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March 12-25, 2026

## IT'S COOKIE SEASON!

The March 26th issue of *The Electric City News* will be our Youth Edition. Students in Anderson have submitted their writings for publication. So, be on the lookout for our next generation of writers. Here is a sample from our bright and creative Anderson 5 authors.

**BY JEMMA STROM, MIDWAY ELEMENTARY, GRADE 5**

As you probably know, it's cookie season for the Girl Scouts. Selling the cookies is so much fun! We set up booths outside businesses like Wal-Mart, Sam's and Eggs Up. My favorite job is collecting the money. Girl Scouts learn how to deal with money, how to talk to people and how to be polite. We meet so many nice people. One time someone bought my troop a box of cookies. When people buy

cookies it helps my troop. One time we went to a safari in Columbia. Thank you to everyone who supports Girl Scouts.

Are you interested in buying cookies? We have all kinds of cookies. The most popular cookies are Thin Mints, Samoas, and Tagalongs. We even have gluten free cookies. Our newest cookie is rocky road flavor called Exploremores. Go get a box of cookies before they're gone!

I love being a Girl Scout! I love the crafts we do and earning badges. I made a ton of new friends in Girl Scouts. One day we went to AIM to stock the shelves. Girl Scouts has taught me how to take care of the community. So if you love making friends, helping your community, and selling cookies you should join today!



Jemma Strom is pictured at right with a fellow Girl Scout.

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# Remembering Thomas Hunter

*In response to our article on Thomas Hunter in the February 26th edition, locals remember him fondly:*

**DR. DAVID DEHOLL:**

“Ladies, I do recall one special story about Thomas Hunter. He was highly respected for his work at our hospital. Everyone trusted this man. One day, I was in his department to talk to a friend who also worked there. He was my fly fishing buddy. Thomas asked where we were going, and we told him to the mountains to fly fish for trout. He said he had never been up there and asked if we brought fish home. We told him no, we almost always release them. He said to take a picture, he would like to see them. I did, we were fishing for Brook Trout, a small but beautiful species. I gave him the picture, and a few weeks later, he presented each of us with beautifully carved and painted Brook trout. The carvings were not static, but dynamic. He had a sense of what a wild swimming trout would look like. He nailed it! The carvings were gifts; he would not accept any payment. That’s the kind of man he was, talented, generous, and kind.”

**DR. GEOFFREY H. BROWNE:**

“I am writing to tell you how much I enjoyed reading an article from The Electric City News. The paper brings back so many memories of my earlier life in Anderson. The article on Thomas Hunter and his passion for nature and his skill at woodcarving was special. I had the honor of working with Thomas in the radiology department at what was then Anderson Memorial Hospital. We were patient transporters, bringing patients down for their exams and then taking them back to their rooms. This was in the days when people were admitted to the hospital for diagnostic testing. Thomas was a slim, soft-spoken, and honorable man who loved being in nature. He enjoyed getting into the woods after work. He was a great storyteller! I was privileged to see many of his works when he brought them into the hospital to deliver them to physicians who had purchased them. He loved a good joke and was full of wisdom. I am honored to own two works from Thomas. My wife Marsha, arranged for Thomas to carve them to celebrate two of the most memorable points in our lives. The first is from 1983. I received a carving of a green-winged teal from Thomas as a wedding gift. The second is a beautiful wood duck carving commemorating my graduation from medical school in 1991. They occupy prominent places of honor in my home office. Thank you for sparking such wonderful memories of Anderson and her memorable people every week.”



# ANDERSON SIGNS OF SPRING

Most calibrate spring’s arrival by the old ways passed down from wiser generations. The buds on the trees start to swell, the daffodils emerge, or the robins return. Here in The Electric City, we have our own ways to tell that spring is near. Imagine it’s a quiet Saturday, and you’re sleeping in when you’re startled awake by 50 lawn mowers starting at once, like it’s race day at Talladega. You look out your window, realizing somehow, in the span of a few hours, every car and truck is covered in yellow pollen, and



Neal Parnell

you swear you just saw a house fly with a suitcase hitchhiking toward town. As coffee fills your cup, you ask yourself if you’re still dreaming. You know that when you went to bed, it was thirty-five degrees, but you just got a phone alert warning you to stay inside between 11 am and 5 pm because of high UV rays and a heat index of 105 degrees. You step outside, and you can see the squiggly waves of humidity coming at you from the south. You take in one last soothing breath of dry March air, knowing that in just a few hours your clothes will be wrinkled, your armpits soggy, and your hair flat until October. There are the not-so-subtle signs, like hoodies being worn with shorts, or an ice chest being moved from the garage to the patio, and you hear voices being raised over whether it’s time to put out tomato plants.

It’s not. Fishing talk increases, but actual fishing does not. The neighbor who swore he wasn’t going to the lake this year is uncovering his boat, then suddenly, everyone in the county needs mulch, and every pickup you get behind is spitting pine straw onto your windshield. There was one older couple who believed they heard tree frogs and cicadas, only to find out they somehow mixed up each other’s hearing aids. Chris Justus says, “Tonight will be the last frost”, but you’re not ready to trust him after his January predictions. You notice that the cat and dog start shedding like they’re being paid by the pound, and that your next-door neighbor is burning a brush pile and calling it yard work. You decided to forgive the old, faded lawn chair that pinched and hit you last year, and give it one more chance. Sometime this month, someone on Facebook will announce that it’s snake season with a blurry photo of a garden hose and a title that reads ‘Y’all Be Careful’. You see your neighbor standing with his hands on his hips, and you can tell he is plotting his strategy to pressure-wash the house, the walkway, the driveway, and the birdbath. As you stood near a drainpipe on the side of your house, you accidentally overheard a group of new mosquitoes activating scouting parties to report on standing water and how to avoid citronella torches.

It’s nice to get excited about spring coming soon, but if you’ve lived in Anderson for any length of time you know that someone will declare winter officially over and jinx us into an April blizzard of historic proportions.

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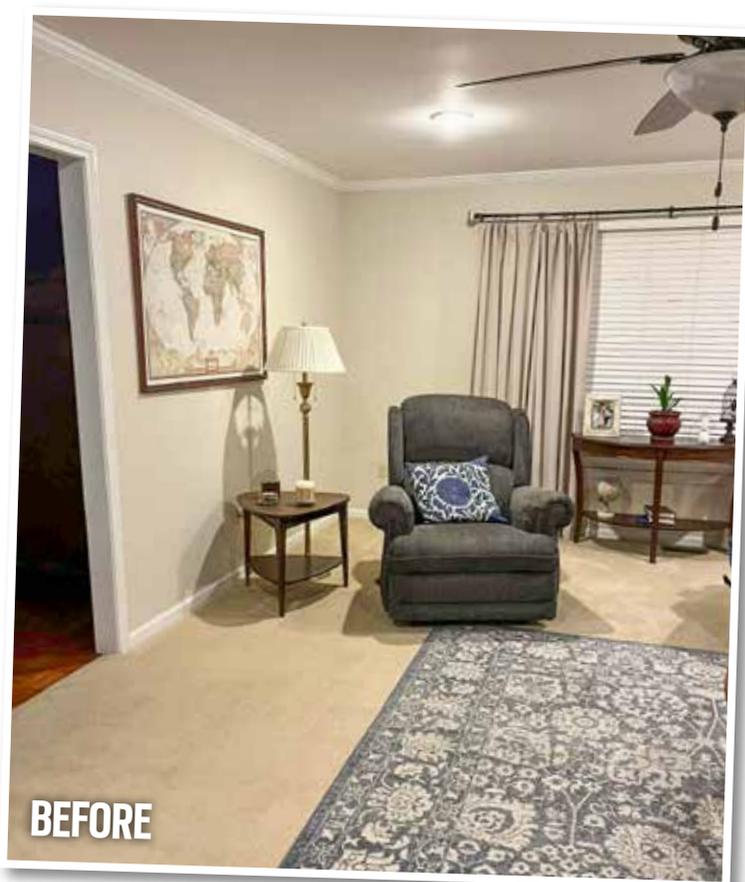
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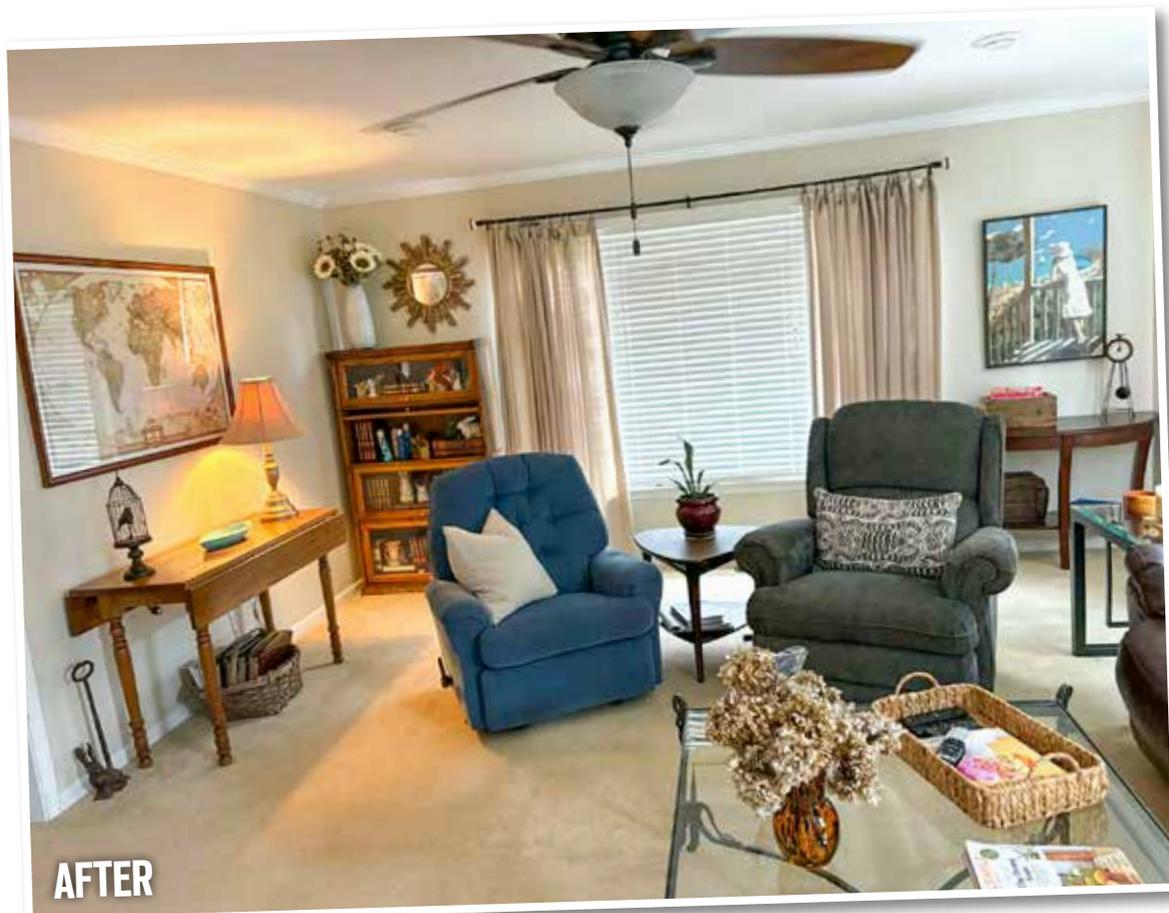
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Please make sure photos include the date taken, location and names of people in the photos. If photos are submitted via email, make sure they are a minimum of 300 dpi and saved as a JPEG file. If photos are mailed, we cannot guarantee the photo will be returned. The editor of The Electric City News will make your article/story grammatically correct without altering its content. The publishers of The Electric City News reserve the right to withhold inappropriate content or photos.



BEFORE



AFTER

# DESIGN ON A DIME

The winner of the 2026 Design on a Dime contest had a den in her house that she needed help redesigning. Her lovely home had good interior bones and all the ingredients to reimagine the space. Our team studied the photos, decided on new placement of the furniture, pulled in pieces that she already had and added a few new items to update the look. The owner was gracious and gave us full creative freedom to bring our vision to life. The result was a complete surprise to her. Here are before and after images.



BEFORE



AFTER

# CEDAR WAXWINGS TREAT

Mother wanted hot glazed donuts. And I was congratulating myself for coming out of the donut shop having bought a dozen only for her—none for us—but feeling a little deprived at the same time. Fortunately, I was



Ann K. Bailes

greatly distracted when walking out by hearing a high-pitched, thin sound (maybe described as “watery”) made by many birds at the same time. Mike heard it when I did, from the rolled-down window in his truck, and we both knew immediately. The

trees behind the donut shop were filled with cedar waxwings. Seeing and hearing them was its own treat.

Waxwings live year-round just a little north of us, but in our area they are mainly winter

birds. They travel in huge flocks and a single bird is rarely seen alone. The description of waxwings found on the All About Birds website ([allaboutbirds.org](http://allaboutbirds.org)) is better than anything that I could write: “The cedar waxwing is a silky, shiny collection of brown, gray, and lemon-yellow, accented with a subdued crest, rakish black mask, and brilliant-red wax droplets on the wing feathers.” It is one of our sleekest and most unusual-looking birds.

The term “waxwing” comes from the red tips on some of the secondary feathers of these handsome birds. Those feathers look like they’ve been dipped in sealing wax. The purpose of these waxy tips is unknown, though it might have something to do with attracting a mate.

Another unusual fact about cedar waxwings is that, other than also eating insects in the breeding season, they subsist almost exclusively by eating fruit. In fact, if they ingest too much fruit that is a little overripe, they have some-



Photo by Stacy Webb



times been known to become a little tipsy!

They can be attracted to people’s yards if native bushes that produce small berries are planted: dogwood, serviceberry, cedar, juniper, hawthorn, and winterberry.

People will usually hear cedar waxwings before seeing them. They call often in flight with that piping thin sound, sometimes called a whistle. The entire flock, calling continuously, will swoop simultaneously to a high bush or tree where they rest briefly before moving on. I remember going into the Goodwill store

on Clemson Boulevard a couple of years ago, and being sidetracked by the sound and then sight of a large flock landing in a tree out front. Cars roared by, the world kept moving, but those waxwings were chattering there in the middle of it all.

Seeing a group of cedar waxwings out in the open is a late-winter gift right in the city of Anderson. It can cause people to get diverted from whatever they are doing, but it’s a wonderful treat. Almost as good a treat – but not quite – as hot glazed donuts.



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## Where's the E?

Mike McClain of Anderson was thankful to have the latest copy of the E when he was recently in the mountains above Antigua, Guatemala with the famous Acatenango volcano erupting off in the distance."

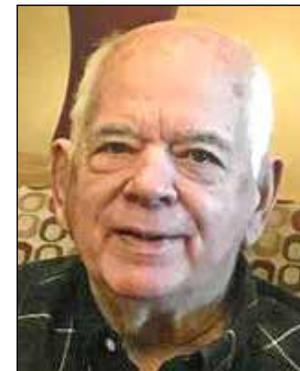


## OBITUARY

# SPENCER SHIRLEY

Fred "Spencer" Shirley, 90, of Anderson, SC, passed away peacefully at his home on March 7, 2026.

Born November 23, 1935, in Anderson, SC, he was the son of the late Fred Armstrong Shirley and the late Jeanette McLees Shirley. Spencer served in the Army



National Guard for ten years. He will always be remembered as a generous, hard-working man and always willing to help family and friends. He

owned Shirley Auto Glass & Trim on West Market Street for over 50 years.

Spencer was a lifelong member of Central Presbyterian Church and could be found in the choir on Sundays and in the church kitchen cooking pancakes for the church members after the Easter Sunrise Service. His chicken salad and deviled eggs were legendary.

He is survived by his loving wife of 72 years, Judith Knobel Shirley; his daughter, Pamela Shirley Hilburn (Don); daughter-in-law, Rachele Propp Shirley; and granddaughters, Judith Marie Shirley and Anna Catherine Carron.

In addition to his parents, he was preceded in death by his son, Richard Alan Shirley, the former Mayor of Anderson and Clerk of Court for Anderson County; a sister, Patricia Ann Shirley of Atlanta, GA; and a son-in-law, Michael Andrew Carron of Jefferson, GA.

The family received friends from 6 p.m. until 8 p.m. Tuesday, March 10, at Sullivan-King Mortuary. A private graveside service was held at Old Silver Brook Cemetery.

In lieu of flowers, memorials may be made to Meals on Wheels of Anderson, P.O. Box 285, Anderson, SC 29622, or the charity of choice.

A special thanks to Lynn Simmons and Joyce Smith, as well as Crescent Hospice, for the excellent care and compassion provided.

Sullivan-King Mortuary

# ELECTRIC CITY EVENTS

### MARCH 12

Women on Wine  
The Kitchen Emporium & Gifts  
418 North Main Street  
6:30 to 8:00 PM

### MARCH 13

Electric City KIDPRENEUR LAB  
102 North Murray Avenue  
10:00 AM to 2:00 PM

### MARCH 13

Home School Friday  
Anderson County Museum  
202 East Greenville Street  
11:00 AM to 12:00 PM

### MARCH 14

Market Off Main Farmers Market  
310 Willimas Street, Williamston  
10:00 AM to 3:00 PM

### MARCH 14

Storybook Series  
1815 Park Drive - Linley Park  
10:00 AM

### MARCH 16

Movers & Shakers Storytime  
Anderson County Library  
300 North McDuffie Street  
10:30 AM to 11:00 AM

### MARCH 17

The History of Agriculture  
Anderson County Museum  
202 East Greenville Street  
12:00 PM

### MARCH 18

Trivia  
McGee's Scot-Irish Pub  
116 West Orr Street  
7:00 PM

### MARCH 21

7th Annual Downtown Anderson Sidewalk Sale  
Downtown Anderson  
All Day

### MARCH 21

Starting Flower Beds  
City Seed at the Station

520 North Murray Avenue  
9:00 AM to 10:00 AM

### MARCH 21

Trucks on Main  
Downtown Anderson  
10:00 AM to 2:00 PM

### MARCH 24

Hall of Fame Ceremony  
Anderson County Museum  
202 East Greenville Street  
5:30 PM to 7:30 PM  
RSVP REQUIRED

### MARCH 28

Easter Egg Hunt  
Dogwood Park - Honea Path  
11:00 AM

### APRIL 23

An Evening With Mark Twain  
Special FREE Performance sponsored by Erskine College  
7:30 PM Memorial Hall - Erskine College Campus  
2 Washington Street, Due West, SC  
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# AnMed named among top places to work in health care

With a roster of teammates that's grown by more than 300 in the last year — now with 742 physicians on medical staff and more than 4,000 employees — AnMed has been named among 165 top places to work in health care by Becker's Hospital Review, a leading source of hospital and health system news and analysis.

The list spotlights health systems and companies that are setting the standard for what it means to be an exceptional workplace in 2026.

"AnMed is a community-based health system of approximately 4,000 teammates, all united by a mission to improve the health and lives of the communities it serves. It's intentionally designed culture emphasizes accountability,

integrity, collaboration, compassion, and innovation, reinforced through

systemwide culture education and ongoing engagement initiatives," Becker's wrote about AnMed in part. "Engagement is high, with the 2025 survey placing AnMed in the 85th percentile nationally and 87% of teammates reporting a strong sense of belonging. The system has been recognized for its commitment to equity, safety, and innovation."

AnMed is one of only three health systems in South Carolina to be named to the list. Becker's Healthcare developed the list

based on nominations and editorial research. Organizations could not pay for inclusion.

"These organizations invest deeply in their people, offering robust benefits, meaningful opportunities for professional and personal development, inclusive environments where employees feel valued, mission-driven work, and resources that support true work-life balance," Becker's wrote. "Beyond their walls, many also make a powerful difference in their communities through service initiatives and a strong commitment to social responsibility."

Kaye Brewer, AnMed's chief human resources officer, said, "Although our achievements are significant, our greatest advancement has been cultivating our Better Starts

Here culture. It has energized teammate engagement and reinforced

our shared commitment to our individual purpose and collective mission. Earning recognition as a top place to work is incredibly rewarding."

The health system was also recognized recently for its nomination for the South Carolina Department of Workforce and Employment's Workforce Champion Award, recognizing businesses and organizations that strengthen the workforce pipeline in South Carolina by connecting students to career

awareness, exploration, and employment opportunities.

Founded in 1908, AnMed is an independent, not-for-profit health system licensed for 648 beds and anchored by AnMed Medical Center, a 495-bed acute-care hospital that's earned the prestigious Magnet designation from the American Nurses Credentialing Center since 2012. Also included are a heart and vascular center, a comprehensive can-

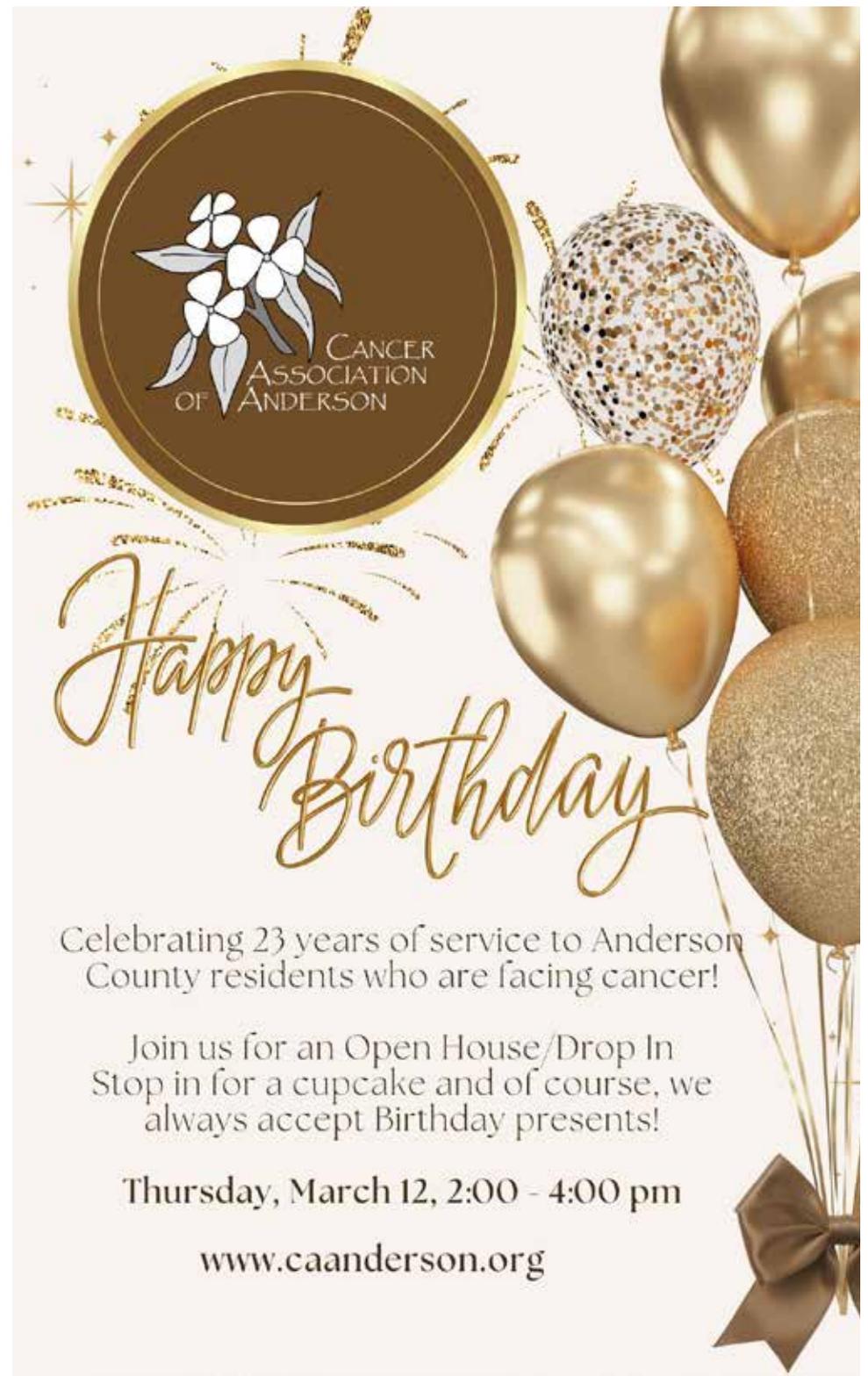
cer center, a maternity center, a behavioral health hospital, a rehabilitation hospital, and Integrated Therapy and Urgent Care locations. The AnMed Piedmont campus and its freestanding emergency department opened in 2025, and a new campus serving Clemson and Central is scheduled to open in 2027.

Nearly 60 physician practices are also among the service sites spread throughout the region.



**'Although our achievements are significant, our greatest advancement has been cultivating our Better Starts Here culture. It has energized teammate engagement and reinforced our shared commitment to our individual purpose and collective mission. Earning recognition as a top place to work is incredibly rewarding.'**

— Kaye Brewer, AnMed chief human resources officer



## YOUR DENTIST CAN SAVE YOUR LIFE

# Continuing our 'self-care' journey to better health

Modern life provides us with many benefits and conveniences. Still, this often comes at a high price. Do you ever feel you're running at top speed, taking care of family, job and everything in between with little time left over for yourself?

Going further, how many times have you thought, "I just can't afford to get sick." For many of us the answer is obvious, we can't, which may explain why "self-care" has become such a hot topic.

In recent features I've referenced my personal experience as an example. My self-care journey began in earnest when I was diagnosed with an autoimmune condition affecting my hands and wrists. That's not what a dentist wants to hear. As a result, I began to focus on lifestyle changes that could benefit me -- and others -- ultimately becoming a certified lifestyle, wellness, and nutrition coach through Harvard Medical School's Executive Education Program.

Today we are learning that our health and indeed our longevity are influenced not only by our genetic make-up -- but by factors that we can control. And the single biggest factor of all is what we eat. In fact, there are specific foods that do a lot more than give us energy. They contain specific nutrients that can actually "turn on" our genes that make us healthy and "turn off" the genes that make us sick.



**Dr. Gabrielle F. Cannick**

Think about it this way. Every day you are creating your own health/longevity story with every choice you make.

To activate your "good" genes -- and keep them happy -- choose certain foods. Consider the so-called Mediterranean diet. Touted as

one of the healthiest by dietitians and health organizations including the American Heart Association, the benefits have been exhaustively studied with reliable results. Go for more vegetables and fruit, whole grains, dairy products, eggs, fish and poultry with less red meat. Note: There's evidence a diet rich in virgin olive oil may help remove excess cholesterol from arteries and keep blood vessels open.

And there's more. Medical research has shown that following this path of making sensible choices in our diets, along with exercise and quality sleep, we can actually rejuvenate our bodies to achieve a younger, healthier profile!

For sure a lifestyle change can be challenging. In order to maintain it you have to derive pleasure from it. When we do, our brains tend to make us want to repeat habits that are good for us. And our bodies respond immediately. Trust me. When you begin to see and feel the results, you're going to want to do it every

day! This is a wonderful positive journey we can make together. If you have questions and would like to discuss this, please reach out. Consider us your hometown resource for guidance and support.

*Dr. Gabrielle F. Cannick is the owner of Grand Oaks Dental, located at 3905 Liberty Highway in Anderson. A strong believer that dental fear and anxiety should not prevent any patient from receiving the highest quality dental care, Dr. Cannick has received extensive training in Sedation Dentistry and is a certified member of the Dental Organization for Conscious Sedation. She is also a member of the South Carolina Dental Association, the American Dental Association, the Academy of General Dentistry, and the American Academy of Dental Sleep Medicine.*

*For more information about Grand Oaks Dental and the services provided, please call 864-224-0809, click to [grandoaksdental.com](http://grandoaksdental.com) or visit us on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/GrandOaksDental>.*

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# ‘Relentless and rewarding’: Get to know Fire Chief Charlie King

Most of us have an idea of what the job of a firefighter entails. But what is a fire chief’s job? Charles “Charlie” King has been Anderson Fire Chief since 2022. What aids him in fulfilling the Fire Department’s mission, which is, in part, “to reduce the frequency and severity of emergencies, whether they are natural or man-



Kim von Keller

made,” is his personal perspective as a volunteer firefighter.

Chief King is an Anderson native. Firefighters are part of his childhood memories. “Both my grand-

father and my dad were volunteer firefighters in Centerville. When I was

young, I would go to the station with my dad. By the time I was in high school, I knew that firefighting was what I wanted to do.”

Chief King continues to work as a firefighter with the Whitefield Volunteer Fire Department, a position that informs his work as Fire Chief.

“A firefighter’s work is both relentless and rewarding. Volunteering with the Whitefield Station allows me to give back to the community and to stay grounded as a firefighter. As the administrative lead for fire protection and community safety for the city, I support 82 personnel who provide fire, emergency, and hazmat response 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. I also oversee policy, manage the budget, supervise personnel, and guide the vision and mission of the department.”

Chief King’s day as Fire Chief actually starts at home.

“Before I leave the house in the morning, I review incidents or events from the night before, anything that requires immediate attention. Once I get to our headquarters on South McDuffie Street, I interact with the battalion chief and the staff going off shift. I like to be present when the new shift comes on. A lot of my job involves meetings and office work, such as monitoring budgets and finance and making sure that our training programs match our policies.”

There are two developments within the Fire Department that Chief King is excited to share.

“Everyone in Anderson is aware of the city’s tremendous growth, both residential and commercial. We have not built a new fire station since 2009, but a new station is being built at the East West Parkway and Beltline Connector. We’ve started hiring staff, and we have purchased two new fire trucks. Also, we are beginning to reach out into the social services world. We recently received a grant from the South



Anderson Fire Chief Charlie King

Carolina Opioid Recovery Fund that will place a paramedic on a truck with every shift to cover overdose incidents and to follow up with those individuals to help them access addiction treatment. We’re hoping this service will help break the addiction cycle and change someone’s life.”

One of the difficulties with Chief King’s job is recruiting.

“There’s more competition for jobs today than 15 years ago. Anderson County has recruited well-paying industries, so we’re in a competitive job market. Lots of young folks are looking for technology jobs, and firefighting is a very physical job. It’s hands-on and in all environments: heat, cold, snow, rain. One thing that makes recruiting easier, though, is that firefighters know that they are giving back to the community. They also become part of a crew and a team that can develop their skills through education.”

When Chief King is not on the job, he is often with his family. He is married to Kristi King, who is a nurse with a local family practice. Their son, Carson, is a student at Anderson Christian School.

“Kristi and I spend a lot of time following Carson to his sporting events,” Chief King says. “He plays basketball and volleyball, and he runs for the cross-country team. He will be 17 soon, and we want to spend as much time as we can with him while he’s still at home. As an Eagle Scout, I also spend time as an adult leader with Scouting America. It’s an opportunity for me to give back to the organization.”

At the end of the day, the opportunity to give back – to young people, to his employees, to his community – is what drives Chief King.

“I love the opportunity that I have at the Anderson Fire Department because I work with incredible people. I supervise a young, energetic crowd of firefighters that work to serve our citizens. It’s a reward to see what they achieve every day.”

*Celebrating Our Past,  
Igniting Our Future.*



ANDERSON COUNTY  
SOUTH CAROLINA

1826 BICENTENNIAL 2026

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## GUESS WHAT, ANDERSON COUNTY?

The first Anderson County Courthouse was a small, square building constructed with logs. The first court was held in October of 1828.

March 17<sup>th</sup> at Noon - History of Agriculture in Anderson County with Clemson Extension Agents



## Anderson County History Spotlight

A Colonel in the Army, General in the State Militia, and our county’s namesake, Robert Anderson, fought at several key Revolutionary battles including King’s Mountain, Cowpens, and Eutaw Springs, among others.

Explore our Revolutionary War Exhibit through June 2026.

*In Our Revolutionary Era:*

March 31<sup>st</sup> at 5:30 PM: Write like a Revolutionary: 18<sup>th</sup> Century Communication and Quill Writing with local history reenactor Bill Williamson.

ANDERSON  
COUNTY MUSEUM

(864) 260-4737  
202 E Greenville Street, Anderson, SC 29621  
[andersoncountymuseum.sc.gov](http://andersoncountymuseum.sc.gov)

## THE GARDEN SHOP

## PART OF THE PROBLEM



**SUSAN  
TEMPLE**  
master  
gardener

Despite my diligent attempts, it seems I may have infected the woods with flying dragons (*Poncirus trifoliata*), also called Citrus trifoliata, as botanists have changed the name since it is in the orange family. Many years ago, I bought this plant as a focal point for the front of the garage. Flying dragon produces small lemon-sized fruit that is very sour but can be used to make jelly. Tiny white flowers in spring smell good. It is very architectural and has brutal, hook like thorns. Nurseries still sell it. BEWARE!

Once I learned of its invasiveness, and it started producing fruit, every year, I picked up, bagged, and trashed all the "lemons". No research says it is of any benefit to birds or pollinators, but I did not want to take the chance. Then years later, I saw two along the creek bank. That focal point plant was immediately cut down. Boy, did Husband grumble about that job...all those thorns. Thorns did not stop me from using it in flower arrangements over the years though. It was quite a statement. As a few more years went by, about half a dozen were found along the path in the woods.

Helene took out the path. Our neighbors lost theirs, too. I had been thinking of renting a skid steer to clear the path so it could be bushhogged again. It sure is nice to meander along the creek without having to fight through briars, privet,

and other stuff. As the decision was made to rent the skid steer, I walked what was the path to see how much would be involved. The first interesting thing is beavers are trying their best to dam up the creek. Usually, they are further down the creek where the swamp drains into the creek, trying to dam the little tributaries. It is something to see how they've worn down the creek bank. The banks are usually at least about five feet high. Spots have to be found to get down in the creek (or should I say so I can get back out).

While planning for the machine, and watching beaver progress, unfortunately, about a dozen more flying dragons were found. Some would pull up; some had gotten big. This plant is difficult to see until other plants are dormant. The stems stay green year-round, and



Thorns of flying dragon

that makes it easier to see in winter. I spray painted them orange as I came across them. My brother was the skid steer driver, and he pulled up the big ones with the grapple. The neighbors went in halfers on the skid steer to clear their path too. As we were walking their land, a few

flying dragons were spotted in their woods too. Durn! Are they washing down the creek from somewhere? We know their big patches of dwarf mondo grass washed in.

As the neighbors led the way, we stopped in a big thicket of something while David cleared and moved stuff behind us. At first I feared trees of heaven (*Ailanthus altissima*). I'm finding more and more in my woods. Neighbor did not recall seeing the blooms I described. Upon further thought, maybe, hopefully, they are paw paws. We will determine for sure once they put out. The wood did not have the funky smell of trees of heaven.

I intend to stay alert for flying dragons. If I am the problem, or if they washed in, either way, I hope they never get a strong hold. There aren't many cool plants in the bottom land along the creek, but I don't want to be part of the invasive problem. Believe reports of plants' tendency to be invasive.

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# The heart of a home

BY DONNA ANDREWS BRATCHER

I've heard it said that "Family is the heart of a home." And nowhere is this more true than the lovely Victorian house that sits at 7 Piedmont Avenue in Piedmont, SC...although family, in this case, wasn't always referring to the traditional sense of the word. This home's remarkable history spans almost 150 years and has a very unusual origin. In fact, the "heart" of this home is where the story begins...

It was the 1870's and Piedmont, SC, was a newly established textile mill town located on the banks of the Saluda River. As the town grew, a church building was needed. In 1878, the Piedmont Manufacturing Company built the Union Church to serve as a multi-denominational worship space to be used by the Baptists, Presbyterians, and Methodists. Each congregation, or "church family," had a Sunday to use the building. As was common in those days, the church was also used as a school. By 1895, each denomination had erected their own building, and the Union Church was no longer needed. It appeared to be a short life for the little church building, but actually, it was just the beginning.

In the early 1900's, the Piedmont Manufacturing Company was in direct competition with other textile

mills in the area. To attract workers to their mill, they began building impressive brick stores and providing a variety of activities to attract mill workers. The YMCA was one of the focal points of the town for the men of the village. In 1908, the mill decided to build the very first YWCA in the state of South Carolina for the ladies of the town. The Union Church was moved from Church Street to Main. After relocation, the building was turned to its side, transforming the original side wall into the new front. It was then remodeled to resemble a lovely Victorian home. It was painted a lovely shade of yellow and became a charming addition to the town. The YWCA was used as a boarding home for single women who worked at the mill, as well as offering cooking and sewing classes, a library, a night school, and other recreational activities. The girls were closely monitored by the matrons who were hired to live in the house with them. The girls would often gather in the evenings in the sitting room to talk and play the piano or to sit on the large front porch and discuss the day's events. The YWCA became their home away from home, and the residents became like "family."

In 1946, the Piedmont Manufacturing Company was sold to J.P. Stevens and Company. This purchase included the textile



mills and the surrounding company-owned village housing. Two years later, when the Hwy 86 bridge was built across the Saluda River, the YWCA house had to be moved once more. That is when it came to its final resting place at 7 Piedmont Avenue. Two years later, the house was purchased by Andrew Scott for a private residence. In 1954, James and Vangie Oliver purchased the home. The large home was made into a duplex; the Oliver family lived



in one side of the house and rented out the other side. The Olivers raised their four children in the home, and once more the rooms were filled with life. Once more the large front porch became a gathering place to relax and talk in the evenings. The Oliver family created a lifetime of memories in the home and lived there for the next 68 years.

In May of 2022, the 4,070 sq. ft. house was sold to the Piedmont Historical Preservation Society. With great excitement, plans were made to change the former church, YWCA, and home into the Piedmont History Museum. There were many costly changes ahead including stabilizing the exterior and having an elevator installed. Also, many of the interior walls were

removed and the double front doors were returned to a single entrance resembling the original YWCA design. It was once again painted yellow. The restoration was made possible through grants and charitable donations from those who desired to see this plan come to fruition. It has been 4 years since the purchase, and the end is finally in sight!

Today, the sunshine-bright house is a beautiful centerpiece in the community of Piedmont. It is a testament to the history of a town... to its religious roots that go back to the Union Church resting deep within its walls... to the first YWCA in the state... to the Oliver family who will always call it home. Now it has been given new life and will soon begin another chapter of its long and amazing journey.

# BEAUTY ON A BUDGET

The word dupe is funny to me for some reason, but in this economy we all can use some budget friendly ideas. Instead of having to buy the real thing, fortunately, we have copycat products and wardrobe now that basically have the same ingredients and designs for less. I'm always on the hunt for



Kristine March

a good dupe. I like to splurge on skin care just because I'm almost 41 now and I basically have to.

I was perusing the aisles of Trader Joe's and stumbled upon some really good serums, night creams, and actual retinols, and toners galore.

I follow this dermatologist on Instagram and she said that TJ's products are every bit as good as the high-end ones that we break our bank with. So, I bought a whole kit and caboodle and let me tell you, my skin has never felt better. I'm always skeptical because you just never know. I purchased the rose water toner, Manuka honey day and night cream which is an actual dupe for Farmacy Halo cream which was 8 dollars as opposed to 48 hyaluronic serum, and the antioxidant serum as well. I skipped the retinol one just because my skin has a love-hate relationship with retinol, but I do want to try it eventually. They've basically tried to copy L'Occitane, Super Goop, Clinique, Sol de Janeiro, Drunk Elephant and more. Oh, and let me tell you about their body butters. I am obsessed. I think I've probably mentioned this one before, but there's one called the Cacay Oil Body Butter and it's smells just like Baccarat Rouge 540 perfume. I don't know how they did it, but they did. I always buy at least two or three at a time and I give them away as gifts to friends and family because they're just that good. You can't beat good ole Trader Joe's.

Now, for fashion. I don't usually like to buy fast fashion or cheap fashion, but sometimes if you're in a pinch you have to.

My favorite thing to buy for the dupe version of any accessories are sunglasses. I treat my Ray-Bans pretty well, but they always end up getting scratched eventually, so I like to find cheaper ones that I can really wear, especially in the summer months. When I'm swimming or tubing down a river or boating, I like to feel guilt free. They do feel heavier on the face, but if you lose them, it's definitely not as devastating. I love the Tom Ford and the Chloe dupes for sunnies. You literally can't tell. The most incredible find though, is the Yves Saint Laurent dupe. They're identical. I swear. They're shaped like octagons and they're so, so cute! They instantly make every outfit look glam and cool. So go get yourself some cheap sunglasses, like the ZZ Top song says.

Handbags can be hit or miss when it comes to a dupe, but I found a really incredible bag at H & M. They have basically replicated the infamous tote bag from The Row. My sister and I both got one, and they are a game changer. Instead of paying \$4,900 we both paid \$50. It's not as good of quality of course, but it's still giving quiet luxury. From far away, who can tell the difference anyway.

In all seriousness, you can get some really cute things for less if you keep your eyes peeled. You just have to know how to do it and make it look expensive. If it feels too cheap, don't even waste your money on it. There's nothing worse than something that feels bad on your skin or doesn't work with your vibe. Sometimes it's worth the luxurious price after all, but I get a buzz on finding good deals. It's a challenge and it's fun.

So, what are some of your favorite dupe versions? Being budget friendly is always a good idea. Remember to make the sidewalk your runway and kindness always matters.



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FROM THE SHELF

# On heroism and stories

I graduated with my English degree in 2010. My main focus for my undergraduate studies was 'hero theory' more specifically narrowed down to applying said theory in the study of children's literature. At the time a major driving force in any 'hero theory' studies was Joseph Campbell's Hero with a Thousand Faces. If the title rings a bell, it's likely due to its popularity in Hollywood, most famously as the framework for the original Star Wars.



Sara Leady

The "hero" is "abandoned" as a child, goes on a quest and must overcome various obstacles to end victorious and is left standing alone. Others might sort of help or support the hero but ultimately he achieves his great deeds on his own. If there is a romance coded character, they are at best a prize won/saved along the way and don't really play a role in the journey.

I'll point out what is obnoxiously obvious now, sixteen years later, the intentional wording of 'he.' Making the word 'hero' synonymous with masculinity while also placing the concept on a pedestal creates a narrative that only traditional 'masculine' traits or actions can be seen as heroic. This also affirms the binary construct of male versus female and fitting different attributes firmly into those two categories. I'm not speaking to gender politics (though I'm happy to have that conversation). I'm talking about behaviors, energies, and ways of engaging with the world and how we sort them into two categories that we've also made gender coded. For example, if I were to describe a person as "assertive and direct," you'd more than likely picture some sort of dude. Plot twist—that's a common description of me, a petite, feminine woman—likely the opposite of what you envisioned.

I've previously written about the idea of stories being tools of "socializing" in that they are representative of how society feels people should behave. Using that idea but adding in the above take on what it means to be a "hero,"

we create a narrative that you can only be heroic through traditionally masculine means. If we were to take an honest look at some of the greatest "strong female characters," we'll see that most of them don't fit within the traditional definitions or expectations of the "feminine." Katniss from *The Hunger Games* for example is hyper logical, thinks with survival and not her heart, hunts, is the breadwinner of her family, etc. These are all things that fall within the masculine tradition. We could try to make the argument that her protective nature could be categorized as feminine, but she's protective of everyone and is fighting for the "little guy" and not just her sister—a pretty stereotypical heroic and masculine behavior. Wonder Woman? Textbook example of Campbell's hero.

I've recently been reading a lot on the "heroine's journey" or what would be more representative of a hero with more traditionally feminine traits and behaviors. I've been specifically diving into professors/authors Gail Carriger and Maria Tatar's who have released books on the topic in the past few years. I've gone down this literary theory rabbit hole because I've been asking myself about what makes a "strong female character?" Do I have many examples that are actually heavy on the 'feminine' versus just being masculine energies in dresses? I've also been thinking through male main characters that present more feminine qualities and how they are treated or described. It's an interesting conversation in terms of what attributes we choose to celebrate as a society and how we choose to celebrate them.

The "hero" narrative is continuously evolving but how and why it's shifting is important and a fascinating thing to discuss. If you want to hear more from me, or other smart ladies' thoughts on what makes a "great heroine" and to hear about some of our favorites, I cordially invite you to our discussion on the topic on Monday, March 23 at 6:00 pm at the Anderson Main Library. For An Evening with a Librarian: the Heroine's Edition we'll have three librarians nerding out on powerful stories by and about "heroes" who just happen to be women and feminine.

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# Class of '72 Anderson OGS keeping connections alive

Society feels more and more fragmented these days. "Which side of the aisle are you on?"

But it's not just politics. It's almost everything.

I heard a podcaster recently say we are becoming very tribal.

Well, Scott Drake had an idea to bring us together. At least for the Class of '72 guys.

Once-a-month meetings at Mama Penn's restaurant have become popular.



Brian Hodges

The OGS (Old Geezers) have met for almost 4 years.

Our March 2 gathering included 19 guys. Randy Bannister, a Naval Academy graduate and captain in the Navy, spoke about the U.S. military actions in the Middle East.

The number fluctuates from month to month but Drake said there has been as many as 28 show up. Old students from Hanna, Westside and McDuffie are invited. Harry Craft and Bill Moore are two former Rams.

"And they come from all over. Last time I counted, six states were represented," Drake said.

John Ross, Hanna class of 1970,



March 2, 2026, meeting

was a guest of Mark Greenway at the March 2 meeting. There have been guest appearances by coach Wayne Jones, and Bob Palmer, a math teacher at Hanna.

One time, several class of '72 Hanna girls paid a delightful visit and spoke to us. They included Kathy Fortner Oliver and Candy DeBerry Cantrell.

"The OGS meeting is snowball-

ing," Drake said.

Personally, it feels like a monthly family reunion. These are people I grew up around.

"It means a lot to a lot of people," said Drake, who once was a pharmaceutical rep and now has a real estate license. "I love it. I always enjoy meeting people for lunch. I kept running into people who'd say, 'We've got to get together sometime.' "That's what started it."

"I started contacting people and the first 7 I reached out to said, 'I'll be there.'"

Drake kept notes and wrote that the first meeting was held April 4, 2022 and those present were Drake, Brian Hodges, Michael Lupo, Joe Cash, C.H. Ducworth, Fred Cooley, Bannister, Rick King and Richard Shirley.

"An enjoyable time was had by all," Drake wrote on a legal pad. "Randy Bannister graciously picked up the tab."

So what do we talk about? Everyone has favorite memories. Somebody remembered a fight in a stairwell. "It was a draw," one combatant reportedly said. Some stories are not fit to be repeated in a family newspaper.

There are sub-groups within the group. North Fant elementary school, where I attended from 1960-1966, has a strong presence.



OG hats

"Y'all are clannish," Drake joked.

There are other sub-groups such as members of individual churches or former football players and various athletes.

Drake and Wayland Harkey came up with the idea of offering to let anyone tell their story to the group, "but it was strictly a voluntary thing," Drake said.

Not long ago, Joe Cash, an energetic musician who lives in Greenville, stunned the group.

"I just wanted to let y'all know that I suffered a heart attack last week," he said to the room, that was suddenly quiet.

He said he'd been having gas pains and back pain and couldn't shake it. He finally went to the emergency room and they confirmed his heart attack.

"I'm so glad to be here," Cash

said to the group. "But it was a strange experience. I could watch the procedure as it happened on a nearby screen as they went up through a vein and fixed the problem. I don't remember being stressed out at all."

A week later Cash looked great and he was darn glad to be alive.

"I'm taking about nine pills a day, but I'll do what the doctors say."

Fred Cooley, who had an outstanding career with a division of Pfizer, laughed and told Joe, "You keep taking those pills. It's good for my retirement fund."

David Burns was another classmate who had a serious heart problem several years ago. He had successful triple-bypass surgery.

Of course, no one can forget former mayor Richard Shirley, who died of a heart attack several years ago.

"I really miss him," Drake said. "We both worked on the Yellow Jacket school newspaper. He was the sports editor and I was the features editor."

"My best story I wrote was about 'Blue,' a dog that belonged to Cissy Hughes and was a fairly regular visitor at Hanna," Drake said. "Blue disappeared for a while and everyone was afraid something bad had happened to him."

"But it turned out he was fine."



2022 OG meeting

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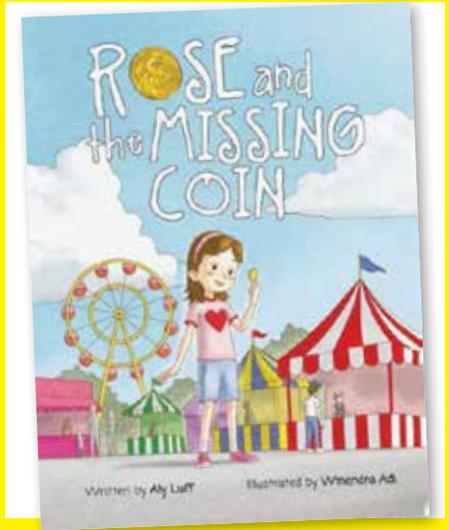
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# Mayor's crackdown on lawlessness and blind tigers

On June 5, 1914, Anderson County sheriff Joe M. H. Ashley made a rather astonishing statement to a reporter for the Anderson Intelligencer declaring a blunt policy concerning the County of Anderson and the City of Anderson. He said the people of Anderson "right now" can look to the next mayor for the enforcement of city laws. He complained that he had been forced to devote a good part of his time in looking after lawlessness in the city of Anderson but after the coming election he was going to leave it to the city.

Ashley declared "it was squarely up to the people [of Anderson] to select a man to own the office of mayor and administer the laws in a manner to meet the approval of the majority." He went further: "If the town wants a wide-open man, let the voters elect such a man for mayor and I will let him own the city to suit his own notion."

Sheriff Ashley said the city should pass its own ordinances to protect law and order and he intended seeing to it that the city runs its own affairs.

The sheriff was obviously a man of action. He asserted his authority as reported in the same issue stopping a cockfight "battle royal" attended by some 200 men. Curiously, no arrests were made. Sentries at the event were attributed to having sounded the alarm and the participants scattered. It had been possible, however, to confiscate a 16-gallon keg of beer. It was not reported what disposition had been made of the keg.

The target of the sheriff's attack may have been the current mayor of Anderson but after the Democrat primary and the general election (the later stated by the newspaper



Anderson Mayor John Harrington Godfrey

as only a matter of form), a new mayor, John Harrington Godfrey, was elected who took office in August of 1914.

At the very first meeting of the Godfrey administration, the hammer fell. A new law provided that any man convicted in the Recorder's Court of carrying a pistol would be fined \$60 or would serve 20 days in jail. In addition, there would be a fine imposed of

\$100 for selling liquor for each case – presumably that meant in each separate incident, not a fine based on the number of cases of liquor.

On September 25, 1914, the Intelligencer, announced "A Raid is Coming" and that "detectives have been at work in Anderson rounding up all of the blind tigers [term for illegal saloon operations] in the city and that now the sleuths have evidence to convict three-fourths of the evildoers within the city." That was an obliging suggestion that the bad guys should get out of town.

But some "evildoers" did not take the hint. The Intelligencer on October 27, 1914 declared in a headline: "War was waged on City's Social Clubs." It was reported "the Anderson police force, headed by Detective Wiggins from the Thiel Agency of Atlanta, made an onslaught on the Dixie Social Club on Whitner Street ... and on the Owl's club on South Main Street." (Names of the owners were apparently withheld to protect their

innocent descendants.)

Goods were confiscated and two other arrests were made for selling whiskey and violating the liquor laws. Police sized all furniture, empty barrels, beer barrels, whiskey bottles and whiskey cases "galore." It was said "The halls through the temple of justice looked like a first-class dispenser yesterday morning," and the Intelligencer predicted "Anderson County Court room will be packed to hear the trial."

There was no explanation as to why a representative of the Thiel Agency of Atlanta was required to lead the charge. The Dixie Social Club and Owl's club were likely well known in the city – perhaps much too well known for local involvement.

City residents obviously approved of the actions taken by Mayor Godfrey. He served three successive terms as mayor but unfortunately passed away prior to the end of his third term.

**At the very first meeting of the Godfrey administration, the hammer fell. A new law provided that any man convicted in the Recorder's Court of carrying a pistol would be fined \$60 or would serve 20 days in jail. In addition, there would be a fine imposed of \$100 for selling liquor for each case – presumably that meant in each separate incident, not a fine based on the number of cases of liquor.**

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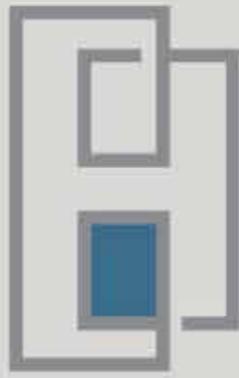
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