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Inside {local} April '25

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OVERFLOWING WITH ART

Our community is loaded with artistic folks

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EASY ENTERTAINING

Strawberries are in season, and this recipe is delicious



Painting by Wally Wallace

LOCAL FOCUS FAITH & WORSHIP PAGE 13

ON THE COVER: Kerry Parks is the resident glass artist at the Coastal Arts Center of Orange Beach. Photo by Linda Williford

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Bryan Chandler, Woodcrafter. Photography by Linda Williford



Wally Wallace, Watercolorist. Photography by Linda Williford



Bryan Chandler, Photography by Linda Williford

CREATIVITY ABOUNDS

BY LINDA WILLIFORD

If you haven't already noticed, the Foley and surrounding Baldwin County area are overflowing with talented artists and artisans. It seems that creative and talented people gravitate to this area. Many of those gifted people have resided here for years.

Bryan Chandler grew up in Silverhill, AL. His love and talent for working with wood has turned what was at first a hobby into full-time work. Bryan and his wife, Ree, own and operate Silverhill Mill. Bryan retired from the banking industry in 2023 when he discovered he was making more money milling and woodworking than his conventional job. Bryan and Ree, also known as "sawyers," started their mill business in 2020. Neighbors and property owners from all around call on Bryan to cut trees and mill logs. Once the tree is cut and transported to Bryan's property, he mills the logs into planks and put in his kiln for quicker drying 3 or 4 weeks. Then, the lumber is ready for cutting and shaping into a beautiful piece of art. Bryan says, "I love to repurpose wood into pieces that live on for generations." Bryan loves challenges. "The

more imperfections in the wood, the more challenging it is for me, he says. "No two boards are alike."

Bryan has a studio filled with pieces made with black walnut, pecan, white oak, black cherry (which is plentiful in this area), pine, cypress, and more. He displays and sells charcuterie boards, cutting boards, wooden utensils, and wine stoppers. He also makes bayou paddles, fireplace mantels, and tables.

Bryan and Ree average about 20 arts and crafts shows a year. Go to Facebook Silverhill Mill for their upcoming events. If you need their milling services or want to visit the studio, contact Bryan at 251-979-2521.

Wally Wallace moved down from New Hampshire with his wife, Patty. Wally shares his knowledge, experience, and love for watercolor paintings. Wally says, "I became interested in watercolors during my last class in college in 1999, literally the course was Watercolors 101." Wally is a retired high school teacher but noted: not an art teacher. He developed a passion for watercolors and said, "I just enjoy teaching and passing on the information." He admits, "I'm still learning."

Wally likes using the "wet to wet" technique, which is an

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Painting by Wally Wallace, Photography provided



Kerry Parks, Glass artist. Photography by Linda Williford



Kerry Parks, Glass artist. Photography by Linda Williford

application of clear water first on the canvas and then drops the paint into it. The color explodes and transforms into something beautiful on the canvas. Wally says, "The less brush strokes, the more exciting for this technique."

On the walls of Wally's home are many of his art pieces. One of his favorites is a beautiful 12-foot painting of a marlin that is too large for his home. He is willing to find a new home for it if someone expresses an interest.

Wally says, "The most economical way to preserve a painting is to mount it on a frame with artist glue and use multiple layers of non-yellowing acrylic and varnish. Another way, which is a little more expensive, is to mat it and put it in a glass frame."

Wally teaches watercolor classes in a local neighborhood community, and he allows his students to display their works in an Art Appreciation Show that he hosts in the Fall of the year. This event is open to the public. For more information, Contact Wally at 603-400-6747.

Glass blowing is such a spectacular process to watch. The transformation from molten glass into something that the glass blower desires requires a great deal of practice and experience to master. **Kerry Parks**, Resident Glass Artist at the Coastal Arts Center of Orange Beach, says, "It's mesmerizing to work with the heat and the fire." Kerry said, "I always identified as an artist."

She studied art at the University of South Alabama. In the Fall of 2010, glass-blowing was a new curriculum at the University. Kerry was among the first to register for this first class. She enjoyed it so much that she graduated from the program in May 2014 as the first student to become a Glass Major in the USA.

Over the last decade, Kerry says, "We've trained probably 10-15 interns. We have two interns at the Hot Shop who are full-time, which is a huge help in handling the workload. We are always looking for interns if anyone is interested in learning."

Crowds love to watch glass-blowing demonstrations at the Hot Shop located at the Coastal Arts Center. Kerry shares her love and knowledge of the art by teaching classes. She says, "I tell my students it's like blowing bubbles into a glass of chocolate milk." Visitors can purchase beautiful blown glass at the Art Gallery and Gift Shop. Visitors can sign up for classes at the front desk of the Gallery, or they can call 251-981-2787 to make an appointment.





These stories touch the surface of the creativity and talent in this area. Local adventure and local discovery are truly plentiful in Foley and Baldwin County.

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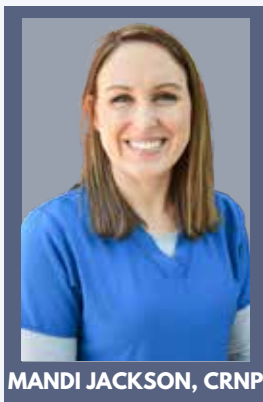
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- 1 CUP POWDERED SUGAR
- 1 PACKAGE (8 OUNCES) CREAM CHEESE, SOFTENED
- ASSORTED FRUIT, FOR SERVING

DIRECTIONS

In blender, puree strawberries until smooth. Set aside.

In mixing bowl, whip heavy cream and powdered sugar until fluffy.

In separate mixing bowl, beat cream cheese until smooth. Add strawberry puree to cream cheese and mix until combined. Add whipped cream and stir until combined.

It's easy, fresh and delicious. Your kids can help you combine all the ingredients and excitedly try the sweet result. Serve in bowl with fruit.

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