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

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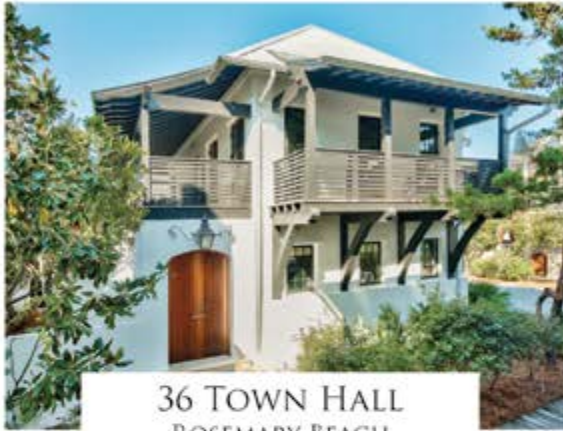
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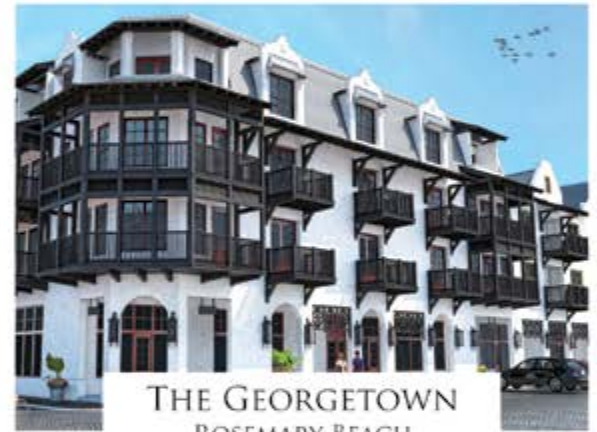
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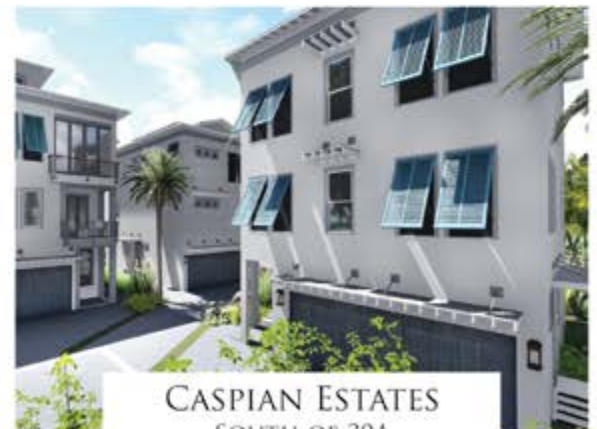
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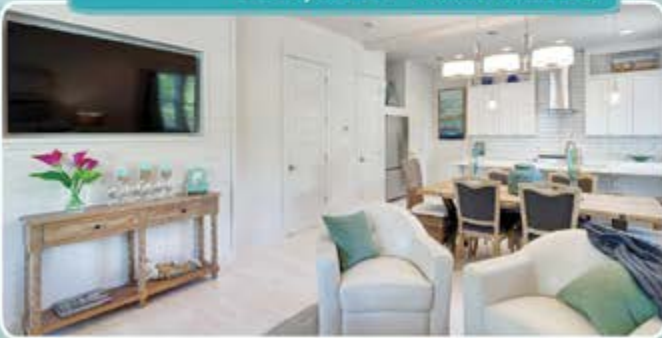
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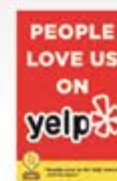
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Bobby J



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letter from the publisher

SPRING FEVER



Spring is in the air and 30-A is bustling with people to see, places to go and things to do.

The ocean is beautiful this time of year. Lots of beautiful wildlife and the sun is not too hot.

We hope you enjoy our paradise this spring break and we remind you that 30-A is a real community. With schools, teachers, doctors, plumbers and the like. Please make sure to treat our beaches and towns like you would your own home. We know you will.

As always, this issue is packed full of stories about the things that make 30-A great. We invite you to peruse the pages that follow and to read about the personalities that make 30-A your home away from home.

We wish you and your family a wonderful time at the beach and nothing but warm days and cool breezes on your back.

Be safe out there. And love the ones you're with.

Cheers,

Miles K. Neiman

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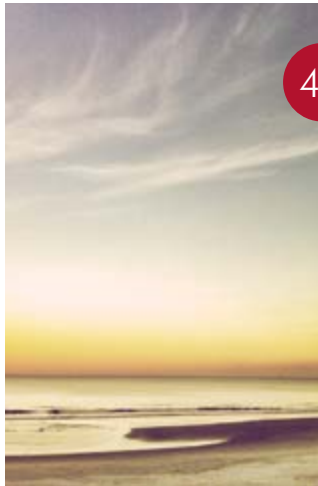
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Showbiz and Events in March and April

ALYS BEACH

30A Wine Festival

March 9-12, 2017

Pricing varies by event, Alys Beach; locations vary by event

Spring Concerts

Free, Alys Beach Amphitheatre

The Forrest Williams Band

March 8, 2017; 6-8 p.m.

The Panhandlers

March 15, 2017; 6-8 p.m.

Fearless Heights

Alys Beach Amphitheatre

March 22, 2017

The Blue Ribbon Healers

April 5, 2017

Mike Whitty & Friends

April 12, 2017



ROSEMARY BEACH

Caravan Jazz Band –

Live Musical Performance

Sundays, March 12, 19, 26, April 2 & 9

5:30pm-7:30pm, TOWN CENTER

Caravan brings the sounds and atmosphere of 1930's Paris with a touch of Disney! Close your eyes and picture the swinging dance halls of the Champs-Élysées or the sound stage of a Walt Disney cartoon. A must see performance, fun for all ages!

Spring it On! Concert Series

Mondays, March 13, 20, 27 and

April 3, 10

6:30pm-8:30pm, EAST LONG GREEN

Bring your chairs and blankets and enjoy an evening of entertaining musical performances. Each week is a different show...be sure to catch one or all! (Town Hall if raining)

3/13: "Like Totally Awesome" 80's!

3/20: Bubble Gum Machine

3/27: The Hep Cats (50's & 60's)

4/3: One Hit Wonders

4/10: British Invasion (Beatles, Stones)

Art in the Park

Tuesdays, March 7, 14, 21, 28 & April

4, 11

5:30pm-7:30pm, WESTERN GREEN

Enjoy a variety of three different art projects and activities and explore different mediums of art

Children's Theatre: "The Tales of King Arthur"

Wednesdays, March 15, 22, 29 & April

5, 12

6pm, NORTH BARRETT SQUARE

(Town Hall if raining)

A troupe of travelling players revel in creating much onstage merriment by

presenting, The Tales of King Arthur and his Knights of the Round Table. Young Arthur is a squire who dreams of becoming a knight, but a great wizard named; Merlin has plans for Arthur beyond mere knighthood. Join Arthur, Merlin, Guinevere, and Lancelot in this sword and sorcery comedy adventure sure to royally entertain audiences of all ages. Blankets and lawn chairs are welcome.

Moonlight Movies & Face Painting

Thursdays, March 16, 23, 30 & April

6, 13

Face Painting starts at 5pm, Movie at

7:30 pm, WESTERN GREEN

Bring the family for a wholesome and fun movie night under the stars. Blankets and lawn chairs are welcome. Come early and get your face painted by one of our talented artists! Enjoy popcorn and the best hot dogs on the beach from DogManDu!

3/16: *The Secret Life of Pets* (PG)

3/23: *Pete's Dragon* (PG)

3/30: *Finding Dory* (PG)

4/6: *Moana* (PG)

4/13: *Rogue One – A Star Wars Story*

(PG-13)

The "Amazing Rosemary Race" (Scavenger Hunt)

Fridays, March 17, 24, 31, April, 7, 14

Registration: 10am, Race Start: 11am,

Awards: 2pm, SOUTH BARRETT

SQUARE

Partner up with family or friends and get ready to explore all Rosemary Beach has to offer. You will be given a series of clues, tasks and instructions that will take you through an "amazing" race around town. Much like a scavenger hunt but with a few twists and turns thrown into the mix! Winning team gets \$100 to spend in their favorite shops and eateries in Rosemary Beach! All ages are welcome!

SEASIDE

15th Annual Seaside Half Marathon & 5K Weekend

March 3-5, AMPHITHEATER, LYCEUM, ASSEMBLY HALL

Seaside Farmers Market

Saturdays, March 11, 18, & 25, 9am-1pm

(changes to 8am-noon after March 11th),

AMPHITHEATER

(No farmers market on race weekend, March 4)

Stories by the Sea

Monday-Friday, March 13 - March 31, 3:30pm

SOLOMON SQUARE

Broadway Theatre Camp

Tuesdays & Thursdays & Fridays, March 14

- April 14, 1-3pm, SEASIDE REPERTORY

THEATRE/MEETING HALL

Central Square Cinema

Fridays, 7:30pm

3/17: *Toy Story*

3/24: *Wreck it Ralph*

3/31: *Tangled*

AMPHITHEATER

Children's Theatre Performance –

Seaside Repertory Theatre

Mondays, March 13, 20 and 27, 5:30pm,

AMPHITHEATER

Huck & Lily Kids Music

Performance

Tuesdays, March 14, 21, & 28, 6:00pm,

AMPHITHEATER

Stories by the Sea

Mondays-Fridays, April 3 - April 21, 3:30pm,

SOLOMON SQUARE

Broadway Theatre Camp

Tuesdays, Thursdays & Fridays, March 14 -

April 14, 1-3pm, SEASIDE REPERTORY

THEATRE/MEETING HALL

Central Square Cinema

7:30pm, Fridays

April 7: *Happy Feet*

4/14: *Storks*

4/21: *Muppets Most Wanted*

AMPHITHEATER



Photo courtesy Lesley Isacks Photography

Seaside Farmers Market

Saturdays, April 1, 8, 15, 22, & 29,

8am-noon,

AMPHITHEATER

Huck & Lily Kids Music

Performance

Tuesdays, April 4, 11, 18, & 25, 6:00pm,

AMPHITHEATER

Children's Theatre Performance –

Seaside Repertory Theatre

Mondays, April 3, 10, & 17 5:30pm,

AMPHITHEATER

Seaside's Easter Celebration

Sunday, April 16, 12-2pm, AMPHITHEATER

Riding the Wave: Seagrove's Newest Gem is Surfing Deer

BY SARAH MURPHY ROBERTSON



George and Ann Hartley have been residents of Seagrove Beach for nearly twenty years now. As business owners and devoted locals, they've always paid tribute to the historical significance of this 30-A community.

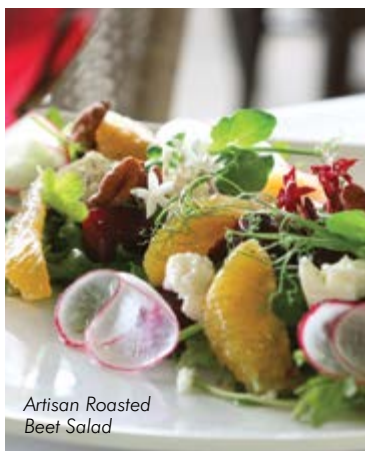
When it came time to re-concept their newest restaurant, previously V Seagrove, the Hartleys recalled the stories they had heard about one of the first landowners of the area. Back in the 1940s, Cube McGee recognized the diamond in the rough that would one day become Seagrove Beach. He decided to develop it and in the early days, as the area grew, he was a key figure. McGee also had an unusual pet – a deer he called Bambi. McGee and Bambi were often spotted frolicking on the beach at sunrise - in the morning surf. And, hence the inspiration for the name of the Hartleys' newest venture: Surfing Deer!

Surfing Deer is open nightly for dinner service and is a casual fine dining atmosphere. It is modern and comfortable with a soft color palette and coastal touches. They know families vacation together, and well-behaved little ones are welcomed with their own kids menu.

The Hartleys are thrilled to have Chef Gregory Smith leading the extremely talented culinary team at Surfing Deer. George shares how Chef Smith's precision, attention to detail, and cerebral approach to cooking has been an inspiration and an invaluable aspect to the restaurant's success.

The starters are unique and give a peek into the special meal to come. Their Surfing Deer Flatbread is naan topped with premium beef tenderloin, caramelized Vidalia onions, thin slices of fresh Mission figs, bleu cheese, and a balsamic glaze. It is sweet and punchy, herbaceous and tangy – a true testament to balanced composition.

The soup and salad section of the menu is full of familiar favorites like a caesar and wedge, but they are



Artisan Roasted Beet Salad

spot-on with impeccable care taken in their craftsmanship. Try the Artisan Roasted Beet salad. Cubes of sweet, earthy golden and red beets top peppery greens and are garnished with farmers cheese, radish, juicy citrus, and the crunch of toasty Marcona almonds. This salad is bright, light, and sublime all in one.

Choosing an entree may prove to be a bit difficult. Hopefully your table likes to share! George loves the Stout Coffee Braised Beef Short Ribs served with horseradish and white cheddar mashed potatoes; he's a self-confessed meat and potatoes guy from Texas. The expertly prepared Caramelized Sea Scallops over farro with crispy kale has been deemed locally as a solid "11 on a 1-10 scale". Ann recommends their Seared Gulf Red Snapper. The fish is perfectly cooked and Asian influences in the coconut lemongrass emulsion, baby bok choy, and ginger infused black rice are its brilliant co-stars.

If you are stuffed, take a few minutes to linger, but be sure to order dessert. Their pastry chef is extremely talented and the sweet treats at Surfing Deer are some of the best around. Get a slice of the Caramelized Banana



Seared gulf red snapper



Banana pudding cheesecake

pudding Cheesecake – it takes the best of two classic desserts all nestled in a homemade vanilla wafer crust and drizzled with a rum caramel sauce.

While dinner service is primed to be an exceptional experience, the full dinner menu can be ordered at their beautiful bar, which also has its own smaller bites menu. The fish and chips, made from gulf-fresh fish of the day, comes with fries and hush puppies and

would be great while enjoying a couple of locally brewed draughts.

And if a nightcap or another glass of vino is in the cards, Surfing Deer has you covered with a well curated wine list ranging in special occasion bottles to more affordable sips. Their signature mixed drinks includes the Bambi Tini – a refreshing cocktail of

Cubes of sweet, earthy golden and red beets top peppery greens and are garnished with farmers cheese, radish, juicy citrus, and the crunch of toasty Marcona almonds.

Deep Eddy peach flavored vodka, fresh strawberries, lavender-lemon simple syrup and a fizzy splash of Prosecco.

Surfing Deer features a lovely private events room for celebrations of all kinds. It is complete with its own entrance and kitchen to serve guests. The window-lined space can seat up to 50 comfortably and is also furnished with audio-visual technology and a flat screen television. Many a special memory will be cherished in this room.

Surfing Deer has been open since November of this year and the excitement among foodies is growing as good news travels fast. Stop by soon, say hello to the unofficial mayors of Seagrove, and enjoy the creative culinary genius of Chef Smith. It's sure to be a night to remember and Surfing Deer is up for one smooth ride.

Surfing Deer is located at 2743 E Co Hwy 30A, Santa Rosa Beach. Hours are 5-9pm M-S, closed on Sunday. Call (850) 213-4200 or go to surfingdeer.com for more information.



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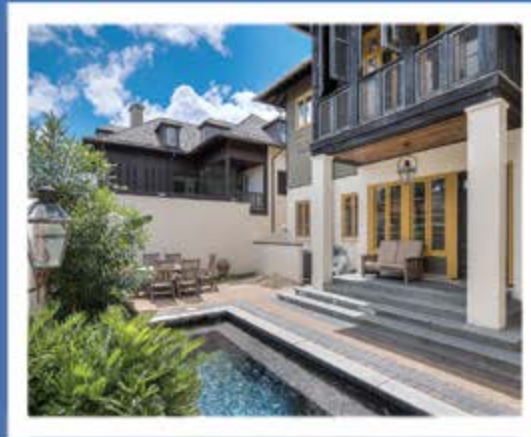
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Back to Business: Seagrove Village Market Cafe

BY SARAH MURPHY ROBERTSON



institution meant to the area and earliest homeowners.

When George and Ann Hartley purchased the Seagrove Village Market Cafe in 1999 it was, in their words, being in “the right place at the right time.” From the very start they wanted to build upon the culture, reputation, and beloved mainstays

out. The space is brand new with open, high ceilings – so bright and beautiful – but it definitely echoes the charisma of the old location and all the charm is still there. Much of the signage from the original restaurant adorns the walls and the countertop at the checkout area remains. George shepherds me into the men’s restroom to show one other treasure from the old space: the vintage fuse box that kept the operation buzzing for all those years. “More than one electrician has told me this belonged in a museum,” he laughs. Seems it was just as important to transplant the “heart” as well as the soul, you see.

The menu hasn’t changed much in all these years – with golden-fried grouper sandwiches and juicy burgers being offered from the start. But over time, the Hartleys expanded the menu to include fish tacos, fresh salads, and their signature sides like mac n cheese and fried green tomatoes. Everyone has a favorite here and the restaurant’s commitment to consistency makes any order on any day an excellent choice.

When the Hartleys and their team recently developed a few new additions to the menu, the andouille and shrimp po boy was added to the line-up. This promptly became George’s new pick, and he often orders it in lieu of his years-long go-to, the fried shrimp po boy. The garlicky spice and subtle kick from the sausage is a great complement to the tender shrimp. This po boy is sure to become an instant classic.

The Hartleys are quick to acknowledge they could never run this business alone and were pleased to find much of their loyal staff were patient and eager to return

when the market reopened in November of 2016. It is a family-run business committed to treating their customers and their staff as part of the family.

So now the new Village Market will greet old and new generations. Hungry customers will happily order their favorites, making memories and continuing the rich tradition started back when 30-A was just an unpaved road in between Panama City and Destin. As the signage from the original space promises, the Seagrove Village Market Cafe will continue its tradition of serving “Deep Fried Love...Since 1949!”

The market is located at 2976 S Co Hwy 395, Santa Rosa Beach. Hours are: Sunday, 10:30-2:30, Monday-Saturday, 10:30-8:30. Call (850) 231-5736 for more information.

So much of the magic and allure of 30-A is that tangible feel one gets from a sleepy beach town. It often harkens back to simpler days. Visitors to our area take great pleasure in “unplugging” while they are here – choosing bikes and walks over car rides, spending long, lazy days swimming, napping, or reading, and finally enjoying spectacular sunsets lighting up the gulf. So it is no surprise that over the years a trip to the oldest businesses along 30-A would become a must-stop destination.

Seagrove Village Market Cafe has an identity in this area that is unparalleled. It is itself almost a resident of 30-A and guests have a real reverence for this special spot. From day one, its current owners, George and Ann Hartley, have regarded this iconic restaurant with that same level of reverence.

Nostalgia can be found all around the history of the Seagrove Village Market. Since opening as a small market and mini mall in 1949, it has been a gathering spot in the Seagrove, Florida community. Generations of families have made the village market part of their family memories. In the earlier days, the Seagrove Village Market had one of the first and only pay phones in South Walton. The market also functioned as a hub for all the teenagers to meet, grab sodas, and hang out. The market was the keeper of keys to many of the cottages for years and years. This is a look inside what this



Fried grouper sandwich



Chicken and waffles



Seafood platter

of the cafe and they took some key advice from the previous owner to heart – buy fresh, cook to order, and serve with a smile. For 18 years they’ve followed his philosophy while also preserving the original integrity of his recipes.

With the closing of the original market in October of 2015, there was a lot of apprehension. How could the market live on? The Hartleys had the extremely fortunate opportunity to acquire the parcel of land just north of the spot where the original market stood.

Ann shares how important it was to the couple to keep the soul of the Seagrove Village Market intact. “We saved the booths and tables – look, they still even have all the names carved into them,” she’s excited to point

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Chef Holbrook and The Bellamy of 30A Chef-Driven Cuisine in Full Service Style

BY SARAH MURPHY ROBERTSON

Since hustling bussing tables at 14 years old, Chef Christopher Holbrook has centered his life's work around the food world. After working in restaurants throughout high school, he chose Johnson & Wales University for his culinary training. From there, the list of who he apprenticed under is certainly impressive. Holbrook cooked at the renowned Kiawah Island Resort in Charleston, gained invaluable guidance and experience under esteemed local chefs Tim Creehan and Phillip Krajeck, and then served as private chef to many of society's elite, including New Orleans mogul Al Copeland Sr.

In 2010, Holbrook launched Signature Catering of 30A with the idea he could feed others while also feeding his soul. He took the cultures and styles of cooking he had honed over the years to develop his own unique style of coastal cuisine. His focus as a chef is always to highlight each ingredient to its fullest potential, but you're always gonna find a twist here and there and that is just the way he likes it.

After years of gaining a devoted clientele with Signature Catering of 30A, Chef Holbrook is thrilled to announce what 2017 will bring. Along with two partners, he has taken ownership of the former The Grecian Gardens restaurant, now known as the event space The Bellamy of 30A. "I'm back on 30-A and it feels like home," he confides.

The Bellamy was originally built as a family-owned estate designed to replicate the Greek Orthodox Church in which the matriarch and patriarch were married. It was important to the investors to keep the beauty and history of the property intact while also transforming it into a functional and elegant event space. You'll see modern hints of "coastal chic" decor in the bar area and bridal suite. The renovations infused a fresh sense of modern elegance to the interior while preserving the romantic Greek history of the building's exterior. Much effort went into landscaping the lawn, gardens, and grounds - including constructing an arbor atop a knoll for wedding ceremonies.

And of course, The Bellamy of 30A has incorporated a large catering kitchen equipped and ready to create the food Chef Holbrook's clients have come to love. Chef's menus emphasize a balanced progression; to keep it fresh

His focus as a chef is always to highlight each ingredient to its fullest potential, but you're always gonna find a twist here and there and that is just the way he likes it.

and straightforward. But the gulf seafood he favors will always be the star of the plate. The Bellamy on 30A will offer its guests lots of options. They can choose from one of four prix fixe menus or work to create a uniquely custom menu. And don't worry: they can bake the beautiful wedding cake you crave too!

Chef Holbrook's cooking style is versatile and The Bellamy of 30A will offer fare from casual to more formal. He can whip up a mean low-country boil or plate the most intricately composed sushi rolls or ceviche dishes you can imagine. Chef will roll out a whole new menu this spring - taking all the favorite dishes he's known for and announcing some new creations as well.

While couples planning their weddings will inevitably find this space exquisite, any number of events can be held at The Bellamy of 30A. Holbrook says bridal and baby showers, anniversary and birthday celebrations, and functions of all kinds will find this space perfect. They also offer in-house event planners. So no matter the scale and scope of the event, they are excited to help execute a great party. Your special moments will surely come to life with grace and ease in 30-A's newest gorgeous setting.



Chef Christopher Holbrook

As 30-A's popularity grows, and more and more people choose to celebrate life's milestones amidst the unparalleled beauty of the Emerald Coast, The Bellamy of 30A and the talents of Chef Holbrook are poised to help. It's an exciting time for the area and Chef Holbrook and his partners are gearing up for a very busy 2017.

To find out more, go to www.bellamy30a.com or call (850) 502-9233.



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Cypress Cattle & Produce

BY SUSAN BENTON



Cypress Cattle & Produce Company holds a heritage of 103 years of running the family business, and the latest generation thinks that's an experience worth sharing.

"My family has raised about everything you can raise on a farm," says Luke Langford of Ponce de Leon. If his name sounds familiar, it may be because Langford has been strumming a guitar and belting out twangy country classics with The 331 South Band at large events over the past couple years, including opening the Down Home Music Fest. But as much as he enjoys entertaining, Langford's love of the simple life is what drew him back into the farm business while he was in college.

Cypress Cattle Company was founded in 1912 by W.J. Sapp. From Sapp, the farm was handed down through the family to W.L. Comander, then Ken Langford, and now Luke Langford.

"In the early years and into the Depression, we grew red potatoes by the railcar," says Langford. Sapp also distributed cornmeal and cane syrup produced on the farm and sent milk to an ice cream factory in Pensacola.

The farm had a dairy operation until 1993 when, Langford says, "It was time to get big or get out." The family got out of the dairy business and never regretted it. The farm now supplies produce to food retailers and distributors such as Walmart, Sysco, and its very own produce market in Freeport.

Things on Cypress Farm changed gears once again as popularity grew around agritourism, a type of tourism offering visitors an educational and novel look at life and business in any agricultural setting.

"I want them to spend a day out on the farm going through soybeans and to see production crops," says Langford. "I want them dirty when they go home. I want them smelling like animals because they had their hands on them all day." The farm has hosted field trips and now offers farm tours of the property.

Florida lacks the frigid climate, but that didn't stop the farm from ushering in fall favorites. Cypress Cattle & Produce just ended a successful first ever season of fall-

The farm first tried on public curiosity by inviting people in to pick their own bushels of peaches from 600 trees in the orchard each spring.



"When we grow GM corn, I am able to cut my pesticide and chemical application by about 90 percent," says Langford. "On the harvest end, we harvest 90 to 95

percent of our crop instead of 70 percent like we used to with corn ear worm damage."

Waste is something the farm strives to eliminate. When the corn maze is cut down in a couple weeks, the corn will be used to make molasses and the field will be primed for dove hunts.

Langford has two young sons he hopes will take an interest in farming like he did. "Hopefully one of them will be in a place where they want to take over the family farm," says Langford. "It was never forced on me. It's like I was hardwired for it."

Cypress Cattle & Produce is closed to the public except on specified dates. The farm's stand is located at 16564 US 331 South, Freeport, FL 32439. For more information call (850) 880-6955 or visit their website, cypresscattle.com.

Susan Benton is the owner of 30AEATS.com where she shares her passion for food and travel, and her commitment to promoting local farmers, fishermen, chefs, artisans and restaurants along the Gulf Coast.

themed fun. The farm was open to the public to experience a 5-acre corn maze, giant pumpkin patch, hayrides, and children's activities. The farm first tried on public curiosity by inviting people in to pick their own bushels of peaches from 600 trees in the orchard each spring. After success with u-pick peaches and strawberries, it only made sense to try the same with a pumpkin patch.

Langford says the pumpkin patch is one of the things that sets Cypress Farm apart from other corn mazes in the region. "There's a lot of people that have moved here from places like Ohio and Indiana, and the fall family tradition was to go out into a patch and pick the pumpkin. Here, you go to a Walgreen's parking lot and grab one off a palette."

Langford staffed the corn maze with Future Farmers of America students. The teens helped visitors carry 50-pound pumpkins to their car and dressed up in zombie attire to scare those walking through the haunted corn maze experience after dark.

Now that the corn maze is retired for the season, the family will get back to using its commercial operation to teach the younger generation about the importance of knowing where their food comes from and dispelling misconceptions about modern agriculture - even genetically modified (GM) crops.

Guests who traipsed through the corn maze probably didn't realize it was a field of genetically modified sweet corn. Cypress Farms grows crop plants whose genes are spliced with a protein that strictly wards off corn pests.



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Art and the New Urbanism II

A Conversation with Artist Jamie Zimchek

BY ANNE HUNTER

I met artist Jamie Zimchek this winter at a bonfire in Grayton Beach and was delighted to discover her works, which currently hang at the Newbill Collection in Seaside's Ruskin Place Arts District.

It's no wonder that this seasoned artist found her way to Ruskin Place for representation when she moved to the area last year. Ruskin Place made its first international debut in the Truman Show and is the geographical center of Seaside, which in some respects makes it the epicenter for the arts of Scenic Highway 30A.

Born near Sacramento, California, Zimchek received a BA in Humanities at Newbold College in the UK in 1998, and her MA in Middle East & Mediterranean Studies from King's College London in 1999. She worked as a freelance photographer, journalist, and college lecturer in both the U.S. and the U.K., supplemented by extensive solo travels through Asia, Africa, the Caribbean, South America, and Europe,



before returning to the United States nearly a decade later.

My particular interest in her work is this artist's unique painting style, which she refers to as "narrative abstracts". Pulling from her experiences as an academic, traveler, and writer, she's created works that are a cerebral synthesis of ideas, memories, and social constructs. On a subtle level, Zimchek's mixed-media paintings aim to ask necessary questions - often playfully - about identity and place while offering a sometimes-oblique critique of



farther afield simply because I believe that diversity and a little change can be all that's needed to spark a creative fire. Last year this area had over 3.5 million visitors, a good share of them from nearby states, which is absolutely lovely, but it would also be nice expand the pool.

WHAT IS THE CRITICAL ROLE OF ART IN OUR SETTING?

It depends on whether you mean critical in the sense that it points out flaws or critical in that it's essential. It's horribly cliché, but the arts really do breathe soul into a place, and in one such as this, where the permanent population is heavily outnumbered by the visiting one, I think it's easy to lose sight of community without something like the arts to anchor it. So yes to art playing a critical role in that sense, but yes also in the sense that art that challenges existing mores is also necessary here to prevent the creative community from stagnating.

WITH POPULAR TOURISM AND MODERNITY ARRIVING EVERY DAY MORE IN OUR PRECIOUS PLACES, HOW MIGHT IT BE POSSIBLE TO AVOID THE DESCENT INTO KITSCH? DO YOU THINK IT'S POSSIBLE TO AVOID COMPLETELY?

I think a full-on descent into kitsch; though possible; is unlikely, though it's always going to be lurking at the edges. More importantly the question might be, is there room for kitsch to co-exist with something loftier? Sometimes the contrast might provide needed context for understanding the shades of gray between black and white.

What institutions and programs should these towns nurture to foster a healthy culture, which includes the arts? From what I've observed, the Cultural Arts Alliance has a robust events calendar, and does an excellent job of bringing art to the community. However, it also seems like there could be room for some sort of facility more central to 30-A, like the Parrish Art Museum in The Hamptons that could serve as a more readily reachable "public" art space through curated art exhibits, art classes, and other enrichment programs timed to coincide with a week-long vacation stay. There have been other atmospheric seaside communities that have managed this, and it seems like something that could both nurture the region's considerable assets, cultural or otherwise, and encourage a more diverse discourse.

modernity. More overtly, her works are colorful abstract urban landscapes, a mix of brushwork and mark making, with clues to interpretation secreted away for the discerning.

WHAT IS YOUR PERSPECTIVE OF OUR TOWN AND THE CURRENT ART SCENE?

I think it has great potential. There are some very successful artists and designers here already, but there's certainly room for more. Selfishly, I'd love to see the area begin to pull in more visitors and permanent residents from





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Smallcakes Cupcakery and Creamery

BY SUSAN L. CANNIZZARO

CEO Jeff Martin recently opened his Smallcakes Cupcakery and Creamery headquarters in Seacrest Beach. This location will serve as a corporate test kitchen and training facility for the whole franchise, which is known for offering gourmet cupcakes that feature creative flavors, quality ingredients, and a family friendly vibe.

It all started as a dream to create a great tasting cupcake. In 2008, Jeff and his wife Brandy were visiting New York and Los Angeles and noticed cupcake only shops with lines of people waiting to buy cupcakes. “I asked myself, what is so great about this cupcake concept that has people lined up and they did not even taste that great,” says Martin. He previously had been a chef for high-end restaurants in Atlanta but once the couple relocated to the Kansas City area, he knew he wanted a different type of lifestyle but still follow his passion for baking.

To start his cupcake venture, they began testing different cupcake recipes until they perfected their favorite 10. “I had \$5,000 to start this business and had to decide if I should buy an oven or a sign, and decided the sign was more important and we could bake these cupcakes in our home,” says Martin. In the first week, they sold 100 cupcakes. Shortly thereafter they were selling 800-900 cupcakes a week. “Once our first child Lily was 6 months old we would use photos of her eating a cupcake on signage. That proved to be a very successful marketing tool!”

The Food Network soon called and invited Jeff to participate in their hit show, Cupcake Wars. Martin apparently forgot to add pumpkin to his pumpkin cardamom cupcake during an elimination challenge. Despite the mistake, the judges loved it anyway. He and his cupcakes have also been featured on the television show The View, made star-studded events such as the MTV Video Music Awards, and was also listed as one of the Top Ten Cupcake Places to try in the country by USA Today. Restaurant Business listed them as one of the 50 fastest-growing small chains in America.



CEO Jeff Martin



After being on the show, he opened several more stores in the Kansas City area and began to franchise his business. Now 9 years later, they have over 160 locations across the United States and 4 International locations in Dubai and Saudi Arabia. “We have done well with our expansion due to how inexpensive it is to get into this business. 90% of the owners are women. They are relationship and family oriented and that works well with this business model,” says Martin.

Jeff and Brandy were married 16 years ago on South Walton Beach and vacationed in this area with their children Lily and Jax for several years. They are now very proud to call this area home, with their primary home located in the Inlet Beach neighborhood.

They bake 18 flavors of cupcakes from scratch daily and now offer 15 flavors of small batch ice cream, which is setting the model for franchises company-wide. “Every new store we opened in the past 3 years has both cupcakes and ice cream. We also offer our most popular item: the Smallcakes Smash, where a customer gets

to pick any cupcake and two scoops of ice cream and we smash it together,” adds Martin. Signature flavors are simple cupcakes that people love, such as birthday cake: a vanilla cake with buttercream frosting, topped with sprinkles or cookies n cream;

but many also love the unique flavors like maple bacon and wedding cake. They have over 300 cupcake and ice cream proprietary and proven recipes and can ship their popular “Cupcake in a Jar” nationwide for those not near a location.

In 2015 Martin was asked to write a cookbook. Buttercream Dreams: Small Cakes, Big Scoops and Sweet Treats is kid and family friendly, featuring recipes for his cupcakes, ice cream, and other treats. “The art of the cupcake business is really keeping it fresh,” says Martin. “We are always inventing new offerings.”

Sudie Hector and her family are huge fans of the Smallcakes concept. “Each of us has our favorite but we love trying new flavors as well. The cupcakes are so fresh and delicious, we’ve never been disappointed. Just walking into Smallcakes makes me feel like a kid again!” she says.

Long term goals include growth and more growth. “In 2015 we had \$60 million in sales and in 2016 we did \$120 million in sales,” says Martin. What a delicious dream for the Martin family, franchise owners, and for cupcake and ice cream lovers everywhere.

Smallcakes 30A is located in the The Villages of South Walton at 10343 East County Highway 30A, Unit C112 in Seacrest. Call (850) 213-4037 or go to www.smallcakescupcakery.com.



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Your Health: Is It All in Your Gut?

BY DR. BART M. PRECOURT

Dr. Bart M. Precourt



When you get your gut health in balance, you get your life back. Poor gut health can and will lead to symptoms, sickness, and disease.

Gut health has received increasing attention lately, and for good reason. Some of the fastest growing sectors of the pharmaceutical industry are drugs for gut health. These include antacids, proton pump inhibitors (PPIs), and medications for heartburn, Crohn's, IBS, constipation, leaky gut, S.I.B.O., and many more.

Chances are you have a gut issue and may or may not realize it. Gut imbalances affect much more than just digestion: Allergies, asthma, skin issues like psoriasis and eczema, candida, urinary tract infections, weight gain, hormone imbalances, fatigue, depression, high blood pressure, immune deficiencies, and this list could literally go on to cover almost every health symptom we know of. Why? Your gut is the starting point of your health. Poor gut = poor health.

Here are 3 key points to understanding your gut health:

1. It starts with your stomach. This is where digestion begins and also where most problems begin. The cause is very simple: WEAK stomach acid! This is not a misprint. If you have heartburn, acid reflux, or indigestion, these are caused by a weakening of acid in your stomach. When your stomach acid is weakened over time from stress, processed food, and alcohol food cannot be broken down properly. Therefore, food sticks around longer and your symptoms of bloating and indigestion begin. Using antacids like Tums, Rolaids, Prilosec, or Nexium may make this problem worse.

What to do? Eat foods that enhance digestion. "Bitters" are good for digestion and include radishes, ginger, arugula, kale, turmeric, dark chocolate, and endives, to name a few. As a nutritionist, I suggest that virtually everyone use a digestive enzyme supplement before meals; and my patients are often surprised by the immediate benefits. Most often I suggest a whole food supplement called Zypan that contains HCl (hydrochloric acid), the primary stomach acid.

2. Small and Large intestines. This is what most people consider their "gut". This is also where more of the deeper issues are. Leaky gut, S.I.B.O., Crohn's, IBS, gluten issues, immune and skin issues, etc. It all starts here. This is where the gut flora resides and the quality of your gut flora will determine the quality of your health. Period! Why do so many people have gut issues? There are many reasons for this, yet one rises to the top. Antibiotics destroy our natural gut microbiome. Often the damage is permanent, so we have no choice but to methodically rebuild our gut flora. Antibiotics are often the direct cause of

conditions like candida, urinary tract infections, and many others.

What to do? The most common support for gut flora is using probiotics. This can be tricky though, because proper dosing, quality, and type of probiotic are important. I usually suggest working with a healthcare practitioner who is familiar with restoring gut flora and can identify where in the gut your issues lies and which probiotics will help. In addition to a probiotic supplement, eating fermented foods on a daily basis is key. Sauerkraut, kimchi, pickles, kombucha, kefir, and apple cider vinegar are a few good ones. If you look at this list and think to yourself "yikes... nope!" then finding the proper probiotic will be essential for you. Equally as important as your probiotic consumption is the quality and quantity of fiber you get daily. Fiber is technically what feeds your flora. The challenge here is that as your gut flora gets beat up over time, it becomes difficult to digest certain types of fiber, hence people avoid these important flora builders.

3. Regular elimination. The conversation that most of us don't have. "How is your elimination going?" THIS IS IMPORTANT! Emptying our bowel completely on a regular basis is critical. Constipation, diarrhea, etc. are signs of an imbalanced gut flora. Fatigue, immune deficiencies, and all of the symptoms I mentioned earlier can be attributed to poor elimination.

What to do? Home remedies can often get you in a bind, so my best advice is to work with a healthcare practitioner who is familiar with how to treat this properly. I often have my patients take 400mg of magnesium lactate before bed to treat constipation. Dehydration is another factor leading to infrequent elimination—make sure you are drinking enough water (minimum half your body weight in ounces) to help cleanse your body.

When you get your gut health in balance, you get your life back. Poor gut health can and will lead to symptoms, sickness, and disease. Do it, you're worth it!

Dr. Bart M. Precourt 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, FL at Balance Health Studio, www.balance30a.com. For a consultation contact Balance Health Studio at (850) 231-9288.



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Wally Sears: As the Shutter Flies

BY LIESEL SCHMIDT

While some find their greatest creative outlet at the meeting point between paintbrush and canvas or in the wet feel of clay taking shape in their fingers, others come alive behind the lens of a camera, seeing things with eyes that unearth the greatest beauty in even the smallest details. They sense movement, light, life, and nuance in ways that most of us fail to notice, capturing moments in time that can never be recreated, never exactly duplicated, with a focus on finding treasures that are priceless in their appeal and their meaning.

For Atlantic Beach-based Wally Sears, photography has always released his spirit. He comes by the affinity naturally, never having been formally trained within the structures of a curriculum whose adherence to the plan might stifle his eye. Though he occasionally takes classes to hone his technique and learn new processes that will further his understanding of his art, Sears prefers to keep his skills sharp by putting them to use everyday—photographing anything and everything that captures his interest. “I’ve loved photography for as long as I can remember, really,” Sears says. “It started back when I was a young boy, when I would watch my dad take photos with a camera he brought back from his tour of Germany in the Army. Watching him take pictures absolutely fascinated me, and I eventually got my own camera, a Konica.”

Shooting every subject imaginable from the interiors of homes and pieces from the furniture line created by his wife to some of the breathtaking scenery he sees in his travels, Sears creates images that seem to breathe with a sense of life and burst from the frame. It’s one of the very things he so greatly loves about photography, one of the things that



he feels make it so dynamic an art form. And while time and progress may seem to be phasing out the traditional ways of doing things, Sears still loves the time-intensive processes of photography before the advent of the digital age. “If I had my way, I would prefer using old-school methods of photography, with film-loaded cameras whose images had to be developed with time and care, not in the instantaneous way they are now,” Sears admits. “There’s just something about the investment being made into those photos—

things become more deliberate, more special somehow. It’s much slower and more thought is put into each shot. It becomes much more about the quality of each shot rather than how many shots are being taken.”

Regardless of whether he’s using a digital camera or loading it up old-school style, however, Sears’s passion for

camera has already taken every shot there is to be taken, there are still a few that Sears would love to take from his mind’s eye and see them emerge within frame. “If someone told me that I had one last photo to take, I’d want it to be of my boys walking down the beach with their surfboards in the early morning light.”

It’s a priceless piece, in a world where everything seems to have a monetary value attached. But images such as these are the points of connection we have to each other, to places, to memories and times in our lives. They’re the very soul of photography; and for Wally Sears, those are the images that make one huge and unconnected world develop into something beautiful.

For more information on Wally Sears, visit www.wallysears.com. An upcoming exhibit of Wally Sears photography pieces will be held at Anne Hunter Galleries, located at 25 Central Square, Santa Rosa Beach, FL 32459. For more information, visit www.annehuntergalleries.com.

his work is apparent in every piece; and it’s that ability to translate the world around him into a work of art that has made him successful as a professional photographer. Now working from a studio he and his wife created within the converted Richmond Hotel in Jacksonville, Sears has built his reputation as a renowned artist over the course of the last ten years, taking what was once a hobby and turning it into his life’s work. He allows the camera to lead him, letting the shutter fly as he catalogues his travels, shoots events for clients, and studies the light to find the perfect vantage point in a commissioned piece. Each shot is a chance to create something special, to capture a moment in time that will be treasured forever. And while one might assume that someone who’s spent so much time behind the



LIFE DEFINED



U2 · 79 NONESUCH WAY

This stunning 3,145 square-foot home, designed by Eric Watson, features 4 bedrooms plus a double-bunk room and 4.5 baths. Chelsea Frazer Interior Design created a masterpiece with the interior furnishings, fixtures and finishes. The home is just steps to the Caliza Pool & Restaurant, Town Center, Fitness Center, and Nature Preserve.



U8 · 52 SPICE BERRY ALLEY

Framing Arboleda Park, this 3,297 square-foot home is designed by renowned Khoury-Vogt Architects. The home features two master suites, two guest bedrooms, bunk area, 4.5 baths, media room, park side loggia, two-car garage, courtyard loggia, and pool. Buyers have the opportunity to make many of the interior finish selections for the home.



E6 · 57 GOVERNORS COURT

This 4-bedroom, 4.5-bath courtyard home features a courtyard with dipping pool, detached master suite, junior master suite, living and dining rooms, and gourmet kitchen. The master suite has 25-foot vaulted cypress ceilings, a jetted tub, sunken shower, and private poolside seating. Two guest bedrooms, are located on the 2nd floor.



J12 · 31 NORTH CHARLES STREET

Located just north of Fonville Press, this Somerset Home, designed by Architect Gary Justiss, features 4-bedrooms, 4.5-baths, a generous courtyard with a pool, open loggias, and second floor flex space and den. Buyers can make personal interior finish selections for the home.



U29 · 45 SUGARLOAF ALLEY

Located just north of Town Center near Caliza Pool & Restaurant, this Somerset Home, designed by Gary Justiss, features 3 bedrooms, 3.5 baths, bunkroom, with a spacious center courtyard and pool and two-car garage. Buyers can make personal interior finish selections for the home.



A6 · 50 SEVEN WELLS COURT

This 2,672-square-foot courtyard home is designed by renowned architect Robert Orr. A generous dipping pool, built-in seating and an outdoor fireplace ensure the courtyard, encompassed with greenery, will be used every season. On the second floor, two spacious guest suites open into a louvered gallery and a spacious rooftop terrace.

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Starr Designer: Sublime Original – Leading the Movement In New Urban Interiors

BY ANNE HUNTER

The sand roads were still being paved on Main Street in Rosemary Beach when a young architect and designer stepped on the scene. Over the next two decades, she would design the first homes in Rosemary Beach, Draper Lake, and Alys Beach, before launching an interior design and private label furniture line.

The year was 1996 and Julia Starr Sanford, the founding principal of Starr Sanford Design Associates, a residential design and development firm based in North Florida, had been courted to come to Rosemary Beach to join a small team in realizing the vision for the world's second new urbanist town. "I was brought to Rosemary Beach to help foster interest and to illustrate the intent of various development codes," says the designer, whose bold modernist sense of style graces everything she touches.

"Since our beginnings in Rosemary Beach, we have worked to fill a demand for carefully conceived, legacy homes. The desire, by a few, for enduring and exceptionally crafted homes provides us a platform for timeless architecture. We strive to create sustaining and nurturing environments." Sanford's architecture recognizes an environmentally sensitive approach to residential design with "outdoor living rooms" enhanced by natural climate control, verandas, balconies, large windows, and louvered shutters. The homes that she designed for Rosemary Beach were distinctive in their attention to historical proportion and detail; the designs are distinguished by their old world techniques of wood joinery, heavy timber framing, and authentic detail.

Ten years later, Sanford would be selected again: This time to be one of ten international designers tasked with setting the vision for the first homes in Alys Beach along the pedestrian thoroughfare. Lots were hand picked for each designer and together they spent ten days in the ballroom of the historic Raleigh Hotel in Miami determining the look and feel of Alys. "We worked closely with DPZ and the founders of Alys Beach to design a deliberately restrained community of homes that are timeless, built to last hundreds of years, and in concert with their climate and coastal geography," says Sanford,

who defined her style of new urbanist architecture on 30-A by blending the regional traditions of the South with the Colonial architecture of the West Indies.

Also known for her feature film designs for Twentieth Century Fox, Universal, MGM, and Walt Disney Pictures, Sanford's entertainment-industry portfolio includes movie set designs for legendary films like *The Legend of Bagger Vance* and *My Cousin Vinny*. Take that and meld it with her well-known use of artisan-crafted, natural materials in her buildings and interiors, and it comes as no surprise that Sanford would bring her simple, sensual, and sustainable style even closer to home.

In 2014, together with her team of furniture and interior designers, the new urbanist architect and designer

curated a collection of "coastal chic" interiors and furnishings for her latest design venture, Sublime Original (SO), an interior design and private label furniture line.

Designing furniture was the offspring of an architectural project. "We were designing Mahogany Bay, a boutique hotel in Belize for the Hilton Curio Collection, and established a workshop there to prototype several pieces of furniture for the 400-room inn. We felt passionate about reinvigorating the wood craftsmanship in Belize with its quality, durability and sustainably harvested wood." Now, through SO, Sanford is bringing her creations from Central America to rest of the world. In 2016, she began importing the line to the United States.

Like Sanford, the forms of her furniture lines are bold and modernist with a sensual side; hand-rubbed finishes with natural curves complement SO's Belgian linen upholstery and visceral interior style. "Whereas the foundations of our architecture are traditional and structures are classically proportioned, the interior realms are very private and personal. SO shares the philosophy of enduring quality and legacy craftsmanship with fine art that folds into its ensemble. The art

adds original expression and underscores our reliance on natural resources while celebrating nature in all of its forms," says Sanford of her carefully curated collection of artists.

"With SO, we're blending casual yet sophisticated. It's seagrass and suede, ancient and modern. Like its namesake, Sublime Original is destined to speak to that which is elemental but cannot be named or possessed."

You can find out more about Julia Starr Sanford by going to starrsanford.com and sublimeoriginal.com.



Photo by Nate Ebert

The 30-A Real Estate Market Continues Upward Price Trends

A 12-Year Review of Home Price Appreciation Along Scenic 30-A

BY ERIN ODEN

The 30-A home market has become well over a billion dollar annual industry. Dollar sales volume reached over \$1.2 billion for 2016, 7% over 2015.

Pricing trends along the 30-A corridor have experienced an impressive 6-year uptick. Taking a closer look at the history of price trends from the peak of our market to today provides greater insight into our current position.

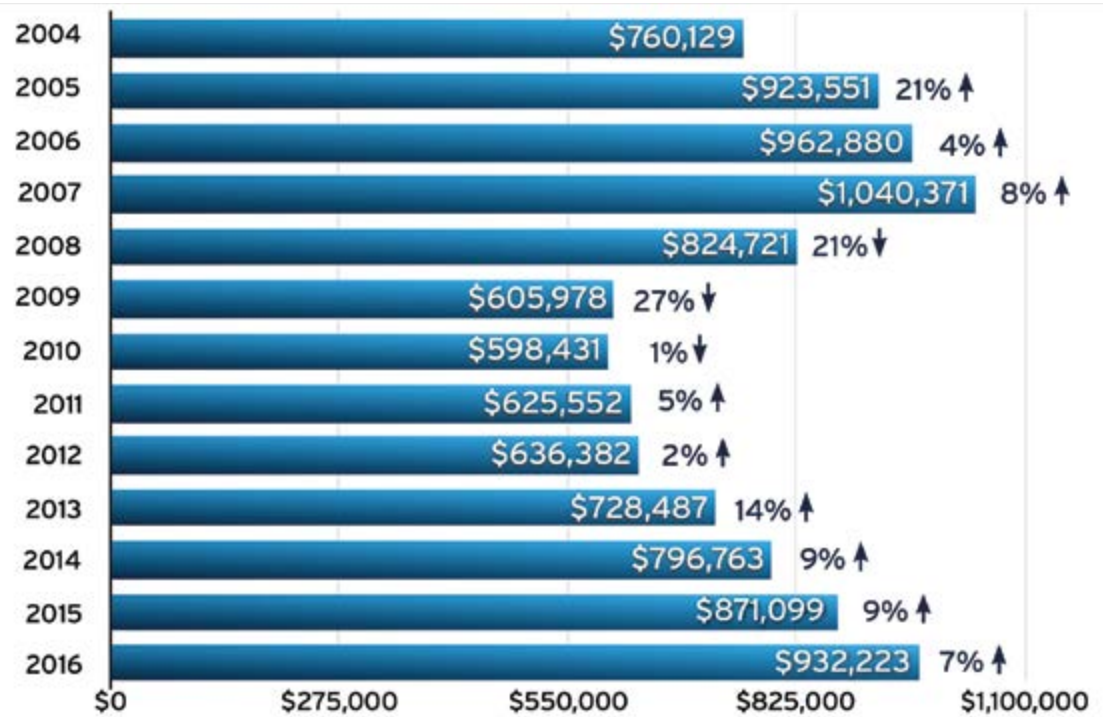
Average sales price of all Scenic 30-A closed residences in 2016 was \$932,000, up a strong 7% over 2015, and a notable 28% three-year increase, yet still below 2006-2007. In looking back at the history of 30-A's yearly average sales prices, this is in fact the highest average sales price we have seen since 2007.

We expect the 30-A market to remain healthy and in strong demand. While the future of the real estate market is certainly unpredictable, knowing where the market is today and where it has been provides an advantage in assessing our real estate opportunity.

The positive appreciation of the past six years is great news for all owners. Sellers have insight into their current opportunity and equity position, and the upward tick of prices is also encouraging new for buyers in assessing what appreciation they can anticipate based on current trending.

We anticipate the 30-A market pricing will continue to strengthen in the coming seasons. New flight additions are being planned for the ECP Northwest Florida Beaches International Airport, giving opportunity for more to visit our coastal area. Coupled with the current trends, this gives us confidence that enthusiasm for our market will continue in 2017.

AVERAGE SALE PRICES FOR 30-A HOMES AND CONDOS



Statistics according to data gathered from FLEX MLS for combined residential properties (detached homes, attached units and condos). Deemed reliable but not guaranteed. Prepared compliments of Erin Oden, Coastal Luxury.



Erin Oden is the principal broker and owner of Coastal Luxury and maintains a strong emphasis on intimate market knowledge and expertise in the luxury and gulf-front market. Erin can be reached at (850) 502-1220 or erin@coastalluxury.com. Or stop by Coastal Luxury, located directly on 30-A, the first office east of Alys Beach. Search all available properties at coastalluxury.com/SEARCH



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30A Townhomes

BY JESSICA HOLTHAUS BADOUR

For people looking to own a little piece of paradise right here on 30-A, there is a rare ownership opportunity currently happening in the heart of Seagrove Beach through Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices Beach Properties of Florida: 30A Townhomes. The new luxury townhome community in Seagrove Beach has been under construction since late 2016.

Considered an exceptionally rare find in South Walton, 30A Townhomes offers modern three- and four-bedroom attached residential homes in two- and three-story layouts. Each offers premium features, including upscale coastal finishes, garages, fenced-in backyards and private porches situated on Scenic Highway 30A. Quality and energy-conscious construction, such as firewalls installed between each home, ensures soundproofing and safety. The initial phase includes 11 multi-story townhomes and a neighborhood swimming pool.

“New build opportunities in our area are becoming scarce, especially in established and popular beach communities like Seagrove,” says Price Rainer, owner of Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices Beach Properties of Florida. “The combination of exclusive features, amenities and prime location near Seaside, WaterColor, and WaterSound Beach, makes 30A Townhomes a one-of-a-kind opportunity.

“The lifestyle at 30A Townhomes is one of both luxury and convenience,” continues Rainer. “A low maintenance, upscale community maintained by an association – all located within walking and biking distance to beaches, shopping, dining, and recreation. By contracting sooner rather than later, owners have an opportunity to customize their homes as construction continues.”

From any of the perfectly located properties at 30A Townhomes, residents are within minutes of the breathtaking sugar sand beach, the rare coastal eco-system of Eastern Lake, or a quick visit to Seaside, WaterColor, or The Hub for restaurants, shopping, and entertainment. In addition to the community’s amenities, there are plans to add 30A Townhomes as a stop on the Sunshine Shuttle 30A trolley – giving residents access to the beaches, boutiques, restaurants, and communities along 30-A without ever needing a car.

“There are few quality townhome developments along 30A, let alone new construction. That, combined with its exceptional location and its unusually affordable price point for this area, makes it a highly desirable property,” Rainer points out.

Without many townhomes in this area, the new community at 30A Townhomes provides an opportunity

Each offers premium features, including upscale coastal finishes, garages, fenced-in backyards and private porches situated on Scenic Highway 30A.

for a lower price point than a single-family home, as well as lower costs to maintain.

“These townhomes offer buyers a way to experience living on 30-A at a fraction of the price. It is an incredible opportunity for first time homeowners or investors looking to break into the 30-A market,” Rainer says. “Townhomes are an ideal investment property, as a short- or long-term rental in a vacation destination renowned for its beauty, accessibility, and long-term investment potential.”

But the included features are what make 30A Townhomes unique.

“In a typical new construction scenario, a property owner purchases a base model and is then shown multiple design features that add to the home’s cost,” Rainer says. “With 30A Townhomes, premium design features come standard, making it an affordable, luxury property.”

The first phase of construction is slated for completion in late spring, and models will be open by the time this issue has gone to print. Introductory ownership starts in the upper \$300s. With all phases complete, 30A Townhomes will offer 26 exclusive units in one of 30-A’s most prominent communities.

Founded in 2007, Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices Beach Properties of Florida leads the market in 30-A sales. Since joining the Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices brokerage network in 2016, the agency has grown exponentially, expanding into Panama City Beach and St. George Island and continuing to expand into additional markets. For more information about 30A Townhomes, call (850) 217-2842, email 30ATownhomes@BPFLA.com or visit www.30ATownhomes.com.



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Blue Title Takes the Stress out of the Closing Experience

BY KEMPTEN TAYLOR



FOUR COMMON MISTAKES MADE DURING THE CLOSING AND TITLE PROCESS:

1. I got 99 problems but... maybe I only really have 1!

In real estate, as with most things in life, TIMING is everything. There are always issues to resolve related to a closing.

The good news is that almost every single one of them can be solved, IF it's raised in a timely manner. Many times parties either ignore or are unaware of the timing deadlines found in their contracts and loan documents. And when deadlines to raise issues are missed, things that were previously easily resolved can become major showstoppers. Don't let this happen! Map out all of the major deadlines in your documents and make sure all parties are explicitly aware. Then, be sure that all due diligence can be properly conducted and reviewed in the allowed timeframe. Lastly, ensure your title company is proactively working the timelines, not merely reactively responding.

2. I said replace the toilets. Exactly, I fixed the 2 leaky faucets just like you said.

What? Not only is timing important in raising issues, but CLARITY with regard to required

REPAIRS is crucial. If you're buying or selling a home that needs repairs completed prior to closing, you'll want to be painfully explicit about several things: when and who will determine what needs to be repaired; who will complete the repairs; who will inspect the repairs; how much will be spent; and what happens if the repairs are not complete by the closing date. Detailing these exact expectations will eliminate a substantial amount of high blood pressure, hurt feelings, lost money and years off your life when closing finally arrives.

3. Whose money is this anyway?

Many times the title company finds itself holding FUNDS POST-CLOSING in an escrow agreement awaiting one of the parties to complete some task related to the closing. It's imperative that the trigger to release the funds is detailed and objective. For example, you'd much rather say that funds will be released when the county (an independent third party) issues a certificate of occupancy (a verifiable document) than that state funds will be released when the buyer/seller deems the structure complete. In the end, you want the release of funds to be an obvious foregone conclusion that the parties merely document has occurred, rather than a protracted rehashing of what was actually required.

4. That's really just not good for me.

When setting the CLOSING DATE in the contract or loan documents, plan ahead! Yes, even pull out the calendar and make sure you are actually available. Many times the other parties are amicable to moving a closing date later to accommodate your schedule, but you can't count on it. They don't have to. And you don't want to rely on a favor from people you likely don't know to avoid default under the contract. In planning, you'll help yourself to avoid times you know you will be traveling, bank holidays, late Friday afternoons when payoffs are involved and the last day of the month when a new loan is being issued.

Certainly, there are many other pitfalls to avoid and opportunities to maximize in your next real estate deal. Bottom line, surround yourself with a great team that is committed to making your real estate transaction a success. There will most certainly be issues to address, but with planning, proactive communication and a competent group of professionals at your side, you'll come out way ahead...and with a few less gray hairs!

Blue Title is a top resource for title insurance and closing needs for those on the Emerald Coast. Blue Title is located at 10952 E County Hwy 30A, Suite B, Inlet Beach, Florida 32413. For additional information call (850) 960-0016 or visit www.blue-title.com.

If you are about to take the plunge on a new home or vacation property, Blue Title is available and ready to help you avoid any mistakes during the closing and title process. Blue Title provides closing and title services throughout the state of Florida. From researching tax issues in the pre-contract phase to hosting everyone on closing day, Blue Title offers the panhandle experienced and effective closing and title services.

Blue Title's Dylan Taylor, Operating Partner, and Lisa Shaffer, Licensed Title Agent give us some valuable advice on avoiding common blunders throughout the closing process.



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Pre-Marital Planning

BY KIMBERLY WATSON SEWELL AND FRANKLIN H. WATSON

When contemplating marriage, remember that love may be blind, but it is wise to proceed with both eyes wide open. This wisdom is never truer than when that marriage will form a blended family. After all, both parties are blending their respective assets and, oftentimes, their respective children.

It is estimated that one in three remarriages end in divorce, especially when children are involved. So, how does a couple “unblend” their assets when things do not work out as planned? Further, if the remarriage stays intact when one spouse dies, what happens with the assets of the deceased spouse?

In light of these realities, the parties should consider negotiating and signing a premarital agreement before saying “I do” that addresses these issues. Once the premarital agreement is signed, it takes effect when the marriage is legal. The agreement should clarify asset ownership during the marriage, asset disposition upon divorce, spousal support, and asset division upon death.

Once those details are covered, be mindful to ensure that the agreement will withstand future legal challenges. To help make the agreement bullet-proof, ensure that both parties:

- Provide full written disclosure of their assets and liabilities;
- Provide adequate time for negotiation and reflection well in advance of the wedding day;
- Ensure that the agreement is voluntary and not unconscionable (i.e., unfair);
- Ensure that each party understands the consequences of the agreement; and
- Ensure that each party has independent legal representation.

While, admittedly, not very “romantic,” a premarital agreement can start the remarriage off on the right footing. Not only will both future spouses know what their future rights and responsibilities will be, but their children will know the rules of the road, too.

When it comes to assets, certain rights that attach only after the marriage is official need to be addressed. One common asset that requires careful attention is your retirement fund. If it is an ERISA retirement fund, then your surviving spouse is automatically the primary beneficiary, even if your own children have been designated as your primary beneficiaries. Accordingly, your premarital agreement should address this and provide that your new spouse agrees to “waive” these ERISA rights after the wedding.

Another area of concern involves gifts or an inheritance received after the wedding. For example, if you will inherit the family business from your parents, then this needs to be addressed in your premarital agreement to insure that it will be your “separate property” when received.

Naturally, the estate plans of both parties will need to be created or revised after the wedding so that they are consistent with the agreed disposition of assets upon the death of one spouse or after the deaths of both spouses. Thereafter, careful attention is required to ensure that all separate and marital assets are titled and designated to pass as planned.

If you are married already, consider a “post-nuptial agreement” to address all of the “premarital agreement” matters.



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Playing the Right Note

BY TOM FITZPATRICK



Tom Fitzpatrick and Chris Stills

Musician Chris Stills has become a regular at the 30-A Songwriters Festival. Based in Los Angeles, Stills finds 30-A to be a refreshing destination to visit and play guitar each year. His music is strongly influenced by his father Stephen Stills (of famed rock group Crosby, Stills, and Nash) and his mother French singer Véronique Sanson. He began piano at an early age, then guitar at 12.

Stills's outgoing, friendly nature is evident in his performances. In addition to music, he's landed some acting roles in Hollywood and France. While taking a break from this year's festival, we had a chance to head to Sharks Tooth for a round of golf.

Chris loves any chance to get to the course. It was his father who introduced him to the game while on a family vacation to Disney World. His first golf outing made little impression on him. However, the next day the golf bug bit him.

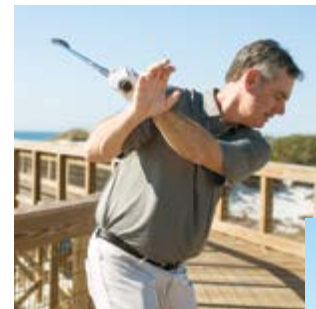
While Chris and Stephen were waiting for their guest, a white Ferrari Testarossa came screeching down the club's tree-lined entrance. At the valet, the car door opened and out popped pro golfer Greg Norman. Now that got Chris's attention. "Golf must be cool if this charismatic guy plays it and also drives a Ferrari," he thought.

Chris said it sounded like a sonic boom when Greg hit the driver. That memorable introduction was enough to convince him to take up the game.

Today, Christopher is a wonderfully talented musician. He's never had formal golf training, but his textbook swing can smash the ball 280 yards off the tee.

I've had the chance to play golf with some notable musicians. They always seem to carry tempo to the course easily. Chris is no exception – he has tempo both on stage and on the course!

CONFUSED AFTER A BAD DAY OF GOLF?

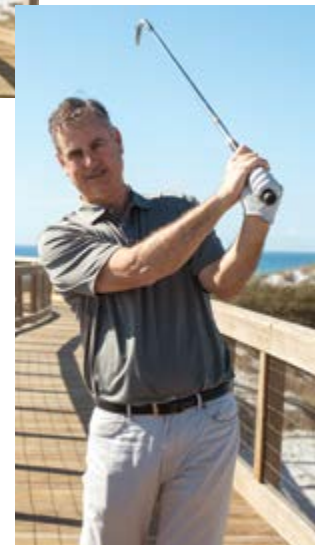


Simplify matters with this two-step drill:

- **Backswing:** Stretch your left arm across your chest, towards the right shoulder.

- **Downswing:** Stretch your right arm across your chest, towards the left shoulder.

You'll notice that your upper arms stay fairly snug to your chest through the swing, which contributes to great timing.



Tom Fitzpatrick has conducted corporate golf events, worked for David Leadbetter, and is an active realtor with Scenic Sotheby's Intl Realty. Reach him at (850) 225-4674 or visit tom.scenicir.com



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Sincerely,
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Paradise By The Sea - Lot 20
\$6,900,000 | Gulf Front Lot in Gated Community
Located between Alys Beach & Rosemary Beach



125 Lifeguard Loop
\$839,000 | 4BR | 4BA
Seacrest Beach near Town Center



27 Michaela Lane
\$499k | 4BR | 3BA
Walking distance to the gulf and Gulf Place
Town Center



Lot 11 Buena Vista Blvd in Sand Cliffs
\$759k
Gated Community walking distance to
Rosemary and Alys Beach



The Preserve - Lot 101
\$189,000
Lot fronting 30-A in Gated Community



1503 Marsh Point Lane in Wild Heron
\$379,000

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