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Rachael Cox
Marketing Communications Director
Editor-in-Chief



I am delighted to be able to celebrate the 10th anniversary of *Coming of Age* magazine and TV with you all! Though my perspective is limited as a “newbie” at Council on Aging of West Florida, I have been impressed and excited by what I’ve discovered in my research to prepare for this issue. In the past decade, Council on Aging of West Florida, with the support of so many, has accomplished a lot for our community and the seniors we serve. Along the way, these accomplishments have been well-documented in *Coming of Age* magazine and TV with the help of talented teams at Ballinger Publishing and WUWF-TV. Thank

you to all of our supporters for joining us on this incredible journey. We hope you’ll stick around for the next 10 years!

In addition to our highlight reel of the last 10 years at Council on Aging of West Florida and *Coming of Age*, we really lucked out with our celebrity interview... Al Roker! Roker is a television personality, and nine-time Emmy winner who is probably best known as the weatherman for NBC’s TODAY show.

This issue also features information about the Panhandle Charitable Golf Tournament, driving safety and casino getaways. As we enter hurricane season, please

make sure to check out page 12 for some preparedness tips from Be Ready Alliance Coordinating for Emergencies.

We want to hear from you! If you’ve been a long-time *Coming of Age* subscriber, tell us what your favorite stories have been in the past 10 years. Send your stories to rcox@coawfla.org, and we’ll share them with our friends on social media.

And as always, if you have comments or suggestions about *Coming of Age*, please don’t hesitate to call me at (850) 432-1475. We value your opinion!

Until next time – Enjoy life. You’ve earned it!

Readers’ Services

SUBSCRIPTIONS

Your subscription to *Coming of Age* comes automatically with your membership to Council on Aging of West Florida. If you have questions about your subscription, call Rachael Cox at (850) 432-1475 ext. 130 or email rcox@coawfla.org. Please do not hesitate to contact Rachael with any questions or comments about your service, and thank you.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

When calling or emailing us your change of address, please provide Council on Aging of West Florida with both the old and new addresses to expedite the change.

BACK ISSUES

Is there an issue of one of our magazines that you just have to have? Was your relative seen in a recent issue and you lost it? Give Ballinger Publishing a call at (850) 433-1166 ext. 30, and they will find one for you.

LETTERS

Council on Aging of West Florida welcomes your letters and comments. Send letters to Council on Aging c/o Rachael Cox at 875 Royce St., Pensacola, FL 32503, emails to rcox@coawfla.org or contact editor Kelly Oden at Ballinger Publishing, P.O. Box 12665 Pensacola, FL 32591 or kelly@ballingerpublishing.com.

WRITING OPPORTUNITIES

We are always willing to consider freelance writers and article ideas. Please send queries and/or suggestions to Kelly Oden at kelly@ballingerpublishing.com or Rachael Cox at rcox@coawfla.org.

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SUITE 402 • PENSACOLA, FL 32502
850/433-1166 • FAX 850/435-9174

PUBLISHER

MALCOLM BALLINGER

EXECUTIVE EDITOR

KELLY ODEN

EDITOR

EMILY ECHEVERRIA

ART DIRECTOR

RITA LAYMON

GRAPHIC DESIGNER & AD COORDINATOR

GUY STEVENS

BUSINESS EDITOR

JOSH NEWBY

ACCOUNT EXECUTIVES

BECKY HILDEBRAND • BECKY@BALLINGERPUBLISHING.COM
AMANDA TOMLINSON • AMANDA@BALLINGERPUBLISHING.COM

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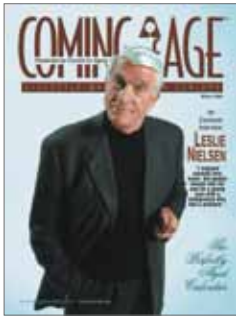
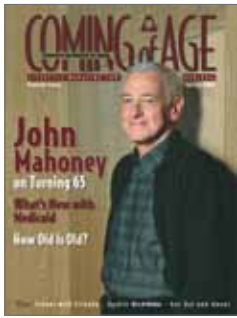
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On the cover: Al Roker, Photo by Andrew Eccles

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Elder Abuse:

An International, National and Local Problem



John B. Clark,
President/CEO,
Council on Aging of
West Florida



According to the U.S. Administration on Aging (AoA), hundreds of thousands of older persons are abused, neglected and exploited every year.

Elders throughout the United States lose an estimated \$2.6 billion or more annually due to financial abuse and exploitation. These are funds that could have been used to pay for basic needs such as housing, food and medical care. Unfortunately, no one is immune to abuse, neglect and exploitation. It occurs in every demographic, and can happen to anyone—a family member, a neighbor, even you. Yet it is estimated that only one in five of those crimes are ever discovered.

World Elder Abuse Awareness Day (WEAAD) was launched on June 15, 2006 by the International

Network for the Prevention of Elder Abuse and the World Health Organization at the United Nations. The purpose of WEAAD is to provide an opportunity for communities around the world to promote a better understanding of abuse and neglect of older persons by raising awareness of the cultural, social, economic and demographic processes affecting elder abuse and neglect. In addition, WEAAD is in support of the United Nations International Plan of Action acknowledging the significance of elder abuse as a public health and human rights issue. WEAAD serves

as a call-to-action for individuals, organizations, and communities to raise awareness about elder abuse, neglect and exploitation.

Elder abuse, neglect and exploitation can be hard to identify and are complex issues. A great place to learn more about this serious issue and how to spot warning signs is the National Center for Elder Abuse of the Administration on Aging (NCEA). The website is www.ncea.aoa.gov.

On a local level, Council on Aging of West Florida works closely with the local office of Adult Protective Services (APS) to serve those individuals who have been identified as “high risk” for institutional placement, abuse, neglect and/or exploitation. A case in point: APS referred a “high risk” consumer to Council on Aging. This consumer was an 85-year-old male who suffered from multiple health-related issues, some life threatening. The consumer was in need of 24-hour care and supervision to ensure that his Activities of Daily Living (bathing, dressing, eating, toileting and transferring) as well as his Instrumental Activities of Daily Living (housekeeping, meal preparation, money management, shopping and medication management) were met. The consumer did have a caregiver who unfortunately had recently suffered from a stroke and was also in poor health. After an in-home visit and assessment by a Council on Aging case manager, a care plan was developed

to assist both the consumer and his caregiver. The consumer received a monthly supply of consumables (incontinent supplies/adult diapers) to help maintain good personal hygiene and avoid skin break-down due to incontinence. The consumer also received respite to relieve his caregiver. His caregiver was able to pay for some private nightly respite care with a local care-giving agency. The consumer also received homemaking to ensure that his living environment was clean. He received seven home-delivered meals weekly to ensure he had a daily nutritious meal as his caregiver was not able to stand for long periods of time. His grandson assisted with bathing daily. The consumer's monthly income was modest, but just above the minimum that would have made him eligible for Medicaid. Without help from his caregiver, family members and Council on Aging services, funded in part by United Way, Florida General Revenue funds and private donations, the consumer would have been placed in a facility in order to receive the care to keep him safe and ensure that his needs were met.

These services not only helped prevent nursing home placement and ultimately expensive assistance from the Medicaid program, but also helped ensure he was no longer high risk for abuse, neglect and/or exploitation. This is an example of a family working together with just a little help from state and local resources to keep their loved one at home, which ultimately benefited everyone.

Take the time to learn more about elder abuse. Visit the NCEA website www.ncea.aoa.gov, and if you know an elderly or disabled person whom you feel is being abused, neglected and/or exploited, you should report this to Adult Protective Services at 1-800-96-ABUSE. **COA**

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HURRICANE PREP

The Be Ready Alliance Coordinating for Emergencies (BRACE) and its partners know that the likelihood that you and your family will recover from a hurricane or other emergency tomorrow often depends on the planning and preparation done today. You should plan to survive on your own for at least three days. Think about the basics for survival – food, water, clean air and any life-sustaining items you require.

Courtesy of BRACE



Get a kit: Consider the development of two emergency kits. In one kit put everything you will need to stay where you are and survive for several days. The other kit should be a lightweight, smaller version you can take with you if you have to leave your home. Recommended basic emergency supplies include: water one gallon of water per person per day for at least three days for drinking and sanitation; food, at least a three-day supply of non-perishable food and a can opener if kit contains canned food; battery-powered or hand crank radio and a NOAA Weather Radio with tone alert and extra batteries

for both; flashlight and extra batteries; first aid kit; whistle to signal for help; dust mask to help filter contaminated air and plastic sheeting and duct tape to shelter-in-place; moist towelettes, garbage bags and plastic ties for personal sanitation; wrench or pliers to turn off utilities; local maps; pet food, extra water and supplies for your pet or service animal.

Include medications and medical supplies: If you take medicine or use a medical treatment on a daily basis, be sure you have what you need on hand to make it on your own for at least a week. Florida statutes allow for the replacement of prescription medications at

any time during a declared local state of emergency.

Additional items: If you use eyeglasses, hearing aids and hearing aid batteries, wheelchair batteries, or oxygen, be sure you always have extras in your home.

Include emergency documents: Include copies of important documents in your emergency supply kits such as family records, wills, power of attorney documents, deeds, social security numbers, credit card and bank information, and tax records.

Make an emergency plan and write it down.

The Florida Division of Emergency Management offers an online tool to help you develop your plan through its website:

www.FLGetAPlan.com. Keep a copy of your plan in your emergency supply kits and a list of important information and contacts in your wallet.

Develop a family communications plan: Your family may not be together when disaster strikes, so plan how you will contact one another and review what you will do in different situations. It may be easier to make a long-distance phone call than to call across town, so plan an out-of-town contact.

Deciding to stay or go: Depending on the nature of the emergency, the first important decision is whether you stay or go. Monitor television or radio news reports for information or official instructions as they become available. If you're specifically told to evacuate or seek medical treatment, do so immediately.

Consider your pets: Keep in mind that what's best for you is typically what's best for your animals. If you must evacuate, take your pets with you, if possible. If you are going to a public shelter, it is important to understand very few are pet-friendly and able to accommodate animals in separate space from evacuees. Pre-registration of pets may be required. If you have a medical condition, check with your doctor or the health department about alternative sheltering options.

Evacuation: There may be conditions in which you will decide to leave, or there may be situations when you may be ordered to leave. Choose several destinations in different directions so you have options in an emergency.

Fire Safety: Plan two ways out of every room in case of fire. Secure or remove furniture and objects that may block your path.

Be Informed: It's important to stay informed about what might happen and know what types of emergencies are likely to affect our community. For more information about specific types of emergencies, visit www.ready.gov, call 1-800-BE-READY, or contact your emergency management office: in Escambia County at (850) 471-6400 or in Santa Rosa County at (850) 983-5360.

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By Josh Newby

ON THE ROAD AGAIN

Florida boasts one of the highest concentrations of senior-aged drivers of any state in the country. Senior drivers are also the population segment most prone to accident fatalities, even more than new drivers. To combat this troubling statistic and make the roadways safer for all, there are a host of programs, both public and private, to help seniors continue to enjoy the freedom of driving in a safe way and know when it may be time to switch from the driver's seat to the passenger's.

According to aging road user data, 20 percent of drivers in Florida are over the age of 65. Ten percent of the vehicular accidents these seniors experience result in deaths and 9 percent result in serious injury. Keeping our seniors safe is important to keeping our roadways safe. Luckily, there are initiatives in place to do just that.

Since 1991, Florida's Department of Transportation has been working to make the roadways easier to see for aging eyes. By the time we hit retirement age, our eyes need three times as much light to see what we did when we were 20. As such, Florida has increased the width of reflective pavement stripes

from 4 to 6 inches. The state has also put advance street-name signs 1,000 feet before intersections to give seniors a heads-up if they want to turn and give them time to switch lanes if needed.

"Through the Safe Mobility for Life Coalition, we also implemented a statewide Aging Road User Strategic Safety Plan which established baseline data on population, drivers, and crashes by age," said Gail Holley of the DOT. "We are currently developing, implementing and evaluating resources and programs to help reduce crashes for aging road users by improving their safety, access and mobility."

Private organizations have a vested interest in senior road

safety, too. Florida's AAA Motor Club and Travel Agency has a number of programs aimed at keeping seniors safe. According to them, aging individuals, as well as their families and friends, should stay aware of warning signs that could signal impending danger.

The signs include frequent fender-benders, getting lost on familiar routes, getting honked at by other drivers, having wandering thoughts, or driving too fast or too slow. The AAA advises ongoing classes for seniors to keep their minds sharp on our increasingly congested and confusing roadways. These classes can help seniors learn how to see for safety and understand the effects of medication on driving.

"Today's senior drivers are often healthy and active, but they are still at a greater risk of being killed or injured in a crash due to age-related fragility," said Michele Harris with the Florida AAA. "For this reason, utilizing tools and resources designed to teach them how to reduce crash risk can keep aging



drivers safer behind the wheel."

AAA also partners with local higher learning institutions, such as the University of West Florida, to produce CarFit events that help older drivers find the perfect fits with their cars.

"The Florida Panhandle is home to some of the most active older adults in the state and for the Center on Aging to bring this program here to improve their confidence behind the wheel is simply a joy," said Dr. Rodney Guttman, director of the UWF Center on Aging. "Driving is a major point of focus for maintaining independence and with this incredible academic-community partnership we are demonstrating our commitment for

our community to be the safest and most informed in the region."

CarFit events use a trained team, including occupational therapy practitioners, to assist older drivers with items such as a clear line-of-sight over the steering wheel; adequate space between the front air bag/steering wheel and the driver's breastbone; properly adjusted head

restraints; proper positioning on gas and brake pedals; and proper seat belt use and fit; and safe positioning of mirrors to minimize blind spots.

For more information about CarFit, visit www.car-fit.org.

Mass transit is a way for seniors to get around in an efficient way. By riding buses and other forms of public transit, seniors can enjoy the sights around them while not having to worry about driving and being on high alert. Escambia County Area Transit (ECAT) offers senior citizens and Medicare cardholders a more than 50 percent discount on fares, from \$1.75 to just 85 cents. Unlimited 30-day ride passes can also be purchased for \$35 instead of the usual \$47.

"Mobility and access to transportation is important for most residents," said Tonya Ellis, director of marketing at ECAT.



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Family members and friends of senior drivers should know that an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure when it comes to aging drivers, and simple, non-judgmental conversations are often the first step to safer transportation. Conversations should be one-on-one (avoid intervention-style talks), encouraging, and express concern instead of judgment or condescension.

"It is important that we all



remain proactive about our safe driving skills," said Holley. "We must also create a plan to successfully transition from driving in order to remain independent and active in our communities after we retire from driving."

By using various free programs, common sense, and transportation alternatives, Florida's seniors can work to make themselves and their fellow drivers safer than ever.

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CROSSFAITH MISSIONS FUND

Makes an Impact



By Brandi Welk, Development Director

The smallest amount of help can make the biggest difference. That's exactly what the CrossFaith Missions Fund intends to do.

"With the loving support of our members and the community," said Helen Winfree, Secretary for CrossFaith Church, "we are able to help local families and their loved ones walk through this journey with the support, love and prayers of a great facility and staff."

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The congregation of CrossFaith Church has founded the CrossFaith Missions Fund to support Council on Aging of West Florida's adult day health care center, The Retreat. This fund will be used towards assisting local families in need of respite from care giving by allowing their loved one to participate at The Retreat.

"This will increase their stimulation and socialization with others, allow them to have fun and laugh with their peers, and provide respite for the caregiver," said Sandie Holtry, director of The Retreat, Council on Aging of West Florida's adult day health care center. "What a blessing this will be for our participants!"

Council on Aging could not be more humbled or thankful for an organization to want to contribute to our mission. CrossFaith Church is a small church out of Molino, Fla. with the goal to make a grand impact locally. Brenda Long, daughter of participant Blanche Long, has benefited tremendously from the CrossFaith Missions Fund:

“My mother was born on July 14, 1928 in Tylertown, Miss Mom was one of five children who grew up on a farm. From the early years, she was never an 'inside' person and had to be outside. At the age of 19, she married my dad, where he whisked her away to Mobile, Ala. and had two children. Mom worked for the Civil Service at Brookley Field and later transferred to Pensacola NAS where she retired. Dad owned a mom and pop store called 'Romie's Penny Patch.' Once mom retired, the store carried lots of flowers and once again, mom found herself outdoors.

About 10 years ago, dad passed away after they had been married for 58 years. Naturally, mom was devastated. She couldn't even put gas in her own car. That's when I saw the first

signs of mom's dementia. She was diagnosed with Alzheimer's. Here is this very intelligent woman dealing with this dreadful disease and the loss of her husband. She still loves to be outdoors, but it has become too dangerous. She is not at the stage where she needs round-the-clock care, but still needs some supervision.

Thankfully, we found Council on Aging of West Florida and their adult day health care center, The Retreat. With their program, she could be around people, go on field trips, and continue to enjoy the outdoors. It gives me peace of mind while at work to know that I don't have to worry about her. I don't know what I would do without The Retreat's help. They are angels. God bless them! We are so thankful for the help that we receive from CrossFaith Church. Your generosity is greatly appreciated! ”

This is only one of many participants who has been positively impacted by CrossFaith Church's kindness.

"I hope our endeavor will help provide or supplement funding for families who might otherwise not be able to take advantage of this important aid in the care of their loved ones," said Janice Mason, the director of missions for CrossFaith Church. "With this scholarship program, our goal is to help provide peace of mind in knowing that your loved ones are well-cared for while providing the time for you to accomplish those daily tasks without the financial hardship."

We cannot thank CrossFaith enough for their generosity. If you would like to join CrossFaith Church in supporting Council on Aging of West Florida, please contact them at (850) 587-3187. If your company is interested in starting a fund for your employees, please contact Brandi Welk at (850) 432-1475.

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**PANHANDLE
CHARITABLE OPEN**

AIMS **FORE**

BIGGEST YEAR YET

By Brandi Welk, Development Director

**Marcus Pointe
Golf Club**

Sept. 24-26

**The Panhandle
Charitable Open**
(PCO) has quickly become a signature charity event in Northwest Florida, raising more than \$500,000 for local non-profits, including Council on Aging of West Florida. The tournament is back again for its 14th year and it's taking place Sept. 24-26 at Marcus Pointe Golf Club.

The PCO was created by chairman John Peacock and his wife Jerre after the unfortunate death of their 17-year-old son John Ryan. The couple started the charity event so individuals and organizations could give in Ryan's name, making some sense of their loss. They partnered with an existing tournament by a Marcus Pointe men's group and began working on something much bigger. Prior to Peacock's leadership, the men's group raised roughly \$700 a year for non-profits. In its first year under a new name and leadership, they were able to raise \$20,000. Momentum grew for the PCO, and last year they raised a record-breaking \$130,000.

The tournament uses a two-day, two-person Best Ball format, allowing each player to play his or her own ball from tee to green. There is a variety of tee times including Friday morning and afternoon and Saturday morning and afternoon. To play at your preferred time, Peacock suggests registering early. Registration information can be found at www.pcogolf.org.

If golfing isn't quite your forte, the weekend's events include a FORE! Charity Tee Off Par-Tee and Silent Auction held Sept. 24 from 6 pm to 10 pm at Sanders Beach-Corrine Jones Community Center.

"Some folks may not be interested in golfing," Peacock said. "So we've created an event to include more community members that is entertaining and still raises money for our local charities."

Tickets are \$100

per person and include dinner by Four Seasons Catering, live music by Mass Kurfuzon, and access to the silent and live auction. "In the past, we've raised between \$12,000 and \$15,000 at the auction. I hope by continuing the FORE! Par-tee we will build on that momentum."

Peacock and committee members are actively seeking sponsors for the various events. There are an array of packages available, ranging from \$100 for dinner only to a \$6,000 platinum sponsorship with extensive access and benefits. They are also seeking silent auction items. There is no monetary minimum requirement for items donated. Items for the auction can be dropped off at Council on Aging of West Florida at 875 Royce Street, Pensacola, Fla. 32503 or at Edward Jones located at 200 South Tarragona Street, Pensacola, Fla. 32502.

In addition to the auction and tournament, a raffle will take place for a chance to win either a men's



PCO Chairman John Peacock and committee members present check to Council on Aging of West Florida.

Tag Heuer watch or SimonG ladies diamond earrings from Bere' Jewelers. Both prizes are valued up to \$3,000. Tickets are \$50 each and there is no limit on the amount of tickets purchased. Tickets can be purchased online at www.pcogolf.org or at any of the four main charities: Council on Aging of West Florida, Child Guardians, Gulf Coast Kid's House and Children's Home Society of Florida.

Peacock is geared up for this year's PCO, saying, "We hope to exceed last year's total by bringing in \$160,000 to share within our community. We are aiming for the biggest year yet." He envisions many plans for the future of PCO, but ultimately would like to "continue to expand the breadth and depth of the PCO reach."

Whether you are a golfer or need a night out with a loved one, you cannot go wrong by participating in the 14th Annual Panhandle Charitable Open. If you are interested in participating or want more information, find PCO on Facebook by searching "Panhandle Charitable Open" or visiting www.pcogolf.org. **COA**





GAME FOR A GETAWAY

Gulf Coast Casinos Offer More Than Just Gambling

By Emily Echevarria

For many people, summer means long vacations complete with plane trips, hotel stays and all the financial burdens that come along with such an excursion.

Luckily for residents of northwest Florida, the natural surroundings offer an escape to paradise close by, and beyond the sun and sand of our own beaches there are plenty of perfect daytrip locales that are close

enough to drive to and spare the hassle of extended travel. Popular getaways in this region include casinos in nearby Biloxi or Atmore. Whether it's just for a day out with friends or family, or a fun celebration for a birthday or other occasion, the short travel time and plethora of options at many casinos and casino hotels make it a fun and low maintenance trip to get away without going too far.

While the main draw of casinos is generally the game floors with slots, card and game tables, and the thrill of possibly winning some cash prizes, many if not all places that offer gambling also offer other amenities and entertainment options that keep people coming back even if they're only mildly interested in the games.

A car might not even be necessary to make the trip. Good Time Tours offers several daily charter bus rides to various casinos in Biloxi. Fares are only \$7 and include the round trip between Pensacola and the casinos along with \$15 or \$20 free play to use during the five-hour stay at the casino. With travel taken care of, day trippers only need to arrange drop off and pick up at the Good Time Tours parking lot. For those that would rather book a room and enjoy even more time at their casino or hotel of choice, the amenities for hotel guests are endless.

Hard Rock Hotel & Casino Biloxi

The Hard Rock is widely known for its many entertainment options as well as the lively atmosphere and rock 'n' roll attitude on the gaming floor. With 1,300 slots and 50 table games, all decked out in true Hard Rock fashion, there's something for any gambling lover, but there's much more as well.

The Rock Spa offers an array of services from massages and facials to nail care and waxing as well as access to the relaxation room, aroma steam room, fitness room, sauna, hot tubs and coed hot tub area with cold plunge. Hard Rock guests also have access to the pool area where they can lounge in comfort surrounded by tropical landscaping or take a dip and swim up to the



Sound Bar for a daquiri or visit Tequila's on the Bay. Hard Rock offers golf packages that include visits to one of many nearby courses for guests eager to hit the links.

The live music is one of the main things Hard Rock is known for, and with several venues within the complex there's plenty to enjoy. The summer schedule in the spacious Hard Rock Live includes classic rock greats like Judas Priest and Whitesnake, as well as Air Supply and more. The Center Bar on the gaming floor also hosts live bands nightly and dueling piano shows on Thursday evenings.

Beau Rivage

One of the most popular and established casino and hotels in Biloxi, the Beau Rivage, attracts players to its expansive gaming floor that boasts 2,100 slot games, a poker room and table games. Its other amenities offer a world of entertainment, dining and even shopping right on the complex. Intimate, fine dining is available in the form of swanky American steakhouse BR Prime, or sophisticated Jia, offering Pan-Asian flavors in a modern setting. There are also casual dining options in Terrace Café, the Italian eatery Stalla, and the traditional American pub fare at Coast Restaurant. Of course, the Buffet is also the perfect spot to indulge and try a little bit of everything.

Those looking for some luxury can find it in the boutique shopping promenade at the Beau Rivage, which features clothing, jewelry, artisanal products and more, or at the salon and spa. Nightlife and entertainment abound at the Beau. Summer concert lineups include Bret Michaels, Peter Frampton and Cheap Trick, and Yes and





Toto. The cocktail lounge Eight75 is the perfect spot for pre- or post-dinner drinks and has live music nightly. For the young and young at heart, a 3,000 square foot arcade offers some non-gambling gaming with new games and classics like Pac Man. The Beau also has Fallen Oak Golf, a private golf course exclusive to its guests.

Wind Creek Casino and Hotel Atmore

While Wind Creek Casino Hotel has a 50,000-square-foot gaming floor with more than 1,700 games to choose from, it also offers other unique amenities that make it a getaway spot you won't soon forget. The hotel has 236 spacious rooms, round the clock room service and is one of only nine properties in Alabama that has received a prestigious AAA Four Diamond rating. On the private 15th floor, Level 15 is a boutique "hotel in a hotel," offering luxurious surroundings inspired by nature and special amenities for guests. Continue the luxury at the spa, where services include massages, facials, nail care, body scrubs and wraps and more.

If it's delicious and varied cuisine you're looking for, Wind Creek has plenty to serve. Fire Steakhouse and Grill Café have contemporary classics, while the Spa Café has lighter fare for healthier options. The Taste Buffet has delicious all-you-can-eat options, and Yogurt Shop has sweets and a coffee bar to satisfy your cravings. Guests can delve even further into a culinary experience at Kitchen, where the Culinary



Studio offers hands-on cooking classes that change monthly and give participants a one-of-a-kind cooking experience.

Entertainment at Wind Creek extends far beyond the gaming floor. The complex has its own cinema as well as a bowling alley, both offering fun and leisure for all ages. Golf packages are also available for some outdoor activity.

IP Casino Resort & Spa

Biloxi's IP Casino Resort & Spa is a premier location with a huge range of options in its massive complex. The AAA Four Diamond rated property has a 70,000-square-foot casino housing 1,900 slot machines and 60 table games and more than 1,000 elegantly appointed rooms and suites. Eight different dining options are available onsite including two award-winning fine dining restaurants: Thirty-Two, a steak and seafood restaurant, and Tien, an interactive Asian eatery. Other dining spots at the IP include Back Bay Buffet, Italian eatery Costa Cucina and the tropical flavors of Quench, the poolside café.

Senses Spa and Salon is the perfect place to relax at the IP, with a wide array of beauty and spa treatments for guests to enjoy. For evening entertainment, head to the show space at Studio A, or wind down at the chic Chill Ultra Lounge or Thirty-Two Lounge, where cocktails and live music await. Summer headliners at the entertainment complex include Joan Jett & the Blackhearts, Don Rickles and Merle Haggard.

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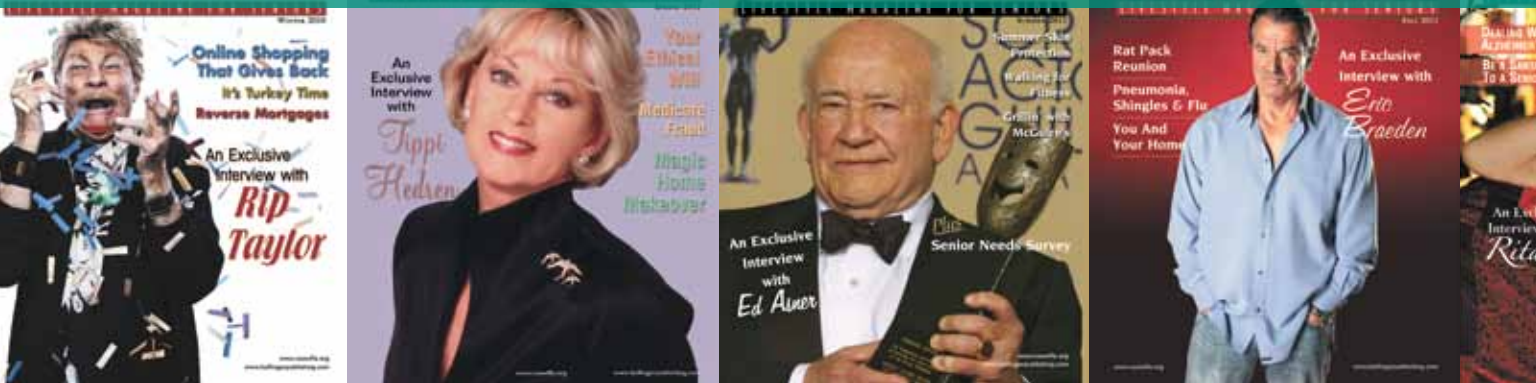
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A Helping Hand and a Gentle Heart



Celebrating



By Rachael Cox, Editor-in-Chief

When Council on Aging of West Florida began our partnerships with Ballinger Publishing and WUWF-TV to produce *Coming of Age* magazine and TV, we could only hope that with quality content and a passion for excellence we would positively impact those we serve. Ten years later, the magazine has grown tremendously both in number of pages and readership and the show has crossed over to YouTube to engage a larger audience. This is cause for celebration, but also a time to reflect. In the past decade, how have senior-related issues evolved? How has Council on Aging been instrumental in advocacy and the provision of much-needed services for the aging and their caregivers? Where does *Coming of Age* fit in to all of that?





The Retreat

Jeff Nall, former vice president of communications and development for Council on Aging, remembers the early days of *Coming of Age* well, saying, "Council on Aging of West Florida had a successful, informative newsletter for many years, *Branches*, which focused on the programs and services provided by the Council on Aging. Due to the nature of the content, the newsletter was primarily distributed to clients and a donor base much smaller than the organization has today. However, increasing printing costs meant a need to generate outside support, or advertising, which required a larger and more diverse readership base to attract marketing dollars. At the same time, the Baby Boomers were growing older and there was a need in the community for information and education on a wide range

The Rat Pack



of 'senior' topics. *Coming of Age* magazine enabled us to broaden the content of the publication, increase readership and attract advertisers, which enabled us to serve a more diverse audience and continue to be good stewards of our resources by keeping costs down."

Perhaps the most obvious change in senior issues the last 10 years is the advancement in technology. Besides nurses and physicians carrying laptops and tablets, and caregivers having information at their finger tips, technology has empowered seniors to be more independent. With technology like assistive home devices, seniors now have more choices, control, self-mobility and reminders for taking medications.

Another notable trend in the past decade is a shift in service delivery. Americans are living longer and the population of older adults increases steadily every year that passes. In 2005, when Council on Aging of West Florida launched *Coming of Age*, 36.8 million Americans (12.4 percent of the population) were 65 and older according to the Administration on Aging (AoA). This represented one in every eight Americans. In 2013, the most recent year for which data are available, 44.7 million Americans (14 percent of the population) were 65 and older, representing one in every seven Americans. The population of older adults has been increasing for some time, and has led to a culture change. Fewer older adults are going into nursing home placement, and more are maintaining their independence through in-home services and care.

The shift in culture from institutionalized care to in-home care has resulted in a greater need for organizations like Council on Aging of West Florida. Our purpose is to empower individuals in Escambia and Santa Rosa counties to live healthy, safe and independent lives in their own familiar surroundings. Since 1972, we

PRIMARY SERVICES

Adult Day Health Care Center (The Retreat)

Provides a protective, stimulating environment for seniors with physical and cognitive impairments and much needed respite for caregivers. The center is the only licensed facility of its kind in the area. Meals and activities are supervised by specially-trained staff.

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Senior Dining Sites and Recreational Activities

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Foster Grandparent Program

Provides income eligible seniors 55 and older the opportunity to earn tax-free stipends and other benefits while working with children in schools and other facilities.

Meals on Wheels

Balanced meals are delivered to homes of seniors requiring nutritional assistance.

Caregiver Support and Training

Training and support groups designed to reduce stress, increase coping skills and enable caregivers to effectively manage caregiving tasks.

Senior Center

To serve the needs of seniors in rural areas, we operate senior centers that provide recreational, educational and socialization opportunities.

Senior Companion Program

Provides income eligible seniors 55 and older the opportunity to earn tax-free stipends and other benefits while helping their peers remain in their own homes and giving respite to caregivers.

In-Home Services

Assist eligible seniors 60 and older with activities of daily living through services such as personal care, homemaker, companionship and respite, which increases their ability to function independently in their own homes.

Private Pay Program

Adult day health care and home-delivered meal services are available for individuals not eligible for funding assistance.

have successfully provided much-needed services like Meals on Wheels, adult day health care, homemakers and much more to local seniors.

As the need for these services increased, so did the need to find creative ways to raise funds to keep them going. In 2011, our then board chair DeeDee Davis, came up with an idea for a signature fundraising event – the Rat Pack Reunion. Since its inception, this event, along with the Rat Race 5K, which we launched last year, has raised more than \$450,000 for Council on Aging of West Florida’s programs and services.

In the past decade, Council on Aging of West Florida’s adult day health care center has also seen some significant changes. The Oaks was the only licensed adult day care facility of its kind in the area, and became a resource and haven for individuals and their families who were impacted by Alzheimer’s disease and other forms of dementia. Thanks to Lowe’s Heroes and the West Florida Home Builders Association, in 2011, what was an unusable portion of the day care center’s property was transformed into 7,200 square foot relaxation, exercise and activity area that now includes a large pavilion, fenced-in retention pond, seating area with benches, a screened-in back porch and beautiful landscaping. In 2013, in an effort to help the community better understand the services the day care provides, we underwent a rebranding effort. With the help of Council on Aging of West Florida board members, and Ideaworks president Caron Sjoberg, The Oaks became “The Retreat,” a much more inviting name that better described the



COA President John Clark Hosts Coming of Age in 1987

experience our participants were having at the adult day health care center.

In 10 years, Council on Aging of West Florida has seen a lot of changes, both in the population we serve and within our organization. Recalling these changes in limited space is challenging – but we are fortunate to have *Coming of Age* magazine and TV to help archive not only the changes, but the accomplishments, none of which would be possible without the generous support of Council on Aging of West Florida’s board of directors, volunteers, staff, supporters and the talented teams at Ballinger Publishing and WUWF-TV. John B. Clark, president and CEO of Council on Aging, agrees, saying, “In the past decade, Council on Aging of West Florida has experienced many changes in program operations. Yet, through it all, we have remained true to our core values and purpose. Our mission to empower seniors to live healthy, safe and independent lives in their own familiar surroundings has resulted in recognition at both the local and state levels. However, any success we’ve had these last 10 years must also be attributed to a very generous and compassionate community who recognized the need for our services and has continued to support us.”

As for me, I am thrilled that I am able to celebrate this significant milestone with all of you! The hard work of so many, particularly my predecessor, Jeff Nall, has built a solid foundation that will help ensure another successful decade for *Coming of Age*. Thank you all for your faithful support. We look forward to another 10 years with you! **COA**



COA TV with Dozer the Therapy Dog

Impact Stories

Mary Fabbro

"The meals from the Meals on Wheels program were the answers to my prayers," said Mary Fabbro, a Meals on Wheels private pay client and retired educator from the University of West Florida. Fabbro and her husband moved down to Pensacola in 1984 shortly after their 25th wedding anniversary. The couple wanted to "start something new" and thought Pensacola would be the perfect fit for their new lifestyle.

Earlier last year she was involved in a car accident, which significantly set her back. Shortly after, Fabbro found herself bedridden from the flu. While sick, she hated the smell of food cooking, which led to her losing a lot of weight. She knew something had to change and so she called Council on Aging of West Florida to set up a meal plan from their Meals on Wheels program.

"The meals were a lifeline and a lifesaver," said Fabbro. "Council on Aging is an essential resource to our community and I am very grateful." The Meals on Wheels program helped her get back to good health and back on her feet.



Wallace "Glenn" Duncan

Wallace "Glenn" Duncan lost his wife Annie Jean to Alzheimer's disease on May 10, 2014. They would have been married 62 years this year. Glenn and Jean were participants at the Grace Assembly of God Senior Dining Site, and Jean was enrolled as a private pay participant at The Retreat, Council on Aging of West Florida's adult day health care center. The respite Glenn received while Jean was at The Retreat was a welcomed relief, enabling him to continue to attend Warrington Baptist Church, where he serves as a deacon and participates in the senior dining site program. Glenn's talent for playing the dulcimer and harmonica earned him a volunteer position at The Retreat, where he was invited to play and sing with the participants twice a month.

Since Jean's passing, Glenn continues to be an active participant in the senior dining site program, and shares his musical talents with The Retreat participants. Glenn says he appreciates the support, help and respite he received through Council on Aging. He says the relationships he has developed have helped him live through the most difficult time of his life.

A Look Back...

- **Coming of Age** magazine has won several awards including the SeniorVision Media Award from the Florida Council on Aging and Golden Image Awards from the Florida Public Relations Association. On the national level, *Coming of Age* has been an annual recipient of National Mature Media Awards from the Mature Market Research Center since 2007.

- **In 10 years**, Council on Aging has published 38 editions of *Coming of Age*, all of which include exclusive cover interviews with mature celebrities like John Mahoney, Barbara Eden, Eartha Kitt, Bob Dole, Pat Boone, Linda Gray, Diahann Carroll, Louis Gossett Jr., Kirk Douglas and Phyllis Diller.

- **Coming of Age** began as a 16 page publication, but quickly grew to become the 48 page high-quality publication it is today.

- **In January 2015**, *Coming of Age* TV had its first ever four-legged guest, a Great Dane named Dozer who serves as a pet therapy dog.

- **Coming of Age TV** in partnership with WUWF-TV is Council on Aging of West Florida's second go-around with a television show. Our first show aired for several years on BlabTV and our President/CEO Mr. Clark was even featured as a host a time or two.



Photo by Andrew Eccles

AL ROKER

An exclusive interview

Al Roker is known as America's most trusted weatherman and has been the weather and feature anchor on *NBC's TODAY* since January 1996. Al Roker was born in 1954 in Queens, N.Y. His mother, Isabel, was of Jamaican descent, and his father, Albert Lincoln Roker, Sr. was a labor relations negotiator, bus driver and dispatcher, was of Bahamian descent. Roker is the cousin of actress Roxie Roker, who played Helen Willis on the sitcom *The Jeffersons* and is the mother of popular rock musician Lenny Kravitz.

In addition to his work on *TODAY*, he also co-hosts the morning show *Wake Up with Al* on the Weather Channel. Until January of 2000, Roker also served as the weekday weather forecaster for News Channel 4's early evening newscast *Live at 5* on WNBC-TV, NBC's flagship owned and operated station in New York City.

Throughout the years, Roker has reported live for *TODAY* from some of history's worst storms and natural disasters. In January 2010, Roker reported from Haiti with the most up-to-date information on the earthquake devastation. In August 2010, he co-anchored live from the Lower Ninth Ward and the French Quarter in New Orleans for a special edition on the fifth anniversary of Hurricane Katrina.

In 1994, he founded Al Roker Entertainment (ARE), a leading producer of original, award-winning TV programs and digital content for the world's best brands.

New York magazine has twice named Roker "Best Weatherman." Roker came to WNBC-TV as a weekend weathercaster in December 1983 from WKYC-TV, the NBC television station in Cleveland. He began his broadcasting career while still in college by landing a job as a weekend weatherman WTVH-TV in Syracuse, N.Y. in 1974. After graduation he moved on to weathercasting jobs in Washington, D.C. (1976-1978) and Cleveland, Ohio (1978-1983). He is a recipient of the American Meteorological Society's prestigious Seal of Approval and has been a pioneer in the use of computer graphics for weathercasting. In 2010, Roker was awarded a Daytime Emmy award as part of recognition as the best morning newscast.

Roker is a member of several professional organizations, including the Friars Club, American Federation of Television and Radio Artists, the Screen Actors Guild and the American Meteorological Society. He resides in Manhattan with his wife Deborah Roberts and three children.

COA: Hi, Al, how are you?

AR: Good, how are you?

COA: I'm great. Thank you so much for taking the time to talk to me today. As you know, we're based out of Pensacola, Fla. and I understand you've spent some time here?

AR: Yes, covering some storms.

COA: What did you think of our little town?

AR: Nice, very nice. You know you don't get to see very much because you're in, you're out, you're covering one part of it and then you take off.

COA: Yes, that makes sense. I wanted to talk a little about your upbringing. You grew up in Queens, N.Y. in a really interesting time. Can you tell me a little about it?

AR: Well, it was the 60s and obviously there was a lot going on, there was a lot of turmoil in the country—the Vietnam War, civil rights, the RFK and Martin Luther King assassinations, so it was a time of turmoil and yet great change in this country. To be able to see that and kind of live through it, I mean, it's American history today, but when I was living through it, it was current events. I mean you didn't realize it at the time, but it really kind of shaped the country and you were very cognizant of the changes going on. It was in 1968, I was a freshmen going to a Jesuit military school and we had military uniforms on the subway and people were calling you “baby killer” and you're just a kid trying to do your Latin homework before you get to school.

COA: That's pretty intense. What were you like as a boy?

AR: I wanted to be a cartoonist. I love comic strips, I love animated cartoons, comic books and I thought that was what I was going to do. I wanted to go to the New York School of Graphic Art and Design, but I got a scholarship to Xavier High School and that's where my parents wanted me to go and that's why I ended up going. But in a way it kind of put me on the path to where I am today because we had a close-circuit TV system. I got interested in television—I didn't want to be on TV,

I just wanted to work in TV-- and that led me to go to the State University of New York and Oswego where I majored in radio and television.

COA: So, you graduated with a degree in radio and television. Did you think at that point that you might be interested in being on air?

AR: I just thought I would get a job as a camera man and hopefully work my way up to director or producer and my department chairman put me up for a job, a weekend weather job, at the end of my sophomore year and I thought, well if I got this, great, I'll just do this until I get a real job. And I got it and about a year after I got it, I got promoted to the weekday weather job when I was a junior in college. And then six months after I graduated, I got a job in Washington D.C. at the Fox Station. Well, then it was Metro Media, but I had no plans to be on TV. In fact, one of my classmates for the first two years was a guy—I don't think a lot of people have heard of him—a guy named Jerry Seinfeld.

COA: (laughter) No idea who he is.

AR: He's done something on the comedy circuit but I don't know...

COA: Yes, the name sounds vaguely familiar. Wow, so he was your classmate?

AR: Yeah.

COA: Do you still keep in touch? Were you friends or just classmates?

AR: Yeah, I see him from time to time. He put me in an episode of the show. And you know, he's just a great guy.

COA: You're most famous for your work on the *TODAY Show*, where you've been since 1996, I understand? I'm wondering what your favorite part of that job is and do you plan to stay there forever?

AR: Well, I plan to. I don't know if they do.



COA: I'm sure they're in no rush to have you leave; you're such a great part of the show. What's your favorite thing about the show?

AR: The best part of the show is that you don't know what the best part of the show is going to be when you start. You know, when it says 'this is *TODAY* on NBC,' you just don't know because it's live and anything can happen. And so that's what I love about it, the unpredictability.

COA: Do you have a favorite episode of all time?

AR: Nah, not really, you know that's like who's your favorite child. I just enjoy being on the show. I mean, we've had great moments and done a lot of amazing things--from different Olympic locations to sharing in "Where in the World" with Matt—we've just done a lot of amazing stuff. I've met a lot of amazing people from Rosa Parks to Charles Schulz, to different presidents. You know it's quite the honor to be on the show.

COA: Did you ever imagine such a life for yourself as a young man?

AR: No, no. People have asked, 'Oh this must have been a dream job' and no, I never dreamt about it because I never imagined doing it. I was so happy when I got the job doing weekend weather in WNBC in New York because this is where I'm from. I thought, this is great, maybe five or ten years down the line I'll make it to the Monday-Friday gig and that'll be great. You know my mentor is Willard Scott and I've been kind of given his blessing and there's a lot of things that I just didn't imagine would happen. I've been very blessed.

COA: You've also worn a lot of hats in your life. You're an author, a cook, a weather personality, a broadcaster, you run a production company, and you're a father. Professionally, which of those hats do you like the best?

AR: Well, I think it's whatever hat that I'm wearing at the moment because they all speak to different parts, but they're all very fulfilling. I'm just happy to do them. The idea that they kind of feed off of each other and kind of allow me to be different parts of myself. I'm pretty lucky.

COA: What do you see as some of the biggest challenges in journalism today?

AR: Well, I think that with the internet and the web, what's verification and what's really true? I keep telling my kids that just because it's on the internet doesn't mean it's true. Where are the fact-checks, where are the stop gaps that make sure what you're reading and what you're reporting is the truth, is factual? I think going forward that's going to get harder and harder. When we were kids and you went to the library, there were reference books. You could see them, you could feel them, and you could look at them. Not as convenient, obviously.

COA: Sure, but better in a way because you had to do the work, you had to do the research.

AR: Now convenience, that's not necessarily a good thing. There was something about the discipline of having to go to your school library or your public library, researching a paper so that you could verify. Now look, there are obviously verifiable sources online--libraries, references, all that stuff. In the beginning, I was like everyone else. I had a Kindle and all that. I went online. I don't read books on my tablet or Kindle anymore. I've gone back to reading physical books. I almost think that there's a digital backlash going on right now. I think people are re-discovering the simple pleasures of analog. I mean you look at the resurgence of vinyl record stores, a lot of people rebelling against digital watches, and buying a decent time piece or writing with a fountain pen. I think there is a bit of a backlash.

COA: I read in an article in *Modern Farmer* where you talk about knowing your farmer and that you buy a lot of your meat from farmers you know in upstate New York. Do you want to touch on that for me?

AR: I do. I've got a shepherd that I order my lamb from in upstate Virginia. I get some pork from a place in upstate New York and Idaho of all places. I think it's important. I think a lot of people are embracing that.

COA: You've been pretty outspoken about your feelings on



climate change. Could you give me a quick outline of your thoughts?

AR: I think that it's pretty obvious that we are going through something right now and seeing a change in our climate. I think the biggest mistake was that they called it global warming because it doesn't allow for what we see happening, which are these violent swings, these extreme swings in weather. And yeah, there are deniers who say, 'Oh, well this is normal,' and no, it's not. I don't know how you look at the facts and don't come up with the conclusion that our climate is changing. There might be disagreement to the timeline, but it's still happening and it's going to continue to happen. And at some point we're going to reach a point—nobody knows when obviously—we're going to reach a point of no return. And the problem with that is that it will probably happen and you won't know it until it's too late.

COA: What do you think individual people can do to help combat the threat?

AR: Well, I think everybody finds their own place. I try to bike into work whenever I can, reduce the use of fossil fuels, we're cutting back a bit on the amount of meat we eat, trying to do more of a plant-based diet. My daughter is a bit of a vegetarian, so we're trying to adopt that a little more. A simple thing like trying not to run the faucet while you brush your teeth can help. You know, you look at what's going on in California and it's going to be a drastic change in life there and people are going to have to look at that as a bit of a warning sign.

COA: Absolutely. You mentioned that Willard Scott was your mentor, is there anyone who is coming up in either weather or journalism that you're mentoring or that you see is doing a great job?

AR: I see a lot of bright young journalists out there or opinion makers like Torre, Tamron Hall is another one. I mean I work with her and she's kind of a contemporary, but she's much younger than me. Ronan Farrow is really good. I like him a lot. Luke Russert, our dear late colleague's son, has really turned into a great journalist, a solid hard-working journalist. So, we've got a lot of great people out there.

COA: Tell me a little bit about your production company Al Roker Entertainment?

AR: We produce different shows for different networks. We do *Coastguard Alaska* for the Weather Channel, *Last Chance Highway* for Animal Planet, and *DEA* for Spike. We just do a number of different shows both for cable and for networks and some for digital. I've always liked producing and that's been my first love, and so it was kind of fun to do something like that.

COA: That's very exciting and I understand that you're working on another book. What's this one going to be about?

AR: This one is called *Storm of the Century*. It's about the hurricane of 1900 that literally wiped the city of Galveston off the map. It was the first "media" storm covered by media, which back then was the newspapers, but there was just unbelievable stories of heroism, of survival and these people and places and characters all intersect at a time when we're a nation growing and stretching its muscles.

COA: You've written all kinds of books--fiction, health, memoir--what's your favorite genre?

AR: You know, I don't have one. I liked writing the murder mystery, I liked writing the cook book, and I've enjoyed this historical book. They're each different in their own way, but then again I never thought, if you told me 15-20 years ago that I've had nine books under my belt, I'd laugh at you, you know, but I'm enjoying it.

COA: Well, you've mentioned the cook books and I know you're a big foodie, what are some ways that you stay healthy? Any particular lifestyle or diet plan?

AR: I don't eat a lot of fried food. It's more about moderation. I'll still make ribs, but instead of having a rack of ribs like I used to, I'll have three or four. I have a green salad and I may pass on the cornbread. It's all about making those kinds of choices and not depriving yourself.



COA: You have such a positive upbeat attitude, and I think that's part of why people love you so much. Have you always been a positive person?

AR: Yeah, I think so. I mean my mom was a pretty positive person, my dad certainly was. He was always like, if you can look in the mirror at the end of the day and say I did my best, that's all I want from you. But it was also that way with my mother: Especially the golden rule of 'Do unto others as you would have others do unto you.' And we try to stress that with our kids. I guess I was raised with fairly positive parents and my grandmother, my father's mother, was pretty positive and she had a rough road to hoe as an immigrant from the Bahamas and as single mother raising two daughters and my dad. But, she was always very positive and I think that rubbed off.

COA: I also read that you were a pioneer in the use of computer graphics for weather casting and that you were an early adopter for the internet and technology in general. You're also quite savvy with selfies and social media. So what advice do you have for older people who aren't so great with technology?

AR: You know, I would say pick one thing and do that because it can just eat up so much time. I like Twitter because it's kind of short and sweet, and I like Instagram. Those are two of my top forums of choice.

COA: You met your wife Deborah while you were working at NBC. How was it to date a fellow reporter and co-worker?

AR: Well you know, it was lucky for us that less than a year after we started dating she left to go to ABC, but you know we were respectful of the workplace. I might drop by her office to talk a little bit, but that was about it. It's always nice when somebody shares your interests whether that's personally or professionally and it's rare that it's both, so that was a bonus.

COA: I understand you have three children. Have any of them showed any desire to follow you into the business?

AR: Well, my oldest girl Courtney is a chef, so she shares at least my love of cooking. My daughter Leila is a sophomore and she's majoring in drama at a local high school here and my son Nick is 12 and he's in sixth grade and he's, you know, just a typical boy so I don't know. We don't know what he's going to do yet.

COA: Being famous and loved by millions, do they still get embarrassed by 'old dad' or are they pretty proud of you?

AR: My being on TV cuts no mustard in my household. I'm still the annoying, embarrassing dad.

COA: What charities, causes or organizations are close to your heart?

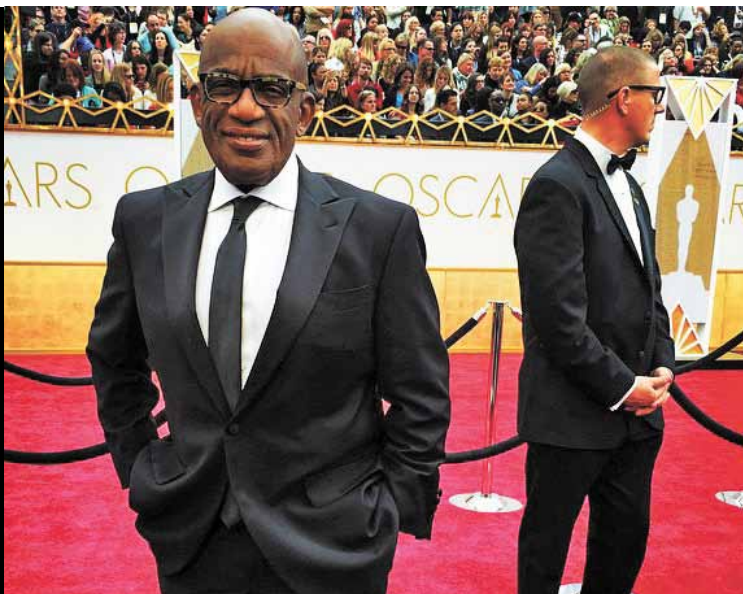
AR: I would say the American Cancer Society. My mom had breast cancer and lung cancer. My dad was diagnosed with lung cancer about 13 or 14 years ago even though he quit smoking 35 years earlier. Calvary Hospital here in New York is a palliative care hospital and they took care of him in his last couple days of life. They just do a wonderful job. I would say that those are the two main ones.

COA: What advice do you have for young people looking to get into journalism?

AR: I think that they need to realize that there are no real short-cuts if you want to have a long career doing this and realize that the truth is important.

COA: We are a magazine for mature adults, so what is your secret for aging gracefully?

AR: I don't think you should age gracefully. I think you should fight. And by that I mean try and stay active both physically and mentally. Try to know as much about popular culture as possible. Try not to compare to how great your music was to your parent's music or your grandparent's. And just be open to new experiences. **COA**



NEWS FROM

COUNCIL ON AGING OF WEST FLORIDA

COA Awarded International Paper Grant

Council on Aging of West Florida was awarded a \$2,500 grant from the International Paper Foundation for a composting program our Foster Grandparents will be doing with students in Escambia and Santa Rosa counties. The money will be used to purchase composting kits and books. Thank you, International Paper, for your generous donation!



COA Awarded Grand All Image Award



Rat Pack Reunion Sponsorships Available



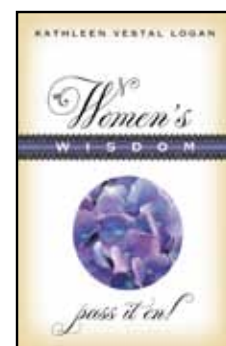
The Rat Pack Reunion has quickly become a signature event in Pensacola. Proceeds from the event benefit Council on Aging

of West Florida and its programs. Proceeds from the Rat Pack Reunion are largely dependent on generous businesses and individuals in the community. Council on Aging is actively seeking sponsors for the 2015 Rat Pack Reunion. There are a variety of sponsorship levels available to meet every possible preference and budget, ranging from a \$100 event ticket to \$5,000 for extensive access and benefits. To review our sponsorship packet, email Brandi Welk at bwelk@coawfla.org or call at (850) 432-1475. We hope to partner with you on another successful Rat Pack Reunion!

On behalf of Council on Aging of West Florida, Brandi Welk, development director, and Lorenzo Aguilar, board member, accepted three awards at the Annual Florida Public Relations Association Local Image Awards on April 2, 2015. Awards included a Judges' Award, Image Award, and the top award, the Grand All Image Award, for the Rat Race 5K. This would not be possible without our generous sponsors, participants, Ideaworks, and our COA team. Way to go!

COA Board Member Publishes Book

Council on Aging of West Florida board member Kathleen Vestal Logan has just released a book titled ***Women's Wisdom: Pass It On!*** In the book, Kathleen shares her own life experiences, joys and difficulties alike, and what she has learned from them to help other women strive to become wiser, more complete, women. She walks side-by-side with women in the book, never suggesting anything that she hasn't tried herself. Her fundamental belief is that the more women care about and share with each other as a community, the stronger and more capable they all become. To get your copy today, visit www.amazon.com or email kvllifeskills@aol.com.





Cool Tips to Beat the Heat

As summer approaches and temperatures begin to rise, the elderly will be particularly vulnerable to heat-related illnesses like heat stroke and heat exhaustion.

According to the Centers for Disease Control, older adults, especially those taking medications that impair the body's ability to regulate temperature, should be aware of the following cool tips for beating the heat:

- Stay in air-conditioned buildings as much as possible.
- Do not rely on a fan as your primary cooling device during an extreme heat event.
- Drink more water than usual and don't wait until you're thirsty to drink.
- Check on a friend or neighbor and have someone do the same for you.
- Don't use the stove or oven to cook—it will make you and your house hotter.
- Wear loose, lightweight, light-colored clothing.
- Take cool showers or baths to cool down.
- Check the local news for health and safety updates.
- Seek medical care immediately if you or someone you know has,

symptoms of heat-related illness like muscle cramps, headaches, nausea or vomiting.

Older adults and their caregivers are also encouraged to learn the signs and first aid response for heat-related illnesses. Warning signs may include:

Heat exhaustion symptoms:

- Heavy sweating
- Weakness
- Cold, pale and clammy skin
- Weak pulse
- Fainting and vomiting

If heat exhaustion symptoms are present:

- Move to a cooler location.
- Lie down and loosen your clothing.
- Apply cool, wet cloths to as much of your body as possible.
- Sip water.
- Seek medical attention if you have vomited and it continues.

Heat stroke symptoms:

- High body temperature (above 103 degrees F)
- Hot, red, dry or moist skin
- Rapid and strong pulse
- Possible unconsciousness

If heat stroke symptoms are present:

- Call 911 immediately – this is a medical emergency. Move the person to a cooler environment.
- Reduce the person's body temperature with cool cloths or a bath.
- Do NOT give fluids.

For more information on how you can protect yourself against heat-related illnesses, call Council on Aging of West Florida at 850.432.1475.

COA Marketing Director Graduates from Leadership Program



Council on Aging of West Florida's Marketing Communications Director Rachael Cox graduated from the Pensacola Chamber Foundation's Leadership Pensacola (LeaP) program on May 21, 2015. In addition to leadership seminars and team-building activities, this 10-month-long program includes a class project chosen to generate positive change in the community. This year's class of nearly 50 members unveiled "LeaP This Way," a project that enhanced and renovated Downtown Pensacola's wayfinding system. Rachael served as the project's marketing chair, designing the project logo, sponsorship package and other marketing and promotional materials. LeaP was founded in the fall of 1982 with the first graduating class in 1983. The program was established with a goal of ensuring the community's pool of talented leaders would be continually renewed. To date, more than 1,500 people have completed the program and have acquired the skills, passion and connections to work effectively as community trustees. **COA**

CAREGIVER SUPPORT GROUPS

Milton Caregiver Support Group

First Thursday of each month at 6 pm
Santa Rosa Health and Rehabilitation,
5686 Broad St.

Refreshments and door prizes
provided

Century Caregiver Support Group

Third Thursday of each month at 6 pm
Century Care Center,
6020 Industrial Blvd.

Refreshments and door prizes
provided

Pensacola Caregiver Support Group

Last Thursday of each month at 6 pm
Council on Aging of West Florida,
875 Royce St.

Refreshments and door prizes
provided

Pensacola Grandparents Raising Grandchildren and other Relatives

Second Thursday of each month at 6 pm.
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For more information, contact
Margaret Jerauld at (850) 432-1475
or email mjerauld@coawfla.org.

VOLUNTEER ORIENTATIONS

Third Thursday of each month
Council on Aging of West Florida,
875 Royce St. – Conference Room

July 16 – 5:30 pm

August 20 – 10:00 am

September 17 – 5:30 pm

For more information, contact Betty
McLeroy at (850) 432-1475 or email
bmcleroy@coawfla.org.

THE RETREAT'S "DAY ON THE GO"

Day on the Go is for higher functioning participants of The Retreat, Council on Aging of West Florida's adult day health care center. Participants must be able to follow directions, have good endurance and are able to attend area attractions and events with limited supervision. The following activities are scheduled for the summer:

July 10 – Big Lagoon State Park

July 24 – Baldwin Heritage Museum

August 7 – Oops Alley Bowling

August 21 – NAS Aviation Museum

The cost to participate is \$65. For more information, contact Sandie Holtry at (850) 266-2503.

BAPTIST HEALTH CARE WELLNESS EVENTS

Peripheral Vascular Disease

8
July
11:30 am lunch;
noon to 1 pm, seminar
Presented by Safwan Jaalouk, M.D.,
FACC, FACP, FSCAI,
Cardiology Consultants
Baptist Towers Medical Meeting
Rooms, 1717 North E St.,
Avery Street Entrance

Top 10 Supplements

10
July
noon to 1 pm, seminar.
Presented by Kacey Gibson, D.O.,
Family Medicine, Baptist Medical
Group, Tiger Point
Baptist Medical Park - Navarre,
8880 Navarre Parkway, 2nd Floor
Conference Room

Skin Cancer Prevention

22
July
11:30 am, lunch;
noon to 1 pm, seminar
Presented by James Adams, M.D.,
Baptist Medical Group,
Radiation Oncology

Andrews Institute Athletic
Performance & Research Pavilion,
1040 Gulf Breeze Pkwy.,
Conference Room B

Skin Cancer Prevention

23
July
11:30 am lunch;
noon to 1 pm seminar
Presented by Sherif Ibrahim, M.D.,
Baptist Medical Group
Hematology Oncology
Baptist Medical Park,
9400 University Pkwy., Azalea Room

Skin Cancer Prevention

12
Aug.
11:30 am lunch;
noon to 1 pm seminar
Presented by Nutan DeJoubner, M.D.,
Baptist Medical Group - Oncology
Baptist Towers Medical Meeting
Rooms, 1717 North E St.
Avery Street Entrance

Smarter Way to Shed the Fat

20
Aug.
11:30 am lunch,
noon to 1 pm seminar
Presented by Patrick Gatmaitan, M.D.,
Bariatric Surgeon
Andrews Institute Athletic
Performance & Research Pavilion,
1040 Gulf Breeze Pkwy., Conference
Room B

Exercising with Arthritis

27
Aug.
11:30 am lunch;
noon to 1 pm seminar
Presented by Amy Dunkel, DPT,
Andrews Institute Rehabilitation
Baptist Medical Park - Nine Mile,
9400 University Pkwy., Azalea Room
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it necessary to require reservations.
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Rat Pack Photoshoot Party at Fred Levin's Estate, Timeless Tanglewood. Photos by Bill Strength.



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When the Foods We Love Don't Love Us Back

The very thought of southern cuisine brings forth a torrent of culinary delicacies that have become a staple of breakfast and dinner tables across the Deep South: Mama's fried chicken, biscuits and sausage gravy, collard greens and fried catfish just to name a few. But what happens when the foods we love don't love us back?

Southern cuisine—and comfort foods in general—have been linked to many health complications including a rise in obesity, diabetes, and high blood pressure (hypertension). But did you know that all those foods we love, all the stuff that's hard on our bodies, is hard on our kidneys, too?

So what is it about our favorite foods that make them so hard on our kidneys? It's a combination of factors including the high sugar, fat and sodium (salt) content that can lead to multiple health complications that lead to kidney disease. In fact, diabetes, often driven by our American diet, is now the number one cause of kidney disease and failure in the United States, with high blood pressure second.

According to the National Kidney Foundation, kidney disease is the 9th leading cause of death in the United States and one in three American adults is currently at risk for developing kidney disease with African Americans three times more likely to experience kidney failure. Knowing your risk factors and controlling them is important in reducing your risk for developing kidney disease. These risks may include diabetes, high blood pressure, a family history of kidney failure, being age 50 or older, smoking, obesity and cardiovascular disease.

Edward Friedland, M.D., a physician specializing in the treatment of kidney disease and high

blood pressure and co-founder of Renalus Center for Kidney Care explains, "The kidneys work to maintain a healthy chemical and fluid balance in our bodies 24 hours a day and have a very important role in maintaining stable blood pressure."

"When the kidneys are not functioning correctly, complications can occur including stroke and heart failure due to blood pressure problems. To avoid these outcomes we have to pay attention to what we eat, maintain physical activity to the degree we can, and follow medical treatment plans designed to help control our blood pressure and other health issues."

Controlling salt intake—especially for those with high blood pressure and/or diabetes—can play an important role in keeping us active, feeling good and even keeping us alive longer. The average American consumes about 3400mg of sodium a day, which works out to approximately a teaspoonful and a half of salt. High risk individuals—those with hypertension or diabetes; aged 50 or older; or African American—should consider limiting their sodium intake to less than 2000mg a day—or about a teaspoonful of salt. But a majority of sodium intake doesn't come from table salt alone. Heavily processed and prepared foods provide more sodium than what your body needs, so it's especially important to read food labels closely.

So what can you do to keep your kidneys healthy? Limiting your salt intake and cutting back on sugar can reduce your risk for chronic kidney disease. Dr. Friedland recommends limiting your salt intake by buying fresh rather than processed foods, and avoiding products with more than 200mg of sodium per serving.

Let's face it, America. When the foods we love don't love us back, isn't it time to re-evaluate what we put in our food—and on our dinner plates?



Renalus Physicians

Humam Humeda, M.D.
Edward L. Friedland, M.D.
Ronnie Wiles, M.D.
Christopher S. Reid, M.D.
Maged Nashed, M.D.
Nicholas Nagrani, M.D.
Derek Jimenez, M.D.
Haitham O. Qader, M.D.
Douglas Bunting, M.D.
F. Duncan Scott, M.D.
James P. Martin, D.O.

Learn more about kidney disease, including ways to reduce your risk factors at:

American Kidney Fund

• kidneyfund.org

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

• cdc.gov/salt

National Kidney Disease Education Program

• nkdep.nih.gov

National Kidney Foundation

• kidney.org

Keep Your Kidneys

• keepyourkidneys.com



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