April HIGHLIGHTS

Find all Chamber updates for events at: www.FWBChamber.com

In light of the mandates that have been established regarding gatherings, the majority of our events in April have either been canceled, postponed or TBD (to be decided). We are in the process of determining which events we can bring you virtually.

Please watch for updates through Chamber emails or our social media channels for the most current up to date information on events and meetings. Thank you!

A Message From The Chair Of The Board

It's On Like Donkey Kong!

Leveling Up You and Your Chamber Sponsorship

Growing up in the 70s and 80s was Great! You experienced the switch from black & white TVs to color, the birth of MTV, the dawn of computers, and the birth of video games. During my free time, in addition to swimming at Meigs Beach, jumping and fishing off the Shalimar, Cinco Bayou, and Brooks Bridges, I frequented local hangouts. Hangouts like Cinco Bayou Cinema, Funway Amusement Park, and Aladdin’s Castle. I spent a small fortune in time and treasure putting my hard-earned quarters, three lives at a time, into playing PacMan, Defender, and my favorite: Donkey Kong.

In Donkey Kong, you are the hero named Mario, who is battling a villainous ape name Donkey Kong. This angry ape is hurling barrels at you while you dodge and jump over obstacles to save a girl named Pauline. Mario traverses a series of steel girders and ladders to climb to the top and rescue Pauline. Each successive level gets harder as you “level-up” to the next tier of the game. At different stages, you have intermissions where you (Mario) and Pauline are reunited only to be thwarted again by Donkey Kong and moving to the next harder level.

Your business is like the game Donkey Kong. You take your passion and grind it out to reach the next level and achieve your dreams or goals. As you grow in size (revenue & employees), you may level-up from local, to regional, to national, to international, and, ultimately, global business. Within each level, there are micro levels that you will achieve. Your company is in a constant state of change as you grow. What got you where you are now, will not get you where you want to go next. It is a constant evolution. The company you are when you are a sole proprietor at 150K in revenue is not the same company and structure needed when you are 40 employees and 8M in revenue, or 500 people and 100M in revenue.

When my business partner Louis [Erickson] and I moved our company back to Fort Walton Beach in 2001, we were two guys who were grinding it out trying to survive. The first few years in business is analogous to Level 1 of Donkey Kong. We wore many hats. Many times, we wore many hats all at once, including Delivery, Finance, Marketing, Sales, and HR. We did everything. Our business wasn’t local, meaning, at that time, we did not have a local offering. At that time, Bit-Wizards was only offering custom software development services, and our customers come from around the country.

I gained a strong sense of community-mindedness from my Father, an Air Force Chief Master Sergeant, and my Mother, who was a Director of Catholic Social Services. Additionally, I learned to be community-minded as an Eagle Scout and in Civil Air Patrol and High School ROTC at Choctaw. I knew Bit-Wizards needed to engage in the community, so we joined the Chamber. We also knew that relationships with people were the key to growing a successful business. Initially, we were just so busy trying to grow our business to the next level. It was enough for us to join the Chamber on our terms, and take advantage of the marketing and association benefits. Those benefits don’t always produce a direct ROI (Return on Investment); they are often intangible benefits such as providing visibility and stature.

As Bit-Wizards grew and leveled-up several times during our growth, we eventually expanded our business beyond Software Development to Digital Marketing. We ultimately created a Managed IT (information technology) Services line of business. With the addition of Managed IT Services in 2013, we had an offering that was local and national. Louis and I both had also leveled up in our personal lives with Louis marrying Tabitha and me marrying Kimberly and creating our two beautiful children: Molly & Wes.

--- CONTINUED ON PAGE 5 ---
My Schedule

I attend A LOT of meetings and banquets. In late February, a fellow chamber member and I were attending two banquets two nights in a row. He asked me, do you ever have a free night, which got me thinking—how many nights am I actually doing something? Thus I will outline my schedule from the February First Friday Coffee to the March FFC.

My normal work day is 7:30AM-6PM. I will list all the activities that are not included in the normal work day—those that occur after 5PM or on weekends. The schools noted are the school by school community conversations to promote the Half cent surtax campaign.

Friday Feb 7  First Friday Coffee // Allsports Banquet Auctioneer
Sunday Feb 9  FWB Mardi Gras parade
Monday Feb 10 Community Solutions Board meeting
Tuesday Feb 11 Riverside Elementary School, Crestview—
Wednesday Feb 12 Meigs
Thursday Feb 13 Shalimar
Saturday Feb 15 Fusion Gala at Emerald Coast Conference Center
Monday Feb 17 Historical documentary showcase at FWB Municipal Auditorium
Tuesday Feb 18 School Tax interview at Crestview community TV // Antioch School
Wednesday Feb 19 Personal not work 😊: Gordon Lightfoot concert (Pensacola Saenger)
I love concerts!
Thursday Feb 20 Early Learning Coalition emcee at FWB Auditorium
Friday Feb 21 Personal not work 😊: Dennis DeYoung (Pensacola Saenger)
Did I mention I like concerts?
Saturday Feb 22 Weekend in Pensacola — love that downtown — FWB will be like theirs—soon!!
Tuesday Feb 25 Mary Esther Elementary
Wednesday Feb 26 Florosa Elementary
Thursday Feb 27 Distinguished Young Women rehearsal emcee — FWB Auditorium
Friday Feb 28 Distinguished Young Women Finals emcee
Saturday Feb 29 St. Mary’s Church fundraiser auctioneer
Tuesday Mar 3 Destin Middle
Thursday Mar 5 A Bed for Me emcee // Eglin Elementary
Friday Mar 6 First Friday Coffee // Fundraiser for Kim Denman
Saturday March 7 Century 21 awards banquet emcee

Therefore, of the 30 days between February 7 First Friday Coffee and our March FFC weekend, I had an event 22 of those nights. For some that may be crazy busy — for me — just my life. Let’s see what happens this month!!

Ted Corcoran
President/CEO
National Defense Industrial Association (NDIA) Gulf Coast Partners with Emerald Coast Science Center

March 2, 2020—The NDIA Gulf Coast Chapter has come forward to sponsor the Emerald Coast Science Center. NDIA is a non-profit, educational association representing industry, government and all military services. Nearly 1,000 companies and 26,000 individuals build their businesses, careers, and the future of the industrial base through NDIA membership. President of the Gulf Coast Chapter, Sam Burkett, graciously sponsored the center as a top-level Partner in STEAM for $10,000.

As a partner of the Science Center, the NDIA Gulf Coast Chapter’s sponsorship makes it possible to expand educational programs, grow the center via new exhibits, and allows STEAM education to thrive in Northwest Florida. This support is the catalyst in making a positive impact for students and learners of all ages in our region. Collaborating with industry partners like the NDIA Gulf Coast Chapter helps increase the opportunity for the center to reach new members of the community and provide them with hands-on educational encounters that enrich their lives and futures. An annual average of over 5,900 field trip students and over 16,500 museum guests of all ages will be impacted by this partnership.

The Emerald Coast Science Center strives to inspire and grow a scientifically engaged community, and it has promoted STEAM education and public outreach in Okaloosa County and beyond for over 30 years. The museum is committed to serving children and families through excellent programming and exhibits that allow patrons to capture the difference a hands-on encounter with science can make. To learn more about our programs, history, and museum, please visit our website www.ecscience.org.

Emerald Coast Harley-Davidson earned the prestigious Silver Bar & Shield Circle of Recognition Award for 2019. Presented by Harley-Davidson Motor Company, this award is given to dealers based on its delivery of premium customer experiences and for demonstrating operational excellence across a range of categories.

“We’re proud to present this high honor to Daniel ‘Gus’ Gusoff in recognition of the many ways Emerald Coast Harley-Davidson delivers personal freedom to Harley-Davidson riders day in and day out,” said Dave Cotteleer, Vice President and Managing Director for U.S., Harley-Davidson Motor Company. “Strong, passionate dealers like Gus, who inspire new people to take their first steps toward riding and offer long-time riders the quality service they expect and deserve, are big reasons why Harley-Davidson has been a respected, recognized brand for over 116 years.”

Silver Bar & Shield award recipients, like Emerald Coast Harley-Davidson, consistently elevate the brand by providing their customers with exceptional and authentic Harley-Davidson experiences. “My team and I are honored to be recognized as a Silver Bar & Shield dealership,” said Gus. “We are committed to being industry leaders and sharing our passion for riding with our community.”

Emerald Coast Harley-Davidson, located on Beal Parkway, has been proudly serving the greater Fort Walton Beach area since 2014. They were awarded both the Bronze Bar & Shield award and the Greater Fort Walton Beach Chamber of Commerce Corporate Business of the Year Award in 2018.
Bay Port, New Senior Living Facility

Bay Port of Fort Walton Beach has broken ground on their Senior Living Facility expected to be completed by end of 2020 in time to welcome their new residents in 2021. The new facility will be located at 243 Hollywood Blvd SE and will be made up of five structures all on one floor enabling residents to move about easier.

“The one unique aspect that really is great for us is that it’s all on one floor,” Executive Vice President Todd Filippone with SRI Management stated “And it’s spread out really nicely over that eight acres, with some nice walking paths between buildings and some really beautiful landscaping.”

CONTINUED from page 2: It’s On Like Donkey Kong | A Message From The Chair Of The Board

In 2014, our marketing team wanted to level-up our involvement in the Chamber. To be honest, I was skeptical. I saw leveling-up in the Chamber as attending First Friday Coffee and Nothing but Networking. I knew that The Chamber provided visibility, promotion, events, relationships, association, and community connection. However, my time is a premium as a busy Husband and Father. I am focused on growing Bit-Wizards. Additionally, we have a second company, Monitored Communications LLC, which demands my attention, in which we are scaling a Software-As-A-Service co-parenting application called TalkingParents.com.

While I want to promote our company, I only want to do impactful things that matter and make a difference. Leveling-up our Sponsorship fit that goal while providing great benefits. Sponsorship has allowed me to help make a substantial impact on our community, such as the Brooks Bridge Replacement, Gulf View, ½ County Local Option Sales Tax, and the ½ Local Option Sales Tax for our Schools.

Not only has our Sponsorship expanded opportunities for me personally, but it has also expanded opportunities for key young leaders in my company. It has allowed your professionals such as Candie Mitchell, Jennifer Kraus, and Jason Monroe, to grow as leaders. It has allowed me to meet and build relationships with people I would never have known and established our company as a leader in the community. It has also increased our business opportunities.

Running and growing a business is hard. The formula for success isn’t as simple as playing Donkey Kong, but fighting the good fight and leveling-up while evolving is critical. Don’t forget to evaluate your Chamber Membership and consider leveling-up as you grow. Leveling-Up your Sponsorship can do great things for your business, whether you are a local business, a large national business, or a global business. Fight the good fight and Level-Up to Grow Your Business with The Chamber!

Vince Mayfield, Chair of the Board

Vince Mayfield and Louis Erickson
Accepting the INC. 500 Award
October 2, 2010

We Care About Our Community!

Coronavirus Self-Checker
A guide to help you make decisions and seek appropriate medical care
Fort Walton Beach Medical Center announced today that its Emergency Department Nursing Unit has earned the 2019 HCA Healthcare Unit of Distinction (UOD) Award – an annual program that recognizes and rewards exemplary nursing units at HCA Healthcare sites of care. The “Unit of Distinction” designation is achieved through measurable, exemplary performance in the strategic areas of advocacy and leadership, consistency in nursing practice and operations and leveraging scale to drive performance.

“The Unit of Distinction Awards recognize and celebrate excellence in nursing and acknowledge that it takes a high-performing team of nurses demonstrating a high level of commitment to achieve results like these,” said Jane Englebright, chief nurse executive and senior vice president of HCA Healthcare. “These awards help to unite our nursing community, all of us, toward a common goal of creating a patient-centered culture and keeping our commitment to the care and improvement of human life.”

In 2019, approximately 2,200 HCA Healthcare nursing units participated in the program and were scored on approximately 20 different criteria to determine which would receive the 2019 Unit of Distinction honor. Unit of Distinction winners are in the top five percent of all HCA Healthcare medical surgical, critical care, emergency services, surgical services, behavioral health and women’s and children’s nursing units. In addition to the UOD recipients, 106 additional units achieved scores ranking them within the top six to ten percent of all HCA Healthcare units, earning each an “Honorable Mention” designation.

“Our nurses are committed to the care and improvement of human life, and this award demonstrates their dedication to that mission.”

- Caroline Stewart,
Chief Nursing Officer of Fort Walton Beach Medical Center

Distinguished Young Women 2020

The event takes place June 25 and 26, with the final night on Saturday, June 27. Tickets go on sale in April.
distinguishedyw.org/
Founded in 1958, Distinguished Young Women is the largest and oldest national scholarship program for college-bound girls - it is the ONLY one of its kind in the country. It has provided life-changing experiences for almost 800,000 young women across the country and more than $108 million in cash scholarships at the local, state and national levels. In addition to cash scholarships, Distinguished Young Women participants are eligible for college-granted scholarships from over 100 colleges and universities. More than $1 billion in college scholarship opportunities were provided last year, some of which included full tuition, room, and board to first-class institutions.

Hosted in the city of Ft Walton Beach, the State of Florida DYW Program, was held Feb 28 at the FWB City Auditorium. $21,000.00 was awarded in cash scholarships. The participants were scored in five categories: scholastic achievement, interview, public speaking, fitness, and talent. Brooklyn Peters was selected by the 5 out-of-state judges to represent Florida in the upcoming nationals to be held in June in Mobile.

Brooklyn will report to Mobile for a 2-week stay that will consist of workshops, presentations, character building, rehearsals, and some fun on the side. Living less than 2 hours away, we fill up a cheering section in the balcony each year in the Mobile Civic Center. We hope to repeat that tradition this year. We have seen charter buses arrive from nearby states to cheer (LOUD) for their state...but also have seen yearly: busses from Kentucky, Rhode Island and Oregon. We hope several will want to drive over and help us fill that section and cheer for Brooklyn.

The event takes place June 25 and 26, with the final night on Saturday, June 27. Tickets go on sale in April.

Letter to the Community from Distinguished Young Women of FL State Director, Carole Byrd:

You are our people.

Betsy and I were both born here, but by living in multiple cities over time has shown us that “home” is truly where we belong. I personally have never been involved with a chamber who is so supportive, involved, and helpful. Suffice it to say that it is overwhelming, touching, and even more motivating for our passion for these college-bound girls from all over our state.

Story: One activity that occurs every year at the national level is an event called STATE SPECIALTY. Each state has a table set up with information about their own state, serves food particular to their state, and generally gives a Chamber type welcome. Many years ago when we were involved with it for the first time, people would come by our booth and tell us that they have been to Florida many times – they would fly to Disney World every year and back home (This came from people in Oregon, Vermont, California, and North Dakota). We were astounded that no one knew about anything about the Emerald Coast and our unmatched beaches! From that year on, we were determined to sell the Emerald Coast. And that, we did! We have sold our beaches, attractions here in our area, our food, and more. We are determined that every state in this country is going to be aware of and love the Emerald Coast!

We were selected to relocate and run the state finals program here about four years ago based on Betsy’s detailed organizational skills and my years of experience with young people and the program. With the support from our sponsors, attractions, and restaurants, the families of these people who come to stay here for STATE WEEK (and the judges as well) have marveled at the food, fun, and friendly atmosphere of the city itself, and we couldn’t be more proud. Case in point: Two years ago our judge’s panel had dinner provided by Tom and Peg Rice at Magnolia Grill. It was a wonderful experience; so much so that one of the couples canceled a reservation for their family beach trip to Panama City and made a reservation on the island to stay for a week later June…and they returned to the Magnolia Grill two times the week they were all here. And that’s just one story of many. We are bursting with pride.

But...our chamber – YOU - have completely blown us away! The involvement, the support, the monetary help, the offers to let us feed or entertain the girls at your businesses has been overwhelming. The employees in the DYW national headquarters office in Mobile are astounded, and of course, news flies fast all over all the other states in our DYW family, so everybody knows about Fort Walton Beach and our Chamber! We feel so fortunate, so blessed, and we love you all individually and collectively.
Public Safety Open House Success!
The Fort Walton Beach Fire Department and the Fort Walton Beach Police Department hosted a successful Public Safety Open House on Saturday, Feb. 29. Hundreds of people attended and were able to learn about crime and fire prevention and see firsthand what these two departments do on a daily basis to keep the Fort Walton Beach community safe. The event included a live K-9 demonstration by the police department, a fire sprinkler demonstration by Advanced Fire Protection Services and the fire department, fire truck rides, station tours and police vehicle displays. Families enjoyed bounce houses, a rock-climbing wall and interactive exhibits. The fire department cooked and provided lunch.

City of FWB Employee Hero
Jayson Furber, a 25-year City of FWB Sanitation employee, did a great thing recently. He saved a life because of his dedication to his customers and his attention to detail. While servicing one of his special needs customers, Jayson noticed newspapers piled up outside and a light routinely left on was turned off. Jayson called his supervisor who called police dispatch to request a wellness check. Officers found the resident in the home in need of medical attention. We are happy to report that the resident is doing well, thanks to Jayson. The City of FWB is extremely proud of Jayson and grateful that he has chosen to work for this community for so many years.

A Word from the Mayor
I would like to invite you to my annual State of the City Address on Tuesday, April 28, at 5 p.m. at City Hall. I am excited about the opportunity to share with you the current state of our city, highlight our successes over the past year and provide insight into the direction our community is headed. I am extremely proud of the accomplishments we are making in every area of service: recreation and cultural services; public safety; public works and utilities; growth management; and administration. While we are often met with many challenges at the local government level (unfunded mandates, erosion of home rule, funding shortfalls, regulatory changes, etc.), I am encouraged by the community support and input the City Council and staff receive from all of you. I hope to see you on April 28.

Sincerely,
Dick Rynearson
Mayor of Fort Walton Beach

Discover Jet Holmes Park
(Pickleball Central!)
The Recreation Department opened six new pickleball courts at Jet Holmes Park (224 Holmes Blvd. NW) with a ribbon cutting ceremony on March 5, 2020. The aging and underutilized tennis courts at the park were transformed into pickleball courts thanks to Community Development Block Grant funding of approximately $30,000 approved by the City Council in December 2019. The basketball court at the park also received a face lift.

“Pickleball has become wildly popular in the Fort Walton Beach area over the last few years and the demand for more courts spurred this project,” said Recreation and Cultural Services Director Jeff Peters. “These new courts are a great addition to our park system and will be heavily used.”

Quality of Life Survey and Strategic Planning
The City conducted its first ever Resident Quality of Life Survey in February in partnership with the Studer Community Institute. The phone survey sample had a sample size of 625 and reflected the demographic profile of voters in Fort Walton Beach. Questions covered economic conditions, traffic and roads, jobs, leadership, taxes and spending, education, crime rates, race relations, the environment, social opportunities, health care and more. The survey will be conducted annually.

“It is crucial to receive feedback from our residents if we plan to grow and improve the City. This survey is part of the process to move Fort Walton Beach forward,” said Mayor Dick Rynearson. “Every piece of information we can glean from this survey will be used to help us better understand what we are doing right and where we can improve.”

The survey is a product of the City’s 2019 Strategic Planning Sessions. Quint Studer will present the survey findings to the City Council on Tuesday, March 31. The survey report will be made available at www.fwb.org.
Each month the Greater Fort Walton Beach Chamber of Commerce hosts a special luncheon for our newest members.

Fairfield Inn & Suites Destin
19001 Emerald Coast Pkwy
Destin, FL
850.654.8611
www.fairfield.marriott.com
The Fairfield Inn & Suites Destin is located on the picturesque Emerald Coast. Experience sugary-white sands and emerald waters at Henderson Beach State Park, across the street. You can also take a short drive to Hurlburt Field and Eglin Air Force Bases, and visit deep-sea fishing charters and shopping at Destin Commons close by. Unwind after a memorable day in the heart of Destin at our rooms and suites, featuring plush bedding and complimentary Wi-Fi. Each morning, fuel up for adventures at our free deluxe breakfast. Burn some of those calories with a refreshing swim in our indoor and outdoor pools or visit our fitness center with cardio equipment and free weights. Ask us about The Fairfield 100% Guarantee™ where we promise you’ll be satisfied or we’ll make it right. That’s our commitment to you.

Katrice Johnson
The Powerlink Expo
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The largest most anticipated small business conference and expo on the Gulf Coast. This event connects and helps you build relationships with small businesses and Fortune 500 companies. We create events that will help your company share its message and brand with potential buyers, decision makers, partners and community.

Robert Conrad
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850.517.8898
www.sofmissions.org
SOF Missions is a non-profit organization that supplies veteran resources and assistance for warriors struggling with PTSD, the rigor from combat and challenges of military life. We develop and provide complete treatment plans that encompass psychological, social, spiritual, and physical programs. Our organization offers the opportunity to combat the epidemic of 20+ Veterans a day who lose hope and take their own life. We empower warriors to find purpose, be resilient and live well.

Joy Saddler
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(850) 770-2100
www.pc.fsu.edu
Florida State University Panama City offers life-changing educational and social opportunities that prepare students, faculty and community members to achieve their goals, develop a richer culture of diversity and foster a spirit of lifelong learning. Partnering with area military installations, industry leaders and other Florida State University departments and colleges, we tailor the educational experience to make higher education more accessible to the residents of Northwest Florida.

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We are a Music teaching facility. Learn – Perform – Record. We fulfill the desire to learn music, perform music providing both the space and the guidance. We can help even further by fulfilling the dream of recording your own song! Our Mission statement is to teach, train, coach, motivate, inspire and invest in a generation of musicians to live out their purpose and pursue their dreams.

Koko Russo
Genesis218 Matchmaking Services Inc.
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Fort Walton Beach, FL
850.585.9063
www.genesis218matchmaking.com
We assist people who are looking to be in a long term relationship. When juggling multiple responsibilities it can be difficult to find the time to get to know someone well enough to determine if they are a right match for you. That’s were our services come in! We do the looking and we ask the question on your behalf. Give us a call!

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Advance Auto Parts
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Advance Auto Parts is the largest aftermarket auto parts provider in North America. We serve Do-it-Yourselfers and professional installers. Passion for customer...Passion for Yes! At Advance Auto Parts we strive to provide our legendary customer service. We sell more parts. Have more fun!

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Smoothie King
(Fort Walton Beach)
330 Mary Esther Blvd, Ste. C
Mary Esthers, FL
321.609.1145
Smoothie King offers Healthy options. Smoothies for you, your employees or any group event. We inspire people to live a healthy and active lifestyle. Rule the Day!
OUR MISSION...

... is to strengthen local businesses and enhance the quality of life in our community by providing services which help businesses help themselves.

AJ’s on the Bayou
200 Eglin Pkwy NE, Fort Walton Beach, FL 32547
(850) 362-7738

Andrews Institute / Encore Rehabilitation, Inc.
133 Racetrack Rd NW Suite B, Fort Walton Beach, FL 32547
(850) 344-7500

Meridian at Westwood
1001 Mar Walt Dr, Fort Walton Beach, FL 32547
(850) 357-8385

Kia Fort Walton Beach
343 Miracle Strip Pkwy, Fort Walton Beach, FL 32548
(850) 396-2031
Ribbon Cuttings

Special Moments Creations Bridal Shop
Santa Rosa Mall, Mary Esther, FL 32569
(850) 586-6455

Emerald Coast Bait & Tackle
232B Eglin Pkwy NE, Fort Walton Beach, FL 32547
(850) 362-6128

Bridgeway Health Clinics
137 Hospital Dr NE, (North Entrance) Fort Walton Beach, FL 32548
(850) 226-8857

A Bed 4 Me Foundation
www.abed4me.org
(850) 280-5519
Welcome New Members!
February

JORDAN BREWER
MATTHEW LEARY
AXIS PHYSIOTHERAPY INSTITUTE
339 RACETRACK RD, STE. 20
FORT WALTON BEACH, FL 32547
(850) 374-8158

TRICIA SMITH
BAY PORT OF FORT WALTON BEACH
243 HOLLYWOOD BLVD NW
FORT WALTON BEACH, FL 32548
(850) 583-7990

BRENNON CASTILLO
BC MUSIC
796 NAVY ST.
FORT WALTON BEACH, FL 32547
(850) 376-8380

CHRISTOPHER MANSON
THE BEACHCOMBER
543 HARBOR BLVD STE 103
DESTIN, FL 32541
(850) 376-8380

HEIDI ALLEN
BRIDGEWAY HEALTH CLINICS
137 HOSPITAL DRIVE
FORT WALTON BEACH, FL 32548
(850) 226-8857

JUSTIN WATSON
CAPITAL GROUP INVESTMENTS
34990 EMERALD COAST PKWY
DESTIN, FL 32541
(850) 883-1299

CIRQUE ITALIA
CIRQUE ENTERTAINMENT II LLC
310 WHITFIELD AVENUE
SARASOTA, FL 34243
(941) 704-8572

SHANNON CARD
FATHER AND SON PEST & LAWN SOLUTIONS
8373 EAST BAY BLVD
NAVARRE, FL 32566
(850) 795-2038

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(877) 968-4335

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GCF INC.
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FORT WALTON BEACH, FLORIDA 32548
(850) 301-0083

JODELL HAVENFIELD
HAVE TRAVEL MEMORIES VACATIONS, LLC
34990 EMERALD COAST PKWY STE. 301
DESTIN, FL 32541
(850) 608-3058 . (877) 428-304

STEVE BUTLER
JOHNS HOPKINS UNIVERSITY
73 EGLIN PKWY NE, STE 201
FORT WALTON BEACH, FLORIDA 32548
(850) 883-1299

KARL MUTANGANA
SHALIMAR, FL 32579

MARSHALL DENYS
MARSHALL CUSTOM WELDING, LLC
CALL OR TEXT FOR SHOP ADDRESS
NEAR 399 AND HWY 87
NAVARRE, FL 32566
(850) 376-8945

MICHIELLE MCCORMICK
MILLENNIAL PHYSICIAN GROUP
203 CLOVERDALE BLVD.
FORT WALTON BEACH, FL 32547
(850) 803-8060

KELLY MURPHY-REDD
MURPHY REDD MARKETING
NICEVILLE, FL 32578
(850) 723-4541

CHARLES THOMAS
OMICRON PHI SIGMA - FWB SIGMA FOUNDATION
1052 BRYN MAWR BLVD
MARY ESTHER, FL 32569
(850) 582-4462

RICHARD ROBERTS
PAPA JOHN’S PIZZA
248 EGLIN PKWY NE, STE D
FORT WALTON BEACH, FL 32547
(850) 864-3636

PATT MANEY
PATT MANEY FOR STATE REPRESENTATIVE
(850) 390-8188

NIK DUDLEY
PRENTECE THOMAS & ASSOCIATES, INC.
425 E. HOLLYWOOD BLVD, SUITE D
MARY ESTHER, FL 32569
(850) 301-0083

LORI RENNEL
SKIPPERS FURNITURE/MATTRESS DEPOT
303 MARY ESTHER CUT OFF
FORT WALTON BEACH, FL 32547
(850) 586-7686

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SKY MOVING CO. LLC
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FORT WALTON BEACH, FL 32547
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TASHANA GRIFFITHS
NICEVILLE, FL 32579

WES FELL
WES FELL, CANDIDATE FOR OKALOOSA COUNTY COMMISSIONER
DESTIN, FL 32541
(850) 585-2153

PAUL RUIZ
WHERE Y’AT SEAFOOD
9575 NAVARRE PKWY
NAVARRE, FL 32566
(833) 332-8328

JENNIE LIBBY
WHICH WICH
735 MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. BLVD
FORT WALTON BEACH, FL 32548
(850) 770-2100

JOY SADDLER
FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY
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PANAMA CITY, FL 32405
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Join a collective voice to make a difference in your community.

FEBRUARY MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS

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Allergy Partners of the Emerald Coast
AMI Kids Emerald Coast Inc
Beachside Community Church
Bridgeway Center Inc
Brockman Enterprises Inc
Brookdale Bluewater Bay
Center Line Associates
Cinco Christian School
Connect With Flowers
David Goetsch
Diane Kelley
Dog Gone Cute Grooming & Bowtique
Embassy Suites Destin - Miramar Beach
Emerald Coast Cleaning Professionals
Emerald Coast Diabetes & Nutrition Center
Emerald Coast Funeral Home
Endless Horizons Realty
Florida Blue
FloridaOne DMAT Inc
Fort Walton Yacht Club
FWB First United Methodist Church
Hampton Inn & Suites-Mary Esther
Hancock Whitney Bank
IMPACT 100 of Northwest Florida
Jelly IT
Jim ’N Nick’s Bar-B-Q
Livin Right Real Estate
Liza Jackson Preparatory School
Okaloosa County Sheriff’s Office
Panhandle United Roller Derby
(formerly Beach Brawl SK8r Dolls)
Ray Sansom, Candidate for Okaloosa
County Superintendent of Schools
Raymond James & Associates
RealJoy Properties
Red Lobster
Rosewood Realty Inc
S4P Synergy Inc
Sacred Heart Hospital on the Emerald Coast
Salvation Army
SandCastle Dreams Realty, Inc.
Shalimar United Methodist Church
SoundSide Apartments
Southern Business Interiors
Synovus - Valparaiso
The Inner Wag
Valparaiso Coca-Cola Bottling Company
Visiting You Senior Home Care
Waterscape Condominium Owners Association Inc
Whataburger
Zaxbys

The Florida Small Business Emergency Bridge Loan Program is currently available to small business owners located in all Florida counties statewide that experienced economic damage as a result of COVID-19.

These short-term, interest-free working capital loans are intended to “bridge the gap” between the time a major catastrophe hits and when a business has secured longer term recovery resources, such as sufficient profits from a revived business, receipt of payments on insurance claims or federal disaster assistance.

Go to floridadisasterloan.org/ for rules and an application.
February’s Business After Hours was hosted by the colorful folks over at Painting with a Twist. Not only are their instructors talented but they proved to be lovely hosts! Thank You Painting with a Twist for a truly inspiring time!

**Meet the Member**

Taki Brown
Active Duty Air Force
- GenZ (not an elf)

**Where did you first hear about the Greater FWB Chamber?**
Billy Bowlegs Pirate Festival

**What did you think a Chamber of Commerce did?**
In the beginning, I thought it was an organization that was heavily involved in politics due to the fact that it was connected to the city.

**What specifically enticed you to attend your first Chamber event and why?**
I was told being part of the chamber would help me become connected to the city and that sprouted my interest.

**How do you explain to another young adult that it is “cool” to attend events with people who are as old as your parents and grandparents?**
I will explain to them that you want to surround yourself with people that inspire you and are already in the position in life that you are trying to get to.

**What did you learn during your involvement that motivated you to consider the career we discussed when you were here?**
Being a part of the chamber showed me that there is more to life than just a simple 9 to 5 job, by networking and communicating with people from all walks of life opened a completely new door for where I see my life in the next couple of years.

**What can our organization do better specifically to entice a young adult such as yourself to join and participate?**
My honest opinion is nothing more than you are already doing. People will only do what they are driven to do.
Stephen Perkins, CPA,
Warren Averett
Greater Fort Walton Beach
Chamber of Commerce: Executive Board

Vicki Tarro
HCA Heathcare Board Member – Community Solutions / One Hopeful Place
Leadership Council – Okaloosa County Public Schools - Take Stock in Children Hospital Team Lead – American Heart Association Heart Walk for many years.

Did You Know?

School Cents Makes Sense

DECEMBER 2019

The FWB Chamber Board of Directors unanimously voted to ‘Do what we can’ to assist our Okaloosa County School District with suggestions as to how our community might assist with their failing infrastructure of buildings, buses—and all capital needs.

JANUARY 2020

Our Chamber representative, Michelle Anchors (Anchors & Gordon, PA) along with 2020 Chair Vince Mayfield, and Destin Chamber CEO Shane Moody, offered our assistance to the School Board asking to allow us to visit each school to ‘find out for ourselves’ what the issues might be.

FEBRUARY-MARCH 2020

Michelle, Barbara Britt, Donna Teashk, Vince Mayfield, Heather Ruiz and Ted Corcoran, FWB Chamber President/CEO divided & visited all 38 Okaloosa County Schools (plus one charter school open house at Liza Jackson). These School by School Community Conversations were attended by School principal, teachers, parents and interested citizens.

The FWB Chamber will be lobbying for a Half Cent – For Ten years local optional sales tax to be voted on during the November 2020 election cycle. Each month we will share updates, facts and antidotes about how this surtax is IMPERATIVE for the economic future of Okaloosa County.

FACTS

61% of Okaloosa County Schools are over Half a century old!
75% of Okaloosa County schools are over 45 years old!!
Only two schools were built this century!

There are over 160+ portable buildings being used as classrooms across the county and even they have an average age of approximately 27 years!

When we are tracking our community advancement or lack of advancement by Century’s—we are in trouble.

https://www.facebook.com/halfcenttax/
Nothing But NETWORKING

Two Trees Restaurant at the Fort Walton Beach Golf Course served as the perfect backdrop for March’s Nothing but Networking luncheon. No better place to be on a sunny early spring day!

Thank You Two Trees Restaurant!
Our Chamber Members went to some pretty interesting places before the travel ban and they took some great reading material along with them for a little touch of home. If you took your Coastlines with you on a trip or vacation and took a photo of it there — share it with us!

Send your photos to lin@fwbchamber.org

Juanita Harvin, with EurWay Tours, LLC, enjoyed her Coastlines while on a river cruise in late 2019 while passing the National Prague Palace in Prague, Czech Republic!

NOW ACCEPTING NEW PATIENTS

Bridgeway Health Clinics
Working Together for a Healthier Community
A Florida Not for Profit Corporation

We accept Medicaid, Medicare and offer a Sliding Scale fee (pending eligibility)
137 Hospital Drive (North Entrance)
Fort Walton Beach

Not a Walk-In Clinic, please call for an Appointment
850.226.8857
BridgewayHealthClinics.org
Facebook.com/BridgewayHealthClinics

TOOK A TRIP
Took the Coastlines!

In light of the mandates that have been established regarding gatherings, the majority of our events in April have either been canceled, postponed or TBD (to be decided). We are in the process of determining which events we can bring you virtually. Please watch for updates through Chamber emails or our social media channels for the most current up to date information on events and meetings. Thank you!
Thank you to our sponsor!

Thank You to the great folks of Destin Fort Walton Beach for sponsoring our March First Friday Coffee.

Welcome to Our New Members!

Left to Right: Alex Acero, Cirque Italia; Jacobo Laya, Jac & Mac Photography; Corissa Fusco, Cirque Italia; Lia Davis, Montessori Learning Center; Christopher Manson, The Beachcomber; Nikolaus Dudley, Prentice Thomas & Associates, Inc.; Micheal Vecchio, Project Hope Recovery Center; Jessica Vecchio, Project Hope Recovery Center; and Cai Zhang, Keller Williams Emerald Coast Realty

Left to Right: Kelly Murphy-Redd, Murphy Redd Marketing; Scott Welner, Chesser & Barr, P.A.; Michelle Harsey, Church of Jesus Christ Latterday Saints; Claudia Molina-Pierce, M.D., White-Wilson Medical Center; Ginger Madden, Ginger Madden for State Attorney

FWB Chamber Committee Chairs

Leadership Okaloosa County Group
**Committee Briefs**

**Debbie Dodge**
Membership Specialist, Greater Fort Walton Beach Chamber of Commerce
Mary Kay Independent Sales Director
Debbie@FWBChamber.org

**Do You Have a Google Brain??**
Short answer...YES! Longer answer...yes AND.....
We are constantly feeding our brains with information. We all know that the bad and ugly thoughts don’t benefit us in any way. These often come to mind when we’re about to do something scary like enter a networking situation. We tend to think negative thoughts, such as “I don’t know anyone,” “I’m going to embarrass myself,” and the worst “I’m not good enough.”

So let’s return to our Google Brains. When we Google something, we type in keywords to find what we want. Why not “type” keywords into our brains so we can get what we are searching for, and train our brains to think GOOD thoughts. As we head into a networking event, think: “I will make someone feel important,” “I will help my fellow Chamber members by learning about them,” “I will be interested in others and they will be interested in me.” Remember that what we think about, we bring about, as Peter Pan did, think happy thoughts, and though they won’t make us fly, they will surely help us to soar in our businesses!

**Jamil Harris**
Cornerstone Financial
FWB Young Professionals Committee Chair
The FWB YP Committee’s Instagram account is now live. Follow us @fwb_young_professionals.

**Facebook page also has announcements, event photos, & more. Our young professionals are making great connections, learning about community initiatives and ways to get involved, and how to be successful in business while having fun! Next Mixer Mtg scheduled for April 30th, but due to COVID-19 — may be canceled - Stay Tuned!**

**Jessy Bautista**
Lisa Jo Spencer Law
WomenConnect Committee Chair
Let’s Focus on Women’s Heath in April!
We are going to learn about self-defense, general wellness and nutrition. Join us April 22nd from 11:30 to 1:00 – Due to COVID-19 -watch for details!

**Melissa Heath**
Brookdale Fort Walton Beach
Healthcare Committee Chair
Last month’s presentation, “The top 10 common signs for dementia and how to help yourself and family,” by the Alzheimer’s Association can be seen on the Healthcare Committee of the Greater Fort Walton Beach Chamber of Commerce Facebook page. Our next meeting, on April 14 @ 8am, “What are Advance Directives and why everyone must have them in place at all times?” with speaker Lisa Jo Spencer, P.A. will also be Facebook Live’d and posted.

**This event will ONLY be virtual.**

**Jason Monroe**
Bit-Wizards
BSG (Business Service Group) Committee Chair
Are you socially networked? However you may feel about social media on a personal level; on a business level, you should use it! ’What social network do I use for my business?’
• Networking and B2B Sales: Get a LinkedIn Profile!
• B2C and Non-Profit: Facebook’s the way to go!
• Twitter and Instagram: Anything goes!
The Business Success Group wants to help you connect, socialize, and network. Join us on Tuesday, April 21 @ 8:30 a.m. – TBD Watch for details.

**Lynn Dominique**
Escape Zone 60, Inc.
Military Affairs Committee Chair
Reporting this month’s MAC article from the Air Force Material Command Senior Leadership Conference at Wright Patterson Air Force Base in Dayton, Ohio.
Two topics at the top of their list are the Mission and the Airmen. Connected with the Director of Munitions Directorate and Commander of Eglin Research Site who have graciously agreed to share what he does at Eglin and offer highlights from the conference.

**Monday, April 20, 11:30 @ the Beal Center-POSTPONED**

**Martin Owens, CEO**
The Owen Organization
The FWB Tourism Guru
Board Chair 2012

**Tourism Innovation Sessions**
The Destin-Fort Walton Beach CVB recently held what they termed Innovation Sessions, aimed at receiving input and ideas from us locals about how we should move forward with our tourism stewardship. What is good for the locals is also good for the visitor! Similarly, what is good for tourists is invariably good for the locals. Our quality of life is intertwined.

The Innovation Sessions were brainstorming events seeking ideas to address three areas that affect us all. These were: how to get our kids out of the house and onto the water, how to avoid the congestion on our roads and how to develop Community Ambassadors.

Ideas that emerged could lead to significant improvements for us locals. That in turn will help the tourists. Everyone wins. Look out for more opportunities to contribute your ideas and suggestions over the coming months.

**Nic Dezinski**
MAG Aerospace
Ambassador Committee Chair

**The Green Team**
Are you making the most of your chamber membership? Did you know you can attend a new member luncheon if you are not a new member? Did you know that getting involved with the Ambassador committee will jump start your membership? The Ambassador committee allows for ample opportunity to meet a lot of new businesses and business people. See how the “Green Team” can help your business stay in the green.

Join us for our next meeting –TBD

**Visit the FWB Chamber**
online for up-to-date info on meetings and events!
www.fwbchamber.org/
Thank You To Our 2020 Annual Chamber Sponsors!