Gulf Coast

A Winter Visitor Publication January 2018

New Bus Day Trips! pages 17-18

Clubs and Calendar pages 14-15, 18-19 HORNE

FREE

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ON THE COVER

Virginia natives Charles and Kitty Cassell are settling down quite nicely as Snowbirds in Destin, Florida. Charles is this year's president of the 2,000-strong Destin Snowbird Club.

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As I write this we are getting ready for the Christmas holiday and a trip to

Arkansas where my husband – the longrange forecaster – predicts we have a high probability of seeing snow.

While snow is pretty and fun for that first day – I'm with most of you – once January 1 gets here, I'm already looking forward to spring!

I know that warmer temperatures – and rarely any snow – in this area is the main reason why many Gulf Coast Snowbird "Winter Visitors" come, most of them arriving this month.



Beautiful weather means moving the office right out to the beach!

And as I've published this magazine for the last 12 years, I've enjoyed watching the Snowbirds become a fast-growing tourism group.

And with that growth, communities across the coast are rolling out the welcome mat with activities, events and expos to make your stay fun and full of opportunities to make friends – and make a difference.

Our cover couple, who hail from the same small area in southwest Virginia, met, married and spent more than 30 years following his career in the energy business. They resettled there after retirement but found they enjoyed their winter condo in Destin (and proximity to a daughter and grandkids) so much they have recently relocated full-time there.

This edition we take a look at the growth of a familiar bus company you've probably have seen riding up and down the road – Good Time Tours. In recent years they've added more day and overnight trips to regional attractions in addition to the casino runs they've made for more than 20 years.

Our regular features – Snowbirds Clubs, Snaps, Casino Entertainment and a new one – columnist "Sean of the South" – a Gulf Coast writer who is gaining a considerable audience through social media.

Be sure to "Like" our Facebook page - Snowbirds Gulf Coast - and sign up online at SnowbirdsGulfCoast.com for our e-newsletter. We want to stay in touch with you beyond our four winter editions.

I hope you enjoy each and every day of your stay. You sure have earned it.

We are always glad you are here.

Best,

Karen Harrell, publisher@snowbirdsgulfcoast.com or 850-291-1266





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Life's better at the beach!

These Virginia Snowbirds are in Destin to stay, but they are far from settling down.







Virginia natives Charles and Kitty Cassell are settling down quite nicely as Snowbirds in Destin, Florida. But, perhaps settling down isn't the correct word.

The ever-busy couple, Charles is this year's president of the 2,000-strong Destin Snowbird Club.

After attending Virginia Tech, Charles spent most of his career working for American Electric Power, including as construction manager and project manager of the company's generation plants. Kitty went to Radford (Va.) University and later was a teacher. They made their first visit to Florida in 2011, when they came to Crystal Beach to visit their daughter and her family. The following February, they bought a condo at The Terrace at Pelican Beach and have been coming ever since.

Their normal routine was to come down in September and return in May to coincide with the school year activities of their five grandchildren who range from middle school to college.

Charlie admitted he'd never been a fan of Florida because he preferred area with mountains and hills.

Kitty was the opposite.

"The last place we lived on was 2 1/2 acres of land and I couldn't stand not seeing cars go by," she said. "I like watching cars go down Highway 98 (near their condo)."

And Charles admits he has changed his





mind about Florida.

"Having family here allowed us to meet a lot of the locals and not just the Snowbirds." They got involved with the Destin Snowbird Club when Kitty saw something in the paper about senior activity at the community center. The Snowbird season was almost over, so the next year they joined and Charles marked on the registration that he'd volunteer.

He helped collect prizes for giveaways among other things, then was asked if he'd like to be the club's second vice president. "I ended up opening my mouth and said, 'Yeah, I'll take it'," he said. "When you get elected, you keep moving up. That's how I ended up doing that."

It wasn't a surprise. Charles has always been busy. He was active in the Lions Club; he coached baseball for more than 40 years; did some drag racing; and he drove a race car for six laps at Talladega International Speedway when he was 70.

"I told somebody one time, I don't know how I had time to work before I retired," he said.



Kitty stays busy, too. She sings in the choir at the Destin Methodist Church.

"I like to eat out and I like to talk and I like to watch people," she said. "I can sit around and correct his grammar."

They have been married for 53 years. "I'm the power behind the throne," she laughed. "We're going to stay together now."

And they're going to stay in Destin. They sold everything in Virginia. "We're anxious to see how the summers are down here," Charles said.



Fort Walton Beach Restaurateur, Veteran and Tireless Volunteer Honored

Tom Rice is a familiar face to Emerald Coast Snowbirds.

The long-time restaurateur who owns Magnolia Grill welcomes the Fort Walton Beach Snowbird Club each January, regaling them with his deep knowledge of the area and true appreciation that they choose the area for their winter home.

Well-known for his community involvement in organizations such as the Salvation Army, Rice served 27 years in the U.S. Army and was recently inducted into the Florida Veteran's Hall of Fame for his post-military community and military involvement. The ceremony was staged in November at the governor's mansion, and his name will be added to a special wall at the state capital.

"I got out of the military in 1996 and opened my restaurant in 1996," said Rice, who opened the restaurant with his wife, Peggy. "Getting in the restaurant business is a very scary thing, but it has worked out. We've



L to R: Rice shows off his Florida Veteran's Hall of Fame plaque and medal; Rice is inducted into the hall of fame at the governor's mansion in Tallahassee, Fla., with Governor Rick Scott.

been very blessed to use this facility for the community."

Rice's volunteer and fundraising efforts have had considerable impact. He was integral in a local effort to send 954 World War II veterans on nine Honor Flights to Washington, D.C. over a three-year period. He also established The Air Force Enlisted Village (for spouses of retired enlisted U.S. Airmen); Fisher House (temporary housing for families of hospitalized military); and most recently, the installation of the Veteran's Memorial Tower at the Fort Walton Beach Memorial Cemetery. Housed in a warm and inviting 1910 catalog house in downtown Fort Walton Beach, the Magnolia Grill is known as "the museum that serves food" for its vast collection of Fort Walton Beach and military history. The expansive menu features home-style American and Italian dishes.



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<image>

The Mobile tourism community is once again hosting a special event for all the winter residents of the Gulf Shores/Orange Beach area. Enjoy prizes, entertainment, refreshments and a great opportunity to meet the good folks from the Mobile area who will tell you about all the events planned for the next couple of months. Receive special updates on events being held at the USS ALABAMA Battleship, Gulf Coast Exploreum Science Center, Bellingrath Gardens and Home, the History Museum of Mobile, city tours and all other Mobile area attractions and cultural activities.

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 10, 2018 THE CONFERENCE CENTER AT THE WHARF 1:00PM TO 3:00PM



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There are nearly forty restaurants, bars, delis and cafes in downtown Mobile, and we've also compiled a suggested list of activities you can do in two, four and six hours in Mobile:



MARITIME: About 230 steps from the Alabama Cruise Terminal (yes, we counted!) is the one-ofa-kind GulfQuest National Maritime Museum. GulfQuest is the first and only museum dedicated to the Gulf Coast's rich maritime traditions from its discovery in the 1500s to the present day and one of the only interactive maritime museums in the country. So before you head out into the Gulf, learn all about the Gulf. It'll make your cruise that much more interesting, believe us!

PORT & FORT: The downtown waterfront of Mobile, Alabama is full of rich history, culture and economic importance to the region. This bustling port welcomes ships from all over the world along with tug boats and barges that roam the many rivers of North America. See them all up close from a USCG Certified passenger vessel with Wild Native Tours. The city skyline, maritime museum, Austal shipyards, cruise terminal and cruise ship are also seen on this tour. Courteous and knowledgeable guides will educate and entertain as you cruise these local waters. After your port tour, be sure to visit the Fort of Colonial Mobile, an immersive, interactive exhibit about the people who colonized early Mobile.



HISTORY LOVERS: Take an historic city tour, starting at the Visit Mobile Welcome Center, by car, van, trolley or duck boat. These usually last an hour to an hour and a half, which leaves plenty of time to explore historic downtown Mobile on foot, including the History Museum of Mobile and the Mobile Carnival Museum or hop across the Mobile River to board an authentic World War II battleship, the USS ALABAMA.

SHOPAHOLICS: Several new locally owned clothing boutiques, gift shops, vintage and antique stores and art galleries (some will ship your purchases home!) are located within blocks of each other downtown. We know you'll be grabbing some souvenirs in the Caribbean, but hey, taking a little bit of Mobile home with you is pretty awesome, too.

FAMILY FUN: The Gulf Coast Exploreum offers rotating exhibits and permanent activities designed to bring the scientist out in all of us. You'll notice an Oyster statue out in front of the Exploreum, which is a great starting point to walk The Oyster Trail throughout downtown Mobile (how many can you visit?). Mobile's newest addition to outdoor family fun is ArtGo, a self-guided free walking trail and outdoor art gallery that leads visitors to 33 public art pieces/installations. Pick up your map at the Mobile Arts Council at 318 Dauphin Street.



Outdoors: With a little more time on your hands, you can explore a little more of what the entire area has to offer. The crown jewel of Mobile, Bellingrath Gardens and Home is about 45 minutes west of the Alabama Cruise Terminal - plan to wander amongst the blooms for a few hours. Or, head east, just a few minutes of downtown and take an airboat ride, sightseeing cruise or guided kayak/canoe tours of the Mobile/Tensaw Delta (the views are a little different from the deck of the cruise ship but fascinating just the same!)

HISTORY AND CULTURE LOVERS: There are several historic homes in or near downtown, each offering guided tours. Pick up a Historic Homes brochure and plan to visit all five during your time here in Mobile. Hit the Mobile Museum Trail, visiting some of the previously mentioned downtown museums but also plan to stop by the largest art museum on the Gulf Coast, the Mobile Museum of Art, the Mobile Medical Museum, and the Archaeology Museum at the University of South Alabama.









Send your club news to Publisher@ SnowbirdsGulfCoast.com

Each year there are a variety of activities put on either by Snowbirds or area organizations for the Snowbirds. If you have activities to share, please email: publisher@snowbirdsgulfcoast.com by the 5th of the month preceding publication (we publish Holiday, January, February and March each year.)

PANAMA CITY: Panama City Senior Center: A hub of activity for Panama City Snowbirds is the sprawling senior center. Membership fees are just \$35/year. Activities include health, fitness and exercise; arts and crafts; fun and games and social and learning opportunities. Upcoming events:. Events are held at: Oatfield Center, 423 Lyndell Lane, Panama City Beach, Fl. Details: 850-236- 3038 or 850-233-5065

The Panama City Convention and Visitor Bureau: Winter Resident Appreciation Days are Jan. 18, Feb. 8 and 22 at the Panama City Beach Senior Center from 8 to 11 a.m. Shop a variety of vendors and buy tickets the annual Homecoming Dance Jan. 23 at The Wharf, Senior Prom Feb. 13 at Edgewater Beach Resort and The Grand Finale Feb. 26 at the Sheraton Bay Point Resort. Details: 800-722-3224 or www.visitpanamacitybeach.com **WALTON COUNTY:** Meetings are at 10 a.m. at the Destin United Methodist Church, 200 Beach Drive. Vendors are set up at 9 a.m. with area information. Dates include: Jan. 10, 24; Feb. 7 and 21 (at Village Baptist Church, 101 Matthew

Dr.) Meetings include entertainment, information from local vendors and club activity sign up sheets. Please park on the east side of the church. Activities include art, ballroom dance, casino trips, book discussion, bowling, cards and games, pickleball, computer, softball, golf, tennis, Zumba, fishing and more. Volunteers are needed to help administrate the activities. Membership dues are \$10 per year. There are numerous volunteer opportunities so don't be shy! For membership: Joan Dougall jmrd166@gmail.com. Details: www.waltoncountysnowbirds.com **DESTIN:** Meetings are held at "The Roost" – the Destin Community Center, 101 Stahlman Ave. The "Big Registration" set for 1 to 3 p.m. Jan. 4. Weekly Tue. meetings start Jan. 9 with sessions at 8:30 a.m. and 11 a.m. Meetings include entertainment, activities and information from local vendors. Club activities include cards and games, fishing, golf, tennis, pickleball, skeet shooting, cruises, casino trips and more. FORT WALTON BEACH: With over 700 members, the Club offers activities, events, camaraderie and fellowship. Registration 9 a.m. - Noon Jan. 5 and 8 and Tuesdays starting Jan. 16 – March 6. Annual fee is \$8. Meetings are 10 a.m. Jan. 9, Feb. 6 and March 6 with registration from 9 a.m. – noon at the Fort Walton Beach Recreation Center (132 Jet Dr. NW). Scheduled socials are Jan. 14, Feb. 11 and March 4 and a

Valentine's Dance on Feb. 14. There are three state "breakfast" groups that meet throughout the season and the sponsors craft, cards, games, golf outings and social events. Details: information@FWBSBC.com or www. fwbsbc.com **NAVARRE:** The Navarre Beach Snowbird Club continues to grow and offers a variety of programs and social events. There are four "Snowbirds Sessions by the Sea" sessions in January and February staged at the awardwinning Navarre Beach Marine Science Station. Topics include: Jan. 18 – Beachcombing 101; Jan. 25 - Lionfish 101; Feb. 1 - Where's the Reef and Feb. 15 – Birds and Barrier Islands. Also, The Holley Navarre Senior Center is offering a Snowbird Guest Pass for \$25, which is good through March 31. The annual Navarre Beach Snowbirds Business Expo & Social is 2 p.m. – 4 p.m. Jan. 23 at the Navarre Conference Center. To learn more: navarrebeachsnowbirdsclub.com **PENSACOLA:** A special VIP discount card is available at the Pensacola, Pensacola Beach and Perdido Key Visitor Centers for all Snowbirds. The annual Snowbird welcome "Pensacola Beach Bash" is 9 a.m. – 11 a.m. Jan. 26 at the Pensacola Beach Community Church. Also, a Snowbird Expo is set for Jan. 23, 10 a.m. - Noon at the National Naval Aviation Museum. Check out visitpensacola.com for details. The Pensacola Beach Church will sponsor a (free) chili cookoff at 11 a.m. Jan. 28. Church services start at 10 a.m. Details: 850-932-6628 or www.thebeachchurch. com/church-events. Also, St. Ann Catholic Church in Gulf Breeze hosts the "Fun Bunch" senior group meeting at 11:30 a.m. every third Tuesday for lunch and Bingo, all are welcome! Details: Darlene Goderski 850-677-8321 or online at www. stanngulfbreeze.org/seniors

BALANCE AND MEMORY SCREENINGS: A series of memory screenings will be staged at various locations in Baldwin County this winter. Dates include: Jan. 8 - Bodenhamer Center, 8 am.; Feb. 6 - Gulf Shores Cultural Center, Noon – 4:30 p.m.; Feb. 15- Foley Cultural Center, Noon – 4 p.m.; Feb. 16 – Fairhope Nix Center, Noon – 4 p.m.; Feb. 22 – Orange Beach Community Center, Noon – 4 p.m.

AMERICAN LEGION: Bingo 6 p.m. Mondays and 10 a.m. Thursdays at Gulf Shores American Legion, 6781 Gulf Shores Pkwy (AL-59. Details: 251 948-6119

ALABAMA GULF SHORES MEN'S COFFEE

CLUB: The Gulf Shores Men's Snowbird Coffee Club at Gilbey's Restaurant, 25775 Perdido Beach Blvd. in Orange Beach on Mon., Wed. and Fri., 7:30 to 8:30 a.m. Membership information is available at these meetings. This is the oldest continually active snowbird club with more than 280 members from 26 states and three Canadian provinces. Besides raising money for local charities, the club holds golf

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outings, sponsors casino trips and conducts breakfast meetings for members and spouses and throws horseshoes on Mon., Wed. and Fri. at noon at Meyer Park in Gulf Shores.

DAUPHIN ISLAND: The Dauphin Island Chamber of Commerce invites Snowbirds to visit the Welcome Center, 1016 Bienville Blvd., for info on island events including the twice-monthly Boardwalk Talks the first and third Wednesdays at 11:15 a.m. at The Estuarium. Island

representatives are actively engaged in forming a club. Details: www.townofdauphinisland.org **SENIOR SNOWBIRDS:** Meets Thursdays Jan. through March. Bring a dish to feed 10. Cost is 50 cents at the Adult Activity Center, 260 Clubhouse Dr., Gulf Shores, Ala. Details: Michael O'Rourke 251-981-6060

ILLINOIS: The 2018 Illinois Club meets the second and fourth Fridays in Jan., Feb. and March 9 at GT's On the Bay (26189 Canal Rd, Orange Beach) at 7:30 a.m. A Welcome Back Coffee is 10 a.m. Jan. 5 at Orange Beach Senior Activity Center. Potluck and Games is 5 p.m. Jan. 16 at Gulf Shores Activity Center. Book Club meeting is 9:30 a.m. Jan. 18 at the Orange Beach Library. RSVP: 630-738-8717

INDIANA: Indiana Club meets for breakfast at 8 a.m. on the second and fourth Thursdays through March 1, 2018 at 7:30 a.m. Luna's 25753 Canal Road, Orange Beach, AL. Speakers at every meeting. Cost to join: \$5. Breakfast is \$10 including meal, tax and tip. Details: Bev Walker 513-519-9645 or bwalker@etczone.com

IOWA: Iowa Snowbirds invite Iowans and guests to attend their breakfasts and the cocktail parties held Jan. through early March 2018. Snowbird breakfasts are the second and fourth Wednesdays in Jan. and Feb. Cocktail party dates are Jan. 26 and Feb. 23. The first Iowa "breakfast" will be at OWA, a change from previous announcements. The "meet and greet" coffee and donuts gathering will be Wed., Jan. 10, at the Groovy Goat, 8 to 10 a.m. Cost is \$6 for an informal coffee time. Other meeting are 8:30 a.m. Jan. 24, Feb. 7 and 21 at the Perdido Beach Resort. 27200 East Beach Blvd., Orange Beach. Reservations can be made at Iowa-Alabamagulfcoastsnowbirds.org

MICHIGAN: The Michigan Club will hold club and golf registration 4 to 6 p.m. Jan. 2 with regular meetings set for Jan. 4, Feb. 1, 15 and March 1 at Erie Meyer Civic Center. Doors open at 8:30 a.m. with coffee and donuts at 9 a.m. Meetings include entertainment, Club activities and door prizes. Membership dues are \$3 total per person per year. Details: www. michiganclubalabama.com **MINNESOTA:** The Minnesota Club meets weekly through mid-March in our "home away from home" state of Alabama. Breakfast meetings

start weekly in Jan. on Tuesdays at GT's on the Bay, 26189 Canal Rd, Orange Beach, Ala. Doors open at 7:30 a.m., Breakfast costs \$10. Info on golf, upcoming events or updates: www.mnal.org

MISSOURI: The first club meeting is 9 a.m. Jan. 3 at Phoenix V condominiums. A welcome back party is 6 p.m. Jan. 6 at Phoenix V. The club will meet for breakfast at 9 a.m. Jan. 10, 24, Feb. 7 and 21 at Perdido Beach Resort (27200 Perdido Beach Boulevard, Orange Beach). Business meetings held at Phoenix V will alternate with breakfast. Details: www.mosnowbirds.org **NEW YORK:** New York State Snowbirds have been gathering for social times since 2000. Lunch meetings are Jan. 11, 25: Feb. 8, 22: and March 8. Registration and social time starts at 11 a.m., lunch at 11:30 a.m. The club will order off a special menu with separate checks. The fee is \$1 per person collected at the door for expenses. Reservations to Frank and Tracy at 585-748-0432 or email at nvsnowbirds@gmail.com, no later than 3 days before the scheduled luncheon. NORTH DAKOTA/SOUTH DAKOTA: The Gulf Shores, Ala.-based North and South Dakota Snowbird Club meets at 8:30 a.m. for breakfast with a 9 a.m. meeting to follow Jan. 9, 23, Feb. 6, 20 and March 6 at Luna's Eat & Drink, 25753 Canal Road, Orange Beach. The club also sponsors several other social events and it collects food and infant items for donation. Details: Joyce 605-351-0274 pdinsf@msn.com

OHIO: Meeting's are Jan. 11, 25, Feb. 8, 22 and March 8 at Luna's, 25689 Canal Road, Orange Beach. Cost is \$10 per person. Doors will open at 8 a.m. with breakfast at 9 a.m. Details: Gayle Hofacker, gaylehofacker@gmail.com or 937-621- 1700 **PENNSYLVANIA:** Pennsylvania Snowbird Club Members meet 8 a.m. Wednesdays, Jan. through March at Hazel's Seafood Restaurant in Orange Beach, Ala. Dates are Jan. 3, 10, 17, 24, 31; Feb.7,14,28 and March 7. "Eat and Talk" at 5 p.m. At O'Charley's in Foley, Ala., on select Mondays (TBD). A potluck luncheon is noon Feb. 21 at Orange Beach Presbyterian Church in Orange Beach. Details: Rich Smith 908-420-8806 or bettyrich@rcn.com

WISCONSIN: The Wisconsin Snobird Club activities are open to all winter visitors to the southern Alabama and northern Florida areas. Upcoming club meetings are Jan. 3 and 17; Feb. 7, 22; March 7, 14 at the Orange Beach Event Center. Meetings begin at 9 a.m. with updates, raffles. Coffee and doughnut social hour before. Other January activities include: 18 – Fish Fry and Ribs and Reds; 23-24 0vernight casino trip; 24 – Potluck; 28-29 – New Orleans overnight. Details: Kenn 251-967-2463 or www.sites.google. com/ site/wisconsinsnowbirdclub/company- calendar Orange Beach Event Center, 4671 Wharf Pkwy W, Orange Beach, Ala.

CLUB FUNDRAISERS: * Key dates for major Alabama Snowbird fundraisers this year include: Feb. 3 – Bob Gilray Memorial Bratfest; Feb. 10 - Fireman's Pancake Breakfast; and Feb. 15 -Baldwin Heritage Museum Golf Tournament; Feb. 17 – Trivia Night; Feb. 23 - Low Country Boil.

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* Limitations: These promotions are for Snowbirds and new patients. Expiration March 31, 2017. Check website for complete information.





Good Time Tours adds trips to military sites, a Mardi Gras museum, a president's home and more

by Louis Cooper

The bus company known for its trips to casinos is expanding its selection of tours to destinations that don't feature slot machines.

"Our first non-casino tours were trips to Florida State Seminole and New Orleans Saints football games," said Jerri Smith, vice president of operations for Good Time Tours, based in Pensacola. "New Orleans has always been a popular destination for the snowbirds, but this year we incorporated other tours." New non-casino trips on Good Time Tours' schedule include trips to military spots in Pensacola, caves in inland Florida, the Mardi Gras museum in downtown Mobile and an overnight stay in Americas, Ga., to tour the boyhood home of President Jimmy Carter.



Mobile's famed Carnival Museum is just one stop on the new Royalty and Ramparts tour exploring the history of the Alabama Gulf Coast.

Good Time Tours was founded in 1993 when gambling was legalized in Mississippi. Smith's mom, Vicki Stevison, had been running a part-time business called Four Corner Tours taking Pensacola bingo players to out-of-state

bingo halls.

"My mother knows a good bet when she sees one," Smith said. "She got on the ground floor and made sure that the first Good Time Tours bus was waiting at the door with a load of gamblers when the first casino opened in 1993." Smith joined her mother's business in 1995. At the time, Good Time Tours was operated out of Stevison's living room and consisted of three buses. Smith suggested adding non-casino trips, starting with those football games. "Once we realized there was a demand for comfortable and safe transportation to these events, we added more trips like Atlanta Braves games, the Talladega NASCAR race and Smokey Mountain tours," she said. "We even did a 13-day

'Westward Ho' sightseeing tour that went all the way to the Grand Canyon." Over the years, Good Time Tours has grown to include 12 full-size, 55-passenger motorcoaches, a full-service garage and 40 employees. "We look forward to snowbird season. Because of the snowbirds, February is the busiest time of the year for our one-day trips to Biloxi," Smith said. "They can sit back, relax and let Good Time Tours do the driving." Good Time Tours ensures safe and proper operating conditions of all vehicles in its fleet by keeping in compliance with regulations set by the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration. The company also carries

the highest safety rating set by the Department of Transportation. In addition to scheduled trips to casinos and other destinations, Good Time Tours also offers their buses for charter. "Many of the snowbird groups, along



Historic Fort Gaines on Dauphin Island is part of the new Royalty and Ramparts tour exploring the history of the Mobile, Ala. area.

with the RV parks and condos, charter our buses for private trips to the casinos and New Orleans," Smith said. "They look forward to coming back each year to visit old friends and meet new ones."



Feb. 5 - Bus tour Pickup at Good Time Tours Florida locations Feb. 9 - Bus Tour pickup at Good Time Tours Alabama Locations Falling Waters State Park, Marianna Caverns and Chautauqua Winery



President Jimmy Carter is known for his enthusiasm in greeting tours visiting America, Ga.



HIGHLIGHT OF GOOD TIME TOURS' NON-CASINO TOURS:

Royalty & Ramparts Tour, Feb 1 (Florida

departures), Feb. 2 (Alabama departures): Visit the Carnival Museum and Toomey's Bead World in Mobile

and Historic Fort Gaines on Dauphin Island; \$69 per person, box lunch included.

Mardi Gras Parades in

New Orleans, Feb. 3 and 11 (Florida departures); Feb. 4 and 10 (Alabama departures); \$50 per person.

Underground

Florida, Feb. 5 (Florida departures), Feb. 9 (Alabama departures): Visit Falling Water State Park in Chipley, Mariana Caverns in Mariana and the Chautauqua Winery in DeFuniak Springs; \$69 per person, box lunch included.

Red, White and Blue

Pensacola, Feb. 16: Visit the Wall South, the National Naval Aviation Museum and more; \$50 per person, box lunch included.

Peanuts, Presidents and Cannonball Tour,

Feb. 21-22: One-night stay in Americas, Ga., with tours of several locations related to Jimmy Carter's life, Habitat for Humanity, the National POW Museum and the Andersonville Civil War encampment: \$149 per person, double occupancy.

Taste of NOLA, Feb.

25-27; Tour of Abita Brewery, Insta-Gator Ranch & Hatchery, the Houmas House Plantation and Gardens and the New Orleans School of Cooking, with shopping at Cajun Village; \$345 per person with double occupancy.

For more information, visit www. goodtimetours.com or call (850) 476-0046.



GOOD TIME TO

The new Underground Florida tour explores lesser known features and sites in Northwest Florida.



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BY PACIFICA COMPANIES



The Currys are an Americana folk trio featuring Jimmy, Tommy, and Galen Curry - two brothers and one cousin - and like many family groups, their songs are anchored by the sort of elastic, entwined harmonies that only seem to exist among kin. The band is the first act in the 2018 Americana Music at The Lodge concerts at Camp Helen State Park in Panama City Beach, Fla. The free concert series kicks off on Jan. 6. Music starts at 6:30; doors open at 6 p.m. Visitors are also welcome to explore Camp Helen. For more information, visit www.VisitPanamaCityBeach.com.

SEASON SERIES

Mattie Kelly Arts Center Broadway and Artists Series

includes: Jan. 11 – Dirty Dancing; 20- Original Stars of American Bandstand; Feb. 3 – Grease Singalong; Feb. 17 MJ Live; March 14 – Catapult. Events are staged at Northwest Florida State College, 100 College Blvd., Niceville, Fl. Details: www.mattiekellyartscenter.org or 850-729-6000 **Martin Theatre "Presents" Series,** Panama City. Acts include: Jan. 10 Atlantic City Boys; Jan. 26 The Glenn Miller Orchestra; Feb. 2 – Take Me Home, The Music of John Denver. Feb. 9 – The Drifters; Feb. 16 – Louis Prima, Jr.& The Witnesses; Feb. 23 – 7Bridges. Located at 409 Harrison Ave., Panama City, Fl. Details: 850-763-8080 or martintheatre.com



Saengar Theatre: The Classic Series, Downtown Pensacola, Fl. includes: Jan. 18 – Dirty Dancing: The Classic Story on Stage; Feb. 6 - Buddy: The Buddy Holly Story; March 26 – Jersey Boys.

Gulf Shores Entertainment Series at the Erie Meyer Civic Center, 1930 W. 2nd St., Gulf Shores, Al. Lineup includes: Jan. 29-30 – Moscow Meets Manhatten Dueling Pianos; Feb. 5-6 – Jukebox Broadway starring The Diamonds; Feb. 19-20 – 62 Edition of it's Magic and Feb. 26-27 – The Redneck Tenors. Details: gulfshoresal.com

Mobile Saenger Theatre, 6 South Joachim St., Mobile, Al. Included among upcoming events: Jan. 5 – The Black Jacket Symphony: Led Zeppilen "IV"; Jan. 20-21 – Mobile Symphony Orchestra: Four Seasons; 2-16 – MJ Live; 3-15 – Garrison Keillor. Details: mobilesaengar.com or 251-208-5600
Boardwalk Beach Resort Entertainment. Jan. 7, 10, 17, 21, 24, 31 – Snowbird Dances with DJ Jim Lawson; Jan. 12, 19 & 26 – Woody & The Peckers; Jan. 13, 20 & 27 – 3x A Lady; Jan. 18, 25 – Don Audette; Jan. 20- Magi Shaun. At the Boardwalk Beach Hotel, 9600 S. Thomas Dr., Panama City Beach, Fl.

Details: boardwalkbeachhotel.com or 850-596-8125 **Panama City Beach Winter Resident Events -** Senior Softball – Wednesdays at Frank Brown Park; Jan. 18,

Feb. 8 22 – Winter Resident Appreciation Days, Lyndell Center; Jan. 23 – Winter Resident Homecoming Dance, Laketown Wharf Resort; Feb. 9-10 PCB Mardi Gras & Music Festival, Pier Park; Feb. 13 – Winter Resident Senior Prom, Edgewater Beach Resort; Feb. 26 – Winter Resident Grand Finale. Details: visitpanamacitybeach.com

Resident Homecoming Dance, Laketown Wharf Resort; Feb. 9-10 PCB Mardi Gras & Music Festival, Pier Park; Feb. 13 – Winter Resident Senior Prom, Edgewater Beach Resort; Feb. 26 – Winter Resident Grand Finale. Details: visitpanamacitybeach.com

WEDNESDAYS

Boardwalk Talks, Dauphin Island Sea Lab Estuarium - The Northern Gulf Institute presents informal talks about all things scientific in the Gulf of Mexico region. 101 Bienville Blvd, Dauphin Island, AL. First and third Wednesdays, 11:15 a.m. FREE. Details: www.disl.org/estuarium or 251-861-2141 **Winter Wednesdays** - Bellingrath Gardens and Home -Sessions are held each week in the Magnolia Room from 10:30 to 11:30 a.m. from Jan. 3 - Feb. 28. Admission is included in the regular Gardens admission. Register: 251-459-8864. Details: www.bellingrath.org **SUNDAYS**

Americana Cafe Sundays - Roberts Hall, 831 Florida Avenue, Lynn Haven, FL. Live music weekly at the Legendary Roberts Hall, 4 p.m. Open mic at 3 p.m. Details: 850-722-4915, 850-774-3561 or Luckymudmusic.com 12/31

Pensacola Symphony "Celebrate the New Year" - Saenger Theatre, 118 S Palafox Place, Pensacola, FL. 7 p.m. Details: 850-595-3880 or www.pensacolasymphony.com **MoonPie Drop** - Downtown Mobile, AL. Mobile kicks off the New Year with a giant, lighted MoonPie. Details: www. mobilenewyear.com

Baytowne Countdown NYE - Family-friendly from 6 to 8 p.m. Fireworks displays at 8 p.m. and midnight. LIVE music till 1 a.m. Details: www.baytownewharf.com

New Year's Eve Dance - Holley-Navarre Senior Center, across the street from the Navarre Library. Doors open at 8 p.m. Joe Occhipinti's Band from 9 p.m. to midnight. Tickets are \$15. Details: 713-819-1980 or 936-1644 **1/1**

5th Annual Polar Bear Plunge - Gulf Place Community hosts the South Walton Fire District (SWFD) Annual Polar Bear Plunge at Ed Walline Beach Access. Registration opens 11 a.m. Jan. 1 at Gulf Place. Proceeds benefit the SWFD Department Relations Committee.

Annual New Year's Day Volksmarch - Walk begins at 9 a.m. at Wall South, east Romana and 10th Ave. in downtown Pensacola, Fl. and will tour the Historic Downtown. Yearly dues of \$10 can be paid at the walk. 1/6, 13, 20, 27

The Market Shops Winter Concert Series - Free concert at the entrance to Sandestin Golf and Beach Resort. 1 p.m. - 3 p.m. Details: themarketshops.com

1/6, 2/3, 3/3

Fundraiser Dinners at Sonora Masonic Lodge #635

F&AM - Join the community for the 2018 annual fried chicken dinner fundraisers on Jan. 6, February 3 and March 3 from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. at 202 E. Jackson Street in Summerdale. Details: Dean Mott at 251-423-7604 **1/9**

Miramar Beach was once SHOALS, FLORIDA - The Destin Library, Destin, FL. Historian Hank Klein tells the story of the history of Shoals on January 9, at 5:30 PM. The presentation is free and open to the public. Details: 850-837-8572 **1/12**

"The OLD East Pass and the Destin Lighthouse Keepers" - Heritage Museum of Northwest Florida, 115 Westview Ave, Valparaiso, FL. Historian Hank Klein speaks at History Sandwiched-In at the Heritage Museum of Northwest Florida, Jan. 12 at 12 p.m. Details: 850-678-2615, www.

heritage-museum.org **1/13**

Pensacola Symphony Presents Beethoven & Blue Jeans

- 7:30 p.m. Pensacola Saengar Theatre, 118 South Palafox St., Pensacola, Fl. Details: pensacolasaengar.com or 850-595-3880

1/15

Sounds of Chuck & Herb - Join Jazz Pensacola for Jazz Gumbo 6:30 to 9 p.m. Jan. 15, at Seville Quarter, 130 E. Government St., Pensacola, Fl. Doors open at 5:30 p.m. See the music of legends Chuck Mangione and Herb Alpert performed by Pensacola's talented jazz musicians. \$10 admission includes a cup of seafood gumbo. Details: 850-433-8382, or www.jazzpensacola.com 1/16, 23, 30

Discover! South Baldwin Adventure for Learning and Retirement: "Your Family Tree: Who, What, When and Where" - 1:30 - 3 p.m. at Gulf Shores Cultural Center Registration for \$35 includes all sessions. Program sponsored by the University of South Alabama. Details: 251-460-7200

1/18-28

"The Amish Project" - Emerald Coast Theatre Company presents this gripping one-woman docudrama, January 18-28 at 560 Grand Boulevard (upstairs) in Grand Boulevard at Sandestin, Miramar Beach, Florida. Details: www. emeraldcoasttheatre.org

1/19

B.J. Thomas: The Living Room Sessions - The

Imogene Theatre, Milton, FL. This five-time Grammy and two time Dove Award winner has sold more than 70 million records. He'll perform The Living Room Sessions, featuring intimate acoustic re-imaginings of



12 of his most renowned songs. Tickets and details: www. theimogenetheatre.com

1/21

Wine Tasting at The Twisted Grape - 1193 B Eglin Parkway in Shalimar, Jan. 21, 2 to 4 p.m. Wine, food and live entertainment. Tickets: 1 for \$25 or 2 for \$45. Benefit for the Okaloosa Arts Alliance. Details: www. okaloosaarts.org or Amy at amybaty1@gmail.com or 850-499-8335

1/25-28

Florida Chautauqua Assembly, DeFuniak Springs, Fl. - A historic 4-day educational program includes keynote presentation, educational breakout sessions, evening dinner performances and exhibits. All exhibits are free including a Florida Frontiersmen Settlement Camp, Florida Forest Service Indoor Nature Trail, Tin Can Tourists Antique Camper & RV show, Native American Camp, and more. Details: (850) 892-7613 1/26

Sybarites, presented by Sinfonia Gulf Coast at Grace Lutheran Church, 4325 Commons Dr., Destin, Fl. Details: sinfoniagulfcoast.com or 850-460-8800 1/30

Retirement Marketplace Expo - 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. at The Palms of Destin, 4201 Indian Bayou Trail, Destin, Fl This new event presented by the Emerald Coast Financial Accounts, LLC features 20 vendors across the spectrum from financial experts to hobbies and lifestyle. There are planned raffles, games and giveaways. The event is free.

Laissez le bon temps rouler! It's Mardi Gras on the coast

colored floats will

neighborhood. The

festival is filled with

Pensacola Grand

from 2 to 6 p.m. In

Downtown Pensacola,

FL. Floats, bands and

beads! Family-friendly event. Details:

www.pensacolamardigras.com.

Gulf Shores Mardi Gras Parade -

Parade begins at Wintzell's, 24131

AL at 2 p.m. and ends at Hwy 161.

More than 30,000 people gather

along the two-mile stretch of

Pensacola Beach Mardi Gras,

Krewe of Wrecks Mardi Gras

Parade - Mardi Gras on the Island

with more than 50 parade entries,

Feb. 11, 2 p.m. Parade starts at Via

de Luna & Avenida 10 and ends at

pensacolabeachmardigras.com.

the Gulfside Pavilion. Details: www.

Perdido Beach Blvd. Orange Beach,

Perdido Beach Boulevard to stand in

the rain of throws. Details: 251-981-

2-day parade and

2/10

2/13

6979

2/11

You'll find Mardi Gras parades and events across the Gulf Coast, beginning on The Epihany, 12 days after Christmas, Jan. 6, and ending on Fat Tuesday, Feb. 13. Laissez le bon temps rouler! 1/13,20

Dauphin Island Mardi Gras

Parades – The coastal town of Dauphin Island, Ala., kicks off Alabama's Mardi Gras season with two parades. Details: 251-861-5525 or www.towneofdauphinisland.org. 1/20

Mardi Gras Parade on Okaloosa

Island – The Fort Walton Beach, Fla. parade has about 40 floats and is the only parade held on the island. Parade rolls at 1 p.m.

1/26 - 2/13

Mobile Mardi Gras – Mobile, AL.

Mobile hosts one of the biggest and oldest Mardi Gras celebrations in the world. There are dozens of parades in downtown Mobile beginning Jan. 26 through Feb. 13, Fat Tuesday. For more information, visit http://www. cityofmobile.org/mardigras.php. 2/2-3

St. Andrews Mardi Gras – Panama City, FL. Celebrating its 21st Anniversary in 2018, St. Andrews is the most popular and largest Mardi Gras celebration in Bay County. More than 14 Krewes and 30 brightly



St. Andrews Mardi Gras, Panama City, Fla. 2/11,13

Mississippi Mardi Gras Parades

-The Mississippi Gulf Coast hosts the St. Paul Carnival Krewe Parade in Pass Christian on Feb. 11 at noon, and the Orange Grove Carnival Association parade on Fat Tuesday beginning at 2 p.m. in Gulfport. Details: www.gulfcoast.org. 2/3

Navarre Beach Mardi Gras Parade presented by the Krewe of Jesters,

1 p.m. – 3 p.m. Route is at Navarre Beach, Fla. Details: nkoj.com. 2/3

Kids and Kritters Parade Pensacola Beach, presented by the Krewe of Wrecks. 1

p.m. - 3 p.m. Entry fee for kritters \$5, kids are free. Details: pensacolabeachmardigras.com.



DEMETRIUS FULLER ~ MUSIC & ARTISTIC DIRECTOR



SYBARITES

FRIDAY, JANUARY 26, 2018 | 7:30 pm GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH TICKETS: \$29.50 - \$45.00



THE FOUR SEASONS OF BUENOS AIRES featuring violinist Corinne Stillwell SATURDAY, MARCH 3, 2018 | 7:30 pm GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH



SINFONIA GULF COAST **GALA** event

MEREDITH WILLSON'S THE MUSIC MAN AT THE SYMPHONY SATURDAY, MARCH 31, 2018 | 7:30 pm EMERALD COAST CONVENTION CENTER Wilson Music LLC & Happy Valley Foundation. All Flights Pe



Snowbird expos offer info, fun and friendship

Is there any better way to learn about a community than attending events where you can interact with the locals?

The northern Gulf Coast has seen considerable growth in Snowbirds in the past decade and communities across the coast are putting out the welcome mat. These events are open to everyone. (You don't have to be staying in that community.)

Mark your calendars!

MEET MOBILE DAY: The birthplace of Mardi Gras, the City of Mobile, Ala., and its attractions and other businesses put on this free, lively annual event staged 1 - 3 p.m., Jan. 10 at The Conference Center at The



Wharf, 4671 Wharf Pkwy., Orange Beach, Ala. Talk to representatives from attractions such as the USS Alabama Battleship, the **Exploreum Science Center**, Bellingrath Gardens and Home, History Center of Mobile and interact with a variety of vendors. Also included are light refreshments and live music. Snowbirds from across the region are invited to attend. Details: 800-5-MOBILE or org.

RESORTQUEST WINTER GUEST

FEST: The Fort Walton Beach Chamber of Commerce welcomes Snowbirds 8 a.m. – noon, Jan. 12 at the Emerald Coast Convention Center, 1250 Miracle Strip Pkwy, Fort Walton Beach. Vendors of all descriptions will be on hand. Door prizes and giveaways. There is a \$2 admission fee. Details: 850-2448191 or fwbchamber.com. **WINTER APPRECIATION DAYS:** The

Panama City Beach Convention and Visitors Bureau will sponsor a series of "Winter Appreciation Days." Jan. 18, Feb. 8 and 22 at the Lyndell Center, 423 Lyndell Lane. Local vendors are on hand. Also, learn about signature events: Winter Resident Homecoming Dance (Jan. 23), Winter Resident Senior Prom (Feb. 13) and Winter Resident Grand Finale (Feb. 26). Details: 800-722-3224 or VisitPanamaCityBeach.com

DEFUNIAK SPRINGS SNOWBIRD DAY: Enjoy a

complimentary lunch, free goodie bag with coupons for local attractions, restaurants and shops. Event hours

are 11 a.m.- 2 p.m. Jan. 18. Details: 850-892-8500. **NAVY MUSEUM SNOWBIRD EXPO:** The National Museum of Naval Aviation located at Pensacola NAS is sponsoring a Snowbird Expo 10 a.m. – noon, Jan. 23. The event features area vendors and local organizations, special offers on museum attractions

such as the gift shop and IMAX theater. Learn about upcoming special events including the Feb. 2 Glenn

Miller Orchestra Concert and the February Breakfast and a Movie series. There is no entrance fee to the museum.

NAVARRE BEACH SNOWBIRDS BUSINESS EXPO

& SOCIAL: The free annual event is 2 – 4 p.m., Jan. 23 at the Navarre Conference Center, 8700 Navarre Pkwy. More than 50 vendors are expected



to be on hand. Door prizes, refreshments and music. Presenting sponsors include the Santa Rosa County Tourist Development Office and Navarre

Area Board of Realtors. Details: navarrebeachsnowbirdsclub.com. **PENSACOLA BEACH BASH:** Presented by the Santa Rosa Island Authority, the annual Snowbird welcome will be staged 9 – 11 a.m., Jan. 26 at Pensacola Beach Community Church, 920 Panferio Dr. The free event includes island trolley tours, light breakfast, chance to play TriviaBLASTBingo all the while enjoying an Elvis tribute and a chance to meet local vendors.

Be sure to stop by the Pensacola Beach Visitors Information Center to pick up your free Winter Escape Discount Card (anytime it is open.)

Pensacola Beach is bordered by the Gulf Islands National Seashore, which offers one of the nation's great seaside drives. The drive east is free

(ends at Navarre Beach) while west takes you to historic Fort Pickens (fee.) Details: 850-932-1500 or 850-932-2257.





SNOWBIRD FEST: This event is 9 a.m. – 1 p.m., Jan. 27 at

The Event Center at The Wharf in Orange Beach, Ala. Entertainment includes a magic act, live music and more. There is a car show, restaurant samples, prizes and giveaways. A variety of vendors are on hand. Good Time Tours will transport visitors from the Florida panhandle (limited availability, so sign up asap.) Details: www.snowbirdfest.com.

LIFESTYLES EXPO: The 26th Annual Alabama Lifestyles Expo, 8 a.m. - 2 p.m., Feb. 8, attracts more than 3,000 visitors each year at The Caribe in Orange Beach, Ala. Now a regional draw, visitors wind through the picturesque resort stopping at vendor booths to factfind, taste-test and play games.

Participants from around Alabama showcase their

communities and attractions and offer discounts to encourage visitors en route to and from the Gulf Coast to make a "stopover." Also, medical facilities offer free screenings, bus tour companies tout their casino and day trips, restaurants offer a taste test, small shops display their wares and regional tourism bureaus look to tap



the Snowbird market for future stays. Pre-register to receive updates: www.alabamaadvantage.com



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6 NW Florida Heart Institute

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6 NW Florida Urology

1032 Mar Walt Drive, Suite 250 • Fort Walton Beach (850) 863-0883 • Urology

7 The Rehabilitation Institute of Northwest Florida 996 Airport Road • Destin

(850) 863-7651 • Inpatient Acute Care Rehabilitation

8 Florida Institute of Neuroscience

965 Mar Walt Drive • Fort Walton Beach (850) 863-3463 • Neurosurgery

9 Gulf Coast Regional Medical Care

4121 W Highway 98 • Panama City Same-day appointments; walk-ins welcome (850) 872-9701 • Family Practice

10 Gulf Coast Regional Medical Care

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11 Gulf Coast Cardiology

2202 State Avenue, Suite 303 • Panama City (850) 872-3939 • Cardiology

12 Gulf Coast Pediatric & General Surgery

2202 State Avenue, Suite 207 • Panama City (850) 784-1856 • Pediatric and General Surgery

13 Gulf Coast Cardiology - Santa Rosa Beach

870 Mack Bayou Road • Santa Rosa Beach (850) 872-3939 • Cardiology

13 Florida Instutute of Neuroscience - Santa Rosa Beach

870 Mack Bayou Road • Santa Rosa Beach (850) 863-3463 • Neurosurgery



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Let your inner chef shine at the Kitchen Culinary Studio, Wind Creek Casino and Hotel

Want to tap your inner chef? The Wind Creek Casino & Hotel in Atmore, Ala., features the Kitchen Culinary Studio, with hands-on classes taught by instructor Brandon Thrash, who formerly taught at Faulkner State Community College in Gulf Shores, Ala., and other colleges in the Southeast. The state-of-the art culinary studio is designed so guests can interact, learn and be social. There are four regularly scheduled classes each week. The twohour culinary experience starts at \$59 and includes your meal, plus a complimentary



two-drink beverage service during the cooking session. Classes offer a variety of global cuisines, seasonal ingredients, cooking techniques, wine and beverage



pairings and custom menu options. January class choices include a variety of dishes: Italian, American, Seafood, Mexican, Coconut Shrimp, Braised Short Ribs and Getting Ready for Mardi Gras. Classes fill quickly so it is recommended you plan ahead. The on-site hotel also offers multiple restaurants, luxury spa, meditation garden, cinema, bowling alley, arcade, swimming pools and more. There also is a new RV park onsite. There are a variety of packages offered at the resort. Details: 866-946-3360 or windcreekatmore.com/resort/ culinarystudio.





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RETIREMENT MARKETPLACE Х Р

Life after retirement couldn't be better! Join us for the premier event in Destin for folks 50+ as we showcase all the Emerald Coast has to offer!

January 30, 2018 10:00am - 3:00pm

This lighthearted and relaxing event boasts exciting raffles with your chance to win BIG! Our 20 exhibitors range from home and finance experts to hobbies that enrich your way of life. This is an event you don't want to miss.

The Palms at Destin, 4201 Indian Bayou Trail, Destin, FL 32541 Just west of Jim & Nick's BBO, and across from Ruth's Chris, right on Hwy 98 in Destin.

Brought To You By:





12/30

Rick Springfield, 8 p.m. Hard Rock Casino 777 Beach Blvd., Biloxi, Miss. Details: (877) 877-6256 or (228) 374-7625 or www. hardrockbiloxi.com

1/5

BB King's Blues Band featuring

Tito Jackson, 8 pm. IP Casino Resort & Spa, Studio A, 850 Bayview Avenue, Biloxi, Miss. Details: 228-436-3000.

1/9

Absolutely Journey Tribute, 8 p.m. Island View Casino, 3300 W. Beach Blvd., Gulfport, Miss. Details: 1-877-774-VIEW (8439) or www.islandviewcasino.com.

BILOX

1/12

Tommy James & The Shondells, 8 pm. IP Casino Resort & Spa, 850 Bayview Avenue, Biloxi, Miss. Details: 228-436-3000. 1/13 Ann Wilson of

Heart, 8 pm. IP Casino Resort & Spa, Studio A, 850 Bayview Avenue, Biloxi, Miss. Details: 228-436-3000.

1/19-20 Englebert Humperdinck, 8 p.m., Beau Rivage Resort & Casino, 875 Beach Blvd, Biloxi, Miss., Details: 888-566-7469 or www. beaurivage.com

Jeff Foxworthy,

1/19

8 pm. IP Casino Resort & Spa, Studio A, 850 Bayview Avenue, Biloxi, Miss. Details: 228-436-3000.

1/20

Chris Janson, 8 p.m. Island View Casino, 3300 W. Beach Blvd., Gulfport, Miss. Details: 1-877-774-VIEW (8439) or www.islandviewcasino.com.

1/23

A John Denver Tribute: Chris Collins & Boulder Canyon, 8 p.m. Island View Casino, 3300 W. Beach Blvd., Gulfport, Miss. Details: 1-877-774-VIEW (8439) or www.islandviewcasino.com.



1/26

ISACOLA

Creedence Clearwater Revisited, 8 pm. IP Casino Resort & Spa, Studio A, 850 Bayview Avenue, Biloxi, Miss. Details: 228-436-3000.



1/26

Starship featuring Mickey Thomas, 8 p.m., Beau Rivage Resort & Casino, 875 Beach Blvd, Biloxi, Miss., Details: 888-566-7469 or www.beaurivage.com

1/26

Marty Stuart, 8 p.m. Golden Nugget Biloxi, 151 🌌 Beach Blvd., Biloxi, Miss. 8 p.m. Details: 800-745-3000.

1/12-14 Riverdance, 8 p.m., Beau Rivage Resort & Casino, 875 Beach Blvd, Biloxi, Miss., Details: 888-566-7469 or www.beaurivage.com



Take Exit 50, south to Ocean Springs, turn right US 90, cross the

Biloxi Bay Bridge. Take first right to the Palace Casino Resort.



Medical Briefs: Gulf Coast doctors on the cutting edge of knee and heart treatments

New Procedure Provides Options for Patients with Knee Cartilage Damage

Millions of people each year damage their knee cartilage – causing pain and restricting mobility. Juliet DeCampos, M.D., an orthopaedic surgeon at Andrews Institute for Orthopaedics and Sports Medicine, recently started using a new treatment option for cartilage damage that involves regrowing the patient's own cartilage cells in a laboratory and then implanting them to repair the defect.

"We have the opportunity to provide leading-edge treatment options for patients because of our commitment to education and clinical research as modeled by Dr. James Andrews," said Dr. DeCampos. "It



is my goal as an Andrews Institute sports medicine orthopaedic surgeon to use research evidence from our professional societies and journals to provide our patients and community with the

newest, safe and

Dr. Juliet Campos

beneficial surgeries to keep them able to move through life!"

The procedure, known as autologous chondrocyte implantation (ACI), repairs damaged articular cartilage defects with the use of a patients own cartilage cells. Andrews Institute is among the first centers in the U.S. to offer treatment for cartilage defects with the use of autologous cultured chondrocytes on a porcine collagen membrane. The procedure is the first FDA-approved product that applies the process of tissue engineering to grow cells on scaffolds using healthy cartilage tissue from the

patient's own knee. To contact Dr. DeCampos, visit

AndrewsInstitute.com or call 850-916-8700. Physical Therapy Crucial in Clinical Trial

Orthopaedic surgeons will tell you that surgery is only half of the battle, and that physical therapy is as important or more important to the patient's recovery. Specifically staged weight bearing physical therapy is paramount to the groundbreaking clinical trial evaluating the use of stem cells to regenerate knee cartilage at Andrews Institute for Orthopaedics & Sports Medicine. The FDA-observed clinical trial, led by Adam Anz, M.D., involves three steps: the surgical procedure, multiple injections of the patient's own stem cells, and the physical therapy.

"One recurring theme of orthopaedic surgery is that form follows function," said Dr. Anz. "While we've known this for some time regarding bone maintenance and healing, we've also found that with healing tissues such as cartilage you have to stimulate the cartilage with weight bearing so that it heals appropriately as it grows. We've found that loading the cartilage (with weight-bearing physical therapy) is the way to get good cartilage to heal (and grow), as we've been supplementing it with our body's own stem cells."



Dr. Adam Anz examines a patient's knee following surgery and stem cell injections.

Baptist Heart & Vascular Institute First in Area to Offer World's Smallest Pacemaker

Baptist Heart & Vascular Institute (BHVI) is the first in the area to offer the world's smallest pacemaker for patients with bradycardia, a condition characterized by a slow or irregular heart rhythm, usually fewer



The new transcather pacing system is one tenth the size of a traditional pacemaker.

than 60 beats per minute. The transcatheter pacing system (TPS) is one-tenth the size of a traditional pacemaker and does not require cardiac wires (leads) or a surgical "pocket" under the skin. The first procedure at BHVI was completed by Sumit Verma, M.D., FACC, on November 13.

"The device restores the patient's heart rate to a normal and physiological rate in keeping with the patient's activity level," says Dr. Verma. "It is an ideal device for selected patients who have atrial fibrillation, those who have difficulty with access such as dialysis patients and those who wish to avoid a visible scar. This technology will change how we approach pacing in the future." Dr. Verma used Medtronic's Micra TPS device for the procedure. It is small enough to be delivered through a catheter and

to be delivered through a catheter and implanted directly into the heart with small tines, providing a safe alternative to conventional pacemakers without the complications associated with leads – all while being cosmetically invisible. Following the procedure, most patients are able to return to normal activities within their fitness levels.

To learn more about Baptist Heart & Vascular Institute, visit eBaptistHealthCare. org/Heart or call 850.469.7309.



Friday, January 12, 2018 8 am to Noon, \$2 admission Emerald Coast Convention Center 1250 Miracle Strip Parkway, SE, Fort Walton Beach



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Get to know the GUI

by Louis Cooper

When snowbirds choose the Gulf Coast as their winter home away from home, one of the primary draws is the Gulf Coast itself. Here, freshwater meets salt and pine forests meet sugar white beaches, creating a unique environment. Across the coast, snowbirds can see exhibitions and attend workshops that highlight our flora and fauna. Here are some such opportunities, including special events and admission rates just for winter visitors:

The Dauphin Island Sea Lab Estuarium Dauphin Island, Ala., www.disl.org

The Estuarium is focused on educating the public about the Mobile Tensaw River Delta, Mobile Bay, barrier islands and the Northern Gulf of Mexico. Free Boardwalk Talks are on the first and third Wednesdays of each month.

"The program offers the public a chance to engage with the experts at the Dauphin Island Sea Lab on science topics as wide-ranging as climate change, habitat restoration, hypoxia, sea level change, salt marshes, oyster reefs, sharks and the Deepwater Horizon oil spill," said Angela Levins, the public relations director for the Dauphin Island Sea Lab. **Navarre Beach Marine Science Station**

Navarre Beach, Fla., www.navarresciencestation.org

The Navarre Beach Marine Science Station has five Snowbird Sessions by the Sea planned this winter specifically with snowbirds in mind.

"I did a series of programs for snowbirds last year and it was a great success," said Charlene Mauro, station director. **Upcoming workshops include:**

Jan. 18 - Beachcombing 101: Learn about sea shells during a guided beach walk.

Jan. 25 - Lion Fish 101: Learn about this harmful, invasive species.

Feb. 1 - What's on the Reef: Learn about artificial reefs. Feb. 15 - Birds and Barrier Islands: Interactive lecture and guided tour with an Audubon expert.

Pre-registration is required for Snowbird Sessions. Each workshop costs \$5 with 15 spots available.

A planned 9,000-square-foot marine interpretive center will showcase the Pensacola Bay Watershed with a focus on the Gulf of Mexico and its marine life.



Exploring the habitats at Navarre Beach.

Steven W. Baker Sea, Sand, and Stars Center Orange Beach Elementary School, Orange Beach, Ala., www.seasandandstars.com

The Sea, Sand, and Stars Center is 8,700-squarefoot facility that houses a 5,600-gallon saltwater aquarium, a 1,000-gallon touch tank, a planetarium, a technology center, a laboratory, a reference center and a weather center, along with four outdoor learning gazebos for the study of native bugs, birds, reptiles, amphibians and plants. A snowbird field trip is planned for Feb. 2. "Space is limited," said Nicole Bryant, director of the center. "We have talked about adding a third tour, if we have enough participants interested."

The tour ends with a planetarium presentation. This is the third year for the snowbird trips. "We want our winter guests to know about us and see what we do," Bryant said. "It has grown each year as people tell their friends about us." **Gulf World Marine Park**

Panama City, Fla.,

www.gulfworldmarinepark.com

"Winter residents love our educational tours and learning new things each time they visit," said Sam Tuno, sales and marketing director for Gulf World. "The various animal species, educational programs and tours allow them to continue educating themselves each visit. Visiting Gulf World has become an annual tradition for many snowbirds."

Gulf World offers several shows every day, including dolphin and sea lions shows and a "feathers and friends" show featuring birds, cats, dogs and reptiles. The park also offers tours and the chance to feed sting rays, sharks and turtles. Snowbirds pay only \$15 admission on Mondays in January and February. The park is also offering snowbirds monthly passes for January and February for \$35.

Gulfarium Marine Adventure Park Fort Walton Beach, Fla., www.gulfarium.com

For more than a half century, the Gulfarium has been bringing the aquatic adventure to visitors on Fort Walton Beach's Okaloosa Island. This time of year, the park has a special with snowbirds in mind.

In January and February, Senior Wednesdays when admission is only \$7 for visitors ages 62 and older. It's a popular attraction for seniors and their grandchildren. The Gulfarium features dolphin and sea lion shows scheduled several times throughout the day as well as exhibits with reptiles, seals, penguins, sharks and much more. Many of the exhibits feature "chats" throughout the day where visitors can ask questions about the animals.

Mississippi Aquarium

Gulfport, Miss., www.msaquarium.org Soon the Mississippi Gulf Coast will offer its own gulf experience with the Mississippi Aquarium, coming in 2019. The beachfront aquarium is currently under construction with plans for 1 million gallons of both salt and freshwater with more than 80,000-square feet of exhibits.

Top to bottom: Dolphin at Gulf World Marine Park; Navarre Beach Marine Science Station education bus; exploring Navarre beaches; native Alabama turtle at the Dauphin Island Sea Lab Estuarium; and the touch tank at the Steven W. Baker Sea, Sand, and Stars Center. Above left: Exploring Navarre Beach.

Get inspired by gardening, history and more during Bellingrath's Winter Wednesdays

Bellingrath Gardens is filled with blooms and beauty year-round. One of its most popular programs for visitors and residents is the Winter Wednesdays series staged in January and February.

The Winter Wednesdays sessions are held weekly in the Magnolia Room from 10:30 to 11:30 a.m. through Feb. 28. Admission to the program is included in the regular Gardens admission, and guests are encouraged to tour the Gardens after the session. Registration is requested: To register, call 251.459.8864.

The 2018 Winter Wednesdays schedule: January 10: Winter Garden Walk - Learn about the interesting winter borders and containers throughout the Gardens from Bellingrath's Horticulture Management Team: Executive Director Dr. Bill Barrick, Nursery Manager Chuck Owens and Display Coordinator Barbara Smith.

January 17: "The Underwater Forest," with Ben Raines - Environmental reporter and filmmaker Ben Raines will describe the secrets of an ancient underwater cypress forest recently discovered south of Alabama's Gulf Shores in the Gulf of Mexico that dates back to more than 60,000 years ago, when sea levels were 400 feet lower than today. Ben's acclaimed documentary about the forest was released in June 2017.

Boardwalk Beach Hotel

January 24: Steamboats on Alabama Rivers,

with Tom McGehee - Long before there were highways or railroads in Alabama, rivers provided the only way to move passengers and freight. The age of steam travel on those rivers lasted from the 1830s until the early 20th century, when railroads and improved roads made them obsolete.



Walter Bellingrath shipped his Coca-Cola cases on river steamers in the early 1900s, and his father-in-law was a shipwright. Explore the beginnings of river steamers, their peak in the 1890s and their sad end by World War I.

January 31: An in-depth look at the Civil War with authors John Sledge and Frye Gaillard- Well-known local historians and authors John S. Sledge and Frye Galliard will discuss their books about how the Civil War affected the lives of Alabamians. After the presentation, John and Frye will sign copies of their books, "These Rugged Days: Alabama in the Civil War" and "Journey to the Wilderness: War, Memory and a Southern Family's Civil War Letters," which will be available to purchase in the Gift Shop. **February 7: Birding on the Gulf Coast -**

Dr. Mark LaSalle, Director

of the Pascagoula River Audubon Center, will tell guests how to identify birds along the Gulf Coast and how to participate in the Great Backyard Bird Count. Weather permitting, he will lead a bird walk through the Gardens. The 21st annual Great Backyard Bird Count will be held Feb. 16 to 19, 2018. February 14: Raising Roses - Linda Guy, longtime Rosarian of Bellingrath's awardwinning Rose Garden, shows guests how to care for roses year-round and will give a demonstration of rose pruning techniques. Questions are encouraged! Books and supplies are available in the Gift Shop. February 21: Shipshape Urban Farms -Located in downtown Mobile, Shipshape Urban Farms grows hydroponic lettuces,



leafy greens and herbs. Learn from owner Dale Speetiens about how hydroponic crops are cultivated without soil in nutrient-rich water in a controlled environment with no pesticides or herbicides, using innovative, green features to save water and use less energy than traditional farming practices. February 28: Caring for Gulf Coast Appalachia - Imagine adding rhododendron, mountain laurel, and native hydrangeas to your Gulf Coast garden. These plants, and many more like them, are native to the Gulf Coastal Plain. Bobby Green, owner of Green Nurseries in Fairhope and one of the most knowledgeable horticulturists in our area, will introduce you to these beautiful ornamentals. He will also discuss how to best select and care for them in your garden.

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| | KOODS- the Feedkets | | | |
| Snowbird Dances with DJ Jim Lawson | Woody & The Peckers | 3xs-a-Lady | Don Audette | Magi Shaun |
| 3pm-6pm | 6pm-9pm | 6pm-9pm | 6pm-9pm | 6pm-9pm |
| | | | | 1.4.7 |
| Jan 7,10, 17, 21, 24 & 31 | Jan 12, 19 & 26 | Jan 13, 20 & 27 | Jan 18 & 25 | Jan 29 |



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2

Pensacola Ice Flyers hockey will give you chills

Snowbirds come down to the Gulf Coast to get away from the cold temperatures up north.

But if they want just a brief return to some colder temperatures, grab a jacket, come to the Pensacola Bay Center and watch some hot action with the Pensacola Ice Flyers hockey team.



The team plays through early April in the Southern Professional

Hockey League. The league features teams from as far away as North Carolina, Tennessee and Illinois. Teams feature young, talented players who hope to get a chance to reach the NHL. And neat names as well ... like Mayhem (Macon, Ga.), Havoc (Huntsville, Ala.) and Rail Yard Dawgs (Roanoke, Va).

The Ice Flyers have won three league championships in the last five years and, through late December, were tied for first place this season. The team is led by first-year coach Jeff Bes, who was a player for the Pensacola Ice Pilots in 2000.



Team owner Greg Harris has put together an organization that makes it a family affair at the games where promotions and activities before the puck drops, as well as during the intermissions, keep it fun the ice for adults and children.

Coach Jeff Bes

The team offers numerous tickets packages, including 5-game pack where you can select the games/dates you want to attend. Prices for individual games range from \$15 to \$29. Details: pensacolaiceflyers.com or 850-466-3111.



Discover Tiger Point Golf Club. Nestled along the gentle shores of the Santa Rosa Sound, Tiger Point provides the perfect balance of recreation and challenge. With awe-inspiring water views we invite residents and visitors alike to come experience our coastal playground. From the welcoming charm of our facilities to the warmth of our team members, Tiger Point Golf Club is the perfect place to reconnect with family, friends, and co-workers.

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28





Snowbird Expo Jan. 23 at 10 a.m. - 12 p.m. **Blue Angels Atrium**

Winter visitors are invited to receive information from local organizations, enjoy coffee, as well as special offers on Museum attractions.

Glenn Miller Orchestra Concert Feb. 2 at 7 p.m. Hear the world-famous Glenn Miller

Orchestra bring unique jazz and big band sounds to the National Naval Aviation Museum.

Breakfast and a Movie

Feb. 6, 13, 20, 27 • \$10.00 per person Enjoy Chick-fil-A breakfast and choice of beverage from the new refreshment counter followed by a presentation and movie in the recently renovated, Giant Screen Digital Theater. Doors open 9 a.m., presentation begins at 9:30 a.m. followed by movie at 10 a.m. February 6.....Hurricane February 13Dream Big: Engineering Our World February 20.....We, The Marines

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Download now at VisitPensacola.com/wintervisit and see a complete list of offers.



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Snowbird Sessions by the sea at the Navarre Beach Marine Science Station Beachcombing 101 Thursday, January 18, 2-3 pm

BJ Thomas Live at the Imogene Theatre Friday, January 19, 7-9 pm

Navarre Beach Snowbirds Business Expo & Social Tuesday, January 23, 2-4 pm

Snowbird Sessions by the sea at the Navarre Beach Marine Science Station Lionfish 101 Thursday, January 25, 2-3 pm

Navarre Beach Krewe of Jesters Mardi Gras Ball Saturday, January 27, 2018 6 pm

Snowbird Sessions by the sea at the Navarre Beach Marine Science Station What's on the Reef Thursday, February 1, 2-3 pm

32nd Annual Navarre Beach Mardi Gras Parade Saturday, February 3, 1 pm

Gulf Coast Clay Conference and Woodstoke Pottery and Kiln Festival/Kiln Walk at Holley Hill Pottery, February 7-10, 2018

Snowbird Sessions by the sea at the Navarre Beach Marine Science Station Bird and Barrier Islands Thursday, February 15, 2-3 pm

30th Annual Riverwalk Arts Festival Saturday & Sunday, March 3 – 4, 10 am – 5 pm

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New Volunteer Opportunities

The new South Alabama Retired Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) is enrolling volunteers that are seeking opportunities to share meaningful and rewarding experiences in our local communities.

Retired seniors throughout Baldwin County now have opportunities in Gulf Shores, Orange Beach and Foley to make a powerful impact in the lives of veterans,

elderly, children and those with special needs.

Share your wealth of experience and life time of expertise where it matters most.

Details: Dawne Biggs, RSVP Volunteer Coordinator, at (251) 621-9000 Ext 164

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How do you help stimulate a child's interest in science - and boost your own knowledge?

Buy an annual membership package at a hands-on science center. Benefit packages typically include the option of bringing two or more children with you and discounts on IMAX and blockbuster-type exhibits plus reciprocal agreements with hundreds of centers throughout the country.

The Gulf Coast Exploreum in Mobile, Ala.; the Emerald Coast Science Center in Fort Walton Beach, Fla., and the Science and Discovery Center of Northwest Florida in Panama City, Fla., all offer packages that typically start at \$125 per year.

Learn about each at their websites: Gulf Coast Exploreum - exploreum.com; Emerald Coast Science Center - ecscience.org and Science and Discovery Center of Northwest Florida - www.scienceanddiscoverycenter.org



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Bellingrath

Winter Wednesdays 201

| January 3 | After Christmas Sale |
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| January 10 | Winter Garden Walk |
| January 17 | "The Underwater Forest," with Ben Raines |
| January 24 | Steamboats on Alabama Rivers, with Tom McGehee |
| January 31 | The Civil War, with authors John Sledge and Frye Gaillard |
| February 7 | Birding on the Gulf Coast, with Dr. Mark LaSalle |
| February 14 | Raising Roses, with Linda Guy |
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Mardi Gras

Start the year with a party – Mardi Gras! Originally celebrated in the coastal Alabama area, the first parades roll on Dauphin Island on January 13th and 20th. The Krewe de la Dauphine rolls first, as the oldest parading organization on the Island. Then, the Dauphin Island People's Parade rolls with many, creative floats and parade goers.

Boardwalk Talks at Estuarium at the Dauphin Island Sea Lab

The Boardwalk Talk series is a free, public program on the first and third Wednesdays of the month, at 11:15 a.m. Come to the Estuarium to participate in a dialog with

the experts, including researchers, graduate students, post docs, educators, aquarists and technicians. These informal chats encompass a broad range of science topics.

Winter Wednesdays at Bellingrath Gardens

Every year, Bellingrath Gardens and Home hosts specialized workshops when the weather gets chilly in winter months. Each workshop covers a special feature of the Gardens or Home, tips for making your garden more spectacular or guest lectures from renowned members of the horticultural and gardening world.

Discovery Day at the Dauphin Island Sea Lab

Discovery Day is the Dauphin Island Sea Lab's annual open house. Visit April 7th for a tour of the research facilities to learn about our coastal environment and the research being done at the Sea Lab. Visitors will learn about

the coastal ecosystem and why it's important to conserve our precious and unique environment. Guests will also be able to tour the Research Vessel Alabama Discovery.



www.townofdauphinisland.org

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Don't forget a ride on the Mobile Bay Ferry is a fun way to see the Bay and both Fort Gaines and Fort Morgan.

Sean of the South:



At the end of the night, my dog and I are walking to my truck. I am carrying several foil-covered plates they

sent with me. My stomach is full. This is an engagement party at the Cuthbert farm. There are country people here of every shape, accent, and denomination. Salt-of-the-earth people.

On the buffet line they have every home-cooked casserole you can imagine. Jugs of tea. Coolers of beer. Cheap wine. And a coonhound roaming free.

I recognize this hound. She came with me. And she's supposed to be my date tonight.

The hound is following a boy who's as tall as a longleaf pine. The boy is sixteen. Tallest thing at the party. "Don't know how he got so stinking tall," says the boy's daddy—a roofing man. "He was a normal-sized kid until last year. Then, BOOM. He was Michael Jordan."

The kid is a baseball pitcher. He can pitch fastballs that shatter sound barriers.

"When he's standing on that mound, he's freaking awesome," says old Dad.

I meet a forty-three-year-old woman, wearing a scarf around her bald head. She's eating bacon-wrapped venison. The woman is on her last round of cancer treatment. She is aunt to the bride-to-be.

She says her disease was a blessing. "A blessing?" I ask.

"People all came together for me. You can't imagine the support these people give you when you're sick. "When this many people love on you, it makes you realize that life's a gift." A gift.

They tell me this woman might not make it.

I meet Miss Bonnie—mid-eighties. She has reddish-white hair and smells like Youth Dew.

She is a passionate little thing. "Back in the day," she says. "My girlfriends and I wanted to march with Doctor King, but my Daddy forbid it. Told me it was too dangerous.

"Daddy was a good man. He ended up driving three old country preachers and their wives all the way to Selma for the march."

I meet a ten-year-old. His name is Jake. He's a novice welder. He takes lessons from his father after school. "He's getting pretty good," says his father. "We weld small things, simple projects."

A mailbox. A headboard. Iron wind chimes.

Jake's father is teaching his son to weld because good welders make better money than some folks with MBA's.

"I know guys who want their sons going to top-notch colleges," he says. "Welding's kinda the same thing. Best gift I can give my son is teach him to make a good living." At the end of the night, my dog and I are walking to my truck. I am carrying several foil-covered plates they sent with me. My stomach is full. I have spent three hours with the salt of this earth, and I feel better for it.

There's a hound beside me. She's ready for bed.

I dig in my pocket for my keys. I catch a glimpse of a six-foot-seven teenager, pitching a fastball toward his daddy—who holds a bat.

They're standing in the empty field, the sun is setting.

The woman with the scarf on her head is watching them. She's bundled in blankets, sitting on a truck bumper. She applauds each pitch. My God. I see it.

I see it, and it's downright magnificent. I'm sorry I don't stop and pay attention to it more often. *Life is a gift. And people are beautiful.*

Sean Dietrich is a columnist, and novelist, known for his commentary on life in the American South. His work has appeared in Southern Living, The Tallahassee Democrat, Good Grit, South Magazine, Yellowhammer News, the Bitter Southerner, Thom Magazine, The Mobile Press Register, and he has authored seven books.



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up online) and Facebook page: Snowbirds Gulf Coast ("Like" the page to receive information)

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January 8th - February 26th Earn 10 base-points 7am - 2pm and lunch that day at TASTE Buffet is on us!* *REWARDS Members 50+ years of age ONLY

\$10 FREE PLAY CODE: 10FPSNOWBD

Valid Monday, January 8th – Wednesday, January 10th Wind Creek Casino & Hotel Atmore **\$10 FREE PLAY** CODE: 10FPSNOWB1 Valid Monday, January 15th – Wednesday, January 17th

Birthday E

HOT SEATS

WEDNESDAYS

January 3rd - January 31st • 1pm - 3pm

WIN UP TO \$100 FREE PLAY!

alid Monday, January 15th – Wednesday, January 1⁻ Wind Creek Casino & Hotel Atmore

\$10 FREE PLAY CODE: 10FPSNOW2

Valid Monday, January 22nd – Wednesday, January 24th Wind Creek Casino & Hotel Atmore



FIND YOUR WINNING MOMENT.®

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Present coupon each week to PLAYER SERVICES to redeem. Limit one per Rewards account per week in January. Cannot be combined with any other offer. See PLAYER SERVICES for details.