

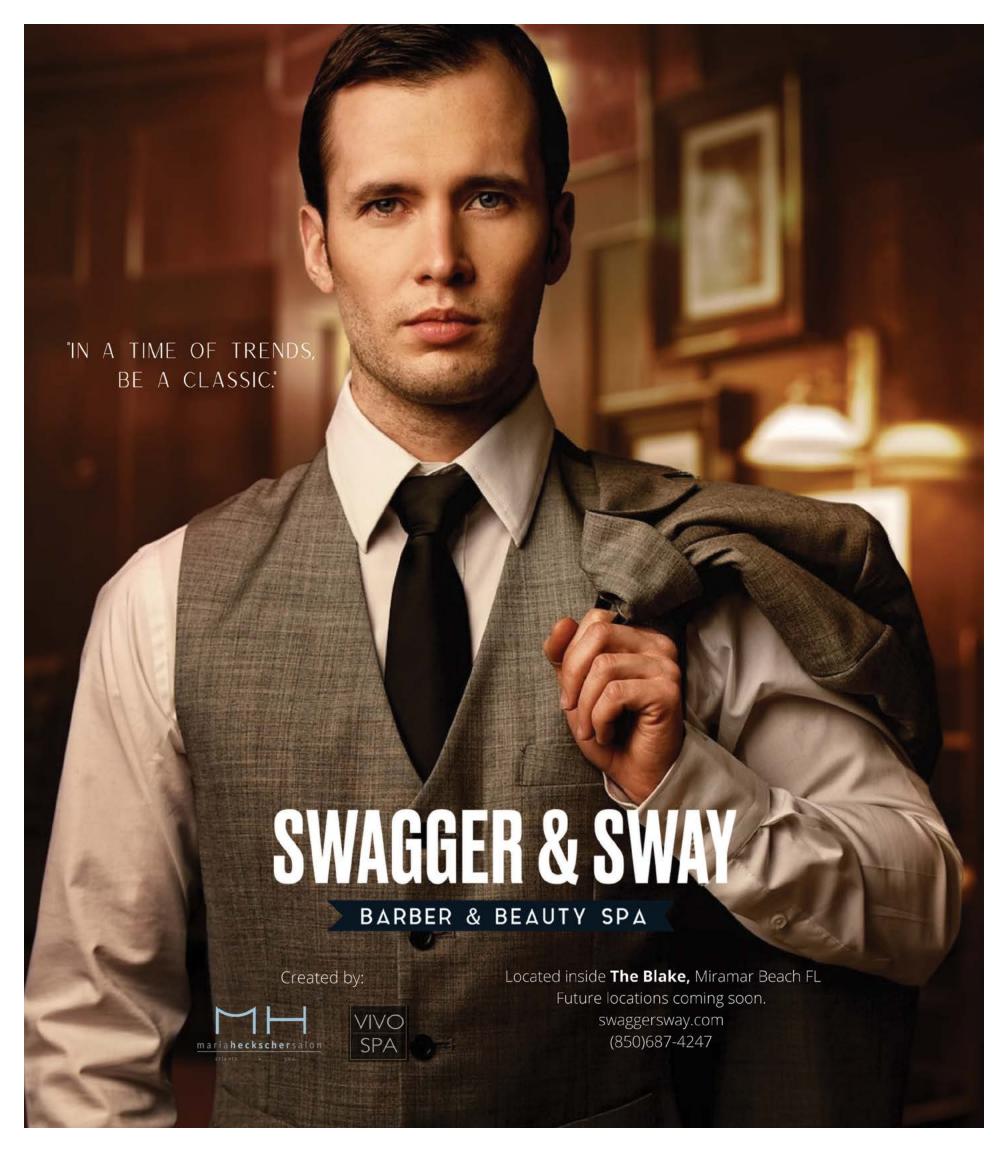
a review of 30-A's finest people • places • things

Night Moves

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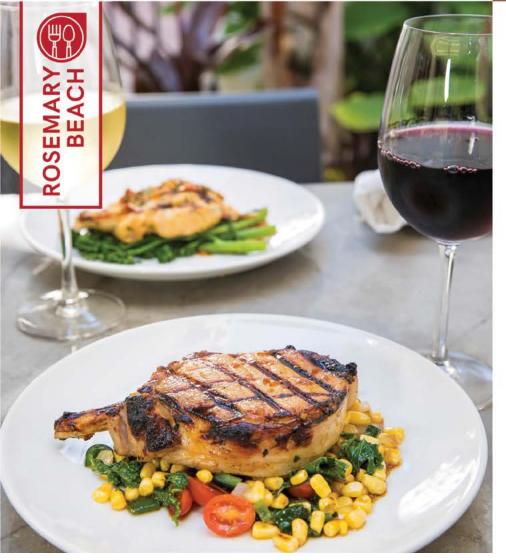


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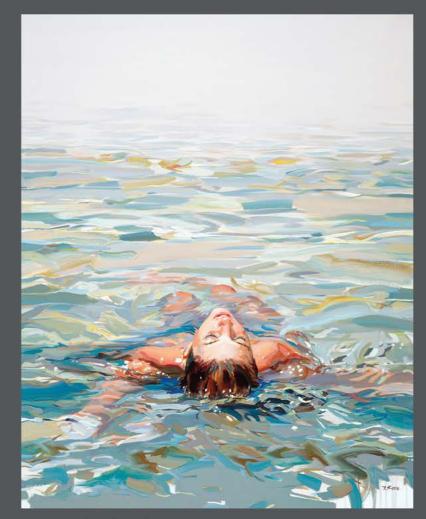
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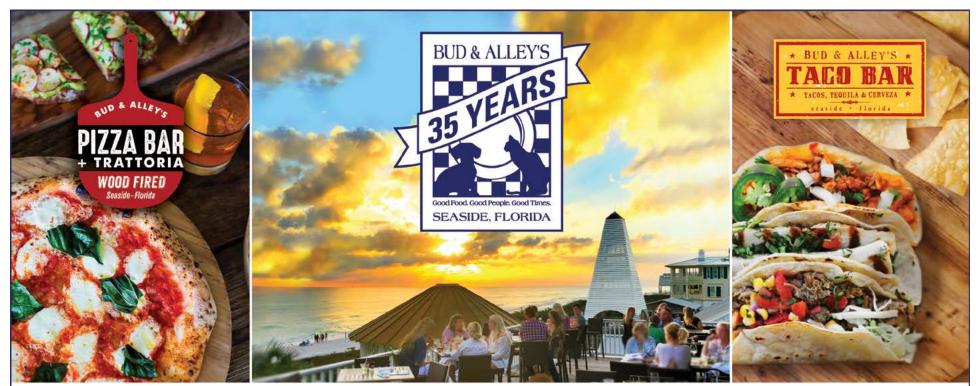
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letter from the publisher

SUMMERTIME, AND THE LIVIN' IS EASY.

Summertime, and the livin' is easy Fish are jumpin' and the cotton is high Your daddy's rich and your ma is good-lookin' So hush little baby, baby don't you cry...

~ Ella Fitzgerald

Every summer, this classic and brilliant song by Ella Fitzgerald comes to my mind. After 18 months of not so easy livin, this summer we can finally embody the message in this song with open arms. Some days it doesn't feel real to be able to shake hands and hug our neighbors. No better place to do so than our beautiful beaches and communities of 30-A.

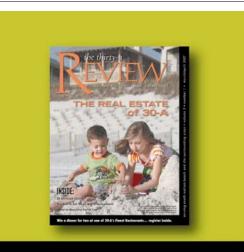
We invite you to peruse the pages of this issue and learn more about the art, culture, fabulous food, real estate, and fashion which make 30-A and the surrounding areas such a special and unique place.

The locals and visitors alike propagate a spirited zest for life like the olden days. And here we are all neighbors. So whether it's fishing, tanning, body surfing, shopping, or motor boating that makes your heart sing, we hope you enjoy every minute of it while here on 30-A.

Until next issue, keep loving each other and enjoy your time at the beach.



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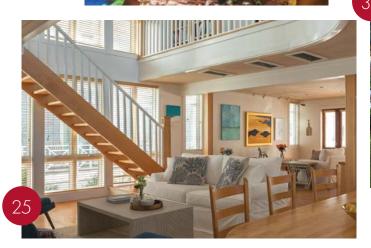
Warren Butler













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Fresh Ingredients + Fresh Salt Air = Fresh Perspective Chiringo offers the best of the beach in Grayton

BY TESS FARMER

The restaurant and bar blends saltwater staples, elevated proteins, and fresh produce to recreate the bright and bold flavors of easy sunny days by the water.

s Grayton Beach continues to rank as one of the top beaches in America, it's the vibrant community that makes this beach town sought after more with each passing year. Chiringo, a casual beachside restaurant and bar serving

a vibrant surf-side cuisine, came on the scene in Grayton in April 2016 and also has a loyal customer following coming back for more year after year.

The name is derived from the Spanish "chiringuito," meaning the casual, often portable seaside bars in Southern Spain. Owner and founding partner Andy McKoski traveled to Spain to visit some of its coastal bars as inspiration prior to acquiring the space in the heart of Grayton Beach.

Originally from South Florida, McKoski grew up in the restaurant industry and spent much of his college days as a bartender and waiter. Having left the business behind for a life outside of the hospitality industry, McKoski dove back into the restaurant business in 2006, opening a string of successful restaurants throughout the southeast before deciding Grayton Beach was his ultimate destination and relocated to the area in 2015.

Located in the eclectic, soulful center of 30-A in Grayton Beach, Chiringo's laidback vibe, fresh juice cocktails, and elevated "beach food" menu creates a dining experience with a stellar backdrop for lasting memories along the Gulf of Mexico.

The restaurant and bar blends saltwater staples, elevated proteins, and fresh produce to recreate the bright and bold flavors of easy sunny days by the water. "We use fresh fish, fresh juice; we hand-cut all of our





Food photos by Andy McKoski

fries and tortillas," says McKoski. "Our goal is to elevate your favorite beach meals—fresh fried shrimp but make it gluten free, hand cut fresh french fries, and all our dips and sauces are made in house. The pizza pie with blackened gulf shrimp features dough and sauce that are also made fresh in house and finished off with a Lil' Chubby ice cream sandwich (which isn't so little)."

With a strong customer base from the Atlanta area on vacation at the beach, McKoski was prompted to open the first sister restaurant in Alpharetta in October 2018, called Chiringa, a smaller restaurant serving up the same coastal vibe, drinks, and dishes to those dreaming of returning to days at the beach.

"We want to continue to take the magic of Grayton Beach to other communities across the Southeast and Midwest," adds McKoski. "The community has grown organically over the years and there's so much value in what that represents; we are proud to become a part of the deep history here and see the potential of bringing the Grayton vibe to our customers back in their home states."

Both restaurants were operating to-go service during Florida and Georgia's restrictive periods and the operators jumped into quick action to develop a plan to back the staff and implement all

> guidelines. The restaurants also organized fundraisers to support the community and employees during the pandemic and kept everyone employed.

> "As challenging as it was to consider the unknowns at that time, we are reminded how rewarding it is to come

through to the other side," McKoski says.

McKoski, his wife and young son recently moved back to Atlanta but still get in plenty of visits to Grayton Beach. "The way of life at the beach taught me to slow down and to accept things will happen when they're supposed to happen. We were all reminded of that in the past year, learning to have more patience and knowing that the tide will rise again."

Chiringo is located in the heart of Grayton Beach at 63 Hotz Avenue. Open Tuesday through Sunday, 11:30 a.m. - 9 p.m. Bar open till 11 p.m. For more information, visit chiringograyton.com or call (850)

Small Cakes, Big Flavor

BY LIESEL SCHMIDT

here's an old saying that life is short, and dessert should be eaten first. And while some may disagree with the particular wisdom of the adage, the sweet treats offered at Smallcakes Cupcakery prove the prudence of putting that principle into practice. Whether you're hunting down a quick snack to give you a sugar rush or want to indulge in something truly decadent, you'll find it freshly baked and ready to go-and you'll have a hard time just picking one favorite.

Founded in 2007 by cupcake master Jeff Martin, Smallcakes began as a single store in Overland Park, Kansas. Created with the concept of offering, as the company mission statement says, "creative flavors, quality ingredients, and friendly service to provide the finest cupcake experience worthy of and recommending," returning company—and its founder—were put to the test on the national stage when Martin appeared on Food Network's hit series Cupcake Wars for seasons one, two, and seven. Further attention came from a feature on The View, and Martin soon found that his little confectionary was in heavy demand all across the nation.

Naturally, Martin did what all good businessmen do: He capitalized on the popularity of his brand and franchised. Now, the Smallcakes name is proudly displayed at more than 200 locations in the US, as well as Dubai and Saudi Arabia. Even celebrities have had Smallcakes at their events and weddings, and USA TODAY named the company in their listing of Top Ten Cupcake Places to try in the country.

Realizing that 30-A needed a touch of sweetness that only his high-quality cupcakes could bring, Martin opened a corporate location in Seacrest Beach. Since the shop opened its doors in 2017, its two bakers have been baking 12 flavors of cupcakes each day, using the best ingredients to achieve the very best product. "People love that we make all of our products fresh every day, and that's something that really makes us stand out," says Martin. "We have no freezers."

Except, of course, for the freezers that house the 18 flavors of ice cream that Smallcakes offers alongside their signature treats. From the festive taste of Birthday Cake to the nuttiness of Peanut Butter Cup, the flavors of their scoops are the perfect way to satisfy a craving for ice



With every flavor of cupcake and ice cream they offer, Smallcakes can help can satisfy whatever craving you have, giving your tastebuds an adventure of the sweetest kind.

cream—not even the Chocolate and Vanilla are plain Jane. And while such decadent treats could seem off limits to the nut-free, gluten-free, and dairy-free crowd, Smallcakes offers varieties that are specially made for them.

In fact, the company also offers cupcakes that meet those criteria. For Martin, it was a strategy of inclusion, a

desire to make his creations something that would not only be widely appealing, but also safe for people with special dietary considerations. The result, of course, has been his massive success—and a widespread addiction to his diminutive delights.

Boasting Smallcakes's signature pink buttercream frosting, the Pink Vanilla and Pink Chocolate are great for lovers of the classics, but the menu is really a reflection of Martin's love of creativity. Other signature flavors include Lemon Drop, Chocoholic, Vanilla N Chocolate, "Famous" Red Velvet, and Wedding Cake, as well as a few that take fun and nestle it in a brown fluted wrapper. Filled with buttercream and topped with fudge frosting, the Chocolate Cream is an elevated take on a classic snack cake. For lovers of the chocolate-peanut butter combo, Peanut Butter Cup is chocolate cake topped in peanut butter cream cheese frosting and a sprinkle of peanut butter cup crumbles. Then, of course, there's Hot Fudge Sundae: chocolate cake with buttercream frosting, chopped nuts, hot fudge, and a cherry on top. Topping the charts as best sellers are Cookies and Cream, chocolate cake with cookie but-

tercream and chocolate cookie crumbles, and Birthday Cake, a vanilla cake topped with buttercream and a colorful rainbow of sprinkles.

With every flavor of cupcake and ice cream they offer, Smallcakes can help can satisfy whatever craving you have, giving your tastebuds an adventure of the sweetest kind. Each day is a new chance to enjoy life to its fullest-so why not eat dessert first? Whatever your bliss, they have the perfect way to make each and every day just a little bit sweeter. As one can see the moment they arrive, Smallcakes believes in its slogan of "Maybe a Cupcake Will Help?" And who knows-maybe the world would be a better place if we all took a minute to sit and smell the cupcakes. And then eat them.

Smallcakes Cupcakery and Creamery is located at 10343 East County Hwy 30A, Unit C112, Seacrest Beach, FL 32413. For more information, call (850) 213-4037 or visit www.smallcakescupcakery.com.

Lola Coastal Italian

Certified Master Chef Tom Catherall Brings Coastal Italian Dishes to 30-A

BY TESS FARMER

Freshness and real, whole food ingredients are the cornerstone of all menu items at Lola.

fter building an empire of chef-driven restaurants in Atlanta, Tom Catherall planned on a retirement on the Emerald Coast spending his days sport fishing and taking in the slower pace. That turned out to be short lived, because in 2020, just as restaurant operations were being restricted, Catherall was signing a lease on the former Acme Oysters restaurant space in Seacrest Beach.

A certified master chef, Catherall's Here to Serve Restaurants group was the successful hospitality umbrella for 12 unique restaurant concepts. His classic chef-driven restaurant empire thrived in the 90s through 2015 as fun, swanky hot spots where Asian, Spanish, and Southern ingredients came together in fusions of flavor and technique. Cuisine ranged from steak,

seafood, and sushi to Spanish tapas, with 15 locations in the Atlanta area, which he operated from 1996 until he sold the group in October 2014.

After his brief retirement, Catherall re-entered the restaurant scene in February 2016. He opened Lola Coastal Italian in June 2020 and outfitted the restaurant to serve fresh gulf seafood and homemade pizza to hungry beachgoers... who returned in droves after the beaches reopened.

His entrepreneurial spirit inspired him to establish TC Brands, a popular, innovative Atlanta hospitality company that established his reputation as a pacesetter among the area's restaurateurs. Now Catherall is bringing his talents to his second home in the Santa Rosa Beach community. He also is the only certified master chef on the gulf and one of 67 in the country.

He's been cooking for 50 years now and has a funny story about how he got started. "Growing up in Newcastle, in northeast England, I wanted to be a motor



mechanic, but my mother would have none of it. She signed me up to be a chef apprentice. It was a fouryear program and I worked with some of the best European chefs."

His commitment is to bring chef-inspired menus that are both innovative and fresh, offering some of his best culinary work serving the residents and visitors to

Freshness and real, whole food ingredients are the cornerstone of all menu items at Lola. The pizza dough is made each day from Italian flour, fresh toppings including Italian meats and sauce made with San Marzano tomatoes then cooked in a wood-fired oven. All the seafood is fresh, of course, brought in from local gulf fishermen.

"You won't find salmon here... I have never cooked a frozen fish in my life. If you want good meat, you go to a butcher. It's what I thought everyone did until I came to the States. That's where I saw my first 'meat in a box' and I was not impressed," adds Chef.





"I am happy to say more consumers today are eating with a sustainable focus," he says. "Since the pandemic, most of us have been cooking more than ever at home. My hope is that we learn to forgo processed foods and make

good choices like buying fresh fruits and vegetables and visiting local farmer's markets, seafood markets and butcher shops."

Chef Catherall has assembled a top-notch team, including managing partner Andrew Paparella, and Layla Lejla serving up innovative cocktails made with fresh juices. The location also allows the space to host bachelorette parties and private events.

"It's taken off since day one," says Chef. "During spring break week, we were making 130 pizzas a day."

Guests can also choose from grab-and-go items in the cooler case including salads and house made dressings, meatballs, peel and eat shrimp, curry chicken salad, hummus, deviled eggs, and all the charcuterie fixings... not to mention fresh baked key lime pie and tiramisu.

Lola Coastal Italian is located at 10343 East County Highway 30-A in Seacrest Beach. Open for dinner Monday through Thursday 5-9 p.m. and Friday-Saturday 5-10 p.m. To-go orders accepted by calling (850) 541-9440. Menus available at lovelola30a.com.







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Jeanie Posey

BY LIESEL SCHMIDT

tanding in the corner of her living room, Jeanie Posey lifts her brush from the canvas and pauses, taking a moment to assess the piece in front of her, eyes scanning to find points that need just a little more

color. In the background, the drone of announcers as they give the play-by-play of a tennis match in progress can be heard, filling the void of an otherwise silent room.

What happens in that space of her home her "studio"—is magic. A self-taught artist who retired from her career in education—first as a high school science teacher, then a curriculum specialist, and, most recently, Deputy State Superintendent of Education for the State of Georgia—Posey has been following this passion for the past 12 years. It was something she had put aside, boxed up and put on a shelf, as life and a more "stable" career path had taken priority over the love of art that she had shown as a child. "I'd always enjoyed painting as a girl; and, recognizing my affinity for art, my mother

provided me with watercolor lessons after school during my elementary and junior high years," says Posey. "Then a focus on science overshadowed my artistic leanings in my high school and college years, where I went on to earn a bachelor's and Master's degree in Biology and Chemistry and a Doctorate in Instructional Supervision."

Those 40 years that she spent in education may have put off her career as an artist, but Posey's natural talent never lost a step. She's used the past decade of her retirement to refocus, and she's honed her techniques under some of the best. "Since retiring over 12 years ago and becoming serious about my work as an artist, I have studied under such notables as Michelle Torrez in Denver, Morgan Samuel Price in Florida, Gary Bodner in France and Atlanta, and Thomas Nash and Nancy Franke in Atlanta," says Posey. "Having no formal art training, I truly value the contributions that these artists and teachers have made to me personally and to my emerging career as an artist."

That emerging career has been one that has been greatly validated through juried competitions and awards that she has won at shows in Georgia and Florida. Her talent has is also recognized by her peers—something that is hard-won in certain circles of artists. "When painting in a group setting, other artists often ask for my critiques and seem to value my mentoring efforts," Posey says. "I also consider sincere emotional reactions to my work a significant validation for me as an artist."

Clockwise from top: "Jeanette's Cowhand", The artist with "Blue Bottles" and "Po, the Thinker", "Pat's Mom, Years Ago", "Valued Asset at the Artists Center







As most artists do, Posey faces the challenge of self-criticism and knowing when to lay down her brush—among a few other things. "My goal is to keep a painting fresh, but it's a challenge to stop painting before I end up overworking the piece," Posey admits. "I

also find it challenging to meet specific requests for portraits, such as making the subject look younger or adding a Mona Lisa smile."

From pet and personal portraits to coastal scenes, Posey's work captivates its audience. Her figurative work captures movement and personality, the impressionistic style imbuing it with elegance and grace, while her seascapes are aspirational glimpses of places that we all want to be. "I strive for a painterly approach, so my work is representational, with a loose quality. I'm inspired by John Singer Sargent's paintings as well as those by many of the Impressionists. With my coastal scenes, people love that they feel like they are there. With the portraits, they love that I made them 'look good'," says Posey. "Given that my subjects are typically figures engaged in some fun activity, I use reference photos and try to capture their personality. People often say that I have captured the nature or character of the subject in my



action portraits, whether of pets or people," she goes on. "My favorite subjects reflect the beauty of coastal scenes and the charm of children at play. I have on occasion seen interesting people that I think would be great subjects to paint and asked permission to photograph them for a possible painting. I paint portraits because it makes me happy to give people

the joy of seeing their image on canvas. They also love their pets, children, and grandchildren and appreciate having them featured in a painting. My other passion for artistic expression is to paint places I love, especially the beach."

Jeanie Posey is represented at The Blue Giraffe Art Gallery in Inlet Beach, the Studio Gallery in Grayton Beach and venues hosted by the Cultural Arts Alliance of Walton County as well as LM Gallery in Marietta, GA and in many venues sponsored by the Roswell Fine Arts Alliance. She is available for commissioned pieces and may be contacted at JeaniePosey@att.net or (470) 342-0606. Her work can be seen on Instagram at Paintings by Posey.

Erica Johansson Greene's Emerald Haus

BY ANNE HUNTER

merald Haus, founded by Erica Johansson Greene, is a full-service interior design studio. Greene is an interior designer and architectural specialist experienced in residential and commercial interiors. Born and raised in Florida, Greene spent several years working at residential and corporate interiors firms in NYC before returning to Florida permanently last year. Her background in both interior design and psychology, with degrees in each from Pratt Institute and Emory University, enables her designs to be thoughtfully layered. Having lived in Seaside, Florida for much of her life due to her family's deep architectural ties to the town, she is interested in bringing globally inspired interiors rooted in 30-A tradition to the region.

What is your connection to Scenic Highway 30A and Seaside in particular?

In the 80s, my grandfather, Swedish architect Sture Johansson, found out about an upcoming New Urbanist community in northwest Florida and was keen on visiting as soon he could. Being from Sweden and trained in engineering, he was always interested in exploring ways to incorporate a more humane approach to city development than what had become the status quo at the time in America. Through him, the importance of bike paths, pedestrian bridges, and engaged community development at the city level was taught to me at an early age. Soon thereafter he and his equally talented artist wife Henny built their first home in Seaside, right on Pensacola and Highway 30A, and our family and extended family have been coming to Seaside ever since.

Tell us about your education and career path.

I studied psychology and photography at Emory University in Atlanta, Georgia and received a Master's in interior design at Pratt Institute in Brooklyn, New York. Pratt is one of the top programs in the world for interior design at the graduate level. At Pratt, I was trained architecturally. This means that I approach interiors from a spatial perspective, and although I love decor, I see these elements as the icing on top of a very layered cake. After Pratt, I worked for several years at a large corporate interiors firm in New York City, where I was able to learn the business side of design. But I always say that my first and best education in design was within my family, growing up around architects and artists.

When did you decide to make Walton County your home?

I was living in New York City when I came to my family home in Seaside during the beginning of the pandemic. I was planning on staying in my Seaside house, Mojo Biblio, which also was designed by my grandfather, for about a month. As I was living in the house, I noticed it needed an interior redesign and exterior refresh. This was mainly because it had not been updated since it was constructed in 1999. The bones of the house are extremely solid, and the architectural elements were still beautiful, but it needed a contemporary update to honor the original vision. I began

working on the design plans immediately and was able to complete the renovation by December. At that point I had gotten used to the nice pace of life on 30-A and decided to move here permanently and open up my own interior design studio as well.

What are your favorite hangouts on 30-A?

My favorite hangouts on 30-A are Bud and

Alley's for the view, Red Bar for the music, 45 Central for sushi, and For The Health of It and Prema for healthy food and smoothies.

Your place of inspiration?

I take inspiration from all the places I've been fortunate enough to visit. From the east coast to the west coast, from Miami to Stockholm, all of these gorgeous and unique places have inspired me greatly. But it's definitely nice to be rooted in Florida, and I'm constantly awed by the gulf's beauty.







Top: The central living spaces feature both American and Scandinavian made pieces. Above: Natural millwork in the kitchen warms up the beach house with plenty of places to store and display cherished family keepsakes. Left: The designer has lived in Seaside for much of her life and received a Master's Degree in interior design from Pratt Institute. Images by Jack Gardner Photography

For more information visit Emeraldhausinteriors.com

Cultivating Coastal Community

Beau Interiors welcomes people home to an exquisite dream-come-true

BY CAROL BADARACCO PADGETT

hen people decide to settle in Santa Rosa Beach or 30-A's surrounding areas, they're searching for a place of respite unlike any they have ever experienced beyond the crystal blue waters of the Gulf of Mexico.

Margie Perry, owner of Beau Interiors, intuitively understands this. "Your home should be a place of peace and rest," she says. At the same time, "People are excited when they've just moved here and bought a home or a rental. And we want to share in that excitement with them. It's a blessing and a privilege to be a part of that."

Perry opened Beau Interiors, a lifestyle store aimed at capturing the simple, understated style of coastal living, 10 years ago. She credits her husband, Lee, with encouraging her to follow her dreams for the business. Her daughter and business partner, Kristen Foley, joined her in 2016 when she and her family moved to Santa Rosa Beach. Of working with her daughter, Perry says, "She has gifts and talents that are a big part of the business, and our individual talents pair really well together."

Since its founding, Beau Interiors has already expanded four times to keep up with the demand from locals and out-of-state visitors, quadrupling its square footage in the process. And whether a customer seeks decorating advice in the store or wants an interior designer to visit their home, Perry and Foley are staffed to handle either scenario and every budget, even selling to the trade, as well.

One of Beau Interiors' specialties is being able to go beyond simply providing the things that every homeowner needs—like the sofa and the chairs. As Foley says, "By pulling from the crystal blue waters of the Gulf of Mexico and using soft neutral hues that mimic the coastal dunes, we help create bright and airy spaces that allow for bringing a little bit of the outside in."

Perry adds, "We also add those one-of-a-kind, unique pieces that are really special... like the distinctive antique or treasure that makes a house a home."

As one can imagine, stopping at Beau Interiors is nothing like going into a typical furniture showroom. "People can walk into our store and see the vignettes, but they can do things their own way," Perry shares. "We carry the big lines and the big names, but then we also cherry pick items they would never find anyplace else."

Foley expands on this important point, saying, "Even in the larger lines, we are cherry picking. We try to pick the things that are the best fit in our store and for our customers... Simplicity is one of the hallmarks of our design philosophy. We aim to capture the essence of life on the coast."

Realizing that not every visitor to Beau Interiors is looking to furnish an entire home or even a complete







of Romona

room, Perry and Foley offer an assortment of one-of-akind gifts and small, fabulous finds that can "make" a space in unexpected ways.

But beyond the lavish coastal-inspired furnishings and surprise finds, the mother-daughter duo strives to make sure that Beau Interiors' staff offers graciousness and true service excellence. "Our mission statement is to honor God in all we do by respecting, helping, and serving others," Perry says. "I think that at the end of the day, even more than our expertise, customers are looking for great service and a helpful attitude."

Their desire to serve others transcends day-to-day business dealings and extends out into the world at large as well, where Beau Interiors' owners are major players in giving back a part of their blessings.

Local and international charities that Perry and Foley support through their business includes Food for Thought that works to fight hunger for children in

grades K-12; Embrace Florida Kids, a faith-based organization that helps vulnerable kids with families in crisis; Grayton Beach's Kous Kouri 8- and 4-mile trail race to benefit homeless youth in Haiti; Twelve Churches, a ministry that supports churches in Nicaragua; and other missions such as Samaritan's Purse and the International Justice Mission.

As the mother-daughter duo moves into 2021, what's next on the horizon for Beau Interiors? The answer may as well be blowing in the breeze on Santa Rosa Beach. "I always love it when a door opens..." Perry smiles. "But we're thoroughly enjoying where we are right now. It's such a gift."

Beau Interiors: 32 E Co Hwy 30A, Santa Rosa Beach, FL 32459, (850) 534.0700, @beauhomeinteriors

Furniture South

BY AUTUMN MURRAY

When people buy a house, the first thing they want to do is to get it furnished and owners are contacting us due to our reputation of customer satisfaction in the industry and in our local community.

he salty air and lull of the ocean tide has had people flocking to the Emerald Coast to purchase beach homes and condos due to the pandemic this past year. People are wanting to get away from the hustle and bustle of city life and are opting for the simplicity and exclusivity of beach life. Home and condo rentals in the area are also in high demand with people seeking to enjoy a less stressful life or getaway vacation on the

beautiful sandy beaches and miles of open space that allow them to breathe freely.

Walton County is the second fastest growing county in the state of Florida. As a result of the influx of people moving into the area from Atlanta and surrounding cities, most businesses in the county are thriving and trying to keep up with the high demand on supplies and Furniture South is no exception. This new and unique furniture store in Santa Rosa Beach is experiencing record sales of over 60% more than last year just in this first quarter.

We are ecstatic that the increase in real estate sales in Walton County has significantly driven our furniture and décor sales. When people buy a house, the first thing they want to do is to get it furnished and owners are contacting us due to our reputation of customer satisfaction in the industry and in our local community," says Frank Kovach, who co-owns the furniture store with his wife Julie, an interior designer certified by the National Council for Interior Design Qualifications.



Views of the Furniture South Showroom





Another factor at Furniture South that has increased the furniture company's sales is that they have the largest showroom and display inventory in Walton County, with over 3,000 merchandise selections in their expansive showroom of 10,000 square feet. While large retailers generally have to order their items, which can take several weeks or even months for delivery, that is not the case with Furniture South. The company has added several new warehouses to ensure that their most popular inventory items are in stock and available for immediate delivery as well as to allow for free storage space to customers that are not able to receive their orders due to circumstances beyond their control. Additionally, everything in the store is always 20-40% off so customers never have to wait for a sale or discount coupons.

Furniture South offers a variety of popular brands such as Ashley, Sealy, Liberty, Capris, Braxton-Culler,

Stanley, Powell, Elements, Bernhardt, and Century. They offer free financing up to 24 months for customers opening an account with their preferred financial institution - Synchrony Bank (see website for details on applying for a Synchrony Bank credit card at www.furnituresouth.net).

In addition to furniture and décor sales, Furniture South's professional interior design team offers clients free design services and one source shopping to get their client's home or condo move-in ready. Where smaller furniture stores in the area only offer one designer, the design team at Furniture South consists of four experienced designers, each with over 20 years of experience in the design industry. The designers provide their expertise and recommendations on paint selections, floor covering, lighting, and window treatments, basically providing every assistance needed to make a house a home all at no additional cost or service fees.

"Convenience is really the key that keeps our long-term customers happy and gets the attention of new customers. Our furniture and décor selections as well as our design services are seamless and can easily be handled online or over the phone. There is no need for our customers to stress over

making multiple trips to different stores as we handle everything to exceed our customers' vision of their dream home." Kovach says.

Furniture South is conveniently located on the Beaches of South Walton/ 30A (4552 US Highway 98 W, Unit 8, Santa Rosa Beach, FL 32459). Their showroom is open from Monday through Saturday from 10:00 am to 5:00 pm in addition to private appointments with designers after hours and on weekends based on the customer's availability. Call (850) 267-1411 to schedule an interior design consultation and visit their website at www.furnituresouth.net to view their selections. Follow on Instagram at: @furnituresouth.

The Show Will Go On!

BY TESS FARMER

hat we do is community; the medium happens to be theatre," explains Nathanael Fisher, co-founder of the Emerald Coast Theatre Company (ECTC). "Understandably, there were definite challenges arising in the past year and a half, but we are fortunate to say we have held steadfast to our role in connecting the community during one of the most disconnected times in recent history."

Emerald Coast Theatre Company was founded by Nathanael and his wife Anna Fisher in 2012. The first performance took place in January of 2013, the same month the couple welcomed their third daughter into the family. "It was truly a labor of love and hectic month as we launched a new non-profit and became parents to a new baby," adds Anna.

Fast forward eight years and the non-profit has had to rely on its creativity and support from the community to keep live theatre going this past year.

"Despite the many challenges, it's been a really special year for us," Anna says. "The support from the community has been astounding as we continued our mission to enrich and entertain the Emerald Coast community through professional and educational theatre."

The ripple effects of Covid-19 have shaken many supporters and fans of the performing arts, an industry that heavily relies on large groups of people packed into small spaces. Florida's guidelines allowed the non-profit to operate at reduced capacity, however being allowed to operate at all has saved the local community one of its most precious resources when many theatres across America continue to struggle.

The experience of watching live theatre is both personal and communal. "Theatre has been shown to combat depression and loneliness, and laughter and connection are some of the best cures," says Nathanael.

He recalls the first live performance last fall when a smaller audience first returned to the theatre. "Anna and What the kids learn through these programs sets them up for success in any career or life path, so watching their confidence grow firsthand is truly a full circle moment.

I watched the faces of audience members and the sense of joy and emotional release in the room was palpable. We'll never forget it."

Nathanael was born in Tampa and grew up on the Suncoast. He was working at Universal Studios Islands of Adventure in 2002 when he met Anna. Anna is a Destin native with most of her family living in the area. After living in Orlando for a few years and then attending graduate school in Virginia Beach (Anna has a master's in theatre studies, Nathanael has a MFA in acting), Anna and Nathanael moved back to Santa Rosa Beach in 2012.

The couple wanted to get involved in the arts scene and ended up getting connected with Marcia Hull at the Mattie Kelly Arts Foundation and Demetrius Fuller with Sinfonia Gulf Coast Orchestra. After consulting with both of them and investigating the availability of theatre arts here on the Emerald Coast, it became clear that at that time in Okaloosa and Walton Counties there were almost no opportunities for children to get involved in theatre.

With the support of the Mattie Kelly Arts Foundation in January of 2013, ECTC launched an afterschool class at Destin Elementary with 10 registrants. ECTC

now reaches over 500 local children through their educational programs. These educational programs were the foundation and from there, ECTC launched the Theatre for Young Audiences and the professional theatre programs.

The professional season starts at the end of September and runs to the middle of May with five productions. Educational children's theater productions take place in November and May. ECTC also provides a full line-up of summer camps and programming for children as well as a weekly StoryTeller series with one night events every Thursday in January.

ECTC's team of five full-time staff members, its board of directors, and many volunteers and supporters continue to focus on its purpose to inspire, educate, and empower the community and artists of all ages to achieve the highest level of cultural excellence through working together on productions and educational programs promoting lifelong learning while providing professional entertainment for our community.

"This is what I wished for when I was a kid growing up here," Anna says. "And now to see it come to life and flourish has been so rewarding. What the kids learn through these programs sets them up for success in any career or life path, so watching their confidence grow firsthand is truly a full circle moment."

The team is gearing up for a new season full of excitement this fall and also planning several surprises for the milestone tenth season in 2022.

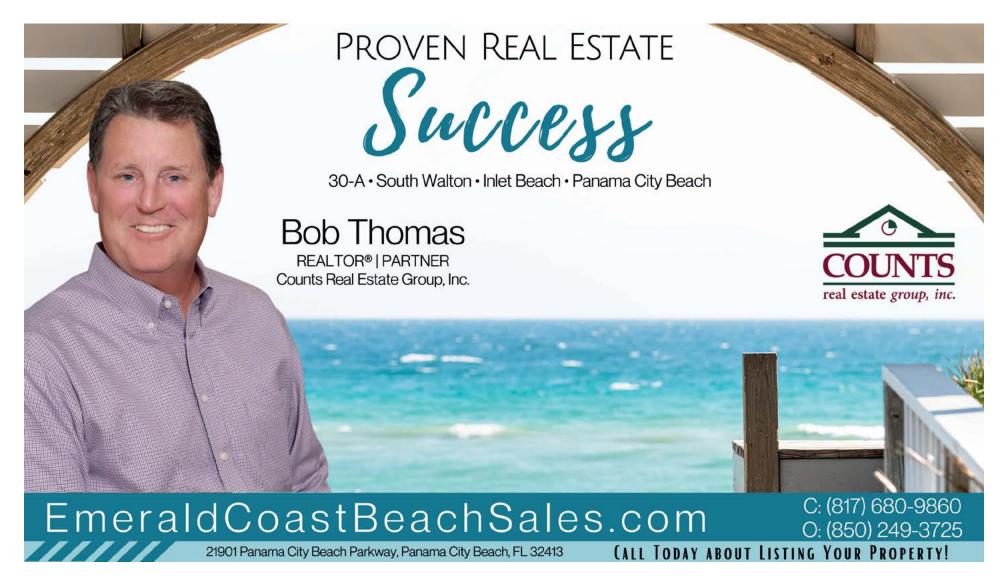
ECTC is located at 560 Grand Boulevard, Suite 200 in Miramar Beach. The public can purchase tickets to live shows and access all information about productions, events, and dates and times at emeraldcoasttheatre. org. Tickets can also be purchased online or over the phone by calling (850) 684-0323.







Photos courtesy Emerald Coast Theatre Company





Slow down. Breathe. Enjoy.

Why 30Avenue is your 'gateway' to everything Florida's Gulf Coast has to offer

BY MICHAEL J. PALLERINO





here is a magical, almost mystical beauty behind the fountains that introduce visitors to 30Avenue, the outdoor lifestyle center that offers an unparalleled mix of boutiques, shopping, dining, and professional services. Known as the "Gateway to 30A®", the center sits at the intersection of Highway 98 and Scenic Highway 30A in Inlet Beach, just walking distance to the Rosemary, Seacrest, and Alys beaches.

The fountains, strategically positioned in every corner of 30Avenue, are a key element in the center's design—a nod to the sound and beauty of the movement of water. To complement the fountain's allure to your senses, the white stucco building design reflects the area's white sand beaches and palm-tree lined drives. Developers Tina and Bryan Corr say the visual representation is designed to tell visitors, "You've arrived at the beach... slow down, breathe, enjoy."

In 2013, during a casual conversation with friend and architect Darrell Russell, principal at A BOHEME Design, the Corrs discussed the need for office space where locals looked forward to going to work. They envisioned a place that was within walking distance of people's homes—one that reflected everything residents loved about living on 30-A. Taking in the conversation, Russell offered to host a collaborative session featuring experts who could help define the look and feel of what they all envisioned would be 30-A's premier outdoor lifestyle center. One week later, the 30Avenue concept

"What began as a solution to a need that we personally had, 30Avenue has become all that and more," Tina says. "The predominant goal was to provide a space that feels good, is comfortable, entertaining, offers unique shopping, premier dining, professional services and,

above all else, serves as a beautiful reflection of everything 30-A has to offer. We envisioned an introduction of sorts, built on Highway 98, but a sincere snapshot of what you will experience once you enter 30-A."

The Corrs say the 30Avenue's design has always been geared to attract the best in class for whatever specialty or business that locates here. With the fountains serving as the soundtrack of the center's lifeblood, 30Avenue's stone paved sidewalks, central green area for relaxing, majestic palm trees, and generous parking is the perfect place to shop, dine, or hang out. "Selecting the perfect mix of local businesses to partner with helps to make sure our goals are aligned," Tina says. "Having unique restaurants, services, and retail with little or no overlap in offerings gives patrons an opportunity to experience something different with each visit; or they can spend an entire day exploring the shops and dining in our top-rated restaurants."

Summer sun, something's begun...

As locals and visitors alike start to set their mindsets to life beyond the past year's challenges, 30Avenue is set to rekindle its magic in helping create memories to last a lifetime. "We're looking forward to a fun-filled summer at 30Avenue," says Marketing Coordinator Stephanie Madden.

For example, Monday night will feature bocce ball games on the green, while 6 p.m.-9 p.m. on Thursday and Friday evenings host live music and a number of in-store events that promise to include a number of exclusive experiences. In addition, guests have the opportunity to listen to live music while they dine and shop Monday-Saturday, thanks to the 11 a.m.-2 p.m. concert series. On holiday weekends, those times and events will be expanded.





The goal is to have 30Avenue be at the center of everything for family, friends, wedding parties or just an Instagrammable moment near a fountain. To help celebrate the moment, guests are encouraged to visit one of the many great restaurants, including a fast casual treat at 30A Burger, Goatfeathers Seafood Cafe, Barbacoa, Great American Cookies, Decadent Coffee & Dessert Bar, and Marble Slab Creamery; or some fine dining at Cuvee 30A, amici Mexican Kitchen, and amigos Italian Kitchen.

"It's difficult to identify a favorite haunt," Tina says. "That honor depends on the taste you are craving."

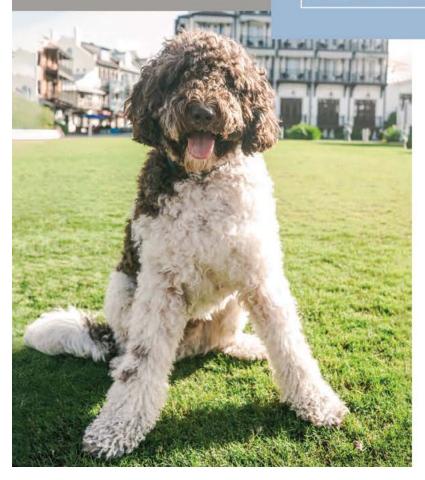
To help promote everything and anything 30Avenue, Madden says 30Avenue is collaborating with local influencers and bloggers, including hosting a number of social media contests that promise to spread the word.

"Our No. 1 goal for the summer is to continue to host thousands of guests and provide them with a beautiful, safe, and entertaining setting," Tina says. "We want each of them to enjoy their time with friends and family, to be able to laugh, dine, shop, and discover the service they need."

So, if you're going to get a little sand between your toes, the Corrs have the perfect place for you. Just set your sights on the intersection of highway 98 and 30A your gateway to a truly Florida experience.

For more information visit www.thirtyavenue.com.

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Crowning Achievement

Salon Twist's Gina Shiflett has raised the salon experience to a whole new level

BY CAROL BADARACCO PADGETT

he came to 30-A in 2004 not knowing a soul. But it wasn't long before top hairstylist Gina Shiflett opened her business, Salon Twist in Grayton Beach, and began making friends.

At first, the veteran hairstylist, who had spent time as a top-tier stylist at Atlanta's posh Van Michael Salon, adhered to one focus: make people's hair look fabulous, with customer service being

As Shiflett grew roots in the 30-A community and settled into a new life, her vision for the salon began to expand.

"Through my own wellness journey with yoga and meditation, I began to feel my vibration rise and continue to rise—and I felt better," she describes. "After decades of doing hair and making people look great temporarily, I came to find firsthand that true beauty happens on the inside."

Instead of letting her clients go home feeling only temporarily lovely, Shiflett set out to make her salon a place where real and lasting transformation could begin. Where that starts, at Salon Twist, is in the talk.

"I raise the vibration of the conversation beyond gossip," Shiflett describes. "I might talk about the trips I have taken, my experiences, what I felt, and how meditation has served me. I always insert wellness."

With this broader focus, as her clients' hair is being made absolutely gorgeous, their minds and imaginations are nourished as well. And the combination is something they won't find anywhere else. As she says, "Any skilled stylist can make hair look good, but to make people actually feel better leaving than they did when they came in—that's an experience that people truly love."

Her approach works, and it resonates, because Salon Twist has caught the notice of the international beauty world, with ELLE Magazine naming the business to its Top 100 list of salons in the United States for three years in a row.

Another beautiful offering at Salon Twist is the business's humanitarian work. "I was working in my first location in Grayton Beach," Shiflett remembers, "and a client said, 'You know, Gina, for \$5 you can save a child's life in Africa." Astounded, Shiflett inquired how. Her client proceeded to describe how \$5 could buy a mos-



quito net that a child could get under at night with their family and it would keep everyone safe from contracting malaria. The client then told her about a local 30-A organization that collects donations, buys the mosquito nets, and takes them to Africa and distributes them.

Convinced by the beauty of this opportunity to make a real difference, Shiflett hung a mosquito net inside Salon Twist's door, pinning it with \$5 bills and then placing a donation jar at the front desk.

"This was my opening to talk to people about the opportunity to help others," she states. "One client was so blown away that he gave me \$5,000 in \$5 bills." She hosted a charity dinner and raised another \$20,000 for mosquito nets.

From there, more opportunities to help others presented themselves. Shiflett recalls how Sister Schubert

Any skilled stylist can make hair look good, but to make people actually feel better leaving than they did when they came in—that's an experience that people truly love.

(of Sister Schubert's Dinner Rolls) was in the salon on the day of the mosquito net charity dinner, and as she made a donation for the event, Sister Schubert commented on something they had in common—a love for children. "As our friendship grew, she began to share with me about her orphanage in the Ukraine, so our next event was a benefit for her orphanage. We had a fundraiser at Alys Beach with over 500 attendees and we were able to raise \$100,000 that night," Shiflett shares.

For all the relationships she has cultivated over the past 17 years, she holds extreme appreciation. "It makes my heart swell that people want to come in and see me and say hi, even if they only come once," she shares. "I love it when people say, 'I didn't really need a haircut, I just wanted to come see you today."

Gratitude, she says, is her superpower. "I have deep gratitude for each and every one who has supported Salon Twist, whether they had their hair done, were an employee here, or just bought shampoo."

And she closes, "I look at my hair salon as a vehicle to meet people and then take it to the next level."

Salon Twist, 4281 East County Highway 30A, Seagrove Beach, FL 32459, (850) 231-7853, www. salontwist.com, @salontwist

Tom Fitzpatrick

Featured 30A Local Golf Columnist





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Insuring Luxury BY LIESEL SCHMIDT

elebrating their 20th year in business, Coastal Insurance has been known across Florida for its expertise in insuring luxury homes and meeting the particular needs of high-end real estate. Since creating the company in 2001, owner Grant Blackwell and his team of agents have been working with his clients to give them peace of mind-no matter what winds may blow.

Thirty-A Review: What was the driving force in starting Coastal Insurance?

Grant Blackwell: I was in commercial insurance in Jackson, Mississippi, and I saw a need down here for a need for an agency that specializes in the real estate closing process. There was no one else doing what we were offering, and real estate agents were really excited to have a company that was prompt, fast, dependable, and knew what they were doing.



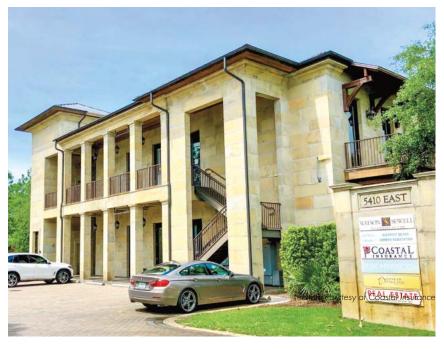
We specialize in residential property, so we offer coverage for a wide range of homes and condos in the area, regardless of their value. We're pretty much the neighborhood insurance agency in that respect, and we work hard for every single client, from the couples in starter homes to the celebrities in multimillion dollar homes. Still, we take our specialization a step further in that we are known state-wide for being experts in highvalue luxury homes; and we insure homes here in Destin, as well as in Naples, Florida Keys, Tampa, and Miami.

What are high-value homes?

In the insurance industry, high-value homes as homes that have a value of \$1 million or more.

Is there a particular need to specialize in highvalue homes?

There are only a handful of agencies that specialize in it, and there are only a few carriers that specialize in coverage for those homes. Million-dollar homes, when they are insured under a standard homeowners' policy



designed for the everyday home, have coverage gaps that are important to fill. We offer coverage that meets those needs.

What are some of the carriers you work with?

We work with Pure, Vault, Chubb, and Florida-based carriers like Frontline, Olympus, and Tower Hill. The important thing is the expertise that we have in designing the coverage specifically for high-value homes.

Are there differences in the way that you have to cover homes in Florida?

Yes, because Florida's standard carriers add coverage limitations that other states don't face, such as limited mold coverage, limited water and sewage back-up, limited HOA loss assessments—which happen when there is damage in an HOA community, and everyone is assessed money to cover those damages. The high value policies offer coverage that exceeds all the limitations of standard coverage. Another problem is windstorm limitation based on the age of a home—that's one of the hidden clauses often in policies. In Florida, just in our exposure to catastrophic events, you have to be more careful in getting your policies written. We also have to make sure that we cover flooding and tidal events properly. Flood

coverage was especially something that I learned about and gained expertise in when I came to Florida.

What sets you apart, even amongst other high-value carriers?

We are the largest privately-owned agency on the Emerald Coast, and we're in the top five luxury estate agencies in the state of Florida. We're also flood insurance experts; and we've been named the National Flood Insurance Agency of the Year twice in 2002 and 2010, before they stopped giving that award altogether.

What keeps you passionate about doing this kind of work?

We're community-oriented and we've never said no to a charity that asked for our help. We're good friends with realtors and bankers. My passion is my commitment to the community and knowing that one of these days

the wind is going to blow, and I want to make sure that everyone I know has been properly taken care of. Our mission statement is that we will be "more caring, more responsive, and more knowledgeable than the competition and judge ourselves everyday by those three factors."

What is your client base like, and how may agents do you have?

We write somewhere around 200 new houses a month, just on the 30-A arena. We have about 10,000 clients at this point, insuring homes and condos with a heavy concentration on 30-A. We have 20 agents in the company.

What have 2020 and 2021 been like for you?

We've met the challenges, and we've also experienced a lot of growth because more and more people have wanted to buy homes in a drive-to destination. We've been extremely busy as a result, and our new client production is up 52 percent over 2019.

For more information, call (850)23-.0042 or visit www.coastalcoverage.com.

Premier Sales, Premier Service

BY LIESEL SCHMIDT



The beauty of the area, the beaches, and the coastal communities are all things that make my job not only easier, but also one that I love doing.

or some, the real estate industry is just the means to an end: Real estate agents who work only for a commission, clients who go through a real estate agent only because it's the most expedient way to complete the sale or close the deal. But for the real estate professionals who are Realtors and see their work as a calling, the transactional relationships they create soon become genuine connections; and the sales they help facilitate become the foundation of a community.

It is that kind of passion that drives Carrie Campbell in her work along the Emerald Coast. After realizing in 1999 that she wanted to change her career path, Campbell decided to become a Realtor. That decision led first to a position working with a title company before she began assisting all of the original St. Joe WaterColor agents. From there, she went into sales with the St. Joe Company, where she gained an immeasurable grasp of the local area and invaluable knowledge of luxury real estate. Now a Realtor with The Premier Property Group, Campbell prides herself on her dedication to her clients and her ability to provide personalized care with excellence, integrity, and professionalism. Above all, her priority is to understand her customers' needs and desires and to provide the best service possible while building personal customer relationships. "It gives me great pleasure to know that I have been instrumental in assisting someone to find that special place that enriches their lifestyle," she says.

The daughter of a military man, Campbell was born in Monterey, California, and spent much of her childhood moving with his orders, living in in several different locations around the world. It was only after her father retired at the Pentagon that Campbell was brought to the Emerald Coast, where she fell in love with the beauty all around her.

After 20 years in her profession, Campbell sees her clients as the key to her success—that, and, of course, the fact that she's selling paradise. And while so many years could easily have worn off the shine, she is still passionate about her work. "I love having the balance of freedom

and control that being a Realtor gives me, while being given the opportunity to enhance the lifestyles of others," she says. There are, naturally, other perks to working in one of the most scenic places in the world. "The beauty of the area, the beaches, and the coastal communities are all things that make my job not only easier, but also one that I love doing. Not everyone in real estate has such a fantastic product."

As with any service-related profession, there are, of course, challenges. "It's often difficult to juggle responsibilities with family and business—especially when you're working in real estate in a resort area like I do. Weekends and holidays are almost always mandatory, which can be hard to make people understand," explains Campbell, who is married with children.

Those challenges have been compounded with the advent of the pandemic, which turned all aspects of life—and business—on their heads. Even so, Campbell has worked to overcome the obstacles in front of her. "It was difficult, staying in touch with owners and customers in the beginning of COVID, some of whom quarantined here, when everything was shut down," she recalls. "Then, when everything began to re-open and people started wanting to relocate or move to another home, both buying and selling saw a tremendous spike. It was hard to just keep up with things. Following COVID protocols when showing properties was another challenge: the social distancing, the masks and disinfecting...Real estate is a very one-on-one profession, and all of that felt like a removal from the personalization."

As life slowly returns to normal, Campbell is looking forward to a continued boom in business-and a sustained rise in her place in the industry. For anyone entering real estate, she offers this sage advice: "Mirror or work as an assistant to a top producer in your area before going full force into the business. Become an expert in the area you know best, and don't spread yourself too thin." She also knows the value of creating a reputation that will lead to repeat business as well as referrals something that her tagline espouses: "Referrals are a girl's best friend."

From the beaches to the bay, Campbell has her finger on the pulse of Okaloosa and Walton counties; and she's ready to help you find your piece of paradise.

The Premier Property Group at WaterColor is located at 1701 East County Hwy 30A, Suite 101, Santa Rosa Beach, FL 32459. For more information, call Carrie Campbell at 850.830.9896 or visit carriecampbell. premierbeachretreats.com.

Westonwood Ranch

BY KEVIN BOYLE

We know they are capable of doing anything but to watch them believe in themselves and see that they can have the life they dream about, it's just so rewarding.









Photos courtesy of Westonwood Ranch

on-profit organizations usually find themselves on the frontline of a community, filling in a gap of service or spreading awareness of a need. Some organizations, like Westonwood Ranch, offer resources to overwhelmed and exhausted families looking

Founded in 2017 in Freeport by Lindy Wood and named for her son Weston, Westonwood Ranch seeks to showcase lifelong ability instead of disability for young adults and teenagers with developmental differences. The goal is to bridge service gaps by providing hands on job training through their small business operations, including an Aquaponics farm and gourmet dog biscuit company, as well as life skills training, community integration, and social skills learning opportunities.

Westonwood lectures words like "Potential" and "Future" to families aware of the obstacles their child will face, including limited transitional resources as they begin to age into the work force and adult life.

"All of our programs are focused on highlighting the individuals' strengths, grabbing hold of their passions, and providing them with the skills they need to live a fulfilling, purposeful life," says Executive Director Kelly Cash. "We want to help these families who are daunted by a status quo that stacks the odds against their child for any future employment or a chance at living independently."

Cash stresses that, while rapidly growing, there are vital needs to be met in order for the organization to continue to operate: The biggest challenge being consistent volunteerism.

"We have volunteer needs in our Equine Therapy program working with kids ages 4+ during equine therapy lessons for 8-week sessions. We also need volunteers in our Aquaponics Farm, Animal Husbandry program, Day Program, and our new job training program," Cash says. "Con-

sistency is key with our volunteers because change is often difficult for our participants to handle; plus it gives our participants ability to work on their social skills and relationship building skills."

Fundraising is another key component to Westonwood Ranch's ongoing operation. Back in April of this year, Kevin and Susan Logan hosted a private fundraiser at their home on the Bay and raised over \$96,000 for the mission and programs, with 200 guests listening to music and enjoying a catered dinner. Cash says they were blown away by the support that night and hope to make it an annual event.

Another challenge is the accessibility of their vital programs to all families who need it in our community. Westonwood has an In House Scholarship Fund set up for donor contribution. This Fund enables families who cannot afford this type of service can attend the programming with little to no financial burden.

The one thing Cash wishes more people knew about the organization is how much these services are needed, not only in our community but around the country.

"The lack of transitional resources that are available for these individuals is staggering," Cash states. "Often times, individuals graduate from high school, and they are left wondering what is next with few opportunities and nowhere to turn. We are providing these individuals

with opportunities, training, and resources that they wouldn't have gotten anywhere else. We aren't just a ranch with some animals and a greenhouse, we

are literally changing lives and building programs that will support these individuals for their lifetime."

At the end of the day, however, it is the small steps made each day that make the mission rewarding. "I think the most impactful part of my job is seeing the little sparks and successes in our participants," Cash reflects. "There is nothing better than watching one of our participants meet a goal or accomplish something they never thought they could, whether it be from writing their first email to going on their first trip into the community," Cash says. "The pride I see in their eyes and watching their self-confidence grow is incredible. We know they are capable of doing anything but to watch them believe in themselves and see that they can have the life they dream about, it's just so rewarding."

With long term goals of semi-independent, supportive housing for adults with developmental differences and helping share their transitional services model with other communities, Westonwood Ranch will continue to have a major impact in our community and beyond.

For more info on Westonwood Ranch and how you can donate to the In House Scholarship Fund, visit www. westonwood.org.







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Probate and Estate Administration

BY KIMBERLY WATSON SEWELL AND FRANKLIN H. WATSON



Although a simple estate may take just a few months to make its way through probate, a more complex estate may find the personal representative working for several years before the estate is closed.

robate and estate administration procedures are never described with any of the following terms: speedy, quick, fast, or fun. The adjectives most commonly used are slow, tedious, time-consuming... well, you get the picture.

The entire process can take as long as six months to even years. Remember, patience is critical for all concerned. Having some expectation of the snail-like pace usually gives folks a better tolerance for the creakingly slow turning of the wheels of justice.

Getting Started

With that in mind, here are some of the duties an executor (in Florida we refer to this person as the "Personal Representative") has throughout the probate and estate administration process. Generally speaking, the personal representative is tasked with collecting and managing the estate assets, filing tax returns and paying taxes and debts, as well as distributing assets and making the distributions of any bequests detailed in the will.

Initially, the personal representative must:

Search the decedent's personal files and papers for any evidence of potential creditors;

Look at the decedent's checking account for recurring payments which may indicate an existing debt; Contact the decedent's credit card companies; and Contact the decedent's healthcare providers for medical bills.

Probate the Will

Next, the personal representative must "probate" the will. If the court declares the will validly executed under state law, then the court gives the personal representative

authority to perform his or her duties under the provisions of the will.

The personal representative must pay any claims of the estate's creditors and all estate administration expenses. He or she must also collect all the estate assets, then file and pay all required tax returns. These may include federal and state income taxes, in addition to estate and inheritance taxes.

Duties and Responsibilities

The personal representative may need to engage the services of an appraiser to ascertain the value of certain assets of the estate. This could be a business, a work of art, a pension, or real estate. It is important and necessary because estate taxes are based on the fair market value of the assets. After the personal representative files the required returns and makes payment of any taxes owed, the IRS typically notifies the personal representative by an estate "closing letter" that the agency has accepted the return. But it is not unheard of that a return is subject to an audit.

After everyone has been paid for debts, taxes, and expenses, the personal representative will distribute the assets. Beneficiaries may sometimes even receive a partial distribution of their inheritance without having to wait for the closing of the estate. Although a simple estate may take just a few months to make its way through probate, a more complex estate may find the personal representative working for several years before the estate is closed.

Experience Matters

A key characteristic of a good personal representative is some experience with this process. On-the-job training is possible, but only makes the process that much longer. An experienced personal representative can get the job done without unnecessary expense and delay, and without causing additional hardship and stress for the beneficiaries of the estate.

Hopefully, the personal representative will have a firm grasp of the many problems involved and a method with which to settle the estate.



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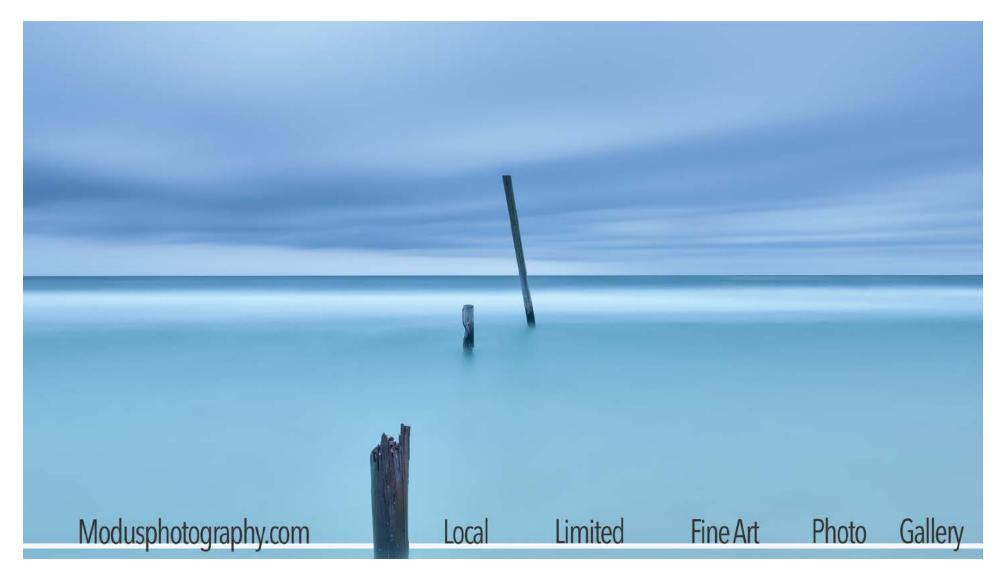
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Phil Mickelson's Top Short Game Tips

BY TOM FITZPATRICK







hil Mickelson lived up to his nickname "Phil the Thrill" at the 2021 PGA Championship in Kiawah Island. His hugely popular win was made even more so due to his being fifty years of age. Quite amazing to be so competitive and especially at Kiawah Island. I've conducted corporate golf clinics at Kiawah and that course is just an absolute brute. Phil showed his mastery around the greens with holed bunker shots and fabulous putts. He is a deep thinker with a short game approach that is all his own.

Putting

Mickelson has boiled putting down to two simple keys. First, set up with his hands high at address. This prevents the face from rotating too much. Secondly, take the putter back with the heel (not the toe) so that the face feels shut on the takeaway. Why? Because there is less effort to square the face at impact. A shut, delofted putter face allows the ball to hug the green. You can't make putts when the ball bounces and wobbles all over. Try his Callaway three-line golf ball to identify any wobble in your putts.

Phil has ONE objective in chipping: That is to keep the leading edge of the 60-degree lob wedge pointed downward into the back of the ball. If you can accomplish that the ball will come out lower and with a controlled roll.

For the leading edge to point downward he stresses that your weight must be forward at address. Leaning forward with the grip pressed forward naturally delofts the face and pushes the leading edge downward. Set your hands higher and stand closer at address.

When Phil approaches a chip shot in a tournament, he will decide whether to play it high or low. The high chip has the ball positioned opposite the front foot. A low chip has the ball placed opposite the back foot. He stresses it is never in the middle of your stance. It's forward or it's back!

During the stroke, sense that your lead arm and the club shaft form one straight line at impact. Accelerate through with firm wrists and arms.

Try this drill: chip using your lead arm only. Hold that lead wrist firm. Try that while 70% of your weight stays forward onto your front foot for the entire stroke. The ball will stick to the face longer allowing for more control.

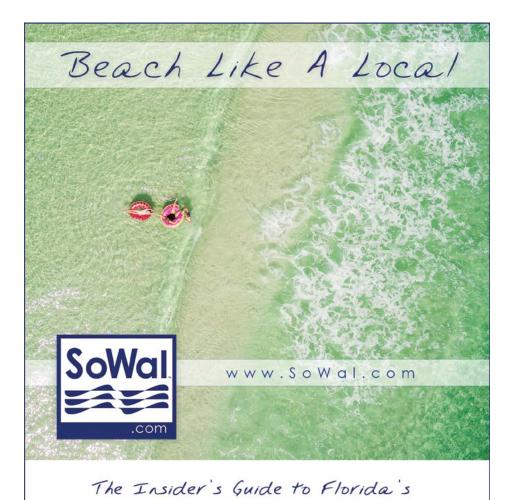
Pitching:

For a 40-yard pitch shot Phil prefers to square the clubface up with the ball positioned in the back of his stance. His key phrase is "Set & Hold", which means set the wrists on the back swing then hold them on the through swing. Because the backswing is short you must hinge the wrists immediately. At impact, the hands are ahead of the ball through impact allowing you to trap the ball. The leading elbow has a slight chicken wing look to it by design. Make an aggressive downswing with a short and low follow thru.

Mickelson's surprisingly simplistic approach is easy for any level golfer. Give it a try!

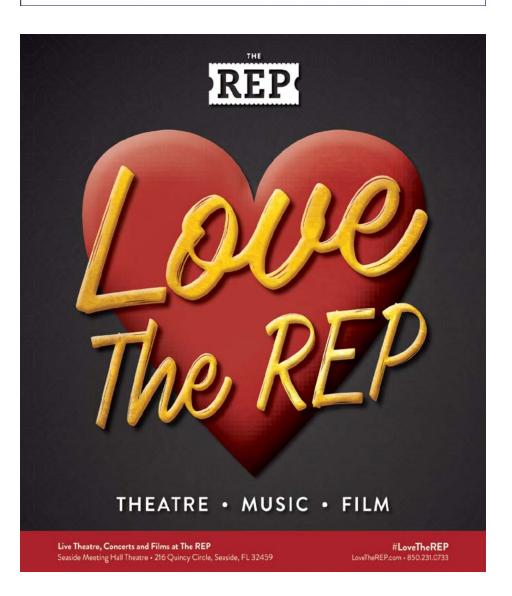
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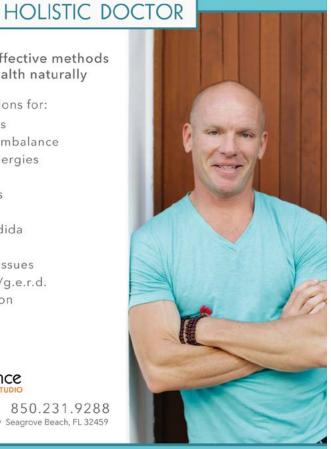
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