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THE GARDEN SHOP

Gardening for Christmas



**SUSAN
TEMPLE**
master
gardener

As I sit staring out the window on this thick as peanut butter foggy morning, Christmas traditions are on my mind. You may remember it was Yukon Cornelius in Rudolph who said peanut butter rather than thick as pea soup. He said something like “You pick your food and I’ll pick mine” when he was corrected for not using pea soup. Back at the beginning of gardening where I live, planting for Christmas decorations was one of the things I considered. There is an area in the woods where Mother Nature provides pine trees. Mother Nature also provides cedar trees. I have moved many to grow along the property line with deodar cedars. It was many years before I picked deodar for decorations. Cryptomeria trees were planted because of how the branches grow, they drape wonderfully over the edge of the mantle. Got

to have magnolia, of course, but surprisingly I don’t pick much for decorations in the house. It mostly goes in pots on the breezeway. Last year I added a Little Gem or Teddy Bear magnolia for cuttings. I got it at the Jockey Lot. The first guy said it was a Little Gem and was \$25. On my stop again, another guy waited on me and he said it was a Teddy Bear and was \$20. It was growing wonderfully, surprisingly fast. Fence wasn’t put around it in time this year and a buck rubbed on it and tore it all to pieces. There is a poof at the bottom and top with nothing but skinned trunk in the middle. I sure hope it recovers. Nellie Stevens holly, junipers, boxwood, and loquat are others used. One of the best is green giant thuga. It tolerates some shade, deer don’t eat it, it smells wonderful, very easy to grow, and its flat growth pattern is wonderful for all kinds of decorations.

Years ago, I wanted to spruce up the mailbox but there is no road frontage for planting anything much. I thought about a container but caring for it, and again room for it, didn’t seem logical. When the mailbox post rotted I had to start from scratch. I got a galvanized trash can, cut the bottom out, and put a new mailbox in

the trash can. Voila! My container! I painted it a sage green color, painted the mailbox purple, planted heuchera, sedum, and add angel wing begonias in it each year. It’s perfect. Then, several years ago, it occurred to me the mailbox needed to be decorated for Christmas. I found a box of tacky tinsel at a thrift store and there was my inspiration. Tacky Tinsel Christmas!

My former neighbor stopped when I was decorating. I explained I was going redneck Christmas, it wasn’t meant to be pretty necessarily. I wrapped the can in different color tinsel, wrapped the mailbox, and stuck some candy canes in it. Over the years, it’s had a little holly tree stuck in it, covered with blue and silver tinsel, I’ve hung tinsel from bare sweet gum branches, it’s had vintage artificial wreaths hung all around it. Whatever seemed tackiest at the moment. But wrapping all that tinsel around the can took some time. This year I got a vinyl table cloth and covered the can. And for the first time, it has real greenery in it. My neighbors now moved here from Connecticut about three years ago. The first year they saw it, I explained again. I wonder if other neighbors think I’m serious about my tacky tinsel Christmas mailbox.



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Random acts of kindness, senseless acts of beauty

BY KARL POKORNY

On a cold, rainy Sunday in December of 1986, I was driving back from NYC on the New Jersey Turnpike when my radiator blew up. I stopped on the shoulder of the Turnpike and filled the radiator of my beat up old Cadillac Seville by dipping rainwater out of a ditch with my hat - Briscoe Darling style. When I stopped down the road for another fill, A New Jersey State Trooper pulled in behind me and said he would follow me with his lights on to the next exit.

At the exit, the Trooper told me that he knew of a radiator shop about 15 miles away, but it was closed on Sundays. I told him I would sleep in my car at a gas station until the shop opened the next day. The Trooper said it was too cold to sleep in my car without the ability to run the engine, so he radioed his dispatcher and asked them to call the radiator shop. The dispatcher radioed back several minutes later and said that the shop owner had agreed to work on my car that afternoon.

My car rolled into the parking lot of the radiator shop with steam bellowing from under the hood, and the State Trooper right behind me. The Trooper just waived and kept driving after I parked, so I didn't get a chance to thank him. The shop had the definite ambience of criminal enterprise, and I could imagine this being the last stop Jimmy Hoffa made on his way to the Meadowlands. A heavily tattooed, fierce looking, middle-aged man came out of the radiator shop and introduced himself as "Fingers". He really looked like someone who should be nicknamed "Fingers". He also looked like someone that perhaps the Trooper knew from having arrested him in the past for armed robbery. I got the feeling that this was going to be a costly repair, but I was in no position to be choosy.

Making matters worse, I only had \$40 in my pocket and no credit cards. I felt that my chances of getting a payment plan from the man who, perhaps, had dispassionately buried Jimmy Hoffa in concrete



11 years earlier, was extremely low. Very apologetically I told him that I only had \$40 cash and that I would have to mail him a check for the rest of the repair if he did the work. In a total contradiction with his fierce appearance Fingers said with a calm, re-assuring voice: "I know you didn't blow up your radiator on the Turnpike so you could come here and rip me off. I will fix your car and you can mail a check when you get home." Fingers (I never learned his real name) cheerfully chatted with me as he repaired my radiator and then gave me an invoice for only \$200. I tried to give him my last \$40 as a down payment and he said "No, you are going to need that for food and gas on your way home."

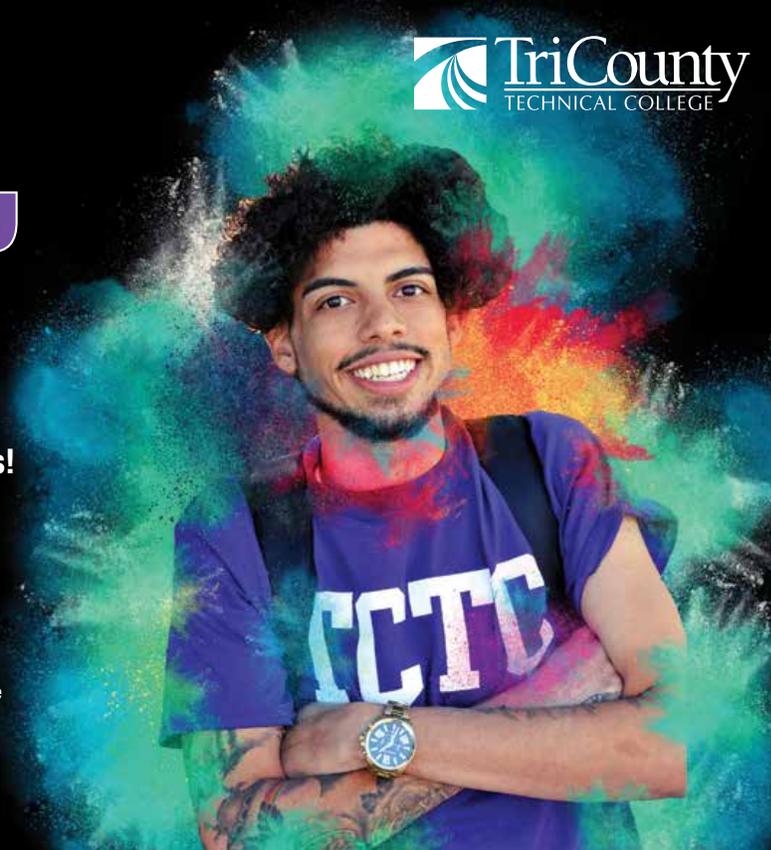
The next day when I got home, I mailed him a Christmas card with a check for \$300 because I was certain he had not charged me enough for the work. In the card I heaped on the praise for his kindness and trust. A couple weeks later I got a Christmas card back from him with a check for \$100 saying "You accidentally paid too much, thank you for your business."

When my radiator blew up, I had immediately gone into my "the Fates hate me" frame of mind and knew with certainty that the Fates would spend the remainder of the day adding insult to injury. When the State Trooper pulled up, I had expected him to just radio his dispatcher for a tow truck and then tell

me to sit tight, but he took the time to follow me instead. The Trooper could also have waved goodbye once he got me off the Interstate, but he stayed with me until he was sure I was taken care of. Fingers could have told the State Police to have me bring my car in the next day and then told me that he would not make the repair until I had a way of paying him in full. Instead, without hesitation, Fingers decided to help me on his day off and then trust me to send a payment.

Whenever I get overwhelmed with bad news or have dealt with an unpleasant person, I like to remember the many acts of kindness like this one that I have experienced over the years. Good things happen every day, but it is easy to miss them because a headline reading "Radiator Shop Fixes Stranger's Car on Sunday Afternoon" does not often make headlines.

*Taken from title of book: "Random Acts of Kindness, Senseless Acts of Beauty" by Anne Herbert and M. Paloma Pavel





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'What are you doing for others?'

BY JIM HARRIS

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. said, "Life's most persistent and urgent question is 'What are you doing for others?'" In the case of Pastor Velma Williford, the answer is quite a lot. She and the non-denominational house of worship she leads, The Tabernacle of Faith, do quite a lot for others, like providing meals and food packages for the area homeless.

When she was growing up in Anderson, Pastor Velma says, "I never missed a meal. My Daddy made sure we had food. I couldn't understand people not having food, so that was on my heart." She met her husband of 56 years at Westside High School. Claude has been working beside her throughout her ministry. He says, "I retired from my job to help her. I drive the truck, pick up donations, whatever is needed."

She began her faith journey in 1972 when she felt the calling to pastor. She took over the leadership of her first church in 1975. Many churches followed, including as far away as Albany, GA. When the parent organization overseeing her Greenwood church disagreed with her vision of launching a mission ministry, she began a new church, starting with the established base. That sanctuary is now known as Zion's Tabernacle of Faith. In 1992, Pastor Williford founded The Tabernacle of Faith, located at 1613 South Main Street in Anderson. She still pastors both churches with help from her assistants.

When the Anderson church began, the members started bringing a covered dish for lunch after the service and included those in need in the area. A connection to the Red Cross led to an introduction to an area food bank which made it possible to expand the services provided to even more of those in the homeless community.

Each Sunday, members and volunteers arrive around 7 AM and prepare lunch. The church serves meals to around 300 people each week after the Sunday morning service. On Sundays and Wednesdays, folks in need can drop by and receive boxes of USDA food from the food bank, one of the area's most significant.

Heading into the Christmas season, the church property is buzzing with activity. Behind the sanctuary is a building that serves as an operations hub. Workers fill large bags with apples, oranges, tangerines, soap, washcloths, candy, toothbrushes, and other items for the Christmas Giveaway operation. Once completed, the bags make their way into the pews in the sanctuary, where, just before Christmas, as many as 300 will be distributed to the area's homeless population.

Pastor Williford holds two degrees, Doctor of Theology from CLST and Doctor of Ministry from Beacon University of Columbus, Georgia. In 2019, her work was recognized with her inclusion in Who's Who in America.

She sees education as one of the keys to ending poverty and homelessness. Toward that end, the church provides scholarship assistance for



Claude and Pastor Velma Williford

young members to help further their education at the college level. Recipients have attended Clemson and Charleston Southern, among others.

Dave Phillips is the Vice-Chair of Hope Missions of the Upstate and knows the Pastor's work well. He says, "Pastor Velma is a consummate example of a fully devoted servant of Christ, and she inspires others to do the same. Every day of the week, some part of the feeding operation is at work. From driving their box truck to collect food from stores around the area

to prepare for the Sunday meal and food pantry, Velma's team is constantly at work."

He continues, "While their food operations are the most noticeable, they also serve in prison ministry, and several of the church members are foster parents. It's just who they are. No fanfare. Just loving people by tending to needs in many ways."

Anyone wishing to donate to the church can do so through their website, www.tabernacleoffaithministries.org, or call the church at 864-617-7107.

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NIBBLE & SIP

Ring in the New Year with a jam session

A really great band doesn't have to play a song the same way at every concert. Depending on the crowd, the location, and the energy, an on-stage jam session may result



Kim von Keller

in a better version than you've ever heard. It's the same with Nibbles and Sips. I'd like to encourage you, once you find a recipe that you like — and as long as it doesn't involve baking, which is as much about chemistry as taste — to keep the ratio and

switch out the ingredients to form something new in '22. That's exactly what I've done with my Herbed Cheese Ball and Jammin' Til the Break of Dawn.

For the Herbed Cheese Ball, choose the grated cheeses that you prefer (or that you have on hand), up the garlic, or change the nuts for the coating. And for the Jammin' Til the Break of Dawn, use your favorite spirit, preserve, and citrus (or what you have on hand) to create as many different cocktails as you like. I like bourbon/peach/lemon, vodka/



raspberry/lime, rum/pineapple/lime, and gin/orange marmalade/lemon, but you're the musician; play it however the mood strikes. Have a delicious new Nibble and Sip and a truly Happy New Year, everyone!

Herbed Cheese Ball

8 oz. cream cheese, softened
1 cup grated white cheddar or Monterey



Jack cheese

1 tablespoon grated parmesan, Pecorino Romano, or Asiago cheese
1/4 cup chopped fresh Italian parsley
2 T. chopped fresh basil
1 T. chopped oregano
1/2 t. finely chopped garlic, or to taste
Salt and pepper to taste
3 T. finely chopped toasted pecans, walnuts, or pistachios

3 T. chopped chives
Crackers, for serving

In a small mixing bowl, combine cream cheese, white cheddar cheese, and parmesan cheese. Use an electric mixer on low speed to blend. Add parsley, basil, oregano, and garlic and blend thoroughly. Season to taste with salt and pepper. Cover the bowl and refrigerate for three hours (or overnight) to allow flavors to meld and the mixture to become firm.

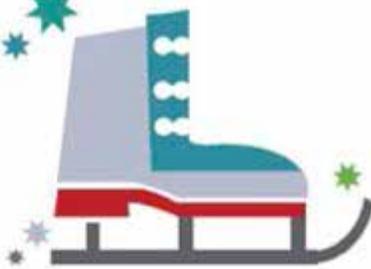
Remove the cheese mixture from the refrigerator and form into a ball. Combine pecans and chives on a plate and roll the ball in the pecan/chive mixture to cover completely. Serve with crackers. Serves 4-6.

Jammin' Til the Break of Dawn

1 oz of your favorite spirit
2 T. of your favorite fruit preserves
1/4 oz. lemon or lime juice
3 oz. chilled sparkling wine

In a cocktail shaker, combine spirit, preserves, and lemon or lime juice. Add a large handful of ice cubes, cover, and shake until well blended. Strain into a coup or martini glass, add sparkling wine, and stir gently. Serves 1.

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The burning o' the calendar

I don't know how you celebrate New Year's Eve, but in 2021, Ted and I will be watching the ball drop from the confines of our own home. We love a party, but NYE should probably be renamed "Amateur Night" as otherwise sedate folks gather in bunches to eat WAY too much, drink WAY too much, and drive WAY too much, and on January 1st, I don't want to be at the dry cleaners or the morgue. So on December 31st, we'll make the fanciest dinner of the year using every pot and pan we own, open a bottle of champagne that we probably won't finish, and set the alarm for 11:55 p.m. in case we should drift off while binge-watching "The Detectorists" for the second time this year. We'll also take some time for the annual

Burning of the Calendar. It's a tradition we started a couple decades back after a particularly difficult year. Somehow, ripping out the really bad months and throwing them on a roaring fire felt cathartic, like January was a clean slate. So to make sure we're ready, we've gone through each page of our "365 Days in Ireland 2021 Wall Calendar" to decide which months stay and which ones are relegated to the ash pile. January: Ted had to have a cataract removed,



Kim von Keller

which was no fun, but his vision was a lot better afterwards. January stays.
 February: I had a hip replaced. Turns out that practicing tae kwon do in your 40s has ramifications. But I recovered like a champ, I lost my limp, and friends and family brought us dinner for two weeks. February stays.
 March: There's nothing written down at all, but the 26th features a great picture of an all-cordian marching band at the Fleadh Cheoil Music Festival in Drogheda. Looks like something I wouldn't want to miss. March stays.
 April: This is the month I turned Very Many Years Old. COVID restrictions prevented me from throwing the big party for myself that I had planned, but Elizabeth put together a smaller, safer surprise party where we all ate Marionberry pie. When she asked me if I was actually surprised, I pointed out that I arrived in sweatpants and wearing no makeup. April stays.
 May: Our supper club resumed after a hiatus of more than a year, and the menu was full-tilt. May stays.
 June: A car accident leaves me with a cracked sternum, which is bad. And painful. Still, the friends and family from January bring more delicious food to our house. Yay, friends, and yay, air bags. June stays.

July: Ted has to dry my hair because I can't lift the blow dryer (see June), but I have a husband who would try to dry my hair because I can't lift the blow dryer. July stays.
 August: Wedding anniversary. (See July.) August stays.
 September: Trip to Orcas Island, Washington. Couldn't paddle a kayak (see June), but I could sure sit on a deck with good friends and look at unbelievable scenery. September stays.
 October: We discover "The Detectorists," a gentle comedy about a metal detecting club in England. October stays.
 November: The finale of "The Detectorists" is the best-ever ending of a series. November stays.
 December: The worst of months, we lose a dear family member. We are sad and tired. Grief, though, is the price you pay for loving — we did — and being loved — we were. I will never forget that. December stays.
 Guess I'm gonna have to stoke my NYE fire with something else this year.
 As difficult as 2021 has been, it was redeemed each month as we were reminded of how fortunate we are, so how could I burn the pages that serve as reminders? As we enter 2022, I hope that all of your calendars will be filled with nothing but good things. If there are difficulties, look for the good things that they illuminate. And if all else fails, look to "The Detectorists" to restore your faith in humanity. Happy new calendar, and Happy New Year!

Let's make a resolution

When I hear the words "New Year," I immediately think of two things. First, I am reminded of how grateful I am for the gift of spending another year with my family and friends. Second, I ask myself, "What can I personally do to make the new year even better than the last?" As is true for many, the new year is a time to reflect on the past, reassess our priorities, and determine a better course for the future. This year, when you sit down to consider your "new year resolutions," don't forget to include your children. Not only can this process be a valuable teaching moment about setting goals and sticking to them, but the practice of choosing an achievable resolution for the New Year can also be a fun way for kids to develop their communication and decision-making skills.



Katie Laughridge

Start by explaining what resolutions are, and why they are important. Then give examples of a few resolutions you have set for yourself in past years. It's also helpful to share your experiences about how hard it can be to stick to a resolution goal, but how satisfying and empowering it is when you finally accomplish it. Ask your children about what is important to them, and what goal(s) they would like to achieve over the next year. Keep in mind that resolutions should be talked about in a positive way with children, so that your child does not become overwhelmed or discouraged. For example, say, "I'm going to do this..." Instead of "I'm going to stop doing this..."
 While change and self-improvement are valuable concepts to adopt, it's also important to ensure that your child does not feel like there is something wrong with who they are or

what they are doing right now. To avoid this, try to frame the conversation as 'something could be better if we did this'. It is also important to help your child pick a resolution that is both achievable and specific. In this way, when your child achieves each new goal, he or she will feel empowered and eager to take on new and more challenging goals in the future.
 Here a few ideas for resolutions appropriate for encouraging children to create meaningful resolutions:
 Instead of "I'm going to be healthier," say: "I'm going to join a basketball team or I'm going to spend 30 minutes outside each day."
 Instead of "I'm going to help around the house," say: "I'm going to help set the table for dinner or I'm going to take out the trash."
 Instead of "I'm going to be a better friend," say: "I'm going to ask _____ to sit with me at lunch tomorrow or play with me at recess."
 Instead of "I'm going to make better grades," say: "I'm going to study for 15 extra minutes each day."
 Consider displaying your child's resolution(s) on a little bulletin board or chalkboard in the kitchen, or let your child write their resolutions on the glass of an empty picture frame with a dry-erase marker. Seeing their goal(s) written out each day will help your child stay focused and motivated. Learning the value of setting resolutions, knowing how to make necessary adjustments along the way, and experiencing the joy and satisfaction gained in achieving each goal through hard work, determination and dedicated focus, is one of the most valuable skills you could possibly teach your child to ensure their future success and happiness.
 Perhaps Dr. Seuss said it best....
 "And will you succeed? Yes, you will indeed. (98 and 3/4 percent guaranteed.)"
 I wish everyone a Happy New Year, and a healthy, prosperous and memorable 2022!

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A FRESH START

What are you doing New Year's Eve? That's how the song goes and I can't wait. Ringing in the new year has always been



Kristine March

one of my favorite things to do. The champagne. The kiss at midnight and the dress. It's overrated to some, but I don't care. I've always loved it. It's a fresh start. It's a time of reflection and counting our blessings and a time to

have fun in a sparkly cocktail dress.

Let's face it, we don't really get a chance to honestly wear those that often. So I say, bring it on. This year I'm planning on making an entrance. Sequins from head to toe. I want a dress that will make me feel fancy. I'm really loving a company called Retrofête. They make the most divine crystal beaded, embellished dresses ever. I'm obsessed with their sequin robe dresses. A most fabulous party frock for dancing the night away.

The perfect shoe is a must and I personally have to go with something on the more comfortable side. Stiletto heels just aren't my thing anymore, so I opt for a block heel for extra cushy support. Kenneth Cole makes a metallic platform that is absolutely beautiful. I love a good ankle strap to hold up through the entire evening as well. If you want a secret from the red carpet, always put in Dr. Scholl's high heel relief insoles. You won't even realize you're wearing strappy shoes. It's a secret from the stars. I've always wondered how they actually wear those shoes all night. It definitely makes a difference.

Lastly, you have to have the perfect coat and I love a faux fur. Banana Republic makes a reversible down faux jacket that is stunning. You can wear it from day to night. It's in a transition cream white color and it's absolutely beautiful. These are all ideas I've



put together for me personally, but if you want to get creative go with your own personal style and have no fear.

It's New Year's Eve and anything goes. So, make a toast to the bright, new days ahead and make unforgettable memories. Cheers y'all. Happy New Year!

Increasing appreciation at work



MARY-CATHERINE
McCLAIN
RINER

Our brains are wired to focus on the "threat" and "danger" of a situation. Likewise, the mind is more likely than not trained to pick out "flaws" and focus on the negative rather than identifying appreciation. In the past, this may have led to safety and survival. The problem is when this pattern is constant as it leads to only seeing problems and risks rather than opportunities and alternatives.

Appreciation is the foundation to having satisfied and engaged employees. One of the easiest and best ways to cultivate appreciation is engaging in daily gratitude practices. Set aside a few minutes daily and write down 2-5 things you are grateful for in your personal and/or professional life. Next,

consider who the person is behind the gratitude. For example, is it a colleague who helped or a customer that said thank you. Make an intentional and conscious effort to "scan" the work environment and ask what you appreciate (e.g., coffee pot for coffee, refrigerator to store food). Are you thankful for the WiFi or high-speed internet, or free parking? As you continue this practice, the brain will change its circuitry and neural pathway network. Over time, your brain will begin identifying these appreciations more naturally and frequently.

If you are still feeling stuck, consider these additional strategies:

- 1) Focus on what you are learning and challenges you are overcoming rather than only achievement outcomes.
- 2) Identify the small things, such as equipment, technology, and the people who show up on time.

3) Ask the people around you what they are grateful for at work. Ask your team to name appreciations and watch them scan the work setting as you set the trend to build more positive neuropathways.

4) Remember to say thank you each day. Slow down and notice what others are doing around you.

5) Consider where and/or what you would be doing if you were not working today. How would life change? What would be different? What would be missing? What would be a struggle?

6) Ask yourself what is in your control to change and what you are capable of changing, and surrender the rest.

Mary-Catherine McClain Riner, Ph.D., Ed.S., M.S., is a Licensed Psychologist with Riner Counseling, LLC. Visit www.rinerounseling.com or call 864-608-0446.



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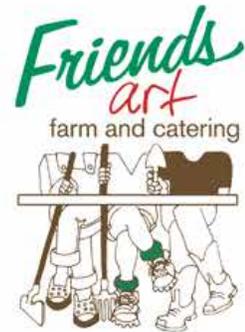
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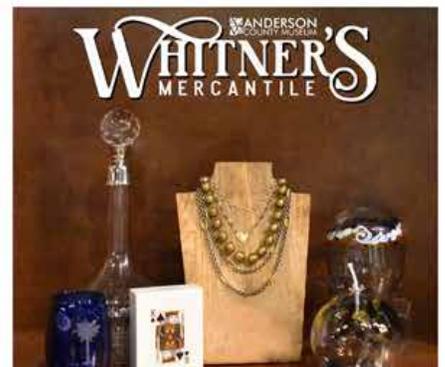
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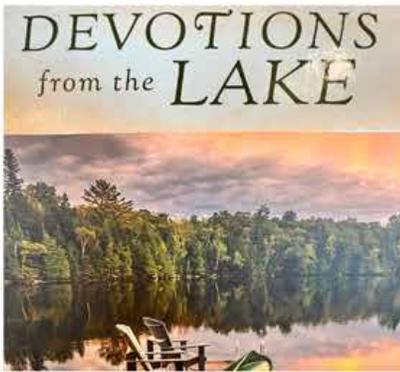
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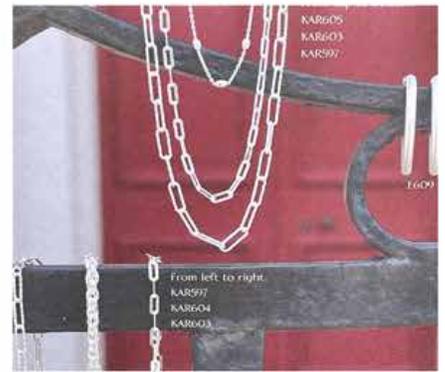
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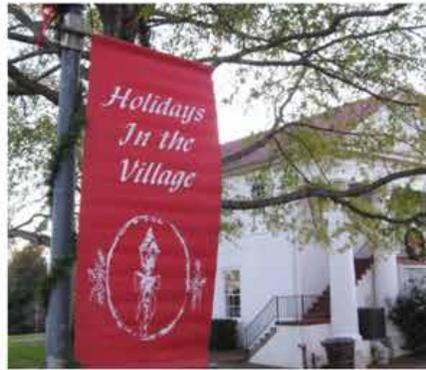


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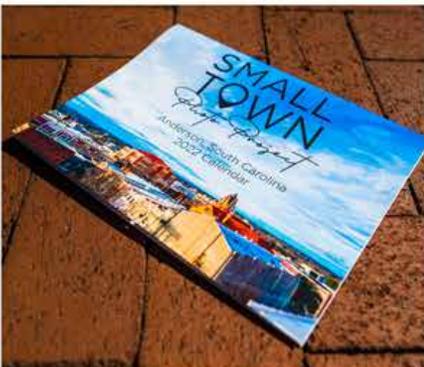
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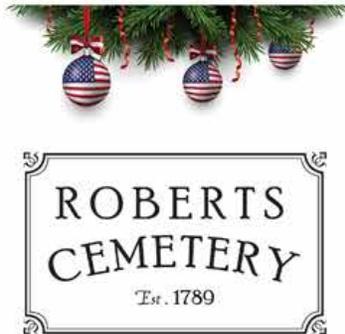
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The legacy of coach William Roberts

BY RICH OTTER

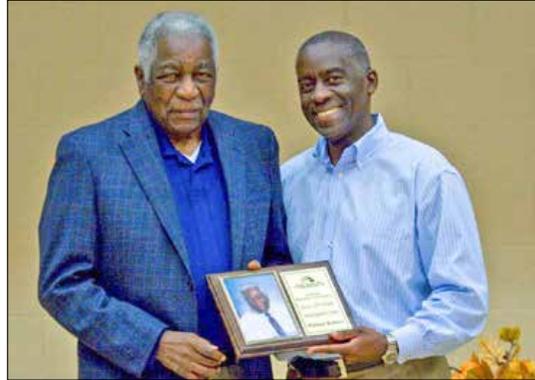
William McKinley Robert's father, Albert Roberts, was a porter, similar to a janitor, in a theater and also worked two or three other jobs, putting six out of seven of his children through college with the help of his wife Susie. Albert Roberts had a fifth grade education but recognized the great value of an education. The family was living in Nashville, Tennessee.

As a youngster his son William Roberts played basketball and worked as a paperboy. In addition to his own route, he had two or three other routes he was leasing out to other youngsters, serving about 150 people. That started when he was 12 or 13 years old and continued through his college years with his father handling the routes for him while Roberts was in the military. He was a student at one of the early Black high schools in Nashville that included a full 12 grades.

William Roberts joined the military on graduation at age 17 in 1944, and was one of only 154 Black youngsters in the country to pass a test that resulted in his going to Howard University for training. World War II ended when he was about to be shipped out and from Howard he was off to the Philippines where he spent 18 months and rose to sergeant major for his entire battalion. He was there when General MacArthur returned as promised during his evacuation in 1941.

After being discharged, Roberts attended Fisk University majoring in math and physical education. He received a job offer on graduation from Westside High School in Anderson, South Carolina, where he arrived to join Bowen Wakefield who was engaged in his first year as principal. Later, during summer months, he earned a Master's degree in Physical Education at Tennessee State University.

During his first year at Westside he coached basketball along with teaching but that expanded into football the next year and coaching also eventually included baseball, track and boys and girls basketball.



William Roberts with his son, Anderson Mayor Terence Roberts

Immediately after football each year he proceeded into basketball. He had not played football in high school and learned from his student players, fans, friends who had played in high school in Nashville, studying, and the hard knocks of experience on the field.

Coach Roberts never cut a player. He felt players knew when to do that themselves and he would often find another position for the ones who couldn't make it as a player, such as acting as scorekeeper.

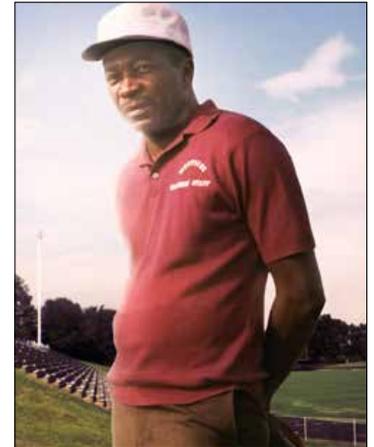
The Black players were drawn from all over the district and his teams were very successful. But then there was integration. He said it looked like the lines had been drawn to send his best players to Hanna High School and not back to the new Westside High. He had to begin a whole new development process.

Roberts coached for 47 years and when he retired his teams had totaled 447 wins in girls basketball, 357 in boys basketball, 173 in football and 216 in track – a total of 1,193 wins not including baseball. In football his teams had six state championships and runner up two or three times. In boys basketball they were state champions four times and runner up twice. In girls basketball they had three state championships. He was the first South Carolina coach in the North Carolina-South

Carolina girls basketball championship and his girls won. In football they were the first team in the area to film games as a training tool.

Coach Roberts and Coach Jim Fraser of Hanna High School were both entered into the South Carolina Athletic Coaches Association Hall of Fame in 1998. In 2010 Coach Roberts was inducted into the City of Anderson Recreation Department Hall of Fame.

His career included the opportunity to coach such future professional players as Jim Ed Rice, George Webster, George Grant, Tommy Lowden, and Saudi Roundtree. He



Coach William Roberts

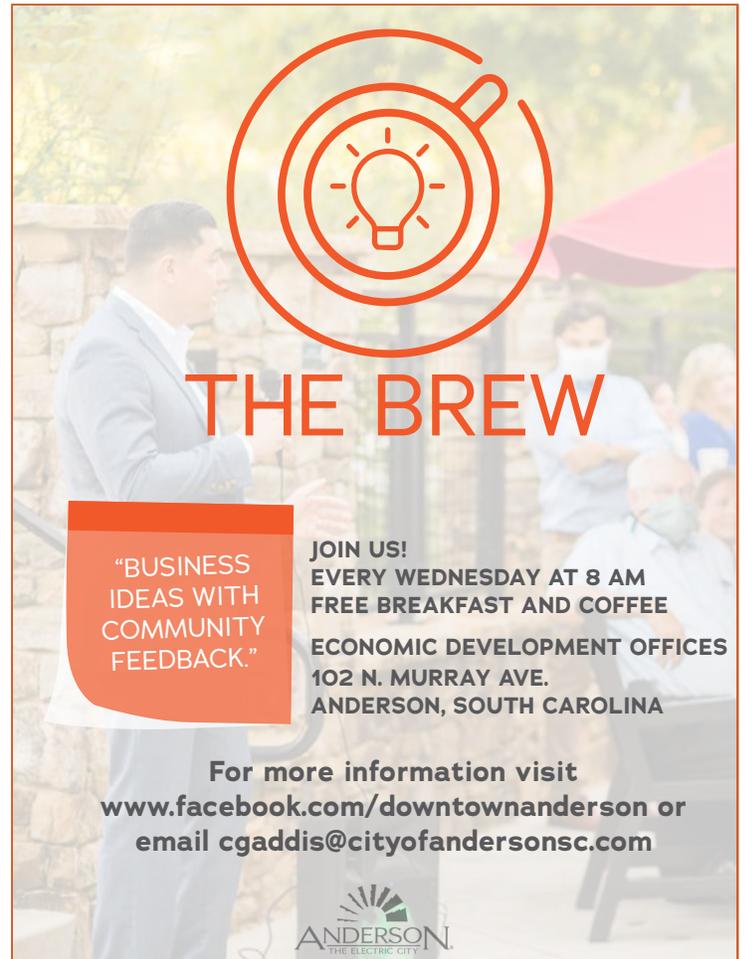
also remembered fondly the determination and abilities of Bobby Clinkscales and Al Norris among so many others.

Roberts had an amazing ability to observe, learn and innovate as well as maintain a rapport with the students with whom he worked while retaining their respect. Coach Roberts passed away in 2014.



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ANDERSON CHRISTMAS DREAM



'Twas the night before Christmas in the Grand Ol' town,
Not a creature was stirring, and no one's around.



Neal Parnell

The lights were twinkling all over the Square,
In hopes that Santa would soon be there.

I'd just lied down, and was snug in my bed,
While visions of the past, danced in my head.

When what to my wondering eyes did appear,
But Sky City and K-mart and then the old Sears.

I saw Murph's, Woolworth's and Dickson's Ice Cream,
There was no way to tell if this was a dream.

I cruised McDonald's and skated next door,
Then played with toys on the J.M. Fields' floor.

Kathrine's Kitchen was open, and biscuits were baking,
Chicken salad from Yon's was there for the taking.

The State Theater was full and showing Cinderella,
So, I went to the Osteen and saw Old Yeller.

I couldn't believe things were going so fast,



Guess it happens that way, looking back at the past.

I woke with a gasp and did my best to replay,
The sights I'd just seen on this Christmas Day.

It seemed so real to go back to the time,
When Cokes were a nickel and calls were a dime.

I looked out and saw new snow and a new moon,
I'm not sure why it reminds me of the Greasy Spoon.

Anderson is still my town, and it still stands pretty,
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MUGS, APPLES AND A VOTIVE CANDLE

BY ANN K. BAILES

It's that time of the year for teachers — time to walk into the classroom and find the desk covered in brightly wrapped packages. For the record, I have always appreciated the thoughtfulness and generosity behind every present ever received from a student — including all the mugs and apple knick-knacks along with tins of nuts, gift cards, Christmas ornaments, and lots of home-baked goodies. But of all those kind gifts, three stand out strongly to me.

A seventh grade girl named Anita once gave me a bottle of Emeraude perfume. When I told her that my grandmother always used that scent, which brought back nice memories, she smiled and said, "I'm glad you like it. Somebody gave it to my mom, and she didn't like it, so that's why I'm giving it to you." Well, okay then!!

Then there was that time that in May, during locker clean-out, a young man tossed a gift

on my desk and said "This is for you." I thanked him as he walked out (thinking it was an end of the year present), opened it to find a pretty little monogrammed makeup bag, and then happened to notice that the wrapping paper was covered with poinsettias. I found him in the hallway and said, "Cody, were you supposed to give me this at Christmas?" Flushing a little, he admitted that yes, it was a Christmas present, and it had been at the bottom of his locker for five months. I imagine his mother wondered why they never got an acknowledgement for that "Christmas" gift.

But the present that stands out most to me is one I received many years ago, and still think of every Christmas season. It was awkwardly taped into some poorly cut and slightly dirty white tissue paper. It had no ribbon and no card. I gently tore it open, finding inside a small glass candle holder (price 29 cents according to the sticker

on the bottom) and a votive candle (price about the same). A small note on torn paper inside had written in pencil: "From J.T."

J.T. was a struggling student. He was bigger than his seventh grade classmates and was slow with his classwork. He could be perceived as a bit of a tormentor of other students — not a bully, just a tough guy trying to find his place. He was at the bottom of the social pecking order. And though he had parents who cared about him, they weren't the kind of "PTO parents" who would make sure the teacher got a Christmas gift. He mostly had to make his own way. I knew that J.T. had done this all on his own, and in his own clumsy way, the best way he knew with no help, was showing appreciation.

And that is why a small 29-cent candle holder with a votive candle inside is the best Christmas teacher gift I ever received.



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T.L. HANNA YELLOW JACKETS

Yellow Jacket boys take down Easley, Westside, fall at powerhouse Dorman

BY BRU NIMMONS

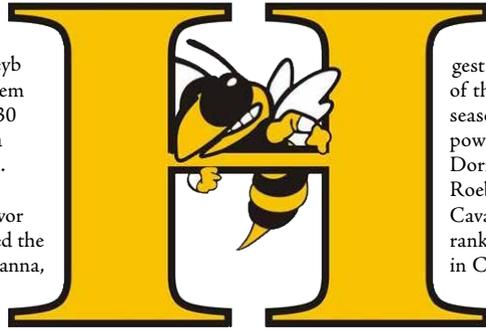
ANDERSON — The T. L. Hanna High School boys' basketball squad got off to a great start to the 2021 season, and the Yellow Jackets have continued that run over the last two weeks, reaching a 6-2 record.

After starting the season 3-1, Hanna faced off with Easley High School on Dec. 7. The Green Wave, a playoff team last season, couldn't stop a Hanna team that was playing its first true road game of the season, and the Jackets were able to take a 55-38 win.

Coming off the Easley win, Hanna went head to head with city rival Westside at Westside High School. The Jackets gave the Rams an even

bigger beating than Easley, ousting them by nearly 30 points in a 72-44 win.

Senior guard Trevor Pittman led the way for Hanna, putting up 21 points against the Rams, while junior forward Adarius Armstrong was close behind with 15 points on his own. With two wins in a row, Hanna



faced its biggest challenge of the early season against powerhouse Dorman in Roebuck. The Cavaliers, ranked first in Class 5A, lived up to their hefty

ranking, beating Hanna 66-50. The Yellow Jackets were in the contest well into the second half, before Dorman got hot from behind the arc

in the fourth quarter to pull out the big win.

The Yellow Jackets were supposed to meet the Rams on the hardwood once again on Dec. 17, but the game was postponed.

Despite the loss to Dorman in their last outing, the Yellow Jackets — who were ranked sixth in the state in the most recent Class 5A poll — have to feel good about their standing as they head into tournament play during Christmas break.

Results from Hanna's tournament games were unavailable at press time. The Yellow Jackets will return to regular season play on the road at Hart County (Ga.) on Jan. 4.

WESTSIDE RAMS

Westside girls still unbeaten early in season

BY BRU NIMMONS

ANDERSON — After bringing home a 4A State Championship last season, the Westside High School girls' basketball team is well on its way to another stellar season, with a 10-0 start.

After winning five straight to open the year, the Rams continued their tear over the last two weeks, starting with a matchup with Anderson County foe Pendleton.

It was all Westside from the start, as the Rams opened the game on an 18-2 run and never looked back in a 58-22 win.

Senior guard Aliyah Bell and sophomore center Olivia Randolph led the way with 10 points each, and Randolph managed a double-double by adding 10 rebounds.

The next day, Westside returned to

action against J.L. Mann in one of the Rams' closest games of the short season, coming out with a 54-48 win.

Senior guard Destiny Middleton was the star on the day, making 11 of her 21 shots to score a game-high 23 points.

After facing Mann, the Rams hosted city rival T.L. Hanna. After being up just six points at the end of the first quar-

ter, Westside blew the doors open with a 16-4 second-quarter run to pull away and score a 58-28 win.

Senior guard Branya Pruitt and sophomore Trinity Bowman put in team-leading performances in the rivalry matchup, scoring 15 and 12 points, respectively.

Coming off its win over the Yellow Jackets, Westside took on Seneca and

came away with another dominant win by a final score of 73-39.

The Rams were led by the tremendous trio of Harper, Middleton and Adrianna Scott, who all scored at least 15 points in the contest.

In their most recent game before press time, the Rams hosted Daniel. After trailing by two points in the first quarter, Westside turned the tide to come out with a 53-40 win.

Middleton made the biggest impact, putting up 12 points and 11 rebounds, while Scott scored 13.

The Rams were scheduled to play Hanna again on Dec. 17, but the game was postponed to later in the season.

Over Christmas break, the Rams were set to take part in the Anderson County Christmas tournament, but results were unavailable at press time.

