

# Business

## Speaking of Business ... Emerald Coast Scuba

**DAILY NEWS:** When did your business start?  
**EMERALD COAST SCUBA:** We formed the business in 1994, specializing in scuba training. The business expanded six years later when it moved to the harbor and offered full retail and charters on brother Tom's boat. Two years later, another opportunity to expand came with a partnership with Jan and Doug Best, along with Jan's mother, Olive Ogle (Destinite for more than 50 years). They built a center that is home to both the dive center and the Sea Mint Pond — a large, deep, saltwater pool to train divers and swimmers. The swim program brought an entirely new dimension to the business.

**DN:** Why did you decide to open it?  
**ECs:** Since Anna and brother Tom began their careers in diving in Destin in the early 80s, and Lori was a diver too, it seemed only natural to continue doing what they love. It really is awesome to make a living doing something you love — and doing it with family makes it even better.

**DN:** What type of products and services do you offer?  
**ECs:** We are a PADI 5-Star Center. We teach people how to dive and snorkel (kids are our specialty), and we teach specialty diving such as Nitrox, rescue, night diving, etc. We offer professional development courses like divemaster and instructor courses. We run boat trips, snorkel trips and sell and service dive gear, fill tanks, Nitrox



**Owners:** Sisters Lori and Anna Schmitz  
**Address:** 503 Harbor Blvd. (U.S. 98) in Destin (next to Taco Bell)  
**Phone:** 850-837-0955  
**Hours:** 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. seven days a week  
**Web site:** www.diveDestin.com  
**Business Philosophy:** To help people have safe fun in and under the water

fills, teach CPR, teach swimming, water safety, teach life guard and WSI courses, have birthday parties and kids scuba camps and we are a Red Cross training center.

**DN:** What's the newest thing you're doing?  
**ECs:** Headed by Coach Mary Weeks and her team, the Sea Mint Pond specializes in teaching children drown-proofing,

water safety and how to swim.  
**DN:** Do you have anything special you'd like people to know?  
**ECs:** "Coach Mary" has just added another professional coach to her team, Jackie White. Jackie has been a competitive swimmer for 18 years and competed nationally for 10 years. She was a four-year scholarship swimmer for the University of Alabama, where she scored at the SEC championship all four years. Her specialty is stroke development and refinement for those wishing to pursue a position on a swim team.

## RESORT PLANNED from Page C8

development application. Dunavant Enterprises has spoken with Crystal Beach residents worried about how this will affect beach access, parking and traffic in the area, particularly that it will increase the number of drivers using residential streets to cut between U.S. 98 and Scenic Highway 98. The company said it is forming a traffic committee to tackle this.

The \$1.4 million in public benefits proposed for the project include:  
● \$150,000 for sidewalk improvements the city has tentatively planned for fiscal year 2010.  
● \$72,400 a year for three years toward beach restoration.  
● \$21,000 over three years contributed to Destin's citywide lighting plan.  
● \$125,000 for pedestrian crossings at the Matthew Boulevard and Crystal Beach Drive intersections

## RESTORE from Page C8

and at the same time donate to a cause that is dedicated to helping others. For details, call 850-685-0686.

Committee on Economy. This week, he told us there could soon be a vote on his bill known as the Community Renewal Act. Simply put, if approved, this bill would:  
● Give towns with more than 5,000 residents the ability to waive or eliminate mandates that normally assign state roadwork costs to some developers.  
● Eliminate state reviews of proposed big projects known as "Developments of Regional Impact." Since this started, counties have gained the power to conduct their own reviews.  
● Allow cities and counties to eliminate "impact fees" to developers. This is a complicated issue, but Gaetz contends fees "are a bigger slice of shrinking pie." The alternative is a "smaller slice of a bigger pie."

## Big Green Egg

Here's a correction on something we ran Wednesday. Furniture Resources, at 211 Jonquil Ave. in Mary Esther, will be conducting its second Big Green Egg University cooking class from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturday. Ray Lampe, known as "Dr. BBQ," will assist in the cooking and give instructions. Lampe has written four cookbooks and is working on the fifth. Along with Lampe, John Miller, master barbecue chef and developer of Love Meat Tender barbecue products, will be available to assist participants. There is a \$5 enrollment fee. For details or to reserve a seat, call 850-243-3533.

Do you have a business development you'd like to share with our readers? Send an e-mail to [Business Editor Thomas J. Monigan](mailto:BusinessEditor@tdn.com) at [tdnmonigan@nvdailynews.com](mailto:tdnmonigan@nvdailynews.com) and then call him at 315-4438 to discuss it.

## State Senate vote

Republican Don Gaetz from Niceville is chairman of the state Senate Select

## Cornerstone wins 37 awards at ADDYs

Cornerstone Marketing & Advertising Inc. was recognized more than three dozen times recently by the Emerald Coast Advertising Federation for advertising excellence at the 2009 ADDY Awards Gala at Emerald Grande at HarborWalk Village in Destin.

Cornerstone won 37 awards:  
● 10 gold, including one Judge's Choice Award;  
● 27 silver, 13 of which were the highest in their category.  
The 10 gold ADDYs awarded to Cornerstone were won for three local businesses — 30A Resorts, Café Thirty-A and VIE — People + Places magazine — as well as North Carolina-based Sky Carolina.  
The 27 Silver ADDYs were secured for Southern Theatres L.L.C., owner of The Grand 16 at Pier Park, The Resort Collection of Panama City Beach, VIE — People + Places magazine and Cottages for Kids.

"We were thrilled to have had interesting and varied clients last year, and we count it a blessing that we were able to continue to grow the company in an economic down-



Left to Right: Jessie Shepard, Eric Shepard, Crystal Hamon, Lisa Burwell, Gerald Burwell, Bob Brown, Lisa Comeau, Hui-Ting Tang and Lisa Ferrick.

turn," said Lisa Burwell, president and owner of Cornerstone, in a press release. "Our creative team, led by vice president Bob Brown and cre-

## Local man trains in Tuscany, Italy

Daniel Pearson, a culinary assistant of the Fort Walton Beach Olive Garden, recently participated in a company-sponsored training in Italy.

Pearson and 13 fellow culinary assistants spent a week learning about Italian culture and cuisine and enhancing their culinary skills at Olive Garden's Culinary Institute of Tuscany.

Each year, Olive Garden selects about 100 employees to travel to Italy as part of the restaurant's ongoing culinary training program. This experience is designed to bring the genuine Italian dining experience alive for service leaders, and upon their return, to their restaurant teams and guests.

At Olive Garden's Culinary Institute of Tuscany, Pearson worked under the direction of Olive Garden executive chefs to learn time-honored traditions of Italian cooking by refining ingredient selection skills, learning the secret to layering sauces and perfecting al dente pasta.



Special to the Daily News  
Executive Chef Romana Neri was one of Daniel Pearson's instructors at Olive Garden's Culinary Institute of Tuscany.

While in Italy, the group also visited Olive Garden's Riserva di Fizzano restaurant and the Rocca delle Macie winery, Olive Garden's partner. While in Chianti, Italy, the class learned about the history and tradition of Italian winemaking and gained knowledge of the role wine plays in the Italian meal.



KAY PHELAN | Special to the Daily News  
Cattle Baron's Ball chairman Tim Krueger and his wife, Marlene, pose with Diane Maldonado, executive director of the Emerald Coast Unit of the American Cancer Society.

## Community rides against cancer

At the recent Cattle Baron's Ball, cowboys, cowgirls and their posses rode in more than 300 strong to help raise approximately \$94,000 for the American Cancer Society.

Held at Destin Commons, the event was like walking into the Wild West of yesteryear with hay bales and wagon wheels. Cowboy Bruce Brannen lassoed guests, while One Bullet Deputy Barney Fife arrested people who has to post "bail" to get out of jail. There was country music and food from area restaurants, gaming tables, as well as silent and live auctions. The event involved more than 60 volunteers. Businesses donated generously to the silent auction.

## Wine Auction Foundation announces board members

The Destin Charity Wine Auction Foundation, a non-profit organization that raises money for children in need by hosting world-class wine and culinary events, has added five new members to its board of directors.



JOHN RUSSELL



CORY FOSDYCK

The newest member is John Russell, senior vice president of operations for Sandestin Golf & Beach Resort. As an advocate for the foundation, Russell will operate as the strategic partner and sponsor for the Foundation.



JESSICA MARAMAN



KELLY FROHSIN

"The Destin Charity Wine Auction Foundation is unique in that it is able to contribute a high level of worthwhile funding and service while providing creative and enjoyable events for the community and distinguished wine enthusiasts," Russell said.

Other new members to the board include Cory Fosdyck, certified financial planner with The Krueger Group of Merrill Lynch, serving as the marketing committee co-chair and a bronze level sponsor; Jessica Maraman, president of Vivid Publicity and Marketing, serving as marketing committee co-chair; Kelly Frohsin, vice president of Morgan Stanley also serving as marketing committee co-chair; and Mike Kelley, owner of Kelley's Beach Liquors, serving on the procurement committee.



MIKE KELLEY

"Our board members make up the lifeblood of this organization. Their commitment and support is a valuable asset to our team and we look forward to the future growth of our foundation. Our new members are already very engaged, bringing new energy and fresh ideas to the foundation," said Todd Vucovich, executive director of the foundation. "As we prepare for our upcoming Wine & Dine in Paradise event, we greatly appreciate the time and resources that our board brings to the table."