

# R *the thirty-a* REVIEW™

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



**HOTEL EFFIE**

a bit of paradise in paradise.

## INSIDE:

30-A's Delicious Dining, Home Decor & Style, Real Estate, Health & Wellness, Art, Culture, Business and More...



# Watersound Origins



**298 SAWBUCK DR | WATERSOUND ORIGINS | 4 Bedrooms | 4.5 Bathrooms | 3,545 Sq Ft | \$1,895,000**

*Welcome to the epitome of luxurious coastal living at 298 Sawbuck Drive. Situated on an enviable lot, bordered by a picturesque nature reserve and a charming pond in the backyard, this tailor-made home is a standout gem within the community.*



# Blue Mountain Beach



**20 EMERALD BEACH CIR | HIGHLAND PARK | 3 Bedrooms | 2.5 Bathrooms | 2,010 Sq Ft | \$1,075,000**

*Best detached single family home to establish presence on 30A at a reasonable price. With tastefully appointed high-end finishes, appliances and upgrades, this home is a very attractive proposition.*



**AMIN DELAWALLA** *Founder, Luxury Real Estate Specialist, The Delawalla Group*  
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# BellaMar

566 SEA WINDS DR | BELLAMAR AT GULF PLACE | 4 Bedrooms | 3.5 Bathrooms | 3,377 Sq Ft | \$2,195,000

*Nestled within the prestigious gated community of BellaMar at Gulf Place in the heart of Santa Rosa Beach, this Mediterranean-style retreat is a true coastal paradise.*



# Cessna Landing

205 MALLARD LN | CESSNA LANDING | 4 Bedrooms | 2.5 Bathrooms | 2,538 Sq Ft | \$1,250,000

*Discover the finest coastal living in this custom designed home, in gated Cessna Landing. Private community access to the Bay with Kayak/Paddle board Launch, Pool and a Public Boat Launch right across the street make this one of the coveted neighborhoods in the area.*

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### GULF-FRONT SENSATION

357 Old Beach Road, Santa Rosa Beach

\$8,998,500 – A coastal design vision brought to life. Expansive 5,584 SF with 5 bedroom/5 full/1 half bath, soaring vaulted wood ceiling, tons of windows and a large slider granting access to the outdoor living where views of both the gulf waters and the coastal dune lake await.



### MODERN COASTAL CLASSIC

41 Longue Vue Drive, Inlet Beach

\$3,495,000 – Exclusive gated enclave. Boasting 2,066 SF with 4 bedroom/4 bath, luxe breakfast bar, modern staircase & outdoor retreat including a private pool, outdoor spa and only 100 yards to a private, deeded beach walkover.



### CHARMING LAKEFRONT COTTAGE

854 N Walton Lakeshore, Inlet Beach

\$1,850,000 - 0.36 acre lot beneath a canopy of live oaks and lush foliage. Generous 2,046 SF with 4 bedroom/2 bath. Home boast two full kitchens, one on each levels newly renovated upper kitchen & 157 feet of lake frontage on Lake Powell, the area's largest Coastal Dune Lake.



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AT HOTEL EFFIE SANDESTIN

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# letter from the publisher

## FAMILY, FRIENDS & THE BEACH



Holidays at the beach are a time of serendipity and family. It's a time to treasure your loved ones and your blessings. In addition, 30-A and its surrounds provide a backdrop of stark nature and luxury, giving us the perfect environment to practice gratitude and thankfulness for our personal treasures close to our heart.

This issue is filled with the treasures that make 30-A and South Walton Beach special. The people, places and things that provide the excellence and keep us coming back for more.

We hope you enjoy perusing the pages that follow. And we also hope that this magazine brings you new discoveries and passions. The Thirty-A Review is approaching our 20th anniversary. It has been a pleasure to be such an integral part of 30-A for the past two decades. And to bring you the best that our beloved region has to offer.

Wishing you and yours the finest holidays ever.

Sincerely,

Miles K. Neiman

View the entire publication online at [www.ThirtyAReview.com](http://www.ThirtyAReview.com)



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## about the cover

**Pictured**  
The Hotel Effie Rooftop Pool

**Photography**  
Gary Bogdon



Go to [www.ThirtyAReview.com](http://www.ThirtyAReview.com) to view the entire publication online.

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### Distribution:

Distro Data

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ROSEMARY BEACH, FLORIDA

**179 KINGSTON ROAD**



WATERCOLOR, FLORIDA

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# Theatre and Events in November and December

## ALYS BEACH

### TUESDAYS

#### Wine & Song

Tuesdays at NEAT feature tableside wine tastings and live music from 5-7 p.m. Wines are posted every Tuesday on Alys Beach Facebook and Instagram accounts.

### SPECIAL EVENTS

#### Supper Club Series: Prohibition Dinner at the Bike Shop

Nov. 13

Come underground for an evening of Prohibition era elegance and intrigue with just a dash of rebellion. We'll journey back to the 1930's for this clandestine Supper Club Series dinner set speakeasy-style, with dishes inspired by the flavors of the past yet created with contemporary culinary process, paired with cocktails crafted in homage to the movement's inventive mixology. We look forward to seeing you there, and don't forget to knock three times. Bike Shop under the beach plaza. 6-9 p.m. To buy tickets, visit the [www.alysbeach.com](http://www.alysbeach.com) calendar page.

#### “Every Christmas Story Ever Told” Live Theatre

Nov. 25

Don't miss the REP's smash hit, “Every Christmas Story Ever Told” showcasing all your favorite beloved holiday classics crammed into a performance full of high-energy jolly, frivolity and hilarity. Fun for the whole family! Chairs and blankets welcome. Alys Beach Amphitheatre at 10 am

#### Alys in Winter Wonderland

Nov. 24

A holiday event for the whole family. Alys Beach Amphitheatre at 4 p.m.

## ROSEMARY BEACH

### SPECIAL EVENTS

#### Jeff Black LIVE@TheREP

Nov. 11

After critically acclaimed commercial releases, fan-favorite

independent releases, song placement on numerous independent films, 30-plus years of celebrated performing, and songs covered by artists as diverse as Alison Krauss, Waylon Jennings, Sam Bush, Jerry Douglas, and Dierks Betley, Jeff Black continues to solidify his reputation as a creative force in the music industry. Continuing to evolve as a writer, performer, and recording artist, Black has never before expressed so much of the creative process on his own terms—deepening his work and leaving the listener with some of the most fully formed and resonant music of his career. 7:30 pm at the REP Theatre. Tickets: \$40 and \$32 for REP Members.

#### Griffin House LIVE@TheREP

Nov. 16

Griffin House is a true, and nowadays rare, musician who writes lyrics so vulnerable and authentic that the listener is irrevocably captured by the powerful experience of sharing along and connecting with his songs. Recording and performing for over a decade, Griffin has toured with the likes of John Mellencamp, Patti Scialfa, and The Cranberries. He has released ten albums and his songs have been featured in countless films and television shows. Through his songs, Griffin shares his perspective on how people remember the past with rose-colored glasses and how we grow up and realize what we deeply need. 7:30 p.m. at The REP theatre. Tickets: \$40 and \$32 for REP Members

#### 2023 Old Town Holiday (Thanksgiving week) events

#### Pittman Magic Holiday Spectacular

Nov. 20

St. Augustine Green/Owners Pavilion  
Join us for an afternoon of action-packed crowd-pleasing holiday fun with Pittman Magic, Juggling and Comedy... Rosemary Beach's #1 magical variety show! Witness a husband-and-wife duo perform Las Vegas-style grand stage illusions, juggling, balancing, escapes, and family-friendly magic right before your eyes! Chairs and



The Seaside Post Office decked out in Holiday Decorations.

blankets welcome. 2 p.m. to 3 p.m. Before the show, from 12 p.m. – 2 p.m., enjoy Twisted Treats with a talented balloon artist make you a magical creation at North Barrett Square.

#### Festive Face Painting

Nov. 21

Enjoy Festive Face Painting is the perfect way to get into the holiday spirit! Bring the kiddos and watch as they are transformed into creative creatures! Tuesday, November 21, 10:00 AM to 2 PM, North Barrett Square

#### “Every Christmas Story Ever Told” Live Theatre

Nov. 21

Don't miss the REP's smash hit, “Every Christmas Story Ever Told” showcasing all your favorite beloved holiday classics crammed into a performance full of high-energy jolly, frivolity and hilarity. Fun for the whole family! Chairs and blankets welcome. East Long Green at 2 p.m. Come early and get your face painted before the show!

#### Moonlight & Movies- THE GRINCH

Nov. 22

Bring the family for a wholesome, fun night under the stars. Enjoy a holiday favorite, “The Grinch.” Chairs and blankets are welcome!

6-8 p.m., Western Green

#### 30A 10K & 1 Mile Fun Run

Nov. 23

Tour scenic Highway 30A and give yourself an excuse to go for that second slice of pumpkin pie. 7:30 a.m., North Barrett Square. To register or learn more about this event visit [www.30A10K.com](http://www.30A10K.com)

#### Tree Lighting Ceremony

Nov. 24

Enjoy musical performances by the Charles Dickens Carolers; see Santa's big arrival and the lighting of the tree. Then enjoy a carriage ride throughout the festive town. 6 PM, South Barrett Square. A Merchant Holiday Open House will be held after the tree lighting for a very special evening of holiday shopping and refreshments.

#### Breakfast with Santa

Nov. 25

Bring the kids to Santa's Workshop for a magical morning filled with delight! Included are a boxed breakfast, a professional color photo with Santa and a special goodie bag from Gigi's! Tickets are \$20 and available at the door. 100% of admission proceeds will go to the SWFD Angel Tree Program. 8 a.m. – 10 a.m., Town Hall.

#### Deana Carter Country Christmas Concert

Nov. 25

Enjoy an afternoon of holiday favorites from country music artist, Deana Carter! 100% of the proceeds benefit Alaqua Animal Refuge. 3 p.m. at St. Augustine Green.

## SEASIDE

### SPECIAL EVENTS

#### Seeing Red Wine Festival – Vintners Dinner

Nov. 9

Enjoy an evening of delicious wines from Silver Oak Vineyards alongside a curated menu at Bud & Alley's as we toast to the beginning of Seeing Red Wine Festival weekend. Tickets will be \$350 per person, which includes tax and gratuity. Jeff Flood of Silver Oak Vineyards will be in attendance serving the wines. Reservations for this coveted dinner can be made by emailing [michael@budandalleys.com](mailto:michael@budandalleys.com) using the subject line “Seeing Red Dinner Reservation.” Seating is Limited. 6:00-9:30 p.m. Visit [www.seasideseeingred.com/](http://www.seasideseeingred.com/) for more information.

#### Seeing Red Wine Festival – Al Fresco Reserve Wine Tasting

Nov. 10

An elegant evening filled with a curated selection of vintage and reserve wines, poured by the winemakers and vintners. Mingle among friends and fellow wine enthusiasts as you enjoy paired-to-perfection hors d'oeuvres and live music in Seaside's Lyceum Lawn. Visit [www.seasideseeingred.com/](http://www.seasideseeingred.com/) for more information. 6-8:30 p.m.

#### Seeing Red Wine Festival – Grand Tasting

Nov. 11

Seaside's Central Square comes to life for the Seeing Red Grand Tasting. Sip on wines poured by winemakers and vintners from around the world paired with cuisine curated by local chefs, including those in Seaside. Live music fills the air as you sip and mingle with fellow wine enthusiasts. Visit [www.seasideseeingred.com/](http://www.seasideseeingred.com/) for tickets and more information. Seaside Amphitheater, 1-4 p.m.



**Seeing Red Wine Festival – Sunday Tiki Social**

*Nov. 12*  
Let's have a tiki party! Join us for our Sunday Tiki Social located at The Daytrader Restaurant in partnership with Cabana by The Seaside Style. Enjoy tiki-themed cocktails and more alongside a perfectly curated brunch menu and a live DJ. A favorite among locals and visitors alike, this event wraps up Seeing Red weekend. Visit [www.seasideseeingred.com](http://www.seasideseeingred.com) for tickets and more information. 10 a.m. – 1 p.m.

**The Nutcracker**

*Nov. 19*  
Bring blankets and chairs on the Amphitheater lawn to kick off the holiday season with a holiday classic of The Nutcracker presented by Ballet Pensacola on the Amphitheater Stage. 5 p.m.

**Central Square Cinema – Holiday Movie Night**

*Nov. 24*  
Grab your blankets and head to the Seaside Amphitheater for a family movie under the stars. This week we are excited to present “The Santa Claus!” The movie begins at 7 p.m., weather permitting. See you there!

**Local Love Sidewalk Sale**

*Nov. 24-26*  
A town-wide shopping experience of Merchant sidewalk sales, live music, and discounted food & beverage at Central Square. 10 a.m. – 6 p.m.

**Turn on the Town - Tree Lighting and Christmas Parade**

*Nov. 25*  
'Tis the season for holiday cheer! Join us in Seaside Amphitheater as we ring in the holiday season with our annual tree lighting, photos with Santa and more holiday activities for guests of all ages. The Christmas Parade will take place at 3 p.m. with the tree lighting at 5 p.m.

**“Every Christmas Story Ever Told” Live Theatre**

*Nov. 25, Nov. 26, Dec. 2, 3, 8, 10, 15-17, 20-23*  
Grab your chairs and find your perfect spot in front of the Seaside Post Office for the magical holiday tradition of Every Christmas Story Ever Told. Back for its 13th year, The REP Theatre’s holiday smash hit, Every Christmas Story Ever Told, returns with all of your favorite beloved holiday classics packed into one show of high-

energy jolly, and hilarity! Three REP actors, armed with a bazillion props and costumes, send up everything from Charles Dickens and Dr. Seuss to Jimmy Stewart and Chewbacca in this ever-evolving REP favorite. It's the perfect way to get ready for the season, beat the festive fatigue, and share some holiday cheer. This complimentary, non-ticketed event is family-friendly and great for audiences of all ages thanks to the Seaside Merchants. Seaside Post Office. November 25 at 4 p.m., all other dates, 11a.m.

**Holiday Market**

*Dec. 2&3*  
Join us in Central Square as local artisans, unique vendors, and festive creators fill the square for your holiday shopping. Seaside Amphitheater, 10 a.m. – 6 p.m.

**Holiday Pops Concert**

*Dec. 10*  
Join us in SEASIDE® as we fill the town with the holiday spirit as we listen to the beautiful sounds of Sinfonia Gulf Coast perform holiday classics in the Amphitheater. Blankets and lawn chairs are welcome. This is a complimentary event proudly presented by the Merchants of Seaside. Seaside Amphitheater. 5-6 p.m.

**Photos with Santa**

*Dec. 15,16,17,18,19,20 & 21*  
Here comes Santa Claus! Join us in SEASIDE® for complimentary photos with Santa at the Lyceum Tree, between Seaside Yacht Club and Cabana by The Seaside Style. 4-6 p.m.

**NYE Celebration**

*Dec. 31*  
Join us for a New Years' Eve celebration in Central Square including arts & crafts, face painting, a live performance by Monsters of Yacht and fireworks. 4-9 p.m. Seaside Amphitheater.

**WATERCOLOR DAILY**

**Happy Hour at Fish Out Of Water - FOOW**  
From 2pm – 4 p.m. enjoy food and

drink specials.

**THURSDAYS**

**Live Music at WaterColor Beach Club**

5-8 p.m. (No music on Thursday, Nov. 23 due to Thanksgiving; moved to Friday, Nov. 24 from 5-8 p.m.)

**FRIDAYS**

**Live Music at Fish Out of Water – FOOW**

6 p.m. - 9 p.m.

**SUNDAYS**

**Live Music at Fish Out of Water – FOOW**

11 a.m. – 1 p.m.

**SPECIAL EVENTS**

**23rd Annual Mountain Film Festival**

*Nov. 3 & Nov. 4*  
Gates open at 5:45 p.m., films begin at 7 p.m. Learn more at [www.mountainfilmfl.com](http://www.mountainfilmfl.com)

**Veteran's Day**

*Nov. 11*  
Happy Hour offered all day at Fish Out of Water – FOOW. Free appetizer or dessert for all Veterans.

**Thanksgiving Day buffet**

*Nov. 23*  
No better day than one with turkey and dressing. Thanksgiving plates available along with a la carte brunch items until 2 p.m. Enjoy your day and let FOOW do all of the work for you!

**Turkey Take Away Family Style Meal**

*Nov. 23*  
Let Gather Kitchen + Bar do all the cooking for your holiday meal. To-Go or Delivery. 10:30 a.m. – 2 p.m. Email [WCISocialEvents@stjoe.com](mailto:WCISocialEvents@stjoe.com) by November 20 to place order.

**Brunch with Santa**

*Nov. 24*  
Brunch is served with Santa who is available for pictures & wish lists at Fish Out Of Water - FOOW. Santa will also be giving out sweet treats to

all the children. 8 a.m. - noon

**Christmas Eve Brunch**

*Dec. 24*  
Christmas Music, a la carte and kids menu available plus chef features at Fish Out Of Water - FOOW. Complimentary cookie and decorating kit for every child to take home for Santa! Opens at 8 a.m.

**Festive Holiday Take Away Family Style Meal**

*Dec. 24 & 25*  
Let Gather Kitchen + Bar do all the cooking for your holiday meal. To-Go or Delivery. 10:30 a.m. – 2 p.m. Email [WCISocialEvents@stjoe.com](mailto:WCISocialEvents@stjoe.com) by Dec. 22 to place order.

**FOOW Year's Eve**

*Dec. 31st*  
It's finally here, the end of 2023! Come celebrate with us as we drown out this year and cheers to the new year. Ring in 2024 with a multicourse dinner, champagne, and a night full of memories. Live music, Chef Features, and a photo booth to capture the evening's festivities. 6 p.m. – midnight.

**AREA FARMER'S MARKETS**

**Grand Boulevard Farmers' Market**

*600 Grand Boulevard, Miramar Beach*  
Saturdays year-round 9 a.m. – 1 p.m.

**30A Farmers' Market**

*28 N. Barrett Square, Rosemary Beach*  
Sundays year-round 9 a.m. – 1 p.m.

**Watersound Town Center Farmers' Market**

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

**SEASIDE® Farmers Market**

Saturdays year-round from 9 a.m. – 1 p.m. at the Amphitheater & Tuesday, Nov. 21 & Tuesday, Dec. 19 from 9 a.m. – 1 p.m.



The Nutcracker at the Seaside Amphitheater Stage.

# Delicious food with a sense of place

## Southern comfort meets fine dining at Óvide

BY TESS FARMER

Nestled within the luxurious Hotel Effie at Sandestin Golf and Beach Resort, Óvide Restaurant is a hidden culinary gem that offers an unforgettable dining experience. From the moment you step through its doors, you're transported to a world of elegance and gastronomic delight.

The restaurant offers an elegant culinary adventure where the rich tapestry of Gulf Coast flavors and cherished southern culinary traditions come together in perfect harmony. At Óvide, each dish is thoughtfully crafted with a dedication to sustainability and seasonality that gives each bite wonderful flavor.

Architectural Digest highlighted Hotel Effie in a recent article outlining upscale, high-design hotels across the world led by females. Sara Becnel led the hotel's overall conception and design effort. Her vision for all the unique design and architectural accents was to make the experience inviting and accommodating, especially to female travelers. The hotel is named for Becnel's great grandmother, who was the ultimate Southern hostess, while the restaurant Óvide pays homage to her great grandfather, Effie's husband.

Guests will immediately be struck by the restaurant's upscale and inviting atmosphere. The restaurant boasts modern and stylish decor, with warm lighting and sweeping ceiling artwork that sets the mood for an intimate dining experience. The attentive and friendly staff are knowledgeable about the menu and can provide recommendations or answer any questions.

The menu is updated seasonally featuring the freshest local seafood combining cherished flavors of the Gulf Coast. A range of eclectic appetizers including beef tartare, crispy pork ribs with benne seed BBQ sauce, honey and cilantro; fresh greens and salads, and a raw bar selection of oysters, shrimp cocktail, and smoked fish dip. Popular entrees include the Berkshire pork chop with stone-ground grits, peach chutney and herbs. The fresh fish selections are hard to beat, coming right out of the Gulf of Mexico.

While seafood takes center stage, the menu also pays



Delicious pork ribs at Óvide.



The Óvide provides an intimate setting for Gulf Coast flavors.

homage to Southern cuisine traditions. Dishes like shrimp and grits, jambalaya and fried chicken are lovingly crafted to satisfy Southern cravings. The flavors are rich yet not too heavy. Complement your meal with a selection of unique craft cocktails inspired by coastal living and made with locally-sourced spirits and fresh ingredients.

Óvide's wine list is extensive and well-curated. Whether you're a wine connoisseur or just looking for a perfect pairing, you'll find something special here.

It's a place where you can celebrate a special occasion or simply indulge in a memorable dining experience. The meticulous attention to detail and the dedication to providing a truly exceptional culinary journey make Óvide

The restaurant boasts modern and stylish decor, with warm lighting and sweeping ceiling artwork that sets the mood for an intimate dining experience.

a must-visit when staying at Sandestin Golf and Beach Resort. Locals will also appreciate this gem tucked within the elegant atmosphere Hotel Effie provides. The restaurant offers specials for locals and guests throughout the year. The rooftop bar makes the perfect setting for taking in the sunset.

For moments that beg to be marked with a celebration at a

truly special place, Óvide is also available for private events. Birthdays, rehearsal dinners and special events are made more memorable at Óvide and its sophisticated and welcoming spirit.

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# Comfort food on a whole new level

*Sweet Chilli's private chef experience celebrates a love of in-home dining*

BY TESS FARMER

Relocating to the 30-A area in 2020, Nick Andrews made the decision to return to his childhood passion of cooking with tailored dishes. Some family members had food sensitivities and he dove into creating the best gluten free chocolate cake for a birthday and has had great success ever since.

One of the defining features of Chef Andrews' culinary services is his dedication to providing clients with the ultimate dining experience within the comfort of their homes. He prides himself on crafting personalized menus that cater to each client's unique tastes, dietary preferences and dietary restrictions.

His clients rave about the exquisite dishes he prepares, often blending traditional comfort food with modern twists. Whether it's a three-course gourmet dinner, a themed international feast, or a comforting Sunday brunch, his culinary creations leave a lasting impression.

Chef Andrews' clients don't just receive a meal or baked goods; they embark on a culinary journey. He takes the time to get to know his clients, their preferences and their stories. This personal touch allows him to create not just food, but an experience that resonates with each individual.

He provides in-home meals and has honed a niche in baking for those following alternative diets. His expertise is in gluten and dairy free baked goods including cakes, cookies, muffins, and he is able to accommodate any special dietary needs.

Some customer favorites include his gluten free carrot cake with cream cheese frosting, cinnamon donuts filled with spiced pear apple jam, and gluten free and vegan cookies of all sorts.

"I've always believed that baking is an art form," Andrews said. "It's about creating something beautiful, delicious and nourishing that brings joy to people's lives. There's a certain magic in the way a perfectly risen soufflé or a fresh-from-the-oven pie can brighten someone's day."

He adds, "There has been an increasing need for gluten free baked goods that look and taste great. I've perfected the combination of grain free



*Chef Nick with his mother, realtor Lynne Andrews.*



*Chef Nick Andrews.*

Whether it's a three-course gourmet dinner, a themed international feast or a comforting Sunday brunch, his culinary creations leave a lasting impression.

flours to achieve the best consistency and taste and have received great feedback from happy customers."

Vacationers to the Emerald Coast are often looking for in-home chef services as opposed to crowded restaurants. Andrews serves families and groups of all sizes.

His most requested dishes often feature fresh Gulf seafood in shrimp tacos, shrimp and grits, seafood boils, as well as his barbequed chicken. Other specialties include miso deviled eggs, Shepherd's pie, an exquisite curry with either seafood, beef, chicken and seasonal fresh vegetables as well as chicken piccata.

Chef Andrews' venture is not just about culinary expertise; it's also about fostering a sense of

community. His in-home dining experiences provide a unique opportunity for people to come together, celebrate and savor life's special moments.

As he looks to the future, Chef Andrews has plans of expanding his services to more households and visitors to 30-A, sharing his passion for food, and creating unforgettable moments, one dish at a time. He combines his talents for baking and cooking and is

always inspired to witness how the magic of food brings people closer together.

In his world, every meal is an opportunity to create, to connect, and to savor the exquisite flavors of life.

"It's been such a unique and rewarding opportunity to have people welcome me into their homes—and homes-away-from-home at the beach—to take part in creating cherished memories," he said.

***Sweet Chilli's Private Chef Experience***

***Nick Andrews***

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# A dining experience that engages the senses

## Seagar's Prime Steaks & Seafood celebrates 25 years

BY CHRISTOPHER MANSON

Seagar's Prime Steaks & Seafood is celebrating 25 years in Northwest Florida and over two decades as the only AAA Four Diamond Steakhouse in the area. As the restaurant continues to showcase prime beef and fresh seafood, Executive Chef Fleetwood Covington challenges himself to provide a dining experience that engages the senses and instills a sense of nostalgia for his guests.

Before Covington stepped onto the culinary scene, he was a concert pianist playing for folks along the French Riviera.

"I was only supposed to be visiting for a few days and ended up being there for four or five years," he says. Covington was exposed to a plethora of different foods during his time overseas.

"I saw fine dining at its peak while in Europe," he said.

Originally from South Carolina, Covington moved to Florida as a teen. Late into his twenties, he chose to step away from the piano career he'd spent the early part of his life curating.

"I went through a phase where I questioned what my next chapter was going to be," he said. It was happenstance that Covington chose to enjoy an evening dining at Seagar's around that time.

"There was nowhere else in the Panhandle like it," he recalls. From his musician's perspective, the restaurant moved like an orchestra.

Not long after that experience, he began working part-time at Seagar's rolling pasta.

"I'd never cooked professionally, but I wanted to learn and I wanted a hands-on experience," he said.

After mastering handcrafted pasta, Covington moved on to the fundamentals of baking under the direction of the Seagar's executive chef.

"I continued to learn and master each element of the line and observed how professional cooks act and move around the kitchen," he says.

A lead cook position soon followed.

"The chefs at the time were extremely hard on me. Fine dining is a very territorial space, especially with the restaurant's AAA status and the pedigree of the team. I was definitely the black sheep, but I was getting closer to the creative core of the restaurant," he said.

Having observed some great chefs, he decided the culinary world is what he wanted to be a part of long term.

"Food is a language. Being a chef, you articulate your

narrative about who you are and what you stand for through your food and your knowledge of it," he said. In 2021, Covington was promoted to chef de cuisine as Seagar's began searching for a new executive chef.

Covington had the gift of vision, along with passion and drive to take on the role. "I wanted that executive chef role, and I wanted to prove myself to ownership. So I'd come in at seven in the morning and work with our culinary leadership team," he says. "The chef at the time gave me a lot of freedom, and I went wild. Once we were published in Forbes, I could feel my feet lift off the ground."

Soon he achieved his goal of being named executive chef the restaurant, a position he continues to prove himself "worthy" of daily.

Abetted by what he calls "the best culinary team the restaurant has ever had," Covington feels a responsibility to be a mentor to his staff. He also puts an emphasis on providing a philanthropic service for the local community. Seagar's is proud to partner with nonprofits like the Destin Charity Wine Auction Foundation, Food For Thought Inc. and Sinfonia Gulf Coast, among others. Covington describes his vision for the restaurant's future.

"Right now, Michelin (of the highly-coveted Michelin Star fame) only services Miami, Tampa and Orlando, but it's slowly moving northwest," he said.

While he has a Michelin Star in his sights, he also hopes for a James Beard Award.

"That's a big one for us. There's no geographical restriction, and we're running after that," he said.

He believes it is his duty to the restaurant to continue to grow it "as ruthlessly and as fast as I can."

This includes looking to the top chefs in New York,



A sampling of Seagar's Holiday Menu. Michael Booini

Chicago and Atlanta for inspiration and relationships. Covington recently attended a dinner at Buckhead restaurant Atlas with a Michelin Star chef.

"The kind of energy those guys give off is infectious. I want to have conversations with people who are setting trends, and I left that dinner beyond inspired," he said.

While Seagar's is renowned for their steaks, the executive chef champions its seafood as well.

"We live in one of the best destinations for snapper, grouper and cobia, and I love that," he says. "Fall and winter are big for me. When creating a menu, I visualize everything two dimensionally and then ask myself, 'How can I elevate this?' As a chef, you're not just curating a menu, you're curating an experience."

With hundreds of restaurants in the area, Covington sets himself apart by exploring beyond having a great meal.

"I want the food to say something with the colors and aromas. What does it feel like? You hone in on an ingredient, for example, hickory. What pairs best with hickory? Eventually, a dish is built, and by the end of the process a full menu unfolds," he said. "I think what we're doing is working, and we're going to keep doing it."

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When creating a menu, I visualize everything two dimensionally and then ask myself, 'How can I elevate this?' As a chef, you're not just curating a menu, you're curating an experience.



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# Beachfront Breakfast

*Pickle's celebrates 30 years, opens casual beachfront spot*

BY CHRISTOPHER MASON

On May 7, Seaside's popular dining spot Pickle's turned 30 and opened its sister spot, Pickle's Sandbar, located right on the beach.

"Stroll up, have a drink, and enjoy the same food you love at Pickle's without having to stand in that scary line some people are afraid of," says owner and managing partner Ashley Beecher.

Pickle's Sandbar has a full liquor license, along with a full-service bartending team and handcrafted cocktails. Pickle's Sandbar shares the same hours as the original Pickle's, and patrons can enjoy the bar for breakfast if so inclined.

In June, Pickle's teamed up with Jessica Proffitt's award-winning public relations firm for a celebration of the restaurant's 30th anniversary and the grand opening of the beach bar. Over 100 people attended, including Bill and Heavenly Dawson, the founders and original owners of the Dawson Group's family of restaurants which includes the Seaside restaurants Dawson's Yogurt and Fudgeworks, It's Heavenly (ice cream and gelato, the Wild Bill's Beach Dogs airstream, and The Shrimp Shack.

For those unfamiliar with the Pickle's menu, there's a lot more to sample than its famous fried pickles.

"Our number one seller is the classic cheeseburger," said operating partner Courtney Fields. "We also sell a lot of patty melts that come with 'secret' sauce, grilled onions and white American cheese on Texas Toast."

Pickle's truffle fries are consistently in demand.

"We hand-cut the potatoes every single day—all day, morning and night. They are blanched and fried to order," Fields said.

A new variation offered exclusively at Pickle's Sandbar are the "Vacation Bod Fries," truffle fries made with parsley, kosher salt and premium truffle oil and drizzled with ranch dressing and bacon.



Town tours during the 2023 Seaside Prize.

Our hand-battered French toast, made with ice cream in the egg mixture, has been a favorite for many years.

Among the handcrafted cocktails, customers will find the "Savannah Street Skinny," a twist on the skinny margarita made with Herradura Blanco tequila and fresh-squeezed lime juice. Fields said it's the Sandbar's most popular drink. She adds that the "Buffalo Smash"—a mixture of Buffalo Trace bourbon, lemon juice, a dash of agave, muddled mint and blackberries—runs a close second.

"It's super light and refreshing," she says. "Most of our drinks are light and refreshing, since we're right on the beach."

Pickle's attracts a heavy breakfast crowd, and Beecher said that the morning menu has been overhauled and items quickly became crowd favorites. The breakfast tacos are a top seller.

"We put them on the menu overnight and sold a ton of them. We have bacon and sausage—I recommend getting one of each," said Beecher.

One long-time traditional breakfast item is still on the menu.

"Our hand-battered French toast, made with ice cream in the egg mixture, has been a favorite for many years," Beecher said.

Consider washing down those tacos with a Bloody Mary. The Pickle's team has elevated the beloved eye-opening cocktail with a peppery taste that combines Absolut Peppar

vodka, Zing Zang, pickle juice, hot sauce and freshly-squeezed lemon and lime juice.

Beecher and her husband Clark purchased their first home in Seaside about 10 years ago. They stay in the area three months out of the year and spend the rest of their time in Houston.

"We lived here during COVID, and I home-schooled my four kids. We were then introduced to the Dawsons, and we purchased the restaurant group later that same year."

It's a family business; Fields is Clark's stepsister, and the two women have known each other for 17 years. Fields and her husband Baron reside in Grayton Beach year-round with their three furbabies.

"Since we started working together, one of the things we've enjoyed—besides making family memories—is our staff," says Beecher. "We try and help them grow financially, which is extremely important. That's what we want our legacy to be, a great place to work. Everyone's making really great pay."

An outreach program the restaurant launched is called Pay For Grades.

"Our high school, college and technical school student employees bring in their report cards and we (literally) pay them for As and Bs," Beecher said. "The pay is pretty substantial, because we want them to know how much we value them and their education. As they grow older and become successful, we're excited that we could play a little part in that."

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# Coastal Canvas

Allison Wickey captures the serenity of the shore

BY LYDIA MARTIN



Wickey draws inspiration from the vibrant colors of the gulf coast.

We are all born with certain innate talents that hold the potential to drive our ambitions in life. For some, those talents ignite a passion for the subject almost immediately. For others, it takes time and experience to truly embrace their gifts and develop a more meaningful relationship with intrinsic ability.

For local artist Allison Wickey, a natural knack for drawing and painting provided the canvas on which she developed genuine happiness and overall success. However, this wasn't always the case. Despite her early reservations about considering an artistic career, Wickey was ultimately able to discover that some dreams really can come true.

"I have some photos of myself painting when I was around six years old with a little Crayola water paint set and I was a big doodler all through grade school and high school," she recalls. "But painting was never really on my radar until I took my first class as a college freshman."

Still, Wickey hesitated to travel the path of potentially living as a "starving artist" during her college years.

"I never saw painting as an option in life," she says. That mindset began to change back in 2000 when she started a faux finish and mural business in the St. Louis area,

learning how to make her own color stains and finishes and how to use Venetian plaster on some extra creative projects.

Flash forward to 2007 when Wickey and her family moved to our beloved Santa Rosa Beach and she started painting individual pieces.

"I developed a 13-step process that utilized my favorite medium from the faux finish days, stains and plaster on wood frames," she said. "I loved the timeless, weathered, textured look that 'aged' Venetian plaster lent to my renditions of local landscapes."

Wickey continues to draw inspiration from the coastal colors, shades of blue and neutral palettes that surround this quaint community by truly immersing herself along the shore every chance she gets.

"I love to be in or near the gulf whenever possible and embody those colors in my work. I'm so intrigued by the natural beauty of the coast," she explains. "My favorite scene to capture is when a dark, periwinkle storm rolls in, making the sand appear to glow white and the dune grasses along the gulf become almost neon."



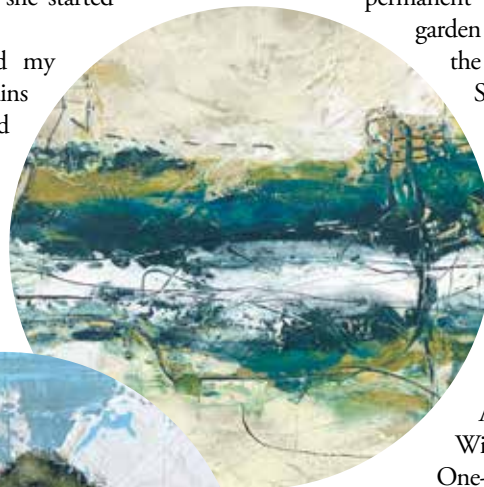
My favorite scene to capture is when a dark, periwinkle storm rolls in, making the sand appear to glow white and the dune grasses along the gulf become almost neon.

Alongside the natural beauty that highlights our local landscapes, Wickey also acknowledges the importance of communal support in her artistic endeavors.

"It's a culture that stretches the imagination and gives us room to find our passions without the pressures of an urban rat race!" she gleams. "I don't feel like I could have developed artistically without the support of our community, fellow artists and collectors."

That connection to the local artistic atmosphere of our incomparable coastal views and communal support has driven Wickey even further with her craft, participating in both charitable and ecological endeavors.

When asked what's next on the horizon for her artistic repertoire, Wickey is excited to mention her work as co-founder of the Underwater Museum of Art—the first, permanent underwater sculpture garden in the U.S.—located off the shores of Grayton Beach State Park (UMAFL.org).



"The idea for this sculpture museum was developed through a partnership between the Cultural Arts Alliance of Walton County, and the South Walton Artificial Reef Association," she said. Wickey.

One-of-a-kind sculptural works from artists across the globe decorate this dreamlike underwater garden in the Gulf of Mexico. Wickey's work serving on the board of the Cultural Arts Alliance (culturalartsalliance.com) helped create the unprecedented seascape that inspires artists, ecotourists, marine scientists and more. Not only does the Underwater Museum of Art attract people from around the world, but it also serves as a preservation and habitation study of local marine life.

Just like anything considered good in life, the idolization of being a creative artist has its pros and cons, waxes and wanes, ups and downs.

"An artist's life encompasses 24 hours of every day. [We're] always seeking and documenting inspiration, trying to make our visions come to life...all the while displaying your soul for all to see," Wickey said.

Still, she continues—"I wouldn't trade this job for anything."

While her hobby transformed into a true life passion, Allison Wickey still remains humble and recognizes the vast amount of effort involved in mixing colored comfort with social responsibilities and success.

"My favorite unforeseen perks have been raising money through my work to support local charities, and the flexible schedule that allows me to travel and spend ample time with my kids," she said.

It's amazing to think about how many lives—both on land and under the sea—have been positively impacted, simply because on one fateful day, Allison Wickey picked up her first paintbrush... and ultimately followed her art.

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## Shine Bright

### Q&A with Elizabeth S. Campbell, jewelry expert and co-owner of McCaskill & Company



The McCaskill Family and several of their stunning ring selections.

*What makes diamonds and gemstones so special and meaningful?*

Both diamonds and gemstones are very rare in nature adding to their allure, making them both precious and highly desirable. Gemstones hold significant symbolic value. Diamonds are often associated with love and commitment, making them popular choices for engagement rings. With the stones over one billion years old, they clearly symbolize forever. Birthstones are also meaningful, as they are linked to an individual's birth month and are believed to bring luck and protection. Precious gifts of jewelry or a watch, mark a particular special moment in time. I recall receiving a Timex watch for my 8th birthday, a garnet ring for my 12th and sapphire and diamond ring for graduation. People tend to remember the exact occasion a particular piece of jewelry or watch was received and such keepsakes will always be a reminder of those events and treasured throughout life.

*When buying a gift of jewelry for a loved one or friend, what are some of the things to consider?*

As a designer gallery, McCaskill & Company offers a very diverse selection of jewelry. Everyone has their particular style and preferences. When selecting jewelry some considerations that may guide you in your decision include if the person prefers contemporary or more classic/traditional, the scale of jewelry that they wear—big and bold or more petite and delicate and metal preference—gold, silver, platinum or other metals.

*What are the criteria for the jewelry and fine watches that your store keeps in its inventory?*

There are so many incredible designers today. At McCaskill & Company we “cherry pick” each individual piece of jewelry that we add to our collections. Our designers or companies are selected on a number of factors to include uncompromisingly quality, exceptional craftsmanship, outstanding and unique design, integrity and exclusivity.

*How did your family get into the jewelry business?*

McCaskill & Company founder and president, Bill Campbell, credits his grandmother, Gussie McCaskill, for his passion of fine jewelry and gemstones. Her father traveled the world and would bring diamond jewelry home to his children. Bill was absolutely fascinated with her collection of diamonds and would spend hours cleaning them and was mesmerized by the sparkle of diamonds. After college, he managed and then owned two family hardware businesses. At age 40, he realized that it was jewelry, not lumber and hardware, that was his calling.

*How long has your family been selling jewelry and fine watches on the Emerald Coast?*

It was in 1993 that Bill transitioned from building supply to gems after selling his building supply stores. McCaskill & Company (named after his grandmother) originated in a small briefcase with just a couple of necklaces, a few strands of pearls and an assortment of rings and earrings. Bill sold to

family, friends and referrals. The following year, he had the opportunity to open in a tiny kiosk in the amphitheater of Seaside. Working 7 days a week, 12-hour days and commuting from DeFuniak Springs as the sole employee, the business grew. Outgrowing the space, Bill and his wife Elizabeth moved the business to the Market Shops in Sandestin and then to their current flagship gallery between Destin and Sandestin approximately 25 years ago. Now with Elizabeth and daughter Carolyn Brigman at the helm, the business continues to flourish. From the company's very humble beginnings, the gallery has close to 20 employees and is considered one of the most prestigious jewelers in the U.S.

“What other profession allows you to be a part of so many of the most special occasions in someone's life? Sharing in this joy is priceless!”

*What is your favorite thing about this community?*

What other profession allows you to be a part of so many of the most special occasions in someone's life? Sharing in this joy is priceless! We become family and share in their joy. We are so fortunate to live on the Emerald Coast with such an abundance of beauty, but even better than that, it's the people and their sense of community that make this the best place to be.



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# Living the Good Life

Luxury realtor Lynne Andrews has a 30-A success story

BY JESSICA HOLTHAUS BADOUR



Lynne Andrews (right) and Luxury Property Specialist Jodie Schneeberg.

What do you get with 30 years of entrepreneurship mixed with a marketing and public relations background, topped with a passion for real estate? More than \$100 million in sales along the Emerald Coast in just under three-and-a-half years, that's what.

Lynne Andrews, a top producing luxury realtor with Corcoran Reverie on 30A, is frequently called a "vision caster" by those who know her. But she'll be the first to tell you, she's not selling homes—she's selling a lifestyle.

With roots in Atlanta, Andrews spent summers as a child here with her family (back when there was nothing except the beach). Her father tragically suffered a stroke in Destin the summer she turned 16; her last memories of her father with her family are right here. As an adult, she got her first taste of investing on the 30-A corridor in 2004 when she and her former husband purchased their first beach home. Lynne managed the beach house as a vacation rental while running her own PR/marketing firm in Atlanta and raising her two boys, always returning for summers here. In 2019, after a divorce and the loss of her mother, she and her sister decided it was time for a change.

"We kept our vacation home in the family, and I decided to reinvent myself. I was 53 when I moved here and decided it was time to do something fresh," she said. "I enjoyed real estate and had watched the 30A corridor exponentially grow. I've been able to bring my knowledge and expertise in this area as an investor and use that to help clients looking for primary residences, second homes or income-producing vacation rentals," Andrews continues. "I feel my approach has been refreshing since I

don't have a traditional real estate background. My expertise in marketing and my background as a vacation rental owner on 30-A for more than 20 years really benefits both sellers and buyers alike."

30A is a "luxury pocket" in the panhandle and Lynne's average selling price is just over the \$1 million mark, with a niche in short-term

investment properties and vacation rentals. A resident of Watersound Origins herself, she loves introducing people to living life on 30A.

"For me, 'luxury' is a level of service, not a price point," she explains. "I'm all about going above and beyond for my clients. As an individual agent, I might help schedule an HVAC appointment, or calm fears during hurricanes. I love casting a vision of what it's like to live down here as a full-time or second home resident, and it's not hard because we truly live in paradise!"

Andrews has a unique perspective of the area, arriving full-time just as the pandemic was starting. She credits her success to an immediate shift in her mindset.

"The minute I realized people were scrambling, wondering, 'are the beaches open? What's going to happen to my rental this season?' I shifted from a sales-person to a shares-person, coming from a place of contribution," she explains. "I shared what was happening here, helping them pivot and leverage the challenges that came with the pandemic. It really changed everything in real estate."

As Florida reopened, real estate investors poured in with it. Many began working remotely, downsized to move full time to the beach, or start an early retirement.

"Our area has grown because we have so many opportunities, restaurants, sunshine, fresh air and we're an easy drive from so much," she says. "Once people realized they could work remotely from anywhere, why not work at the beach?"

As an investor herself, she's not afraid to share the good and bad about what it's like to take the plunge here. She says it's still a great time to enter the real estate

market—a multitude of tax benefits, appreciation gains and the opportunity to diversify investment portfolios through real estate. Her prediction for the future is hopeful once interest rates drop back into the 5 to 6 percent range.

"I want to help people move toward their next chapter, whatever that may be" she says.

Lynne never imagined she'd be starting a new career in her 50s, reigniting a whole new passion and lifestyle. But she feels the move here in 2019 was a "God wink," being in the right place at the right time. And today, she feels blessed to have family and friends here plus so many clients who have become friends.

"Here, it's all about relationships. That's how I built my marketing firm in Atlanta and the same thing has happened here. Reaching the \$100 million threshold is thanks to friends, referrals and colleagues, plus leads generated from my own marketing," she said. "It's inspiring to find a career I can jump out of bed each morning and still be excited about. I work hard but knowing that the beach is just around the corner reminds me that I'm living in utopia for sure!"



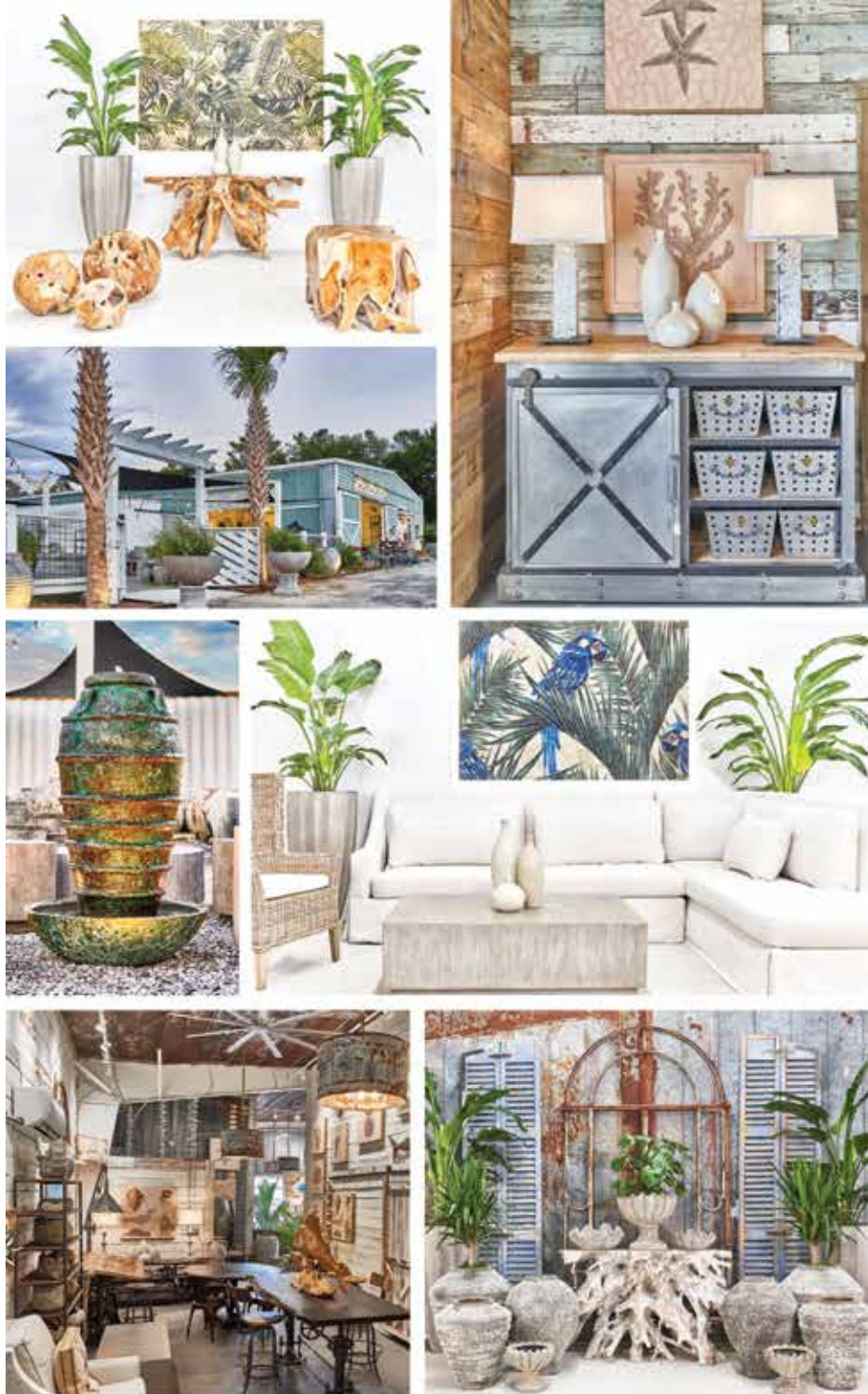
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# The Wonder of Watersound

*Coastal communities redefining the art of luxury living in South Walton*

BY AMIN DELAWALLA, THE DELAWALLA GROUP

South Walton is renowned for its stunning beaches and charming coastal towns and has in recent years become as much a coveted destination for full-time residents as it has been for seasonal visitors. Among its many hidden gems are the Watersound communities, a collection of picturesque neighborhoods that offer a tranquil and luxurious coastal living experience whether prospective homeowners are seeking a primary home, second property, or an investment.

Masterfully developed by the St. Joe Company, the Watersound communities began with two gulf-side developments along South Walton's Scenic Highway 30A, WaterSound Beach and WaterSound West Beach. The Watersound umbrella has since expanded to include Watersound Origins and Watersound Camp Creek. In addition, the highly touted Latitude Margaritaville Watersound from the St. Joe Company and Minto Communities USA in neighboring Bay County is a new 55+ community located near Panama City Beach and the Scenic 30A corridor.

Each community provides a unique experience and a thoughtfully planned community design fostered to promote neighborly connection while also seamlessly integrating with natural surroundings. The WaterSound Beach and WaterSound West Beach communities both offer classic maritime-style architecture, often reminiscent of Nantucket with cedar shake siding, pitched roofs, and ample balconies. The sprawling Watersound Origins community features different neighborhood villages with properties ranging from traditional Florida-style cottages to grand retreats. Watersound Camp Creek is South Walton's newest luxury residential community with estate-size homesites and custom-built personal havens. Latitude Margaritaville Watersound has a welcoming coastal feel with brightly hued, island-style cottages.

Living in the Watersound communities offers residents access to a host of exclusive amenities designed to enhance their quality of life. While each community offers its own suite of amenities, residents can expect to find resort-style community swimming pools, recreational trails, green spaces, sports courts, and more. WaterSound Beach and WaterSound West Beach provide private beach access to homeowners while Watersound Origins and Latitude Margaritaville Watersound have onsite golfing opportunities. In addition, homeowners of all Watersound communities have the opportunity to join the Watersound Club with first class golf courses, a private beach club, fine dining, boutique hotels, and much more.



Amin Delawalla

Adding convenience to residents of the Watersound communities is the new Watersound Town Center located along Highway 98 at the entrance to the Watersound Origins community and easily accessed from each of the Watersound communities. Teeming with activity and development, recent additions including a Publix Supermarket, multiple new restaurants including Ambrosia Prime Seafood & Steak, healthcare services such as the Ascension Sacred Heart Emerald Coast's Women's Diagnostic Center and Dermatology Specialists of Florida and Aqua Medical Spa, among other services. Community events and farmers markets are hosted regularly from this central hub.

A wide range of opportunities currently exist in the Watersound communities for prospective buyers whether they wish to purchase a new construction home, secure a homesite for a new build, or find a

move-in ready resale. Due to the active development of the Watersound area and the premium lifestyle offered, properties in these communities have remained in high demand and priced competitively. Buyers can expect to find a range of \$600,000's to \$3 million+ in Watersound Origins, \$1.8 million and up in WaterSound West Beach, \$2.3 million and up in WaterSound Beach, \$4 million and up in Watersound Camp Creek, and \$400,000's and up in Latitude Margaritaville Watersound for a single-family home. Average sales prices in the first quarter of 2023 for single family homes in these communities were as follows: \$1.14 million in Watersound Origins, \$2.7 million in Watersound West Beach, \$5.39 million in WaterSound Beach, and \$625,400 in Latitude Margaritaville Watersound. There were no first quarter sales in WaterSound Camp Creek as it is such a new development.

The communities of Watersound offer a slice of coastal paradise to those seeking an enchanting coastal living experience. With their stunning natural beauty, exquisite architecture, exclusive amenities, and strong sense of community, Watersound has become a highly sought-after destination that truly captures the essence of coastal living at its finest.

***For additional information regarding the communities of Watersound and homeownership opportunities, contact Amin Delawalla of The Delawalla Group at 850-225-9899 or email [amin@bestofemeraldcoast.com](mailto:amin@bestofemeraldcoast.com).***



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## The Carroll Jones Beckman Group

BY TESS FARMER

Integrity, trust, and fun are the cornerstones of our philosophy.

With experts in every part of the world, we are 'local' everywhere, allowing us to walk alongside our clients at every stage of their journey.

Randy Carroll has lived, worked and played along the Emerald Coast for more than 30 years. After vacationing in the area while living in Atlanta, he began buying and selling real estate here before finally making it his full-time residence in 2007.

He has a passion for helping others find their "peace at the beach with their very own piece of the beach," be it a primary home, vacation retreat or rental investment. Prior to entering a career in real estate, Carroll worked as a director of sales for technology teams supplying software to the U.S. government's defense and intelligence communities. After spending many years traveling for business, he decided to settle into a profession that gave him more time at the beach.

"Real estate has always been a passion of mine," said Carroll. "Thirty-five years ago, I had two opportunities coming out of college—technology or real estate. I chose the technology field, but also became actively involved in real estate as a side interest. I have since been buying/selling/investing in real estate with investment groups and LLCs in many cities including Atlanta and along the Emerald Coast," he said. "This has a full circle moment to be able to peruse this passion full time at the beach, helping others make this lifestyle a reality."

Before going into real estate as a licensed realtor, Carroll had a successful record in sales and sales management for both small organizations and Fortune 500 companies. These roles included serving as director of sales for IBM and HP leading the teams

responsible for the U.S. Department of Defense, U.S. Intelligence Community, and U.S. Civilian Agencies such as The Department of Justice.

Yet, all along, the beach was calling. Carroll and his wife, Beth moved to 30-A after years of vacationing here and finally adopted the coastal lifestyle they so appreciated on vacation while now commuting for his sales roles. At the same time, he was still networking with friends and colleagues, assisting others in the process of moving to the Emerald Coast. Soon after he finally transitioned to real estate full time in 2015.

"I've enjoyed success in both residential and commercial real estate in the boom and bust times and learned so much. Our team is numbers driven and dives deep into the stats of the market to ensure the best outcomes for buyers and sellers," Carroll said.

Carroll utilizes the tenets of teamwork he learned playing basketball at Northwestern University and incorporates those into his approach in working with clients, from Destin to 30-A to the west end of Panama City Beach. He and the entire team is committed to focusing on clients' needs and earning their trust, delivering personalized service and local expertise. Above all, he believes in taking the stress out of the homebuying process and having fun.

"Integrity, trust, and fun are the cornerstones of our philosophy. With experts in every part of the world, we are 'local' everywhere, allowing us to walk alongside our clients at every stage of their journey," said Carroll. "With innovative technology and unrivaled service, we ensure your home is connected with buyers locally and worldwide while earning your trust at each step of the process."

Another special part of forming connections and working relationships with clients are the bonds



The Carroll Jones Beckman Group.

created over the years.

"It's a pleasure to get to know our clients and develop a friendship. Over the years, we have joined them on trips and have attended their children's weddings, which represents how important our connections become," said Carroll.

Carroll is the father of four boys and his daughter-in-law Ariel Blackwood Carroll has also joined the Carroll Jones Beckman Group as a global advisor.

In his free time, you can find him representing the beach lifestyle and cruising the area in his Jeep with his dog Gunner. He is the author of two books: "Avoiding Overpaying For A Home" and "My Secret Wealth of Information For Any Seller," and he is actively involved in community organizations including serving on the 30A Alliance Advisory Board. He and his wife founded EasyOn30A, a non-profit that raises funds for Alaqua and Children's Volunteer Health Network.

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# Peace of Mind

## *Sun Surf & Sand Insurance Services has you covered*

BY CHRISTOPHER MANSON

**S**un Surf & Sand Insurance Services is a Florida independent insurance agency that represents numerous companies with competitive rates. They offer insurance for home, auto, condo, rentals properties (short-term and long-term), flood, boat, motorcycle, golf carts, low speed vehicles, charter boats, business, RVs, builders' risks, general liability and much more.

Scott Zambarano, vice-president of Sun Surf & Sand, began his venture into the insurance business in Rhode Island in 2013. Zambarano continues to maintain his office in Rhode Island with the assistance of his business partner Alex Mazika III.

Zambarano and his fiancée, Jennifer Valliere—originally from Michigan—moved here in 2021 and started the new agency in July.

“The growth of the business has been amazing based on advertising and word of mouth, so I’m trying to stick around to assure our clients and new clients have a high level of customer service,” he said.

“This is a good, humble area,” Zambarano adds.

“We pride ourselves with integrity and place high value on customer service.”

“The beach town vibe is calm and relaxed compared to the wildness back in the Northeast and other parts of Florida. Here, you can be sitting next to a multimillionaire with shorts and a T-shirt on.”

The other members of the Sun Surf & Sand team are salesperson Conner Clark and Courtney Bottorf, the agency’s customer service representative. “We pride ourselves with integrity and place high value on customer service,” said Zambarano.

Sun Surf & Sand is a family-owned business and Zambarano says many potential clients call him directly on his cell phone.

“I don’t plan on changing that,” he said.

Zambarano grew up in North Providence, Rhode Island, and spent over 45 years there, where he also obtained a bachelor’s degree from Roger Williams University. “Prior to insurance, I worked in retail management for many years. After that, I was a police officer in Providence for almost 10 years, where I sustained a career-ending injury forcing early retirement,” he says.

Fiancée Jennifer Valliere is a realtor for Corcoran



Scott Zambarano and his fiancée Jennifer Valliere.

Reverie. They both stay busy but make sure to attend some of the noteworthy events in South Walton.

“I love sponsoring many of the local events and high school sports teams to assist the kids with a better sports experience,” says Zambarano.

For him, the most rewarding aspect of the insurance business is helping people by educating clients about insurance. “Although price is important, it’s not always the best determination of the client’s needs. We like to analyze their needs and assure that they have the best peace of mind.”

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# Wellness Heaven

## Spa Lilliana at Hotel Effie delights with luxurious treatments and top-notch service

BY TESS FARMER

Spa Lilliana at Hotel Effie, located in Sandestin Golf and Beach Resort on the Emerald Coast, is its own wellness haven. As you enter the light and airy lobby on the second floor of the hotel, the senses are immediately greeted with huge floral blooms and soothing aromatherapy notes to set the stage for your spa journey.

The hotel's serene space features ten treatment rooms, a co-ed relaxation lounge, private men's and women's locker rooms and relaxation areas, a hair and nail salon and a retail boutique. The attention to detail is evident from the design of the spa to the exclusive treatments and luxurious product lines.

The gracious hosts welcome you with warm Southern hospitality, a cornerstone of the hotel itself. The spa's special treatments are designed to rejuvenate, restore, and relax and include facials, scrubs, massages and energy work, as well as manicures and pedicures.

Osa Mallo serves as spa director and has made it a primary goal that each guest's experience is flawless from start to finish. The spa is an extension of the service and warm hospitality provided at Hotel Effie.

"What's unique about our offering is how our highly-trained therapists are able to tailor the treatment to your particular needs as well as give advice on how to continue your wellness journey beyond your time at the spa," said Mallo.

"A visit to Spa Lilliana offers much more than just a moment of relaxation, our goal is to help you reach overall well-being."

Exclusive treatments include the popular cryo lifting facial, which leaves the face visibly lifted and sculpted, depuffed and glowing. The signature Cryo Glow Globes offer immediate cooling relief to sensitive or compromised skin and is followed by lifting and sculpting massage techniques that will leave skin looking brighter and tighter. The world-renowned Bioxidea Miracle 24 Face Masque follows, which has extraordinary anti-aging benefits and leaves



The spa at The Hotel Effie is an escape like no other.

the skin intensely hydrated, skin toned and texture improved.

"This treatment is brilliant for turning back the clock or soothing tired, jet-lagged skin making it a popular choice for our guests on

vacation at the beach," noted Mallo. cleanse is followed by a facial massage consisting of lifting and sculpting techniques. The signature Cryo globes and the Bioxidea Miracle Mask leaves the skin toned, hydrated and glowing. The facial concludes with an anti-aging hair and scalp treatment, featuring Miriam Quevedo 24k gold products and ancient Japanese techniques.

Mallo said that spa is also committed to providing wellness programs through Spa Lilliana that play an essential role in promoting health, relaxation, and overall well-being among the local community. The programs often extend beyond traditional spa services and aim to educate, engage, and support individuals in their journey toward better physical and mental health. These include sound baths, fitness classes, wellness retreats, and other holistic therapies to encourage self-care practices.

Spa Lilliana is also open for group treatments, perfect for corporate gatherings, bachelorette or bridal parties, family reunions.

"It's a pleasure to offer guests and the community time and space to ground and reflect on their path," added Mallo. "We all need those opportunities to pause, breathe deeply and connect."

vacation at the beach," noted Mallo.

Hotel Effie also has partnered with Miriam Quevedo, the award-winning powerhouse brand in skin, hair and scalp health, based in Barcelona, Spain. The 30-minute hair and scalp rituals with the products are ideally added to a facial, but also a complement to any massage.

Many of the products and treatments used at Spa Lilliana aren't found anywhere else along the Gulf Coast and in

the instances of some of the services, are only found at Hotel Effie. These treatments exclusive to Hotel Effie are featured on the current spa menu, including exclusive results-oriented beauty care brand partnerships.

"We are also the only spa in our area with a co-ed relaxation room, so you can spend time with your significant other before or after treatment while enjoying snacks, champagne and assorted natural juices and hot teas," said Mallo.

Winter Spa Specials at Spa Lilliana include the Cryo Lifting Facial Ritual, a luxurious 80-minute ritual that nourishes and revitalizes face, scalp and hair. A gentle

A visit to Spa Lilliana offers much more than just a moment of relaxation, our goal is to help you reach overall well-being.

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# Choose Wisely

*Four keys to eating healthy when out on the town*

BY DR. BART M. PRECOURT

As more and more people are on their health journey, I often hear that it's hard to eat out and be healthy. There is some truth to this...unless we know how to play to win!

The following four keys to eating out “healthy” is a guideline for those on their health journey who want to go out, socialize, enjoy the company of others and not sacrifice their health doing it.

Let's face it, most restaurants are not in the health space. Not that they couldn't be, but frankly it's more profitable to use cheaper foods. Therefore, it's our job to choose wisely. These tips should assist you on your journey. Look for any of the following when eating out:

## *Choose organic foods.*

This is the easiest to identify and easiest for restaurants to offer. Why organic? Often this is dismissed as something for the “health nuts,” yet it's not. Most people involved with their health recognize that organic foods are what we should be eating. We are designed to eat real food, not food riddled with chemicals and GMOs.

Two primary reasons for organic foods. First, organic foods will tend to have more nutrients. Technically we eat to provide nutrients for our cells to function optimally. Nutrients are the key to us thriving as humans. Without nutrients dis-ease is soon to arrive. Secondly, non-organic foods all have chemicals. Consuming chemicals makes the body work harder. Just defending the toxins, we waste valuable energy and resources. Low energy, weight gain and brain fog are all side effects of low nutrients and higher chemical consumption.

Most restaurants that offer organic foods are proud of it and will label accordingly. Wild-caught fish fits into this category and farm-raised fish is absolutely terrible to consume. Be mindful of labeling that includes things like grass-fed, which is good yet not the same as organic. Organic implies that what the animal or plant is eating is also organic.

## *Avoid canola oil.*

Avoid this at all costs. It's terrible for the body and is the leading cause of liver disease, even more so than alcohol! The challenge here is that almost every restaurant uses this for everything! It's a cheap chemically-processed oil that is very disruptive to our health. It promotes inflammation, fatty liver disease, weight gain and bad cholesterols. This oil is often used



Dr. Bart Precourt

“Ask for what you want—  
it's OK (actually it's great)  
to be a little different.”

to cook chicken, veggies and is present in salad dressings. Even the oil you dip your bread into is most likely canola oil. Tortillas, chips, cereal, coffee creamers, even nut milks. It's often referred to as “vegetable oil,” but don't be fooled by the name. It is garbage for humans.

How do you avoid this? Ask to have your food cooked in butter, not oil. Avoid processed foods. Ask if the oil is 100% olive oil or a blend. Many use a blend olive/canola, it's best to avoid this. The best salad dressing is balsamic and vinegar.

## *Go gluten-free.*

Fortunately, this is easy if you're looking to do so. Gluten is pro-inflammatory. Even if you don't have an allergy to it, it still wreaks havoc on your health. High levels of glyphosate combined with pesticides and herbicides make this a double whammy. Consumption can lead to conditions like leaky gut, brain fog and weight gain. Gluten also contains phytic acid, an anti-nutrient that blocks the absorption of iron, zinc, magnesium and calcium.

Many restaurants now include gluten free options. It's as easy as ordering your favorite salad topped with favorite protein.

## *Skip the sauces/condiments.*

This is easy and tricky at same time. Almost all packaged condiments, including ketchups, soy sauce and BBQ sauce should be avoided. Most of these will have canola oil, additives, coloring and other junk fillers. Yet the worst is the high fructose corn syrup (HFCS). It's a leading cause of insulin resistance and causes you to want to eat more!

The easy part here is you can use salt, pepper and butter. These make everything taste good and most restaurants have them all.

Also worthy of mentioning is to avoid overeating! Skip dessert and go for a walk instead. Put the emphasis on your company more than “yummy” food. Avoid sugar. Be impressive with your gratuity. Pick places to eat where you can win in health!

Ask for what you want—it's OK (actually it's great) to be a little different.

***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](http://www.balance30a.com) or call 850-231-9288.***

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# Taking control of your wealth

## *Estate planning for singles*

BY KIMBERLY WATSON SEWELL AND FRANKLIN H. WATSON

If you are single, you are in good company. Nearly half of all adult Americans are single. Being single can mean considerable personal and economic freedom.

Nevertheless, just like your married counterparts, proper Life and Estate Planning is necessary to keep you in control.

### Disability Planning

Every adult American is responsible for making his or her own personal, health care and financial decisions. In fact, you may take many basic decisions for granted. For example, you decide where to live, what medical care is appropriate and how to manage your finances. But what if an illness or injury leaves you unable to make even these basic decisions? Who will make such decisions for you? Who will have your best interests at heart?

Proper Life and Estate Planning is required in advance of your incapacity, if you want to appoint your own decision-maker. Otherwise, by default you may find yourself in the Probate Court in a legal process that typically employs three lawyers and makes your private, personal, health care and financial circumstances a matter of public record.

### Choosing Guardians

Do you have minor children (i.e., under age 18 in most states)? If yes, you probably invest considerable time and treasure to provide them with a moral, safe and secure home environment. What if you die while they are still minors? Who will rear them to adulthood? Who will provide the moral, safe and secure home environment? Unless you want a Probate Judge to make the selection for you, proper Life and Estate Planning is required.

Who will manage the inheritance you leave for your minor children until they reach adulthood? Again, that decision will be made by a Probate Judge in the absence of proper Life and Estate Planning by you.

What if you have minor children, but are divorced or never married? Absent a showing of “unfitness,” the Probate Court will appoint the surviving biological parent not only to rear the children to adulthood, but also to manage their inheritance. Additionally, if the surviving biological parent then survives your children, they ultimately may receive your child/children’s inheritance, which might not be what you would prefer to take place.

### Distributing family heirlooms

Is family harmony important to you? Whether it is grandma’s yellow pie pan, antique furniture or that



Kimberly Watson Sewell and Frank Watson.

Civil War sword, such items should be identified in your Life and Estate Plan along with the designated recipient of your own selection. Otherwise, your valuables could end up in the hands of the wrong loved one or sold to a perfect stranger in your Estate Sale. Either way, relationships between and among your loved ones could be bruised or battered unnecessarily.

### Estate and Gift Taxes

Benjamin Franklin noted that there are only two certainties in life: Death and Taxes. While there is little we can do to avoid the former, proper estate tax planning can minimize the latter. One of the best kept secrets for reducing Federal Estate Taxes is giving while you are living. Such giving leverages the Annual Gift Exclusion (AGE) that is available to every taxpayer.

Under the AGE, each taxpayer may give \$14,000 each year to as many people as they wish. This wealth transfer does not trigger gift taxes to the donor or to those receiving the gift. Additionally, any future increase in the value of the gifted asset is not included in the donor’s estate for determining Federal Estate Taxes later on. For this reason, gifts of appreciated assets (e.g., stock that is rapidly going up in value) are popular. [Note: legal counsel should be sought before making AGE gifts.]

Are your likely beneficiaries young, inexperienced or perhaps irresponsible? If so, various Trusts can be created to protect your AGE gifts from their potential divorces, lawsuits, bankruptcies or good, old-fashioned squandering. Through carefully-drafted Trusts, you can

control how and when the gifted assets are made available to your beneficiaries. As legendary jurist Oliver Wendell Holmes put it: Put not your trust in money, but put your money in trust.

### Ask Yourself These Questions Regarding Estate Planning for Singles:

1. *If I were to become incapacitated due to an injury or illness, would I or my assets be subject to the Probate Court?*
2. *If I were to die leaving minor children, have I legally appointed at least one guardian for them and someone I trust to administer their inheritance?*
3. *If I were to die, have I legally designated who will receive various valuable (or sentimental) items of tangible personal property from my estate, to avoid conflicts among loved ones?*
4. *If I were to die, have I made arrangements to protect the inheritance for my children from their potential divorces, lawsuits, bankruptcies or squandering?*



For more information regarding estate planning or real estate transactions, please contact: Watson Sewell, PL (850) 231-3465

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# Relaxed Concentration

*Play your best golf by mastering the 'inner game'*

BY TOM FITZPATRICK

The player that wins is often the player that is simply able to concentrate the best.

I recently ran across a blog by Microsoft co-founder Bill Gates talking about one of his top five favorite books. One of them, *The Inner Game of Tennis*, caught my eye because I assisted on a similar book by the same author called *The Inner Game of Golf*. Gates enjoyed playing tennis in his youth and circled back to picked it up again after a long hiatus. The book made such a lasting impression on him that he re-read it a few times—something he hadn't done with other books. What he found so interesting was that we all have this natural ability to do things and because of self-interference, we prevent ourselves from reaching our true potential.

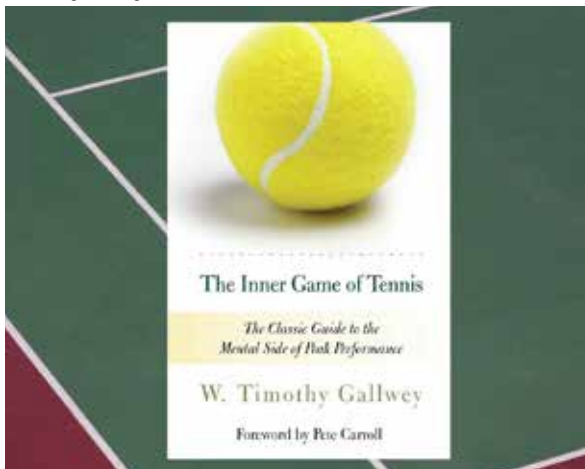
The author, Tim Gallwey, also wrote *The Inner Game of Golf*. Tim is a fascinating coach that breaks from your standard style of instruction. Most people approach tennis or golf from a mechanical perspective: For example, should the left arm be straight or flexed? Gallwey delved into what most people often overlook, which is the inner game and what takes place in the player's mind. When our thinking prohibits us from achieving our goals, the inner game becomes paramount.

One premise is that we often learn from the standard 'Do Instruction.' The teacher orders us to perform an instruction in order to hit the ball better. It's the 'being told' aspect that circumvents the natural learning process of figuring things out for ourselves with the assistance of a coach. Tim prefers instead for a coach to offer suggestions to help the student increase their awareness of their own technique. He found that students learn quicker when they are directly involved in that process. At the core is awareness – are we conscious and present in trying to feel a swing change? If you have awareness of the problem, sometimes the problem will just go away.

What Gates found interesting was that our basic mental state that most of us exist in doesn't allow us to learn much, and often what is learned is quickly forgotten. What do we think about when we play tennis, or golf? Does our thinking benefit or harm us?



Tennis legen Rodger Federer with Bill Gates



The Inner Game of Tennis inspired Bill Gates on the court and in the office

The player that wins is often the player that is simply able to concentrate the best. And concentrating doesn't mean getting a headache, but it's rather a relaxed concentration. That's a state Gallwey says where your mind is calm and not interfering. This allows a higher level of performance to emerge. In tennis, it can be looking at the seams on the ball to distract the mind. Or offering a challenge to the student to serve the ball over the net but not into the service court. What Tim found was the player that struggled to serve suddenly increased their service rate.

In golf, picking a putting variable can help distract a busy mind. For instance, hit six putts and each time ask yourself when did you know you hit a good putt. Then note how much time passes before you say aloud 'good putt.' This drill caught Tiger Woods' attention one day while I was helping another pro. On the first putt the pro said 'good putt' a few seconds after the stroke. By the sixth putt his 'good' was said at the time of impact. They realized that he had become more present with each putt.



Say 'Good' aloud when you know that you've hit a solid putt

Football coach Pete Carroll picked up on the benefits of the Inner Game while at USC. He implemented an inner game team approach that helped produce a Super Bowl win with Seattle.

**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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