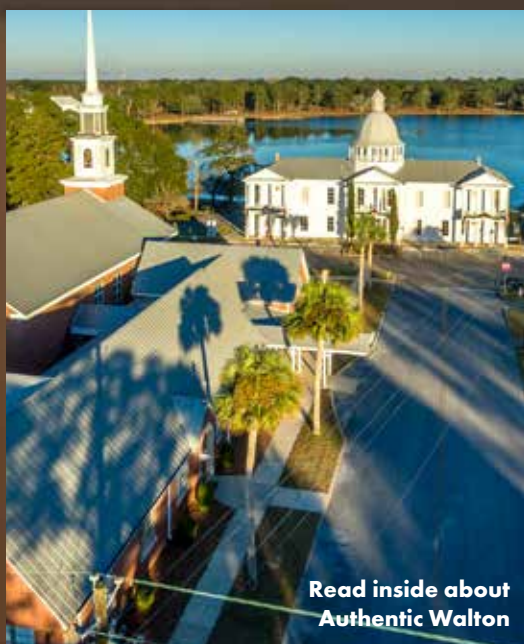


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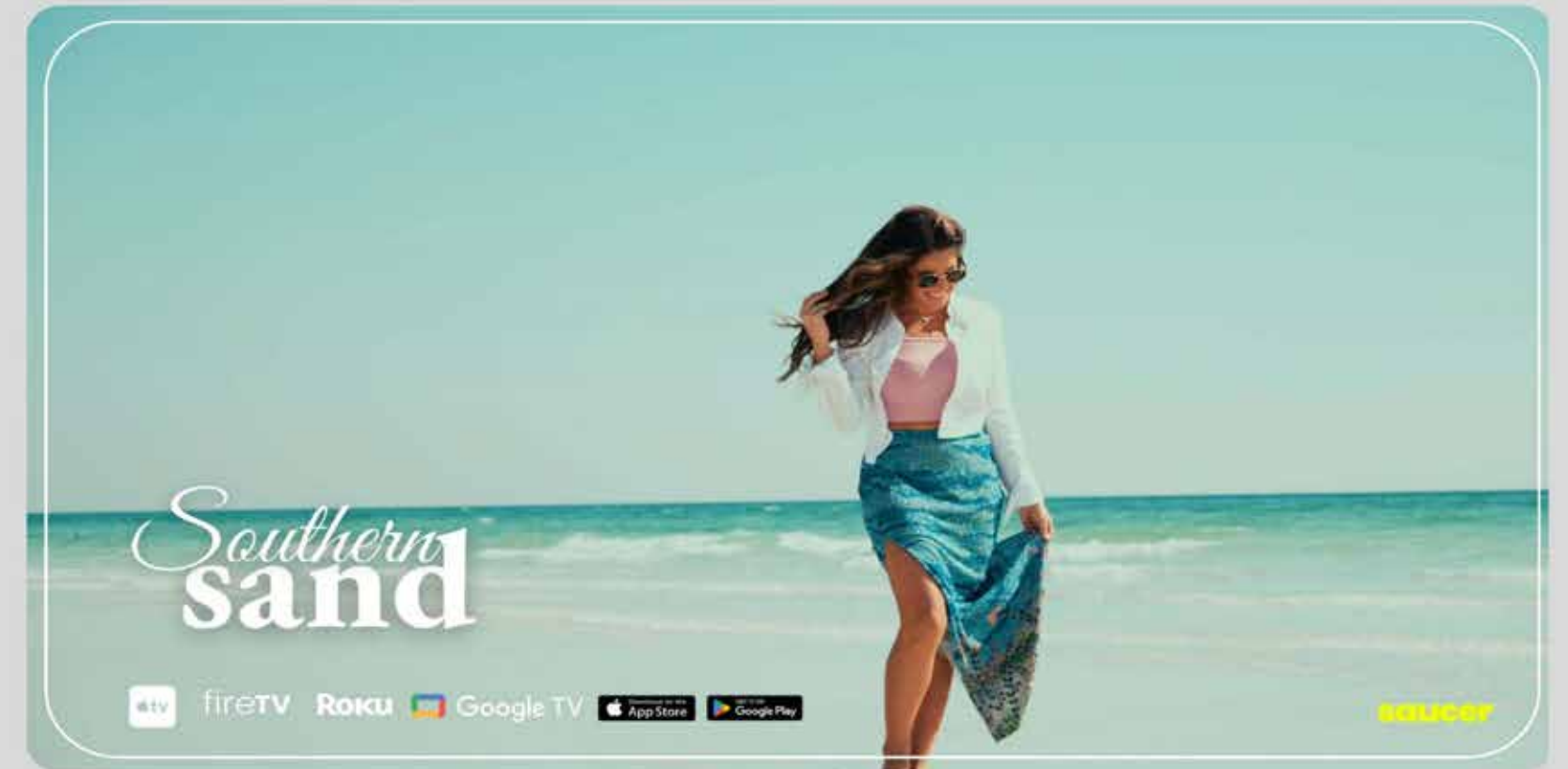
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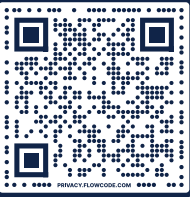
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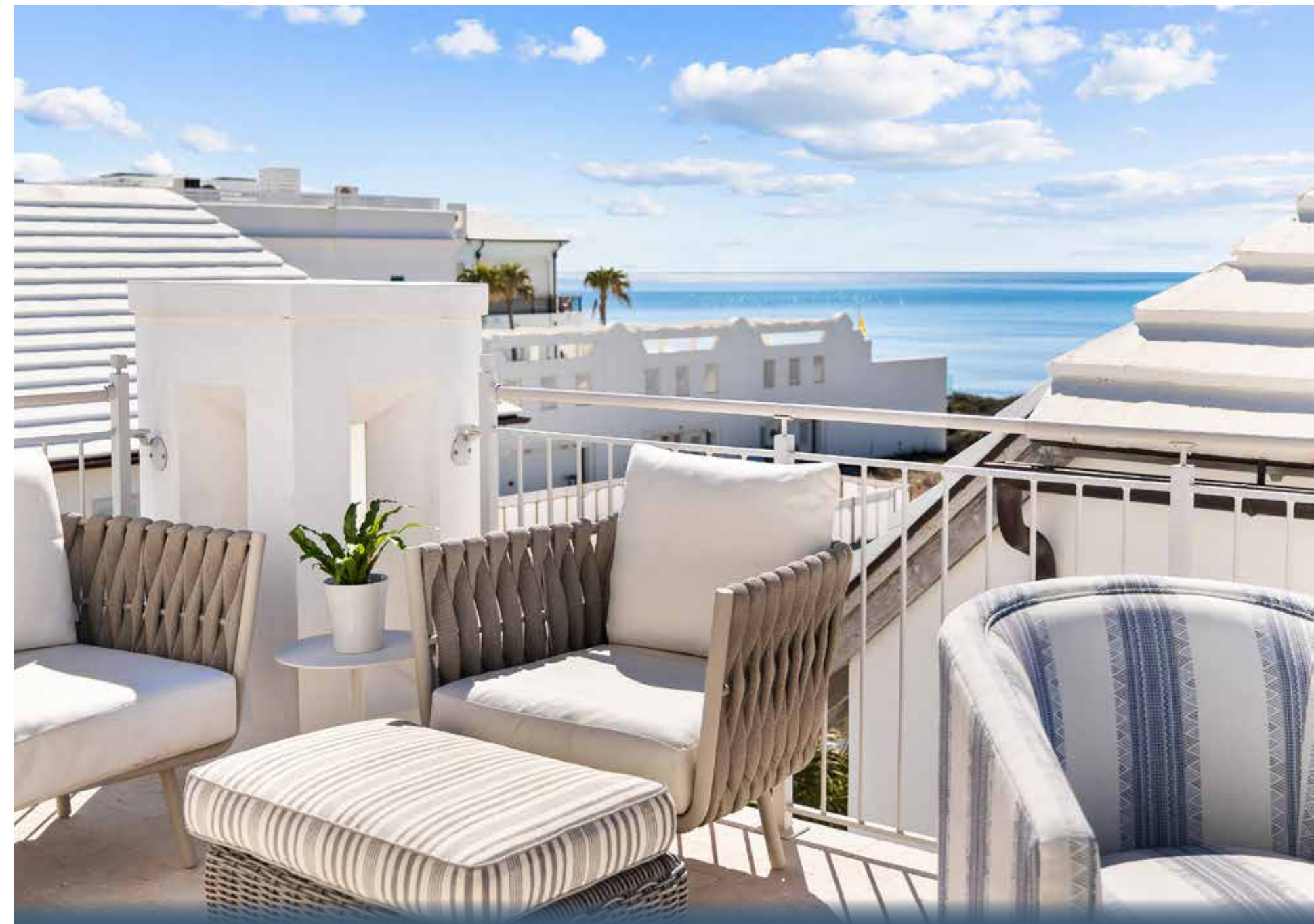
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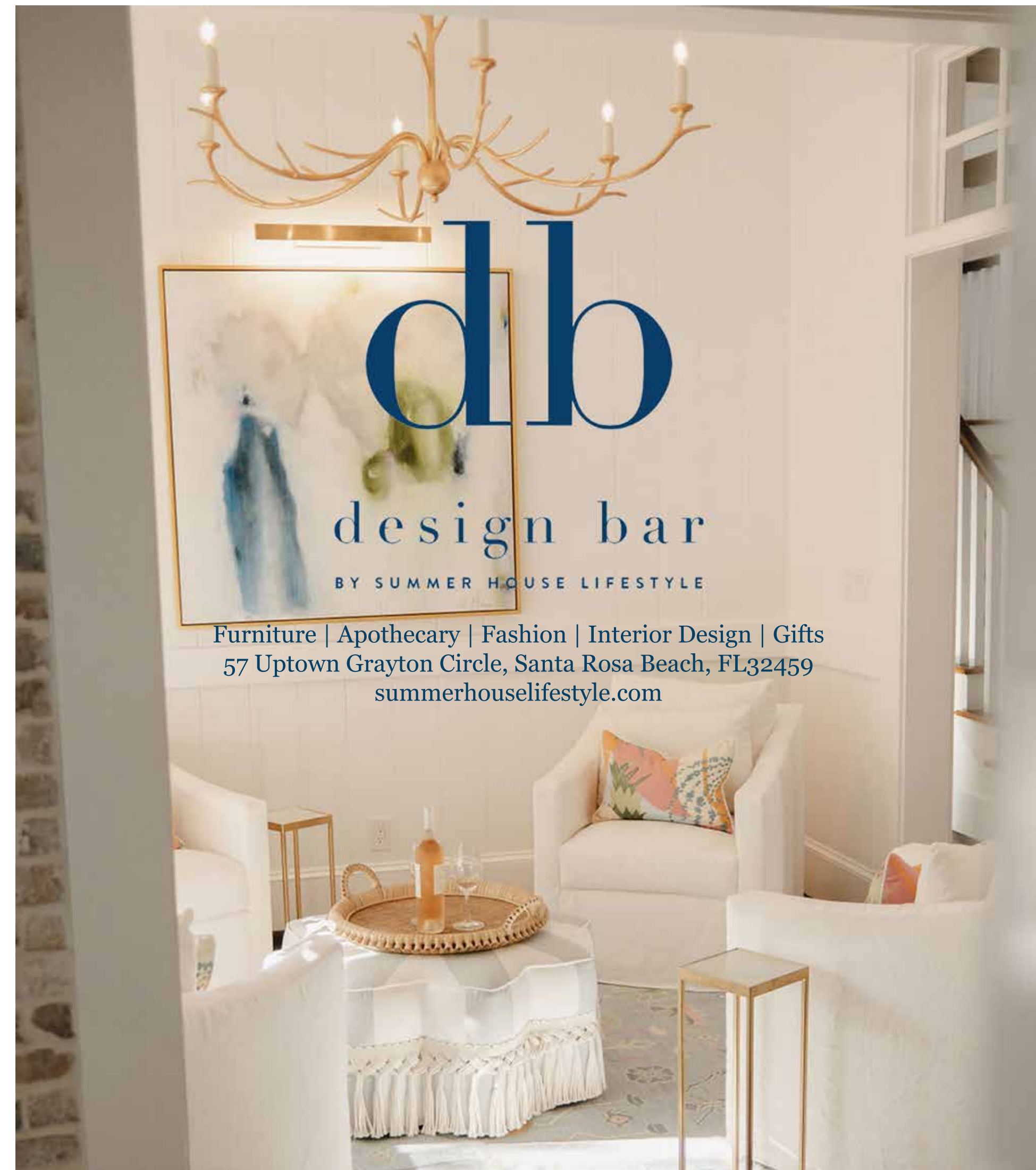
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letter from the publisher

SUMMER DAYS ARE HERE AGAIN



It's that time of year again. Time to bring out the flip flops and sandals! Unless, of course, the beach vibe is your daily hometown vibe. Either way, the pages that follow will provide you with the stories of the people, places and things that make 30-A and its surrounds a lovely place to be.

We invite you to enjoy all that South Walton has to offer. Whether it's the sites and sounds of "Authentic Walton" or the taste of 30-A's delicious restaurants, or the incredible shopping and sparkling gems of South Walton's retailers, like the family-owned business of 30 years, McCaskill & Company, featured on the cover of this issue.

They are all here, in the pages of the Thirty-A Review magazine.

We are in the business of connecting people. Of telling the stories that make people tick. And of providing you, our illustrious reader, with a golden itinerary while you're at the beach.

So on that note, we wish you lovely days at the beach. Whether this is your vacation or your daily life, make it a great day on 30-A.

Cheers,

Miles K. Neiman

View the entire publication online at www.ThirtyAReview.com



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about the cover

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Carolyn Brigman

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Angela Beltran from MH Salon 30A

Learn more at mccaskillandcompany.com

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Theatre and Events in May and June



Seaside Farmers Market

SEASIDE MONDAYS

Children's Theatre

Begins May 20. Enjoy evening children's theatre at Seaside Amphitheater when your favorite fairy tales are brought to life by The REP Theatre. Join Jack, a quick-witted youngster with a talent for mischief, as he trades the family cow and sets off on a daring quest that will take him to the top of an enormous beanstalk reaching up to the clouds. Get ready to climb into a magical world of wonders and grumpy giants in this heartwarming tale of courage, family and finding magic in the most unexpected places. This is a complimentary event made possible by the Merchants of Seaside. 6:30 p.m.

TUESDAYS

Stories by The Sea

Begins May 21. Join The REP Theatre for a one-of-a-kind storytelling experience that will take audiences on a fun and interactive storybook adventure for children of all ages! On Tuesday mornings, REP actors will bring your favorite stories to life in this expertly-improvised and entertaining performance that will have you wishing for more. Proudly presented by the Seaside Merchants! Seaside Post Office. 10 a.m.

Kids Improv Boot Camp

Begins May 21. It's time to level up with Improv Boot Camp for Kids! At The REP, not only do we perform and share stories, we also share the craft of storytelling and theatre arts with local and visiting students. In our popular Improv Bootcamp workshops, students jump into action by learning all the basics of improv comedy and performance with unique challenges, teamwork exercises and interactive theatre games. At the end of each week, our improv students advance to the next stage in the Friday Friends & Family Finale showcase, where they show off their new and improved skills. Improv Bootcamp is great for boosting your child's creativity and providing a fun, engaging experience kids will love. Advanced registration is required. 2-3:30 p.m. Tickets: \$25 and \$20 for REP Members. Seaside Post Office

Huck & Lilly

Join Huck & Lilly for a fun-filled evening of characters and music for kids and the grown-ups who love them! 5 p.m. in the Seaside Amphitheater, weather permitting.

THURSDAYS

Stories by The Sea

Begins May 23. Join The REP Theatre for a one-of-a-kind storytelling

experience that will take audiences on a fun and interactive storybook adventure for children of all ages! REP actors will bring your favorite stories to life in this expertly improvised and entertaining performance that will have you wishing for more. Seaside Post Office. 10 a.m. Proudly presented by the Seaside Merchants!

Huck & Lilly

Join Huck & Lilly for a fun-filled evening of characters and music for kids and the grown-ups who love them! Tuesdays & Thursdays at 5 p.m. in the Seaside Amphitheater, weather permitting.

Kids Improv Boot Camp

Begins May 23. It's time to level up with Improv Boot Camp for Kids! At The REP, not only do we perform and share stories, but we also share the craft of storytelling and theatre arts with local and visiting students. In our popular Improv Bootcamp workshops, students jump into action by learning all the basics of improv comedy and performance with unique challenges, teamwork exercises, and interactive theatre games. At the end of each week, our improv students advance to the next stage in the Friday Friends & Family Finale showcase, where they show off their new and improved skills. Improv Bootcamp is great for boosting your child's creativity and providing a

fun, engaging experience kids will love. Advanced registration is required. 2-3:30 p.m. Tickets: \$25 and \$20 for REP Members. Seaside Post Office

FRIDAYS

Friday Friends & Family Finale

Begins May 24. The REP Theatre presents the Friday Friends & Family Finale featuring the stars of improv bootcamp! Enjoy the high-energy

hilarity as The REP's improv students take center stage in an unforgettable performance of entertaining scenes and improv games. This weekly showcase is the perfect way to experience the comedic genius of the next generation of performers as they show off their creativity and new skills in front of their friends, family and theatre fans. You'll love watching these kids shine! The REP Theatre. 2 p.m.



Digital Graffiti will illuminate Alys Beach

Central Square Cinema

Grab your blankets & chairs and head to the Seaside Amphitheater for a family movie under the stars. The movie begins at 8 p.m., weather permitting.

SATURDAYS

Sounds of Seaside

Bring blankets and chairs and enjoy an afternoon of live music from local musicians in the Seaside Amphitheater. 3-6 p.m.

SPECIAL EVENTS

Memorial Day Weekend Concert

May 25 & 26
Join us for a Memorial Day Weekend Concert by Ken & Andi and friends at the Seaside Amphitheater. 7 - 8:30 p.m.

Jazz on the Lawn

May 12
Join us for an unforgettable day of smooth tunes at the annual Jazz on the Lawn concert. This annual event is a favorite among locals and visitors alike and offers a fantastic lineup that will keep you grooving all day and into the evening. The first band will perform at 1 p.m., with the final band beginning at 9 p.m. Cabana Man will provide

umbrellas, so bring lawn chairs and towels for a day filled with fun! Seaside Amphitheater, 1 - 9:45 p.m.

WATERCOLOR

SUNDAYS

Live Music at Fish Out of Water, 11 a.m. - 1 p.m.

MONDAYS

Live music at WaterColor Beach Club, 2-5 p.m.

TUESDAYS

Bikes, Sights, and Beers

Bring your own bike, grab a map at Camp WaterColor and follow along on the bicycle tour/selfie scavenger hunt. Upon completion, return to The Canteen for a souvenir cup of beer (root beer for the kids!)

Live music

WaterColor Beach Club, 5-8 p.m.

THURSDAYS

Live music at WaterColor Beach Club, 5 - 8 p.m.

FRIDAYS

Live music at Fish Out of Water, 6-9 p.m.

SPECIAL EVENTS

Cinco de Mayo celebrations at local restaurants

May 5
Enjoy a tequila takeover and tasting at Gather Kitchen + Bar with an assortment of tequila plus complimentary chips and salsa all day with food and drink specials. At Fish Out of Water, celebrate with half-priced select tacos and house margaritas all day. Enjoy a fiesta at WaterColor Beach Club with \$5 frozen margaritas and food specials.

Mother's Day at WaterColor Inn Pool

May 12
Pamper mom with complimentary rosé all day and chef's special tea sandwiches at Gather Kitchen + Bar.

National Biscuit Day at Scratch Biscuit Kitchen

May 14
The 2nd Annual Biscuit Eating Contest! There will be games and activities for kids including a bounce house, face painting, live music, raffle prizes, and lots of fun! 7 a.m. - 2 p.m.

Pancakes with pops

June 16
Join us at Fish Out of Water for a special

Father's Day brunch celebration and treat dad to complimentary coffee, all-you-can eat pancakes and quality family time. 8 a.m. - 2 p.m.

ALYS BEACH

TUESDAYS

Wine & Song at Neat

Enjoy love music and a glass of wine at the bottle shop and tasting room. 5-7 p.m.

SPECIAL EVENTS

17h Annual Digital Graffiti

May 17-18
Immersive technology meets art and architecture. A number of events and panels with an awards party and finale on May 18 from 8 - 11 p.m., where families can enjoy projection art installed along a festival path. Food trucks and beverages will be available for purchase along the path. digitalgraffiti.com.

Sinfonia for Memorial Day

May 26
A concert event from 7:30-9 p.m. in the Alys Beach Amphitheatre.

AREA FARMER'S MARKETS

Grand Boulevard Farmers' Market

600 Grand Boulevard, Miramar Beach
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30A Farmers' Market

28 N. Barrett Square, Rosemary Beach
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Watersound Town Center Farmers' Market

85 Origins Main Street, Watersound
Sundays year-round 9 a.m. - 1 p.m.

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Saturdays year-round from 9 a.m. - 1 p.m.



Sinfonia Memorial Day concert in Alys Beach

Celebrating America's Culinary Heritage

M&P is a one-of-a-kind chef's tasting experience on 30-A

BY TESS FARMER

A new immersive restaurant has arrived on 30-A and it's already receiving rave reviews. Chef William Farrington of Farrington Foods has created a one-of-a-kind dining experience with all-American wine pairings with each course of the tasting menu. His goal is to highlight the unique culinary heritage in America with the offerings, both food and wine, changing seasonally.

Farrington is a Culinary Institute of America-trained French chef and has poured his heart and soul into the creation of M&P.

Armed with a solid foundation in classical culinary techniques and a relentless drive for excellence, Chef Farrington embarked on his culinary journey by gaining invaluable experience at renowned restaurants across the country. From bustling metropolitan kitchens to idyllic coastal retreats, Farrington's career took him on a diverse and enriching path, allowing him to refine his craft and expand his culinary repertoire. M&P represents the culmination of that path.

After training and working in Napa Valley and Los Angeles, Farrington found his way to Oak at Fourteenth in Boulder, Colorado. The transitions during the pandemic brought him and his family to Santa Rosa Beach where they fell in love with the area.

"When people ask what kind of restaurant we are, our response is often to tell them the first course is tater tots and caviar," said Farrington. "It's our invitation to come taste and experience for yourself."

Located in Blue Mountain Beach in a quaint space on the south side of 30-A, the dining room design was inspired by a 1920s Pullman train dining car. Farrington's wife Elizabeth carefully selected the design details, creating the experience of traversing the country while savoring cuisine from different regions.

M&P is inspired by Farrington's passion for Americana. From grass-fed Holstein cows raised on a New Jersey farm, to Mangalitsa pigs raised to forage in grass pastures and mature oak trees in Tennessee, Farrington sources his ingredients from sustainable, small, typically family-run American farms. M&P's caviar is sourced from Marshallberg Farm in North Carolina, which is the only full RAS sturgeon farm in the USA, ranked a "Best Choice" for sustainability



Chef William Farrington sources ingredients from sustainable, small, typically family-run American farms.

Photos by Tully Farmer

by the Monterey Bay Aquarium Seafood Watch.

The name M&P stands for meat and potatoes, which has multiple meanings to what the chef offers his guests. The expression typically refers to something fundamental, basic or essential, and in a culinary context, referring to a traditional, hearty meal consisting of a protein and potatoes as the main components.

The menu changes seasonally and will highlight fresh ingredients sourced close to home and surrounding areas as well. Farrington is committed to showcasing the best of what Americans are growing and producing at the local level. William and Elizabeth work together to craft flavors and combinations you won't see anywhere else on 30-A. They are constantly updating the menu and wine lists to create a memorable experience for diners.

The menu is a chef's tasting dinner created and made by hand by Chef William, all himself. He's a one-man band in the kitchen and comes out to announce each course and share a story describing it.

Every dinner is unique and nothing is announced in advance. The concept is based on omakase a Japanese dining experience where the chef curates a multi-course meal based on the freshest seasonal ingredients and their culinary expertise. The term "omakase" translates to "I'll leave it up to you," indicating diners entrust the chef to create a

personalized and often inventive culinary journey.

Typically enjoyed at sushi restaurants, omakase allows patrons to savor a variety of dishes, including sushi, sashimi and other delicacies, all expertly prepared and presented with meticulous attention to detail. Chef Farrington brings that idea to a range of delicacies sourced from American farms. The experience emphasizes the culinary heritage of America as well as the chef's creativity, skill and dedication to providing an unforgettable dining experience.

In addition to its regular dinner service, the restaurant offers private event services, including customized menus tailored to a specific occasion, be it a wedding, corporate event or special celebration. Work with Chef William to elevate your gathering with personalized culinary experiences and ensuring a

memorable event for all.

Farrington and his wife have two young sons and reside in Seagrove. They are all delighted to be a part of the community and look forward to welcoming guests aboard at M&P.

M&P
Open Wednesday through Saturday for one seating at 7 p.m.
Reservations required at resy.com/cities/ecp/mandp
3375 West County Highway 30-A, Santa Rosa Beach
850-739-2950
farringtonfoods.com/m&p30a



Chef William Farrington of Farrington Foods.

Chef William is a one-man band in the kitchen and comes out to announce each course and share a story describing it.

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From Humble Beginnings To Culinary Acclaim

Seagrove Village Market Café celebrates 75 years

BY TESS FARMER

Nestled along the shores of the Florida Panhandle, Seagrove Beach is renowned for its pristine sands, azure waters and charming coastal ambiance. But amidst the splendor of the seaside paradise lies a culinary gem that has captured the hearts and palates of locals and visitors alike for decades—the Seagrove Village Market Café.

Seagrove Village Market Café has stood as a beacon in the community for 75 years, a testament to the rich history and vibrant culture of the idyllic coastal community. But the story of Seagrove Market Café is more than just a tale of delectable dishes and mouthwatering flavors—it's a journey through time, tracing the evolution of a beloved eatery from humble beginnings to culinary acclaim.

The menu, rooted in Southern tradition, features signature dishes such as the iconic grouper sandwich, which *Garden & Gun* recognized in 2008 in their "100 Southern Foods You Must Try Before You Die" list.

Alongside classics, guests can savor po'boy sandwiches, fresh salads and fish tacos, each prepared with the same commitment to quality and flavor that has defined Seagrove Village Market Café for 75 years.

The roots of Seagrove Market Café can be traced back to C.H. McGee, known as "Cube," who laid the foundation for what would become a staple in Seagrove Beach. His vision and appreciation for the Gulf-front land inspired the café's inception, which started as a haven for travelers seeking the necessities in a remote, untouched paradise. Throughout the years, Seagrove Village Market Café has evolved into a treasured tradition for generations.

The Hartley family members have been South Walton locals since 1997 back when only twenty full-time elementary school kid families lived on 30-A. One street over from their family home was the Seagrove Village Market Café. While the Hartley home was under construction, George Hartley would walk to the market and order a Coca-Cola. He didn't even realize it had a restaurant in the back for months.

Over time, George became a regular in the market, always ordering his favorite, the shrimp po'boy. One afternoon, he overheard the owner mention they were ready



Seagrove Village Market Café introduced a limited-edition, outrageously large, specialty sandwich, "The George-normous Po' Boy" as part of its year-long celebration of its 75th anniversary.



Ann and George Hartley

to retire. George simply replied, "How much do you want for it?" That one question led to a check and a handshake that would change the course of the Hartley family's future and place them on a culinary journey transpiring into a local legacy.

Ann and George Hartley purchased the restaurant 25 years ago in 1999, and have lovingly preserved its legacy while infusing their passion and dedication into every aspect of its operation to bring fresh, locally-sourced cuisine to Seagrove Beach.

Armed with a passion for food and a commitment to quality, they transformed a quaint market into a culinary haven, where guests could savor the flavors of the Gulf Coast in a warm and inviting atmosphere.

Seagrove Village Market Café set itself apart by prioritizing locally-sourced ingredients and forging relationships with fishermen, farmers and artisans to ensure that every dish reflected the bounty of the region. From Gulf-fresh seafood to seasonal produce, each ingredient was hand-

selected for its freshness and flavor, creating a menu that celebrated the essence of coastal and Southern cuisine.

Over the years, Seagrove Village Market Café became a beloved fixture in the community, not only for its exceptional food but also for its warm hospitality and welcoming

ambiance. Locals and visitors alike flocked to its tables. But perhaps the most remarkable aspect of Seagrove Market Café is its steadfast commitment to preserving the spirit of the community. As Seagrove Beach has evolved over the years from a quiet seaside enclave to a bustling destination, the café has remained true to its roots, serving as a gathering place for friends, families and neighbors to come together and share in the simple pleasures of good food and company.

As Seagrove Market Café celebrates its place in the growing history of 30-A, the Hartleys continue to uphold the legacy of its founders. With a menu that pays homage to the flavors of the Gulf Coast and a commitment to serving fresh food with a smile, the café remains a cherished institution—one of the few original landmarks along scenic Highway 30-A.

As part of its year-long celebration of its 75th anniversary, Seagrove Village Market Café introduced a limited-edition, outrageously large, specialty sandwich, "The George-normous Po' Boy." Patrons have been enjoying taking down the creation, which features fried shrimp, oysters, grouper, andouille sausage, fried pickles, fried onions, hushpuppies and more, all nestled on a crusty 12-inch French loaf with coleslaw, tartar sauce and spicy remoulade—a true homage to the flavors of the restaurant.

The café was the Hartleys' first venture into the local culinary scene. Today, The Hartley Restaurant Group is known for numerous other award-winning restaurants along 30-A over the years, including George's at Alys Beach, La Cocina, Surfing Deer and most recently, the opening of their newest establishment, Village Market at Watersound Town Center.

Seagrove Village Market Café
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Top-Tier Title Services

McNeese Title is a trusted partner for individuals, businesses, home builders & developers

BY ELISE CURTIS

McNeese Title has been a pillar in the community for over 20 years. The company is known as a distinguished provider of title services and renowned for its commitment to excellence and client satisfaction. Its reputation in the real estate industry is top notch and the team works together to ensure that standard each day.

Established in 2003 by visionary entrepreneurs Richard and Demetria McNeese, the firm has remained at the forefront of the local real estate industry, offering comprehensive title solutions tailored to meet the diverse needs of its clientele. Richard, an attorney licensed in Florida and Tennessee, is uniquely qualified to help the firm and its clients understand and navigate through the title industry's legal issues that are often presented. Under the leadership of the McNeeses, McNeese Title continues its tradition of integrity, reliability and innovation, serving as a trusted partner for individuals, businesses, home builders and developers alike.

The McNeeses, seasoned professionals with a passion for real estate and a deep understanding of the industry's intricacies, were inspired by the burgeoning



Richard McNeese at the office celebrating the company's 21 years in business.

Throughout its history, McNeese Title has navigated economic fluctuations and industry shifts with resilience and adaptability. Its unwavering dedication to ethical practices and customer satisfaction has earned the trust of clients and industry peers alike, solidifying its reputation as a trusted authority in title services.

Recently the firm moved its Destin location to Miramar Beach. The Seagrove location remains the same and both offices welcome eager home buyers, sellers and their agents with freshly baked cookies, which has become synonymous with the McNeese brand.

Today, McNeese Title remains a beacon of reliability and professionalism in the real estate community, committed to upholding the highest standards of excellence. The firm gives back to the community by supporting countless charitable organizations and events and by providing educational classes and seminars to real estate agents.

With its rich history of success and a forward-thinking approach, the firm is poised to continue to shape the future of real estate transactions on the Emerald Coast and beyond, while ensuring others can make the dream of living in this coastal community a reality.

"We attribute our success to the team we've assembled, starting with Peggy Owens, who joined us in the very beginning and who now serves as director of operations," said McNeese. "Collectively, our team boasts over 300 years of experience in the title industry. And with full-service capabilities and cohesive collaboration, we quickly become trusted partners to our clients."

The McNeese Title team has set the foundation for what would become a

cornerstone of the region's real estate landscape. Armed with a commitment to excellence and a team of seasoned experts, the firm quickly gained recognition for its exceptional service and attention to detail.

McNeese Title Company
mcneesetitle.com

Seagrove Beach Office
3921 East County Highway 30-A, Suite B, Seagrove Beach
850-534-4242

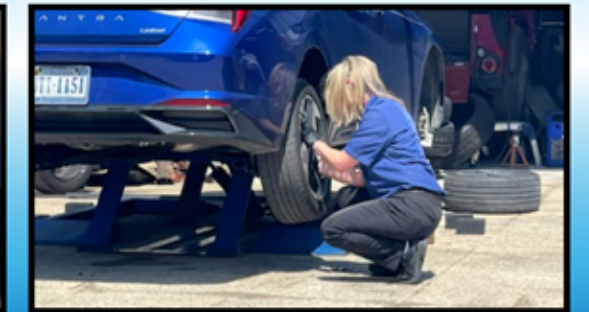
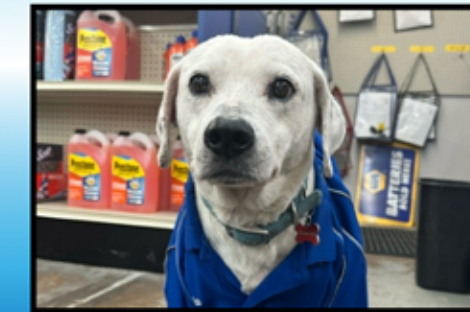
Miramar Beach Office
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opportunities along the Emerald Coast years ago. Originally from the Memphis area, they embarked on a journey to establish a company dedicated to providing top-tier title services with integrity and precision.



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"DIFFERENT BY DESIGN"

Shine Bright on the Emerald Coast

For 30 years, McCaskill & Company has offered an unparalleled selection of fine jewelry and luxury timepieces

BY TESS FARMER

Over the years, McCaskill & Company has become synonymous with excellence in the world of fine jewelry, earning accolades and recognition from industry experts and satisfied customers alike. From its humble beginnings in a small kiosk in Seaside to its current status as a premier destination for luxury jewelry and timepieces, the store's evolution is a testament to its founder's vision and passion.

The story of McCaskill & Company Fine Jewelers traces its origins back to the vision of one man: William "Bill" Campbell. A native of Walton County with a deep appreciation for fine craftsmanship and exceptional design, Bill embarked on a journey that would lead him to create a jewelry destination unlike any other.

As a young boy, Campbell enjoyed visiting his grandmother, Gussie McCaskill Campbell, who would get out the jewels and gems that his great-grandfather had brought home from his travels around the world. It was this fondness and appreciation for precious stones and fine jewelry he gained from his grandmother, for whom he named the store.

In 1992, armed with a wealth of knowledge and an unwavering determination, he started out as a personal jeweler with a small case of jewels and pearls. In 1994, he opened the first store in Seaside, which would set the stage for a legacy to span generations.

Bill was a solo employee for years, working long days and keeping the store open in Seaside for people to shop after dinner. As the business grew and developed, Bill's wife Elizabeth shared in the company, overseeing the business operations and marketing. After 25 years working in community mental health as a licensed therapist and administrator, she joined Bill full time after their move to their free-standing location in Destin in 1999.

Their daughter Carolyn Brigman also joined her parents and now serves as vice president of McCaskill & Company. Carolyn grew up in the jewelry business and over the years accompanied her parents at numerous jewelry shows. Upon completion of her business hospitality degree at Florida State University, she returned to McCaskill & Company to further the



Above: The McCaskill & Company team.
Below: Carolyn Brigman joins the family business in 2008.
Left: McCaskill & Company opening year photo in April 1994.



success of the store for another generation. Her first seven years were spent in her fashion and jewelry boutique, Sarah Carolyn. Needing to devote her full attention to McCaskill & Company, she closed Sarah Carolyn in 2015. As was the plan,

her former boutique served as the perfect training ground for running all aspects of the business. With her father's keen eye for jewelry and her mother's business savvy, the future of McCaskill & Company is in great hands.

Today as McCaskill & Company celebrates over three decades of success, it remains committed to upholding the

From the moment guests step through the door, they are welcomed with warmth and hospitality, as knowledgeable associates guide them through the intricacies of selecting the perfect piece to mark life's most precious moments.

values upon which it was founded: integrity, quality and a passion for perfection. With a team of skilled artisans and gemologists at the helm, the store continues to push the boundaries of innovation and creativity, offering clients an unparalleled shopping experience.

This year McCaskill & Company is breaking ground to expand the Destin showroom to include even more special collections, which also will house their new bridal and engagement design gallery.

From its inception, McCaskill & Company distinguished itself by offering an unparalleled selection of fine jewelry and luxury timepieces, curated from the world's most renowned designers and brands. Whether it's the shimmering brilliance of a diamond necklace, the timeless elegance of a pearl strand or the precision engineering of a Swiss watch, each piece in the store's collection reflects the pinnacle of artistry and sophistication.

In addition to selling fine Swiss watches, McCaskill & Company offers on-site watch repair and service. Repair services from basic quartz watches to more complicated Swiss masterpieces are available on site. Jewelry repair and restoration is also available by master jewelers using modern technology.

Beyond its impressive array of offerings, McCaskill & Company quickly became known for its unwavering commitment to customer service and satisfaction. From the moment guests step through the door, they are welcomed with warmth and hospitality, as knowledgeable associates guide them through the intricacies of selecting the perfect piece to mark life's most precious moments. It's this personalized service that has been paramount to their success and what resonates with customers.

From working as a personal jeweler with only a small case of pearls and other gems, Bill and his staff of 18 now receives recognition from the world's finest designers. In addition, McCaskill & Company has repeatedly been honored as "the Best of the Emerald Coast," "Best in Destin" and "Finest of the Emerald Coast" in local area polls. As the legacy of McCaskill & Company fine jewelers continues to unfold, one thing remains certain: its foundation as a family-run business and the team's dedication to providing the highest caliber of craftsmanship and service will endure for generations to come.

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P448

A row of white houses with porches on a hillside at sunset. The houses are built on stilts and have white columns and railings. The sky is a mix of light blue and orange, and the sun is setting behind a hill in the distance, creating a warm glow. The foreground is filled with tall, dry grasses.

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There has been—and always will be—nostalgia for days gone by.

For those simpler times when neighbors swapped stories over the fence, shopkeepers knew each customer by name, and families gathered on the porch to tell stories as the twilight faded into night.

In one little corner of the world, there is still such a place.

In this place, the moments that are cherished are not grand, but small and rich with meaning. The joy of simply spending time together.

seasidefl.com

A New Perspective 4 Health Myths (to let go of)

BY DR. BART M. PRECOURT



Dr. Bart Precourt

“The best doctor is still the one within. Learn how to listen to and honor your ‘inner doctor’ and the best version of you will soon appear.”

poorly understood myth. What is lost in the “cholesterol is bad conversation” is that cholesterol is healing agents that your body uses when there is damage to the endothelial lining (think arteries).

Sugars, processed foods and certain carbohydrates are the primary contributors to this damage.

In fact, eating healthy cholesterol including eggs, butter and meat can have an advantageous effect on your health.

Sometimes if we hear something frequently enough, we eventually accept it as true. This happens regarding our health and habits more than we would like to admit.

Below are four health “myths,” or beliefs that we currently accept that may not be true at all. Buckle up!

Myth #1: Sun is bad for you.

How many times have we been told to cover up or make sure we put on some sunscreen? That the sun can give us skin cancer and that somehow it’s bad for us.

I would agree 100% to avoid getting sunburned. I would also tell you that sun exposure is not only important, it’s a crucial part of human health.

Did our creator get it wrong? Did they put this big massive unavoidable ball of fire in the sky to harm us? Or, is it possible that our creator was trying to make it simple for us to be healthy?

Getting a light tan each year can have massive health benefits. When the sun hits our skin, it interacts with our fatty acids and allows for the natural production of Vitamin D. Sunscreen, on the other hand, is loaded with dangerous chemicals that are sent directly to your liver and blocks Vitamin D production.

How important is Vitamin D? It’s used by nearly every cell in your body and plays a significant role in hormones, depression and immune function to name a few.

Twenty minutes of sun exposure daily can help balance hormones, boost immune function and regulate circadian rhythm. Generally, the sun makes people happy.

Myth #2: Avoid red meat

It would be accurate to tie butter and cholesterol into this conversation, as they are often clumped together.

To keep this simple: Organic grass-fed red meat is good for you! In fact, red meat may have the highest nutritional value of any single food source: B Vitamins, zinc, iron, choline, amino acids, B12 and more. All in your red meat.

Where this goes wrong or has been interpreted wrong (myth) is what people usually eat with red meat, i.e. a burger and fries, steak and potatoes. When we combine the sugar and starches with the protein, this is where problems can occur.

Yet good old fashioned grass-fed burgers and steak will make strong, healthy humans!

Myth #3 Cholesterol is bad.

This is deep-seated, so will naturally ruffle some feathers. Deeming cholesterol as bad is another very

Millions of Americans have been told that their cholesterol is high and to cut back on the meat and eggs. This is collectively poor advice. Keep in mind, I knew this would ruffle some feathers.

Removing inflammatory foods like sugar, processed foods, simple carbohydrates and alcohol etc. will do more in improving your cholesterol profile than removing healthy whole foods like butter, eggs and meat.

Myth #4: Doctors know best.

The idea or myth that the doctor knows best is a tricky one for the obvious reason: I am one. In the last 5 to 10 years with the advancements of science, research and data regarding human physiology and function, we have new perspectives on how to advance human function and health.

No longer is it a guessing game whether or not nutrition, exercise and mindset play a significant role.

This, unfortunately, is where the doctor doesn’t always know best. If your doctor is not talking to you about mindset, nutrition and exercise in relation to your health condition than your doctor probably does not know best. (More ruffling of feathers).

As humans, we are healthiest when we move well, eat well and think well. Your doctor may be brilliant at treating a particular symptom or sickness, yet not always great at increasing human function. If your doctor is not talking about diet & lifestyle...fire them!

We have come to a time and a place in healthcare where we recognize that some doctors may not have all of these tools. It therefore becomes our responsibility to either educate ourselves or find a practitioner who has the necessary tools to meet our health desires.

The best doctor is still the one within. Learn how to listen to and honor your ‘inner doctor’ and the best version of you will soon appear.

Dr. Bart M. Precourt, D.C., is a holistic doctor, chiropractor, acupuncturist and nutritional consultant. For nearly 20 years he has helped people get healthy, lose weight and create healthy sustainable lifestyles. He currently practices in Seagrove Beach at Balance Health Studio. For more information or a consultation, visit www.balance30a.com or call 850-231-9288.

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Love Your Skin

Dermatology Specialists opens Watersound location, offers tips for sun safety

BY ELISE CURTIS



New Office in Watersound Origins Town Center

certified dermatologist Audry Kunin, MD, certified registered nurse practitioner Angela Pearson and Maddison Hollendonner, medical aesthetician."

The Watersound office offers all-inclusive dermatology services—including general, surgical and cosmetic dermatology as well as aesthetician services through Aqua Medical Spa and hair restoration services through the Hair Transplant and Restoration Center.

At Aqua Medical Spa, the physician-supervised team of aestheticians are committed to providing highly-personalized anti-aging treatment plans designed to help clients restore, rejuvenate, enhance and protect their natural beauty at every age.

By prioritizing dermatological care and embracing regular skin checks, individuals can not only maintain healthy, radiant skin but also reduce the risk of serious dermatological conditions, ensuring a brighter, healthier future.

The procedures and treatments offered include:

- Comprehensive skin exams
- Screening, diagnoses and treatment of skin cancer
- Mohs micrographic surgery
- Diagnoses and treatment of chronic skin conditions
- A wide range of anti-aging services, including laser treatment, cosmetic injectables, chemical peels and more
- Hair loss solutions

"Unlike other cancers, skin cancer can be seen on the surface of your skin," said Dr. Jon Ward, double board-certified dermatologist, Mohs surgeon and practice founder. "A skin cancer screening from a dermatologist is a visual exam that is painless, only takes a few minutes and could save your life."

A skin cancer screening from a dermatologist is a visual exam that is painless, only takes a few minutes, and could save your life.

- Dr. Jon Ward

The state-of-the-art office, located in Watersound Town Center, houses medical, surgical and cosmetic dermatology services and a physician-supervised medical spa.

Dermatology Specialists has assembled an experienced team of medical and surgical clinicians serving patients in Florida, Georgia, Alabama and Mississippi. The Watersound location opened in the summer of 2022 to serve the growing communities along the Emerald Coast.

"Opening an office in Watersound Origins Town Center is especially exciting as I'm now seeing patients in the same county I was raised in, and the one my family calls home," said Ward. "Our team will include myself, board-

Massachusetts, where he earned the position of chief resident. He serves as an associate professor at the Alabama College of Osteopathic Medicine and has been practicing

dermatology in the Panhandle since 2006. Skin cancer awareness month is May.

"With over 5 million cases diagnosed in the United States each year, skin cancer is America's most common cancer. Fortunately, skin cancer is also one of the most preventable cancers," added Dr. Ward.

One in five Americans will develop skin cancer at some point in their life. The most common types are basal cell carcinoma, squamous cell carcinoma and melanoma.

Tips for preventing skin cancer

The good news is that skin cancer is highly curable when diagnosed and treated early. You can also limit your risks of developing it by practicing sun safety and seeking shade during peak sunlight hours.

"There's one thing our team wants to share and that's asking you to please make it a habit to regularly check your body from head to toe once a month," said Dr. Ward. "It's easy to begin—just become familiar with the types of spots you have so that you will know if a spot changes or you have one that just doesn't look right. And, it will only take a few minutes every month."

Keeping skin healthy takes a combination of protecting skin from sun damage with hats, clothes and safe sunblock if outside during peak sunlight and also eating a diet that can lessen the risk of developing skin cancer. Several nutrients (especially antioxidants) found in various real foods can help prevent skin cancer. You can find the nutrients you need to lower your risk of skin cancer in the following:

Beta-carotene – Orange fruits and vegetables like squash, carrots, yams, cantaloupe, mangoes, peaches and apricots

Vitamin C – Citrus fruits, strawberries, raspberries, broccoli, bell peppers and leafy greens

Vitamin D and Omega-3 fatty acids – Fatty fish, like mackerel, sardines, herring, tuna and salmon

Vitamin D – Milk, cheese and vitamin D-fortified orange juice

Vitamin E – Almonds, peanuts, beets, greens, collards, spinach, red bell pepper, sunflower seeds and pumpkin.

Dermatology Specialists of Florida & Aqua Medical Spa
75 Origins Main Street, Suites 203 & 204, Watersound
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Pain, Pain Go Away

Align 30A offers a boutique wellness experience and chiropractic adjustments

BY JESSICA HOLTHAUS BADOUR



Align 30A founder Dr. Shawna Hogan

but it's not the be-all-end-all," she says. "Chiropractic visits might be helpful, or maybe the person needs guidance or direction for other steps. I encourage people to get testing, or request that additional consultation."

While many people end up visiting a chiropractic office as a "last resort," Hogan says it does not need to be that way. One of her favorite parts of care is listening to her patients, learning what they've tried (or haven't).

Whether you suffer from headaches, back or neck pain, arthritis, fibromyalgia, degenerative disc disease, bulging or herniated disc(s), scoliosis (and the like) – it is not normal to be in pain every day. Chiropractic care can be the answer for many musculoskeletal conditions, and Hogan always seeks the most conservative management to provide the most relief.

Originally hailing from New York, Hogan grew up in a chiropractic office where her mother was the office manager. Early on, she knew she wanted to become a chiropractor. After graduation, she owned and operated a practice in Pensacola and in 2012 moved to 30A. She opened and successfully ran Regatta Chiropractic & Laser Center in Destin for nearly 10 years before opening Align 30A roughly a year ago.

Align30A was her answer to finding that life-work balance that is most effective for her and benefits her patients. During the pandemic, she thought about retiring fully. She had waited until later in her life to start a family and realized during Covid how fast she was running (essentially on empty).



Align 30A is located at Watersound Town Center.

"When I closed the Destin office, I had a few patients who told me they would be showing up at my front door for home-office adjustments," she says with a laugh.

That was the birth of Align 30A, giving Hogan time to listen and nurture patients in a way that she loves (minus the static of a big practice).

The office does not operate full-time and is open by appointment only. Massage therapy is for active, regular patients, and all her patients are under ongoing, regular care. This model works well for Hogan, with many other chiropractic offices available in the area filling other needs for the occasional adjustment or

to address specific acute injuries.

As for her move to 30A permanently? Now her family lives where they used to vacation and it's nothing short of a dream come true for Hogan to join the local business community.

"We had been coming to Watercolor for vacations more and more—it kept getting harder to leave!" she says. "I never thought this could be a reality, but somehow everything fell into place. We live and work within minutes of the office. The community has wrapped its arms around us and we are so happy to be here in the neighborhood."

Align 30A is accepting new patients for long-term care. To schedule a consultation, complete the online new patient form, send a text or email with your name, phone number and anyone who referred you — including this article! You can also find them on Facebook and Instagram.

Watersound Town Center
26 Origins Main Street, Suite 202, Inlet Beach
(Executive Suites at the entrance to Watersound Origins)
850-748-6102
DrHogan@Align30A.com

Align 30A is a boutique chiropractic and wellness experience offering consultation, chiropractic adjustments and massage therapy, located in Inlet Beach.

"I see this as the future of health care, and I believe that my patients greatly benefit from this level of service," says founder Dr. Shawna Hogan. "I love having the time to truly sit with someone, determine their needs and send them off feeling better than when they arrived."

Consulting affords Hogan the opportunity to coordinate care to help patients put the pieces together. Anyone who's spent time within the healthcare system knows it can be easy to get lost if you don't know your way around.

With more than 20 years in chiropractic care, Dr. Hogan can help navigate and advocate for people experiencing ongoing pain and musculoskeletal problems.

"Sometimes it's as simple as knowing what or who to ask, and hopefully getting an answer. It's amazing to me that in many cases, some basic tests have not been done. Chiropractic care can fix a lot of things,

The community has wrapped its arms around us and we are so happy to be here in the neighborhood.

- Dr. Shawna Hogan

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On the Mark

Community unites for fitness and education during Seaside School's race weekend

BY TESS FARMER

The 22nd Annual Seaside School Half Marathon and 5K race weekend was a resounding success again this year.

The annual community event raised \$545,000 in net proceeds to support the educational initiatives of The Seaside School. Held over Presidents' Day weekend in Seaside, the event welcomed participants from across the



Photos by Shelly Swanger

nation as well as the United Kingdom, Finland, Andorra and garnered support from the local community.

"Race Weekend serves as a vital platform for fostering community engagement while raising crucial funds for our schools," said Teresa Horton, executive director of the Seaside School Foundation. "The collective effort of everyone involved has a profound impact on the educational opportunities and programming we can provide to our students in the classroom and beyond."

The Seaside School is the oldest operating public charter school in Florida and comprises Seaside Neighborhood School and Seacoast Collegiate High School located on the nearby campus of Northwest Florida State College. The Seaside School was founded in 1996 with the simple goal of creating a school to address the need for a better middle school education in Walton County. Today, the school has nearly 440 students across the two campuses and Northwest Florida State College and serves 5th through 12th grades.

The funds raised from the race weekend directly benefit the academic and operational programming of both of the Seaside School campuses in partnership with the Seaside School Foundation.

As one of Florida's pioneer public charter schools, the Seaside School stands as a model of excellence, consistently ranking as the #1 combination public charter school in the state. With over 20 consecutive years of achieving an "A" rating and boasting top one percent rankings in math and science, the Seaside School continues to redefine academic achievement.

"The collective effort of everyone involved has a profound impact on the educational opportunities and programming we can provide to our students in the classroom and beyond." - Teresa Horton

This year's race witnessed an impressive turnout, with 3,700 half marathon and 5K participants, along with over 12,000 race weekend guests converging upon Seaside.

The success of the event was made possible by the unwavering dedication of more than 500 volunteers and countless sponsors including new merchandise sponsor, The Seaside Style, whose commitment ensured a seamless experience and further solidified the unwavering support of the community.

"The overwhelming success of the race weekend underscores the unwavering commitment of our community towards supporting education," said Patrick McCarthy, president of The Seaside School Foundation. "We are immensely grateful for the generosity of our sponsors, participants and volunteers, whose dedication ensures the continued growth and success of our schools."

Event festivities kicked off with the annual pre-party, Taste of the Race, where 18 local chefs showcased their culinary expertise. The event, presented by the Florida Restaurant & Lodging Association, Grayton Beer Company, SEASIDE and Driftwood Wine & Spirits, drew over 700 attendees and featured a live performance by The Molly Ringwalds.

At Taste of the Race, The Daytrader Tiki Bar & Restaurant won the coveted Chef's Choice Award. The People's Choice was awarded to Jackacuda's Seafood & Sushi, and the Judge's Choice was awarded to Marrow Private Chefs.

The race results showcased remarkable achievements as the event concluded with the main event, the half marathon and 5K races, along scenic Highway 30-A.

Jack Rodes, 23, of Roswell, Georgia, took home the top prize as the overall half marathon finisher and the overall half

marathon male with an impressive time of 1:13:24. Katie Sherron, 42, of Tallahassee, emerged as the overall half marathon female with a time of 1:20:56. Aidan McHugh, 17, from Alpharetta, Georgia, and Scarlett Griffin, 14, a 9th grade student at Seacoast Collegiate High School, from Santa Rosa Beach, claimed the titles of overall 5K male and female winners, respectively.

The Race Weekend festivities concluded with a lively finish line after-party featuring live music by The Seaside School Performance Band and post-race fare catered by local favorites Great Southern Cafe and Grayton Beer.

Dr. Tom Miller, executive director of the Seaside School, expressed his gratitude for the community's support.

"The success of this event not only sustains our schools, but also reaffirms our mission to provide a transformative educational experience to our students. We are deeply appreciative of the outpouring of support from our community and look forward to continuing our legacy of excellence," Miller said.

The continued growth and success of the school's model reaffirms what charter pioneers understood at its founding. Led by continual support, exploration, accountability, scholarship, independence, dreams and effort, students cultivate their diversity and begin to understand ways they can make unique contributions to society.

The Seaside School
SeasideSchools.net
RunSeasideFL.com



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Coast to Coast

Artist Josef Kote takes inspiration from coastal regions of Albania and Greece, with work available at Curate30a

BY ELISE CURTIS

I hope my art makes an emotional connection with the viewer and evokes a sense of nourishment, soulfulness, peace and serenity.

Influenced by the many places where he's lived, Albanian-born artist Josef Kote began his journey towards artistic self-discovery in his youth and never looked back.

Kote's trademarks are his bold brush work and sweeping strokes of vibrant colors applied—more often than not—with a palette knife, while other areas of the canvas are left monochromatic and devoid of detail, creating a negative space that lets the eye drift to infinity.

Inspired by his upbringing in the scenic coastal regions of Albania and Greece, Kote's art is deeply influenced by the natural world. His paintings often evoke a sense of wanderlust and adventure, transporting viewers to idyllic seaside vistas or bustling urban landscapes. Through his masterful use of light and shadow, Kote creates a sense of drama and movement, infusing his works with a palpable sense of emotion and depth.

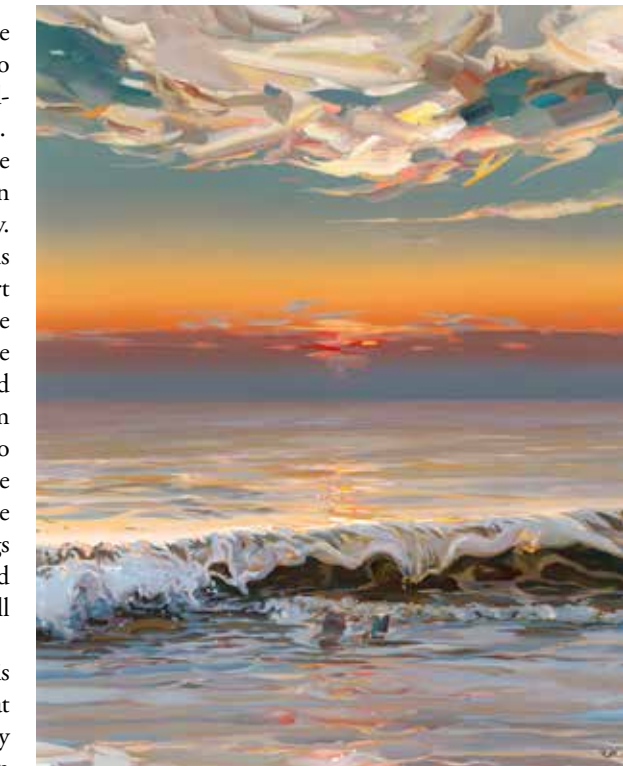
From a young age, he was endlessly drawing and had the innate urge to create. By the age of 13, he had made up his mind to become an artist and devote his life to the arts. He focused on getting accepted into the finest art high school of his native Albania. Ultimately, after competing locally and nationally, he was awarded a coveted spot at the National Lyceum of Arts in Tirana.

In 1984, Kote was accepted into the Academy of Fine Arts of Tirana, where he was educated in the traditional approach of the old masters. Yet, even as a student, he wanted to break loose of the limitations. He wanted to experiment and grow, sometimes leave paintings seemingly unfinished and shatter the boundaries of classic realism.

While still in school, Kote also worked at a movie studio and made a small, but well-received animation film, *Lisi*.

In 1988, Kote graduated with a diploma in painting and scenography. The years of practice and his eight-year solid art education had prepared the young artist well to pursue his life's quest of living and breathing art. It had set him on his lifelong journey to find his own unique style and language, to create stupendous paintings pulsating with the light and energy that he sees all around him.

Kote's artwork is represented locally at Curate30a in Rosemary Beach. Curate offers an exciting selection of the most sought-after artists, ranging from alluring rising new talents to nationally-recognized museum artists, in an impressive array of original paintings, mixed media and sculpture.



"Quiet Beauty of the Setting Sun"

Currently Kote is working on a new body of work called "Blurring Boundaries" as he builds up towards a solo exhibition planned for the month of July. This collection will be coastal-inspired works. He lives and works in Connecticut.

"Water is a true source of inspiration for me and I feel an inexplicable connection to the ocean and I'm fully at peace when in its presence," said Kote.

"I hope my art makes an emotional connection with the viewer and evokes a sense of nourishment, soulfulness, peace and serenity."

Kote has explored the northeast and south Florida and says he's looking forward to exploring the Northwest coast to find more inspiration.

"Curate is honored to have been chosen as one of the handful of galleries in the U.S. to showcase the new

collection of Josef Kote's art," said gallery owner Gary Handler. "It is truly an honor to have access to such an incredible, exclusive body of work by such a talented artist. Kote's unique technique, vibrancy and style have captured the attention of art enthusiasts worldwide, and we are thrilled to share his latest creations with our collectors."

"Our local gallery is a place where our exuberance for collectible fine art is contagious," added Handler. "Whether a seasoned collector or someone new to the world of art, we invite all to come experience our gallery in the heart of Rosemary Beach."

The gallery regularly hosts exclusive shows and live painting performances that allow the artist and collector to connect, adding immeasurable value to each acquisition and making the process of collecting truly personal.

Certainly, one thing holds true for all of Kote's masterworks: they capture shimmering moments in time and space and are filled with light, energy and love for whatever subject he chooses to portray.

In essence, Josef Kote's style of art is a testament to the transformative power of creativity and the boundless potential of the human spirit. Through his visionary paintings, he invites us to see the world through new eyes—to embrace the magic and wonder that surrounds us and to find beauty in even the most ordinary moments.

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Natural Beauty & Historic Charm

Discover authentic Walton County beyond the beach

PROVIDED BY WALTON COUNTY TOURISM DEPARTMENT

Serene landscapes and hidden gems are awaiting discovery beyond the famed beaches of Walton County. While its pristine shores are undoubtedly a draw, this destination offers a plethora of treasures beyond the coastline. From vibrant communities steeped in history and culture to enchanting



Morrison Springs

natural wonders teeming with biodiversity, Walton County invites exploration beyond the sand and surf.

Walton County Tourism recently unveiled the new brand chosen to represent the welcoming communities in Walton County located north of the Choctawhatchee Bay – Authentic Walton. The branding project followed a multi-step process involving stakeholder research, ideation, trademark search and adoption.

Local business owners and community stakeholders participated in a brand positioning study, with the findings directly informing the strategic direction for brand development. “Authentic Walton” encompasses what was uncovered in the surveys as to what makes this area so unique – traditional values, a welcoming sense of community, genuineness and steadfastness.

“We’re extending the invitation for locals and visitors to head up Highway 331 for a daytrip to discover Authentic Walton by exploring some of the great sights, tastes and traditions offered just north of the Choctawhatchee Bay,” said Kelli Carter, director of marketing.

“There’s a whole world of culture and history waiting just north of the Choctawhatchee Bay starting in Freeport, which serves as a lively crossroads between the north and south ends of Walton County.”

Encompassing Freeport, Paxton and DeFuniak Springs, these Walton County communities are filled with historic treasures and pastoral landscapes. Tour past the beautiful Victorian homes and the buildings of the former Chautauqua Assembly. Explore Morrison Springs, a 161-acre park highlighted by a crystal-clear, spring-fed pool that attracts dive enthusiasts, eco-tourists and casual swimmers alike. You’ll find a place that perfectly balances all the charm of its colorful past with great amenities and vibrant culture.

Outdoor adventure is a way of life in Freeport, and it’s all centered around the Choctawhatchee Bay. Whether

you’re boating, fishing, paddle boarding, or feasting at Nick’s Seafood, there’s a bevy of things to do on the water. Grab a canoe and start paddling at Grady Brown Park or charter a fishing boat and hit the waves with an expert guide.

Nestled within the vast Nokuse nature preserve, Freeport’s E.O. Wilson Biophilia Center is dedicated to biodiversity and conservation education. From free programs to hands-on environmental science lessons, this ecological powerhouse is a must-visit for eco-conscious explorers and nature enthusiasts alike.

to biodiversity and conservation education. From free programs to hands-on environmental science lessons, this ecological powerhouse is a must-visit for eco-conscious explorers and nature enthusiasts alike.



E.O. Wilson Biophilia Center

Visitors can explore a wide variety of shopping, dining and activities awaiting in Authentic Walton. Each welcoming community north of the Bay is filled with incredible treasures and breathtaking landscapes.

Whichever place you visit, you’ll find a place that perfectly balances the charm of its colorful past with new amenities and vibrant culture – all within easy reach of South Walton’s beaches.

Whether you’re in the mood for a leisurely stroll or an energizing hike, multitudes of outdoor adventures are available and accessible for sight-seers and nature lovers alike.

DeFuniak Springs is home to amazing restaurants, shops, activities and a historic downtown district. Enjoy everything from antique shopping to public art, or spend your days indulging in distinctive local flavor.

Wide-open spaces meet family-friendly hospitality in Paxton, where you can hike to Florida’s highest point, explore the lakes, or visit the Paxton Agricultural Center.

Britton Hill is Florida’s highest point. Soaring to 345 feet above sea level in a charming countryside setting, Britton Hill is nestled amid the rolling hills and farms of Lakewood Park. Hit the trails for a scenic hike with picture-perfect vistas.

Dive into thrilling water activities on Lake Jackson in Paxton like boating, fishing, and paddleboarding. Exploring the pristine beauty of this serene lake is perfect for nature lovers and leisure seekers alike.

Walton County communities are filled with historic treasures and pastoral landscapes.



Lake Jackson in Paxton

Authentic Walton welcomes you to embark on a journey through its quaint towns adorned with local artistry, immerse yourself in outdoor adventures amidst towering pines and tranquil lakes, and to savor the flavors of its culinary scene showcasing farm and Gulf-to-table delicacies. Whether seeking relaxation or adventure, Authentic Walton, Florida, promises an unforgettable experience.



For more information and suggested trip itineraries, visit AuthenticWalton.com.

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The Story Behind the Home

Bridging Design and Real Estate with Shawn & Geoff Chick

BY BOBBY PARKER

In the world of luxury real estate, where every detail matters, Shawn Chick stands out as a unique force, seamlessly blending her diverse background in visual merchandising, event planning and retail with her passion for design and architecture.

As a prominent real estate agent with 850 Properties, Shawn brings a fresh perspective to the industry, one that is deeply rooted in storytelling and creating authentic connections with her clients.

Before Shawn delved into the realm of real estate, her career journey was a tapestry woven with experiences that shaped her unique approach to sales and marketing. Graduating from Florida State University, she embarked on a career with Polo Ralph Lauren, where her role as a visual merchandiser ignited her passion for curating spaces that exuded luxury and timeless elegance. Later, as the Director of Commercial Property at Sandestin, Shawn honed her skills in tenant relations, marketing and event planning, all while nurturing invaluable relationships within the community.

It was during this time that Shawn's path intersected with that of her husband, Geoff Chick, a renowned architect and founder of Geoff Chick & Associates. Their shared love for design and their mutual appreciation for each other's craft laid the foundation for a dynamic partnership that transcended both personal and professional realms.

Shawn's collaboration with Geoff has been instrumental in bridging the gap between design and sales in the real estate industry. With Geoff's expertise in architecture complementing Shawn's keen eye for aesthetics and storytelling, they have created a synergy that sets them apart in the competitive world of luxury home sales. Together, they have designed, built and sold multiple homes, each project reflecting their shared vision and meticulous attention to detail.

What sets Shawn apart from other real estate agents is her ability to merge design and sales seamlessly. She doesn't just sell homes; she narrates their stories, bringing them to life through staging and presentation. Shawn understands the essence of each property, curating spaces that resonate with potential buyers on a deeply emotional level.

Geoff's background in architecture has greatly influenced Shawn's approach to real estate sales and marketing. His emphasis on natural light, space efficiency and the use of natural materials has informed Shawn's understanding of what makes a home truly exceptional. Together, they work hand-in-hand to



Left: Geoff and Shawn. Right: The elegant kitchen at their listing at 40 AnsleyForest Dr.

enhance properties, offering valuable insights to clients while ensuring that each home shines in its own unique way.

One of the hallmarks of Shawn and Geoff's collaboration is their unwavering commitment to excellence. They don't settle for compromises; instead, they work tirelessly until they achieve a result that exceeds expectations. This dedication to perfection has earned them a reputation for setting records in every community they serve, creating a ripple effect of success that extends far beyond individual transactions.

For Shawn, the wonder of real estate lies in the art of storytelling. As the "narrator of the home," she takes great pride in unraveling the narrative behind each property, advocating for its unique features and creating an immersive experience for potential buyers. Whether it's through staging, artwork or furnishings,

With Geoff's expertise in architecture complementing Shawn's keen eye for aesthetics and storytelling, the husband-wife team has created a synergy that sets them apart in the competitive world of luxury home sales.

Shawn adds the finishing touches that elevate a house into a home.

In the world of luxury real estate, Shawn Chick is more than just a real estate agent; she's a storyteller, a curator and a visionary. With Geoff by her side, she continues to push the boundaries of what's possible, creating unforgettable experiences for her clients and leaving an indelible mark on the industry. As they say, iron sharpens iron, and in Shawn and Geoff's case, their collaboration is nothing short of magical.

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Investing on 30-A

Q&A with real estate advisor Shelby Rochester

COMPILED BY JENNY PETERSON

Shelby Rochester is a global real estate advisor who has been enjoying the Emerald Coast and 30-A since 2006. Shelby's strengths include weaving research and negotiation, ensuring that her clients' dreams of owning or upsizing along 30-A are realized. Below, she discusses what clients should consider when choosing an investment property on the Emerald Coast.

What would you say are the top five things to consider when deciding on an investment property here at the beach?

1) Decide which neighborhood or area you enjoy most. When you come visit, do you love staying along 30-A in the lifestyle communities of WaterColor, Seaside, WaterSound, Alys Beach or Rosemary Beach? Do you prefer the West side of 30-A (Dune Allen, Blue Mountain Beach, Gulf Place, Grayton Beach) or do you prefer the East side of 30-A - WaterColor, Seaside, Seagrove Beach, WaterSound, Prominence, Kaiya, Alys Beach, Seacrest Beach, Rosemary Beach or Inlet Beach? This will be the place where you'll make memories when you're here to check on the property or vacation with family and friends. If you're just getting familiar with 30-A, knowing what activities you enjoy when you're on vacation and the amenities you prefer will help determine the best neighborhoods to start exploring.

Management companies can make a significant difference in your bottom line, so know who is strong in each neighborhood.

2) Know your preferred budget and preferred down payment if you'll be financing a portion of the purchase. There are various loan programs with local lenders here and there are properties in all different price points with excellent rental history numbers. Second homes will typically require around 20% down and an investment which is placed on a rental program will typically require 25% down. There will be variations based on credit, how many homes you own currently in the area or in your portfolio. It's always a good idea to talk with your accountant or CPA and a local lender here to go over scenarios.

3) Discover the rental history and rental projections on favorite properties. It's helpful to see how many weeks the property has booked. How many nights were reserved for the owners versus paying guests? Some owners use the home for a few months each year or only a couple of weeks per year, so it's helpful to see the differences so you are comparing apples to apples. Rental projection data is helpful for new construction, first time rentals or for high-owner usage properties.

4.) Understanding seasonality is important. Understanding the high, shoulder and low season rental rates and average occupancy can help you effectively plan and budget for fluctuations in rental income.

5.) Maintenance planning. Factor in costs to maintain the property to resort standards, including regular deep cleaning and timely repairs. How often will you plan for paint touch up, rug switch outs, décor changes, etc.? Guests appreciate and will expect a well-kept, fresh, clean and updated home when they come vacation along 30-A.

What are some of the pitfalls or red flags to avoid?

I'd recommend to always check any upcoming special assessments, review the minutes of the past HOA meetings and investigate any specific timelines and cancellation fees the seller may have with their current management company. It's best to not displace any guests, so having a smooth transfer over to new management helps.

What is the best way to maintain and service the property if you don't live locally?

Decide if you would like to be hands-on and self-manage with the help of a local cleaning crew, a maintenance company and someone in charge of quality control, such as resolving guest issues, lockouts, etc. or would you prefer to hire a property management company to take care of all the marketing, bookings and details for you?

What are some factors to consider when searching for a rental management company to service your property on the rental market?

We have some amazing rental management companies here along 30-A, in Miramar Beach and in Destin. Each community has its strongest companies. I've seen a one-tier back home perform better than a similar Gulf-front home. Both had the same sleep count and were very similar in size and amenities, but the back home was outperforming the

Gulf-front home by more than 20% annually. The management companies can make a significant difference in your bottom line, so knowing who is strong in each neighborhood you're considering will help. Will your property stand out in their portfolio of offerings and how so? Compare their strength in the neighborhood, the management fees, cancellation fees, yearly linen or replenishment fees and understand exactly what the management company will handle for you and where any additional costs may occur, so you can plan accordingly.

What is the minimum length of time that you want to hold onto the property?

That depends. If you're looking to flip, then 8-12 months is common. Keeping the home for generational use also happens occasionally. Most investors hold their property for at least two years and trade up into another by doing a 1031 tax deferred exchange.



Shelby Rochester is happy to discuss your plans for investing in 30A. When she's not selling homes, Shelby is water rescue training with her Newfoundlands and savoring the scenic lifestyle communities along 30A, with her cheerful pugs and her majestic Newfoundlands by her side.

Shelby Rochester
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A look inside 30-A's premier property management company Oversee's commitment to positive guest experiences

BY PAUL NIES

30-A remains an irresistible magnet for both vacationers seeking respite and savvy property investors. Its harmonious blend of pristine landscapes and opulent amenities continues to enchant visitors and residents alike.

Michael B. Emerick, broker and co-founder of Oversee, explains how the management encapsulates the essence of Oversee's ethos: 'Our family manages. Your family unwinds.'

Emerick offers insight into the challenges, triumphs and distinctive qualities that define Oversee's success story.

Working within my budget, which neighborhood offers the best return?

MICHAEL: Fortunately, the market tends to balance the return relative to the home's price. For instance, a \$3M home in WaterColor can gross around \$155,000, while a \$1.5M home in Seagrove can gross around \$75,000. In the example above, WaterColor's return is higher, but once you factor out the HOA cost, it brings them even closer. I always recommend looking for a home in your budget that your family would enjoy vacationing to. Where do you want to be? What do you love to be close to when you visit the beach?

What makes a home stand-out?

MICHAEL: The key to success lies in offering a superior product and service compared to neighboring properties. Renters have a budget and seek the best value for their money. If a neighboring property offers similar amenities and furnishings but has a private pool at a similar price point, you may lose bookings to them.

To outperform the market, assess neighboring listings and find ways to objectively surpass your competition. Consider factors like bedding arrangements, furnishing upgrades, entertainment options, pet-friendliness and other amenities.

What are some issues you see buyers run into when searching for their home?

MICHAEL: I see two categories. Wild rental projections and pitfalls. With dozens and dozens of rental management companies along 30-A, you have the opportunity to get your hands on lots of free rental projections.

Due to the competitiveness of 30-A, projections are often inched higher and higher to get a foot in the



Serenity in Rosemary Beach, Sleeps 10

door of a new listing. However, the more accurate projections may have been left by the wayside because they do not reinforce a higher home sales price.

The best tool a buyer has to combat this is to ask for actuals. If it's a new home or it has not been on the rental market, ask for actuals of a comparable home and make sure you analyze the reasoning given if there's a discrepancy between actuals and projections.

For those aiming for market or above-market returns, here are a few pitfalls to avoid:

- Avoid purchasing a 3-bedroom, 1-bath property and leaving it as is.
- Opt for versatile bedding arrangements rather than all queen beds in a 4-bedroom home.
- Keep up with necessary property maintenance to avoid negative reviews.

Can you avoid issues with negative reviews?

MICHAEL: Yes, work with a company that cares about their reputation and the community they live and work in. At Oversee, we value our people, our honest numbers and our cost transparency. One more thing: In 2024, we clinched Diamond for Perfect in

Walton County: Best Rental Management Company, and manage 50+ homes! Sure, it feels great, but the real winners are the homeowners and guests.



Michael and wife, Kaitlyn, daughter, Lemon, and son, Rook.

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Crisis Averted

The importance of risk management estate protection

BY KIMBERLY WATSON SEWELL AND FRANKLIN H. WATSON

Managing your risk requires that you make proper plans in advance of the storm.

Statistically and anecdotally, we all know that the number of divorces, lawsuits and bankruptcies is staggering. While no one believes lightning will strike them, wealth created through a lifetime of work, saving and investing can be lost overnight if these forms of man-made lightning do strike. To protect your assets from such disaster, proper risk management strategies should be given careful consideration. These strategies include exempting your assets from the claims of creditors, limiting your liability through type of ownership or legal entities and transferring your risk through insurance.

Exempting Assets

State and federal laws may exempt some of your assets from the claims of creditors. Depending on your state of domicile (i.e., your legal residence), the equity in your primary personal residence may be protected from creditors. Protection also may extend to your salary or wages, retirement funds and even the cash value of your life insurance.

Once you have identified the protected asset classes available to you under applicable law, it may be prudent to maximize your protection by converting nonexempt assets into exempt assets. For example, if the equity in your home is exempt from the claims of creditors under the laws of your domicile, then using non-exempt resources to pay off your mortgage may be a smart move.

Limiting Liability

Many married couples purchase and own their assets as joint tenants with rights of survivorship. Bank accounts and financial instruments owned by married persons are often designated as being owned jointly with rights of survivorship. Courts will presume that the debtor spouse owns a 50% interest in joint tenant with rights of survivorship property unless the facts demonstrate a different allocation of ownership and a creditor may seize the interest the debtor spouse holds in joint tenant property. However, unlike joint ownership with rights of survivorship, tenants by the entirety ownership—a special form of joint tenancy ownership which is available only to married persons—affords certain asset protection benefits.

Many entrepreneurs operate their businesses as sole proprietors rather than through a legal entity, such as through a Corporation or a Limited Liability Company. Whether their business is home-based or in the Fortune 500, these business owners are attracted by the informality of sole proprietorship. They also do not want to incur legal fees to create and maintain a legal entity. However, in addition to other advantages, conducting business through a legal entity may offer substantial risk management benefits. While lawsuits brought against a sole proprietorship are really lawsuits against the owner's personal assets, lawsuits against a properly-created and maintained legal entity are really lawsuits against the entity's assets.

Additionally, certain entities such as limited liability partnerships and limited liability companies have substantial benefits for estate planning as well as asset protection. While the investment interests in an LP or LLC are not "exempt" from levy by creditors of the limited partner, asset protection is available by virtue of the limited procedural remedy given to creditors to levy upon a debtor's limited partner interest and an LLC membership interest. A creditor has no right to seize property within a partnership or an LLC to satisfy the debt of a partner or member. Moreover, in a properly-drafted LP agreement or LLC agreement, a creditor has no right to vote or inspect the books and records of the LP or LLC. Nevertheless, the selection of an appropriate legal entity is critical for managing your risk.

Transferring Risk

When was the last time you reviewed the details of your liability insurance program with your insurance professionals? Are your policies current? Are the coverage limits adequate and are the deductibles reasonable? Have you scrutinized the policies for loopholes? Remember: the fundamental philosophy of any insurance coverage is to pay a premium you can afford to transfer a risk you cannot afford. Take time to understand both the risks you have retained and the risks you have transferred.

Quick tips to help protect your pocket:

Valuation Experts

There are times when some or all of your assets must be valued with great accuracy. At such times, your best guess is just not good enough. For example, a rock-solid valuation is necessary to help withstand an IRS challenge to any discounts claimed on gifts of Limited Partnership interests. Additionally, if you are valuing a business for a buy-sell agreement between shareholders, a sale to a third party or for estate tax purposes, then an accurate valuation is essential. Here are some resources to help you locate a valuation expert: the American Institute of Certified Public



Kimberly Watson Sewell and Frank Watson.

Accountants (www.aicpa.org or 888.777.7077), the National Association of Certified Valuation Analysts (www.nacva.com or 800.677.2009), the American Society of Appraisers (www.appraisers.org or 800.272.8258), and the Institute of Business Appraisers (www.go-iba.org or 954.584.1144).

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The FDIC (Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation) is an independent agency of the United States government that protects you against the loss of your deposits if an FDIC-insured bank or savings association fails. But how safe is your money? Fortunately, you can check the status of your bank online, early and often, at www.fdic.gov. While you are there, be sure to review the requirements to maximize your account protection under FDIC rules, especially if you have accounts held in a Revocable Living Trust. In addition to online help, the FDIC provides a toll-free number to answer questions about coverage for Revocable Living Trusts. For assistance, call 877-275-3342.

Managing your risk, like avoiding lightning, requires that you make proper plans in advance of the storm. Take time today to protect your wealth tomorrow.



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Practice Makes Perfect

Tips to maximize the benefits of driving range mats

BY TOM FITZPATRICK

By attaching a paint stick, it shows the (club's) path and face direction. When the club comes in on a tilt and over the top, the stick points left of target. When the stick points at the target, the face is flatter for optimal contact.



1. At address, the stick is flat.



2. At impact, the stick should be flat once again.



3. A slice swing path causes the stick to point up.



4. This path is cutting across the ball

Driving range mats are an unwelcome sign for most golfers. The greenskeeper can't grow grass fast enough to meet up with the appetite golfers have for hitting lots of range balls. Hitting off of mats has downsides, but there is one important benefit.

On synthetic turf, the ball goes higher and not as far. Leading arm and leg accelerations are slower because it's tougher to ground your feet.

What is beneath the mat? Concrete—a material that won't give way or absorb the club head. Don't hit too many wedge shots because you can hurt your wrists and have soreness. Mats are not great for short irons, so practice more with long irons and hybrids. Mats disguise bad shots. The club bounces instead of digs on an 'over the top' slice. On grass, we get a wider range of fat and thin shots, whereas on turf, our shots are more alike. We may think we hit it better simply because plastic grass neutralizes those deep divots.

Listen to the sound of the mat of the person next to you. If you hear a lower-pitched thud, that generally indicates a poorer-struck shot. Your goal is to hit the ball cleanly with less mat contact so it produces a higher, clearer sound.

Tiger recently said that his best iron shots had no divot. In other words, the club had a long flat spot along the grass where the club never submerged below the blades of grass. Taking that approach here is the benefit of hitting off the turf – learn to pick the ball off the mat cleanly, with no divot.

Here is a different take to warming up before the round. Instead of a wedge to begin, make half swings with a 3 or 5 wood. The bigger club head is perfect for learning how to make a flatter, wider arc through

impact. Let the club glide along the mat. Brush the ball off the top of the turf, don't chop down on it.

Can you detect what part of the 3 wood makes contact with the mat first? Is the leading edge coming in on a tilt, or is the sole of the club flat? The tilt indicates a steep angle of attack.

Let the club head rest on the mat. See how the entire sole is flat from the leading edge to the back edge. Impact should mirror address. By attaching a paint stick, it shows the path and face direction. When the club comes in on a tilt and over the top, the stick points left of target. When the stick points at the target, the face is flatter for optimal contact.

The key is for the full underside of the club to make turf contact. An airplane lands on the runway with its

back wheels touching down first. That is a great image for how to improve the path and face direction. Get the back wheels down with the glove logo at the target and you'll feel a more solid shot!

Tom Fitzpatrick is a David Leadbetter certified instructor and an active realtor with Scenic Sotheby's Intl Realty. Contact him at 850 225-4674 or tom@scenicisr.com



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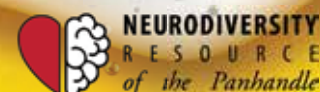
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