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#### In honor of National Poetry Month, The Electric City News cordially invites you to take part in our

Whether you're a Whitman, Poe, Hughes, Shakespeare, Wordsworth or Silverstein, we want to hear from you.

Email us your piece for a chance to win \$100 and have your work painted on our office window. 2nd & 3rd place winners will be featured in a future issue of The Electric City News.

Entries must be a reasonable length and submitted by **April 20. Please send** submissions to ElectricCityNews@gmail.com.





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"Poetry and beauty are always making peace. When you read something beautiful, you find coexistence; it breaks walls down." - Mahmoud Darwish









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# Where's the E?



Left:Tassy Mannis, Sylvia McLeod, Kylie Herbert and Liz Brock were seen perusing the latest edition of The Electric City News during a break at the Rotary President Elect Training Seminar (PETS) for the Carolinas in Greensboro, NC on March 18.

**Right:** While at Rosenborg Castle in Copenhagen, Denmark Mike McClain of Anderson was thankful to have the latest copy of The Electric City News for something to do. This renaissance castle was built in 1606 and contains the oldest royal garden in the country and welcomes 2.5 million people every year."



# Homeschool Extravaganza planned at the Anderson County Museum (ACM)

All homeschoolers are invited to attend May 5, 10 a.m. until 1 p.m.

Come one, come all to the exciting Homeschool Extravaganza – an event planned just for homeschooled students. The Anderson County Museum has let history speak for 40 years. This event is planned as an interactive and engaging way for homeschool students to learn Anderson County and South Carolina history.

There will be learning opportunities and engaging docent led tours for all grade levels. The K-2nd graders will learn about the early fairs and have a fun craft to do. The 3rd–12th grades will learn about textile mills, trade, transportation and our military history. In the museum courtyard, there will be games planned and a chance to win prizes! Hot dogs will be \$1.50 including a drink and chips.

The ACM is a collecting museum with more than 26,000 artifacts, there are many things to see and learn about in our gallery. Students can also visit all exhibits at their leisure and learn about the museum research

room. The research room is a great place to find information about a variety of

topics rooted in Anderson County and South Carolina history for school assignments and projects. "As an admission free museum, it costs nothing for families to walk in our doors. Part of our mission is educating the



public. As an artifact driven museum, our exhibits give students an opportunity to see objects they have never seen before," said Executive Director Beverly Childs. "This

ANDERSON COUNTY MUSEUM event gives homeschoolers and their teachers a chance to connect with other

homeschoolers across the upstate." The fun begins at 10 a.m. on Friday, May 5th until 1 p.m. We do ask for a general headcount if you plan to attend and have a hot dog. Go to our website (andersoncountymuseum.sc.gov) and click on Homeschool Extravaganza at the top of the page. The direct link: https://andersoncountymuseum.sc.gov/homeschool-extravaganza.

The admission free Anderson County Museum is located at 202 East Greenville Street, in downtown Anderson. The Fred Whitten Gallery and Whitner's Emporium Gift Store hours are Tuesday 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. and Wednesday through Saturday 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. The Roper Research Room is open 1 to 7 p.m. on Tuesdays and by appointment with the Curator. ACM is handicap accessible and admission and parking is free. Donations are always welcome. For more information, contact the Museum at (864) 260-4737. RED ROCKET Publishing of Anderson, LLC

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#### TO SEND INFORMATION

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

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# TURNING BACK THE CALENDAR

It was like stepping back into the 1700s. Mike and I were leisurely traveling north from Charleston to Pawley's Island recently, when about two-thirds of the way there we saw the sign for Hampton Plantation. We'd seen that same sign on several occasions in past years but had never stopped. This



morning we had time to spare, and took the opportunity to go see the beautiful place that time appears to have left behind.

Ann K. Bailes

Hampton Plantation, built between 1730 and 1750, is associated

with several illustrious names from South Carolina history: Horry, Pinckney, and, since 1830, generations of the Rutledge family—as in Archibald Rutledge, our first state poet laureate. After his passing in 1973, the property was sold to the Department of Natural Resources and is now

in our state park system. The place was empty when we arrived mid-morning. We made our way past the visitor center entrance and several massive old magnolias and Spanish-moss laden oaks that had been standing guard for multiple centuries. Immediately we had an unobstructed view of the stately old home.

We walked past a small rice field and read a sign describing how Carolina Gold rice was the huge moneymaker for early settlers in our state. (A bird note here: bobolinks were also called rice birds, because as they migrated north each spring they often decimated those rice fields along the coast.)

We would have taken a guided tour of the inside of the home, but it was not available then. So we just rambled around the outside. The cabin where food was cooked was close by the main house (kitchens were separate in those early days to prevent fires). We looked in the windows and checked out the layout.

The quietness of the grounds accentuated the feeling of being back in the 18th century. No power lines were visible. The walkway to the little family cemetery was surrounded by overgrown gardens, and hushed except for a few bird sounds. Everything was peaceful as we paid our respects to the Rutledge family.

Mike took another walkway to look at Wambaw Creek and the crossing where centuries ago slaves were taken every day to work the rice fields on Hampton Island. Meanwhile, I headed back toward the quietness of the big house. Then the loud sound of a swarm of bees made me wonder what was going on nearby.

I rounded the corner of the house and discovered that the buzzing noise wasn't from bees—a man and his three sons were using the open lawn to play with their drone. Immediately I was snapped from the 1700s back to 2023. Oh well, that historical feeling was nice while it lasted.

Hampton Plantation provides a great and lovely look at the early history of our state, and we highly recommend it as a worthwhile side trip for beachgoers this summer. (Just bring bug spray.) And I certainly hope no drones will be hanging around to ruin your own feel of stepping back in time.



#### YOUR DENTIST CAN SAVE YOUR LIFE

# 'Life essentials' that enable us to live longer?

Is it possible in this age of modern medicine — with the knowledge gained from continuing research studies into human health issues — that by making certain lifestyle choices we can live longer? Moreover, can we do so with a much higher quality of life as we age avoiding debilitating diseases like type 2 diabetes, cancer, heart disease, and dementia?

From my own reading and research, I for one am convinced we can. Accordingly, I am doing my best to make better life choices and at the same time help those I love to do the same.

The latest research into human health and aging can be our guide. The American Heart Association for example has identified eight basic "life essential" lifestyle choices we should all embrace to live longer and increase our chances of enjoying optimum health free from chronic disease. Of course, genetics plays a role in our health and lifespan. But at this point genetic influences are largely unknowable. What we do know, and what we can



control, are the choices we make. Here is the suggested roadmap to longevity — actions we should all be able embrace in our daily lives.

Resolve to: 1. Eat better (reduce sugar and processed foods) 2. Be more active (walking counts) 3. Quit tobacco 4. Get quality sleep 5. Manage weight (keep your weight in the healthy range for your age and body type)

6. Control cholesterol

- 7. Manage blood sugar
- 8. Manage blood pressure

Eight simple life choices. The result? Enjoy greater life expectancy, living a more enjoyable and productive life free of chronic illness! Wouldn't it be wonderful if each of us began in the bloom of youth practicing these essentials? Even so, experts advise starting today still matters — and simply exercising regularly, getting quality sleep, and maintaining a healthy diet can reduce cardiovascular event risk for decades beyond the age of fifty! What's more, research is confirming that people at age 50 embracing the "essential eight" have a life expectancy of about 33 additional years compared to those who do not, and as a result develop poor cardiovascular health.

As my faithful readers know, my interest in staying healthy is personal. It is about my loved ones. It is about the impact on our society. I recognize with the daily pressures of family and jobs how hard it is to constantly remain disciplined on this journey. But the benefits are undeniable. Be inspired to live your best life. And know this: Being healthy goes beyond diet and exercise. Achieving optimal wellness is really about a wholistic lifestyle that is intertwined — physical, emotional, social, spiritual, and intellectual. Each affects the other. If you have questions or would like to open a dialog about your personal journey, please reach out. We are your hometown resource for guidance and support.

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

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



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MONTHLY WORKSHOPS: Held the 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday of every month at 102 North Murray Avenue Lunch is free but registration is required RSVP to: swright@cityofandersonsc.com or Call: 864.231.2603

#### **THE GARDEN SHOP**

# **NOTHING TO DO WITH GARDENING**



**SUSAN TEMPLE** master gardener

This article is in memory of an outstanding dog. Often in Garden Shop, my faithful four legged companion has been part of the story. Cadet was on the urgent list at the old animal shelter, headed for the gas chamber. He had been there for about four months. He was someone's dog because he had already been fixed. The lady who helped me the day I met Cadet didn't believe me. I explained to her that I played with all of his feet, shook his tail around, stuck my hands in his mouth, laid him down, rubbed his belly, and checked back there and nothing was there. When I met Cadet, with his beautiful blue eyes, he captured my heart almost immediately. It was estimated Cadet was about a year and half, maybe two. His name came from the Crayola crayon, Cadet Blue. His eyes fit the description and

the definition of a young trainee completed the idea. My boy dog, Dodger, had recently died and it seemed right to get another one.

Sparkler, my girl dog, was quite a challenge with her quirky ways. She was about seven years older than Cadet. I took her to the animal shelter to meet her little brother, Cadet accepted her as the pack leader, and Cadet came home with us on May 15, 2010. My sweet boy was good from the get go except for chewing my favorite pair of yard shoes. And his beds couldn't have fiber filling stuff. He would chew them up almost immediately. Sparkler lived by the beat of her own drum. She's the only dog I've ever had that didn't care if she had a human or not. But she and Cadet lived happily together for four years.

After Sparkler died, Cadet's true abilities became very apparent. Husband said Dodger and Sparkler dying were the best things that happened to Cadet. Cadet was my gardening companion. He ran along beside the tractor. I could take him anywhere. He was my wandering buddy, road trip buddy, the best dog I've ever had. Cadet even went to a celebration at The Electric City News' office and enjoyed



popcorn with Julie. He would mind with just a look, if I even had to give him the look. He somehow knew exactly what I was thinking. When visiting dog parks, he got along with every dog. It was very obvious if a dog was a bit of a bully, he would simply find other friends, even steering some dogs who were bullied as if to say "Come on, let's go over here and play". Children everywhere would ask if they

could pet our dog. Our standing answer was always "His feelings would be hurt if you didn't want to pet him". Cadet vacationed on Edisto Island with us. One year, every afternoon when we walked down the beach, a family with a toddler would be out. After introductions, the toddler knew he could pet Cadet and Cadet knew that toddler was the same kid he talked to the day before. Husband always said Cadet was a ham for the camera. I could tell him "Sit and get your picture made". He would immediately sit. Then I'd say "Now smile for camera" and he would. Cadet was not a barker but when he did, he sounded like a 100 pound German shepherd. The sound did not go with his personality at all. He was such an excellent, sweet boy.

Slowly, in the past year or so, his age started catching up with him. His back legs slowly gave out. We knew last October would be his last trip to Edisto. I made sure we did all our favorite things one last time. On Sunday, April 2, we went for our last walk around the yard. He didn't' want to go far and laid down. That confirmed for us it was time. Our exceptionally wonderful, loving Cadet went to doggie heaven at 3:30, and our hearts shattered.

### No more smoke and mirrors: Living authentically



In a world filled with texting over faceto-face communication and communication online versus in-person meetings, individuals have begun living a more isolated and solitary lifestyle. Social media, while can be positive and encouraging, may also reduce empathy while increasing narcissism and comparison. In order to challenge perceptions and counter artificial stories, it is important to lean into being authentic and connect with authentic people.

#### Traits of Authentic People

1. Behaviors and Actions are Congruent. Internal feelings are congruent with outward emotions and behaviors.

2. Transparency and honesty are key. Even when it is difficult and hard, authentic people do not pretend in order to fit in or gain the approval of others. Sense of self is high and feedback is not perceived as critical or as a personal attack.

3. Relationships are reciprocal. Respect is mutual and there is a strong foundation of compassion and honesty.

4. Open-mindedness. Individuals remain open and curious, and are willing to entertain

alternative thoughts and ideas. 5. Acceptance of others for who they are-making others feel safe, secure, and that they are approachable without the fear of

judgment. 6. Happiness is not based on material objects. Happiness is found from within and joy is experienced with simple pleasures. Meaning and purpose are based on connection rather than money.

7. Personal responsibility is important; mistakes are acknowledged and accountability is taken.

8. Decisions are not based on the ego. The sense of self is strong as is integrity. Life is based on values and not fears.

9. Gratitude is critical. An internal compass is used to align with core needs, values, and principles.

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.



# AnMed, better careers start here

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AnMed's inspiring mission and vision, historic foundation, growth and momentum make it an exciting time to join the team. Danielle Stevens, an ICU Staff Nurse, says she enjoys working at AnMed because of the support and benefits she has received. "I enjoy working at AnMed because they have supported my career so far and have given me the foundation I need to one day go back to school to become a nurse practitioner." AnMed prides itself on having a work environment where teammates thrive, reflecting our values and commitment to exceptional care. It's also demonstrated by our investments in specialized and advanced programs, technology and facilities.

Improving the health and wellness of our patients and community starts with taking care of you, our teammate. To do your best at work, you need to feel your best as a whole person—physically, emotionally, financially and mentally. AnMed offers competitive pay and well-rounded benefits.

"Working at AnMed allows me to make a difference in the lives of our patients and to be a positive influence and role model for other nurses," says Tara Moss, a Nurse Manager at AnMed. It takes a whole team to make AnMed an outstanding place to work. Even if you are not in the medical field, AnMed offers a wide range of opportunities for clinical and non-clinical roles. Join our team and be a part of something special.

Interested in applying or learning more about AnMed careers? Visit anmed.org/ careers to apply and learn about all the opportunities you will have at AnMed. To stay up to date with our community involvement and what is happening at AnMed, follow us on social media channels.

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### APRIL SPRINGS INTO SONG WITH GAMAC

ANDERSON, SC — Fans of musical theater and jazz will have much to celebrate in April when the Greater Anderson Musical Arts Consortium (GAMAC) concludes its 2022-2023 Concert Season with POP Goes the Chorale on Sunday, April 16, 2023 and the International Day of Jazz on Sunday, April 30, 2023.

POP Goes the Chorale will feature the GAMAC Chorale under the direction of Dr. Don Campbell. In a choral music salute to the music of the stage and screen with medleys from the Tony Award winning musical Wicked, Elton John's Rocketman, Disney's Frozen, and favorites from the late Stephen Sondheim. Joining the GAMAC Chorale for a special appearance will be members of the Anderson Children's Choir under the direction of Ms. Lauren Owens. POP Goes the Chorale will be held on Sunday, April 16, 2023 at 3pm at First Baptist Church located at 307 S. Manning Street in downtown Anderson, SC. Tickets are priced at \$20 for adults with children 12 and under admitted free of charge.

The music continues later in April when the Anderson Symphony Orchestra (ASO) under the direction of Dr. Andrew Pettus presents its International

Day of Jazz performance on Sunday, April 30, 2023 at 3pm in the Rainey Fine Arts Center at Anderson University. Presented in observance of the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization's (UNESCO) worldwide jazz celebration, the ASO's International Day of Jazz performance will showcase the music of Louis Armstrong, Cole Porter, and Dizzy Gillespie among others. Established in 2011 and held each year on April 30, the purpose of UNESCO's International Day of Jazz is to highlight jazz in its diplomatic role of uniting cultures around the world. The ASO's per-

formance will celebrate jazz as an uniquely American musical genre. Tickets are priced at \$15 for adults with elementary, middle, and high school students admitted free of charge thanks to generous support from the Montessori School of Anderson and recreation fund support from Anderson County Council members the Honorable John B. Wright, Jr., the Honorable Glenn A. Davis, the Honorable Brett Sanders, and the Honorable Tommy Dunn.

Tickets to POP Goes the Chorale and International Day of Jazz can be purchased online at www.gamac.org or by calling the GAMAC office at (864) 231-6147. Tickets will also be on sale at the door at 2pm prior to each performance.

Additional support for these performances has also been generously provided by Mr. & Mrs. Mason Garrett, Mr. & Mrs. Harold Gilbert, Drs. Brena & John Walker, Mr. & Mrs. Bill Manson, Anderson Community Car Wash, the Anne G. Gambrell Foundation, and City of Anderson Accommodations Tax Funding. Support is also provided in part by the South Carolina Arts Commission which is funded in by the National Endowment for the Arts.

# THE ESCAPE ARTIST

The most famous escape artist is most likely Harry Houdini. He was not a magician as some described him, but a master at never being contained or

> restrained. My first

escape took

Anderson

Memorial

Hospital. I

must have

somehow

place in



Neal Parnell

known that taking chances should always be done near medical facilities. I was eight months old and hadn't even inhaled my first breath when I decided to escape and make my early earthly appearance. My second escape was not my idea. I was held upside down by my ankles and whacked on my backside, then dunked underwater and immediately wrapped like a burrito and placed in some type of glass covered chamber.

The experience was similar to

Harry Houdini's Chinese Water Torture stunt.

They wheeled me into a large glass enclosed viewing room and left me there with the other burritos. By the time my family got there to view me, I had broken free of my wrappings, and was hanging off the side of the incubator with one hand, and waving to the crowd with the other.

After the hospital incident my parents regretted spending money on a crib that they now knew would not contain me.

Even though I couldn't walk, I had super hand and arm strength, much like a baby possum that can cling to their mama's back. I could pull myself to the top of my playpen cell, but couldn't get over. My parents thought that since I couldn't talk, that I didn't understand what they were saying. I heard them plotting ways to keep me in my place. There was talk of mittens, handcuffs, and smearing Vaseline on my playpen bars. The highchair was their go-to confinement apparatus, but I quickly learned that screaming,



crying, and slinging grits would set me free. It finally occurred to me that I had legs and feet that I was just dragging around. I made it to the top of my cell and flung over a leg. The fall was short and luckily I bounced on my loaded diaper. The sound had them running toward me, but before they got there my legs and arms kicked in and I was



crawling like a lizard on hot pavement. I think my dad was praying when he said, "Lord help us now" as I grabbed a window curtain and exposed us all to the neighbors. It's a bit ironic that once I was out, all I wanted now, was in. They tried the rubber band on the cabinet trick, but I was determined to bang those pots and pans. My dad spent half a day installing one of those little wooden accordion gates for the hallway that I unlatched and went through before he did. Did you know that if you keep rocking your head against a screen door, the screen will break and you can crawl back into your blowup pool? Or that if you take the broomstick out of the sliding door you can get to daddy's special drink?

I started the whole baby-proofing era and never got any credit. You have me to thank that there are no more baby Houdinis. So when your child tries to open that pill bottle, or chews a hole in the corner of its blanket to lasso that door latch, think of the escape artist that blazed the trail to child safety and why kids today have no see-saws, monkey bars, cap pistols or lawn darts.



#### **FROM THE SHELF**

# **Brendan Slocumb**

A book that's been on my list to read for a minute is last year's runaway hit, The Violin Conspiracy by Brendan Slocumb. It was a Good Morning America, Book Club pick, so it also had a lot of holds, and I just hadn't really gone after getting a copy. My push came from the incredible opportunity for the Anderson County Library to host Slocumb Thursday, April 27th at 6:30 pm as part of the release of his new book, Symphony of Secrets.

The Violin Conspiracy is a slower-paced thriller that also takes a deep look at family dynamics, race, and the world of classical music. Ray McMillian grew up in rural North Carolina and fought his mom his whole life to be able to pursue his passion for classical music. His mom has always viewed it as noise, so he's never been able to own his own violin (school rental), let alone take private lessons, despite his incredible talent. While playing at an orchestra regional qualifier, a music professor sees Ray perform and makes him an offer of a full ride scholarship, giving him the opportunity of a lifetime.

That gives a background on Ray, all of which comes to light in scattered flashbacks, but the conspiracy and conflict all surround his violin.

The story opens with Ray learning that his prized violin has been stolen. As a high school student Ray used what he could get from the



his grandmother gave him his great-grandfather's fiddle. The fiddle was given to his ancestor from his slave owner along with his freedom papers. It's a bit of a spoiler but the heirloom violin happens to be a lost Stradivarius, so the "fiddle"

Ray's mom wanted him to toss turns out to be worth \$10 million-so kind of a big deal.

We get flashbacks of Ray's history and his history relating to the violin alongside the investigation into who stole it and ransoming the priceless violin. There's a myriad of candidates, including Ray's own family who from the moment they learned of the value of the violin, have been pushing him to sell for cash for the family. While Ray's family are quite frankly terrible, the other more likely candidates are the descendants of the slave owner who claim Ray's ancestor stole the



violin and therefore it's rightfully theirs.

This sets up a lot of the racial discussion Slocumb discusses in his book. The descendants try to strong arm Ray into giving it to them and make plenty of racist comments along the way. They aren't the only ones though. Ray, as a Black man in the classical music world, is an anomaly and he's had more than one person tell him he can't possibly play Mozart as a Black man. Definitely some real icky scenes, and unfortunately, I'd infer that Slocumb is pulling from personal experience when laying out some of these

scenes. Slocumb continues this conversation about the attitudes toward Black musicians in the classical music world in his next book, Symphony of Secrets.

I've had the privilege of getting an early copy of Symphony of Secrets, and I've been working my way through it (can't remember the last time I read a novel, not listened to audio). It opens in 1936 with famous composer Delaney going on stage to perform, and we've already been told something terrible happens to him within hours. Then we shift to the present, to Bern Hendricks, an expert on Delaney who's being called in to examine and maybe authenticate some new Delaney artifacts that have surfaced. What Bern discovers though, is that Delaney isn't the genius that everyone thought he was, he had a silent partner who was the real talent, a young Black woman, Josephine Reed.

I'm not too far into Symphony of Secrets, but I can already tell this is going to be an incredible novel. A lot of Delaney and Reed scenes take place in the 1920s and I am always a sucker for that time period, but it's great seeing a different look at the 20s since we're looking at classical music. We also don't see a lot of 1920s fiction from a Black perspective either, so I'm enjoying getting to read from this new lens. There will be copies of both books available at the library event on April 27, and obviously you'll be treated to the pretty incredible story of Brendan Slocumb himself. It'll be a night to remember.

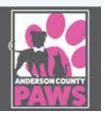


# ANDERSON COUNTY PAWS: Free Microchips & Vaccinations!

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Homeland Park Fire Department - April 19<sup>th</sup>, 1-4 pm

Burris Field in Iva - April 26<sup>th</sup>, 1-4 pm



# Girl Scout Troop 3324 creates activity trail at Midway Elementary

Local Girl Scout Cadettes promote physical activity for Midway Elementary Students by completing a high-level community service project, the Girl Scout Silver Award. This optional award is the highest achievement a Cadette can earn, and is not completed by all Girl Scouts. Girl Scouts requires the project to be sustainable, and each girl must reach a minimum of 50 hours of time worked on the project.

Cadette Girl Scouts Lillie Vassar, Eliza Wolken, and Olivia Clark from Anderson, SC, took on this community project. With the help of their Troop Leader and Project Advisor, Courtney Huggins, they explored their community and decided on a problem they could solve.

The CDC states that "less than one-quarter (24%) of children 6 to 17 years of age participate in 60 minutes of physical activity every



day." The Girl Scouts found this statistic surprising. Not getting enough physical activity is a problem that the Girl Scouts wanted to solve for Elementary School children. With the help of Mr. Brandon Meares, the principal of Midway Elementary School, they decided to implement a painted activity trail on the school's walking track.

"While we can not extend the recess time, we can give kids a way to be a little more active", says Lillie.

The Girl Scouts coordinated donations from their local Lowe's, Home Depot, and the Midway PTO to fund the project. With their gathered supplies, the girls painted educational and physical activities that will benefit the students for years to come, such as Hop the Planets, Follow the Vine, and Jump over the Books. They also wrote an instructional guide of their project to assist other Girl Scouts Troops that may want to do a similar project in a different community.

According to Eliza," This experience helped us learn how important it is to make a change in the world." Olivia said, "This project taught us how to negotiate, be leaders,



and about how much work it takes to plan and implement a project." These Girl Scouts hope their project has made a positive impact on the Midway community, and are very grateful to Mr. Meares, Mrs. Huggins, and everyone else that helped them complete this project.



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# LOVE AND TITANIUM

I am fortunate to write for "The Electric City News." It gives me an opportunity to write about the people and events in the hometown that I love. It also allows me to be silly, to share a recipe or two, and to tell a story that readers might find amusing.

This is not one of those stories. Last night, I watched the Diane Sawyer interview with actor Jeremy Renner. I've been a fan of the actor since "The Hurt Locker," and Hawkeye is my second-favorite Avenger. (Sorry, sir; my heart will always belong to Chadwick Boseman's Black Panther.) But it wasn't the celebrity aspect of the interview I was interested in. I wanted to find out how a man so badly broken after being run over by a snowcat is living his life three months later.

At home now, Renner is recovering from over 30 broken bones. From head to toe, his body is being held together by plates and screws as it heals. He suffered major organ injury He feels pain in some parts and has lost feeling in others. He also can't shake the memory of the moment he was pulled under the tracks of the snowcat while making sure his nephew didn't

*von Keller* work *Keller* with the same fate. He cries when he sees the photo of being with his daughter for the first time after his injuries. It turns out that a superhero can be vulnerable, too, even as his body heals.

I must admit a

selfish interest in Renner's story. As I wrote earlier this year, in 2022 I had an accident that left me partially broken. After falling backwards down a flight of stairs, I had multiple leg breaks and nerve damage. Lived in a wheelchair for a couple of months. Couldn't sleep because of the discomfort. Couldn't fully bear weight for three months. Airport TSA workers hate the plate and screws in my leg. In other words, a hard fall rates 0 out of 5 stars on Yelp, and I definitely do not recommend it.

Now, before you start sending me hate mail for comparing a fall to being run over by a piece of equipment weighing seven tons – that's 14,000 pounds if you're math-challenged like me – my accident and injuries are in no way like his. No comparison. I could have fallen down seven flights of stairs without being so badly injured.

That doesn't mean that we don't have important things in common. Like Renner, I received excellent healthcare. I was fortunate to have an amazing support system of family and friends. I concentrated on physical therapy so that by the end of five months, I could walk 20,000 steps in a day. I'm also sad sometimes for reasons that I can't always explain. The sensation of the hardware in my leg reminds me that I'm being safely held together, but it also reminds me of the moment I went all Humpty Dumpty in the first place. While I wish that one of my favorite actors had not been injured, I felt less alone and more normal seeing Renner, who projects such strength on screen, express similar big emotions.

The interview also reminds me that if he can overcome all he's been through, both mentally and physically, I probably can too. I'm lifting weights again, and I've regained some sweet, sweet dance moves in just the last month. Instead of trying to keep the memory of the accident at bay, I'm trying to remember more and more about it so that I can put it in its proper place. I take the stairs whenever possible, even if it means keeping a tight grip on the rail.

At the end of the interview, Renner speaks positively about his recovery, his own strength, and the strength of those who have helped him get to this point.

"I've been refueled and refilled with love and titanium," he says.

Me, too, Hawkeye. And if we should ever meet at an airport, let's use our collective hardware and really set off some alarms.

# T.L. HANNA YELLOW JACKETS Jackets atop region standings

#### BY BRU NIMMONS

ANDERSON — The T.L Hanna softball team is rolling with the regular season nearing its conclusion as the Yellow Jackets went 4-1 over the last two weeks.

The Yellow Jackets opened their recent stretch of games hosting J.L. Mann. Behind a dominant performance from pitcher Addison Sharp and an explosive fourth inning, the Jackets took the region win, 7-0.

Sharp stole the show in the circle pitching the complete game shutout and giving up just one hit while striking out 11 Mann batters. In the batter's box, Madison Henderson and Allie Grace Pruitt stood out with each picking up three hits.

Coming off the big win, the Jackets returned to action the following night against Wade Hampton, Hanna continued their excellent play against the Generals with an 11-0 win in five innings.

Sharp and Emma Williams teamed up for another shut out victory for Hanna and Pruitt stole show at the bat driving in two runs with a double and a triple in the win.

The Jackets returned to region play to end the week against the Hillcrest Rams. Trailing 5-1 in the fifth, Hanna came alive in the sixth leading to extra innings where the Yellow Jackets pulled out the 8-5 win.

Sadie Moon was the hero for the Yellow Jackets in the win, going 2-4 and driving in two crucial runs in extra innings. In the circle, Sharp struggled with control with eight walks but did enough to secure the victory.

The Yellow Jackets went out of region to start the next week against Crescent. A strong offensive day for the Tigers proved too much to overcome as Hanna fell 13-8.

Henderson and Taylor Wessel stood out in the batter's box for the Jackets, but control continued to be an issue Hanna's pitchers as Williams gave up 11 runs and walked eight in the loss.

The next night, Hanna traveled to Mauldin for a region matchup with the Mavericks. The Jackets took control early and held on to stay perfect in region play in a 7-2 win.

Addie Rose Glenn had a standout showing in the circle for Hanna giving three hits and striking out 10 in the complete game win. Jada Sanders proved to be reliable for the Jackets in the batter's box driving in three runs on two hits.

The Yellow Jackets (10-4, 4-0 Region 1-5A) look to be in solid shape down the stretch as they sit in first place as the only unbeaten team with less than a month left in the season.

# Rams in playoff position

WESTSIDE RAMS •

#### BY BRU NIMMONS

ANDERSON — It's been a rough few weeks for the Westside baseball team, but with less than a month to go in the season the Rams are still in great position for a playoff spot in Region 1-4A.

The Rams began their most recent stretch on the road against the Greenwood Eagles. Falling behind early, Westside was unable to muster enough run support through the rest of the night as they dropped game one of the series, 4-1.

Elijah Grant led the way in the batter's box for the Rams driving in their lone run with a sixth inning homer. On the mound, Samuel Parnel struggled at the the start giving up two runs in the first inning, but Jacob Kirkus was solid in relief pitching five innings and striking out four batters.

With a chance to even the series, the Rams hosted Greenwood two days later only to fall 11-0 in five innings to clinch a series loss.

Brody Caudle managed the lone hit for Westside in the loss, while three Rams pitchers struggled before Mykah Clark settled things down on the mound.

In the final game of the series, Westside traveled back to Greenwood hoping to gain some momentum going into their series with Easley. Behind some early offense and a solid combined showing on the mound, the Rams handed the Eagles their first region loss in a 4-3 win.

Starter Ace Amidon and reliever Tyler Scott proved to be a successful one-two punch for the Rams with Scott especially impressing in with six strikeouts and no runs on four relief innings. In the box, Mikey Scott proved to be the hero for Westside with his third inning home run giving the Rams the lead.

With momentum, the Rams traveled to Easley the next week to face the Green Wave. Westside struggled to find its form in the series opening game as they fell 10-0 in six innings.

After a solid first two innings from Parnel, things fell apart for the Rams starter leading to a five run third inning for Easley. Westaide didn't fare much better in the batter's box with Caudle (2-3) being the only Ram with multiple hits on the day.

Hosting the Green Wave two days later, Westside let an early lead slip away to drop the series to Easley in a 6-4 loss.

The Rams (4-10, 3-8 Region 1-4A) were unable to finish their series with Easley as scheduled due to inclement weather on Friday. With four games to play in region play, the Rams are in good shape with a series win over fifth place Pickens and a region ending series against winless Berea coming up on April 18.





### LET'S **SPRING INTO** FUN!

Spring break means more time with our kids and more time to be creative. BUT being creative doesn't have to mean being



expensive! Below you will find some of my favorite things to do with my own children, along with some new ideas I'd like to try! I hope you and your family have a lovely spring break

Katie Laughridge

+ Visit a local farmers market or produce stand

together!

• Plant sunflowers

+ Be on the lookout for four leaf clovers

- Read books about bunnies or spring
- Hang easter eggs in the trees
- Decorate eggs
- + Go on an egg hunt
- Start a garden

• Paint with spring colors then hang the artwork to dry on clotheslines

 Plant a tree—or flower bush together or even let each child pick one out to plant and "care for"

• Build a bird feeder (or refill the feeders you have!)

- Collect and paint rocks
- Explore a wild space
- Pick berries at your local berry patch
- Make spring crafts
- Skip stones in a pond or the lake
- Draw with sidewalk chalk
- Blow bubbles
- Go on a picnic
- Happy Spring to you and your familv! -Katie

# Anderson's square

BY RICH OTTER Many of our residents will still remember when the center of Anderson with roads surrounding the historic Courthouse was a

square and regularly referred to as such. The Square was the primary reference for finding anything downtown. When Anderson Village was laid out, in the very center of town was the original courthouse. Behind it was a two story log building

that was the county jail. On the first floor of the jail the sheriff and his family lived and the prisoners lived upstairs. A fence surrounded the jail area that also enclosed a garden maintained by prisoners growing vegetables and possibly housing chickens to feed the sheriff's family and inmates. It was a short secure walk to take prisoners awaiting trial to the courthouse.

The original courthouse was also of logs but was soon replaced by a rectangular brick building that later was plastered, whitewashed and appropriately embellished to appear somewhat like either a church or a courthouse.

Lots were sold around the Square with the highest price property, fetching \$600, is now occupied by the Chiquola Condominiums. The Square then was divided by Main Street in front of the courthouse with a plaza directly across the street, now an area in front of the new courthouse. On the North side was Fourth Street, now Whitner; to the south, Fifth Street, now Benson.

Behind the courthouse, after the jail was relocated in about 1850, a street was developed with the adjoining area becoming known as Granite Row due to the facades of the buildings. Their backside was East First Street, now McDuffie, followed by East Second Street, now Fant.

Across from and in front of the Courthouse was a plaza with a later developed street and buildings of brick - the Brick Range. The buildings backed on to First West Street, now Murray Avenue (formerly Jail Street, then Peoples Street).

Lots behind the jail brought the lowest prices. When the jail moved and a street behind the courthouse was developed, their value increased materially. Both Granite Row and the Brick Range are now gone, streets and buildings. The county has plans for the Granite Row area and the new County Courthouse absorbed the Brick Range. Sixth Street, to the south of the

Courthouse, became Church Street.

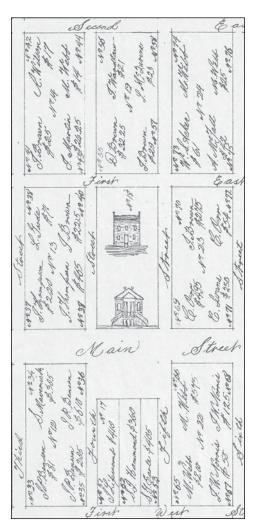
Some lot buyers were either helping the start-up town or constituted early Anderson speculators. Multiple properties were acquired by M. Webb, J.W. Norris, and J. P. Brown.

To find your way around town in the old days all you needed was a compass and know how to count. Now you need a map or a helpful stranger after you find a parking space and know the most recent name change of the street.

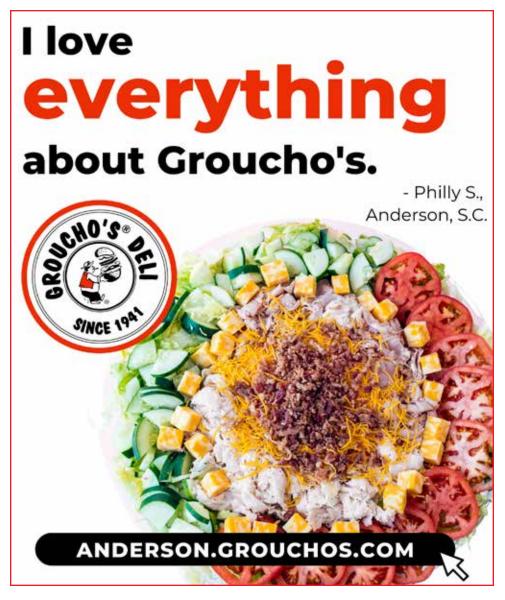
About 1840 the jail inmates were moved to a brick building at Church Street and Jail Street. The location had been a barn for race horses. On the same lot, in 1898 (at about the same time the historic Courthouse was built) a new jail was constructed that is now referred to as the Old County Jail. That facility was closed in 1956 when inmates were relocated to what is presently the Detention Center on County Home Road (now named David Lee Coffee Pl) that originates at Martin Luther King Boulevard (previously the Mall Road) and leads to Jim Ed Rice Parkway (previously Freedom Way).

The courthouse had all of the conveniences, including a whipping post and a pillory. The good news was that many offenders could probably go home for dinner after visiting one or the other of those facilities. This was convenient and economical for the county. A stay in the calaboose would cost taxpayer money.

Someone really obnoxious could be banished from town - probably dumped out at the dirt trail leading to Greenville. That was undoubtedly where he had come from in the first place.



Anderson Village Square



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#### NIBBLE & SIP

# HATE HOT WEATHER? LIGHTEN UP!

We're almost a month into the spring season, and you know what that means, South Carolina: Any minute



now, summer will arrive, even if the calendar says it's still two months away. Half a year of hot weather is the price we pay for our mild winters, so it's good to have an arsenal of lighter Nibbles and Sips when temperatures read 90

and above. And if I'm wearing shorts and a t-shirt, one of my favorite cocktail ingredients is Aperol.

Aperol is an Italian aperitivo, bright orange in color with a taste that's both bitter and sweet. It pairs well with fruit like orange or grapefruit slices, but it's also good with those Palmetto State favorites, peaches and strawberries. Its low alcohol makes it great to pair with sparkling wine, but even a good



soda water will do. The best introduction to Aperol uses both in the Classic Aperol Spritz. It's also time to put away our favorite cold-weather comfort food, with all its hot, bubbly goodness, and turn to something lighter. Whipped Ricotta is a perfect complement to crisp raw vegetables and crackers.

#### **Classic Aperol Spritz**

3 oz. prosecco or other sparkling wine 2 oz. Aperol Splash of club soda Orange slice

Fill a large wine glass with ice. Pour in prosecco, Aperol, and club soda; stir gently. Add orange slice and serve. Makes one.

#### Whipped Ricotta

1 cup whole-milk ricotta cheese

 $\frac{1}{4}$  to  $\frac{1}{2}$  t, salt, or to taste

<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> t. white pepper

<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub> c. minced mixed fresh herbs, such as Italian parsley, basil, chives, and oregano

Assorted vegetables, such as blanched asparagus, carrot sticks, and carrots, for serving Crackers, for serving

Combine the ricotta, salt to taste, white pepper, and herbs in the bowl of a small food processor. Process for one to two minutes, or until completely smooth. Serve with assorted vegetables and crackers.

# ELECTRIC CITY EVENTS

#### ANDERSON SPORTS & ENTERTAINMENT CENTER

BLOOD CONNECTION BALLOON LAUNCH Friday April 14th 2023 11:00 AM to 7:00 PM Contact Houston Howell (864) 751-3090 hhowell@thebloodconnection.org

SPECIAL NEEDS PROM / GRADUATION BALLROOMS

Saturday April 15th, 2023 5:00 PM to 10:00 PM

Contact Dr. Sanjeev Kumar (864) 634-1187 drsanjeevkumar@hotmail.com

DANCING FOR OUR HEROES Thursday April 20th 2023 7:00 to 11:00 PM Contact Jennifer Osgood (864) 231-5494 jennifer@wwadvisors.com

WHEN LIFE SUCKS BANQUET Saturday April 22nd, 2023 - 5:00 to 10:00 PM

Contact Patrick Elswick (304) 356-8273 pelswick@whenlifesucks.org

THOMAS CONCRETE TRUCK RODEO Saturday April 22nd 2023 - Parking Lot - 7:00 AM to 1:00 PM Contact Robert Donald (864) 318-0917

robert.donald@thomasconcrete.com

A.C. HUMAN RELATIONS AWARDS BANQUE - BALLROOMS Monday April 24th 2023 6:00 to 9:00 PM Contact Sydney Robertson (864) 915-4399 clr0108@aol.com

SHERIFF RECOGNITION CEREMONY - BALL-ROOMS

Thursday April 27th 2023 1:00 to 3:00 PM Contact Christi Lee (864) 260-4368 clee@andersonsheriff.com

GAMAC PRESENTS POP GOES THE CHO-RALE

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Sunday April 16th 2023 - 3:00 PM First Baptist Church of Anderson (864) 231-6147 www.gamac.org

GAMAC PRESENT INTERNATIONAL DAY OF JAZZ

ANDERSON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA Sunday April 30th 2023 3:00 PM Rainey Fine Arts Center - Anderson University (864) 231-6147 www.gamac.org

#### SUMMER SOIREE

Downtown Anderson Friday April 28th 4:00 to 8:00 PM Saturday April 30th 10:00 AM to 8:00 PM FREE ADMISSION\* (\* Some children's activities will require tick-

ets, which can be purchased at the event.)

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ANDERSON

# STAYING SAFE IN THE SUN

I'm currently on Spring Break right now in Charleston, South Carolina and the sun hits differently. When you're on the beach, you have to make sure to wear the right attire. It can ruin a vacation.

Sunscreen application is a must, but what you wear can also really help you. I discovered long sleeve swimsuits and they may sound kind of weird, but they protect you from the



UV rays and are quite fashionable. Surfers started the trend years ago, but it protects the whole body from sun exposure. The Trina Turk paddle swimsuit is perfect for a long day by the sea. She has really beautiful colors that are bright and fun.

They're also right around \$100 and will last all summer. A hat is a must. I love the big

straw Sun shield hats. Wolf And Badger makes really adorable ones with big seashells on them and embellishment. Protecting your eyes is also vital. Everyone knows that I'm a Ray-Ban's girl. Not only are they lightweight, but they really protect those peepers. For the beach I would wear an aviator style for safeguarding. Lastly is sunscreen. I've

gone through so many different brands and I find that Shiseido ultimate Sun protector

SP50 is incredible. The price point is a little high but it's worth every penny.



An umbrella is great but for an instant upgrade, try the Shibumi Shade tent. It's a canopy that flows from the ocean's breeze. It's also designed to be easily set up by

one person and broken down. Now if you were to get sunburned, I have the ultimate remedy for you because hey - we're human and it happens. The old school Noxzema is always a win-win, but if you want an instant home remedy slather on cold Greek yogurt. Try a cold shower and an oatmeal bath. Of course, Aloe Vera is always a good option as well. What are some of your best beach tips and remedies? Remember to make the sidewalk your runway and

kindness always matters. Don't worry, beach happy.



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JHI JEIDO

# **Finding Linley**

#### BY AUBREY NEWBY

Before the Americas' entry into World War II, John Linley Sr. had begun to develop a new residential area across North Main Street from his earliest development of North Anderson. In the typical style of the neighborhoods developed by Linley Sr., the neighborhood had wide curvilinear streets, separated by tree lined- almost park-like medians. While several lots were sold, and homes built in the early 1940s, the area's most significant building boom would take place with the return of many of Anderson's enlisted men following the war. From 1947 – 1960, the neighborhood would be the center of Anderson's post war building boom, in time to welcome the baby boom generation.

Due to the timing of its development, which coincided perfectly with John Linley Jr.'s return from Princeton, Moultrie Square would boast more Linley designs than any other single neighborhood in Anderson.

In the years before his studies at Princeton, and in those immediately following his return to Anderson, Linley Jr. was on the payroll of his father's Home Realty Company. The designs from that period largely reflect common designs that could be easily sold in Anderson. Few of those designs speak to the creativity and modern design elements that would become most synonymous with later Linley designs. Moultrie Square, in many ways would serve almost as a design playground for Linley. As the centerpiece of the neighborhood, Linley Jr., with almost unbridled creative license, designed a home for his mother and father at 228 Moultrie Square.

Anyone who has driven Moultrie Square, no doubt, knows the large two-story house. Sitting in the curve of Moultrie Square, it is surrounded by a high pierced brick wall that in early spring, bursts in fragrant wisteria. The





approximately 4,000 square foot house, with four-bedrooms, over a full raised basement that originally featured a three-car garage and full apartment, is not exactly the retirement home that John Linley Sr. envisioned for himself. The result, however, was pure Linley and showcases like almost no other, his genius of design. Anderson native and architect Reggie Gibson recalls fondly his time in the house on Moultrie Square and believes that Linley was; "integrating historic southern architectural characteristics and modernism." It is a style that might be called Regionalism- specifically Southern Regionalism.

Typical of many Linley designs, the front façade of the house does not face the main road but instead is positioned to take advantage of private garden areas. Further study might also indicate the position of the house was to take advantage of solar rays in the winter months of the year. This was an idea that Linley advocated in his later teachings at the University of Georgia. The imposing façade of the house is clad in board and batten siding over a brick foundation. The windows are casement and corner windows, which take in views of the surrounding landscape. The main entrance to the house is through an entry lined with pole columns - again, Linley's use of modern material in a historic method. The design seems to call to mind a Charleston Single House and may have been a nod to Linley Sr.'s native home. The stairs lead from the ground floor to a second story entry with, perhaps, one of the quintessential nods to southern architecture- a fan lighted door.

The interior is largely traditional in feel, with a floorplan designed for functional daily





living, but one that will accommodate large scale entertaining. Throughout the house are built in bookshelves, indicative of the Linley family's love for reading. There is a classically designed mantle and stairway and louvered folding doors. In an expanded version of the conservatory found in the Ed Hill House, the west side of the house is banked with windows in a unique two-story conservatory design. The potting room has shelves of plants overhanging the stairway that may be watered from the kitchen window above. Originally, the roof of the house was outfitted with a sprinkler system designed to help cool the house in the summer months of the year. George Sands Jr.- Linley's nephew who later grew up in the house- recalls asking his uncle about the system and he replied; "Oh

I don't know if it ever worked, it was just something I wanted to try." Linley was always experimenting with design ideas that would adapt well to the southern climate.

Following the death of John Linley Sr., the basement was redesigned as a private apartment for Linley Jr. when his sister, Frances Linley Sands, and her family moved into the house. Today, more than 60 years later, that apartment, with its rows of closets and garden views, still feels a lot like Linley must have envisioned it. Over the years, a number of families have called 228 Moultrie Square home. Even with modern changes and the passing of time, Linley's classical infused modern design has remained almost unchanged and relevant to living, even in the 21st century.





# Anderson women live life like it's golden

#### BY KIM VON KELLER

It's easy to meet people - we do it almost every day – but how do you actually make friends when you're new to an area? That's the situation London native Georga Weaver found herself in when she arrived in Anderson in 2021.

"I had lived in Anderson many years ago, but I moved back to the U.K. after the death of my husband. When I returned to Anderson, my old friends had scattered. My son Adam, who lives here, encouraged me to make new friends, but that's not easy when you're older and your children are grown. I tried NextDoor, the neighborhood social media network, but it was hard to use. Finally, I decided to start a Facebook group, Golden Girls of Anderson, hoping that would introduce me to new people."

Did it ever.

The Golden Girls of Anderson Facebook group, which went live in May of '22, started with 10 members. Today, it's a group of almost 470, with Georga as the administrator. And the best thing about the Golden Girls group is that it doesn't just live on the Internet. It's an active, in-person social group which organizes monthly "Meet and Eat"



gatherings in restaurants throughout town, with around 30 women attending on average. The Golden Girls of Anderson was exactly the group that newcomer Jody Slagel needed when she and her husband moved to town.

"I had recently moved to the area and wanted to make friends and enjoy the company of other women. My husband doesn't have the same shopping/thrift store/travel/hiking

desires as myself, and I felt that this group would be a great opportunity to meet people who share those interests. I'm now one of the moderators of the Facebook group."

Membership has largely grown through word of mouth, and becoming a Golden Girl is simple. Go to the Golden Girls of Anderson Facebook page and request to join. You'll see the list of group rules, and once you've agreed to follow them,

you're in. The rules are designed to set aside issues that are sometimes divisive, such as politics, religion, and marketing, and allow women to simply be themselves.

"I joined because I wanted to meet new people to go places with and to enjoy life with," says Linda Eskew, who is also a group moderator. "Sometimes, members invite new members. Women who see our group at our monthly gatherings will ask about us and join. After all, who doesn't want to be a Golden Girl?"

Brunches are scheduled for the first Saturday of each month. The Golden Girls try to gather at local establishments to support small businesses. Over the last year, they've dined at Earle Street Kitchen, McGee's Irish Pub & Restaurant, Typsy Tavern Bar and Grill, The Social Tap, and Doolittle's. The group has also started a Wednesday "Game Day" at Empire Games.

"Our members' average age is probably 60," Georga says, "but they range in age from their 30s to their 80s. I always encourage our regulars to sit with newcomers so that everyone can get to know one another."

As the Golden Girls of Anderson approaches their oneyear anniversary, they're finding

new ways to get together, based on the members' interests. Some are meeting to walk at the Y, and others have expressed an interest in bowling. There was even a surprising turn after some members attended a performance of "The Bridges of Madison County" at The Historic Pelzer Auditorium.

"We were having dinner at a restaurant afterwards," Linda says, "and some stranger walked in, saw a table of ladies having fun, and paid for the entire table. We went to pay, and the manager told us our bill had already been taken care of!"

As many events as the group has organized, it is still a work in progress, and members often contribute ideas for new get-togethers.

"We're still in our infancy stage, really," Jody says, "and I'm looking forward to things to come."

Whether you're a newcomer or a native, Golden Girls of Anderson welcomes all women who are looking for what Georga, Jody, and Linda have found.

"I've gained some wonderful friends," says Linda, "friends who give me encouragement when I need it, a shoulder to cry on when I need it, and a friend to laugh until I cry with."

### How to save America

"HOW ARE YOU GOING TO SAVE THIS COUNTRY?!" shouts the talking head on TV.

I'm at an American diner. The kind with fried food and waitresses who call you "sweetie." There is enough saturated fat in the air to cause a coronary event just by breathing.

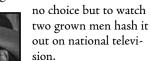
My waitress is a middle-aged woman named "Muffin." I know this because it's written on her nametag.

There is a deer head mounted on the wall above the stove. There are taxidermied bass fish everywhere. The coffee tastes like bathwater. The eggs aren't bad. The bacon sucks.

A giant television is mounted just above the bar. The volume is blaring. The talking heads are discussing political things. Controversial things. You get the feeling the commentators are unhappy people. As though maybe these commentators go home each evening and strangle small woodland creatures to unwind.

THERE IS NO WAY TO SAVE THIS COUNTRY!" says the commentator.

The talking heads are practically shouting at each other. Their voices are so loud that everyone sitting at the breakfast counter has



I wish the waitress would turn this malarkey off, but Muffin, like everyone else, has grown deaf to this kind

Sean Dietrich of shouting. This is America. Land of the free. Home of 24-hour

cable news channels. "I HATE THIS COUNTRY!" shouts the

guy on TV.

The commentator's words slap me upside the face.

Sure, I realize they're just trying to boost ratings. Yes, I get it. They're just shock jocks. But this doesn't make sense to me.

I realize I'm old fashioned, but I grew up with World-War-II-era grandparents. I was

reared by men and women who remembered the Battle of the Bulge intimately. These were people who bought movie tickets to watch Bing Crosby perform patriotic numbers that lasted roughly as long as dental school. These were people who spoke of Pearl Harbor with hushed voices.

Moreover, I personally experienced the 9/11 era. I remember a time when you couldn't get away with spewing hatred on America without earning a bruise.

I was a young man when the airplanes hit the Trade Towers. I was in my early 20s when my peers were getting sent to Afghanistan to die. Everyone was American to the core. You didn't hate your country; you bled red, white, and blue.

No, I'm not saying our country was perfect—far from it—but you didn't "hate" anyone.

The man next to me at the breakfast counter points to the TV and says, "Can you believe this crap?"

"No. I really can't."

"Why do people watch this stuff?" I don't know.

Someone at the bar asks the waitress to turn it off. She obliges. When the TV goes dark, something magical happens.

Conversation at the bar picks up tempo. People start to actually talk to one another. Laughter ensues.

Imagine that.

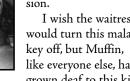
My constituent starts speaking to me as he eats his runny eggs. We're talking about real life. He tells me about his grandkids, about his career as a salesman for commercial sheet metal buildings, about his dog. And it's rather nice.

The people on my right are talking about their upcoming plans for summer vacation. They're going to the Florida Keys. They're not married, because if they marry they'll lose their Social Security. But they're in a committed relationship. Sort of.

Even the waitress is chatting with the cook about her daughter, and how her kid is making all A's in school—except in algebra. God love her. On the Eighth Day, Satan said unto the Lord, "I shall add the alphabet to math."

After a few minutes, we at the bar aren't nearly as tense as we were a few minutes earlier. Our collective blood pressure has gone down. We are almost happy. We are in good moods.

No, I don't know how to save this country. But I know that turning off the TV is a good place to start.



# EVERY LITTLE THING

e all have favorite treasures in our homes that we love and admire. Most come with a story or history behind them. These treasures can be something that was passed down through generations, some can be a favorite gift or an heirloom that you coveted as a child. Or these treasures can be a piece of furniture or a clock or a piece of art or even a beautiful antique book. And not all treasures come with great monetary value. They can be great finds from a flea market or a hidden antique store or consignment shop. The value of each treasure is driven by how it makes you feel and what they mean to you. All of these things make our homes special and represent our individuality. They are parts of who we are and create an interesting background to our lives. What is your favorite treasure?

Hand carved trout by Thomas Hunter: "I love this piece because Thomas didn't cover it with paint.





Most of the decoy shows the natural beauty in the wood and just a faint display of color on the side, which allows you to identify it as a rainbow trout."

Hand-made kneeler: "My wife and I made a kneeler for our son who is an Anglican Catholic priest. We used Bolivian rosewood because of its endurance, strength and beauty."

Handmade ashtray: "One of my treasures is an Italian ashtray that belonged to my uncle George. He loved anything in turquoise and loved smoking cigarettes and beautiful works of art."

Old bronze bank: "As kids, one of our favorite things to do at our grandmother's house was to put nickels in the old bank. Now, every time I pass by it in my own home it brings back that wonderful memory."

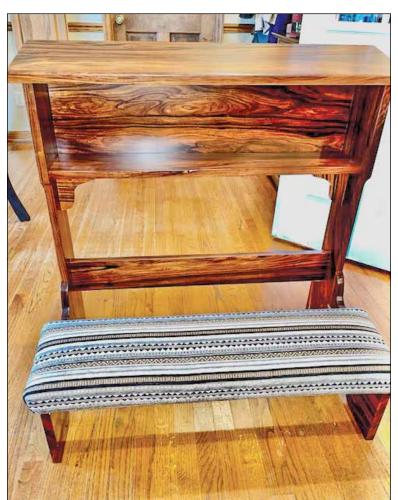


Needlepoint chair: "One of my favorite things in my house is an antique American chair that I inher-



ited from my uncle George. It has an ultra modern zebra needleprint fabric that I upholstered myself."

Russian icon: "I bought this in 1984 during a college trip to Russia. It was a Christmas gift for my father



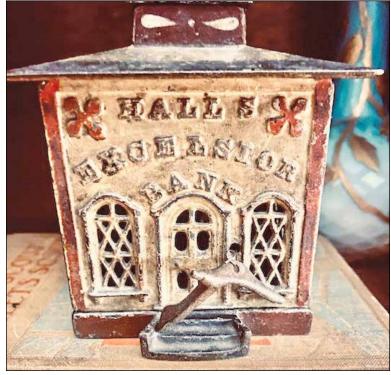




and I ran the risk of it being confiscated at the airport. But the risk was worth it - he was absolutely delighted with it. It has since been one of my favorite treasures."

Painting of sunflowers: "When I graduated from nursing school years ago, a very dear friend, Lily Roland Hall, gave me this painting. The painting came from her family's estate in Edgefield. Every time I look at it, I think of her."





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