



OCTOBER 2020  
VOL. 1, NO. 2

# PCB Life

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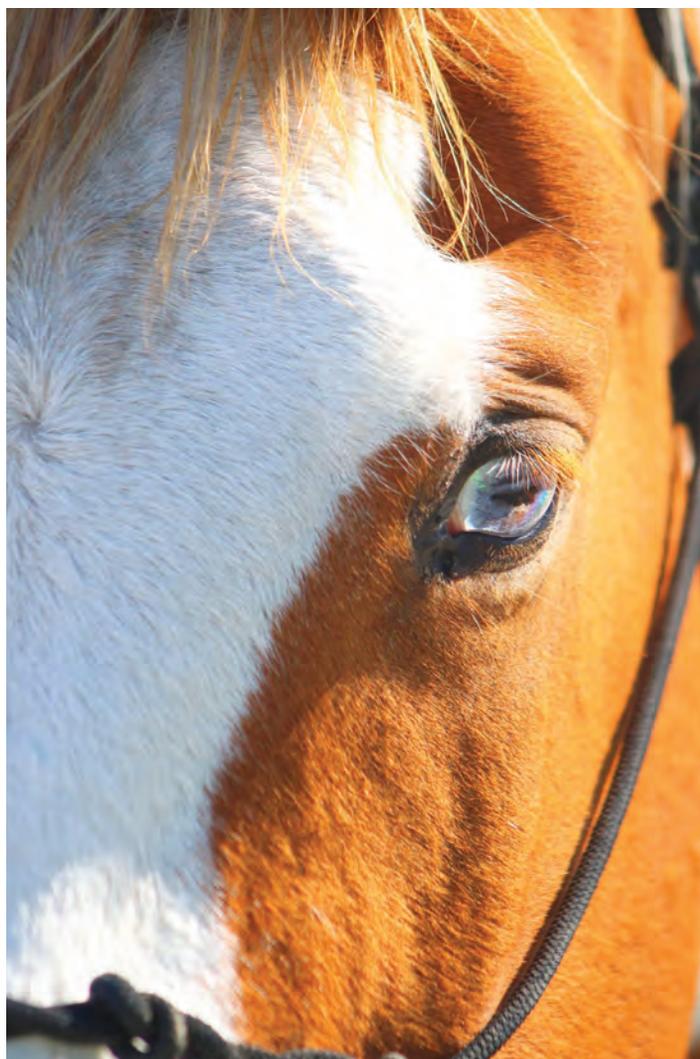
## Giving HOPE to Humanity and Horses

BY HEATHER BENNETT

Hope is an optimistic feeling, based on the desire or wish for a positive outcome. Hope can also be the faith in the unknown. For HOPE Project, Inc., hope means Healing Our Patriots with Equines. Through equine therapy, this nonprofit organization is giving hope to veterans, first responders and their families, as well as children, teens and adults that have PTSD or have trauma from physical or sexual abuse.

Located in Fountain, Florida just north of Panama City, HOPE Project was founded by Veteran David Trogdon. David was active duty for 25 years, and spent the last 16 years as an Army Chaplain. He spent 3 years in Iraq and Afghanistan. David retired medically from the Army with 3 traumatic brain injuries and PTSD. After leaving Fort Benning, he helped friends rescue horses from kill pens here in Florida, and the Hope Project was developed bringing together both animals and veterans that needed healing.

The equine therapy used at HOPE Project is based on the Eagala Model that incorporates a certified mental health professional and a certified equine specialist working together with the horses and clients. Horses react to the client's emotions and the horse's behavior will change as the client's emotions change. This provides information to the therapist.



"Horses are truly amazing, and God's given them these abilities where a horse can read your body language and your facial expressions, and because they are so emotional, they also know your emotions," David said. "When I'm having a tough time or a down day, the horses know it and they'll come up and check on me."

HOPE Project provides

free counseling, resources and equine therapy to Veterans, First Responders and their families, children, teens and adults who have been physically or sexually abused. They don't turn anyone away that needs help. "It's been a blessing to help anyone who's been hurting," said David. "Last month we reached out to over 100 people who needed help."

Instead of talking to a

counselor at an office, clients will spend time with David and their equine specialist in the arena, interacting with the horses as they are given tasks to complete while answering questions. "We've had Vietnam Vets with severe PTSD that haven't talked to anyone, but I've seen them talk to a horse for over an hour and cry," said David. "It totally transforms their lives, and I know what it does for me."

HOPE Project is completely nonprofit. They currently have 10 horses, 2 donkeys, 6 goats and cats. The horses were rescued from kill pens, are retired from racing or displaced from Hurricane Michael. HOPE Project operates solely on donations and volunteers. Many spend 20-40 hours a week there. Most are medically retired like David, and some work full time, but volunteer because they believe in the work HOPE Project is accomplishing. "We have the best volunteers in the world. We appreciate all our volunteers and all who help," said David.

HOPE Project also has some great partners and projects. One of the HOPE volunteer staff is a Retired Air Force First Sergeant who owns 20 acres off Highway 20. She provides free riding therapy for Veterans and others. They also work with Alaqua Animal Refuge where they come out

**HOPE**

*continued on page 2*

## Defenders of Potential Add Virtual Component to Annual Fenner Fundraiser



Big Brothers Big Sisters of Northwest Florida (BBBSNWFL), along with the West Florida Wheelmen Bicycle Club will present the annual Fenner Ride on Oct. 31st, 2020. And this year, due to the COVID-19 pandemic and respect to social distancing, BBBSNWFL has added a new virtual participation element to this anticipated cycling event, which will be held at the Milton Community Center located at 5629 Byrom St. Milton, Fla.

This cycling event is dedicated to the memory of Fenner McConnell and Matt Wantz. Both men were avid cyclists and former members of the West Florida Wheelmen. Dr. Fenner McConnell, a medical examiner for a four-county district in the Panhandle, was killed in 1998 by a hit-and-run driver as he rode his bicycle across the Bob Sikes Bridge, which connects Pensacola to Santa

**FENNER**

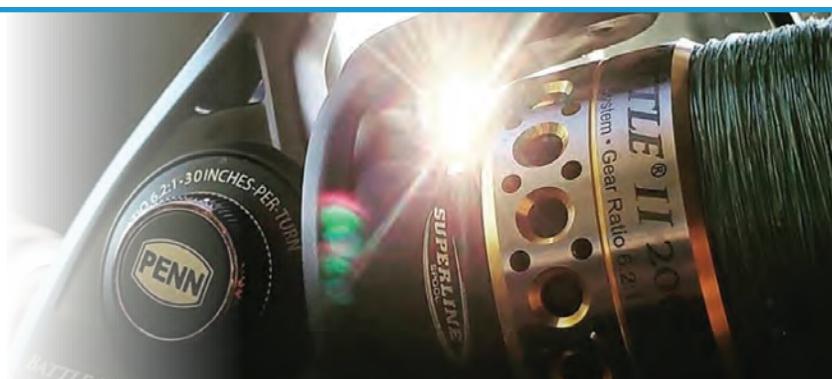
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### Community

#### HOPE

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to provide therapy there. HOPE Project is also a member of the National Alliance on Mental Illness. After Hurricane Michael they were a distribution center for over 6,000 people. They have also held suicide prevention training on site.

David said HOPE Project is currently working on raising money to build a covered arena so they can provide therapy regardless of the weather and

the elements. They haven't held many fundraisers because they know people are still recovering from Hurricane Michael and Covid. They have a sponsorship with Texas Roadhouse in Panama City Beach, and have received VA grants and other donations. "The Chaplain in me says God provides," said David. "We've been very blessed."

If you are interested in more information on donating or therapy, you can visit their Web-site at [hopeprojectinc.org](http://hopeprojectinc.org).



#### FENNER

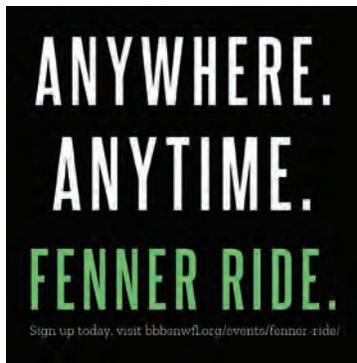
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Rosa Island. Matt was tragically killed while working in a local bike shop.

Adding a virtual element will expand this event and allow people to participate on their own time from anywhere in the world. This option is for individuals who want to participate but may not be local and prefer to stay away from a crowd. Just like the in-person ride, the virtual option will allow individuals to pick from an 18, 42, 62, or 100-mile ride. Each ride will

have a map that can be used to guide individuals throughout their route, or riders can set out on their own route riding their preferred distance. Once their ride is finished, they will be able to submit their time through a virtual platform called, RunSignUp. All participants virtual and in-person will receive a t-shirt, medal, and a promotional gift bag.

Early registration is taking place now, through Oct. 16th, 2020. Registration is \$45 for both the in-person and virtual ride option. After Oct. 16th, registration prices will increase



to \$55. For those who are participating locally, registration packets can be picked up at 1320 Creighton Rd. Pensacola, Fla. on Oct. 30th from noon - 7 p.m. the morning of the ride. Day-

of ride registration will begin at 6:30 a.m. (CST). The 100-mile riders will begin at 7:30 a.m., with the remaining riders beginning at 8 a.m. BBBSNWFL is taking ample precautions to ensure the health and safety of all participants is the top priority.

You can sign up for Fenner Ride and purchase a jersey by visiting, [bbbsnwfl.org/event/fenner-ride/](http://bbbsnwfl.org/event/fenner-ride/). This is a ride for all cycling levels, so don't miss this opportunity to participate from anywhere in the world! All proceeds from this event benefit BBBSNWFL.

**PCB Life**

Published Monthly  
Directed Mailed to Panama City Beach  
Circulation: 12,000 Households

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## Faces of PCB: Marta Rose Thorpe

**Marta, tell us a little bit about yourself.**

I'm a creative, artistic, entrepreneurial, driven business-woman. I love living here in the Grand Lagoon and since moving into Martinique six years ago, I've had a personal interest in helping build, develop, and evolve the Grand Lagoon community into its full potential. The Grand Lagoon is a special enclave to me and living here is all about nature and outdoor living at its finest. I launched a media company, Grand Lagoon Life, in June of 2017 and have enjoyed a slow, steady growth for the past three-and-a-half years. At a certain point, probably sometime in the past year, I took a 30-thousand-foot view at what I was doing with this magazine, all the social media, videos and live events, and the realization hit me that Grand Lagoon Life really isn't so much of a place as it truly is a lifestyle. People come here for that easy-going lifestyle... days filled with being outside in nature. Being a part of a small community where everybody knows

your name. Maybe they've left a corporate job in the city, or they've relocated here following retirement. They are ready to live the easy, breezy, beach life now. My new web-based show, Grand Lagoon Life, is a little "slice of life" in the Grand Lagoon. I am the host, and I interview local residents, business owners and entrepreneurs on what life here is all about. This is a passion project that I've had in the works for a while.

**Tell us about your family.**

I live with my sweet hubby Jimmy and kids Leo, 15 and a sophomore at Arnold High School, and Cruz, also 15 and a freshman at Arnold. We have three cats and the household is always busy! My sister Liz lives right up the street with her family – she's my best friend, and the reason I relocated here from Los Angeles once upon a time – to be closer to the family.

**Tell us about your current, past, or future career.**

In Los Angeles for 18 years I worked at ad agencies, large and small, and later launched

a catering & event production business which I ran for the last ten years. Upon moving to Panama City Beach in 2004 I first worked at the Panama City Beach Chamber as Director of Communications for nine years, then jumped over to Harley-Davidson of PCB as their Director of Marketing & Events for four years. By that time the entrepreneur in me was ready to roll again, so I left Harley and went into business for myself in June 2017.

**What are a couple of your favorite restaurants in our community?**

Firefly's Caesar salad, Grand Marlin's tuna tartar, C-Level's prime rib, Juan Taco's for a good taco or shrimp quesadilla.

**Who is the most interest-**

**ing person you've met here in our community?**

That's hard – I meet a lot of interesting people every week through interviews and events. The most interesting person to me probably didn't take the road more traveled. I love meeting young adults and asking them about their aspirations, and why.



*The Faces Of.*

Panama City Beach

Oftentimes I learn a lot of new things from the world's future leaders.

**What advice do you have for us?**

It's possible to manifest nearly any dream if you believe in it and can envision it. The old saying is so true: "Whether you think you can – or think you can't – you'll be right."

**What is something on your bucket list?**

To own a sangria bar on St. George Street in St. Augustine.

**What is something interesting that most people don't know about you?**

Out in L.A. I catered a fiesta party for Fran Drescher in her Malibu home. Her friends and family were SO NICE! As my crew was getting ready to wrap it up and leave, the whole party stood and applauded us.

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 Community

# An Introduction to Your Chamber of Commerce



By KRISTOPHER MCLEAN,  
PRESIDENT AND CEO,  
PANAMA CITY BEACH CHAMBER  
OF COMMERCE

Established in 1987, the Panama City Beach Chamber of Commerce proudly serves its members within Panama City Beach, Panama City, Lynn Haven, Mexico Beach, 30A, Destin and other surrounding areas or

as we say, Bay County and beyond. The Panama City Beach Chamber is a 501(c)(6) not-for-profit member organization, established to advocate for and partner with our members to support, encourage, and expand business development and tourism, thereby enhancing the quality of life in our community.

When you join the Panama City Beach Chamber, you invest in your own success and the success of the community. Quickly approaching 1,300 members, we are becoming one of the largest Chambers in the region. This would not be possible without the strong leadership of my Chairman, Matt Griffiths, and my amazing team: Jena Liles, CFO; Shannon Richmond, Vice President - Director of Membership Services; Missy Holmes, Business Support Di-



rector; Tiffiney Carter, Director of Communications & Design; and Lysie Sisk, Director of Marketing and Events.

One of the most important roles that the Panama City Beach Chamber serves is connecting business to business and providing tools and resources for their success. Our Chamber hosts both large and small events every month to bring the membership and community together. Those events include the Annual Women's Work-

Life Symposium, Panama City Beach Marathon, Awards Dinner, Golf Classic, After Hours, and Friday at the Beach. We also have different committees for the membership to network and volunteer. Due to COVID-19, most of our events this year have been postponed but we look forward to holding them once again as Governor Ron DeSantis recently announced Florida's move into Phase 3 of his Safe. Smart. Step-By-Step Plan for Florida's Recovery. It's very rewarding seeing the membership come together and it's even more rewarding that a portion of the proceeds collected at some of our events are given to local non-profit organizations, FSU-PC, GCSC, Bay District schools, and other volunteer groups.

The Panama City Beach Chamber also serves as an infor-

mation hub for the visitors coming to our destination. We offer our award-winning magazine called The Circuit, which features bi-monthly themed issues, and our Annual Visitor/Relocation Guide that highlights the Bay County area. Our lobby is full of information about all the attractions, accommodations, restaurants, and other local businesses in the area—which we use to promote our entire membership.

I am very proud of everything our Chamber accomplishes year after year. The success of our community depends on the success of the businesses and we are here to support both. For more information about our organization and the benefits we provide, please visit our website [www.PCBeach.org](http://www.PCBeach.org) or call (850) 235-1159.

## City Approves Budget with \$81.8 Million in Capital Investments

On Thursday, September 24th, 2020 the Panama City Beach Council approved the fiscal year 2020-21 budget, which includes \$81.8 million in capital investments, four additional police officer positions, one additional fire inspector and a procurement specialist.

"The budget is balanced, prudent and responsive to the

City Council's Strategic Plan and community needs," City Manager Tony O'Rourke told the Council. "The proposed FY 20-21 expenditures budget for all funds is \$144,628,926. The capital investment represents 94 percent of the FY 20-21 budget increase."

Major components of the budget include:

- \$33.3 million in Front Beach Road Community Redevelopment Area (CRA) capital investment
- \$37.4 million in water and wastewater capital investment
- \$9 million in general fund capital investment including \$6.8 million for Bay Parkway
- \$1.8 million in stormwater capital improvements



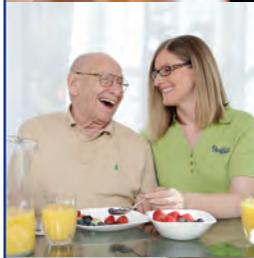
After a September 1st budget workshop, City Council recommendations totaling \$553,000 were incorporated into the budget. These included the addition of several new positions including a procurement officer to lead citywide purchasing; a third fire inspector so that all condos/properties can be inspected annually; and four police officer positions. The Council also added a part-time IT systems employee and agreed to fund an IT assessment study.

Other positions included in this budget include a biologist and GIS analyst in Utilities, and an additional street maintenance worker in Public Works.

The City has \$1.5 million budgeted for street resurfacing.

Unassigned General Fund reserves for the next fiscal year, which begins October 1st and runs through Sept. 30th, 2021, are projected to be \$9.7 million or 35 percent of recurring general fund expenditures, which exceeds the City Council's Financial Management Policy that requires at least 25 percent (\$7.1 million) be kept in reserve.

The Council has committed to fast-tracking the CRA by having several sections underway at one time and recently approved a bond issue which will provide \$40 million to keep the project moving forward.



### The key to quality senior care is asking the right questions.

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# Charity Chatter

## Camp Helen State Park Pumpkin Patch



The friends of Camp Helen are excited to announce the opening of their pumpkin patch. Now through October 31st, (or until they sell out) pumpkins will be sold 7 days a week, from 9 a.m.- 4 p.m.

Camp Helen State Park is located at 23937 Panama City Beach Parkway (Highway 98), Panama City Beach, just west of the Lake Powell Bridge.

This year, the pumpkin patch will have social distancing measures in place. Everyone is encouraged to stay 6 feet apart and only handle pumpkins they plan to purchase. Signage will be placed throughout the park with our safety guidelines. The Charity accepts all major credit cards but cash will be exact change only.

The organizers look forward to welcoming local residents to this picture-perfect event, but urge supporters to stay home if they feel ill and only visit once they feel better.

More information is available at facebook.com/FriendsOfCampHelenStatePark, or by calling 850 233 5059.

## Panama City Senior's Center Has Reopened!

The Senior Center at 423 Lyndell Lane has reopened and is once again offering members a number of varied and engaging classes: chair exercise, yoga, line dancing, rotary, knife and chisel woodworking and painting. Daily, Monday through Friday 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. To find out more please call 850-233-5065.

## Programs and Support for Dementia and Parkinson's Disease



The 850 Strong Rock Steady Boxing, at Anytime Fitness, 856 N. Tyndall Pkwy., Callaway offers a premiere exercise fitness

program that can help halt the progression of the devastating effects of Parkinson's disease. Only people who have a Parkinson's diagnosis can participate. Call 850-640-6150 to make an appointment.

**Dementia Support Group** – meets the first Tuesday of every month, at the PCB Chamber, 309 N. Jackson Blvd., 9:30 a.m. to 11 a.m.

**Parkinson's Support Group** – meets the second Tuesday of every month, at the PCB Chamber, 309 N. Jackson Blvd., 9:30 a.m. to 11 a.m. This month, the group will host a representative from Acadia Pharmaceuticals who will be discussing medical treatment options for the disease.

## Red Cross to Host Two Blood Drives in Panama City



**October 9th** - at the First United Methodist Church, 903 E 4th St. from 8 a.m. until 2 p.m.

**December 17th** - Bill Cramer Showrooms. 2251 W. 23rd St., 8 a.m. until 2 p.m.

Donors are invited to sign up for both drives and encouraged to invite new donors to participate, more donors...more lives saved!

Interested in hosting a Red Cross Blood Drive at your place of business or worship in Panama City Beach? Please contact Stephen Carr 251-222-0608 or stephen.carr@redcross.org.

## Junior League Once Again Hosts Annual Holly Fair

Tickets are now on sale for Holly Fair, the Junior League of Panama City's (JLPC) largest annual fundraiser, **November 12th to 15th, 2020**, at Edgewater Beach and Golf Resort. The more than 30-year Bay County tradition will continue to be an in-person holiday shopping experience with JLPC's top priority being the health and safety of event attendees, volunteers and vendors. Tickets are available for purchase at JLPanamaCity.org/HollyFairTickets.

"We think now more than ever we can lift people's spirits in preparing them for the holiday season," JLPC President

Lauren Presser said. "The Junior League of Panama City is expert at putting on Holly Fair. We will have the necessary precautions in place to make shoppers feel comfortable during the COVID-19 pandemic while also making sure the people of Panama City know how important carrying on this tradition is to us."

In addition to the traditional Thursday night Preview Party, Friday Champagne Brunch and general shopping, Holly Fair will feature a new event, 'Crafting with the Clauses,' on Sunday, November 15th. This day of crafting and fun is \$10 and includes a photo with Santa Claus. Patrons who purchase tickets will also have access to nearly 75 vendors ranging from Christmas décor to boutique clothing and from kitchen gadgets to designer jewelry. All net proceeds from Holly Fair will support the programs and mission of JLPC.

One of the programs that benefits directly from Holly Fair is the JLPC Diaper Bank, which addresses diaper need within our community by distributing diapers, wipes and training pants through various local partner agencies.

## Become a Defender of Potential



Big Brothers Big Sisters of Northwest Florida host 'Let's Talk Tuesdays' on the 2nd and 4th Tuesday of every month, 8:30 a.m., 12 Noon and 5:30 p.m. Find out how you can become a defender of Potential!

Visit bbbsnwfl.org to find out more and to sign up for this month's virtual meeting.

## Healthy Start Coalition Launches Safe Sleep Campaign

Following a dangerous uptick in the number of unsafe sleep deaths in Bay County, the Healthy Start Program and Children's Advocacy Center are partnering with Gulf Coast Regional Medical Center to launch 'This Side Up,' a Safe Sleep Baby campaign. Over the coming months the Advocacy Center and Healthy Start



VITAS Healthcare presents grant to Panama City Rescue Mission

will be training first responders, police and firemen on safe sleep practices and providing them with 'This Side Up' safe sleep packets, that will include a Safe Sleep shirt, pacifiers and educational materials for Mother's and other guardians. To find out more or to find out how you can participate in the campaign please contact Sharon Trainor sharon@healthystartbfg.org.

## VITAS Healthcare Awards \$30,000 Grant to Panama City Rescue Mission

The Panama City Rescue Mission (PCRM) recently re-

ceived a \$30,000 grant from VITAS Healthcare to provide aid to people experiencing homelessness in Bay County. The grant will support PCRM's new 'Life Transformation Program,' which assists people with relationships, personal health, economic stability and housing.

"The vision for PCRM is to provide the inspiration and services that will stimulate effective collaboration without compromise and uphold personal development within the community as the clear and compelling

*Continued on next page*

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 Community

# Putting the Wow Back in Learning with Woz Ed



BY BILL HUSFELT,  
SUPERINTENDENT,  
BAY DISTRICT SCHOOLS

Now that we've welcomed students back to school, it's time to begin highlighting some of the amazing programs we have going on throughout Bay District Schools.

I'd like to start by taking a look at "Woz Ed," the Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) education program designed by Steve Wozniak, one of the co-founders of Apple Computers.

This unique curriculum is designed to teach students the "soft" skills they need to be lifelong learners and collaborators (like problem solving and

critical thinking) while leaving them with some very real, and marketable, skill sets like coding, creating artificial intelligence and flying drones.

While Woz Ed offers a multitude of programs at a variety of levels, we've chosen to focus our professional development on elementary grades at first so we can appropriately support the teachers who are undertaking this new project. So, this school year, we're rolling out coding, drone aeronautics, cyber security and artificial intelligence in grades kindergarten through fifth at the area elementary schools that were willing to be our pilots for this new curriculum.

On the beach, this program will debut at Hutchison Beach Elementary School this year and we can't wait to see what our Dolphins create! Their Woz Ed teachers have been equipped with 3-D printers, drones, block and text coding tools, robots and cyber security simulations. According to the Woz Ed program, their curriculum "is a convergence of the worlds of education and work. Our programs are aligned with

the emerging global economy – rich with technology, driven by industry demands and infused with entrepreneurial spirit."

While every student will benefit, it's of particular interest to me that coding, engineering and other similar courses are truly open to all. As the Woz Ed brochure notes, "you don't have to be good at English to be good at coding."

We're also rolling out a new heavy machinery Career and Technical Education component to our Construction Technology Academy at J.R. Arnold High School this year. So now students have yet one more program from which to choose (construction, engineering and drone flying are all very popular) and even more options for hands-on education that can both take them places right out of high school and, in many cases, translate into college credits if that's their chosen path.

It's exciting to do our part to enhance diversity in these career fields and to show our students some of their options for further study after high school. I, for one, cannot wait to see our second graders learn to fly



The Arnold High School student body President and Vice President addressed the City Council, September 2020.

drones and I'm excited about how that technology may entice them to learn more about science, technology, engineering and math. There's no telling the dividends that may result from us piquing the interest of these students early on with technology-related skills and careers.

Equipping our students with the academic and soft skills they need to achieve their dreams is

our mission and it's thrilling to see another program coming to fruition that will help excite students about school and about furthering their education in the technical fields.



## CHARITY

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pathway out of recurring crises through rescue, redemption, rehabilitation and re-assimilation." said Stephen Fett, PCRM CEO.

### A Superior's Veterans & First Responders Appreciation Lunch

**Tuesday, October 20th, 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m.** at Texas Roadhouse. All local veterans and first responders are invited.

The local community is also welcome to come out and support our heroes and share their appreciation for the men and women who keep our country and community safe. Proudly hosted by A Superior Air Conditioning.

### Rotary Club of the Emerald Coast Announces Milestone

Earlier this summer the Rotary Club of the Emerald Coast presented three more of its members with the Paul Harris Fellow Award, making the 20-member strong Club, a 100% PHF Club! The Paul Harris Fellow is the highest award in Rotary and is given to Rotarians, or member of the community, who have made an outstanding contribution to the community and contributed at least \$1,000 to the Rotary Foundation. The Emerald Coast's 100% PHF status is significant as only 12 of the 53 clubs in this District (6940) have achieved this status and only one other in Bay County.

Rotary is an international organization of business and professional leaders united worldwide, who provide humanitarian service, encourage high ethical standards in all vocations, and help build goodwill and peace in the world.

### 2nd Annual Pre-Holiday Coastal Social to Benefit Girls Inc.



Join Grand Lagoon neighbors, friends and business owners for a fun evening of cocktail and wine tastings, holiday treats and live entertainment. The event will feature a Local Vendor Showcase, full of local merchants' and artists' finest products on sale just in time for the holidays! There will also be an Art Raffle benefiting Girls Inc. "Inspiring All Girls to be Strong, Smart & Bold." The event is free; attire is 'Festive-Holiday.' **Thursday, November 12th, 5:30 to 7:30 p.m.** at Legendary Marine, 4009 Thomas Drive.

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# School Spirit: Arnold High - Go Marlins!

BY BRITT SMITH, PRINCIPAL, J.R. ARNOLD HIGH SCHOOL

J.R. Arnold High School prides itself in providing our Marlins a “A-A-A” education. As a result, our students excel in Academics, Arts, and Athletics.

Our ACADEMIC program is designed to prepare students to be successful in the pursuit of the college or career of their choice. Arnold High School was the first high school in Bay County to provide students the opportunity to earn the College Board’s Capstone Diploma. This special diploma designation is earned through a rigorous course of study and viewed by upper tier universities to be an indicator of a student’s preparedness for success at the collegiate level. Over the past two years alone, Arnold graduates have been recognized as National Merit Scholar Finalists and have earned appointments to military academies across the country.

Arnold prides itself in providing 14 career-technical education (CTE) certification programs. Our newest CTE



program is the Unmanned Aircraft System, UAS. Students completing this program will earn their pilot’s license to fly drones and be sought after by companies for one of the most rapidly growing career opportunities. Arnold’s Construction Trades Academy was recently awarded a grant to expand its program to include simulators for Heavy Equipment Operation. Our other CTE programs are equally exciting and are expanding to meet the diverse needs of our community and



interests of students. We pride ourselves in providing diverse CTE learning opportunities as our students can earn industry certifications ranging from Engineering and Computer Science to Culinary Arts and Hospitality.

The ARTS play a vital role in the education of students at Arnold HS and our programs are award winning. Arnold’s Theatrical program has earned the International Honor Award for six years in a row. This past year they were awarded a \$10,000

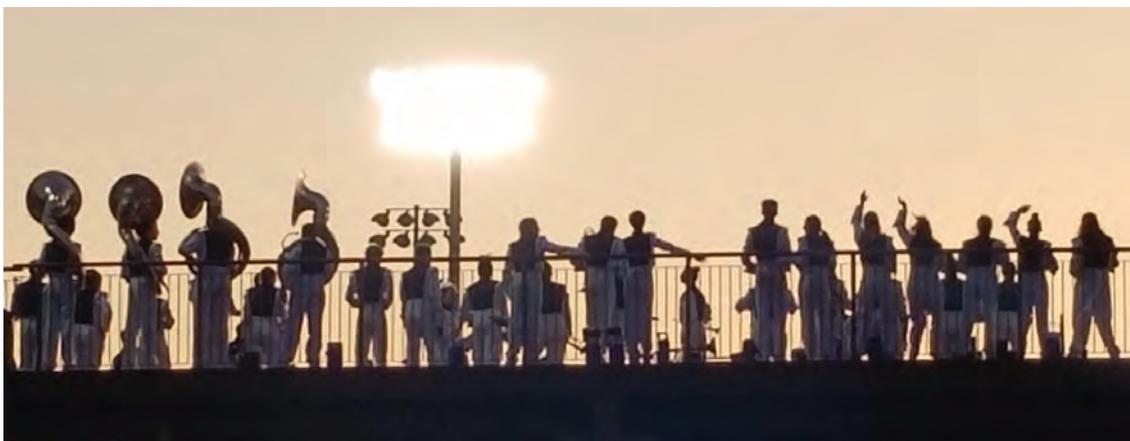
scholarship to attend the International Thespian Conference where one of our students was elected an International Officer and received first place in the International Monologue category. Of course our Blue Thunder Band is an award winning group that excels during both marching and concert competitions. They regularly and consistently are awarded Superior ratings!

Finally, Marlin ATHLETIC programs have been rec-

ognized for their excellence in competition and sportsmanship. Our Lady Marlin Weightlifting team has earned Back-to-Back State Championships! During this most recent school year, Arnold’s male and female athletic teams were the highest ranked in the area earning a 6th place finish in the Florida High School Athletic Association’s Floyd E. Lay Sunshine Cup All-Sports rankings. In addition, our school was awarded the Fred E. Rozelle Sportsmanship Award. This prestigious award was only given to 14 schools in the state of Florida.

J.R. Arnold High School is proud to be part of the Panama City Beach community and serve as its high school. As we begin our 21st school year, Arnold Marlins are helping to make our community a great place to learn, live, and work!

**#GoMarlins**



## The Heart & Soul of Arnold High

The Blue Thunder Band program is comprised of the marching, jazz, and concert bands at J.R. Arnold High School. Established in 2001, the Blue Thunder Band Program has a rich history and tradition of excellence that is truly special. The band has performed at state and national events. The marching band performs at all Friday night football games, and the jazz and concert bands perform concerts regularly throughout the year. It is the Band’s goal to provide and pro-

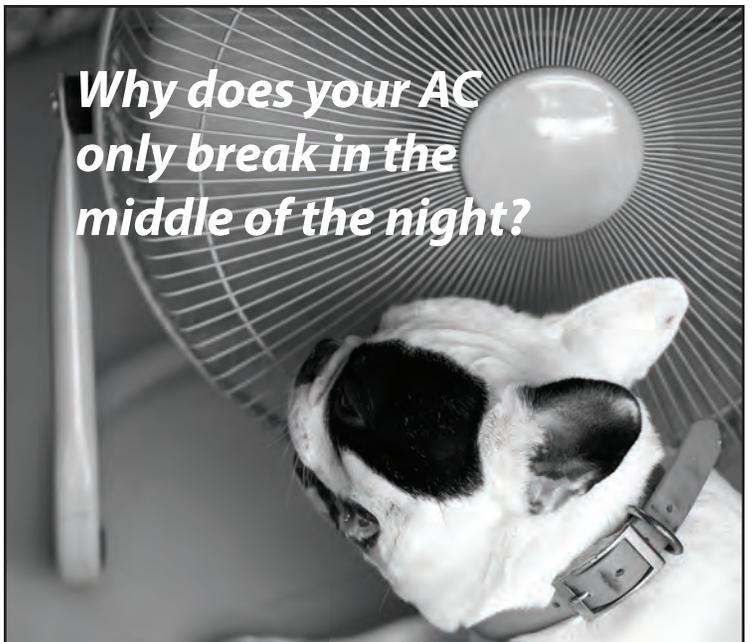
mote music in the Panama City Beach community and J.R. Arnold High School in the highest regards with whatever they do!

IC programs have been recognized for their excellence in competition and sportsmanship. Our Lady Marlin Weightlifting team has earned Back-to-Back State Championships! During this most recent school year, Arnold’s male and female athletic teams were the highest ranked in the area earning a 6th place finish in the Florida High School Athletic Association’s

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 Community

## The Sound of Freedom

By JOANNE MACPHEE

Ever since he was a young boy, J.R. Figueroa has been fascinated by military aircraft; he played with them, he studied them and hoped that one day he would get to fly them. His Uncle would take him to airshows in Arizona and together they would make frequent visits to the Yuma Aircraft Museum. Then as an impressionable seven-year-old he watched, like millions around the world as *Top Gun* burst onto our movie screens. All these childhood memories left an indelible mark on the man he would become.

Today, Lieutenant Colonel J. R. Figueroa is a member of the 301st Fighter Squadron at Eglin Airforce Base, flying B38 fighter jets in adversarial, simulated combat against fellow F22 fighter pilots.

Born in Puerto Rico Lt. Col Figueroa was already a member of the Island's Civil Airport National Guard and ROTC when he joined the U.S. Air Force to study at Embry-Riddle University in Daytona Beach, Fl. Figueroa graduated as a Lieu-



tenant, with a degree in aerospace engineering.

Three years into his military career Figueroa was selected for pilot training and was sent to Columbus AFB for F15 flight training. Like many, Lt. Col. Figueroa has moved from base to base over the years including a four-year commission at Lakenheath AFB in England, where he flew tactical, Alert Force missions over UN territories.

It was while stationed at Lakenheath that the Lt. Col. had the privilege to participate in a 'Missing Man Formation' as

part of a Memorial Service in Normandy, France. The Missing Man formation is a ceremonial aerial salute, composed of two pairs of aircraft. The aircraft fly in a V-shape with the flight leader at the point and their wingman on their left. The second element leader and his wingman fly to their right. The formation flies over the ceremony low enough to be clearly seen and the second element leader abruptly pulls up out of the formation (in this instance Figueroa), while the rest of the formation continues in level

flight until all aircraft are out of sight.

A married father of three, Figueroa is well aware of the risks he and his fellow pilots face each day when airborne, but there is confidence in knowing that every mission is meticulously planned down to the smallest detail. "What many people do not know, is the hours, upon hours that go into preparing for a simulated-combat flight" said Figueroa. "An actual exercise might only last an hour to one point three hours in the air, but as pilots we spend hours in brief-

ing sessions before each flight and many more hours after the exercise, analyzing every aspect of the maneuver to see what we did right, what we did wrong and what we can do better. We all realize that one day this may not be a simulation and lives will depend on how well we trained in advance for the mission." Figueroa admitting that much as there is definitely a rush and a sense of fun and excitement to every flight, there is also danger and the privilege of being able to fly should not be taken lightly.

Before their posting to Eglin following Hurricane Michael, the 301st Fighter Squadron was stationed at Tyndall AFB, and as Figueroa explains the Gulf Coast Airspace is particularly conducive to flight training because of its topology and minimal commercial air traffic.

We are lucky to live among them, so the next time you hear that unmistakable roar, look up as they fly by you at mach speed and stop to consider the men and women above, risking it all for our freedom.

## A Reminder from the Bay County Sheriff's Office

Storm force winds, flash flooding and fires, can occur at any time, devastating your home and property. Don't wait until you are at your most vulnerable to consider these important and timely tips from the Bay County Sheriff's Department.

Vet contractors to make sure they have a license. Use this link to check licensing: [www.myfloridalicense.com](http://www.myfloridalicense.com). Licensed contractors working in Bay Coun-

ty must be either registered or certified with the Florida Department of Business and Professional Regulation (DBPR). Also check sites like the Better Business Bureau and look at any licensing complaints.

Always get a copy of the written / signed contract and take the time to read the details. Ask for the person's business card that you are contracting with. Be sure to clarify that they actu-

ally work for that company.

Never fall for the "it's cheaper to have the homeowner pull the building permit" excuse. This is a red flag and indicative of an unlicensed contractor.

Never pay for the total job up front. A 10% down payment and draw system based on actual progress is typical. Also, do not pay large checks for "materials" to a contractor. Instead offer to buy materials yourself

from the supplier if the contractor is requiring you to pay up front for the materials.

Get multiple estimates from qualified contractors. Ensure you are not getting ripped off by unscrupulous contractors by getting additional quotes before agreeing to a contract.

When in doubt about a contractor call your local building department or the Bay County Sheriff's Office.

In a declared State of Emergency contracting without a license is a third-degree felony. An unscrupulous licensed contractor can be held criminally accountable in certain instances when work fails to get completed in a timely manner, or if the licensed contractor is enabling unlicensed contractors to work under their license. Know your rights!



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By JULIE MCCONNELL, UF/IFAS EXTENSION BAY COUNTY

With the 2-year anniversary of Hurricane Michael approaching and many still recovering from Hurricane Sally we are all acutely aware of the damage storms can inflict. Building codes are updated regularly to mitigate against structural damage to our homes and businesses, but how do we protect our landscapes?

Nothing is foolproof and we have no control over weather events, but if you start with the #1 Florida-Friendly Landscaping™ Principle: Right Plant, Right Place you are setting yourself up for success.

Tree selection decisions usu-

ally start out with a basic desire – I want shade and I like the way this tree looks. That’s a good start, but there are many other things to consider when selecting trees that can live for generations. Starting with an honest site assessment is very important.

**Site selection questions to ask:**

**How much space do you have for a tree?** Be sure to consider overhead, underground, and mature canopy width. Make sure there is enough room for lateral root expansion as the tree ages. A good rule of thumb is to allow for root spread 2-3 times mature canopy width.

**Is my site windy?** Trees on windy sites have increased transpiration rates and may require more water. Choosing a “drought tolerant” tree can reduce supplemental water needs

after establishment. Wood strength varies by tree species, select trees with medium to high wind resistance to reduce likelihood of breakage in wind events.

**Could the tree be exposed to salt spray?** If so, be sure to choose salt tolerant plants.

**How does the soil drain and is it subject to periodic freshwater flooding?** Some areas are prone to short term flooding from seasonal rain showers. If this is the case, be sure to select trees that can tolerate fresh water flooding.

Below is a table with some recommended trees and how well they rate in some difficult site conditions. There are many more that can be grown in our area, this is simply a small sample!

If you have questions about specific trees, please contact me at [juliebmcconnell@ufl.edu](mailto:juliebmcconnell@ufl.edu) or

# Let’s Get Growing: Selecting Storm Resistant Trees



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Tree	Wind Res.	Flood	Salt	Drought	Native
Bald Cypress <i>Taxodium distichum</i>	X	X	X	X	X
Crape Myrtle <i>Lagerstroemia</i> sp.	X			X	
Dahoon Holly <i>Ilex cassine</i>	X	X	X	X	X
Live Oak <i>Quercus virginiana</i>	X	X	X	X	X
Nuttall Oak <i>Quercus nuttallii</i>	X	X		X	X
Sabal Palm <i>Sabal palmetto</i>	X	X	X	X	X
Sand Live Oak <i>Quercus geminata</i>	X		X	X	X
Southern Magnolia <i>Magnolia grandiflora</i>	X		X	X	X
Sweetbay Magnolia <i>Magnolia virginiana</i>	X	X			X
Wax Myrtle <i>Myrica cerifera</i>		X	X	X	X






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 Wellness

# Weight Loss and Thyroid



BY DR. RICHARD CHERN, MD

Last month we discussed our quick weight loss program. This month I will discuss how even mild thyroid dysfunction can cause weight gain over months and years. And this weight gain is nearly impossible to lose and keep off without getting the thyroid optimized.

The thyroid regulates every metabolic process in our body. This includes growing hair and fingernails, moisturizing your skin for less dryness and a better appearance. It also means keeping our toes warm, and our brains focused and working.

The thyroid determines how many calories we burn for each process. With age, thyroid function often decreases causing weight gain. So how does this cause weight gain?

Imagine you are in your 30's. Your thyroid is functioning perfectly and your weight has been the same for years. Your calorie intake matches your calorie output. If you are eating 1500 calories a day then you must be burning 1500 calories a day. Now fast forward 10 years. You haven't changed a thing, but your body has decided that adding color to your hair is no longer a priority, and also, that your hair and fingernails do not need to be made as fast or as well. Your hair gets

some gray, and becomes more coarse, dry or brittle. You don't need to trim your nails nearly as often and they seem brittle and thin too. You are getting tired and unfocused in the afternoon and either nap, drink caffeine or just push yourself though the day. And you notice your weight is creeping up!

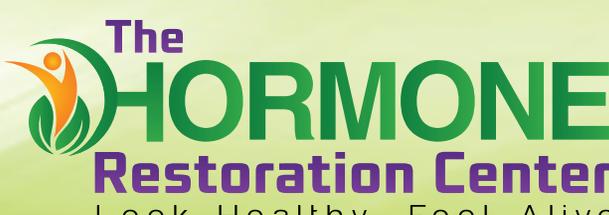
Now the diet and exercise is a start, but it's always a struggle and seems less and less successful. What is going on? It's your thyroid! Even though you haven't changed anything in your life, your body has decided to burn less calories. You're still eating 1500 calories a day and have exactly the same activity level, but your body is slacking on the job. Maybe your body is just burning 50 calories less a day. That's five pounds of weight gain every year! And as you decrease your calorie intake or increase your exercise, your body continues to burn fewer and fewer calories each year. So, your diet and exercise just gets more difficult.

What's the solution? Get your thyroid functioning! When you turn the thermostat up, you burn more fuel. Hair, nails, skin, energy, focus improves and weight loss can happen without effort.

But my doctor says my thyroid labs are normal. We hear this a lot and, unfortunately, traditional medicine only orders a TSH and stops. Dr. Richard Chern, MD, orders numerous thyroid labs and understands that normal and optimal do not always agree. Of course, optimizing thyroid without also optimizing hormones is like going shopping without your credit card.

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# Medicare Annual Enrollment Period Open October 15 through December 7

BY MICHAEL ROTH, Florida Health Connector

Happy with your Medicare benefits? Not interested in making changes for 2021. Great! You do not have to do a thing! However, if you are ready to make a change, the Annual Enrollment Period (AEP) runs from October 15, 2020 to December 7, 2020 with any policy changes becoming effective January 1, 2021.

If you have an Advantage or Drug plan, your insurance provider should have already sent you the "Annual Notice

of Change" (also known as the "ANOC") letter. This notice alerts you to any changes regarding your plan... such as premiums, copays, pharmacy networks and drug formularies.

**During AEP you can:** change from Original Medicare to a Medicare Advantage Plan or vice-versa, choose a different Medicare Advantage Plan, join a Medicare Prescription Drug Plan or switch to another drug plan. Drop your Medicare Advantage or Prescription Drug Plan completely and return to Original Medicare A & B.

**Why you may want to make a change:**

An increase in monthly premiums. Better benefits - since all plan benefits are not the same.

Your doctor is no longer in the plan network or you want a broader and more stable network of providers. Your medications are no longer covered.

**What Not to Do:**

You should not listen to all the TV commercials and phone calls that begin airing in October.

Remember the old Joe Namath commercial about the best Medicare plans on the

planet? You should not wonder, "Should I be doing something since everybody else seems to be? Can I believe what I hear from my friends, colleagues, and family?"

You should not call an "800" number. The majority of Medicare members should just ignore the "noise" and do nothing. However, not paying attention to the changes in their Medicare plan (reflected in the ANOC letter) and not calling to find out what other plans may work better for their current needs is not good either!

For further information on how the benefits and resources at Florida Blue can help you live more and worry less call (850) 899-7003, or email mhaaland-roth@gmail.com.

*Michael Roth is Regional Manager with Florida Health Connector (Your Local Agency for Florida Blue), and President of MrBenefits, Inc. Michael has been a local resident on 30A since 2008 and has over 40 year's experience specializing in Medicare, Health, Life and Group Benefits.*

## Enduring Hard Things in 2020



BY STEPHENIE CRAIG, JOURNEY BRAVELY

Even if you highly value optimism, 2020 is giving you a run for your money. As we sit six months into the pandemic, Hurricane Sally has pummeled the Panhandle, and we all know someone impacted by Covid, fires, racial tensions, not to mention the upcoming election discussions. Exhaustion and uncertainty fatigue are very normal in these circumstances. I continue to hear stories, both locally and nationally, of people being angry, irritable, depressed and overwhelmed. Situations that used to be mildly irritating

are now feeling off the charts infuriating and disappointing. We are collectively worn down and struggling to manage emotions, to be kind to each other, and to find a continued sense of resilience.

So, what can we do to remember who we are and to be the people we want to be in the current season of uncertainty? What are the tools that inspire us not to give ourselves permission to spiral downward and give up loving our neighbors?

### 10 Ways to Endure & Thrive Through Hard Things:

**Engage self-care practices.** When you sleep well, eat well, move your body, take prescribed medicine, engage in personal hygiene and get out of bed at a consistent time, you communicate a sense of hope and motivation to your brain and body.

**Look for the positive in the midst of the negative.** While being honest with yourself about the real current challenges, also daily look for and

focus on the positive happening around you. Hurricanes are awful; people showing up lovingly for neighbors is beautiful.

**Engage your spiritual life.** Remember that God is present in the midst of suffering and you are deeply loved. While difficult, try embracing the reality that some of our deepest growth as humans is born in times of suffering.

**Remember your values.** Values such as honesty, family, love, and kindness can be consistent guides through both the wonderful and the awful moments of life. Try listing your top 10 values to remind yourself of the anchors that drive your life and decisions daily.

**Focus on others.** Spend a few minutes each day thinking of someone you know and engaging in kindness toward them such as a thoughtful text, a phone call, praying for them, or helping them in a practical way. Remembering others gives perspective to our personal suffering and reminds us that love lives in the hard places.

**Let go of what you can't control.** Sort what you can control from what you can't. As much as possible, let go of what is outside your control. Now, try spend your energy on taking meaningful action on the things within your control. I cannot control the pandemic; however, I can control my daily routines and self-care.

**Engage social support.** Chat with neighbors outside, call or Zoom friends, return to activities that feel safe to you with social distancing precautions. We all need other people regularly.

**Breathe when you're about to lose it.** Don't give yourself permission to take your frustrations out on others at home, at work or on the road. Notice when you're getting flustered. Slow down, take 10 slow, deep breaths. Check in with yourself and take 10 more until you feel your brain calming back to the rational space.

**Give grace.** Assume the best of other's intentions until they prove otherwise. Be kind

to yourself and others as much as possible. We are all having a hard time.

**Practice gratitude.** Write or say aloud five things you are grateful for daily. It's okay to repeat some. Be creative and try to notice new things that bring joy.

While many of these tools may seem simplistic, we often neglect practicing them regularly and wonder why we feel so negative and out of control. Take a few minutes to rate yourself on each tool using a scale of 1-10, 1 being "I've not been so great at this" and 10 being "I'm great at doing this daily." Then choose two areas to begin focusing on consistently.

You are certainly not alone in the struggles you might be facing as you walk through 2020. Remember that seeking support is brave and wise. Journey Bravely has coaching sessions available to help you through finding tools for balance and forward movement in these challenging times. Connect with us at [journeybravely.com](http://journeybravely.com).

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 Dining

## Wine of the Month: California Wines

At Kwiker Liquor they know that the key to having a great selection of Fine Wines, is knowing a great selection of Vintners and Winemakers. And they take pride in cultivating these relationships to bring the very best to their customers on the Beach and beyond. This month we will

explore California wines with Consulting Winemaker, Julien Fayard.

In the American wine business—especially in its leading regions like Napa and Sonoma—consumers are becoming more savvy and discerning in their taste and purchase deci-

sions. There is a new evolution of palates looking for fresher, less-manipulated wines; Napa winemaker Julien Fayard calls it “American wine with old-world restraint.”

One of Fayard’s brands, Nicholson Jones, captures what today’s wine drinkers are seek-



Julien Fayard

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ing from the bottle: better balance and increased ageability. The brand, which originated in 2003, is owned by part-time Naples, Fla. residents Cal Nicholson and his wife Pam Jones who brought Fayard on board as winemaker in 2006. At the time, Fayard had been working as Philippe Melka’s Director of Winemaking, and Nicholson was the first vintner to recruit him to save their 2005 vintage. He did, and Fayard has been the winemaker for Nicholson Jones ever since.

Throughout the past 15 years, Nicholson Jones has evolved to become a true collaboration between vintner and winemaker. Nicholson and Fayard share a common vision to produce California-style wines with a traditional French accent, shining a light on unique, small vineyards in Napa Valley’s most famed AVAs. The result is a diverse portfolio of terroir-driven, single-vineyard wines and blends.

“Napa has an incredibly wide array of soils. What is good for us as winemakers and for those who enjoy the wines is that there are so many expressions due to that soil variance and undiscovered expressions still waiting to be revealed,” said Fayard.

For Fayard and Nicholson Jones, terroir-driven wines are defined by respecting the vines. Fayard believes that it is his job to bring out the specific characteristics and personality of each site. He doesn’t have a set equation for any wine. He is in the vineyards daily, tasting the fruit around harvest, deciding when they pick based on each specific site. He will go to the vineyard, look at what is happening in a given row with the soil, the vines and the fruit. That holistic approach of keeping in mind all aspects of nature that provides us this fruit is what sets great wine apart from good wine.

“We make wine naturally not artificially. The winemaking

process has the least impact on the fruit, the vineyard dominates,” said Fayard. “It’s finding the balance between farming and winemaking that gives you certain flavors that are consistent over time and shine through the vintages. You can credit it to the terroir.”

Take the Sugarloaf Vineyard, located in the very south part of Napa Valley between Coombsville and Carneros, for instance. Nicholson Jones sources Cabernet Sauvignon and Syrah from this site for a single-vineyard, single-varietal Cabernet Sauvignon and the Proprietary Cuvee. The vineyard sits on a volcanic rocky bench, in a cooler climate widely influenced by the bay. The vineyard is positioned high on the hills guarding the entrance to Coombsville. In general this vineyard has long hang time and very low yields. Standing in this beautiful vineyard, one can see the most northern part of the San Francisco Bay. Fayard and Nicholson like this terroir because it creates fresh acidity, a balanced wine with elegance and finesse that is a distinguishing factor in both wines.

“With great vineyards you can make beautiful wines, but having the presence and involvement of the owners is what truly makes the difference for us,” said Fayard. “Wine has a soul. It is a people business, especially for us. I thrive on producing value with high quality and new areas that are still to be explored.”



# PCB *Flavor*

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## IN THIS ISSUE

ISO: PCB's Best Sports Bar

Tastebudz

Event Highlights

## ISO: PCB's Best Sports Bar

By JACK SMITH

The sports bar is a truly American invention, whose history is as cloudy as some of its late-night patrons. Dennis Harrah, former L.A. Rams lineman, claims to have invented America's first Sports Bar in 1979. Legends opened in Long Beach, California and quickly filled up with memorabilia. These items were not just NFL related, but included everything from Mohammed Ali's boxing gloves, to an actual Indy race car hanging from the ceiling. What really separated Legends back in the day was that they were the first bar to incorporate satellite technology to broadcast live sporting events. Another claim comes from Palermo's, a St. Louis bar located across the street from Sportsman Park, former home of the Cardinals and Browns. Ironically, Palermo's opened on the same day prohibition was repealed. Talk about timing. Due to Covid 19, 2020 will be remembered as the only time in history when a fan could go to a sports bar and watch the NBA, NFL, college football, tennis, the Triple Crown and Bowling for Dollars, all at the same time. Is America great or what? Please enjoy our choices and let the games begin.



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The Caribbean has seen many visitors from different continents for centuries, many who have stayed and formed grand lineages. One of the greatest cultural impacts of this migration has been on the food. The Caribbean cuisine is a fusion of African, Amerindian, European, East Indian, Arab and Chinese in addition to the indigenous Caribbean population's touch.

## Restaurant Review: Mike's Café & Oyster Bar

BY THE CURIOUS EPICUREAN

Let's cut straight to the chase – it's worth the drive! Whether you're coming from the north, east or west, (it's a little tricky to come from the south unless you have a boat or scuba gear) it is worth the trip to Mike's Café and Oyster Bar on Front Beach Rd.

Locals love to regale newbies like me with stories of how much the Beach has changed over the years, and how it was once a quaint seaside village, popular with visitors from Alabama and Georgia. It is often hard to picture it the way it was until you walk into a popular hangout like Mike's.

According to their website, Mike's did not actually open until 1986, but there is a certain 'I have been here forever' feel to the place that makes you feel immediately at home and back in old Panama City Beach.

Deceivingly spacious, Mike's is part diner (it used to be called Mike's Diner) and part restaurant and one hundred percent Southern. Right down to the notice on the front door that tells you service will be denied if you don't pull your pants up over your underwear.

Even a cursory look at the menu and you know you are in the South and in for a treat. The lunchtime Blue-Plate Specials draw a large and habitual crowd. A virtual cornucopia of Southern fare. I visited with friends on a Wednesday (I thought the more people who joined me the more we could sample) so that meant liver & onions, southern fried chicken, fried chicken breast with gravy, pork chops and fish were all on the menu. And each option was served with your choice of mac & cheese, lima beans, collard



greens, peas and fried okra and banana pudding or peach cobbler to boot.

But before the mains, we did not think it polite if we did

not first sample some appetizers. The fried mushrooms were succulent and light, the oysters that day were small – just as our very honest server Brittany told us before we ordered, so they lacked that salty brininess plumper mollusks would have provided. Then there was the seafood gumbo, thick, dark and exceptionally hearty, by far the best I have had this side of New Orleans. Simply delicious!

One of my guests said he was very pleasantly surprised by the liver and onions which he claims restaurants often get wrong. He described this specialty dish as tender, flavorful and perfectly cooked. I will have to take him at his word!

The fried chicken and fried chicken breast were both well-seasoned, perfectly cooked and not at all greasy. The BBQ flavored shrimp with cheese

grits were out-of-this world! And there were certainly plenty of to-go boxes required as portions were all more than ample. Great value for money when you consider the Blue-Plate Specials are just \$10.99

In conclusion, it was time, calories and money well spent. Brittany was attentive, with little wait time between refills of tea and adult beverages (Mike's has a full bar) and she was not at all flustered or annoyed by off-menu requests. Hometown charm, down home good cooking and all at a price that will make you want to return. All in all, Mike's Café and Oyster Bar was a delight.

*Mike's Cafe is located at 17554 Front Beach Rd., Panama City Beach. Visit [www.mikescafeandoysterbar.com](http://www.mikescafeandoysterbar.com)*

## Things to Consider Before Catering Your Next Event

BY JOHN TURBIA, EXECUTIVE CHEF, PAPA RAZZI CATERING

Whether you are planning an intimate gathering at your home, or organizing a major post-covid extravaganza, there are some basic catering tips you should consider.

Every great caterer is a chef but not every great chef is a caterer. It is important to choose your caterer carefully, not on a whim or because you like him or her, or the food they serve at their restaurant. Restaurant service is very different from catering, especially at off-site venues.

**Do not hesitate to ask questions.** How many off site catering jobs have they done, can they provide references, what's the biggest event they have catered and do they have all the necessary catering equipment and trained staff to do the job? Finally, understand their strengths and weaknesses. Any Chef worth their salt can cook almost anything, but most chefs specialize in a certain type of cuisine, make sure your caterer specializes in the type of food you want to serve.

**Choose your venue carefully.** If you are catering at home consider exactly where you want the food and bar set up, taking into consideration the flow of your inside and outdoor



space and ease of access in and out. You do not want to create bottlenecks that prevent your guests from gaining easy access.

**Off-site venues must be considered very carefully.**

Is there a power supply that can handle the caterer's needs as well as lights, heating and/or ac. If not, does the caterer have generators large enough to handle the job. If the event is to be held outside then you must give very careful consideration to the weather. Will it be hot, or cold, will there be bugs, when does it get dark and what will you do if the weather turns bad. Event insurance, often called Show Stopper Insurance, is a safe bet for any large outside event.

**Plan well in advance.**

Even a small gathering at home takes time to arrange well. For smaller events of 35 or less, caterers will usually only need a few days' notice. Larger events can take up to three months to plan and prepare.

**Budgets are important and it's not just the per**

**plate price you need to consider.** Depending on the size and complexity of the event and the menu, you will need to take many other aspects into consideration, not the least of which,

additional staff. Prep chefs will cost more than wait staff, who will cost more than runners. Then there is the bar and bartenders to be considered. As well as room and furniture rentals, décor, and setup and breakdown costs.

**It is important to know exactly what kind of event you want to have and to share your vision with your caterer.** You may want an elegant, four-course sit down din-

ner, or perhaps a less structure buffet event, or cocktail reception. Each style comes with its own considerations and costs, right down to the table linens and the knives, forks and plates you choose.

**Take a practical approach to selecting your menu and consider all aspects of the event.** For instance, will it be inside or out, what time will it be held, what

*Continued on next page*



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Ahoy, Maties!

# PCB Hosts Virtual Pirates of the High Seas Fest

Panama City Beach is pleased to announce that it will be virtually hosting its annual Pirates of the High Seas Fest on October 5th -11th, 2020. The destination invites kids of all ages to find their sea legs and join one of the most popular celebrations of the year from the safety and comfort of their own homes. From a virtual scavenger hunt, social media costume contest, magic show, a pirate battle streamed live online and the chance to win a free vacation to the Real. Fun. Beach., this year's virtual event will bring swashbuckling adventures with just the click of a button.

"While we are not hosting our traditional Pirates of the High Seas Fest due to

COVID-19, we are thrilled to offer a virtual adaptation so that kids everywhere can join in on the fun," says Dan Rowe, president and CEO of Visit Panama City Beach. "With a variety of pirate-themed contests and prizes, we look forward to a truly unforgettable experience."

Panama City Beach's Pirates of the High Seas Fest celebrates the legacy of the pirates who once roamed the Gulf of Mexico and pillaged the Emerald Coast, telling the tale of Dominique Youx and his krew of loyal buccaneers through staged pirate battles and storytelling. Kids will learn the old legend of how these mighty men fought to defend Panama City Beach from invaders that wanted to



steal the destination's jewels in the early 1800s.

The following is a list of vir-

tual offerings that are available on Panama City Beach's website and Facebook page.

**Friday, October 9th - Tune in Live on Facebook:**

10 a.m.: Mayor's Proclamation

12 p.m.: Magic with Mayhem

**Saturday, October 10th - Tune in Live on Facebook:**

2 p.m.: The Invasion and the Battle for Panama City Beach

2 p.m.: The Defeat of the Pirates - a pirate Invasion and the Legend of Dominique Youx, with a pirate concert from Tom Mason & the Blue Buccaneers

Additional details will be announced closer to each event. For more information, follow Visit Panama City Beach on Facebook or visit [www.visitpanamacitybeach.com/piratesofthehighseas](http://www.visitpanamacitybeach.com/piratesofthehighseas).



## Grand Lagoon Golf Tournament and Bloody Mary Fest Nov. 6-7

Save the date for the inaugural Grand Lagoon Golf Tournament, hosted by the Grand Lagoon Coalition, on Friday, November 6th at Sheraton Panama City Beach Golf & Spa Resort. Tee times start at 8 a.m. with Shotgun start at 9 a.m. Entry fee is \$500 per team/\$125 per person and teams may sign up in advance at [grandlagoon.com](http://grandlagoon.com).

The fun continues on Saturday, November 7th, with the Coalition hosting their signature 5th Annual Blood Mary & Music Fest from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m., also at the Sheraton PCB Resort. Several bars and restaurants will compete for the title



of "Best Bloody Mary in the Grand Lagoon." This year, will be a panel of secret judges, who will decide who will be crowned the "Big Tomato" and awarded the annual four-foot, tomato-topped trophy.

Dat Cajun Place are current "Big Tomato" champions and you can bet they will aim to take the trophy home with them again this year. Organizers say you can also bank on the fact that all the other participat-

ing bars and restaurants will be clearing a spot to showcase the coveted trophy for the next year. A spokesperson for the event stating "It's a friendly competition, but it's fierce. Creativity is the name of the game, and these Grand Lagoon businesses come to win."

There will be live music throughout the day, by Mind Plays, and a Local Vendors Showcase featuring Grand Lagoon artists, shops and other establishments. Admission is \$30 per person, \$25 for active duty military and first responders.

For more information visit [grandlagoon.com](http://grandlagoon.com).

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### CATERING

continued from previous page

day of the week will you be hosting, how long is it scheduled to last and is anything scheduled before or after your event. You should also take your guest list into consideration, keeping food allergies, vegetarian and vegan preferences in mind.

**Waste not want not.** Every host fears running out of food. A professional caterer will always ensure there is ample food, but they cannot account for waste. It

is worth paying a little more for staff to serve at the buffet table to avoid waste and to select items which can be easily and more uniformly portioned out.

**Trust your caterer and let them do their job.** You have planned well; you have consulted regularly with your caterer and you have taken every aspect of the event into consideration. Fussing over every detail on the day will be stressful and it will put your guests ill at ease. It is time to relax and enjoy your event.

*John Trubia is a third-generation Italian chef from Staten Island, New York. John has over thirty years catering and event planning experience. In April 1997 John catered the commissioning of the USS The Sullivans, serving 4,000 guests aboard Amphibious Assault Ship Kearsarge, to-date the largest catering job of his career. John is also the proud owner of Papparazzi Gourmet Deli on Thomas Drive. For information on John's catering services please call 850 867 7688.*

## Locally Acclaimed Musician Releases Her First Album

Local singer/songwriter Casey Kearney is celebrating this month with the release of her first full-length original album. The 11-song soundtrack, entitled ‘More to the Story,’ was produced and recorded in Nashville earlier this year.

When describing her album, Kearney says “This project is extra close to my heart because it took so long to complete and was such a roller coaster to finally get it here. Some of the songs are my personal stories. My husband and I celebrate 20 years of marriage this year so the song ‘Make This Work’ is one of my favorites. Others like ‘Waffle House’ and ‘Bless Your Heart’ are stories of friends and family. The lyrics in ‘Little Words’ are actual quotes from my Nana who passed away a few years ago and other lines I have heard my whole life that

I want to pass to my children.”

Many of the musicians featured on the album are seasoned professionals, who usually tour with big name stars like Tim McGraw and Reba McEntire. They were all brought together by award-winning, ACM Producer Doug Kahan, who not only produced the album, but also co-wrote several of the songs, while contributing instrumentally on a number of tracks.

Will Estell, the Director of Publishing for the 30A Company and Editor in Chief of Beach Happy Magazine, praised the album when he stated, “I absolutely love the new



songs coming and I think everyone else will too. Most definitely her best tunes and writing.”

Although Kearney’s much anticipated September promo-

tional tour with The Martin McDaniel Band — said to be ‘one of the hottest up-and-coming bands in Nashville in sometime’ — was interrupted by Hurricane Sally, the young star and Mother of three, plans to live stream a special performance in early October to coincide with the release of the album.

Kearney, who was born in Crestview and now lives in Holt with her husband Scott, is the founder and president of the non-profit, ‘Bands of 30A.’ While a regular on the local music

scene, Kearney has performed at events all over the country, including Las Vegas, where she played for the National Finals Rodeo (her children are all active on the junior rodeo circuit) and Truist Park, home of the Atlanta Braves, where she sang the National Anthem.

Kearney released her first EP titled ‘Faster’ in 2016, and ‘Somebody’s Favorite Song’ in 2019. Kearney was named ‘Best Country Artist’ at the 2018 Beachcomber Music Awards.

“More to the Story” is now available nation-wide digitally, as well as in old-school vinyl, CD and cassette format. For more information visit [www.caseykearney.com](http://www.caseykearney.com) or find Casey Kearney on Facebook, Instagram, and Youtube @caseykearneymusic.

## Emerald Coast Theatre Company Continues its 8th Annual Season with Four October Productions

It is time to fall in love with live theater all over again. Emerald Coast Theatre Company (ECTC) continues its eighth annual season on the Northwest Florida Gulf Coast in October with four distinctly different productions that offer something for all ages.

In accordance with CDC guidelines, all offerings will be performed in ECTC’s performance space located at 560 Grand Boulevard, in Grand Boulevard at Sandestin in Miramar Beach.

The first offering of the season on ECTC’s Professional Theatre Mainstage is **First Date**. The book for this musical comedy is by Austin Winsberg with music and lyrics by Alan Zachary and Michael Weiner. A new musical, First Date debuted at Seattle’s ACT Theatre before going to Broadway in 2013.

“Everyone needs a laugh these days and this musical comedy is sure to provide it,” says ECTC co-founder and producing artistic director Nathanael Fisher. “If you have ever dated or even thought about dating, this is the musical for you.”

Adam Silorey (Dancing Lessons, Around the World in 80



Days, The Fantasticks, Buyer & Cellar) returns to ECTC’s stage from Chicago. Brooke Meyers of Kansas City, Missouri, makes her ECTC debut. Regional credits include (Linda Mason) Holiday Inn, (Lori Beth) Happy Days, (Jovie) Elf and (Janet Weiss) The Rocky Horror Picture Show.

October 9th to 25th. Tickets \$36 per person for adults; \$34 for seniors (55 years old and up) and military and \$30 for students (must show ID).

New this year, ECTC is introducing Second Stage, a more intimate space that will showcase musical cabaret acts, as well as small bands, solo musicians and performing artists. The first event will be **Cabaret on the Boulevard**, featuring live musical selections performed by talented members of the First Date cast. Tuesday, Oct. 13th. Tickets \$22 for adults; \$20 for seniors/military; \$18 students.

On Oct. 20th Second Stage will feature **Cabaret on the Boulevard** - spine-chilling selections from “spooky” Broadway shows such as Wicked, The Addams Family, Beetlejuice and others. Showtime 7:30 p.m. Tickets \$22 for adults; \$20 for seniors/military; \$18 students.

Rounding out the four October performances will be, **Dot and Ziggy**, a play by Linda Hartzell and Mark Perry, a Theatre for Young Audiences (TA) production. The cast features ECTC Junior Company members Clara Taylor (Dot), Sasha Blair (Ziggy), Rylan Shaffer (Spider).

Children in the audience will get to experience this hands-on show with all of their senses as they become part of the story. This colorful play creatively utilizes music, dance, movement and touchable props to envelop our young audience members and inspire their imaginations.

October 23rd, 24th 30th & 31st Showtime 9 a.m. Tickets \$18 for adults; \$16 for seniors/military; \$12 for children 4 to 12; children ages 0-3 are free and must sit on an adult’s lap. Proceeds benefit ECTC and its Theatre Education programs.



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 Musing

## Florida



By SEAN DIETRICH

I am taking my dog for a walk among the thick longleaf pines of the West Floridian woods. I am on a trail that cuts across marshland, swampland, farmland, grassland, and every other kind of land.

Autumn is in its infancy in the Sunshine State. The air is cool. And I just read in the newspaper that there have been 712,000 cases of COVID-19 within our boundaries. Not to mention all the damage from Hurricane Sally.

Oh, it's been quite a year.

I am here because I needed

to see some trees. I needed a pine-scented breeze. I needed this.

The Florida woods are not like other places. You don't get a sense of how big they are when you're in them. You can only feel their immense size. It's disorienting. Your phone loses reception, so you have no GPS to gauge your mileage. And even if you did, who cares?

You don't come out here to play on phones.

The woods are a cathedral. These trees do something to you. They remind you that this world isn't exactly what we think it is.

You leave your house and immediately you're within the Age of Concrete. You see only what highway engineers want you to see. Overpasses, big box hardware stores, flashing lights, signage, and here comes another strip mall. Goodness knows how much we love our strip malls.

But that's not the world. That's not life. It's only one tiny part.

America is one third forest. There are the boreal forests in

Alaska, the tropical forests of Hawaii, the majestic old growths of Appalachia. Maine is 89 percent forest, West Virginia is 78 percent forest. My home state is over 50 percent forest.

I have a friend who once hiked the entire Florida Trail, which cuts 1,000 miles of old forest from Big Cypress National Reserve to Fort Pickens.

I've also hiked and camped small parts of the Florida Trail with my dog. To camp in the middle of these trees is haunting. You hear sounds at night that will totally freak you out. A possum becomes a Florida panther. And a gecko sounds just like an adult alligator.

I once found a bobcat sifting through my food bag. I shined a flashlight at it. The thing was the size of a lap dog. It hissed at me before finally romping off into the tallgrass. I've never been so grateful to have a change of pants.

In the deep woods, many longleafs still bear the old cat-faces from Florida's turpentine days. At one time Florida was covered in turpentine mills. Turpentiners would carve V-shaped whiskers into trees with machetes and drain the trees' lifeblood into buckets.

Now and then, you still find these old trees, scarred and mangled. You feel sorry for the old trees because they were stripped, bled, and you know that had to hurt.

But then, you feel admiration for all evergreen conifers in this wilderness. You're not sure why. Things are different out here. Out here they become your pals.

Maybe it's because these trees are part of your blood. Literally. Floridians breathe in pine pollen December through May. If doctors were to draw our blood, they would see yellow dust in it.

These trees have always been in our line of vision. On every highway. Every backwater. Behind every filling station. And in the night, when you take out the garbage, they are all around you, groaning in the faint breeze like they are alive.



S E A N D I E T R I C H

Because they are alive.

Longleaf pines are much more than giant pieces of celery. They're breathing creatures. You might not know that, but they are.

A pine can communicate with other trees. Its roots travel miles beneath soil, forming a veiny interweb scientists call mycorrhizal networks. The fine, hairlike ends of these herculean root systems join with fungal life and form a kind of complex internet among trees.

These trees share water, nutrients, food, and send distress signals to each other. A longleaf has a signaling system it uses to spread news of draughts, disease, or insect attacks, and nearby trees will change their behavior.

When the destructive sawfly invades, for example, the longleafs don't just sit on their stumps. A tree will change her scent. Soon all her friends are reacting. The new fragrance drifts throughout the woods, setting off a chain reaction across the behemoth forest. The scent attracts chalcid wasps who swarm into the woods to save the day from the wicked sawfly.

And I think that's pretty cool.

But sometimes I lose sight of it all. Life itself. And how majes-

tic it all is. I forget that it's happening all around me. I forget the resilience of it. I forget about the beauty of trees.

These pines were here before me; they will outlive me. They were here when the Conquistadors needed masts for their square-rigged ships.

They were here when fledgling colonies needed lumber. And when turpentiners demanded their sap to manufacture warship paint, the trees gave blood. They resisted fires, hurricanes, tornadoes, industrialism, commercialism, and subdivision-ism. They can endure nearly anything except guys with chainsaws.

They are the most lovely creatures, and it's sad how often I overlook them. How can a guy grow up beside the most complex and marvelous things to ever exist and hardly notice them?

But I notice them today. They're strong, thick-skinned, broad-limbed, humble to a fault, and long lasting. They will keep growing in the face of heartache, outlasting disease, famine, dry spells, and rare snows. They will keep being sturdy, no matter how sad this world gets.

And so will you, Florida. So will you.

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## A Pastor's Ponderings: Memories

BY RICK MOORE

Norman Rockwell said "The view of life I communicate in my pictures exceeds the sordid and the ugly. I paint life as I would like it to be." Looking back on the twenty-fifth year of my marriage, the memories of that season can be recalled as either a fairytale or a horror story. It all depends on what view of life I choose to tell it from.

Anniversaries have always been a big deal in my marriage. We even celebrate the day I proposed. We call it our "proposal-versary." The date is easy to remember because of the lyrics of a song by Earth, Wind & Fire, "Do you remember, the twenty-first of September?" Yes it is cheesy, but I proposed on the twenty-first of September. Fast forward twenty-four years and I'm still as cheesy as ever.

For our twenty-fourth wedding anniversary, personal finances were so tight I had to get creative. There was no way I could

afford to buy the twenty-four karat gold jewelry I wanted Catrina to have in celebration of our twenty four years together, so I did the next best thing. I purchased twenty-four baby carrots from the grocery store and wrapped them in a gold bag. Get it...twenty-four carrot gold! My wife Catrina didn't think it was funny either. She said she would forgive me, but only if our twenty-fifth anniversary was truly special. By truly special, that meant a trip to Hawaii, Aspen or Europe; not a day at a theme park. No worries. There was a whole year to plan the perfect getaway.

A few months before our twenty-fifth anniversary, Catrina's scoliosis became so bad the doctor said she would need complete back reconstruction. After a challenging surgery which took over ten hours, the doctor admitted he made a mistake and would have to go back for a second surgery. The second surgery



went well, and she was doing well physically, but the medical bills and weeks off of work were taking a toll financially. It was looking like the big time plans for the perfect getaway were not going to happen. Being the loving and understanding wife Catrina is, she suggested we do something nice but simple. We settled on two days and one night at Disney World.

As we entered the Magic Kingdom the morning of our twenty-fifth anniversary, a cast member asked if we were celebrating anything special that day. We told her it was our twenty-fifth anniversary. She then asked a question that was more shocking than when I asked my wife to marry me. She said, "Would you like to be the Grand Marshals in today's parade?" I thought you had to be an astronaut, the chairman of a fortune five-hundred company, or the MVP of the Super Bowl to be the Grand Marshal of the parade. They gave us special Mickey Mouse Ears with our names embroidered on them, free pictures, and so many gifts we were a bit embarrassed. One minute before the gate opened for us to lead the three o'clock parade through the Magic Kingdom, Catrina squeezed my hand and said, do you realize it was exactly twenty-five years ago to the minute we were married. At

that moment I looked up into the heavens with a wink and a thankful heart full of gratitude, knowing the Lord took my mediocre plans and turned them into a truly "magical" memory. The evening ended with our own personal Disney chief (at no cost to us) and the projection of our picture plastered onto Cinderella's Castle. That memory will be with us forever.

The 23rd Psalm says "Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life." But sometimes, goodness and mercy seem to follow so far behind they are nowhere in sight. In such times of despair, I have to remember to look past the sordid and ugly parts of life and choose to recall the times our cup is running over with blessings.

*Rick Moore is Communications Pastor at Destiny Worship Center.*

## One Woman's Journey, Every Woman's Nightmare

BY STEPHEN FETT, PRESIDENT/CEO, PANAMA CITY RESCUE MISSION

Was there ever a time you had to care for a sick family member? Maybe a spouse, a sibling, or a parent? Imagine yourself in a situation where you had to move to another city to care for your ailing mother. At some point we all need to provide care to a loved one. You make a decision to do whatever it takes to give comfort to those in need for as long as it's needed. Because of that you change your life until that care is no longer required. We do what we need to do for our family out of love. We do it just as God loves us - unconditionally.

This is a story about Indria who was living in St. Petersburg, Florida in December of 2019 when her mother fell sick. She made the decision to move with her three children to help her step-father take care of her mother. Sadly, in February of 2020, her mother passed away. After her mother's passing, her step-father told Indria and her children they had to leave and could no longer live with him. Indria and her three children



were living in hotel after hotel. They would sometimes sneak into truck stops to be able to take a shower when they didn't have money for a room.

Indria made her way to Marianna, Florida where she heard about Panama City Rescue Mission and Bethel Village Women's and Children's Shelter. She called and told us she had spent all her money and had to be out of her hotel by 11 a.m. that day. Indria did not have trans-

portation and needed to find a way to get to us. We called Doorways of Northwest Florida, a Community Partner to see if they could help. They were able to pick up Indria and her children and bring them to us. There are no accidents when it comes to God's hand looking after his children. He placed the right people at the right time to secure a way for Indria and her children to have a safe place to stay.

Soon after arriving at Bethel Village, Indria secured a job locally. She has been able to save money and has recently been approved for an apartment. Doorway's is assisting her with move-in costs. She is grateful for all the people that helped her transform a situation of suffering to flourishing.

Since 1973, the Panama City

Rescue Mission has been committed to Christ-centered rescue, recovery, and restoration in an effort to break the destructive cycle of poverty and homelessness. Anyone wishing help the organization either with a donation, or by volunteering, are urged to visit the Mission's website [permission.org](http://permission.org) for more information or to contact us.



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 Lifestyle

# The Honey Hole: Fishing PCB October 2020



BY TIM BRADDOCK,  
Bay Breeze Bait + Tackle

October is all about opportunity. It offers some of the best fishing for the Emerald Coast. Particularly in Panama City Beach, where the inshore bite tends to be described as ferocious. Those beautiful pumpkin

colored red drum and big flatie flounder will be photographed often and posted to the gram or Facebook. Live shrimp under a Precision Tackle Pop N Cork tossed in the bay, or its backwaters, will entice about any fish within the area including the large slotted red fish. The flounder will be looking up to those bull minnows for a nice meal. Be sure to stop by your local bait and tackle shop to get the best in live bait.

Notable mentions for offshore include the chance to still harvest a few more grey triggerfish. The season for triggerfish will remain open until October 26th. October always brings the anticipation of a few more additional days for Red Snapper to be added to the boat cooler. No additional announcement has been made by Florida Wild-

life Commission regarding Red Snapper, but anglers can continue to have hope that a special bulletin will be posted the first of October.

As an angler, October is your opportunity month regardless of your experience. With plenty of tournaments available you have the opportunity to show off your skill or simply catch that 'lucky' one. Navarre Beach & Destin will both hold fishing rodeos in October. Check for registration requirements and tournament rules online.

Locally, you can register for the Smoker King of the Pier & Yak Tournament. This tournament is held by Sea Worthy Baits based in Panama City. The host shop for this tournament is Bay Breeze Bait & Tackle on the West End of Panama City Beach. There are more than a

dozen sponsors for this tournament to include local companies such as: Howell Tackle, Sun Jammers, Half Hitch Tackle, Gulf Marine, Diego's Burrito Factory. The tournament will run the entire month of October, have daily weigh ins, and have a pier and kayak division. The three fish categories will be King Mackerel, Spanish Mackerel, and Bonita. Be sure to stock up on those cigar minnows, flat line rigs, dusters, and X-raps.

For the gear focus, let's give the kayak some attention. A kayak will give you the opportunity to be mobile in the waters, exploring different spots, and the ability to reach fish you just cannot get to from shore. If a budget is what is holding you back from getting out to fish look into renting a rig from a local shop. When reaching out to

these shops be sure to ask if they have any 'fishing' kayaks.

Hobie is one of the most respected names in the kayak fishing industry and they manufacture a stable, solid fishing platform. There are several local retail shops in SoWal & Panama City Beach listed as Hobie dealers. Stop by and have a conversation with them. One of the newest yaks to enter the market is based in Florida. Vanhunks manufactures fishing kayaks from 9' - 13'. They use premium grade components, are designed with plenty of room for your gear, and provide an exceptional fishing platform.

Opportunity is only enjoyed if you are willing to use it. October offers many opportunities for any skill level of angler so get outdoors and enjoy all that October has to offer. Catch on!

## Meet Your Neighbors

John and Ann Smith have lived in Panama City Beach for 29 years and currently reside on Grand Palm Blvd. The couple have been married 42 years and have two children, Adam and Katie.

John holds a Ph.D in Medical/Veterinary Entomology (insects affecting human & animal health) and Ann is a former special education educator.

Over the course of his 37-year career, including 20 as director of the State of Florida

mosquito control product testing laboratory, John has dedicated his work to mosquito control research.

As John explains, "Aside from being a major nuisance, mosquitoes are the world's most deadly creatures capable of spreading serious illnesses such as, West Nile virus, Eastern Equine encephalitis, dengue, and dog heartworm...diseases currently circulating in Florida. Mosquito control involves much more than just spraying. I have the



scientific background necessary to know how to achieve exceptional control to benefit Beach residents."

Though now retired, John continues to serve on the Florida Health Department Mosquito Advisory Task Force and is currently running for a seat as

Commissioner of Beach Mosquito Control District in the November elections.

John and Ann enjoy spending time with family, working on their property near Pine Log State Park, visiting national parks, and are avid nature lovers.

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# The Hope Diamond: Cursed or Coincidence?

By TRACY MILLER, OWNER,  
TRACY'S FINE JEWELRY

Happy October everyone! Who's ready for bonfires, football, pumpkins and cooler weather? I know I am. In honor of October and Halloween I thought I would share with you an interesting story regarding one of the most exquisite, and cursed, pieces of jewelry in the world, The Hope Diamond.

Most jewelry comes with happy stories of anniversaries and birthdays. Some pieces that are inherited often come with tall tails. Throughout history many of the royal collections have been tied to some rather legendary tales of thievery and horrible curses.

However, the Hope Diamond is by far, the most famous of all the cursed pieces of jewelry in the world. The diamond can be traced back to the 17th century where it was mined in Golconda, India, weighing 112.0 carats. It was purchased by a gem merchant by the name of Jean Baptiste Tavernier, who in turn sold the diamond to King Louis XIV of France in 1668.

Louis XIV had the diamond recut to enhance its beauty to a 67 1/8ctw, and reset. He then officially renamed it 'The Blue Diamond of the Crown' and would often wear it on a long ribbon around his neck.

In 1749 when Louis XIV's Great-Grandson, Louis XV was King, he ordered the crown jeweler to make a decoration for the Order of the Golden Fleece using the diamond and the Cote de Bretagne, a large red stone thought to be a ruby, but later found to be a red spinel.

During the Reign of Terror in 1791 the crown jewels were taken from Louis XVI and his Queen, Marie Antoinette, who were both later beheaded as they tried to flee France. That same year the crown jewels were stolen when the French National Treasury 'The Garde Meuble' was looted. Even though many of the jewels were recovered, the Hope Diamond was not. The diamond disappeared for some time but it eventually ended up in the hands of King George IV of England. It was sold after his death in 1830, to settle his enormous debts.



By 1839 the Hope Diamond was in the possession of Henry Philip Hope, one of the heirs of a banking firm Hope & Co. Hope was a collector of gems and fine art and had acquired the blue diamond, which would forever more carry his family's name, for his private collection.

Henry never married, so when he died in 1839 his estate was left to his three nephews. The Hope Diamond went to Henry's oldest nephew, Henry Thomas Hope. When Henry Thomas died the diamond went to his widow and later to her oldest grandson, Lord Francis Hope, who shared his grandmother's life estate with his siblings.

Francis was a gambler and

came into an enormous amount of debt. In 1898 he asked permission from the courts to sell the Hope Diamond to relieve his debt, but was denied. He again appealed in 1899 and was again denied. Finally in 1901 his request was granted by the House of Lords and Francis Hope was able to sell the diamond.

Simon Frankel, an American jeweler purchased the Hope Diamond that same year and brought the diamond into the United States, where it changed hands several times over those next few years. A Sultan, an actress, a Russian Count and Pierre Cartier, all owned the diamond at one time.

In 1910 Cartier sold the diamond to Evalyn Walsh McLean, an heiress and socialite who had heard of the diamond's curse but elected not to believe in its negative history. Instead it was stated that 'unlucky objects were lucky for her'. The diamond was remounted onto a new setting and McLean became very attached to the diamond. However, in the years following her acquisition of the stone, her son died in a

car accident, her daughter died of an overdose and her husband ended up in a sanitarium from brain atrophy from alcoholism. Evalyn herself died of pneumonia in 1947 and once again the diamond was sold, along with the family's bankrupt newspaper the Washington Post.

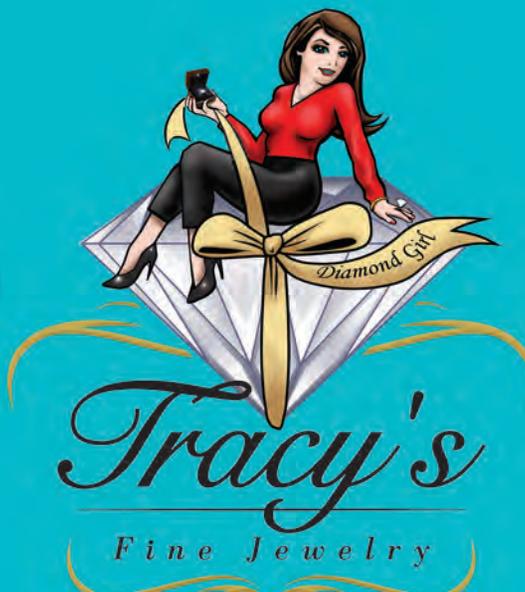
The diamond was then purchased by Harry Winston, who donated the cursed diamond to the Smithsonian National Museum of Natural history in Washington D.C. in 1958. It is rumored that the diamond was hand delivered to the Smithsonian by Registered Mail in a paper box. Harry Winston having paid \$2.44 in postage and \$155 in insurance for the delivery. The legend continues, that the mail man who delivered the parcel had his leg crushed in an automobile accident shortly thereafter.

The diamond still resides at the Smithsonian, and has been on display ever since. The Hope Diamond is currently valued at approximately \$350 million dollars.

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## “Raise The Bar...Go Bold”

Shades of white and grey are the most popular colors right now in interior design and you can “raise the bar” with a touch of bold in any project. Whether you are remodeling, building a home or just need to freshen up what you’ve got, bringing in some bold will do just the trick to forming a beautiful and balanced space.

Texture is a fabulous way to “raise the bar.” Texture comes in all types of forms and can dramatically change a space. Where to start though, right? There are so many options available to us at our finger tips and a whirl wind of interior accessories to choose from.

Artwork or exotic countertops are great places to start. Finding inspiration is always important to create a space because it will offer direction.

We have pictured here a captivating Heron, and this bold piece instantly brings contrast, texture and emotion into the space. Upholstery, lighting, linens and all accessories are chosen to bring balance and enhance a focal point. All work together to create a “raise the bar” space.

Exotic stones are another great way to bring texture into

a space. A few months ago we had a client come to us for countertops. She had a beautiful, traditional home, rich with artwork inspired by history. She told me “I want something that looks like a piece art.” After shopping around, she and her husband decided on Titanium Granite. Black and gold are the dominant colors in this stone with movement that is exhilarating. Although pictured here, you would have to see this stone in person to enjoy the depth and energy it has.

Traditional met bold in her space and Titanium, this exciting, exotic stone from Brazil, truly “raised the bar” in the interior design of her home.

Texture in furniture, rugs, pillows, and linens are other great options to “raise the bar.” Consider a custom upholstered chair that may enhance your artwork or countertops. Bold rugs are always fun. Don’t be afraid of bringing bold textures into your life.

Now I know we have some readers out there that love simple, clean and sophisticated. There are some bold, but subtle



touches that can go with those beautiful shades of white and grey that can really “raise the bar” in your space in a subtle way. White cabinets and white quartz countertops are a popular choice right now. Choosing a bold hardware or lighting is subtle but bold enough to create

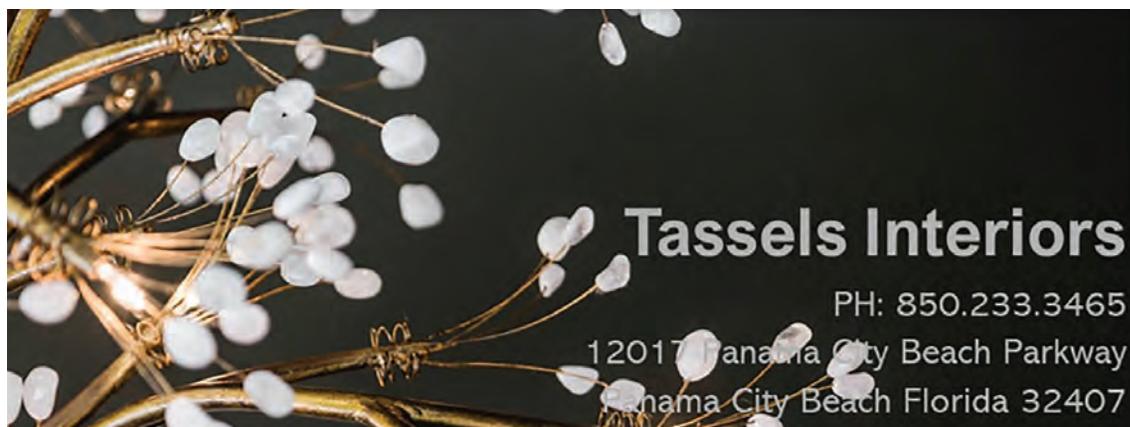
some contrast and balance to your space.

**SHOP LOCAL!** Although we live in a world where you can get on amazon and buy at your fingertips, we always want to encourage our readers to shop local. The designers at Tassels Interiors can guide you

into bringing in some bold into your home. They offer design expertise and a lovely selection of custom fabrics, custom lighting, custom furniture and more to bring some bold design in to your space.



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# Furnishings with Flair

Tactile, is the first thought that comes to mind when visiting the Maison 30A's furniture showrooms on Panama City Beach Parkway.

From the cool, smooth edge of the industrial chic cement dining tables, to the rugged, hewn feel of the hand carved teak sculptures and occasional tables, everything at Maison 30A is intended to be touched, seen and experienced.

Indeed, as soon as you enter it is clear that owner and designer, Chris Bailey deliberately seeks to evoke the senses and stimulate the eye. In the interior showroom, a lit candle lingers subtly in the background, the walls are covered in part by soft pastel shades of recycled wood, once strewn aside by Hurricane Michael, contrasting starkly with opposing walls finished in rugged corrugated iron. Wood samples and color swatches are set out in an alluring display on the table, all setting the tone for a memorable shopping experience.

With success has come growth, and what was once a warehouse is now a spacious extension of their interior showroom, featuring on-trend French Bistro chairs, intriguing geometric side tables and an abundance of furnishings in all manner of colors, shapes and creativity.

This is not a shopping experience to be rushed. Maison 30A is both dog and people friendly, and visitors are



Not sure exactly what you want or don't see exactly what you want? No problem, Daniel is always on-hand to gently guide you through your selection, and private appointments with Chris are suggested if you are in the building and design process, or seeking to undertake a major remodel.

Large or small, statement piece or delicate accent, you are sure to find a memorable treasure at Maison 30A.

Conveniently located on 98 near the junction with Highway 79, Maison 30A offers ample parking and is open daily Tuesday through Saturday, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.

encouraged to slow down and linger over the many, many furnishings ideas on display. In addition to Chris' signature industrial line of large, heavy furniture, there are numerous, much smaller accent pieces interspersed among the furniture. All intended to give you a perspective on how individual pieces might fit into your own home.

Outside there is an equally large space featuring pots and planters from around the world. So many pots and planters! From gleaming, glazed Mediterranean style pots in bold colors, to their much sought-after collection of subtle, neutral-toned pots and water fountains. All in sizes large and small and everything in between.



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Check out our other company specializing in industrial design furniture | [industrial-chic.com](http://industrial-chic.com)

 Business


BY MAURICE STOUSE, FINANCIAL ADVISOR AND BRANCH MANAGER

The 2020 presidential election is nearing, and many investors, workers, savers and retirees are being bombarded with messaging and have a lot of things

they are considering by Nov. 3. Many are wondering, asking and offering their opinions (deservedly so) as to what impact the election will have on the economy and the markets (stock market, bond market, money market, real estate market to name a few). Many might be pondering the age-old question of, “Do presidents make markets or do markets (and the economy perhaps) make presidents?”

It is important to remember that long-term investors should

not be as concerned with the short-term moves the markets might make and, that in either direction, those might end up as short-term blips. Note that while it is indeed important to take good notice of who occupies the White House, it is more important to think about the economy long-term, what corporate and business earnings are to be and what the Federal Reserve does. It is generally not prudent for investors to make dramatic changes to their portfolios or strategy

## Presidents and Elections, the Market, the Economy



based upon the results of an election.

It is important to remember that the strength of the economy and the corona virus can impact the outcome of the election, but investors might want to look beyond that. There are always near-term implications that impact some, but not all the 11 sectors of the stock market.

Raymond James has also published a piece entitled: “3 Myths About Voting and Market Volatility.” The article points out that when making decisions on investing, elections are one of many things to be considered. Here are the myths in short:

The first myth is that Markets Underperform in Election years. Raymond James points out that in 17 of the past 23 election years, the S&P 500 index has ended in positive territory. When the market was down, it was because of things beyond the election.

The second myth is that one party can lay claim to superior economic or financial performance. Raymond James points out that neither party can make such a claim as both the economy and the markets have performed well under both parties.

And the third myth is that the markets are weakest in the year following the election. Raymond James dismissed that as cause and effect as there is not sufficient evidence to support that.

Market timing has often been mentioned as very tempting for investors, either to preserve a gain, avoid a loss, or perhaps make a large gain. The problem many investors have experienced is that predicting the markets can be akin to predicting the weather. There can be forecasting for sure but predicting the outcome is next to impossible.

To learn more, you can go

to [www.raymondjames.com](http://www.raymondjames.com) to read the article on the election myths. The Raymond James site is replete with information regarding presidential elections, the economy and the markets.

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

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

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



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# Property Tax Season is Approaching

## What You Need to Know Before Visiting the Tax Collector's Office this Year



BY CHUCK PERDUE,  
BAY COUNTY TAX COLLECTOR

If you've visited the Bay County Tax Collector's Beach Office on Hutchison Boulevard, you know our building is not large, throw in social distancing

guidelines and customer space is compromised further. As property tax season approaches, we want to be sure our customers are aware a visit to the office is not necessary to pay property taxes.

Property tax notices will mail November 1st as always, which means most taxpayers will receive their notice by the second week of November. However, even before your notice hits the mailbox, you can access your online notice and pay online. Property tax accounts are typically accessible online the last week of October.

**Some things to keep in mind this November:**

If your property is mortgaged, the mortgage company

is required by law to pay during the November discount period. Customers with a mortgage will receive a courtesy notice that reads "this is not a bill." Please simply keep this notice for your records. No other further action is required.

Online payments are highly encouraged. Customers can pay online with an e-check without paying any convenience fees. After paying online, you can print the tax notice with the payment date and receipt number noted at the bottom for your records.

Mailed in payments are posted within 24 business hours of receipt of the payment. It can take up to 48 hours for the payment file to post online. Please check our website before calling

or emailing our office regarding receipt of your payment. When mailing in your payment, please make sure you reference your account number(s) on the check.

Drop boxes are available at all offices for check and money order tax payments. Payments are posted the following business day.

When sending in payment via mail or drop box, please only pay one amount based on when you are sending in your payment.

We strongly encourage you to skip a visit to our lobby to pay your property taxes in person and pay online, by mail or drop box instead.

We truly appreciate the opportunity to serve you and

thank you for helping us keep our community and team safe by minimizing lobby traffic and completing as many services as possible online.

2020 Property taxes are not delinquent until April 1, 2021.

Homestead exemptions must be filed with the Property Appraiser's Office by March 3rd to be applicable for the 2021 tax year. You can file online at baypa.net.

You can access services easily by visiting our website, BayTaxCollector.com.

If you need to visit our office for a transaction which cannot be completed online or by mail, please visit our website to schedule an appointment.

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**CHUCK PERDUE**  
TAX COLLECTOR  
BAY COUNTY, FLORIDA

Property Tax Notices  
mail November 1st.

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 Business

# Flying this Fall: What to Expect

Historically, the fourth quarter is one of the busiest times of the year for air travel. While this year is unpredictable, we do know more people are flying again. Whether for the holidays or a “workcation” – a blend of a longer-term work and vacation trip - air travel looks to be on the rebound from where it was in April. Then, the industry was down more than 60 percent, compared to the same period in 2019. The good news is ECP was only down and estimated 20 percent thanks to the efforts of our community partners and the desire to see the world’s most beautiful beaches.

The gradual return of consumer confidence is partly due to the increase in COVID-19 health and safety precautions taken by airports and airlines alike. Northwest Florida Beaches International Airport (ECP) and its airline partners, American Airlines, Delta Air Lines, Southwest Airlines, and United Airlines, have implemented new measures to ensure a safe environment for your next jet set, no matter the occasion.

### What to Expect at ECP

The safety and security of our passengers and staff is our top priority. To address the global pandemic, the Airport has developed its ECP Ready Plan, which details ECP’s cleaning and safety efforts to slow the spread of COVID-19. ECP Ready outlines an increase in cleaning frequency, along with



new protocols and requirements for both passengers and staff. Here’s what to expect:

With health and safety in mind, passengers and staff must wear a mask in the Terminal. If a passenger does not have a facial covering, one may be provided. In some cases, passengers are exempt, as is the case for specific medical conditions. All passengers can take a mask break while eating or drinking.

Plexiglass dividers are placed in critical locations. Like interactions at banks, grocery stores, and college campuses, plexiglass dividers have become a standard precaution at certain check-in points to ensure safe human-to-human interactions.

Social distancing is encouraged throughout ECP. Your safe travel experience starts the

minute you walk into ECP, with floor decals placed six feet apart to remind passengers to social distance when possible. In addition to the decals, segmented security checkpoints have been activated, and staggered seating is available in waiting areas and restaurants.

Meeters and greeters are encouraged not to enter the Terminal and, instead, wait for their passenger(s) in their vehicle.

### What To Expect at the TSA Checkpoint

Just like in the Terminal and on the plane, TSA requires travelers to wear a face mask and practice social distancing, whenever possible. TSA may ask passengers to adjust their mask for ID verification or remove it entirely for a secondary screening.



To reduce physical contact, passengers will remain in possession of their ID or passport and boarding pass. You will be asked to place the items on the reader directly, and then hold them up for physical verification.

Frequent travelers may be familiar with the 3-1-1 rule, which specifies restrictions for liquids. Due to the global pandemic, the policy has been adjusted to allow one liquid hand sanitizer container, up to 12 ounces per passenger in carry-on bags.

### What to Expect from ECP Partner Airlines

Check-in may look different with some airlines. ECP encourages all passengers to check directly with their airline before heading to the Airport to learn any new protocols or procedures.

Customers can also expect to see enhanced prevention protocols and procedures from ECP’s airline partners once on the airplane. For example, many airlines have upgraded their air circulation systems, implemented stringent cleaning practices, and have taken physical-distancing measures by leaving the middle seat vacant. However, if you are traveling with your family, you may sit together and occupy the

middle seat. Airlines are adding additional precautions regularly to ensure the health and safety of passengers and crew.

### What to Expect from Ground Transportation

We realize your travel experience doesn’t stop or start at our doors. If you need to call for services like Uber or Lyft before heading to the Airport, or upon arrival, rest easy knowing these companies are also taking safety measures. Find out more on their websites.

If you need to call a local ground transportation company like a cab or a shuttle, they too are taking additional precautions to ensure the safety of their passengers. The drivers are wearing PPE, and many are taking additional steps to ensure their vehicles are continuously cleaned for your protection. A list of ground transportation companies can be found on our website, [iflybeaches.com](http://iflybeaches.com).

When you’re ready to fly, whether for work, vacation, or a blended “workcation,” ECP and its partners are prepared to see you! We will be smiling from ear-to-ear behind our masks, with your health and safety top of mind.

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BY JENNIFER LEDESMA,  
MANAGING BROKER, BERKSHIRE  
HATHAWAY HOME SERVICES  
BEACH PROPERTIES OF FLORIDA

The Breakfast Point® community continues to be one of the hottest new home communities in Bay County, and with good reason. Centrally located in Panama City Beach, this charming community boasts high quality homes, parks, playgrounds, and miles of sidewalks perfect for an afternoon bike ride or stroll. A Publix grocery store and the highly rated Breakfast Point Academy (K-8) are located at the front of the

## New Phase Offers New Opportunities in the Breakfast Point Community

neighborhood, and the beach is only a two-mile drive away.

For those interested in becoming Breakfast Point homeowners, new opportunities are now available with a recent expansion of 80 new homesites in a new phase of the community. The St. Joe Company began development of the homesites in Spring 2020, and this phase will increase the total number of homesites from 369 to 449.

“The Breakfast Point community continues to attract homebuyers looking for a family-friendly, short-term rental restricted neighborhood that is close to everything that makes Panama City Beach such a great place to live,” said Bridget Precise, Senior Vice President of Residential Real Estate for St. Joe in a press release about the expansion. “We have established relationships with homebuilders and closed on 88

homesites in the Breakfast Point community in 2019. This new phase will enable us to meet the continued demand from these homebuilders as the community continues to grow and attract new residents.”

The new 80 homesite phase is being developed to the east of Breakfast Point Boulevard off Graze Point Drive. The development of the homesites is expected to be completed later this year.

In additional community news, Bay County builder Samuel Taylor Homes recently announced that the company was joining the elite roster of builder partners at Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices Beach Properties of Florida. Samuel Taylor is one of two builders currently building in the Breakfast Point community and offers a variety of floor plans from 1,587 to 3,100+ square feet with quality



features and exceptional craftsmanship.

“We put the customer at the center of our planning process to create homes that truly meet the needs of today’s buyers,” said Matt Brandman, part owner of Samuel Taylor Homes. “The homes we’ve just completed are exactly what those buyers want, and we were able to keep the prices within the range they demanded.”

Berkshire

Hathaway

HomeServices Beach Properties of Florida will exclusively market Samuel Taylor Homes offerings within the Breakfast Point community. Visit the model home at 206 Basin Bayou Drive, Panama City Beach, FL, 32407. Weekly hours are Monday through Saturday 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Sunday 12 p.m. to 5 p.m., or email [BreakfastPoint@BPFLA.com](mailto:BreakfastPoint@BPFLA.com) to schedule an appointment with a community specialist.

## Know Your PCB Pro: Jarmon Flight School

BY AETHER VAN DYKE

There is something incredibly thrilling about being off the ground. For many people, being in the air produces a feeling of freedom unlike anything else. Along the Emerald Coast, there are a myriad of different ways to get off of solid ground including parasailing, skydiving, and flying in a helicopter or plane. Island Air Express is Panama City’s premier flight school, and they want to offer you the experience of a lifetime.

The dream for Island Air Express became a reality in 1994 when father and son duo Morris and Ron Jarmon began the company. It was and continues to be the Jarmon family’s passion to help individuals in their local community experience the freedom of seeing the earth from a brand new perspective.

Island Air Express offers a variety of courses tailored to each flight student. The company prides themselves on teaching each person ‘from the ground up’ and giving them a unique, unforgettable experience. Some of the courses that are offered include Private Pilot Training, Multi Engine Training, Sport



Island Air Express Founders: father and son Morris and Ron Jarmon

Light Aircraft Licensing, and Commercial Pilot Licensing. This is not an extensive list. The entire course list can be viewed on their website ([islandairexpress.com](http://islandairexpress.com)).

The Island Air Express team consists of six flight instructors and two ground instructors. Each of the instructors have been fully trained and many have been in the business of flying for years. Flying planes and teaching others to do as well has been a dream come true for many of these instructors.

When asked what he finds most enjoyable about taking others into the air flight instructor, Scott Pittman, said, “I enjoy

being the median to allow others to achieve their goals.” What an incredible opportunity to help people conquer their fears and attain their desires!

One of the challenges the team at Island Air Express faces is finding the root concerns of each individual and creating a solution for those concerns. The team understands that each person’s experience is unique, offering

various difficulties. They excel at creating ways to overcome those difficulties. It’s not always easy to take a risk and jump into a new experience!

However, the challenge of creating a unique experience is also what makes this company stand out. No one wants to show up as a student and be treated like another number. People are coming to these businesses to learn about and expand their own boundaries, and in order to do that one must fully consider the individual’s needs and dreams.

Island Air Express contributes their success to having a great team. Very few people, if anyone, can find success alone, and this incredible company is no exception! As the saying goes, “Teamwork makes the dream work.”

Island Air Express is open for business everyday from 8 a.m. - 5 p.m. They can be reached via their website at [islandairexpress.com](http://islandairexpress.com), or by telephone (850) 814-6407. Be sure to check them out next time you’re looking to get off the ground and get a new perspective!

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