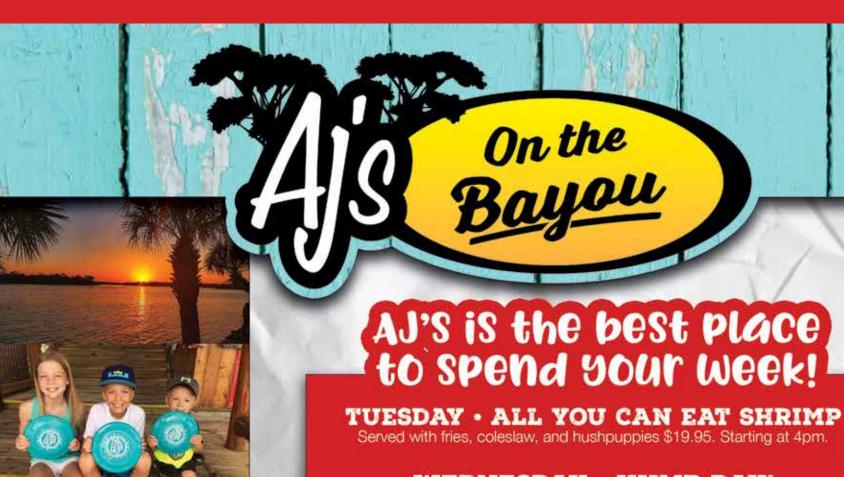
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