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# PCB Life

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## Redfish Returns

Did you know Historic Downtown Panama City is home to one of only two documentary film festivals in the Southeast U.S.?

Redfish Film Fest – in its second year – is on track to become the premier event of its kind in this area. Last year was a smash, and festival organizers say they have more films and immersive live events planned for this year.

“We were awed how people embraced Redfish in its first year,” said Kevin Elliott, Director of Redfish. Elliot moved to Panama City in 1988, at the age of 13, and was smitten. A life-long arts kid, he has always wanted to help build arts and culture in Panama City like he sees in the big cities he visits with his film company, Wewa Films.

“Our town and people helped us make this what it was. We are thrilled and honored to do it again.”

This year’s fest happens April 24-27 in Historic Downtown Panama City. The fest will be screening at five venues this year – Panama City Center for the Arts, Down-



town Boxing Club, Mosey’s, Gallery of Art and Bay County Historical Museum – with more than 60 documentaries and immersive arts events



happening each night. Redfish is not a typical film festival. Its signature evening arts events are not usually seen at film festivals.

“Last year we had a 3D projection art block party, a blues jam, a Redfish comedy show, and bourbon tastings,” Elliott said. “Our arts community gathered round us and helped make Redfish so much better. It’s happening again this year.”

In addition to documen-

**REDFISH**  
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## Mattie Kelly Arts Foundation Calls for Artists for the 30th Annual Festival of the Arts



The Mattie Kelly Arts Foundation (MKAF) is now accepting artist applications for the 30th Annual Festival of the Arts, one of the most anticipated art festivals in the Southeast. This juried fine arts show will take place October 25-26, 2025, on the Dugas Pavilion green in Destin.

Celebrating three decades of artistic excellence, the Festival of the Arts features more than 100 premier

**MKAF**  
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# Community

## REDFISH

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taries, Redfish will have an opening night party on April 24 called From Bayou to Beyond that celebrates Panama City's past, present, and future. Friday, April 25 includes an "urban fantasy street party" called Storyteller's Row that will feature musicians, light projections, and a nighttime art market from local group Trash Market, all in downtown's Gateway and McKenzie Parks.

That same night, local haunt Mosey's will host a concert by Matt Siegel Music called Music in the Movies, then Panama City Comedy will host its Redfish Comedy Showcase.



Saturday night, April 26 will see Masque of the Red Death, a "dark masquerade party" based on the short story by Edgar Allen Poe.

The Redfish team have a brunch planned for Sunday, April 27 that includes a boat



journey across St. Andrews Bay to Papa Joe's Bayside, where guests will be entertained with a true crime adventure.

But why documentaries only?

Redfish co-founder and head programmer, Lex Benedict, said it comes down to real stories about real people. Benedict is a

producer, editor, and VFX artist who has been working professionally in L.A. for over two decades. She has spearheaded the post-production and delivery process of over twenty feature-length films, several docu-series, music videos, shorts and branded content distributed

on platforms such as Array for Netflix, HBO/MAX, HULU, BuzzFeed, Billboard, FOX, COMPLEX and Amazon.

"In the end, Redfish is about people and their stories," Benedict said. "Personal stories are our most treasured possessions as humans. We want Redfish to be a place where people can share their stories, celebrate them, and create some new chapters with us."

For more information on Redfish Film Fest or to buy tickets, visit www.redfishfilmfest.com. Volunteers interested in assisting with set-up April 19-27 can email Lex Benedict at lex@redfishfilmfest.com for more information.

## MKAF

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artists from across the country, offering attendees an immersive experience of fine art, live music, and interactive activities for all ages. The event includes a beer and wine garden, a live entertainment lineup, "street" performers, and engaging art activities for children—all narrated by a professional emcee.

Artists are invited to apply for this juried show, which awards more than \$12,000 in cash prizes, including Best in Show, People's Choice, Awards of Excellence, Awards of Merit, and Judge's Recognition Awards. A variety of mediums will be showcased, including painting, drawing, printmaking, photography, digital art, sculpture, ce-



ramics, fiber, glass, wood, jewelry, mixed media, and more.

The Festival of the Arts provides a prime opportunity for artists to showcase and sell their work to an audience of more than 6,000 art enthusiasts and collectors. Participants benefit from inclusion in the offi-

cial festival guide, both in print and digital formats, with artist contact details featured in the Artist Preview. MKAF offers exceptional artist hospitality, including free admission to the kickoff party Friday (optional), complimentary breakfast each morning and a special artist



award dinner on Saturday evening. Artists also enjoy easy, drive-up access for booth setup and teardown, free on-site parking, booth sitters, and overnight security.

Artists must submit four high-resolution images, including three of their work and one of their booth setup, for jury consideration. The application fee is \$30 per category. Booth fees are \$350 for a single space, \$400 for a corner space (limited availability), and \$700 for a double space (limited availability). The deadline to apply is June 30, 2025, with jury results announced in mid-July.

Proceeds fund the MKAF's community outreach mission to provide cultural outreach programs serving K-12 students, individuals with special needs, and active-duty military and veterans in our community.

For full details on artist participation, rules, and applications, visit www.MKAF.org or contact (850) 650-2226 or info@mkaf.org.

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# PCB Activates Tough Spring Break Rules

BY ED OFFLEY

Police Chief J.R. Talamantez was blunt: "If you are committing crimes, you are going to be held accountable."

As 2025 Spring Break got underway in March, Panama City Beach officials geared up for the massive influx of college students with a set of regulations aimed at thwarting unlawful behavior and spontaneous mass gatherings that pose a potential for violence.

Their goal is to prevent a repeat of the widespread chaos that engulfed the city during Spring Break three years ago that was sparked by an out-of-state social media campaign calling for a "Panamaniac" invasion of the Beach. The unsanctioned event attracted several thousand young people, and the city was rocked over a 48-hour period by scores of criminal incidents ranging from mass looting to public drug dealing and assaults.

Talamantez announced on March 17 that the city was activating one of its toughest Spring Break restrictions, clearly marked "Special Event Zones"

in two sections of Panama City Beach that have experienced disorderly conduct in recent years.

As authorized under Florida law, within the zones local law enforcement officials may impose double penalties for traffic violations; impound vehicles in traffic infractions at owner's cost, and charge the organizer of any unpermitted special event for expenses the city incurs related to law enforcement, fire rescue services and medical responses.

The two "Special Event Zones" are (1) the area north of the Russell-Fields City Pier, including Pier Park and North Pier Park, and (2) a swath of the tourist district generally between Richard Jackson Boulevard on the west, and Joan Avenue on the east, running inland from South Thomas Drive to Panama City Beach Parkway. The zones were ordered to be in effect during March 20-25.

The areas are clearly marked with notification signs on all streets along their perimeters.

In addition, the city and Bay

County activated their annual seasonal Spring Break restrictions effective March 14 that will remain in effect until April 30. These include:

- \* Banning alcohol on the sandy beach (both in the city and unincorporated Bay County);
- \* No alcohol sales after 2 a.m.;
- \* No consuming alcohol in parking lots

Officials also closed two portions of the sandy beach between 10 p.m. and 4 a.m. to prevent "flash mob" events along the waterfront. One area is located between Beach Access 25 and Beach Access 36. The second area encompasses the Russell-Fields City Pier, with the beach closed between Beach Access 85 to the east side of Calypso Beach Resort.

Talamantez told PCB Life he is confident the "Special Event Zones" and seasonal beach ruled will have "a meaningful impact" in reducing unlawful behavior. "These measures create clear expectations for visitors, allowing law enforcement to take proactive steps in ad-



dress violations before they escalate," he said.

While saying it was still too early to discuss specific crime statistics at the end of March, Talamantez said that "initial re-

ports suggest that the enhanced enforcement strategies, including the special event zones and beach rules, are having a positive impact."

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# PCB Chamber New Member Spotlight



## Introducing: Flippin' Awesome Adventures - Dolphin Tours with a "Porpoise"

By CAPT. CHRIS FARLEY,  
MARINE BIOLOGIST, DOLPHIN  
WHISPERER, TOUR GUIDE  
EXTRAORDINAIRE

Flippin' Awesome Adventures is Panama City Beach's only marine eco tour run by a marine biologist—and let me tell you, we are all about flippin' awesome fun on the water!

I started Flippin' Awesome Adventures a few years ago with a simple goal: to give families and visitors an unforgettable, hands-on experience while learning and educating them about our local wildlife. I've always been passionate about marine life, and after years of

studying and working in marine biology, I wanted to share that love and knowledge with others in a way that's exciting, educational, and most importantly—fun for all ages.

We offer private, small-group boat tours focused on dolphin watching, snorkeling, shelling, and exploring the white sandy shores of Shell Island. But we're not just a sightseeing tour—we're an immersive marine experience. Every tour (currently) is guided by me, a marine biologist with years of experience, and I make it a point to educate guests about the incredible wildlife we encounter, from playful

dolphins and sea turtles to delicate sand dollars and colorful fish. We believe in responsible eco-tourism, so we always prioritize the safety and wellbeing of the animals and ecosystems we explore.

Our motto is simple: "marine fun with a purpose." It's about creating lasting memories for families while instilling a sense of appreciation and respect for the ocean. Whether it's a child holding a sea star for the first time or a parent snorkeling alongside their kids in the crystal-clear waters, those moments are what it's all about.

As a local business, we're proud to serve the Panama City Beach community by promoting sustainable tourism and supporting local conservation efforts. We partner with local schools and organizations to offer educational outreach and marine science experiences. It's important to us that our tours not only entertain but inspire future generations to care about and protect our coastal resources.



We've been blessed with incredible support from both visitors and locals, and we're committed to giving back by providing top-notch service, unforgettable tours, and a little extra knowledge with every adventure. Plus, we keep it lighthearted and fun—you might learn some marine biology, but you'll also laugh, splash, and

make memories to last a lifetime.

If you're looking for a unique way to experience Panama City Beach, come join us for a Flippin' Awesome Adventure. We'd love to have you aboard!

Learn more about Flippin' Awesome Adventures on their website, [www.flippinawesomeadventures.com](http://www.flippinawesomeadventures.com).

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# PCB Chamber New Member Spotlight



## Introducing: Bay Limousine

Bay Limousine, founded in 1990 in Dothan, Alabama, has since expanded to Northwest Florida, serving hundreds of clients annually. With this expansion, Bay Limousine has established itself as a premier provider on the Emerald Coast. Our commitment to exceptional customer service and client well-being is the cornerstone of our operations.

We take pride in our drivers, who undergo extensive training and consistently maintain a professional demeanor. They adhere to the highest standards of discretion and privacy, ensuring that our clients are treated with the utmost respect. Reservation agents are available 24/7 to book your transportation or answer any questions by email or by phone. Our fleet includes over ten luxurious vehicles, offering top-quality limousine



Ray Valverde has been a driver for Bay Limo for three years.

and is dedicated to reflecting this through excellent service. We provide VIP Sedans and SUVs, elegant stretch limousines, VIP Buses, and Charter Buses for larger groups, making your travel experience seamless and unforgettable, regardless of party size. Get the fun started for everyone with a ride in one of our stretch SUVs like our Hummer H2 or GMC Yukon



services at competitive rates for corporate events and special occasions alike.

Bay Limousine can get you anywhere you want to go along Florida's gorgeous Hwy 30A. Luxurious resorts, amazing artists, and world-class golf can all be found along the Gulf Coast. From fresh seafood to good music, Bay Limousine knows all the hotspots.

Whether you are visiting for business or planning a memorable event, our primary focus remains on customer satisfaction, privacy, and safety. Every member of our team recognizes the importance of our clients

XXL. Whether it is a small or large party, we have the vehicle fleet to suit any wants, needs, and desires. From engagement to reception, Bay Limousine is dedicated to celebrating happy couples along the Emerald Coast, we also offer limousine services for bachelor and bachelorette parties. We coordinate with you on the number of attendees, venues, and timings to ensure your event runs smoothly. In addition to our luxury vehicles, we also have a beautiful vintage selection which includes a 1933 Buick, 1965 Thunderbird and more.

Bay Limousine ensures that

you reach your destination safely and promptly, whether it's a long trip to Atlanta, an excursion to New Orleans for Mardi Gras, a night out on the town, or even just a simple ride to and from the airport. At Bay Limousine, we strive to serve our clients in a professional, timely,

and respectful manner.

To view our complete fleet, please visit [www.bay-limo.com](http://www.bay-limo.com). There, you can find detailed information on each vehicle to ensure you select the ideal one to enhance your event. Our vehicles are available for dispatch from Panama City, FL to Pen-

sacola, FL, and our drivers are prepared, ensuring timely arrivals to meet your needs.

For more information or to book your reservation, give Bay Limousine a call at (850) 678-LIMO (850-678-5466) or send a email to [info@bay-limo.com](mailto:info@bay-limo.com).



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# Sitting Down with Stuart Tetterer, Mayor of PCB

BY MARTA ROSE-THORPE  
INTERVIEW WITH MAYOR STUART TETTERER

On a brisk Saturday morning in February, I catch up with Panama City Beach Mayor Stuart Tetterer. We meet at The Pour, a coffee bar on Front Beach Road that stands in front of The Ark and Ark Church and funds many of the Ark's ministries and programs. Praise and worship music gently flows through the lively space, packed with visitors and Christian youth groups lining up for their coffees and matcha teas. This is a spot Stuart visits frequently for various meetings and spiritual-fueled appointments, and throughout our conversation, he quotes scripture. As Mayor of Panama City Beach for nearly one year now – he took office in April 2024 – he's had time to settle in and get to know the lay of the land. I am anxious to check the pulse of how things are going. "So far, is it anything like you've anticipated?" I ask. "It's such a tremendous opportunity – much better than I expected," is his reply. "That's because of the people, on the Council and Charter staff, City Manager, City Clerk, City Attorney – they're all wonderful, dedicated, hardworking people. They are part of the lifeblood of our municipality."

It's evident Stuart has great respect for the people he works and serves with. "The Vice Mayor, Michael Jarman, who's been in the area forever, is dedicated, knowledgeable and insightful," he shares. "Councilmember Mary Coburn is connected with the community, particularly the Senior Center. She has history in Downtown development and revitalization. Councilman Paul

Casto has been with the municipality his entire life and provides great history for us. He started as a lifeguard, worked his way up to Director of Public Works, and is now a Councilman. Councilman Ethan Register knows a lot about the tourist industry, bringing a vibrant perspective from the crucial industry on the beach. He works hard to represent everyone in the community, from residents to business owners. In Corinthians 1, Chapter 12, verses 4 into the 20s, it talks about spiritual gifts and the body of Christ being different parts of the body," he explains. "It's fascinating how well that works. The apostle Paul emphasizes that we all have our role to play, and it's not the same role. We see that in the City Council, we have a good mix of people."

Stuart grew up in Kissimmee, FL, attended college at Cornell University, and majored in Computer Science. "The internet came of age when I was in middle school," he shares. "I was good with computers, and I like building useful things." He relocated to Northern California after graduation, living in Silicon Valley for nine years, 2009-2018, and joined three early-stage startups. At Pinterest, there were 90 employees when he joined, and he stayed as that number climbed to 300. At Zumper, the largest privately-owned rental platform in the country, he became the tenth person to join. For seven and a half years, pre-Covid, he worked remotely at a search engine called Elastic. "When Covid hit I was living in Colorado with my family, but I wanted to get back to Florida. On a business trip to Florida, I got off the plane, felt the oppres-



sive humidity, and it just felt like home!" Panama City Beach is well-located, geographically, and accessible to the rest of the south. He moved here in May 2020. "PCB is a good mix of 'Small Town' with a lot of amenities because of the tourism. Being from Kissimmee, I love tourist towns. I was ready for a quiet life but felt I was called to enter the political realm. I had a few people ask me to run."

"Have you ever heard the saying, 'Fast, cheap and good, pick two?'" he asks me. "When you're in public office those three things become 'Interacting with community, getting things done, and having a home life... pick two.' Interacting with the community is an important part of government, making sure everyone knows we're here, we're listening, that we care about the residents as well as the visitors and the business owners." "So, what are your two?" I ask, and he smiles. "I don't have a home life!" But as our conversation continues, I start to feel that Stuart's spiritual life is the third part of the equation. "I spend my time between work and church. I've really poured a lot into this church (The Ark Church). I was an Atheist for 20 years," he shares. "I took a philosophy class in college; I was listening to a podcast about

Atheism and there were some things that didn't make sense to me – didn't fit with my experience of reality. Seven years ago, I came back to the church. That was God, I believe, who'd been working on my heart for many years. I started investigating Christianity, attending an Orthodox church for a little while. I liked the ritual and the structure. But then I came to The Ark." Stuart really became a Believer, he feels, about two or three years ago. "I had an intellectual understanding of God. The Ark is where that moved from my head to my heart. That movement began when I started volunteering. Sweeping the floors before service... being of service is how I interact with spirituality and the world." His heavy involvement at The Ark includes involvement in the Mentorship Program. "I have one protégé – we've developed a very strong friendship and brotherhood through that program."

"One of the passages I enjoy is John 14-17, where John prays for us," he shares. "That we be one, as he and the Father are one, and we are all one through that.

I see the opportunity for Panama City Beach to be One Beach. There are different areas of the beach, but there is one body." This is the first I have learned of One Beach, and I am curious to hear more. "Public safety, infrastructure, water infrastructure, transportation, CRA – these are core things we have to get right," he says. "But there's also the collaboration with the City and the community to work together to be One Beach. This includes the unincorporated area... it includes the 'Island' bound by three bridges. Bay County and the City have good movement towards thinking about the entire beach from a regulatory perspective. One element of Stuart's campaign platform was encouraging collaboration with residents and making sure they have robust communication with the City. He cites a recent successful collaboration. "After the tragic shark attacks on the beach, the City and TDC worked together to place more lifeguards, and the Beach Rotary Club worked with the City on a Personal Rescue

*Continued on page 19*



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# Shop Talk: Pirates to Take Over Pier Park

By LEE ANN LEONARD

Dolly Parton's Pirates Voyage Dinner & Show is slated to open in mid-May... but you don't have to wait until then to release your inner pirate! The battle for pirate booty is set for Saturday, April 12 at Pier Park! Join the Pirates Voyage and Pier Park crews for a treasure scav-

enger hunt throughout the mall. The fun begins at 11 a.m. on the SkyWheel Panama City Beach concourse (15700 L.C. Hilton Jr. Drive, Panama City Beach, Florida 32413).

To get started, guests will visit the Pirates Voyage booth in front of the SkyWheel to pick up their clues. Then they can

search for Easter-egg-style treasure chests in fifteen Pier Park stores, restaurants or attractions. There will be four hundred prize-filled chests to discover. A few chests will contain a pair of tickets to Dolly Parton's Pirates Voyage Dinner & Show—a \$140+ value!

The hunt ends when all chests are found or the mall closes at 9 p.m., whichever comes first. To ensure the optimum number of winners, treasure chests are limited to one per person while supplies last.

Dolly Parton's Pirates Voyage Dinner & Show is located in

Pier Park West and will include a 60,000-square-foot indoor theater, a 15-foot-deep lagoon, two full-sized pirate ships serving as stages for the swashbuckling action and more! To learn more about the attraction, visit [PiratesVoyage.com](http://PiratesVoyage.com).



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## Poetry Corner: PCB

By J.H. BEVELS

The waves roll and pound the shore  
They sing to me, come down once more  
You caught them the last time  
You'll catch them again  
In the bay where you can see their fins  
The reds, the blues, and the specs too

All out there waiting for you  
To cast a top water near their lair  
And then at night such table fare  
So my bags are packed  
Tomorrow I leave  
When I get back I'll have tales to weave  
Not a tale of my days at sea  
But a tale on the bay  
Just my friend and me.

Community

# Spring is for Fishing & Cruising!

BY PAM ANDERSON

Welcome April! We are looking forward to your warm days which bring plenty of opportunities to fish and cruise!

Our head-boats are coming in with great catches of vermilion snapper, mangrove snapper, porgys, almaco jacks, and more! Start watching for Cobia. It is about time for them to make their annual migration from the South. Red Snapper season opens June 1. Boats are filling up—call soon! They always book up early.

The charter boats and guide boats are bringing in Spanish Mackerel for their spring run through the area. They are fun to catch and plenty tasty! Be sure to make reservations soon for your chance to catch one of these seasonal fish. Bake it, grill it or take it to one of the local restaurants for a 'Hook 'n Cook - you catch and they cook.

Capt. Max's Bar & Grille offers Hook 'n Cook. Capt. Max's (at the marina/dockside) will be serving fresh sandwiches, snacks and ice cream. Enjoy watching the boats come in all over

Grand Lagoon at the Upper Deck Bar. Come join the fun with your hosts (bartenders) Canaan & Braden!

On April 20, the Upper Deck Bar will host its first annual Adult Easter Egg Hunt that starts at 1 p.m. With prizes, cash, and mystery in every egg you find, it's sure to be great fun! Find the Golden Egg for a huge prize! Live music and specials are featured for this fun afternoon.

Sea Patriot Jet Boat Cruises Again! Check out this exhilarating cruise in the Bay and Lagoon for a real thrill ride!

The dolphins and seagulls are certainly happy to see the Shell Island boats this time of year. I think they enjoy watching us as much as we enjoy watching them. And the seagulls love the Cheetos!

'Fisherman's Walk' with its souvenir shop, That Ship's Store, and Sugar Shack ice cream shop offers shaded seating with tables so you can snack and watch the boats unload their catches. It provides a safe kids' play area.



The Event Center is bustling with weddings, seminars, business meetings, retirement parties and the like. What a beautiful waterfront view of Grand Lagoon! Make plans now for your special event.

More and more folks are coming to enjoy all that beautiful Grand Lagoon has to offer here on Panama City Beach. We welcome you all! You won't find an area of the beaches that has more local family-owned businesses all nestled in one place as you will here in the Grand Lagoon area and all along Navy (Thomas) Drive.

Come see us! The family experiences on the water are great memories in the making!

*Capt. Anderson's Marina... Where the fish are always biting and the kids are always smiling.*  
[CaptAndersonsMarina.com](http://CaptAndersonsMarina.com)

*Easter... A time to remember the ultimate sacrifice made for your eternity and mine. Have a blessed Easter!*

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# Technology Keeps Changing But My Drives Don't Go 400 Yards

BY ALAN WATSON, PRESIDENT,  
GOLF+ DOTHAN, ALA. AND  
PANAMA CITY BEACH

I know. I know. I've heard it all before. Over and over. "Every time they (the golf manufacturers) introduce a new model they say it's longer and straighter than the one before, but I still hit it the same distance I did ten years ago."

Look, I agree in principle that if driver and iron technology had come as far as "they" say it has then we would all be hitting it as long as Bryson DeChambeau. At fifty years old I realize that the ball and club technology is the only reason I can hit it as far now as I did at

forty. That being said, it does seem like these distance increases that they keep promising us should have us all hitting it 400 yards or at least 300 yards off the tee. Unfortunately, that just isn't a reality for most. Here's why:

1) Yes technology has gotten way better over the years. In the early 1980s, we still had wood

woods. They were not very forgiving due to the small sweet spot, the heavy weight and the inability to move weight to the perimeter of the club. Also, shafts were terrible back then. I mean just awful.

2) Modern drivers incorporate tungsten, titanium, steel, aluminum, and carbon fiber. The use of these materials allows for almost complete control of the design in terms of weight distribution, Center of Gravity placement, Moment of Inertia optimization, and overall weight and feel. Plus modern graphite shaft technology is amazing and infinitely better than steel shafts from 40 years ago.

But here is the kicker. The club still has to be swung by a human. And some of us humans are not good golfers. We don't practice, take lessons, hit the center of the face, get properly fitted, and play from the correct tee boxes. Therefore,

golf is still hard.

When a golf manufacturer says that their latest iteration is 3-8 yards longer than the previous model - it is. However, that relies on a center strike, and all other measurable dynamics being equal. Many golfers today are playing drivers that are more than a year behind in technology and also many of those drivers were not properly fitted in the first place. This actually means that by switching you could gain even more distance than the manufacturer's most recent promises.

However, there is one more problem. Many of us are getting older. We're not stretching

issues. I fit many juniors, ladies, and seniors whose club head speed is what we in the industry call "moderate." These speeds of 60-75 MPH with the driver often mean that a 3 wood or 5 wood might go just as far as a driver due to the increased loft and shorter shaft which makes achieving optimal launch numbers easier for many golfers. There is no shame in playing the

clubs that work and eliminating the ones that are just not useful in the bag anymore. For example, we sell very few 4 irons anymore. They are too low lofted and without proper club head speed, long irons don't launch high enough with enough spin to carry and go the distance most golfers expect. Same thing with the driver. Adding loft can help. Getting fitted into the right

shaft can help. But sometimes there is no substitute for power and speed.

So next time you see an ad from a big golf company that tells you you'll hit it farther with their new club it's okay to believe them. But make sure you test them out on a quality launch monitor before you spend your money just in case.



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 Community

# The Watersound Club® Team Announces the Opening of Its Newest Course, The Third

The Watersound Club® team proudly announces the official opening of The Third, a premier 18-hole championship course designed by golf legend Davis Love III and his team at Love Golf Design for the prestigious Watersound Club private membership club. Spanning acres of green in Panama City Beach, The Third enhances the exclusive club's world-class offerings, bringing its total to

54 holes of championship-level golf. Named in homage to its designer and as a nod to its place as the club's third course, it delivers a dynamic new playing experience to the region.

Starting March 20, The Third will be available for play, not only to members, but also to guests of Camp Creek® Inn. The luxurious 30A hotel boasts a Member for a Stay program, which treats guests to Northwest



their game. The greens are large and have a good deal of movement in them. We can set the course up to challenge highly skilled players in a major event, but on a daily basis, we can provide a nice mix of easy, medium and difficult pins to keep things interesting, but not too

difficult for the average golfer."

Alongside the existing Watersound Club golf offerings—Shark's Tooth and Camp Creek courses—The Third continues to establish Northwest Florida as a premier destination for golf enthusiasts. Golfers looking to treat themselves to an unforgettable golf retreat should explore one of Camp Creek Inn's exclusive Golf Packages, which are perfectly tailored to offer avid golfers exceptional accommodations, tournament-caliber golf, and luxurious amenities.

For more information on The Third and accommodations at Camp Creek Inn, visit [campcreekinn.com/golf/the-third-golf-course](http://campcreekinn.com/golf/the-third-golf-course).



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Florida's most sought-after, otherwise private, amenities and championship-caliber courses during their stay. The Third is the latest of several recent demand driven expansion projects, including Watersound Camp Creek® amenities, featuring a state-of-the-art wellness center, tennis and pickleball courts, a sprawling pool complex and three dining venues, as well as Watersound Club Sporting Preserve, a 15-station sporting clays course.

"The opening of The Third represents a monumental milestone in the ongoing Watersound Club evolution and an intentional response to growing demand for more golf options," said Patrick Murphy, Senior Vice President of Hospitality

with St. Joe. "We're thrilled to elevate the experience on the green for our members, while also offering an exclusive opportunity for Camp Creek Inn guests to enjoy premier golf."

Just north of Shark's Tooth Golf Course, the newly designed grounds boast a meticulously crafted layout that caters to golfers of all skill levels. Expansive greens with subtle undulations, strategically positioned bunkers, and six tee options create a course that is both inviting and rewarding—delivering a challenge even for the most seasoned players.

Describing the course, Founder and President of Love Golf Design, Mark Love, noted, "Players should be able to find a set of tees that matches

## The St. Joe Community Foundation Awards Grant to Panama City Symphony

The St. Joe Community Foundation recently awarded Panama City Symphony a grant which will fund vital orchestral equipment, including recording equipment, cello chairs, and other necessary resources. This funding will help PCS adapt to and best utilize its new venue, the Barbara W. Nelson Fine Arts Center at Bay High School. Along with record ticket sales this season – at a venue with 200 more seats than in recent years – Panama City Symphony is able to provide collaborative artistic opportunities for area musicians and guests. With the generous support of The St. Joe Community Foundation and the leadership of Music Director Sergey Bogza and the Board

of Directors, Panama City Symphony is experiencing a period of exciting growth and artistic development, and is making a significant impact on the cultural landscape of the community.

Panama City Symphony is committed to presenting excellent live symphonic music, engaging and educating audiences of all ages. With an annual audience of over 8,000 people, the orchestra presents a season comprising eight symphonic concerts, 10 chamber concerts, multiple fundraising and special events, and offers six distinct music education programs serving over 3,000 students. Collaborating with international guest artists and area musicians, the orchestra

enhances the cultural impact of the arts within a sustainable financial structure.

In the 2025-2026 season, PCS will celebrate its 30th anniversary, continuing to produce concerts, intimate ensemble performances, fundraising galas, events, and a variety of music education and outreach programs, all aimed at enriching the community's cultural landscape. PCS not only provides a rich, cultural experience but also serves as a cornerstone for artistic opportunities in Northwest Florida.

Panama City Symphony wishes to thank The St. Joe Community Foundation for its continued support. For more information, visit [PanamaCitySymphony.org](http://PanamaCitySymphony.org).



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# Behind the Scenes this Spring

By TEAHNA STEPHENS,  
ENTOMOLOGIST

Have you ever found yourself wondering: Why are some mosquitoes bigger or smaller than others? Why do those mosquito bites make you itch so much? Or why do those noisy spray trucks keep coming by your house at 4 a.m.? Many people are unaware of the many public health entities that are working tirelessly behind the scenes to protect and prevent them from contracting harmful diseases. Beach Mosquito Control District is no different.

An important element of mosquito control is the science behind it all. The surveillance department stays busy every week to set mosquito traps, identify the mosquitoes caught, and test for viruses that can harm people. You may be wondering, why mosquitoes? Mosquitoes are the deadliest animal in the world. The viruses they carry kill more people than sharks, bears, lions, or any other animal you can think of.

In the Panhandle of Florida, there are a few arboviruses that

we have that are endemic. The viruses are always in the area going through their natural life cycles with our variety of wild bird populations. Sometimes, the virus can break out of that cycle and be transferred to people through infected mosquito bites. The Surveillance Department monitors viruses that are close to breaking out of that cycle with our Sentinel Chicken Program. There are chicken coops strategically placed between human populations and our woodlands or wetlands. Every week, we take a small blood sample from the chickens and send it to be tested for our most prevalent arboviruses.

Our most common Arboviruses information is in the table below:

West Nile Virus (WNV)	Eastern Equine Encephalitis (EEE)
Leading arbovirus in USA	Rare but serious
Symptoms: fever, headache, vomiting, joint pains, rash	Symptoms: fever, chills, body aches, and joint pain
1 in 150 get severe symptoms: meningitis (fluid around brain & spinal cord) or encephalitis (inflammation of the brain) can lead to death.	Approx. 30% of people that have serious symptoms die. The remainder normally have life-long neurological problems.
No treatment and No vaccines	No vaccines

\*\* This does not include all the diseases mosquitoes can carry and pass on to people.

In areas where chicken coops are not feasible, there are traps set to take samples of the mosquito populations. In Bay County, there are 50 different species of mosquitoes. This is why you may see differences in the appearances of certain mosquitoes at different times of the year. Some are more seasonal; some are active during daylight while others are nocturnal. As an Entomologist, my duties include identifying different species and determining if they are vectors (can pass viruses) or more of a nuisance mosquito. We also study their behaviors. For example, most of our West Nile and EEE vector species are nocturnal, this is why the spray trucks are normally spraying between 2 a.m. and 6 a.m. before daylight.

While mosquitoes sound like this awful creature that should just be eliminated from the world, they are not all bad. Mosquitoes are just as important to the environment as bees and butterflies.

They are pollinators and play an important role in the ecosystem. Only the females need a blood meal to form their eggs, and they do not always get them from humans. Mosquitoes feed on other mammals, reptiles, birds, even earthworms!

However, the few that will feed on people are usually competent to carry viruses. When the mosquito bites, they insert their mouthparts and some saliva. The saliva has a numbing agent to prevent it from being detected during the feeding process. This agent is what makes a welt and itches after the bite. It is also what transfers the virus. Some of these mosquitoes are adapted to living close to homes where they have easy access to people. Others just seize the opportunity of an easy meal when a human is in their environment.

While we are working behind the scenes to protect people from being bitten by mosquitoes through disease surveillance and strategic treatment options, there are a few things you can do to help prevent yourself from being bitten.

## The 5 Ds of Mosquito Control:

**Drain** all containers from around your property and talk with your neighbors if you are having issues. Mosquitoes can breed in a small container, such as a bottle cap.

**Dawn/Dusk:** these are the times when mosquitoes are the most active. Avoid being outside around these times

**Dress:** when outdoors wear long sleeves and pants. Especially around dawn and dusk.

**Defend:** Use repellent!!

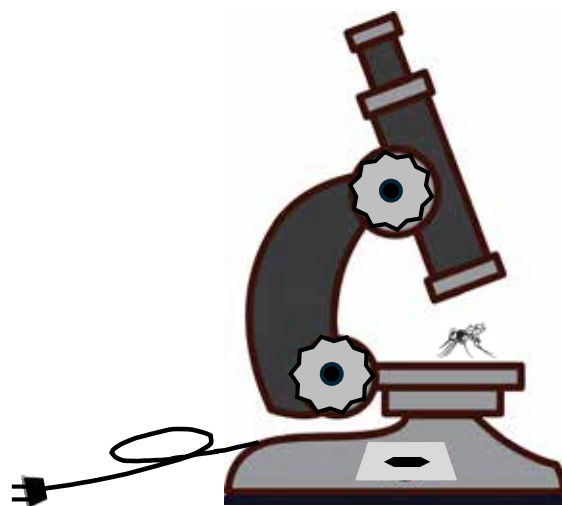
**Deet** is your friend! Mosquito repellents with Deet are most effective for repelling mosquitoes.

Other products can be effective tools but do your research on them. Some may need to be reapplied more often.

Lastly, Beach Mosquito Control District in Panama City Beach is here to help. We are local Government funded by tax dollars. Please call or email if you are being bitten or bothered by mosquitoes. Our phone number is (850) 233-5030. <http://www.pcbeachmosquito.org>

## Beach Mosquito Control District

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Beach Mosquito Control District: 850-233-5030

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

 Community

# Let's Get Growing: Protecting an Important Resource



BY LAUREN GOLDSBY

We know that plants rely on water to grow, but we don't always consider how growing plants impacts the water around us. More than 25% of Bay County is covered by water, and many of us were attracted to the area for that very reason. Whether you live here, work here, or vacation here you have benefitted from our natural waters.

### Regulations That Protect Our Water

Both federal and state regulations help protect and maintain

water quality. The Clean Water Act allows the EPA to set water quality standards and enforce pollution limits. Additionally, the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) and the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (FDACS) assess and restore impaired waters and determine best management practices for growers. These regulations help protect public health, ecosystems, and the tourism and recreation industries that rely on Florida's clean water, beautiful beaches, and natural springs.

### Florida Friendly Landscaping™ Principles

Florida Friendly Landscaping™ principles were developed to promote sustainable landscape practices that protect Florida's natural resources.

- Right Plant, Right Place.
- Water Efficiently
- Fertilize Appropriately
- Mulch
- Attract Wildlife
- Manage Yard Pests Responsibly
- Recycle Yard Waste
- Reduce Stormwater Runoff

### • Protect the Waterfront

Incorporating these practices into your landscape will help you reduce water usage and maintenance while protecting natural spaces and species around you.

A study was done comparing water use in a traditional Florida landscaped (TFL) yard versus water use in a Florida Friendly Landscaped™ (FFL) yard. The yard landscaped in using FFL principles used 83% less water than the traditional Florida landscaped yard (Clem, et al., 2021).

### Why Reducing Water and Nutrient Runoff Matters

Using less water can reduce nutrient runoff, which can leach into our freshwater systems. Nitrogen and phosphorus are especially problematic because they fuel algae growth. Certain species of algae release toxins that kill fish and contribute to red tide events.

### To further reduce runoff:

- Only fertilize when plants are actively growing to prevent



excess nutrients from washing away.

- Leave a 10-foot buffer of unmowed vegetation along water edges. This buffer helps filter nutrients and pollutants before they reach the water.

If you're interested in incorporating Florida-Friendly Landscaping™ principles into your home landscape, reach out to the UF/IFAS Extension Office in Bay County for guidance!

Research Cited: Clem, T. B., Hansen, G. M., Dukes, M. D., Momol, E., Kruse, J., Harchick, C., & Bossart, J. (2021). Sus-

tainable residential landscapes in Florida: Controlled comparison of traditional versus Florida-friendly landscaping. *Journal of Irrigation and Drainage Engineering*, 147(7), 04021025.

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 Community

# Know Your Neighbor: Gary Sellers is "Helping People In Disguise"

By PAUL BONNETTE

Gary Sellers has a secret identity, however it's not what you might imagine. On any given day, you will perhaps find Gary working at Ascension Sacred Heart Hospital as a House Supervisor. However, Gary has

come down to Fort Walton for a couple of contracts and it was the view of the beaches. I had always grown up next to the water. I grew up in California then Washington with the military and went to Missouri and lived there for almost 14 years

costume." They do a variety of fun things, from attending comic cons and building movie set props to stopping in at conventions to get the word out. "At these comic cons, we try to raise money through photo-ops and just ask for donations. We will



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a secret identity as part of an organization called the 501st Legion which consists of Star Wars characters on a galactic mission to spread joy, hope and happiness. The 501st, which consists of stormtroopers, Darth Vader and a myriad of other bad guys, is not typically what one expects to see visiting sick children at a hospital or raising money for Autism Awareness or Cancer Treatment, but as their motto says, they are "bad guys doing good."

Until 2015, Gary's mission of helping others was carried out openly, without a disguise. Coming from a military family, he followed in their footsteps and enlisted immediately after graduating from high school. After his military service, Gary pursued a career in nursing, where he dedicated himself to helping others and saving lives—a path that eventually led him to the Florida Panhandle.

"I really fell in love with the excitement of helping people and saving lives," he says. "It was a gratifying feeling. I went home feeling that I did something good for that day. In 2010, I came down as a travel nurse on a couple of assignments and fell in love with the area. I was hitting all the ERs and ICUs of all the hospitals in the area trying to get a feel for where I wanted to make home. I had

which was close to lakes. When I came back down here as a travel nurse, that's when I said, I have to be by the water."

According to Gary, his goal of helping people would get an unexpected boost during a trip to Walt Disney World. "In May of 2015, Disney World was having a Star Wars Celebration and I loved Star Wars. So, some friends and I go down to Disney World and are just enjoying the costumes. We just thought that they were Disney actors. I had never even heard of the 501st. We are walking around taking photos and they mentioned a parade. Later that day they block off the street and the Empire March starts playing and coming around the corner is Darth Vader with a big banner that says 501st Legion with all these stormtroopers and it's just breathtaking. So, I googled the 501st legion and that's when I realized I could dress up as a Star Wars character and help people."

For Gary, joining the dark side was the perfect way to spread light and hope. "The 501st's mantra is "Bad Guys Doing Good." The 501st is basically the bad side of the Star Wars franchise, from the Empire to the First Order. The 501st is an all-volunteer organization that is free to get into, but you have to have a movie-quality

usually pick a charity such as Peter Mayhew Foundation, which is a Star Wars organization that helps children, and donate all the money to that charity."

It's not just comic conventions and hospitals that Gary and the 501st march into, you can also find them at community events such as the upcoming May 4th Star Wars Event happening in downtown Panama City. According to Gary however, there is one event that is particularly close to his heart.

"In December, we do another charity event called '850 No Kids Left Behind' Toy Drive. We give out more than 20,000 worth of toys, from bikes to Barbie dolls. I know we have Santa Claus here, but how about Storm Troopers? We tried it out and everybody loved it. We've been doing it for about six years now. We usually have 12 to 15 tables full of toys."

For Gary, it's these interactions that make it all worthwhile. "If I make someone smile for a day and for one day take them away from any pain and misery they are having, that makes me feel like I've done something for my day, I didn't waste my day not doing anything." For more information about the 501st Legion, visit [501st.com](http://501st.com).

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# PCB Flavor

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## IN THIS ISSUE

ISO: PCB's Best Beef

Things to Do

## ISO: PCB's Best Beef

By JACK SMITH

Where's the beef? Although we live in a seafood destination, almost every restaurant offers some sort of steak or beef dish. Whether it's a "surf & turf" dish, a sizzling ribeye, a porterhouse, or my favorite, a country fried steak, PCB restaurants have some delicious steak and beef options to choose from.



Personally, I believe that the best cuts of meat come from Black Angus, although I suppose a case could be made for Kobe beef as well. In the end, perhaps these questions were best summed up in the 1984 Wendy's commercial starring unknown actress Clara Peller when she famously asked "Where's the beef?"

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Add cheese, mushrooms or bacon to your taste.





# Spring Awakens:

## 'Exploring Connection,' 'Concrete Jungle,' and the 2025 Redfish Film Poster Contest Showcase Fresh Artistic Visions at the Center for the Arts

As the vibrant season of spring ushers in new beginnings, three exciting new exhibitions offer a fresh perspective on the world around us. The Main Gallery offers a sneak peek into the Second Annual Redfish Film Festival. The Miller Gallery features Exploring Connection, a multimedia collection of works by local ceramicist Kelly McLendon and artist Jen Hon-eycutt. In the Spotlight Gallery, Alberto Spirgatis, a student at Gulf Coast State College, brings in a collection of ink and collage works for his exhibition, Concrete Jungle. The public is invited to the opening reception on Friday, April 4 from 5-7 p.m. The exhibits will be on display through April 26.

The Redfish Documentary Film Festival is set to return to Historic Downtown Panama City for its highly anticipated second year, running from April 24 through April 27, 2025. Showcasing an eclectic lineup of groundbreaking documentary films, the festival highlights powerful storytelling from

around the world while embracing the rich cultural tapestry of the Gulf Coast.

Leading up to the festival, Redfish is proud to present a special exhibition at the Center for the Arts, featuring the vibrant talent of local artists who participated in the 2025 Redfish Poster Contest. This reception will celebrate the artistic voices that help shape the visual identity of the festival, from seasoned professionals to budding young creatives—including this year's youngest contributor, a 12-year-old.

The exhibition serves as a tribute to the intersection of art and storytelling, offering festival goers and the community a first glimpse into the creativity behind this year's festival branding. The event will include an opening reception, providing an opportunity for attendees to meet the artists and enjoy an evening of visual inspiration



ahead of the festival's official programming at the end of the month.

Exploring Connection, featuring the works of Jen Hon-eycutt and Kelly McLendon in the Miller Gallery, explores the profound role of connection in our everyday lives. Through a dynamic array of two- and three-dimensional pieces—collages, paintings, sculpture, and ceramics—both artists reflect on how connection manifests in their thoughts, experiences, and creative processes. Each artwork offers a glimpse into their journey of uncovering the significance of connection, both as a



Jungle. "I've always had an affinity for cartoons and comics," said Spirgatis. "Really those two mediums have been my main sources of inspiration and are what I hope to be able to pursue as a career."

Spirgatis was inspired by adult animation from the 1970s and 80s as well as films that take place in major cities from the same era, and music relevant to the time. "I wanted the characters themselves to pop using ink and magazine clippings," said Spirgatis, "As the ink helps create a high contrast and the clippings allow the subjects to be framed in a way that makes it look like they're popping out the page."

The public is invited to the opening reception on Friday, April 4 from 5-7 p.m. at the Center for the Arts. Visitors can meet the artists in the galleries over light hors d'oeuvres during this free event.

The Center for the Arts is open Tuesday-Saturday 10 a.m.-5 p.m., Fridays 10 a.m.-7 p.m.



personal theme and a universal force shaping their artistic expression.

Alberto Spirgatis, a student at Gulf Coast State College, is featured in the Spotlight Gallery in an exhibition titled Concrete

## Must Do in PCB



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 Music & Arts

# Emerald Coast Theatre Company Raises \$54,193 at Inaugural Signature Event, "La Vie En Rouge"

Emerald Coast Theatre Company's (ECTC) signature event, "La Vie En Rouge," held on Friday, March 7 raised \$54,193 for the local organization.

Embodied after the hit musical, Moulin Rouge!, the event brought the glitz and glamour of a 19th-century Parisian cabaret to the Emerald Coast. From entry to exit, guests were delighted with spotlight performances sponsored by Presenting Sponsor Blue Water Oral Surgery Center, Grand Boulevard, and Ocean Reef Vacation Rentals and Real Estate. Throughout

the evening guests were surprised by pop-up performances and atmosphere entertainment from ECTC's talented performers. There was also an extensive silent auction and a special finale dessert presented by Cafe Thirty-A and baked with love by Charcuterie by Shelli.

ECTC was transformed into a 19th-century Parisian cabaret with decor sponsored by Hilton Sandestin. Guests were greeted upon arrival by our strolling Champagne Dress Lady sponsored by Own at the Beach Team Keller Williams, with champagne courtesies of Vin'tij

Food and Wine. Guests enjoyed the Moulin Rouge-themed cocktail hour and an opening performance by presenting sponsors Blue Water Oral Surgery Center. Commemorative keepsake wine glasses were provided by Grand Boulevard. The Cabaret Lounge hosted additional craft cocktails made with Distillery 98 Vodka, each poured into a commemorative keepsake rocks glass, courtesy of Ocean Reef Vacation Rentals and Real Estate. Patrons indulged in gourmet bites prepared by local chefs from Bijoux, Swiftly Catered, Fish On, Cantina Laredo, Tommy Bahama, Flemings, P.F. Chang's, Grimaldi's, and Beignets and Brew.

"Another amazing soiree - thanks to YOU" said Anna Fisher, co-founder of ECTC. "The music, the costumes, the food,



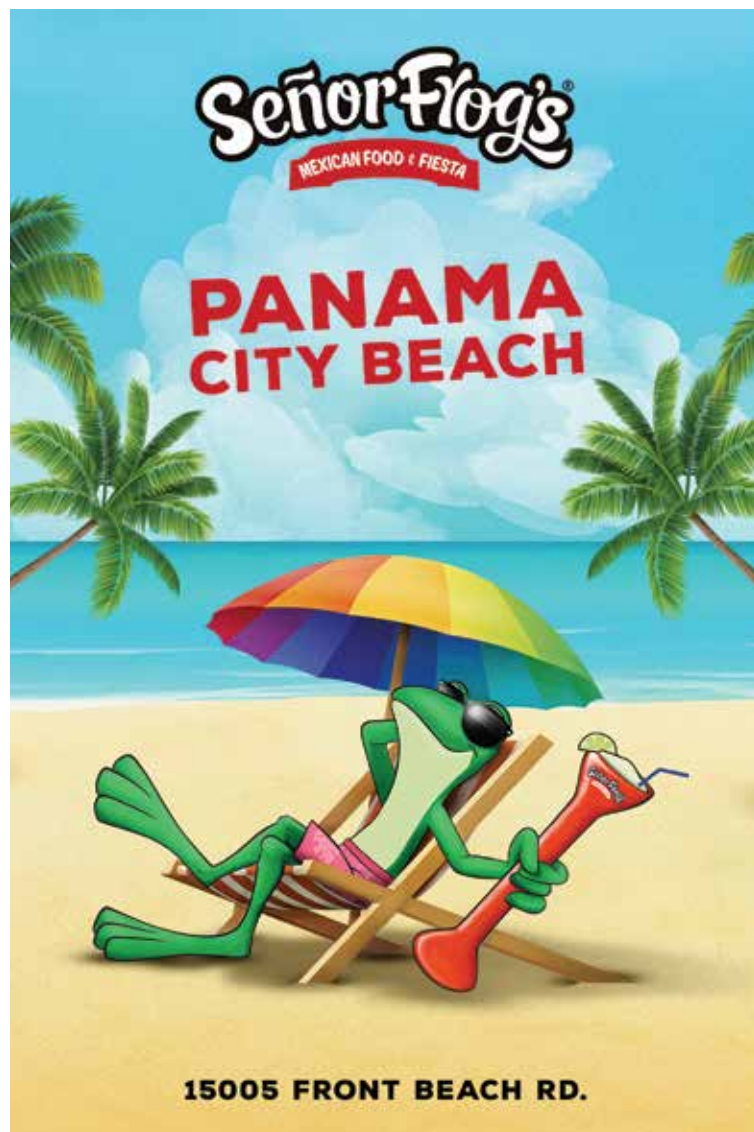
the performances - we can't wait to do it again year after year! Thank you to each person who supported this event, from the restaurants serving food and local businesses who donated auction items, to the ticket holders and sponsors - you all helped make this event so special."

Through ticket sales, donations, and silent auction purchases, ECTC was able to raise \$54,193. This money will go directly to the organization's

continued mission to enrich and entertain the Emerald Coast community through professional and educational theatre.

Emerald Coast Theatre Company would like to thank these additional local businesses and individuals for sponsoring the event- Basmati's and Poate/Bonjean Financial Group of Wells Fargo. A special thanks to The Gathering for their sponsorship of this event in honor of Shirley Simpson. Media sponsors include: Emerald Coast Magazine, Tallahassee Magazine, Life Media, Scarlett Magazine, SoWal.com, and Destin the Beautiful.

La Vie En Rouge only happens once a year! Join us next spring on March 6, 2026, for this annual epic night of food, fun, and jaw-dropping performances!



## Get Ready to Paw-ty

Spring Pup-alooza takes over Downtown Panama City with Fur-tastic Fun!

Bay Arts Alliance will host a Spring Pup-alooza on Saturday, April 5 from 10 a.m.-1 p.m. The public is invited to bring their canine friends to the Center for the Arts lawn for live music, an agility course, kids arts and crafts, and a sweet treat from the Gelato Love food truck. There will also be a clay paw print class available for sign-ups. 10% of proceeds from this class will be donated to a local animal rescue.

Sign-ups for the clay paw print class are available in person at the Center for the Arts, by phone (850) 640-3670 or online at <https://bayarts.square.site>.

The Center for the Arts will also have brand new art exhibitions on display featuring Alber-

to Sprigatis of Gulf Coast State College, a duo show by Kelly McLendon and Jennifer Honeycutt, and the Redfish Film Festival. These exhibits are always free to visit.

The Center for the Arts is open Tuesday-Thursday 10 a.m.-5 p.m., Friday 10 a.m.-7 p.m., and Saturday 10 a.m.-5 p.m.

### Bay Arts Alliance

Since 1978, Bay Arts Alliance has served as the local arts agency for Bay County and provides opportunities for cultural enrichment through broad based educational experiences, music and arts programs, exhibitions, and events. Bay Arts Alliance has brought countless national touring performances to the area and provides many cultur-

al opportunities for Bay County schools and non-profit organizations.

### Panama City Center for the Arts

Panama City Center for the Arts in downtown Panama City is housed in the beautiful 1925 historic City Hall building. Panama City Center for the Arts is managed by Bay Arts Alliance. In the Center for the Arts, Bay Arts Alliance provides visitors and the local community with creative enrichment through monthly art shows and exhibitions, films, concerts, educational art classes for all ages, and special focus classes for Bay County school trips. The facility and grounds are under the ownership of the City of Panama City.



# Honoring the Month of the Military Child

BY MARK MCQUEEN,  
BAY DISTRICT SCHOOLS  
SUPERINTENDENT

As April unfolds—a month filled with meaningful observances—I am especially focused on celebrating the Month of the Military Child. This tribute is deeply personal to me as the Superintendent of Bay District Schools, a former military child myself, and a proud father of two remarkable military children.

This year, our celebration is even more significant as Bay District Schools has achieved an incredible milestone—100% of our schools are now Purple Star Schools! This distinction makes us one of only five districts in the entire state to earn the prestigious title of Purple Star School District, a recognition that underscores our unwaver-

ing commitment to supporting military-connected students and their families.

The Purple Star designation signifies that our schools go above and beyond to ensure military children feel supported, valued, and included in every aspect of their educational journey. This accomplishment speaks volumes about the dedication of our educators, administrators, and community partners who work tirelessly to provide stability and encouragement for students navigating the unique challenges of military life.

As we prepare to honor our military students throughout April, I encourage our entire community to take part in #PurpleUp Day on April 15 by wearing purple as a visible sign of support for these young heroes.

Wearing purple is a simple yet powerful way to recognize the resilience and sacrifices of military children, and I look forward to seeing our schools, businesses, and community members come together in solidarity. Be sure to share your photos on social media using the hashtags #PurpleUp and #BDSPurple so we can showcase our district's pride and appreciation.

Throughout the month, our schools will host special events to celebrate military students and their families. These activities provide an opportunity for our school communities to come together, express gratitude, and ensure that every military child feels seen and supported. I look forward to attending as many of these celebrations as possible and personally recognizing these

incredible students and their families.

Additionally, in early April, we will welcome command staff from Tyndall Air Force Base, Naval Support Activity Panama City, and the U.S. Coast Guard to a special board meeting, where we will present a resolution in support of military children. This event will further solidify the strong partnership between Bay District Schools and our military community.

I also want to extend my sincere gratitude to our sponsors, Tyndall Federal Credit Union and Gulf Coast State College, for their unwavering support of our Month of the Military Child activities. Their generosity and commitment allow us to make this celebration truly special for the students and families who

give so much in service to our country.

At Bay District Schools, we take immense pride in being a military-friendly district. Our military children demonstrate resilience, adaptability, and courage in the face of frequent relocations, new schools, and long periods of separation from loved ones. It is our privilege to recognize and support them, and I am grateful to our entire community for joining us in this effort.

Thank you in advance for celebrating the Month of the Military Child with us and for showing your appreciation for these extraordinary young individuals. Let's make April a month to remember for our military families!

## MAYOR

*continued from page 6*

Tubes pilot program.”

He sees Panama City Beach as an All-American city. “We have a healthy visitor mix from blue-collar and white-collar backgrounds. Our local faith community is strong, and the visitors reflect that, as well. The Tallahassee Memorial Health Hospital is coming in making PCB a potential medical destination perfectly placed between Pensacola and Tallahassee. We have our wonderful military: NSA-PC and Tyndall, so you can see the opportunity to continue to build up the defense contractor community, giving us a more stable base. As One Beach, we want to hear from every segment who lives here.” Tourist communities in Florida,

he shares, can go one of three ways. “They can become Disney World. They can become retirement communities. But then you have a full community. You have the visitors and the retirees, but you also have families and a robust ecosystem. Our community has the potential to have a three-legged stool of economic productivity.”

We discuss Bay County as a tech hub. “If you look at Silicon Valley, one of the reasons it was so successful was the two universities there, Stanford and UC Berkeley. You have that talent. I know FSU-PC has a very strong entrepreneurship program and computer science program, and GCSC has a nice electronics program – I took a course there. To grow tech, you need the practical side of academia as well as workforce development. We

want good jobs here to make sure families can stay here. One of the things I love about this community is the strong multi-generational families. There's history and a strong ‘sense of place.’ More global areas, like Silicon Valley, are transient with so many moving in and out.” Right now, he adds, there is a lot of focus on aerospace. “The Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill in 2010 has largely funded FSU's InSPIRE project (bringing advanced manufacturing and aerospace capabilities to the region). It's amazing how God works... out of tragedy comes opportunity.”

“One Beach is a continuation of the efforts,” he says. “We're doing a good job in this community – there needs to be tweaks, but we're still broadly walking down the same path. We're tak-

ing what has already been done and building on it. Our job is to put the next rock on the pile.” As an individual, he says, your job is to put the next rock on so that the future elected officials and the future residents – those born here and here for generations as well as those who have moved here more recently – can build on that. “I ran because I

love the people here. I have been overwhelmed in seeing the other side of city government, the other side of the elected office, and seeing the passion and drive of the residents to do everything they can to make this the best place possible. It is such a blessing to be here and be part of this community. Honestly, I just really thank God.”

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 Education

# Cultivating Opportunity at Walsingham Academy

By AMY HARVEY, PRINCIPAL

Walsingham Academy offers a diverse range of extracurricular and academic opportunities that enrich the student experience. From performing arts groups to academic clubs and service organizations, students are encouraged to explore their interests, develop new skills, and build lasting friendships. These activities play a vital role in cultivating leadership, teamwork, and a sense of community, all while allowing students to pursue their passions and make meaningful contributions.

## Choir

The arts are an intrinsic part of the educational program at Walsingham Academy. Each year students from participating elementary schools in Bay County gather to perform in the Elementary Choir Festival. Choir students rehearse together on a wide range of musical literature, often including music in a foreign language, and culminating with a concert performance held at a local venue. "The Choir Festival gives

our students the opportunity to showcase their talent and hard work, as well as providing a sense of community among all the schools. They really are an amazing group of students," said Mr. Johnson.

## K-Kids

Walsingham Academy is excited to announce the addition of a Kiwanis Kids (K-Kids) club. K-Kids is an organization that encourages leadership and community service. Students who participate in K-Kids can continue their membership in middle school through Builder's Club and high school in Key Club. Third- through fifth-grade Wahoos are nominated by their teachers to become members of this club based on their capabilities for leadership and interest in helping others.

K-Kids organized a canned food drive before Thanksgiving, where they received almost 1000 cans to benefit local families who needed assistance. Future plans include planting a vegetable and rock garden, collecting soda tabs for Ronald



McDonald House, and providing incentives to promote kindness in their school, recognizing teachers during Teacher Appreciation Week and first responders during Random Acts of Kindness Week.

## WIN

This year, Walsingham Academy implemented "What I Need" (WIN) time. The goal of WIN is to provide targeted support, helping students achieve success and meet their goals.

Recognizing that students learn at different rates and in different ways, teachers adjust their teaching methods and materials to accommodate diverse learning styles and abilities, making learning more accessible for all students. At Walsingham, our student population includes English Language Learners (ELL), Exceptional Student Education (ESE), and Gifted

students. WIN involves grouping students by their needs (e.g., for enrichment, remediation, or skill-building), providing additional time or resources to those who require it, and creating opportunities for students to demonstrate mastery at their own pace.

## Learning Walks

The students at Walsingham Academy are not the only ones learning. At Walsingham Academy, teachers engage in Learning Walks. Learning Walks are a professional development strategy where educators observe each other's teaching practices to share insights, enhance skills, and foster a collaborative learning community. Teachers observe one another with a clear purpose, often linked to school or district-wide goals, or specific areas of practice that need improvement. Through shared observations and feedback, teachers can refine their practices to enhance student outcomes.



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## Summer Camp Registration Now Open

The City of Panama City Beach Parks and Recreation Department is thrilled to announce the return of Summer Camps! There are more than 70 different camps scheduled from June 2-August 1. The time to register is now, as many of the camps fill up quickly.

This year's lineup has everything, from fine arts to sports, aquatic and science adventures, and even gaming and specialty camps. There are more than eight camps each week and run from two to five days. With affordable pricing and a variety of activities for ages 4-18, it's the perfect recipe for a summer of fun and memories that will last a lifetime!

Our camps are designed to promote teamwork, creativity, and physical activity. Sports enthusiasts can choose from batting, tumbling and tennis, while crafty kids can flex their artistic muscles. The water lovers can splash into lil' sharks, dive, and jr. beach lifeguard! Fun new camps

for the science buff include baking, jr. coding unplugged, and kitchen science. We have an exciting line-up of camps that are perfect for kids who want to explore their favorite fandoms! Whether your kiddo is a Pokémon fanatic, Moana obsessed, or a Harry Potter aficionado, we've got a camp that's just right for them!

Registration is underway and is available online or in-person at the Frank Brown Park Community Center, Monday through Friday, 8 a.m.-6 p.m. Registration will end five business days prior to the start of each camp (except for Lil' Mermaids which ends on May 27). All camps are on a first come, first served basis. Space is limited, so reserve your spot today! All camps must be paid in full at the time of registration.

If you have any questions regarding Parks and Recreation Summer Camps, please contact Diane Nottage at (850) 233-5045 or [diane.nottage@pcbfl.gov](mailto:diane.nottage@pcbfl.gov).

# Board Certified Dermatologists Are the Experts in Medical and Aesthetic Dermatology



BY DR. JESSICA CLARK, MD  
FAAD, BEACH DERMATOLOGY  
SKIN WELLNESS CLINIC

I have been surprised lately that patients do not realize that dermatologists not only “do botox and filler”, but we are also the experts. Board certified dermatologists are considered experts in skin conditions and aesthetic skin treatments because of their extensive training and expertise in cutaneous anatomy and physiology.

### Medical Training:

Dermatologists complete four years of medical school after a bachelor’s degree, followed by a dermatology residency program that typically lasts three years. The basis of dermatology is internal medicine and dermatologists are often the first to diagnose internal disease as well as cutaneous conditions. During this time, they receive in-depth training in the diagnosis and treatment of a wide variety of

skin conditions, including complex diseases, infections, and cancers. This broad knowledge allows them to effectively manage all aspects of skin health.

### Specialized Expertise:

Dermatologists specialize in the skin, hair, nails, and mucous membranes after learning general medicine. This makes them uniquely qualified to understand the complexities of skin anatomy, function, and aging, all of which are essential when performing cosmetic procedures like neuromodulators, dermal fillers, and lasers.

### Board Certification:

Becoming board-certified involves passing rigorous exams and continuous education. Board-certified dermatologists must stay up to date with the latest advancements and research in medical, surgical, and cosmetic dermatology. This ensures they provide safe and effective treatments.

### Cosmetic Treatments Expertise:

Dermatologists receive additional training in cosmetic procedures, including neuromodulators like Botox, dermal fillers, and lasers. Their knowledge of skin anatomy and how different treatments interact with the skin allows them to achieve optimal, natural-looking results while



minimizing risks and complications.

### Patient Safety:

Dermatologists have a deep understanding of potential risks, side effects, and complications related to aesthetic treatments. They can manage and mitigate these risks by tailoring treatments to individual patients, considering their skin type, health history, and desired outcomes.

The injection of filler can be dangerous in a non-qualified injector causing skin necrosis or even blindness. Your face is not a place to look for bargains or specials.

### Holistic Skin Care:

Board certified dermatologists consider both the cosmetic and medical aspects of skin health. They can provide per-

sonalized, comprehensive care, addressing both aesthetic concerns and underlying skin issues, such as acne, rashes, chronic skin conditions, and aging.

This combination of extensive medical training, specialized expertise, and commitment to patient safety makes dermatologists the top choice for skin conditions and cosmetic treatments. Physicians swear by the Hippocratic oath that first says “Do no harm.” Providers who

do not get a degree in medicine do not take this oath. Also, unfortunately, in 2025 it is possible to get a PhD online and then call yourself a doctor. I wish patients did not have to be savvy and ask about credentials but in today’s world, there are many people who present themselves to be experts who have very little training and may not even know basic anatomy.

I tell my patients to inform their friends and family to check the credentials of anyone treating them medically and verify there is board certification in the specialty being practiced. I would advise everyone to ask who the supervising physician on staff is before allowing anyone to perform procedures on your face and make sure they are actually in the office in case a complication does happen. In the state of Florida, it is not required for the physician to be on-site and I do not think the public is very aware of that.

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# How to Show Compassion and Create Protective Positivity in Your Marriage



BY JAMIE C. WILLIAMSON, PhD

Happily married couples occasionally have screaming arguments. Yet, their marriages are immune to lasting damage from these fights.

What seems to protect happy couples from severe problems is how they communicate when they are not fighting.

Of course, happily married couples are optimistic about their life together and set high expectations for their marriage. And, happily married couples also live out an attitude of gratitude.

But a growing body of research shows that the presence of compassion is also a key ingredient to a happy marriage.

## What is Compassion?

Compassion includes both feelings and action and is fueled by recognizing and accepting our shared humanity. That is, compassionate people recognize that no one is perfect, we all make mistakes, we all are affected by stressors, none of us are immune to pain and suffering, and we all should be treated with loving kindness.

With that as background, compassion in relationships involves genuine feelings of caring and concern for your partner and actions that help address the concern through relationship understanding and action.

## Why is Compassion So Important in Relationships?

When couples routinely display compassion for each other they strengthen their friendship and create a happier home characterized by “positive sentiment override” (PSO). John Gottman explains that couples experiencing PSO feel optimistic about their relationships, have great expectations about their lives together, and routinely give each other the benefit of the doubt.

For these couples, their positive



thoughts about each other are strong enough to override the negative things their partner might do. In contrast, they see negativity as evidence that their partner is somehow stressed or not themselves for some reason.

PSO spouses may notice negative events, but they don't overreact. They are not overly sensitive and do not take the negative behavior personally. Instead, they show compassion and try to help.

## How to Show Compassion Toward Your Spouse

Displaying compassion in marriage involves the ability and the desire to quickly see your spouse's perspective and to kindly help make it easy to address the matter before it becomes a conflict.

Compassion can and should be expressed for big issues but is most often shown in little ways every day. For example, if your busy spouse forgets to gas up the car and will be late to work if she has to buy gas on the way, you assume that she's doing her best and volunteer to gas up the car while she gets ready. Of, if your newly retired husband isn't doing his fair share of work around the house, you refrain from scolding him, assume he just truly doesn't know what needs to be done, and kindly suggest that you jointly make a list and divide the chores.

Notice that in both examples, the spouses avoid criticizing each other. They give each other the benefit of the doubt and offer to help.

## Developing Compassion and Positive Sensory Override

The Norm of Reciprocity suggests that when you show

compassion to your spouse, your spouse is more likely to be compassionate with you. In this way, by showing compassion, you help yourself as well as your spouse. This, in turn, strengthens your friendship and continually elevates your relationship PSO, which further protects you from feeling adversarial toward your spouse.

Of course, these reciprocal displays of compassion must start somewhere. And they begin with friendship.

The strength of a person's desire to show compassion and understanding to their spouse is directly related to the level of intimacy and warmth in their marital friendship. The stronger the friendship, the more likely spouses will display compassionate responses to mistakes, which fuels Positive Sensory Override. This pattern establishes a protective positivity “set point” which takes a high degree of negativity to overcome.

In order to maintain their compassionate, happy marriage, couples who have a strong friendship and PSO set point need to continually invest time and attention to their relationship and to respond favorably to each other's bids for emotional connection.

Couples who have let their friendship erode need to deliberately try to increase their fondness and admiration for each other before it is too late.

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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# Book Review: Maybe You Should Talk to Someone by Lori Gottlieb



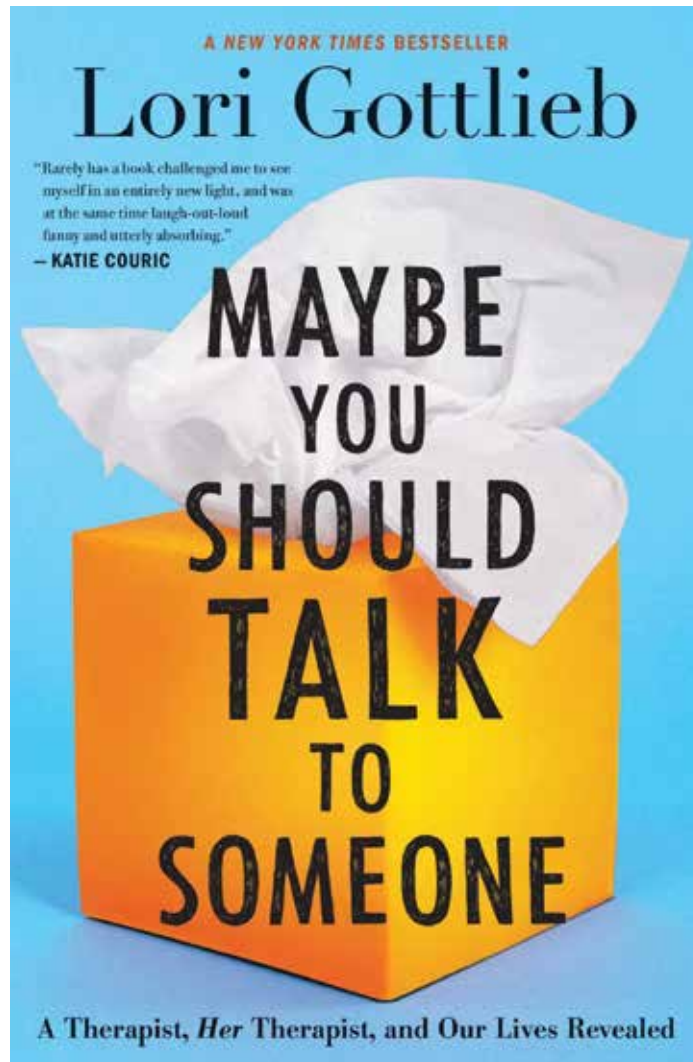
REVIEWED BY MICHAEL  
McMANUS, LCSW

“Maybe You Should Talk to Someone” by Lori Gottlieb is an insightful and engaging exploration of the human experience through the lens of therapy. Gottlieb, a therapist herself, weaves her personal journey into the stories of her patients, creating a rich tapestry of vulnerability, humor, and profound insight. I love this book and find it to be one of the better books describing the therapy experience.

The book stands out for its candid approach to mental health, breaking down the stigma surrounding therapy. Gottlieb’s writing is both relatable and deeply moving, as she shares her own struggles and the lessons learned from her clients. Each character is well-crafted, bringing unique challenges and perspectives that resonate with readers, allowing them to reflect on their own lives.

What makes this book particularly compelling is its balance of humor and seriousness. Gottlieb’s witty observations and self-deprecating anecdotes provide levity to the heavier themes of loss, love, and personal growth. The narrative flows seamlessly, making it a page-turner that invites readers to ponder their own emotional landscapes.

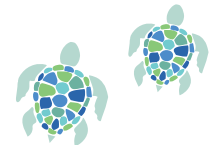
Overall, “Maybe You Should Talk to Someone” is not just a book about therapy; it’s a book about life itself. It encourages readers to embrace their vulnerabilities and seek connection, reminding us that we are all in this together. This heartfelt and thought-provoking read is a



must for anyone looking to understand themselves better or simply seeking a compassionate reminder of the beauty and complexity of the human condition.

and is in private practice in Santa Rosa Beach, Florida. To set an appointment call or text (850)837-0123 or visit [Psychotherapy30A.com](http://Psychotherapy30A.com).

Michael McManus LCSW has been a psychotherapist for 38 years



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# More than Skin Deep: How Stress Affects Your Skin and Hair

By BRIDGET SULLIVAN, PA-C

I often say to my patients: "Everything is related. One part of the body is not separate from the other." This can be true for our emotional and physical health too. This article will highlight how stress can have an adverse effect on our skin and hair health.

When we go through stress - physical stress or emotional stress - this can have negative consequences on our skin and hair. Physical stress to our body includes surgeries, pregnancy, extreme changes in weight, and

sickness or illness. Emotional stress includes things like death of a loved one, divorce, a major move, starting a new job or a job loss. When we undergo stress, our body releases a hormone called cortisol. This hormone can be helpful in a flight or fight situation but can be damaging if the cortisol is released for a long interval of time. An increase in cortisol causes an increase in sebum or oil production in our skin. Increased sebum production increases our acne flares. Increased cortisol can also cause increased inflammation in the

skin. This will flare up skin conditions of rosacea, eczema, and psoriasis. Increased cortisol can also cause increased mast cell activation and that can cause itching and scratching. All in all, chronic increased levels of cortisol can lead to negative impacts on our skin and immune system.

Physical and emotional stress not only affects our skin, but it can also affect our hair. There is a medical condition called telogen effluvium, which is hair loss following an incredibly stressful event in our life. The stressful event shocks the hair from the



growing phase or antigen phase to the shedding phase or telogen phase. You will start to notice massive shedding of hair. A lot of women will notice this after childbirth. This condition is usually reversible, and can last between three to six months.

How can we combat stress? Some simple tools that we can incorporate into our daily life to help reduce stress are: 1) Practicing gratitude. This can be done by writing down 3-5 things every day for which you are thankful. 2) Having a regular exercise routine is important. Try

to include a thirty-minute walk into your day. 3) Getting proper and sufficient sleep is essential to our overall health. 4) Lastly, a healthy and balanced diet is imperative for good health. Anti-inflammatory foods include dark green leafy vegetables, berries like blueberries and raspberries, vegetables like spinach and kale, and green tea.

Having a healthy and balanced lifestyle will not only have a positive impact on our emotional health but will also be impactful to our skin and hair health. Beauty starts within!



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# Aging Gracefully: A Guide to Longevity and Vitality



By DR. KAREN DEVORE

Aging is a privilege, but how we age is largely within our control. While genetics play a role, lifestyle choices and proactive health management significantly impact our vitality, mobility and overall well-being. The good news? You don't have to accept aches, fatigue and chronic diseases as inevitable. You can age on your own terms by implementing a few key strategies.

## 1. Annual Check-Ins & Lab Work: Stay Ahead of the Game

Prevention is the cornerstone of longevity. Annual health

check-ups allow you to track changes, address concerns and monitor key health markers before minor issues become major problems. Many conditions—such as metabolic disorders, cardiovascular disease and osteoporosis—develop silently over time, making regular lab work essential for early detection and intervention.

Too many people avoid these appointments due to frustration with dismissive healthcare providers. If your practitioner isn't listening to you or supporting your health goals, find a team that will. Healthcare should be a partnership, not a battle.

### Key Lab Markers to Monitor:

- Inflammation & Metabolic Health: CRP, fasting insulin, A1C
- Hormonal Balance: Thyroid panel, testosterone, estrogen, progesterone, DHEA
- Nutrient Status: Vitamin D, B12, ferritin, magnesium
- Cardiovascular Health: Lipid panel, homocysteine, ApoB

## 2. Listen to Your Body: Symptoms Matter

Your body is always communicating with you. Fatigue, brain fog, unexplained weight changes and joint pain aren't just random annoyances—they're signals. Ignoring them doesn't make them disappear; it only allows problems to worsen over time.

Being proactive about your health doesn't mean dismissing symptoms in the name of "natural" healing. It means staying in tune with your body, recognizing patterns and addressing imbalances early. You know your body better than any textbook or algorithm—if something feels off, advocate for yourself.

## 3. Know Your Family's Aging Patterns

While lifestyle choices have the greatest impact on longevity, understanding your genetic predispositions can help you make informed decisions. Look at how your parents and siblings are aging. Are they dealing with cognitive decline, cardiovascular issues or bone loss?



Genetics don't determine your fate, but they do provide insight into potential vulnerabilities. By identifying patterns, you can take proactive steps to mitigate risks through targeted lifestyle and medical interventions.

## 4. The Fundamentals Never Get Old

Some health advice remains timeless because it works. If you want to age gracefully, these fundamentals are non-negotiable:

- Movement is medicine. If you don't use it, you lose it. Regular exercise supports mobility, cardiovascular health and cognitive function.
- Hydration matters. Dehydration contributes to fatigue,

joint pain and poor circulation.

• Sleep is the ultimate reset. Quality sleep is essential for hormone balance, brain function and immune resilience.

• Laughter truly is the best medicine. Joy and social connection improve mental and emotional health while reducing stress and inflammation.

• You are what you eat. A nutrient-dense, whole-food diet fuels longevity and vitality.

## 5. Muscle Mass: The Fountain of Youth

One of the most powerful predictors of longevity? Muscle mass. Research consistently links muscle maintenance with reduced mortality risk, improved metabolic health and greater resilience against age-related diseases such as osteoporosis, diabetes and cardiovascular disease.

### Why Muscle Matters:

- Improves metabolism and helps regulate blood sugar
- Reduces fall risk by support-

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 Musing


BY SEAN DIETRICH

“What is Easter?” the boy asked his grandfather.

The old man and boy sat on the front porch. That’s where people used to sit in the olden days. They used to build porches on the fronts of houses so you could wave at your neighbors. Now they build “decks” on the back so you can wave at your above-ground pool.

“Easter is a day of rebirth,” said Granddaddy.

The two cohorts were still wearing their Sunday best. The boy: His necktie and khakis. The grandfather: His button down, crisply pressed, with only a few tobacco-spit stains on the collar.

“What’s rebirth?” the boy said.

“Well, you remember when

## Sean of the South: **What is Easter?**



you was born, don’t you?”

“No.”

“Well, trust me you were born, or else you wouldn’t be here.” Granddaddy took a sip of his Doctor Pepper. “And today it all happens again.”

“What happens again?”

“You get born.”

“I get born twice?” the boy said.

He nodded. “Look at the trees and the flowers, see how they’re all blooming? You see those azaleas across the street.”

“Which ones are the azaleas?”

“The pink ones that Mrs. Wannamaker will slit your throat if you touch.”

“I see them.”

“And the trees, look at them. They’re turning green. The birds are singing. That’s what resurrection means.”

“It means birds?”

“No. Resurrection means, when something comes back to life. And it’s a miracle, every time something gets reborn. Be-

cause a new beginning is a miracle.”

“Is that why we look for eggs on Easter?”

“No. Hell. I don’t know why we look for eggs.”

He took another sip. “Look,” he went on, “you know all those crosses people wear around their necks?”

“Yes.”

“Well, I think we’re wearing the wrong thing

around our necks. We shouldn’t be wearing the cross. The cross is death. It’s a tool of execution. It’s like wearing an electric chair around your neck. Or a hangman’s noose.”

“Granny wears a cross around her neck.”

“Your Granny was raised Pentecostal.”

“What’s that mean?”

“It means don’t go to her church if you’re afraid of reptiles.”

He unbuttoned his top button. “The point is,” he went on, “maybe we should be wearing the empty tomb around our necks. Because that’s where it all starts.”

“Where what starts?”

“That’s where your life begins. You will come to a point in your life when you have nothing. You will reach a moment in your life when everything falls apart. You will find yourself in a tomb, of sorts. You will be as good as dead.”

“Just like Jesus?”

“Just like Him. And I wish I could save you from that fate, but I can’t. Because on that day, there will be nothing left for you, boy. Your life will be a wreck. You will be at your bitter end.

“And in that moment, you will have only two choices: You can either lie down and die, or you can look up.

“What happens if I look up?”

“Rebirth.”

“Have you ever been reborn?”

“Many times.”

“How did it happen?”

“It first happened to me when I was in Italy, fighting. And there were men with guns all around us. And my young soldiers were all going to die.”

“And what’d you do?”

“We all looked up, and we asked God to help us. My men started praying. Out loud. We started talking to God. And that’s all it takes. You just have to talk.

“Ain’t no magic words, no secret handshake, no special membership rules. Don’t ever let anyone tell you it’s more complicated than that. You just talk to God. And He’ll hear you. And He heard us that day in Italy.”

“And what happened next?”

“I’m sitting right here drinking a Doctor Pepper, ain’t I?”

Granddaddy always had a way of explaining things so I could understand them.

### AGING GRACEFULLY

*continued from previous page*

ing balance and coordination

- Strengthens bones through mechanical stress, helping prevent osteoporosis

- Supports cognitive health by enhancing blood flow and reducing inflammation

The takeaway? It’s never too late to build muscle. Resistance training—even starting in your 70s or 80s—can lead to significant improvements in strength, mobility and longevity.

### Aging on Your Own Terms

Aging gracefully isn’t about avoiding every wrinkle or pretending time isn’t passing. It’s about maintaining independence, vitality and quality of life for as long as possible. It’s about making informed choices, staying proactive with your health and surrounding yourself with a supportive healthcare team.

Longevity isn’t just about adding years to your life—it’s about adding life to your years. Take care of your body now, and it will take care of you in the decades to come.

I’d be honored to support you on your wellness journey. Let’s create a personalized plan that nurtures your unique body, helping you feel vibrant, strong and at ease as you age gracefully. Schedule a consultation with me at the Tortoise Clinic (850.267.5611)—because you deserve to feel your best, every step of the way.



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BY DR. KERRY KNIGHT,  
MINISTER, EMERALD BEACH  
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*“Now my soul is troubled, and what shall I say?  
Father save me from this hour?  
But for this purpose I came to this hour”  
John 12:27*

The scene of Jesus kneeling in prayer in the garden has stimulated the imagination of the great painters. We think of the light of the moon filtering through the olive trees, casting a web of shadows. A lonely figure is in anguish. Deep in careless sleep, His companions are oblivious of the Masters agony. The tension is palpable. The torches and swords of the soldiers

and priests approaching can be faintly seen. And we hear the soft, almost whispering, words of Jesus:

*“My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from me.  
Yet, not as I will, but as you will.”  
Matthew 26:39)*

Jesus awakens His disciples with these words: “Rise, let us be going “ (Matthew 26:46. Going where? Was this the moment when they must leave the Gethsemane and seek safety far from the garden and Jerusalem? Had they already plotted to cross the Jordan (a journey of 20 miles) and then make their way to Perea, which was the route north, back to Galilee? But that would not make sense. The Romans would certainly look for Jesus in Galilee, His previous home. Would they take refuge at Qumran in the hills near the Dead Sea, and home of the Essenes? But there is no indication in the Bible that Jesus ever had contact with the Essenes. Jesus and the disciples would not

# A Minister’s Message: The Garden of Gethsemane

have journeyed to Caesarea, a seaport, with plans to sail away, for that was the home of Pilate. All of this speculation is unnecessary. When Jesus said, “Let us be going,” He was not speaking

of escaping at all. He was ready to meet his betrayer and the soldiers, coming into the garden to arrest Him. Yes, Jesus might have had a heart of trouble, but He was the Son of God and His

prayers with His Father had given Him enormous courage.

He knew full well that His hour had arrived. It was now His purpose to save the world.

HAVE YOU EVER PRAYED TO GOD, BEEN DENIED AND STILL KEEP YOUR FAITH?



**JESUS DID.**  
The account of Jesus praying in the Garden of Gethsemane before being taken away to be crucified is one of the most personal glimpses into the relationship between Jesus and his Father. God. Jesus went to the Father with his deepest troubles and honestly cried out to him. Not only did Jesus trust God with his fears, sadness and requests, he also trusted the perfect plan God had for his future. Even when it would cost him his life. Jesus trusted the will of his Father and even prayed for it.

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# Celebrating Earth Day: How Mohawk Flooring Leads the Way in Sustainability

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

Every year, Earth Day serves as a reminder of the importance of environmental responsibility and sustainable practices. As consumers become increasingly eco-conscious, businesses across industries are stepping up to reduce their environmental footprint. At Flooring Depot, we take pride in partnering with vendors who share our commitment to sustainability, and Mohawk Flooring stands out as a leader in this space.

## A Commitment to Sustainability

Mohawk Flooring has long been at the forefront of eco-friendly innovation in the flooring industry. With a deep commitment to reducing waste, conserving resources, and creating sustainable flooring solutions, Mohawk has implemented numerous initiatives that make a significant environmental impact.

One of Mohawk's most no-

table sustainability efforts is its ReCover Recycling Program, which offers an easy way for consumers and businesses to recycle old carpet rather than sending it to a landfill. Since its inception, this program has helped divert millions of pounds of carpet from landfills, giving materials a second life and reducing overall waste.

## Using Recycled Materials to Create Beautiful Flooring

Mohawk takes recycling to the next level by incorporating post-consumer and post-industrial materials into many of their flooring products. A stand-out example is their EverStrand carpet, which is made using recycled plastic bottles. Every year, Mohawk repurposes billions of plastic bottles, transforming them into high-quality, durable carpet fibers. This process not only reduces plastic waste but also decreases energy consumption compared to traditional manufacturing methods.

In addition to carpet, Mo-

hawk has pioneered sustainable practices in hard surface flooring as well. Their RevWood laminate flooring is crafted using responsibly sourced wood, and their resilient flooring lines include products with high recycled content, ensuring that eco-friendly choices don't compromise on style or durability.

## Water Conservation Efforts

Sustainability isn't just about materials—it's also about responsible manufacturing. Mohawk is a leader in water conservation, implementing cutting-edge techniques to reduce water usage across its production facilities. Through advanced recycling and purification systems, Mohawk has saved millions of gallons of water, making its production process significantly more environmentally friendly.

Mohawk also focuses on reducing chemical waste in its water treatment processes, ensuring that manufacturing runoff is treated and reused when-

ever possible. This proactive approach further demonstrates their commitment to protecting natural resources and maintaining cleaner waterways for future generations.

## Renewable Energy & Carbon Reduction

Reducing carbon emissions is another pillar of Mohawk's sustainability mission. Many of their facilities are powered by renewable energy sources, including wind and solar. Additionally, Mohawk has invested in biomass energy systems, which utilize natural and sustainable sources to generate power, further reducing reliance on fossil fuels.

Mohawk is also actively working toward achieving carbon neutrality by optimizing production processes and utilizing energy-efficient technologies. Their ongoing sustainability goals ensure that every step of their manufacturing and distribution chain aligns with their mission to reduce environmental impact.

## Certified Green Flooring

For consumers who prioritize eco-friendly flooring, Mohawk's products come with industry recognized certifications that validate their sustainability claims. Certifications such as Green Label Plus, LEED, and FloorScore ensure that Mohawk's flooring meets rigorous environmental standards, promoting better indoor air quality and sustainability.

## Making a Difference Beyond Flooring

Mohawk doesn't just focus on manufacturing sustainable products—they also give back to communities and support environmental causes. Through initiatives like their Partnership for a Healthier America, Mohawk collaborates with organizations that promote sustainability and wellness. Additionally, their involvement in habitat restoration projects and environmental education programs highlights their broader commitment to

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# Design and Culture: Countertops, The Details

Countertops are a fabulous investment for any space, and surprisingly, may be one of the few products that are not inflated right now in terms of price. If you are interested in renovating or are building a new home, we are here to help and discuss all the current trends going on in the most beautiful beaches in the country with countertops. As color and pattern are the

edge profile, is by far the most common countertop edge, but we have seen a small revival of the ogee edge in baths. The mitered edge has become increasingly popular for kitchens, kitchen islands, baths, and outdoor kitchens. A mitered edge is a lovely detail and creates a bold statement in any space. If you are interested in a mitered edge, 2 inches to 2 1/2 inches is a good

6-inch to 8-inch backsplash with a stone cap shelf, are increasingly in demand. As these details have always existed, they are becoming more and more desirable as clients veer away from grout lines or hard-to-clean surfaces in their homes. The final product is stunning. When considering this application, there may be coordination and planning required to achieve some



Melanie Turner Interiors, Henderson Construction



Tassels Interiors, Panama City Beach



most important when selecting a countertop that works best with your space, there are a few small details you can consider when it comes to edges and backsplash to give your space, whether small or big, that extra special touch.

The standard edge profile, also referred to as a flat eased

range to consider.

When it comes to stone backsplash, 4" is the standard height, but different heights are becoming increasingly popular as designers push the boundaries of stone applications. Full-height backsplash, backsplash to the ceiling with floating shelves mounted on the stone, and

of these options. A fabricator will be able to assist you with any questions you might have.

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# Capital City Bank Celebrates New Office Opening In Panama City Beach

On Tuesday, March 11, Capital City Bank hosted a ribbon cutting to commemorate the opening of its new banking office located at 8403 West Bay Parkway at the entrance of the Latitude Margaritaville Watersound community. Attendees included leadership from Capital City Bank and The St. Joe Company, as well as several members of the Panama City Beach Chamber of Commerce and the Bay County Chamber of Commerce.

“With the opening of our new office in Panama City Beach, we are strengthening our commitment to Bay County,” said Stephen Stabler, Capital City Bank regional executive for the Emerald Coast of Florida. “The addition of our West Bay Office compliments our existing locations in the area, enhancing access to comprehensive banking services and ensuring we are well positioned to support clients across the region.”

“We are very pleased to wel-

come a financial institution to Watersound West Bay Center,” said William Brock, Vice President of Commercial Real Estate for The St. Joe Company. “We have had the opportunity to work with Capital City Bank on other offices near our residential communities. This new location gives them an additional opportunity to serve customers as development continues along Highway 79.”

With the addition of West Bay, Capital City Bank now operates five service locations across Bay and Walton counties, providing a full range of consumer and business banking, lending, trust and wealth management solutions to the local community. The Bank’s expansion in the region began with the opening of its first loan production office in Panama City Beach in March 2018. Since then, Capital City has steadily grown its presence. In 2020, the Company added a loan production office in Santa Rosa Beach



equipped with virtual teller technology, which enables live assistance from a banker via video chat with or without a debit card from 7 a.m. until 9 p.m., Monday through Friday, and from 9 a.m. until 3 p.m. on Saturday. The machine has a Smart ATM option for self-service banking with a debit card 24 hours a day. The Smart ATM has all the standard features of a traditional ATM but includes several key enhancements that make it easier, faster and more convenient than ever before. It accepts cash and check deposits of up to 30 items in a single transaction, and checks post the same day when deposited by 8 p.m. on business days.

Founded in 1895 and headquartered in Tallahassee, Florida, Capital City Bank provides a full range of consumer, wealth management, business and commercial banking services. The Bank has repeatedly been selected as the best bank or financial institution in multiple communities across its footprint, including Tallahassee, Crawfordville, the Emerald Coast and Palatka, Florida, and Cairo, Georgia. Additionally, the Company has been chosen for Florida Trend magazine’s “Best Companies to Work For in Florida” thirteen years in a row and the American Banker magazine’s “Best Banks to Work For” every year since the list’s inception.

and constructed its first full-service banking office at Panama City Beach’s Breakfast Point community to replace the original Panama City Beach loan production office. In 2023, the Bank continued its expansion with a second new-construction full-service banking office at the Watersound Town Center in In-

let Beach and a loan production office in Lynn Haven. With the addition of the West Bay Office, Capital City Bank remains committed to serving the financial needs of Bay and Walton counties with convenient locations and comprehensive financial solutions.

The West Bay Office is

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## From the Desk of Congressman Neal Dunn

Under the leadership of President Trump, Washington has come alive. From restoring common sense to our immigration policy to identifying waste, fraud, and abuse in the federal bureaucracy, Republicans are moving to end business as usual in Washington.

The President needs support from Congress to enact his agenda. My colleagues and I are committed to ensuring your taxpayer dollars are spent wisely and not supporting the efforts of America's adversaries. Earlier this month, I introduced the Ending China's Unfair Advantage Act to stop the flow of American taxpayer dollars to the Chinese Communist Party.

For far too long, American taxpayer money has been flowing to China through international environmental organizations, including the Montreal Protocol's Multilateral Fund and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. The United States is the largest contributor to the Montreal Protocol's Multilateral Fund, giving almost \$1 billion. China has benefitted disproportionately from this fund, receiving nearly \$1.4 billion due to its status as a "developing nation."

China is the world's second-largest economy. It has no business benefiting from international trade and environmental policies designed to benefit developing nations. American taxpayers should not be sending their hard-earned money to organizations that underpin China's unfair advantage on the world stage. The Ending China's Unfair Advantage Act will stop the flow of American money to international organizations that allow China to exploit their rules.

I am committed to putting the American people in charge of their tax dollars and their property. That's why I introduced the REPAIR Act at the beginning of the new Congress to put car and truck owners back in the driver's seat.

Vehicles on America's roadways generate a vast quantity of user data, including repair and maintenance information. American consumers deserve to have full control over their vehicle repair data to ensure they can work with the repair shop of their choosing at a reasonable price. Unfortunately, car manufacturers want to control who has access to that information, steering car and truck owners to their affiliated dealerships for repairs where prices are usually higher.

You own your vehicle, not the manufacturer. I have introduced the REPAIR Act to provide a binding, workable solution to anti-competitive behavior in

the auto repair industry and reaffirm consumer control over their vehicle maintenance data. Whether you fix your vehicle yourself or work with a trusted independent repair shop, no one should stand in the way of accessing your car's maintenance information. This legislation enjoys support from the more than 557,000 businesses nationwide, providing maintenance and repair services for the 295 million registered vehicles on American roadways.

Between these important legislative initiatives during the opening chapters of the new administration, I have been traveling around our district to hear from community leaders and address ongoing issues. Recently, I visited Keaton Beach with Acting FEMA Administrator Cameron Hamilton and Florida Division of Emergency Management Director Kevin Guthrie to survey the ongoing recovery effort after recent hurricanes battered the community.

After returning from Keaton Beach, I visited the VA Tallahassee Outpatient Clinic to meet with clinic staff and leaders to discuss the importance of strengthening benefits for our veterans. While in Tallahassee, I also met with student leaders and faculty from FSU's Political Science department and participated in a roundtable discussion hosted by Americans for Prosperity to discuss the importance of extending the 2017 Tax Cuts and Jobs Act, which provided

much-needed tax relief to working families. I am committed to engaging with my constituents throughout Northwest Florida to ensure Washington is listening to their concerns.

Serving as your voice in Washington is an honor, and I

am always eager to hear from my constituents. If you have a comment about upcoming legislation or need assistance with a federal agency, please contact my office in Panama City at (850) 785-0812.

### Bayway Offering Free Transportation to Residents Seeking Tax Assistance

Bayway is bringing back an annual initiative to make tax season easier for Bay County residents. From March 19 to April 9, Bayway will provide free rides every Wednesday between 9 am - 2 pm to the A.D. Harris Learning Village where residents can access tax filing support through the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) program with United Way Northwest Florida.

"We understand tax season can be stressful and want to ensure residents with limited transportation options can still access the assistance they need," said Lamar Hobbs, Transit Programs Administrator of Bayway. "By offering free rides every Wednesday, our goal is to remove barriers and make tax services more accessible to everyone in the community."

Residents interested in using this free service can visit

[www.baywaytransit.org](http://www.baywaytransit.org) to view route schedules and map their ride using the detailed trip planner feature.

The VITA program provides free tax preparation assistance to individuals and families earning \$70,000 or less annually. Residents seeking assistance should bring all relevant tax documents, a valid ID, a Social Security card, and any documentation needed for dependents. The A.D. Harris Learning Village is located at 819 E 11th Street in Panama City, Florida.

Bayway is committed to strengthening the local community and connecting residents to vital resources. By offering these free rides, Bayway hopes to make a meaningful impact during tax season, ensuring that all Bay County residents have the opportunity to file their taxes with ease.

### CELEBRATING

*continued from page 28*

protecting our planet.

Mohawk also encourages consumers to make eco-friendly choices by providing resources on sustainable living and home improvement. By educating customers about the impact of their purchasing decisions, Mohawk helps foster a more environmentally conscious community.

#### Mohawk for a Greener Future

As we celebrate Earth Day, it's essential to recognize the brands that are actively working to create a more sustainable future. Mohawk Flooring's dedication to recycling, responsible sourcing, water conservation,

and renewable energy makes them a true industry leader in sustainability.

At Flooring Depot, we're proud to offer Mohawk's eco-friendly flooring options, allowing our customers to make choices that are both stylish and environmentally responsible. Whether you're looking for recycled carpet, sustainable hardwood alternatives, or low-emission flooring, Mohawk provides innovative solutions that help reduce environmental impact without sacrificing quality.

This Earth Day let's take a step toward a more sustainable future—one floor at a time.




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