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# PCB Life

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## The Thanksgiving Proclamation

BY TIM NORRIS

One of my favorite times of the year is Thanksgiving. It brings families and friends together to share a meal and give thanks for their blessings. It's similar to when the pilgrims and Indians had their first meal together, and gave thanks for their bountiful year.

The Thanksgiving celebration we observe today is derived from the pilgrims' Thanksgiving celebration in 1621. They landed in Plymouth, Massachusetts in November of 1620. The first winter was harsh and more than half of the settlers died. Emerging from the grueling winter they were greeted by an Indian named Samoset; he spoke to them in their own language, explaining he had learned English from fishermen and traders. Samoset then introduced them to his friend Squanto, who then began living with them and accepted their Christian faith. Squanto taught the pilgrims how to live in the New World. He and Samoset forged a peace among the Pilgrims and the Wampanoag Indians,



which lasted many years. The pilgrim governor, William Bradford described Squanto as, "A special instrument sent of God for our good... he never left us until he died." The Pilgrims reaped a bountiful harvest that summer. So in December 1621, they declared a three-day feast to thank God and celebrate with their Native

American friends. This was America's first Thanksgiving celebration. It was a festival of friends, family, and athletic events, and involved feasting, times of prayer and religious worship. This led to an annual Thanksgiving tradition in the New England colonies. But, Thanksgiving didn't start spreading southward into the

other colonies until after the American Revolution. At that time, Congress issued eight separate national Thanksgiving proclamations over many years. In 1789, America's first federal Thanksgiving proclamation occurred after the

**THANKSGIVING**  
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## Theo the Turtle Takes the Beach



BY JAMIE ZIMCHEK

Theo the Turtle is now swimming into stores near you, a cuddly, plush toy turtle with a very serious mission: raising money to support Gulf World Marine Institute (GWMI). GWMI, based in Panama City Beach, is the largest sea turtle rehabilitation facility in northern Florida, and its only long-term facility for marine mammal rehabilitation. With a coverage area that extends over 130 miles of coast from St. Mark's River to Ft. Walton Beach (as well as inland waterways), they're tasked with handling a significant number of marine strandings. An established nonprofit, GWMI benefits greatly from volunteer efforts and other outside support.

**THEO**  
*continued on page 5*



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**THANKSGIVING**

*continued from page 1*

adoption of the Constitution. Congress responded by requesting President George Washington proclaim a day of Thanksgiving, which he gladly did. He

said, "It is the duty of all nations to acknowledge the providence of Almighty God, to obey his will, to be grateful for his benefits, and humbly to implore His protection and favor."

The adoption of our Thanksgiving federal holiday may also be credited to Sarah Hale, a mother of five and editor of Godey's Ladies Book, a popular ladies magazine that contained poetry, artwork and articles by America's leading authors. She actively promoted the idea and said "Thanksgiving Day is the national pledge of Christian faith in God, acknowledging Him as the dispenser of blessings. This festival should be joyfully and universally observed throughout our whole country as inseparable from American life." For nearly three decades she lobbied presidents including President Abraham Lincoln, asking him to declare a federal Thanksgiving. Lincoln responded in 1863 with a proclamation printed in the New York Times, designating it on the last Thursday of November. He reminded people that, "The year that is drawing towards its close has been filled with the blessings

of fruitful fields and healthful skies. To these bounties, which are so constantly enjoyed that we are prone to forget the source from which they come, others have been added...no human counsel hath devised, nor hath any mortal worked out these great things, they are the gracious gifts of the most high God."

Over the next 75 years, subsequent presidents followed President Lincoln's precedent and the celebrations varied widely and at times in different months. Then in 1933 with a Thanksgiving proclamation from President Franklin D. Roosevelt, we began regularly celebrating Thanksgiving on the fourth Thursday of each November. By 1941, Congress permanently established that day as the national Thanksgiving holiday!

As the legendary radio host Paul Harvey would say, as he signs off the air, "And now you know the rest of the story."

**Have a Happy and Blessed Thanksgiving!**

**Beach Home for the Holidays Nov. 26-27**

Thanksgiving Thursday may be the time for turkey, but that weekend, Santa Claus is coming to town! Beach Home for the Holidays waves goodbye to fall and sets the stage for the most magical month of the year. Aaron Bessant Park serves as the site of carol-themed concerts, s'mores, an appearance by Santa and activities for the kids. Fireworks will be the encore each night.



**Schedule of Events**

- Friday, November 26**  
 3:30 p.m.: Campfires, S'mores & Santa's Village\* Open  
 4:15 p.m.: Holiday Movie: Dr. Seuss' How the Grinch Stole Christmas  
 5:55 p.m.: The Lighting of the Christmas Tree  
 6 p.m.: Josh Turner: Holiday & The Hits  
 7:15 p.m.: Fireworks
- Saturday, November 27**  
 3:30 p.m.: Campfires, S'mores & Santa's Village\* Open  
 4:15 p.m.: Holiday Movie: The Polar Express  
 6 p.m.: Panama City Symphony Orchestra  
 7:15 p.m.: Fireworks
- \*Temperature checks required to meet santa.*

**Headliner Josh Turner: Holiday & The Hits Tour Friday, November 26**

With his deep bass voice, Turner has sold more than six million records, reached 3.2 billion global streams, and has become a favorite and unforgettable hitmaker on country radio. With timeless songs like "Long Black Train" and "Why Don't We Just Dance," Turner's five No. 1 singles include "Your Man," of which the official music video recently surpassed 100 million views.

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# PCB Chamber New Member Spotlight

## Watchstander Services

Watchstander Services is a new business serving Panama City Beach and surrounding areas. It is a property maintenance and home watch company that caters to absentee owners who manage their second home or rental properties themselves. Watchstander services acts as the owner's eyes on the ground to keep watch for anything that might go wrong, and quickly mend any problems that might occur.

Jeff Clinger, co-owner of Watchstander Services, has a long history of managing his own properties. He knows first hand the problems that can occur when you are not able to lay eyes on your property regularly. He and his wife, Lisa, spent several years managing their vacation homes themselves while living remotely in Indianapolis, Indiana. Any time a renter of one of their condos would call them to tell them that something went wrong in their unit they would frantically call anyone they could think of to go



out and try to fix the problem. They often didn't know who to turn to for help, because they didn't know anyone in the area.

When they were able to get in contact with someone to fix the problem, they just had to hope the job was done right, as they were not in the area to physically check on it themselves. All of those years they wished for a service that they could use to help them with these problems.

This is how Watchstander Services was born. Jeff, a retired firefighter and Navy veteran, joked that he wished that there was some sort of Watchstander to stand watch over his condos in the same way there was a watchstander to stand watch over the ships he was on in the Navy all those years ago. He reached out to his daughter Cayla, a realtor, and told her about the idea he had. Cayla had encountered several customers reaching out to her after she had assisted them with purchasing condos in need of this exact service. They have since teamed up together to offer these services to many happy customers in the area.

Watchstander services offers comprehensive weekly or

bi-weekly home checks for absentee owners. They check everything from how well the cleaners did for your rental property to how your mechanicals and plumbing are running. When a problem occurs that needs to be fixed, they will perform property maintenance services to get the job done efficiently and quickly. If it is something that is out of the scope of their expertise, they have a long list of local trusted vendors that they will refer you to. They will also work for you as a vendor key holder. If you have a delivery that needs to be made to your vacation home they will let them in and make sure everything goes smoothly. They will then report back to you so that you have peace of mind. They also offer concierge services as well. They look forward to speaking with you, and figuring out how they can best tailor their services to match you and your properties needs!

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# Holiday Safety Tips From the Sheriff's Office



Like the song says, "it's the most wonderful time of the year." Unfortunately, this is also a time when law enforcement

sees an increase in theft. Criminals know at this time of year folks carry cash and credit cards, have packages in homes and vehicles, and shop online so boxed items can be found unattended on porches.

Be sure to have someone you trust that can watch for package deliveries and can hold them safe for you.

If you are going out of town for Thanksgiving or Christmas, don't announce on social media

what dates you will be leaving your home empty. Criminals use social media, too. If you wish for the Bay County Sheriff's Office to watch your home while you are away, just call us at (850) 747-4700 to sign up for the Home Watch Program. We will connect you to dispatch to get your information and send someone to check on your house while you are gone.

When shopping alone, be sure to park in a lighted area in

the parking lot in case you come out after dark. If you feel uneasy when leaving a store loaded with bags of purchased items, ask for store security personnel to escort you to your vehicle. Never leave packages in your vehicle where others can see them. When shopping, carry only the essentials like identification (such as a driver's license), and only the credit card you plan to use. That way, if your wallet or purse is stolen you won't lose every cred-

it card, your social security card, or anything else of value.

After Christmas, don't place big boxes out by the trash for everyone to know you have new, expensive gifts. Break up the boxes and place them inside trash bags.

By taking a few steps to prevent theft, you can have a safe and happy holiday season. Merry Christmas from your friends at the Bay County Sheriff's Office.

## THEO

*continued from page 1*

That's why PCB Life, part of Life Media, is excited to show their support by spearheading a new fundraising effort with Theo as the star. Starting this month, find Theo and a matching Theo keyring at select retailers in Panama City Beach, with all proceeds to benefit GWMI. "Any funds raised by the Theo partnership will contribute directly to the efforts of our sea turtle and marine mammal rehabilitation program," says Lauren Albrittain, Stranding Coordinator at Gulf World Marine Institute. One of their fundraising priorities? Building a new operations center. "We are in the process of building a new building, and some of our fundraising efforts will go toward that," explains Pam George, the general manager at Gulf World Marine Park. "We're very excited to partner



with Life Media on this and see how the project will grow, and how educating everyone on the safety of sea turtles will have a positive impact on our rescue work."

Though Theo is new to Panama City Beach, he's actually been around since 2018 when he was first introduced as part of a Life Media campaign in South Walton to benefit Friends of South Walton Sea Turtles (FOSWST). Then, Theo product sales raised \$40,000 for FOSWST, and the hope is that he'll generate the same stir in PCB. Now that he's made his way one county over, you can

find Theo at The Treasure Box, Pieces on the Beach, Gulf Coast Gift Shop, Salt Shed, Turtle Girls, Salty Mermaid, and the gift shop at Gulf World Marine Park.

So let's say you run right out and pick up a Theo for your children, grandchildren, and neighbor children, that's it, right? But why not go a step further and consider "adopting" one of the actual sea turtles in need at GWMI? For a \$30 donation, you can become the "adoptive parent" of a stranded sea turtle, which makes for a pretty special way to make a difference, as well as some unusual

bragging rights. There's more. "People can go to our website to just donate, they can purchase our merchandise that's available on the website, and there is the adoption program - we want to add that supporting doesn't just mean the money side though," adds Albrittain. "Pick up after yourselves at the beach, and if you see anything stranded, don't push it back in the water." Instead, call Florida Fish and Wildlife; they have a wildlife hotline for the whole state reachable by calling (888) 404-3922, or dial either \*FWC or #FWC

on your mobile phone (depending on carrier). Prospective volunteers can find more information and an application form at [www.gwmi.info/volunteer-information](http://www.gwmi.info/volunteer-information).

In short, Christmas is just around the corner, and Theo is the kind of gift you can feel good about giving. Not only does he make a great stocking stuffer, but he also offers the perfect opportunity to teach the next generation about saving sea turtles specifically and wildlife conservation in general. It doesn't get much better!

*When the only thing you want to stick in the oven is your head*



## Welcome to the Angry Tuna!

Whether you're local or just visiting, stop by the Angry Tuna for the great taste of the local flavors of the Gulf Coast. House specialties include Seared Tuna Bowl, Tuna Sliders, Tuna Nachos, a Colossal Seafood Platter, Peel & Eat Shrimp and much more! We've got a full bar with a variety of beers and Angry Tuna lager, and frozen drinks for those hot days.



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 Community

# The Humane Society of Bay County: How to Help

Readers have been asking after last month's article on The Humane Society of Bay County "How can we help?" According

to Lauryn Gill, the store manager at Humane Society Thrift & Gift, there is not currently a specific financial target. "Unfortun-

nately we do not have a target amount at this time as it is more of coming up with guaranteed flow of income. The idea is to get the Thrift Store to a point where it is profitable since it has just recently opened up and once it is we'll be able to have a better idea of what steady income this place can bring to the shelter," she says. Additionally, the shelter structure itself is a problem. Gill explains that, "We have not come to a decision on what we will do with it yet, but it is very outdated and constantly posing issues so we are trying not to dump all the money we raise into repairs. Also with the hurricane it made some aspects of it unsound."

Looking for ways beyond supporting the thrift store to contribute? Sign up to become a member at their website, adopt.org. Click on GIVE and then BECOME A MEMBER. Here it's possible to select an option to donate a certain amount monthly/annually. Members will receive email updates and any newsletters we have on upcoming events.

It is also possible to donate directly through Facebook to the shelter's page. There is both a thrift store page and a separate shelter page so make sure to go to the page for The Humane



Society of Bay County, [www.facebook.com/HumaneScty-BayCo](http://www.facebook.com/HumaneScty-BayCo), and not the "HSBC's Thrift & Gift Store."

**Checks can be sent to:**

The Humane Society Thrift & Gift Store. 1352 W 15th St., Panama City, FL 32401.

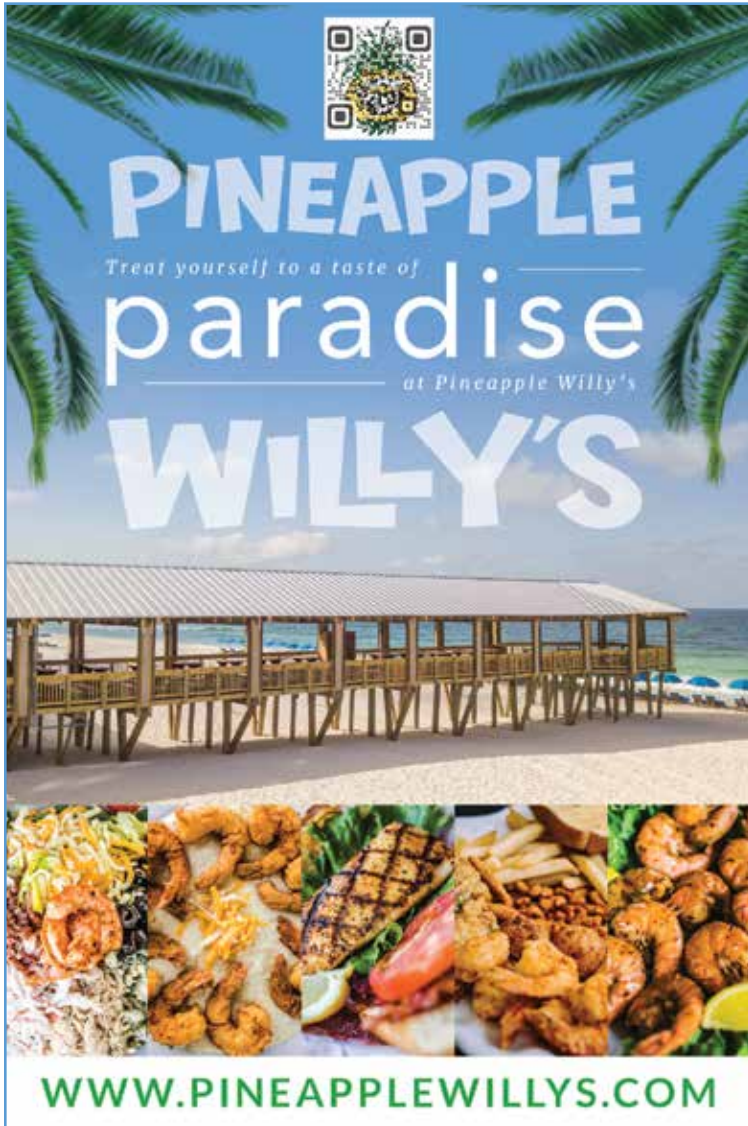
Donations can also be left with a staff member at the rear of the Thrift Store Monday-Saturday between 10 a.m. - 6 p.m. Go to their website, [adopt.org](http://adopt.org) to the Thrift Store tab to see a list of items they do and do not accept.

Additionally, HSBC accepts volunteer applications, scheduling volunteers as opportunities arise. To join their volunteer da-



tabase, reach out to Lauryn Gill via email ([lgill@adoptme.org](mailto:lgill@adoptme.org)) or stop by the store to pick up a Volunteer Application. As of right now there are not any major volunteer projects for people to sign up for but it's always helpful to have a list of potential volunteers ready when the time comes.

The land the shelter is on, however, is in need of a significant clean up. A volunteer landscaping crew willing to take care of overgrown grass, trees, and bushes would go a long way. "It is quite a bit of land and may take a couple days depending on the crew and the supplies," says Gill. Though of course, the reward is mostly in the volunteering, Gill adds that, "We would be able to provide a donation receipt as a tax write-off for their businesses services and hours volunteered." After the first big clean up, a volunteer crew is really needed monthly at least to stay on top of it. "We hate for the place to look as if it's abandoned," explains Gill. "When we closed it down the idea was to be able to maintain the landscape so it doesn't look like a lost cause but it has been hard with the minimal staff, time, and resources we have."



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# Worth Remembering: The Rotary Club of the Emerald Coast Partners With Wreaths Across America

By DAVID WESLEY

I'm not sure who started the practice of tying a bow on your finger to remember something important but I have heard the saying over the years. There is an important bow that is tied on an evergreen wreath that is important and about remembering. The Rotary Club of the Emerald Coast is making sure that the lives of veterans laid to rest at Evergreen Memorial Gardens are remembered. Partnering with the Wreaths Across America organization, the club holds a wreath laying ceremony on markers of veterans at Evergreen Memorial Gardens each year. The wreaths are live balsam evergreens and have a red velvet bow. This is one of many national and seven local Bay County Wreaths Across America events, this is an opportunity to remember, honor and teach about the service and sacrifice of veterans.

Each year this touching ceremony brings to mind those who chose to serve their country and honors their service. It also teaches a new generation what service to our country means. Wreaths Across America asks that as each wreath is placed on the marker that the volunteers say the name of that person out loud and remember their life. Anyone who has participated feels honored to do so.

The first ceremony at Evergreen Memorial Gardens was

weeks after Hurricane Michael. One family shared that due to hurricane damage to their home, for the first time in their lives, they had no Christmas tree or decorations or place to put a tree up where they sheltered. For them it brought comfort in the Christmas season to celebrate their memories of their father and Christmases past by laying fresh live fir wreaths on the markers of veterans. One of the Boy Scout volunteers shared that his grandfather was a veteran laid to rest at Evergreen and later was seen solemnly saluting his grandfather's marker.

The free and open to the public ceremony this year is December 18, 2021 at 9 a.m. and will include special music, a guest speaker, and laying of wreaths by attendees and volunteers. Refreshments will be provided and seating available for those that need it. Support to make this ceremony possible is provided by sponsorships from businesses in the community as well as individuals who purchase wreaths. An individual wreath is \$15 and sponsorships are offered at several levels based on the level of participation the business prefers. For information on how to be a sponsor or donate wreaths please email [ecrotarypcb@gmail.com](mailto:ecrotarypcb@gmail.com).

The Rotary Club of the Emerald Coast makes veterans a high priority in their outreach to the community. The club an-



nually hosts special parties and events for veterans at Sims Veterans Home. Perhaps the best known are the Miracle League Veterans games at Frank Brown Park each spring and fall. The Sims Veterans Home participants enjoy an outing of a one inning game and lunch together at the park. They are given a police escort, are cheered and applauded as they enter the field through the flag line and cheered on as they play by appreciative fans and family who attend.

Internationally the club is reaching out beyond the borders to encourage a better understanding of the world. They have sponsored a number of Rotary Youth Exchange students from countries around the world giving them a chance to learn firsthand about the panhandle area and life in America. The Rotary Club of the Emerald Coast partners with a sister Rotary Club in Casma, Peru. They supported the Casma club's project to provide supplies to help curb the Covid 19 pandemic in the rural, disadvantaged regions of Peru.

Special needs children and adults are another focus of the Rotary Club of the Emerald Coast. In 2019 the club created a Rotary Community Corps club called Special Ops for youth and adults with special needs, providing activities and service opportunities. The group has had beach clean-up days, created sleeping mats and supply kits for the homeless and created decorations for the Sims Veterans Home for the different holidays throughout the year.

This holiday season of bows, remembering and gifts, The Rotary Club of the Emerald Coast offers the gifts of friendship and meaningful service which touches lives while making lasting memories. Get to know the Ro-

tary Club of the Emerald Coast with their tradition of supplementing the international and national efforts of Rotary International by supporting the local community. The club meets on Monday evenings at 5:30 p.m. which provides a relaxing time after work to connect, learn and serve. Please email them for meeting information or any questions at [ecrotarypcb@gmail.com](mailto:ecrotarypcb@gmail.com) and they are on the web at [emeraldcoastrotary.com](http://emeraldcoastrotary.com) or on Facebook, Rotary Club of the Emerald Coast, PC. Contact information is also available in the Panama City Beach Chamber of Commerce member directory.

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Community

# Reflection, Thanksgiving and Fall-Winter Events

BY PAM ANDERSON

Remember the days when locals used to say PCB was a ghost town after Labor Day? I think the old saying was 'it was so quiet here after Labor Day you could roll a bowling ball down Front Beach Road and never hit a car or a person!' Not anymore!

We can thank City, County, TDC, and Chamber of Commerce leaders for realizing we have a lot more to offer here in what used to be the 'off season.' So true! Many folks have year-round jobs, not just summer jobs; many industries have moved in to build a better, more vibrant local economy. Thank you all for your vision!

With that, we can offer many more activities for locals and visitors alike in the fall and winter.



In Grand Lagoon, at this writing, the Grand Lagoon Coalition is working toward the

annual Bloody Mary Fest event the first weekend in November which is hosted by Sheraton PCB-it includes a Golf Event, too! Missed it this year? Find out more on their webpage at [www.grandlagoon.com](http://www.grandlagoon.com) and be sure to get it in your calendar for 2022.



On November 11, Capt. Anderson's Marina hosted the Anderson family's 47th annual salute to our Veterans on Veterans Day. It started at 11 a.m. with the Freedom Celebration hosted by Neysa Wilkins, with several honored guests as well as inspiring music, a gracious 'thank you' for your service' and more. Following the celebration, veterans and their immediate families were invited to board one of the Capt. Anderson boats for a free Dolphin Cruise. Again, we say 'thank you for your service!'

On November 25, let's all stop and give thanks to the One who is our Great Provider.



In December, the ninth Annual Bethlehem Christmas Village at Capt. Anderson's Marina will take place Wednesday through Saturday, Dec. 8-11. Storytellers will be stationed around the village to share their stories of this amazing Gift to humanity and the part they played in this event. The re-enactment of the story of Jesus' birth will be presented before and after musical presentations from our local schools. The Village will be open from 5:30 until 8:30 each evening. Local vendors will have their Christmas merchandise on sale as well as food, but the event is free... except that the 'Tax Collector' will expect a donation of food or gifts or funds for local charities (not required,



but appreciated). There are also free gifts for the children who visit and collect pages for their 'story' books. Find out more at our website at [www.CaptAndersonsMarina.com](http://www.CaptAndersonsMarina.com). Giving thanks for free speech!

And then there is fishing.... The special season for Red Snapper for charter and head-boats ends November 5, but fall and winter fishing continues with many of the boats in Grand Lagoon.

When planning your fishing trip, remember Capt. Anderson's Marina... home of three large head-boats, 35 private charter boats, and four dive boats... and Shell Island/Dolphin Cruises. Be sure to call or check our website for fall and winter schedules.

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# Center for the Arts Opens Two New Exhibitions

The Panama City Center for the Arts opened three new exhibitions to the public on November 5.



**Carol Mitchell's** work will be on display in the Main gallery, Megan Mueller will be featured in the Miller gallery, and students from Square Pegs will have their artwork on display in the cafe.

There will not be an opening reception due to The Songwriter's Festival, taking place November 5th and 6th. However, a "Meet The Artists" reception will be held on Friday, November 12, from 5-7 p.m., with complimentary refreshments.

As a prominent member of the arts community, you may recognize Carol Mitchell's work in the main gallery this month. Though she grew up on Long Island's Atlantic coast, she found her way, along with her military husband, to Panama City in

1988. In 1990, with a studio perfect for painting and teaching, she began teaching oil painting at the Visual Arts Center (now known as our Center for the Arts) and taught at the GCCC Encore Program.

Carol Mitchell began her artistic career as early as elementary school, with a great art teacher, art room, classes, and a club. While she earned a degree at Duke for psychology/zoology, art was put on hold until during her MA education program at Adelphi when she had electives teaching art.

Much of her inspiration and materials reflect the thrill she feels finding shells and driftwood. "When I joined the Gulf Coast Shell Club," said Carol Mitchell, "I found wonderful places to explore. Here the focus is on collecting and painting seashells, shell-craft, and making shell jewelry. What a way to combine shells and art." She also paints in oil, acrylic, watercolor, and hot wax batik.

As a beachcomber early on, upon her husband's retirement, they built a home in Apalachicola where Carol states, "the shrimp boats were a magnet for me to paint in oil, and soon I was selling these as well as seascapes. I started using painting knives, with delight in the texture."

Her love of travel led to Carol teaching arts and crafts on cruise ships. "It has been the best of all possible worlds for me -- painting, travel, beach combing, and bringing joy to my students as they dive into painting too," said Carol. You can find Carol Mitchell's work also in our gift shop of local artists, she also exhibits and sells at the annual Gulf Coast Shell Club show in Panama City Beach.

In the Miller Gallery, you will



find local artist **Megan Mueller's** work. Growing up, her dad was in the military and they moved around a lot. From no place and every place, Megan was born in North Carolina and has lived in places as far reaching as Okinawa and as close as South Carolina. As an air force veteran, she came to Panama City in 2018 after being stationed here.

Megan had an early start to her artistic endeavors; as kids, her siblings and family were surrounded by art. With a dad who was really artistic, and a mom always cultivating and supporting their creative endeavors, art was just an innate feature in their lives. Now as a self-taught artist raising three kids of her own, to further her craft and skills Megan often embroidered in the car pick-up line or painted in the wee spaces of time between nap times.

When reflecting on when

her artistic journey started, Megan states, "I've been doing art all my life and it's only recently that I started to get more deeply involved with it. I found that pursuing my art was something I had to do for my mental health."

Some of the special techniques used to make her artwork include working with mixed media – particularly embroidery and oil painting. Mueller starts each painting off with a sketch first and marks the background and area for embroidery with acrylics, then she embroiders by hand and goes from there.

She came into this style of art by simply exploring and trying different techniques. Her most significant inspiration for the work are her experiences as a woman – the good, the bad, and the ugly. Whether about trauma, joy, or resiliency, Megan's feelings about being a woman in this world spill onto the canvas in self-expression.

In her exploration of experimenting with mixed media, particularly the merging of what we might consider fine art and craftwork, Megan states, "Craftwork has been devalued as art and positioned as 'women's work' for so long, I want to show that you can do amazing and beautiful things with things like embroidery and it can be fine art."

Megan has been a part of the 57th and 58th Bay Annual Competition and Exhibition at the Center for the Arts, receiving a merit award at the 57th competition, but this is her first solo show.

The meaning behind this show depicts the struggle at the beginning of the pandemic with our mental health, our families, and the chaotic world developing around us. "In the wake of this, I turned to art," said Megan

Mueller, "I knew I needed this avenue of expression or else I'd just sit and stew with all my feelings. I have loved each piece and am really proud of this show and the work I've produced." This exhibition will be a depiction of the struggle that all of us have faced since the start of the pandemic and the beauty that can come from it.

Ten students from the Square Pegs Learning Center in Panama City will be featured in our cafe gallery this month with their seasonal pieces of artwork. You can expect to see seasonal paintings from these young creative minds inspired by the changing colors of fall. When asked what it means to have their artwork on display in a show of their own, Bryson Phipps said, "it makes me happy and proud," along with their classmate Gabby Deleon who stated, "this means I'm getting better at art and can show it to the world."

"As an artist myself, I know how important it is for young artists to see their work on display in a gallery where their families and friends can admire their work," said marketing and exhibition coordinator Anastasia Dengerud, "I'm so glad we were able to give these students this opportunity and we hope to again in the future!"

Come support these students and our other featured artists this month by visiting the Center for the Arts, it is always free to the public.


These exhibits will be open through Saturday, November 27. The Center for the Arts will be open from 10 a.m. - 5 p.m., Tuesday–Thursday, Fridays, 10 a.m. - 7 p.m., and Saturdays 10 a.m. - 5 p.m.

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 Community

# Let's Get Growing with Julie: Gardening in the Rain



BY JULIE MCCONNELL, UF/IFAS EXTENSION BAY COUNTY

“Rain, rain, go away. Come again another day!” Seems to be the theme song of this summer. Hopefully we will start to transition into a drier fall because right now some of our landscapes are past the point of saturation. Although we are seeing some issues with plants that have suffered from too much water, one good thing about the high rainfall amounts is that it gives us all a chance to assess our yards under extreme conditions and offer some insight into ways to make them more resilient.

Like you, I have high hopes that we won't see this much rainfall next year but realistically it is not unreasonable to have torrential downpours that temporarily flood parts of our landscapes. So, how do you plan for the unpredictability of Florida weather patterns? One way to hedge your bets is to choose plants that can tolerate periodic flooding for low or poorly drained sections in your yard. If you have identified areas of your landscape where plants fail following years of high rainfall, consider using native plants that are naturally found along stream banks where soil moisture levels vary throughout the year.

Some examples of plants native to our region that perform well even in saturated soils after establishment are listed below:

- Scarlet hibiscus *Hibiscus coccineus* 4-8' tall perennial with scarlet flowers
- Swamp sunflower *Helianthus angustifolius* 4-8' tall perennial with yellow flowers
- Stoke's aster *Stokesia laevis* 6-12" evergreen perennial with blue/lavender flowers

- Blue-eyed grass *Sisyrinchium angustifolium* 4-8" iris-like perennial with light blue flowers
- Blue flag iris *Iris virginica* 1-3' perennial with purple flowers (blooms taller than 3')
- Swamp milkweed *Asclepias incarnata* 3-4' tall deciduous perennial with pink flowers
- \*Dwarf Fakahatchee grass *Tripsacum floridanum* 3-4' tall clumping ornamental grass
- \*Muhly grass *Muhlenbergia capillaris* 3-4' tall clumping grass with bright pink flowers late summer/early fall
- Virginia sweetspire *Itea virginica* deciduous shrub with striking red stems, white flowers in the spring, 3-5' tall
- \*Wax myrtle *Myrica cerifera* large evergreen shrub or small tree, fragrant foliage, birds attracted to blue/gray berries
- \*Beautyberry *Callicarpa americana* deciduous shrub 4-8' tall, small purple flowers in spring followed by purple berries in the fall that attract birds
- \*Buttonbush *Cephalanthus occidentalis* 6-12' tall deciduous shrub, white flowers followed by red berries



Blue-eyed Grass



Beautyberry



Sweetbay Magnolia

- River birch *Betula nigra* 40-50' deciduous tree with attractive exfoliating bark, yellow fall color, usually sold as multi-trunk
- Sweetbay magnolia *Magnolia virginiana* evergreen tree with oval leaves with silver underside, large white flowers, red berries; smaller than more well-known Southern Magnolia
- Bald cypress *Taxodium distichum* large deciduous tree with rust colored fall foliage, bright green leaves are very fine textured; may form knees if soil remains wet for extended periods
- \*Black Tupelo *Nyssa sylvatica* deciduous tree that reaches 75' tall, red fall color, fruit is attractive to wildlife

\*salt-tolerant plants

For more information about creating a rain garden in your home landscape visit <https://tappwater.org/documents/Rain%20Garden%20Manual.pdf>.

Julie McConnell can be reached at [juliebmcconnell@ufl.edu](mailto:juliebmcconnell@ufl.edu). An Equal Opportunity Institution. UF/IFAS Extension, University of Florida, Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences, Nick T. Place, dean for UF/IFAS Extension. Single copies of UF/IFAS Extension publications (excluding 4-H and youth publications) are available free to Florida residents from county UF/IFAS Extension offices.

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# Beach Mosquito Control District & Florida Mosquito Control Association

BY JAMES CLAUSON, DIRECTOR, BEACH MOSQUITO CONTROL DISTRICT AND PRESIDENT, FLORIDA MOSQUITO CONTROL ASSOCIATION

Beach Mosquito Control District (BMCD), of Panama City Beach, and the Florida Mosquito Control Association (FMCA), headquarters in Tallahassee, have had something in common this past year. The director of BMCD and the President of FMCA are one and the same. I am very proud to serve as the President of the FMCA as well as being the director of BMCD.

The FMCA is a 94-year-old organization that was started in Indian River County (Vero Beach) in 1925 to initiate support to fight the world's deadliest animal, the mosquito. They say that "air conditioning and mos-

quito control made Florida habitable." This is very true. There are 67 Counties in Florida and nearly all of them have some sort of organized governmental mosquito control program.

There are 2 types of governmental mosquito control programs, Independent Special Districts and County programs. The County programs fall under the Board of County Commissioners and the Independent Special Districts (BMCD is one of 15 in FL) have elected Commissioners (Boards). BMCD has 3 elected Commissioners that run every 4 years and coincide with Presidential Elections. Mosquito control in Florida is governed by chapter 388 of the Florida Statutes and 5E-13 of the FAC (Florida Administrative Code).

BMCD was founded in 1953

by a group of citizens that lived in Panama City Beach. They petitioned the Bay County Board of Commissioners to allow them to tax themselves, enabling them to form Gulf Mosquito Control District. The name was changed to Beach Mosquito Control District in 1997 to eliminate confusion with Gulf County Mosquito Control. The district's boundaries are west of Hathaway Bridge to the Walton County line, south of the Intercoastal Waterway. The district is funded exclusively by ad valorem taxes. The current millage rate is .3000, which is roughly 1/3 of a mill or .30 cents per \$1000 valuation. Our location is 509 Griffin Blvd which is in the Beach Commerce Park.

BMCD uses an integrated approach to mosquito control.

We incorporate the most modern, safe, and effective methodologies. Integrated mosquito management uses mosquito surveillance to drive control measures. BMCD uses 4 different mosquito trapping devices. We sort, count, and identify the mosquitoes we catch, twice a week. Certain mosquitoes transmit diseases so it is important to know what mosquito species we have in the district. Since we know the location of the traps and where certain mosquito species breed, we can identify those locations and safely treat the water for the larva before they emerge as a hungry adult mosquito. Only the female mosquitoes take a blood meal. They need this for egg production. Both male and females feed on nectar for energy. BMCD also uses sentinel chickens to identi-

fy mosquito borne diseases. We do this in cooperation with the Florida Department of Health by taking blood from our chickens in chicken coops once a week and sending it to the State Lab in Tampa and they can tell if a chicken has been bitten by an infected mosquito based on antibodies. The chickens are not harmed by the disease. Hence the name, sentinel chickens.

Lastly, we rely on the citizens in the district to call us if they are experiencing mosquito problems so we can respond quickly and effectively. Please visit our website at [www.pcbeachmosquito.org](http://www.pcbeachmosquito.org) or call us at (850) 233-5030.



THE DEADLINE IS THE 23RD EACH MONTH FOR THE NEXT ISSUE



Warm Holiday & New Year Wishes!

BEACH MOSQUITO CONTROL DISTRICT

850-233-5030

[www.pcbeachmosquito.org](http://www.pcbeachmosquito.org)

 Community

# The LEAD Coalition Making a Difference!

By BRITTANY KIRKE

The mission – to bring together community partners to identify solutions to meeting the needs of our most vulnerable communities and thereby creating resilient and strong neighborhoods. To do this, it takes partnerships from every corner of the community including churches, businesses, and government. And in the middle? A leader who understands how to collaborate with these partners to solve issues and find solutions

to help the community grow. In Bay County, that person is Janice Lucas, Executive Director of LEAD Coalition. This year, LEAD (an acronym for Leadership, Empowerment, and Authentic Development) has tackled major initiatives.

Starting with COVID 19 at the beginning of the year, LEAD is the anchor organization for our local Resilient American Communities (RAC), a public-private consortium focused on COVID 19 prevention ef-

forts and increasing social equity for our disenfranchised communities. LEAD and partners organized Vaccine Clinics and distributed COVID Monitoring Kits, vaccinating more than 2,500 citizens. Since summer, LEAD and partners have organized Testing Clinics. Pivotal to LEAD's launch into COVID initiatives was the development of a COVID dashboard on the local RAC website that tracked COVID stats and provided important community information.



While tackling COVID 19, LEAD received a grant from the Emergency Solutions Grant Fund and in June launched the “Better Life Homeless Solutions Program” to address the needs of homeless individuals in Bay County. This work requires the staff to be ready at a moment's notice to manage a call for help. The program provides hygiene products, food, emergency shelter, housing placement and assistance to find work.

This year, LEAD, in partnership with Macedonia Church and Cornerstone Trust, granted micro-loans of \$5,000 to three local businesses in the Glenwood area.

The crown jewel achieve-

ment for LEAD this year was receiving a \$10,000 pledge from Gayle Littleton to create the Ginger Littleton Youth Development Fund. Gayle wanted to honor her mother, an educator/advocate for our youth for more than forty years. This fund represents another opportunity to create equity and support our youth in our most vulnerable communities. Janice was challenged to raise matching funds, and in one night raised over \$7,000.

LEAD will continue its mission and if you would like to support this outstanding organization, please visit [leadabetterlife.org](http://leadabetterlife.org) to donate.

## Friends of Camp Helen Funded Accessible Beach Mats for Camp Helen State Park

The Friends of Camp Helen State Park are excited to announce the purchase and installation of 880 ft long and 5ft wide AccessRec mats half-way to the beach at Camp Helen State Park.

Because of the community's support of kayak rentals and the pumpkin patch, the CSO was able to fully fund this project for the park with-

out corporate donations or grants.

The mats have been installed along the trail to the beach as well as at the kayak rental area.

The mats provide an easier walk to the beach for everyone but will also accommodate wheelchairs and strollers.

The mats create less impact to the natural resources than

boardwalks or other developed structures.

The Friends of Camp Helen hope to continue renting kayaks and selling pumpkins to complete the other half of the mat within a year.

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



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# J.R. Arnold High School Shines

BY BILL HUSFELT,  
SUPERINTENDENT, BAY DISTRICT  
SCHOOLS

*“Education is for improving the lives of others and for leaving your community and world better than you found it.”*

- Marian Wright Edelman

I have often said that a rising tide lifts all ships when it comes to our schools and what I mean

from the Florida Department of Education and that, in and of itself, is simply commendable. It’s hard to quantify all of the calculations that go into developing a school grade but, suffice to say, students from all socio-economic backgrounds must be achieving and making significant academic gains for a school to earn an A or a B rating. When you consider the incredible challenges our community has faced

dance when teams compete or play out of town.

You simply can’t place a dollar value on that kind of support and commitment but it’s definitely something we don’t take for granted and it’s something we appreciate.

I certainly encourage all beach parents to begin investing at Arnold regardless of the grade level of your students. Students need to understand

elementary and middle schools so students can see them and catch a glimpse of graduation and all of the accompanying pomp and circumstance. The senior walks are also a chance for our graduates to find some of the influential teachers from their earlier years and to thank them for their investment, support and encouragement.

All of our schools on the beach are simply amazing and

they are accomplishing great things with our students thanks to hard-working and passionate educators and support employees and because of the incredible support from parents and guardians.

Thank you for everything you continue to do to support our beach-side students and I look forward to seeing you at an upcoming Arnold Marlin event.

Stay safe and God Bless!



by that is that our schools don’t make our students successful, actually our students make our schools successful.

And nowhere is that more evident than at our schools on the beach and particularly at J.R. Arnold High School.

J.R. Arnold High School has the distinction, and privilege, of being the beach’s only high school and in that capacity, the school draws from an incredibly diverse and supportive community. The beach is, essentially, an old-fashioned “one horse town” when it comes to the high school experience and that’s evident when we look at the community support for Arnold and its students and staff.

Since 2002, J.R. Arnold High School has almost always maintained an “A” or a “B” rating

in the past three years, and the fact that J.R. Arnold was the site of the county’s longest running emergency shelter after the hurricane, those accomplishments seem even more incredible. Our Arnold students and their families were absolutely amazing after the storm and everyone just pitched in to do whatever they could to make the double sessions at Surfside Middle School work while that was our only option. I know that we’re all praying we never, ever have to do that again!

If you’ve attended any sporting event at Arnold you can also easily see the level of community support the school has. Stands are always crowded with a plethora of students, parents and community members and there’s also significant atten-

what comes next in their education and there’s no better way to make sure your future Marlin is set for success than by involving him/her as often as you can in our high school events. We’d love to see stands full of future Marlins at an upcoming football game and we’re sure your students would find our version of “Friday Night Lights” pretty exciting. And the energy from stands full of excited fans really contributes to the experience our student athletes have while competing.

Likewise, our high school students make sure they give back as they can and one of the most memorable ways they do that is with our Senior Walks. Days before graduation, our seniors dress up in all of their graduation regalia and visit their beach



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## Aquaponics and Space Tomatoes at Surfside Middle School

BY ERIN LANG

Science has always been a focus of Surfside Middle School. From our outstanding pre-engineering program to wet week at the Gulf and Bay Day in St. Andrews Bay, Surfside makes every effort to bring science to life for our students.

There are a few new projects taking shape this year. We were lucky enough to receive a grant from the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Sciences for a full-sized aquaponics system for our students to operate as part of the Agriculture program. Aquaponics is growing in popularity throughout the world, and there are more and more career opportunities in the field every single year. This style of farming allows the farmer to grow fish and plants together in a much smaller space, utilizing

far less water than traditional farming. Our system at Surfside includes a 250 gallon fish tank and space to grow over 100 plants.

We are planning on raising catfish as we grow a variety of plants including lettuce, basil, and tomatoes. However, these are not just your everyday tomatoes. As a way to connect this to the real world of science, we are going to grow tomatoes from seeds that spent 30 days aboard the International Space Station. As part of the Tomatosphere project, students will grow tomatoes from two sets of seeds. One set has been to space, and the other has not. The goal is to see if there is any difference between the tomatoes that have been to space and those that have not. One day, humans may need to be able to grow their



own food in space, and this is a tiny step in collecting real data to figure out if this is possible. We won't know which seeds are



the "space tomatoes" and which are not until we submit the data to the project leaders.

This brings us back to the aquaponics system. If in the future, humans on a space station or another planet have to grow food, they will likely have limited space. Our research in the classroom will provide data to scientists exploring the possibilities of utilizing aquaponics systems for growing food in space.

For many students, this is the first time that they have ever thought about where their food comes from. As our world changes, the way that we grow and distribute our food is changing. We need to be able to grow more food using less and less space. Aquaponics is showing itself to be a viable solution to this.

Studies show that middle school is the time when students "decide" if they are going to take an interest in science and possibly pursue it as a career. This is why we are so passionate about science at Surfside. The main goal of the Agriculture program is for students to have both an appreciation for the food they eat and perhaps spark an interest that could turn into a career.

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# PCB *Flavor*

THE BEST OF LOCAL DINING

## IN THIS ISSUE

ISO: PCB's Best Bloody Mary

Tastebudz

Events

## ISO: PCB's Best Bloody Mary

By JACK SMITH

The origin of the Bloody Mary revolves around two of the world's greatest bars. The tale begins in the roaring twenties at the famous New York Bar in Paris (later known as Harry's New York Bar), one of Ernest Hemingway's favorite haunts. There, bartender Fernand 'Pete' Petiot is said to have conceived the first rudimentary version. After prohibition Petiot moved to the U.S. where he refined his invention at one of my favorite bars, the King Cole Bar, located in the St. Regis Hotel in New York. There, in 1934 it is said Pete enhanced his creation by adding a few dashes of salt, pepper and cayenne, along with Worcestershire Sauce and lemon juice, to the vodka and tomato juice, which he served shaken over crushed ice.

The story of how the cocktail got its name is as unclear as the libation itself, but my favorite version of history is that Pete named it so, after a patron remarked that it reminded him of his girlfriend Mary who was a dancer in a cabaret called a Bucket of Blood. No matter the history, today the Bloody Mary is one of America's most beloved cocktails... perhaps that is because we can drink it, guilt free, before noon!

Cheers to the Bloody Mary and Panama City Beach's Annual Bloody Mary Festival!



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Christo's Bloody Mary has its own twist. Ingredients are Dixie Pepper vodka, Charleston Spicy Bloody Mary mix, then we rim the glass with our special seasoning salt topped with olives, okra & a pepperoni meat straw. It's a tasty way to enjoy!



## Paparazzi Gourmet Deli

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[Paparazzideli.com](http://Paparazzideli.com)

Paparazzi doesn't have Bloody Marys on the menu but there are plenty of head-spinning tomato adjacent alternatives worth trying, like the hot meatball parmigiana sub, melt in your mouth manicotti, and their famously delicious pizzas.



## Schooners

5121 Gulf Drive, PCB | (850) 235-3555  
[schooners.com](http://schooners.com)

You can never go wrong with the White Cheddar Cheese Curds Appetizer and a Bloody Mary! Cheese always makes an excellent accompaniment to tomato and its gooey nature contrasts nicely with the horseradish in the Bloody Mary. Enjoy it with a view at Schooners!



## Capt. Anderson's Restaurant

5551 N Lagoon Drive, PCB | (850) 234-2225  
[captandersons.com](http://captandersons.com)

Is there anything more decadent than buttery Scallops? Their rich flavor makes an exceptional accompaniment to a Bloody Mary. They can also bring down the heat a little bit, especially if you have a heavy pour on the Tabasco! Try Capt. Anderson's super colossal Seared Sea Scallops with a traditional Bloody Mary!



## The Wicked Wheel

10025 Hutchison Boulevard, PCB | (850) 588-7947  
[thewickedwheel.com](http://thewickedwheel.com)

The Wicked Wheel serves up a wicked great Bloody Mary with their "Wicked Mary." This Bloody Mary comes with 3 ounces of copper distilled Tito's Vodka mixed with Whiskey Willy's Bloody Mary mix in a 20-ounce souvenir glass for you to take home. Garnished with greens & served ice cold.



## The Shrimp Boat

1201 Beck Avenue, Panama City | (850) 785-8706  
[shrimpboatpc.com](http://shrimpboatpc.com)

The Shrimp Boat Restaurant offers a unique waterfront dining experience, with a reputation for being one of the best seafood restaurants in town. Located in Historic St. Andrews, we offer a great Bloody Mary, as well as amazing steaks, pasta, drinks and top-notch service. We are right along side Smith's dock with a wonderful view of the fishing and pleasure boats. Dine on our outside deck that runs the length of the dock, or relax by an open fire pit.



# Restaurant Review: **Craft 850**



BY MARTA ROSE-THORPE

When I enter a restaurant, even if not for the first time, I like to take in and savor the atmosphere. Some call it the "space" ... the "vibe." My son Leo and I arrived at Craft 850 a little before 5 p.m. on a Thursday evening. The mood was calm, and I loved the ambient lighting of mason-jar pendants

throughout the room. The colors, the furniture, the fireplace all make Craft 850 feel very cozy. Lady Gaga entertained us over a system with perfect acoustics – the kind that made it seemed as if we were there, listening to her and Bradley Cooper perform "Shallows" live, yet we could still maintain a comfortable conversation. The

place felt stylish and happening; the servers were chic in their all-black outfits. We were seated, and our server Aleeta started us out with an order of house made, spiced potato chips that were crisp and delicious, seasoned with an Indonesian curry. Leo gave these a thumbs up.

Aleeta then served a trio of appetizers: the Chichen

Tuna, Coconut Shrimp, and Craft 850's signature Devils on Horseback. Oh my, where to begin? The Chichen Tuna, a Craft 850 original, is a fusion of east and south, with sushi-grade ahi, flash fried, topped with togarashi, wasabi ranch, and Thai chili. The ahi was tender

*Continued on next page*

## CRAFT 850

*continued from previous page*

and rich, and the beautiful dish was topped with microgreens. The Coconut Shrimp consisted of Gulf shrimp lightly fried in a key lime-coconut batter – warm, juicy, and mesmerizing. The accompanying chili dipping sauce was tangy and sweet. And those Devils on Horseback! Goat cheese and basil stuffed dates, wrapped in bacon, drizzled with a balsamic reduction. This was the perfect balance of tastes and textures, showcasing the sweet, warm date with salty, crispy bacon and creamy goat cheese. A sprig of fresh Rosemary gave it a majestic finish. I enjoyed a glass of Ernesto Catena Padrillo Malbec from Argentina with these appetizers...

rich and multi-dimensional, the perfect backdrop to those Devils on Horseback. Leo enjoyed an order of the Chicken Wings: eight wings, slow roasted and lightly fried, tossed in your choice of several sauces; he tried the Jamaican Jerk that packed a powerful punch. (Other sauce options include Datil Pepper, Nashville Hot, Buffalo, BBQ, Honey Mustard, and Mango Habanero).

By 6 p.m. Craft 850 was starting to fill up with dinner guests. By 6:45 pm it was hopping. Aleeta brought us three of the most popular entrees on the menu: Black Sails Pasta, the Fish Tacos, and the crème de la crème, the Montana Rack of Elk. The pasta was hand-made squid ink noodles tossed with Gulf shrimp, crawfish

and crab swathed in a creamy, white wine-garlic pan sauce. This dish was a peppery explosion of flavors... the most juicy, tender shrimp perfectly cooked al dente in that heavenly sauce topped with thin sheets of Parmesan. The fish tacos were hand-battered local fish topped with Chef's mango salsa, a menagerie of red and green peppers with fresh mango, spritzed with remoulade. The elk is what took the cake for me. Two tender chops of the juiciest meat (served medium-rare) with a complexity of flavor deeper than angus. Aleeta explained that the elk is first prepared with a coriander rub, then cooked sous-vidé\*, "kissed on the grill" as they say, and drizzled with a black cherry demi. Now, I appreciate perfectly cooked vegetables, and this dish was served with the most delicious local veggies including mashed potatoes, purple, golden and orange carrots, broccoli, green beans, yellow squash and zucchini. Everything I tasted was inventive, creative, fresh, and made from scratch (and many dishes at Craft 850 can be prepared vegan). As if that wasn't enough, Aleeta then proceeded to bring us two top favorite desserts: the Salted Vanilla Caramel Cake (decadent, lovely and rich) and the Berry & Champagne Sorbet (a magnificent presentation of bubbly slowly poured over the tart, frozen masterpiece).



for only \$9 added to your bill. What a great idea, I thought; we bought them a round.

Craft 850 has an incredible chef-created menu including appetizers, salads, soups, sides, mains (each with a recommended wine pairing) and desserts. Their extensive international wine selection includes many whites, roses, reds, and bubbles. The craft cocktails, Aleeta shared, are – like the food – all house-made from scratch. Offerings like the Hocus Pocus Pear Punch dazzle... pear vodka, vanilla simple, and house citrus served in a cinnamon smoked glass. Or the Apple Cider Sparkler... vodka and muddled red apple with thyme, apple cider, house simple, and citrus with a ginger beer float. French press coffee and espresso are also available.

Craft 850 offers more draft, craft beers than anyone in Panama City Beach (the menu looked to include around 100!). It is located at 7715 Front Beach Road, Panama City Beach 32407. Hours are 4:00 pm to 10:00 pm. For more information call (850) 640-1410 and visit [craft850.com](http://craft850.com).

*\*Once limited to the pros, sous vide (meaning "under vacuum" in French) is a cooking technique in which the food is vacuum sealed in a bag, then cooked to a precise temperature in a water bath to deliver consistent, restaurant-quality results.*

I love the "Kiss the Chef" option (well, in a manner of speaking). If you loved everything you ordered, and wanted to thank the chefs, you can buy them all a round or a six-pack

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### **PCB Senior Center Christmas Bazaar Dec. 4**

9 a.m.–2 p.m.

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dell Lane, PCB 32407

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## Studio 237 Music Lessons: Recital Celebration

By RAYMOND CYR

The month of December is the celebration of the ending of a year. The pleasure for a music student is the completion of their song which they have been preparing for recital. This is also the time when the entire family will applaud them and their musical accomplishments.

The power of music has a very unusual ability to bring people together- whether it is singing, dancing, or attending a concert. A recital brings families together be it parents, grandparents, or relatives who

support those with a musical interest. The experience that a child might recognize at a recital is the knowledge that they have, through the power of music, brought people together.

The power of music draws together a community of those who appreciate the arts and the art of music. It allows everyone to hear someone's expression of music which in turn releases a freedom of expression and stirs up artistic qualities. It is a time of acknowledging and rewarding a student for their accomplishment.

Saturday, December 11, the community is invited to join the families of the Studio 237 Music School students as they share their children's musical hearts and talent with our community. Two recitals will be held, Saturday at 10:30 a.m. and also at 2:00 p.m., located in Seagrave Beach at the Seagrave Baptist Church, 4915 E. County Hwy 30A. Each recital will last about one hour. The recitals have no admission cost.

*Studio 237 Music School is located in Santa Rosa Beach, FL. Private*



*music lessons are taught to students of all ages (5 and up). For more information contact Lisa or Ray Cyr at 850-231-3199, email: studio237dawson@gmail.com, and visit their website at Studio237Music.com.*

## Artists of the Emerald Coast: Get to Know Brian Clowdus

By MARTA ROSE-THORPE

'Renaissance Man' seems apropos in answering the question to Who is Brian Clowdus? "I'm this theatre producer who grew up coming to Bay County," he smiles. "This is not the life I had planned a few years ago, but life is exciting if you allow yourself to take those left turns and listen to what God is saying."

### Growing Up

It's been an interesting journey for Brian, who was born and raised for 18 years in Hokes Bluff, Alabama, a small southern town near Gadsden, nestled in the foothills of the Appalachian Mountains. "Growing up we always went to Panama City Beach," he says. "I grew up with Goofy Golf, Angelo's Steak House, and we stayed at Sandpiper. We mourned the closing and teardown of the Miracle Strip. It was the iconic PCB experience."

After high school, Brian attended Amherst College, a liberal arts college in Amherst, Massachusetts where he received a Bachelor of Arts degree in Theatre and Dance. Following college he moved to New York City, where he became a working actor. He got a job as a singer for a cruise ship for six months, touring all over the Caribbean, Canada, and Alaska. Afterward, he moved back to NYC and did a Broadway national tour, then later got a performing role at Tokyo Disney, based in Japan for a year. "I was living this gyp-

sy lifestyle that took me in and out of the city," he remembers. "I missed my family, and I wanted more stability in my career. My family will always be my top priority... time with my mom, my sister, and her family. I am a family man first and foremost."

Brian decided to go back to school, receiving his MFA degree in Acting at USC in Columbia, South Carolina. After grad school he founded a theater company in South Georgia that specialized in outdoor immersive experiences. This, in turn, led to him spinning Brian Clowdus Experiences which performs theatrical entertainment all over the country. In 2020 he had eleven shows in eleven states... this breakout year is what he had worked his whole 14-year career for. (At the time of this writing, Brian has just completed three productions in a six-week period: Oklahoma in Roseland, VA; Sleepy Hollow in Texas; and Salem in Georgia.) "Theatre production is really intense," he says. "We put things up pretty fast. It's concentrated. There's an extreme rehearsal period. It's all about getting the right people in the room. If you have people in the right roles, everything works out." BrianClowdus.com gives an overview of his Immersive Experiences.

### Bay County

Brian always said he was going to retire in Bay County, and he moved to his permanent home in March of 2020. "Long



term, I would love to bring some type of immersive (interactive) production to Bay County," he states, noting our current lack of a large theatre production company here. "The beach is what brought me to Bay County, but there are so many interesting opportunities that I could bring, like an immersive dinner theatre experience. All of my work is interactive. The fourth wall is

pulled down; the audience is involved. The show takes place in a cool space and it's happening the second you step in the door. The guests are always interacting with the actors."

### New Chapter

While in lockdown last year, Brian did a lot of soul searching. "Sometimes I think we work to work, and we say yes to everything," he observes. "2020 made me think about my priorities. I wanted to be mindful and strategic on what I'm doing with my life... follow those voices that I know are the truthful ones to follow. Was this where I was meant to be? I got into fitness; I tuned into the presidential election. I got involved with the Bay County Republicans and started volunteering for the Trump campaign. I had no agenda of running; I just fell in love with

this district. I knocked on thousands of doors and got to know this community, and with every door I knocked on, I fell more in love with the residents."

Truly figuring out what makes you happy is a life pursuit, Brian believes. The three key ingredients to being happy, he feels, are found in the questions: Where do you want to be? What do you want to be doing? Who do you want to have in your life? "Hang onto joy because tomorrow it may be gone," he says. "The good and the bad are both fleeting. So let things go that are not serving your life, and know that when you let go of things, you are creating space for new things in your life. Joy is about figuring out how to be happy with yourself. It's the most valuable commodity we have."

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 Wellness


BY JAMIE C. WILLIAMSON, PhD

Most marital conflicts are unsolvable. In fact, according to renowned relationship researcher John Gottman, 69% of marital conflicts are perpetual problems that couples will never resolve. Only 31% of the problems in marriage are solvable. This is true for both happy couples and unhappy couples.

So, it is not the presence of on-going problems that makes couples unhappy. It is the way the couples talk about perpetual problems that distinguishes between happy and distressed couples. Happy couples learn to cope with perpetual problems rather than let the on-going issues infect their relationship. Distressed couples rehash the same issue over and over again and allow those conflicts to erode their relationship.

This does not mean that couples should ignore or avoid perpetual problems. Ignoring the issues will not make them go away. If the issue is important, pretending that it doesn't matter will eventually create emotional distance between you and your partner, lead to resentment, and begin to negatively impact your entire relationship.

The good news is that most couples can learn to manage their perpetual problems once they recognize them as unresolvable on-going issues that they need to cope with rather than situational conflicts that can be resolved.

So, what's the difference between Solvable Problems and unsolvable, Perpetual Problems?

Gottman explains that Solvable Problems are situational and tied to specific circumstances where a solution to the problem is possible. Once the problem is resolved, couples can move on and not have to address it again. In contrast, Perpetual Problems are on-going because they are rooted in differences in personality, beliefs, values, and hidden feelings.

Examples of perpetual, unsolvable problems include:

- One person is neat, the other is messy.
- One person is a spender, the other a saver
- One person is punctual, the other typically runs late
- One person wants to spend more time with friends, the other wants more couple time.

#### How do couples cope with Perpetual Problems?

First, accept the fact that problems, differences of opinion, and mismatched expectations are normal and inevitable in couple relationships. This realization helps couples keep the issue in perspective, rather than blow it out of proportion.

Second, look for the hidden feelings behind your partner's behavior or point of view. For example, if Tyler routinely fails to help with the housework, Maria might feel abandon – left on her own to take care of their home, like her single Mother was. When Maria complains to Tyler about his laziness or lack of support, he might feel like she is trying to control him, which

makes him feel like a scolded child instead of the man of the house.

Third, have a conversation (not a fight) about the issue. Pick the right time, the right place, and start with soft, respectful tone. Ask your partner to please listen because this is important to you. Speak honestly about your position and what it means to you. Describe your feelings and where they come from. Discuss your position and explanation for it, without criticizing your partner or blaming your partner for your feelings.

If you are the listener, seek to understand your partner rather than think about your rebuttal. Encourage your partner to explore his/her feelings and preferences. Do not evaluate your partners' feelings and desires or mention any reason why they are impractical or unimportant. Show empathy and truly try to understand. Then, switch roles so that the listener now describes his/her position and the feelings behind it.

Fourth, use your new understanding to find ways to cope with the issue with respect,

cooperation, and humor. In the Tyler-Maria example, this might include jointly making a list of the chores that need to be done over the weekend. Divide the chores and agree to do those allocated to you. Praise each other for what got done. Tease each other about what didn't get done. And, set another deadline for what didn't get done. Do not do each other's chores unless the other sincerely requests help due to unexpected circumstances.

If you can follow this approach to coping with inevitable Perpetual Problems you will be much more likely to retain (or regain) and stable, happy marriage.

*Jamie C. Williamson, PhD is a FL Supreme Court Certified Family Mediator and Gottman Methods Couples Counselor. She is an owner and partner at Amity Mediation Workshop, LLC, a mediation practice specializing in "friendly divorce" mediation and marriage revitalization sessions for couples. Dr. Jamie speaks frequently on relationship topics and authors the blog "Work it Out." You can find her online at amitymediation-workshop.com.*

## The Other Pandemic

BY STACY KEHL,  
APRN, FNP-BC

COVID-19 dominates the news these days: we haven't

lived a day since January 2020 without being inundated by it, but that doesn't mean that other diseases no longer exist. In

the world of medicine, there is another pandemic that we see every day, however the discussion of it as a disease is largely



is my job as a primary care provider, but my goal is not to make my patients supermodels. Eating disorders run the spectrum, and thinness comes with its own set of health and psychosocial problems. I want patients to maintain a "healthy weight," but what determines that? BMI (body mass index), which is essentially a height to weight ratio, is one measure that healthcare providers use to evaluate obesity. A BMI of 20-25 is "normal," 25-29 is "overweight," 30-39 is "obese," and 40 or greater is "morbidly obese." Admittedly, BMI is not an optimal tool to evaluate obesity, as it does not necessarily correlate to body composition (such as the case of a weight lifter with a high BMI, but a fantastic physique). Still, BMI is the generally accepted method for the determination of obesity (the reasons for this is another discussion entirely).

avoided - it's obesity. Acceptance of obesity as a disease is disputed in the media. Because of "fat shaming" there is definitely a stigma about the topic. But, obesity is certainly no less of a disease than the conditions it causes: type 2 diabetes, heart disease, high blood pressure, kidney disease, liver disease, orthopedic problems, and cancer. Obesity can cause a host of psychosocial issues, too: depression, anxiety and social isolation to name but a few.

Addressing all these concerns

*Continued on next page*



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BY DR. RICHARD CHERN, M.D.

One of the most bothersome symptoms women mention at their initial visit is a loss of sex drive. A decline in sex drive is very typical for women as they age. This decline is directly related to the decline of testosterone. Testosterone levels in women begin declining in the 30's, but

it's often subtle until menopause when things can worsen drastically. As women's testosterone declines, numerous changes occur in the body. Sex drive, mood, the ability to deal with stress, maintaining a steady weight and getting restful sleep all quickly deteriorate. In addition, numerous health indicators including cholesterol, sugar levels, blood pressure, bone density, cancer risk, heart issues and more all worsen with this decline in testosterone in women.

Unfortunately, most doctors do not even look at testosterone levels in women. Worse, when they do, they are unable to interpret the results properly. Women see benefits at levels greater than 100 ng/dL, but the reference

range for most labs will tell you that "normal" is below 45ng/dL. This "normal" reference range is really showing levels that have already fallen. So, most levels appear to be in the "normal range" when they are actually severely low. If your doctor has never drawn a testosterone level in women before, are you going to trust their judgment of the results of that test?

Don't be fooled. For most doctors, normal means, "Does the patient's lab value fall inside the reference range?" and does not mean, "Does the patient's lab value give them the most protection against disease and functional decline?"

Another great example of this is vitamin D. A level of 30ng/

mL is considered "normal" and many doctors would tell you a level of 30ng/mL is fine. Well, a level of 30ng/mL is associated with a huge increased risk of cancer including breast cancer and is also associated with an increased risk of death from COVID infections. A level of 70ng/mL reduces the risk of cancer and reduces the risk of death from COVID. Are you going to be content when your doctor tells you your labs are normal?

Many times, patients tell me they've complained to their doctor, but always hear that their labs look fine and that this is just part of the aging process. Enjoy the aging you. You are not going to hear that from us! I bet you

don't even realize how bad you are feeling. Come find out what you've been missing and get your drive back!

*Dr. Richard Chern, MD specializes in hormone and thyroid therapy in both women and men. He also teaches other providers both locally and around the country how to properly assess and treat hormone and thyroid problems. He has been providing BioTE hormone therapy longer than any other doctor in the region and is the only Platinum provider in the area. Dr. Richard Chern, MD, along with Sue Griffith, ARNP, are currently accepting new patients. Labs drawn in the office are typically resulted in 24 hours so often your consultation can be scheduled the same or following week. Call 850-837-1271 today for an appointment.*

## OTHER PANDEMIC

continued from previous page

### Obesity by the numbers:

- Worldwide obesity has nearly tripled since 1975.
- In 2016, more than 1.9 billion adults, 18 years and older, were overweight. Of these over 650 million were obese.
- 39% of adults aged 18 years and over were overweight in 2016, and 13% were obese.
- Most of the world's population live in countries where overweight and obesity kills more people than underweight.
- 39 million children under the age of 5 were overweight or obese in 2020.
- Over 340 million children and adolescents aged 5-19 were overweight or obese in 2016.
- Obesity is preventable.

(World Health Organization, [www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/obesity-and-overweight](http://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/obesity-and-overweight), accessed 10/25/2021)

In today's society, we look for convenience in everything, especially food consumption. We are busy, yet more sedentary than ever. Convenience



and a sedentary lifestyle comes at a price. In terms of food products, convenience translates into high sugar, high fat and high preservative (i.e. salty) foods. When counseling my patients about weight loss, I tell them that weight loss can be as simple as this: calories burned must exceed calories consumed, or the extra calories stay on as weight. Eliminate processed foods and drinks altogether; include only fresh vegetables, lean white meats, and whole grains (limit fresh fruits, they are high in sugar). Avoid alcohol (it slows metabolism and encourages poor eating habits), and drink lots of water. Exercise is a must

- walking a minimum of 10,000 steps daily is necessary. Weight

training increases muscle mass, thus increasing the body's ability to burn calories even while resting. We can also use medicines (appetite suppressants and medications to increase insulin production or sensitivity) and technology (using noninvasive body sculpting) to boost results.

If you are having difficulty with weight loss, please discuss the issue with your healthcare provider. A physical exam and labs to check blood chemistries, thyroid, cholesterol and hor-

mones can give insight to your problem. Referrals to specialists may even be necessary. Where weight loss is concerned, there is no "magic pill"; it requires a combination of all these methodologies. The key to success is a sustainable plan. Also realize that perfection is not the goal, rather healthful weight management to avoid long-term problems.



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You shouldn't have to stop your social life for any reason, and hearing aids can offer the perfect solution to those with hearing loss. Whether it's mild or severe, there are options out there to explore.

If you're after help for treating your hearing loss, then it's worth getting in touch with All Clear Hearing Centers today at (850) 634-0230. We will be helpful in making sure you get all the helpful advice you need to treat your hearing loss and to help reclaim your title as a social butterfly.

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Source: <https://hearagainamerica.com/treating-hearing-loss-helps-you-stay-socially-connected/-October.22.2021>  
\*Gift cards distributed after 30 day trial period. Call for details.



BY GREG DURETTE, FLORIDA HEALTH CONNECTOR

For those folks new to the Medicare Annual Enrollment Period (AEP), the overwhelming volume of mailing pieces, emails and phone calls are dizzying. For those folks more experienced in this time, the sigh of despair and cries of “Oh no, not again!” can be heard from every balcony and rooftop.

Keep in mind, the closer we get to December 7th (the official end of the AEP), the more intense it will get if you let it. Regardless of your experience level, there are some things you can do to quell the noise and help make

the best possible decision for you.

First, make sure you pay attention to the mail and phone calls you receive from your existing insurance company. These communications will be very valuable to you as they likely will be about the changes to your current plan in the new year. Too often, because of the volume of clutter mail, folks tend to throw these out along with everything else just trying to keep the kitchen counter clear. As the saying goes, don’t throw the baby out with the bath water!

Next, try to make a real effort to understand everything you can about your current plan. Know the exact name and type of plan as well as how much you are paying in premiums. Is it a Supplement Plan? If so, which one; M, N, G, F, etc.? Know which type of Part D or, Stand-Alone Prescription plan (if any) you have, to go along with this Supplement Plan. Know your

deductibles, co-insurance and copays. Know if you are able to use your pharmacy of choice. Know how the coverage Gap (commonly known as the “Donut Hole”) works in your plan.

Perhaps you have an Advantage Plan instead. Again, know the exact name and type of plan as well as how much you are paying in premiums. Being that most Advantage plans have the Prescription coverage built in, you will likely not have a separate premium for Part D. However, you will need to know the deductibles and co-insurances for the entire plan. Oftentimes, there will be a separate deductible for the Advantage Plan and the Prescription coverage within the plan. Also, know your copays and whatever Extra Coverages your plan offers such as Dental, Hearing, Vision, Rewards Programs, Silver Sneakers, etc.

The two final, most important pieces of information you will

need to know about your current plan is, what your premium will be and are your doctors/medications going to be on the plan in 2022. Will you have in-network options in other states? Some plans get better, some plans not so much. Some get more expensive and some reduce to as low as \$0 per month. Some doctors stay and some doctors go. Some medications get more expensive, less expensive or simply are not covered. It all depends on where you live and the plan you have.

Now, FINALLY, you are armed and ready to attack that onslaught of external information. Be careful of where you look! Many of those ads you see on TV with famous sports figures/actors are nothing more than marketing companies looking to get your information to SELL to anyone willing to pay for it. If you respond to those ads, you will only make the onslaught of mail, emails, texts and

calls that much more.

Work with people you know and/or reputable insurance companies you know and recognize. Deal direct and don’t be afraid to let someone know you would prefer they not contact you again if you have settled on what you want to do.

That is the final important point. Now that you are well informed and have made a well-informed decision, you will feel much better about changing the channel when the next Medicare ad shows up on TV. You can sort your mail over the trash barrel. Talk about stress free living!

*Greg Durette is a qualified, licensed agent with Florida Health Connector providing Medicare throughout the State and is based in Niceville. He has been in the insurance industry for over 38 years and can be reached at his office at 850-842-2400 or his mobile at 978-509-2941.*

## Staying Healthy Through the Holidays



BY KAY LEAMAN, HEALTH ARCHITECT, HEALTHYDAY HEALTHYLIFE

The fourth quarter of 2021 lengthens our ‘To Do’ lists and reminds us how quickly this year has gone by.

It’s this season that causes so many of us to let all our healthy habits go by the wayside as we

indulge in so many goodies and once a year cuisine. This season also brings added stress which triggers many an extra cookie or glass of wine (happy combo). So, how can we set ourselves up for healthy success while we enjoy everything this season has to offer?

Let’s start by setting aside some time to grab our favorite cup of coffee or tea and our holiday recipes. As you look them over, what ingredients can you exchange for healthier options?

- Sugar can be replaced with honey (1/2 of recipe amount as honey is very sweet) or unsweetened apple sauce
- Flour can be mixed with almond flour (1/2 and 1/2).
- If your recipe has marsh-



mallows and brown sugar, decrease the amounts.

- Switch sugar frosting to sour cream frosting.
- Use hummus for veggie dip instead of ranch dressing.
- Use real butter instead of margarine. If it’s not real butter, it’s not healthy! And, yes, too

much butter isn’t healthy either, but at least the body recognizes it.

Look at your pantry and see how you might improve the snack shelf with healthier options. Consider gluten free crackers (Greenwise from Publix has some good options), nuts, raisins, etc.

Making a cake? Make it one layer and freeze the other layer for later. Cookies? Freeze half the dough for another upcoming celebration. If we make less, we will eat less.

Use smaller plates. Fifty years ago, plates were 8-1/2”; in the 50’s they were 10-1/2”; and today we use 12” and restaurants use 13” plates. Smaller plates mean smaller portions. If you don’t have smaller plates, use one

plate for salad and dinner items.

Consider having a healthy snack before the big meal and go for a walk before you eat; no one feels much like walking after dinner.

Lastly, serve healthy beverages. Get rid of the soda and mix unsweetened fruit juice with plain or carbonated water. Serve tea unsweetened or sweeten with honey (also consider using an herbal iced tea). Drink water before you eat.

Small changes can make a difference. Have fun and explore the possibilities. Feel good through the holidays!

If you have a question, email me at [succeed@healthydayhealthylife.com](mailto:succeed@healthydayhealthylife.com).

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 Musings

# Mother Mary



BY SEAN DIETRICH

I'm sitting with my Methodist mother-in-law in the living room. We are replaying old memories like worn out records. There is a ballgame playing in the background. Braves are winning.

She sits in her wheelchair, nursing a nightly glass of Metamucil. I am sitting in a fold-up rollator walker, drinking one of her Ensure meal replacements. Chocolate.

The white-haired woman gets a sly look on her face and says, "Do you remember that one time...?"

There is mischief in her voice. And I already know where she's going with this. Even so, I prod.

"What 'one time?"

"Oh, the time I came over to your house, unannounced, several years ago..."

I knew we were going here. "You mean the time you saw me naked?"

She laughs and sips her fiber supplement. "That would be the instance of which I speak."

I might as well tell you the story now that we've brought it up. And I'm sorry if this is offensive because I consider myself a sincere gentleman. I mean it. I open doors for ladies, watch my language, and I don't slouch.

But the truth is—and I can hardly say it—my mother-in-law has indeed seen me wearing nothing but the Joy of the Lord. And I mean the full biscuit.

Don't make me repeat myself.

It happened years ago. And the violation occurred right in my own house. I'm forever traumatized. In fact, just writing about this causes unpleasant feelings to start swimming inside me, some of which date back to middle-school gym showers.

I can't really explain how it happened. All I know is that one

moment I'm waltzing across my empty house after a shower, enjoying the invigorating spring-time air, then (WAM!) a peeping Thomasina is standing in my kitchen.

"Mother Mary!" I squealed—but in a masculine tone. "How'd you get in here?"

"I have a key, ding-a-ling."

"Please don't use that word." She handed me a stack of envelopes, but did not turn away. Her demeanor could only be described as unimpressed. "I was bringing your mail."

I felt my face get hot. "My eyes are up here."

"It's mostly just bills."

"Miss Mary, I'm naked."

She agreed with this. Then without breaking her non-Methodist stare, she said, "Sorry, I didn't bring any ones or fives with me."

Without uttering another word I trotted to the bedroom and heard loud whistling and cheering behind me. I edged past her, one hand covering the stern of the boat, the other shielding the bow.

The thing is, I've never felt so violated. A man's house is his sanctuary, his dojo. Mothers-in-law can't just pop in for half-priced peepshows whenever the mood strikes. There are laws against this sort of thing in civilized countries.

I suppose even after all these years I still don't know how to act now that my mother-in-law has seen the authentic me. Nothing has ever been the same



between us. I have a hard time looking her in the eye.

Take the holidays. Thanksgiving with the family is awkward. I want to know who prays the serious and reverent blessing with a straight face? It can't be me. I can't say grace while she's bouncing her eyebrows at me. I know what she's visualizing.

What about going to church? For years after the incident whenever our congregation would sing a hymn, Mary would slap my back pocket and say, "I got your Blessed Assurance right here."

Isn't it sad how something

like an innocent pair of hind-cheeks can rip a family apart with awkwardness? Which is why my advice to all sons-in-law reading this is, keep your family close and your skivvies closer.

Mary finishes her Metamucil, and after we are done retelling the old story I realize how much this past experience traumatized me. I never forgot it. It laid me bare, so to speak. So I ask Mother Mary where two traumatized souls go from here.

Mary suggested we go for drinks and dinner.






# A Pastor's Ponderings: Counting Blessings



BY PASTOR JEFF WADE, THE ROCK OF PANAMA CITY BEACH

When it comes to writing monthly articles, the month of November is a no brainer right? THANKSGIVING!!

They go hand in hand and I find it impossible to not speak to it today. Thanksgiving, after all, is one of my favorite holidays. I know that many of you share the same sentiment. For

all of us who love to eat, this is the crème de la crème. I have a medical condition called "elongated stomach" which basically means my stomach starts at my neck and goes all the way down to my feet. It takes a lot of food to fill an elongated stomach and the season of Thanksgiving helps lend a hand. I am of course kidding.

So what is the season of Thanksgiving? Some people would say that it's not a biblical holiday and they would be correct, it's not. Nowhere in the bible will you find anyone celebrating Thanksgiving as we know it today.

BUT....

While Thanksgiving may not be biblical, being thankful is!

One of the ways that we have

benefited from the last two years of seeing what all of us have seen is that it has drawn our minds back to some of the simple things that we have that we should be thankful for. I'm thankful today that I have toilet paper because not too long ago, even that was iffy right? Friends, no matter what happens from here, no matter how bad it gets, no matter, no matter, no matter, we will ALWAYS have something to be thankful for and THAT should be our focus. I'm finding that as a Pastor,



what I am thankful for is changing as I continue to mature in Christ. At one point in my life my thankfulness was centered around things like my home, my vehicle, things like that. It's not that I'm not thankful for those anymore, it's just that my thankfulness is changing and evolving into things that aren't temporary but are eternal. My home doesn't have the same value to me as much as the surpassing worth of knowing Christ.

Another thing I find myself thankful for today isn't things,

but PEOPLE. I'm thankful for people whom God has brought into my life to be in ministry with. We do find this Thanksgiving concept in the scriptures.

Ephesians 1:15-16 says: "For this reason, ever since I heard about your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all God's people, I have not stopped giving thanks for you, remembering you in my prayers."

Here we see the Apostle Paul, recognizing the gift of people along with his recognition of how they loved all God's people. That is incredibly powerful friends! Consider this today. Not what do you have to be thankful for, but WHO do you have to be thankful for? Pause today, and give God thanks for them. Ask God to bless them even more abundantly than yourself. Seek out ways today to show your thankfulness for them. God will hear your prayer, and bless your heart abundantly for being obedient to this biblical concept. I thank God for you, and pray that you have a safe and friend filled holiday season.

## Book Review: Atlas Shrugged by Ayn Rand

REVIEW BY JACK SMITH

"Who is John Galt?" begins the famous 1957 novel by Ayn Rand, "Atlas Shrugged." How could a 64-year-old book see into the future and make us believe that it was written today? Jules Verne, George Orwell, and Ayn Rand are authors who, it seems, could see into the future. Rand believes in the virtues of rational self-interest and the power of capitalism, and that the individual knows better than the

government how to spend its capital and intellect. In the book, the government forces industrial and intellectual people to share their wealth and treasure with those who are less fortunate. This formula not only disincentivizes the have-nots, but takes away all incentive for the producers to produce. "Atlas Shrugged" is a mystery story, not about the murder of a person's body, but about the murder and re-birth of one's spirit. The book

is about individualism versus government, dependency, and Socialism - and the characters could be found in a school board meeting today. No matter which side of the political spectrum you find yourself on, "Atlas Shrugged" will at least expose you to the alternatives. Peopled by larger-than-life heroes and villains, charged with towering questions of good and evil, "Atlas Shrugged" is Ayn Rand's magnum opus.

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## Design and Culture: **Top Kitchen Trends**



White Oak Cabinetry and dark countertops are on trend right now and we are here to guide you on the best options for cabinetry, countertops, and tile to get this look!

Quarter-sawn White Oak is a strong, beautiful hardwood with a straight and consistent grain pattern, making it a top choice for kitchens right now. DuraSupreme Cabinetry now has quarter-sawn white oak cabinetry available in a variety of new and fresh stains such as Alabaster

and Coriander. For those of you not familiar with DuraSupreme Cabinetry, they are one of the top custom cabinetry companies. They have been awarded “Best of Houzz” nine years in a row. They are located out of Minnesota, and they are committed to excellent craftsmanship, innovation, durability, and design. Featured in this kitchen design by DuraSupreme, quarter-sawn white oak in the Coriander stain is utilized on the island featured in the Avery inset door style

and on the finished interiors of the glass cabinetry. The cabinet doors with glass have an onyx aluminum frame door style, a charming accent for this kitchen. The painted cabinetry is the Reese inset door style in the color Dove. Cabinetry to the ceiling with a stacked crown, the black painted wood crafted hood, and the bronze hardware finish off this beautiful and captivating cabinet design.

There are a variety of options when choosing dark countertops

to get this look. Featured here is Cambria Blackbrook quartz. Caesarstone Empira Black, Vicostone Nero Marquina and MSI Marquina Midnight are a few other quartz options for this look. The natural stone, Negro Marquina Marble that has inspired these quartz colors also would be a beautiful choice for this application. Black Mist Granite is another stunning natural stone for darker countertops. The veining is softer, and it is also available in leathered or honed.

There are some beautiful design elements that should not go unnoticed in this kitchen. When designing your new kitchen, it is important to have all your samples with you wherever you may be going. The choice of flooring in this kitchen is perfect, a dark warm hardwood with subtle dark and light hues. The dark wood grain works well with all the other hues and textures in the space. The simple mosaic backsplash tile going all the way to the ceiling is a great design element. Remember you can do a

matching grout so it will not be so distracting. This wall is subtle and stunning, not taking away from the beautifully crafted hood. Floating shelves stained to match the flooring are an added touch to bring everything together. Appliances panels are a great way to create a streamlined look in the kitchen. This kitchen features a built-in with applied panels to blend into the cabinetry. When purchasing appliances, this requires a specific style of refrigerator and freezer so be sure to discuss this with your kitchen designer.

You can visit [www.durasupreme.com](http://www.durasupreme.com) to view all the new quarter-sawn white oak stains or you can stop by our showroom located at 17801 Ashley Drive to view samples. Granite Plus is the local dealer for DuraSupreme Cabinetry and we have free design services. You can stop by our showroom Monday through Saturday or call our showroom and a project manager will come to you!



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## Flooring Depot of Panama City Opens New Beach Location

By: KIM BRAZELL,  
MARKETING DIRECTOR

The new, 2,000 square foot, blue building sits along Back Beach Road in Panama City Beach. Its yellow sign signals that Flooring Depot of Panama City has expanded and is now serving customers on the beach side. The decision to expand was a natural one for Flooring Depot of Panama City owner Barry McEntire.

"If you are from Panama City or have lived here for any length of time, you will hear the phrase 'I don't cross the bridge,'" says McEntire. "It's a convenience factor for customers and by opening this location, our store, products and services are more accessible to our customers who live on this side of the bridge."

Flooring Depot PCB, which opened on Monday, November 1, showcases some of the major brands carried in the main store on W. 15th Street. "It's not the size of our store in Panama

City, but it gives us the opportunity to showcase some of our more popular products. And even though our customers may not want to cross the bridge, we don't mind," adds McEntire with a smile.

"We can deliver from the main store to the PCB store daily, so customers don't have to wait on product. We are fortunate to have a huge warehouse at our main location where we stock a number of major brands. And with shipping costs going up rapidly and products stuck on ships off the coast of the United States, that's a really good thing. It equates to savings for our customers both in time and money."

Sean Palamarzuc will run the new PCB store and he is excited about working with his friends and neighbors on the beach. "I live like two miles from our new store, so for me, this is like coming home," says Palamarzuc.

When asked what his goals

are for the new store, Palamarzuc is quick with his answer. "There are actually several things I would like to do. First and foremost, I want to continue creating great relationships with our customers and our contractors that we work with—just like we do at the main showroom in Panama City. We aren't looking to just make a sale, but to create a working relationship with the people coming through our doors."

Palamarzuc adds, "The second thing is to help our customers create their dream homes, rooms or spaces. Listening to their wants and needs and helping them find the perfect product is always the most rewarding part of this job."

Lastly, he smiles and says, "I want to outgrow the space. I want us to work hard, and for people to hear about our products and service on this side of the beach, and I truly want to need a bigger space."

Flooring Depot PCB will



carry all the major products such as luxury vinyl plank, carpet, tile, and hardwood from our major manufacturers including Mohawk, Karastan, MSI, Engineered Floors, Hallmark, Happy Feet, Florida Tile, Southwind, Marquis, and many more. The store is organized by types of products which makes it easy to browse what you are looking for.

"This is an exciting time for Flooring Depot," says McEn-

tire. "We are looking forward to expanding our customer base at the beach."

The new Flooring Depot PCB is located at 19700 PCB Parkway, Panama City Beach. The store is open Monday through Friday, 8:30 a.m. until 5:30 p.m. and on Saturday from 8:30 a.m. until 2 p.m. You can reach the store by calling us at (850) 785-2216 or emailing us at [seanp@flooringdepotofpanama.com](mailto:seanp@flooringdepotofpanama.com).

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Monday- Friday 8:30 a.m. - 5:30 p.m. & Saturday 9 a.m. - 2 p.m.



# Has the Pandemic Accelerated Changes That Were Already Coming?

BY MAURICE STOUSE, FINANCIAL ADVISOR AND BRANCH MANAGER

Americans and American investors continue to be amazed and surprised at so many things that are taking place. Were we headed in this direction already and has the pandemic merely accelerated it? There is a shortage of labor. (We understand there are 10 million job openings and only 6 million looking for jobs). Was that already going to happen given the changes in population growth? Americans are retiring now more than ever before. The media are referring to this as “The Great Resignation.” American workers are also quitting their jobs (often to go to another job) more now than in recent memory. There is also a shortage of supplies: computer chips, Christmas and other holiday presents (toys, things),

cars, parts, materials. There is a shortage of truck drivers. Now we are seeing and hearing there is a shortage in energy. A recent cover of *The Economist* called it “The Energy Crisis.” We haven’t seen a headline like that since the 1970s. This week we have learned, courtesy of CNBC, that this fall saw the sharpest decline in college enrollments in the past 50 years... portending a future shortage in skilled workers? One might wonder: Just what is going on? We think there are a myriad of reasons why and we also anticipate there are things that investors might want to consider going forward.

**First**, as to labor, consider that the population is no longer growing, it is slowing or even declining. The fastest growing segment of the population is now those over 65. **Second**, consider the positive financial shape many Americans are reported to be in at this time: Checking and savings deposits have swelled to \$3.5 trillion dollars — that in part has been helped by the massive Federal Reserve stim-

ulus unleashed in the past 18 months. Real estate values have climbed, along with stock prices and several commodities... leading to increased wealth. If people feel more wealthy or financially secure, might they be retiring earlier?

**Third**, consider that inflation has increased and many are left wondering if that is permanent or getting worse. We believe that the levels of inflation we are now experiencing will be with us for a while. In response to the labor shortage, wages are up, but so are worker strikes and walkouts.

There are implications for investors. Inflation resistant and inflation resilient investments might be worth further review and adding to current allocations in those investments might be practical as well. Examples of those are energy, commodities, materials, industrials, financials and real estate.

Business leaders have been weighing on inflation: Jack Dorsey, who co-founded Twitter, announced this week that hyperinflation is here. On the other hand, Cathie Wood, CEO of ARK Invest, opines that we will soon be entering a period of sustained deflation. Those are pretty divergent views.

Fourth, the supply chain has been disrupted. This is leading to shortages from chips to energy and everything in between as demand for such goods is increasing. As the world emerges from the pandemic, both developed countries and emerging markets are accelerating their growth. There is a book, written by Darren Hardy called “The Compound Effect.” In it, he notes that as anything that compounds, (in this case economic growth), it can lead to a substantial result or change. In another book “The Tipping Point,” written by Malcolm Gladwell, it is pointed out that massive change comes about as the result of a lot of little things that add up. So, we conclude that economic growth, developing markets and demographic shifts are leading to increased demand for labor, materials and for energy — from all sources. In the meanwhile, concerning energy, there is considerable effort to lower

carbon emissions which might be having an impact on exploration and production — eventually resulting in lower supplies. We understand cleaner energy could eventually fill the void but the amount of investment into cleaner energy sources would have to just about triple from where it is now to meet planned targets for carbon emissions and that is not currently happening. Coal has reemerged not only in demand, but in price as well as China and the developed world have increased coal consumption (it also has increased in the U.S., per S&P Global, and the EIA for the first time in seven years).

Looking again at Americans’ financial shape (on the average), balance sheets are at their strongest in decades. We have more money and assets but we owe less. This has also had an impact on those on the lower on the economic spectrum. The *New York Times* recently reported that the poverty rate in the U.S. has been cut in half in the past 18 months. That is attributable to government assistance as well as stimulus. No one expected this at the outset of the pandemic.

**Finally**, the most positive thing that has emerged is American productivity. It is at one of the highest rates in history. That is the silver lining. Productivity means that more goods and services are produced per unit of input and this has continued to grow. The question is will price and wage inflation eventually jeopardize that? Maintaining and growing productivity is key to economic growth and ultimately the profitability of companies and that has direct input on stock prices.

So, what might investors want to consider right now? We feel that productivity, maintaining it, and actually growing it will be very critical going forward. How might America’s producers and service providers accomplish that? We think it means acceleration in the use and implementation of automation and artificial intelligence. Investors might do well to look at companies, funds and exchange traded funds that focus on those very things. Cloud

computing would be in the same group. The cloud is one of the fastest growing innovations in the world. Almost all of our daily activities interact with the cloud directly and indirectly. With so much being stored and relied upon by way of the cloud, investors can look at companies and funds in those areas as well. What is the cloud? Simply put: the “cloud” is made up of data centers. Note: The growth in energy consumption from these large data centers is quite significant (see “The Atlas of AI” by Kate Crawford). Not just in America, but around the world as well. In other words, it takes massive amounts of electricity to power and run the cloud — which means the demand for energy won’t be easing up anytime soon. Another reason for investors to consider increasing their energy allocations.

Electricity is produced by sources of nuclear, hydro, solar, wind, natural gas (currently 40%) and coal. The increased demands for electricity — whether from data centers (the cloud), mining crypto currency, supply or supply change problems or the upcoming winter weather are driving prices up. Natural gas at this writing has doubled year to date. Raymond James (October 26, 2021 Daily Energy Update by John Freeman, Pavel Molchanov, Justin Jenkins and J.R. Weston) wrote this week that “numerous weather forecast models increased their probability of a materially colder 2021, 2022 winter, sending natural gas prices surging.”\*\*

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*\*\*A full copy of the report is available upon request.*

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# Know Your Pro: Oasis Power Wash

Shane, born in Texas, learned “work ethic “ from his father, who ran a successful H.V.A.C. business. Shane started Oasis Power Washing about ten years ago and specializes in power washing and exterior restoration . Located in Panama City Beach, Oasis is a fully insured licensed company and carries general liability insurance over two million dollars, which allows Oasis to handle any commercial or residential project. Oasis is a firm believer in keeping up with the latest cleaning techniques, choosing and using the detergents and chemicals that will get the job done without doing damage to your property. Surfaces are all different: wood, paint, concrete etc. Using pre-mixed solutions may work on one surface, but not another. The ability to custom mix solutions on site is a trade secret developed by owner Shane McKenney and makes it possible to offer a satisfaction guarantee on every job. So



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## PCB Chamber Events

**November Friday at the Beach Nov. 12, Gulf Coast State College, ATC**

Enjoy morning networking with the local business community!

**November Business After Hours Nov. 18, Dick's Last Resort**

Enjoy hors d'oeuvres and cocktails while networking with fellow chamber members, from 5-7 p.m. This event is exclusive to Beach Chamber members. If you would like to attend as a prospect, please contact Shannon at [Shannon@pcbeach.org](mailto:Shannon@pcbeach.org).

**Panama City Beach Marathon, Dec. 4, Start/Finish Line located at Pier Park**

Annual Marathon, Half-Marathon, 5K or Kid's Fun Run through paradise alongside our award-winning beaches. The Panama City Beach Marathon is a Boston Qualifier race! Visit [pcbmarathon.com](http://pcbmarathon.com) for more information!



athon.com for more information!

**Business After Hours – Annual Christmas Party Dec. 8, The Shrimp Boat**

Join us at The Shrimp Boat to celebrate the holidays and end of another great year. Don't forget to bring a new unwrapped toy to donate for an extra ticket. All toys collected will be donated to the local toy drives for the PCB Police and the Bay County Sheriff's Office. Sponsored by Panama City Toyota and Hare Taylor.

**See registration information at [www.pcbeach.org/chamber-events](http://www.pcbeach.org/chamber-events).**

### PANDEMIC CHANGE

*continued from previous page*  
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**Before After**

# 2021 Property Tax Roll Open for Collection: Online Options Allow for Convenient Payment



Property tax notices are in the mail and the 2021 tax roll is officially open for collection. Bay County Tax Collector Chuck Perdue is encouraging taxpayers

to pay online to save gas, time, and money this tax year.

Since 2018 the tax collector's office has made significant improvements to their property tax portal to allow for easier navigation of the site, including searching for property tax accounts, providing for the ability to pay multiple properties at once, and providing different online payment options including e-check, PayPal and debit/credit cards.

"I encourage customers who are able to do so to pay online. We've simplified the process and added features to make it easy," said Perdue. "I think everyone is really wanting to stretch their

dollars the best they can, so I strongly encourage our customers paying online to utilize the e-check option as this payment method will avoid any added convenience fees charged by the payment processors. Taxpayers can also save money by paying by November 30 to take advantage of the 4% discount. The discounted amount is already calculated in the online amount due."

In addition to paying property taxes, the tax portal site also allows customers to view and print their tax notice as well as their receipt. Once an online payment is processed, a receipt number is added to the bottom of the online bill which serves as the customer's receipt. If a customer is interested in receiving their tax notice electronically, they can sign-up for this service through the portal and also enroll in the Installment Plan for the 2022 taxes should they so desire.

For those taxpayers who pre-

fer not to pay online, the traditional mail-in option is encouraged. Individuals who like to hand deliver the payment can utilize the drop boxes located inside and outside of every office location to avoid a wait in the lobby.

"The goal for our office is really to minimize the number of customers having to travel to visit us and having to wait in our lobby," said Perdue. "Some of our other services such as driver license and titling services can get lengthy so we want to provide convenient payment options for our taxpayers to make efficient use of their time."

Customers desiring to drop their tax payments off in person can also participate in the Remote, Area, Tax Express (R.A.T.E.) Program taking place on November 17 at Salty Sue's located at 17501 Panama City Beach Parkway. Representatives from the Tax Collector's Office will be onsite from 11 a.m. through 3 p.m. that day to col-

lect property tax payments and answer any questions customers may have regarding services provided by the Tax Collector. The R.A.T.E. program is designed to provide extra community outreach during the high discount period utilizing partnerships with area businesses in more remote areas of the county.

To access all of the dates, times and locations for the R.A.T.E. program, please scan the QR Code with your smart phone to be directed to the webpage. Dates and times are subject to change due to COVID-19 protocols, so this webpage allows us to provide the most updated information.

For more information regarding services provided by the Bay County Tax Collector's Office, please visit [BayTaxCollector.com](http://BayTaxCollector.com). For the latest information and updates follow them on social media- Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.

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# Ask Apex: A Homeowner's Worst Nightmare



BY JEREMY NEEL

Sewage backups are a homeowner's or renter's worst nightmare. Backups can cause flooding, broken pipes, and introduce raw sewage into your home. Cleaning up after and fixing a problem such as this is one task that is best left to the professionals. Raw sewage carries a variety of germs and bacteria that can make you ill. If you, or someone in your family, is pregnant, elderly, or has a compromised immune system, you should not risk exposing yourself to the germs that are carried within raw sewage. It is best to immediately call a professional sewage cleanup crew to remediate a flooding situation or sewage backup. They will follow specific safety protocol and use protective gear designed to prevent the spread of disease.

The longer water and sewage remains, the worse the problem gets. Significant water damage can occur in as little as 12-24 hours. Most people do not have the flexibility to drop everything at a moment's notice to dry out and disinfect their homes after a sewage backup. Apex Disaster Specialists can be at your home within a few hours to minimize water damage and begin sewage cleanup.

Recovering from a sewage backup is more than cleaning the dirt and waste out of your home. Problems can occur such as water damage, mold growth, bio-hazard threats, and broken plumbing or septic system. Apex Disaster Specialists will also be able to advise you on which of your possessions can be safely cleaned or restored, and which should be replaced. If your property remains under sewage water for long, the damage will be considerable. Flooring and insulation materials that have been soaked up will need to be removed, as well as mattresses, leather products, stuffed toys,



and paper products (including books and documents).

## What To Do After a Sewage Backup

1) Do not flush toilets or attempt to drain tubs and sinks – just don't use the water supply system in your home until the problem has been detected and taken care of.

2) Do not use harsh chemicals in an attempt to unclog the drainage system quickly and easily. They can damage your pipes and sewer lines and make the matters worse. Opt for treatment options which use enzymes instead of chemicals – they will most likely solve your problem and will prevent future clogging.

3) Keep children and pets away from the affected area.

4) If it is still safe, shut off the power. Otherwise, don't go near electrical equipment.

5) Wear protective clothing: gloves, eyeglasses, rubber boots and a face mask.

6) Open windows to allow fresh air in and ventilate well to remove any fumes.

7) Add small amounts of chlorine bleach to standing water to ensure some disinfection.

8) Use sump pumps to remove excessive water.

9) Call for professional assistance.

Remember that sewage backups should be dealt with as quickly as possible to prevent further damage. Apex Disaster Specialists has the most adequate equipment and the experience required for a quick and efficient intervention. We can come up with the most appropriate and safest solution. Apex

also offers not only water extraction but quality repair work, odor removal, and overall sanitization. Before returning to your everyday life, make sure the entire property has been perfectly sanitized, the electrical and plumbing systems have been checked and fully repaired, and

all the appliances are safe and in good working order.

Should you experience a sewage backup, Apex is the company to call! We will reach your property in a timely manner and restore your home as quickly as possible.



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