

the thirty-a REVIEW™

of 30-... es • things

BUD & ALLEY'S



1986 - 2011

25
YEARS!



Dave Rauschkolb and daughter Carlin

INSIDE:

30-A's Finest Dining
Fun In the Sun
Art, Culture & Entertainment
Travel to Costa Rica
Golf Tips & More!

Win a Dinner for Two at one of 30-A's Finest Restaurants... register inside.

Going Green

is a term that is becoming more commonly talked about today. However, the vacation rental industry is one area where you rarely hear this term. Beach Seekers and Sandcastle Escapes, in South Walton County, are working to take the first steps toward Going Green. Chandler Williams, Director of Operations for these two companies explains, "We understand this is a huge undertaking and are going to start with baby steps to improve our impact on the environment and increase awareness." Guests don't only come here to visit amusement parks and such; it is the pure attraction to the untouched environment. The powdery white sand, the emerald green waters, the nature preserves, and endless bike and hiking paths are what people are here to see and enjoy.

Williams has begun to greatly modify the housekeeping process and procedures for Beach Seekers and Sandcastle Escapes. For example, schedules for the housekeepers are emailed weekly rather than being printed, to eliminate paper usage. Linens for the homes are packaged in reusable plastic storage bins and the used linen is returned to the laundry department in cloth laundry bags, instead of plastic garbage bags. This eliminates the use of up to 5 or 6 bags per home that would otherwise be thrown away after each use.



While in the homes the housekeeping staff is encouraged to use refillable bottles for cleaning supplies rather than continuously purchasing new cleaners to be thrown away after each use. Williams hopes to move to making it mandatory that cleaning supplies, used in the homes, be more environmentally friendly and less toxic. He is currently researching and testing new green cleaners and products.

The housekeepers stock each home with organic soaps, lotions, and after sun aloe that is all produced locally and custom made for Beach Seekers and Sandcastle Escapes. Soaps are packaged in 100% recycled paper and the logo is printed with soy ink. The toilet paper and paper towels are Greenwise, 100% recycled products, and are purchased locally through Publix grocery stores. "This eliminates a shipping impact and of course the product is made from recycled materials, but



most importantly we are giving back to our local community," Williams explains. Guests are given a starter set of household necessities and are encouraged to purchase items that are environmentally friendly from local businesses for the remainder of their stay.

The next step that Williams took was to team up with Walton County on the 'blue bag' recycling initiative. Each home receives a blue bag for recyclable materials to be collected on trash pick up day. The blue bag concept has also been implemented in the offices of both Beach Seekers, in Seagrove Beach, and Sandcastle Escapes, in Miramar Beach. Also, all trash bags that are placed in the homes are made of biodegradable materials rather than typical non-biodegradable plastic bags.

Unused food and household items, left in the homes, get returned to the offices and are then donated to area food banks for distribution at their consent. When towels become unusable due to wear or stains, they are donated to the Alaqua Animal Refuge for their use. "We hope that we can help out the community with things that are usually discarded by donating them for others to use," states Williams.

From the maintenance side of things for Beach Seekers and Sandcastle Escapes we talked with Lloyd Williams, Director of Maintenance. Lloyd explains, "The first steps the maintenance department has taken is to have work orders for maintenance



persons emailed to them rather than each one being printed. Light bulbs in the homes are being replaced as needed with the more energy efficient Compact Fluorescent Light (CFLs). The next step we have planned is to switch the batteries we use in the homes with rechargeable rather than throwing them away after each use."

As for what Beach Seekers and Sandcastle Escapes are doing in the customer relations department, we spoke with Wes Shelton. Shelton explains, "Guests make their reservations and receive email confirmation of their arrangements. There is an email for the deposit request, final payment and one for the check-in instructions. This eliminates over 10 pages of documents being printed and three separate mail outs." Guests are emailed information pertaining to 'Leave No Trace' Walton County's initiative to keep the beaches clean, ways to best control the thermostat in the home and in the refrigerator for most energy conservation and guests are asked to hang their towels to air-dry and reuse them.

Taylor Williams, president, and Justin Shelton, vice president, of Beach Seekers and Sandcastle Escapes; explained the steps they are taking in the management area of the industry. "Homeowners receive their statements via email and rental income is done by direct deposit rather than monthly mail outs. Owners also have the option to log on to the website to check the status of their rental property and download past monthly statements as well" Shelton explained.




Beach Seekers and Sandcastle Escapes are hoping to do their part in helping improve the environment one step at a time. Their impact may be small at first, but their ultimate goal is to raise environmental awareness!

You can reach Sandcastle Escapes or Beach Seekers by phone: 1-866-934-4240 or check out the web site at www.beachseekers.com/30A

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OOH LA LA
ONE
PIECES



letter from the publisher

A GOOD SEASON



At the risk of speaking too soon, I will go out on a limb and say it's looking like a good season on the beach this year. The crowds are back, families are having fun, creating new memories again and the water, sand and dunes are looking as beautiful as ever.

It's almost a miracle when we look back at this time last year and consider the horror we all felt at the great unknown of the BP Deep Horizon Oil Spill. None of us (including the experts in Washington) knew what the impact of this spill was going to be. Not to mention that we couldn't even get it capped for what seemed like an absurd eternity.

At any rate, my point is that Mother Nature has a way of working things out, despite our greatest efforts to give her a beating. Let's hope that we (and she) will be kind for a while to our little spot of emerald beauty on Florida's panhandle.

In the mean time, the sun is hot and the water is cool and the businesses, restaurants and communities of 30-A are eager to please. There is so much cool stuff to do on 30-A and so much cultural and musical enrichment for kids and adults alike that one only has to look as far as they can walk to find something great.

Until next issue, we wish you the best time possible on 30-A. We hope that you enjoy using this magazine as a resource for your fun, entertainment, fine dining and great memories at the beach. Life is short, so grab a little piece of heaven on 30-A.

Cheers,

Miles K. Neiman

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about the cover

Photo by Susanna Bartoldus
Pictured: Dave Rauschkolb and daughter Carlin in front of Bud and Alley's Hat from Duckies Shop of Fun in Seaside, FL

Go to www.ThirtyAReview.com to view the entire publication online.

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Showbiz and Events in May and June

ALYS BEACH

Mother's Day Brunch at Caliza Restaurant

Sunday, May 8, 10:30-2:30 pm
Bring your family and celebrate Mother's Day at Alys Beach! Executive Chef Ed Reese has created a special menu just for mom! Please call 850-213-5700 to make reservations.

Fashion HOPE's IMPACT

May 21 at 6 pm in Central Park at Alys Beach
Series of fashion shows against human trafficking. Please visit fashionhope.org for ticket information.

Sinfonia Goes Pops at Alys Beach

Sunday, May 29, 7:30 pm
Enjoy the orchestral sounds of Sinfonia Gulf Coast under the palms in the Alys Beach Amphitheatre. Bring blankets or low back chairs. Concert is free and open to the public.

Cinema Under the Stars

Tuesdays, May 31, 8 pm
Bring blankets and low back chairs to enjoy How to Train Your Dragon in the Amphitheatre.
Tuesdays, June 7, 14, 21, 28, 8 pm
Bring blankets and low back chairs to enjoy a family friendly movie in the Amphitheatre. 7-Alpha and Omega, 14-Nanny McPhee Returns, 21-Legend of the Guardians: The Owls of Ga'Hoole, 28-Megamind

Sandcastle Building Lessons

Wednesdays, 9-11am. June 1, 8, 15, 22, 29
Join local master sand sculptor Mark Flynn and learn how to build towers, walls, and arches like a pro.

Summer Concert Series

Wednesdays, June 1, 8, 15, 22, 29, 6-8 pm
Bring your dancing shoes and join us for local and regional tunes in the Amphitheatre.

Alice's Adventures in Wonderland

Thursdays, June 2, 9, 16, 23, 30, 6-7 pm
Presented by The Seaside Repertory. From the moment Alice falls down a rabbit hole into the zany world of Wonderland, the fun never stops...Bring the family and low back chairs to enjoy!

Digital Graffiti at Alys Beach

Saturday, June 11, 8:30 pm-midnight
Digital Graffiti is a celebration of digital artistry from all over the world. Join Alys Beach as we open our town to showcase the fusion of design, technology, and architecture. Purchase tickets online at www.digitalgraffiti.com

ROSEMARY BEACH

West Indies Market

May 7 & 8, June 11 & 12, 11:00 am - 6:00 pm, town center lawns
FREE
850-278-2032

Rosemary Beach Spring Writer's Conference

May 11 - 14, Town Hall
For fee info and registration, visit www.conferenceforwriters.com
850-278-2032

7th Annual Rosemary Beach Open Tennis Tournament

May 12 - 15, Rosemary Beach Racquet Club
For registration info, call 850-278-2061

"Kids Rock The Block!" Party

May 31, Western Green & Gigi's
6:00 - 8:00 pm, FREE
850-278-2032

Children's Theatre - "Pinocchio Commedia"

Presented by The Rep Theatre
June 1, 8, 15, 22 & 29, North Barrett Square, 6:30 pm, FREE
850-278-2900

Moonlight & Movies

June 2, 9, 16, 23 & 30, Western Green, 8:15 pm, FREE
850-278-2900

"Once Upon A Thyme" in Rosemary Beach

June 3, 7, 10, 14, 17, 21, 24 & 28, Town Hall lawn, 10:00 am
FREE
850-278-2900

Starlight Ballet

June 19, St. Augustine Green, 7:30 pm, FREE
850-278-2900

SEASIDE

"First Friday" ArtWalk

Friday, May 6, 5-8 pm
Friday, June 3, 5-8 pm
Ruskin Place & Central Square
Enjoy live music and view beautiful works of art and artist demos at the galleries and shops of Ruskin Place and select Central Square merchants.

Seaside Farmers Market

Saturdays, May 7, 14, 21 & 28, 9A-1 pm
Saturdays, June 4, 11, 18 & 25, 8A-12 pm - Amphitheater
Get your pick of fresh produce, baked goods, dairy products, native plants and other unique offerings during our Market on Saturday mornings. Find local specialties that will help sustain our growers! Enjoy special cooking demos and activities sure to liven up your morning! Held behind Raw & Juicy.

ArtsQuest Fine Arts Festival

Thursday-Sunday, May 6-8 - Seaside
The 23rd Annual ArtsQuest Fine Arts Festival continues on Mother's Day weekend in Seaside. Don't miss over 120 international artists, along with multiple stages of music, theatre performances, KidZone and a Walton County student art exhibit. The ArtsQuest Fine Arts Festival, sponsored in part by the Beaches of South Walton, is the largest of the many events and programs produced by the Cultural Arts Association as part of its mission to support the arts in Walton County through leadership, advocacy, funding, programs and education

The Stinky Cheese Man

Mondays, May 23 & 30, 7:30 pm
Mondays, June 6, 13, 20 & 27, 7:30 pm - Seaside Amphitheater
Join the REP for a magical children's theatre performance in the Seaside Amphitheater. Each Monday night throughout the Summer, enjoy an educational and entertaining experience for kids of all ages! For more details on the REP, visit: www.seasiderep.org.

Sand Sculpting with Sand Odyssey

Thursday, May 26, 1-3 pm
Thursdays, June 2, 9, 16, 23 & 30, 1-3 pm - Seaside Beach
Thursday afternoons feature a continued tradition this summer filled with all things sand, as Seaside offers free sand sculpting lessons by sand master Mark Flynn from Sand Odyssey. Learn exciting techniques on how to construct a sculpture that will wow your friends and family. Pick up your wristband from Seaside Beach before the event, as space is limited.

Memorial Weekend Concert: The Dirty Guv'nah's with special guest Light Pilot

Saturday, May 28, 7 pm - Seaside Amphitheater
Kick start our summer season with this concert signifying the beginning of another very busy summer of events at Seaside!

Central Square Cinema

Sunday, May 29, 8 pm
Fridays, June 3, 10, 17 & 24, 8 pm - Seaside Amphitheater
Grab your blankets and head to the Amphitheater for a movie under the stars.

Stories by the Sea

Mondays-Fridays, June 1-30, 4 pm
Join the Seaside Repertory Theatre as we present a one-of-a-kind storytelling experience for children of all ages. Each day will offer a new story and there might even be opportunities for your participation!

Seaside Summer Concert Series

Wednesdays, June 1, 8, 15, 22 & 29, 7 pm - Seaside Amphitheater
Celebrate the summer season with your friends and neighbors as we welcome the sounds of some of the regions top musical acts to Seaside. Music will fill Central Square and entertain guests of all ages.

WATERCOLOR

Mother's Day Brunch at Fish Out of Water

May 8, 2011 from 9 am to 1 pm
Treat Mom special on Mother's Day by having brunch at Fish Out of Water. For reservations contact Fish Out of Water at 850.534.5050

Memorial Weekend Events at WaterColor Inn & Resort

Join us at WaterColor Inn & Resort to Kick off the Summer.

May 27, 2011, 5 - 8 pm
Live Music at the BeachClub Upstairs Bar

May 28, 2011, 10 am - 4 pm, Activities for Kids on the BeachClub Pool Deck (fee associated):
10 am - 12 pm, Sand Art
12 pm - 2 pm, Airbrush Tattoos
2 pm - 4 pm, Sandy Candy
5 pm - 8 pm, Live Music at the BeachClub Upstairs Bar

May 29, 2011, 12 - 5 pm, Activities for Kids on the BeachClub Pool Deck, Tie Dye T-shirts and Airbrush Tattoos, Music: DJ Spinning Tunes on the BeachClub Pool Deck
4 - 6 pm, YOLO Board Shotgun Race on Western Lake - Call 850.534.5970 to make your Team Reservation, information & fee. (Fee includes 2011 Memorial Day YOLO Race T-shirt.)
Beer, Wine, and Soft Drinks will be available for purchase
8:30 - 10 pm, Sunset Movie "Gulliver's Travels" on the BeachClub Pool Deck; Popcorn & Glow sticks will be available for purchase. The BeachClub Grille will remain open until 8:30 pm; Beverages available throughout the Movie.

Call of the Wild

Wild Olives Wine & Cheese at Fonville

BY LAUREN GALL

Most people would be surprised to learn that a native tree along the Emerald Coast is the wild olive tree. But Ivy Trovas and her husband, Chris, knew this simple fact, and thought that using that in their business name would not only be appropriate for their Mediterranean inspired market, but would also pay homage to the area in which it resides. Hence, Wild Olives Market in Rosemary Beach was born in 2006 and quickly became a success in the area. But the ambitious couple didn't just stop there. Upon acquiring an interest in Alys Beach, in May, 2010 Wild Olives Wine & Cheese at Fonville, was the next venture to occur, after Alys Beach had been operating the Fonville location prior to Chris and Ivy's acquisition.

"Chris and I have been in the food business for many years ...Chris since he was 16 years old...washing dishes," says Ivy. "Chris introduced me to the restaurant business in the early nineties. However, Wild Olives Market in Rosemary came about when we were approached by the owner of

a solution for the customers' immediate needs. We are not a replacement for the weekly or monthly visit to the "grocery store". But, for a forgotten item like milk, butter or snacks - we provide that niche. If we do not have it on the shelf, we will do our best to find it or provide

Fonville location is relatively small, the couple decided to change the concept from just a coffee shop to a wine and cheese shop in the hopes of better serving their customers. "We have a wonderful selection of retail wine. Also, new retail products are being added, as we are focusing on



Fonville Press, Alys Beach



Fine Wines by Wild Olives



Artisan Cheese Board

The unique area of 30-A brings us a diverse clientele and the ability to be flexible in our offerings of the products we provide at our market in Rosemary based on the season.

the building at Rosemary, as to our interest in opening a market. As a result of this, we put together a plan for a gourmet market and opened in the spring of 2006." After doing extensive research, the couple designed the decor and foods based on a casual Mediterranean market, with offerings of bakery items, breads, deli meats, salads, jams, preserves, olive oils, cheeses... and of course, fresh olives.

When asked about the inspiration and goals behind their markets, Ivy responds, "The unique area of 30-A brings us a diverse clientele and the ability to be flexible in our offerings of the products we provide at our market in Rosemary based on the season. Our goal is to offer

a substitute. We are forever trying to find solutions to our customers' requests." For example, the market has been supplying organic produce and products at their customers' request. Wild Olives found a solution and partnered with "Off the Vine Produce," a local provider of organic and natural produce, most of which comes from local farmers. This allows customers to order fresh produce from "Off the Vine" and pick up their order from the market location at Rosemary Beach.

In addition to the organic produce option at Rosemary, Wild Olives Wine & Cheese at Fonville offers a wonderful cheese selection and wine shop. While the

products that complement wine and cheese. We plan to expand our food offerings to cheese plates to pair with a glass of wine or to take home to enjoy. At this time, we are offering pastries provided by our market at Rosemary Beach, as well as pre-made salads and sandwiches. We still have our coffees drinks, espresso, and smoothies as well," says Ivy.

So, whether it's that unique jam at Rosemary or the incredible cheese plate and wine pairing at Fonville, Wild Olives has much to offer. Make sure to visit either location and enjoy a glass of wine, a cold beverage, or one the exquisite bakery items, Sunday through Thursday from 7 am until 3 pm; or Friday through Saturday from 7 am until 5 pm.

For more information, call (850) 231-0065. Also, visit them online at www.wildolivesmarket.com to see featured items, extended summer hours, and menu selections.



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A Few Good Apples Café

BY NEVILLE CARSON



Banana Berry Yogurt Smoothie



A Few Good Apples in Seagrove Beach



Falafel wrap unwrapped



Veggie Burger

On the day my wife, son, and I visited, we were lucky enough to talk with James Kelly, the café's owner. Kelly knows what he's doing. He owned a successful café in New York City for a decade before coming south. He has the experience and, perhaps more important, the determination to succeed in the restaurant business. "We opened up last year and were doing fine, but then, the oil spill came along. We kept after it, though, and now things are turning around."

That things should pick up for A Few Good Apples isn't surprising once you've tasted the food. One of the café's strengths is its healthy and vegetarian offerings. Vegetable soup is always on the menu and it's homemade, as are

all the soups here. One whole section of the menu board above the counter is devoted to juices, from the everyday orange and apple to more elaborate mixtures; like the "Sunset," which is carrot, orange and beet juices, or the "Spiced Good Apple," a refreshing blend of apple juice, ginger, lemon, and mint. Smoothies are just as creative and every bit as delicious. You can get your greens with a Mediterranean salad of romaine lettuce, feta cheese, olives, tomato, cucumbers, artichoke hearts, and almonds; or enjoy a fruit salad with apples, grapes, strawberries, blueberries, melons, walnuts, and cranberries, all blended with a scrumptious yogurt dressing.

We tried a variety of goodies on our visit. The family enjoyed sharing a plate of falafel. These crispy fried cakes

of ground chickpeas flavored with sesame seeds were delicious and as tender inside as they were crunchy without. A mouth-watering tahini sauce completed the dish. Even our 9-year old, Nicholas, loved this dish. We completed the falafel experience with a falafel wrap, a whole-wheat pita wrap containing falafel, cucumbers, v sprouts, and wonderful sauce.

We also sampled the tuna salad and the curried chicken salad. The tuna salad boasts tomato, celery, and a slightly spicy kick, with just the right amount of mayonnaise, a balance that's hard to master. The chicken salad contained apples and grapes. It had a milder flavor, but was still pleasantly aromatic.

For my main course, I decided to have the Angus burger, and was glad I did. The burger was 100% Angus beef, done to a turn, not at all greasy. The bun was fresh and so were the

lettuce, tomato, and bean sprouts that came on it. A slice of cheddar cheese perfectly melted onto the patty made for memorable eating. Julie went for a burger, too, but it was the café's veggie burger. Seasoned with cayenne, cumin and coriander—but not with too heavy a hand—this is a veggie burger good enough to please any carnivore looking for a change, and certain to win raves from any vegetarian.

Lest I forget, our dessert specialist, young Nicholas, charged me with telling the world they should absolutely ask for the root beer float, made with low-fat soft vanilla ice cream. I have never seen a beverage disappear so fast after being put down in front of someone. And, speaking of dessert, if you're not screaming for ice cream, you might treat yourself to the frozen yogurt here. This is no chain-store concoction; it is real yogurt, made and frozen in-house. You can tell it's the real thing because it has the delicious, sour tang that is yogurt's flavor highlight.

The menu at A Few Good Apples is extensive; I could go on and on listing wonderful things like the daily specials—a combo, a soup, a grain, a bean, and a yogurt; or the middle eastern specialties like baba ganoush. Instead, I will simply recommend that you go there—it's a treasure!

A Few Good Apples Café is located at 3723 E County Hwy 30A, #9 Seagrove Plaza, Seagrove Beach, Florida, 32459. You can call them at (850) 468-0661.

Classic stories of pirate treasure almost always include images of swashbuckling souls hunting for hidden booty on a beach somewhere. If they are lucky, they find the treasure! Scenic highway 30-A is a lot like that. If you're willing to hunt just a little, there are all kinds of wonderful things to see and do. Recently, I found something else to add to my store of 30-A treasures: a gem of a place called A Few Good Apples Café.

It's an unpretentious place, A Few Good Apples is, tucked away in Seagrove Plaza; but when you find it, you're in for a treat. Inside, the café gleams—everything is spic-and-span, and the brightly colored walls of red, green, and yellow make you feel as if there's a party about to start any minute.

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The Meltdown on 30A

BY SUSANNA BARTOLDUS

The Meltdown on 30A brings both reverence and innovation to the crafting of its grilled cheese creations.



The Meltdown on 30A is the latest addition to Seaside's "Airstream Alley" and is serving up some seriously tasty sidewalk eats. Chef Jim Shirley's concept and mantra is simple: Gotta Have Grilled Cheese. And trust me, you will.

If you are strolling down 30-A in Seaside, you'll find The Meltdown's charming airstream trailer adjacent to the Seaside Post Office. After ordering at the window, you can take your brown-bagged goodies to go or eat street side. Hop on a stool and eat at the custom built outdoor counter. There are some additional chairs along the sidewalk and some of the best people watching views on 30-A. Picnicing is also a great option, as the beach is just across the street and the Seaside Amphitheater lawn mere steps away.

As the name suggests, the Meltdown serves up a menu full of gooey goodness all day long. The airstream window opens up at 10am, serving locally roasted coffee from Amavida Coffee and breakfast sandwiches. They proudly use local free-range eggs from Twin Oaks Farm plus your choice of cheese, meat, and bread. The rest of the menu contains delectable versions of the ultimate comfort food with classic accoutrements that can't be



missed. Your cheesy fix can be satiated well into the evening, as the window stays open until 8pm.

The Meltdown on 30A brings both reverence and innovation to the crafting of its grilled cheese creations. The menu starts with an homage to the classic version using American "cheese" and veers off into other delicious directions. My two favorites are far off departures from the pared down classic. The first is the "Goat Cheese, Prosciutto, Arugula and Tomato". The peppery leaves of the arugula stand up beautifully against the tangy soft cheese as the prosciutto provides the salty compliment to the tomato. The sandwich is grilled to perfection between two hearty slices of sourdough bread. A close second is the "Brie and Bacon". Rustic cranberry walnut bread is a delightful addition to this decadent departure and works

beautifully with the richness of the brie and saltiness of the bacon.

The rest of the menu contains a variety of melted masterpieces that are more tempting than the next. On the top of my must try list is the Meltdown's amazing "Meatloaf Melt". The bread can hardly contain its sublime contents. A mouthwatering slice of meatloaf is blanketed in mozzarella and swiss cheeses with a sliver of ham and generously drizzled marinara. It is worth every slightly sloppy bite. Interestingly, they craft their own mozzarella from local organic milk supplied by Ocheese Creamery. This cheese really showcases its superior quality in the "Mozzarella, Tomato and Basil" melt; another must try for sure. Then, there is the "Three Cheese," with its trifecta of Gouda, Gruyere, and Cheddar; the "Pimento Cheese and Bacon" (made with their own handcrafted pimento cheese); and the "Brown Bag Ham and Smoked Gouda." The last item is made with a generous slab of thick cut ham and plenty of melted gouda. Rounding out the menu are the "Smokin' Turkey" with avocado, jack cheese, and smoky "Alberquerque" sauce; and the "Antipasta" melt, featuring hard salami, sopressata, prosciutto, and provolone. All the sandwiches are served with their signature spicy pickle.

Of course grilled cheese wouldn't be complete without its classic sidekick, tomato soup. The Meltdown on 30A offers its own homemade roasted tomato soup all year round. Seasonal soups make an appearance, including Gazpacho in warmer weather and heartier cheese based soups in the winter, such as smoked gouda and potato. Don't skip the chips either. The Meltdown offers a variety of small batch, artisan chips from Route 11. My picks are the mellow sweet potato or the spicy "Mama Zuma's Habenero".

Whether it is a classic or a more modern melt, this little airstream has got what it takes to tackle your frenzy for grilled cheese. Go ahead, have a meltdown. You'll be glad you did.

The Meltdown on 30A is located on the North side of Scenic County Highway 30A, in Seaside. It is housed in an airstream trailer adjacent to Seaside's Post Office. The Meltdown is open 7 days a week from 10am to 8pm. Off-season hours are subject to change.



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Chris Joyner of Onano Café

BY SUSANNA BARTOLDUS



Chef Chris Joyner



Onano Neighborhood Café



Lobster Ravioli

with country cooking. Although he worked in restaurants in high school, it wasn't on his radar as a career. Instead, Chris joined the military and traveled around parts of globe via the engine room of a submarine, as a Nuclear Machinist's Mate. His time in the Navy brought him to many ports along the Mediterranean including Pantelleria, Palermo, La Maddalena, and Salerno, where he fell in love with the different regional cuisines. After serving in the Navy, Chris decided to pursue cooking as a career and attended both culinary and business schools.

Chef Joyner has spent the last 10 years in restaurants on 30-A and is currently co-owner and chef of Onano Neighborhood Café in Rosemary Beach. The restaurant is small in size, but big on charm. It has an intimate, bistro feel and is a favorite with locals and frequent visitors. Onano is named for a small town in Italy in the Lazio region, near Tuscany and Umbria. Chef describes the cuisine as Northern Italian inspired Coastal. He explains,

"Italian cuisine is region specific and Italians are very passionate for their region's cuisine. I can't say we're truly authentic, because I try to use local ingredients whenever I can." In addition to using what is local, Chef Joyner and his kitchen staff create every element of their menu right in their tiny kitchen. Every piece of pasta is made from scratch, the meats are hand cut, bread baked daily, and every sauce and vinaigrette is artfully crafted.

The menu changes seasonally to utilize the freshest local produce and to reflect what is in season. As I recollected his memorable watermelon salad, I asked Chris what diners could look forward to this summer. His highlights included grilled seafood, lots of citrus flavors, salads, and agrodolce-style vegetables. "The menu will be light and healthy to complement our al-fresco dining and so our customers can still have a nice after dinner walk on the beach." His menu approach also reflects his personal lifestyle. "I'm a relatively healthy guy, and I prefer to eat light; especially with the fast-paced, hot environment of a restaurant kitchen."

Although he spends most of his time cooking Italian inspired dishes, Chef Joyner has a keen interest in cooking from around the world and endeavors to be well rounded as a chef. He laughs at his single mindedness when trying to figure out what makes a dish "tick" down to the smallest detail. His staff often benefits from his departures. "I make our staff meals at work, and if I have time I'll try to do something different for them. Right now, I'm trying some new Korean dishes."

Being chef and co-owner of Onano Neighborhood Café doesn't leave Chris much time away from then restaurant. His days begin at 10am and last well into the evening. When he is not in the kitchen, he is focusing on the administrative aspects of running the restaurant or catching up with his customers. In his spare time, Chris spends his time with his family, including his 3 dogs. He describes himself as an avid runner and is training for a marathon in the fall. He jokingly admits that his running helps to balance out his love of eating. "I love to eat and I like it all."

Onano Neighborhood Café is located in the Pensione Building at the corner of 78 Main and West Water Street in Rosemary Beach. The restaurant is open for dinner Mon-Sat at 5:30. Reservations are recommended. For more information visit them online at www.onanocafe.com or call (850) 231-2436.

When I caught up with Onano Café's Chris Joyner, he was preparing for a busy evening. I caught a mesmerizing glimpse of sheets of handcrafted pasta, while Bolognese sauce simmered nearby and the smell of fresh baked bread wafted through the air. I was ready to talk food.

As a fellow foodie, Chef Joyner's love of cooking stems from a simple love of food. He grew up in a small Alabama town where his hearty appetite was satiated

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Great Wine Events

BY BRYAN KRUTZ

Now that Spring has come and gone, and we have moved into the heart of Summer, I thought I would share my experiences at a couple of Spring wine festivals I attended this year. Wine events seem to be popping up all over the place these days and with good reason. They give the everyday wine consumer an opportunity to not only taste a wide array of wines, but also to get educated about the wine industry in general. As much as a person can read about wines, there is just no substitute for and no better way to learn than tasting.

The first tasting I attended this year was “the Mecca” of all wine events: *Pebble Beach Food and Wine*. My brother was first invited to pour his Krutz Family Cellars label at this event last year, and all he could say when trying to describe the experience was “you will see for yourself next year.” Boy was he right! This event includes the best 250 small production wineries in California and a handful from Oregon and Washington.

As much emphasis on the select wines that are poured at this event is the emphasis on food. Some of the world’s best chefs were personally on hand to serve up outstanding bite-sized morsels of their creations. A few that were there include Tyler Florence, Wolfgang Puck and Thomas Keller. The grand tasting was held on Saturday and Sunday afternoons. This was a walkabout type setup that really allowed for interaction between the patrons and the winemakers/chefs.

What also makes this event so wonderful is the many smaller events that stem from the grand tasting. Whether it is a smaller, more intimate tasting or a cooking seminar, there are multiple options of other events going on. The best one of these that I attended was easily the *Domaine de la Romanee-Conti* (known simply as DRC) Echezeaux tasting. If you are not familiar with these wines, DRCs are quite simply the best red burgundies made and are featured on the cover of the current *Wine Spectator* with the title being “Heaven on Earth.” We tasted through a lineup that included the vintages from 2006, 2005, 2002, 2000, 1999, 1997, 1990, and 1978. My personal favorite was the 1990, however all were outstanding. If



Bryan Krutz

The other major wine event in which I visited this spring was much closer to home and is one that many of you most likely attended. Of course I am talking about the Sandestin wine event held at the Village of Baytowne. One thing that really surprised me on my trip to California was how recognized the Sandestin event is nationally. Many of the wineries that I visited would ask, “Where are you from?” When I told them, they would immediately talk about how they were going to be in the area for the Sandestin event. From being in the wine business here locally and attending this event a couple of times, I personally know what a good event it is. However, to hear some of the top wineries in California echo those sentiments really shows the caliber of it.

After finally getting to the correct area (I first showed up at the auction when I was supposed to be at the walkabout) it was time to get tasting. Many good wines were being poured, but some of the best and most entertaining were located at my friend Frank Leal’s table. His Leal label is produced at his winery in Hollister (Calif.) where he makes outstanding full-flavored wines. If you did not get by this table, make sure you do next year as he told me he would be back.

As I mentioned earlier, I recommend taking advantage of these types of events in order to become better educated with wines in general. If you feel you are plenty educated enough when it comes to wines, it is still a great thing to attend in order to taste so many different expressions of wine in one location. Also, stay tuned for information regarding a new tasting experience coming to Rosemary Beach this October. The event is called *Rosemary Uncorked* and will feature samples of smaller production wines and small bites from every restaurant in town. For more information on this event, go to www.rosemarybeach.com and click on the Uncorked link.

Cheers,
Bryan

As much as a person can read about wines, there is just no substitute for and no better way to learn than tasting.

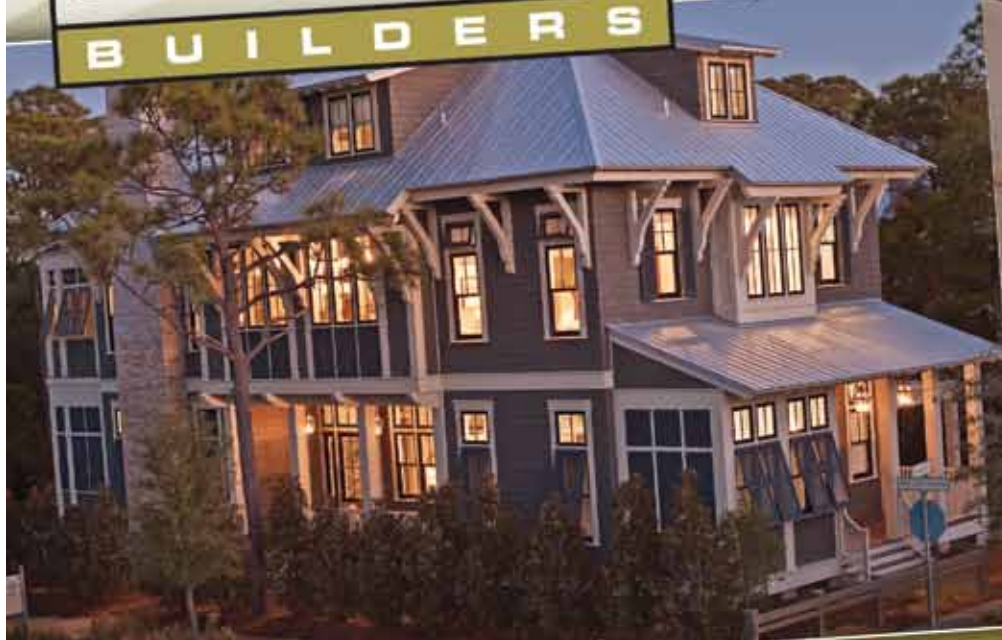
you are ever lucky enough to taste one of the wines made by DRC, you are lucky enough! Just do not forget your checkbook as these wines go for thousands per bottle.

Another option is the fall festival that is organized by the same group that takes place in September and is called *Harvest Carmel*. For info on these events, just Google them. You will not regret it!

Bryan Krutz is the owner of Courtyard Wine and Cheese located at 66 Main Street in Rosemary Beach. For more information visit www.courtyardwineandcheese.com or call (850) 231-1219.



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Seaside Neighborhood School Marathon biggest to date

BY H.M. CAULEY

It started with a group of friends deciding to do a little fundraiser...

Almost three months before the runners took their positions for the 9th Annual Seaside Neighborhood School Half Marathon and 5K, organizers knew this year was going to be an extraordinary event.

Race spaces were completely filled in early December by runners coming to the 30-A community from across the country, as well as Canada and Bermuda. On March 6, when the event finally got underway, more than 3,000 competitors took to the streets to raise money for one of the state's first charter schools.

"This year was definitely the biggest event we've had," said volunteer Rick Helfand, who has worked behind the scenes on the race since its inception. "We probably can't get many more than 3,000 on the roads, but we're becoming a bigger and better race every year. People just love it."

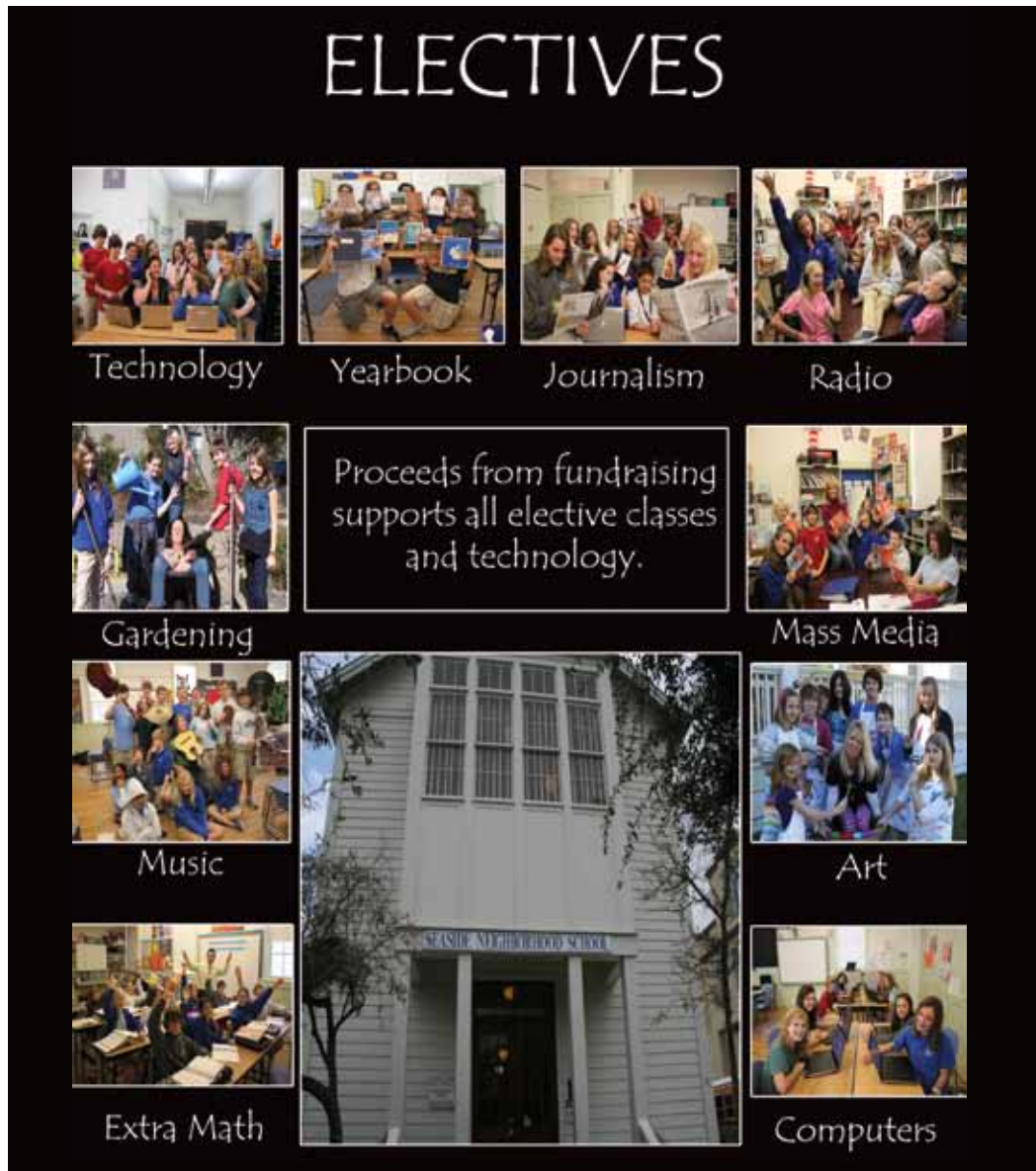
Part of the draw is certainly the attractive course that meanders along Seaside streets as well as the sand dunes and shores of Grayton Beach State Park. It's also a great getaway for runners and their families, who total about 8,000 temporary residents on race weekend.

"The race helps us generate \$3 to \$4 million for the 30-A community," said Helfand. "But our primary goal is to fund the deficit of the school. This year, it was more than \$200,000, and I'm very optimistic that we'll raise that in the end."

Along with competition fees, the event included a silent auction and expo held the day before the race. On March 6, the half-marathon runners, followed by walkers, joggers, and supporters who signed on for a 5K, took to the streets.

"It's fun for everyone," said Helfand. "Along the course, we have the kids playing music and cheering on the runners as we broadcast live on the school's FM radio station."

At the finish line, racers and families filled up on barbecue provided by race sponsor Jim 'n Nick's BarBQ.



Participants picked up their prizes, including a tote bag from presenting sponsor Vera Bradley.

"Vera Bradley does more than just give out bags," said volunteer Cydney Cunningham, who has two children at the school. "They also bring a crew of people to help out. This year, they gave out free ID badges. They're always doing something special that adds to the event."

The Bradley volunteers were among the 300 who worked behind the scenes to make the race a success, said Cunningham.

"Without a doubt, what makes it all work is the people who work tirelessly on it year round," she said. "We have tremendous support from the community as well as the faculty, families and sponsors."

Seaside Neighborhood School, which opened in 1996 as a charter middle school, must raise funds for equipment, technology and building maintenance, and the race has become a primary source of revenue.

"It started with a group of friends deciding to do a little fundraiser, and the first year we had 500 people and raised about \$17,000," said Helfand. "Today, the people on 30-A really support and embrace the school. It's become a major community event."

Seaside Neighborhood School is one of Florida's first charter schools, established in 1996, and serves students from 6th to 8th grade in Walton County. It is located at 10 Smolian Circle, Santa Rosa Beach, FL 32459 and their phone number is (850) 231-0396.



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Alzheimer's and Your Finances

BY CHRIS J. OGLE

In today's complex financial world there is an increasingly dangerous intersection of aging baby boomers and rising rates of Alzheimer's disease. The Alzheimer's Foundation of America estimates that as many as 5.1 million Americans may have the disease (as of 2010). This equates to over 1.5% percent of the total population. Given the stealth-like ways in which the onset of Alzheimer's may affect someone close to you, it is important to be educated about this disease and the potential negative effects it could have including the destruction of a lifetime of wealth accumulation.

WHAT IS ALZHEIMER'S?

Alzheimer's disease is a progressive brain disorder that damages and destroys brain cells; resulting in problems with memory, thinking, and behavior. It is one of the most common forms of dementia, which is a broader category of illness dealing with the loss of intellectual functions significant enough to interfere with normal daily activities. It is not a normal part of aging and is currently listed as one of the top ten causes of death in the U.S. annually. (Alz.org website)

WHAT ARE SOME WARNING SIGNS?

There are a multitude of warning signs for the onset of Alzheimer's. No single issue in and of itself is a cause for alarm. It's often the degree of change from what was once the norm for that individual. Some signs may include:

- Trouble with short-term memory
- Confusion about people, places, and things
- Asking the same question over and over throughout the course of one conversation
- Questionable decision making
- Forgetting to pay recurring bills
- Giving money away to new or different organizations and people; especially if charitable donations were not previously important
- Forgetting to perform basic tasks like bathing or getting dressed properly

Again, these and other "out of character" changes that get progressively worse could be cause for concern. You should see a medical professional for a proper evaluation and plan for managing the physical effects of Alzheimer's. For financial matters, the key is early detection. While all healthy people of most any age should have their affairs in order, it is critical that a plan be established early on for the potential negative effects of Alzheimer's. This can be a particularly stressful situation if finances have not been openly discussed in the family before. The person suffering may also be the patriarch/matriarch of the family that everyone has historically looked up to in financial

matters, adding to the dilemma. Asking general questions like "Do you have a plan in place in case something were to happen to you?" and, "Who would step in to manage your affairs in the event you were unable to for any reason?" might be a good starting point.

This would be a good time-if it hasn't been done already-to meet with a knowledgeable attorney. There are many ways to plan for the potentially negative effects of Alzheimer's, including creating a Durable Power of Attorney or Revocable Living Trust with more than one trustee. This could allow someone else to make critical financial decisions, like bill paying, when the affected person is no longer able to. Once a person is fully diagnosed with the disease, it becomes much more difficult for them to execute most any type of legal document.

Creating an effective strategy for handling the affairs of someone suffering from Alzheimer's could necessitate the coordination of several people, including attorneys, CPA's, personal physicians, financial advisors, and family members. Having an organized list of all financial documents, bank and brokerage accounts, insurance policies, estate planning documents, and recurring bills at a minimum is a good start. This could help ensure that the person stepping in to help (who is typically the executor of the estate) knows where to start and who to talk with when the time comes; for managing the effects of Alzheimer's can be a long-term journey.

You may want to reference the following websites for additional resources:

The Alzheimer's Association: www.alz.org

Alzheimer's Foundation of America: www.alzfdn.org

U.S. National Institute of Health: <http://www.nia.nih.gov/alzheimers/publications/legaltips.htm>

This article was written and provided by Chris J. Ogle, a local financial advisor with Wells Fargo Advisors. He lives on 30A and spends his free time taking his wife and four children on aquatic adventures. Chris can be reached at 1-850-837-5366, chris.ogle@wfadvisors.com, or at www.wfadvisors.com/chris.ogle



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July/August 2010 • number 4 • volume 5 • and the surrounding areas

Bow Wow Meow Pet Company

A Place Where Dogs' And Cats' Voices Are Heard!

BY BRENDA LEE STEPP

John and Natalie Scanlan first arrived to Seagrove Beach in 2008 as visitors vacationing from Atlanta, when they discovered that their beloved dog Buddy would not be allowed to walk on the beach without a license. After learning a license was only available to property owners, the Scanlans did the most logical thing they could think of—they bought a home in Seagrove. After all, they had fallen in love with the beaches as well as the community along 30-A.

As much as they enjoyed visits to their vacation home, they became frustrated with the pursuit of finding quality food and supplies for Buddy without having to drive several miles to either Destin or Panama City. They knew from the pet friendly restaurants and fellow beach walkers, they were not alone. So the Scanlans did the next logical thing that came to mind; they packed up, moved to Seagrove Beach, and opened Bow Wow Meow Pet Company.

It's easy to understand why Buddy's needs served as the catalyst and influenced John and Natalie's destiny. Even before they would come to know Buddy, he was seemingly part of the plan. After a year of dating, on Natalie's birthday John gave her a dog tag bearing the name "Buddy" and Natalie joked, "If we ever get married I want a dog named Buddy!" Sure enough, a year later John and Natalie tied the knot and adopted a 5 month-old rescue puppy from the Humane Society and named him Buddy.

Unfortunately, though, Buddy had digestion problems. Committed to doing the best for him, they extensively researched his tummy troubles and finally found a dietary solution. As the Scanlan's furry child, Buddy's needs are considered equally as important as those of John and Natalie. John lovingly says, "We hope he is with us a very long time."

Bow Wow Meow Pet Company was established in the spirit of providing a place convenient to the 30-A community, offering healthy, organic dog and cat foods, treats, and specialty supplies. The Scanlans operate the shop personally to support dog and cat owners, whether they are looking to improve digestion, ease the discomfort of allergies, or are simply looking to provide the highest quality products for their pets.

John explains, "We encourage people to try our samples to determine what is best for their pets before they buy. It is a bit of trial and error and usually takes a

few days of trying a new food before you see how the pet is going to do with it. Samples work great to allow us to see this without the owner having to spend unnecessary money. By doing so, we hope to provide help to others and their pets."

Bow Wow Meow Pet Company also offers self-serve pet washing stations. For a flat fee the shop provides you and your pooch a state of the art private room with a stainless steel tub, water, organic shampoo, and professional air dryers. Natalie chuckles, "It seemed only

me is the community accepting me, being glad I'm here, and wanting to do business with me."

Not surprisingly, John and Natalie chose their location with the customer in mind. John says, "We chose what we thought was a mid-point along 30-A, where it's not too congested and is easy for people to get to." John has even been known to make deliveries to customers. "If it's on my way home," he says, "I don't mind making a delivery to someone. Since our opening on January 11, 2011 we have gotten great support from the community."



natural to offer dog washing because it is hard to get all the sand out of most dogs' coats and no one likes the smell of a wet dog! Best of all, people love leaving with a clean dog but leaving the mess behind."

Bow Wow Meow Pet Company will soon be implementing training classes in response to customer requests. John says, "We are very open to suggestions here. I believe the best business plan comes from accepting insight from others. Some of what we carry is based on customer requests and suggestions. Success to

Bow Wow Meow Pet Company is open seven days a week. They close early only on Sundays so that, you guessed it, they can enjoy their favorite pastime and what brought them here in the first place—walking Buddy on the beach!

Bow Wow Meow Pet Company is located at 4935 E. Co. Hwy 30A, Suite 3 in Seagrove Beach. Visit them at www.bowwowmeowpetcompany.com or call (850) 534-0009

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Snorkel and Swim

Blue Dolphin Tours Offers a Unique Experience

BY LAUREN GALL



Netting crabs off of Shell Island

Twenty-one years ago, after visiting the area on spring break, Ted Davison started a business that focused on wave runner tours in and around Shell Island. Fast-forward to today and that is just the tip of the iceberg as to what Blue Dolphin Tours has to offer. “Since 1978, I have been living and working on the water with families at Treasure Island Marina,” says Davison. “At that time, we were the founders of island wave runner tours at the grand lagoon bridge between the treasure ship and Captain Anderson’s restaurant. The business grew and we started renting pontoon boats and Boston whalers. When dolphin feeding became illegal in the nineties, visitors from all over the world still wanted to come and watch the friendly bottle nose dolphins in the wild. Blue Dolphin Tours offered a unique interactive experience that was much desired.” The rest, you could say, is history.

Davison knew that he did, and could continue to, offer a more personal experience to his customers at Blue Dolphin. While most of his competition offered an “on the water” experience for up to 150 people at a time, Davison wanted to keep the experience personal and intimate. Blue Dolphin Tours carries only 6 passengers (children included) per tour, which eliminates the splashing and disruptions that large groups often create and in turn frightens the dolphins away. Another reason

that Blue Dolphin Tours stands out from the rest is that all of their tour guides and captains are licensed professionals who are well educated in safety, but who also know how to entertain. The captains will also instruct you on the best means of interacting with the dolphins, such as swimming parallel with the dolphins rather than swimming toward them or reaching out for them. “All of my guys are entertainers on the water. However, they know how to protect the client as well,” says Davison.

In addition to the dolphin tours, Blue Dolphin offers a wide variety of water activities and experiences. Customers can snorkel glass flats, explore Shell Island for seashells and sand dollars, rent pontoon boats for their own exploration of St. Andrew’s Bay and the Gulf, and much more. All sorts of tropical fish, game fish, sea urchins, and more can be found. The St. Andrews Bay side of Shell Island offers a great snorkeling adventure. Here you can discover starfish, puffer fish, sea slugs, hermit crabs, blue and stone crabs, spider crabs, schooling bait fish, artificial reefs, sting rays and more! “The water and area is a passion for me,” says Davison. “I want all of my customers and clients to have a uniquely awesome experience. We have people that come back every year just to experience again what Blue Dolphin has to offer.”

To top it off, Blue Dolphin not only offers an incredible tour or water experience, but they do so at a very affordable price. At \$49 per person, or \$249 to have a boat of 6, you can be swimming with the dolphins or snorkeling for shells, for up to 2 hours. Snorkel gear is included. Tour times are 9 am, 11:30 am, 2 pm and 4:30 pm. Specially designed long tours are also available for an extra \$99.99 at 8 am and 4:30 pm.

So, if you are ready to swim with Panama City’s resident pod of wild bottle-nosed dolphins in their natural home, or take a trip aboard super-fast boats specially designed for finding and visiting with the dolphins, then Blue Dolphin tours is the place for you. “Who knew all of those years ago, when we named the company after the color blue that we painted on the hull of the boats, that we would be where we are today,” says Davison. “We are truly passionate about what we do and look forward to making every day different and unique, not to mention we respect our environment and the wildlife within it.”

Blue Dolphin Tours is located at 3605 Thomas Drive, Treasure Island Marina in Panama City Beach, FL. To learn more, or to book your reservation now, visit www.bluedolphintour.com or call one of the friendly staff at (850) 236-FINS (3467.)



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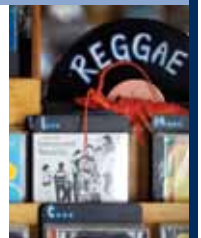
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Bud & Alley's

A quarter of a century and counting, Seaside's landmark restaurant is still making waves and fostering memories along the Gulf

BY LYNN NESMITH



(in the beginning) Entrance with tower



Bud and Alley's restaurant



(in the beginning) Herb Garden

Twenty-five years ago, our beloved Scenic Highway 30A was surely a road less traveled. Those adventurous enough to detour along the twenty-mile stretch of winding blacktop discovered coastal lakes interspersed between the villages of Grayton Beach and Seagrave and settlements of concrete-block cottages. Continuing east just past Western Lake a solitary sign announced the town of SEASIDE.

Two travelers who made the journey one autumn day in 1985 were Dave Rauschkolb and Scott Witcoski, who had been asked by Robert Davis to open a restaurant in his new town. "The first time I set foot in the modest wooden

structure that would become Bud & Alley's, it felt like home," recalls Rauschkolb. "I opened the door, looked out to the porch and saw the emerald Gulf framed by the windows. I turned to Scott and said, 'Wow!'"

Everything was coming together quickly except a name. "As a joke Scott said we should name the restaurant after Robert's dachshund Bud, and Scott's cat Alley," recalls Rauschkolb. "It seemed crazy at the time, but it was the perfect personification of what we would become; a casual, unpretentious eatery with great food." During their first season, Seaside consisted of an outdoor market, post office, and a dozen houses. A sign in the expansive, sand parking lot professed "Good Food, Good People & Good Times" with the image of a dog and cat. "In those days we had a huge parking lot and very few customers," laughs Rauschkolb. "Now we have no parking lot but lots of customers."

A French restaurant had previously occupied the building. It closed after one summer leaving a fully equipped, turn key operation ready to go. "Scott asked if I wanted to open a restaurant and all it took was twenty-four hours to make a life-determining decision." Dave remembers fondly. "The next day I quit college in my last semester and embarked on an amazing culinary and community-building journey."

From the beginning Rauschkolb ran the front of the house and Witcoski was the founding chef. After two decades, Scott sold his interests to his long-time partner. Veteran chef David Bishop currently oversees the kitchen with the same creative flair for seasonal vegetables and the freshest bounty from our local waters. Open for lunch and dinner seven days a week, Bud & Alley's is still housed in the original cottage now enlarged with a gracious dining room and a series of porches. Upstairs the roof-deck Tarpon Club is the perfect spot to celebrate the sunset.

Today there is over a hundred restaurants in South Walton, so it's hard to remember when there were only five places to get a bite to eat along 30A. "We had the privilege of being culinary pioneers along with other early restaurateurs like Johnny Earles and Harriet Crommelin," Rauschkolb explains. "We are a supportive restaurant club; we promote each other as friends."

Rauschkolb's personal and civic contributions have never been more influential. Three years ago he married his long-time love Carol Murphy in 2009 and they are blessed with a beautiful daughter. "To be in Seaside and play a role in town building was and is a privilege I cherish deeply," says Rauschkolb. Anyone who has witnessed his pivotal role in the 30-A Scenic Pride Initiative and his global Hands Across the Sand movement supporting clean energy solutions, knows he still takes those responsibilities seriously.

Yet no one appreciates a playful spirit more than Dave. Rauschkolb. Bud & Alley's fulfills a yearning for a connection to this place and fosters personal histories. "When I reflect on the past twenty-five years I go back to the pleasure of holding a baby and sixteen years later teaching him to bus a table," says Rauschkolb. "Or planning a wedding for a couple who met at Bud & Alley's."

A lot has changed along 30A, but Bud & Alley's continues to resonate with the joy of gathering around the table, joining together for reveries and savoring all the good things in life.

Bud & Alley's celebrates its 25th Anniversary on Sunday May 15 from 4PM to sunset. Toast the sunset with the ringing of an 1888 cast-iron bell – a cherished Seaside tradition.

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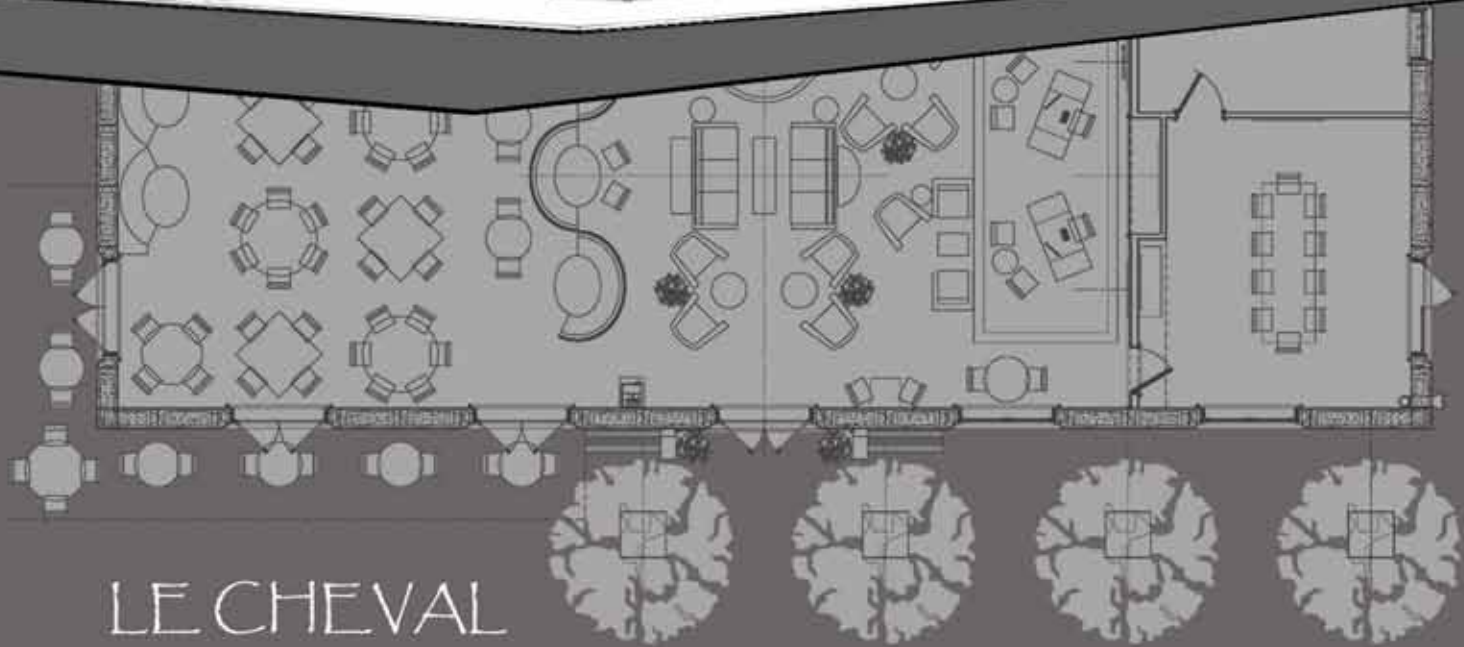
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Tommy Crow... In Flight

BY LAUREN GALL

On a bright, sunny day in Northwest Florida, I traveled east on Highway 98 until I reached Rosemary Beach and the studio of photographer and artist, Tommy Crow. My first impression upon entering the studio was the beautiful simplicity of the space, as well as the magnificent canvas of bright butterflies hanging immediately to my left, centered between silk window treatments featuring vintage pin-up performers.

I initially met Crow a few years back, but am seeing him in his true, "element," today. After the greeting formalities, Crow and I begin strolling through the studio and viewing his pieces. It is easy to realize that there is a common theme or thread in most of his pieces, that being "flight," an expression of freedom and nature combined. When asked about this thread in his work, Crow responds, "Flight is definitely a common theme in my work. I love to utilize butterflies, dragonflies, birds...creatures in motion."

Upon studying a few more pieces, including that of a bird named, "Zelda," I dig a little deeper into what makes the artist "tick," and a little more about Crow's background. "I am a photographer. For as long as I can remember that's what I've been. As a kid, I ran around with a Polaroid swinger camera...the funky cool white one... shooting my friends... I wish I still had it," says Crow. "I learned the principles of photography by reading the instruction sheet that came in the Kodak film box....

it took me forever to understand f-stops and apertures, but I finally got it." Crow tells me that he has always loved photography since childhood; however, his passion truly evolved more during his collegiate career at the University of Georgia. "I studied landscape architecture at The University of Georgia. Photography was a hobby, but found its way into my everyday routine. I finally ditched the drafting table for the darkroom. I couldn't live without it. That was 25 years ago. I spent the next few years in Atlanta mentoring, then opening my own studio shooting advertising photography."

Fast forward to today and you will clearly see that art photography is what Crow is, most definitely, "into." Crow's architecture background is also reflective in his art, as well as his inspirations from the environment around him. "Coming to this area really inspired me, as well as helped me to notice more around me. I became more cognizant of my environment," comments Crow.



He tells me of the many different types of artists who have inspired him through the years...writers, musicians, architects, interior designers...the list goes on. "All the Bob's have inspired me...you know, Bob Dylan, Bob Marley..." Crow says with a chuckle. "I have also garnered much inspiration from Elliot Erwitt, a Parisian street photographer, as well as Helmut Newton, just to name a few."

And if you think that is the end of the story, it is actually just the beginning. Aside from the beautiful pieces of art that fill his studio space, Crow also shoots ad campaigns all over the world, recently completing a campaign for Ralph Lauren. Crow is also very passionate about his book, *The Sea Press*, which highlights not only Crow's photography, but the special and unique businesses and people of the 30-A area. "The book is more of a conversation piece, an artful advertising coffee



table book, that showcases what all this area has to offer."

Crow is very excited about an upcoming project that will be adjacent to his studio. In the small courtyard area outside of Tommy Crow Collections, Crow and friends will soon be staging an outdoor "art bazaar." Crow is determined to have a unique outdoor/indoor shopping experience for anyone and everyone who is interested in his work, as well as the work of his friends. The "art bazaar" will feature art and products by Crow, as well as other merchants. Crow's goal is to have this customer experience ready by June 1st, 2011.

So, what all started with a white Polaroid swinger camera has truly come full circle at Tommy Crow Collections in Rosemary Beach. "This is my window to the world," says Crow. And I must say... what an exquisite view it is from that window.

To learn more about the artist, visit www.tommycrow.com or call (850) 231-1300. You can also email the artist at tommy@tommycrow.com. Tommy Crow Collections is located at 38 Main Street in Rosemary Beach.

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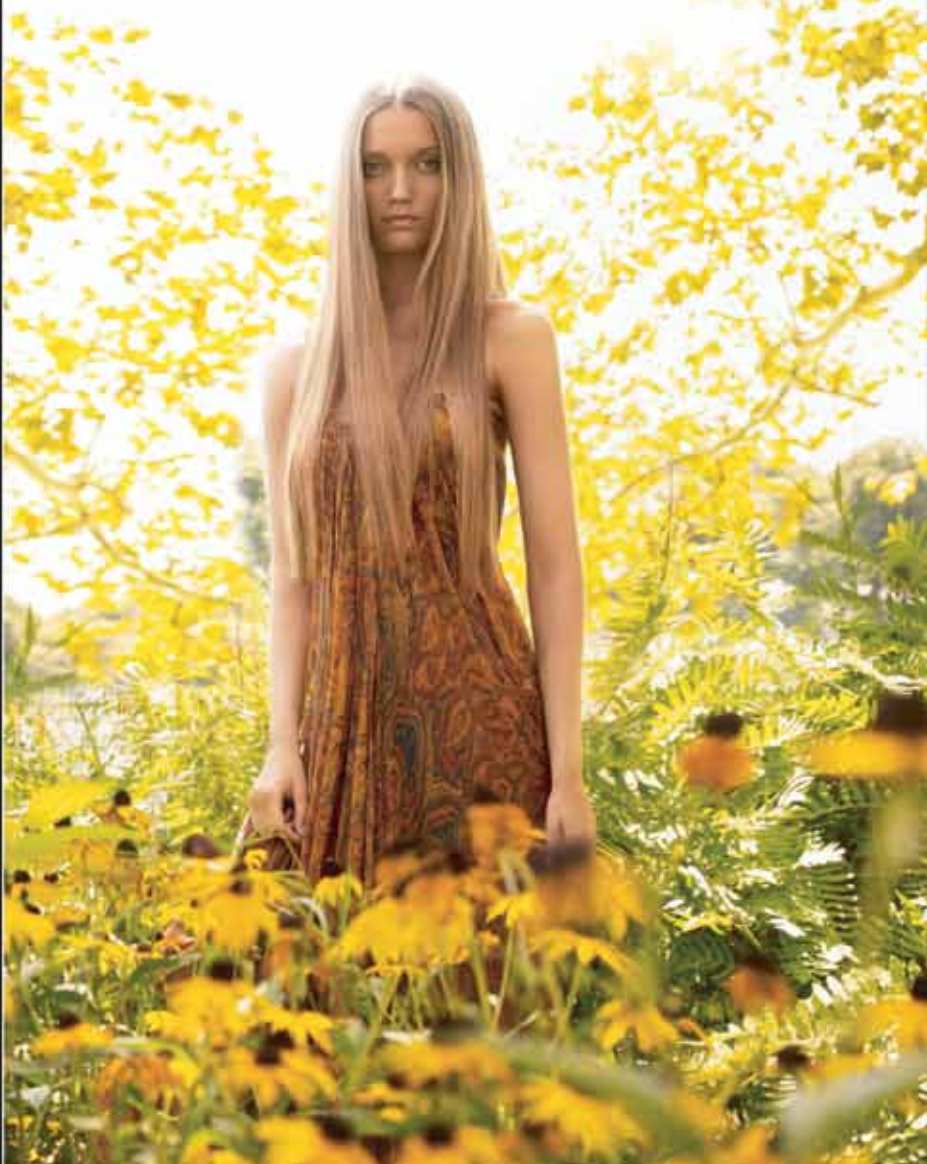


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Duckies Shop of Fun

BY JULIE DORRIS

Stacy and Bryan Pritchett have certainly found their way to the hearts of Seaside's residents with their restaurant *Pizza by the Sea*. Recently, they found yet another way to make people smile with their new store *Duckies Shop of Fun*, which opened in March.

"Our mission was to create the ultimate 'shop of fun,' says Stacy. "Duckies carries toys for all ages in a brightly decorated shop full of colorful and whimsical merchandise. Kids will delight in watching toys spin and parachute from shelves, a parade of ducks overhead, and



Rubber ducks and fun stuff

a giant tree of ducks. Adults will appreciate unique gifts they can peruse while their little ones play."

Stacy relates that she and her husband have always had a passion for retro toys; hence the rubber ducky-inspired name. "We feel the rubber duck is a timeless symbol and one that all ages can relate to," she says.

Inside the store you will find retro, eco-friendly, and sustainable clothing and toys. There is the *Rubbabu* line, which is made of 100 percent natural rubber foam. Natural rubber is the sap of the tree, which is biodegradable and renewable, and trees are not cut down or harmed by the extraction of rubber. These toys are also anti-microbial, dust mite resistant, mildew resistant, hypoallergenic and flame retardant. Other green products include coin purses made from recycled juice boxes, vehicles made from recycled sprig wood, and balls made from recycled rubber. And what parent wouldn't love a pair of candy wax lips or *Scratch & Sniff* stickers to remind them of their own school days?

"Anything old is new again," Stacy says, pointing out the vintage- and bohemian-inspired designs for children's clothes. *Duckies* also carries children's dresses from India and locally handmade mermaid dresses, as well as hand-stitched onesies and baby gowns.

Duckies has innovative items for children, too, such



Duck's eye view of the Seaside store

as the *Madpax* backpacks. These bags are made of leather and high-quality construction, and are covered in soft spikes to help kids of all ages stand out in a crowd of boring, look-a-like backpacks. "We have the exclusive in the area on these, and they are quickly selling out," Stacy warns. "They just won 'Best New Product' at the New York Gift Fair."

It is no doubt the Pritchetts have a creative eye and are keen at finding the right niche for their business endeavors. Stacy has a strong marketing background and held positions at General Electric and Texas Instruments before becoming the Sr. Director of Brand Licensing for Carlson Restaurants Worldwide. She currently oversees marketing and advertising for *Pizza By the Sea* in *WaterColor* in addition to running *Duckies*. Prior to opening *Movies by the*

Sea, which he conceptualized and opened within a month, Bryan had a 14-year career with Carlson Restaurants Worldwide, parent company of T.G.I. Friday's, where he was involved in operational management, technology deployment, and international business.

Bryan and Stacy fell in love with Seaside 12 years ago when they attended a wedding in the area. "We began vacationing here, then eventually got engaged and married here, spending a long honeymoon in Seaside. We were smitten with the area and decided to leave Corporate America and Dallas for the beach. We like to say we traded in our cowboy boots for flip-flops."

For a shop like *Duckies*, there couldn't be a better location. Seaside is becoming more and more attractive for vacationers. Even Sheryl Crow, her son, and her parents stopped by on the store's second day in business.

"The family-friendly atmosphere and unique shopping destinations are second to none," says Stacy. "We think the most important thing next to our relationship with God is spending time with family,

and we love how Seaside brings families together."

All of *Duckies'* toys are kid tested by Swaisie, the Pritchett's 4 1/2-year-old daughter. She must have given her seal of approval on the hot items *Duckies* is selling for summer beach fun. "Sand toys have come a long way!" says Stacy. "We've got sets to make sand cupcakes and cookies, crab-shaped shovels and octopus beach chairs. A really hot item is our light-up beach ball, and if you want to take home a *Duckies* souvenir, we've got *Duckies* Beach Balls and Frisbees."

Duckies Shop of Fun is located on Seaside's main circle, 45 Central Square. For more information, contact (850)231-4800 or visit shopduckies.com and facebook.com/duckiesshopoffun.

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Seaside Farmers Market

BY SUSAN L. CANNIZZARO

Have you ever taken a good look at your grocery bill and wondered how much of that money is going to the farmers who produce the food? According to the USDA, in the United States only 19% of the money spent on food goes to farmers and ranchers. At the Seaside Farmers Market, 100% goes to local farmers and producers.

Started by Jenifer Kuntz, the Market began as a side project to her Raw and Juicy Organic Café to help educate people about the importance of food, organics, local farmers, and local commerce. “The Seaside Farmers Market fosters local commerce by keeping money in the community instead of sending it outside the region. Plus it keeps local farmers employed and helps preserve the land that is so vital in the production of the products and produce,” says Jenifer.

The Farmers Market was part of the original vision of the Seaside development some 30 years ago. Kuntz brought the idea to fruition in May 2008 after a lunch conversation with Seaside Founder Robert Davis. “I don’t think the community would have supported such a market before,” says Kuntz. “It started with a total of 3 vendors and plenty of nay sayers, and it’s finally grown into a true destination for local, fresh food, and true community interaction.”

The food is fresher and healthier, often coming out of the field within a day of being picked. “The food is better for you because you’re eating seasonally, which encourages diversity in the consumer’s diet, which is essential for good health,” she says. “Smaller farms and conscious growers tend to support their soil content through sustainable farming practices that enrich the soil, which means healthier produce for you and more minerals and vitamins. The Farmers Market helps preserve genetic diversity, especially because most varieties can make it to the market but may not make it across the country.”

Today the Seaside Farmers Market is made up of up of 13 vendors that distribute their products, which include organic eggs and chicken, handmade soap, local and organic produce, homemade jams and preserves, worm juice for fertilizer, local honey, homemade breads, gluten

free products, raw food, snacks, plants, seeds, sprouts, and wheatgrass. “All items are unique. You know who is producing them because they are standing in front of you and because they are fresh,” adds Kuntz.

Kuntz grew up in Alaska and Washington, went to college at Colorado State, and owned a dance company in Boulder. When she moved to Florida 7 years ago, she felt a lack of community and availability of healthy, local food. “I decided that my efforts and talents should be spent locally to benefit the community I lived in,” Kuntz says and her Juice Bar and Farmers Market were born. The Juice Bar, located in a 1966 Airstream trailer, serves fresh vegan and raw food seven days a week including smoothies, juices, snacks, breakfast and lunch. She has hired 2 raw food chefs from 105 Degrees, the only certified raw food school, for the summer so they can learn how to run a raw food business and to help her facilitate classes.

The Farmers Market is held year-round every Saturday from 9am-1pm in the Seaside Amphitheater. Loyal customer Buzz Livingston says, “Unless we are out of town, it’s a can’t



Renee Savary of Twin Oaks Farm



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Sampling honey with Gordon of Clear Creek Farm

miss on Saturday morning. Where else can you get bottled milk, Mediterranean cuisine, local gossip and the Soap Peddlers wares?”

“I have been a vendor at the market over the last two years. Jen’s done an amazing job bringing the community together by way of the Farmers Market. It’s a great place to learn, connect with people and find local, healthy

food,” says Chandra Hartman of Moonlight Micro-Farm.

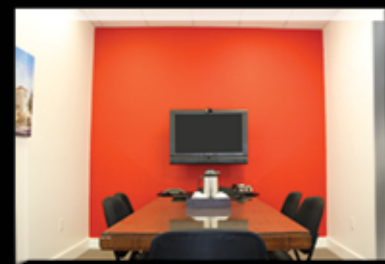
“I’ve always been a mover, a dancer and yoga instructor. I believe in health and wellness as a lifestyle and this includes the Farmers Market. A healthy local commerce and a healthy food community are part of a healthful lifestyle,” says Kuntz.

Goals include growing the market as a place where the community gathers to purchase their food for the week and celebrate food through discussions and demonstrations. “In the future we want to partner with other food organizations to create an annual food event to establish our Farmers Market as a food lover’s destination along the Emerald Coast,” says Kuntz. She has already made enormous strides and the Farmers Market is definitely worth exploring.

The Seaside Farmers Market is located at 2217 E County Highway 30A, Santa Rosa, FL 32459. www.facebook.com/seasidefarmersmarket



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Balance Studio

BY JESSICA HOLTHAUS

"You will come for the work out but return for the experience."

That's the goal that Balance Health Studio co-owners Bart and Kelli Precourt aim to provide each and every time anyone comes to their health studio (be it year round, for a season, or just a few days during a vacation on 30-A).

"It's more than a yoga or spin class or a chiropractic visit— it's about the overall experience of moving your body with other people in the community and having fun while doing it," Bart said.

The couple first began vacationing on 30-A in 2000 and (like everyone else) fell in love with the area. They promised each other that, one day, they'd move to the beach and create their next vision.



chiropractic and fitness classes part of people's daily lifestyle," Precourt said. "Now, five years later, we've been blessed with a steady year round business. Even the vacationers and second homeowners come back every year."

Additionally, while Balance Health Studio has elevated the yoga community, it has inspired other local gyms to add similar classes after seeing the success the couple was having.

"We take it as a compliment when other's do what we do," Kelli said. "In my mind, we are just leading people in the direction of a healthier lifestyle, which in turn elevates the health consciousness of 30-A – how great is that?"

And the health studio looks to do just what the name insinuates: provide balance. With the varieties of yoga and fitness offered, combined with what Kelli refers to as their "X-factor, Dr. Bart, a speaker on life, health and healing," it

truly is one-of-a-kind. In small town communities like 30-A, everyone knows word travels fast. Thankfully, the couple has been doing what they hoped to achieve since the get-go, and their reputation has done them well.

"This isn't just a business, it's our lifestyle," Precourt said. "We realize everyone wants to be healthy and active, yet not everyone has a formula or plan to achieve it. It's our job to make it fun and achievable."

Between him and his wife, the couple shares more than 30 years of experience in the health and fitness industry as well as long resume of degrees, certifications and awards. Today, they're the only official yoga training school from Fort Walton to Tallahassee.

"We're not done. Where there is a need, we'll continue to fill it," Precourt added. "We're always looking to create new programs and opportunities to have fun while getting healthy. We are especially excited about expanding the yoga community because it offers something for everyone. If it is your goal to get healthy, lose weight, become flexible, increase strength, feel young or just meet great people, then we invite you to join us."

Balance Health Studio is located at 3547 E. Country Hwy. 30-A, Seagrave Beach, FL 32459. To learn more, visit www.balance30a.com, call (850) 231-9288 or email info@balance30a.com.



fitness classes such as spinning, boot camp, core fitness, group and individual personal training, plus chiropractic services. The classes are for all levels and first-timers are welcome and encouraged. While many seasoned athletes use the facility (relying on the couple's expertise), so do a lot of people just looking for fun ways to stay healthy.

"Much of our business comes from locals – with the obvious influx of vacationers during peak seasons – and many of our clients have been using our services consistently now for five years," said Precourt. "We intentionally created a personal boutique feel to help eliminate the intimidation that

people often have in a big gym."

As the partnership for Balance has grown and the couple has expanded services, the response from the community has been amazing. Today, regular local and semi-local customers sustain the business (versus the drop off they initially saw when during the off seasons).

"Because there weren't many options when we first opened, it was an ongoing process to educate the community about the benefits of making things like yoga,

That vision began to take shape when Kelli, an Olympic athlete who played field hockey in the 1996 Atlanta games and is in the Virginia Sports Hall of Fame, moved to 30-A in 2006 and opened Balance Health Studio in the heart of Seagrave Beach. In the meantime, Bart wrapped up his Atlanta chiropractic business and joined her full time in 2008.

Today, the couple stands behind the successful studio that offers 30-A top-notch yoga instruction, innovative

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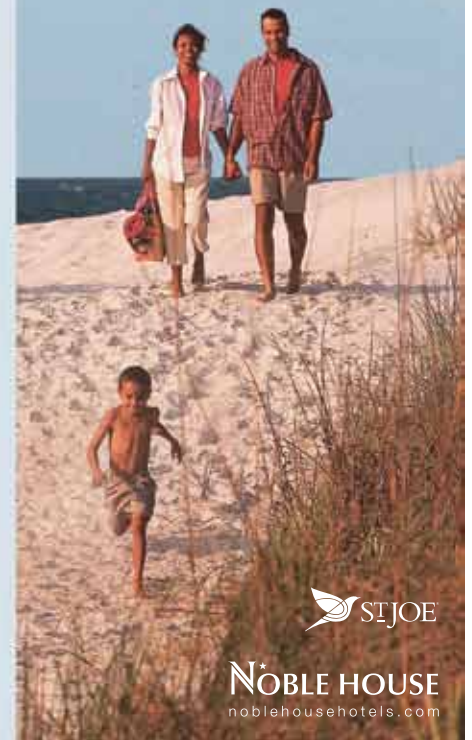
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Transition

BY PRICE RAINER

Transition is defined as the process or a period of changing from one state or condition to another. Sometimes, I feel like my life has been in constant transition since 2004. One aspect of transition for me has been selling real estate during the peak of the market and the lows that came after. Another transition has been that of my life as husband and father. Our first son Christian was born in 2004 prompting me to begin to make some changes in my lifestyle by 2005. In 2006, we were blessed to welcome our second son, Jackson into the fold. At the start of 2007, John David Sullivan, Hunter Harman, and I founded Beach Properties of Florida—at a time in the market when some people probably thought it was not the best time to start a real estate company. 2008 brought more changes into my life, and 2009 through the present has gone by so quickly that it's kind of hard to believe it is now 2011. My point is that not only that I am beginning to understand transition, but I am learning to embrace it. I digress; back to the nature of this article of transitioning real estate along 30-A.

Back in 2006, our little stretch of beach, the state, nation, and world started to transition from some serious growth to the “Great Recession”. Now, I believe we are beginning to see another transition. How so, you might ask? Inventory of available homes is decreasing. I know it might be hard for some to believe, but the market data

During the last five years or so since the bubble burst, our little stretch of beach has continued to add infrastructure..)

supports my statement. During the summer of 2010, there were approximately 150 homes on the market in Watercolor. Currently, there are only about 80 for sale. The same trend is evident in Rosemary Beach. There were 95 available homes last summer and presently only around 60 on the market.

What's even more interesting is when you take the time to cull through the existing inventory and understand what is for sale. A large percentage of what is available is priced higher relative to recent comparable



sales prices, while another percentage suffers from some problems such as functional obsolescence, neglect, etc. That leaves the remaining portion of existing inventory that is available for sale. From my perspective and after weeding out the first two categories referenced above, this portion represents anywhere from 30 to 40 percent or less of current inventory. These homes are nicely appointed, priced correctly, practical, and functional. Interpret this data and you will see that at the rate that overall inventory is decreasing, this ‘good’ inventory will not last long. The options are simple—you can purchase these available homes, wait for new inventory to be constructed, or build yourself. For example, at the rate that inventory is

decreasing and by using the formula described above, there may be as few as 24 to 32 homes available in WaterColor spread throughout the various price points in that ‘sweet spot’ of good inventory. At the rate that homes are selling today, they will be absorbed quickly. You may ask what happens next; well, you just have to call me to discuss.

For those of you that have waited to purchase that dream home, second or third home, crash pad, or whatever you want to call your place in paradise, the time is now. While the 30-A real estate market pings around in this state of transition, pricing may not race up for some time yet. What is happening is that the properties that offer the most value, with value denoting the worth of something compared to the price paid, are leaving the market. So, the longer you wait means that fewer options will be available, putting a premium on the quality inventory remaining. I would be happy to take you on a tour and show you exactly what I'm talking about.

During the last five years or so since the bubble burst, our little stretch of beach has continued to add infrastructure; such as the widening of Highway 331, the new international airport, and low cost air carriers Southwest and Vision Airlines. We have added more conveniences that this area needed such as shopping, rental outlets, and

grocery stores. In addition, the beach looks as beautiful as ever, the water is still that breathtaking emerald green, and the warmth and hospitality that makes this place feel so good is alive and well. I believe that it is during these transitional times that opportunity knocks. Will you seize it or will you let it pass you by?

Price Rainer is a Sales Executive and Co-Owner of Beach Properties of Florida. He can be reached at (850) 259-8287 or price@beachpropertiesofflorida.com. For additional information regarding South Walton Real Estate, please visit www.beachpropertiesofflorida.com.



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The Premier Property Group:

A Little Bit of Home on 30-A

BY RIDGELEY STANDARD

The beaches in the Florida panhandle have long been thought of as some of the most beautiful beaches in the world. To own a home in such a setting would be a dream. To be the dream maker would be even better. Fortunately, The Premier Property Group is in the business of dreams.

Ideally nestled in two locations amidst the eighteen-mile stretch of 30-A, The Premier Property Group is a full service brokerage firm focusing on all properties within the Emerald Coast. The team of professionals has worked together for over twelve years and collectively has over sixty years of experience and boasts some of the best in the business. In fact, within the first year of the company's formation, they were ranked among the top 10% of performers from the Emerald Coast Association of Realtors.

While the combined experience of brokers, agents, and staff is indeed impressive, perhaps more important is the abiding passion they possess for what they do and who they serve. "How we work is by creating a relationship. It's emotional selling," explains the team of Marianne Berrigan Grant, Karen Wagner, Linda Campbell, and Carrie Campbell. "We don't sell

anything people need, we sell something they want. With relationship selling, our approach is different."

Although real estate is inherently an individual endeavor, as a company "they work as a cohesive team". Agents and associates hire support staff individually, thereby ensuring individualized attention. "This gives our customers access to us seven days a week," the team explains. "Essentially we never stop working."

The Premier Property Group operates from a boutique firm perspective, offering a "full service" approach to real estate. "We do more than just sell a house. We offer a full variety of concierge services. For example, we recommend decorators or other vendors. We will hire painters or



*L to R on back row is Carrie Campbell and Marianne Berrigan Grant
L to R on front row is Karen Wagner and Linda Campbell*

movers. We will arrange to meet people at properties for home owners who cannot be there."

This personalized approach has positioned the firm well in terms of market rejuvenation. "We went through a decline a few years ago but our firm seems to be coming out of the downturn before other resort properties. Luckily, we feel like the market is back on track."

Many positive indicators encourage the firm to anticipate a big Spring. "The energy of the market feels better. There is a pent up demand from last year. Rentals are in high demand now that people are taking vacations again. Additionally, for properties for purchase we are seeing multiple offers and a lot of cash buyers. It's as if

people are giving themselves permission to get back into the real estate market. The magic is back!" the team enthuses collectively.

"It is a very rewarding career," they continue. "We get to meet interesting people and have the satisfaction of helping them find a property with the right fit to enhance their lifestyle. And people are always appreciative when you help them find a home. Not only do clients offer praise and thanks, many send gifts. That's how much our personal approach means."

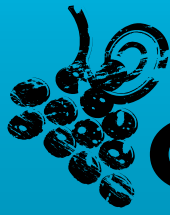
"We don't just sell property," they continue. "We create a lasting relationship. Our clients become friends and a part of our family. We've grown with our customers and have watched their children grow up because we've been in the area so long."

While many clients have a multi-year history with The Premier Property Group, walk-ins are always welcome. "We love to take walk-ins. It is nice to have new blood and excitement for the area. We are always interested in hearing people's different stories, how they got here, and why they are choosing this area."

We don't just sell property... we create a lasting relationship. Our clients become friends and a part of our family.

"Our office is very social and we are in an ideal location. These factors allow us to keep in touch with our customers in an easy manner. We encourage anyone to stop in at any time. Whether it is just to say hi or if you want a market update, we welcome the company. We offer fresh baked cookies every day, and any time after five, feel free to join us for a glass of wine – or two."

The Premier Property Group has locations in both WaterColor and Rosemary/Seacrest to best serve you. They can be reached toll free at (877) 213-2290 or visit online at www.thepremierpropertygroup.com.



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Hilary Farnum:

A Realtor Always There for Her Clients

BY RYAN LOFTIS

There's only one realtor named Hilary on Thirty-A, and Hilary Farnum likes it that way. "I really want people to be able to hear my first name and immediately associate it with Thirty-A real estate," she says.

Reflecting that desire, Farnum changed her company's name to Hilary Select in 2010, two years after it joined the full-service real estate company, The Beach Group. Its mission is to "truly connect people to Thirty-A through my knowledge, my expertise and my enthusiasm for this market." That enthusiasm is evident in Farnum's voice. "I love, love, love our area, couldn't love it more. There's so many positive things going on in Thirty-A. Obviously the biggest thing is the beachfront. If you want to be on one of the greatest areas of beaches, Thirty-A is it. The arts scene, the caliber of restaurants - it has its own unique culture I haven't seen anywhere else in Florida. There's a lifestyle on Thirty-A that people don't realize until they're here." Superstars Miley Cyrus, Sheryl Crow, Jessica Simpson, Carrie Underwood, and Keith Urban are among those who have realized it, either through vacationing or owning property in Thirty-A.

The Florida State University graduate began her career in marketing and sales for Destin's upscale community Regatta Bay. She then spent six years with the St. Joe Company, her last two as its top selling agent. By the end of 2007, in which she secured more than 30 sales, Farnum felt she could better serve clients outside the confines of one area. "I had to seek out a general real estate company. The Beach Group seemed to be the only ones spending money in a difficult market. I also went there because I saw the potential for growth with them. They now have three offices from the one they started out with. I went from the most corporate real estate world you could imagine to, honest to God, flip-flops, shorts, super laid-back." The change didn't affect her abilities: With more than \$35 million in sales in 2010, Farnum was WaterSound Beach's top sales agent.

While Farnum enjoys selling properties of all price ranges, she considers upscale living communities to be her specialty. What has been the key to Farnum's success? "To me it's providing access to my clients. That's accomplished by being available for them and anybody else in the real estate equation. I'm extremely accessible. You name it - text, Twitter, Facebook, answering on the first ring, responding to e-mails immediately. Thank God for texting. It's the first question I ask: 'Are you comfortable texting?' I answer my phone 24 hours a day, seven days a week. That's the only way to give service to the buyers and sellers right now. I think it's a huge component of my success that I actually answer my phone." Laughing, she adds, "I might be giving away my secrets."

Another important aspect is her husband Chad, who heads Hilary Select's marketing department and constantly searches for new ways to help clients. "I could not do it without him," Farnum says. "We are literally in the same office space with desks facing each other, so we have an incredible synergy because he knows what I need before I am even off the phone since he hears everything going on. He's amazing." Amazing, but unrecognized. "He's the person nobody ever meets. He's the guy at the computer. He's an incredible manager of the business."

When asked how the Great Recession affected Thirty-A's real estate market, Farnum says, "From my perspective it made people more cautious. If they did decide to spend money, they wanted it to be in an amenity community. That's where they felt like it was safest. They were only willing to buy in amenity communities and Gulf front properties. Before people would buy anything you put in front of them."

Farnum feels the market's recovery began in the fourth quarter of 2009. The following year was "fairly strong. Now the market has exploded. The number of sales is up substantially across the board. More importantly, we're seeing a ton of building. You're seeing so much construction that has not been seen in 5 years. The number of building permits polled for Walton County is the highest since 2004. That, to me, is the true definition of a recovering market, when the building starts again. Everything is coming together and it's going to be a pretty incredible year for sales. I think the future looks incredibly good right now for us."

For more information, visit www.HilarySelect.com, e-mail Hilary@TheBeachGroup.com or call (850) 685 - 0171.



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Title Insurance

“What is title insurance and do I really need it?”

BY FRANK WATSON AND KIMBERLY WATSON SEWELL



Kimberly Sewell and Frank Watson

Questions and Answers...

In every real estate transfer, the matter of title examination invariably arises, and that is often followed by a question as to the need/nature of title insurance. “But I have a deed and a title search was originally conducted,” many people say, “isn’t that all I need?” No! A deed is not proof that the seller is actually the owner, nor does it contain information regarding the rights others might have in the property, unpaid taxes, mortgages, easements, and restrictions. “Can’t I find out about their rights from the public records?” Yes, most of them. However, not all of the necessary information is contained in a single book, in a given office, or even in the same county. Add to this the possible errors in indexing, improper searching, and

errors in examination; in other words, the “human element,” and one can begin to realize the need. Besides, what is not in the public records is often what causes title trouble.

What is meant by “Title?”

“Title” is synonymous with legal ownership of property. It legitimates your right to “peaceful enjoyment” of the property you own, within restrictions or limitations of use imposed by covenants or government authorities.

What is Title Insurance?

Real estate title insurance, unlike most types of insurance, insures the property’s title for the time period extending **backward** in time from the date of the policy rather than forward, protecting against losses arising from events occurring prior to the date of the policy. The title insurance guarantees a buyer’s ownership and peaceful enjoyment against existing hidden claims, liens or judgments associated with a property after the purchase is completed. This means that when a buyer purchases real estate, a title insurance policy insures or otherwise guarantees that the buyer is protected if a hidden defect in the property title is *subsequently* discovered. Hidden

risks such as those referenced below could potentially lead to a significant financial loss or actual loss of title to the property.

Title insurance will pay for 100% of all expenses in defending you against any lawsuits attacking the title as insured, and will either “clear up” the title problems or pay the insured’s losses up to the amount of the policy.

A One-Time Investment.

Unlike hazard, flood or casualty insurance, when you purchase a Title Insurance Policy, you pay a single, one-time fee based on the value of the property being insured. Yet, the policy provides protection *indefinitely* remaining in effect as long as the insured has an interest

in the property. If the insured should die, the coverage automatically continues for the benefit of the insured’s heirs. Additionally, if the insured sells the property via a general warranty deed, which is typical, the insured is giving warranties of title to the buyer where the insured covenants with the buyer that not only has the insured not personally done anything to adversely affect the title being conveyed, but neither has anyone else who has ever owned the property. Additionally, the owner’s coverage continues to insure the owner regarding said warranties.

How are Title Insurance Rates Set?

How title insurance premium rates are set varies from state to state. In some states rates are set by the title companies themselves and in others, such as Florida, the rates are set by the State Department of Insurance. For those states that set the rates such as Florida, each title company is required to charge the same for title insurance and rates are promulgated based on the purchase price of the property. As such, when shopping title insurance in Florida, you will receive similar rates for title insurance from each company.

Some HIDDEN RISKS that can cause a loss of title or create an encumbrance on title may include, any the following situations:

1. Seller purchased the property while committing mortgage fraud.
2. Seller or prior seller may have outstanding personal judgments which could attach to the property.
3. Forged or missing deeds, mortgages, satisfactions or releases of mortgages, and other instruments.
4. Invalid, suppressed, undisclosed, and erroneous interpretation of wills or undisclosed or missing heirs.
5. Liens from unpaid estate, inheritance, income, gift and real estate taxes.
6. A judgment or levy upon which the title is dependent may be void or voidable on account of some defect in the legal proceeding.
7. A prior deed may be voidable because it was signed while the grantor was incompetent, a minor or in bankruptcy.
8. Outstanding prescriptive rights not of record and not disclosed.
9. Mistakes made during the examination of the title of the property.

Frank Watson has been conducting real estate closings along 30A Since 1997. For more information, please contact: Watson Sewell, PL (850) 231-3465 - www.watsonsewell.com and South Walton Title (850) 231-3467 - www.southwalmartitle.com.

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Costa Rica

Volcanoes, rainforests, hot springs, zip-lines, surfing, yoga and more make for a fun family adventure.

BY JOE RADA

Nosara Beach on Costa Rica's northwestern shore gets great surfing waves year-round.



We spend our days hiking through moist forests teeming with giant ferns, blossoming orchids, and thick moss. On a zip-line adventure we swoop past towering trees and above waterfalls and ravines. After dark we loll in steaming natural hot springs warmed deep inside the volcanic mountain. We eat simple meals of local staples—rice with grilled steak or chicken, lots of fresh vegetables and tropical fruit, and terrific coffee grown and roasted nearby—at Lavas Tacotal (our lodging), or at Las Brasitas or Don Rufino. At night we return to a thatched-roof cabañita with a view of Arenal and watch the mountaintop glow orange through a seemingly ever-present swirl of clouds.

since in the 1970s by U.S. ex-patriots who—determined to avoid the type of fast-food megaresort overkill they saw elsewhere—create small-scale lodgings, cafes, guide services, surf shops and other businesses while maintaining a super-relaxed vibe.

Referred by friends, we contact Nosara Paradise Rentals, whose Floridian founder Craig Sutton takes care of everything. He provides a pleasant little cottage, one of a cluster around a shared swimming pool and garden; arranges beach-galloping horseback rides and discounts at Coconut Harry's Surf Shop for rentals and lessons; suggests jeep tours, nature hikes, and local rodeo action. If we'd been so inclined, he'd have taken us deep-sea fishing on one of several charter boats.

We spend our days surfing, napping in shaded hammocks, and lingering in open air restaurants such as Casa Tucan, Marlin Bill's, Gilded Iguana, and our favorite, Rosie's, where Rosie packs ice, watermelon, mango and other fruit into a blender to make cool healthy drinks. Wherever we go, we walk. While three of us obsess over surfing, my wife walks each day through the woods to Nosara Yoga Institute for yoga sessions, stretching limberly on a covered patio or during sunsets on the beach.

It's hard to leave, but waiting in the airport we're already plotting our return.

Thousands of tiny leaf-cutter ants, each carrying greenery many times its size, march single-file across a rainforest path. Emerald toucanets, scarlet macaws, a dozen species of hummingbirds, and other colorful additions to my birder's life list dart among the jungle canopy. Howler monkeys make a guttural ruckus overhead while raccoon-like coatimundis make brief appearances. And about once an hour an ominous booming sound followed by a thundering rumble and cinders showering down on the higher elevations remind me that I'm standing on an active volcano.

I'm in Costa Rica for the second time, and it's magical. The first trip was for business a decade ago, though I recall free-time outings far better than any meetings. Now I've brought my wife and teenage son and daughter along to experience this remarkable Central American destination.

For half of our vacation we're based in La Fortuna, a village at the base of 5,470-foot-high Arenal Volcano in the northwestern region of this almost-West-Virginia-size country flanked by Nicaragua, Panama, the Caribbean Sea, and the Pacific Ocean. Arenal—one of seven active volcanoes in Costa Rica (60 lie dormant or extinct)—is cone-shaped like one from a child's drawing or a cartoon dinosaur movie. Its last big eruption was in 1968, though smaller events as recently as 2005 sent orange tongues of lava partway down the rugged slopes.



Rainforest Zipline in Arenal Volcano

For the second half of our trip we relocate to remote Nosara on Costa Rica's Pacific coast. It's a seven-hour trek on narrow, sporadically paved, and often poorly marked roads past cattle ranches, coffee plantations, plantain farms, and small towns, and the last 35 miles are deeply rugged dirt tracks. Rather than rent a car and get lost or broken down, we hire a taxi with a driver who knows the territory and gladly serves as tour guide and bilingual interpreter too.

Nosara is a free-spirited, laid-back, end-of-the-road, different-drummer kind of place. Known as The American Experiment, Nosara has been slowly developed

GOING ONCE... GOING TWICE...

In two trips to Costa Rica, unable to decide between volcanoes and surfing, I've split my time. The two extremes aren't that far apart, so why not enjoy both? Fly into San José, the capital, for access to all areas, or into Liberia in the northwest, close to the best surfing beaches. Bring a passport, a Spanish-English dictionary, and a calculator for figuring *colones*-to-dollars conversions. Don't count on cell phone service.

INFORMATION

- Costa Rica: visitcostarica.com
- Fortuna Welcome (Arenal Volcano area): fortunawelcome.com
- Lavas Tacotal (our Arenal hotel choice): arenal.net/tacotal
- Arenal Mundo Adventure: arenalmundoaventura.com
- Baldi Hot Springs: arenal.net/baldi-hot-springs.htm
- Nosara Paradise Rentals: nosaraparadiserentals.com
- Coconut Harry's Surf Shop: coconutharrys.com
- Nosara Yoga Institute: nosarayoga.com

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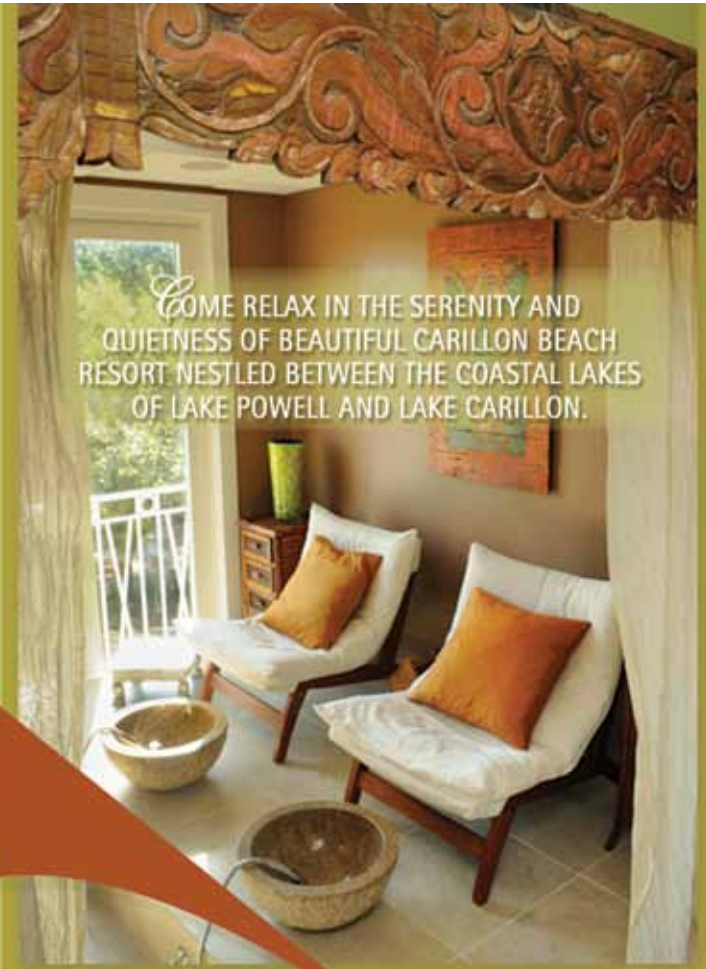
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White Springs

A Small Town With Big Dreams

BY DOC LAWRENCE

Nestled alongside the storied Suwannee, one of America's most romantic rivers, this little village is much like it was during the riverboat days decades ago when celebrities like Theodore Roosevelt and wealthy tycoons came here for spa enjoyment centered around the mineral water springs. Residents proudly showcase Victorian homes, live oak trees decorated with Spanish moss and Cabbage Palms, plus a blaze of flowers year round. Living is easy here.

Springs to live and restore their Victorian home. After becoming mayor, she recognized potential and decided to lead a Herculean effort that could forever transform the town. The University of Florida produced a development plan based White Springs' human and natural resources that is now a work in progress. "Sure, it's challenging," says Dr. Miller, "but it is a realistic project that we can and will do."

The ambitious plan includes a cannery and a winery and pays homage to the impressive natural wonders of the area.

FESTIVALS AND RECREATION

Once a riverboat town, White Springs had 14 luxury hotels the late 1800s. Much of the original town still stands, including the 1865 Adams Brother General Merchandise Store, three churches, and scores of homes. The White Springs Historic District with 88 structures is listed in the National Register of Historic Places.

Surrounded by thousands of acres of public lands, White Springs offers multiple recreational activities. The Nature and Heritage Tourism Center provides information for heritage tours and recreation, including river and trail activities from canoeing and kayaking to hiking. Here, the Suwannee River flows through areas of pristine river marshlands, bordered by low bluffs, wide sandy banks, and ancient woodlands, and is one of the last undisturbed areas of Florida where outdoors enthusiasts can visit and enjoy.

A large variety of fish from catfish to bass and trout inhabit the upper Suwannee River and local guides say that an angler's best bet is to grab a canoe and a rod, then let the current take you down the river.

In late May, the Stephen Foster Folk Culture Center hosts the Florida Folk Festival where traditional art forms of are kept alive during the celebration of songs, artists and folk crafts and other forms of traditional expression.

Upcoming events include the Suwannee River Quilt Show in October when quilters gather to display their magnificent collectible creations. In November, Rural Floklife Days showcases Florida's unique pioneer past with Cracker farm traditions that remain part of family and community life including quilting, cane grinding, syrup making, lye soap making, hand-made cow whips.

Florida's pristine interior has no parallel in the country. This is original America, a land where nature opens nicely to strangers who dream of a lifestyle where harmony and beauty reign. It's a land of forests, pure water, wildlife, cultural heritage and friendly smiles. And the food is abundant, fresh and delicious. Everything combines in White Springs to mirror the goodness of the people and the wonders of nature.

Doc Lawrence is an award-winning veteran travel journalist who tells the story of original Florida, sharing his adventures and discoveries with readers throughout America. Doc lives in Atlanta. DocLawrence@DocsNews.com.

DOWN HOME TASTING

An afternoon of tea and delightful conversation with Judith McClure on the large wrap-around porch of her magnificent White Springs Bed 'n Breakfast remains a precious memory. A retired schoolteacher, artist, and a published author, Ms. McClure's wonderfully comfortable 1905 home is listed on the National Registry of Historic Places. Her rates are reasonable and the conversation is free.

Late on this glorious afternoon beside the Suwannee, I walked over to a feast for the ages. Legendary cook Teddy Bear Marshall manned his large grill, expertly barbecuing many items indigenous to White Springs and North Florida: deer ribs, grilled deer loin, wild boar Boston butt, and grilled cabbage with nettles sausage were Teddy Bear's contributions to a dinner to remember.

The great cooks of White Springs set long tables with favorite homemade delicacies.

A few of the many favorites included Mike Radel's sweet potato in an orange rind cup, Dorothy Brown's cheese biscuits and her tater bread, Mary Lou Bullard's strawberry cake, and Zelda Hutcherson's key lime cake.

The magnificent affair confirmed that wines of the world pair perfectly with traditional Southern cuisine, much like sweet tea and lemonade.



White Springs' "Dream Team," Mayor Helen Miller and local celebrity chef Teddy Bear Marshall share the bounty from North Florida's abundant game, fish, fruit and vegetables with hungry visitors, but also a vision for their town's future, one filled with promise.

White Springs is laidback but not asleep. In fact, the town is committed to a determined upward journey with a goal of prosperity from new tourism. Led by Dr. Helen Miller, the town's visionary mayor, good things are happening.

Dr. Miller is hardly a typical small town Southern mayor. Along with her husband, Dr. Miller came to White



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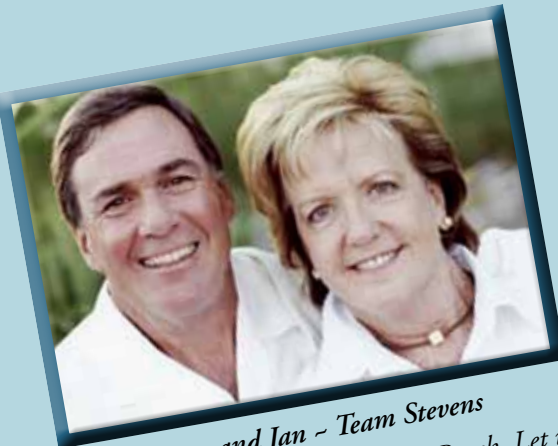
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In Search of a Golf Lesson

A visit to the David Leadbetter Golf Academy

BY TOM FITZPATRICK

Most golfers' shots during the course of eighteen holes rank from poor to average. And sure, you can throw in a few great shots. Golf is one of those games where the quality and consistency can vary greatly in one round. Over time we tend to accept those large variances as normal.

So how do you break out of normal? By taking a golf lesson. Maybe you have taken lessons before and they didn't work. Or maybe lessons made you feel awkward, which is the case for all of us at some point.

Recently, I took my own lesson to see where I could improve. I traveled to one of the best academies in the world, the David Leadbetter Golf Academy in Orlando. It's the place where so many legends have trained: Nick Faldo, Nick Price, Ernie Els and now Michelle Wie.

My teacher was longtime PGA Tour player and former Disney Classic winner Bob Lohr. Bob said my swing needed a bit more dynamic hip and leg action through the swing. And Bob had the perfect drill to help me get that better lower body rotation.

It works like this...start by placing a large beach ball just above your tailbone, then hold it in place against a wall. Fold your arms. Then focus on rotating your core, the engine of the swing, back and through.

Keep repeating and start to notice how your hips and legs respond to your turning navel area. As you do this, watch how your weight moves to your front heel as your front hip opens up. Let the ball fall out as your swing finishes. It's a fantastic drill that will result in a more consistent, powerful golf game.

Then Bob put me on this new weight board that displayed a graphical image of my weight shift pattern. This is a hot new topic for the pros. PGA Tour pro Charles Howell had just spent 15 minutes before me on the board.

So if you want to break out normal and start improving the consistency in your golf game, gain some insight by visiting the Leadbetter Academy. If you have kids, their junior camps are renowned for producing great players.

Tom Fitzpatrick, a realtor with Premier Property Group in WaterColor and Seacrest Beach, was ranked #1 on 30-A in properties sold in 2008. He's had clients discuss homes and condos with him on the course and range as it's a great way to identify communities and narrow down choices. Call if you'd like to hear about 30-A's great real estate opportunities over golf. Fitzpatrick can be reached at (850) 225-4674 or tom.fitz@att.net.



QUICK TIP

The quickest way to improve in golf is to position the lead hand on the club properly. The club should rest along the base of the fingers in the left hand for a right handed golfer. Leadbetter sells a great training aid to help...a golf glove with a marked area to show where the club goes.



Sylvester Stallone and Tom Fitzpatrick at Lake Nona Golf Club

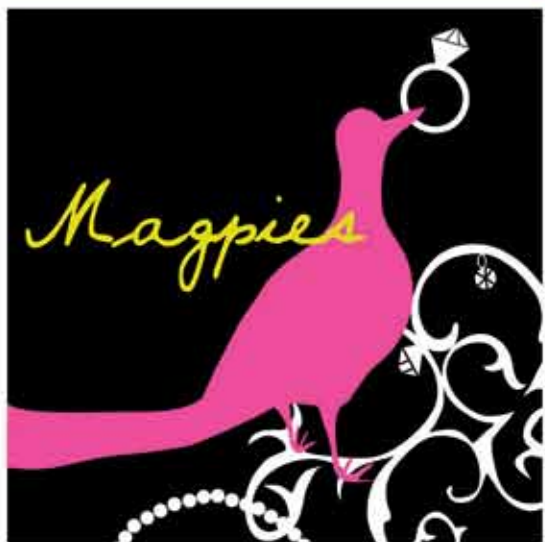
SEVE AND STALLONE

Before moving to 30-A, I had a dream job helping Leadbetter. My first day was to greet major champion Seve Ballesteros and play his swing videotape for him until David arrived. Seve made me laugh in the video room that morning when he asked lots of questions about his swing. I politely told him that we should wait for David to show up. That first day I didn't have a clue about the golf swing!

Actor Sylvester Stallone caught the golf bug and took several lessons at the Leadbetter Academy. Sly was a lot of fun to hang out with. His advice to me one day while on the range was: "The body is dumb without the mind". Ponder that Adrian!



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You have always been accessible by phone or in person. Reporting all progress has been consistent and we always knew where we stood with our budget. Additionally, your daily visits to the site were evidenced by the fact that you were into the details.

Our project superintendent, Kenny SanAngelo, was outstanding. You attract and retain highly competent people who are as adamant about quality as you are. The subcontractors who you have worked with for years understand and deliver that same level of professionalism and pride in their work.

Most of all, we appreciate the fact that you are a "straight shooter". You have certainly earned our trust, respect and friendship.

Since we began coming to the Gulf Coast we have had a dream of our own special place by the sea. You built Falling Waters Villa and that dream is now a reality. We appreciate you!

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