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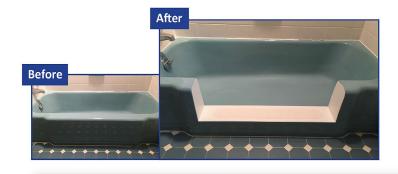
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[FROM THE EDITOR]



Josh
Newby
Marketing
Communications
Director and
Editor-in-Chief

Ugh, here we are again with the Delta variant—you know what, no.

There are other things to discuss, like the senior adult housing crisis—never mind.

Maybe I should talk about caregiver fatigue? Nah, you know about that already.

Look, there are so many crises facing older adults and their loved ones right now, it is just frankly overwhelming. I don't think we as humans were designed to undergo these constant stresses compounded by world disasters and all that cumulative grief that creates. So before we talk in this issue about each of those topics in their own way, I want to encourage you to just take care of yourself. If that means sitting on your front porch when you should be cleaning, do it. If that means taking a longer shower than usual, even if you know breakfast needs to be made, do it. If that means splurging on the extra large fries, hey, go for it.

There is too much aggregate anxiety in the world to sweat the small stuff, and the small stuff has a way of working itself out. We are asked to pay attention to a lot nowadays; our minds need those temporary refuges. The past 18 months have broken many of our senses of self, so I now encourage you to piece it back together, whatever that looks like.

I hope you find some respite, some relief in these pages. If you need more, please reach out to us. You shouldn't have to go it alone, and we have community resources and services available to help you. You're not alone. We're here for you. Take care of yourself.

Until next time, try to enjoy life – you've earned it.

Reach out to me personally at (850) 266-2507 if you wish to discuss anything here. Thank you for reading.

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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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Is there an issue of one of our magazines that you just have to have? Was your relative seen in a recent issue and you lost it? Give Ballinger Publishing a call at (850) 433-1166 ext. 26, and they will find one for you.

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Council on Aging of West Florida welcomes your letters and comments. Send letters to Council on Aging c/o Josh Newby at 875 Royce St., Pensacola, FL 32503, emails to jnewby@coawfla.org or contact editor Kelly Oden at Ballinger Publishing, P.O. Box 12665 Pensacola, FL 32591 or kelly@ballingerpublishing.com.

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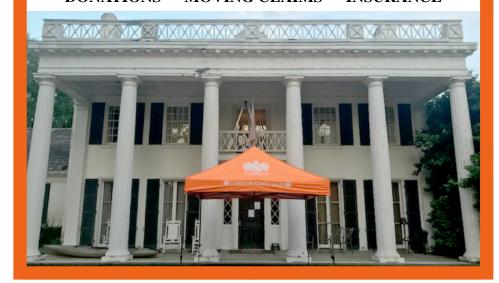




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LIFESTYLE MAGAZINE FOR SENIORS COMING of AGE











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2014





Cover: Olivia Newton-John photo by Michelle Day

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Just Get the Shot

by John B. Clark

2020 was a year for the record books. We saw our nation overtaken by a pandemic which sickened millions and killed hundreds of thousands of our fellow citizens. We underwent lockdowns, millions had to work from home, millions lost their jobs, schools closed and the Council on Aging had to drastically change our program operations. For example, our daycare closed and our senior dining sites closed, which necessitated that we change to a "grab and go" program for the senior dining program participants. All through the year, our country, like the rest of the world, prayed for a cure and a vaccination which would help lead all of us out of the COVID-19 pandemic. Indeed, we were fortunate that by the end of last year several vaccinations were approved for use in the United States. We also hoped that by the middle of this year enough of our fellow citizens would be vaccinated leading to what we call "herd immunity." According to the Mayo Clinic, "herd immunity occurs when a large portion of a community (the herd) becomes immune to a disease. making the spread of disease from person to person unlikely. As a result, the whole community becomes protected — not just those who are immune. Using the concept of herd immunity, vaccines have successfully controlled contagious diseases such as smallpox, polio, diphtheria, rubella and many others. Herd immunity makes it possible to protect the population from a disease, including those who can't be vaccinated, such as newborns or those who have compromised immune systems." But alas we would not reach herd immunity by the middle of the year because far too many of our

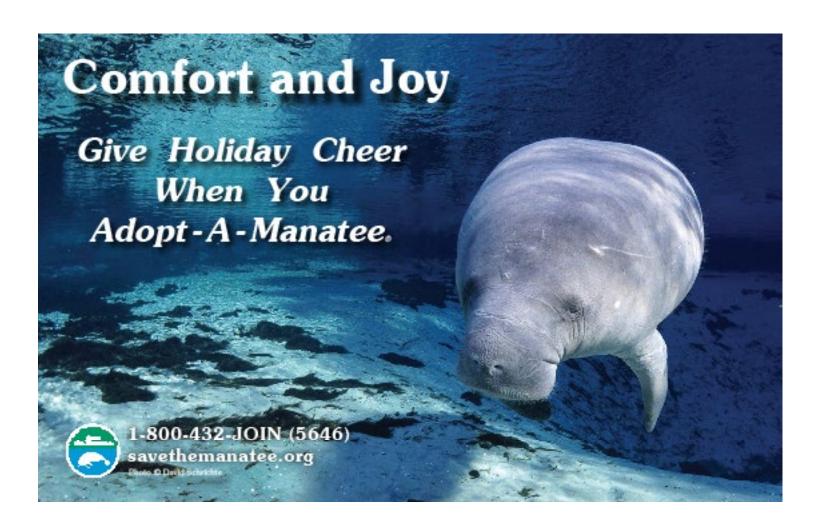
fellow citizens have not, for many reasons, received the vaccination.

I have to admit that I do not understand those who say they are "hesitant" or flat out refuse to get vaccinated due to political, religious, or so called "scientific" reasons. Let's face it, science ain't perfect and our government ain't perfect either. But over the history of mankind, we have been so blessed that men and women have risen up among us who were wise and knowledgeable and who created vaccines against polio, smallpox, pneumonia, hepatitis, diphtheria, whooping cough, measles, shingles, the flu, etc. Imagine if large groups of people refused to get the polio vaccination or the smallpox vaccination. We would still have hundreds of thousands dying from these dreaded diseases, and in the case of polio, many would still be living in iron lungs. I know many of you remember the dreaded "iron lungs." Think of that! Having to "live" in an iron lung so you could breathe. Without a vaccination that would still be the case.

COVID has been an especially cruel disease for the elderly. It spread like wildfire through many nursing homes and assisted living facilities—leaving death and misery in its wake. In addition, those with "underlying medical conditions" were also susceptible to the ravages of COVID. So, it was with great joy when we learned that a vaccination was available and that elders would be among the first to receive a shot. Good news too is the fact that in Escambia County 78 percent of persons ages 65 and over and in Santa Rosa County 77 percent of that same age group have been fully vaccinated. The

scary part is that the total number of vaccinated people in both counties is 44 percent and 43 percent. It is scary because if you believe in science, like I do, you know that we have to do better at getting the total numbers of the fully vaccinated far above 38 and 35 percent so that we can reach "heard immunity" I mentioned in the first paragraph. We did it for polio, we did it for smallpox, we did it for a host of other diseases which caused epidemics and pandemics. We can and must do it for COVID.

Thank you to those of you who have shots. I know it sounds "corny," but that simple act says something important about you—it says you care about your family, your neighbors, vour community, your country and, of course, yourself. I am not a doctor, but the evidence is clear; vaccinations work (polio, smallpox, measles, and yes, COVID). I am no different than anyone else, I am tired of hearing about COVID, I am tired of wearing a mask, I prefer to shake hands and hug. I want things to be normal once again. We can get there sooner rather than later if you would just get the shot. If you are concerned, check with your doctor or a respected medical professional; not someone on the internet. Only when sufficient numbers have received the vaccination will we be able to return to normal in our city, county, state, and country. It is the right thing to do, and it is the unselfish thing to do. So please get vaccinated. We want everyone to be healthy and free from getting infected with a potentially fatal virus.







Aging adds plenty of health concerns to your life and can alter how you feel about yourself and the world around you. This is made even more difficult for seniors with mental illnesses. With increasing chronic health conditions, loss of loved ones, and losing independence, depression rates rise for those over 65. "More than two million of the 34 million Americans age 65 and older suffer from some form of depression." (Mental Health America)

Angelo Pananas is the director of Behavioral Health at West Florida Hospital where they have a psychiatric unit dedicated to seniors at the Pavilion. The Pavilion is a 56-bed inpatient psychiatric program with 18 beds in their geriatric unit. The program is certified through the Alzheimer's Association's Institute for Healthcare Improvement Age Friendly Initiative, a assessment based on fair and equitable treatment of patients living with Alzheimer's disease. "This includes mentation—a psychiatric evaluation and cranial nerve assessment, medication, physical therapy, and working with patients' goals," Pananas said. Most patients are suffering from depression or are in agitated states of dementia that can be difficult for family to deal with without a plan.

Dr. Shabana Jaffri is one of the psychiatrics at the Pavilion and says that they often get patients who have hit a critical care point in their mental health that they did not have to reach. "I think the most common thing is they have to watch when they retire is if they don't have a proper plan because they have had very busy lives, and suddenly, they're just staying at home."

One thing that retirement without any plans can uncover is bipolar disorder. Found in an estimated 2 percent of the population, bipolar disorder is characterized by alternating depression and manic or hypomanic states. Hypomania can go undetected as it may manifest in some individuals as hyper-productivity. Retirement may uncover this as a person becomes

irritable and agitated without an outlet for their hypomania.

Preparing for retirement doesn't just mean having a plan for something fun to do. A plan isn't just for retirement. Dr. Jaffri suggests that patients have plans for their care teams, such as advance directives, power of attorney and living wills. This allows family members to make care decisions while you may be hospitalized that are in your best interest in the case of placement after hospital care.

Having a plan also includes looping your loved ones and caregivers in on your mental health journey. They need to know what medications you are on, as many may have adverse reactions with medications for physical ailments. Your family should know signs of psychosis or depression and examples of when you may need to be hospitalized.

Pananas and Dr. Jaffri recommend that above all else, do not wait until rock bottom for your mental health to go to a mental health facility or simply to talk to your doctor. Dr. Jaffri says that getting dementia patients in the last stage is common and difficult to help with as a provider. She wishes she could see patients earlier to help them and their families with care plans.

Aging can go hand-in-hand with hardships such as loneliness and new aches and pains. But aging does not naturally include depression. "Depression and dementia are not in everybody, but we have to watch some of the cognitive impairment of that," Dr. Jaffri said. Signs that depression might be at play with your loved one:

- · Agitation and irritability
- · Increased paranoia
- Sleep patterns changing
- · Decreased or increased appetite
- · Withdrawing and isolating
- Loss of enjoyment in activities they used to love

Many are emotions that can come and go with life. Seek additional help if they are consistent for one to two weeks. Talk to your doctor to receive a screening for depression and other mental health concerns to start the process of assistance.

In children and older adults, depression and anxiety may have physical components. This means that the body and organs start to become affected, and aches and pains pop up. Anxiety can cause gastrointestinal problems and depression may cause physical aches and pains. Work with your doctor to rule out any causes. If you are unable to make a diagnosis, your mental health may be the culprit—and a treatable one at that!

This can go the opposite way, with physical ailments causing agitation and irritability—even signs of psychosis. Dr. Jaffri says that the first thing they do with geriatric psych patients is treat constipation and urinary tract infections to rule this out.

Pananas adds that it is more important than ever to have faith in your doctor. People are coming in long after physical and mental health issues become a problem. This spike in late interventions recently is caused by a fear of hospitals during COVID-19. Pananas stresses that hospitals are experts and infectious control and urges the public to

take care of themselves and talk to their doctor as issues arise.

You can ask your loved one about their mental health directly. Don't stop at, "Hey, how are you?" because we have programmed ourselves to say, "I'm great!" even when that is far from the case. Especially when you add in our southern mannerisms!

Ask them if they are depressed, are having thoughts of hurting themselves, or thinking about suicide. There is a myth that asking about suicidal thoughts can then plant the idea. This is not the case; in fact, asking about this reduces the risk of suicide because that person knows someone cares and that they can talk about it. Despite being a small part of the population, individuals ages 65 and over account for 20 percent of all suicide deaths in the US and those ages 85 and older are six times more likely to commit suicide than the national average. This is not to say that your loved one is at risk, but rather that it is much more important to check in on them and create a warm space for open and genuine answers.

HOTLINES

Lakeview 866-517-7766

Alz 800-272-3900

West Florida Pavilion 850-494-5070

Suicide hotline 800-273-8255

Pelvic Floor Physical Therapy:

Rehabilitative Techniques for Urinary

Incontinence and More By Dr. Justine Roper PT, DPT

"I pee when I laugh. I just slap on a pad and keep it moving."

"I haven't had sex with my wife in years."

"I sit on the toilet forever just to get anything out."

These are words that are heard by pelvic floor physical therapists almost daily. Their patients are men and women who have no idea that their life doesn't have to be this way.

Physical therapy is not an unfamiliar field to the majority of people. When individuals consider what they already know about physical therapy, exercise, stretches, helping people walk again after car accidents and massage-like techniques are typically the first things that come to mind. Research shows that chronic pain affects approximately 50 million Americans and it is often treated with non-pharmacologic approaches like physical therapy.

Musculoskeletal conditions that impact the shoulders, back and knees are common, as is the need for participation in physical therapy when these issues arise. While the need for physical therapy to address these types of conditions is commonplace, many are unfamiliar with the specialty of pelvic floor physical therapy to address conditions that impact the pelvic region.

The pelvic floor muscles are important to our everyday function. The pelvic floor is located in the

pelvic area and stretches from the tailbone to the pubic bone, similar to an upside down umbrella. These muscles support our bladder and other pelvic organs. The pelvic floor muscles give you the ability to control the release of urine and feces and to delay emptying until it is appropriate. These muscles are also important for sexual function in both men and women. In men, it is important for erectile function and ejaculation. Voluntary contraction and relaxation of the pelvic floor contributes to increased blood flow, which aids in sexual sensation and arousal.

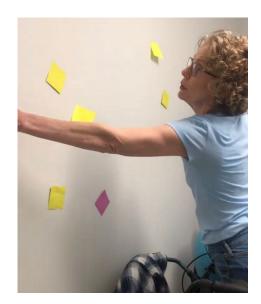
The pelvic floor can become negatively impacted or damaged in a variety of ways that include genetics, environmental factors, childbirth, radiation, surgery and nerve damage. Additional influential factors can also include, constipation, lung disease, obesity, medication, smoking, aging, dementia, environment and medication.

Age-related changes in the lower urinary tract include decreased bladder capacity and a feeling of fullness, decreased pelvic floor muscle strength and increased residual urine volume. Pelvic Floor Physical Therapy (PFPT) is a form of rehabilitation treatment that is commonly used to combat conditions that impact these types of symptoms that originate in and around the pelvic floor. One of the primary conditions that pelvic floor physical therapists treat is



urinary incontinence, which is involuntary leakage of urine due to increased intra-abdominal pressure during activities like exercise or coughing. Other conditions that are treated in PFPT include: overactive bladder, pelvic organ prolapse, fecal incontinence or inability to control the bowels, vaginal or penile pain, menopausal symptoms, post-prostate symptoms such as post-urine dribble and erectile dysfunction. These conditions can make an individual's quality of life poor if they are unaddressed. From skin breakdown to the need to purchase bladder leakage pads, it can become stressful and embarrassing.

The World Health Organization (WHO) has identified urinary incontinence as a health priority for people 60 years of age and older. Anxiety, depression, pressure sores, sleep disturbances, falls and fractures, and urinary tract infections are the leading causes of death in this older population. Urinary incontinence can directly cause these life-altering things to occur. This is why education surrounding pelvic floor conditions is so vital. Urge incontinence is another condition that is often treated with PFPT. Urge incontinence occurs as urine leaks when you feel a sudden, often intense urge to urinate. This is common in





nervous system disorders such as Parkinson's, multiple sclerosis and spinal and pelvic nerve damage. While many believe that these types of conditions can only be treated with medication and surgery, pelvic floor physical therapy can serve as an alternative option or as an adjunct to other interventions.

PFPT consists of various forms of treatment that include groups of exercises, manual therapy techniques and neuro-stimulation treatments that build support in the muscles in the lower abdomen area. Similar to any other muscle in the body, the pelvic floor should have a healthy balance between strength and flexibility. Pelvic floor

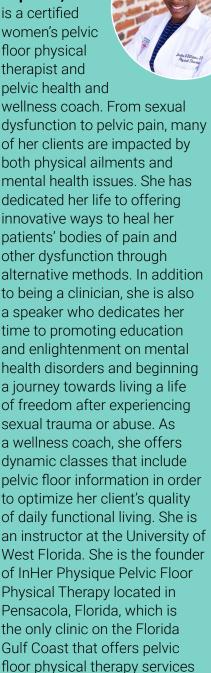
physical therapists are trained in being able to examine the body and identify what parts of the pelvic floor and surrounding areas are contributing to your symptoms.

PFPT is nothing to fear. A trained pelvic floor physical therapist will likely begin the rehabilitative process by speaking with the patient about what is happening with your body and your physical activity or functional goals. Because pelvic floor physical therapists are highly trained in anatomy and physiology, a demonstration of what may actually be happening anatomically in relation to your complaints will likely occur to educate and inform the patient. A pelvic exam and a general physical exam are also likely to occur to get specific information such as whether your pelvic muscles are tight or weak. From there, a treatment plan will be established. Homework is often given to begin working on addressing what was found during the exam.

PFPT is such a specialized form of rehabilitation that many are unaware that it exists. Some may have a medical doctor that will refer them to this type of therapy if they are familiar with a provider in their area. Many patients will elect to find a provider on their own. If you or a loved one may suffer from any form or amount of pelvic floor symptoms, it is recommended to begin therapy as soon as possible to optimize their outcomes. The main goal of PFPT is to always foster hope and confidence in patients suffering from pelvic floor conditions.

About the Author

Dr. Justine Roper PT, DPT is a certified women's pelvic floor physical therapist and pelvic health and



to all genders and ages.

FOOT BY DARIEN HARDY

After an unfortunate cancellation in 2020 due to the pandemic, one of Pensacola's most beloved arts and culture events is back and stronger than ever. The seventh annual Foo Foo Fest will take over the streets of Downtown Pensacola with its grand umbrella of 20 artistic and cultural events.

This 12-day celebration attracts both locals and visitors to downtown Pensacola during the Fall for a series of culturally creative happenings and fun events of the highest artistic caliber—all with a touch of southern sophistication.

One-of-a-kind performances, art exhibits in the streets and even film festivals are all a part of this year's Foo Foo Fest.

While the festival showcases a wide range of events each year, it is traditionally rooted in three of the Gulf Coast's signature annual events: the Great Gulfcoast Arts Festival, the Frank Brown International Songwriters Festival and the Blue Angels Homecoming Airshow. Some new additions to this year's lineup of Foo Foo festivities include the STAMPED: LGBTQ Film Festival, Pensacola MESS Hall's Science of Strategy and the Gulf Coast Quilt Trail and DIY Paint Party.

"The committee is looking forward to an incredible and muchawaited 2021 Foo Foo Festival. The team has been working side by side with our festival grantees and Friends of Foo event organizers to ensure we put together two weeks of unforgettable events throughout Pensacola. As the fall festival city of the south, I am excited to see what these organizations have in store and for our community to have the opportunity to experience," Visit Pensacola Director of Marketing and Communications Nicole Stacey said.

Festival organizers are taking all necessary precautions to ensure the health and safety of attendees with enhanced outdoor spaces to allow for ample social distancing.

This 12-day smorgasbord of arts, culture and historical events will be held at various venues and outdoor spaces throughout the city from November 4–15, 2021. So come downtown to get your Foo Foo on in the Fall at some, or all of these great events.

Visit foofoofest.com, or @foofoofest on Facebook and Instagram, for more information about each event.

GULF COAST QUILT TRAIL

November 4-15: 2021

FREE, some events ticketed

The Gulf Coast Quilt Trail, in partnership with the Pensacola Quilters Guild, is creating a folk-art scavenger hunt. It is the Gulf Coast Quilt Trail's goal to introduce 20+ new Quilt Blocks around Escambia County by the start of this year's Foo Foo Festival, providing a detailed informative map to explore all installations.

Attendees will be able to see a live Quilt Block demonstration by Louisiana artist Kim Zabbia or they can paint Quilt Blocks for their home or business as part of a series of painting events. Prices are as follows: \$50 for 2ftx2ft, \$125 for 4ftx4ft, and \$250 for 8ftx8ft. Check the Foo Foo Fest Facebook events for the date, time, and place of our next DIY painting party. facebook.com/gulfcoastquilttrail. To post about the event on Instagram, use the Instagram Hashtag #GulfCoastQuiltTrail.

FRIENDS OF DOWNTOWN SON ET LUMIÈRE DIGITAL PROJECTION

November 4-7, Time: After Dark | Location: Artel Gallery, 223 Palafox Place

FREE

"Son et Lumière" (Sound and Light) is a form of nighttime entertainment that is usually presented in outdoor venues of historic significance. This year, a digital projection mapping the old County Courthouse on historic Palafox Street will allow visitors to witness an interactive mashup of technology and history. Scenes, people and imagery from 200 years ago come to life in an "undeniably modern" event.

GREAT GULF COAST ARTS FESTIVAL

November 5 & 6: 9 am - 5 pm; November 7: 9 am - 4 pm Seville Square, 311 E. Government St. FREE

The Great Gulf Coast Arts Festival is one of the United States' highest-regarded, most popular art festivals. This three-day, juried art show draws more than 200 of the nation's best painters, potters, sculptors, jewelers, graphic artists and craftsmen to the destination each year. Live musicians are featured on the Main Stage with genres ranging from Bluegrass to Cajun, Jazz to Classical and more. Children also become artists at the Children's Arts Festival, with free fun geared toward children both toddler age and older.

PENSACOLA MESS HALL EVENTS

November 6, 11, & 13-14 | Downtown Pensacola FREE

Pensacola MESS Hall's mission is to evoke creative problem solving, creativity and experimentation through STEM exploration. They aspire to develop a community of critical and creative thinkers of all ages who are inspired by and understand the basic principles of science. Join the Pensacola MESS Hall for events throughout Foo Foo

Fest, including Games Garden, Games Unplugged Curiosity Day and Clue Murder Mystery with the Improbable Cause Mystery Theatre (ICMT).

PENSACOLA CHILDREN'S BUSINESS FAIR

November 7: 12 pm – 3 pm | Downtown Pensacola (Palafox Market), 121 N Palafox St.

FREE

At the Pensacola Children's Business Fair, kids are the boss. In a unique one-day marketplace, young entrepreneurs between 6 and 17 years of age are challenged to develop their own handmade branded products, create a strategy and open business to real customers. These moguls will invest a portion of their profits into the community by giving back to their favorite charity's causes.

FROM SEA TO SHINING SEA: A MUSICAL SALUTE TO SERVICE

Presented by the Pensacola Opera

November 11: 3:30-5 pm | Hunter Amphitheatre, Community Maritime Park, 301 W. Main St.

FREE

On Veteran's Day, the Pensacola Opera will host a complimentary concert celebrating Pensacola's veterans. From Sea to Shining Sea: A Musical Salute to Service will be set against the backdrop of the beautiful Pensacola Bay on the Hunter Amphitheater stage. The Veteran's Day salute will feature four vocal soloists and the Pensacola Symphony performing patriotic selections along with members of the Pensacola Children's Chorus, Pensacola Opera Chorus, Choral Society of Pensacola and University of West Florida music students.

STAMPED: LBGTQ FILM FESTIVAL

November 12 & 13: 5-9 pm & November 14: 12-9 pm | Pensacola Cultural Center, 400 S. Jefferson St.

Price TBD

STAMPED Film Festival is committed to giving Pensacola a deep cultural experience through unique films with a specific focus on the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ) community. Their goal is to promote awareness, inclusion and diversity, building a stronger and more open Pensacola.

Guests will view highly vetted films from around the globe. The first days' ratings can vary from PG to mature, but the gears will shift on Sunday, November 14, for a full day of family-friendly viewing. "Family Day" will include a multitude of children's activities from face painting, balloon art, kid's snacks, and heart-warming films for the whole family.

Frank Brown International Songwriter's Festival

November 4-14 | Venues along the Florida/Alabama Gulf Coast (Flora Bama), 17401 Perdido Key Dr. Ticketed

Blue Angels 75th Anniversary Homecoming Air Show

November 5-6: Gates open at 8:30 am, Show starts at 9:30 am FREE

Stella Artois Chalice Painting

November 6: 11 am – 8 pm | O'Riley's Irish Pub, 321 S Palafox St. FREE

Variation and Virtuosity, Presented by Pensacola Symphony Orchestra

November 6: 7:30 – 9:30 pm | Saenger Theatre Pensacola, 118 S Palafox St.

Ticketed

Pensacola Women's Half Marathon

November 7: 6:40 am - 12 pm | Plaza Del Luna, 900 S Palafox St. Registration Required

"MOMO" Meals on My Own, by Autism Pensacola

November 9 | So Gourmet, 407 S Palafox St. Unit D FREE

Murder Ballad, Presented by PenArts

November 10: 7:30 pm - 9:30 pm | The Gordon Community Art Center, 306 N De Villiers St. \$15

A Celebration of Art: An Immersive 3-D Projection Experience

November 11-14 | Pensacola Little Theatre (400 S. Jefferson St.) and Pensacola Museum of Art (407 S. Jefferson St.) FREE; Enhanced Experience tickets for Purchase

Bourbon, Bacon, Brews, & Cigars

November 13: 3 pm - 5 pm O'Riley's Irish Pub, 321 S Palafox St. Ticketed

Pensacola EggFest: VIP & Early Bird discounts + Day of options

November 14: 11 am (VIP); 12 pm - 3 pm (GA) | Pensacola Blue Wahoos Stadium, 351 W Cedar St.

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The Pensacola Beach Art & Wine Festival

November 14: 11 am – 4 pm | Pensacola Beach Boardwalk, 400 Quietwater Beach Rd.

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Jazz for Justice

November 14: 3 pm – 8 pm | Seville Quarter, 311 E. Government St. GA: FREE, Reserved: \$25, VIP: \$50



Ithough queer and transgender people have been present in films since the inception of cinema back in the 19th century, the way their stories and lives have been represented on screen has often been subject to gatekeeping.

As a result of stigmatization and historic prejudice against the LGBT+ community, early cinema censored and created codes like Hollywood's own Hays Code, which forbade explicit depictions of homosexuality on film for over three decades. It wasn't until the early 1970s to 1990s that the era of "New Queer Cinema" flourished and independent filmmakers began creating sincere and genuine LGBT+ representation. Now major streaming platforms like Netflix have categories for "Gay & Lesbian" movies and television, and locally, the Stamped LGBTQ Film Festival has been showcasing queer short films in Pensacola since 2012. Despite this thriving era of film, one population continues to be underrepresented: the elderly LGBT+ community. The Council on Aging of West Florida set out to change this with their new documentary Someone Waits For Me.

The documentary follows five senior LGBT+ people in Northwest Florida and shares their individual stories and experiences through in-depth interviews and subversive and artistic recreated scenes. The Council on Aging received funding for the documentary from a Sunday's Child grant in 2020 and partnered with Appleyard Agency to produce the film. Someone Waits For Me is set to premiere on the weekend of November 12 at the Pensacola Little Theatre and will be available to stream online after it makes its rounds in the festival circuit. Josh Newby, Council on Aging of West Florida marketing communications director, served as the director of the documentary and explained that he hopes the film will spark a communitywide conversation about LGBT+ elders.

"We wanted to highlight this population that is very

much overlooked in both the media landscape and in the conversation about LGBT+ issues," Newby explained. "There is this notion that seniors are taken care of through Social Security, Medicare or their children. That is simply not the case. They are very much an invisible and vulnerable part of the population that our culture doesn't focus on because we place such an emphasis on ability and beauty. I want this film to start a conversation around elders. who have unique challenges based on their age and physical capabilities, but also have the intersected challenges of their sexuality in a very conservative part of the country."

This invisibility of the senior population is something that the Council on Aging wanted to capture in the documentary as they work to support and advocate for elders in Escambia and Santa Rosa counties. Rather



It's the young people that go to the rallies. It's the young people that march in the streets. It's the young people that make the most noise. So, it's their stories that are told. It's not the elder who has been homebound for years and feels lonely and forgotten. That story never gets told, because frankly, no one even knows that person exists."

than telling the stories of these individuals, they have given them a platform to share their own stories.

"It's the young people that go to the rallies. It's the young people that march in the streets. It's the young people that make the most noise. So, it's their stories that are told. It's not the elder who has been homebound for years and feels lonely and forgotten. That story never gets told, because frankly, no one even knows that person exists," Newby said. "But we know that person exists, because we serve that person. At Council on Aging, we go to their door

every day and serve meals or clean their home and make their lives better. If we can shed a spotlight on their stories, then maybe more people will care, and it'll enable this community to live a richer life."

The lives and stories of LGBT+ elders are diverse, individual and cover a wide span of history. From growing up in a less tolerant time and living through violence against LGBT+ people to witnessing society change at their fingertips with the Gay Liberation Movement of the late 1960s and marriage equality in 2015. The documentary follows the





narrative stories of Rick and Bill, a gay couple, Pat and Carla, a lesbian couple, and Miriam, a single lesbian. While their narratives sometimes overlap, they often contradict one another and cover topics such as religious intolerance, coming out, class privilege, loneliness, marriage, being a part of the queer community and the importance of queer spaces.

"Everyone we interviewed had such unique

experiences and different perspectives on issues like prejudice, living in conservative areas and whether or not seniors should come out or remain closeted," Newby explained. "Rick and Bill are big advocates of coming out and being true to yourself no matter how old you are, whereas Miriam took the opposite stance. Rick and Bill have been together for over 30 years, and they waited to get married until the Supreme Court legalized same sex marriage for the entire country, while Pat and Carla were the opposite and went to New York to get married. There wasn't this monolithic gay experience."



Recreated scene of Miriam walking through her Catholic grade school.

SOMEONE WAITS FOR ME

Each interview in the film is separated into three mini-films within the documentary. Part of showcasing these diverse experiences includes weaving in elements of fantasy, magical realism and dream spaces to illustrate the stories being narrated in the background of the film. As the filming took place in the midst of COVID-19 lockdowns and restrictions, where they couldn't film the couples on a date or out on the town, Newby explained that they relied on these artistic and abstract scenes to create a nontraditional documentary.

For Miriam, who is Puerto Rican and grew up in New York with a Catholic upbringing, her interview grapples with her experiences of being unaccepted at her Catholic school but finding refuge in the queer underground clubs in Brooklyn. As she narrates her experiences, you can see a young girl walking through a church, clutching a cross necklace, as club music suddenly starts booming through the walls and drag queens appear in full-glam garb dancing in the church. For Pat and Carla, who met at a dive bar and told stories about lesbian bars, feminist poetry and the importance of having intimate queer spaces where they



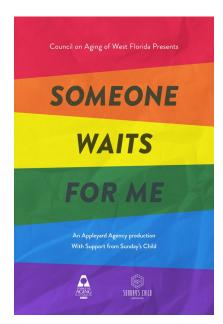
Film still of Miriam sharing her story in an interview for the documentary

can feel safe and be themselves, the scene literally transforms on the screen from a dive bar to a luscious lesbian bar.

"We couldn't go back in time to these clubs in Brooklyn that changed over to gay bars at a certain hour of night or this dive bar where Pat and Carla met. We had to recreate those spaces, infusing them with the sentiments, desires and the forbidden, taboo culture that was so prevalent back then. These scenes really emphasize how these characters were feeling and the emotions that were evoked as they told their stories," Newby said.

The first screening of the film will premiere in Pensacola on the weekend of Nov. 12 at the Pensacola Little Theatre, to open the Stamped Film Festival. Someone Waits For Me will also be available to stream online after it finishes its rounds in the film festival circuit. Visit facebook.com/coawfla for more information on the premiere and future streaming platforms.

"Society has written off both seniors and the gay community for far too long. I hope this film raises awareness about those who are living in the closet, living out of the closet or are living somewhere in between and showcases how we as a community can make their lives better," Newby said.



Movie poster for the Council on Aging of West Florida's documentary Someone Waits For Me









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16 OCT 7:30PM

OPENING NIGHTI ROBERTO PLANO, PIANO

"Hunce in n March" from The Damnation of Faust

I hat Plano Concerto No. 1 Brohme Symphony No. 4

6 NOV 7:30PM



VARIATIONS & VIRTUOSITY

Le Tambes v de Couperin Value clayer Concertantes Dedrifk Violin Concerto

15 JAN 7:30PM



BEETHOVEN & BLUE JEANS

HALLEY GELDER'S GOFFAHO

MAILEY JONES, POET | CHAPLES MCCASKILL, POET

Beathoven Symphony No. I Pictor Citizend Cont Phone: Poorville Summer of 1915 Burber

Cyric for Strings

Bernstein Symphonic Bulls from On the Waterfront

26 MAR 7:30PM



AMERICAN CLASSICS

Capland Suits from Gilly the Kid Ellington Suite from The Filter Symphony No. 2, "Gaelic"

30 APR 7:30PM



SOUNDS TRIUMPHANT

LEGY LARGEST COMPORER AND CONCERT CURATOR

Respight Foretake of Rome Symphosy: WaterMusic Symphony No. 2.

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31 DEC 7:00 PM



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Byron Strip**ling and Current Burdford light up** the stage as they take you on a journey featuring the music of juzz leganda Ella Fitzgandd and Louis Armstrang.

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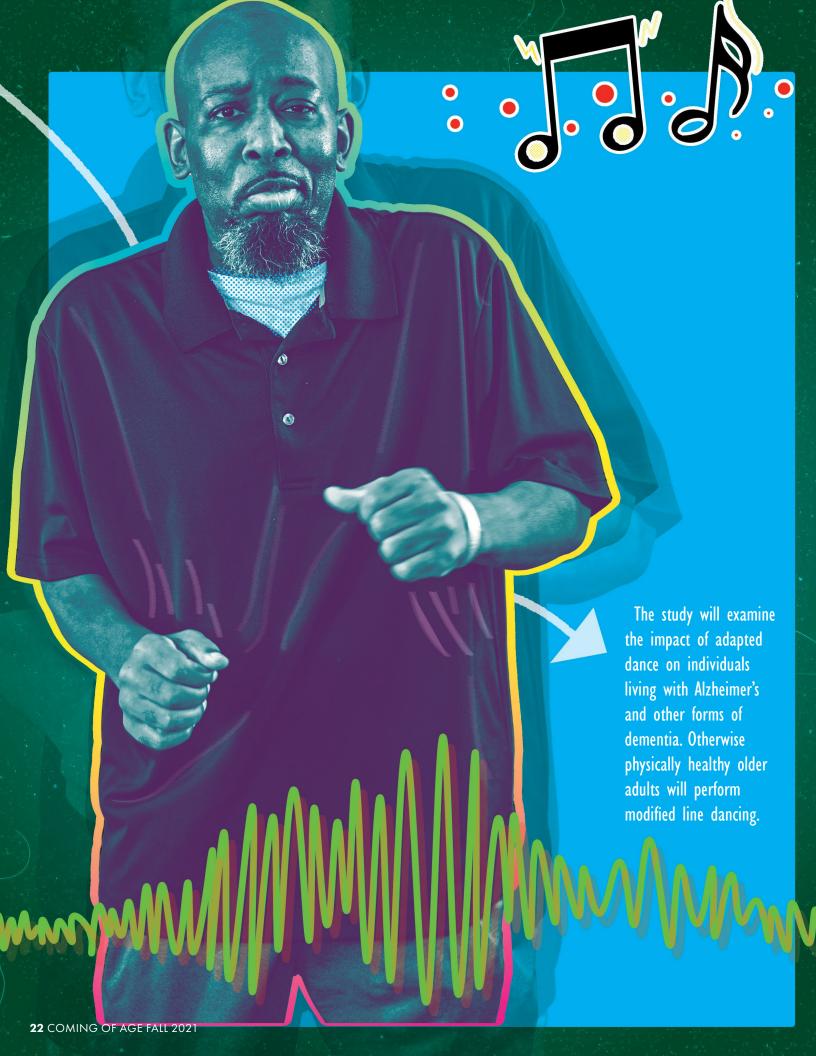
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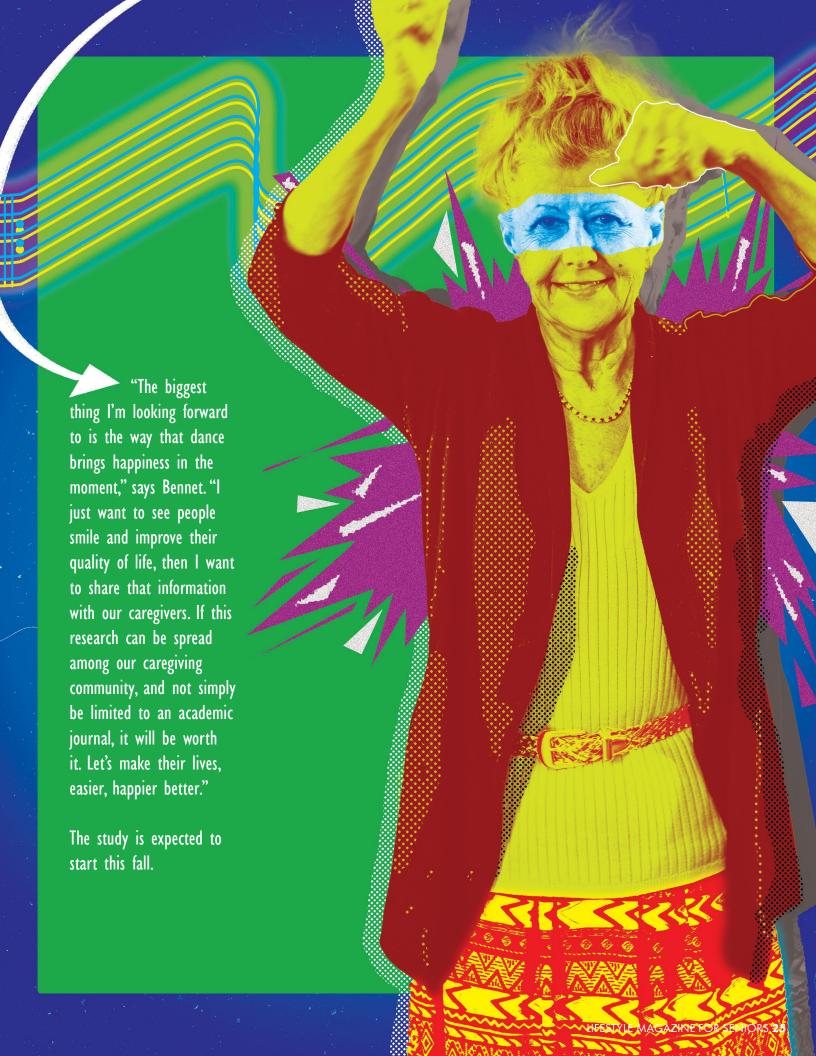














An Exclusive Interview

by Kelly Oden

hether you know her as Sandy Olsson, the good girl gone (slightly) bad in the 1978 blockbuster musical *Grease*, as the Kira, the Greek muse on roller skates in the 1980 disco pop film *Xanadu* or as the head banded, legwarmer clad hot and sexy singer of the 1981 mega hit, "Physical," one thing is for certain—you know Olivia Newton-John.

In her career, Newton-John has earned the highest of honors, including a Country Music Association female vocalist of the year award, multiple Grammys, an Emmy and much more. In 2020, Queen Elizabeth II, appointed the Britishborn, Australia raised singer Dame Commander of the Order of the British Empire (DBE), thus making her Dame Olivia Newton-John.

An icon of popular music, culture and film, Newton-John is also a philanthropist and avid believer in the power of nature as a healing force. Originally diagnosed with breast cancer in 1992, Newton-John has battled the disease through multiple recurrences. In part, she attributes her longevity in her journey with cancer to her use of plant-based medicine to fight the disease and to help curb the painful side effects of chemo, radiation and surgery.

With these experiences in mind, Olivia Newton-John recently founded the Olivia Newton-John Foundation, which will fund cutting-edge research and treatment programs for plant-based medicine and its use in treating cancer.

Dame Olivia Newton-John was kind enough to speak with *Coming of Age* about her life, her career, her foundation and her passion for plant and herbal medicine.

COA: Hi Olivia. How are you?

ONJ: Great! We're in California right now and it's beautiful weather. We're very fortunate. We have a really lovely spot here.

COA: Right? We focus a lot on health, and I know that health and wellness are priorities for you, too. You've had your own battles with health. How are you doing now?

ONJ: I'm doing well, thank you. I've actually really enjoyed this forced time off, which I probably haven't had since I was pregnant. It's the longest I've ever been off work. I'm just enjoying being at home, being a person and having my animals around me. It's actually been really, really quite wonderful.

I have great compassion for people that aren't in the position I'm in, but I feel very grateful that I have this time off.

COA: You are an advocate of plant-based and herbal medicine, especially in regard to the your own battle with cancer. How did you get interested in plant-based medicine and how has it been helpful to you?

ONJ: Well, I'm very fortunate to be married to an amazing man who is a plant medicine man and has been for most of his life. He studies plants and herbs from the Amazon rainforest. When we got together, I was introduced to a lot more knowledge about plant medicine, and it has really made a huge difference in my life. He grows cannabis for me and he is breeding new strains



that work better for pain and inflammation. Before that, he went to the Amazon 200 or 300 times and brought back herbs, so he's very knowledgeable. I'm very, very grateful for him. He has helped me so much. I don't do very well with prescription medication and I try not to take it because my body doesn't agree with it, but cannabis can greatly reduce my pain and help me sleep. It's been a godsend.

COA: That's wonderful. Are there any other herbals or plant base medicines or treatments for everyday wellness that you've found really helpful?

ONJ: Oh, yes. I take a lot of different herbal things, but right now it's very important that we all up our vitamin D (with K if possible), high doses of vitamin C and zinc. I make sure I have those three things every day because they're really important to help our immunity, especially at this time in the world. I have vitamin IV's sometimes. Yesterday I

had an IV cocktail of minerals, vitamin C, glutathione and other things that are supportive for my immune system because my immune system is probably a little more compromised than most. My husband also gives me things all day. I don't even always ask what they are. I just know they are good for my health.

COA: That brings us to your foundation. You founded the Olivia Newton-John Foundation to focus on cutting-edge research and treatment programs for plant-based medicine and its use in treating cancer. What inspired you to start this foundation?

ONJ: Cannabis and plant medicine, along with all the Amazonian herbs that I take, has had a really beneficial effect on me. I'm very lucky. I first had breast cancer in 1992 and I'm still here. I have had a few metastases through this history and I tolerate the plant-medicine well. I don't feel sick from it. It helps me. It's kinder. Having been through chemotherapy,

radiation and surgery, I would love to help find an answer for cancer that is kind and not so difficult on the body. When you use these toxic chemicals to kill one thing, you're also harming something else. So, my dream is to find a cure and even just to help people going through cancer. That's the idea is to make the journey more tolerable. So, it's become very important to me because I've experienced it in such a good way. It's really helped me so much.

COA: Does the foundation invest in cancer research that's already being conducted or will it fund new types of research?

ONJ: Well, that's what we're working on right now. We will be funding new research that's in the works with one company. We also hope to fund research in Australia at another institute. We are looking at all the different possibilities. There's a lot of interest in this and a lot of really positive science with plant medicine, so I'm very excited at the possibilities.

COA: Do you think that there's a cure in plant-based medicine for this disease?

ONJ: I think it's out there. After spending time in the Amazon Rainforest with my husband and seeing the amazingness, if there is such a word, of nature and what it provides, I think it's out there. There were plants in the Amazon that were called signature plants, I believe, where the killer looks like the disease. There's a story my husband told me where there's a chief in the Amazon

OLIVIA NEWTON-JOHN

who was bitten by a snake, which is probably one of the main causes of death in the rainforest. There is an actual vine that looks like that snake and if you can get that vine in time and give it to the person, they'll be healed. So the answers are all there, we just have to find them.

COA: You've had a long and prolific career in the music industry. I understand that the 40th anniversary of your album and hit song, "Physical" is this year. To celebrate, you are reissuing the album with bonus tracks and DVDs of your 1982 HBO concert and your ABC "Let's Get Physical" TV special. Are you excited?

ONJ: It is! To me, it's amazing that people still love it, still workout to it and still even remember it—it was a long time ago. You know, it was a lot of fun and it really allowed me to take my career in another direction. And, you know, John Farrar, the producer, is one of my dearest friends and Steve Kipner, who wrote it, is another one of my dearest friends—both Australians. That makes it kind of extra fun to share it with them.

COA: It's such a catchy tune and at the time you caught some flack for the sexual suggestiveness of the song. Does that make you laugh now when you hear what's being played on the radio?

ONJ: You took the words out of my mouth. I always say, you know, that song, compared to what's out now is like a lullaby. It's nothing. But at

the time it was very controversial. I was always uncomfortable with any kind of controversial things, but it's amazing that as time goes by, you get older, you learn stuff and now I can have a good laugh and appreciate it.

COA: When you first heard the song, did you catch on to the sexual connotations?

ONJ: I don't think that I did. I recorded the song and it went out, and then I suddenly freaked out because I was hearing that people were taking it in this other way. I called my manager and I said, "Pull this record. I've gone too far." He said, "It's too late, love. It's climbing up charts!" It was really funny, you know, with "Physical" and the role in Grease-I was the same kind of nervous and not sure I should do it. Both times, thank goodness. I bit the bullet and went ahead with them and did pretty good.

COA: With "Physical," you crossed over into the pop rock music genre. Prior to that, there was some controversy when you won the Country Music Association award for Female Vocalist of the Year in 1974, right?

ONJ: Yes. I was living in England. My producers were John Farrar, who was Australian, and Bruce Welch, who was English, and the song was written by an Englishman. Then, I go and have a country hit with it and win an award. Some of the people in Nashville weren't very thrilled about it. Luckily for me, I had a few more country hits after that



and I had some really lovely support. Dolly Parton and her sister and Loretta Lynn and her sister all came out in support of me. Dolly and Loretta were also nominated, so, it was actually very sweet.

COA: In retrospect, you're somewhat of a pioneer. After that we started seeing more country pop crossover music.

ONJ: Yes, I think John Denver and myself were the first ones to kind of crossover, as they called it then, from country to pop. It opened the door up for a lot of people in the end, but sometimes it's takes a while for people to see that.

COA: Can we talk a little about *Grease*? I think it's celebrating 43 years this year, right?

ONJ: Oh, you know, I'm very grateful for the fact that I've been in two movies that are still loved—*Grease* in particular and *Xanadu*. You know the music was so good. I feel very lucky that I was part of that.

COA: You and John Travolta had such great chemistry in *Grease*. How often do you see him, and what is your friendship like today?

ONJ: John Travolta and I did some meet and greets in Florida actually right before the lockdown. I guess that was about three years ago. We stay in touch. We have a great relationship and we'll always be friends, you know, it's special. We had a lot of fun.

COA: Speaking of great chemistry, I understand that you and your husband realized you were falling in love while in the Amazon and that you had an ayahuasca experience with him. Can you tell me about that?

ONJ: It was interesting because I really didn't want an ayahuasca experience because I was afraid of anything that would get me out of my head. We were actually in the middle of the jungle and John said that all the people who he took the jungle had to at least taste it. So he gave me, liter-

ally, what would fit in the cap of a Coca Cola bottle. That much is all I had. I'm very sensitive, I guess, because later on that night I started to feel sick and I was having a full on ayahuasca experience with just a capful of it. I hadn't intended for anything to happen, but it was an amazing experience. I had a difficult time emotionally before I went to the Amazon. When I came out of the Amazon. I mean apart from the fact I was falling in love with John, I think my brain got tweaked a little bit. They do use ayahuasca for alcoholism and drug addiction and mental health issues, and I think it somehow kind of straightens up your brain or something because I did feel better afterwards.

COA: Is there any correlation with that experience and your belief in the power of positive thinking or is that something you've held your whole life?

ONJ: I think I've had that my whole life. Thinking positively

about anything is beneficial. Especially now, when everything in the world is going 'no' and to be going 'yes' against it is not always easy. I mean your emotional body and your spiritual body is all connected. It's not like we're different parts, we're all connected. I think keeping your mind in a positive realm really helps your body recover and cope. I think every human has moments of negativity or fear. That's very human and natural, and sometimes it's very hard to keep those positive thoughts going when you're not feeling well, but I really believe it makes a difference to your recovery. I really believe that.

COA: I understand that you auctioned off your leather jacket from *Grease* to raise money for the Olivia Newton-John Foundation. But, then you received a bit of a surprise from the winning bidder, right?

ONJ: Yes, it's a quite an amazing story because, you know,

to give those two things up was difficult. I was willing to do that to raise money for the foundation so that we can do cancer research. This wonderful man who didn't want his name mentioned bought the jacket. He then came to my house with my publicist and a couple of other people to surprise me. They made me put a scarf around my eyes so I couldn't see what they were doing. I opened my eyes and there is this man standing there saying, "I bought this jacket to raise money for your foundation, but I really believe that it should be with you." And I couldn't believe it. It was the most unbelievable act of generosity that I think I've ever encountered.

COA: I know you have the foundation work and the anniversary of "Physical" coming up. What else is on the horizon for you?

ONJ: On September 26, which is my birthday, we're having a fundraiser for my

Wellness Center in Melbourne, Australia. It's called Walk for Wellness. If anyone is interested in being involved, obviously you can't go to Australia, but you can walk in your backyard or in your neighborhood. The walk supports people who are on the cancer journey and the programs they have at the Olivia Newton-John Cancer Center, which is a hospital that I'm very, very proud of. We need money every year to fund the wellness programs, which really helped me a great deal when I was in there a few years ago. So, if anyone is interested, they could just go to walkforwellness.com.au and join up. The top six fundraisers are going to be able to either have a virtual meet and greet with me, a fireside chat with me or morning afternoon tea with me. So anyway, there's something they can look up online if they'd like to participate.



Pensacola Habitat for Humanity will be hosting their first Neighbors Helping Neighbors event on Saturday, October 23.

Pensacola Habitat for Humanity is mostly known for providing affordable homeownership opportunies to residents in Escambia and Santa Rosa Counties through its Home Buyer Program, but Pensacola Habitat supports the community in even more ways. Homeownership preservations is just as important for the community which is why the Community Development Programs were created several years ago.

Through Community Development, Pensacola Habitat has been able to help the community with critical home repair, wheelchair ramps, neighborhood revitalization, weatherization repair, disaster recovery, and much more. The latest initiative Pensacola Habitat has added to its Community Development Programs is the Neighbors Helping Neighbors Program.

On Saturday, October 23, Pensacola Habitat for Humanity will be hosting their first Neighbors Helping Neighbors event in partnership with Northwest Florida Council on Aging and Westside Garden District Neighborhood Association. This program is partially funded by a grant through Neighborworks America. Neighbors Helping Neighbors is a pilot program with the goal of connecting neighbors from all walks of life to help foster safe, accessible homes where aging neighbors can thrive.

"We are pleased to launch this program with Westside Garden Neighborhood Association and Council on Aging." Said Emma Field, Pensacola Habitat for Humanity Community Development Manager. "By bringing people together to assist older residents with aging in place safely, not only are we connecting communities but we are increasing the

ability for older residents to stay in their homes for years to come."

During this event, residents from Westside Garden District will come together to assist older neighbors with home safety assessments and minor home repairs. The day will conclude with a celebratory meal for all who helped to make the event a success. To learn more, visit pensacolahabitat.org/nhn or contact Emma Field at efield@pensacolahabitat.org or call 850-434-5456, ext. 114.

About Pensacola Habitat for Humanity

Founded in 1981, Pensacola Habitat for Humanity is a non-profit, nondenominational, Christian ministry whose purpose is to improve communities through sustainable partnerships. Having built and renovated 1,400 homes, Pensacola Habitat seeks new and innovative ways to positively impact the community through various meaningful projects, including their Home Buyer and Neighborhood Revitalization programs. Pensacola Habitat for Humanity offers unique financing opportunities to qualified applicants to provide affordable home ownership in Escambia and Santa Rosa Counties. For more information, visit rethinkhabitat.org.

About Habitat for Humanity International

Driven by the vision that everyone needs a decent place to live, Habitat for Humanity began in 1976 as a grassroots effort on a community farm in southern Georgia. The Christian housing organization has since grown to become a leading global nonprofit working in more than 1,300 communities throughout the U.S. and in more than 70 countries. Families and

individuals in need of a hand up partner with Habitat for Humanity to build or improve a place they can call home. Habitat homeowners help build their own homes alongside volunteers and pay an affordable mortgage. Through financial support, volunteering or adding a voice to support affordable housing, everyone can help families achieve the strength, stability and self-reliance they need to build better lives for themselves. Through shelter, we empower. To learn more, visit habitat.org.

About NeighborWorks America

For nearly 40 years, Neighborhood Reinvestment Corp. (d/b/a NeighborWorks America), a national, nonpartisan, nonprofit, has created opportunities for people to improve their lives and strengthen their communities by providing access to homeownership and safe, affordable rental housing. In the last five years, NeighborWorks organizations have generated more than \$27.2 billion in reinvestment in these communities. NeighborWorks America is the nation's leading trainer of community development and affordable housing professionals. For more information, visit nw.org.

About Pensacola Habitat for Humanity ReStore

Our local Habitat for Humanity Restore supports Pensacola Habitat for Humanity's mission of building homes, communities and hope. Revenue earned by selling donated furniture, appliances, building materials, and more is reinvested in our community to provide affordable homeownership options to families in Escambia and Santa Rosa counties. Together we are changing lives right here at home. For more information, visit pensacolarestore.com

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Lusharon Wiley

Council on Aging of West Florida is a local independent 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization that has served seniors and their families since 1972. Council on Aging of West Florida helps seniors in Escambia and Santa Rosa counties live healthy, safe and independent lives in their own familiar surroundings by providing community-based, in-home programs and services such as Meals on Wheels and Alzheimer's respite care. For more information, call 850-432-1475 or visit www.coawfla.org.

A copy of the offical registration and financial information may be obtained from the division of consumer services by calling 1-800-435-7532 toll free within the state. Registration does not imply endorsement, approval or recommendation by the state. The registration number assigned to Council on Aging of West Florida, inc by the florida department of agricultural and cosumer services is ch201. Council on aging of West Florida does not use a professional solicitor or professional fund raising consultant for the purposes of soliciting funds. 100% Of donations go to Council on Aging of West Florida, inc.

Priscilla O'Rear



"My Mom loves it here, and your loved one will, too."



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