

# GRAINGER NISSAN of ANDERSON

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October 9-22, 2025

# Protecting our water resources

'These grants

are all about

trying to

create a

space where

communities

can decide

how to spend

the money

allocated to

**Anderson** 

County.'

What does the Savannah River mean to you? For many, it's just the water below the bridges we cross when we drive into Georgia. But for the border counties of South Carolina, it's one of our most precious natural resources. And since 2001, Savannah Riverkeeper has



Kim von Keller

been working with communities to protect and restore this swimmable, drinkable, and fishable waterway.

The Savannah River originates near Ellicott Rock in North Carolina, South Carolina, and Georgia,

and it ends near Tybee Island, Georgia, as it flows into the Atlantic Ocean. The Savannah River drains a watershed of more than 10,000 square miles, and along its course, you'll find Lake Hartwell, the source of drinking water for Anderson and Pickens Counties.

Tonya Bonitatibus, Savannah Riverkeeper's Executive Director and Riverkeeper, learned the importance of the organization when she was hired as Development Director 18 years ago.

"I received my degree in business from

Augusta University, but I had always had an interest in biology," she says. "I was pregnant with my second child, and I knew I didn't want to work from home. One of my earliest projects with Savannah Riverkeeper concerned Olin Corporation and its production of chloride and caustic soda at its plant in Augusta, Georgia. Mercury was used in the manufacture of these products, and mercury emissions were very troubling to me as a mom. Olin no longer uses mercury in its Augusta plant, and it was so rewarding to see how Savannah Riverkeeper's advocacy and the involvement of the community could bring about change."

While the work of Savannah Riverkeeper affects counties on both sides of the river,

Anderson was most affected in 2014. The Southern Environmental Law Center, on

behalf of Savannah Riverkeeper and Upstate Forever, filed a Clean Water Act lawsuit against Kinder Morgan in response to a gasoline pipeline spill. That lawsuit resulted in a \$1.5 million settlement for the protection and remediation of Anderson County water resources. This fund is held by the Foothills Community Foundation and administered by Savannah Riverkeeper and Upstate Forever and funds grants through the Anderson Water Council. Average individual grant awards range from \$10,000 to \$50,000 for education and outreach and up to \$100,000 for site remediation

"This is the third year that grants have been awarded," says Bonitatibus. "So far,



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almost half a million dollars have been awarded. The Anderson Water Council is an example of how local communities can take care of themselves and their resources. Through these grants, kids can learn to do water quality work and understand their environment. We help leverage funds for land conservation projects. We fix septic tanks and connect people to

**SEE WATER ON PAGE 2** 



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#### **CELEBRATING WOMEN IN BUSINESS**

# The legacy of Wilma Cochran and Cochran Shoes

October is National Women's Small Business Month, a time to celebrate the remarkable women who have shaped our local economy through leadership, vision, and determination. One such trailblazer was Mrs. Wilma Cochran of Anderson, who, in 1958, defied convention by opening her own business, Cochran Shoes.

At a time when women entrepreneurs were a rarity, Wilma's dream of owning a children's shoe store became a reality. Her shop specialized in shoes for infants, toddlers, and preteens, emphasizing quality craftsmanship to support healthy foot development and confident first steps. As generations of children grew up, Cochran Shoes expanded to include women's and men's footwear, becoming a beloved staple in the Anderson community.

For 66 years, Cochran Shoes stood as a Main Street landmark, serving families with warmth and dedication. Mrs. Cochran's philosophy was simple — the right pair of shoes could help a child walk taller, both literally and figuratively. Her loyal patrons often recall the joy of picking out new school shoes each fall or shiny dress shoes for Easter Sunday, guided by her keen eye and caring touch.

The Cochran family's legacy continued as Wilma's son, Freddie, took over operations, followed by her granddaughters, Laura and Carol Anne, who carried forward the same commitment to quality and community. Even in retirement, Mrs. Cochran could often be found in the store, fitting little feet and offering her signature smile.

One of the store's most cherished memories is the iconic gumball machine by the register. Each child received three pennies from Mrs. Cochran to use in the machine after their shoe fitting. It's a small but magical ritual that remains etched in local memory. Today, Laura proudly keeps that very gumball machine



Mrs. Cochran, Marie Hertig and Scott Minnear

in her home, a symbol of her grandmother's enduring legacy.

Through decades of service, Cochran Shoes became more than a store — it became a part of Anderson's story. As we honor National Women's Small Business Month, we celebrate women like Wilma Cochran, whose courage and entrepreneurship continue to inspire generations of women to follow their dreams and step confidently into the future.

## Water

#### **CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1**

sewer systems. These grants are all about trying to create a space where communities can decide how to spend the money allocated to Anderson County."

Because of its length, it can be hard to fully grasp the impor-

tance of the Savannah River. Bonitatibus says that understanding the connections along its route is key.

"From North Carolina to its ocean terminal, 1.4 million people rely on the Savannah River daily. What happens on Lake Hartwell or Lake Keowee affects the Atlantic Ocean. What happens to the river as it runs through Anderson affects Elberton, Georgia and Hilton

Head Island. People tend to see only how it affects them directly. But there are things you can do to protect the Savannah River. One, pay attention to your local government and its projects and their implications. For example, a large data center should be scrutinized because where will the electricity come from? Two, everybody can do a small cleanup. Every time you're on the water, pick up a piece of trash, and do

it in front of someone. My staff and I do that all the time, but it means more when a community sees someone else doing it. Three, become a member of Savannah Riverkeeper. Your involvement gives us more connections in a community with which to engage local governments. We're trying to build an organization that can help communities make good choices to protect our water resources."

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#### OCTOBER IS NATIONAL WOMEN IN BUSINESS MONTH

As a tribute to the local women of Anderson who successfully own and/or operate a business, we would like to highlight the faces of these forward-thinking, hard-working women and honor them by supporting their businesses. We hope to create a conscious effort to elevate interest in women-led businesses. So here's to our local women in business. We salute you.



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# Seeking your spooky drabbles

**Drabble (noun):** a flash fiction story consisting of exactly 100 words.

Tackling suspense and horror, students in a creative writing class composed and compiled an anthology of their stories using frightfulness. Below is a sample of a drabble written by one of the students.

#### THE DEBT BY RIVER MARCH

The wind howled through the cracked window, the moon casting long shadows on the wooden floor. Tom lay still, heart thudding, as the door creaked open. A tall and twisted figure stepped inside its bones scraping like old wood, eyes glowing like embers. "You owe a debt," it whispered like dry leaves. Tom's breath caught. He had left the gold behind, but this man, this thing hadn't forgotten. With a growl, the creature leaned closer, its fingers like claws, ready to claim what was owed. The air grew thick with rot and dust as the door slammed shut behind him.

Are you a good writer? Or do you have a budding writer in your family or friend group? If you have an idea for a creepy, scary story, send us your 100-word spooky drabble for our October 23 issue. Email your submissions by October 16 to electricitynews@gmail.com.



#### THE GARDEN SHOP



Leatherwood fall color

## SUCCEEDING WITH SELF CONTROL



South Carolina Botanical Garden had their fall plant sale at the end of September. As required by the master gardener program, we must have a certain number of volunteer hours to maintain active status. SCBG's sale is a big source of those hours each year, plus, I love to help people choose plants for their yard. Practically everyone attending comes to buy, only a few just to look. The online catalog was reviewed beforehand for an idea of what would be offered so I could research to get my facts right. They no longer print catalogs for the sales. And of course, to make a list of what might need to come home with me.

Two new native azaleas in the confederate series, Nathan Bedford Forrest, and Private LaFayette Acree, were put on the must have list if any were left after the swoosh of people came in. Neither were in bloom and lady luck was on my side. The

series has 12 different azaleas. Four more are needed and the collection will be complete. The only female in the confederate azalea series, Emma Sansom, would be a thrill to find. Several avid native azalea people I've talked with have not found this one. Per history, Emma, only 16 years old, led Nathan Bedford Forrest's troops through very difficult terrain to attack Yankees near Gadsden Alabama.

Dirca palustris, common name leatherwood, piqued my interest as botanical nor common name rang a bell. After research, leatherwood seems perfect for a spot where a camellia is slowly dying. The camellia is unhappy as it never gets any sun, and more so, soil gets soggy when there's been even a bit of rain. With a good amount of rain, one will mire up. I was unsure if the camellia could be moved, but it came up very easily (back to the soil never gets hard and dry). The struggling thing has set buds. It's almost five feet tall but only a few branches have any life. All the dead was cut off, and it looks quite pitiful. Hopefully it will recover.

Leatherwood is native to moist, rich woods. Yellow, bell-shaped flowers bloom early spring, even before foliage puts out according to some pictures. Maybe another show will happen when blooms mature to purplish red with a shiny black seed that might look sort of like a berry.

Growing about six by six, with a round shape, some lime may be needed as sources state it prefers calcareous soil - meaning high in calcium and a high pH. Leaves start out a bit yellow, turning light green, then bright yellow in fall. Stems are so pliable, they can be tied into a knot without breaking. Native Americans used it to make all sorts of things. However, some people may have a skin reaction to the bark, and all parts of leatherwood can be toxic to humans, dogs and cats. Older bark should provide some winter interest with a gray or brown, smooth, leathery look. Leatherwood is a good source of early nectar for many types of bees and butterflies. Birds love the plant too. Maybe being toxic, deer will pass it by.

When reviewing the catalog, 10 plants made the checklist. Azaleas being a must get, leatherwood being a maybe. I might've gotten more if the plants were better. More rattlesnake master (*Eryngium yuccifloa*) was on the list also. On the first sale day I got three and stayed strong on day two, not getting more. Nor did I get anything that was not on the list. Such self-control.



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#### YOUR DENTIST CAN SAVE YOUR LIFE

# How stress can hurt your oral health — Part 1

Can we say this enough? Your dentist can be considered your first line of defense when it comes to your health and well-being. This is because as professionals we're mouth centric! By this I mean the tissue in the mouth is our focus. This is where chronic health issues often first appear. It can't be over emphasized. Regular dental checkups with professional teeth cleaning are about much more than a beautiful smile.

In recent features we've been discussing how obesity and Type 2 diabetes can have a serious impact on our oral health.

There's another health issue that deserves our attention. Stress.

You may not have considered it, but psychological stress actually shows up in the mouth. And it can contribute to the development of oral issues like gingivitis and periodontal dis-

According to the Centers for Disease Control, nearly one third of the adult US population suffers from chronic debilitating stress.

Of that number 62% of women ages 18-34 feel overwhelmed by stress most days. With 51% of men ages 18 to 34 reporting the same. It's



Dr. Gabrielle F. Cannick

pretty much what we already know. Factors contributing to this are our fast-paced modern lifestyle, technological advancements, and societal expectations. We can probably add that middle aged men and women may have the additional stress of launching children

to adulthood while caring for aging parents. You might say we're rowing about as fast as we can juggling multiple responsibilities in a 24/7 plugged in world.

The point is our health is interconnected. One thing influences another.

Chronic stress, for example, can raise blood

pressure. Poor sleep habits can weaken the immune system. The same is true for our mouth and mind. It's a complex relationship. When one's mental health suffers due to chronic stress, it can cause progressively poorer oral health and even oral pain and discomfort. Under chronic stress we tend to neglect basic self-care needs like flossing and brushing, creating a downward spiral that can affect self-esteem, employment, school, and social relationships.

That's why in our dental practice we focus on a whole-person approach to patient care. This means we make every effort to understand and address our patients' total health needs to include the presence of elevated stress and how we can provide optimum oral care to help mitigate it. We want every patient to know and feel we care. That we can do things to improve their life. They never need hesitate to come in and get things taken care of.

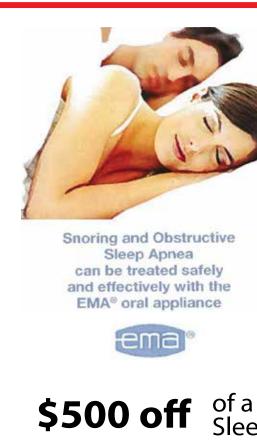
If you have not been to a dentist in a while, now is a good time. We offer a free consultation.

Call and we can schedule your visit. 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.

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## ANDERSON'S BLUE RIDGE RAILWAY DEPOT

#### BY RICH OTTER

It was an amazing innovation when it was built in 1915. There may have been nothing like it in the South. It was Anderson's Blue Ridge Railway Depot that fronted on Main Street with its offices, waiting rooms and the most modern conveniences for a traveler. When the train arrived, passengers descended to a platform under Main Street to board. A hydraulic elevator took luggage down to be loaded. The depot closed with the ending of passenger service in the 1940s.

The Pickens Railway still passes underneath the former depot on its way to serve locations in Anderson County, rendezvousing with an interchange south of Belton and continuing on its way to Honea Path. In the early days the Blue Ridge met lines in Belton that ran south to Columbia and north to Greenville. From Anderson, the Blue Ridge went on to points north, including connecting with other lines in Seneca, and ending in Walhalla. It connected passengers with the rest of the country. Now it is all freight.

After World War II, train passenger service passed on with gasoline becoming abundant, and automobiles were being mass-produced. Aircraft provided rapid long-distance travel. It is possible now, with high-speed rails gaining traction, passenger travel in the South may rise again.

In the mid-1940s, the freight personnel and former depot manager transferred to a building on Fant Street and the former depot was sold. It was remodeled with a 1940s "modern" facade. The depot's exterior had formerly been reminiscent of the Spanish missions of the south-west.

The Spanish missions often included bell-tower gables, smooth sides, exposed rafters, and covered arcades for walkways supported by columns. The architecture was emulated by the Santa Fe Railroad in its depots and by many buildings and homes in the southwest and far west. The concept flowed east. Changes occurred to meet local needs, available materials and building codes. The Blue Ridge Depot followed suit, including two bell tower gables with holes where bells would have hung, and an arcade roofed with a terrace enclosed by a balustrade.

Even the Historic Anderson County Courthouse reflected some of the Spanish influence with a tower that once adorned the north front. Terracotta tiles protected its roof. Those tiles were the same as on the old depot and, with the current construction rehabilitation of the courthouse, its tiles were being replaced. Enough of the tiles were salvaged to be used on a current rejuvenation of the Blue Ridge depot building.

The Piedmont and Northern Railway also adopted the Spanish tradition on its depot at its North Main and Tribble Street facility with a more modest mission décor and a single bell tower replication. It is now occupied by a law firm.

Steve and Linda Krause, with their daughter Dana and her husband R. J. Apozaga, acquired the Blue Ridge Depot building and,



in 2024, undertook rehabilitating the old train station to as nearly as possible replicate its former exterior appearance. The interior will accommodate tenant space for rent on Main Street, and will include an extension of the adjoining Maki Sushi Bar and Bistro. The second floor above Main Street that held offices for the station and freight

personnel, will now house two apartments.

Every effort has been made to restore the exterior to its earlier appearance while meeting requirements of current standards and available materials.

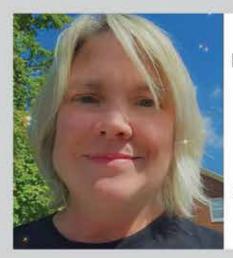
In accumulating information that needs to be preserved concerning such a vital part of Anderson's history, it has been unfortunate that no pictures have been found of the interior of the depot as it was originally functioning. It constitutes an important part of Anderson's history. Any such images are desperately needed, even if just as background of family pictures.

For posterity, a memory will be returning to Anderson of the depot's former exterior.



Depot renovated — 1940s modern





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## YELLOW FELLOW

In 1973, there was a government-imposed oil embargo that caused gas prices to soar from a national average of thirty-eight cents a gallon to a whopping forty-eight cents a



Neal Parnell

gallon. Daylight Saving
Time was implemented year-round, and
President Nixon advised
gas stations not to sell
gas on Saturday evenings,
and not at all on Sunday.
This triggered a Gas
Buying Panic, with long
lines and frustrations
enveloping the country.

I had just purchased a very used 1969 four-door Pontiac Catalina for one hundred dollars. I called it 'The White Whale'. This behemoth of an automobile was 18 feet long and over 6 feet wide. It could carry at least ten of my friends, with an extra five in the trunk on movie drive-in nights. It drank a gallon of gas every 12 miles and needed an empty parking lot if I decided to turn around. There was no GPS tracking back then, but you could find me anytime by following the oil or blue smoke trail. No brake lights, no turn indicator, no problem. I used hand signals to stop and turn. These hand signals are still legal to use today if you remember them. I passed my driver's test using hand signals, but I don't think anyone behind me saw them through the smoke.

My dad must have been in a good mood or had grown tired of me fogging up Anderson when he asked if I'd like a new car. What! Are you kidding? What kind can I get? He must have known that I was 'Car Stupid' when he said, "Any kind you want". We started looking at Guy Motors Ford, where I drove Mustangs, Torinos, Pintos, and Rancheros, but none



suited me. Next was Sullivan Buick. No thanks.

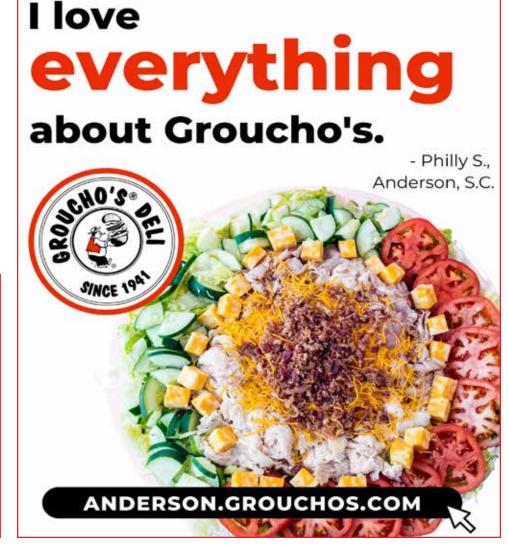
On to Ballentine Motors, where I drove a Roadrunner that was as long as The White Whale. Then came Minyard-Waidner, where I drove a Corvette with a motor that could launch a rocket, although I was disappointed that it didn't have a factory Eight-Track tape player. We left and headed to Greenville when I spotted Frank-Meyers Motors. What about that lot Daddy? 'You don't want a German-Jalopy son. I said, "Let's look anyway, PLEASE". We walked around the new VW lot, and I was intrigued by the little autos that would fit in the White Whale's trunk. I drove a Kharman Ghia, a THING, and a Golf, but again, I wasn't getting the vibe that said, "This is You".

We walked into the showroom, and there she was. The sexy new Volkswagen Super Bug. She was decked out in a canary yellow ensemble, with a black belt around her middle that made her look fast and slim. I drove my new baby off the showroom floor for our first date. I stopped at the red light in front of the new Anderson Mall. When the light turned

green, I took off, and all I saw was YELLOW. What the Heck? The hood had flown up, shattered the windshield, and I stopped in the intersection panicking like I was a blind man trying to exit a doorknob factory. I got out, closed the crumpled hood, did a U-turn, and headed back with broken glass everywhere

inside. It turned out that the last salesman to show the car before I was there had not closed the hood all the way, and I wouldn't get to see my new baby for two weeks. I spent what seemed like a year in a gas line with that smoking, leaking, white Pontiac monstrosity that had once been the Love of my life.







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# 'A great change': New treatment for osteoarthritis helps fishermen return to an active life with much less pain

When Robert White talks about his chronic knee pain, he tells about the adventures that may have contributed to it - and he wouldn't trade them.

He spent more than two decades active in martial arts, beginning when he was a teenager and picking up again "when my midlife crisis hit in my 40s," he said. His time and discipline earned him a state blackbelt championship, he said.

And then there was the time he fell out of a deer stand high in a tree and managed, somehow, to land on his feet.

"Between martial arts and that deer stand, they probably both have something to do with my aches and pains," he said. "I just try to keep going the best I can."

Now 72, White is "semi-retired" from a career in purchasing. When he's not working or tending to his wife's "honey-do list," as he puts it, he's fishing on Lake Hartwell or Lake Russell, often trying to find striped bass.

But even the simplest activities were difficult when his knee pain was at its worst. The gel injections he received for pain stopped giving him relief. He dreaded having to use the stairs or making a trip to the mailbox.

Then a family member told him he might find help from a low-dose radiation treatment available at AnMed.

#### **OSTEOARTHRITIS TREATMENT**

ment just a few weeks ago - and he said his pain has decreased tremendously.

"You wouldn't believe how many people I've told," he said. "It's a big change - a great change."

Osteoarthritis treatment is the latest addition to the applications of radiation therapy used by AnMed's radiation oncologists. The therapy has been more often used to treat cancers of the brain, spine, head and neck, breast, lung, esoph-

Radiation treatment for osteoarthritis can work in conjunction with other treatments to provide valuable benefits, and it can make a difference when other treatments fail.

agus, stomach, prostate, bladder, and bones.

White has received six treatments - two treatments per week for three weeks. He finished his last one about five weeks ago.

The low doses of radiation decrease discomfort and improve the quality of life for people who've struggled with pain.

#### **ANMED REMAINS AT THE FOREFRONT OF ADVANCED MEDICAL CAPABILITIES**

"Oh Lord, yes, it has made a difference for me," White said. "I can go to the mailbox without excruciating pain. I can go up the stairs without excruciating pain. I can walk up Cancer Center, enabled AnMed to remain at the forefront of advanced technology and capabilities with its new osteoarthritis treatment.

Sometimes called a linac, the sophisticated machine uses electronically produced radiation in levels low enough to be safe and

beneficial overall in appropriate applications.

"Radiation therapy is always changing, and we want to stay at the forefront," said Dr. Leander Cannick III, a radiation oncologist at AnMed Cancer Center. "This Varian Edge

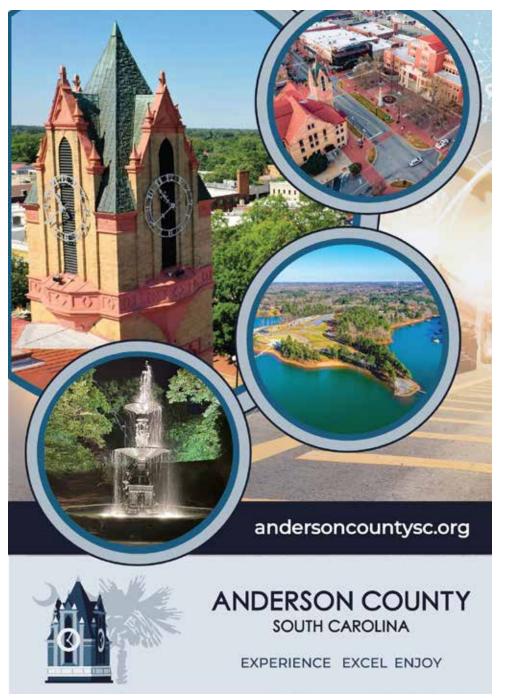
machine is going to keep us there. It's going to help us do more advanced treatments and faster treatments - and provide more access to care."

White is thankful for it.

"I didn't expect it to totally take my pain away; it didn't give me a new set of knees," White said. "But I'll tell you, it's a lot easier to live with a pain level of two or three every day instead of a pain level of seven or eight every day."

Residents throughout the region who are interested in exploring radiation therapy to treat osteoarthritis should consult their doctors.







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## THE CROP OF THE SOUTH

The lone cotton field we pass on the way to our farm in Abbeville County is ready to be harvested. It is beautiful to look at while driving by, and also brings back a lot of memories for me, after growing up in an Alabama coun-

ty that was a big cotton producer.



Ann K. Bailes

According to the
National Cotton
Council (cotton.org),
South Carolina is a
major USA producer of
the critical crop. Cotton
fields were historically seen around here,
but most are now in

the lower part of the state. Darlington, Lee, and Orangeburg counties are big producers. Just drive the backroads to the coast in late September and October, and the sight of many cotton fields along the way will make the trip far more interesting.

Cotton blooms in early summer, the flowers slowly changing from white, to creamy colored, to dark red. When the flowers fall off, the result is a pod called a boll. Damp fibers grow out from the seeds inside the boll, expanding as the summer goes on. The boll changes color from green to brown. Finally, the inside pressure of the growing fibers becomes too strong to be contained, and the boll breaks open. The result is the fluffy soft white mass whose appearance also gives its name to the sweet treat everyone loves - cotton candy.

In the past, most cotton was harvested by hand, pickers pulling long burlap sacks as they made their way down each row. It was backbreaking work. Now, cotton is harvested with large mechanical pickers and taken to gins, modern ones that contain powerful pipes and cleaning apparatuses to separate the seeds from the fibers.

(We sometimes drive by the old-fashioned Center Rock Gin, at the corner of New Hope and Dobbins Bridge Roads. I have often thought what a great history example it would be had it been restored, but it's probably too far gone at this point. Wouldn't it have been interesting to see the activity and motion going on there in its heyday!)

The fibers are packed into bales weighing about 500 pounds each, and the cotton seeds and hulls are later processed into oil and cattle feed. The value of the cotton is determined by fiber length, strength, color, and cleanness. Producers then sell the cotton to buyers who re-sell it to domestic or foreign cotton mills.

And once the cotton gets to a mill, locals are on more familiar ground – Anderson county is much more known for carding, weaving, and finishing than for growing cot-



ton. Most mills have moved overseas, but fortunately a few still operate around here, carrying on the tradition of our part of the process: changing raw cotton into fabric.

Driving by a field of cotton is an arresting sight, something that captures the imagination more so than seeing fields of corn or soybeans. I think it's because cotton is part of our cultural heritage. It's our own white cotton candy. It's the crop of the South.







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#### FROM THE SHELF

# On reading slumps, brain freeze, and LitRPGs

I'm hesitant to say I'm in a "reading slump," but I'm also not really sure what else to call it. It's a little bit things not capturing my squirrel brain, but also nothing is actually sticking. I'm reading, and I have vague outlines of stories and characters, but the details are fuzzy. I have the squirrel brain version of a SparkNotes for a few recent reads (and tv shows). I could probably intelligently speak on them, but the hamster wheel in my brain is barely hanging on.

Taylor Swift's new album has me not just focused, but fixated, so I don't think it's that I'm not into my current reads. I think the culprit might just be that my brain is tired of braining. The exhaustion might stem from the general state of the world. It might come from the Bermuda Triangle of Time that is post 2020 (is it still 2020 or is it 3027? No one knows!). It could be hormones and Covid brain (I had a good five year run before it finally caught up with me). Regardless, the

brain has hung up its thinking cap and is not braining.

Given my ADHD, the game to get all my ducks in the same pond (let alone in a row)



Sara Leady

can feel like a Herculean task often enough, but this snuck up on me. The act of reading is what tipped me in to just how much my brain is on strike. Going with the duck metaphor, I'm not sure if my ducks are on the same planet, let alone

playing the same sport. Confused? Me too.

With ADHD we're generally able to focus on stuff we actually like or find interesting. Reading is that for me, but it's also an escape and a comfort. I like noise, and that noise might as well be a book. When I notice my focus straying when reading, something I do to reset my brain is read short stories. Short

stories don't require the same length or focus in order to get the story. They're the book world equivalent of a nap— not because they aren't engaging, they just aren't like an actual night of sleep and are delightful in their own right.

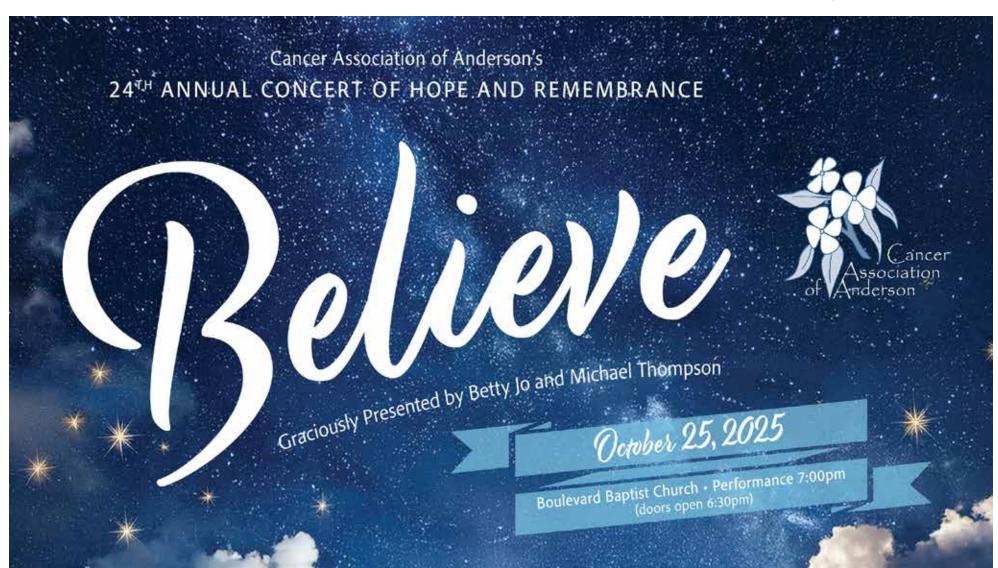
The magic of a "power nap" book style isn't currently recharging my brain. At all. Other than a lot of recent releases that I've been excited for, this isn't that big of deal beyond my having nothing to really write or review. I could attempt to tell you about recent TV shows (Apple's Murderbot Diaries and Criminal Report were both great) but TV has also been pretty fuzzy. I could certainly take a deep conspiracy theory dive into the world of Taylor Swift and Easter Eggs and general insanity, but no one needs to suffer that from me.

I will, however, tell you about Boyfriend's current read. I honestly don't even know where to start with it. For one, it's LitRPG,

which is a genre even I hadn't heard of. New to you too? It's a "literary role playing game." Like a video game, but literary style: stats, powers, levels, and special collected items included. It's not choosing your own adventure, more that elements you see in RPG games are focal to the story.

Boyfriend is reading He Who Fights Monsters by Shirtaloon (yes, you read that right). It's also a series and a different kind of Herculean task. There are currently 12 books and they average a whopping 25 hours each. They follow Jason, a human who's been sucked into this magical world/magical plane/pocket of the universe, and the way his brain translates what's happening to him is to turn it into a video game. The series follows Jason as he joins a team of fellow "Adventurers" as he levels up and collects new powers with each achievement and battle won. It actually sounds delightful, but the commitment to 300ish hours of audiobooks is also daunting.

So all this to say, sorry if your brain is also on strike (solidarity!). And something something about Clive's wife who's very important in He Who Fights Monsters.





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## SET THE SCENE FOR FALL

Today I'm going to write on a little bit of this and that. From the current color everyone is wearing to homeware to makeup and even a cocktail or mocktail with a snack to go with it. This will make you want to go shopping,



Kristine March

but don't tell your husband or partner. And if you're single, well that's even better! Just keep this article between us. They don't have to know everything.

The color tone this season is red, orange, yellow, brown, and plum.

Mixed with a powdery pink. You can use these colors in an outfit, a jacket, for your lipstick, eyeshadow and even your hair color. If you're a blonde try the shade butter yellow, and cool toned browns are really big for brunettes and for red heads go pumpkin spice.

I love a good candle in my home, but one that will last forever. Try the Luxury Nest New York Pumpkin Chai. This particular candle lasts 100-120 hours and has three wicks. It's smells like pumpkin, cardamom and cinnamon. It will instantly transport you to a sweet, little warm pumpkin patch and make you feel homey in your space. It has a beautiful orange, glowy ambiance and looks really luxe.

Now that we're dressed with fresh air and a cute outfit on, we need a drink. An apple cider margarita will really set the tone. The trick is to get a really good apple cider. Try one from your local farmers market or better yet, go to an apple orchard and get the real deal. You will need a good tequila like Clase Azul or Casamigos and an orange liqueur. If you don't drink leave this step out of course, and make it a mocktail. Add lime juice and for your rim, mix a flaky salt with cinnamon and sugar. Next, garnish with a cinnamon stick and apple slices. And there you have it.

For a nice little nosh, go with some chips and guacamole, brie bites or a pumpkin goat cheese. You will instantly have the taste of Fall.

All of these things will elevate you and make you feel content, even if it's just for the

afternoon, remember to live a little and relax.

Treat yourself. You deserve it. Make the sidewalk your runway, and kindness always matters.



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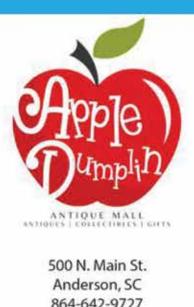


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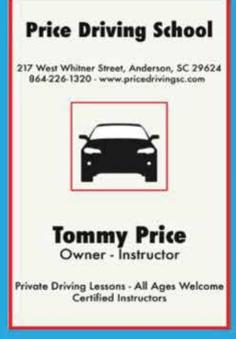


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# 'AN INCREDIBLE STORY'

Postgame emotions were swirling and raw on a recent Saturday in Tigerville, S.C.

There were the usual handshakes between North Greenville University and West



Brian Hodges

Alabama football players. But some players were bristling, too. There were vicious tackles. Taunting. West Alabama won 52-44, but players were barking at each other afterward. I kept my distance.

But I had a mission to get on the field. I needed a book signed.

West Alabama coach Scott Cochran had written "Skull Session," recently. Cochran was a legendary strength and conditioning coach at Alabama and Georgia.

He's one notch beyond intense. He worked with ultra-successful coach NIck Saban for 17 years before going to work for Kirby Smart at Georgia.

Cochran is also a drug addict. In recovery.

"Hey coach, do you mind signing your book for me?" I asked.

"I'd love to," Cochran said.

If you love comeback stories his book details his struggles after getting hooked on oxycodone and fentanyl.

Cochran bares his soul in the book.

"I have been to a rehab facility three times, one visit a hundred-day stay that really changed my life," he writes.

Under coach Saban and Smart, "we taught them (his players) not to look at the scoreboard. Look at your opponent in front of you.

That is your task. That mindset is exactly what you have to learn in rehab. You can't worry about never taking a pill for the rest of your life. You have to focus on not taking a pill today."

As a strength and conditioning coach, he loved to scream encouragement ("Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah") at his players in the weight room. His intensity was startling.

The screaming caused migraines, and doctors searched for options.

They tried blood thinners, beta blockers and finally opiods. He was warned that Vicodin could be addictive. Cochran said he could handle it.

"I was the strength coach at the University of Alabama. I don't show weakness. There's no way I will ever become dependent on anything but hard work and enthusiasm," he wrote in his book.

He was wrong. The struggles were never-ending. He was on Georgia's coaching

staff in 2020 when the Bulldogs went 8-2, including a last-second win over Cincinnati in the Chick-fil-A Peach Bowl.

But trouble was brewing. In the spring of 2021 he relapsed, taking more pills than ever. He returned to his rehab facility "for a refresh-

er" so he could be ready for fall camp.

When he checked in, they gave him a drug test. No oxycodone. All it showed was fentanyl. They told me, "if this is what you are using, you are going to die."

It meant a six-month stay at the clinic. He began to meditate and said he heard God's voice. "I got you. I got you. I carried you this far. I'm not going to stop car-

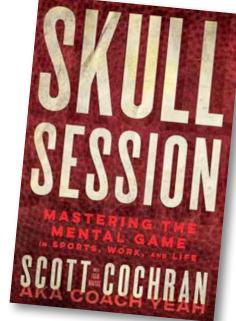
rying you now."

**Scott Cochran** 

Cochran writes that it would be nice to say he's been clean ever since. But he was put in charge of UGA's special teams in 2022 and he put extra pressure on himself. The Bulldogs won a second national championship, but he felt he needed oxy again.

He left UGA after the 2023 season after suffering another relapse and took a year off to form the American Addiction Recovery Association. "Helping people recover is coaching," Cochran wrote.

Cochran then took the head-coaching job at



West Alabama and his first team is 4-0 so far.

"I can't believe how honest you were in the book," I said to Cochran after that game at North Greenville. "It's so compelling. It should inspire a lot of people."

He smiled. "It's an incredible story, isn't it?" Amen, brother.

#### **PUBLIC NOTICE**

Pursuant to SC Statutory Law, personal property from the following unit will be sold on October 16, 2025, at 10 am at Speedy Storage, 4350 Highway 24, Anderson, SC 29626.

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