

**FREE!**

# Snow **BIRDS**

Gulf Coast

A Winter Visitor  
Publication  
**Holidays 2019**

**Casino  
Entertainment**  
page 20

**Holiday events  
across the  
Gulf Coast!**

**Clubs and  
Calendar**  
pages 10-11, 12-13

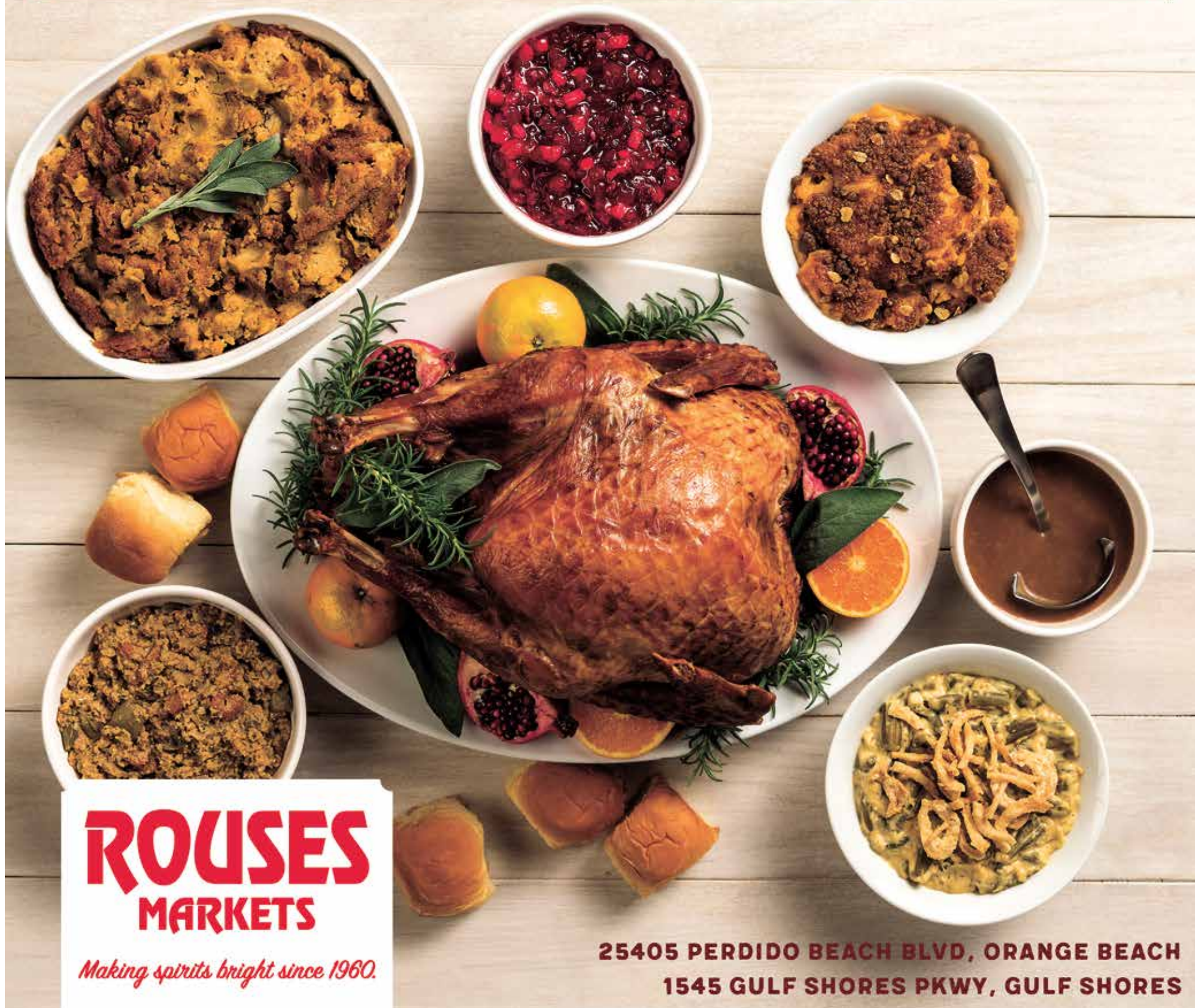
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A promotional graphic for the show 'Christmas in the Air'. It features three female dancers in red and white holiday-themed costumes with Santa hats, performing a synchronized dance move. The background is a deep red with a subtle pattern of white stars and snowflakes. At the bottom, there are stylized white Christmas trees on a white base representing snow. The text is in white, with 'CHRISTMAS' in a large, ornate serif font, and 'IN THE AIR' in a smaller, simpler font below it. The dates 'DECEMBER 14-27' and 'DARK DECEMBER 16 & 17' are prominently displayed. A descriptive paragraph follows, and then ticket and package information is listed. The RPS logo is in the bottom right corner.

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## ON THE COVER

Donna and Jim Jacko arrived at their Panama City Beach winter home just two weeks after Hurricane Michael created a wide swath of destruction. They immediately got to work volunteering.

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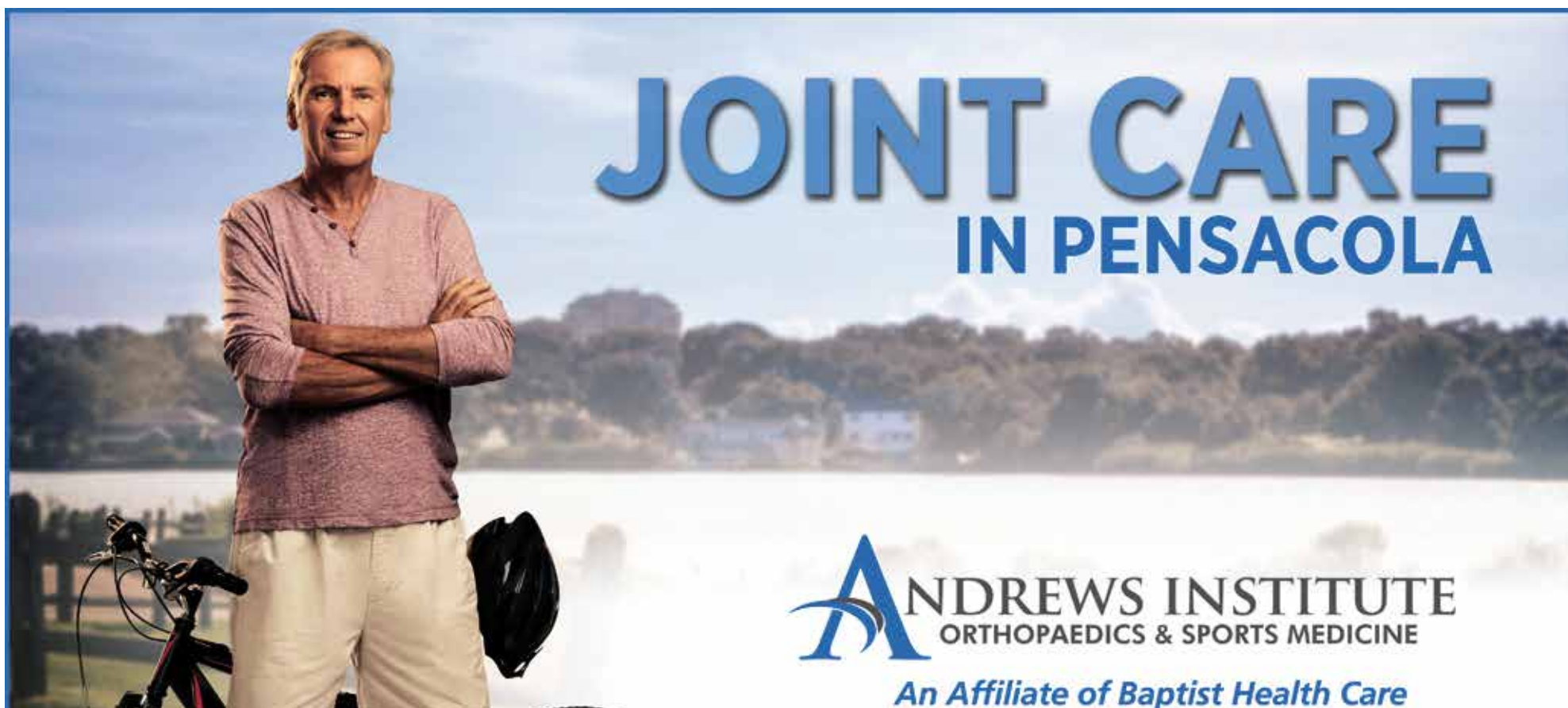
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# Welcome!

Our early arrivals tend to enjoy the quiet time before the bustling Snowbird season begins.

Our cover couple, Donna and Jim Jacko, are roll-up-your-sleeve type of people and they did just that last year when they arrived two weeks after Hurricane Michael. The Jacko's spend six months in Panama City Beach with their beloved senior dog, Abby and they spend much of that time volunteering.



Our holiday edition is always packed with more things to do than most can find time. We offer a sneak peak at club activities and special Snowbird "welcome" events as the big wave of Snowbirds arrive Jan. 1. So, get out your calendars and explore! There is so much to do and see.

As always, we are so glad you are here and know that you bring many visitors throughout the winter. Get to know the folks who serve you as this is the time of year when things slow down and they appreciate you too!

Happy holidays to you all. Be sure to "Follow" our Facebook page Snowbirds Gulf Coast and sign up for our e-newsletter at [Snowbirdgulfcoast.com](http://Snowbirdgulfcoast.com).

Karen Harrell, [publisher@snowbirdgulfcoast.com](mailto:publisher@snowbirdgulfcoast.com) or 850-291-1266



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## WINTER RESIDENT APPRECIATION DAYS

January 17 | February 7 & 21

## WINTER RESIDENT HOMECOMING DANCE

January 22

## WINTER RESIDENT SENIOR PROM

February 12

## PCB MARDI GRAS & MUSIC FESTIVAL

February 21-22

## WINTER RESIDENT GRAND FINALE

February 26

## EMERALD COAST BOAT & LIFESTYLE SHOW

February 28 - March 1

## EMERALD COAST CRUIZIN'

March 4-7

## UNWINED

March 20-21

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# Standing with Panama City Beach

Donna and Jim Jacko didn't let a historic hurricane deter their winter plans.

The Broadview Heights, Ohio, couple arrived back to their home-away-from-home in late October 2018 - just two weeks after Hurricane Michael (later determined to be a Category 5 storm) swept across Panama City, Fla. The storm then moved east along the Panhandle and north into southern Alabama and south Georgia, bringing devastation in its wake.

Hurricane Michael formed at the last minute and quickly "blew up" into a powerful 160-mph monster. The couple didn't understand the depth of the devastation until they arrived.

Jim, 74, retired nine years ago after 20 years as an engineer with Rockwell Automation and several other positions before that. Donna, 73, spent 25 years as a medical insurance and billing professional and still helps people understand their insurance and benefits today.

The Jackos' love story began when they met at a dance when they were 19. They married 3 ½ years later and recently marked their 50th wedding anniversary.

The couple has one son, Joseph, 49, and a 15-year-old granddaughter, Jillian. Both love to fish during their annual spring break visit. They live in Akron, Ohio.



After Michael's landfall, the Jackos stayed in close touch with condo managers at their rental at sprawling Gulf Crest, located on Panama City Beach's east end near Thomas Drive. They feel lucky to have found their pet-friendly condo several years ago as their heart belongs to an aging rescue, an "Australian-Terrier-Yorkie on steroids" - named Abby McGillicuddy "Spike" Jacko, age 14. Spike spent 3 1/2 years "in lockup" before the Jacko's made her their forever family. Some 11 years later, the family knows they are "on borrowed time."

The couple discovered Panama City Beach in 2001 when Jim participated in his first Ironman competition. Since then he's competed in six events (2004, 2007, 2010, 2011, 2014 and 2017)

Before Michael, Jim had trained all year







for the 2018 competition, which had to be moved elsewhere in the state. He's already begun training for the 2020 event where he can compete in the 75-90 category.

Donna has been a regular volunteer at the "Lucky Puppy" rescue operation. Jim helped people with home repairs soon after their arrival last year through relief efforts coordinated by Saint Dominic's Catholic Church, which suffered its own devastation. The church soldiered on and set up a tent and started taking and distributing relief supplies to thousands. Today the effort is coordinated by Catholic Charities of Northwest Florida while Saint Dominic's is trying to repair its building.

During their six-month annual stay, they are never lonely. They look out for new Snowbirds, especially around the holidays, inviting people to dine and spend time with them.



Jim, a former smoker, is an inspiring sight to many who winter in Panama City Beach's east end. He trains at the condo and nearby using the heated pool and fitness room while cycling nearby. That first Ironman race cemented the Jacko's plans as they contemplated retirement and where they would "Snowbird": Panama City Beach.

## Snowbirds giving back

Donna and Jim Jacko arrived at their Panama City Beach winter home just two weeks after Hurricane Michael created a wide swath of destruction, particularly inland Panama City.



Housing in many low-income neighborhoods was decimated.

The Jackos pitched in immediately at Saint Dominic's Catholic Church (which itself was decimated) organizing and distributing food, clothing, blankets, water, tarps and more. Jim, who has construction skills, also pitched in helping shore up shelter for immediate needs. Both animal lovers, Donna pitched in at the Lucky Puppy rescue, an organization dear to their hearts. The pair continue to volunteer today and urge others who have the time and skills to do the same.

**Lucky Puppy Dog Rescue & Kennel**  
1255 Lee Rd, Bonifay, Fla.  
[www.theluckypuppy.org](http://www.theluckypuppy.org)

**Catholic Charities of Northwest Florida**  
3128 East 11th St.  
Panama City, Fla.  
850-763-2475  
[www.ccnwfl.org/](http://www.ccnwfl.org/)



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## Snowbird Clubs

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.

### FLORIDA

**PERDIDO KEY:** Events calendars can be picked up at the Perdido Key Visitor Center, 15500 Perdido Key Drive. Details: 850-492-4660 or www.visitperdido.com.

**PANAMA CITY:** 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. Oatfield Center, 423 Lyndell Lane, Panama City Beach, Fla. Details: 850-236-3038 or 850-233-5065.

The Panama City Convention and Visitor Bureau: Winter Resident Appreciation Days are 8 to 11 a.m. Jan. 17, Feb. 7 & 21. Also: Jan. 27 is the annual Winter Resident Homecoming Dance; Feb. 12 is the Winter Resident Senior Prom and Feb. 26 is the Winter Resident Finale. Details: 800-722-3224 or www.visitpanamacitybeach.com

**DESTIN:** The Club meets at "The Roost" – the Destin Community Center, 101 Stahlman Ave., opened Nov. 18. Registration fee is \$8 per person. Upcoming registration dates include: 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Dec. 2 and 9; meeting dates are 10 a.m. Dec. 3 & 10. "Big" registration is 10 a.m., Jan. 6 with a meeting on Jan. 7 at 8:30 a.m. and 11 a.m. Weekly Tues. meetings are held in Jan. and Feb: 8:30 a.m. and 11 a.m., and at 10 a.m. on March 5. Meetings include entertainment, activities and information from local vendors. The club will

participate in the Destin Street Parade Dec. 14 and gather at Brotula's to view the Holiday Lighted Boat Parade Dec. 15. Details: www.destinsnowbirds.org

**FORT WALTON BEACH:** With over 700 members, the Club offers a variety of activities during the winter months including monthly meetings with entertainment, monthly socials, casino bus trips, Valentine Sweetheart Dance, golf league and scrambles, crafts, pickle ball, billiards, and card games. Meeting and registration are held at the Fort Walton Beach Recreation Center, 132 Jet Drive. Membership fee is \$10 per person. Additional fees for some activities. Meetings are held the first Tuesday of January, February and March at 10 a.m. Registration 9 a.m. - Noon Jan. 3 and 6 from 9 am-Noon and on Tuesdays (starting Jan. 14) from 10 am to Noon. On meeting days registration is from 9 am – 10 am. Details: information@FWBSBC.com or www.fwbsbc.com

**NAVARRE:** Navarre Beach: Key dates include: Jan 7 - Welcome Reception 2 to 4 p.m. at Broussard's Bayou Grill on Navarre Beach; Jan. 14 - Snowbird Business Expo 2 to 4 p.m. at Navarre Conference Center; Jan 25, Arts & Crafts Expo 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. at Navarre Conference Center and Feb. 13, Sweethearts Dance, 5 to 10 p.m. at Navarre Conference Center. Details: navarrebeachsnowbirdsclub.com

**PENSACOLA BEACH:** The hub of activity is at the two island churches, which host potlucks, games and more. The Santa Rosa Island Authority's annual Pensacola Beach Bash is 9 a.m. Jan. 23 at the Pensacola Beach Community Church, 920 Panferio Dr. Also find activities at Our Lady of Assumption Catholic Church, 920 Via de Luna. Check out the island's visitor center for more information.

**WALTON COUNTY:** The first registration 8:30 to 10:30 a.m.

Dec. 9 at Faith Assembly Fellowship Hall, 306 South Geronimo St. Registration fee is \$10 per year. The first general meeting is at 10 a.m. Dec. 11 at the Destin Life Center Building of the Destin United Methodist Church, 200 Beach Drive, Destin. Featured entertainment is "Marilyn Monroe and Frank Sinatra." Door prizes and vendors. Details: www.waltoncountysnowbirds.com

### ALABAMA

**DAKOTAS:** The North and South Dakota Snowbird Club meets on the second and fourth Tues. mornings. Dates include Jan. 14, 28; Feb. 4, 11 and March 3 at Luna's Eat & Drink, 25753 Canal Road, Orange Beach, at 8:30 a.m. for breakfast with a short meeting to follow at 9 a.m. We support the Christian Service Center food pantry and volunteer for several local charities and organizations. Details: Joyce at 605-351-0274.

**DAUPHIN ISLAND:** New this year on Dauphin Island and in the surrounding communities is "Welcome Wednesdays." Visit the official "Little Red School House" Welcome Center, 1016 Bienville Blvd., and learn about area attractions, visit the history exhibits and peruse the library. Island events include twice-monthly Boardwalk Talks the first and third Wed. at 11:15 a.m. at The Estuarium. Visit Bellingrath Gardens for its Welcome Wednesday special guest list. Details: www.townofdauphinisland.org or www.bellingrath.org

**ILLINOIS:** The 2019-20 season kicks off Jan. 3 with a Welcome Back Coffee at 9 a.m. at the Orange Beach Senior Activity Center. Jan. event dates include: 10 – Breakfast at GT's on the Bay, 8 a.m.; 14 – Potluck & Games at Orange Beach Senior Activity Center, 5 p.m.; 15 – Book Club Orange Beach Library, 9:30 a.m.; 24 – Breakfast at GT's On the Bay, 7:45 a.m.; February – 7 – Breakfast at GT's on the Bay, 8 a.m.; 8

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\* Limitations: These promotions are for Snowbirds and new patients.



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# Join the Club!



– Bratfest at Orange Beach Community Center, 10:30 a.m.; 8 – Trivia Night at Orange Beach Events Center, 6 p.m.; 11 – Potluck & Games, 5 p.m.; 19 – Book Club at Orange Beach Library, 9:30 a.m.; 20 – Breakfast at GTs on the Bay, 8 a.m.; 21 – Low Country Boil (new zoo), 11 a.m.; 25 – Picnic in the Park at Johnnie Sims Park, Noon. March 6 – Breakfast at GTs on the Bay, 8 a.m. Club president: Loren Due 815-262-1938 or bbreff@hotmail.com

**INDIANA:** Open to all "Hoosiers" and meets the second and four first Thurs. in Jan. and Feb. at Luna's Event Center, 25689 Canal Road, Orange Beach. The club fee is \$2.50. Dates are Jan. 9, 23; Feb. 6, 20 and March 5. Doors open at 7:30 a.m., meeting at 8 a.m. No cash over \$20. Meetings feature door prizes. The club participates in several fundraisers each year. Details: Jan Pell 317-914-5832.

**IOWA:** Four club breakfast meetings will be staged at Perdido Beach Resort, 27200 East Perdido Beach Blvd., Orange Beach. Cost is \$11 per person. Dates are Jan. 8 and 22; Feb. 5 and 19. Make reservations at [IowaAlabamagulfcoastsnowbirds.org](http://IowaAlabamagulfcoastsnowbirds.org) (preferred) or call Chris and Steve Hedlund at 319-430-4597. A season final informal breakfast will be held at Luna's, reservations necessary, but no program at the event. Cocktail Parties Jan. 17 and Feb. 21, 5 to 7 p.m. at the Caribe Resort, Building C, 28103 Perdido Beach Boulevard, Orange Beach. Details: 319-330-2446 or LFGRU2@gmail.com.

**MICHIGAN:** One of the largest clubs in the region, the Michigan club meets: Jan. 9, 23; Feb. 6, 20 and March 4 at the Gulf Shores Activity Center. Doors open at 9 a.m. for coffee and doughnuts, meeting starts at 10 a.m. The club sponsors several activities, including golf, footgolf, luncheons, casino trips, fish flings, breakfasts, cruises and other special outings. Members participate in area blood drives, food drives, Brat

Fest (Feb. 8) and Low Country Boil (Feb. 21.) Details: Paul Spahl at [michiganclubalabama@gmail.com](mailto:michiganclubalabama@gmail.com)

**MISSOURI:** The first weekly Wednesday meeting date is 9 a.m. Jan. 8 at Perdido Beach Resort. Breakfast meetings continue through the end of February. The first weekly Wed. meeting date is 9 a.m., Jan. 8 at Perdido Beach Resort. Breakfast meetings continue through the end of February.. Business meetings at 9 a.m. at Phoenix V alternate with breakfast. Details: [karenginstead@icloud.com](mailto:karenginstead@icloud.com) or [www.mosnowbirds.org](http://www.mosnowbirds.org).

**MICHIGAN:** Meeting dates: Jan 9, 23; Feb. 6, 20 and March 4, 2020. All meetings are at the Erie Meyer Center in Gulf Shores. Registration at 8:30 a.m., coffee and donuts at 9 a.m. with the meeting at 10 a.m. Meetings include entertainment, Club activities and door prizes. Membership dues are \$3 total per person, per year. Details: [www.michiganclubalabama.com](http://www.michiganclubalabama.com) or 231-335-9838.

**MINNESOTA:** Meets Tues. for breakfast Jan. 7 – March 10 at GT's On The Bay, 26189 Canal Road. Members socialize and hear weekly announcements, volunteer opportunities, card/game get-togethers, golf scheduling and prizes, 50/50 raffle, and more. Pre-registration required by the Fri. before the breakfast. Click on "Breakfast Signup" on the website. Doors open 7:30 a.m.; breakfast 8 a.m. Cost: \$10, includes tax and tip. Cash preferred — no bills over \$20. The club collects food donations and/or cash for the Christian Service Center, our dedicated project. Details: [www.mnal.org](http://www.mnal.org) or the Facebook page @mnalclub.

**NEW YORK:** Luncheon dates are Jan. 9, 23; Feb. 6, 20 and March 5 at Ginny Lane, 4851 Wharf Pkwy. E, Orange Beach at the Wharf. Registration 11 a.m. A \$1 donation will be collected at registration. Door prizes. The club participates in

fundraisers including Brat Fest and Trivia Night (both Feb. 8); Low Country Boil (Feb. 21) and the Golf Tournament (TBD.) Reservations for breakfast: [nysnowbirds@gmail.com](mailto:nysnowbirds@gmail.com) or Tracy, 585 748 0133 or Frank, 585-748-0432.

**OHIO:** Club breakfasts are staged at 8:30 a.m. Luna's Eat and Drink, 25753 Canal Road, Orange Beach. The schedule includes Jan. 8, 22; Feb. 5, 19, and a farewell lunch at 1 p.m. March 4 at GTs on the Bay. RSVP: Gayle 937-621-1700 or [gaylehofacker@gmail.com](mailto:gaylehofacker@gmail.com)

**PENNSYLVANIA:** Meets Wed. for breakfast at Buzzcatz, 25689 Canal Road, Orange Beach Jan 8, 15, 22, 29; Feb. 5, 12, 26 and Mar 4, 11. Pot Luck Luncheon Feb. 20 (tentative). Eat & Talk - dates TBD. Breakfasts have no dues, reservations, formal officers, or roll call. The club joins other snowbird groups in winter fundraising activities. Details: Rich Smith at 484-264-1394 or Betty Ann Smith 908-420-8806

**WISCONSIN:** Upcoming events: Dec. 18 – Lunch at Original Oyster House, 11:30 a.m.; 25 – Christmas Dinner at Orange Beach Event Center, 12:30 p.m. social, 2 p.m. lunch. Meetings are at 9 a.m. Jan. 8, 22; Feb. 5, 26 at the Orange Beach Event Center and 9 a.m. March 4 and 11 at the Orange Beach Community Center. February fundraisers include: 8 at 11 a.m.- Bratfest at Orange Beach Community Center and 6 p.m. Trivia Night at the Orange Beach Event Center; 11 – 8 Pin Tap Bowling at Gulf Bowl, Foley; 18 – 9 a.m. Baldwin Heritage Museum Golf Fundraiser at Glen Lakes and 21 – Low Country Boil, Zoo. Details: [www.sites.google.com/site/wisconsinsnowbirdclub/mparty-calendar](http://www.sites.google.com/site/wisconsinsnowbirdclub/mparty-calendar). Details: Kenn 251-967-2463



## Holiday Isle Properties

offer condos ranging from studios to 3 bedrooms. We have condos all over Holiday Isle and a few on Highway 98. Holiday Isle is a quiet area in Destin consisting of a variety of condo complexes and homes that offer a relaxing environment for a winter stay. Our rates start as low as \$1000/month and we offer a variety of complexes with varying amenities.

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Historic DeFuniak Spring, Fla., has selected "Holiday Movies" as this year's theme. The event is staged in historic downtown business district and adjacent Chipley Park, once the centerpiece of a gated campus/resort opened in 1885 for the annual Florida Chautauqua Assembly. The holiday light show is held nightly from November 29 to December 31 beginning at the DeFuniak Springs Library at 3 Circle Drive. Details: [www.defuniaksprings.net/Visitors](http://www.defuniaksprings.net/Visitors)

### All season

**Holiday Ice Skating** - 201 E. Gregory Street, Pensacola, FL, Pensacola Bay Center. Skate sessions are available throughout the season. Details: 850-432-0800 ext. 252 or [www.pensacolabaycenter.com](http://www.pensacolabaycenter.com)

### WEDNESDAYS

**Boardwalk Talks at Dauphin Island Sea Lab Estuarium** - The Northern Gulf Institute presents informal talks about 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](http://www.disl.org/estuarium) or 251-861-2141

**Winter Wednesdays** - Bellingsrath Gardens and Home - Sessions are held each week in the Magnolia Room from 10:30 to 11:30 a.m., Jan. 8 to Feb. 26. Admission is included in the regular Gardens admission. Register: 251-459-8864. Details: [www.bellingsrath.org](http://www.bellingsrath.org)

### through Nov. 30

**56th Annual Fall Outdoor Cascading Chrysanthemums** - Bellingsrath Gardens and Home - See the nation's largest outdoor display of the signature blooms of the season. Details: [www.bellingsrath.org](http://www.bellingsrath.org)

### through 1/5

**Holiday STEM Wonderland** - Gulf Coast Exploreum Science Center. Interactive fun that teaches math, science and engineering. See the popular holiday model train set. 65 Government St, Mobile, AL 36604 Details: 251-208-6893 or [www.exploreum.com](http://www.exploreum.com)

### through 2/1/20

**Baytowne On Ice** - Apex Skating Pavillion, 9300 Emerald Coast Parkway, West Miramar Beach, FL. The perfect place to find the winter spirit! Details: 850-714-7614 or [www.baytownewharf.com](http://www.baytownewharf.com)

### 11/22 – 12/14

**Forgotten Coast Festival of Trees** - The gallery will be transformed into a winter wonderland filled with decorated trees, wreaths and displays of holiday collections. Details: [www.visitgulf.com](http://www.visitgulf.com)

### 11/22 - 12/24

**Pensacola Winterfest** - Downtown Pensacola, FL. Enjoy

holiday performances, trolley tours, visits with Santa and more in Downtown Pensacola. Details: 850-583-1365 or [www.pensacolawinterfest.org](http://www.pensacolawinterfest.org)

### 11/27 - 12/31

#### Snowflakes in the Bay

- Enjoy the illuminated snowflakes in the historic live oaks in Bay St. Louis and Waveland. Bay St. Louis, MS. Details: 228-463-9222

### 11/29

#### Saltwater License-free Fishing

- The fishing license requirement is waived for all recreational anglers, including both residents and non-residents. The saltwater waiver applies to any recreational harvest requiring a saltwater fishing license. All other rules apply.

### 11/29 - 12/23

#### Fish River Christmas Tree Farm

- Cut your own tree or pick one off the lot! Enjoy a manger scene with live

animals, free tours on the tree train and more holiday fun. 3982 Woodhaven Dairy Road, Summerdale, AL. Details: 251-988-8144 or [www.fishrivertrees.com](http://www.fishrivertrees.com)

### 11/29 - 12/25

**Magic Christmas in Lights** - Bellingsrath Gardens and Home celebrates 22 Years of dazzling nighttime displays. See more than 1,100 set pieces, 3 million lights and 15 scenes on a walking tour of the 65-acre estate. Nov. 23 – Dec. 31, 5 to 9 p.m. Closed Dec. 25. Details: [www.bellingsrath.org](http://www.bellingsrath.org)

### 11/29 – 12/27

**Sowell's North Pole Christmas Lights** - 7650 Sowell Rd., Milton, FL. Sowell's North Pole Christmas Light Display is open every night including Christmas Eve and Christmas night. This event is featured on ABC's "The Great Christmas Light Fight." Details: [www.facebook.com/sowellsnorthpole](http://www.facebook.com/sowellsnorthpole).

### 11/29 - 12/31

#### Annual Gulfport Harbor Lights Winter Festival

- See beautiful holiday lights and visit Santa's Village on a walking tour or aboard a free heated trolley. Jones Park, Highway 90, Gulfport. Open 5:30 to 9:30 p.m. admission. Details: 228-868-5881 or <https://www.facebook.com/gptharborlights/>



### 11/30

**Coastal Half Marathon and 5K Run** - Kaiser Realty by Wyndham Vacation Rentals, Orange Beach Sportsplex, 4389 William Silvers Pkwy, Orange Beach, AL. Details: 615-460-9927 or [www.team-magic.com/events/155](http://www.team-magic.com/events/155)

### 11/30 & 12/28

#### Trash Bash with the Navarre Beach Sea Turtle

**Conservation Center** - 8 to 10 a.m., 8739 Gulf Blvd., Navarre Beach, FL. Clean up our beaches! Navarre Beach Parking lot near the

Sand Crab Pavilion. A limited supply of gloves, buckets and pickers are provided or bring your own. Details: 850-684-3347 or visit [www.navarrebeachseaturtles.org](http://www.navarrebeachseaturtles.org).

### 12/4-21

**12 Nights of Lights** - Festive light show every Wed., Fri. and Sat. leading up to Christmas! Live holiday music on Wednesdays. Shows at 6, 7, and 8 p.m. Details: [www.baytownewharf.com](http://www.baytownewharf.com)

### 12/5

**Christmas Tree Lighting on the Lawn** - Annual Tree Lighting at the The Mary C. O'Keefe Cultural Center lawn. See Santa, enjoy Christmas carols, refreshments and letters to the North Pole. 1600 Government St., Ocean Springs, MS. 6 to 8 p.m. Details: 228.818.2878 or [www.themaryc.org](http://www.themaryc.org)

### 12/6

**Tiki Christmas Fundraiser** - Pensacola Lighthouse and Maritime Museum. Ticketed event for guests 18 & up. Dinner, drinks and fun. 2081 Radford Blvd., Pensacola, FL Details: (850) 393-1561 or visit [www.pensacolalighthouse.org](http://www.pensacolalighthouse.org).

### Light Up Milton

- 4:30 to 9 p.m., Downtown Milton, FL. Church bells ring, the chorus sings, and snow machine is turned on to enjoy Santa's Reindeer Parade. Enjoy the festive lights of Historic Downtown Milton along with caroling, carriage rides, Christmas market, the Pyrates Lighted Boat Parade and ending with fireworks at 8:30 p.m. Details: [www.sracf.org/light-up-milton](http://www.sracf.org/light-up-milton)

**Winterfest at St. Mary's Episcopal Church** - Fri. 12 – 7 p.m., Sat. 9 a.m. – 2:30 p.m., 6849 Oak St., Milton, FL Winter Arts and Crafts Fair with one-of-a-kind custom jewelry, art, woodcrafts, candles and other creative handiwork. Bake sale and lunch items. Details: 850-623-2905 or [www.facebook.com/events/470910260408462](http://www.facebook.com/events/470910260408462)

### 12/7

**Christmas in the Garden** - The Port St. Joe Garden Club's annual Christmas in the Garden celebration, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the garden center, 216 Eighth Street in Port St. Joe. Admission is free. Handcrafted gifts, festive home decor items, and delicious baked goods. Enjoy presentations on Florida wildlife and cooking demonstrations. Details: Susan Wozniak, 630-269-6726.

### The 7th Annual Pensacola International Airport Runway

**Run 5k** - Saturday, December 7, 2019 at 10 a.m. at Pensacola International Airport! Honor Pearl Harbor Day with this unique run taking place right on the runway! 100% of the proceeds go to USO Northwest Florida. Details: Call 850-449-4725 or visit [www.runway5k.com](http://www.runway5k.com).

**Annual Biloxi Christmas in the City** - Choirs, bands and dancers, pictures with Santa, and special Biloxi treats Pusharattes. Rue Magnolia & Water Street, Downtown Biloxi Arts District, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Details: 228-435-6339 or [www.mainstreetbiloxi.com](http://www.mainstreetbiloxi.com)

**Holiday Fresh Market** - Shop for handcrafted Apalachicola baked goods, artwork, woodcarving, pottery and hand-knitted goods. Dixie Theatre, Avenue E and Market St., Downtown Apalachicola, FL. 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Details: [www.apalachicolabay.org](http://www.apalachicolabay.org) or 850-653-9419

**4th Annual Grayt Holiday Market** - 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., Grayton Beer Company, 217 Serenoa Road, Santa Rosa Beach, Florida. Festive craft beers, vendors and Santa. Details: [www.graytonbeer.com](http://www.graytonbeer.com) or call (850) 231-4786.

### 12/7-8

**Merry Market at Perdido Beach Resort** - More than 70 art, craft, jewelry and gift vendors. Free and open to the public. Details: (251) 968-1480

### 12/8

**The Nutcracker** - Erie H. Meyer Civic Center, 2 p.m. The Coastal Ballet Academy presents The Nutcracker. 1930 West 2nd Street, Gulf Shores, AL. Tickets are \$15. Details: [www.gulfshoresal.gov](http://www.gulfshoresal.gov)



## Holiday Parades

12/5

**Light Up Milton** – 5 to 9 p.m. Live music, snow machine, food, carriage rides and Santa's Reindeer Parade at 5:30 p.m. Visit Santa at the South Gazebo! Details: [sracf.org/light-up-milton](http://sracf.org/light-up-milton) or 850-623-2339

12/7

### 34th Annual Christmas on the Water Boat Parade -

Boats in full holiday décor, followed by fireworks. Mississippi Gulf Coast, Biloxi. 6 p.m. Details: 228-617-3112.

**Pensacola Beach Lighted Boat Parade** – Lighted boats set sail from Sabine Marina, travels around Santa Rosa Sound to Pensacola Beach Boardwalk. Details: 850-932-1500 or [www.pensacolabeachchamber.com](http://www.pensacolabeachchamber.com)

**Totally Awesome 80' Holiday Parade in Gulf Breeze** - Gulf Breeze Chamber of Commerce celebrates with an 80's-style holiday parade. 10 a.m. Details: 850-932-7888 or [www.cityofgulfbreeze.com](http://www.cityofgulfbreeze.com)

### 25th Annual Christmas Parade & Christmas in the Park

- 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., 8513 Navarre Pkwy. in Navarre, FL. A full day of fun: Jingle Bell 5K Run/Walk, reindeer games, Merry Market, tree lighting, pictures with Santa and the Navarre Annual Christmas Parade at 2 p.m. Details: 850-939-3267 or [www.navarrechamber.com](http://www.navarrechamber.com).

**12th Annual Bay St. Louis Christmas Parade** - Begins at Necaise Avenue and Main Street and ends at the Historic Train Depot with the Annual Snowflakes & Sugarplums Festival. Details: 228-463-9222

**Dauphin Island Christmas Parade** - The 31st Annual Dauphin Island Christmas Parade is starts at 11 a.m. Details: 251-861-5525 ext 223.

12/8

**Surfing Santa Beach Parade** - Holiday floats wind their way from Via DeLuna to Casino Beach Pensacola



Beach, FL. 2 p.m. Details: 850-932-1500 or [www.pensacolabeachchamber.com](http://www.pensacolabeachchamber.com)

12/13

**Annual Christmas Lighted Boat Parade** - Begins at LuLu's at Homeport Marina. Intracoastal Waterway Canal, 5:45 p.m. Details: 251-981-2300 or [www.alabamacoastalchristmas.com](http://www.alabamacoastalchristmas.com)

12/14

**Panama City Jaycees Christmas Parade** - A Collegiate Christmas - Downtown Panama City, FL. 6:45 p.m. Details: [www.pcfjaycees.com/christmas\\_parade](http://www.pcfjaycees.com/christmas_parade) or 850-763-8282

**2019 Cox Pensacola Christmas Parade** – Floats, bands and the Blue Angels Flight Team. Spring and Garden Streets, Downtown Pensacola, FL. 5:15 p.m. Details: [www.coxpensacolachristmasparade.org](http://www.coxpensacolachristmasparade.org)

**Holiday Parade** - 9100 Baytowne Blvd. #120, Miramar Beach, FL. 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. Details: [www.baytownewharf.com](http://www.baytownewharf.com)

12/15 - pictured above

**33rd Annual Holiday on the Harbor, Destin Boat Parade** 6 p.m. from Harborwalk Village, 10 Harbor Blvd., Destin, FL. Santa's arrival before and a fireworks show follows. Details: [www.emeraldgrande.com/events](http://www.emeraldgrande.com/events)

12/14

**35th Annual Christmas Through the Ages** - join the soldiers from the 1700's through the 1900's and their families as they celebrate the holidays. Details: <http://dauphinisland.org/fort-gaines/>

**Santa Drop** – Santa parachutes onto the beach to kickoff the holidays! Flora-Bama, 1740 Perdido Key Drive, Pensacola, FL. 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Details: [www.florabama.com](http://www.florabama.com) or 850-492-0611

**Yule of Yesteryear** – A Traditional Christmas Festival at The Heritage Museum of Northwest Florida, 115 Westview Ave, Valparaiso, FL. 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Details: [www.heritage-museum.org](http://www.heritage-museum.org) or 850-678-2615

12/14-15,21-22

**Christmas ZOOobilee** - 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. each day,, 5701 Gulf Breeze Pkwy., Gulf Breeze, FL. Christmas ZOOobilee features live music, food, pictures with Santa and a Candy Cane Market trail. Admission includes the entire zoo plus, artificial snow, winter-themed bounce stations and the family photo opportunities. Details: 850-932-2229 or [www.gbzoo.com](http://www.gbzoo.com).

12/20

**Downtown Pensacola Gallery Night** - Stroll through Downtown Pensacola and experience an eclectic array of music, art and cuisine. Downtown Pensacola, FL, 5 - 9 p.m. Details: 850-417-7321 or [www.downtownpensacola.com](http://www.downtownpensacola.com)

12/23

**Classic Christmas Carols at the Cape San Blas Lighthouse** - Join us and the Forgotten Coast Ukulele Orchestra for Classic Christmas Carols at the Cape San Blas Lighthouse. The Junior Service League of Port St. Joe will have hot cocoa to keep you warm. 200 Miss Zola's Dr, Port St Joe, FL Details: 850-229-7800

12/12-22

### "Miss Bennet: Christmas at Pemberley"

presented by the Emerald Coast Theatre Company - Fan favorite characters from "Pride and Prejudice" in a romantic holiday comedy. 560 Grand Boulevard, Grand Boulevard at Sandestin, Miramar Beach, FL. Details: (850) 684-0323 or [www.emeraldcoasttheatre.org](http://www.emeraldcoasttheatre.org)



12/13

**Daphne's Snow and Movie Night** - December 13, 2019 at 4 PM – 8 PM - Daphne City Hall, City of Daphne, AL - "The Jubilee City" Join us for Daphne's annual favorite, Snow & Movie Night. Snow begins falling at 4 p.m., movies begin at 6 p.m. and a visit from Santa Claus 5 to 7 p.m..

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# 'Legends' show brings Vegas entertainment to Gulf Coast

By Louis Cooper

The holidays will bring the familiar tones of superstars like Tony Bennet, Dolly Parton and Lady Gaga to the Alabama Gulf Coast.

But don't start looking for the tour buses – or high dollar ticket prices – you might expect to accompany entertainment of that caliber. The songs sound like the stars, and the entertainers look like the stars, but don't let your eyes and ears fool you. The performers are tribute artists with the Legends in Concert show, which began a residency at Owa in Foley, Ala., this summer.

The Christmas show started Nov. 19 and includes artists performing as Tony Bennet, Dolly Parton, Lady Gaga, George Michael and the Blues Brothers. Other artists represented at the show since it opened in Foley include Aretha Franklin, Taylor Swift and Elvis, among others.

"The artists are all singing live with their own natural voices," said Legends Chief Operating Officer Brian Brigner. "There is no lip-syncing or any lead vocal track."

Shows under the Legends banner have been enthralling guests for decades, having started in Las Vegas in 1983.

"The show is still operating in Las Vegas today ... and is currently the longest-running show in town, celebrating 36 years and over 25,000 performances to millions of fans," Brigner said. "Legends has performed in 20 countries and on five continents."

In addition to Owa and Vegas, Legends has year-round venues in Branson, Mo., Myrtle Beach, S.C., and Honolulu, as well as onboard Norwegian Cruise Line. The company also stages annual seasonal engagements in Atlantic City, N.J.; Niagara Falls, Canada; Melbourne, Australia; Foxwoods Casino in Connecticut and regional casinos around the U.S.

The show is very popular with snowbirds, Brigner said.

"They thoroughly enjoy the show and the nostalgia and memories that come to life," he said. "I like to say that music is the soundtrack of our lives, and I promise that these artists and songs will help them relive old memories and create new ones."



Legends' shows typically last 90 to 120 minutes, including an intermission. In addition to the vocalists, performers include a four-piece, classically trained band.

"They (the early and later shows) are the same," Brigner said. "We offer matinee performances for guests who prefer to not drive at night, families with younger children and seniors who prefer daytime activities."

The Legends show at Owa is located in the Owa Theater in Downtown Owa, the restaurant and shopping destination located outside the front gates at the Owa amusement park. The entire entertainment complex spans over 520 acres.



"The theater itself is amazing and truly state-of-the-art," Brigner said. "The technical capabilities in the room are unmatched in the region, and the lights, sound and video package are what guests are accustomed to seeing on TV award shows and Vegas stages. It is impressive from the moment you walk into the lobby with display cases of memorabilia from actual stars, to the retail and concession spaces, to the decor. The venue is beautiful and all completely new."

The singers in the Legends show are selected via audition from talent worldwide, but others involved with the show are hired locally.

"All of the dancers and tech team are drawn from local talent," Brigner said. "We are very proud of that and providing opportunities for local performers and trained technicians in the arts."

Legends joined Owa after the show found success in similar areas, he said.

"We had concluded very successful engagements in Mississippi, Louisiana and Florida in recent years. We liked that the market was family-friendly and also had distinct seasonality and demographics that would allow us to customize the show for the audience in the market," Brigner explained.

"We're also enthusiastic about the future growth plan at Owa and felt it was the perfect location for

our introduction to the area," he said. "It was also interesting that there was no year-round, world-class live entertainment option in the market, and saw this as a great opportunity for our organization."



## Want to go?

What: Legends in Concert

When: Tuesday – Saturday, 7:30 p.m.; Saturday and Sunday at 4 p.m.

Where: Owa Theater, 205 North Owa Blvd., Foley, Ala.

Price: \$17.95 for children 12 and younger, \$34.95 for adults

Details: <https://visitowa.com/explore/downtown->

## A Legendary Brunch for the Holidays

Legends in Concert's holiday cast will join fans for a Legendary Brunch every Sunday in December to celebrate the season!

Every Sunday from 2 to 3 p.m., the performers will join a maximum of 24 guests a meal at the Owa Theater. For \$9.99, guests may choose between a plate with a fluffy waffle, French toast sticks, sausage, bacon, hash browns, monkey bread, and coffee or juice; or, a plate with a Hoagie sandwich, sausage, bacon, hash browns, monkey bread, and coffee or juice.

Professional photos with the entire cast will be available for purchase.



# 2020, here we come! How to ring in the New Year

Get ready for 2020! From fireworks and concerts to street parties, plunges, galas and uniquely Gulf Coast "drops," there's no wrong way to kick off the New Year! Here are a few party possibilities for starting the new year (and the new decade!) with a lot of fun!

## New Year's Eve Events

### Pensacola Symphony "Celebrate the New Year"

- Saenger Theatre, 118 S Palafox Place, Pensacola, FL. 7 p.m. Dee Daniels brings her swing soul and blues inspired program celebrating Ella Fitzgerald, Sarah Vaughan, Ray Charles, and more to ring in the New Year! Details: 850-595-3880 or [www.pensacolasympphony.com](http://www.pensacolasympphony.com)

**Moon Pie Drop** - Downtown Mobile, AL. Mobile kicks off the New Year with a giant, lighted Moon Pie, laser light show and fireworks at midnight. Event kicks off with the cutting of the world's largest edible MoonPie, and a second-line parade with the Excelsior Band. Details: [www.mobilenewyear.com](http://www.mobilenewyear.com).

**Baytowne Countdown NYE** - Family-friendly event from 6 to 8 p.m. Ring in the New Year with fireworks displays at 8 p.m. and midnight. Live music until 1 a.m. Miramar Beach, FL. Details: [www.baytownewharf.com](http://www.baytownewharf.com)

**New Year's Eve Fireworks** - Midnight. Free fireworks display along the Pensacola Beach Boardwalk. At midnight a dazzling light display, provided by the beach chamber, will take place overlooking the Santa Rosa Sound from the Pensacola Beach Boardwalk.

**New Year's Eve Gala**, 8 p.m. to 12 a.m., Navarre Conference Center, 8700 Navarre Pkwy., Navarre, FL. Celebrate the New Year in "The Roaring 20s" fashion with the Pink Pirates of Navarre, a local non-profit with a mission to raise awareness of breast cancer



and raise money to fund mammograms for the uninsured. The gala includes a prime rib dinner, live music, dancing, raffles and a midnight champagne toast. Details: Frankie Gibbs at [fgibbs@mchsi.com](mailto:fgibbs@mchsi.com) or visit [www.facebook.com/pinkpiratesnavarre](https://www.facebook.com/pinkpiratesnavarre)

### New Year's Beach Ball Drop

- Panama City Beach - Join thousands of revelers at Pier Park to enjoy free live music, entertainment, fireworks, and good cheer. Details: [www.visitpanamacitybeach.com/events/new-years-eve-beach-ball-drop/](http://www.visitpanamacitybeach.com/events/new-years-eve-beach-ball-drop/)

### New Year's Day

**Polar Bear Plunge** - 2 p.m., Paradise Bar & Grill.

Details: <https://pensacolabeachchamber.com/event/season-your-holidays/>



**11th Penguin Plunge 'n Paddle** - 12 to 4 p.m., 1451 Navarre Beach Causeway, Navarre Beach, FL. We're "freezin' for a reason." The Penguin Plunge 'n Paddle event benefits local suicide prevention groups. The 2019 Plunge raised \$8000 for Santa Rosa Kids' House and Emerald Coast Children's Advocacy Center. Details: 850-939-1092 or [www.juanaspagodas.com/PenguinPlunge.htm](http://www.juanaspagodas.com/PenguinPlunge.htm)

**3rd Annual Pirate Plunge** - 10 a.m. - 4 p.m., 8579 Gulf Blvd. in Navarre Beach. This charity event for Healing Paws for Warriors features a plunge into the Gulf of Mexico at the Navarre Beach Fishing Pier followed by an after-party at Broussard's Bayou Grill & Bar. Details: [www.facebook.com/PiratesOnThePanhandle](https://www.facebook.com/PiratesOnThePanhandle)

**Polar Bear Dip** - Flora-Bama Lounge, Package and Oyster Bar, 17401 Perdido Key Dr., Pensacola, FL. 12 to 3 p.m. Live music and the traditional New Year black-eyed peas for all! Details: (850) 492-6838

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# New Orleans Holiday

Good Time Tours is sponsoring two opportunities for holiday day trip shopping outings in December to New Orleans.

Trips are scheduled for Dec. 7 and 14. Drop off is near the French Quarter and the Riverwalk and Harrah's Casino. The bus-only fare is \$60 round trip.

Good Time Tours also has day trips for New Orleans Saints games Dec. 8 and 16. Cost is \$60 per person. You must have your own ticket to the game.

Bus trips also are offered to Biloxi daily, with 11



pickup locations between Alabama's Gulf Coast and Destin, Fla.

Several overnight outings also are planned including:

- Thanksgiving overnight, Nov. 28-29
- Christmas Eve overnight
- Snowbird Snowflake overnight, Jan. 30-31
- Sweetheart Overnight, Feb. 13-14

Trips start at \$99 double occupancy and include room and free play at several casinos.

Details: [www.goodtimetours.com](http://www.goodtimetours.com) or 850-476-0046



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# Upcoming Snowbird Events

Winter is a special time along the northern Gulf Coast. In years past, beach businesses often shut down for months, reopening in Spring.

Snowbirds would still come, of course, but often to limited services. Today, communities and organizations throw open their doors to welcome our winter visitors. Below are a few of the events planned.

**Panama City Beach** – Canadians found ample motel space decades ago in the summer destination favored by southerners. They filled hotel rooms with kitchenettes, often for six months. Most of the motels have been replaced in the past ten years by sprawling condominium complexes that welcome winter visitors from around the world.

Included among a series of winter events sponsored by Visit Panama City Beach are: Winter Resident Appreciations Days (Jan. 17, Feb. 7&21); Winter Resident Homecoming Dance (Jan. 22); Winter Resident Senior Prom (Feb. 12) and Winter Resident Grand Finale (Feb. 26.) Tickets are required for some of the events, so check at [www.visitpanamacitybeach.com](http://www.visitpanamacitybeach.com).

**Winter Wednesdays:** Dauphin Island and Villages of South Mobile are welcoming visitors with special programming each week in January and February. The island boasts several attractions, including the Dauphin Island Sea Lab Estuarium, Fort Gaines, the Audubon Bird Sanctuary, and more. Nearby Bellingrath Gardens has sponsored "Winter Wednesdays" for several years. Each week Snowbirds are invited to visit via ferry or personal car. Details: [visitsomo.com](http://visitsomo.com)



**SnowbirdFest:** The annual SnowbirdFest will kick off the season Jan. 11 at the Orange Beach Event Center. Live entertainment by an Elvis impersonator, British Invasion car show, and a magic show highlight the event. There will be health screenings and multiple giveaways by vendors. Details: [www.snowbirdfest.com](http://www.snowbirdfest.com).



**Navarre Beach Snowbird Business Expo:** Date for this year's big Snowbird Business Expo is Jan. 14, 2 p.m. – 4 p.m. at the Navarre Conference Center. A variety of vendors will be on hand with goodies and to answer questions. Details: [www.navarrebeachsnowbirdclub.com](http://www.navarrebeachsnowbirdclub.com)

**FWB Chamber Winter Guest Fest:** Staged Jan. 16 at the sprawling Emerald Coast Convention Center. This event draws 2000+ visitors each winter. Vendors range from local restaurants, shops, lodging and attractions. Details: 850-244-8191 or [www.fwbchamber.org](http://www.fwbchamber.org). There is a \$2 admission fee.



**National Naval Aviation Museum:** A Snowbird Expo is set for Jan. 21 at the region's premier attraction. Admission to the museum is always free but there will be discounts available on-site and the event includes a variety of vendors on hand to answer questions. Details: [navalaviationmuseum.org](http://navalaviationmuseum.org).

**Snowbirds Beach Bash:** The Santa Rosa Island Authority's annual Pensacola Beach Bash will be staged 9 a.m. Jan. 23 at the at Our Lady of Assumption Catholic Church, 920 Via de Luna. Check out the island's visitor center in the main parking lot for more information.

Saturday, Jan. 11, 9am-1pm | Orange Beach Events Center (at The Wharf)

## 2020 Snowbird Fest

This year featuring tributes to **Young Elvis & Michael!**

- Business Expo
- New Entertainment!
- Car Shine & Show
- Free Restaurant Samples & Coffee
- Door Prizes & Give-Aways
- Magic Acts, & so much more!

**Snowbirds attend FREE**  
PRE-register online & enter to **Win prizes!**

[www.SnowbirdFest.com](http://www.SnowbirdFest.com)

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**Thursday Jan. 16, 2020**

## Winter Guest FEST

8 am to Noon, \$2 admission

**Emerald Coast Convention Center**  
1250 Miracle Strip Parkway, SE Fort Walton Beach

presented by **RESORTQUEST**  
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The area's largest seasonal guest expo!

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FWBChamber.com or 850.244.8191



# Bellingrath Gardens and Home celebrates 24 Years of Magic Christmas in Lights

It's one of the nation's best holiday light shows.

Bellingrath Gardens and Home presents the 24th season of Magic Christmas in Lights in 2019. The dazzling nighttime display features more than 1,100 set pieces, 3 million lights and 15 scenes, set out in a walking tour throughout the 65-acre Garden estate.

**Opening Night is Friday, Nov. 29.** The show will continue nightly from 5 to 9 p.m. through Dec. 31, 2019.

**A Gulf Coast tradition:** Magic Christmas in Lights has become a must-see tradition for visitors from the Gulf Coast region and beyond. Families enjoy strolling along the paths together, taking holiday photos, drinking cocoa on Live Oak Plaza and

visiting Santa Claus in the Magnolia Café.

**Made in Alabama:** Many of our guests do not realize that Magic Christmas in Lights is a made-in-Alabama attraction. Each year, the set pieces for the holiday lights are designed and handmade on

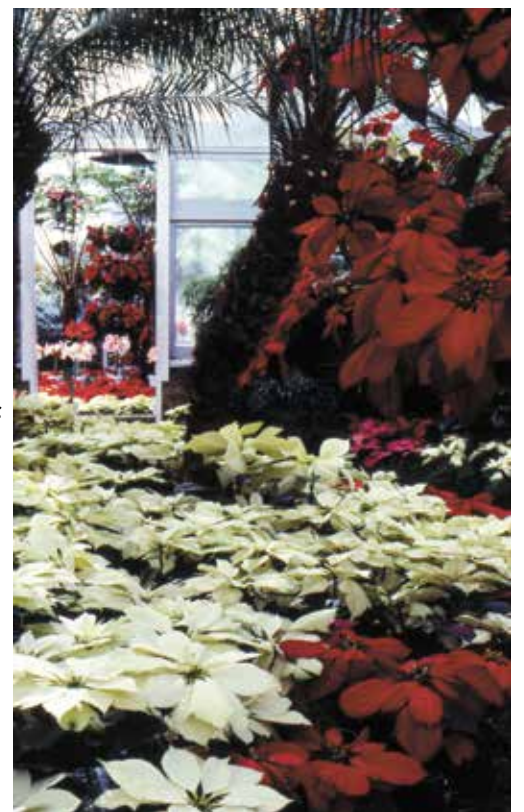
site by Bellingrath's staff. Four employees work full-time all year on the light display.

**Awards:** Magic Christmas in Lights was a Southeast Tourism Society Top 20 Festival & Event winner in December 2018, and was included in USA Today's top 10 list of "Best Botanical Garden Holiday Light Displays in America," which was compiled with readers' online votes. Learn more at [www.10best.com/awards/travel/best-botanical-garden-holiday-lights](http://www.10best.com/awards/travel/best-botanical-garden-holiday-lights). The display was also selected to the American Bus Association's "Top 100 Events of 2016."

**Music and historic tours:** Magic Christmas in Lights also includes choral performances on the South Terrace on weeknights during the first three weeks of the season. The historic Bellingrath Home will be decorated in full holiday finery and open for guided tours each night until 8 p.m. The Home, built in 1935, features the Bellingraths' original antique furniture and collections.

**Santa and shopping:** Guests are sure to find that perfect holiday gift in our fully stocked Gift Shop, open until 9 p.m. nightly. Guests may also have their photos taken with Santa Claus in the Magnolia Café each night from 5:30 to 9 p.m. through Dec. 23.

**Festive food:** The Magnolia Café will also have extended hours, 4 to 8 p.m., during the season; menus are posted on our website, [bellingrath.org](http://bellingrath.org).



**Plan your visit:** For details about Magic Christmas in Lights, or to order tickets, visit our website, [bellingrath.org](http://bellingrath.org). (The Gardens will be closed on **Christmas** and New Year's Days.)

## National Naval Aviation Museum



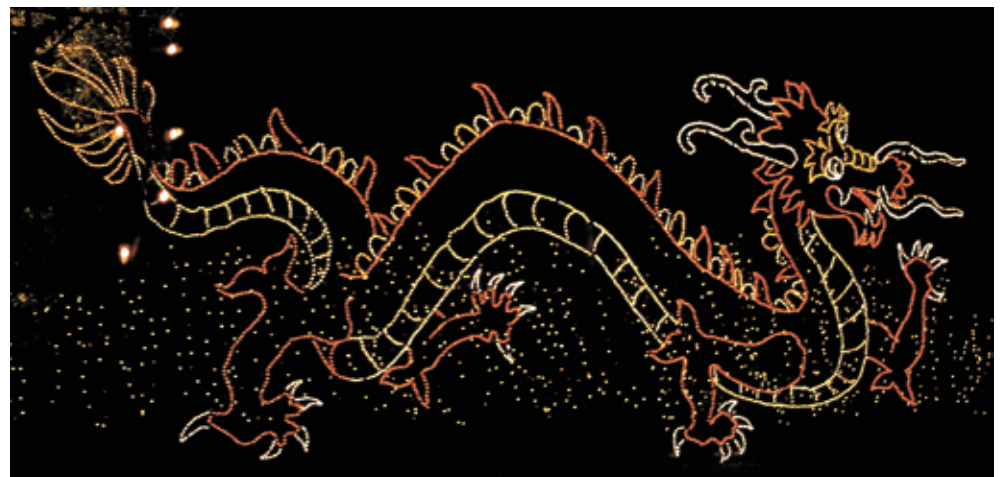
**Snowbird Expo**  
Jan. 21 at 10 a.m. – 12 p.m.  
Blue Angels Atrium  
Winter visitors are invited to receive information from local organizations, enjoy coffee, as well as special offers on Museum attractions.

**Glenn Miller Orchestra Concert**  
Feb. 4 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**  
Jan 28, Feb. 4, 11, 18, 25 • \$10.00 per person  
Enjoy Chick-fil-A breakfast and choice of beverage from the 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.

Jan. 28	Great Bear Rainforest
Feb. 4	Volcanoes – Fires of Creation
Feb. 11	Superpower Dogs
Feb. 18	(Double Header Day) Beavers
	The Director's Cut 30th Anniversary Edition and Hidden Pacific
Feb. 25	A Stephen Low Train Movie TBA

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# Beau Rivage holiday events dazzle and delight

Get into the spirit of the season at the Beau Rivage Casino in Biloxi, Miss.

Beginning Thanksgiving week, the elegant MGM resort casino is transformed into an enchanted holiday experience with spectacular, twinkling displays through Jan. 3.

"Holiday tradition in Coastal Mississippi starts at Beau Rivage. Each year our guests marvel at the ever-changing festive holiday displays, décor and entertainment options," said Beau Rivage President and COO Travis Lunn. "Our team enjoys this time of year and sharing it with our guests from around the country. Preparations begin months in advance and we take tremendous pride in creating unforgettable guest experiences."

The 1,740-room resort's décor features larger-than-life nutcrackers, magnificent oversized ornaments, classic winter scenes, more than 200 frost-covered trees, thousands of red poinsettias, and Santa's sleigh and reindeer soaring over the atrium leading to a stunning 20-foot Christmas tree that all offer keepsake and selfie-worthy photos with friends and family.

Beau Rivage holiday happenings kick off on Nov. 23, with the Sugar Plum Fairy Tea, hosted by Mississippi Gulf Coast Ballet Theatre, where children get their fairy wings in an enchanted fairy garden with crafts, characters from The Nutcracker and decadent pastries and teas.



Beau Rivage's annual Holiday Open House is the perfect time to shop for unique gifts and meet more than a dozen artisans and vendors, Dec. 10-14 from 11 a.m.- 6 p.m. in the Beau Rivage retail promenade and on the resort's second floor.

Christmas in the Air packages of four tickets start at \$40 plus tax and facility fee by using code: CHRISTMAS, and hotel packages start at \$99 and include accommodations for one night and two show tickets using code: HOLIDAY19. Military members can receive four tickets for \$30 when presenting a military I.D., and kids 12 and under eat free in the Beau Rivage Buffet with a show ticket stub.



Ventriloquist, impressionist, and stand-up comedian Terry Fator takes the stage Nov. 23 for two shows, presenting A Very Terry Christmas in Beau Rivage Theatre. Martina McBride returns to Beau Rivage on Nov. 29 to launch her Joy of Christmas 2019 tour. Sirius XM presents Brian Setzer Orchestra's 16th Annual Christmas Rocks! Tour on Dec. 6, while Aaron Neville performs two special Christmas shows on Dec. 12 and 13. Tickets for all performances are available at [www.beaurivage.com](http://www.beaurivage.com) or by calling 888.567.6667.

Christmas comes alive as Beau Rivage hosts the holiday production show Christmas in the Air!, from Dec. 13-27 in the Beau Rivage Theatre. Rand Productions brings renowned New York City-based director/choreographer and veteran Radio City Rockette, Ann Cooley, to Biloxi to choreograph a first-class Broadway-style song and dance review featuring Rockette-style dancers, wrapped up within a warm, fun and feel-good holiday storyline, told by Santa's favorite elves.

Tickets start at \$12.95, plus tax and facility fee. Show times are 3 p.m. and 7 p.m., including performances on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day.



The sounds of the season echo through the atrium Dec. 18-20 with live performances by local choral groups as they bring that extra holiday spirit to Beau Rivage from 5-6 p.m. nightly.

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Majestic Oaks RV Resort in Biloxi is located just a few blocks north of Hwy 90 and Biloxi Beaches, and just blocks away from the MS Coast Coliseum & Convention Center. From I-10, take I-110 South exit to Hwy 90 Biloxi West to Rodenburg. Continue to Pass Road. Left one block.



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## Casino Fun



11/29

**Martina McBride**, The Joy of Christmas, 8 p.m. Beau Rivage Resort & Casino, 875 Beach Blvd, Biloxi, Miss., Details: 888-566-7469 or [www.beaurivage.com](http://www.beaurivage.com)

11/29

**Chicks With Hits (Terri Clark, Pam Tillis, Suzy Boggus)**, 8 p.m. IP Casino Resort & Spa, Studio A, 850 Bayview Avenue, Biloxi, Miss. Details: 228-436-3000.

11/30

**Jamey Johnson**, 8 p.m., IP Casino Resort & Spa, Studio A, 850 Bayview Avenue, Biloxi, Miss. Details: 228-436-3000.

11/30

**Michael Carbonaro**, 8 p.m., Beau Rivage Resort & Casino, 875 Beach Blvd, Biloxi, Miss., Details: 888-566-7469 or [www.beaurivage.com](http://www.beaurivage.com)

12/7

**Larry, Steve and Rudy:**

**The Gatlin Brothers**, IP Casino Resort & Spa, Studio A,

850 Bayview Avenue, Biloxi, Miss. 8 p.m. Details: 228-436-3000

12/8

**The Nutcracker Presented by MS Gulf Coast Ballet Theatre**, 8 p.m., Beau Rivage



Resort & Casino, 875 Beach Blvd, Biloxi, Miss., Details: 888-566-7469 or [www.beaurivage.com](http://www.beaurivage.com)

12/12-13

**Christmas with Aaron Neville**, 8

p.m., Beau Rivage Resort & Casino, 875 Beach Blvd, Biloxi, Miss., Details: 888-566-7469 or [www.beaurivage.com](http://www.beaurivage.com)



12/14

**BJ Thomas**, 8 p.m. Hollywood Casino Gulf Coast, 711 Hollywood Blvd., Bay St. Louis. Details: (866) 758-2591 or [www.hollywoodcasinogulfcoast.com](http://www.hollywoodcasinogulfcoast.com)

12/20-21

**Restless Heart Christmas Show**, 8 p.m., IP Casino Resort & Spa, Studio A, 850 Bayview Avenue, Biloxi, Miss. 8 p.m. Details: 228-436-3000

12/27

**Xtreme Circus of China**, 8 p.m., IP Casino Resort & Spa, Studio A, 850 Bayview Avenue, Biloxi, Miss. Details: 228-436-3000



12/28

**Better Than Ezra**, 8 p.m., Beau Rivage Resort & Casino, 875 Beach Blvd, Biloxi, Miss., Details: 888-566-7469 or [www.beaurivage.com](http://www.beaurivage.com)



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# Panama City Beach celebrates Thanksgiving with Beach Home for the Holidays

Award-winning American country music singer Scotty McCreery will take the stage at Panama City Beach's Aaron Bessant Park open-air Amphitheater for the first time over Thanksgiving weekend playing some of his greatest hits like "I Love You This Big," "The Trouble with Girls," and "Five More Minutes"- the first song released without a record label to ever chart the Country Top 50.



McCreery will take the stage on Friday, Nov. 29 and Saturday night, event-goers will love be entertained by the live symphonic sounds of local favorite, the Panama City POPS Orchestra.

Aaron Bessant Park also serves as the site of carol-themed concerts, s'mores, an appearance by Santa and activities for the kids. Fireworks will cap off each night's events.



"We are excited to invite families back to Panama City Beach to create lasting memories this Thanksgiving weekend, whether for the first time or the fifth time," shares President and CEO of Visit Panama City Beach Dan Rowe. "Families can expect all the same festive amenities, decorations and entertainment from previous years, along with a special performance from the famed Scotty McCreery."

New this year is Panama City Beach's Décor by the Shore Trail, the area's vast network of shops and stores specializing in coastal-themed décor, antiques and gifts.

The centerpiece of Aaron Bessant Park is a state-of-the-art amphitheater, which hosts world famous musicians as easily as local community performances, all just steps from the beach!

Located adjacent to Pier Park, the 70-acre Aaron Bessant Park also features a veterans memorial, 3 looping trails that are great for walking (North Loop, South Loop, and Amphitheater Loop), and an open, grassy area that is perfect for watching the concert performances or for picnics and throwing the Frisbee in the sun on non-concert days. Details: [www.visitpanamacitybeach.com](http://www.visitpanamacitybeach.com)

## Beach Home for the Holidays Event Schedule

### Friday, November 29

3:30 p.m. - Campfires, S'mores, & Santa's Village Open  
4 p.m. - Holiday Movie: The Grinch  
6 p.m. - Live Music Performance by Scotty McCreery  
Lighting of the Christmas Tree & Fireworks

### Saturday, November 30

3:30 p.m. - Campfires, S'mores, & Santa's Village Open  
5 p.m. - Little Match Girl presented by Studio by the Sea  
5:15 p.m. - Patronis Elementry School Choir  
6 p.m. - Live Music Performance by The Panama City POPS Orchestra  
Fireworks

Details: [www.visitpanamacitybeach.com](http://www.visitpanamacitybeach.com).

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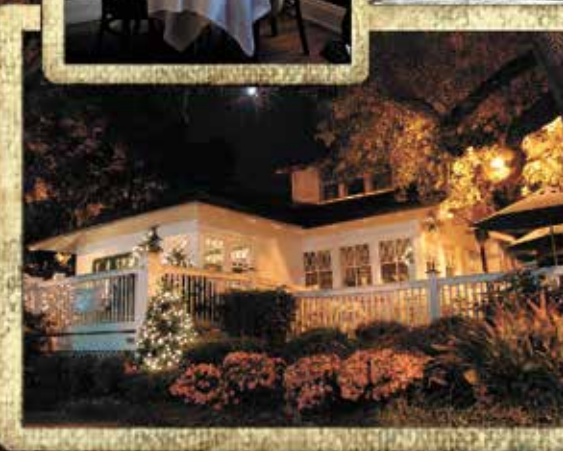
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## Pensacola's Snowball Derby is hot

If ever there were a sporting event for Snowbirds in Northwest Florida, it's the annual Snowball Derby stock car race at Five Flags Speedway in Pensacola.

The 52nd running of the event on the high-banked, half-mile oval caps a weekend of racing on Dec. 8.

It's the last race of the year in any area of the United States. That gives drivers the incentive to race hard and do whatever it takes to win the prestigious Tom Dawson Trophy, named for the late creator of the event who decided December would be a good time to bring big-name drivers to the event.



"The Snowball Derby continues to be one of Pensacola's biggest attractions," said Chuck Corder, media director at Five Flags Speedway. "You have the Blue Angels air show in the summer and the Derby come December. The eyes of the stock car racing world turn to Five Flags when the Derby rolls around."

In the early years, drivers like Darrell Waltrip, Bobby Allison and Rusty Wallace made annual visits to the race. In the last ten years, the focus has been on the younger pack of drivers.

Now, it's the young'uns.

Chase Elliott, now a NASCAR Monster Energy favorite, Christian Eckes and defending champion Noah Gragson have all won the Snowball Derby in their teen years. The one exception is NASCAR champion Kyle Busch, who won the Snowball Derby two years ago.

Gragson, now 21, drove for Kyle Busch Motorsports when he made a late pass over Ty Majeski to win the event last year.



"The venue at Five Flags Speedway is one you don't experience anywhere else on short track racing," said former Snowball Derby polesitter Majeski. "From owner Tim Bryant to people working behind the scenes, the staff does a great job for all the fans. If you're a fan of short-track racing, it certainly has to be on your bucket list."

Racing events start Wednesday, Dec. 4, and continues through Sunday, Dec. 8, when the green flag drops for the 300-lap race. Drivers compete for the 38 starting spots, and only 20 are locked in during Friday's qualifying, which can mean the difference



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## Snowball Derby Tickets

\$75 – 5-day reserved seats

\$45 – Day of race

Information: [www.fiveflagsspeedway.com](http://www.fiveflagsspeedway.com)

## Race Schedule

Wednesday, Dec. 4

9 a.m. – rig parking

6 p.m. – qualifying draw

8 p.m. – Green Flag party

Thursday, Dec. 5

10 a.m. – Snowball, Snowflake practice

8 p.m. – Pro Truck, Sportsman, Pure

## Stock races

Friday, Dec. 6

10 a.m. – Practice

6 p.m. – Snowball Derby qualifying

8 p.m. – Modified race

Saturday, Dec. 7

10 a.m. – Practice

2 p.m. – Snowflake qualifying, followed by Snowflake and Snowball qualifier races

7 p.m. – Snowflake 100, Outlaw races

**Sunday, Dec. 8**

Noon – Engine warmups

1:15 p.m. – Driver introductions

2 p.m. – Snowball Derby

between racing Sunday or going home early.

"There's nothing like it in short track racing, for sure," Majeski said of the Snowball Derby qualifying trials on that Friday night. "It's a mental game for sure. Qualifying is going to be crucial. Having good track position early in the race is huge."

Drivers from Florida to California will arrive for the event, and others come from Canada and Nova Scotia. Drivers like Harrison Burton, son of Jeff Burton, and Bubba Pollard are set to race.

"Guys in the pits at NASCAR races are talking about the Snowball Derby in the days, weeks and months leading up to the drop of the green flag," Corder said. "The 52nd running this year promises to be no different."

# PENSACOLA ICE FLYERS

## HOCKEY TEAM

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6:35 p.m.

Dec. 6  
vs. Huntsville, Ala.  
7:35 p.m.

Dec. 7  
vs. Huntsville, Ala.  
7:05 p.m.

Dec. 21  
vs. Huntsville, Ala.  
7:05 p.m.

Dec. 26  
vs. Macon, Ga..  
6:35 p.m.

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## What Should You Do to Prevent the Flu?

Influenza, or more commonly called flu, is a viral respiratory illness that affects the nose, throat and sometimes the lungs. It can appear suddenly and cause mild to severe symptoms such as headaches, fever, muscle aches, sore throat, stuffy and runny nose, chills and in some cases, vomiting and diarrhea. Not everyone with the flu will have a fever or all of these symptoms. These feelings can last a few days or up to two weeks. Here are five ways to help protect your health and prevent the flu virus from spreading:



Dr. Mitchell Whitehead

**Disinfect your hands and the areas where you interact.** Wash your hands regularly. This is especially important before preparing food and eating. The flu virus can live on surfaces for up to 24 hours so wiping down areas you're exposed to before sitting or eating is a good practice.

**Avoid touching your eyes, mouth and nose unless your hands are clean.** Cough or sneeze into your elbow. Use a tissue for your nose, and throw the tissue away immediately and wash your hands right after. Don't use a handkerchief or cloth more than once without washing it.

**Get the flu vaccination each year and obtain it early in the season.** The flu virus changes

from year to year, so you'll need to update your vaccination annually. Keep in mind that the flu vaccine takes about two weeks to be effective so it's better to get it early in the season.

**Boost your immunity year-round:** The best way to protect yourself against the flu and any virus is to take care of yourself all the time. Eat nutritious foods and avoid processed ingredients that negatively impact the body. Get plenty of sleep each day. Exercise regularly. Check with your doctor to see if you should consider taking a probiotic or supplement to help keep your immune system strong.

**See your doctor if you have any flu-like symptoms.** If you feel you have any of the flu symptoms, such as fever, coughing, sore throat, body aches, runny nose and fatigue, contact your doctor. You may be prescribed an antiviral medication like Tamiflu to lessen your condition.

### Take Care of You This Flu Season and Year Round

The flu virus can be dangerous, especially for the elderly, sick and those with any current medical conditions. Don't panic if you've been exposed to it or think you may have it. Take the above listed preventative steps to protect yourself and reduce your risk.

For more information on flu or to make an appointment with a doctor, call Baptist Medical Group at 850.437.8600, make an appointment online at [EasySchedule.com](http://EasySchedule.com) or visit [baptistmedicalgroup.org](http://baptistmedicalgroup.org).

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# Explore Dauphin Island: Nature, shopping, dining

From sunsets to surf fishing and from history to kayaking, words and photographs can give a taste of Dauphin Island's majestic beauty. But as the saying goes, seeing is believing, and seeing Dauphin Island – whether for the first, the tenth or the 100th time – is nothing short of inspiring.



Surrounded by the Gulf of Mexico, Mississippi Sound and Mobile Bay, Alabama's only barrier island is known as "The Sunset Capital of Alabama," and rightly so. Locals and visitors alike love to pause at the end of each day and sit on the deck or the beach to watch Mother Nature's end-of-the-day light show.

The rest of the time they can choose from an array of activities that include charter fishing, boating, sunbathing, swimming, birding, visiting historic Fort Gaines, learning about the area's marine life at the Dauphin Island Sea Lab's Estuarium, hiking through the Audubon Bird Sanctuary, learning the history of Dauphin Island at the Welcome Center's museum and stopping by Dauphin Island's variety of restaurants, gift shops and boutiques.



Visitors can also ride the Mobile Bay Ferry; take a nature tour, a dolphin watch boat ride, a lighthouse cruise, or a sunset cruise; visit the island's two art galleries and check out the walking and biking trails that span the 14-mile-long island.

For special events, there's just no beating Dauphin Island. The annual Dauphin Island Sailboat Regatta every April is billed as the largest one-day point-to-point regatta in the United States, and the annual Alabama Deep Sea Fishing Rodeo in July is billed as the largest fishing tournament in the world. The island also kicks off the region's Mardi Gras season every winter, hosting between 30,000 and 40,000 visitors for the first two parades of the year.



A large part of Dauphin Island's charm is its laid-back atmosphere. With no towering buildings, big-box stores, shopping centers, traffic jams, or even traffic lights, it is everything an old-fashioned beach resort should be: fun, friendly and family-oriented.

Whether you're thinking about spending the winter on Dauphin Island, or merely a weekend, we've got what you're looking for. Come see us, and see why it's such a special place!

## TELL EVERYONE YOU'RE BUSY ON WEDNESDAYS

*Day trip getaways to Dauphin Island and The Villages of South Mobile County beckon.*



Visit Dauphin Island and the uncrowded Villages of South Mobile County on Wednesdays in January and February – and linger among the region's most treasured attractions. Dauphin Island Sea Lab Estuarium, Fort Gaines, the Audubon Bird Sanctuary, Bayou la Batre, Bellingrath Gardens, and more.

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# Road Trip

Before setting out for our six-week Great American Road Trip we did what all responsible travelers must do to prepare for the unforeseen dangers and dire emergencies of the highway and we packed our fifty-dollar essential oil diffuser.

I know that some young men out there might be wondering what a diffuser is. But if you are a married man you are probably nodding and saying, "Yes, my wife also spends our hard earned mortgage money on essential oils, too, then pours these oils into a diffuser."

A diffuser is basically a smell-good machine that sprays out scented fog laced with essential oils that make the air smell like cinnamon and cause you to feel drowsy.

There are supposed health benefits from diffusers. But I can only speak from experience when I say that I have been breathing diffused air for years and I, personally, have received more health benefits from Anheuser-Busch products.

Either way, we do not leave home without our fifty-dollar diffuser.

We do not travel light. My wife could take a one-night trip to her mother's house and still bring a Coleman cooler, a king-sized comforter, half her hanging clothes, an electric fan, a harpsichord, and of course the diffuser.

The diffuser isn't usually a problem unless you travel by airline. In which case we put the diffuser in my carry-on bag and it becomes national news.

Whenever I go through airport security, the TSA employees always zero in on this device and squint at it doubtfully, at times even smelling it. Then they glare at me and call in the German shepherds. But getting back to our road trip. We have been all over the place this last month, doing my one-man show. Alabama, Georgia, Florida, Louisiana, Mississippi, Tennessee, New York, Pennsylvania. Traveling is hard work. You basically wear the same outfit for days, live out of a suitcase, and sleep on crummy hotel pillows.

Each night before bed, our pet sitter would send cellphone pictures of our bloodhound and alleged Labrador. My wife would look at these photos and become so emotional about our dogs that she would fall asleep clutching her cellphone and forget to refill her diffuser. So I would have to refill it for her.

That's probably the hardest part about traveling, missing the dogs. Our dogs are our children. Thelma Lou is our mascot. And Otis Campbell, serves as our vacuum. He patrols our floors for food-like debris, eats it, then vomits it onto the couch for further examination. Then eats it again. Otis is so vigilant that whenever he hears the sound of our fridge opening, he is already sitting beside you. Whereupon he stares at the floor, waiting for more debris to fall so he can hurry up and get straight to puking. That's how committed he is to his job.

A few weeks ago, we were in a New York hotel, staring at cellphone pictures of Otis and Thelma. We were homesick and tired. We hadn't had a single moment to ourselves in days. We'd been driving rental cars, eating airport food, and we



Sean of the South

were beginning to wear thin. Each day, I had been delivering a speech in some town. Then we would drive half the night so I could deliver almost the same speech in another town. And so on.

The funny thing is, no audience ever reacts in the same way. Sometimes people are in good moods and laugh at my jokes. At other events such as, for example, continuing education conferences in big hotels, people show as much enthusiasm as medical school cadavers.

Mostly, at conferences, the attendees regard a keynote speaker as the idiot who they have to listen to before they can go to dinner and receive free beverage service.

You can imagine how draining this is for a keynote speaker. So at the end of each night, we would get back to our hotel and collapse on the bed. We would be so tired that we would look at photos of our dogs, get misty-eyed, and stoop to ordering room service.

Which shows you how desperate we were. Because most room service food tastes like expired school-cafeteria food prepared by Communists without the aid of heat or salt shakers. Even the room-service delivery-person knows your food is going to suck.

He or she is usually so embarrassed that they sprint away before you actually see your food and discover that your hamburger patty is better suited for a National Hockey League championship game. Before bedtime, you take a shower. And every hotel shower is different. Some have two knobs, where you mix hot and cold water. Others have the one big knob from hell. And it's an adventure. After about ten minutes fiddling with the knob, you understand what third-degree burns are.

But I am not complaining. I feel very lucky to be doing what I do. I feel fortunate to see the U.S. go by my window at eye-level. To play my songs and tell stories in new places for some very nice people. I feel even more lucky that my wife is beside me. Even so, as much fun as it has been for these past six weeks, when we pulled into our driveway this morning and heard the familiar barking, I felt good all over.

My cheeks are sore from smiling. And I have the happy, cinnamon-scented feeling that comes from being back home. Or maybe it's coming from our fifty-dollar diffuser.

Otis just threw up.

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, Bitter Southerner, Thom Magazine, The Mobile Press Register and he has authored several books.

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Services at 10 a.m.  
Sunday School at 8:30 a.m.

Christmas Brunch  
Dec. 8, 11 am

Jan. 31 - Trivia Night

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November 23, 24, 9 am- 5 pm

**Sowell's North Pole Christmas Lights Display**  
November 29 - December 27, 5 pm - 9 pm

**Light Up Milton Christmas Celebration**  
December 6, 4:30 pm - 9 pm

**Navarre Annual Christmas Parade & Christmas in the Park**  
December 7, 9 am - 5 pm Parade at 2 pm

**Christmas ZOObilee**  
December 14, 15 & 21, 22, 9 am - 5 pm

**New Year's Gala at the Navarre Conference Center**  
December 31, 8 pm - 12 am

**Annual Penguin Plunge 'n Paddle**  
January 1, 2020, 12 pm - 4 pm

**Annual Pirate Plunge at the Navarre Beach Fishing Pier**  
January 1, 2020, 11 am - 4 pm

**Navarre Beach Snowbirds Business Expo & Social**  
January 14, 2020 2-4 pm

**Navarre Beach Krewe of Jesters Mardi Gras Ball**  
Saturday, Feb 8, 2020 6 pm

**Annual Navarre Beach Mardi Gras Parade**  
Saturday, February 15, 2020, 1 pm

**Masters of Woodfire, Maria Spies and the "WoodStoke" Pottery and Kiln Festival at Holley Hill Pottery**  
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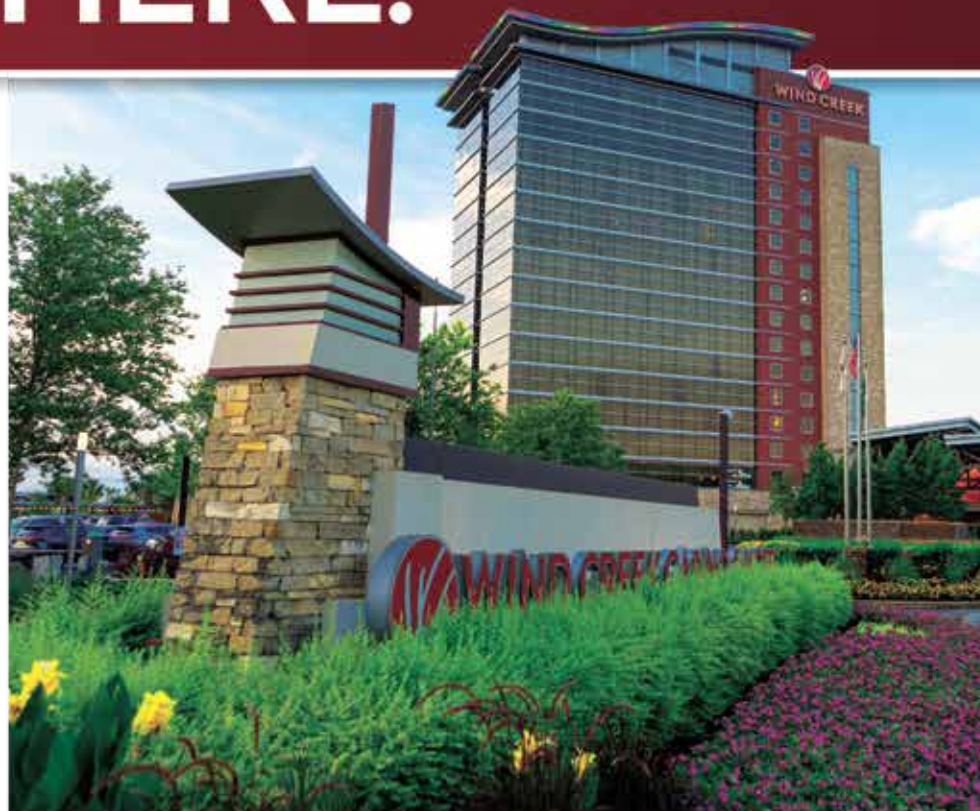
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