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The St. Joe Company Announces Plans for The Longleaf Art Park at The Watersound Origins Community



The St. Joe Company (NYSE: JOE) (“St. Joe”) announced plans by the Berkowitz Contemporary Foundation, an arts-supporting non-profit organization, for the Longleaf Art Park in the Watersound Origins community. The park, which is currently under development off Origins Parkway, is planned for 15.5 acres and will be open to the public once complete.

Day-to-day operations will be managed by the Cultural Arts Alliance of Walton County.

The planned park will be anchored by the Passage of Time Pavilion, which will house the late artist Richard Serra’s iconic work *Passage of Time*. The 217-foot long 540,000-pound sculpture constructed in the artist’s preferred medium features two two-inch thick weathering

steel plates measuring 13.5 feet in height displayed in a meandering parallel arrangement.

The planned Longleaf Art Park and the Passage of Time Pavilion have been designed by OLI Architecture in collaboration with Richard Serra. In order to create a destination that blends with its existing natural environment, emphasis has been placed on

keeping all construction disturbances on the site to a minimum.

In addition to the Passage of Time Pavilion, the park will feature amenities including an outdoor event space that will host future programming opportunities. Meandering paths

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Seniors Receive Emergency Meal Kits

By ED OFFLEY

With the 2024 hurricane season underway, Florida Power & Light and the Bay County Council on Aging have ensured that several hundred seniors are prepared in event a storm disrupts their ability to obtain food.

The utility and the seniors organization handed out over 2,200 emergency meal kits to seniors at the Panama City office of the Council on Aging on June 11. In addition, each senior received \$40 worth of coupons for buying food at local farmers’ markets.

“Each eligible person received three meal kits,” said Shane Boyett, Senior external affairs manager for Florida Power & Light. Any county resident over the age of 65 qualifies for the program.

The meals are targeted for local seniors who might not be able to leave their homes or receive home-delivered meals post-storm. Boyett said the meal kits will help

SENIORS
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Community

ART PARK

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and boardwalks will lead visitors from a parking area through native landscape on a journey through carefully contoured berms surrounding a pond as they approach the Passage of Time Pavilion. The pavilion is designed to be entered from glass vestibules welcoming visitors to an intimate experience with the sculpture.



“The creation of the Longleaf Art Park marks the beginning of a new cultural era for Walton County and establishes the Northwest Florida region as a home and destination for artistic excellence,” said Jennifer Steele, Executive Director of the Cultural Arts Alliance of Walton County. “The importance of access to a piece of work as significant as Richard Serra’s Passage of Time cannot be overstated, and the impact

it will have on our local artists, residents, students, and visitors will be limitless and lasting for generations.”

Plans call for the park to be open in 2026.

SENIORS

continued from page 1

ensure that they are equipped with vital supplies, including three days of shelf-stable, nutritious food, water, snacks and a storm preparation guide.

More than 150 residents attended the distribution, but many were there to obtain meal kits for neighbors and family members who could not attend, Boyett said. About 400 seniors in all received the kits.

This year marks the third annual distribution of the meal kits since the merger of Gulf Power and Florida Power & Light in 2019, Boyett said. The



program has run in other parts of the state for the last decade, he said.

The farmers’ market coupons were provided by the state Department of Elder Affairs, said Council on Aging executive

Andrea Marsh. “The purpose is for them to be able to buy fresh produce for \$40,” Marsh told WJHG. “It’s a lot for seniors who are living on limited incomes, and... makes a big difference to their shopping budget.”

Boyett said he was impressed with the popularity of the hurricane meals program. “People were lined up around the block as early as 6:00 a.m. for the event that began at 8:00,” he said.



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Local Marine Biologist's Shark Insights and Safety Tips

BY JOE MOORE, FOUNDER, 30A SEALIFE DISCOVERY CENTER AND APPLESEED EXPEDITIONS

Hello, my name is Joe Moore. I hold a master's degree in Fishery Science from the University of West Florida and have extensive experience teaching marine biology in Hawaii, the Galapagos, California, and Florida. As the founder of the 30A Sealife Discovery Center and Appleseed Expeditions, as well as a Walton County resident, I'd like to share my perspective on the recent shark attacks along 30A in the Florida Panhandle.

I recently conducted an aerial survey using my paraglider over the region where the incidents occurred to investigate potential threats or anomalies in the ocean waters. Here are my findings:

Factors Contributing to Shark Presence

June Grass Proliferation: I observed extensive June grass along the shoreline. This phenomenon attracts baitfish, sea turtles, and other marine wildlife closer to the shore, creating a rich feeding ground for predators.

Abundance of Bait Fish: I noted an unusually high number of baitfish near the shore and around artificial reefs. This dense population of prey attracts small sharks, likely blacktip and sandbar sharks, which I identified from the air due to their sleek bodies and pointy snouts.

Early Arrival of Tarpon: Typically, tarpon migrate north in May and June, peaking in Au-



gust and September. However, this year, they arrived early and in larger numbers, feeding on baitfish near the shore.

Goliath Groupers and Devil Rays: I spotted large goliath groupers under the piers and numerous devil rays feeding on plankton. The presence of these rays indicates a significant amount of plankton in the water, further enriching the food web.

Loggerhead Sea Turtles: I observed many large loggerhead sea turtles offshore. June marks the peak nesting season for these gentle giants. Large sharks often wait in shallow waters to ambush these turtles, making the waters near shore more susceptible to shark interaction.

Shark Behavior and Human Interaction

The combination of abundant baitfish, plankton, and sea

turtles has drawn more sharks, including potentially dangerous bull sharks, closer to shore. The increase in marine activity has also coincided with a peak tourist season, increasing the chances of shark encounters.

Safety Tips for Enjoying the Emerald Coast

To ensure a safe and enjoyable experience at the beach, here are some important precautions:

Swim in Groups: Sharks are less likely to approach groups of people.

Avoid Dawn and Dusk: These are peak feeding times for sharks. Stay out of the water during these times.

Stay Out of Murky Waters: Sharks may bite out of curiosity when visibility is low. Our waters along the Emerald Coast are usually clear, so avoid swimming when the water is churned up.

Avoid Night Swimming: Sharks are more active at night.

Stay Clear of Fishing Areas: Avoid swimming where bait is present in the water, as this attracts sharks.

By following these guidelines, you can greatly reduce the risk of a shark encounter and enjoy the beauty of our white sandy beaches safely.

Enhancing Marine Science Education

As the founder of the 30A Sealife Discovery Center and Appleseed Expeditions, I am dedicated to educating students about marine science. We offer school marine science trips and school trips focused on studying

sharks and other marine life. These programs provide hands-on learning experiences, fostering a deeper understanding and appreciation of our oceans.

If you are interested in learning more about marine biology, shark behavior and ocean conservation, consider joining one of our educational trips. Together, we can enhance our knowledge and contribute to the preservation of our precious marine ecosystems.

Stay safe, enjoy the beach, and remember to respect the ocean and its inhabitants.

For more information, visit appleseedexpeditions.com or on Facebook at Appleseed Expeditions.



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PCB Chamber Spotlight



Introducing: King of Pops PCB

Hello neighbors! We are Micah and Nicole Priest, but most of you know us as King of Pops PCB. We are a small, local & veteran-owned business serving Bay County delicious, gourmet-style popsicles.

We will get into the popsicles later, but first, we want the community to get to know who we are. We are full-time residents here in the beautiful Florida panhandle and like most of you, our family enjoys being outdoors. Most days we end up on the sand, in the water, or on a ballfield somewhere.

While we wouldn't trade this life for anything, at times, the heat was overwhelming and we often found ourselves seeking some sort of relief, which usually involved ice cream or popsicles. This became increasingly difficult once we had to cut out dyes and gluten for our children. We were shocked at how many things were no longer options.

This is when the business ideas started flowing. Why not bring a healthy version of our favorite family treat to our community? Would we be able to



accomplish such a feat without sacrificing flavor? Can we make them available for everyone?

Nicole is originally from the Atlanta, Georgia area. For those who are familiar with the area, you have likely heard of King of Pops. If you haven't, they offer amazing gourmet popsicles or "pops" as we all call them that usually have between three and five ingredients which come from local farms in Georgia and Florida. They also take great pride in giving back to their community. After much

research and many discussions, we were offered an opportunity to become franchisees.

While our journey began about a year ago, we have already made wonderful partnerships in the area and we have been able to give back to several schools, churches, sports teams, after-school clubs and first responders. You will often see one of our carts at the Panama City farmers market and occasionally other places, however, we can come out or do "pop drops" to nearly any event including wed-



dings, sporting events, birthday parties, school functions and more. We offer several flavors that are always going to be available such as Chocolate Sea Salt, Mango, Tangerine, Strawberry Lemonade, and Raspberry Lime as well as seasonal flavors like Patriot Pop, Peach, Thai

Iced Tea, and Key Lime Pie. We have both gluten-free and dairy-free options and all of the pops are dye-free and use natural ingredients.

We would love to hear from you and as a small business trying to grow, we would greatly appreciate any opportunity to serve our tasty treats within Bay County.

See where we are poppin on Instagram @kop_panamacity or @kingofpopsanamacity on Facebook or visit our website: kingofpops.com.

New PCB Chamber of Commerce Members

The Twisted Fork Culinary Classroom
Avid Storage - Gulf Blvd., PCB
Avid Storage - Tyndall Parkway
Avid Storage - Lynn Haven
Playa Bowls
Hilton Garden Inn Panama City
Emerald & Forgotten Coast Adventures
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Anchor Title Co. is a leading title company dedicated to providing exceptional real estate settlement services. Located in the heart of The Cove area in Panama City, Anchor Title Co. has earned a reputation for reliability, precision, and personalized service. The company's mission is to ensure that every real estate transaction is smooth, secure, and efficient, making the complex process of property transfers as stress-free as possible for all parties involved.

At the core of Anchor Title Co.'s success is its commitment to transparency and integrity. The company offers a comprehensive range of services including title searches, escrow services, and title insurance. By meticulously examining public records to validate property titles and uncover potential issues such as liens or disputes, Anchor Title Co. safeguards its clients'

investments and provides peace of mind. Their escrow services ensure that funds and documents are managed securely and professionally, facilitating seamless transactions from start to finish.

Anchor Title Co. stands out in the competitive real estate market through its innovative use of technology and unwavering focus on customer service. By leveraging the latest digital tools, the company streamlines processes, reduces errors, and enhances communication with clients. This tech-savvy approach not only expedites transactions but also provides clients with real-time updates and greater clarity throughout the settlement process.

Jessica Bennett: A Visionary Leader

Jessica Bennett, the co-owner of Anchor Title Co., is a dynamic and visionary leader

with a deep-rooted passion for real estate and customer service. With nearly two decades of experience in the real estate and title insurance industry, Jessica brings a wealth of knowledge and expertise to the company. Her career began in a large title firm in Tallahassee where she quickly recognized the critical role that title services play in the success of property transactions.

Jessica's entrepreneurial spirit and commitment to excellence led her to establish Anchor Title Co. after being dedicated 15 years to another title company. She envisioned a company that not only meets but exceeds industry standards by prioritizing client needs and embracing technological advancements. Under her leadership, Anchor Title Co. has grown from a small startup to a trusted name in the industry, known for its high standards of service and



ethical business practices.

Jessica is highly regarded for her hands-on approach and her ability to build strong relationships with clients, realtors, and lenders. Her leadership style is characterized by a blend of professionalism, empathy, and strategic thinking. She is dedicated to fostering a positive work environment where her team feels valued and empowered to deliver their best work.

Beyond her professional achievements, Jessica is an active member of the community, often participating in local real estate associations and charitable events. She is a staunch

advocate for education and frequently hosts seminars to educate buyers and sellers about the intricacies of real estate transactions and the importance of title insurance. She is married to a realtor, and a mom of 3, who absolutely adores her family.

In summary, Anchor Title Co. is a beacon of reliability and innovation in the real estate industry, driven by the visionary leadership of Jessica Bennett. Her dedication to excellence and customer-centric approach have positioned the company as a trusted partner in real estate transactions, ensuring that every client's experience is nothing short of exceptional.

Visit their website for more information, www.anchortitle.co, or reach Jessica Bennett by phone at (888)552-7636 or email jessica@anchortitle.co. Their office is located at 438 N. Cove Blvd. in Panama City.

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Community

Shop Talk: Your Happy Place is Happy to Help

By LEE ANN LEONARD

With all the major events it hosts and the millions of visitors it attracts, most locals know Pier Park as Panama City Beach's unofficial downtown. What they may not know is how much their "happy place" serves the community.

In March and April, Pier Park collaborated with six stores—Forever 21, JCPenney, Dillard's, Pink Narcissus, Paradise Found and Latitude 29—on a clothing and accessories donation drive for Save the Closet. The local charity provides a free mobile closet for communities affected by natural disasters and individ-



uals in life transition. The organization also promotes upcycling and supports local artists.

After assessing Save the Closet's needs, the Pier Park team



collected and donated several large bags of new clothing and accessories. New items with tags sell better in the charity's store, helping the organization pay for

travel expenses to disaster-impacted areas. The staff also donated personal possessions and shopped for team members in need at Save the Closet's boutique. To learn how you can help, visit SaveTheCloset.com.

Also in April, the mall staff promoted, contributed to and participated in Ron Jon Surf Shop's annual beach cleanup at the Russell-Fields Pier. The center helped Ron Jon enjoy the biggest turnout to date: 150 volunteers! The record turnout resulted in a \$1,500 donation to the United Way of Northwest Florida and a cleaner beach for residents and tourists.

Every year, the mall hosts several drives like the "Back-To-School Supply Drive" and the "Halloween Costume Drive" to help needy families. Another annual undertaking is the "Making Strides Against Breast Cancer" walk. While organizers canceled this year's event, the mall team still plans to raise funds and awareness for the American Cancer Society in October.

Follow us on Facebook (/ShopPierPark) and Instagram (@PierPark) to learn about our latest community outreach projects.

Shop Tax Free and for Local Youths at Pier Park

Pier Park announced that the center will host its fifth annual Back-to-School Supply Drive from July 29 through August 11, 2024, to coincide with Florida's Back-to-School Sales Tax Holiday.

The drive will benefit the Boys & Girls Clubs of Bay County.

Residents and visitors can purchase supplies at Pier Park stores like Target, Dollar Tree, Dillard's, Forever 21, Pink Narcissus or Tervis. They can then drop those donations off at the Mall Management Office at 600 Pier Park Drive, Suite 125, Panama City Beach, Florida 32413. Donors can also deliv-

er items to the Boys & Girls Clubs of Bay County facility at 16200 Back Beach Road, Panama City Beach, Florida 32413. In addition to helping a worthy cause, donors will enjoy significant savings when shopping for supplies thanks to Florida's Tax Cut Package. According to FloridaRevenue.com, Floridians will pay no sales tax for learning aids and jigsaw puzzles selling for \$30 or less, for certain school supplies valued at \$50 or less per item, for clothing, footwear and certain accessories valued at



\$100 or less per item and on personal computers plus related accessories priced at \$1,500 or less. Find a comprehensive school supply list on Simon.com/Mall/Pier-Park.

Donors will have the chance to win a \$1,000 prize package

during a random drawing at the Panama City Beach Chamber of Commerce's July 19 Friday at the Beach. The organization will host the Pier Park-sponsored event and collect supplies from 7:30 to 9 a.m. at Captain Anderson's Event Center at 5550 North Lagoon Drive #2, Panama City Beach, Florida 32408.

The Mall Management office is open weekdays from 8:30 a.m. – noon and 12:30 – 5 p.m. The mall is open Monday through Saturday from 10 a.m. – 9 p.m. and Sunday from noon – 6 p.m.



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Know Your Neighbor: Pam George Delivers Smiles

By PAUL BONNETTE

For decades, Gulf World Marine Park has been an iconic staple of Panama City Beach. Offering unique educational experiences for guests to get up close with local marine life as well as rescuing, rehabilitating, and releasing animals back into natural habitats, Gulf World is flourishing under the leadership of Bay County local Pam George. Although today Pam is proud to call Bay County home, she lived in many different areas of the country before she found her way to the Gulf Coast.



“I was born in Mobile, Alabama, and lived there for five years with my family and they decided they wanted to live up north, so we moved up to Michigan. I lived in Michigan for a lot of years. My dad was a foreman of a farm. My first job was picking strawberries from a strawberry patch for a summer job. We lived up there until I was sixteen and then we moved back to Florida and my dad ended up taking over as foreman of an orange grove.”

For Pam, this would be the start of moving around, however it wasn't until she moved to Bay County that she found a home. “We moved back to Mobile when I was in high school and that is where I met my high school sweetheart,” Pam remembers. “We got married and traveled because he is in the

Coast Guard. We traveled from Buffalo to New Orleans to Florida, Alabama, and Virginia. We then had the wonderful experience of being transferred here to Panama City during one of those tours and I fell in love with Panama City.”

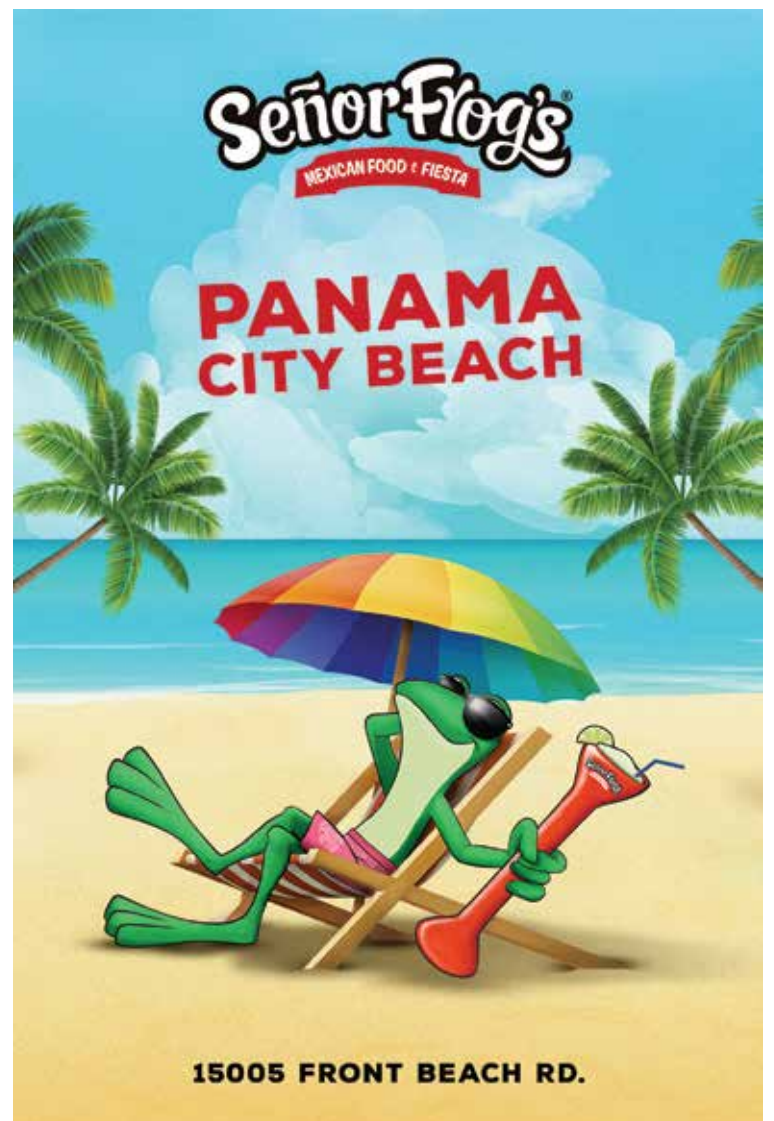
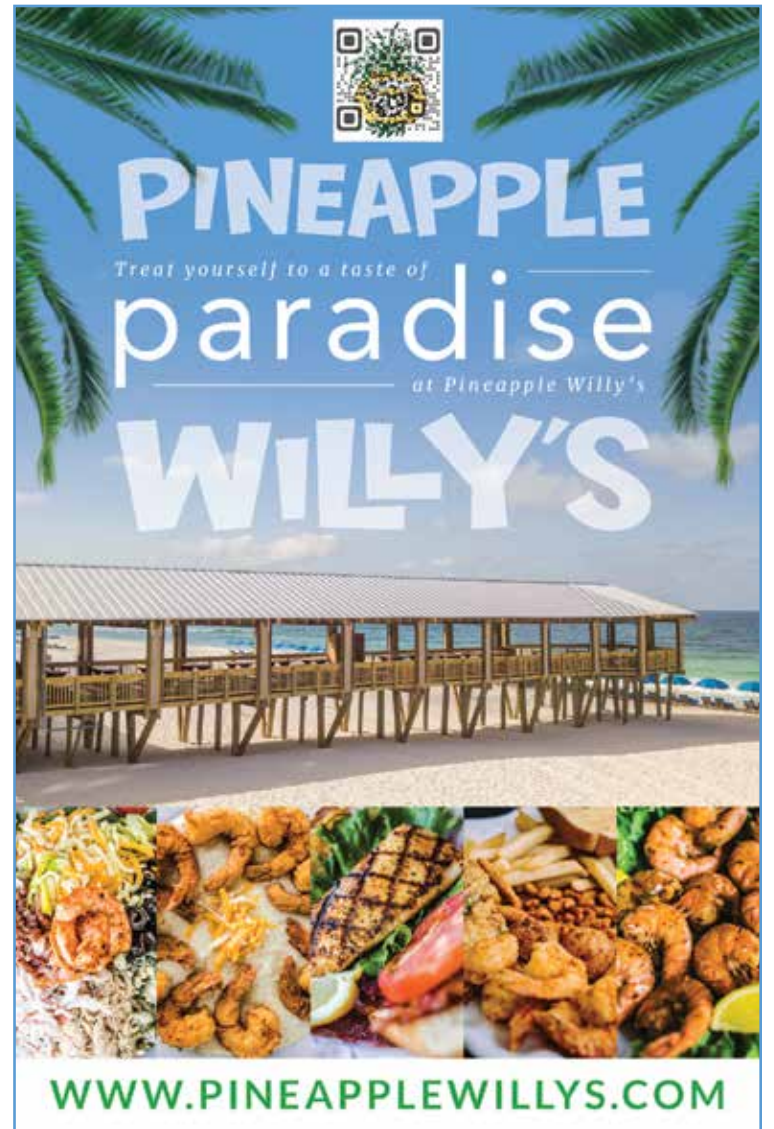
According to Pam, getting transferred to Bay County was one of the best things to happen as it showcased Bay County's small-town vibe with friendly southern hospitality. “It is that small-town feeling when you go to the grocery store, and you run into your neighbor, and you end up standing in the grocery store talking for twenty minutes or going to a gas station and running into a co-worker. Having a small-town feeling was really capturing for me. With my dad, my family and my husband moving around so much, I didn't have that “home” feeling. When I lived here, I got that feeling of “roots” and “home” and know-

ing your neighbor and running into people at the department store. It was a great feeling for me, and I have loved it.”

After moving to Bay County, Pam worked as a business manager for a radio station, as well as a manager at Rock It Lanes, however, it wasn't until 2005, that Pam found her calling at Gulf World Marine Park. “I heard about Gulf World looking for a Marketing Director and so I applied and started working in 2005 and I've been here ever since,” Pam says. After working in multiple departments including Marketing, Human Resources, and Park Management, Pam would eventually be promoted to General Manager. “It seemed like over the years, I just got more and more experience in all the different departments at Gulf World, so when Dolphin Discovery purchased Gulf World in 2015, they were looking for someone to manage the park and I knew enough about it, so I applied and got it.”

For Pam, working at Gulf World Marine Park has been a uniquely rewarding experience.

“Out of all the jobs I've had, I've started at entry level and worked my way up. When I first came to Gulf World, it was so easy to sell memories and smiles and interactions. I just fell in love with being able to bring memories and smiles to families as they come here.”



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Tallahassee Museum Announces the Birth of Red Wolf Puppies

The Tallahassee Museum is thrilled to announce the recent birth of a new litter of endangered red wolves. In the early morning of April 26, 2024, four-year-old female Arrow birthed two healthy pups, one male and

one female. This is Arrow and Rainier's first litter of puppies. Rainier was born from the last litter of pups at the Tallahassee Museum in 2017. This is the fourth litter of red wolf puppies to have been born at the Talla-

hassee Museum since 1988.

The Tallahassee Museum Animal Department and the Attending Veterinarian team have been monitoring the pups growth and health during this time through the use of den



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cameras to reduce human interaction. Following their most recent exam, Dr. Manuel of Forgotten Coast Animal Hospital stated the pups are healthy and developing well.

Mimicking their wild counterparts, the red wolf parents keep their puppies well protected in the den box. Therefore, the pups are usually not visible to the public for two to three months after their birth. We invite the public to seize this unique opportunity to visit the Tallahassee Museum throughout the summer and fall months and witness the remarkable journey of these red wolf puppies as they grow into young adults.

The Tallahassee Museum has been a key participant in the Red Wolf Species Survival Plan, now the American Red Wolf SAFE (Saving Animals from Extinction) Project since 1988, following the alarming decline of wild red wolves. At the time, fewer than 20 red wolves were in the wild and declared biologically extinct. This drastic population decrease was primarily due to hunting and habitat loss. The Tallahassee Museum was among the first national sites to work with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in a captive breeding program aimed to restore the red wolf population in the wild. As a partner in the American Red Wolf SAFE Project, the Museum strives to minimize human contact with the red wolves to promote avoidance behavior and support a healthy pack structure for their



potential release into the wild. Red wolves are the most endangered canid in the world, with less than 250 on earth.

The actual puppies can only be seen when they start venturing from their den.

About Tallahassee Museum

Tallahassee Museum is set amidst 52 acres of breathtaking Florida flora and fauna, and has served as an iconic Tallahassee landmark for more than 65 years. Ranked as one of Florida's top museums, the Museum's living exhibits of native Florida wildlife, nature trails, native gardens, and a zipline course are renowned by visitors of all ages. The Museum encourages guests to discover and learn about North Florida's natural environment, rich history, and diverse cultural communities.

The Museum is open Monday through Saturday from 9:00 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Sundays 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. To learn more about the Tallahassee Museum, please visit <https://tallahassee-museum.org>.



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Well, hello *beautiful!*

Two Beautiful New Businesses Join The Shoppes @ Edgewater

Jolinda Kusy - Owner Solshine Coastal Boutique, Botanica Skincare

"Beauty begins from within" and "When you look great you feel great!" are two of my favorite sayings. These are reflected in the curated collections at Sol Shine as well as the facial services offered at Botanica Skincare.

I really enjoy creating spaces and opportunities that provide a sense of well-being and peace while restoring your natural glow. The collection of women's coastal wear, decor, accessories, local art, and designs will delight those looking for personal treasures and special gifts to spread the love.



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 Community

DIY Golf Club Repair

BY ALAN WATSON, PRESIDENT
GOLF+, DOTHAN AND PCB

Golfers who frequent social media, YouTube, or golf periodicals are probably familiar with the explosion of DIY golf repair gurus who promise to help you fix your own equipment easily and for less, or maybe just for the satisfaction of doing it yourself. Sure those things might be true and perhaps you already have a garage space or a workshop. Let's even suppose you

love working with your hands. All that and a healthy dose of pride make you want to say to your foursome, "I did this myself!" Before you get too caught up in this whole thing let's take a practical and realistic look at golf club repair and whether you should, or shouldn't, attempt it yourself.

Grips

Yes, grips are the simplest of all golf club repairs and yes,

there are only a few basic tools needed and not too much brain power to accomplish re-gripping a set. The skill it takes is minimal and I think most golfers could do a pretty good job with some practice. But, much like I could change the oil in my vehicle if I chose to, I would prefer letting someone who does it all day every day do it rather than expending my valuable time and energy.

The cost for changing your



Golf Game Getting Worse?



Get A Grip.

Come see for yourself! Book an appointment for a fitting or drop by for a few fresh grips. Try on some shoes and peruse over 100 golf bags. Take a few putters for a spin on our custom putting green and hit the latest model clubs in our Foresight GC Quad bays with industry leading technology and data capture.



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swing grips (not including the putter) at a professional shop is \$8-20 per grip including installation depending on the brand and model of the grip.

Cost to do it yourself at home:

Hook blade knife - \$13

Vise - \$90-\$130

Solvent - \$25

Flat knife - \$23 (for removing tape)

Torch or heat gun \$30 (for removing tape)

Squirt bottle for solvent - \$2

Build up tape - \$5

Double-sided grip tape - \$20

Towels - \$5

Total - \$213-\$253

These prices do not include tax or shipping and I also didn't include anything like a catch pan to recycle the extra solvent or a tape dispenser that you might want if you were going to be doing this more often.

Now you have to buy grips which could cost between \$4-\$13 each depending on quality and style. By the way, there are many sites online that will sell you grips and some are legit but others sell counterfeit grips that have no warranty and also don't perform like the real thing. Buyer beware for sure when it comes to golf grips from some sources. Basically, if the price seems too good to be true... well, you know the rest!

So if you were to grip the 13 swing clubs in your bag with a \$6 grip and all the supplies I mentioned you would spend approximately \$315 after taxes. That's an average of over \$24 per grip. In a shop like mine, that same transaction would be

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about \$140 or \$10.77 per grip all in and installed. Now I realize that if you purchase the DIY parts you need you can use them over and over again. I love having tools at my house so I am ready when I need them for home projects or when I'm working on my motorcycles. If that's you then by all means go ahead. But if that sound like too much trouble then just let the professionals handle it. Another benefit of professionals do it for you is that the job will be done correctly the first time. Grips are authentic. Time to re-grip in most shops is an hour to a day depending on how busy they are.

Look, I'm not saying you can't do it or shouldn't do it. I encourage people to learn new skills and I even have YouTube and social media videos of my own that teach people how to do this. I'm a live-and-let-live guy on the subject for sure.

Hopefully this gives you some insight into the most basic of club repairs. We might tackle some of the other types of repairs and their cost in later articles. In the meantime if you need quality, professional golf club repair and you are near Bay County, Florida, or Dothan, Alabama, I have shops in both areas that can serve you. We offer a great selection of products and a staff that will help you and get you back on the course as quickly as possible.



Let's Get Growing with Julie: Great Southeastern Pollinator Census

By JULIE MCCONNELL,
UF/IFAS EXTENSION

Attracting pollinators is a common goal of many gardeners, but sometimes the interest stops at picking out plants. Honey bees and butterflies are well-known pollinators, but did you know that sweat bees, beetles, moths, and even flies also serve that role? If you have ever wanted to learn more about pollinators and how many are visiting those well-planned gardens, then let me introduce you to the Great Southeastern Pollinator Census!

In an effort to create pollinator habitats, increase entomological literacy, and collect data about pollinators, The Great Georgia Pollinator Census was launched in 2019. This innovative program led by Becky



Griffin, University of Georgia's Community & School Garden Coordinator, has expanded into the Great Southeastern Pollinator Census which includes South Carolina, North Carolina, and, as of 2024, Florida in this regional citizen science project.

On the designated days each year, participants will spend 15 minutes observing a plant and counting the number of insect

visits to that plant. Insect visits are grouped into broad categories (small bees, honey bees, wasps, butterflies & moths, flies, and other insects) and recorded on an easy-to-read form. These forms can be uploaded to the website or entered on a computer after the count.

This year, the Great Southeastern Pollinator Census will be held on Friday, August 23 and Saturday, August 24. You

can participate both days or just one – whichever best fits your schedule. Not confident about your insect identification skills? No need to worry, the Great Southeastern Pollinator Census website has great resources that help the user tell the difference between insects while keeping a practical distance.

If you are interested in helping collect data for the census,

visit <https://gsepc.org>.

An Equal Opportunity Institution. UF/IFAS Extension, University of Florida, Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences, Andra Johnson, Dean. 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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 Music & Arts

Bid-A-Wee History Comes Alive in New Book

BY PETER FISCHETTI

Drive west on Front Beach Road just past Margaritaville and look to the left. History comes alive as you marvel at a half-mile of sand, dunes and foliage, creating a scene that looks pretty much as it did a hundred years ago. Nowhere in Panama City Beach will you find that view as every year condos and hotels hide more and more of the world's most beautiful beach. So a first-time visitor might wonder, "Why isn't a Marriott there?"

The answer appears in the just-published book, "Bid-A-Wee: A History of the Last Beach," written by Jim Smith, who has lived in that community for 30 years. Think of it as a recipe with lots of ingredients from a series of legal skirmishes over ownership of the beach and some unsavory villains to the romance of the couple who first developed the area and a woman whose generous check prevented bankruptcy.

The book is the result of 10 years of tedious research. "What I found," Smith said, "was a lot

of people from southeast Alabama, southwest Georgia, northwest Florida and the Bid-A-Wee community had a lot to do with the history of Bid-A-Wee Beach."

When Smith and his wife, Penny, moved to Bid-A-Wee from Alabama, they learned that the community, including its beach, was owned by a beer distributor in Alabama and that Save-Our-Beach, the organization then representing residents, planned to gain ownership by bidding on the property at a tax-sale auction.

That didn't make sense to Smith. "I found this to be not only bizarre, but it also just didn't feel right." So he decided to do some research. "I became totally immersed in researching the chain of title of the beach including how the beer distributor gained ownership. The research became my passion, and gaining ownership for the community became my cause."

Some fascinating people surfaced with the research, beginning with Harry Cailey, who



purchased the 140 acres that is now Bid-A-Wee in 1926 for under \$200 thanks to the Homestead Act. Two years later, the property was sold to Dr. Grover Miller and his wife, Eula, who became the sole owner when her husband died in 1934. She is one of the heroines in the story for developing and ultimately dedicating the beach to property owners in the community.

The story could have ended there, but actually it's only the

beginning. For the rest of the 20th Century and into the 21st, Bid-A-Wee Beach has been a tasty target for individuals, companies, and even our local political leaders to gobble up for their own uses. Each time, the community has prevailed, but sometimes barely. It was, in fact, a day away from a tax-default auction when the story's second heroine, Eunice Keeton, a Bid-A-Wee property owner, produced a \$17,000 check to cover past taxes and other fees.

And even when the dust settled on ownership, Bid-A-Wee faced an internal struggle that included vandalism when coded gates were installed to keep the beach private—and then damage incurred when it was open to the public.

Smith, now 79, served for almost four decades on active duty and in the Reserves in the Army, retiring as a colonel in 2000. He and Penny have two children, and one of them, Lee, and his own two children, convinced him to write this book.

While they were enjoying a day on the beach in 2014, Smith asked his grandsons some innocuous questions about Bid-A-Wee when Lee interrupted.

"Dad," he said, "they know all about this beach and they love it, but what we don't know about is you and this beach. What happened that made you become so involved with this beach for all those years?"

It's taken 10 years and about 250 pages, but now they have the answer.

The story will appeal to Bid-A-Wee residents, of course, but anyone interested in the early days of Panama City Beach will find the characters—good and bad—as fascinating as a Grisham novel. And it will make you wish you lived here a hundred years ago and could buy 140 acres of beachfront for under \$200.

The book is available in hard-bound, paperback and Kindle at Amazon.com/books. Type Bid-A-Wee, A History of the Last Beach in the search bar.



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The Benefits of Music Lessons at Studio 237 Music

Music, an ageless companion to the human experience, has a profound impact on our thinking abilities, emotional well-being, and social development. Engaging in music lessons, whether in childhood or adulthood, offers a variety of benefits that extend far beyond the ability to play an instrument well. Let's explore how the pursuit of musical education shapes our lives in many ways.

1. Mind Strengthening

Learning music involves a variety of abilities including hearing, seeing, and coordination skills. Research has consistently shown that children who receive music lessons tend to perform better in school subjects such as math and language. This is attributed to the increase of memory, attention span, and abstract reasoning skills that are sharpened when learning to read musical notation, understand rhythm, and identify melodies.

2. Emotional Well-being

Music is a powerful emotional outlet. It allows individuals to express feelings that may be difficult to articulate in words alone. Learning to play an instrument or sing fosters a sense of accomplishment and self-confidence as students master new skills and conquer challenges. Furthermore, music has therapeutic benefits, reducing stress, anxiety, and even alleviating symptoms of depression by triggering the release of natural



mood elevators in the brain.

3. Self-Regulation and Patience

Learning to play a musical instrument requires some dedication, practice, and perseverance. Students learn the value of achievement as they commit to regular practice schedules and strive to improve their ability over time. This cultivated patience and resilience extend beyond the realm of music into other areas of life, contributing to personal growth and resilience in the face of challenges.

4. Social Skills and Collaboration

Music education often involves group activities such as bands, orchestras, or choirs. Working collaboratively with peers toward a common musical goal fosters important social skills such as teamwork,

communication, and empathy. These experiences teach students how to listen actively, compromise, and appreciate the contributions of others—a valuable lesson in building harmonious relationships both within and outside the musical sphere.

5. Cultural Awareness and Appreciation

Studying music exposes individuals to a rich tapestry of cultural traditions and history. Whether exploring classical compositions, folk songs, or contemporary genres, students gain a deeper understanding of diverse musical styles and the community in which they originated. This fosters an appreciation for other cultures and their style of music.

6. Lifelong Enjoyment and Fulfillment

Beyond the educational and

developmental benefits, music lessons provide a lifelong source of enjoyment and fulfillment. The ability to create music, whether for personal pleasure or shared with others, brings a sense of joy and accomplishment that endures throughout one's life. Whether playing for relaxation, performing on stage, or simply appreciating music as a listener, the skills and appreciation gained through music education enrich every stage of life.

In conclusion, the decision to begin music lessons is not merely about learning to play an instrument or sing proficiently. It is an investment in learning development, emotional well-being, and personal growth. From enhancing academic performance to improving social skills and cultural appreciation, music education offers a wealth of benefits that resonate far beyond the practice room. Whether for children starting their musical journey or adults rediscovering a passion, the rewards of music lessons reverberate through every facet of life, creating harmony for the mind and soul alike.

Studio 237 Music Lessons has music teachers ready to help you begin your musical learning experience. Contact the studio to register online at www.Studio237Music.com/registration or call the studio at (850) 231-3199 leave a message or text/call (850) 797-3546. We provide a place for teachers to teach and students to learn. For more info visit our website at www.Studio237Music.com.

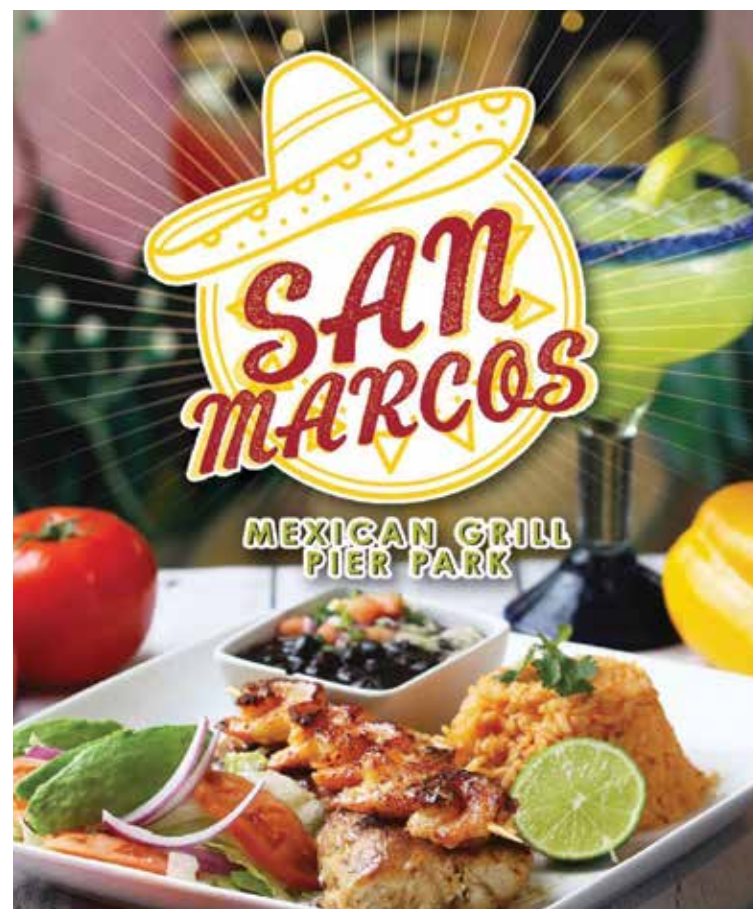


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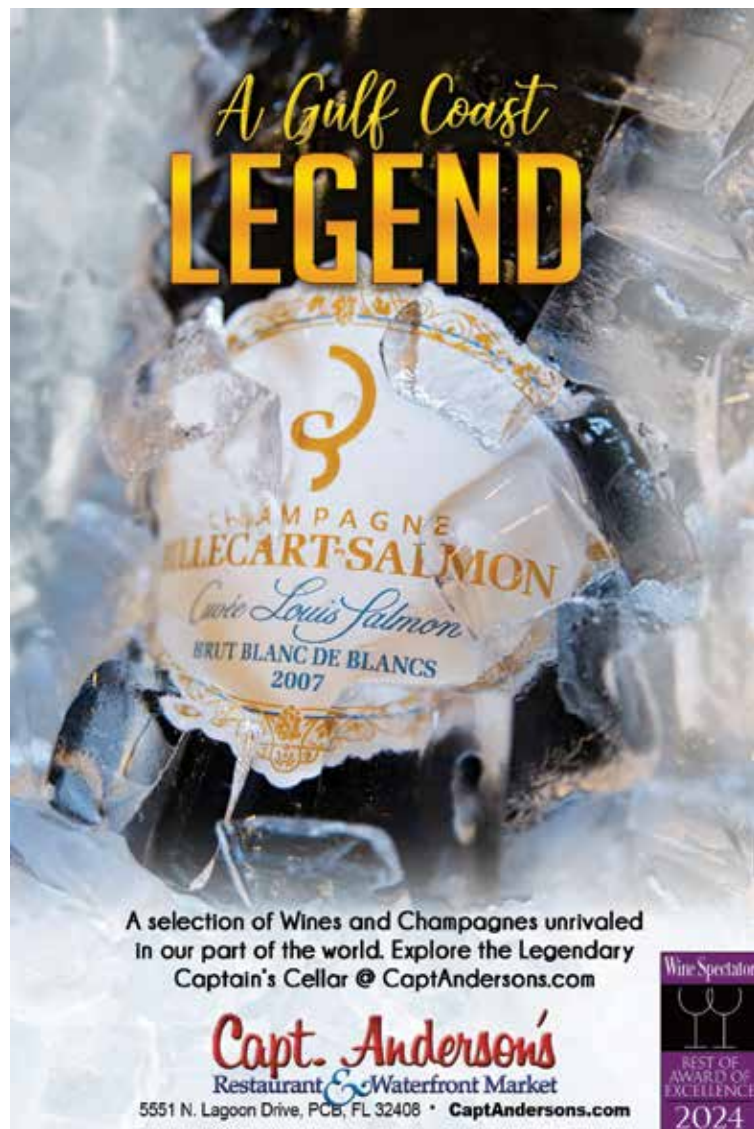
 Music & Arts

A Year-End ECTC Celebration!

A gathering of theatre students came together recently at Emerald Coast Theatre Company (ECTC) to celebrate the close of their 11th Season, induct Jr. Thespians and commemorate the end of a fruitful season of children's educational theatre. This event allowed ECTC's students and parents to come together with food and fellowship for middle school level Jr. Thespians, as well as their high school aged Teen Company counterparts.

The 2024 Inductees included: Ashlynn Aigret, Campbell Carter, Alice Heller, John Kerrigan, Maggie Kerrigan and Noah Modinger. They were joined by their fellow Jr. Thespians: Lucca Bucalo, Hailey Estrada, Jordyn Fowler, Jenna King, Mackenzie Krout, Clara Petersik, and Preston Smith.

In partnership with the Seaside Neighborhood School, ECTC's Junior Thespian Troupe (No. 89447) is a part of District 10 and a chartered



member of the Educational Theatre Association's Junior Thespians. The troupe competes in regional and state competitions and focuses on specialized training, acting techniques and implementing those techniques into performance.

2024 Jr. Thespian inductees:

Ms. Darla, Noah Modinger, Alice Heller, Maggie Kerrigan, John Kerrigan, Campbell Carter, Lucca Bulaco, Mr. Heath

2024 Jr. Thespian Jr. Company Ed Students (pictured):

Back Row: Ms Darla, Preston Smith, Noah Modinger, Jenna King, Hailey Estrada, Alice Heller, Campbell Carter, Tabitha Sheldon, Mr Heath, Caden Gray, Ben Bathula, Leya Bathula, Maggie Bingham

Middle Row: Maggie Kerrigan, Mackenzie Krout, Clara Petersik, Jordyn Fowler, Mercie Taylor, Alex Koehler

Bottom Row: Zoe Fisher, John Kerrigan, Lucca Bucalo, Teddy Petersik

2024 Jr. Thespians:

Ms Darla, Preston Smith, Noah Modinger, Jenna King, Hailey Estrada, Alice Heller, Maggie Kerrigan, Campbell Carter, Mackenzie Krout, Lucca Bucalo, Mr Heath, Clara Petersik, Jordyn Fowler

2024 Best Thespian:
John Kerrigan

ECTC Announces Broadway's Lulu Picart for Musical Theatre Intensive in July

Emerald Coast Theatre Company (ECTC) is proud to announce Broadway's Lulu Picart will serve as Musical Director for the Musical Theatre Intensive: Disney's High School Musical for Teens July 8 - 28, 2024. This three-week camp will stretch students' theatre skills and grow them as performers. Students work on acting, vocals and dance while receiving high quality instruction and direction from ECTC professionals and former Broadway performer Lulu Picart, an acting and creativity coach. Her work in mu-



sicals and on-stage direction includes Norwegian Cruise Lines, Walt Disney World, Orlando Shakespeare Theatre, Universal Orlando, The Choir of Man. As a performer, Lulu has appeared on Broadway (1776), off-Broadway (Disenchanted!, Lortel nominated), around the world on tour (1776, R+H Cinderella, Madagascar Live!), and at many theaters and theme parks. Lulu is also an adjunct faculty member at Pace University. Follow Lulu - @lulupicart

Students can register for the Musical Theatre Intensive at emeraldcoasttheatre.org/summer-camps.





Jason Hedden



Come for an uproarious night of laughs! ECTC presents some of the Southeast's most hilarious comedians. Hosted by resident funny guy Jason Hedden.

June 28 & July 19

More Info and Tickets:
www.emeraldcoasttheatre.org

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IN THIS ISSUE

ISO: PCB's Best Shrimp

Real. Fun. Fourth.

Must Do in PCB

ISO: PCB's Best Shrimp

By JACK SMITH

When I was a child growing up on the Chesapeake Bay, we had a special word for shrimp: bait. My first experience with shrimp as a food source was in the '60s and it came in the form of a shrimp cocktail. Fried, blackened and steamed were all in my future. Today, shrimp is the most popular seafood dish in the United States. Marco Polo wrote about how important shrimp was to the Chinese diet in 1280 and it only took us another 800 years to discover how tasteful and nutritious this protein really is. According to Forest Gump's friend Bubba, you can enjoy shrimp fried, steamed, blackened, broiled, raw, stuffed, in gumbo, BBQ, Kabobs, and Jambalaya. Feel free to add to this list.

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captandersons.com

Capt. Anderson's Grilled Bay Shrimp is FAMOUS in the South. Perfectly prepared with our own special seasoning and resting in melted butter... you have to taste to believe! Try it as an appetizer or an entree and don't forget to sop the seasoned butter with a fresh baked rice roll. Delicious! Dine early and watch the fleet unload.

Schooners

5121 Gulf Drive, PCB | (850) 235-3555

schooners.com

Enjoying fried seafood overlooking the white sand beach and emerald waters is CLASSIC. Schooners serves the tastiest trio of deep-fried Mahi-Mahi, Oysters and Jumbo Shrimp called the "Beach Party." Add a chilled glass of wine, ice cold local craft beer or a vodka based "Beach Bum," and you have the perfect makings of a lifelong beach memory!



San Marcos Mexican Grill Pier Park

101 Bluefish Drive, Suite 105, PCB | (850) 708-3097

www.sanmarcosmexicangrillpierpark.com

San Marcos Mexican Grill is a family-owned and -operated Mexican restaurant. The family is committed to serving authentic Mexican and Tex-Mex fare including handmade corn tortillas and homemade, tableside-prepared guacamole! Pair the delicious dishes with a range of margaritas, or a draft or bottled beer. You can even have your furry friends join you on the pet-friendly patio! Any day is a good day to chill at the grill.

The Wicked Wheel

10025 Hutchison Boulevard, PCB | (850) 588-7947

thewickedwheel.com

Savor the bold flavors of The Wicked Wheel's signature dish, Backfire Shrimp and Grits. These rich, creamy grits are infused with a spicy kick from the backfire butter, and packed with herbs and seasoning. The bowl is then loaded with a dozen succulent grilled Gulf shrimp, adding a touch of freshness to this slightly spicy masterpiece. A true culinary thrill that will leave you craving more!



Señor Frogs

15005 Front Beach Road, PCB

senorfrogs.com/panama-city-beach

Our Cilantro Garlic Shrimp is delectable. Fresh shrimp sautéed in butter sauce, garlic and cilantro, served with white rice, fresh cut veggies and lime.

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boondocksfl.com

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The Pancakery

13800 Panama City Beach Pkwy, PCB | (850) 588-5077

thepancakery.com

The Pancakery started in Destin and opened its doors March 2011. After a huge success, The Pancakery expanded down the coast to a second location in Panama City Beach in 2017. Come check out what makes The Pancakery the Florida Panhandle's FAVORITE breakfast spot!

Rudy's Country Store and Bar-B-Q

14501 Panama City Beach Pkwy, PCB | (850) 588-1996

rudysbbq.com

Rudy's has the best sausage for your Low Country Boil! Known for its two popular bbq sauce varieties, folksy decor and a devotion to smoked proteins, Rudy's was born out of a small Leon Springs, TX gas station just north of San Antonio along I-10. It's the one with "the worst bar-B-Q in Texas" in big block letters on the sign outside. Every location has a special charm.



An American Tradition: A Real. Fun. Fourth.

Visit Panama City Beach is pleased to announce its annual Real. Fun. Fourth. celebration, featuring four nights of spectacular firework displays, will take place Wednesday, July 3, through Saturday, July 6. As the largest Fourth of July fireworks show on the Gulf Coast, this event invites visitors of all ages to enjoy the destination's 27 miles of sugar-white sand beaches and turquoise waters for an unforgettable Independence Day celebration.

"We're excited to once again bring residents and visitors together in Panama City Beach for an exciting Real. Fun. Fourth. celebration," says Visit Panama City Beach President and CEO Dan Rowe. "Held in partnership with the City of Panama City Beach, Pier Park, and Bay County, this vibrant event promises a memorable Independence Day weekend filled



with dazzling firework displays along our stunning beaches."

To experience a live choreographed music simulcast during the Freedom Rocks! and Star Spangled Spectacular firework shows, viewers can tune into Island 105.9 FM and Wild Willie 100.1 FM.

Please see below for details regarding Panama City Beach's Real. Fun. Fourth. Celebrations

including "Freedom Rocks," "Star Spangled Spectacular," "Light Up the Gulf," and "Light Up the Bay:"

Freedom Rocks! July 3 @ 9 p.m.

Make sure to stop by early and dine at one of the waterfront restaurants participating in Freedom Rocks. Take in the breathtaking sunset views

overlooking the Grand Lagoon Bridge before the fireworks illuminate the sky. You can also bring along a chair or blanket and relax on the lawn at Treasure Island Marina.

Star Spangled Spectacular July 4 @ 9:00 p.m.

Experience the ultimate Fourth of July celebration with the largest fireworks display on the Gulf Coast! Watch in awe as dueling fireworks launch from the City (Russell-Fields) and County (M.B. Miller) Piers. Guests are welcome to bring their beach chairs and are encouraged to arrive early to secure the best viewing spots. Locations: Russell-Fields City Pier (16201 Front Beach Rd.), M.B. Miller County Pier (12213 Front Beach Rd.).

Light Up the Gulf July 5 @ 8:30 p.m.

On Friday, July 5 at 8:30 p.m., Panama City Beach's largest, private fireworks show, "Light Up the Gulf," will decorate the night sky. The magic will take place behind the Boardwalk Beach Resort Condominium, and includes free entertainment, contests, and kids activities. Location: Boardwalk Beach Resort Hotel & Convention Center (9600 S. Thomas Dr.).

Light Up the Bay July 6 @ 8:30 p.m.

The celebrations continue Saturday, July 6 at 8:30 p.m. with the "Light Up the Bay" fireworks show at Papa Joe's Bayside. Guests can bring their own chair and enjoy a variety of food trucks, live music and dazzling fireworks. Location: Papa Joe's Bayside (4601 West US-98).



Panama City Beach FUN on the Agenda

By JACK SMITH, PUBLISHER

My phone rings several times a day with people asking “What’s the best thing to do in Panama City Beach?” This question has been covered by several articles over the years. We all know PCB is full of fun things to do. I decided to take a fresh approach, to summarize them and include places off the beaten path that are mostly known by locals. We are just getting started with this section, so look for more places each month. These are some of my favorites places. I will be on the lookout for the next undiscovered gem!



Have a Sunset Cocktail at The Reef Bar & Grill

The Reef Bar & Grill is home to the most beautiful sunsets on the Emerald Coast. The bar hangs over the white sand beach looking out over the turquoise water. It’s the best kept secret in town!

21905 Front Beach Road, PCB
(850) 234-5722
beachsideresortpanamacitybeach.com

Go Back to the Future at Funland Arcade & Snack Bar

Opening in 1953, Funland is the oldest arcade in Northwest Florida. This family oriented business has been a “must” stop for three generations of families visiting Panama City Beach. Funland has over 100 arcade games; from kiddie rides to some of your old favorites to the latest in high tech games. Funland has it all. Another well kept secret is the snack bar, specializing in Southern comfort food for over 50 years now.

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14510 Front Beach Road, PCB | (850) 234-3693
funland-arcade.weebly.com



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1711 Beach Park Trail, PCB
850-230-2080 | Info@panhandlehelicopter.com
panhandlehelicopter.com



PCB's Best Kept Secret: The Reef Bar & Grill

By JACK SMITH

The Reef Bar & Grill is located in Beachside Resort on Front Beach Rd. Is it a dive bar? Maybe the best dive bar that I have ever been to.

I hesitated to write this article for several reasons, all selfish. The Reef has limited seating both inside and outside on the front deck. It features the finest sunsets, including the very rare "green flash" which I have seen twice from the porch. The Reef is famous as a gathering place for locals, but seems to also be a hit with hotel guests who sit for hours listening to the locals tell "tall tales." The locals are happy to pontificate on a wide range of subjects including the best restaurants, night clubs and how to avoid the worst of the traffic.

Although The Reef is a locals bar, it's still one of the best-kept secrets on the beach. The bar actually hangs over the white sand beach looking over the turquoise water and offers panoramic views of both. Pivot your head to the next window and be rewarded with views of



the pool. The Reef features a laid-back attitude and needs a sign that says "No Shirt, No Shoes, No Problem."

There are plans to turn the upper deck into a new venue featuring live music on the weekends. The staff is friendly and the atmosphere very laid back. The bar food is just that, how-

ever, it's done well. The bar features a commercial-grade popcorn machine and soon to be added, a tabletop shuffleboard game. If you choose a more upscale place on 30A, well good, that just means more space for me and my friends. There is a new GM who seems to listen and has his own ideas on how



to improve the entire facility. Come meet the bar staff who have been there forever, and not only know your name, but what you are drinking. Come join us

at The Reef for cocktails and the world's finest sunsets. Hemingway would have been right at home.



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 Entertainment

2024 Gulf Coast Jam Wraps with Record Crowds

The sold-out 2024 Gulf Coast Jam Presented by Jim Beam wrapped up with stars glistening and music blaring. When the last note of Morgan Wallen's rousing set rang through the speakers, approximately 120,000 country music fans filled the festival grounds over four days to witness previous day's headliners Jelly Roll, Cody Johnson and Parker McCollum and more than 20 other artists. Jammers from all 50 states and 10 foreign countries descended on beautiful Panama City Beach for stunning beaches and the best country music.

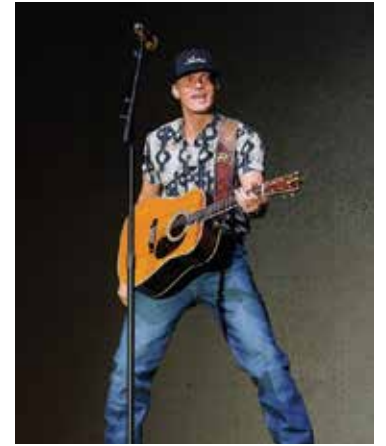
Each evening, 300 lighted, choreographed drones lit up



the night sky with messages celebrating country music, patriotism, and even spelled out the first headliner for 2025. Listed by Billboard as one of "The 10



Best Country Music Festivals," the Gulf Coast Jam Presented by Jim Beam launched in Panama City Beach in 2013. Organizers added an extra night of



PHOTOS: GULF COAST JAM

entertainment in 2022 to commemorate the festival's 10-year anniversary, which is now a permanent part of the schedule.

"We are so thankful to the artists, their teams, our crews who worked tirelessly behind the scenes and especially our Jammers for giving us a sold-out festival," said Gulf Coast Jam Presented by Jim Beam Executive Producer Rendy Lovelady. "We had an incredible four days and nights of music, and we can't wait to do it again next year!"

Parker McCollum headlined a beautiful opening night on Thursday and was preceded by Flatland Cavalry, Corey Kent, Sadie Bass and 2023 Jim Beam Welcome Sessions winner Midnight South. Jelly Roll's incredible Friday night performance showed why the music industry and fans are embracing his music and story. Russell Dickerson, Chase Matthew, Kidd G, Heartland and Shelby Darrall hit the stage earlier in the day.

After torrential rains drenched the festival grounds Saturday morning, Cody Johnson brought out the cowboy hats and country music with a rousing non-stop set that night. Billy Currington showed his staying power with a hit-filled set after Priscilla Block and Austin Snell performed. The weather unfortunately forced the cancellation of Peyton Porter and Chandler Flint's sets. Before Currington's show, Rendy Lovelady and Mark Shelton were joined on stage by Jim Beam's Eighth Generation Master Distiller Freddie Noe for a celebratory toast.

The festival grounds were packed wall-to-wall for Morgan Wallen's Sunday night performance. After vocal issues forced the rescheduling of Wallen's headline show last year, he did not disappoint with a 90-minute

set. Nate Smith, Shane Smith and the Saints, John Morgan, Deana Carter and 2024 Jim Beam Welcome Sessions winner Gage Cowart rounded out the lineup.

Friday afternoon, Gulf Coast Jam hosted Maj. Gen. Michael A. Valle, Air National Guard Assistant to the Commander, Continental United States North American Aerospace Defense Command Region (CONR) and First Air Force (Air Forces Northern & Air Forces Space) from Tyndall Air Force Base, as he administered the oath of enlistment to 15 new Airmen and Guardians on the massive stage.

Following the oath-taking, Valle introduced Technical Sgt. Melissa Lackore from the USAF Heritage of America Band from Langley AFB to sing National Anthem as the 85th Test and Evaluation Squadron from Eglin Air Force Base executed a spectacular flyover, featuring F-16 and F-15 fighter jets.

"This amazing team braves crazy Florida storms and heat to put on this incredible event," said Gulf Coast Jam Presented by Jim Beam COO Mark Sheldon. "We are thankful to Jim Beam and all of our sponsors, VisitPanamaCityBeach.com, and especially the city of Panama City Beach and our wonderful residents for supporting us year after year."

Four-day tickets for the 2025 Gulf Coast Jam are currently on sale at www.gulfcoastjam.com. Headliners and the full lineup will be announced in the coming weeks.

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Stealth Bitters!

BY CINDY MULLA

Northwest Florida is known for its beautiful topography, weather and bright sunny skies which offer year-round outdoor enjoyment for both residents and visitors until the perfect swarm arrives to take a bite out of your outdoor recreational fun or projects.

Yellow Flies:

The insect commonly referred to as the “yellow fly” emerges as a fierce biting adult as early as March, with peaking population numbers during the months of May through June and sometimes present through October. Their common name is due to the yellow color of their abdomen. These flies are active throughout the day. Depending on the Yellow Fly species, their peak activity time will vary from morning hours through the late afternoon. The adults prefer habitats with shady areas over bright, sunny locations. Their favorite natural places include along the outer border of woodland areas, ponds, springs, swamps, creeks, or rivers. On



cloudy days they tend to be more adventurous, leaving their natural habitats and encroaching upon your homefront. They are found near pools, under overhangs of buildings or inside garages. They are aggressive, vicious biters, and are known to chase and follow people into their cars or place of shelter.

Methods of personal protection include avoiding their habitats, especially during their peak season, and wearing special long-sleeved outdoor protective clothing and repellents. Prior to purchasing the repellent, read the label to see what insects it will repel. Before applying a repellent, read and follow the

label instructions and re-apply as recommended by the manufacturer. If you have any prior medical concerns about using a repellent, consult your medical physician first.

It is exceedingly difficult to mechanically or chemically control Yellow Fly populations because their life cycle begins in aquatic natural wetland

areas where treatment is not an option. Adulticides are not effective as they are with mosquitoes.

“No-See-Ums!!!”

These biting midges are commonly known as punkies, or sandflies. They are very stealthy and annoying because when you look to see what just bit you there is nothing there except for the inflicted bite site on your body. Another common name for this pest is “flying teeth” due to the way they feed with their long sharp scissor-like mandibles making a small cut into their victim’s skin. They also prefer warm weather and be-

gin to appear in large numbers in the spring. Biting midges are located along Florida’s coastal region, swamps, and salt marshes. Depending on the region of Florida you reside in or the area you are visiting, these blood-thirsty insects can be a pest during the late fall and winter months. Unseasonable warmer winter temperatures can prolong their activity.

Unlike the yellow fly, they prefer to bite during dusk and dawn hours just like mosquitoes and are sometimes mistaken for being a mosquito problem. They may also be of annoyance on calm overcast days or windless nights. Unfortunately, due to the extensive area to control biting midges plus their complete metamorphosis life cycle that occurs in the natural wetland breeding locations in Florida, treatment is impossible. Temperatures above 90 degrees normally will inhibit the biting midge problem.

Recommended biting midge prevention includes avoiding the outdoors during peak biting times, wearing repellents labeled

for biting midges, using specific gage screen materials specific to keep these pests away or using high velocity fans to increase airflow on porches or patios.

However, **mosquitoes** are still number one due to their public health concern of having the potential to spread harmful or deadly mosquito-borne diseases.

Mosquitoes are the world’s deadliest creatures. Accordingly, please do not hesitate to contact Beach Mosquito Control District to place your service request for all your mosquito concerns. Beach Mosquito Control District Contact Information: (850) 233-5030 or www.pcbeachmosquito.org

We base our science-based mosquito control methods and treatments on the number and location of service requests we receive from the public and our mosquito surveillance program. This service is made possible through levying local ad-valorem tax with no additional cost to you. So do not wait, contact us today!

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&

NO-SEE-UMS






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Wellness

Meet Your New BFF

BY JACK SMITH

If you live in Florida, there are a couple of things you must have: a great heating and air company and a great dermatology practice. Thankfully, I've got you covered on both: Modern Air to protect your heat pump and Coastal Skin Surgery and Dermatology to protect your skin.

If you live in PCB, meet Bridget Sullivan, certified Physician Assistant. Bridget has been practicing as a Dermatologist PA for over nine years. She is trained in medical, cosmetic, and procedural/ surgical dermatology. Take it from me, she is also a very nice person who is

not judgmental, but passionate about her patients. As an ocean lifeguard for over 10 years, you can only imagine the lectures I have received from dermatologists over the years including being asked to leave a practice because I was too tan. Bridget also takes pride in seeing patients' skin health improvement whether they're dealing with skin cancer, chronic rashes, or in search of a tailored anti-aging regimen. Bridget has been coming to PCB with her family since she was a kid and is now happy to call it home.

"After moving here I tried a larger practice, but quickly felt that I was being handled and



processed. Coastal Dermatology feels more like an old-fash-

ioned doctor's office where nobody is in a hurry and people actually listen. I almost hesitated

to write this article, as I feared that too many frustrated patients would respond and gum up the works," Bridget said.

Bridget holds a bachelor's degree in Clinic Lab sciences and a master's degree in PA studies, both from LSUHSC in New Orleans. She is certified by the National Commission of Physician Assistants (NCCPA) and is a member of the American Academy of PAs. In her spare time... she actually doesn't have any. If you love the great outdoors and the Florida beaches consider making Bridget your new BFF. I know I have.




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Introducing: SYNC Diagnostics and SYNC Laboratories

BY GREGG RENNER

“Where are patients able to get *same-day testing and results* for radiology and bloodwork that don’t require a trip to the emergency room?” That is a question that emergency room physicians ask themselves many times over. As ER physicians with decades of experience our founders saw countless examples of Florida patients who needlessly came to the ER only because they needed the diagnostics and answers quickly.

So they decided to do something about it. They founded SYNC Diagnostics and SYNC Laboratories, now located right next door to each other in Panama City Beach. These two affiliated locations operate independently but work in tight collaboration to provide fast, efficient answers to patients and to the physicians and providers who serve them. Clients who arrive are now able to get both lab tests and radiology tests in one convenient visit.

These first locations, opened in August, are equipped with some of the latest testing and



analytics technology available. SYNC Diagnostics offers a wide range of CT Scan, Ultrasound and X-ray testing. Their state-of-the-art Philips 128 slice scanner allows them to capture images at a much faster speed, minimizing the patient’s time on the table. In fact, many of the tests take less than 3 minutes of operation to complete, so patients are tested and on their way quickly.

On the SYNC Laboratories

side, the analysis equipment on-site is equipped with a wide array of test capabilities, enabling them to complete most of their tests on the premises, and on the same day that the blood samples are drawn. So for patients and physicians looking for fast answers, they offer an almost unparalleled local capability. Locals have already seen the benefits of this affordable alternative.

Physician Dr. Jonathan Jung recently wrote:

“As a physician ... I send spe-

cial cases over here due to the professionalism that was shown to me. Trudy and Dr. Rich have been absolutely amazing to me. Dr. Rich went over complex cases with me that I found to be extremely helpful. Lastly, it’s extremely helpful that they are bilingual in Spanish and English because 50 percent of our patients are Spanish speaking.”

And Megan Sweeney, a recent patient posted this:

“...the two ladies that were working the front desk and that performed my ultrasound were

some of the nicest that I have met in the medical profession. They worked so well and waited for a referral from my doctor... to try and save me money. If you were paying out of pocket, their prices are very good. I will go by and see them again and again!”

Recently SYNC Laboratories also added the capability to do mobile phlebotomy. That means if you are an organization or a business that has a need for group or recurring testing they will send the phlebotomist to your location, collect all the samples, and then return the results for all the most common tests the following day.

Their stated mission is: “To deliver financially responsible, industry-leading diagnostics with compassion, trustworthiness, and expertise that will accelerate patient care, wellness, and well-being.”

Based on the reviews, they already seem to be doing a great job. When you need testing and diagnostics with a fast turnaround, the Emerald Coast now has a new solution.

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Beat the Heat: How to Cool Down Your Conflicts



By JAMIE C. WILLIAMSON, PhD

Couples tend to have more heated conflict when it's hot outside.

Hot temperatures interfere with mindful, sensible thinking because when we are overheated, our bodies automatically spend energy to cool down. Much of that energy comes from the prefrontal cortex, which is the front part of our brain that helps us self-regulate. When this happens, we are less able to keep our aggressive impulses in check.

Couples impacted by work or parenting stress and those that are exhausted also have more heated conflict. Like being physically overheated, psychological stress and physical exhaustion create heightened physiological arousal that interferes with mindful, constructive responses

and leads to the more automatic "fight or flight" response. During heated relationship conflict we default to either (a) an attack and defend response or (b) shutdown and withdraw response.

So, when it's hot out (like it is now), or when you and/or your partner are stressed or exhausted, you are more likely to feel overwhelmed and have a difficult time expressing your own negative emotions constructively or dealing with your partner's negative emotions rationally.

Rest assured these types of emotional and physiological responses during arguments are completely normal and predictable.

Thankfully, if you pay attention to your own body, you can learn to recognize the first signs of this negative arousal and take self-corrective action BEFORE you become overwhelmed and "flooded" with hard-to-control emotions.

How to Cool Down Conflicts and Stop Flooding

Learn to identify the early warning signs of being emotionally overwhelmed or "flooded." The first signs that your negative arousal is too high will be unique to you but

will likely include the common classic symptoms like: sweating, racing or pounding heartbeat, gritted teeth, shortness of breath, queasy stomach, or your mind is spinning.

The instant you sense the presence of one of your early warning signs, STOP the discussion and ask to take a break. All your flooding signals will interfere with your ability to mindfully process information or pay attention. Instead, you will respond reflexively and either lash out with harsh words or shut down. Either of these reactions will likely invite equally negative, matching responses from your partner. To prevent this negative spiral and its aftermath, you must notice your early signs of flooding, put a stop to the conversation, and take a break.

Take a break for at least 20 minutes. The purpose of the break is to give you an opportunity to calm down. During this time, do something that occupies your attention and is self-soothing. You might listen to music or a podcast, walk the dog, take a bath, read, meditate, or complete a mindless task. Whatever you choose to do, be sure to do it alone, and avoid thoughts of righteous indignation and innocent victimhood.



Avoid playing out the rest of your conflict through "imaginary interaction" with your partner. Just chill.

Don't start your break by storming out of the room and slamming the door or trying to get the last word in before you take a cool-down break. That will add fuel to an already heated argument.

Instead, respectfully communicate your need to calm down. Explain that you are feeling overwhelmed and need a break. Be sure to say where you are going and when you will be back.

Say something like: I'm starting to feel too upset to be rational about this and I am afraid I'll say something that I will regret. So, I'm going to walk the dog around our usual path. When I get back, I'll be ready to pick this up again.

If your partner is flooding, suggest that "we" take a break. You likely recognize your partner's early warning signs of flooding. The minute you sense one of those signals, stop the discussion and say that

that "we" need to take a break.

Avoid calling attention to your partner's negative behavior. And avoid saying "I think you're getting too emotional. You should take a break."

Instead, say "Sweetheart, we're getting more heated up than we should over this. Let's take a break and come back to this in about an hour, then we can figure it all out."

There are many ways for you and your partner to calm down and sooth each other. Find something meaningful, enriching, and enjoyable that really helps center you.

Of course, on an ideal, cool weather, low stress day, you would plan an enjoyable, calming activity together BEFORE you have a serious discussion.

But, in the heat of the summer, when life's stressors get the best of one or both of you, the most that you can expect of yourselves is to stop the flooding before it gets out of hand.

Let me know if I can help.

Jamie C. Williamson, PhD is a FL Supreme Court Certified Family Mediator and Couples Counselor who is part of the Gottman Referral Network. She is an owner and partner at Amity Mediation Workshop, a mediation practice specializing in "friendly divorce" mediation and psycho-educational counseling for couples. Dr. Jamie speaks frequently on relationship topics and authors the blog "Work it Out." You can find her online at amitymediationworkshop.com.

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By SEAN DIETRICH

A television is playing in a Birmingham bar. The talking head is shouting politics. Most folks in this joint are below thirty, and aren't even watching TV. They're transfixed with the opiate glows of their smartphones.

The bartender looks thirteen. He stares at the television screen and says something under his breath. Something sad.

"This country sucks, man."

I know he probably doesn't mean it. He's just upset. But it stings just the same, and I wish he wouldn't say such things.

Still, maybe it's not his fault. I don't know what his story is, I don't know what his beliefs are, but perhaps this boy has missed a few uniquely American blessings in his accumulated years of harrowed wisdom.

Maybe if he could see a few wondrous things in this country he'd change his opinion about us.

Perhaps he's never seen things like big, neon-pink azaleas bright enough to give you trouble breathing. Those don't suck.

Neither do the Waffle Houses lining the interstates. The shoebox buildings with the canary-yellow tops and the interior globe lights over the faux-wood tables. Nothing sucks about those. I've neither had a bad meal at such an establishment, nor bad service. And no matter which season I visit a Waffle House, it is always cold enough inside to hang meat.

The Everglades at sunrise, no sucking there. The Suwannee River definitely doesn't suck. The fat-bottomed cypress trees, swollen with bayou water. Span-

ish moss—which, as it turns out, is neither moss, nor Spanish.

My bartender needs to see these things. They would bless his heart.

If you ask me, the boy needs to ride a riverboat on the Mighty Missouri at dusk, watch the shrimp trawlers combing Lake Pontchartrain. Or listen to stories from the roughnecks who raised beef in Ottawa County, Oklahoma. He should meet the roughnecks who farmed the oyster beds of the Apalachicola Bay.

And he needs smoked ribs from Kendall's Barbecue in Georgiana, Alabama. Food that comes out of that tin shack is worth crying over.

He needs to witness Charleston at sunrise. Yellowstone at sundown. He deserves the right to see the outerbanks of The Old North State.

What the kid needs is county fairs, livestock exhibitions, and children with prize-winning show hogs.

A porterhouse in Kansas City. The Copper Art Museum in Clarkdale, Arizona. A hot-air balloon flight over the Appalachians. A ballgame at Fenway. The little horserace they do each year at Churchill Downs.

String bands, playing beneath festival tents. Gospel music with Hammond organs. Music from the bayou played on button accordions by men with white hair.

Jazz.

The kid needs to hold a butter-yellow Case XX knife in his hand. And he ought to own at least one Stetson to keep the sun out of his eyes. He needs to taste chicken and dumplings prepared by a woman who has raised seven kids without the support of a husband.

He needs to meet the Walmart greeter named Phillip. The hospice chaplain named Marge. The family therapist named Jason. He deserves to meet the truck drivers, the pipefitters, the songwrit-

ers, the storytellers, the novelists, the oil painters, the shipbuilders, the dentists, the hair stylists, the brewmasters, and the small-town principals named Barbara.

I wish I could take this kid to a Church of God chapel in Senoia, Georgia. Or perhaps a Catholic Mass in Valentine, Nebraska. Or a synagogue in Yonkers. Or the Green Cove Missionary Baptist Church in Damascus, Virginia. Or the Thai temple in Fort Walton Beach, Florida.

I wish I could take him to any church house that backs up to a hayfield. The quintessential American rural congregational house. The kinds of assemblies that pepper this country from Missoula to Uvalde.

And I'd like to carry the kid to an American funeral. Like my grandmother's service. Wherein a string of a million-and-three cars drove with their headlights on. I'd like the boy to attend an honest-to-goodness repast, and eat the food of grieving people.

I'd like him to receive a hug from an elderly Norwegian woman in Minnesota. I'd like



him to taste pierogies in Lancaster County. Chilaquiles verdes in Taos. Crab cakes in Baltimore.

I don't care what the suits on television say, kid. Don't believe them. Yes, we have problems in this nation. Yes, we have haters. Yes, we're a gigantic dysfunctional family fit for an episode of Jerry Springer. Yes, we have division.

But we also have pediatric oncologists, Fort Bragg, national park rangers, historic sod cabins, longleaf forests, Pikes Peak and

James Brown. The sandstone arches of Moab. The beach bungalows of O'ahu. The 960,000 acres of remaining American prairieland. We have nurses, EMTs, special-ed teachers, janitors, meat-packers, cab drivers and bartenders. That's us.

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Sean Dietrich is a writer, humorist, novelist, and biscuit connoisseur, known for his commentary and stories on life in the American South.

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A Minister's Message: Jesus Does Not Want to Harm You... But to Bless You!

BY DR. KERRY KNIGHT,
EMERALD BEACH CHURCH
OF CHRIST

"For I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord, "plans to prosper you and not

to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future."

(Jeremiah 29:11, NIV)

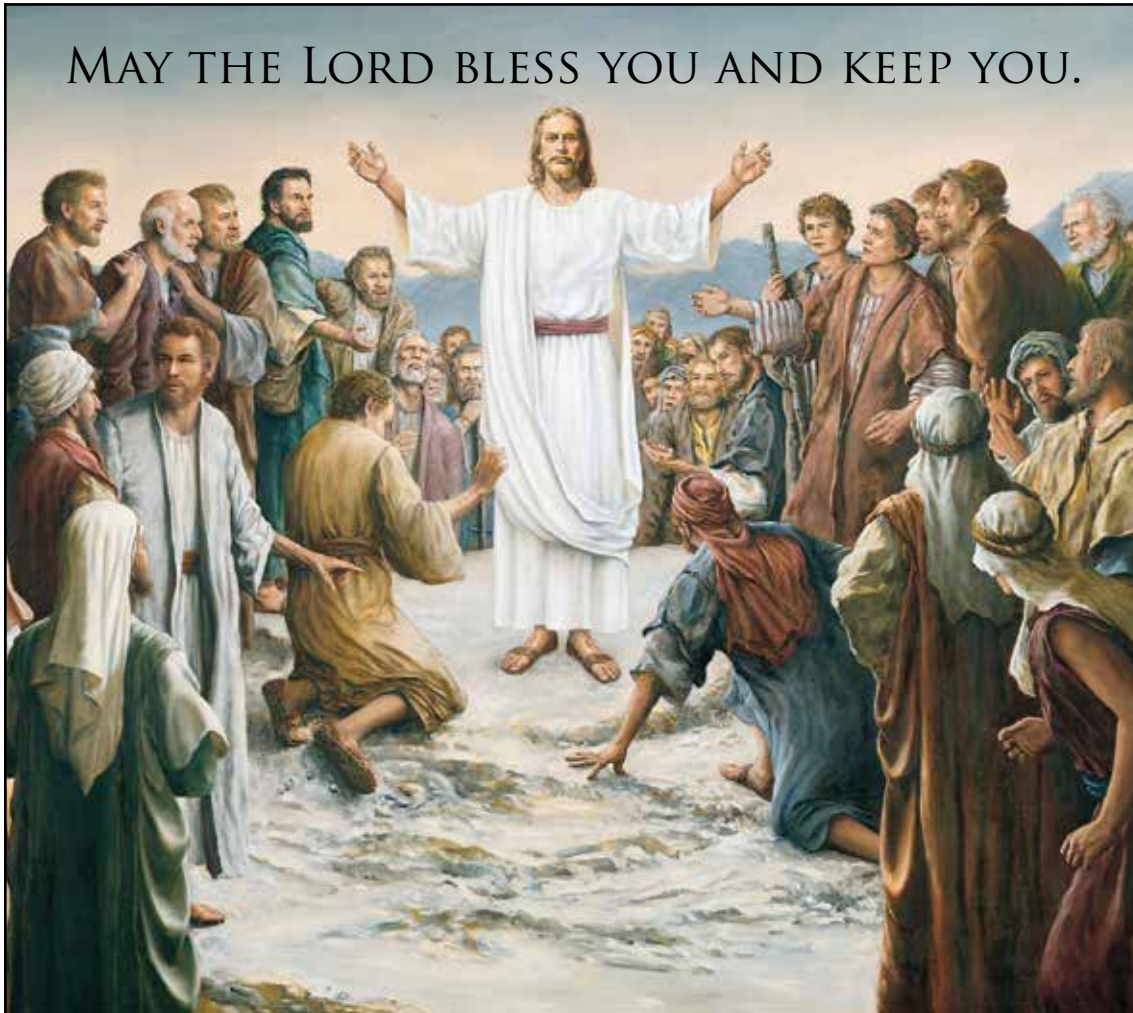
Many people want to blame God for every misfortune that comes their way. Ancient Is-



ing the pagan gods of Ahab and Jezebel. Though being long-suffering and giving Israel plenty of time to repent, His patience was exhausted. He then allowed the king of Babylon to plunder Jerusalem and take the people captive for 70 years. As in our text above, some would view God as trying to hurt them or even destroy them. They were very wrong in that analysis. God was their Father, only seeking to bring them back to Him.

"As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent." Revelation 3:19 God brought them back home again, with the promise of the coming Messiah. Our journey with God today is much the same. He offers us HOPE and a BRIGHT FUTURE, if we will only seek Him. He has a plan for your life. Why not make Him your Lord, Yahweh. Jesus, after His resurrection said, "He that believes and is baptized shall be saved." (Mark 16:16)

rael was just that way. Defeated, dejected and demoralized, God's people found themselves in a strange land after being removed from their homeland and enslaved by the Babylonians. They never seemed to realize that their unwanted circumstance was of their own doing. God had given Israel God's commandments from the tablets of Moses. Prominent among them were the words, "Thou shalt have no other gods before me." God's special name for His people was Yahweh, and He promised to guide them, protect them and provide for them. He, in turn, required respect and obedience. However, in just a short time after entering the promised land, the people of Yahweh began worship-



MAY THE LORD BLESS YOU AND KEEP YOU.

Our journey with Christ offers hope and a bright future; if we will seek Him. Trust Him, He has a plan for your life. After resurrection, He said "He that believes in me and is baptized shall be saved." (Mark 16:16)

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Renovating a Small Kitchen for More Space and Functionality

By AUBRIE ROUNDS,
MARKETING COORDINATOR,
FLOORING DEPOT OF PANAMA
CITY

It has been said that good things come in small packages. This is even more true if you have a small living or kitchen space. Keeping it functional and maximizing space, but trendy and stylish can be a challenge, but it can be done very well. With the right planning and thoughtful design, even the smallest kitchens can be optimized.

We spoke with our resident expert, Jason Havens, who has numerous years of building experience and is currently serving as the lead in the kitchen and bathroom design department, about how to create a small, cohesive, and highly functional space. Here are some of his most useful tips.

1. Install Custom Cabinetry

Custom cabinetry is an excel-



Before

lent way to utilize every inch of available space. Unlike standard cabinets, custom options can be tailored to fit unusual spaces and maximize storage. Consider installing cabinets that extend to the ceiling, providing storage for less frequently used items at the top. Include features like pull-out shelves, corner carousels, and deep drawers to enhance functionality.

“Custom cabinetry allows you to make the most of every nook and cranny,” says Havens. “It’s especially useful in small kitchens where standard sizes just don’t fit well.”



After

2. Add a Kitchen Island

If space permits, a kitchen island can be a versatile addition. Even a small, narrow island can provide extra counter space and storage. Look for islands with built-in storage, such as shelves or drawers, to further enhance their utility.

“A kitchen island can be a

game-changer, adding both workspace and storage. Consider a portable or rolling island that can be moved when not in use,” Havens advises.

3. Optimize Corner Space

Corners are often underutilized in small kitchens. Install corner cabinets with pull-out

shelves or a Lazy Susan to make the most of these areas. Another option is corner drawers that extend diagonally, providing accessible storage. Utilizing corner space effectively can significantly increase your kitchen’s storage capacity.

Continued on page 29



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Design and Culture: **Decorative Arts**

We just finished up this lovely project of cabinets and countertops and while working, I met the artist Krista Vind. Her innovative creativity and her artistic inclusion of textures throughout the home made the spaces on this project stand out. The cabinetry in this kitchen already had a lovely texture of oyster-painted oak selected by our client, but the textures Krista used to accent the cabinetry really made for a stunning look. Krista painted the beautiful knee wall using metallic paints and transformed the wall in the dining room using plaster and metallic waxes. Both works of art are unique and bring energy and a modern touch to the spaces. I love what Krista did with the light switches too, hiding them so they wouldn't take away from the beautiful marble backsplash tile. Krista also refurbished the vanity using plaster, silver leaf, and lightly tinted waxes, just stunning.

Krista Vind has been a resident of the Gulf Coast for over 30 years. She is an accomplished artist that has traveled the country working as a field decorative artisan and also an instructor of decorative arts, teaching everything from fine art to custom finishes for furniture. Passing her gifts along, she has taught hundreds of art



students over the years, many of whom have successfully gone on to be art instructors themselves. You can follow her work on Facebook, Artists Warehouse of South Walton, and Instagram, [@kristavindstudiogallery.com](https://www.instagram.com/kristavindstudiogallery.com). If you are interested in a custom piece for your home, contact Krista at kkvind@gmail.com or visit the Artists Warehouse of South Walton located at HWY 393 in Santa Rosa Beach where her studio and gallery are located.

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Interest Rates and the Economy

soon. That produces a lot of downside volatility in the markets as investors react. That's why we believe it is important to limit risk in the current period. There is a silver lining though! Higher rates may also present opportunities for investors, as rates are nearing a 20-year high in the CD, annuity, and note market.

As the fed rate increases, so do rates on CDs, notes, annuities, bonds, and money markets. At Gulf Financial, we have been aggressively buying these instruments for our clients as rates have peaked above 6% for many of these investments! The time to buy this type of fixed income investment is NOW! We have a brief window, perhaps only a few months to seize these high rates before they go down again. Once the Fed gets into a reduction cycle to stave off recession, interest rates on investments will plummet. We will continue to buy high rate fixed income products for our clients while we can because it isn't likely to last.

As 2024 has shown, monthly economic data can be noisy, signaling a strong trend one month and then the opposite trend the

next month, causing investors great confusion. At Gulf Financial, we perceive a significant amount of risk in the market. The smart play for retirees may be to reduce risk by moving to higher rate fixed income products now.

If you would like to see a cur-

rent list of what is available in our fixed income market, call Rhonda (833) 403-4041 or visit gulffinancialgroup.com.

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The economy and Federal Reserve Policy are in focus today for savvy investors who are analyzing every new data point to determine the trend. Labor market and inflation data are considered most relevant because the Fed aims for maximum employment and stable prices. Softer labor market data and lower inflation are viewed as pulling forward rate cuts, while stronger labor market data and higher inflation delay the expected timing of cuts.

What we see so far in 2024 is that the combination of lower unemployment and unchanged inflation signals a stronger labor market and sticky inflation. In short, that makes it difficult for the Fed to reduce rates any time

SMALL KITCHEN

continued from page 27

"Don't let corners go to waste," says Havens. "There are innovative solutions like corner pull-outs that can maximize these awkward spaces."

4. Use Reflective Surfaces

"Reflective surfaces can do wonders in making a small kitchen feel more expansive," says Havens. Reflective surfaces can create an illusion of more space. So, consider glossy or glass tile backsplashes, stainless steel appliances, and high-gloss cabinet finishes when thinking about your design.

5. Implement Open Shelving

Replacing upper cabinets with open shelving can make a kitchen feel more open and spacious. Use open shelves to store everyday items that you want to keep within easy reach. This also allows you to showcase attractive dishware and adds a decorative element to your kitchen.

"Open shelving is great for both storage and display. Be mindful not to overcrowd the shelves though so that you maintain an uncluttered look," Havens advises.

6. Create a Functional Layout

"A well-planned layout is crucial in a small kitchen," advises Havens. "Consider the classic kitchen work triangle (sink, stove, and refrigerator) to ensure efficient movement. Galley kitchens, with cabinets and appliances on opposite walls, can be highly efficient." If possible, removing a wall to create an open-plan layout can significantly enhance the sense of space.

Renovating a small kitchen requires a blend of creativity and practicality. Thoughtful design choices and innovative solutions can transform your small kitchen into a spacious, efficient, and stylish heart of your home.



Call the lifeguard.

At Gulf Financial, we are passionate about preventing the catastrophic effects of large market drawdowns during retirement. Find out how we use a sophisticated mix of financial instruments to reduce risk without sacrificing growth.

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Business

GCSC Receives \$24.3 Million Triumph Gulf Coast Grant to Expand Nursing, Health Sciences and Public Safety Programs

Gulf Coast State College is the recipient of a \$24.3 million grant from Triumph Gulf Coast, dedicated to expanding its nursing, health sciences, and public safety programs.

The funding will support the development of a simulation center on Gulf Coast's Panama City campus that will feature state-of-the-art technology and virtual reality training, encouraging hands-on skills, critical thinking, and inter-professional collaboration.

The new facility will increase enrollment capacity in Gulf Coast's nursing, health sciences, and public safety programs, addressing a critical community need for healthcare profession-



als and first responders, and support economic growth as these trained individuals enter the workforce. It will increase the capacity for training associate degree RNs, RN-BSN, respiratory care, RN-First Assistant,

and EMT/paramedic students. "We are incredibly grateful for this grant from Triumph Gulf Coast," said GCSC President Glen McDonald. "This funding will not only allow us to enhance our facilities but also

expand our nursing, healthcare, and public safety programs to meet the growing needs of our community and workforce."

In addition to expanding its health sciences degree and cer-

tificate programs, the simulation center will also offer space for continuing education and leadership training for healthcare professionals looking to stay current on their training and progress in their careers.

Gulf Coast will be adding faculty and staff to its health sciences, nursing, and public safety divisions as these programs expand. As jobs become available, they will be posted on gulfcoast.peopleadmin.com/postings/search.

For more information, please contact Dr. Keri Matheus, kmatheus@gulfcoast.edu, (850) 769-1551, ext. 6695.

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From the Office of Congressman Neal Dunn

impact on our kids. We must ensure that America's youth have access to the quality care they need to unlock their full potential.

Getting Floridians the care they deserve means cutting bureaucratic red tape that can complicate the care process. Last week, the Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Health passed my bill that will increase access to essential screenings for prostate and other cancers, Alzheimer's, and Parkinson's. My bill, the FIND Act, will empower doctors and patients with the ability to determine the correct diagnosis early and prevent delayed or inaccurate screenings that can have disastrous consequences. When we avoid unnecessary and inappropriate treatment due to inaccurate scans, Medicare saves money. More importantly, when a physician can obtain an accurate diagnosis, we can achieve the best outcomes for patients. I'm thrilled that this bill has passed this important hurdle, and I look forward to expanding access to these potentially

life-saving scans.

Healthcare is just one aspect of my work in Congress. Over the coming weeks, I hope to pass legislation that will require states to obtain proof of citizenship before voting, improve person-to-person firearm trans-

actions, and hold the Administration accountable for its failure to send aid to Israel. I am also in contact with state and local authorities as our entire district deals with the fallout from recent storm damage. Please know that I am monitoring the

situation and working with local officials to coordinate recovery efforts. As I continue my legislative work over the coming weeks, please don't hesitate to reach out if you have questions or would like to leave a comment by calling (202) 225-5235.

During my time in Washington, I've made it my mission to put power back in the hands of doctors and patients to ensure they have access to the best care possible. In March, I introduced the Improving CARE for Youth Act, which allows for same-day billing for mental health services for youth Medicaid beneficiaries. Our youth's mental health is worse than it's ever been, especially following the destructive COVID-19 lockdowns. Protecting the future of the youth in our country is too important to be held up by Medicaid billing restrictions. Fixing same-day billings for Medicaid beneficiaries may seem like a small change, but it will have a huge

St. Andrew and St. Joseph Bays Estuary Program Completes Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan

The St. Andrew and St. Joseph Bays Estuary Program celebrated a significant milestone this month with the completion of the Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan (CCMP). This plan serves as the organization's guiding document and blueprint for the next 10 years and sets forth 28 actions to preserve and enhance the health of the bays over the next decade.

The Estuary Program began working on the plan in earnest in 2022. The plan's development involved extensive collaboration, research and input from field experts, local

stakeholders and community members. It outlines 14 goals across four focus areas with 28 actions to tackle that address priority issues identified by the community. These actions will require cross-jurisdictional collaborations and significant resources secured to benefit the entire watershed.

"The adopted CCMP represents the result of an extensive and collaborative process that involved representatives of numerous agencies, municipalities, businesses, corporations and citizens," said Jessica Graham, Ph.D., the Estuary Program executive director.

"This process was one of the most challenging yet rewarding to be a part of from start to finish. I greatly appreciate the time and energy that so many put into the creation of this beautiful document that contains a path forward to ensure protection of our natural resources that are integral to our economic sustainability."

For more information about the Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan or to get involved with the Estuary Program, visit the website, SASJBEP.org.

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