

# BECKY'S LENS

What started as a routine trip to Costco changed my life in December 2019. A bag of birdseed, some Rice Krispy treats, a case of water and a Nikon camera. Wait a minute, I've never used a camera! I know nothing about photography. That's the day I became an accidental photographer.

I was in my sixties and to be honest, had little desire to learn something new. With no interest in computers or the latest app, I was the least likely person to pick up a digital camera. So much so, I didn't bother to read the instructions or Google how to take the perfect picture. Honestly, it drove everyone crazy. They insisted

you can't be a photographer and refuse to learn the basics.

Much to their surprise, I walked out the door and returned with some amazing photos. How did that happen? I don't know. What I do know is I turned my love of animals, nature and the occasional pesky flowering weed into something that brings joy to me and people I've never met.

I started posting my photos on social media, Facebook, Instagram, Nextdoor. Private messages filled my inboxes thanking me for sharing. Much to my amazement came requests to purchase my work. Dave Petraglia contacted me and asked to share my photos in *The Magnolia News*. Joe Pellegrino, our local Clay Online Radio DJ, asked me to be the photographer at the Green Cove Springs Third Saturday Market. Before I knew it, I was photographing products for our local small businesses and doing pet photoshoots. The accidental photographer has been really busy the last few years.

Honestly, I didn't take the time until I got a camera and daily exercise became an adventure instead of a chore. I was amazed at what's out there if you take the time to look. People ask how I managed to get a particular shot or where I go to find a specific animal. There's no secret, just a whole lot of walking and even more patience. Don't ever let anyone tell you you're too old to learn something new. I may not follow the rules, use the right lens or work like a professional but I love what I do. It may not be perfect or something everyone likes but I'm having fun.

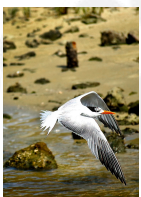
Life is short. Enjoy every day. Get outside, spend time with family, friends and our local wildlife. Make memories and take lots and lots of pictures. You never know, you too might end up being an accidental photographer! Here's my take on the three photos following this page...



My mornings are filled with walking and photography. After lunch, it's upstairs for my indoor exercise. I'm fortunate to have a panoramic view of the pond, wooded area, closed course and lots of wildlife while I work-out. Just before sunset a heavy rain blew through and the ibis came out to snack on the backyard worms. I saw this beautiful guy land on the fence and couldn't resist running outside for a quick photoshoot.



I'm not a fan of posed portraits and generally don't photograph people. I prefer to catch a casual pose when you least expect it. This guy caught my eye at Spring Park and I grabbed a quick shot as I walked by. A quiet moment made a perfect photo.



I split my time between our home here in Magnolia and our home in the Fort Caroline area. I enjoy sitting on the dock photographing the ships sail by and the local wildlife. The tide was out and this tern was fishing by the shore. He didn't catch a fish but I caught a photo that almost looks like a painting.

- BECKY HINSON

*(Gallery begins next page)*







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