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Mary Wallace

She's started the JOY-filled Journeys Foundation for special needs kids

By LINDA ANN McDONALD
Correspondent

Joy and happiness are often used interchangeably, but they have different meanings and sources. Joy is constant while happiness is temporary. Happiness, however, can come and go depending on the situation, such as getting a promotion at work.

A joy can be a person or thing that gives joy to someone or is a source of happiness. Wakulla's special needs population has its own source of joy, and that joy is Mary Wallace and her JOY-Filled Journeys.

Along with her daughter Sara, who has special needs, this mother-daughter team is dedicated to bringing awareness to the community while promoting involvement through enjoyable activities in Wakulla County.

In 2009, Wakulla Springs Baptist Church started a Special Needs Prom. In 2017, due to the success and the event outgrowing the capacity of the church, the pastor of the church decided



Mary Wallace

Turn to Page 7

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How you can help shelter animals

By JOANN SANDERS

If you've ever wondered how you can help the homeless dogs and cats in our community, then please read on! There are so many ways you can make a difference, and it doesn't have to involve investing a lot of time or money.

Pick up a couple of items next time you're shopping to drop off at the animal shelter! Dog and cat food, both wet and dry, are always appreciated. For dogs, Pedigree is preferred, although any quality food for dogs and puppies will always be gratefully received. For cats, Purina One is the preferred choice, but any quality canned or dry food for

cats and kittens is welcomed. Toys and treats are inexpensive items that make such a difference in the lives of homeless pets, and makes their stay at the shelter feel a little more like home. Pet wipes come in handy and are always in short supply, as well as Capstar, an over-the-counter flea remedy that goes a long way in helping to keep our dogs and cats comfortable. Cat litter, cat carriers, and slip leashes are much-needed items that are used on a daily basis at the shelter. Cleaning supplies like bleach, Dawn dish detergent, and paper towels are also used regularly and very much appreciated.

If you have any prescription medications for



dogs or cats that you no longer need, the shelter can always use them as long as they haven't expired.

Don't toss those old worn out towels, wash cloths, and blankets! These items are also used regularly at the shelter.

Old newspapers are used to line the bottom of cat kennels and litter boxes.

Volunteer your time!

Take an hour or two each week to drop by the shelter and walk a dog, or play with a cat. Play time has huge psychological and physical benefits for pets, and it's good for you too!

Offer to foster and socialize a special needs animal. Some shelter pets have been traumatized by what they've experienced and will greatly benefit from being in a private home where they can receive one-on-one attention from a loving caretaker. Any food, toys, treats, or needed medical care is supplied by the shelter for the duration of the fostering period. Although you don't get paid for fostering, there is nothing like the fulfillment and joy that comes from knowing you

helped an animal learn to trust humans again.

Adopt! If you're ready to add a furry family member, do your research in order to find the perfect fit for your family, then go to the shelter and save a life! While you're there, please take the time to meet the senior pets - they still have so much love to give, and they deserve to live out the rest of their days with someone who will love them unconditionally.

Sponsor a pet! Sometimes the only thing that prevents an otherwise approved adopter from taking a pet home is money. Offering to pay the adoption fee is a wonderful way to show your care.

"Like" and follow our

Facebook page, "Wakulla Animal Services". Simply sharing our posts takes hardly any time or effort, but it can mean LIFE for a homeless pet if the right person sees it!

The caring staff at Wakulla Animal Services puts their heart and soul into saving the lives of our homeless pet population, and they couldn't do what they do without the support of the community. On behalf of the animals, THANK YOU!

Wakulla Animal Services is located at 1 Oak St in Crawfordville, and can be reached on their Facebook page, or by calling 850-926-0902.

Joann Sanders is a volunteer for Wakulla Animal Services.

Retiring earlier than expected? Here's what to know



By BRIAN ENGLISH

Many Americans, through circumstances beyond their control, find themselves needing to retire earlier than anticipated. Whatever the circumstances, it's difficult not to feel wrongfooted and hurried by the situation. However, it's important to get yourself back on track as soon as possible. Here are some things to consider as you make the transition:

DON'T MAKE FAST DECISIONS

When dealing with a sudden transition like this, it can be tempting to make some sort of hasty decision. But reacting too quickly might hinder your ability to reorient yourself. Unless something is truly urgent, it's often best to give yourself

some space to think about your new life and carefully consider all your available choices.

Take the time to organize your thoughts and to put your important documents in order. At the end of that period, you can look at things in a cool, calm way.

WORK, IF POSSIBLE

The American Association of Retired Persons (AARP) states that 56 percent of workers aged 50 and older have faced some sort of unplanned departure from work for various reasons, ranging from health issues or caring for an infirm relative to redundancy. Finding yourself out of work in your 60s can be discouraging, but it's also true that age is not the barrier it once was.

In fact, it's not unusual for companies to seek an experienced hand to be a consultant or to train the next generation working in a particular field.

While it may be part time or even temporary, if you are able to work, you may find

great satisfaction in that opportunity, not to mention additional income.

WHAT TO CONSIDER WITH TAX-DEFERRED ACCOUNTS

Your retirement strategy likely includes some form of tax-deferred account. If so, making withdrawals is one choice to consider.

For example, if you are not working, you may be in a lower tax bracket than before. But keep in mind that penalties might apply, depending on your age.

This article is for informational purposes only and is not a replacement for real-life advice. Make sure to consult with your financial and accounting professionals before accessing any tax-deferred account.

IS SOCIAL SECURITY A FACTOR?

The longer you delay taking your Social Security payments, the greater they will be.

While Americans

have an opportunity to start taking payments as early as age 62, the payments will not reflect the amount you could be getting at full retirement age.

Starting at 62 may be a consideration for those who need the income or have some other urgent need, such as being in poor health.

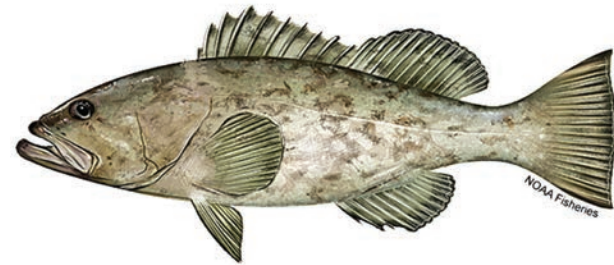
Making an unexpected change can bring changes to your overall retirement strategy. However, it's important to remember that it's likely your financial professional has worked with other people in similar circumstances.

This might be one of those times when it's good to have someone who can help provide some guidance.

Brian can be reached at (850) 926-7487.

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Time to get out with cooler temps



By AL HARTMAN
The Old Pro

The weather has cooled down some, but this is Florida, it can change!

The cool air has brought some of the reef fish in closer. The rivers are full of reds and sea trout. Sea bass are everywhere.

We fished the St. Marks River the other day and caught sea bass all day. Most were not keepers, but we got a few.

Remember Gag Grouper season closed Oct. 19. It will open again Sept. 1, 2024.

Have you noticed animals in Florida are going down with all sort of diseases?

We have an avian flu in birds. Deer have been

found in the panhandle of Florida to have Chronic Wasting Disease. And now turtles have in Florida have come down with a disease known to be fatal in freshwater turtles, called turtle fra-servirus 1 (TFV1).

To aid in that effort, the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission recently launched a new way to report sick, abnormal or dead turtles through a reporting form online at MyFWC.com.

This data will assist staff and partners as they work to better understand TFV1. Turtles affected with this illness appear to be sluggish, walk in circles or just lay there doing nothing. Don't pick them up - just notify FWC of their location.

Don't forget Rail season is in until Nov. 9 and Dove closes first season Oct. 15 and re-opens Nov. 11.

Well, get out and hunt or fish and be careful and safe!

Happy hunting and fishing, and take a young'un.

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**Oyster & Mullet Festival
November 11, 2023
Schedule**

Music on the Stage

- 9:00 Opening Ceremonies: Mayor Lara Edwards
- 10:00-11:30: Humble Road
- 11:30-12: 30: Rockulla Musicians
- 12:30-1:00 : Music for Mullet Haircut Contest
- 1:00-2:30: Funky 'Taters (Funk R & B)
- 2:30-4:00: Hot Tamale Duo

Mullet Competitions

- 11:30-12:30: Mullet Toss (Depot Museum Green)
- 12:30-1:00: Best Mullet Haircut Contest (Stage)

Contact Discover Sopchoppy:

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Planning outdoor activities with family members can encourage camaraderie and help alleviate tension during stressful times.

Serve up family harmony on holidays



By SAMANTHA KENNEDY

Family get-togethers, whether they occur during the holiday season or on special occasions, have a way of bringing out the best and the worst in us. The joy of reconnecting with loved ones can sometimes be overshadowed by tension, disagreements, and unresolved conflicts.

However, there are effective strategies to cope with those awkward moments and ensure a harmonious atmosphere during family gatherings.

Before walking into the lion's den, get prepared mentally. Accept that not everything will go as planned and anticipate potential triggers for tension.

If sensitive topics or past conflicts are likely to be on the menu, plan proper responses or practice redirecting the conversation positively.

Sometimes, a little mental rehearsal can go a long way in avoiding misunderstandings.

Unmet expectations are a significant source of disappointment during family gatherings. Understand that all families have their quirks and issues. Do not expect a flawless event; aim for a joyful one instead.

Embracing the imperfections will make it easier to navigate the challenges.

Sometimes tensions arise due to misunderstandings. If a family member has said or done something uncomfortable or offensive, consider discussing it privately and honestly with them.

Communicate feelings without blaming or accusing, using "I" statements. This can often clear the air and prevent lingering resentment.

Practice active listening, for everyone's sake. When someone is talking, focus on what they are saying instead of on other things. This can prevent miscommunication and help avoid misinterpretations that often lead to conflicts.

Alcohol can be a double-edged sword during family gatherings. While some people find it helps them relax, excessive drinking can also lower inhibitions and lead to heated arguments. It is okay to enjoy a drink or two, but adhere to limits and maintain self-control.

When the tension starts to build, it is OK to take a step back and get some fresh air. A brief walk or a moment of solitude can be helpful for regaining composure and perspective.

Despite any differences, there are likely some common interests among family members. Focus on these shared interests or hobbies to bond and engage in pleasant conversations. This can help divert attention from contentious topics.

Engaging in group activities can be an effective way to reduce tension. Board games, outdoor sports, or collaborative cooking can help create a fun and relaxed atmosphere that encourages positive interactions.

If it feels like an argument is about to

start, try to remain neutral and avoid taking sides. Encourage open-mindedness and empathy in the conversation. Sometimes, simply listening and acknowledging another person's viewpoint can be enough to defuse a potentially explosive situation.

Remember that family members are unique individuals with their own perspectives and life experiences. It's unrealistic to expect everyone to think and behave the same way. Embrace diversity within the family and respect each member's right to their own opinions and choices.

In conclusion, while family gatherings may come with their share of challenges, there are numerous ways to navigate them successfully. Ultimately, the key to coping with tense family get-togethers is to approach them with love, patience, and a willingness to maintain the bonds that make family so precious.

For more information about this and other health and wellness topics, please call Samantha Kennedy at (850) 926-3931.



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Social media vs. real life



By GREG GAST

Where did the terms gaslighting, breadcrumbing, ghosting, submarining, and benching come from? Or zombiefing which is when someone, most likely an ex, keeps popping back into your life.

One that is used a lot is toxic: toxic parenting, toxic relationships, toxic religion. People are saying that they are having some reaction to whatever they put toxic in front of.

What effect are these terms having on our lives? There is a difference between psychoeducation and psychobabble. The one thing that matters about these words and terms is what they mean to

the person using them. What are they trying to describe is happening to them. What are they making out of them?

The use of these words has been dubbed “therapy-speak” and prominent mental health professionals are calling out mainstream articles on social media platforms using these words as incorrect or flippant.

They are cautioning that using words like gaslighting (which was Merriam-Webster’s 2022 Word of the Year) and narcissist whenever someone disagrees with them or prioritizes their own needs could be wrong or unwarranted.

Social media has provided us with some creative ways to describe human suffering. Words like imposter syndrome, triggers, burnout – none of which are in the terms taught to therapists.

Most often these words are used to blame outward as a

protective strategy for not having to engage with the emotional content underneath. The truth is it is the inward internal journey that is not being focused on that would be beneficial to the user of these words.

The question might be what the person on social media wants to do with these labels. If they are just trying to describe their experience it doesn’t matter what they call it. If they are trying to justify some sort of

action, like taking custody from a co-parent or separating from a parent, that’s when these words need to be used correctly.

Being human means being real, honest, and sincere. Using social media buzzwords to justify blame and villainize someone in their life in truth reveals that aspects of these words probably apply to all of us.

These words and terms will evolve and change over time, but it is the real life

experiences that matter most.

Maybe what needs to happen is to be honest with ourselves and ask ourselves why are we using these words in the first place.

There is a difference in public discourse and real genuine personal discourse.

We may need to be honoring the wounds and experiences that are underneath the terms first.

A wise man once said, “We cannot cure the fault of an-

other until we cure what is despicable inside ourselves.”

Let me know what you think.

Send your questions to Real Life Counseling, 3295 Crawfordville Hwy., suite #4, Crawfordville FL 32327 in care of Gregory E. Gast, MS, LMHC, NCC. Your name will be changed and the answer to your question will appear in an upcoming issue of The Wakulla Sun.

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November kicks off the holiday season



By **JARED MILLER**
Wakulla Sheriff

From the desk of Sheriff Miller,

This month typically marks the beginning of the holiday season for many people. This time of year, for many people is rightfully a time of happiness and celebration.

While it's always a nice time to get together with

friends and loved ones, this time of year also tends to see an increase in traffic crashes and DUI incidents.

As we move into the holiday season, I wanted to take time this month to remind everyone of the dangers of drinking and driving and of the very real consequences one may face for doing so.

So first off, let's define what we are talking about. I choose to use the phrase drinking and driving instead of "drunk driving" because "drunk" often publicly is a hard term to define.

Please know that it is never a good

idea to drink alcohol and get behind the wheel of a car, no matter the amount you have consumed.

Even after one drink your sense of coordination, response time, and decision-making skills can become impaired.

Most adults with driver licenses are very comfortable behind the wheel of a car, it's easy to forget the level of concentration and coordination required to drive a car.

Failing to react in the car stopping in front of you, or the pedestrian walking down the road can have dire conse-

quences for everyone involved.

Accidents sometimes cannot be avoided. However, you can reduce being involved in one by making sure not drink and drive, and to have a designated driver.

There are a lot of people who believe to get cited or arrested for a DUI, your blood alcohol level would need to be above a certain point.

This quite frankly is untrue.

One of the reasons I choose to talk about drinking and driving versus "drunk" driving is that it is possible to get in trouble without believing your-

self to be drunk or having a low blood alcohol level.

If a law enforcement officer contacts you while driving and you have been drinking if show signs of impairment, you can be arrested no matter what your blood alcohol level is.

The fact of the matter is that if you are reading this article, you have too much to lose by drinking and driving.

Getting caught behind the wheel of a car after you have been drinking could cost you thousands of dollars, your driver's license, or the life of you or someone

you love.

Please while you are celebrating the holidays this year, if you choose to drink make sure you have a sober driver.

Please remember the Wakulla County Sheriff's Office is always here if you need us, and to always report suspicious or criminal activity. Call our office at 850-745-7100, or 911 for emergencies.

Your Sheriff,
Jared F. Miller

Jared Miller is sheriff of Wakulla County.

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Mary Wallace

From Front Page

it was time to step down and pass the torch of the prom event.

After a divine pull at her heart, Wallace stepped into the role. “I did it because of what the prom did for the kids, how it helped the kids,” she says. “It gave them a way to be engaged with each other. Another reason why I decided to do it is how I saw the world through Sara’s eyes.

“As a parent, you want to protect, you want your child to be liked and accepted. As for Sara, it was difficult. I was sitting in church, and I was asking myself, ‘Is this God telling me to help Sara and all the kids?’ This is the reason why I stepped into the role in 2017. Because of taking on this role and attending more and more events, Sara has blossomed by means of being more outgoing, it was baby steps, not by leaps and bounds, but it gives both her and I a sense of purpose.

“Sara is the inspiration and the one with all the great ideas,” says Wallace.

She was excited about taking on the Special Needs Prom and events but was faced with a barrier immediately. Because

Wakulla Springs Baptist Church was too small to continue holding the proms, the challenge of where and what venue to host the events surfaced. Wallace’s only alternative was to join up with the “Night to Shine” coordinators in Tallahassee who hold proms like what Mary is familiar with, but Wallace wanted to keep the event local.

Right when things for Mary were starting to move forward and look up, the Covid pandemic hit and forced an abrupt halt to her plans. With a determined tone in her voice, Mary says, “I was not discouraged by Covid, it only empowered me more; I was not going to be defeated and I want this to continue.

“The bright side of this pandemic is Sara, this whole time was creating, planning and sharing different ideas and plans for future events,” Wallace says. “This has helped Sara and I to do things together and bond – create a better understanding of how she feels and what she thinks.”

Sara Wallace is the Official Artistic Director of JOY-Filled Journeys.

JOY-Filled Journeys offers new opportunities for the special needs population to make friends

outside their daily group. “It takes several separate meetings for the kids to become really comfortable and become acquainted with each other, so with each event, I hope this makes the kids come more and more out of their comfort zones, just have fun and be engaged.”

Wallace shares each event date slated are reoccurring dates – happening on the same weekend of the same month each year. “I want the kids to know they can always count on a certain day that the event will be upcoming, I do not want them to worry if they missed any event or any fun.”

Wakulla Springs Lodge is where JOY-Filled Journeys holds their events. “I picked the Lodge because of the scenery, the ambience, the staff, it is just a beautiful place to see and a wonderful place to visit.”

The Lodge, she says, “is just a beautiful place for the kids and their families to enjoy events.” She praises the support of Jessie Askew, the Lodge manager, who also has a special needs family member. “She was on board immediately with the idea of holding the events at the Lodge, before we knew it, we were planning more and more ideas on how to make the events better and more accommodating.”



Amy Drexler, Mary Wallace and daughter Sara, Claire Drexler and Jesse Askew and Cricket, Sara’s support dog, at the September Festival of Joy.

It was at a Chamber of Commerce meeting that Wallace spoke with Amy Drexler about her vision for JOY-Filled Journeys and Drexler was all-in. “So now, along with Amy Drexler, Jessie Askew of the Lodge, and myself, we are now a Board! they are a Godsend helping me.”

In 2023, the Special Needs Prom came back stronger than ever.

“As a parent, I feel joy when I see my child being happy and with the events, I hope to share this joy with other parents and other children,” Wallace says. “Everything JOY-Filled Journeys does is centered and organized around joy.”

The Prom was held in May. Then on Sept. 23, the Festival of Joy! was held for ESE elementary through adult education could enjoy inclusive games, a photo with a

unicorn, hotdogs, meet Wakulla County firefighters and deputies to touch a fire truck and/or patrol car along with a ride on the river boat down the Wakulla River.

“Depending on the type of event, we shower the kids with as much fun, love and joy as possible and we make it fun. We create family-oriented outings, and we accommodate wheelchairs and support animals. We welcome Pre-K on up, whether it is homeschooled, private or public school, everything we do is for all the kids,” Wallace says.

Strolling around the event you will see the Foundation’s mascot named Joy. Joy is a walking happy face which is a representation of, “When the kids smile, they put a smile on my face.”

The infinity symbol brand of the Foundation

is endless colors which symbolize and relate to certain Special Needs disabilities. The symbol also stands for joy is endless. Wallace says.

“Special Needs is not a bad word, and it doesn’t automatically mean the kids won’t fit in or succeed,” she says. “We are here to break that stereotype, society is trying to make special needs seem like they are making them fit in, but in fact, they already fit in.

“I wish more people in the world were more like them, they are so kind and selfless, everything about them is giving in an unconditional way, the innocence is endless, they are selfless to a fault.”

JOY-Filled Journeys’ next event at the Lodge for Pre-K and up is on the first Thursday of December, Dec. 7th. There will be a photo session with Santa at the Lodge fireplace, prizes, a Christmas craft, decorate a cookie and hot cocoa.

“I want this organization to grow and to be a fabric of our community for years to come,” Wallace says. “Our plan is to have three to four activities a year which are free to all Special Needs kids and their families. 100% of proceeds gained go directly back into the Foundation to start planning the next event.”



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By SLIM RANGLES

When one of our neighbors is sly enough, or funny enough, or even ... cruel enough to pull one over on the whole neighborhood, that's something that should deserve a yee-haw or a "get 'em sis!"

Well, we've got one of them right here in Home Country. Sarah McKinley is a shy woman. No one knows much about her, even down at the hairdresser's. And that seems to be okey-doke with Sarah. She's like that.

Sarah owns the Read Me Now bookstore, the very finest bookstore in town. Well, the only bookstore, actually. The big question on readers' minds, however, is the sign she hung on one particular section that says, "Love, and Other Fiction."

This was the equivalent of slapping a literary glove across the moosh of every curious person in town, by which we mean all of us. It is a blessing when someone brings a new gossip subject into our consciousness and Sarah's contribution was a dandy.

"Sarah," said Windy Wilson, "now you take in there that there sign ..."

"Yes, Windy."

"Well me and the boys was wonderin' kinda needle sharp like if you could use some fellers to hunt a guy down and move his nose around a bit on his face."

"Not this week, Windy," she said, "but thanks for the offer."

"Any time at all, Hon." Windy said. "We all know there ain't no heartbreakin' situation like unrequested love."

We have a lot of fun here.

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Wednesday: Mass at 7:00 pm
1st Saturday: Adoration and Confessions at 8:30 am
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Jobs, money and college; Can't even compare!
If their child has no Jesus; In their heart to share!

The enemy comes to kill, steal and destroy!
The lives of your precious girls and boys!
So make your walk with God; A sincere priority,
So those little eyes can openly see
The greatest gift; A mother can give
Is not to give up, give in, or give out
But show her children; who Jesus is all about!

Its a gift of time; of prayer, patience and mercy
To care for every tear!
Abiding close to Jesus; drawing your children near
Well done, thy faithful one!
What a mother for her child should long to hear!

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On the Horizon: The calendar of events for November

Wednesday, November 1

- Muffins with Moms Prenatal Support Group meets at 9 a.m., 9:30 a.m., and 10 a.m. at the Wakulla County Health Department. Contact Liz Neighbors at 850-888-6078 or elizabeth.neighbors@flhealth.gov for more information.
- A Line Dance class is held at 1 p.m. at the Wakulla Senior Center every Wednesday.
- Wakulla County Coalition for Youth meets at 12:30 p.m. at the public library.
- Alcoholics Anonymous meets at noon and 6:30 p.m. every Wednesday at the American Legion, 54 Ochlockonee St.
- Gentle Yoga and Stretching Class, every Wednesday, 11 a.m. Wakulla Community Center. Bring a mat. Come early to sign in. Chair Yoga participants welcome. \$2 per class.

Thursday, November 2

- Wakulla Community Theater's Grease opens at 7 p.m. at the Historic Sopchoppy Auditorium. Tickets are on sale now at McIver's Flooring.
- The Wakulla County Tourist Development Council meets at 2 p.m. in the Wakulla County Community Center.
- The VFW Auxiliary Bingo Night will be held at 7 p.m. at 475 Arran Road in Crawfordville, every Thursday. There are concessions and raffles.
- The Rotary Club of Wakulla County meets at the TCC Wakulla Center at 8:30 a.m. every Thursday.

- Gentle Yoga at 9 a.m. and Yin Yoga at 6 p.m. with Zoe every Thursday. Classes are \$12, at New Posh on 3079 Crawfordville Hwy. RSVP to newposh3079@gmail.com or text/call at (850) 528-5838.
- Music Bingo, first Thursday each Month, at 30 Palms in St. Marks. Proceeds benefit the Florida Wild Mammal Association.
- Alcoholics Anonymous meets at 6:30 p.m. every Thursday at the American Legion, 54 Ochlockonee St.

Friday, November 3

- Wakulla Community Theater's Grease shows at 7 p.m. at the Historic Sopchoppy Auditorium, Tickets are on sale at McIver's Flooring.
- Alcoholics Anonymous meets at noon and 8 p.m. every Friday at the American Legion, 54 Ochlockonee St.

Saturday, November 4

- Wakulla Community Theater's Grease shows at 7 p.m. at the Historic Sopchoppy Auditorium, Tickets are on sale at McIver's Flooring.
- Alcoholics Anonymous meets at 6:30 p.m. every Saturday at the American Legion, 54 Ochlockonee St.
- The Panacea Community Garden Farmer's Market will be held from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. in Downtown Panacea.
- The Wakulla Caregiver

Support Group will meet at the Wakulla County Public Library at 10 a.m.

Sunday, November 5

- Wakulla Community Theater's Grease shows at 2:30 p.m. at the Historic Sopchoppy Auditorium, Tickets are on sale at McIver's Flooring.

Monday, November 6

- The Wakulla County Board of County Commissioners meets at 5 p.m. in the commission chambers.
- The Wakulla Respite Program is available for anyone with memory impairment at no cost from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. at Lake Ellen Baptist Church every Monday.
- Alcoholics Anonymous meets at 6 p.m. and 8 p.m. every Monday at the American Legion, 54 Ochlockonee St.

- Gentle yoga at 9 a.m. and Restorative Yoga at 6 p.m. with Zoe, every Monday at New Posh on 3079 Crawfordville Hwy. RSVP to newposh3079@gmail.com or text/call at (850) 528-5838.

Tuesday, November 7

- Sopchoppy community dinner is held every week at the Towles House at 6:30 p.m.
- Alcoholics Anonymous meets at 6:30 p.m. at the

American Legion, 54 Ochlockonee St.

- Flow Yoga at 6 p.m. with Nellie, every Tuesday.

Wednesday, November 8

- The Wakulla county Code Enforcement board will meet at 5:30 p.m. in the county commission chambers

Thursday, November 9

- St. Marks City Commission meets at the St. Marks City Hall at 6 p.m.

Friday, November 10

- The Wakulla War Eagles play the Taylor County Bulldogs at J.D. Jones Stadium at 7 p.m. in a district game.
- A workshop on how to run for political office hosted by the supervisor of elections office will be held from 2 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. in the St. Marks room of the Wakulla Community center

Saturday, November 11

- The Annual Veteran's day parade will be held in Crawfordville, with the parade starting at 10 a.m.
- The Sopchoppy oyster and mullet festival will be held from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. in Sopchoppy depot park
- The First Annual Wakulla County Freedom Fest Variety Show will be held from 4 p.m. to 6 p.m. at the Panacea

Community Center at 115 Otter Lake road

Monday, November 13

- The Wakulla County School Board meets in the school administration building at 5:45 p.m.
- The Wakulla County Planning commission meets at 6 p.m. in the county commission chambers
- The Sopchoppy City Council meets at 6:30 p.m. at City Hall.
- Crawfordville Woman's Club monthly meeting will held the 2nd Monday of each month at 6:30 p.m. at 64 Ochlockonee Street, Crawfordville, FL 32327. Call (850)566-5727 for more information.
- The American Legion Post 114 will be meeting at the Wakulla County Public Library at 6:30 p.m.

Thursday, November 16

- Chamber of Commerce Business Excellence Awards will be held at Wakulla Springs Lodge beginning at 5:30 p.m. Tickets are \$40 each.
- A groundbreaking ceremony for the public safety communication system will be held at the WSCO at 15 oak street, starting at 10 a.m.
- The Wakulla County Cancer Support Group meets in the Education Center of the Crawfordville United Methodist Church at 7 p.m. This

group meeting is for men and women, regardless of the type of cancer. Spouses, caregivers, and friends are welcome. For more information, call 850-926-6050.

Saturday, November 18

- Small Business Saturday will be held in Azalea Park in Crawfordville from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., and will feature the annual friendsgiving Food Truck Cookoff

Monday, November 20

- The Wakulla County Board of County Commissioners meets at 5 p.m. in the commission chambers.
- Thanksgiving break for Wakulla County Schools begins. Students and teachers return on Nov. 27th.

Thursday, November 23

- Thanksgiving Day

Saturday, November 25

- The St. Marks Community Market will be held from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. in St. Marks at 815 Port Leon Drive.

Monday, November 27

- The Sopchoppy Lions Club meets the 4th Monday at the Historic Sopchoppy School at 6:30 p.m.

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CROSSWORD

CLUES ACROSS

- 1. Single Lens Reflex
- 4. People of southern Benin
- 7. One who is learned (abbr.)
- 10. Neckwear
- 11. Solid water

- 12. A way to work the soil
- 13. Inspiring
- 15. Pick up
- 16. It wakes you up
- 19. Parcel
- 21. Popular dog breed
- 23. Lets out a sigh

- 24. Embedded into the surface
- 25. Hard liquors
- 26. One from Scotland
- 27. Satisfy
- 30. Used to introduce a contrasting statement

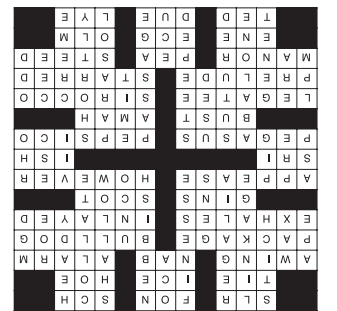
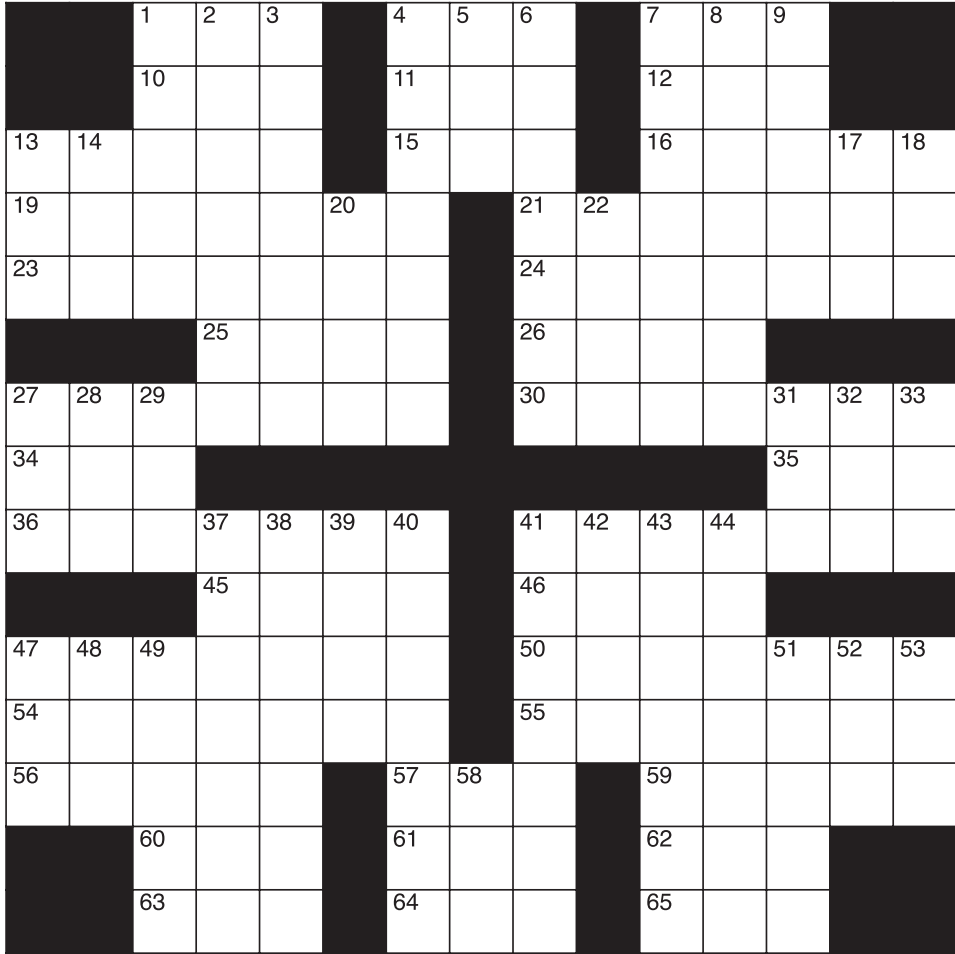
- 34. Antidepressant drug type (abbr.)
- 35. Similar
- 36. Winged horse
- 41. Soft drink maker
- 45. One who doesn't live up to expectations
- 46. Nursemaid
- 47. Inheritor
- 50. Hot, often dusty wind
- 54. Serves as an introduction
- 55. Earned top billing
- 56. Mansion
- 57. A partner to a carrot
- 59. War-horse
- 60. Midway between northeast and east
- 61. It checks the heartbeat
- 62. Aquatic salamander
- 63. CNN's founder
- 64. Being precisely suitable and right

- 65. Strongly alkaline solution

CLUES DOWN

- 1. Pinochle trick
- 2. A system of connections
- 3. Emblems of royalty
- 4. Work with a soft hand
- 5. Plant cultivated in Peru
- 6. A timid man
- 7. Lacking intellectual depth
- 8. A way to order
- 9. Intoxicating
- 13. Mimic
- 14. Surfers use it
- 17. Small Eurasian deer
- 18. Popular Miller beer
- 20. Finds out about
- 22. Unusual
- 27. Small European viper
- 28. Indicates before
- 29. Birth swine
- 31. 7

- 32. Useful keyboard key
- 33. Letter of the Greek alphabet
- 37. Edible mollusk
- 38. Stitched up
- 39. Utilized
- 40. ___ in tradition
- 41. A way to get through
- 42. Let off
- 43. Fashionable source of shade
- 44. In due time
- 47. Printing speed
- 48. A major division of geological time
- 49. Nocturnal, cat-like mammal
- 51. ___ de la ___
- 52. After B
- 53. Unusual
- 58. Former money of the EU



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Meet the cast of 'Grease' – the Pink Ladies

By MINA SUTTON

Meet members of the cast of "Grease! – the Musical" and the actresses playing The Pink Ladies.

Lauren Wilhelm (Betty Rizzo) is a hairstylist and mother to Bailey, Grey, Leo and Cullen. She began her time performing at age seven singing "Tomorrow" (from Annie) at a local talent show. She did plays in middle school and Districts (with Leon High School). Lauren has played in many bands and enjoys being a "Rock Star Singing Mom" to her best fans, her kids! In her spare time, she enjoys writing music, singing and sailing.

Luna Martine (Marty) is a 15-year-old student at Wakulla



Actresses as the Pink Ladies in Wakulla Community Theater's production of 'Grease! – The Musical.'

High School. She participated in Young Actors Theatre in Tallahassee and theatrical plays with Wakulla Middle, Riversprings Middle, and Wakulla High Schools. She is presently a part of Rockulla, WHS Drama Troupe 5036, and enjoys singing, songwriting, acting, fashion, and being with

her friends.

Kolby Hill (Jan) with Wakulla Community Theater. She is a fulltime student at Tallahassee Community College and has plans to transfer to Florida State University next fall. She enjoys singing, acting and dancing. She is a mother to two beautiful little girls who love to see their mom perform.

Kolby has acted in other performances such as "Holiday Movie Christmas Wonderthon".

Callie Cook (Frenchy) is a customer representative/manager for Animal Genetics. She is married to Gregory Cook and has a two-year-old daughter, Charlotte. Her stage experience includes participating in

small school productions and musical performances as a child. She performed at the Sopchoppy Opry at ten years old. Her hobbies are hiking, writing and singing karaoke.

Lily Nichols (Sandy Dumbrowski) is a student at Tallahassee Community College. She danced ballet growing up and

started performing in stage productions in high school. Lily's most recent acting experience was as part of the ensemble in "Young Frankenstein" (Theatre Tallahassee). Lily enjoys sewing and reading, and dabbling in costuming. She recently was the costumer for "Puffs" with The Artists' Workshop.

This is a hard-working group of actresses and will impress the bobby socks off of you! Tickets for Wakulla Community Theater's production of "Grease! – The Musical" are going fast! Shows are Nov. 2, 3, 4 shows at 7 p.m., or Nov. 5 matinee at 2 p.m.

Tickets are available at Rockulla Music in Medart, or McIver Flooring in Crawfordville.



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Life along Newport Road

Chapter 5 (the final chapter) of Elizabeth F. Smith's historical book

LIFE ALONG THE NEWPORT ROAD by Elizabeth F. Smith. Originally published by The Magnolia Monthly Press in 1972.

Chapter Five

Where the St. Marks River angles northeastward into Jefferson County for several miles above Natural Bridge, a creek runs into it known as Brunt Mill Creek, a reference to a grist mill operated there by the Taylor family of Jefferson County whose structure was put to the torch by Seminole Indians during the Second Seminole War in the early 1840s.

In 1850, about the same time as the plank road was being planned to go from Newport to Chaires, another mill was being constructed on the El Destino plantation of G. Noble Jones, a Savannah cottonbroker, whose extensive correspondence with Jonathan Robertson, the builder, is still preserved in the FLORIDA PLANTATION RECORDS. Or rather Robertson's letters to Jones are preserved, in all their original misspelling.

Robertson was known as "the Judge", though there is no qualification for his title, since he was nearly illiterate and inefficient, and why Jones put up with him for so many years while he made excuses for the poor progress of the mill's construction is not known.

According to one of the slaves, the Judge gave most of his advice while sitting in a rocking chair with a fan. He was middle aged, with one grown son.

The mill was to be used for making barrels, sawing wood, grinding corn, and tanning hides. A canal was to be dug from the mill to Brunt Creek, and the excuses for delay followed from one letter to another, proving that if one expects anything to be done well or in a hurry, he needs to oversee the job himself. Roberson not only drank excessively, but was lenient with the slaves, since those who built the mill were exempt from other chores on the plantation. They seemed to have spent a lot of time going into Tallahassee or down to Newport. Apparently, there was still trouble over the plank road too, because Roberson even served as an arbiter in some dispute over



PHOTO FROM FLORIDA ARCHIVES

A drawing of the town of Magnolia, located on the St. Marks River. It was abandoned in the 1840s.

its construction in 1855, and according to Roberson, whatever advice he offered was accepted by the disputants.

Since the road was supposed to have been competed to Chaires by 1853, there either was repair work to be done at some point along the route or else the company did try to build it on to the Georgia border, which was the original plan. However, it never arrived there.

Whatever troubles Roberson had with the mill, it did survive the Civil War. His letters mention such delays as these, "We have had a great deal of rain for the last 4 or 5 days and it drove me out of the seete (site) I was dun Freming and Clearing and Leveling out the seete to raise; and am now putting up the Black Smith shop, and Jointing plank, I have the rest putting up the Black Smith shop - William came here from Georgia yesterday and will cary this letter on."

He tells of two of his oxen suffering from a disease known as "the hollow horn," the wetness of the soil where he is trying to build, and the sickness of the hands.

However, with less than a dozen hands he managed in one month to split 3000 rails, run a cross fence, shingle the smithy, and put a brick forge at each end. The forges each had stove pipes attached, with bellows and tools. He then put in a tailrace for the mill wheel, after which

he started on the grist mill.

Most of the manufactured goods for the construction (such as the stove pipe) came from Newport. Daniel Ladd had the iron works, and along with the other merchants furnished what could not be produced on the plantation. McNaught and Ormond sold Roberson 6 long handled shovels and spades, and Roberson probably did business with James Ormond rather than Ladd, Beard & Denham, or Holt & Miller (see Chap. 1 about these merchants in Newport) because El Destino was in Jefferson County where Ormond's relatives and in-laws were established.

Roberson states in his letters that the plank road came to El Destino, or at least to the gristmill, but he may be talking about the road coming up the east bank of the St. Marks River from Newport and curving northeastward toward Monticello. This was the Pinhook Road, which had a crossing at Magnolia to the west bank where it could have joined the plank road which had yet another branch curving northwestward to Tallahassee by way of Belaire, which Roberson also mentioned in his letter.

Traffic down to Newport by any of the three branches was steady, if only from the gossip that traveled up and down the planks.

Roberson wrote Jones that a man named Fowl-

er was to be hanged in Newport sometime during June 1852 for murder, which will be convenient for him to witness since the road to his mill from the Newport road has just been finished. This revives an old story about another hanging that was postponed in Newport. It disappointed so many people that planned on attending, the sheriff changed his mind and carried on the execution as planned. The condemned men were hanged from a gibbet in the courthouse square.

The building of the mill occasioned much interest, for men came to see it who later became famous, or were already that way.

One was Gen. George Whitfield who fought in the Civil War and lived in the town of Bailey's Mill, later named Lloyd. It was his home where passengers were fed every noontime who were going by train from Jacksonville to Pensacola, a practice that started in the 1880's and continued for nearly half a century.

Roberson's troubles did not stop with the completion of the mill. In 1854 heavy rains caused a flooding of Burnt Mill Creek which washed out the levee. And gin bands broke, new wheels were needed, barrels of fish and pork destined for the workers spoiled in shipment or before they were eaten, and nearly every hand had at one time or another was down with malaria or

yellow fever. They seldom recovered from the latter, and in 1853 there was sickness and death from St. Marks northward to Tallahassee, Chaires and Monticello. The fevers respected neither the rich nor the poor, free man or slave.

People along the Newport Road brought hides to the mill to be cured at the tanyard and during the Civil War when Florida provided much of the salt beef and pork for Confederate commissary agents, hides were necessary for shoes to shod both soldiers and civilian. (It was a search for shoes by Confederate soldiers in southern Pennsylvania that led to the Battle of Gettysburg).

From 1863 to 1865 the El Destino tannery did the following work for people living on the Newport Road: Seventeen hides were tanned for Green Chaires of Verdura, 13 coonskins for Walter Jones, two cowhides for Mrs. Murat, widow of Achille Murat and grandniece of George Washington; four dog skins and one colt skin for Capt. Edwards; one hide marked with a valve for F. H. Hall; skins of undetermined animal but marked with an X for Richard Story. Other people had grain ground at El Destino including Joseph Chaires, James Haick, William R Swain, Judge Thomas Randall and William Moore.

There was a shortage of labor at the mill during the Civil War when many slaves

slipped down the road and out to federal ships lurking in the Gulf. But the mill continued until the latter 1860's with its grinding, cutting, and tanning.

About five miles south of Chaires there was another sawmill operated in the 1820's by Benjamin Byrd, who had a large store at Magnolia, and Thomas Peter Chaires, who used the timber for building his house at WOODLAWN and his slave quarters. Up until the twentieth century there was a mill of some sort at the same place, for a sawmill operated at the little community of Rose which is on the same spot, and for many years a store was operated at Rose by Mrs. Rosa Chaires who still lives at Chaires and is in her 80s. When the sawmill closed down at Rose, so did the store.

Somewhere near Rose also lived Weld Hamlin, the son of John who was a deserter in the Civil War. Three of John Hamlin's children lived near the Newport Road in Leon County after the town of Magnolia was abandoned in the 1840's. Most of the people who wanted to continue exporting cotton moved down to Port Leon, and the rest went up the Magnolia-Newport road and farmed. When Port Leon was destroyed in 1843 and its merchants founded Newport for their export business, the Hamlins traveled down the plank road to do business with Daniel Ladd, their cousin who had become the most astute merchant of them all.

Mrs. Fred Ladd of Newport, widow of Daniel Ladd's grandson, recently acquired several of Daniel's business ledgers from a granddaughter of his, Mrs. J. C. Gatlin of Ft. Myers. (Most, but not all, of the original ledgers are at the Strozier Library at FSU). Weld Hamlin, in 1859, rode down the planks to Newport and bought snuff, \$0.94; tobacco, \$0.75; 6 lbs. nails, \$0.48; a \$1 hat; a \$1 pair of shoes; 8 yards of calico, \$1.20; tacks, \$0.06; 6 pounds of coffee, \$1; 1 bottle of rum, \$0.25; a bottle of whiskey, \$0.38; 12 pounds of bacon, \$2; another pair of shoes, \$1.75; another dollar hat; 2 pounds of pilot bread, \$1.25; shingles, \$4; 21 inches of hide, \$2; a barrel of

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The **Wakulla Sun**

Newport Road

From Previous Page

flour, \$7.50; 7 yards of homespun, \$1.68; a barrel of tar, \$4.50; 2 gallons of syrup, \$1.50. Weld lived at approximately the same place where his grandson, Raymond Hamlin Jr. still lives. Raymond is Sheriff of Leon County and director the past two years of the Springtime Tallahassee Festival. The other two Hamlins lived near Fanlew in Jefferson County, but with access to the Pinhook Road.

How long the planks could be seen in the Newport road is debatable. Repairs from time to time indicate that new ones may have been put down where old ones were broken and worn.

Myers F. Chaires of Tallahassee, the historian and genealogist for the Chaires family, now in his 70's, remembers as a boy seeing saplings put down on the Newport road with the bark still on them. It did not take many

wagons rumbling over the bark. In between saplings was dirt.

It is M. F. who has done the most research on his ancestors. His great-grandfather, Thomas Peter Chaires, built WOODLAWN on a hill west of the Newport Road right before it reached the St. Augustine Road. The house had brick walls 18 inches thick, but the kitchen in the rear was made of wood. The house was built in the 1830's. Tom Peter, as he was called by his family, was the youngest of three brothers, the others being Benjamin and Green Hill. Benjamin, who was the richest, built VERDURA before he died in 1838, Green Hill built EVERGREEN, and Tom built WOODLAWN. All three brothers lived near the crossing of the St. Augustine and Newport roads. They visited back and forth a great deal, and each of their homes burned down in different ways. EVERGREEN was destroyed by the

Seminole Indians in 1839 while Green Hill was away. His wife, Hannah Averitt and her children burned to death in the fire except for Elizabeth who ran to VERDURA to get help, and hid under a cloak near the corner of a fence where several Indians supposedly stopped to rest, but did not see her. WOODLAWN burned down in 1868 when a fire started either in the kitchen or ironing room and found a fissure in the brick wall of the main house and was pulled through to soon engulf the mansion. VERDURA burned down in 1885 when servants struck a match to some trash in the yard and the wind blew the flames against the house. Its ghostly pillars still stand on a wooded hillside of Ed Ball's SOUTHWOOD estate.

M. F. Chaires, who descended from Tome Peter through Joseph John Chaires Sr. and Jr., remembers a sawmill being at Chaires Crossroads in 1912, for he got an itch from playing in the sawdust with his sister, Thelma. His fa-

ther, a peddler, would go down the road to St. Marks and buy fish from one of three fish houses there and exchange them for geese, ducks, turkeys, or eggs. Once when M. F. went along he saw some hogs swimming across the river like hippos. Until then, he didn't know hogs could swim. His father had a canvas-covered wagon pulled by two mules and they'd camp out while peddling. Joseph Jr. had a store in Tallahassee, but it wasn't often open because he had a liver ailment. Joseph also had a livery stable with Belgian draft horses.

Descendants of the Chaireses still live at the upper end of the plank road, but the color of the antebellum days has long since faded with time.

Finis
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 by WILLIAM BROWDER
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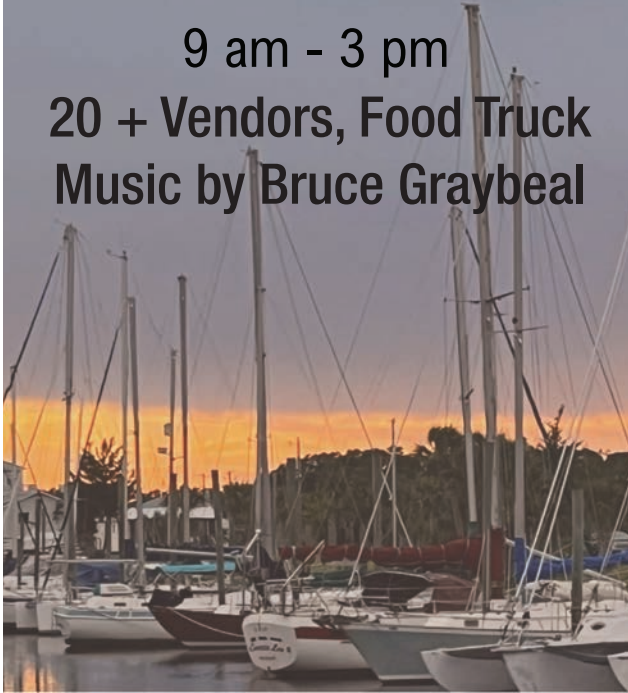
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