

IN THIS ISSUE: COMPANION DOGS • SENIOR TRAVEL • ELDER ORPHANS • SPRING HAPPENINGS

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SPRING 2017



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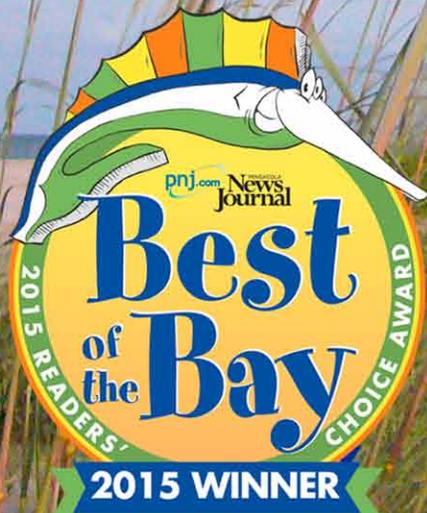
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[FROM THE EDITOR]



Josh Newby
*Marketing Communications
Director and Editor-in-Chief*

Spring has sprung! Although you could be forgiven for thinking it sprung up last month in February (and for about a week in January and a couple randomly humid days in December), March marks the beginning of new life and new opportunities for both young and old. I'm excited to get out into the community, attend various festivals and cookouts, and truly appreciate all this city has to offer before the regrettable heat of summer descends upon us. We have a story detailing some ways you can travel and enjoy this weather on page 21!

Speaking of new opportunities, a new legislative session is underway and it is a big one. A crop of newly minted representatives are ready and willing to make their mark in Tallahassee, and we've got a few ideas to help them do just that. Budgetary concerns are always on the horizon, and while we are optimistic about revenue streams for community service programs, it doesn't hurt to call your congressperson! Our own Mr. Clark goes more in depth on page 10.

The tides of cash from our state's and nation's capitol may ebb and flow, but one thing that remains consistent is the tireless work of volunteers—human and otherwise! While our two-legged helpers are always there to lend an assistive hand to those in need, be it by delivering meals, building a ramp, or just socializing with our clients, there are some four-legged friends out

there who also provide care and support in their own ways. We've got you covered on both fronts, and we encourage you to volunteer if you have the time, or benefit from the efforts of a volunteer if you so need.

And of course, how could we not talk about our cover stars? It's Neil Giraldo Pat Benatar! While I am quite proud of myself for that rhyme, my own lyrical skills pale in comparison to the famous songstress's. With such hits as "Love Is a Battlefield," "We Belong," and of course "Hit Me with Your Best Shot," Benatar defined pop rock and female empowerment for a generation. We were extremely fortunate to chat with her and her husband of 35 years about all things music and otherwise, so get "All Fired Up" for our interview on page 32.

I hope you enjoy this issue. If you did—and even if you don't—I'd love to hear from you at (850) 432-1475. And don't forget, *Coming of Age* TV airs Monday through Friday on Cox Channel 4. You can also view episodes at youtube.com/coawfla.

Until next time—enjoy life, you've earned it!

Readers' Services

SUBSCRIPTIONS

Your subscription to *Coming of Age* comes automatically with your membership to Council on Aging of West Florida. If you have questions about your subscription, call Josh Newby at (850) 432-1475 ext. 130 or email jnewby@coawfla.org. Please do not hesitate to contact Josh with any questions or comments about your service, and thank you.

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When calling or emailing us your change of address, please provide Council on Aging of West Florida with both the old and new addresses to expedite the change.

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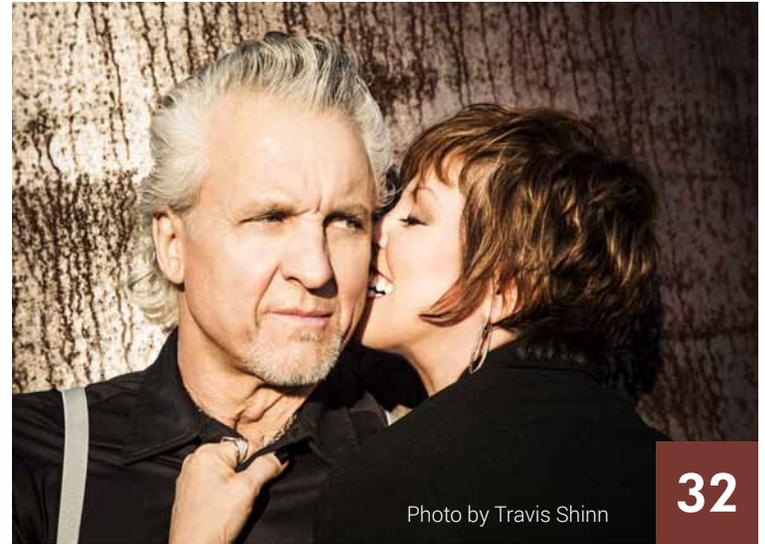
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On the cover:
Neil Giraldo + Pat Benatar
Photo by Travis Shinn

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The Moral Test of Advocacy

By John C. Clark



The election is over; for some there was joy and celebration and for others there was the weeping and gnashing of teeth, sort of like one colossal hangover—no matter what side you came down on. However, the sun still rises in the east and sets in the west and those of us who provide services to elders must still get up in the morning and carry on. We continue to toil in the vineyards; our jobs as service providers continue.

Those providing services to elders include paid and unpaid caregivers (such as family members and loved ones) case managers, agency directors, in-home workers, senior center directors, volunteer coordinators, nurses, and home health aides; you get the picture. They are a diverse lot with one mission: serving elders and helping them all to live in the “least restrictive environment possible.” But I left out one important job, one that we are ALL responsible for and one that none of us will ever receive a dime for; that job is “advocate.” An advocate for those we serve, yes; but also

advocates for what we do. We should never, ever apologize for being advocates or shrink from what is expected of us as advocates. Why?

Well, in his last speech, Hubert Humphrey said (and this quote has been attributed to many) that, “The moral test of government is how that government treats those who are in the dawn of life, the children; those who are in the twilight of life, the elderly; those who are in the shadows of life; the sick, the needy and the handicapped.” One of our very own volunteers and donors echoed this sentiment, saying, “Seniors

“The moral test of government is how that government treats those who are in the dawn of life, the children; those who are in the twilight of life, the elderly; those who are in the shadows of life; the sick, the needy and the handicapped.” – Hubert Humphrey

are so often neglected or forgotten, but they deserve to be remembered and taken care of for all they have done for us. We wouldn't be here if it weren't for them, and they may not be here if it's not for us." So those of us in the aging network are helping our government and society to "pass that moral test." We make sure that our society and our civilization care for those helpless members. It really is a noble cause; both the Old and New Testament address this topic. For example, Psalms says, "Do not cast me off in the time of old age; forsake me not when my strength is spent." None of us should shrink from our roles as advocates, even though some are better at it or more comfortable than others.

We enter this important legislative "season" in our state knowing that our roles as advocates are more critical than ever. We are not only committed to our work as aging service providers but we are also secure in the knowledge that we can "justify" our services (such as adult day care, personal care, respite and Meals on Wheels) and can "prove" their positive outcome measures. That is why we should not be shy about contacting our elected officials and policy makers and discussing with them the critical nature of these services. Yes, it always seems to come down to money, but that is what

our "laser focus" must be during this legislative session. The Florida service provider network this year is asking for an additional \$9.9 million in state general revenue funding for aging programs to serve those most at risk of nursing home placement and who are on the waiting list for services. Locally in Escambia and Santa Rosa counties, there are more than 500 elders waiting to receive services which will help them to remain at home.

We are pleased that the Governor's proposed budget did recommend an increase of \$10 million dollars in general revenue funding for aging programs. But it does not end there. We must continue to talk to our local state elected officials and explain the critical role our services provide in our local communities. These are services which reach some 2,200 people each year in Escambia and Santa Rosa counties. They would much rather hear from their local constituents than hear from someone in Tallahassee. That is why we ask our local citizens who support such aging programs as adult day care and Meals on Wheels to do what they can to contact and meet with their local representatives and ask that they support increased funding for state aging programs. You can find your representative from the list provided.



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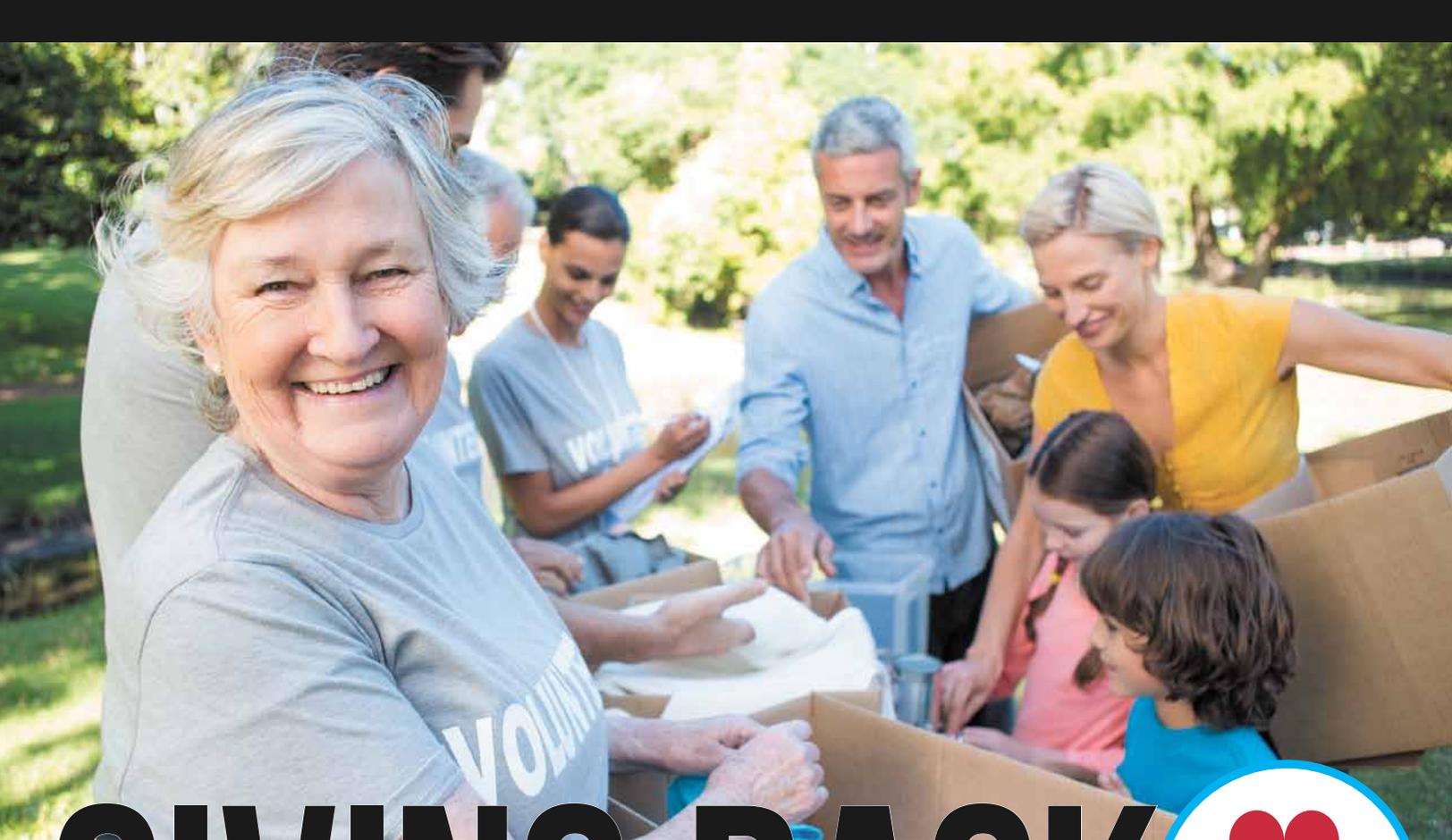
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GIVING BACK



Want to be more involved in the community, make friends, stay busy and go to bed knowing that you did something good? Few activities help as many people while enriching our own personal lives as volunteering. The best part is that you don't need to sacrifice a lot of time or even do something you don't particularly enjoy: Council on Aging of West Florida has a range of service outlets available for almost every time availability, many of which involve pursuits that fit nicely into whatever your existing hobby or interest may be. – *by Josh Newby*

Our clients are in need of everything from social interaction and food delivery to yard work, home maintenance and more. Enjoy meeting new people and learning? You may be great for The Retreat, where senior citizens are eager to chat and play with newcomers while sharing the wisdom of yesteryear. Or maybe you prefer to work with your hands? Our ramp team or yard maintenance team could use just a few hours of your time.

It is not just our clients who will thank you: research shows

the volunteers themselves gain confidence, learn new skills, and report healthier, more consistent joy than those who do not give back in some way.

“Our volunteers are our partners, meeting the needs of our clients by preventing isolation and improving their quality of life,” said Volunteer Program Manager Tricia Dixon. “Helping a senior increases socialization for both the senior and the volunteer. It impacts the community by bringing awareness to our elderly population by providing

services such as Meal on Wheels delivery, friendly visitors and yard services.”

Regardless of how you choose to apply yourself, Council on Aging depends on volunteers to help us serve our diverse and growing senior population. We need volunteers of all ages who are willing to give of their time, experience and skills to help us carry out our mission.

For more information on volunteering, call Tricia Dixon at (850) 432-1475.

HOW TO GIVE BACK



Delivering Meals on Wheels Deliverers are needed. We offer convenient and flexible schedules for individuals, groups, church groups, civic clubs and employee volunteer programs.



Helping at our Adult Day Health Care Center Our participants need, and enjoy, interaction. Teaching arts and crafts classes, helping with meals and snacks, assisting in the garden or just lending a smile and an ear can make their day.



Performing Administrative Tasks We also need help “behind the scenes.” Making phone calls, filing and data entry are a few of the valuable ways you can help.



Marketing and Community Events Our marketing team is trained to enthusiastically and knowledgeably let our community know what we have to offer.



Participating in Fundraising Initiatives We need assistance with fundraising. Organizing special events, soliciting sponsorships, and staffing events are important roles you can play.

PERSONAL TESTIMONIES



Bill Wein

“Volunteering to deliver Christmas gifts for Council on Aging has become an annual event at IMS ExpertServices that we look forward to. We deliver 120 or so gifts to those who are shut in, those who need someone to talk to, and those who need someone to make their day or season better. I am consistently humbled by how my team steps up and participates in this wonderful experience. Some of them even make friends.”



Haydee Seda

“I enjoy just talking to the clients. I click with them. Helping the staff, playing dominoes, improving their quality of life, making them happy—it’s just a part of my life now. I relate to them and they relate to me. Volunteering at The Retreat has become like home to me.”



Desiree Brantley

“I enjoy volunteering my services on my day off. It really is non-stop fun. Eldercare has been a passion of mine since my grandmother taught me the value of service. I want to carry her legacy forward in a continuous cycle of service that should really never end.”



James Brown / Dan Krueger:

“We’ve been building ramps for about 10 years. We come from a lot of different professions, but we’re all neighbors helping neighbors. It’s enjoyable to get in a group and help those who need it. There’s nothing like a person looking up at you with freedom in their eyes. When we’re done, they gain some independence.

They can go out to the garden, and you can tell they’re very grateful for the opportunity we’ve given them.”

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Elder Orphans

Though the golden years are full of travel, philanthropy and fun for many older adults, this era of life can present a challenge for those who either did not plan appropriately for their retirement or find themselves beset with physical and mental obstacles while having no one to assist them. A growing subset of the senior population—as much as 22 percent of those 65 and older—is increasingly vulnerable to the otherwise routine aspects of aging because, simply put, there is no one in their life to help them. Their parents and siblings have passed, they never married and therefore have no children, and many of their friends are too far removed or unreachable. This population, known as elder orphans, is a silent, growing problem afflicting many of our nation’s elderly.

*written by
Josh Newby*

Elder orphans find themselves in this predicament due largely to circumstance rather than choice, according to the 2016 report "Elderly Orphans Hiding in Plain Sight." Many of these individuals have been perfectly independent throughout their lives and have not needed outside assistance. "As they age

and decline, however," the report states, "they realize, often too late, that they can no longer complete many of the tasks they were previously able to do."

Suddenly, and frequently without much warning, elder orphans find themselves stranded—socially, physically, mentally—and unable to

access the preventative care they once took for granted. This leads to serious health problems and concerns, which often burdens the individual with unexpected healthcare costs, leading to a downward cycle from which there may realistically be no escape.

Being an elder orphan can have dire social and mental consequences, as well. With decreased social interaction due to the inability to access transportation, seniors can suffer loneliness and isolation, crucial risk factors for medical complications and mortality. The safety and livelihood of these people are threatened, and without mitigating efforts, could become worse if



population trends continue. Seniors without a care network also face legal and estate challenges, since many adults depend on their children to help tend to financial affairs and navigate legal questions. Affordable housing is also hard to come by. Even mobile homes may become unaffordable as their money is tied up with other more pressing expenses, such as food and medicine. Foreclosure and homelessness is a rare but real problem.

Finally, transportation is a necessity of both city and country life, one that many of us take for granted but one that can be prohibitively expensive or turn a simple doctor's visit into a full-day affair.

With no family and few friends, it is incumbent upon us, the community, to rescue these elder orphans from an unfortunate

experience during what should be the best years of one's life. Experts recommend reaching out to those who we feel may be isolated and vulnerable and attempting to interact with them. Asking simple questions like, "Have you fallen in the last six months?" or "How much medicine do you take?" can be helpful when contacting a social services agency, such as Council on Aging, on their behalf. Offering to take them to church, doctor's appointments and community events can also go a long way toward helping them. Researchers say that developing a rotation schedule with neighbors can lighten the load on individuals in the community.

It is crucial, according to the literature, to reach elder orphans before complete loss of cognitive and physical functions or admission into acute

care facilities. "Early identification of these at-risk individuals allows for care plans that can better meet the needs of the elder orphan," the report states.

For those who are truly concerned about a neighbor or acquaintance, consider becoming their health care advocate. Prepare a medical summary of their conditions, allergies, a list of medications and dosages, etc.; offer to accompany them to the doctor and ensure they fully understand diagnoses and treatment options; take notes of any concerning behavior and tell their primary care provider about it; offer to make meals or clean their home in exchange for a small fee, or if you prefer, reach out to service providers who may be able to offer meal delivery services and transportation from public funds.

Obviously, not everyone can commit to several hours a week of free or even paid work or vigilance. That is why it is so imperative to identify these individuals before their condition deteriorates. If you know someone, or know someone who knows someone who is without parents, a spouse or children, make them aware of the many services available to them should they ever become unable to care for themselves. Encourage them to make an emergency contact sheet with people who are willing to do small tasks for them. By working together, we can alleviate the coming concerns associated with elder orphans and help ensure that their golden years are just that.

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Take a Trip with **Panhandle Senior Travelers**



It's a common misconception that aging signifies a slowing down in life. In fact, aging should be considered **the opening of a new life**, with different experiences as rich as those had in youth. — *written by Haley Weaver*

Hans Christian Anderson once said that “to travel is to live.” Travel, especially with seniors, is key to a healthier aging, as moderate activity is usually the number one way to lower the risk of heart disease, high blood pressure, stroke, diabetes and cancers, according to a recent study by the Global Correlation for Aging (GCOA).

What's more, travel can improve seniors' mental health as well as physical.

In a poll regarding travel by GCOA, they found that 80 percent of seniors say travel helps to improve their general mood and outlook toward life. Travel has also been found to increase seniors' brain activity and cognitive stimulation, which can potentially delay the onset of degenerative diseases such as Alzheimer's.

Panhandle Senior Travelers knows the intangible value of travel for seniors.

In 2005, spouses Terry and Carolyn Reeves organized the non-profit association for seniors 50 years and older, specifically to provide affordable travel and social opportunities. They have a board of eight directors who manage the funds and finalize the outings. The board rotates out completely every two years and is made up entirely of volunteers.

According to the Appalachian Agency for

Senior Citizens, having a variety of positive social supports can contribute to psychological and physical wellness of senior individuals. Along with travel, having a vibrant social life is important for a senior's mental and physical health; this further solidifies the importance of an organization like Panhandle Senior Travelers (PST).

One of the main concerns for seniors is a lack of retirement funds for travel. Traveling can be expensive, and although seniors dream big about retirement traveling, they don't always have



the money to make their dreams a reality. PST takes this into account when organizing their trips.

Susan Breed, a travel planner with PST and a four-year member, says what makes their trips affordable is the lack of interim fees. Volunteers with PST organize the trips themselves, rarely with the assistance of an outside planner. Colonial Trailways in Mobile, Ala. typically provides transportation; for international trips, they usually enlist the services of AAA.

"We do everything and usually pay the venues with cash ourselves when we arrive," says Susan, "but since we aren't a business and don't have a company credit card, sometimes we'll do all the work ourselves, then pay Trailways to provide transportation and make

all the final arrangements for us with no extra fees." That means the cost of a trip is solely the price of the venue and the price of transportation, rather than

Membership with PST only requires registration and a \$10 annual fee. Their meetings are held the third Tuesday of every month in Asbury Place at 750 College Blvd. behind Cokesbury United Methodist Church in Pensacola, at 5 pm.

fees to outside parties, like travel planners or booking sites.

There is often a group rate involved, which lessens the cost even more. Day trips cost



approximately \$50 and two-day trips around \$250. Longer trips, typically one week, usually cost between \$1500 and \$2000.

"We try to do two long trips per year, then several overnight or two day trips, and the rest are day trips," says Susan. "In the past we've gone to Canada, Niagra Falls, and Albuquerque by bus. We also try to do around one out-of-the-country trip per year." This year, PST will spend eight days in London in September.

This past February they spent three days in LaFayette, La. celebrating the Courir de Mardi Gras. In April, they'll be on an overnight trip in Union Springs, Ala. catching a play at the Red Door Theater and touring the

Hyundai Plant. In May, they plan to visit Ark Encounter on a multiple-day trip to Kentucky.

If you're over 50 and seeking an adventure in your life, check out the Panhandle Senior Travelers. You can stay active, make new friends and experience new places without completely breaking the bank.

To find out more about Panhandle Senior Travelers and their future excursions, visit pstravelers.org or join their Facebook page, Panhandle Senior Travelers! ■

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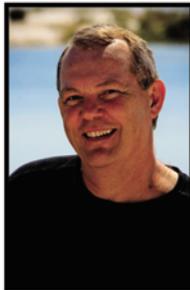
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Spring Happenings

The spring and summer months are packed full of warm weather outings, performances, shows and festivals. Whether you'd like to check out a baseball game inside the beautiful Maritime Park overlooking the bay, stroll your way through downtown Pensacola on Gallery Night, or sink your toes into the sand while watching Bands on the Beach, our seasonal event guide has you covered! – written by Hana Frenette



Ciclovía Open Streets Pensacola

March 25

Pensacola will close a portion of our streets to motorized vehicles and open them up to everyone on foot and on wheels! At the Ciclovía Open Streets event, you can walk, run, bike, roller skate/blade, stroll, skateboard or just play in the streets. Five miles of roadway running down the middle of historic Pensacola's business district and along beautiful Bayfront will be filled with energy and activities for all. Ciclovía will also include special green spaces called "parklets" along Palafox Street, where event participants can sit and relax among lush grass, in the heart of our bustling city. The event will begin at 9 am and it is free and open to the public.



Pensacola JazzFest

April 1

Pensacola JazzFest is a free jazz festival held in historic Seville Square in downtown Pensacola. Jazz Pensacola produces the event with assistance from a variety of corporate sponsors, community organizations and donations. The two-day festival celebrates America's unique musical art form—jazz. Sit beneath the stately oak trees on a blanket or in a lawn chair and listen to some of the greatest regional jazz musicians perform. Plenty of food vendors will be onsite for snacks and drinks, and an arts and crafts area will be provided for children of all ages.



Bands on the Beach April 1 through Oct. 28

This event provides a beautiful and relaxing evening, complete with beach, sunset, and live music. Each Tuesday from April to October you can enjoy live music while the sun sets over the Gulf of Mexico at the Bands on the Beach concert series.

A diverse line up of local and regional artists take the stage at the beautiful gulfside Pavilion on Pensacola Beach each week at 7 pm. Folks of all ages set up their lawn chairs, blankets, and picnic baskets. Concessions and cocktails are available nearby. Take off your shoes and dance on the sugar white sand, or just sit back, relax and enjoy.



Mamma Mia!, the Broadway Musical April 19

Come experience the musical magic of *Mamma Mia!* inside the beautifully restored Saenger Theatre on Palafox Street. Inspired by the storytelling talents of ABBA's songs "Dancing Queen," "S.O.S.," "Money, Money, Money" and "Take a Chance on Me," *Mamma Mia!* is a celebration of mothers and daughters, old friends and new family found. Reserve your tickets online at pensacolasaenger.com or in person at the box office.



Pensacola Crawfish Festival April 28–30

Don't be shy, bring some napkins, and dig in! The 33rd annual Pensacola Crawfish Festival will take place Friday-Sunday, April 28, 29 & 30 in Bartram Park, downtown Pensacola.

Admission is \$5 daily or \$10 for a weekend pass (children 12 and under get in free). Come before 3 pm on Friday, April 28 and admission is free! Admission for active duty military with ID on Friday, April 28th is also free. Great food, live entertainment, and activities for everyone.



Interstate Mullet Toss April 28, 29, & 30

Without fail, the Interstate Mullet Toss takes over the Flora-Bama Lounge, Package and Oyster Bar in Perdido Key each spring. The Mullet Toss consists of individuals on the beach throwing a mullet, from a 10-foot circle in Florida across the state line into Alabama. Whether you try your hand at tossing the slippery fish or just watch with the crowds, the Mullet Toss is a blast. Go with some friends, or make new ones at one of the biggest and best beach parties of the year.



Palafox Market Every Saturday Through December 9 am to 2 pm

Stroll through the shady hollow of Martin Luther King Jr. on Saturdays to find fresh produce, live plants, baked goods, fine art, antiques and much more at the Palafox Market. Items originate directly from onsite vendors who grow, make, or create the fruits, vegetables, herbs, and art for sale. Leave with a one-of-a-kind art piece for your home, or ingredients to make a farm-to-table dinner—the possibilities are endless.



Blues on the Bay Sunday Nights at 6 pm

Bring a lawn chair or blanket and get ready to relax in the grassy Maritime Park overlooking the Pensacola Bay for Blues on the Bay. A different band plays each week—country, jazz, rhythm and blues—so everyone will find something to suit their tastes. Concerts are held on Sunday nights when the Blue Wahoos team is not playing a home game.

Concerts are family-friendly and concessions are available at various food trucks along the outskirts of the park. Or if you'd prefer to pack your own dinner, bring coolers, blankets and lawn chairs but leave all the glass containers and pets at home.



Pensacola Bud Light Fishing Rodeo June 24–25

Reel in a big one and win a big prize at one of Pensacola's largest fishing tournaments. Bring your rod and reel or just bring a chair and your family as local fishermen test their skills.



Pensacola Beach Air Show July 8

U.S. Navy Flight Demonstration Squadron the Blue Angels will perform aerial acrobatics over the Gulf of Mexico during a weekend of high-flying fun. Head to the beach July 8 for the Blue Angels Air Show at 12 pm and 2 pm. Don't forget to arrive early so you can secure a spot in the shade underneath the pavilion near the Casino Beach parking lot, or bring your own umbrella and set up shop wherever you like! Water, a hat and sunscreen are a must when you're watching the country's greatest aerial flight team soar above the Gulf of Mexico.

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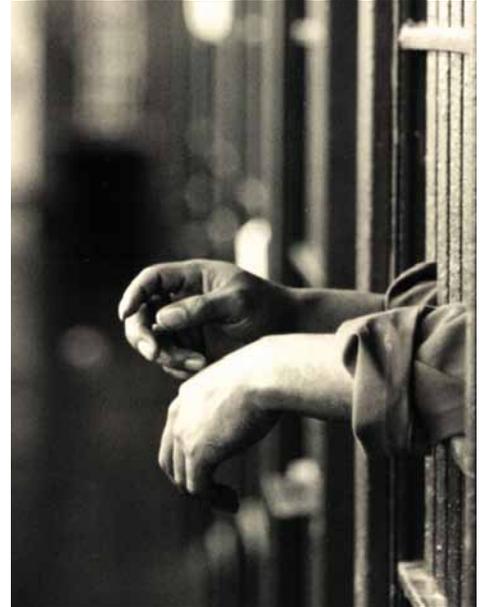


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SMART START

Breakfast Recipes for a Healthy Morning



A COMMITMENT TO HEALTH and wellness means taking care of yourself and your family, exercising and eating right. A nutrient-rich breakfast can set you up for success each and every day. Dairy foods like milk, cheese and yogurt are good sources of high-quality protein, which is an essential part of a healthy diet. Protein serves as the building block for cells throughout the body and may aid in managing weight by helping you feel full.

By adding protein to your day, health and wellness goals can become easier to achieve. Daily protein needs should be met by spreading intake throughout the day in every meal and snack you eat. Not only does protein help satisfy hunger, which may aid in weight management, but it also helps preserve muscle.

No matter your breakfast style, dairy foods can enhance your dish. These recipes show how, from sweet to savory and cold to hot, your breakfast can be unique while providing high-quality nutrition in each bite. Learn more about the role of dairy in a healthy diet at MilkMeansMore.org.

WHITE PIZZA FRITTATA

Recipe created by Rachel Cooks on behalf of Milk Means More

Prep time: 10 minutes

Cook time: 35 minutes

Servings: 8

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1 tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil | ½ teaspoon dried oregano leaves |
| 1 large clove garlic, minced | ¾ cup part-skim ricotta cheese |
| 12 ounces frozen spinach, thawed and water pressed out | ½ cup grated Parmesan cheese |
| 12 large eggs | ¼ cup minced fresh basil |
| ¼ cup skim milk | ½ cup shredded, part-skim mozzarella cheese |
| ¼ teaspoon ground black pepper | |

Heat oven to 325 F.

In oven-safe skillet, heat olive oil over medium heat. Add garlic and cook 2 minutes, or until fragrant. Once garlic is fragrant, add spinach; break up to incorporate and heat.

In medium bowl, whisk together eggs, milk, pepper, oregano, ricotta, Parmesan and basil.

Add egg mixture to skillet, reduce heat to low and cook 1 minute, stirring gently. Move to oven and bake 25-30 minutes, or until eggs are almost completely set.

Carefully remove from oven and add mozzarella. Return to oven and bake until mozzarella is melted, about 5 minutes.

May be served hot, at room temperature or cold.

BLUEBERRY BUCKWHEAT PANCAKES

Recipe created by The Chef Next Door on behalf of Milk Means More

Prep time: 5 minutes

Cook time: 15 minutes

Servings: 4

$\frac{3}{4}$ cup buckwheat flour	1 $\frac{3}{4}$ cups lactose-free, 2 percent milk
$\frac{3}{4}$ cup all-purpose flour	2 tablespoons vegetable oil
2 tablespoons sugar	1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract
1 $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoons baking powder	2 cups fresh blueberries, plus additional for topping syrup
$\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon baking soda	
$\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon salt	
2 eggs	

In large bowl, whisk together flours, sugar, baking powder, baking soda and salt. In small bowl, beat eggs then add milk, oil and vanilla; mix well. Stir wet ingredients into dry ingredients and mix to combine.

Heat griddle or large skillet over medium heat. Using 1/4 measuring cup, pour batter onto griddle. Gently place several blueberries all over surface of pancakes.



Flip pancakes when bubbles start to form around edges and bottoms are golden brown. Cook on other side until golden brown, about 2 minutes. Remove to plate and cover to keep warm.

Top pancakes with additional blueberries and syrup before serving, if desired.



HUEVOS RANCHEROS OATS

Recipe created by Comfortably Domestic on behalf of Milk Means More

Prep time: 5 minutes

Cook time: 15 minutes

Servings: 2

OATS

1 cup 2 percent milk
 $\frac{3}{4}$ cup water
1/8 teaspoon salt
1 cup old-fashioned oats

HUEVOS RANCHEROS

1/2 cup sweet onion, peeled and chopped
1 $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoons light olive oil

1 can (10 ounces) diced tomatoes with green chilies
 $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon chipotle chili powder
2 eggs
kosher salt
black pepper
 $\frac{1}{4}$ cup sharp cheddar cheese, freshly grated

In medium saucepan over medium-high heat, bring milk, water and salt to boil. Stir in oats. Reduce heat to medium-low and simmer oats, stirring occasionally, 4 minutes. Remove oats from heat and place lid on saucepan. Set aside.

In nonstick skillet over medium heat, saute onion in olive oil until soft, about 4 minutes. Stir canned tomatoes with green chilies and chipotle chili powder into onions to combine. Continue to heat salsa to boil, about 1 minute. Make two wells in middle of tomato salsa. Crack eggs into wells. Season eggs with salt and pepper, to taste. Cover skillet and poach eggs in salsa to desired doneness; about 3-4 minutes.

Divide oats evenly between two bowls. Spoon eggs and salsa over oats. Serve immediately with cheddar cheese.



RICOTTA AND FIG OATMEAL

*Recipe created by Foxes Love Lemons
on behalf of Milk Means More*

$\frac{3}{4}$ cup milk
 $\frac{1}{2}$ cup old-fashioned rolled oats
 $\frac{1}{8}$ teaspoon kosher salt
2 tablespoons ricotta cheese
2 dried figs, halved
1 tablespoon sliced almonds
1 tablespoon honey

*Prep time: 5 minutes
Cook time: 3 minutes
Servings: 1*

In microwave-safe bowl, stir together milk, oats and salt. Microwave on high 2 1/2 minutes, or until oats are tender and most liquid is absorbed.

Remove bowl from microwave; stir in ricotta. To serve, top with figs and almonds, and drizzle with honey.



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Man + Woman's **BEST FRIEND** *Especially In Later Life*

Written by Kagan Jenkins

DOGS HAVE BEEN “Man’s Best Friend” for thousands of years. Dogs provide warnings and protection, help to hunt and to herd, and are growing ever more useful as service dogs. Service dogs each serve a special purpose, whether to assist the visually impaired, to provide comfort to sufferers of PTSD, or even to warn of oncoming medical crises. According to PAWS, a reputable nonprofit organization that

specializes in helping to rescue and rehabilitate animals, stress level, blood pressure, and the risk of depression all tend to decrease when time is spent with a furry friend. Today, dogs are perhaps best-known and best-loved as four-legged companions to people in all stages of their lives. For seniors, dogs offer special kinds of love and support, can alleviate boredom and anxiety, and can even improve health.»



WHAT AGE OF DOG do you want to add to your life? Puppies are playful and cute but need a great deal of training, care, and attention as well as several trips to the vet for immunizations and other medical needs. In contrast, middle-aged dogs already show their temperaments, are already housetrained, and should need only yearly or bi-yearly trips to the vet. Older dogs are generally calmer, and adopting an older dog is often the best choice for older humans as well.

The “best” breed for you depends on your lifestyle, and every breed has both “good” and “bad” dogs. All of us want healthy dogs, and most older adults seek pets with calm temperaments that like to be petted. Beyond those basic criteria, would a large or medium dog fit in your dwelling, or are you particularly looking for a small dog, one that is easy to transport? Do you want a dog who will keep you active with a

daily walk, or one that will be happiest when sitting by you most of the time? Do you want a dog that does not shed? Do you want a companion that will be with you most of the time? Are you looking more for a watchdog friend or merely a cuddly one? Do you have young grandchildren who love to visit but who are not always gentle? Among the many dog breeds recommended for seniors, each of the following are suitable for some, but not all, older adults. Each breed has its advocates!

- Beagles are known for their even tempers and gentle disposition and do not need much exercise – but they can get into trouble if left alone too long.
- Pugs love to play, and demand more attention than some other breeds.
- Cocker spaniels are generally easy going, but need frequent exercise.

- Schnauzers are eager to please and love their human companions, but also require daily exercise and regular grooming.
- Poodles are generally easy to train, relatively clean, and low shedding.
- Chihuahuas are good if you want a small dog with a big bark to warn you of anyone coming.
- Terriers are very good dogs for older adults; each type of terrier displays its own traits.
- Two lively terrier breeds, the Welsh and Irish Terriers, do not shed but their coats require regular maintenance.
- Yorkshire Terriers are relatively low energy dogs that love to snuggle with their human companion, but they also require regular grooming.
- Two particularly protective terrier breeds are the Scottish and the Boston Terrier.

- Several of the small spritz breeds that are recommended for older adults include the American Eskimo Dog, the Shiba Inu, and the Japanese Spitz.

Breeds such as those listed above can be a great fit for older owners, and purebreds can be predictable in nature and temperament. Once they outlive their prime time in the show ring, well-trained purebred adult show dogs are often available at low price. Of course mixed-breed dogs often become the best pets. Adult dogs, purebred and otherwise, might be obtained from people who have to give them up for reasons such as military transfers. Perhaps the most common source of dogs of any age is your local animal shelter. According to the Humane Society of the United States, 2.7 million adoptable dogs and cats are euthanized in the United States every year. Adopting shelter dogs generally

costs substantially less. Often the cost of spaying/neutering, first vaccinations, and sometimes even microchipping is included in the adoption cost. Local sources of pet adoptions in the Pensacola area include the Pensacola Humane Society, the Escambia County Animal Shelter, and the Hotel for Dogs and Cats.

However your new companion comes into your life, there are several places around Pensacola to hang out together including these dog-friendly places:

- Bayview Dog Park and Beach
- Navy Point Walking Trail
- Bay Bluffs Park
- Naval Live Oaks (part of Gulf Islands National Seashore)
- Pensacola Bay Brewery
- Gulf Coast Brewery
- Jaco's
- Hopjacks
- The Cottage Café
- Red Fish Blue Fish
- Pensacola Beach Dog Beach

Pensacola also has several canine-friendly events each year. Coming soon, Gulf Coast Healthcare's 5th Annual A Bark to Remember will take place on Saturday, April 1 from 10 am to 3 pm at the Vince J. Whibbs Sr. Community

Maritime Park. This event raises funds and awareness for the local Alzheimer's Association and emphasizes ending the disease through the love of dogs. In addition, the Pensacola Humane Society will be hosting their Paws on Palafox 3K Dog Walk on Saturday, May 6. This event raises funds to help provide low-cost or no-cost spay and neuter surgery to thousands of pets in Pensacola.

While dogs have been the focus of this article, let's not forget about cats and kittens in your quest to find a furry friend. Cats tend to require less maintenance than dogs because they are more independent and they also bathe themselves. They are generally smaller and eat less. You won't need to housebreak them; just set up a litter box and they figure out how to use it naturally. Cats are also beneficial around the house to capture or at least scare away many critters including rodents and insects.

Furry companions offer many benefits, especially later in our lives. A furry friend in your house can improve your health both mentally and physically. The dogs featured with this article are up for adoption at the Pensacola Humane Society. 🐾

MEET YOUR NEW BEST FRIEND

Bailee, Dame, Spot and Chico are currently living at the Pensacola Humane Society while they await their forever home. These furry, four-legged pals are all available for adoption immediately and are ready to become your new best friend.



Bailee
Boxer
3 years old



Dame
American Pitbull
Terrier mix
4 years old



Chico
Miniature
Pinscher mix
8 years old



Spott
American
Pit Terrier
3 years old



PAT BENATAR NEIL GIRALDO

LIVE FOR LOVE

Written by Kelly Oden • Photos by Travis Shinn

Pat Benatar and Neil “Spyder” Giraldo have been making music together for more than 38 years. Romantically, professionally and artistically, their union is nothing short of inspiring. The two melded their unique sounds—Pat’s dynamic vocals and Neil’s explosive guitar playing—to create a catalogue of unforgettable hits from the late 1970s to today.

Their first album together, “In the Heat of the Night,” was recorded in 1979. This was the first time the world was introduced to Giraldo and Benatar’s enduring partnership and their rock ‘n’ roll love affair. “In The Heat Of The Night,” which included the classic “Heartbreaker,” as well as the Giraldo-penned hit, “We Live For Love,” went platinum. The 1980 Grammy winning album, “Crimes of Passion,” saw Giraldo playing guitar and keyboards, arranging, and providing vocals on many of the songs. The album included “Hit Me With Your Best Shot” and reached quintuple platinum while giving Benatar her first million selling, top 10 hit. The following year, Benatar and Giraldo cemented their place in music history forever, by being the first female and first guitarist, respectively, to ever appear on MTV, with the video for “You Better Run.”

Many more hits followed including “Fire and Ice,” “Invincible,” “Sex as a Weapon,” “All Fired Up,” and “Let’s Stay Together.” Benatar won an unprecedented four consecutive Grammy Awards for Best Female Rock Performance from 1980 to 1983 for her second LP, “Crimes of Passion,” and the songs “Fire and Ice,” “Shadows of the Night,” and “Love Is a Battlefield.” These achievements cemented the Giraldo/Benatar partnership as an increasingly unstoppable force in the music industry.

Although their music is impressive, even more so is their deep personal connection. From their first meeting in 1979, this legendary couple has found inspiration in one another—each calls the other their muse. The couple married in 1982 and they have been making music and raising their two daughters ever since. Benatar and Giraldo remain a rock ‘n’ roll powerhouse today, selling out concerts and wowing audiences after more than three decades in music together. Theirs is a chemistry that will, undoubtedly, be thrilling music-lovers forever.

Coming of Age had the pleasure of speaking with these musical soulmates. The couple shared stories of their music, their lives and their enduring partnership. Be sure to check out their Duo concert on March 17 at the Hard Rock Casino in Biloxi. »

COA: Tell me a little bit about each of your upbringings.

PB: My father's family lived in Greenpoint, Brooklyn. That was the Polish side of the family. When I was three years old we moved out to Long Island and I grew up out there. We went into Brooklyn all the time. We'd see the grandparents and go to the Polish Catholic Church every Sunday. It was really great. It was so ethnic. I had the big Irish and Dutch family on my mother's side and then my grandparents in Greenpoint were Polish. I did go back recently with our production assistant, Erin. It's like a whole other world now. The old neighborhood, the Polish stores are still there, but it's much smaller now. It's kind of gotten into this hipster thing now, so it's fun to go to all these great restaurants and coffee shops.

NG: My childhood was completely different than Patricia's. Patricia's was a very nice, warm environment. Mine was in a suburb very close to the city line of Cleveland, Ohio. It was a very tough area. I didn't really do well at school. I had issues with neurosis of various kinds and I just really couldn't concentrate on school at all. It was very difficult for me. What it did do is push me into the direction of creativity and art. Had I grown up where Patricia grew up, maybe I'd be a different person. It was a very tough area—not very open to being different. Let's say that. It wasn't very easy.

COA: Pat, you were singing from a young age, right?

PB: Yeah. I always sang. But in fourth grade I was eligible to try out for choir. All the other little kids went and it was my turn and I sang. The teacher was just looking at me like, "What?" She called my parents and I thought I was in trouble. I was 10 years old. My mother was an opera singer, so everyone knew I was going to sing, but not like that.

COA: Neil, you started guitar at age 6?

NG: My father bought me a guitar at the age of 6 because my parents wanted me to play duets with my sister who played accordion—Italian songs because we were second generation Sicilian-American. I didn't do too many of them. I took some lessons and I really didn't like it at all. I really didn't want to take lessons—I preferred listening to records. We always had music playing in the house. My ear was more in tune even back then with songwriting, arrangement and production. When I listened to a record back then, I was listening to the rich production of it. It wasn't so much about the guitar—the guitar was a way to navigate into songwriting, songs and production. I had an Uncle Timmy who was 25 years older than me and he basically lived with us. He was responsible for all of the rock 'n' roll music coming into the house. That's when I started listening to the Stones and the Kinks and the Yardbirds. That's when guitar started to be fun.

COA: Pat, I understand that you were accepted to Julliard and decided not to go. Tell me about that decision.

PB: I actually never went to the audition. I spent eight years preparing to go. My boyfriend at the time (we were seniors) got drafted. He was the last number called. I thought he was going to die, so I didn't finish the program and I didn't go to the audition. Everyone was pretty hysterical about it, but it worked out.

COA: What do you consider your big break?

PB: I was singing in a band and we became very big regionally in the Richmond area where my ex-husband was stationed. It was great, but I felt like I needed to go back to New York if I was going to do this. It was during the time when Catch a Rising Star and the

Comedy Club and The Improv were open. I went on open mic night at Catch a Rising Star and that was probably when it all started. I was so scared. I'd been singing with a band for a while, but I didn't have any professional experience in New York. I was really nervous and when I was done singing, I closed my eyes and everyone was standing up screaming. The man who owned the club, Rick Newman, opened the door in the showroom when I came out and he was just like, "Who are you?" He became my manager and it kept going from there.

NG: For me, it was the Rick Derringer audition because to join the Derringer band as a guitar player was one of the highest honors. He auditioned over 200 players and I was down to the last five. I actually made it and joined the band. That was the biggest thing. I had just turned 22—the real interesting part is that I joined Rick's band at the same age he joined Johnny Winter's band, so that was a really special thing for him and it was a really special thing for me. That was the big break for me. That's what started it all.

COA: Fast forward a bit and you two meet when Neil interviews for your band. Tell me about that meeting.

PB: I had already done half of a record and we threw it in the trash because when I signed to Chrysalis they picked all these studio musicians and some crazy record producer and it was so wrong. I had told them what I wanted to achieve, what kind of sound I wanted and what I wanted to go for—ad nauseum. They were saying 'yes' to my face but they weren't getting what I was talking about. Mike Chapman was called in to fix it and I told him one more time, "I'm gonna tell you what I'm trying to do here." He said, "You know what? I've got your guy. He's 22 and he's playing with Rick Derringer right now. I think this is the person you are looking for." He wasn't coming to audition.

He was just coming down for me to meet him and see if we got on and 38 years later, I guess we got on. I was such a loser geek. I literally almost passed out when I saw him. He was so handsome. He just had this whole swagger thing. I was being cocky as hell because I had a record deal, you know. I had my back to him and I could hear him say to the guys who were auditioning, "Hey man, can I borrow your axe?" I thought, 'What a jerk. He didn't even bring a guitar.' I turned around and I was ready to burn him. I turned around and he just smiled at me and that was it. It was crazy.

NG: I had just finished the Rick Derringer record up in Woodstock and I received a call and they said there was this person who wanted to put a band together and wanted to make a rock 'n' roll record. She tried it with some other players and it didn't really work. I was highly recommended and they wanted to meet me. I drove down and walked in and met her and talked about what she was interested in doing and it was really a gift for the both of us because we both really needed each other. It was something I always wanted. I wanted to start a project right from the very beginning. It was the perfect situation. I know she makes it a romantic moment and the only thing I can say to that is when I met her I said to myself, "Where have you been my whole life?" It was almost like I knew her. We got on so well, we were like the same person.

COA: At that time in your life when you were developing your own sound, who was inspiring you musically?

PB: It was interesting because there were so many wonderful females that I loved like Joni Mitchell and Linda Ronstadt. But that's not what I was trying to do. I was trying to be Robert Plant. I was listening to that and trying to find a way to do that. It didn't happen until that huge guitar sound that Neil has come



Pat Benatar, Neil Giraldo and Linda Perry recording "Shine."

Inspired by the Women's March on Washington, "Shine" is an anthem for women, created by female artists. "Shine" is available at www.ShineTogether.info and via major music platforms. The song is priced at .69 cents to draw attention to the gender pay gap of women making fewer cents on the dollar compared to men. All proceeds will go to the B.A. Rudolph Foundation, which supports women who are pursuing careers in public service and government.

into the picture. Everybody else just wasn't big enough—it was either too clean or too wimpy. It just wasn't enough. I was trying to get these giant vocals over the top of that and I could never get it because I didn't have enough underneath to bolster up the giant vocals that I was trying to do. So, the minute that Neil came in and started to play, his tone and

the power that he had and the way that he played was exactly what I was talking about. We became each other's muse. He was my inspiration and I was his. That's what happened. I mostly listened to Foreigner and Led Zeppelin. I was trying to get Lou Graham. That's what I was going for—that sort of thing. I didn't want to be the girl singer.



NG: I was really across the board. It was the Yardbirds or Simon and Garfunkel, even some of the crazy Italian songs I heard in my house. It was everything. It was Sam Philips and Sun Records. It was Elvis. It was Jerry Lee Lewis and it was Count Basie. It was really all over the place. I really didn't get a real grip until I started playing with Rick. I learned so much from him on so many levels. I had a great schooling and mentoring by the time I met Patricia.

COA: Your songs in the 80s were really anthems for the idea of powerful women. Where did that come from?

PB: In retrospect, I'd love to take credit for the beginnings of that, but I was going through what every other

woman in the country was going through. I was just doing something that was really natural. I was doing feminism, the women's movement. It was just the collective way that everyone else was feeling, the way that I was feeling, the way the country was feeling. So I was writing songs that were about that. I didn't want to be the girl in the song where the guy was going, 'Come to my room, you're looking hot tonight, blah, blah, blah.' I wanted to be the one singing that. But I was so young. I was 26 years old.

Also, in my household all the women worked. This was nothing new to me. We were poor. My mother had to work. My grandmother stayed home and watched the kids. My mother's paycheck was as important as my father's. She was not home

making cookies. She was out working and coming home tired every night just like he was. In my family, I only saw that—that's all I knew. Spyder's mother was a traditional stay-at-home mom. She stayed home and raised the kids—dinner on the table at 5 o'clock every night. His father was a contractor and carpenter and he went to work every day. But, Spyder was so amazingly oblivious to the gender thing. Except for the fact that we were together, he never treated me like a girl. We were just musicians. In our band there was no misogyny or sexism or anything like that. It was just a bunch of people playing together. It only mattered if you had the chops. The only time anything like that happened was outside of our group. You'd go to a radio station and they'd say, "We'd love to play the record, but we already have a girl on the playlist." We'd just say, "What does that have to do with anything?"

NG: I was just looking at writing really powerful, aggressive lyrics that meant something. Those anthems may work for women, but they may work for guys, too. If you listen to our songs, I tried to never repeat myself. I never dumbed down to the audience. I tried to challenge them with something like "Love is a Battlefield" or "We Belong" or "Promises in the Dark." I tried to challenge them with arrangements and songs so it wasn't like what everybody else was listening to. I did that on purpose.

COA: "Hell is for Children" was inspired by a newspaper article about abused children and your most recent song, "Shine," is inspired by our current political situation and the Women's March in particular. Tell me a little bit about "Shine" and how the news of the day and politics play into your songwriting.

PB: It always has but until this time I've never really mixed the two together publicly. I'd always keep it veiled. Some fans were surprised I took this position, but I'm thinking,

"It's been a great life. It's been a blast. It's been great to be able to keep our marriage together and raise our kids and do this for a living and have success and all of that. It's not always perfect. It has its own challenges, but it's been a great ride." -Pat Benatar

"What do you think I've been singing about for the last 38 years? What do you think "Invincible" and "All Fired Up" are about? "Shine" came about because I really wanted to go to the Women's March on Washington, but I had booked something out of the country. Linda Perry is a good friend and we've been trying to work on something for years. We worked on the song and put the whole thing together in 12 days—we wrote the song, we cut the song, we got the website up and the foundation linked so we could have donations for the B.A. Rudolph Foundation, which does grants and scholarships for women who want to go into politics and law. We got it done in time for the march. It was perfect.

COA: "Love is a Battlefield" is such an iconic song and video. Did the dancing come naturally for you?

PB: Absolutely not. I have two left feet. It was a nightmare. It was 17 hours of hell.

COA: Tell me about your memoir, *Between a Heart and a Rock Place*. Was it a cathartic experience? Any plans to write more?

PB: Writing is what I do, but I was going to have a ghostwriter because I'm so busy doing music all the time and raising my kids. Patsi Bale Cox was going to help me do this and we did six months of research and interviews. She wrote one paragraph and I wrote one paragraph and she said, "You need to write this." I said, "No, no, no," but I wound up writing

the whole book except for the first paragraph. Patsi was with me all the way, guiding me. It was cathartic, though. It's kind of like looking at baby pictures.

COA: How has the music industry changed since the late 70s and 80s?

PB: It's changed a lot and it hasn't changed at all. Parts of it are identical to the way it was then. The way that music is distributed and the way it gets out there is different. Longevity is difficult now—things come and go really fast. Some of it is still the same. You can only get so far faking it or digitally doing things. You still have to have the goods and that's the same. I love that you can distribute music in so many ways now. There's basically no holds barred. You can do anything in any time in any way and I love that. But we have to move forward. It's not supposed to stay the same and I'm grateful for the progression.

NG: It is a shorter lifespan. People come and go real quick. There's not a lot of development of artists. I don't know why that is. Maybe it's that short term social media thing that happens. If you put a story on social media, it lasts for a day or two and then it's gone. It's a short shelf life. It doesn't make me really happy. There are people that are writing great stuff out there, but another thing comes along and they get bumped off. It's a different mentality.

COA: What contemporary artists are you inspired by?

PB: I love Lorde. She's great. There's

so much out there now. People are doing great stuff and you get to hear things you would have never heard before. Our own daughter is 23 years old and she's a songwriter and singer. She puts her content out on the internet.

NG: I was just listening to a band called the Carolina Chocolate Drops. I listen to everything you can possibly think of. I love the new Rolling Stones album. It takes it back to the roots.

COA: You've said you never thought you'd be doing this this long. What keeps you going?

PB: I guess I'll stop when it's time to stop. Who thinks they are going to be doing it this long? You think you're going to have five good years and you would be ecstatically grateful to have that. But it just rolls along. Truthfully, had we not been both in a band together and a couple, we wouldn't have lasted as long as we did. It's what we do and we do it together. Singing and writing are my passion. It's like breathing. I can't imagine not doing it. But I'm sure there will come a time when it's time to stop.

COA: You have two children. What do they think of your music and your fame?

PB: I think our older one, she's 32 and she's getting married in July, now she probably thinks her parents are pretty cool. But the younger one, are you kidding? She's like, "Mom, seriously?" I'm just the mom. I come after the dog—more of a nuisance than anything. The worst part is,



I get, “You’re not gonna wear that are you? Did anyone see you?” I go, “Yeah pretty much everyone saw me.” They just want to know if I can put some more money on their American Express card and if I have any really cool vintage clothes.

NG: They call me pop. Our little one thinks I’m a lot cooler now. Our oldest one does, too. The youngest one always wants to write songs with me and the oldest is really talented with making jewelry.

COA: I understand you just had a wedding anniversary. You and Neil were married in 1982. What’s your secret to a long, happy marriage?

PB: Well, he’s really nice. The truth is there’s no secret. It’s exactly what you think it is. You need to be committed. Everyone has to be on the same page. You need to stay individuals but you need to have this common ground that you have as a couple—unified. Nothing else comes in front of that—not even your children. When you make this

commitment and it is working, then it just goes. It’s not hard. The problem is when the relationship grows and changes but you’re not on the same page. One of you has decided that it’s not worth it—that you want something different. For us that didn’t happen.

NG: I don’t have a secret. I have no idea.

COA: In terms of collaborating musically, does it get better with time?

PB: We’re like Siamese twins, separated at birth. It’s ridiculous. It gets to a place where you don’t know which one is writing what part and who did what. It’s like Lennon and McCartney only it lasted five times longer.

NG: I think it continues to be strong. We both have our individual identities, so when we write, we write from different perspectives and we join them together. It works really well. I think our collaboration has been strong since the very beginning and I

don’t see it weakening. We each bring a different element.

COA: Your recent concerts are often stripped down and acoustic. Do you prefer that to the big stage shows of your early career?

PB: We still do the big shows in the arenas and that’s really fun, but there is something really amazing about going backwards and stripping down those songs to the way that you heard them when you wrote them, just the two of you—in the kitchen or in the car or wherever we were when we were writing them. There’s an intimacy in that and we get to tell all the back stories to each of the songs. The most important thing when you are an artist is that you have to find ways to justify playing. You can do it by rote and you can do it for money, I guess. But if you want to be inspired and you want it to continue and you want it to be genuine, you have to find a way to make that happen spiritually for yourself. So, this is one of the ways we do that—by paring it down and

going back to how it began and to the inception of how the songs were grown. That is an inspirational thing for us and it keeps it pure and genuine, which is, for us, the only way it works.

NG: I like them 50/50. I may prefer the acoustic one a little more at the moment because we can play more songs and we can tell stories. People really seem to love the stories. It works really well.

COA: Neil, tell me about the song you wrote for the Cleveland Indians.

NG: I was in a band in Cleveland and I ended up doing pretty well in my professional career. I wanted to give something back to them and to the city, so I called them up right before the Cleveland Indians started playing the playoffs. I said, "We should write a song together." They got really excited, so I said, "Let's write a song about Rocky Colavito and let's call it 'Lifting the Curse of the Rock.' We just put our heads together and we wrote a song. It's a fun song and we are going to try to help it become the anthem for the tribe this year in their quest to win the World Series.

COA: Neil, you really like the back end production work, right?

NG: I do. I always have. I've always thought of myself as a producer over just a guitar player because I have a vision and I like to explore the vision. It's all about creativity.

COA: Do you tire of playing your hits?

PB: There are some that are tiring—not because they are not great songs. But, you have played them to death, you have heard them on the radio to death, perhaps you were in the studio recording them to death, so they get tiring. It's just like eating Cheerios every day of your life. At some point you need to take a break from Cheerios. So we take them out for a while. Then there are others that are like French toast and you can eat them every day. "Heartbreaker," "Promises in the Dark" and "Hell is

for Children" are those songs. I could play "Heartbreaker" until the day I die because it never gets old. Not ever.

COA: If you weren't a musician, what would you be?

PB: I'd love to be an author. I really love writing books—either that or I'd love to be a researcher because I love to discover stuff. I can spend all day looking for one thing.

NG: I'd probably want to be the guy who discovers the cure for cancer.

COA: What's your secret to aging gracefully and staying healthy?

PB: Clean living for sure. We are pretty much holistic people. We're not vegans because I can't give up a cheeseburger—I just can't. No drugs, no smoking. We do drink wine and Spyder smokes cigars, but no inhaling. We don't take any medication—no pharmaceuticals of any kind. You have to lighten up, too. Being happy has a lot to do with being healthy. We try to be in a good frame of mind—not always easy to do as life gets in the way, but trying to have a good attitude really helps.

NG: Hanging around young people. They keep you young because they just keep motivating you. And you have to keep your mind sharp and keep finding new ways to reinvent yourself.

COA: What's coming up for you?

PB: We are starting the Duo tour, which is coming near you. Neil and I just did another song called "Dancing through the Wreckage" with Linda Perry for a fabulous documentary called *Served Like a Girl*. It's about female veterans who do a pageant every year. It's a fundraiser to raise money for female veterans who need help when they get out.

NG: I do a lot of things. I'm actually in the process of writing four screenplays and two books. I do that more than I do anything at the moment. I can't really reveal my screenplay and writing projects.

I have been working on writing a holiday record of completely new songs that reflect the time of the year—Christmas, Hanukah, New Year's—and all of the emotional distractions that people have in their lives during that time of the year. It's not like a "Frosty the Snowman"—not that there is anything wrong with that. But, it's not that kind of Christmas record. I'm going to do it with different singers, different players. I think people will like it. I'm also exploring the idea of directing. I've scored films before, but I love the visual aspect of things. I don't know what I'm doing in terms of directing, but I'm going to go ahead and figure it out and go ahead and try it because I like the medium. It's another process of creativity. I'll try anything. I like creativity and I like to explore.

COA: What charities do you support?

PB: We have worked with the LGBTQ community our entire career. We also do a lot of work with children's charities. We have our Shine Together charity for women's causes. We also do work with the elderly and animal rights. We usually do it anonymously. With "Shine," it is the first time we've stepped out and done this publicly.

COA: What can fans expect at your upcoming show on March 17 at The Hard Rock Hotel and Casino in Biloxi?

NG: I was just telling Patricia that what I'm going to do for these acoustic shows in March is I'm going to listen to every song that we've written and I'm going to refresh my memory. I'm going to have them at my hands so we can play any of those songs in this upcoming March run. So the people who have seen our Duo show before are going to really be in for a treat on this one because we are going to pull them all out. Some of them I haven't played since I recorded the record. But they'll be acoustic. ■

What's the News?

Council On Aging of West Florida

Council on Aging Announces Rat Pack 2017

Year of "Lucky Number 7" includes Marianne McMahon, Nels Offerdahl, John Peacock & Roger Webb.

The annual Rat Pack Reunion fundraiser, hosted by Council on Aging of West Florida to raise money and awareness for senior programs in the area, will take place Oct. 27, 2017 at 5:30 pm at New World Landing. At the event, four local leaders will be recognized for their service to the community. They are:

Marianne McMahon

Marianne started volunteering with the American Cancer Society by assisting with the Cattle Barons' Ball. Following guidance that, "Much is required from the person to whom much is given. Much more is required from the person to whom much more

is given," Marianne currently serves as a board member for the PACE Center for Girls and the Arc Gateway. In addition, last year she became involved with Fiesta.

Nels Offerdahl

Nels attended the University of Wisconsin-Madison before moving to Gulf Breeze in 2000. He built and operates three local movie theatre complexes in Gulf Breeze, Pace, and Crestview. He was a member of the 2010 Mayo-ki Indians and the 2016 Court of Fiesta. He also serves as a board member for the Panhandle Charitable Open.

John Peacock

John has served as a financial advisor for Edward Jones in Pensacola, Fla. since 1995. Prior to this, he also worked as a consultant to the US Department of Energy and served in the US Navy Nuclear Program. He is the

President of the Panhandle Charitable Open Golf Tournament and a board member for the Edward Jones Grassroots Task Force, Council on Aging of West Florida, Autism Pensacola, Epilepsy Foundation of Florida, UWF Foundation, WSRE Foundation Board, Pensacola Area Chamber of Commerce, Five Flags Rotary, and the Downtown Improvement Board.

Roger Webb

Roger began his career with Wendy's in 1970 when Dave Thomas hired him as a part-time employee when Dave opened his third restaurant in Columbus, Ohio. Currently, Roger owns the Wendco Group, which has a total of 43 Wendy's restaurants and employs a staff of over 1,200 people in Northwest Florida and South Alabama.

Now in its seventh year, the Rat Pack Reunion pays hom-

age to the glamorous Hollywood styles of yesteryear by honoring Pensacola's own celebrities with a gentle roast, auction, dancing, dinner and more. As men sport their skinniest ties and women show off their most dazzling gowns, hundreds of individuals gather to raise funds and awareness for Council on Aging of West Florida. To date, the event has raised close to a million dollars for services like Meals on Wheels, The Retreat Adult Day Health Care Center and more programs that aging adults in Escambia and Santa Rosa counties depend upon.

To purchase tickets, sponsor Rat Pack Reunion, or for information on the event, visit coawfla.org/ratpackreunion



COA Give Back on MLK Day of Service

Council on Aging of West Florida's Senior Companions and Foster Grandparent volunteers helped donate hundreds of dollars in food, blankets and other animal accessories to the

Pensacola Humane Society as part of Martin Luther King, Jr. Day of Service.

Each year, the Foster Grandparent / Senior Companion / R.E.L.I.E.F.

Programs Advisory Council selects a cause to contribute to for the Day of Service. In years past, they donated meals to the needy and shoes to the homeless, but this year, they wanted to do something different.

"Animals provide a lot of companionship to our seniors," said Velma Franklin, the Foster Grandparent Program Supervisor. "They are often our best friends, and we wanted to help the dogs and cats who will hopefully find homes soon."

The advisory council reached out to the

Pensacola Humane Society beforehand to ensure volunteers would purchase items the animals would really need and use. They were so grateful for the gifts, which were delivered by a team of volunteers on January 13.

"It's always helpful to receive food and help of any kind," said Jeff Kenner, the Humane Society's Director of Development. "Very often, people need help feeding their animals. Their animals are all they have. They keep them warm and they keep them company."



State Representatives visit Council on Aging

Rep. Frank White was kind enough to visit The Retreat in January and learn about all that we do to help aging adults live safe, independent lives. By enabling seniors and their families to continue living in dignity, surrounded by those they love, we alleviate a huge financial burden that would otherwise exist in nursing home expenses. It is over eight times more costly to serve at-risk seniors in a nursing home than it would be to serve them in their own house.

Through the work Council on Aging does, we help the senior, their family, and you, the tax-paying citizen.

State representative Jayer Williamson visited our Senior Dining Site in Bagdad in February, where he talked with some of the aging adults who gather there throughout the week for a good meal, socialization, crafts and more. We are happy to have a strong proponent of senior issues representing us in Tallahassee!



UNIVERSITY of WEST FLORIDA HISTORIC TRUST

UWF Historic Trust announces access program for low-income families

The University of West Florida Historic Trust announces it has joined "Museums for All," a signature access program of the Institute of Museum and Library Services and the Association of Children's Museums, to encourage families of all backgrounds to visit museums regularly and build lifelong museum habits.

"Museums for All" enables up to four people, with presentation of an Electronic Benefits Transfer card and a valid form of identification, to visit all Historic Pensacola museums and the Pensacola Museum of Art at no charge. "Museums for All" is part of the UWF Historic Trust's broad

commitment to seek, include and welcome all.

Families can visit any participating museum year-round for free admission or a minimal fee. More than 300,000 individuals have gained access to museums through the program since its inception in October 2014.

For more information on the UWF Historic Trust's participation in "Museums for All," contact Jeff Nall, UWF Historic Trust chief community officer, at 850.595.5985 ext. 110 or jnall@uwf.edu. For more information about the UWF Historic Trust, visit historicpensacola.org.

Andrea Krieger wins PACE Award

Congratulations to Andrea Krieger of United Way of Escambia County, who has won the Professional Leader of the Year PACE Award. Andrea is a tireless advocate of those in need and serves United Way as a champion for our community's most needy and vulnerable. Council on Aging is proud to have Andrea and her team in our corner!



Karen Barbee wins *IN Weekly's* Best of the Coast

Congratulations to our own Karen Barbee, who received *IN Weekly's* annual Rising Stars award for 2017. Karen serves as our community services director and is directly responsible for the oversight of Meals on Wheels, senior dining sites, transportation and caregiver support programs.



Sign Up for Our Newsletter

Enjoy the COA updates in *Coming of Age* magazine? Sign up for our monthly e-newsletter and stay current on all the news and happenings! Visit coawfla.org and click "e-newsletter" to sign up today!

● What's the News?

Council on Aging of West Florida joins Meals on Wheels programs across the country in 15th annual March for Meals celebration

Council on Aging of West Florida will be participating in the 15th annual March for Meals - a month-long, nationwide celebration of Meals on Wheels and the homebound and vulnerable seniors who rely on its vital safety net. Council on Aging's March for Meals celebration will include meal routes with Pensacola dignitaries, partnerships with local restaurants and client testimonials.

"The services that we provide the seniors of Escambia and Santa Rosa counties are critical and the need is rapidly increasing," said John Clark, President and CEO of Council on Aging. "Together, with help from volunteers, donors, and those who raise awareness about this service, we can keep seniors living independently, healthier at home and feeling more connected to their community as they age."

Since 2002, Meals on Wheels America has led the annual awareness campaign in an effort to fill the gap between the seniors served and those in need that is widening due to increased demand with a rapidly aging

population combined with declining public and private resources, and rising food, transportation and operational costs. This March, hundreds of local Meals on Wheels programs, like Council on Aging's, will reach out to their communities to build the support that will enable them to deliver nutritious meals, friendly visits and safety checks to America's seniors all year long. In our area, Council on Aging provides nearly 500 aging adults with nearly 130,000 meals per year.

"March is a time for us all to rally around Meals on Wheels," said Ellie Hollander, President and CEO of Meals on Wheels America. "Our ability to meet the needs of vulnerable seniors lies in the willingness and generosity of businesses, government and concerned individuals of all ages to contribute in their own way. It not only makes economic sense to enable seniors to stay healthy and safe at home, but it improves the health and vibrancy of our communities and our nation at large."

For more information on how you can volunteer, contribute or speak out for the seniors in Escambia and Santa Rosa counties and across the country, visit www.marchformeals.com.

Council on Aging welcomes Alesia Ross as Senior Volunteers Program Director

Welcome, Alesia Ross, to the COA team! Alesia Ross is a Pensacola native who is very active in the community, having graduated from the University of West Florida with a BA in Interdisciplinary Social Science. She is also pursuing a MA in Counseling from Troy State, a MA in College Student Affairs Administration from UWF, and is supportive of the West Florida High School Athletics Department, Waterfront Rescue Mission, Emerald Coastkeepers, and the United Way Rise & Mentor Program.



Previously, Alesia worked at the University of West Florida for more than 15 years in a variety of functions, from marketing, programs and customer service, to alumni and outreach. Alesia is a consummate professional with a keen ability to institute programs and facilitate growth. Her colleagues can also attest to her team spirit and optimistic attitude.



Tune in to *Coming of Age TV*

Similar in concept to *Coming of Age* magazine, *Coming of Age TV* also covers a wide variety of senior-related topics. Each 30-minute program consists of interviews with three local experts. **New programs are recorded monthly and air on WUWF-TV, Cox Cable Channel 4 (Escambia County) Monday, Wednesdays and Fridays at 7 pm and Tuesdays and Thursdays**

at 9 am. For individuals in Santa Rosa County and beyond, each segment from the program is uploaded to youtube.com/coawfla. *Coming of Age TV* is proudly sponsored by Baptist Medical Group and their more than 100 caring physicians serving the Gulf Coast. Meet a caring doctor in your neighborhood at BaptistMedicalGroup.org.

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Sample Menus



Out & About

GET OUT, MEET PEOPLE & GO PLACES

Sacred Heart Health System Events

During March, Sacred Heart Health System will provide free heart-health and osteoporosis screenings at several locations in Pensacola, Cantonment, Beulah and Century for the poor, elderly or uninsured.

Heart-health screenings will measure blood pressure, blood sugar and total cholesterol, and can detect anemia. The screenings are helpful in diagnosing conditions that put people at high risk for heart attack, stroke, diabetes and other health problems. Osteoporosis screenings measure bone density.

Following is the March schedule for adult screenings:

March 14 from 9 am to 11:30 am at Beulah Senior Center, 7425 Woodside Rd., Beulah. Heart-health screenings.

March 15 from 9 am to 11:30 am at Catholic Church of the Holy Spirit, 10650 Gulf Beach Hwy., Pensacola. Heart-health screenings.

March 22 from 9 am to 11:30 am at WESCO Senior Center, 904 N. 57th Ave., Pensacola. Osteoporosis screenings.

March 23 from 9 am to 11:30 am at Fricker Center, 900 N. "F" St., Pensacola. Heart-health screenings.

March 30 from 9 am to 11:30 am at Warrington United Methodist Church, 301 E. Winthrop Ave., Pensacola. Heart-health screenings.

For more information about Sacred Heart's "Mission in Motion" community-health screenings, please call 850-416-7826.

Florida Dental Association Presents No-Cost Dental Care

March 24–25

Woodham Middle School, Pensacola

The Florida Mission of Mercy (FLA-MOM) is a two-day dental clinic that provides dental care at no cost to the underserved and uninsured in Florida – those who would otherwise go without dental care.

This is a first-come, first-served event with a goal of treating 2,000 patients, and having a positive impact on the Pensacola community by providing important access to dental care.

Treatments offered at the FLA-MOM include: cleanings, fillings, extractions, limited root-canal therapy and pediatric dentistry.

For volunteer sign-up and more, go to www.FLAMOM.org.

Caregiver Support Groups

As part of COA's mission to serve seniors and their families, we offer caregiver support groups in Escambia and Santa Rosa counties. These groups are available to all caregivers regardless of the condition or illness of the person being cared for, including grandparents caring for/raising grandchildren or relatives caring for a disabled adult. Attendance is free and new members are always welcome.

PENSACOLA

Council On Aging Of West Florida 875 Royce St.

LAST THURSDAY of each month at 6 pm

Refreshments provided.

THIRD MONDAY of each month at 2:30 pm Facilitated by Covenant Alzheimer's Services. Respite provided on site during the meeting. Call Sandie Holtry at 266-2503 to arrange.

Myrtle Grove Baptist Church

5920 Lillian Hwy.

LAST THURSDAY of each month at 9 am

Refreshments provided.

**Grandparents Raising Grandchildren & Other Relatives
Council On Aging Of West Florida 875 Royce St.,
Pensacola 32503**

SECOND THURSDAY of each month at 6 pm Refreshments provided. FREE child care provided on site during the meeting. Reservations requested to 432-1475.

Day on the Go

Day on the Go, a program of COA's adult day health care center, The Retreat, is an exciting off-site experience for higher functioning participants who can follow directions, have good endurance and are capable of attending area attractions and events with limited supervision. Schedules are planned to allow for a full day of activity for participant as well as extended respite for caregivers. Day on the Go includes breakfast, exercise time, an outing and lunch. Dates and locations to be visited are planned quarterly. For more information, call (850) 266-2503.

Volunteer Orientations

Council on Aging is always in need of volunteers! From helping plan events to delivering Meals on Wheels, our programs and services would not be possible without the help of our community. Join us for a brief 45-minute volunteer orientation this winter.

Volunteer orientations are the third Thursday of each month at 5:30 pm at Council on Aging of West Florida (875 Royce St.) conference room. March 16, April 20, May 18. For more information, contact Tricia Dixon at (850) 432-1475 or email tdixon@coawfla.org.

Thank You.

Many thanks to our donors. We appreciate your generous support. Gifts received from November 17, 2016 to February 16, 2017.

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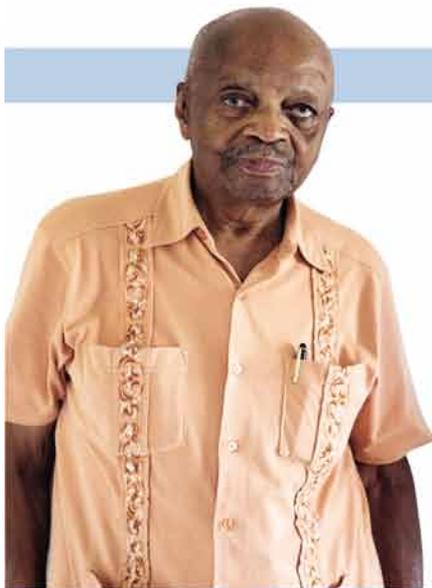
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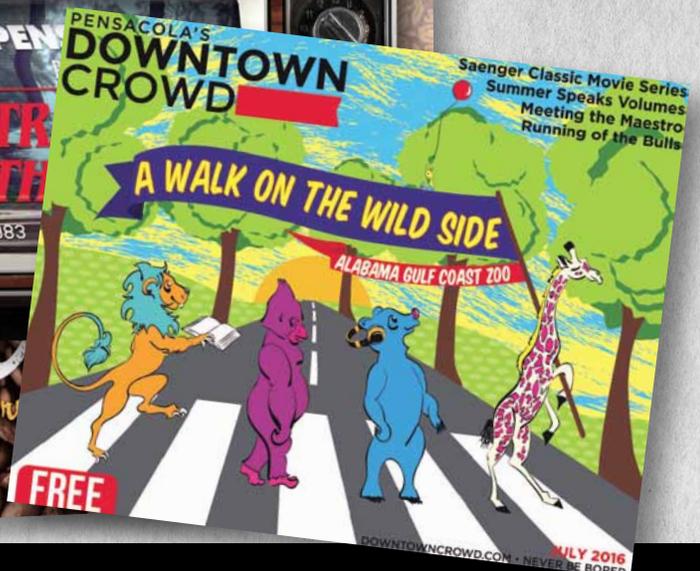
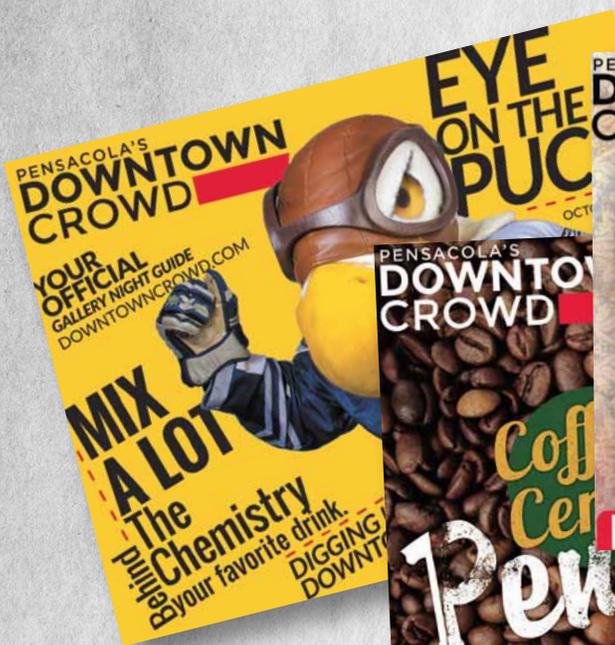
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