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Thomas J. Hunter: A first-class wood carver who was completely self-taught

In observance of Black History Month, this is a tribute to one of Anderson's most talented artists. Thomas was a gentle man who lived a quiet and unassuming life and enjoyed the creative process of his gift.

Many people in Anderson remember Thomas J. Hunter as the quiet, kind orderly who worked in the X-ray department of Anderson Memorial Hospital. He was known as a humble man who went about his work with care and dedication. Few realized that behind his gentle manner was a talent that would one day earn him admiration from professional artists and collectors alike.

One day, Hunter brought a small wooden duck he had carved by hand to show a few friends at the hospital. The carving immediately caught the attention of several doctors,

who were surprised and delighted by the quality of his work. Among them was Dr. Robert Dameron, himself a woodcarver, who quickly recognized Hunter's exceptional ability.

Dameron and Hunter began exchanging ideas, techniques, and encouragement. Though Dameron had taken lessons from nationally-renowned carvers, he later remarked that Hunter was entirely self-taught and that his work rivaled that of many established masters. Impressed by what he saw, Dameron brought several of Hunter's carvings to a wildlife festival in Charleston to introduce them to collectors. Many of the pieces sold at the festival marking the beginning of Hunter's recognition beyond his workplace and hometown.

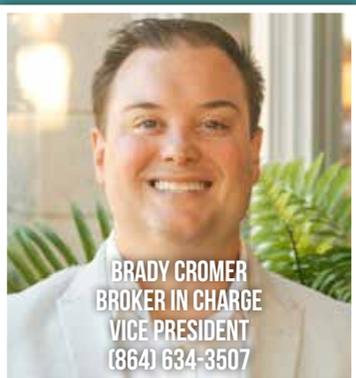
SEE HUNTER ON PAGE 2



An exquisite turtle



Lovely decoy owned
by Dr. David DeHoll



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Ruddy duck, circa 1980



Beautiful swan

Hunter

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Hunter's favorite subjects were wood ducks, Canadian geese, and other waterfowl. He also carved a striking turtle that drew particular admiration. He was commissioned to carve a few fish,

an owl, a pelican and other birds. Living in the country, he found endless inspiration in the natural world around him, studying wildlife closely and translating what he observed into detailed wooden forms.

Before joining the hospital staff, Hunter had lived a very different life. He once traveled as a backup drummer for James Brown, performing with the leg-

endary band on the road. Medical issues eventually forced him to leave music behind, leading him to seek steady work in Anderson, a change that would unknowingly usher in his remarkable carving career.

One story shared by a local family illustrates the emotional impact of his art. After the family's father passed away, Hunter visited their home to help estimate the value of a collection of his carvings the man had acquired over the years. The pieces were spread across the dining room table. Hunter stood silently for several moments, then removed his glasses and wiped his face.

"When brother Mike asked him what was wrong," a family

member recalled. "Thomas said, 'I've just never been in the presence of that many of my works in one place. It's overwhelming.'"

Thomas Hunter's journey from hospital orderly to respected artist remains a testament to quiet talent and self-taught brilliance. His carvings continue to be cherished not only for their craftsmanship, but for the story of the man who created them. Thomas Hunter is remembered as a humble local figure whose work found its way into the wider world.

Although Thomas has passed, his creative talents live on among many residents of Anderson as well as collectors throughout the Southeast and across the United States.



One of Hunter's earlier works from 1977, owned by Dr. B. C. McConnell

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Countybank

MIKE MORRIS APPOINTED SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT AS HE JOINS COUNTYBANK'S COMMERCIAL BANKING TEAM IN ANDERSON

Countybank announced that Mike Morris has been appointed Senior Vice President by the Board of Directors, as he joins their Commercial Banking team in Anderson as Senior Commercial Relationship Manager. Morris brings extensive experience providing comprehensive banking solutions to businesses in Anderson and the Upstate. In this position, Morris's focus will be meeting the needs of local business owners by partnering with clients to develop comprehensive banking solutions that support growth and long-term success.

"My goal is to truly understand the core aspects of a business and develop financial solutions that support local business owners achieve their financial goals," said Morris.

"I am very excited to have Mike Morris working in Anderson as our Senior Commercial Relationship Manager," said David Tompkins, Commercial Banking Manager. "Mike is well-versed in providing banking solutions for business owners, and I am thrilled that he is on our team in Anderson."

Morris earned a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration from Berry College and an MBA from Anderson University. He is located in Countybank's Anderson office at 2125 North Highway 81.

For more information on Countybank and its commitment to serving the Upstate of South Carolina since 1933, visit ecountybank.com or follow Countybank on Facebook and Instagram.



Do you have a business question or need?
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IN PRAISE OF THE OLD NEIGHBORHOOD

There was a time when neighborhoods weren't just places you lived, they were places that raised you.

In those old neighborhoods, childhood had a rhythm. It sounded like bike tires humming over pavement, the clatter of handlebars dropped on driveways and the universal call of a parent's voice floating down the street at dinner time. Kids rode bikes everywhere, not because it was exercise, but because it was freedom. We built forts out of scrap wood and imagination, convinced they were impenetrable castles or secret headquarters. And if the fort fell down? We built it again the next day.

We walked to school together, lugging books, solving the world's problems before the first bell. After school it was normal to crash a neighbor's house for a drink or a snack. No invitation needed. A glass of Kool-Aid, a handful of crackers, and maybe a reminder to wipe your feet. Sometimes that same neighbor would scold you for riding your bike through their yard and somehow that scolding felt like belonging, too.

When the sun began to dip low, parents started keeping mental clocks. You might walk a friend halfway home after dark, stretching the day just a little longer. Carpools formed without apps or calendars. Just a knock on the door and a quick plan shouted across the driveway. Dinner time was strict, though, and you knew better than to be late. The street lights were not suggestions.

Weekends meant building bike tracks in the woods, carving paths through dirt and ending up with scraped knees. Summers meant catching tadpoles in the creek and playing in the sprinkler until the yard became flooded. Drinking water straight from the hose, convinced it was the coldest, best water on earth. No one worried much. Everyone knew whose kid belonged to whom.

If your mom ran out of sugar or eggs, she borrowed them from a neighbor. It wasn't a transaction, it was trust. Girl Scout meetings were held in living rooms and basements, complete with folding chairs and homemade snacks. Every parent took a turn helping out.

Those neighborhoods worked because people showed up for one another in small, ordinary ways. Doors were open. Kids roamed. Adults watched out, even as they were scolding.

Today, those moments feel almost mythical, like stories passed down from another era. But for those who lived them, the love of old neighborhoods is nostalgia for connection. For the sense that you were known, that you belonged and that the world felt just a little smaller and safer when everyone looked out for everyone else.

And maybe that's why we still miss them. Because those neighborhoods didn't just shape our childhoods, they shaped us.

Growing up in Hammett Acres

In May 2025, many of the original residents of one of Anderson's most beloved neighborhoods gathered to celebrate their shared childhoods in Hammett Acres. Old photographs were passed around. Stories were retold. Laughter filled the room as decades of memories came rushing back. For those who attended, it was more than a reunion; it was a reminder of a time when a neighborhood truly felt like an extended family.

In the beginning, Mr L.O. Hammett, Sr. purchased a bankrupt 9-hole golf course, and with the help of John Linley, Sr. developed Hammett Acres. Mr. Linley was instrumental in helping parcel lots which faced the natural loop, known to all who lived there as "The Circle".

The original neighborhood consisted of these families:

The Hammett Families:

Larry and Betty- Lawrence (Little Lawrence), Martin, May Ligon, and Elizabeth Prue and Whitney- Debbie, Carter, and Mac

Joe - Michael

JR - Mona Ruth

Other Families in the NeighborHood were:

Press and Evelyn Jones – Press, Jr, (Little Press), Greg

Jack and Sybil Hehn – Marc, John, Peter,Chris

Agnes and Paul Shook – David, Debra, Danny , Diane

Bill and Amy Wright- George Rodgers, Leith, Billie, Maria

Ken and Barbara Saylor – Mary, Drake

The Harrises – Charlie

Essie and Tom Bailes

From the beginning, Hammett Acres was a place where doors and hearts were open.

May Ligon Hammett Huff remembers her family's house by one unforgettable detail, a tomato-red front door.

"That perfectly expressed the personality of the house and my mother," she said. "Our front door wouldn't lock, and that didn't seem to bother anybody. We felt safe there. We had fun there. That front door was a freeway to our friends."

With four children in the house, the Hammett home stayed full of visitors. Friends were shared, crushes formed, and laughter was constant. Toys were plentiful, thanks to a father who loved gadgets and motors. There was a train in the backyard, a swing powered by a motor, and even a swimming pool built with old mill looms, all long before building inspections were part of everyday life.

"It was pretty lawless in Hammett Acres," May Ligon joked. "We learned to drive well



Pictured, front row, from left, are May Ligon, Liz, Mac, Martin and Gregg Jones. In second row are Carter, Debbie, Lawrence and Press Jones.

before we were legal. We seemed to have our own rules. In Hammett Acres, everybody's house felt like home."

For David Shook, childhood meant fishing in the pond with rooster tails and spoons bought from Grady's Sporting Goods across from the old A&P. His first tackle box was a travel soap container, and his only tools were nail clippers and a Cub Scout pocketknife.

He remembers camping "down the hill and over the creek," crossing on a bridge made from tree roots, building tarp shelters in the woods, and riding mini-bikes and go-carts around the court. He recalls climbing ropes for Scout badges, flying kites so high they nearly disappeared beyond Concord School, and playing basketball and baseball with neighborhood friends.

"I don't remember any controversy between families," David said. "It was a great time to be a kid. I don't know if there could be a more interesting place to grow up."

Diane Shook Reid, part of the younger crowd, shared similar memories, especially of the Hehn family.

She remembers being sent to cut okra from Mr. Hehn's garden, even though the plants were taller than she was. "It was scary," she said, "but somehow Mr. Hehn would always show up and help me." She recalls riding on his shoulders, "flying" with a parachute in the yard, watching trains run in the basement, and learning to play tennis on the clay courts.

Her memories also include card games at Mrs. Hammett's house, swimming in the Hammett pool, and babysitting for neighborhood families for years. Halloween meant trick-or-treating followed by hot chocolate and candy trading at someone's house.

Marc Hehn remembers moving into Hammett Acres in the mid-1950s and being shaped by the neighborhood's diversity and closeness.

"The neighborhood was magical," he said. "There was the lake, the canyon, and the woods behind the Hammett home where we played war. Dead meant you got hit with a BB or a dirt clod."

He remembers swimming off the dock, exploring the woods, sliding down stairs in the Hammett house, and eating foil-wrapped hot dogs cooked in the fire at cookouts.

Carter Hammett-McGarry recalls games of kickball and football in a huge front yard, riding the train at Larry and Betty's house, and swings that flew around a pole thanks to an electric motor.

One unforgettable moment involved being tied to a lamp post during a game of "Swamp Fox" just as her mother turned on a faulty light. "I was being electrocuted and dancing, trying to pull away," she said. "Everyone was screaming at her to turn it off. To this day, we laugh about it."

There were homemade go-carts and pon-toon bikes on the pond. Ski rides were pulled behind a go-cart beside the Jones-Hehn pool and also behind an aluminum boat with a 3 HP motor. Carter remembers being pulled on a 12 ft sled behind their father's car. Every Christmas Eve, parents staged a Santa sighting while Prue dressed in a borrowed Santa suit and rang sleigh bells to send children running to bed. Then the adults stayed up late assembling toys and sharing beer until morning.

Cars were raced around the circle and later on dirt tracks. Trampolines, Ouija boards, and roller skating filled countless evenings in big basements. Halloween meant traveling in large packs of goblins, witches, football players, and sheriffs, collecting candy in pillowcases until they overflowed.

Taken together, these stories paint a picture of a neighborhood where children roamed freely, neighbors trusted one another, and homes belonged to everyone.

Hammett Acres was more than a place to live. It was a place to grow up and to learn independence, friendship, and community. And for those who gathered in May 2025, it remains a place that still lives vividly in memory.

Some neighborhoods fade with time. Hammett Acres didn't. It became a shared story, one that still brings memories, laughter, and a sense of home to everyone who once ran its streets.

OBITUARIES

BRENT THOMPSON ROGERS

Brent Thompson Rogers finished running his race on Sunday, February 8th, 2026 at the age of 67. Brent was a dedicated and loving husband, father, and brother, with a warm smile and a tender heart, who humbly and fervently pursued Jesus throughout all of his days.



Born in Augusta, GA, on July 31st 1958, Brent was the middle child of three siblings. He grew up in various cities

across South Carolina and graduated from TL Hanna High School in Anderson. From there, he attended the University of South Carolina in Columbia, SC, where he graduated with a degree in Information Systems Technology. It was during his early working career that he met Rhonda, his wife of 39 years, while getting his racquets restrung at Todd & Moore Sporting Goods. Brent loved Rhonda with everything he had. As his closest friend, they walked side by side and hand in hand through it all.

In 1996, Brent and Rhonda took a leap of faith together, as they would do many times in their marriage, and moved with their growing family to Chattanooga, TN, for a new posi-

tion at Unum. They moved without knowing a single person in Chattanooga, but trusted God's plan for them in a place they had never been or seen before.

In the years before their move and the years that followed, God provided for Brent and his family again and again. He put kind, loving friends in their lives where they put down roots on Lookout Mtn., GA. This is where Brent followed the Lord, led his family, and served others for more than 30 years as a husband, father, and friend, and eventually took on the name of "Pops" to his grandkids.

Over the decades, Brent would share his gifts and wisdom with so many, both young and old. He was always there for his kids, quick to answer any call, day or night, to listen and gently guide them through life's biggest and smallest questions.

Brent spent his years coaching hundreds of youth sports games for his kids on Lookout Mountain, winning tennis tournaments of his own across the Southeast, finding success and growth in his working career at Unum, serving as a deacon at Lookout Mountain Presbyterian Church, volunteering at prison ministries and so much more... and he did so with a quiet and humble joy that only Jesus provides, pointing others to Him in all that he said and did.

He loved to travel with Rhonda, especially to the beaches he grew up going to as a child on the coast of South Carolina. Some of his fondest memories were crabbing, building

sandcastles with his children, and enjoying all of God's creation.

On the surface, Brent may have been quiet and rarely at the center of the room, but he was always present. Brent showed others the love Jesus had shown him, extending His love in all that he did.

From the outside, his blessings in life would seem to many as easy "successes" by the world's standards. Yet underneath, Brent climbed mountains of great heights that many never saw or understood, as he battled chronic pain for more than 25 years.

But through it all, he clung to Jesus each and every day for strength and sustaining grace that carried him over mountains of joy, through valleys of sadness and pain, and across rivers of peace. Brent was steady and constant, never wavering and always quick to forgive. He lived a life of prayer and open hands for the Lord as his foundation, always seeking refuge and strength from Jesus.

In the months and days before he passed, he journaled often, writing scriptures that he would lean on each day. One of the last verses he wrote down was 2 Corinthians 4:16-18, with a note in the margin saying, "My story!"

So we do not lose heart. Though our outer self is wasting away, our inner self is being renewed day by day. For this light momentary affliction is preparing for us an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison, as we look not to the things that are seen but to the things

that are unseen. For the things that are seen are transient, but the things that are unseen are eternal.

Brent is preceded in death by his father, Gilbert Lawrence Rogers and his mother, Barbara Thompson Rogers, who loved him dearly. He is survived by his loving wife, Rhonda Lee Rogers, his five children (and grandchildren), Taylor Rogers (wife Brittany and children Ford, Ryan, and Nelson), Ansley Harwell (husband Foster and expecting baby girl Greer due in March), Ruth Ann Buckner (husband Chase and children Emmy, Townes, and Collins), Jenna Rogers and Ryan Rogers, his older brother Gil Rogers and younger sister Laura Wheeler, and uncles Johnny Rogers and Wayne Thompson.

There was a celebration of life for Brent on Friday, February 13th at 11:30am at Lookout Mountain Presbyterian Church. Brent's family received guests for visitation beginning at 10 am in the Fellowship Hall.

In lieu of flowers, please send donations to Transform: Prison Ministries (PO Box 3026 Chattanooga, TN 37404) or Choices Chattanooga (951 Eastgate Loop Suite 1000 Chattanooga, TN 37411).

The family would like to thank everyone who has called, sent messages, dropped off food, and shared fond and happy memories of Brent. Jesus shows up in many ways, often unexpectedly, and we feel His presence through you all, both near and far.

THOMAS KELLY

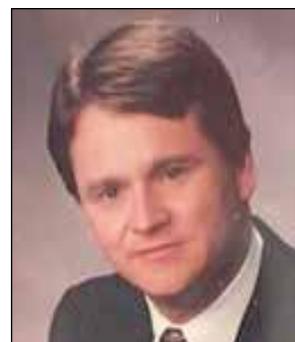
Obituary published on Legacy.com by Sullivan-King Mortuary & Crematory - Anderson on Feb. 15, 2026.

Tom was born and raised in Anderson SC, a place he loved to call home. He attended TL Hanna High School where he lettered in football and track and field. In 1978, Tom was a proud graduate of The Citadel Military College of South Carolina. He often spoke of how The Citadel shaped his life.

Upon graduating with a degree in Business Administration, Tom accepted his first job with Roger Millikan. This sparked a career of over 40 years including Orian Rugs, Maxim Medical, and Quintiles Laboratories in Atlanta, GA.

Tom was a shrewd businessman. At an early age, he purchased his father's former business, Kell-Brook Men's Store in Anderson

SC. His personal portfolio spanned from buildings, land, warehouses, and condominiums in both Anderson, SC and Atlanta, GA.



It wasn't all work with Tom though. Tom knew how to have fun and enjoy life through his many hobbies. Tom loved bluegrass, traveling, boats, motorcycles,

classic cars, and even received his pilot's license - flying for some years. Tom spent many weekends in the Blueridge Mountains with his

lifelong friends Jimmy and Cathi Laughridge. Tom had a real love for the mountains and their beauty, and his wish was for it to be his final resting place.

Tom left the world too early for his family and friends - yet in his timing. Family was very important to him, but more importantly, Tom was a child of God. Jesus Christ was his foundation, and Tom lived a Godly life every day while enriching the lives of those around him. He worshipped God, he showed up for his family and friends and was extremely generous to those in need. Tom attended Covenant Baptist Church in Anderson, SC. If you ever had the pleasure to be in his company, his pure heart would've been immediately evident.

Tom was preceded in death by his father, Thomas Earl Kelly Sr., his mother Bertha (Bert) Ellenburg Kelly Gales, and his brother

Keenan Dagnal Kelly. Tom leaves behind his beloved sister, Susan Kelly Foust (Butch), beloved brother John Taft Kelly, sister-in-law Beth Jones Kelly, nephews Joshua Seth Kelly and Brett Butler Kelly (Paige), nieces Lindy Foust Tempelis (Spiros) and Laura Kelly Foust, and great niece Georgina (Georgie) Irene Tempelis.

A Memorial Service was held on Sunday, February 22, 2026 with a reception that followed at Sullivan-King Mortuary.

In lieu of flowers, the family requests that donations be made to a church or charity of your choice.

Tom will be remembered for his steadfast faith, generous heart, sharp mind, and deep love for God, his family, and friends. His legacy of integrity, devotion, and quiet strength will endure in all who knew him.

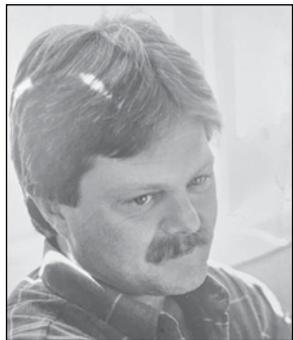
OBITUARY

REDUS MARTIN HAMMETT

Redus Martin Hammett, age 73, of Belton, SC, passed away at Rainey Hospice House on Friday, February 20, 2026.

He was born on July 11, 1952, to Elizabeth Martin Hammett and Lawrence Orr Hammett, Jr. in Anderson, SC.

Martin spent his early years in Anderson and then made the long trek down the road to Belton, SC where he lived out his life. He always told people that he worked construction all his life and he did. His first project was a village he built in the woods near his house which he named Camp Cherokee. It was the scene of many misadventures. He helped build a double-decker tree house in a pecan tree in his back



yard. So, what he said was true, he was in the construction business all his life. Martin loved the outdoors and he liked to work with his hands. He wore blue jeans years before they were cool, and even in the hospital he wanted to have his jeans on. While he was a committed curmudgeon, he had a special place in his heart for all the children in the family. He had plenty of opinions, but he loved them and was very proud of them. Martin also had loyal, true-blue friends who saw him through to the end.

Martin was predeceased by his parents, his sister, Alice Elizabeth Hammett; his brother, Lawrence Orr Hammett, III; and his niece, Elizabeth Huff Sleeman.

He is survived by his sister, May Ligon Hammett Huff; his sister-in-law, Rosalind Jeffcoat Hammett; and his nephews Thomas Hammett Huff, Lawrence Orr Hammett, IV, and Jacob Keller Hammett; his great nephews, James Louis Huff and William Thomas Sleeman; and his great niece, Laura Elizabeth Huff; and his aunt June Dodd Martin.

A graveside service was held on Sunday, February 22, 2026 at Belton City Cemetery with Rev. Nick Kirby officiating.

In lieu of flowers, memorials may be sent to The Rainey Hospice House, 1835 Rogers Road, Anderson, SC 29621 or First Baptist Church of Belton, SC, 105 Brown Road, Belton, SC 29627.

Condolences may be left for the family by visiting www.mcdougaldfuneralhome.com.

Jackets fall short in second round of Class 5A playoffs

Well, the Hollywood script writers got this one wrong.

Instead of a dramatic victory for the T.L. Hanna boys' basketball team, the reality is the Yellow Jackets bobbled their chances and suffered a 62-59 loss to visiting Fort Mill Friday night in a second-round state AAAAA playoff game.



Brian Hodges

It was a frustrating end to a 21-6 season. Fort Mill improved to 21-7.

Hanna and Fort Mill had battled evenly through three quarters. But the Jackets appeared to take over, building a 55-47 lead in the fourth quarter. Hanna held a 57-50 lead with 2:20 left in the game.

After Fort Hill hit a basket, trimming the lead to 57-52, Hanna began fumbling their chances. Inbounds passes were dropped or Fort Mill forced turnovers as the visitors applied pressure.

"Their pressure obviously hurt us," Hanna coach Keith Arrington said. "We had been good all season. We had worked on executing against the press. We just missed our chances."

Arrington, a veteran hoops coach, called several timeouts to get his team to settle down.

"It was my responsibility to get the team in the best play. I've got to do a better job scouting that team. We don't pin this loss on any one person," Arrington said.

Brice Wiersma, a standout 6-foot-8 sophomore for the Jackets, hit a layup to get Hanna ahead 59-55 with 1:39 to go.

But A.J. Washington hit a clutch 3-pointer for Fort Mill to cut the lead to one at 59-58.

"That No. 21 (Washington) hit some difficult shots in the late stages, so give them credit," Arrington said.

Hanna successfully inbounded the ball with 40.7 seconds left, but the Jackets missed two free throws.

Fort Mill then hit a layup with 15 seconds left to take a 60-59 lead and added two more foul shots with three seconds left and that was the game.

"Lucas Wiersma had a great game. He helped us get that lead in the fourth quarter," said Arrington, who said he felt his



team had a real chance to advance far in the playoffs. "This is a tough one."

Lucas Wiersma, a 6-foot-7 senior

and older brother of Brice, fought hard throughout the game. He led the Jackets with 22 points, and Brice added 18.

In other news at T.L. Hanna, the principal, Walter Mayfield, confirmed he was retiring at the close of the school year. He had replaced Shawn Tobin in 2019.

Across town, the Westside High School girls smashed Travelers Rest 62-17 Friday night in their second-round playoff game and played Camden (23-3) on Feb. 23 in the next round. The Westside boys are also in the playoffs.



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**SUSAN
TEMPLE**
master
gardener

February 14 was the 24th annual Greater Greenville Master Gardener Symposium. It is always a wonderfully inspiring day with speakers, shopping, and visiting with gardening friends. No matter what a speaker is presenting, there is always something I can take away and use at my place. Dr. Jared Barnes stole the show this year. In his headlining presentation he opened with singing a song (even though I don't remember what it was). But the words were changed to fit his presentation theme. In his con-current session, he opened

with the tune of "Wouldn't It Be Nice" by The Beach Boys. With words on the screen, again changed to fit his presentation, it became a sing along. It was quite funny. Serenades and singalongs are rarely associated with a gardening symposium.

Camellia Forest, from Chapel Hill, NC, joined as a vendor again this year. I pre-ordered three camellias and had them delivered. One is Sarah Catherine, spelled exactly like Mama's name, was a must get. A friend's mother's name is Sara, and our joke is her Sara without an h, and my Sarah with an h. Very pale pink, semi-double flowers are supposed to have a long bloom time and have excellent bud hardiness. It is a japonica. For simply curiosity sakes, Fragrant Jewel was added to the order. It is a hybrid. The scent is described as strong for a camellia and is supposed to smell sort of like cloves

and carnations. This one will be interesting to watch grow. Strawberry Limeade, a sasanqua, will also be interesting to see bloom. It is supposed to bloom in abundance, be a vigorous grower, and grow dense too. The bloom edges look like they've been pinched and are lime green. I hope it doesn't look like the blooms are discolored.

All three will have to have fence put around them to keep deer away. It is always peculiar as to how they eat some A LOT, and then others, they only nibble, or pass by altogether. Sasanquas will take more sun, and I know where Strawberry Limeade will go to help block across the creek. The other two will take some thought.

False indigo bush (*Amorpha fruticosa*) was offered by a ven-

dor specializing in native plants. It reminds me of sumac, which grows wild in a section of the pasture. Summer blooms are described as aubergine. Bright yellow and orange stamens give it a golden dusted color. It forms thickets by suckers, much like sumac. Most sites state it prefers moist roots, often growing at waters edge but will tolerate dry spells and occasional flooding. The dryer the soil, the more shade it needs. False indigo is a host plant for silver-spotted skipper butterflies, black-spotted prominent moths, and andrenid bees. It is a legume, which has beneficial bacteria in their roots. And, it has inoculum that can help

nitrogen in the atmosphere. Well, alrighty then.

I asked the plant seller if he thought in bottomland, would it be able to compete, or at least hold it's on, amongst privet, stilt grass, and perilla mint. He was hesitant but said it was worth a shot. It would be great if a native could choke out some of those monsters. I think one will go somewhere along a path in the woods so I can hopefully keep track of it. The other one may go along the trench that leads into the woods, then on to the creek. A bald cypress tree is very happy there. Sounds like it might be just right for false indigo bush.



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12-15, 2026**



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KAY BURNS HUMANITARIAN AWARD PRESENTED

On September 9, 2025, an ordinary drive turned into an extraordinary moment of courage.

After a medical emergency caused a driver to lose consciousness, the vehicle crossed lanes of traffic and came to rest in a residential swimming pool. Without hesitation, Demahge Clinkscales and Terrance Mack rushed to help, pulling the victim from the submerged vehicle and saving a life.

Acts like this remind us that heroes don't always wear uniforms. They live among us.

We are incredibly proud to present them with the first-ever Kay Burns Humanitarian Award in recognition of their selfless bravery and quick action.

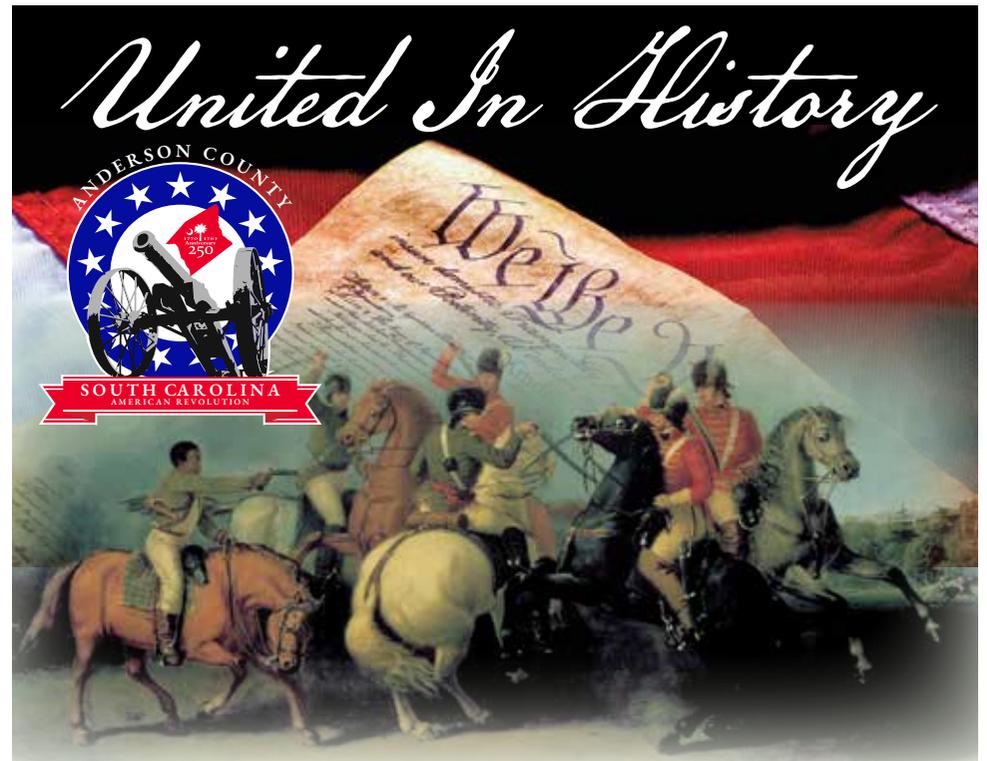
In March of 2024, a month after Mrs. Kay Burns, a longtime advocate for local services and volunteering, passed, the idea of a Humanitarian Award in her honor was created. The award celebrates those who embody her spirit of selflessness and dedication. Mrs. Burns, remembered for her extensive work with charitable causes, left behind a lasting impact on Anderson County that continues to inspire new generations of volunteers and community leaders.

This year's awards ceremony brought together law enforcement officials, civic

leaders, and community members to recognize honorees who have made significant humanitarian contributions. Recipients were celebrated for their selfless actions assisting an accident victim, who had suffered a medical emergency. Honorees received commemorative plaques, and guests shared reflections on how community service continues to strengthen the bonds among residents.

"The Kay Burns Humanitarian Award isn't just about volunteering — it's about inspiring hope, building trust, and standing up for what's right in our community," said a spokesperson for Anderson Area Crime Stoppers. "Each honoree represents the best of what Anderson has to offer."

Anderson Area Crime Stoppers is a non-profit organization that provides the public a platform to submit tips to law enforcement anonymously. The members meet the first Wednesday of every month and highlight the partnership between Anderson Area Crime Stoppers and various local organizations working together to promote safety, compassion, and civic engagement. If you have an interest in serving on this board, or being a part of a great program, please contact email andersonareacrimestoppers@gmail.com or on social media.



DID YOU KNOW...

The land that would become Anderson County was part of the Cherokee Nation when the war for American Independence began. It was ceded to South Carolina in 1777 following the Treaty of DeWitt's Corner.

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The Anderson County population when established in 1826 was approximately 15,000. Currently, the census estimate is 217,183.

March 10th at 5:30 PM - Bicentennial Women's History
- Anderson County's Female Historians

March 17th at Noon - History of Agriculture in Anderson County
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Hometown redneck on the moon

For the first time since 1972, America is headed back to the moon. Initially, we will be on a mission to orbit the moon as early as February of this year. Then, before or near the 250th



Neal Parnell

Fourth of July celebration, we will launch and land on the moon once again.

The only South Carolinian to walk on the moon is Charlie Duke, who, at 90 years old, is still alive and is also the youngest human to have walked on the lunar surface.

The rush is on to find the next man or woman for this dangerous and monumental mission. Here are the top ten reasons a Redneck should be the top pick...

1. Expert at fixing things with duct tape.
2. Over 500 hours of intense training on the Tilt-A-Whirl.
3. Able to survive for long periods with little oxygen due to decades of inhaling parents' secondhand smoke.
4. Able to conduct experiments on the Dark Side of the Moon, since it's just like not paying Duke Power.
5. Not showering or bathing for days or weeks will feel just like being at home.
6. Walking with no gravity will be just like walking home from the club on Saturday night.
7. Mushy space food from a tube and Tang are perfect nutrients for an astronaut with no teeth.
8. Smart enough to bring saltines just in case the Dark Side of the Moon is made of cheese.
9. Prior alien abduction experience.

10. Numerous Splashdowns (forgets to close the lid at least once a week).

11. A Moon story that starts with, "Hold my Beer".

12. Driven Hwy 81 at night, not scared of anything.

13. First words will be, "Houston, we got a problem, ain't no Fishin' Holes."

14. Highly adept at dodging potholes and craters.

15. Would say that the old moon was better.

16. Would know at least three people who had worked there.

17. Already spent time in places that used to matter.

18. Would be the first to say, "Ya'll hear that noise?"

19. Has seen emptier places.

20. One small step for man, One Big 'Ol " I remember when.

I'm sure there are many more reasons that a Redneck should be the chosen one, and possibly you could qualify. Perhaps you were the one who tried to build your own wings and fly off the barn. Was it you who was standing in the middle of the trestle when the train was bearing down on you? Were you the one who jumped off the bridge

because of a double-dog dare? Maybe you're the one who keeps extra green-houses under your leg when playing Monopoly, or can drink a six-pack and watch four quarters without having to go. If so, then you're just the kind of daredevil we're looking for and could be the most famous Redneck the world has ever known, and all because you have "The Right Stuff."



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SNOW BRINGS SNOW GEESE

Many people didn't like all the recent cold and snowy weather (though some of us loved it) but one silver lining was there. The icy temperatures brought some different birds to our area. Out at the farm ponds in the Townville area, two unusual species have shown up. Snow geese and Ross's geese have made recent appearances.



Ann K. Bailes

Both of these birds nest in the far northern reaches of the Arctic tundra and migrate to the lower 48 during

winter months--but not usually to our area. Texas is a common winter spot for both species. Snow geese are mainly midwestern birds with reaches farther west; Ross's is primarily a western bird. Though a few make their way to South Carolina every winter, finding either of these species around the Upstate is still considered a rare sighting.

Snow geese are all white with black wing-tips, not very visible when the birds are on the ground, but obvious when they are flying. They have large pink bills with a darker line across the middle, called a "grin patch." The website allaboutbirds.org states: "Watching huge flocks of Snow Geese swirl down from the sky, amid a cacophony of honking, is a lit-

tle like standing inside a snow globe." They fly and roost in massive numbers, but again, that's on their midwestern and western flyways. They are actually one of the most common goose species on the continent – just not here. Usually, several times a winter season, people in the Upstate might see from one to a half dozen or so. Not exactly common, but always a treat to see.

Occasionally, a "blue morph" snow goose is also seen around here. This goose carries a gene that gives it a dark blue color, but other than that, genetically it is still a snow goose. This type was also seen in the last month in Townville.

Ross's geese are similar to snow geese, and unless an observer looks carefully, these slightly smaller birds might not be seen as a separate species. The main way to tell the difference is to look at the bill. Ross's bill is stubbier and shorter than a snow goose bill (as is its neck); also, the Ross's does not have the "grin patch" line that makes the snow goose look like it is smiling. A Ross's looks like a little sibling to the larger snow goose.

The two species of birds are often seen together. Rare birds are fun to see from time to time, and the ice and snow brought snow geese and Ross's geese to the ponds in the Townville area. Let's hope a few more fly in before they return to the Arctic to nest once more.

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In the words of Captain Christopher French ...

BY RICH OTTER

What was it like in territory now known as upstate South Carolina before it was safely settled. Captain Christopher French of the British 22nd Regiment, in his own words (and spelling) offers a capsule view as he traveled from Charles Town to the Mountains, with a swift trot into what became Georgia, and back through the later South Carolina area to their place of beginning. They departed Charles Town on March 20, 1761 and returned November 14, 1761.

There were a total of 1,262 men starting out, of which 200 were in his company in the 22nd Regiment. They included 46 serjeants, 23 drummers, 48 officers and 5 Indian scouts. The following includes some selected segments of his report.

On March 22, they reached Monk's Corner where they remained for a short period of time. The grass was not sufficiently grown for their cattle to continue. While there, French was "informed there were great numbers of alleigators just by our encampment in a creek called Bigging Creek. Three of us took a canoe and went to hunt them. We saw about twenty different sizes. I shot four of them."

April 17 they "Halted & try'd seven Men for Desertion. They were found guilty & six of them condemned to dye."

April 29 they "reach'd half way Swamp...In our way we pass'd a place call'd Saludy old Town, an abandoned settlement & a pretty one." [Saluda.]

They "arriv'd [April 30] at Fort Ninety-Six...Here stands a small Fort of Picquets of no consequence...At Night a number of Wolves came about our camp, drawn we suppos'd by some Bullocks we had in a pen just by us. Here we found some Chickasa Indians, headed by a fine old Fellow...Eight of the Chickasa having [left] a little way from our Camp, came [back] painted & in every respect the same manner as when they engage, their Chief carrying a Bloody, or War Tomahak & danced the War Dance..."

One night "while we remained in this Camp a large wolf got in the



The last ceded parcel, 1777

Bullock Pen & fright'd them so that many broke out, & had like to have been lost."

As they traveled on, they may have passed through your back yard, and, on May 26, they were "Encamp'd on the far side of Twelve Mile River...so call'd, being that distance from Fort Prince George." The next day at the fort they "encamp'd on a hill just opposite to the remains of an old Indian Town call'd Keeowee."

While traveling to the fort, on May 22, they had "sent out three Scouts of Indians, having been inform'd that a track had been seen which made us suppose the Cherokees were watching us. Great abundance of Deer every Place we came to, in so much that they came

amongst us, and were sometimes affrighted from the grounds where we encamp'd. The Scouts return'd, having discover'd one Track of a Horseman, and another of a Man on Foot."

On June 7, they left Fort Prince George and on June 8, crossed War Woman Creek with "strong water" up to their knees. The next day, they found a petroglyph that had been pecked on a tree featuring two individuals in apparent conflict. Captain French interpreted the marking as being a warning to his soldiers left by the Cherokees.

On June 10, as the column proceeded, "we were very briskly fired upon from the far side of the river." Five officers were injured; nine soldiers were killed and there were forty-seven injured. Forty horses

were killed. Obviously, the horses were an important target to put soldiers on the ground. Also, they were an easier target. The action lasted about three hours. The deaths and injuries of the Cherokees is not known. They located their village and destroyed it, except for one of the structures converted to a temporary hospital.

They proceeded in pursuit of the Cherokees into the mountains, burning villages and corn crops as they went. The Cherokees generally stayed ahead of them and fighting was mainly carried on with confrontations by the scouts. With the drum beatings by the soldiers, the Cherokees could easily avoid them.

Wolves continued as adversaries and also two officers were bitten

by ground spiders. French said the bite effects were like those from a Tarantula.

Much in their travels thereafter involved showing a presence and attempts to open communication with the Indians. Strength had been demonstrated but also a willingness to talk. It had been over two hundred years since DeSoto had marched through the later South Carolina on his way to the Mississippi River and it would be over another sixteen years before the last of the land was ceded to upper South Carolina by the Cherokees.

The Cherokees had sided with the British during the Revolution, but final resolution occurred with the Cherokees in the South Carolina area in 1777.



THE MARTIN GIRLS — OUR PLACE IN BLACK HISTORY

BY GAIL MARTIN-MATTHEWS

As the 2026 Black History Month 100th Anniversary draws to a close, I pause to reflect on the small—but meaningful—part my sister and I played in advancing the cause of Civil Rights. History is often told through famous names and sweeping movements, but it is also carried forward by children who were asked to be braver than any child should have to be.

If you don't already know, my sister, Lola Martin-Day, was the first and only Black student at Southside Elementary School during the 1966–1967 school year. The only Black student. She walked into that building every day carrying the weight of history on her small shoulders.

During that same period, I helped integrate McCants



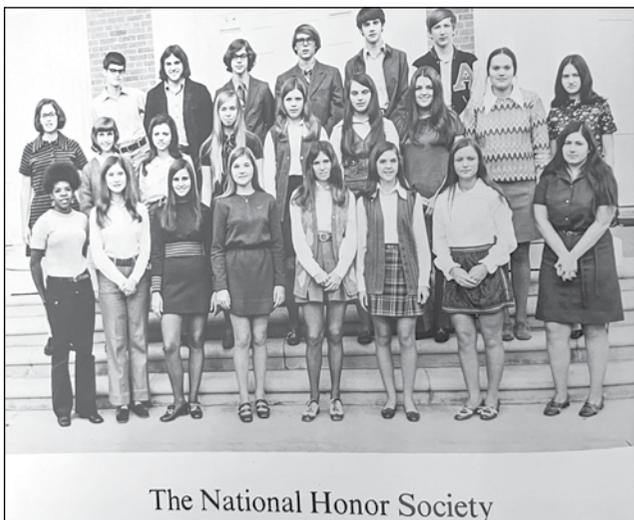
Junior High School in 1966–1967. In 1970, I entered T. L. Hanna High School as a junior. By the fall of 1971, I was elected president of the marching band. Several white students left the band and never returned after the elec-

tion. They were certain a white male student would win. The ballot count proved otherwise.

That same year, I became the first and only Black student inducted into the National Honor Society. It was a shock to many—students and staff alike. When they called my name during the honor assembly, the auditorium exploded with Black Pride. The ceremony had to wait several minutes before the celebration stopped. I'm sure my grades were calculated over and over again. Years later, while reading the 1972 yearbook, I discovered that the society held several off-campus activities and functions to which I was never invited. Even in recognition, exclusion followed.

Looking back now, I clearly see the struggle, the hurt, and the pain we endured for the small but hard-won progress we made. Our footsteps helped open doors, and our voices remain part of the ongoing struggle to keep those doors open for the generations that follow. Many may not remember our names. These schools may not remember the marks we left on them. But we remember—and more importantly, we still carry the marks they left on us.

We carry those marks with a distant lingering bitterness and pain, but we carry them with a strength and boldness that history itself could not erase.



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Why disconnection is rising — and what we can do about it



**MARY-CATHERINE
McCLAIN
RINER**

In a world where we are more connected than ever (e.g. phones, social media, constant communication), many people quietly report feeling more alone. It is important to remember that loneliness doesn't always look like isolation, and exists in crowded rooms, busy workplaces, or even within families. Increasingly, people describe a subtle sense of disconnection that's hard to name yet deeply felt.

One of the most important mental health challenges of our time is loneliness. Loneliness is not simply about being physically alone. It's

the experience of feeling unseen, unheard, or emotionally distant from others. In conversations across our community, there is a common theme; people are busy/productive and outwardly functioning while on the inside, carrying stress, fatigue, and a longing for deeper connection. Many hesitate to reach out because they worry about burdening others or appearing vulnerable. Others assume everyone else is coping better than they are.

Modern life can unintentionally reinforce this pattern. Packed schedules, long work hours, caregiving responsibilities, and digital interactions can leave little room for meaningful presence. While technology allows us to stay in touch, it doesn't always provide the emotional nourishment that comes from feeling truly known.

Why bring this up? The reality is that loneliness, especially chronic, increases the

risk of anxiety, depression, insomnia, and even cardiovascular issues. When people feel disconnected, stress levels rise, and the body remains in a subtle state of alert. Over time, this can lead to exhaustion and a sense of emotional depletion. Loneliness is also the result of broader social patterns—community structures, a culture that prioritizes independence, and being told to only say nice things. As a whole, individuals have learned to hold it all together and push through emotional pain.

The good news is that connection does not require grand gestures. Small, consistent moments of genuine attention can make a meaningful difference. A brief conversation with a neighbor, checking in on a colleague, or taking time to listen without distraction can help rebuild a sense of belonging. Communities also play a powerful role in shaping whether people feel connected or

alone. When environments encourage openness, kindness, and curiosity about one another, it becomes easier for people to share honestly. Feeling welcomed across schools, workplaces, faith communities, and local gatherings can buffer against isolation. It is also helpful to remember that many people are quietly hoping for deeper connection, even if they don't say so. Sometimes, taking the first step — sending a message, inviting someone for coffee, or simply asking how they are really doing can open the door to meaningful conversation. Remember, loneliness can be a shared human experience and we all have the opportunity to create safer, more authentic spaces for connection.

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

NEW YORK CITY FASHION WEEK

New York City Fashion Week was held on February 12th through the 15th in Manhattan, and it certainly did not disappoint. The designers and models focused heavily on quiet luxury this year and Fall/Winter 26 is going to be gorgeous. Key trends included faux fur, animal prints, brooches and a mix of different materials and patterns.

My favorite show was Ralph Lauren. He consistently delivers with his quintessential approach that is both bohemian and rustic, yet luxurious. He just knows how to make a person look put together, but effortlessly. Gigi Hadid started the show tailored in tweed. A brown wool vest, A form-fitted maxi skirt, a turtleneck and a silver chain belt with brown boots and a brown leather handbag. Refined, yet pastoral and quaint at the same time. She closed the show in a velvet belted gown with a chainmail bolero. Rugged romance at its finest. He also incorporated oversized sweaters with sequined long silk skirts and lots of leopard print shearling to add glamour to his equestrian signature. Everything was absolute perfection in my book.

Seven For All Man Kind made their first debut with a new creative director and put on a really fun show

and paid homage to the trendy Y2K era. Think party girl attire. The style icons and muses were Kate Moss, The Olsen Twins and Sienna Miller. So, a lot of baby doll and mini dresses, skinny jeans and boots with oversized statement necklaces, huge handbags and even stiletto heels. Leather mixed with denim and chunky knits with black opaque tights were the vibe I



Kristine March

didn't know I needed. Ray Ban sunglasses and glittering costume jewelry is back and I couldn't be happier. I've always loved that kind of messy, party girl look. I've never stopped wearing it, now that I think about it.

Now, for more of a clean approach we have the ever so chic and fastidious Calvin Klein. His show was all about the lines of the garment as per usual. He has hired a creative director that focuses on minimalism and tailoring that could almost cut you. Perfect is most definitely an understatement. The word "yuppie" suits the analogy of the show. It was very seventies and eighties "Mom's that



work". A lot of elongated trench coats and sharp suits. Brooke Shields sat front row. Her 1980's campaign was historic and she said, believe it or not, she had never been to a Calvin Klein fashion show before. It was fitting for

her to be the star this year, and it was totally full circle for her.

Speaking of Calvin Klein, I never realized how authoritarian and severe of a person he is. If you've watched the new Hulu series, Love Story. It's

all about John F. Kennedy Jr. And Carolyn Bessette. It will show you what working for him truly was. When women would work for him in his office back in the day, they weren't even allowed to wear nail polish and the makeup and hair had to be extremely minimal. There was also a color restriction of only white flowers, such as calla lilies allowed on the desktop. So, a very strict aesthetic was put into place that you had to follow or he would instantly fire you. I'm glad things are changing in the work force. That sounds so sad and boring. I do appreciate his line to a fault.

Another really fun fact is you, yourself can actually attend fashion week. Most big designer shows are invite only, but there are quite a lot that you can buy tickets for. Especially if you're a fashionista. Nepo baby not even required. Attending runway shows in the melting pot of the world is most definitely on the bucket list. Please do your research and look into it for next year. If you love wardrobe and style as much as I do, this is your calling.

What were some of your favorite looks at New York City fashion Week this year? Remember to make the sidewalk your runway and kindness always matters. Get your Vogue on y'all!

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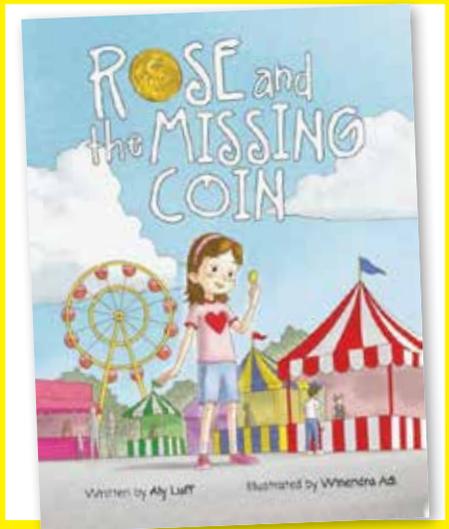
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FROM THE SHELF

On reading outside yourself, or being 'well-read'

I have a very strong stance on how being "well-read" should be defined. I'll start with the caveat that it's just my opinion. I only say that because I tend to offend people with my definition of "well-read" because if I'm right, then they aren't even remotely "well-read" (#sorrynotsorry). Traditionally, we think of "well-read" as someone who's read the classics, often reads literary fiction, and has read



Sara Leady

all those books we were assigned in school but didn't finish or just didn't read them.

Here's my issue and where I might offend you... "Classics" are most often decided and defined by white men. They're often also reflective of the experience of white men and are written by white men. Sure, you can throw *Pride & Prejudice* or *Jane Eyre* at me, but I'll counter with these books not being taken seriously at the time of publication, and the narratives revolve around white men making decisions for white women, whether they like it or not. Even

better? Elizabeth is "barely tolerable" to Darcy despite his litany of reasons why she's not good enough, yet we swoon at the insult because love. *Jane Eyre* is glorified Stockholm syndrome. I said what I said— hopefully you're either going to keep reading out of spite (because I'm clearly wrong), or (my hope) is you're open to why I might be right, even if it's just a tiny bit.

For those who have consumed all the classics "I see you, I hear you. I too have claimed the stance that I was not just "well-read," but incredibly well-read because I didn't just dabble in Shakespeare, I've read every single word written. Here's the problem though, any one person or group deciding a list of anything to be THE list of something is always going to have a bias. It's human nature for us to seek familiarity because it makes more sense to us. However, when a select group decides what's worthy, they make that standard the baseline or norm, and it leaves a lot of stories behind. This is extra important (and concerning) in terms of how we write history, or rather WHO writes history.

So, here's my argument for why our stereotypical (and stale, maybe moldy) definition

of "well-read" has to be re-evaluated. If we only read stories that represent one view point and one perspective, we can't claim to be "well-read" because that means we've never read outside our comfort zone, or never read things that might challenge us or might make us uncomfortable. My stance is that if you aren't reading books, be they nonfiction or fiction, written by authors who are NOT a reflection of you and your experiences, you can't be "well-read."

By doing this, you're failing to read an entire world of books that hold an entire world of experiences, essentially erasing those stories and experiences. You've created a vacuum mirroring your personal identity. You're reading what makes you comfortable rather than challenging yourself to truly be "well-read" by reading things you might not understand or might challenge you to rethink your beliefs and experiences. This is ultimately devaluing the

real-life experiences of anyone who's not like you. You don't have to agree with their life, but you shouldn't erase their existence.

How can you know yourself if you've never experienced anything different? Just like you can't be "well-read" if you aren't consuming stories from different races, genders, cultures,

How can you know yourself if you've never experienced anything different?

countries, identities, etc., we can't foster and grow empathy for people who aren't like us if we refuse to learn about them. When we open ourselves to the truth of another's experience, we open ourselves to understanding them.

Again, we don't have to agree with them, but we can at least acknowledge and see them. Previously I would have told you I was "well-read" even by my standards, but this year

I've been trying to read a 1:1 ratio of BIPOC authors to white authors and y'all, I'm not "well-read" either. I am, however, looking forward to maybe becoming "well-read," or at least getting closer to that mark.

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

Notice to Creditors as required by South Carolina statute is hereby given that on March 18th, 2025, Letters of Administration in respect to the Estate of Derrick Little, who died on February 14th, 2025, and was domiciled in Anderson, South Carolina, were issued to the undersigned by the Probate Court of Anderson County.

All persons, resident and non-resident, having claims, matured or unmatured, against said estate are required to file the same with the Clerk of Court on or before February 14th, 2026, otherwise their claims will be forever barred.

This the 6th day of February, 2026.

Jessica Little
Personal Representative of the estate of Derrick Little.

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