Day Trippin’ Through Florida: A Selection of Relaxing Stops Through the State

AN EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW

FRED LEVIN

MEALS ON WHEELS

WHEN DISASTER STRIKES

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Summer is here. And while for many of us that means day trips to the beach and laying out by the pool before retreating inside to our comfortably air-conditioned homes, many among us are not so fortunate. Even before the height of summer in August, inside temperatures can reach 90 degrees during the day and dip down to just 85 degrees at night without any sort of central HVAC system. Not only does this make for some miserable afternoons and evenings, but it also presents a unique health challenge to seniors whose bodies may be unable to regulate their temperatures like they once could — or whose medication makes the task that much more difficult. That’s where education and personal generosity can help. Each summer, we raise awareness of this dangerous plight that many aging adults face while also raising money for window-AC units to help keep their homes at a reasonable and comfortable temperature. This year, we are holding our annual Senior Chill Out at area Lowe’s locations and also hoping to raise money through Home Instead’s Give65 program. Visit give65.org/coawfla for more information.

Perhaps you’ve been keeping an eye on all that is happening in the state and federal government. Needless to say, it is a very exciting time on both fronts! On the state level, agencies who help the elderly were blessed with an increase in general revenue funding — an increase that will go straight to helping you and your neighbors access vital services. Learn more about what’s happening on the state level on page 10 with Mr. Clark. Up in Washington, D.C., things are a little more uncertain. Meals on Wheels, for example, has gotten a lot of attention recently due to proposed cuts to the Community Development Block Grant program, which helps fund the meal-delivery service. You can find out more about this vital initiative on page 15.

Also this month, I’m so excited to welcome attorney, philanthropist and all-around fascinating individual Fred Levin to our pages. Fred was our original Rat Pack honoree and has lived a storied and at times controversial life, but his impact on the law profession and on Northwest Florida is undeniable. This is truly one of the most entertaining and enlightening interviews we’ve ever hosted, and I hope you find it as interesting and as worthy of cocktail chatter as I do.

In this great summer issue, you’ll also find some useful information on planned giving, ideas for fun regional vacations, tips on staying active and so much more. It’s truly our pleasure to bring you this vital material each quarter, and if you know someone who may be interested in receiving the quarterly publication, have them give me a call at (850) 432-1475. I’d love to sign them up (for free). Thank you for reading, and as always, enjoy life — you’ve earned it!
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On the cover: Fred Levin
Photo by Guy Stevens

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Is it Always About Money?

by John Clark

IT SEEMS WHENEVER I PREPARE MY ADVOCACY ARTICLE FOR COMING OF AGE, I am always talking about “funding” or the status of legislative budgets (state and national); so, it would be easy to think it is always just about money. And it is true that we do have to pay the bills. It does take money to operate our home delivered meals program, our day care center, our senior dining sites and other important services. So clearly funding for Council on Aging services is super critical; whether it be funding at the local level, the state level or the federal level. So, first some good news.

We are very pleased that Gov. Rick Scott, in his initial budget proposal, recommended a significant increase in state general revenue funding for aging programs in Florida. The Florida legislature has also recommended an $8 million increase in general revenue funding for aging programs—if this budget is signed by the Governor it will be the largest increase in funding in recent years. While not yet finalized, the budget must still go to the Governor for his approval/veto; however, we are confident that funding increases for aging programs will be approved. We owe a special thank you to the Governor and members of our local legislative delegation, Senator Doug Broxson and Representatives Frank White, Clay Ingram, and Jayer Williamson for their recognition of the value and importance of home and community-based services for frail elders and for their support of these funding increases. Not to be a “Debbie downer,” but there is some potential bad news on the horizon as it relates to the President’s proposed budget.

The National Association on Nutrition and Aging Services Providers (NANASP) provided a summary of the President’s FY 2018 budget and some of the proposed cuts and noted that “in its entirety, it is a budget that proposes the deepest cuts in domestic programs in a generation.”

Among the programs that would be eliminated under this proposal are the Senior Community Services Employment Program (SCSEP), Senior Corps, the Social Services Block Grant (SSBG), the Community Services Block Grant (CSBG), the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP), and the Medicare State Health Insurance Assistance Program (SHIP). Just so the reader is aware, the Senior Corps program funds Council on Aging Senior Companion and Foster Grandparent Programs. The CDBG program provides funding locally which provides meals to frail low-income elders and is also used as match for some federal and state programs which, in turn, provide more meals to local elders in need. Also, many hundreds of local elders who are low-income will be impacted by the elimination of the LIHEAP program which helps with high energy bills and the SHIP program which assists elders as they “sort through the myriad and complex health insurance plans.”

Some of the programs taking the deepest cuts are SNAP (the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, commonly known as food stamps), which would be slashed by $193 billion over ten years, and Medicaid, which would be cut by $610 billion over ten years.

Older Americans Act (OAA) programs, including nutrition, would also incur a small cut by returning funding levels to what they were in the FY 2017 Continuing Resolution.

As NANASP points out; from this point, Congress takes over. No President’s budget in modern history has ever been approved as submitted. This budget will meet that same fate. NANASP has also provided a chart (shown next) which provides specific funding
levels for programs of interest to elder advocates.

So again, is it always about money? No, it isn’t. It is also about the ongoing need for volunteers; volunteers who are willing to drive people to the doctor and shopping, volunteers who are willing to deliver home delivered meals, volunteers who are willing to clean up an overgrown yard, volunteers who are willing to build wheelchair ramps, volunteers who are willing to complete minor home repairs, volunteers who are willing to help with fundraisers, volunteers who are willing to take on office administrative duties, and volunteers who are willing to help out at the day care center. So, no, it isn’t “just” about money; but boy money sure is a big driver in the provision of critical home and community based services. And, remember this—a budget document prepared by any governmental body is a “policy statement and a statement of beliefs and priorities.”

Someone once said that “the moral test of a government is how it treats those who are at the dawn of life, the children; those who are in the twilight of life, the aged; and those who are in the shadow of life, the sick and the needy, and the handicapped.”

Organizaton FY17 CR FY17 Final FY18 Proposed
OAA Congregate $448 Million $450 Million $447 Million
OAA Home-Delivered $226 Million $227 Million $226 Million
NSIP $160 Million $160 Million $160 Million
OAA Nutrition Total ~$835 Million ~$838 Million ~$833 Million
SCSEP $434.4 Million $400 Million 0
OAA IIIB HCBS $347.7 Million $350.2 Million $347.7 Million
OAA VI Native Americans Nutrition $31.1 Million $31.2 Million $31.1 Million
Elder Justice Initiative $8 Million $10 Million $8 Million
Senior Corps $202.1 Million $202.1 Million 0
SHIPs (Health Insurance Assisters) $52.1 Million $47.1 Million 0
LIHEAP $3.39 Billion $3.39 Billion 0
LIHEAP $715 Million $715 Million 0
Comm. Development Block Grant (CDBG) $3.06 Billion $3.06 Billion 0
Social Services Block Grant (SSBG) $1.7 Billion $1.7 Billion 0
Commodity Suppl. Food Program (CSFP) $222.2 Million $235.1 Million $238 Million
Senior Farmers Market Nutrition Program $20.6 Million $18.5 Million $20.6 Million
SNAP $80.8 Billion $78.4 Billion $73.6 Billion
Section 202 Housing $432.7 Million $502.4 Million $510 Million

"The moral test of a government is how it treats those who are at the dawn of life, the children; those who are in the twilight of life, the aged; and those who are in the shadow of life, the sick and the needy, and the handicapped."

spokesperson upon the release of the budget; "We're no longer going to measure compassion by the number of programs or the number of people on those programs, but by the number of people we help get off those programs…. we’re not going to measure compassion by the amount of money that we spend, but by the number of people that we help." Intellectually, that statement taken alone can sound reasonable; until you begin to examine who exactly are “on those programs.” In many cases, the people who will be affected by these budget cuts and program eliminations are frail, low-income people who “just” cannot “get off those programs.” These programs are a lifeline to a quality of life that assist them in remaining independent and ultimately avoiding costlier institutional care. They need to be preserved and protected and, if anything, increased!
Surprise! There’s pleasure in planned giving. Too often, people think, “Yuck! Who wants to think about dying?” when in reality, such giving is all about life – yours, and organizations that are dear to you.

For several years, my husband led the United Way effort to grow their foundation to the point that the money it generated in interest yearly would cover the overhead, ensuring that every dollar donated, like Impact 100, would go to charity. What a great idea! It hasn’t happened yet, because many folks seemed reluctant to include United Way in their will or estate.

What keeps people from taking such action? First and foremost, obviously, you must have money before you can give it away. Even small amounts, however, could be helpful to organizations if enough people would do it.

Others say, understandably, “My husband and I have kids. I’m leaving everything to them.” If you have a large sum, however, should you? There can be a danger in making it too easy financially for a grown son or daughter. Even Warren Buffet has limited what he will bequeath to his children, designating most of his money for charity and other good works.

We don’t want to think about our own demise, either. Well, we all die eventually anyway, and making a will or estate plan does not hasten it one minute. In fact, planning gives you peace of mind, and your family will be grateful, too, to know that your affairs are in order.

A few years ago, after the birth of our second granddaughter, Flack and I set up a meeting with our estate lawyer. Before the meeting, he and I took time to talk about what we wanted our estate to accomplish. It was very worthwhile to look at the changes we wanted to make and how we wanted our money to be used. We’ve both invested significant time and energy in various nonprofits over the years, such as Big Brothers Big Sisters, Council on Aging, and United Way. We want those organizations to thrive long after we’re gone, too, and planned giving helps us do just that. As Flack said, “We’ve adequately given to our son, but this community is part of our family, too—not genetic, but chosen.”

We also identified other institutions that were instrumental in helping us become the people we are today. For Flack, that’s the
U.S. Naval Academy. For me, it’s a special and unique dormitory at the University of Michigan to which I had to apply for admission. I lived there my junior and senior years and was enriched by my relationships and experiences there. Many folks supported Flack and me along the way; we can now return the favor to another generation.

Our discussions were enriching. They helped us examine our lives in a different way, clarifying our values and what was meaningful to us. No, we have no plans to depart this world any time soon, but we do feel a sense of contentment knowing that our life’s work and savings will be put to good use. There truly is pleasure in planned giving. Try it!

To get started leaving a portion of your estate to an organization like Council on Aging of West Florida, determine how you would like the assets to be transferred. A bequest, for example, is a gift that is included in your will, which can be a specific monetary amount, property or percentage of your estate. A charitable remainder trust, on the other hand, can be set up at a bank or financial institution for minimal fees and is an irrevocable trust that pays a specified annual amount for a fixed period of years. At the end of the term of the trust, the remaining assets are distributed to Council on Aging. Sort of the inverse of this is the charitable lead trust, where annual payments are given to the charity for a set period of time and the principal reverts back to the donor or beneficiary at the end of the trust term.

You can also name Council on Aging of West Florida as a beneficiary for part or all of your IRA or retirement plan. This move could result in estate tax savings or even income tax savings. Additionally, you can name Council on Aging as a beneficiary of your life insurance policy. For more information on how to support seniors in this way, simply call (850) 432-1475 or email info@coawfla.org.
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Elodie Cardon
Meals on Wheels

FOR MOST OF US, the pangs of hunger only last a few minutes before we find a snack or meal to satisfy our cravings and refocus us on the task at hand. Unfortunately for many senior citizens in our area, access to food can be sparse. Many cannot afford the nutrition their aging bodies so desperately need, and even worse, they are physically unable to prepare the meals in a safe, efficient manner.

We all know how difficult it is to concentrate when we are hungry, how our emotions quickly spiral and our relationships suffer when our body is underfed. Imagine living that way every day, unsure of both where your next meal is coming from and for how much longer you can go without before you start to really deteriorate. That is the plight of many hundreds of aging adults in Escambia and Santa Rosa counties. We pass by their houses on the way to the grocery store, unaware that inside, there is a human being going hungry.

Meals on Wheels, provided locally through Council on Aging of West Florida, seeks to remedy that by using a team of volunteers to hand-deliver packs of five and seven frozen meals per week. These meals meet one-third of the recommended daily nutritional allowance for our seniors, and are often the only food they may receive.

In 2016, Council on Aging delivered almost 130,000 meals to nearly 500 participants in our area. They greet the volunteer drivers like a savior coming to provide food, socialization and so much more.

“A little while ago, I was very sick for an entire year straight,” said Gladys Olige, who has been receiving the meals for some time. “I was worried I’d have to leave, but because of Council on Aging and Meals on Wheels, I can stay put in my home. There’s a lady who comes by for four hours a week and tends to the house, and I really enjoy my weekly meal delivery.”

Oftentimes, the few minutes of conversation is as valuable as the food. Up to a third of Meals on Wheels clients live completely alone and, unable to drive anymore, are left to
spend the days watching television and gazing out the window, waiting for visitors. The friendly faces of the Meals on Wheels volunteers may be one of the only human contacts these clients have all week. This socialization is vital to their mental health, and it also gives the volunteers a chance to glance around the house and take note of any issues they may see, so that they can report them back to a case manager.

The meals themselves are quite tasty and their ease of use helps frail elders who may not have full control of their motor functions like they once did.

"I especially like the chicken, spaghetti and greens," said Mamie Powe, another Meals on Wheels client. "I get six meals a week and it’s easy to just warm them up and eat."

Unfortunately, there are many like Mamie and Gladys who need the help but are not getting served. There are about 500 people on waiting lists for Meals on Wheels in just Escambia and Santa Rosa counties. Across Florida, that number is 60,000. Eligibility is determined by local Area Agencies on Aging that take into account income, age, health, living situation and other factors. Potential clients are given a priority ranking between 1 and 5, with the 4s and 5s getting served first and the lower designations having to wait for increased funding.

Council on Aging receives a combination of federal, state and local funding, as well as private contributions. Federal monies account for about 43 percent of all funding that Council on Aging receives. While the Meals on Wheels program has recently faced a lot of scrutiny due to President Trump’s proposed elimination of the Community Development Block Grant program, which helps pay for the meals, it is Council on Aging’s opinion that the proven initiative needs more money and volunteers, not less.

"Meals on Wheels is a program that serves a vital need for homebound, disabled and vulnerable aging adults," said John Clark, President and CEO of Council on Aging. "The program is largely comprised of volunteers who donate their time and transportation to alleviating hunger in our senior community. This is not a government agency bloated with bureaucracy whose cuts would benefit the tax-payer; Meals on Wheels is fully dedicated to the client and in fact helps Americans avoid the far greater cost of caring for these individuals in a nursing home or retirement community."

If you would like to donate or volunteer for Meals on Wheels, call (850) 432-1475 or visit coawfla.org.
Forrest Sibley was killed in action Aug. 26, 2015. He had served in the Air Force as a combat controller since 2001, Naval Air Station Pensacola will honor his service, he received four medals, once with valor, or lost time, days, or memorial event,” said Rear Adm. Darrin, commander of Air Force Special Operations Command as a combat controller trained in combat.

“Or Forrest was one of our best marksmen, a federal holiday, most members, often separated from families and travelling road trip or simply jumping out of the ordinary for a shipmate; reach out to them,”

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Elevated temperatures can be extremely dangerous for aging adults, many times resulting in heat stroke or heat exhaustion. People’s ability to notice changes in body temperature decreases with age and many seniors also have underlying health conditions that cause them to be less adaptable to heat. Even medicines that seniors take can cause dehydration at higher levels. A recent University of Chicago Medical Center study found that 40 percent of heat-related fatalities in the United States were among people over the age of 65. 

Thankfully, several guidelines can help keep seniors safe in the hot weather:

• Stay in air-conditioned buildings as much as possible
• Routinely check on a friend or neighbor and ask them to do the same

It’s that time of year again in the beloved Sunshine State – the sun is setting later, the temperatures are rising, and the humidity is becoming almost stifling. While many residents and tourists take this opportunity to explore the sandy white beaches of the Gulf Coast and enjoy an abundance of outdoor activities, low-income, and often home-bound, elderly residents are suffering in the heat.

by Kagan Jenkins
• Take cool showers or baths to cool down
• Drink more water than usual and don’t wait until you’re thirsty to drink
• Do not use the stove or oven to cook
• Keep an eye on the heat index: High humidity inhibits the body’s ability to cool itself through sweating
• Wear light-colored, loose clothing when outside
• Wear sunscreen: A sunburn not only can hurt when you try to move but it can actually make it more difficult for the body to cool down
• Take it easy: Avoid intense exercise and strenuous activity, particularly outdoors
• Know the warning signs of heat-related illness: Dizziness, nausea, headache, rapid heartbeat, chest pain, fainting, red/dry skin, and breathing problems that you should seek immediate help

In an effort to raise awareness about these potential issues and ensure that local seniors are comfortable in their homes during the summer, Council on Aging of West Florida and WEAR ABC 3 partner with Cat Country 98.7, NewsRadio1620, and Magic 106.1 FM every year to procure the community’s donations of new air conditioner units and fans during the Senior Chill Out. While utilizing all-day media coverage, donation centers are set up at three Lowe’s Home Improvement stores throughout the area for one day. Afterwards, hard-working volunteers help to install the units for seniors who need it most in Escambia and Santa Rosa counties.

This year’s 2017 Senior Chill Out will take place on **June 30 from 6:00 am to 6:30 pm** at select area Lowe’s Home Improvement stores. Donations can be made at the following locations:

- Lowe’s on Fairfield Drive in Pensacola
- Lowes on Airport Boulevard in Pensacola
- Lowes on Highway 90 in Pace
- Lowe’s on 9 Mile Road in Pensacola
- Lowe’s on Highway 98 in Gulf Breeze

In addition to these wonderful in-kind donations, monetary donations are also welcome and will be used for the purchase of additional fans and air conditioning units. Last year, the 2016 Senior Chill Out raised just over $8,000 to help with additional purchases.

With your help and support, Council on Aging and its media partners can continue to help aging adults stay safe in the summer heat.

For more information or to make an online donation, please contact our office at (850) 432-1475 or visit www.coawfla.org. Please also note that A/C units and fans will not be handed out at the Senior Chill Out event. If you are a senior in need, please call the Council on Aging office to be placed on the waiting list.

Special thank you to the Florida Association of Aging Services Providers (FASP) and the Volen Center for donating $250 to help Council on Aging assist seniors in need of A/C units and fans during Summer 2017.
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Hurricane Safety for Seniors

By Sarah Whitfield, Santa Rosa Public Information Office

Hurricane season is June 1 through November 30. Santa Rosa County Emergency Management would like to remind you it’s never too early to be prepared for a disaster.

Five Things to do Now Before a Disaster

1. Refer to the hurricane evacuation zones and maps online at www.santarosa.fl.gov/KnowYourZone. Determine if and when you would have to evacuate. Remember: All mobile home residents are advised to evacuate, regardless of location. If you need help determining your zone, contact Santa Rosa County Emergency Management before a storm threatens at 850-983-5360.

2. Decide now where you would go if ordered to evacuate - a friend or relative’s home, a hotel, or as a last resort, a public shelter. Remember, if you are going to leave the area or go to a hotel, don’t delay. Determine your route, leave early and travel the shortest distance possible. Think tens of miles, not hundreds.

3. Purchase a battery-powered NOAA weather radio and, if you have a landline, be sure to have a non-electric phone. Even though phone service may not be disturbed, a cordless phone will not work during power outages. Also be sure you have a car charger or portable battery charger for your cell phone and mobile devices. If there is a power outage, you will not be able to charge your phone or tablet inside your home.

4. Make sure your street address number is clearly marked on your home.
5. Whether you rent or own your home, review your insurance policies with your agent now. You may wish to take photos or videos of your belongings at the beginning of each hurricane season.

**Disaster Planning for Special Needs**

In a disaster, people with special medical needs have extra concerns. Take the following steps if you or your family members have special medical needs:

- Have at least a three-day supply of necessary medical supplies, like bandages, ostomy bags or syringes.
- For medical equipment requiring electrical power such as beds, breathing equipment, or infusion pumps, check with your medical supply company and ask about a back-up power source such as a battery or generator.
- If you use oxygen, have an emergency supply (enough for at least a three-day period.)
- Oxygen tanks should be securely braced so they do not fall over. Call your medical supply company regarding bracing instructions.
- If using oxygen, have an emergency supply (enough for at least a three-day period.)
- Prepare copies of vital medical papers such as insurance cards and power of attorney.
- Store extra batteries for hearing aids, implants, TTY and light phone signaler.
- If hearing impaired or non-verbal, bring additional communication devices if applicable.
- Service animals may become confused, frightened or disoriented during and after a disaster. Keep them confined or securely leashed or harnessed, this will help a nervous or upset animal.

**Preparing your Medication**

- Always have at least a three-day supply of all your medications. In some emergencies, you may need to prepare for a week or more.
- Store your medications in one location in their original containers.
- List all of your medications: name of medication, dose, frequency and name of prescribing doctor.

For those with special needs or are considered vulnerable, Santa Rosa and Escambia counties have a special needs shelter. Santa Rosa and Escambia counties offer transportation to a shelter in the event of an evacuation. Registration is required prior to any disaster. To register:

- Contact your county’s Emergency Management division and let them know you would like to register.
- Call Santa Rosa County Emergency Management at (850) 983-5360 to register over the phone or to request a paper form.
- Escambia County: (850) 471-6400
- [myescambia.com](http://myescambia.com)

**What to Bring to a Shelter**

- A change of clothing, rain gear and sturdy shoes.
- Toiletries, personal items and all medications.
- Blankets or sleeping bags.
- Identification.
- Special items for elderly family members.
- Any dietary needs and snacks.
- Flashlights and spare batteries.

Santa Rosa County also offers a welfare check for those that request one in the event of a disaster. Emergency Management staff is available to conduct public speaking engagements on safety and preparedness when requested.

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2017 Atlantic Hurricane Season Outlook: Summary

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration’s (NOAA) 2017 Atlantic Hurricane Season Outlook indicates that an above-normal or near-normal hurricane season is most likely. The outlook indicates a 45 percent chance for an above-normal season, a 35 percent chance for a near-normal season, and a 20 percent chance for a below-normal season. The Atlantic hurricane region includes the North Atlantic Ocean, Caribbean Sea, and Gulf of Mexico.

The outlook calls for a 70 percent probability for each of the following ranges of activity during the 2017 hurricane season, which runs from June 1 through November 30:

11-17 Named Storms, which includes Tropical Storm Arlene in April

5-9 Hurricanes

2-4 Major Hurricanes

Most of the predicted activity is likely to occur during the peak months (August-October) of the hurricane season.
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Long and lazy summer days make for the perfect time to get out of town for a day trip—roll the windows down in the car, feel the breeze and take advantage of the extra hour of sunlight as you embark on your drive.

Whether you’re looking to venture to the opposite end of the state, or just to the other end of the county, we’ve compiled a list of the near and far(ish) parks, sights and attractions of the Sunshine State that make for excellent day trip adventures.
Distance from Pensacola: 108 miles, approx., 1 hour 49 minutes

For those of you in need of a new and page-turning summer read, stop into charming Seaside bookstore, Sundog Books. The two-story beach cottage serves as both a bookstore on the bottom floor, and a record shop upstairs. The bookstore regularly features readings and book signings from regional and national artists. Stop in and pick up the latest release or peruse selections and artwork from local authors.

If you’re looking to update your art collection, or just need a pretty vase to place your garden’s flowers in, pop into Fusion Art Glass Gallery. The shop features colorful, hand-blown pieces in all shapes and sizes—glowing octopus chandeliers, beach-themed jewelry, simple and elegant vases, intricate nightlights, and more.

Aside from the many adorable and locally owned shops, Seaside also offers a large farmer’s market on the weekends. The Seaside Farmer’s Market features ventures from across the panhandle, selling farm-fresh products, jewelry, artisan soaps and bath products, art, and flowers.

**2. St. Andrews Bay and Oaks by the Park, and Man in the Sea Museum: Panama City, Fla.**
Distance from Pensacola: 134 miles, approx., 2 hours 19 minutes

It is a 69,000 acre estuary located in northwest Florida. It is relatively deep, and of relatively high salinity due to the low freshwater inflow provided by only a few spring-fed creeks (the most significant being Econfina Creek, fed by Blue Spring.) Wild dolphins are commonly seen in the waters of St. Andrews Bay; they are easily spotted when the waters are smooth in the mornings. In shallower waters, St. Andrews Bay is known for vast schools of mullet, red fish and speckled trout. Occasionally a manatee is spotted in the bay as well.

After that, head over to Oaks by the Park and take in the sprawling, shady oaks ranging in age from 45 to 100 years old. Stroll along the well-manicured walkways along the bay while taking in the scenery. If you’re looking to step indoors out of the heat, head over to The Museum of Man in the Sea and take a glimpse into the history of military, science and recreational diving. The museum provides endless articles and artifacts from diving; many e pieces of equipment, helmets and gear are interactive, providing a hands-on element for curious guests.

**3. Wakulla Springs State Park and Historic Lodge at Wakulla Springs: Tallahassee, Fla.**
Distance from Pensacola: 197 miles, approx., 2 hours 57 minutes

Florida has dozens of beautiful, cold water springs to enjoy during the hot summer months. Wakulla Springs is favored by both locals and visitors for its deep and clear waters, unusual plants, old-growth forests, nature trails, riverboat tours and abundance of wildlife. An on-site lodge, the Lodge at Wakulla Springs, also offers visitors a variety of unique and appealing amenities.

Surrounded by 6,000 acres of pristine forest, the Lodge at Wakulla Springs is North Florida’s castle. Built in 1937 by industrialist Edward Ball, the Lodge is not only one of the most beautiful buildings of its period, but also one of the few where you can stay overnight.

Enjoy dinner in the Lodge’s fine dining room, or relax in a TV-less room overlooking one of the largest natural springs in the country. Play checkers or chess at an old-fashioned table while surrounded by paintings and the watchful eye of a large stuffed alligator. Take in the beauty of old Florida while relaxing in style at the Lodge at Wakulla Springs.

**4. Castillo de San Marcos: St. Augustine, Fla.**
Distance from Pensacola: 397 miles, approx., 5 hours 42 minutes

This Spanish fort in St. Augustine is one of the oldest in the country. It’s a fun and picturesque place to visit. The gun deck on top of the fort offers a great view of the river and the downtown St. Augustine area. Dozens of cannons and mortars that are scattered across the fort and many of them still work. Every other hour, the fort staff fire the cannons for the crowds.

The bottom rooms of the fort each have signage and artifacts pertaining to the fort and the use of each room, providing a concise picture of the fort’s history and more about the history of St. Augustine as a whole.

St. Augustine experiences no shortage of historical buildings and stories, but one of the most
beautiful and interesting buildings is the Lightner Museum inside the historic Alcazar building downtown. This museum houses hundreds of pieces of art from many private eclectic collections, as well as pieces from the American Gilded Age.

5. Ponce de Leon Inlet Lighthouse, Ponce Inlet, Fla.
Distance from Pensacola: 463 miles, approx., 6 hours 41 minutes
This lighthouse stands 175 feet tall, making it the tallest lighthouse in Florida and one of the tallest in the country, second only to Cape Hatteras Lighthouse in the Outer Banks of North Carolina. The tall, red, Florida lighthouse is visited by more than 170,000 people each year and was designated as a National Historic Landmark in 1998. Climb to the top of its 203 steps and get ready for a breathtaking view of Ponce Inlet. The historic structure also features several retired lighthouse projectors, with their original craftsmanship still intact.

Distance from Pensacola: 522 miles, approx., 7 hours 22 minutes
This Mediterranean Revival mansion was built to serve as the winter home of circus magnate John Ringling. It is now part of the John and Mable Ringling Museum of Art. Designated as the official state art museum for Florida, the institution offers twenty-one galleries of European paintings as well as Cypriot antiquities and Asian, American, and contemporary art. The museum’s art collection currently consists of more than 10,000 objects that include a variety of paintings, sculpture, drawings, prints, photographs, and decorative arts from ancient through contemporary periods and from around the world.

The most celebrated items in the museum are 16th–20th-century European paintings, including a world-renowned collection of Peter Paul Rubens paintings. Other famous artists represented include Benjamin West, Marcel Duchamp, Diego Velázquez, Paolo Veronese, Rosa Bonheur, Gianlorenzo Bernini, Giuliano Finelli and many others.
Visitors will enjoy a large-scale circus model, and several guided tours of the gigantic circus and art museums, and house.
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Exercise and staying active are important parts of any lifestyle, but become much more important as you get older.

According to the US Department of Health and Human Services, by the age of 75 one-in-three men and one-in-two women do not engage in physical activity. Part of the reduction of strength and stamina associated with aging can be reduced by physical activity. Activity helps reduce the risk of fracturing bones, decreases high blood pressure and coronary disease, helps with anxiety and depression, assists with joint pain and improves stamina and muscle strength in general.

Below, we list a variety of options in the Pensacola area to not only help you stay active, but have fun while you are doing it. These are only a few activities of the many that can keep you healthy and feeling young.

Walking
Some of the easiest exercise to get is simply walking. According to the Arthritis Foundation, walking can improve circulation, strengthen muscles, support your joints, and even helps lower the risk of Alzheimer’s disease. It’s easy to walk around your block or neighborhood for as little as 30 minutes a day to start feeling the benefits, but getting away from the city and reconnecting with nature can help give you a new view to appreciate as well.

Pensacola has a large variety of trails to explore. The Edward Ball Nature Trail wanders through the outskirts of the University of West Florida’s beautiful campus, while the Perdido Bayou Trail offers you a good view into our Gulf waters. If you are feeling up for more of a challenge, our beaches and seashores can give you a good resistance workout while you enjoy the spray of the sea and the calls of birds.

If you’d rather not walk alone, there are a large variety of walking clubs and events you can participate in. One of the largest is the Pensacola Volksmarch Club, which is a division of the American Volkssport Association. They hold numerous walks year-round all throughout the city. For more information on when and where these events are held, visit either ava.org or walkflorida.org

Dancing
If walking is too low energy for you, a more active and energetic option might be dancing. Everyone loves music and everyone can dance, regardless of your talent. According
to the *Journal of Aging and Physical Activity*, dancing can improve aerobic power, body muscle endurance, strength and flexibility, balance and more.

If you’re a little rusty on your steps or would like to learn the ropes of dancing, a great place to learn is the Fred Astaire Dance Studio in Pensacola. Open to all skill levels and ages, they provide private, group and practice dance lessons – all as part of their curriculum. They also offer a large variety of dances – from smooth styles like the foxtrot, tango or waltz, to more upbeat styles like the cha-cha, mambo and samba.

Another alternative is to visit one of the many community centers around the area. The Bayview Senior Center regularly offers dance events along with a host of other activities – including exercise classes. The Wesco Senior Center also offers similar exercises and dance courses, including line dancing.

All Council on Aging volunteers are also welcome to attend the inaugural Hats & Heels Senior Prom, hosted by Humana on Thursday, Aug. 17 from 4 to 7 pm at New World Landing. There will be heavy hors d’oeuvres, giveaways, dancing, music and more. This is a great chance to bring your sweetheart to an old-fashioned dance and rock the night away! The event is free for all volunteers and their spouses or significant others.

For more information on the Fred Astaire Dance Studio, visit fredastaorpensacola.com. For more information on the Wesco or Bayview Senior Centers, visit wescoseniorcenter.com or ci.pensacola.fl.us

**Traditional Exercise**

When it comes down to it, often the best exercise is a traditional exercise routine. One of the best places to get a workout in right now is the new Bear Levin Studer Family YMCA, where wellness director Chris Parker heads up the senior exercise program.

“We really want to make people feel welcome, to feel like a community,” said Parker. In addition to the exercise at YMCA, many of the seniors form fast friendships and will sit around and socialize after the exercise is all finished.

The YMCA Senior Program involves two kinds of exercises done every morning – Water Fit, which is done in a pool; and Senior Fit, which is done on land. “A usual session can include building strength, chair yoga, cardio or balance. All of these can be done in a chair, depending on your ability,” he said.

The YMCA also offers Smart Start to anyone who is a member – four free sessions with a wellness coach to help you establish goals and create a workout plan, all by analyzing what activities work for you, which are easiest to do and which are the most enjoyable. “The hardest thing to do in exercise is to get started. The best thing to do is what you like doing – dancing or just getting up and moving,” said Parker. “Once you do, it’s easier to take that next step into consistent exercise.”

For more information on the Bear Levin Studer Family YMCA, visit ymcanwfl.org.
Pensacola Children’s Chorus announces SUMMER FESTIVAL 2017

Young performers interested in having fun while developing their skills in musicianship will come together for an exciting week as they attend inspiring, interactive sessions at Pensacola Children’s Chorus. This brand new Summer Festival will be held July 31-August 4, and will be open for children entering 3rd grade through completing 8th grade. In addition to large group singing and interaction, singers will participate in dynamic and participatory music classes which explore performance skills such as age-appropriate vocal artistry, engaging and game-based sight singing, creative and hands-on music theory, world music exploration, and movement based on music and musicianship.

Tuition is $75.00 for the week, which includes one (1) festival t-shirt and one (1) complimentary ticket to the final performance on Saturday, August 5th. Festival will be held at the Pensacola Children’s Chorus on the campus of First Presbyterian Church. Sessions will be held from 9:00 A.M. to 4:00 P.M. daily.

Registration deadline is July 15, 2017.

A final performance for friends, family, and community members will conclude the Festival on Saturday, August 5th at First Presbyterian Church in downtown Pensacola. Tickets for the performance are $10.00 for adults and $5.00 for children, 12 and under.

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LEGENDARY PENSACOLA PERSONALITY FRED LEVIN is perhaps best-known as the trial lawyer who brought down big tobacco, but locals know he is also one of the most generous philanthropists our community has ever known. Levin has given millions of dollars to the causes closest to his heart and he has no plans to stop anytime soon. Levin has donated to big name organizations like the University of Florida; The Studer, Levin, Bear, Switzer YMCA; the Institute for Human and Machine Cognition; and the University of West Florida. In addition to these big dollar contributions, Levin has given significant donations to smaller nonprofits like the Children’s Cancer Camp and Gulf Coast Kids House, along with countless smaller grants to area nonprofits, little league teams, and even individuals. Levin’s charitable giving has changed many lives for the better and has significantly contributed to the growth and renaissance Pensacola has seen in recent years.

Levin was born on March 29, 1937, in Pensacola. One of five sons, Levin’s father owned a local pawnshop where Levin would often fill in. As an undergraduate at the University of Florida, Levin was more interested in partying and socializing than academics. That changed when he entered law school. He spent three years working hard and he graduated third in his class—first in what was left of the original freshman class. Levin found that he enjoyed being praised for his mind rather than his dancing skills—and so, his lifelong relationship with success began.

Levin has been honored with many awards and accolades in his life and career. He has been named Trial Lawyer of the Year; he is a member of the prestigious Inner Circle of Advocates; he holds multiple records for highest verdicts; he has been recognized in every edition of Who’s Who in the World, Who’s Who in America and Best Trial Lawyers; and he is a member of the Trial Lawyers Hall of Fame.

While his legal accomplishments could fill volumes, Levin also found tremendous success as a boxing manager and was awarded the Rocky Marciano Award for National Boxing Manager of the Year. As if that’s not enough, Levin was named a chief in the country of Ghana. He is one of three to receive this great honor along with Shirley Temple Black and Barbara Jordan.

Levin has also been a generous friend to Council on Aging of West Florida and was honored as the first ‘Rat’ in the organization’s annual Rat Pack Roast and Fundraiser, where he was roasted by civil rights attorney Morris Dees and many other friends and colleagues.

Coming of Age had the great honor of talking to Fred Levin about his life, his career and his recent fight against Stage 4 lung cancer. »
COA: What was your boyhood like growing up in Pensacola?
FL: I thought it was fabulous. You have to go back to the late 30s and then World War II. I never knew anything else and life felt very good. I certainly did not see prejudice or anything along those lines. Although I wasn’t good at it, I enjoyed sports. I played basketball and baseball and things of that nature. The 50s were fabulous times—this was after the Korean War, so during that break between high school and college. Basically, the 40s and 50s were great times for me.

COA: Your father owned a pawn shop in Pensacola when you were growing up. Were you very involved in that?
FL: Yes, and I think it had a lot to do with my legal career. When he would go to lunch or go out to coffee, I basically ran the store. It got to a point where people would come in, I could almost identify what they did just by looking at them. I was able to identify what they wanted, their occupation, etc. This became very helpful as I got into the practice of law and jury trials and things like that.

COA: In law school you changed. You became more motivated and worked much harder on your studies. What changed?
FL: I thought that this was going to be a continuation of my undergraduate time, but on the first day of law school, the dean said, ‘Look to your right, look to your left, neither one of them will be here when you graduate.’ Now, of course the guy on my right and the guy on my left were looking at me. I realized that this wasn’t going to be a continuation. So, I started really studying and for three years I did not do any playing. I did nothing but study, study, study and it started something that really continued all through my law practice—and that is preparation. It had so much to do with doing well in law school and then doing well in the practice of law.

COA: At that point you had met your wife. I understand that when the two of you met, she wasn’t particularly impressed.
FL: No and she had good reason. I was introduced to her by my roommate who later became my dear friend and followed me to Pensacola, Fred Vigodsky. I fell in love almost immediately and I don’t think she did.

COA: How did you win her over?
FL: I think that all in all, she figured that I would be a safe bet for her. I think she had been in love with a guy in high school and she figured I would be an easy person for her to date and she wouldn’t have to give up her love.

COA: But then the two of you fell in love.
FL: Yes. We were married in 1959 and I graduated in 1961.

COA: You famously went up against big tobacco and won. How did that journey begin? How much of a struggle was it?
FL: I had a major victory in the railroad case and as a result, I was accepted into a very exclusive fraternity called the Inner Circle of Advocates, which was limited to 100 lawyers. They have a seminar once a year and I had gone to it and I was sitting there, smoking a cigarette and having a drink when one of the members came up to me and asked if I would like to be part of this case against big tobacco. I actually told him no because I knew that no one had ever defeated big tobacco or received anything from
them. Anyhow, I went back to my home in Pensacola and I saw that there was a statute that, with a few changes, would have allowed the state of Florida to sue big tobacco. At that time, I was counsel to the president of the Florida Senate, W.D. Childers. Long story short—he decided to sponsor the changes and we went to the Governor and he agreed to the changes. At the last minute in the legislative session, we got the bill passed and that became the tobacco statute that allowed the state of Florida to sue. We ended up settling the state of Florida case for $13 billion back then.

COA: Did it inspire you to quit smoking?
FL: Yes. I gave up smoking about 15 years ago.

COA: After that, you became very well-known and very wealthy. You decided to donate $10 million to your alma mater, the University of Florida Law School. In return, they named the law school the Frederic G. Levin College of Law. This naming was met with a lot of push back from the Florida legal community. How did that relationship change over the years?
FL: I'm not so sure that it's changed at all. It certainly started me in a direction of making contributions to different charities—everything from the law school to IHMC to UWF and from the Children's Cancer Camp to Gulf Coast Kids House. These are all major contributions. I think the lowest of any of them was the camp and it was $300,000. Basically it goes back to family. My father left me with the idea that once you've taken care of your family, make sure you do what you can from a philanthropic standpoint. That's basically what I've done. Unfortunately, I've come down with health problems and I am considering making a major contribution to the Dana Farber Cancer Institute at Harvard. I'm probably going to do that and some other things. When you are diagnosed with Stage 4 lung cancer and brain cancer you start thinking of your mortality. I've had two major seizures, had a big part of my brain taken out and I've had major surgery on my lungs, so I spend a lot more time thinking about those sorts of things than I do practicing law.

COA: You are well known for your generosity. Is it difficult to choose? Do you get more requests than you accommodate?
FL: Yes. I think one of the problems was created by me when I set up a foundation. As a result I get two or three requests a day—anything from a high school volleyball team to an individual. They are mostly minor grants, but it really is difficult because once you start, all the other groups start requesting help.

COA: What are your criteria for charitable giving?
FL: I wish I had one—mainly children.
COA: You’ve been named Trial Lawyer of the year and you’ve won many big cases. Tell me a little bit about your process or legal philosophy that has granted you so much success.

FL: When I got to law school and they said ‘look to your left, look to your right,’ I wanted to stay for the three years, so for the first time I really, really started studying. I really started preparing. And actually, instead of one out of three graduating it was really one out of six. Of the 360 that started with me, 60 graduated. Of those 60, I graduated number one. For the first time in my life, instead of being the fun guy, I was getting credit for being something else, which was bright and smart. I had never had that. I was always the fun guy. Instead of having good grades, I was probably the best dancer in high school and college. For the first time I was getting credit for being something other than the fun guy. So, when I started practicing law, the same thing followed through. I would be more prepared than the next guy, and as a result I started getting good verdicts. That gave me a good reputation and the reputation, with the
"In almost 60 years in the practice of law, I don’t remember ever being surprised in a court room. I was always prepared for anything. I enjoyed it more to be known as the best lawyer than the best dancer."

kind of law I practiced, meant more money and the reputation became more and more—not just citywide, but statewide and then nationwide. It felt good to be known for something other than the jokester. It was nothing other than total preparation. In almost 60 years in the practice of law, I don’t remember ever being surprised in a court room. I was always prepared for anything. I enjoyed it more to be known as the best lawyer than the best dancer. The problem with preparation is time and as a result of all that time, you spend less time with family. Now at this stage in life, I look back and I reflect on what I missed. The sad thing is I still can’t determine—would I have been happier with being a great husband and father than to be the great lawyer? I really don’t know. As a result of success, I provided for them very, very well. I don’t know what their thoughts would have been. I know what my wife’s thoughts would have been. She would have preferred that I’d been home. The boyfriend that I mentioned became a lineman for the power company in West Palm Beach. I always said that she would have been happier with the lineman from the power company than the super successful lawyer. Looking back, from my standpoint, I really don’t know if I had it to do over again whether I would have given up being the super trial lawyer for being the super dad and husband. I guess that’s sad in a way.

COA: How is your health now? I understand you are in remission.
FL: I guess you could call it that. I’m being treated up in Boston by Dana Farber, which is one of the great cancer institutes in the world. I just got back. They are very optimistic. At this point there is no indication that I have any active cancer in my body, but I’ve got enough sense to know that it is likely to return. At this point I’m probably going to do more giving. My kids are well taken care of and they are all very successful. So, I can either give it to a charity that I can see while I’m living or I can give it to the government. I’ve elected to do more charitable giving.

COA: A lot of people who battle cancer and survive say that it changes them. What has the experience been like for you and how has it changed your perspective?
FL: Actually, all of this started about a year and a few months ago.
All I was thinking about was getting ready for my next trial. Then I had a seizure. They took me to Baptist Hospital. They decided to send me to the University of Florida where they removed the brain tumor. They knew that it had to have come from somewhere else in my body. So, they sent me to Dana Farber where they determined that I have lung cancer. All during this time, I didn't know it, but I had something called ICU delirium. It's very common, but not to the extent that I had it. Normally you have it for a day or two where you get out of surgery and you don't know where you are for a couple of days. Mine went on for months. The first thing I remember is the doctor in Boston telling me, “I have good news for you. You are cancer free.” Now, I had been in a totally different world all this time, so I didn't know I even had cancer. So I never really went through the fear that you get when somebody tells you that you have Stage 4 lung cancer. By the time they told me, I was cancer free and I have remained that way for about a year. I was always very optimistic, so it never really changed me other than I wanted to make sure that my children were well taken care of. My wife passed away in 2011. That started to get to me. At that point, I wish I had done more in regard to her. I've had a lot of difficulty expressing emotions. I would buy her the most expensive jewelry. It’s ridiculous—the necklaces, the rings—well over a million dollars. She never wore any of it. She never wanted it. This was the way I was expressing my love—by buying her a $150,000 ruby necklace or something like that. She never really wanted any of this. In fact, when the ambulance came to get her, she called me over to her side and said, “Just tell me you love me.” That was the last thing she ever said and the last thing I said to her. I realize now that there are things I could have done with her that would have made a major difference in her life. The kids told me that after she died, they went through her things and she had scrapbook after scrapbook of things that I had done. She was my biggest fan and I never even realized it.

COA: How has faith influenced your life and work?
FL: I have questions—as does everybody, I’m sure, at one time or another. I recently read a story in the New York Times with Jimmy Carter and they were asking him basically the same questions that I ask. I thought he did a fabulous job in answering them. The questions were about things like the Bible saying all of this was created in six days when science says that would be impossible. And, the thing about Jonah being swallowed by the whale or that after you’re gone there will be mansions in sky. These are questions that anyone with a reasonable amount of common sense might ask, but I thought Jimmy Carter answered them just beautifully. If you look at faith logically, there are some major questions that any person would have, but I also know this—ever since I became diagnosed with my condition, I must have had hundreds of people come up and tell me they are praying for me. When I

“Although, I've had some very fortunate things happen to me in life outside of the legal community—very few of which I really deserved. Looking back, I don't know what I would have changed. For a Jewish boy from Pensacola, Florida, it’s been a good ride.”
was diagnosed, they said I had four to eight months to live. Right now I’ve outlived what most people who have Stage 4 lung cancer would have and I’m basically cancer free. So, how much has faith meant to me? I hope that everything is as I want to believe. I have questions, but I have also got to believe that all of this praying for me has helped.

COA: You have a lot of rare collectibles like Aristotle and Jackie Onassis’s Rolls-Royce and the car from the movie Titanic. What is it about collecting that interests you and how did you get started?

FL: I don’t know why, but the fact that someone that I have a great deal of respect and admiration for touched these various objects is significant to me. My son befriended Betty Williams who had been awarded the Nobel Peace Prize back in the 70s. She gave him the actual prize. To display a Nobel Peace Prize was significant for me.

I got involved in the boxing business and I was named national boxing manager of the year and that led to meeting a lot of superstars. As a result of boxing I became very good friends with the artist Leroy Neiman. I started collecting a lot of his work. He did paintings of me and my wife. I have the original Three Tenors he painted at my home, which is a very famous painting. I’ve got Schindler’s paper weight that he had on his desk.

There are a lot of different things like that—I just appreciate them.

COA: Speaking of the Titanic, I know you have an entire room dedicated to the doomed voyage. How did your interest in that start?

FL: When I started to redecorate my Tanglewood home, there were two Renaults that were made in the early teens. One of them was on the Titanic—if you saw the movie, it was the car with the sex scene where the hand went up in the back window. That one was a replica, but there were two actual cars made. One went down with the Titanic and this one became available. The person who was helping me do some of the decorating went up to Pennsylvania, bought it and brought it back. It totally changed the look of that room.

COA: What made you get into talent management and boxing?

FL: Roy Jones, Jr. was Pensacola’s 18-year-old superstar who went off to the Olympics. Boxing was much more important in 1988. Of course, everyone in Pensacola was watching him in the finals. They basically stole the finals. He beat the hell out of his opponent, but they gave the gold medal to Korea. When they got back, his father came to see me and asked if I would represent him. From that point on, I had the most fun I’d ever had in my life. Without knowing much of anything, I became National Manager of the Year and I met all of these very powerful people.

COA: Who were you most star struck by?

FL: I’ve met President Clinton, Mikael Gorbachev, the Chairman of the Board of Time Warner, you name it. The person I became the closest to was Jack Kemp. We travelled together and he was a big boxing fan. Jack would have been a great president of this country. We were very close. In fact, his famous quote was that ‘the most dangerous place in a Roy Jones, Jr. ring was after the fight to try to get between the camera and Fred Levin’.

COA: You’ve been travelling a lot lately. Tell me about that.

FL: I left Pensacola and spent five weeks travelling. I went to Germany, Hong Kong, Japan, Korea, Los Angeles and then back home. In Japan, we went to Hiroshima and Nagasaki. That was very interesting to me. I’m glad I did it, but I began to realize that I’m happier here. There’s a lot of this country I haven’t seen. If I decide to do more traveling, I’d like to do it in this country.

COA: The Council on Aging focuses on senior issues. What do you see as the greatest issues facing seniors right now?

FL: Well, I’m there. I’m 80 years old. I never realized how difficult it is from both a financial and a health standpoint to be a senior. I can’t even fathom the idea that people may not have enough to eat or that they live in horrible conditions. I never had to face that, so it’s difficult for me to understand the problems. I was talking to my children and they said you just don’t realize that money doesn’t buy today what it used to buy. I haven’t paid any bills in so long. I have people who pay them for me. So, I never realized the cost of things. I’ve been very fortunate, that’s why it’s important to help people who are struggling.

COA: What do you want your legacy to be? How do you want to be remembered?

FL: That I did my best, which I did. That I was a great lawyer. I don’t know if I’d rather be known as that or as a great husband and father, as I’ve said. I am a great friend. I can’t say ‘no’ and as a result I have tons of people coming to me for different things. But, what do I want on my tombstone? I guess it would have to have something to do with my work in the legal community. Although, I’ve had some very fortunate things happen to me in life outside of the legal community—very few of which I really deserved. Looking back, I don’t know what I would have changed. For a Jewish boy from Pensacola, Florida, it’s been a good ride.
What’s the News?
Council On Aging of West Florida

Council on Aging responds to President Trump’s proposed elimination of programs that help fund Meals on Wheels

President Trump’s budget, dubbed the “Taxpayer First Budget” by the White House, includes dramatic cuts to federal funding sources that local agencies use to help vulnerable, disabled, hungry adults ages 65 and older. The investments in defense and homeland security, as outlined in the spending proposal, are largely at the expense of non-defense discretionary and other anti-hunger and anti-poverty programs, many of which help as many as 2,200 senior citizens in Escambia and Santa Rosa counties.

Among the eliminated programs are the Community Development Block Grant program, which helps fund Meals on Wheels, and the Corporation for National and Community Service, an initiative that funds Senior Companions and Foster Grandparents. Meals on Wheels delivers almost 130,000 meals to nearly 450 elders in our area. There are 500 individuals on the waiting list for meals in the two-county area. Senior Companions are healthy older adults who help other adults live independently. Without the help of Senior Companions, many older adults would not be able to continue living at home and would need more expensive, less personal care. Foster Grandparents give their experience and talent to help children develop the skills, confidence and strength to succeed in life. Children who need Foster Grandparents gain individual attention they might not otherwise receive, confidence, tutoring, advice and the life-changing opportunity to know the consistent love of a Foster Grandparent.

These proposed cuts widen the service gap between these proven programs and those who benefit from them. Meals on Wheels, for example, is already serving 23 million fewer meals now than in 2005, and waiting lists are mounting in every state. At a time when increased funding is needed, millions of seniors who rely on the program every day for a nutritious meal, safety check and visit from a volunteer will be left behind.

“These initiatives make sense not only from a compassionate perspective, but from a common-sense, fiscal one as well,” said John Clark, President and CEO of Council on Aging of West Florida. “They give hope and real nutrition to those who are food-insecure among us. They allow older individuals to stay in their home and remain active in the community, while in the case of Foster Grandparents helping at-risk youth find purpose and the one-on-one attention they so desperately crave. Individuals who stay at home for a few dollars a day save more expensive programs like Medicaid and Medicare the cost of assisted living care at a rate of over a hundred dollars a day.”

While eliminated or reduced programs that affect Council on Aging of West Florida directly are outlined below, many other funding sources that benefit seniors and enable them to live more secure lives are at risk, as well.

“Cuts to funding sources on which Meals on Wheels programs rely – coupled with the significant reductions proposed to SNAP, Medicaid, and other safety net programs for low-income Americans and people with disabilities – would exacerbate the widespread suffering already felt by millions of vulnerable seniors and put greater pressure on an already strained senior support infrastructure,” said Meals on Wheels America President and CEO Ellie Hollander in a statement.

Three Council on Aging of West Florida funding sources at risk (figures are national):

- Older Americans Act (OAA): A federal program which provides funding for a myriad of services including homemakers, transportation, assessment, and congregate meal programs: $6.5 million cut
- Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS): A federal program which funds the agency’s Foster Grandparent Program (FGP) and the Senior Companion Program (SCP): ELIMINATED
- Community Development Block Grant (CDBG): The agency receives funding from the CDBG program from the City of Pensacola and Escambia County. These funds are used for congregate meals program and Meals on Wheels in the city and for rural services in the county. These funds can also be used for match. ELIMINATED

This budget is just a proposal and still needs Congressional approval, and thankfully many members of both parties have said that the cuts and reductions go too far. Council on Aging of West Florida looks forward to working with Rep. Matt Gaetz and Senators Marco Rubio and Bill Nelson to advocate for our area’s most needy while educating our elected officials on the challenges these older individuals face.

For more information about these programs, or to volunteer or donate, visit coawfla.org or call (850) 432-1475.

Help Needed
The Retreat, our adult day health care center, needs your help! The facility’s volunteer piano player, who would delight our clients with music the first Wednesday of each month, has moved on. Do you or does someone in your network play the piano, and would you or they be willing to donate an hour a month to making our participants’ day a little brighter? Come join us for an hour and make the participants at The Retreat VERY Happy! 10:30 am - first Wednesdays of each month. Call (850) 266-2518.
On April 13, we celebrated our Retreat Director Sandie Holtry, who is now enjoying her much-deserved retirement. Sandie joined the Council on Aging of West Florida team in September 1996 as the Foster Grandparent supervisor, and later moved into a nursing position at The Retreat adult day health care center. In 1998, she was promoted to director of the adult day health care center.

Ask any Retreat client, any coworker of hers, or any relative of a participant about Sandie, and they will all tell you the same thing: there is no one like Sandie.

Council on Aging says 'See You Later' to Sandie Holtry

Council on Aging of West Florida hires Jessica Ayers as director of The Retreat

She earned a bachelor’s degree of social work in 2000, which included extensive internships with both Alzheimer’s Family Services and The Haven of Our Lady of Peace, and a master’s degree in health education in 2004.

Jessica is engaged in the community in other ways by serving on various boards and councils that further the cause of social work and regional improvement.

The Retreat offers a stimulating day experience for older adults with physical and cognitive impairments. Participants enjoy a full day of activities, social interaction and recreation in a safe, protective at-home like atmosphere. Family caregivers gain peace of mind knowing their loved ones are in a safe place while they go off to work or get much needed respite. To arrange a tour, call (850) 266-2503.

Council on Aging Honors Volunteers

On April 26 in honor of National Volunteer Week, Council on Aging of West Florida honored all of our wonderful Senior Companions, Foster Grandparents and RELIEF workers at a packed annual recognition luncheon at New World Landing. Last year, this dedicated team of philanthropists served nearly 350 peers and students in our area for more than 113,000 hours.
Major Events of the 1960s

Across
1. U2 spy plane pilot captured by Russians
2. Televised Viet Cong attack showing brutality of war
3. _____ act set up social programs to fight poverty
4. Built by Russians in 1960
5. First American to orbit the Earth
6. 1968 Presidential candidate from Alabama
7. Site of musical festival in 1969
8. Civil rights leader assassinated in 1965
10. _____ Act of 1964 prohibiting racial discrimination
11. Assassinated Robert Kennedy
12. Title of Martin Luther King speech given in 1963
13. Lost 1964 Presidential race to Johnson
14. First person in space
15. City where Kennedy was assassinated
16. Created to provide health insurance for 65 and over
17. In 1961 they started trying to desegregate busses
18. Place where U.S. destroyer was fired upon by North Vietnamese
19. Program implemented by Johnson in 1964
20. Failed invasion of Cuba

Down
1. Coming of Age SUmmeR 2017
2017-2018 CONCERT SEASON

OPENING NIGHT!
10.7.17 7:30PM with Santiago Rodriguez, piano

A W A K E N I N G S
11.4.17 7:30PM with Westwater Arts: Symphonic Photochoreography

B E E T H O V E N & B L U E J E A N S
1.13.18 7:30PM with Tracy Silverman, electric violin

P A P A H A Y D N
3.3.18 7:30PM with Scott Kluksdahl, cello & UWF Singers

S Y M P H O N I E F A N T A S T I Q U E
4.28.18 7:30PM with Guest composer

B E R L I O Z
Roman Carnival Overture

S A I N T - S A E N S
Piano Concerto No. 5 "The Egyptian"

R. S T R A U S S
Suite from Der Rosenkavalier

R A V E L
La Valse

C O R O L L A R I
Awakenings

C U R I A L E
The Kiss and the Chaos

K E N J I B U N C H
Embrace

G I N A S T E R A
Dances of Estancia

B E E T H O V E N
Symphony No. 5

D E E D A N I E L S
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2.10.18 7:30PM

T C H A I K O V S K Y
Romeo and Juliet

S T R A V I N S K Y
Symphony in Three Movements

T C H A I K O V S K Y
Violin Concerto

R U S S I A N
S P E C T A C U L A R

4.7.18 7:30PM with Gil Shaham, violin

T C H A I K O V S K Y
Violin Concerto

S E A S O N S U B S C R I P T I O N S A V A I L A B L E N O W

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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 432-1475 or visit www.coawfla.org.

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