



President Jimmy Carter  
1924-2024

The Electric City News  
pays tribute Page 9

# THE Electric City News

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## Cancer Association plans A Night at the Opera

The Cancer Association of Anderson will host the 2nd Annual A Night at the Opera at 7 pm on January 11 at St. John's United Methodist Church.

### WHY OPERA?

Many people wonder why opera would be accepted and liked in Anderson, South Carolina. There are several reasons that opera should be widely performed in local areas. Opera is a play set to music usually with no spoken words. The music requires the utmost respect to the opera performer "acting" the song (opera aria).

Opera exposes local audiences to music that might otherwise be available unless you travel to a larger city in the US or Europe. Opera enriches all cultures because the plots are centered around human experiences of love, inspiration, celebration, and even heartbreak and betrayal. These emotions are in the context of each note sung in opera. In other words, opera is a great storyteller.



Although opera is sometimes considered for the elite, we are bringing opera to our community to foster and enrich the arts in our area. Anderson is very fortunate to be immersed in all the arts. Opera can open doors to the human heart.

And the heart of opera is a great combination with the heart of the Cancer Association of Anderson to raise money and awareness for those in our Anderson community who are battling cancer. Together we can make a difference in the lives of others!

— Timothy Kelley

### MUSICIANS

**Jane Palmer Dill, Pianist**  
Jane Palmer Dill recently retired as Professor of Music Emerita after a thirty-six-year career at Southern Wesleyan University. She served as Chair of the Fine Arts Division for twenty-seven of those years. During her tenure as chair, the division received accreditation by the National Association of Schools of Music, and the Newton Hobson Chapel and Fine Arts Centre became the new home for the division.

Mrs. Dill received her Association of Arts degree from Anderson University, the Bachelor of Music degree from the Mars Hill College, and the Master of Fine Arts degree in piano performance from the University of Georgia and the late Max Camp from the University of South Carolina. She studied organ with Donna Robertson at Mars Hill College.

Professor Dill has a broad keyboard background in accompanying as well as solo playing. She has served as organist at several

churches including First United Methodist Church in Athens, Georgia; Boulevard Baptist Church in Anderson, South Carolina, Briarcliff United Methodist Church in Atlanta, Georgia; and Holy Trinity Episcopal Church in Clemson, South Carolina. She currently serves as organist at First Baptist Church, Clemson. She was the rehearsal accompanist for the August Regional Opera Company from 1976- 1980 and has played

SEE OPERA ON PAGE 4



# GRAINGER NISSAN of ANDERSON

## LIFETIME WARRANTY



# SOUTHERN SOPHISTICATION

This year we decided to do something different for Christmas. We packed up our car with gifts and our luggage and drove down to Savannah, Georgia. It was one of the best holidays we've ever had. It was sublime from



Kristine March

start to finish. We stayed in an ole Brownstone beauty established in 1887 right off of East Gaston Street in the gorgeous Garden District. It was overlooking Forsyth Park and everything we did was in walking distance. There is something magical about that city.

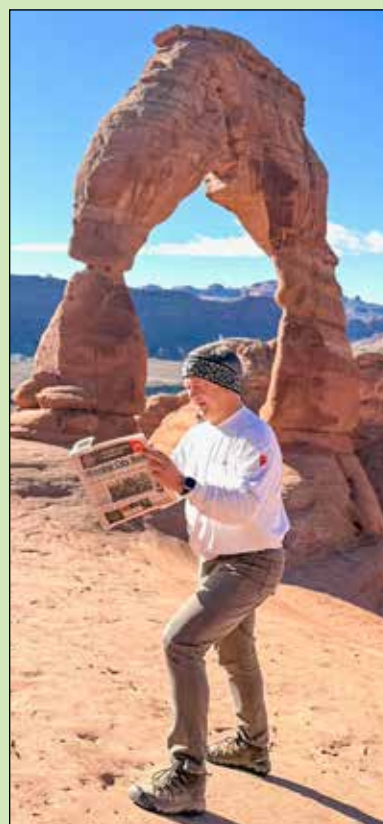
It's charming and has a very laid-back feel to it. Not to mention the streets are just pristine and everything looks pretty much perfect.

I don't think I've ever seen a cleaner city. The attention to detail is absolutely remarkable. You feel like you're in one of the many movies that was filmed there, like *Midnight in The Garden of Good and Evil* or *Forrest Gump*. It's just so lovely. The Southern Gothic architecture and the live oaks and Spanish moss make you almost teary eyed. At Christmas time everything is just breathtaking.

We sipped homemade Horchata and Eggnog around our old historical fireplace and opened up our gifts and got ready for fabulous dinners every night. From The Sixpence Pub to Husk and a funky little pizza place called Graffito that was absolutely fabulous for our teenager and not too stuffy. We walked around old cobblestone streets and shopped at my new favorite place called, The Paris Market and Brocante. Everything there has been imported from France and is perfectly curated. Even my husband like shopping there. From home decor to stunning stemware, perfumes to candles and old absinthe decanters. There was pretty much something for everyone. The antiques are just beyond beautiful, as well. I like to pretend like I'm a local and just Google everything when I'm traveling in a city, but there are fabulous walking tours if you want history facts. The Cathedral Basilica of St. John is a definite must on my list. It's a Roman Catholic cathedral near Lafayette Square. It's an architectural masterpiece. You certainly don't want to miss it. If you want to be touristy go to River Street directly on the waterfront. It's got endless options and is a really fun location if you like to people watch. The most fascinating place that stood out to me was The Armstrong Kessler mansion. It is actually spilling with southern sophistication and it almost has an eerie vibe to it. I think it's estimated to be worth over two hundred million dollars. It's



just a fascinating piece of property to look at. We were enthralled for sure and it left me wanting to know more. In fact, everything in Savannah leaves you with that sensation. It's mystifying, haunting and serene all in one. With acres of parks and beauty you're sure to have a stellar time. What's one of your favorite southern cities? Remember to make the sidewalk your runway or cobblestone if you're in Savannah and kindness always matters. Happy travels y'all!



## Where's the E?

Mike McClain of Anderson was thankful to have had The Electric City News for something to do while hiking to see Delicate Arch at Arches National Park in Moab, UT. The arch is the most widely recognized landmark in the park and is depicted on Utah license plates.

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# Opera

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

for numerous vocal recitals. Choral accompanying has been a highlight of Professor Dill's career. She has accompanied all-state and regional high school and collegiate groups as well as community groups in Georgia, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Virginia. Professor Dill currently serves as accompanist for the GAMAC Chorale and the Concert of Hope Choir in Anderson, South Carolina.

## Wendy Fowler, Mezzo Soprano

Wendy Fowler has sung multiple roles and as a concert soloist with several opera companies, chorales, and orchestras, beginning in the Boston area in 1998 with Paul Madore Chorale, Symphony by the Sea, Salem Philharmonic Orchestra, Hillyer Festival Orchestra, Longwood Opera Company, Cape Ann Symphony, in Arkansas with Opera Theater at Wildwood Park for the Performing Arts, in North Carolina with National Opera Company (formerly Grass Roots Opera), Hickory Choral Society, Faith Memorial Chapel, in San Francisco with BASOTI, in Italy with Opera Theatre and Music Festival of Lucca, and in South Carolina with Jim & Tina Broussard's Greenville Opera Company, Cliffs at Glassy, Commerce Club, Poinsett Club, International Ballet, and Spartanburg Repertory Company. She has been a church music director and contemporary worship leader since 2001, currently leading the music at Redeemer Presbyterian Church in Moore. Wendy teaches private voice and piano lessons, served as a voice professor at Anderson University for 5-years and in her "free time" performs occasionally with a couple of local bands – Devinger Dukes and Dead End Street.

## Indra Thomas, Soprano

Known for her lush and warm voice, Ms. Thomas has performed at many of the world class opera houses and venues, such as the Metropolitan Opera and the Vienna State Opera; she has performed at prominent venues her in the US, France, Germany, Spain and England, including the Royal Albert Hall and Carnegie Hall. Among numerous top orchestras with which she has appeared are the New York Philharmonic, the London Symphony and Leipzig's Gewandhaus Orchestra – as well as leading orchestras in Paris, Spain, Brazil, the Netherlands, Japan, Finland, South Korea, Malaysia, and Abu Dhabi. Ms. Thomas has graced several famous music festivals such as the Bregenz Festspiele in Bregenz, Austria, Choregies, d'Orange in France and the Proms Summer Festival in London.

Her movie credits are "The Upside" and the Academy Award-winning film "Driving

Miss Daisy". She was Emmy nominated for her performance of the "Porgy and Bess Suite" on the New Year's Eve Broadcast Live from Lincoln Center; Grammy Nominated for her recording of Michael Tippett's "A Child Of Our Time" with the London Symphony Orchestra and multiple Off-Broadway nominated opera "Intimate Apparel".

Ms. Thomas is from Atlanta, Georgia. She has a BM from Shorter College and an Artistic Diploma from the prestigious Academy of Vocal Arts in Philadelphia. She serves as Artist in Residence in Voice at Berry College in Rome, Georgia.

## Logan Webber, Tenor

Logan Webber, a Colorado native based in North Carolina, is overjoyed to be performing again here in Anderson, SC! Logan has performed with other companies such as Hawaii Opera Theatre, Opera Carolina, Virginia Opera, Opera Orlando, Charlottesville Opera, The Princeton Festival, Chautauqua Opera, Piedmont Opera, Pacific Opera Project, Amelia Island Opera, The Richmond Symphony and their AEX Indiana Yuletide Celebration where he has performed alongside stars including Frankie Moreno, MOIPEI, Ben Crawford, and most recently Sandi Patty. Logan recently served as the Communications Manager for Opera Carolina during their 74th and 75th Seasons and when not singing, serves as a freelance marketing consultant for arts organizations. Previous companies include The Edward C. Smith Civic Center, Piedmont Opera, Wear Yellow Proudly, the rock band Scythian, and more. Mr. Webber holds degrees from UNCSCA and UMD at College Park. Logan is incredibly thankful and grateful for his amazing, supportive, and wonderful mother, Suzie.

## Dr. Howard Kim, Conductor

Howard Kim has enjoyed a varied career in music throughout the United States as a conductor, vocal coach, concert pianist and collaborative artist. While studying conducting under Richard Rintoul, he was Assistant Conductor of the Colburn Chamber Orchestra and the Orchestra Da Camera, making his television debut in the Dorothy Chandler Pavilion and radio debut on KUSC radio. Howard is a veteran of musical theatre and opera, involved in productions in California, New York, Florida, North Carolina, and South Carolina. He has served as the keyboardist, vocal coach, and/or musical director for production companies including Opera Rochester, Cape Fear Regional Theatre, Fayetteville State University's Summer Opera Series, Mauldin Theatre Company, and the Anderson University Playhouse. He served as a pianist or keyboardist for many churches, including Westwood United Methodist Church in Los Angeles, California; Bethel Fellowship Church in Rochester, New York; Highland

Park Church of the Nazarene in Lakeland, Florida; First Baptist Church in Hope Mills, North Carolina; and most recently as the Director of Music for Lawrence Chapel Methodist Church in Six Mile, South Carolina. He has been the featured soloist with the Colburn Chamber Orchestra, the Marina Del Rey-Westchester Symphony Orchestra, the Southeastern University Orchestra, the Imperial Symphony Orchestra, the Fayetteville Symphony Orchestra, the Anderson Symphony Orchestra, the Oconee Winds, and the Greater Anderson Musical Arts Consortium Chamber Orchestra. He was a member of the Mallarmé Chamber Players and served as principal keyboardist for the Fayetteville Symphony Orchestra, the Fayetteville Jazz Orchestra, and the Electric City Big Band. He has performed duo piano concerts with Canadian pianist Rebekah Jordan-Miller throughout the United States and Canada. Howard has won numerous awards and honors, including the Audience Favorite Prize at the Josef Hofmann International Piano Competition and the Ozelle Rubenstein Award for Chamber Music at the Young Artists' Peninsula Music Festival as part of the Colburn Piano Quintet. He received his early piano training from master teacher Dorothy Hwang at the R.D. Colburn School of Performing Arts, then earned his Bachelor of Arts in Piano Performance from the University of California-Los Angeles, studying under Antoinette Perry and Aube Tzerko. While completing the Master of Music and Doctor of Musical Arts degrees in Piano Performance and Literature under the tutelage of Rebecca Penneys at the Eastman School of Music, he was awarded the Performer's Certificate. Dr. Kim previously served on the faculties of Nazareth College, Southeastern University, and Fayetteville State University; currently he is Professor of Music at the South Carolina School of the Arts at Anderson University, where he is Coordinator of Keyboard Studies and Musical Director for Theatre productions.

Howard and his wife Wendy have lived in Anderson, South Carolina since 2011 with their son Andrew.

## Timothy Kelley, Bass-Baritone

Timothy Kelley is an Anderson County resident, born and raised in Walhalla where he fell in love with music as a student of John Fallon. Timothy has studied voice with John Ramsaur, Russian Bass Vladimir Chernov, and Dr. Amber James.

Timothy has been hailed as a versatile singer with rich low notes that resonate and higher notes with a baritone timbre that rings in halls across the country and Europe. He has travelled to Europe, the Eastern United States performing in various operas and musical productions. Most notable Timothy has sung the role of Javert in Les Misérables and The Engineer in Miss Saigon. He has sung Sarastro in Mozart's The Magic Flute, and many others. His most recent appearance was with Opera Southwest's production of Gounod's Romeo and Juliet as Count Capulet.

A frequent soloist for Handel's Messiah, Mendelssohn's Elijah, and Mozart's Requiem, Timothy favors heavier dramatic roles. When not singing with his home church, St. John's United Methodist Church's Chancel Choir, he can be found in the Billing and Revenue Office for Foothills Community Healthcare.

A Night at the Opera is very special to him as Timothy loves doing work for others in the Anderson Community. Thank you for attending. Sit back and let us take you around the world with Opera!

## INSTRUMENTALISTS:

Kathy Perry, Violin  
Maren Reaves, Violin  
Amanda Aumann, Viola  
Robin Dais, Cello  
Christopher Lewis, Bass

For tickets: <https://cancerassociation-anderson.networkforgood.com/events/78748-a-night-at-the-opera-2025>.



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# Restorative sleep – essential to your good health!

If you're like me, you are charged up to begin a new year with all the positive energy and opportunities that lie ahead for a happier and healthier "you"! Hopefully you will find our features in the coming months filled with both useful and inspiring information.

To that end, let me start by placing my continuing emphasis on one of the cornerstones of good health. And, if I may, suggest it is one of life's simple pleasures. I'm talking about a good night's sleep. Or more to the point what healthcare experts refer to as Restorative Sleep – or the two essential stages of deep sleep and REM (rapid eye movement) – that enable our bodies to repair and regrow tissue, build bone and muscle, and strengthen our immune system. Lack of quality sleep can impact learning and cognition and cause short term memory loss. A real problem when it comes to job effectiveness and student performance.

Are you getting enough quality sleep? If you are feeling so tired you can't focus or find

yourself nodding off at your desk you may want to seek help.



**Dr. Gabrielle F. Cannick**

Through our practice membership in the American Academy of Dental Sleep Medicine we bring our valued patients a unique combination of advanced dental care – plus solutions for patients who have sleep issues. Sleep deprivation has such an impact on our overall health that our signature line above is accurate: "Your dentist can save your life".

Consider. Lack of quality sleep leads to poor oral health. This includes a greater risk of cavities, gum disease, dry mouth, bruxism (teeth grinding); plus, disorders like sleep apnea and insomnia. Long term, chronic sleep issues can lead to cardiovascular disease and hypertension,

diabetes, and the risk of anxiety and depression.

What can be done? Our practice may be a good first start.

If you or family members are experiencing difficulty achieving regular quality sleep, consider reaching out to us for help. We offer a free consultation designed to identify any sleep issues and the possible causes. This includes checking throat anatomy for any airway obstruction – plus tongue, tonsils, and soft palate, all of which can contribute to snoring and irregular sleep patterns. There is also teeth alignment and jaw positioning. Simply put, dental professionals are in a unique position to identify underlying causes of sleep disorders.

Our objective is to help our patients find appropriate solutions, from oral appliances to lifestyle changes, and more. Don't let sleep issues impact your quality of life. All this underscores how important it is to have regular dental checkups.

Please reach out to us if you have questions

or simply call our office for an appointment. We're here for you. Consider us your hometown resource for guidance and support.

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

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



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# HOUSE FINCH

"I'm getting tired of feeding all these house finches," Mike grumbles every time he fills the bird feeders. I take his point. We do have big



Ann K. Bailes

groups of them that seem to be the first to find the new seeds out there. And they stay. And empty out the feeders. Extensively. But they are

pretty birds, so my own opinion vacillates.

The biggest objection to house finches is that they're not supposed to be here. Years ago they were illegally imported from their native west coast to New York pet stores and marketed as "Hollywood Finches." When they didn't sell, and hefty fines loomed for the owners,

they were released back into the wild. That was in 1940; the birds rapidly spread throughout the east and westward, and now their range has met up with their fellow house finches in the west. They are very adaptable, and thrive in arid deserts, woodlands, fields, and urban areas. In other words, they flourish just about anywhere.

Even though they are non-native to our part of the country, they have been accepted by people much better than the European starling and the house sparrow, which are the two other non-native songbirds in the east. Two reasons probably cause this: They have a beautiful song, one that is often heard in most neighborhoods. And while the female is a rather dull greyish-brown, the male has a colorful red head and breast, which varies from dark orange to much deeper red. Sometimes an observer can catch a glimpse of that



red on the male's backside as well.

Often people mistake the house finch for a purple finch. While the

two do look alike, the house finch is much more common and is distinctly red or reddish orange. The purple

finch looks like, according to the late noted ornithologist Roger Tory Peterson, "a sparrow dipped in raspberry juice." The females of the two species are similar to each other but do have some distinct differences.

The main downside to the house finch/purple finch discussion is that purple finches are declining in numbers, in no small part due to house finches' greater adaptation to urban environments. (Purples nest further north, but they do sometimes get this far south during the winter.)

Anyone with bird feeders out is just about guaranteed to be visited by house finches—and yes, Mike is right, they do eat a lot of seed. But I will watch them all winter, hoping to spot a visit by a rarer purple finch with its more raspberry-looking color. Some winters we get them, but it's been awhile.

And I will try to remember that house finches are still pretty in their own right, and their bright song compensates somewhat for all the seed they eat. After all, they're here to stay. So we might as well learn to love them!



## Improving the Landscape of Our Community

**TBA privately funds projects of preservation, public art and good works benefiting the Anderson area community since 2008**

tba: Project Seven



### **Pegasus:**

**Did you know...** That Pegasus is an enduring symbolic figure representing freedom, power and the eternal spirit of imagination and creativity. The bronze sculpture is 12 feet tall with a wingspan of 14.5 feet.

It was created by sculptor Sandy Scott of Lander, WY.

*"The seventh tba project brings beauty and imagination to Courthouse Square."*

*"Whenever I'm downtown, I notice people admiring the sculpture and even taking photos with Pegasus in the background!"*  
Robert Rainey



**tba: Project Eight is in the works and will be announced in the Spring of 2025. Another gift to the Anderson Community from your friends at tba!**



JANUARY 1, 2025 — ELLIS ISLAND DAY

## Anderson residents recount ancestors' immigration

January 1 each year is Ellis Island Day. This day is designated to observe and to celebrate an island that served as a gateway to America during the immigration wave of 1892 through 1954. During the peak years of immigration, an average of 1,900 people passed through the station every day. Between 1892 and 1954, about 17 million people immigrated to America through the station at Ellis Island. Currently, such an operation no longer exists on the island, which can only be accessed by ferry. The island is part of the Statue of Liberty National Monument, including the Statue of Liberty, a national museum of immigration, and Ellis Island Immigrant Hospital.

Here are some local families whose ancestors immigrated from various countries with undesirable conditions to the greener grass of the United States and made this their new home.

**Jan Silverstein's family:** Benjamin Silverstein- PGF- Poland; Sarah Scheinman- PGGM- Russia; Julius Fogel- MGF- Austria; Oscar Levy- MGGF- Russia; Harris Needle- M 2nd GGF- Russia; Rebecca Needle- M 2nd GGM- Russia

**Karin Doker Mize:** My great grandmother and grandfather, Barbara and John Emmanuel Doucha. The spelling of their name was changed upon arrival to New York. She was pregnant with my grandfather, John Emmanuel Doker Sr. They came through Ellis Island from Czechoslovakia.

**Cathy Calvo Knobel:** My grandparents (paternal), Louigi and Loreta Muscarella Calvo came to Ellis Island from Sicily right after marrying about 1912 or so. They never saw

their parents again. Their names were later changed to Louis and Laura.

**Sherrill Knobel Hall:** My mother's mother came here from Russia through Canada. One grandfather from Romania, and one from Austria. Not sure about my father's mother – they never really talked about it. One or more came through Ellis Island, they all lived in various areas of New York.

**Graeme McGregor Heintz:** My husband David's father immigrated from Sweden through Ellis Island. His name was Vladimar Tuir Heintz, they changed his first name at Ellis Island to Walter.

**Ann Beard Shahid:** My husband Ron's ancestors came through Ellis Island from Lebanon.

**Karen Harris Pruitt:** My grandparents came to America from Italy – late 1800's – early 1900's.

**Chris Saad:** Both sets of grandparents came from Lebanon 1916-1917. Alfred and Zahkia Saad (paternal) Michael and Mary Joseph (maternal).

**Donna Marie Maddox:** My maternal grandparents, Dominic and Anna from Italy, the Abruzzo region.

**Laurie Pfister Epps:** All my maternal great grandparents came here from Sweden.

**Lisa Banaszak:** My husband Dave's maternal grandfather came through from Germany.

**Marion Motroni Lambert:** My mother's mother came through Ellis Island from Ireland. My mother's father came from Poland. My father's grandfather came from Italy.

**Dan Lacobie:** My ancestor, Jose Leucoviche, came in by way of merchant

marines from Sicily, Italy in late 1700's. The name was changed around 1810.

**Dawn Tabor:** Eric's grandparents and family came through Ellis Island from Italy. Lena Frinzi. Their names are inscribed on the wall at Ellis Island.

**Judy Booker:** My grandfather, Paul Milz, came to the U.S. from Germany. He was only 18 years old when he came to the U.S. by boat.

**Ann McCoy Nicolopoulos:** My husband Craig's grandfather came through Ellis Island in the early 1900's from Greece on the Peloponese Peninsula; they were olive farmers. His ship sunk in the harbor and his life was spared. He eventually made it to South San Fran to a large Greek community.

**Cliff Smith:** My great grandparents came here from Poland in the 1880's.

**Natalie Juhan:** My great great grandparents Herman and Juliana Auchtung came to America from Germany.

**Robert Hoffman:** My great grandfather Hans Christian Hoffman came through Ellis Island around 1867 from Bad Durkheim, Germany. His wife Lillian Keeble came here from England.

**Carolyn Broeker Knight:** My great grandparents on both sides came here from Germany.

**BJ Nash:** My father in law, Karl Heidlberg and his parents, Hans and Katrina and his sister Elsa escaped Nazi Germany in 1939 and immigrated through Ellis Island. Hans and his siblings were Jewish. They had to escape individually using coins given to them from an uncle who was a jeweler to bribe their way to

America by boat. Karl had finished medical school in Berlin, but the degree wasn't accepted here, so he started over at the University of Wisconsin where he met his wife.

**Lillian Tamanini Humphries:** My grandfather and grandmother came through Ellis Island from Hungary.

**Deana Chavis Baker:** My maternal great-grandfather, Paul Washington Stribble Jr. was born at sea and came through Ellis Island which thereby gave him dual citizenship (Switzerland and America).

**Candy Brigman Jones:** My great great great grandfather came from Germany circa 1829. He was a watchmaker and jeweler. He had a gold mine and a mint in Rutherfordton. He minted the first gold dollar in the U.S. the Bechtler Gold Dollar. The Bechtler House in Rutherfordton NC is now a museum.

**Aubrey Pfirmann:** My Nana, Tusnelda Hartman came here from Germany.

**Mary Guida Downs:** My grandparents – Salvatore and Mary Guida came to NY via ship prior to Ellis Island opening.

**Ann Klopfenstein Bailes:** My grandfather, Max Hemmer, came here from Germany about 1925.

**Beth Cartlidge:** My Paternal grandparents came here from Germany and my maternal grandparents from England and Ireland.

**Peg Ivey:** My mother Anna and grandparents Carmella and Saverio came here from Italy.

**Deb Herbert:** My ancestors came here from Scotland.



# The basics of cat trapping according to an ACHS volunteer

**BY SHIRLEY MCALISTER**

Hello, everyone. When my friend Ginny Bailes Fretwell asked if I was interested in writing a column about cats and cat trapping for The Electric City News, I jumped at the chance, not because I consider myself an expert on the subject but because any attention drawn to the feral, stray, and community cat situation in Anderson will, I hope, be for the good. In this first column, I want to tell you a little bit about myself and my involvement in animal rescue and share some facts about feline trap/neuter (or spay)/release (TNR).

I've always loved animals, and I've been a member of the Anderson County Humane Society since the 1970's, but I became what I consider an active member about fifteen years ago. I volunteered in the cat adoption area at the Anderson PetSmart for a year or two, cleaned the cat room at the ACHS spay/neuter clinic each Sunday for about eighteen months, and helped with many fund-raisers and transports. Over the years I also took in several ACHS animals who had little chance of getting adopted. Then Wanda Crane, the ACHS president, asked me if I'd help trap some cats. I said yes.

I had no idea what I was getting into.


First, some definitions: Feral cats are completely wild. They are not socialized to humans and usually would not be comfortable as pets without careful and lengthy socialization. Strays were once pets who, for a variety of reasons, are now living outdoors. They are potentially adoptable. Community cats is a term for groups of both ferals and strays who live in a particular area.

Trapping is the job no one wants. It can be physically demanding, it requires a lot of patience, and it can be heart-breaking. (I still feel guilty every time I entice a cat into a trap when all the poor creature wanted was a little food.) Trapping can also be costly and somewhat hazardous. And it's definitely time-consuming since TNR is a three-day process. On day one, the cat is caught. The trapper keeps the animal overnight to make sure it doesn't eat the night before its surgery. The next morning, she takes the cat to whichever facility will be performing the spay/neuter, then picks it up that same afternoon, keeps it overnight, and, if there are no complications, releases it back to its community.

Life isn't easy for cats in these colonies. Since the animals receive no veterinary care, they are at the mercy of all the diseases that affect their species. Any injuries they suffer

usually go untreated. They face many hazards: traffic, attacks by other animals, human cruelty, etc. And unless the cats are trapped and 'fixed,' a colony can grow at an alarming rate. A female cat can have 2-5 litters each year, but it's the male cats who really throw the population increase into overdrive because a single male cat can father numerous litters from multiple females. TNR is the only humane way to control the growth of these colonies.

There are many cat colonies/communities in Anderson, and there are dedicated people out there trying to make life a little kinder for them. I hope to speak with some of these folks and share their insights with you in later columns. In the meantime, I wish everyone a happy and healthy new year.



President Jimmy Carter  
1924 - 2024

The Electric City News remembers Jimmy Carter  
38th President of the United States  
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Citizen of Plains, Georgia, and the world  
Humanitarian  
Defender of those oppressed  
Champion to the poor  
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# WINTER IS HERE

You and I are so lucky to live in a region with four distinct seasons. I love them all, but if I had to pick a favorite, Winter would be the best, from my point of view. Let's take a cup of coffee as an example. In the summer, a cup of coffee is nothing more than a quick pick-me-up and a habit to start the day. In the Winter, that same dark liquid takes on a magical morning quality as you hold its warmth



Neal Parnell

with both hands, feeling its hug while contemplating your day and watching the glistening sun rays on the frost-covered lawn. Winter Wins.

Now, don't take this the wrong way. I know that some of them are beneficial to our lives, and I'm willing to live with them for three seasons but praise the maker for allowing us to have a couple of months without bugs. I know this is the South, and some of the hearty bugs are still around, but at least I'm not unknowingly inhaling a horde of gnats for my daily protein requirement. Winter Wins.

Winter in the South is like Summer storming into the room, yelling and slamming the door, but coming back and

saying, "And one more Thing". We can't have Snuggly in the Summer when we're all sticky, sweaty, and smelly. We sit on opposite sides of the couch and avoid all contact. But give us a blustery forty degrees and we'll be snuggling on the couch, covered in blankets, loving like two rats in a wool sock. Winter Wins.

After the Holidays some decide that they will get their bodies in shape for Spring and Summer. Not me. I'm more like a bear that doesn't hibernate but enjoys gorging on hot dogs and pizza through the Summer and Fall to prepare my body for the harsh high-calorie marathon of November and December. Winter Wins.

We work like mad during the Spring and through the Summer; planting, mowing, watering, and weed-whacking, only to have Winter come along and say, "This is my yard now, I'm killing everything you've worked on, get in the house and stay there till I'm done". Winter Wins.

Southerners don't get much winter weather and forget that they cannot drive on snow and ice-covered roads. Old Man Winter knows this and that's why he waits a couple of years before dumping a few inches and laughs out loud as we slip, slide, and crash like an episode of America's Funniest Videos. Winter Wins.

**You and I  
are so lucky  
to live in a  
region with  
four distinct  
seasons.**



Winter gets another laugh when it sees us bringing trees into our houses, hanging socks on the mantle, attaching red noses to our trucks, and eating and drinking ourselves into a stupor while watching men in helmets try to move a brown ball up and down a field for hours on end. Winter Wins.

Old Man Winter does have haters that

long for him to leave forever. For them, he allows Spring to arrive, and the new planting to begin when Ka-Boom!, He April Fools everyone with 6 inches of snow and ice before saying goodbye. Winter Wins.

Spring is Birth, Summer is Growth, Fall is Knowledge, Old Man Winter is Wisdom

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# Be grateful in 2025

By now, the eggnog is gone, the cookies are stale, and the tree has lost half of its needles. We're moving into the celebration of a new year, and I'm asking you not to make ANY resolutions but this one:

"In 2025, I resolve to practice radical, aggressive, and, most importantly, dutiful gratitude."

If gratitude seems easy, you are not being radical enough. I'm not talking about the words of gratitude we often repeat, such as, "I'm grateful for my family," or "I'm grateful for my health." I am talking about being grateful for tiny, specific moments that we usually take for granted.

This focus on gratitude started on a trip to Washington, D.C., a couple of months ago. People go to our nation's capital for official business or to protest in front of the White House, but Ted and I went for the restaurants and the museums. It had been many years since we had visited the Smithsonian collection, and we wanted to see our old favorites, like the Museum of American History and the American Art

Museum, as well as some newer ones. About halfway through our five-day trip, we toured the National Museum of African American

History and Culture, the National Museum of the American Indian, and the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, which is not a part of the Smithsonian Institute.

I do not have to tell you that, on paper, this looked like a bad idea, but based on location,



Kim von Keller

it is just how our schedule worked out. My biggest worry was that the histories of so much suffering would eventually make us numb, but that is not what happened at all. At each museum, the personal stories and artifacts that were shared served as reminders that history is more than timelines. History is real people and their experiences, millions of

people over extended periods of time, and you quickly realize that if you've not faced bondage, family separation, displacement, or extermination, you are part of a historical minority.

Ted and I talked about this a lot. Our first thought was global: "We are grateful that this wasn't us." Soon, we became more specific: "We are grateful for food." Neither of these felt right.

Finally, we talked about what life was like for the people whose stories were told in these museums and the mundane experiences that were taken away from them: sitting with a spouse; choosing your own food; having an hour or two without being afraid. "Practicing gratitude is more than just a good idea," I said to Ted at one point. "Recognizing even the smallest blessings is a duty to those who had so little to be grateful for."

Of course, gratitude is not enough. To truly be dutiful to those who have suffered, we must follow up with action. American poet Mary Oliver once said, "We need beauty because it makes us ache to be worthy of it." Substitute the word 'gratitude' for 'love' and you will be moved to speak out, donate, or volunteer for those in need.

Since those museum visits, I have been transformed. I'm thinking about things I do every day in a completely new way. I am grateful for a cup of coffee in the morning, exercising, brushing my hair, and listening to music. I could go on and on, but that might not make your gratitude list. What I hope will make your New Year's Resolution list, though, is radical, aggressive, and dutiful gratitude. It will change your life, and the lives of others, in 2025.



## Museum to host 'Anderson Underground' exhibit

The Anderson County Museum is hosting their new exhibit, Anderson Underground. This exhibit will feature Rich Otter's photography of the Blue Ridge Passenger Depot as it stands today.

The event is Friday, January 3rd 2:00 – 3:30 p.m.  
Anderson County Museum  
202 E. Greenville St.  
RSVP to [acmrsvp@andersoncountysc.org](mailto:acmrsvp@andersoncountysc.org) - Anderson Underground.

[andersoncountysc.org](http://andersoncountysc.org)

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# County marks 20th anniversary of Green Pond Landing

Anderson County, S.C. – When people gathered to cut the ribbon for Green Pond Landing on December 19th, 2004, they had no idea what it would mean for Anderson County. It has turned into an economic engine!

The Green Pond Landing Project is a collaboration between Anderson County and South Carolina Department of Natural Resources, Sport Fish Restoration administered by the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and the Natural Resource Trustee Council for the Lake Hartwell PCB Settlement.

On its 10th birthday December 19, 2024, the fishing tournaments will have generated an astounding \$116M in economic impact! This amazing decade has featured:

- ♦ Three Bassmaster Classics
- ♦ Two TBF High School World Finals & National Championship
- ♦ Two Bassmaster High School National Championships
- ♦ Bassmaster & TBF Junior World Championships
- ♦ Two Ray Scott Championships
- ♦ Three BASS Nation Championships
- ♦ Association of Collegiate Anglers National Championship
- ♦ Bass College Series National Championship
- ♦ Two Fishers of Men National Championships
- ♦ Two National Professional Fishing League tournaments
- ♦ Three ABA Military Championships

Anglers from 48 states, four Canadian provinces and 12 foreign countries have fished Lake Hartwell out of Green Pond Landing. In addition to European & Asian anglers, four countries in Africa have traveled here to compete.

The day after the celebration, Anderson County Parks, Recreation & Tourism Division Director Glenn Brill will retire after a 20-year career. When Brill arrived here in December 2004 to found our Convention & Visitors Bureau, he remembers, "Nobody was talking about our lake." We've come a long way since then!

## FROM THE SHELF

# On Ann Patchett and reading goals

Finishing off my reading year with more than a 1:10 ratio of nonfiction to fiction (my goal), I read *These Precious Days* by Ann Patchett. While most know her for her prolific fiction, *These Precious Days* is a collection of essays.



Sara Leady

An ongoing joke for one of my book clubs is all about my love for Patchett. I have a strong dislike of her books, and the fact that my book club manages to select

one of her titles to read every year is endlessly hilarious to them (fine, to me too).

I recognize and respect her craft and talent, I just don't generally enjoy her fiction. It hasn't sparked any sort of strong emotion on my part beyond mild annoyance that I'm being "forced" to read a book I don't really care for. Again, she's a phenomenal writer, she's just not my jam. I can't really explain it because I don't have what feels like a solid justification for my 'meh' (not that you're required to justify not liking a very popular or renowned author).

Earlier in the year, I read *Big Magic: Creative Living Beyond Fear* by Elizabeth Gilbert (she wrote *Eat, Pray, Love* among a bunch of other things). In the book she mentions Patchett (whom she's friends with) and this was my first look at Patchett outside of her fiction novels. Reading it I remember thinking, "Huh. She actually sounds kind of rad - I wonder why I never like her books." *These Precious Days* showed me the 'rad' Patchett I glimpsed in Gilbert's book.

Patchett has lived an incredible life outside of the context of her being a famous author. This collection of essays gives us insight into not just what makes her the writer she is, but also who she is as a person. As much as I am 'meh' about her fiction, her nonfiction makes me feel like not only could she be my best friend, she's goals for what I want to be when I grow up.

Each of the twenty-four essays spoke to me in some way, but a few stood out more than others. Her essay

"There Are No Children Here," speaks to the experience of many women, like me and her, about our experience with people's reactions to our adamant desire to not have children. I laughed, I felt seen, and it was a good reminder of how often the question regarding marriage and children is often just a means of small talk and nothing else.

The title essay, "These Precious Days" covers Patchett's friendship with Sooki, Tom Hanks' assistant, whom she always admired. Despite having "known" each other for years, they didn't become close until Covid started and Sooki's pancreatic cancer returned. By serendipitous circumstances, Sooki happened to mention her diagnosis (something Patchett didn't know about) and that led to Patchett's husband, a renowned doctor, getting Sooki into a clinical trial at his hospital. She even stayed with Patchett during treatment. I identified deeply with Sooki's processing of her diagnosis and her fears

surrounding how it, and she, was impacting everyone around her.

Her opening essay, "Essays Don't Die," makes me think I could actually write, not just contemplate it (yes, I see the irony given my longevity writing this column). I've had a multitude of people tell me I should write a memoir, and Patchett's thoughts on and framework of creating a collection of essays makes me seriously think I could and should actually do it. It's certainly something I'll be noodling on as a goal for this coming year. Outside of life goals, I've added Patchett's nonfiction to my TBR list (to-be-read list) which is the subject of my reading goal for 2025: to actually knock some titles off my TBR pile (ideally long term ones). While they may be new additions, I'll be making a point to read the rest of Patchett's nonfiction (also essay collections) while also "getting" to read *Tom Lake*, another fiction by her for my book club.

I love  
**everything**  
about Groucho's.

- Philly S.,  
Anderson, S.C.



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# ANDERSON-BELTON TRAIL

BY RICH OTTER

Throughout South Carolina, the United States and the world, there has been a growing trend to rehabilitate abandoned railroad lines by using them for walking, hiking, and biking trails. They were wonderfully situated and graded to accommodate the previous need of the old steam or electric engines. Likewise, they are perfectly suited for personal fitness and exercise in the 21st Century.

Anderson County has a particularly inviting potential for a scenic, historical and accessible trail. The old Blue Ridge-Southern rail line is still actively functioning with the Pickens and the Greenville & Northwestern Railways, but the former Anderson Traction Company-Piedmont & Northern (P&N) route from Anderson to Belton has been abandoned. Fortunately, much of its structure remains intact and runs parallel to the overhead electric power lines that fed it once upon a time.

The P&N acquired the Anderson Traction Company that originally built the route as an interurban route to Belton. The acquisition and development of an extended electric line was a brainchild of Anderson's former resident W. S. Lee and was adopted by James Buchanan Duke and the Duke Syndicate to merge into an electric train route that became the P&N.

The electric line was innovative, and for ten cents an individual was reported as being able to go from Anderson to Belton, Williamston,

Pelzer and Greenville with whistle stops in between. The line would start from downtown Anderson and stop where there was a very small (one tiny room) station for the then Anderson College, and stretch eight miles to Belton. There was even a girls' club at Anderson College known as the P&N Girls in the early 1900s.

The route stretched through farm land, over the Rocky River and Broadway Creek trestles, providing breathtaking views of the country

side. Even where there was no official railway station, with a wave of a hand, the engineer would stop to give a hopeful walker a lift. It has been reported the engineer also had to stop to lift an occasional moonshine imbiber off the rails.

The trestles still exist, towering across streams with old rails. They are of unique historic significance. Fixing them in a rails-to-trails corridor environment could preserve an otherwise very significant and historically valuable asset of Anderson

County while also offering a wonderful means of exercise and a beautiful stroll opportunity.

A multi-purpose trail would be built with a ten-foot paved width similar to what is currently available on the East-West connector. It would provide access and departure areas along the route. It would likely be constructed in one-mile increments, begun from each end and finally converging in the center.

There are certainly obstacles that would need to be overcome.

Part of the property is publicly available, but mostly it is in private ownership. Some of the private owners are understandably concerned about security by opening a stretch across their land for public usage. Historically, however, the evidence has shown little danger from such intrusions, and, in many respects, would be safer because of a secure public access that would allow individuals a visitation to the historic trestles and areas with safe access, secure structures and other health enthusiasts offering safety through numbers. It would be a quiet environment.

Michael Gardner, a member of the steering committee of the Trails to Belton feasibility project has indicated that citizen enthusiasm is needed for the project to succeed. He expressed hope that nearby property owners would recognize the benefits to both the community and their own properties that could arise from repurposing the dormant electric rail line, while also acknowledging and respecting their concerns about the project. He pointed out: "It is a train line of historic significance that is still out there, but overgrown."

Andersonians are proud of their heritage. Such a project would revitalize a part of its past with some very interesting scenery and including beautiful bridges few have had the opportunity to see. They still have a story to tell, and this would help in their survival while proving a healthy activity for our current and future citizens.



P&N trestle top, Broadway Creek

WINSTON/WINSTON

Wingo

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## THE GARDEN SHOP

## RESCUING AZALEAS



**SUSAN  
TEMPLE**  
master  
gardener

One of my least favorite things to do is clean out oak trees, sweetgums, briars, etc., that Mother Nature plants in shrubs and trees. Thankfully, it is a task that does not have to be done often and is saved for wintertime. It's easier to see odd plants amongst what I want to grow and I'm not crawling up under something when snakes are out. This was not on my to do list, yet, but one thing led to another and there I was crawling around pulling, cutting, and prying out. I've learned that sometimes letting the trees grow enough so they can be bent out away from whatever they are growing up in, makes it easy to put some weed killer on them, then simply cut them off after they die. It's a catch 22 – let it grow and use herbicide or catch them small and pull. Sometimes such undesirables are not noticed until they are too big to pull or dig out. Often times it is impossible to get close enough with the lawnmower or bushhog to cut these undesirables. However, when

the pasture gets bushhogged before spring, I may try to cut some lower limbs from deodar cedars and cedar trees so the bushhog can get all the way under them. Keeping those cleaned out can be a really big task and brings to mind things I would rather not think about.... when I'm too old to do such things. Then what? But like most things in life, I'll figure that out when I have to.

Before this cleaning jag started, some rescue azaleas were being planted. While at the library to check out a book, a landscaping crew was there removing big patches of azaleas near the road. I briefly thought about continuing why I was there but could not help myself. As I watched a truck pull off loaded down with azaleas, I asked the man when he put another load aside, could I pilfer through and get some. He said yes, it would save him from having to haul them off.

Azaleas are very easy to divide. In a mature patch, as limbs touch the ground, new plants root. It is very easy to cut them off from the mother plant and get a new one. Most of these rescues are small pieces. About ten are nice shrubs. I just happen to keep a pair of pruners in my truck so what I couldn't break apart could be cut. The guys were very nice and the one directing the tractor driver helped me get a few as the tractor scooped up

the big bunch. Many divisions have a patch of roots with one or two big branches. The long, lanky growth was cut back to make it grow back thicker and decrease transplant shock. Ones that have a good root ball to them were planted as is. If they seem to droop, or suffer too much from being transplanted, I'll prune them later. They should be fine though. If some of the scraggly ones don't make it, I'm not out much. Just a tad of time and labor. These new rescues got mulched with leaves, sprinkled with some worm castings, and jump start fertilizer. Jump Start is made by Fox Farms. I've been using it for several years when rooting plants. It seems to make a noticeable difference in how well plants root and start growing. I've never experimented with using root tone on transplants. It is used solely on cuttings.

The landscapers guessed the azaleas are red. That will be good. There are not many red ones in the garden. The shrubs removed were about four feet tall. They do not appear to have been pruned to keep to that height. If they grow taller, that will be fine, actually preferred. Just in case, the rescues have been put in front of Formosa, George Tabor, and Pride of Mobile, that are taller. Hopefully, in a few years, this will be time and effort well spent.



Rescued azalea in front of Formosa azalea

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