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May 23-June 5, 2024

Spend summer with some all-time great Anderson-area writers

BY KIM VON KELLER

Whether your summer getaway takes you to the beach, the lake, or the mountains, you can always take a bit of home with you. Vacation is a great time to become acquainted with some of the Anderson area's finest novelists, screenwriters, short story writers, and poets who have been inducted into the South Carolina Academy of Authors.

BETSY CROMER BYARS, 2016 INDUCTEE

Nurture your children's love of reading by introducing them to the fiction of Betsy Cromer Byars, one of the most famous authors with Anderson connections. Her grandfather, John Schwartz Cromer, was a local merchant, and her aunt Gladys Cromer taught math to thousands of Andersonians over her 45-year career. Byars' novel *Summer of the Swans* won the prestigious Newbery Medal,

while *The Night Swimmers* won the National Book Award for Children's Fiction. Leaning into children's love of mystery, she wrote *Wanted... Mud Blossom*, which received the Edgar Award for Children's Mystery. Available at amazon.com.



Betsy Cromer Byars

JAMES LEE BARRETT, 1998 INDUCTEE

You've got to come off the beach at some point. During the heat of the afternoon, gather the family for a movie by screenwriter James Lee Barrett, who attended McCants Junior High and Boys High School. *Shenandoah*,

starring James Stewart, is the story of a family torn by the Civil War. *Smokey and the Bandit*, starring Burt Reynolds and Sally Fields, is lighter fare, as long-haul truckers attempt to outrun the law. You'll find *Shenandoah* on YouTube. *Smokey and the Bandit* is available on Netflix.



James Lee Barrett

RON RASH, 2010 INDUCTEE

An excellent introduction to a writer's work is by exploring his or her short stories. South Carolina native Ron Rash is a novelist, poet, and short story writer who studied at Clemson University and taught at Tri-County Tech. He is

a three-time winner of the O. Henry Prize for short fiction, and *Chemistry and Other Stories*, a collection of short stories, was a finalist for the PEN/Faulkner Award. His best-selling novel *Serena* was also a finalist for the PEN/Faulkner Award and later produced as a movie starring Jennifer Lawrence and Bradley Cooper. You'll find his literary works at amazon.com, while *Serena* is available for streaming on Netflix.



Ron Rash

SEE WRITERS ON PAGE 2

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TL HANNA NJROTC CADETS AWARDED HISTORIC FIRSTS

Only a handful of Navy JROTC students from across the country are selected to receive the Legion of Valor Bronze Cross for Achievement and the Joseph C. Gilliam Academic Achievement Award. A T.L. Hanna Yellowjacket cadet had never earned these awards before this year when Cadet Lieutenant Commander Caden Waters and Cadet Lieutenant Shivangi Nayak were both selected, respectively. The cadets were recognized by Principal Walter Mayfield and Captain Skip Lussier at an awards ceremony on 2 May.

The Legion of Valor of the United States of America, Inc., an organization made up solely of recipients of the Medal of Honor, the Distinguished Service Cross, the Navy Cross, and the Air Force Cross, presents the Legion of Valor Achievement medal annually to outstanding cadets for excellence in military, scholastic, and civic affairs. It is the highest award an NJROTC Cadet can earn and Caden was selected for this prestigious award. Caden carries a GPA of 4.5, is

ranked in the top 20% of his class, was the NJROTC Company Fall Commander, recipient of the West Point Leadership Award, a Palmetto Boys State graduate, a Citadel Leadership Academy graduate, and on the Tennis Team. He will attend the University of South Carolina in the Fall.

The Joseph C. Gilliam Academic Achievement Award is given to one cadet from each of the 23 NJROTC areas...that is twenty-three awardees out of 83,000 students nationwide! Cadet Lieutenant Nayak was chosen based upon her academic achievement with an eyewatering 5.113 GPA, sustained superior cadet performance, and an insightful essay she wrote regarding "Memes in Modern Communication." Shivangi will attend the University of South Carolina on a full scholarship to study Biochemistry.

These individual awards cap an outstanding year for the T.L. Hanna NJROTC unit that earned Distinguished Unit status for the third consecutive year!



Joseph C. Gilliam Award - LT Nayak



Legion of Valor - LCDR Caden Waters

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Writers

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

SUE MONK KIDD, 2011 INDUCTEE

The stories of Sue Monk Kidd have been brought to life on the page and on the screen. She was an Anderson resident from 1976 to 1998, writing her first work of fiction in her 40s. Her first novel, *The Secret Life of Bees*, spent over two years on the New York Times best-seller list and has been



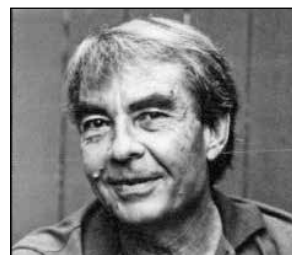
Sue Monk Kidd

translated into 36 languages. A 2008 film version of the novel starred Queen Latifah and Dakota Fanning. Kidd's subsequent novels, *The Mermaid Chair*, *The Invention of Wings*, and *The Book of Longings* also received best-seller status. Her novels are available at amazon.com. The screen adaptation of *The Secret Life of Bees* is available for streaming on Hulu. You'll find *The Mermaid Chair* on Prime Video.

GUY MATTISON DAVENPORT JR., 2016 INDUCTEE

The work of Guy Davenport, an Anderson native, could be described as both thoughtful and difficult. In addition to his work as an author, he was an illustrator, translator, and teacher, serving as a professor at the University of Kentucky for almost 30 years. When he died in 2005, Christopher Leumann-Haupt of the New York Times recognized him as a short story writer in the modernist tradition of Ezra Pound and James Joyce (NYT, Jan. 7, 2005). In 1990, he was awarded a "Genius Grant"

by the MacArthur Foundation for his work in short fiction. Davenport, who famously said that he only had 18 readers, is still remembered in Anderson by the Davenport 18, a reading group who meet regularly to discuss

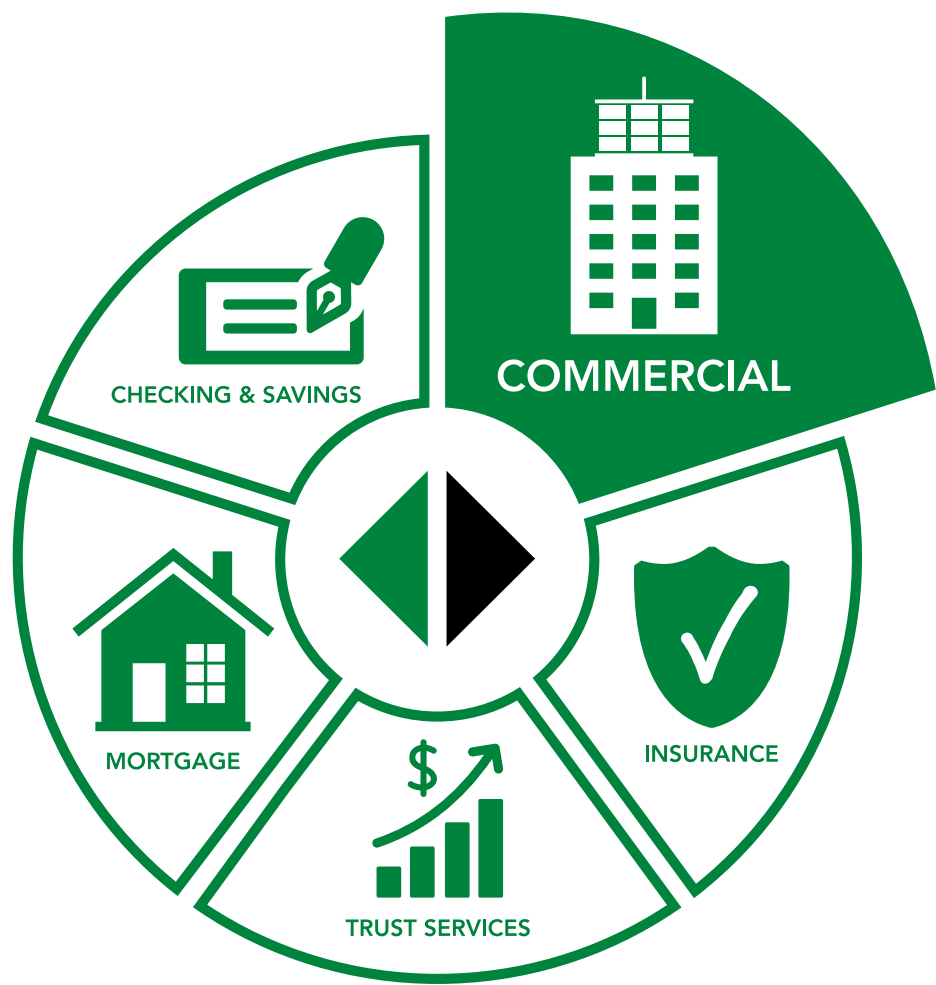


Guy Mattison Davenport Jr.

his work. The Guy Davenport Reader and a collection of short stories titled *Twelve Stories* are available at penguinrandomhouse.com.

The Electric City News thanks Gayle Edwards, a former member of the South Carolina Academy of Authors Board of Directors, bibliophile, and retired educator, for her help with this story. For more information on The South Carolina Academy of Authors, visit scacademyofauthors.com.

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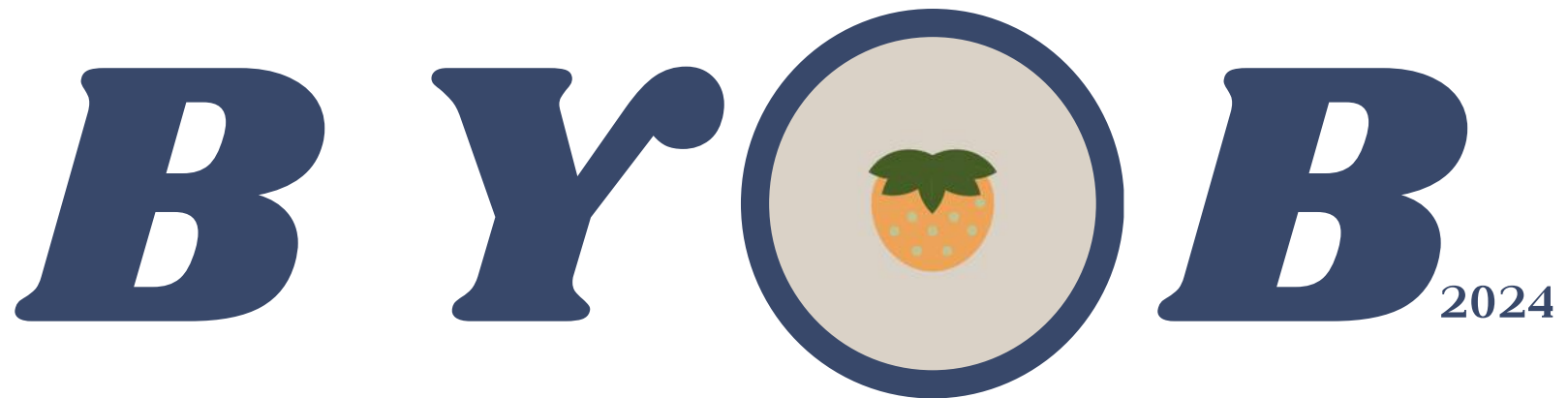
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Curtains of color

Never, ever, did I think that I would be able to observe the northern lights right from the end of our driveway in Anderson, SC.

For thirty years I taught about the aurora borealis (northern lights) in my earth science classes. We'd look at pictures, and I'd tell the students that the aurora borealis is a phenomenon only seen by people in Canada, or Alaska, or the very northernmost parts of the U.S. I'd think that maybe one day Mike and I could take a trip far enough north to see this phenomenon. But it was always a bucket list item. Definitely not something that we would see around here.



Ann K. Bailes

When I heard on Friday, May 10, that a large geomagnetic storm might cause the northern lights to be seen as far south as Greenville, I didn't think much of it. I've heard that prediction before, and nothing ever came of it. Since we are further south of Greenville, – why get my hopes up?

About 10:00 my son called from the east side of town. "Mom, you've got to go outside right now and look at the sky!" So I headed out, flashlight in hand. And how incredible was the sight! Reddish-pink shades lighting up the entire northwestern sky near the setting crescent moon. The lights grew brighter and darker, back and forth, over several minutes. Then, they shot upward overhead, changed to

light green, and then returned to pink. Finally the sight dimmed and went away. Many in our area enjoyed the nighttime beauty.

What in the world--or atmosphere--are these curtains of color? The complete answer is a little above my pay grade (I taught eighth grade, not exactly high-level academics) but here are the basics: Ionized particles called solar wind are ejected from the sun during periods of intense activity of solar flares, or storms. This solar wind travels to the earth and interacts with the magnetic field that exists around the earth. That produces the unusual light features we know as the aurora borealis. They are usually only seen in areas much closer to the north and south poles (in the south they are known as the aurora australis) because the magnetic field is tighter in those two spots.

But last week the storms coming from the sun were much stronger than usual, and thus we got a very rare opportunity to enjoy the aurora right here in Anderson.

This current period of solar activity is expected to continue for up to another year, so we may get even another chance. But it was a potentially once in a lifetime experience. It led to a lot of Facebook interaction with former students who also saw the beautiful skies – including my son, who took the photo.

I'll never forget the experience. This was an awesome example of God's power as seen in nature – not in some exotic northern place, but right here in Anderson, SC. What a great event!



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Anderson School District 5 presents 2024 Distinguished Alumni Awards

At graduation ceremonies each year, Anderson School District Five honors a former graduate from each high school selected from nominations. These outstanding alumni are held in esteem for their contributions to our community and/or their profession maintaining high standards in personal integrity and character.

Anderson School District Five has prepared many deserving young men and women who have gone on to make their school, district, and hometown proud. It is an honor to recognize there are so many outstanding alumni that there will be many more years of bestowing this award to these deserving individuals.

If you know someone who deserves this

honor, be sure to fill out a nomination form on the district website.

AMY DAVIS

Amy is a 2007 graduate of T. L. Hanna High School. During her years at Hanna, she earned multiple awards for her achievements on the soccer, volleyball and swimming teams. She was also a



top ranked student of distinction academically and participated in numerous clubs and student government.

She is a 2011 graduate of the United States Naval Academy, ranking in the top 15% of her class. She earned a master's degree in 2019 from UNC Chapel Hill.

In her military career, she has completed multiple professional and tactical qualifications. Amy was awarded Instructor of the Year for instructing over 2500 future naval aviators.

Lt. Commander Amy Davis is currently stationed in San Diego as Maintenance Department Head for Helicopter Sea Combat Squadron Two One. She has recently been selected to serve as 2nd in Command at Naval Air Station Key West for the Station Search and Rescue Unit in Key West, Florida.

Hall of Fame in 2023.

A graduate of Erskine College, he was the first to receive a scholarship from the school to run on the cross-country team. He has also received the Outstanding Alumni Award from Erskine.



As a local business man, Andy has served and serves in numerous local organizations, some of these in leadership roles. Some of these include Anderson School

District 5 Board of Trustees and Foundation Board, Anderson Area YMCA Board of Directors, First Presbyterian Church, Anderson Chamber of Commerce, AnMed Ambassador Program, Anderson United Way and the Kiwanis Club of Anderson. He was also selected for the Anderson Independent Mail's 20 Under 40. Andy is currently the T.L. Hanna Bass Fishing Team Coach.

ANDY PATRICK

Andy is a 1992 graduate of Westside High School. Andy was an outstanding and award-winning cross country and track athlete at Westside from 1989-1992. He was inducted into the Westside High School Athletic

'I'M BORED!'

It's hard to believe another school year has come and gone. Where does time go? We go from the "rat race" of May to the "slow days" of summer. Give it about a day or two and your kids will be asking you questions such as "What can we do?" or saying things like "I'm bored!" I've compiled a list of ideas you may not automatically think of when giving suggestions. I hope this helps keep those little minds and hands busy while you settle in to enjoy the 'dog days' of summer!

- Go on a bike ride, or take a walk.
- Go on a scavenger hunt in your backyard.
- Go to www.storylineonline.org and listen to a story read aloud by a member of the Screen Actors Guild.
- Tune in to Cosmic Kids Yoga at <https://www.youtube.com/user/CosmicKidsYoga>.
- Go to <https://www.youtube.com/user/GoNoodleGames> and start dancing along to fun songs like "Can't Stop the Feeling," "Banana, Banana, Meatball," and "Baby Shark"!
- Get artsy with a "directed drawing" at Art for Kids Hub <https://www.youtube.com/user/ArtforKidsHub>. Here you can learn how to draw the Easter bunny, Yoda, caterpillars, sunflowers, and more!
- Map the house/ Treasure hunt: This allows students to practice their mapping skills! Allow the student to create a map of your house using pencils and crayons. Tell your child to use the map to mark where they have hidden a "treasure" and a path to get to the treasure.
- Journaling: Challenge your child to create their own journal entries of all the fun

activities you do together each day. Be sure to date each entry so that you can go back and



Katie Laughridge

remember what made each day special! To make a journal: Get 4 or more pieces of paper and stack them on top of one another. Next, fold the stack of paper in half. Give your child some sentence starters such as: "My favorite thing I did today was _____," "Today I got so frustrated when _____," or "I felt the most happy today when _____."

- Shape walk: Look for shapes indoors or outdoors and ask your child to identify what shapes the objects look like and write them down.
- Start a new chapter book "read-aloud" with your kids. Let them draw, build legos, or do a quiet activity while you read to them. Some good choices are Junie B Jones, The Vanderbeekers, Gooney Bird Greene, I Survived series, The Boxcar Children, Ninja Kid, DragonMasters, Holes, Ivy and Bean, and Owl/ Pug/ Unicorn Diaries! The options are endless. Google search "chapter books" with the ages of your children and you'll find so many options!

"I have long felt that the way to keep children out of trouble is to keep them interested in things. Lecturing to children is no answer to delinquency. Preaching won't keep youngsters out of trouble, but keeping their minds occupied will." -Walt Disney

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When I was a teenager, my Aunt Issie told me the older I get the faster time will move. In my teenage brain, my eyes rolled as I thought crazy ol' woman, but I smiled at her and agreed. Issie was precious to me, and I would have never done anything such as that out loud to her. And precious doesn't even come close to what I was to her. I quote her statement quite often now that I know how wise her words were. Time seems to stand still now and then though, particularly when one is waiting on something to grow. Give or take, some 24 years ago, native Florida leucothoe (*Agarista populifolia*) was planted along the edge of the woods to block a house

someone would build on the adjoining land someday. Lady luck smiled on us, however, and that land became ours in 2019. Therefore, blocking that area is not so important now.

In those years, Florida leucothoe became a favorite plant. If one needs a plant for full shade, dry or damp, Florida leucothoe could be it. Its only short coming is it is slow growing. It took probably 10 years for a three-foot plant to get about six feet tall. Had I watered it, surely it would have grown faster. But as with most things at my place, it must survive with only water from Mother Nature. Plants in this hedge are now about eight feet tall and almost as wide. A few are much taller. The evergreen branches arch and the plant takes on a vase, draping shape. Some of the taller plants have formed a tunnel to walk under. This plant would make a nice natural arbor if one had a need for such. The clumps at ground level will spread, but again, slowly. A few have rooted where



Florida leucothoe in bloom

branches have touched the ground and/or suckered a bit. If you're visiting SC Botanical Gardens, there are leucothoes growing along the edge of the pond where the bald cypress trees are. Or they were on my last visit. Smaller varieties of what is commonly called doghobble can be found growing wild along creeks. Acid soil is also helpful. No fertilizer or amendments have ever been put on my hedge. What would be the point of fertilizing if I wasn't going to water? Plus, oak leaves have

hopefully provided enough nourishment to them over the years.

New growth has a slightly copper color, adding interest. White blooms cover the stems from late April, through most of May, and have a sweet honey like smell. While reading about the plant, flowers were described as urceolate. Ok...that's a new term. Please bear with me on trying to give the pronunciation – Urceolate. It means urn shaped. Each flower does look like a tiny urn.

When researching plants, NC State's site, plants.ces.ncsu.edu/plants, and Missouri Botanical Gardens, missouri-botanicalgarden.org/plantfinder, are great sites. Florida leucothoe was busy with bees buzzing around when I was cutting some. It is good for butterflies and birds and provides winter cover and nesting sites for birds. These plants are in a part of the yard I have to go visit. If butterflies are visiting them, I can't see it from any window or most parts of the yard. Deer have never even browsed these plants.

Florida leucothoe also makes a great cut flower. Older growth will hold up nicely out of water, but tender new growth will wilt. Branches go in a container at the breezeway every winter and last for a very long time. Maybe someday, one will root. I've been told it roots easily. NC State's website states it "has high severity poison characteristics" and can be a problem for dogs, cats, and horses. But then goes on to say juvenile leaves have been used as salad greens. Not that I'm planning on eating any, but I wonder if that means it is not poisonous to humans.

DRIVING LESSON

It was 1967 and my dad was driving a '61 Ford Galaxy with me as a twelve-year-old front seat passenger. Daddy had his left arm propped on the open window holding a cigarette and guided the car with his two right fingers on the steering wheel at five o'clock. I can still hear the crunchy sound the tires made as the gravel from the road hit the car's underside. Most side roads back then were tar and gravel and made for a semi-slippery surface on which to drive. We were on that long stretch of road that is now called the White Street extension when he asked me if I wanted to drive. "Are you kidding? Sure!" There were no seatbelts in the car, and he slid toward my side with one hand on the steering wheel as I ducked under his arm and was now in the driver's seat with the car still moving. I was in very unfamiliar territory as the car slowed and asked, "What now?" He says, "Grab the wheel and give it the gas." I grabbed the wheel, and he let go. I was Driving! Well, actually my hands were frozen on the steering wheel and the car was speeding along at 10 mph when he said again, "Give it the gas!" I could only see the sky ahead of me, and when I tried to reach the gas pedal with my right foot,

I only saw the top of the windshield and the roof. Daddy reached under my arms, pulled something, and the whole seat, along with us, shot forward. A cloud of gray dust and gravel enveloped the car as I slammed the gas pedal to the floor. Daddy snatched my leg off the pedal just as the car started to go sideways and said, "Easy there Richard Petty, the more you push, the faster we go." I tried again but



Neal Parnell

was watching my foot on the pedal instead of the road when I felt his hand on the wheel. "You know where your foot is son, keep your eyes on the road." I was now weaving back and forth at twenty miles per hour but managing to stay on the road. I don't think I ever blinked, and every muscle in my body was pulled tighter than a bottom banjo string as I asked him, "How fast can I go?" He said, "As fast as you want." Just as I was easing down on the pedal I saw a car coming toward us in the distance. "Daddy! There's a car coming, what'll I do?" He



asked, "What do you think you should do?" I said that I wanted to stop, and he said, "Well then, stop." My first time trying the brake pedal was just like the gas pedal; I stomped it hard, causing the wheels to lock and the car skidded to a grinding stop in the middle of the road. My only driving lesson was over as he slid back into the driver's seat, floored the gas pedal, spun the car around, and headed back to where we

began. I looked back to see that once distant car stopped in the dust cloud he'd purposefully created. I told him I couldn't wait to tell everyone that I had peeled out and skidded to a stop while driving. Dad said it would be best if I didn't tell my mom or sisters. I wasn't sure if I could hold it in, but I did....until now. That quarter-mile of driving was the most thrilling time I can remember, and one I'll never forget.

MOVIE NIGHT IN WREN PARK

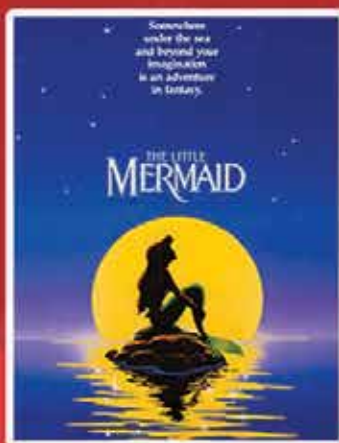
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Summertime is storytime

Southerners are good storytellers. Should you disagree, you are as dead to me as Butterfingers became after they removed hydrogenated oils and several unpronounceable ingredients. There are just some things, like facts and candy bar recipes, which should never be challenged.

Maybe it's the strong oral tradition of our Celtic and African ancestors. Maybe it's our tendency to linger on porches and observe the neighbors. Maybe it's the kind of oppressive heat and humidity that stifles the desire for any physical activity. But from the Gulf Coast to the Chesapeake Bay, I've never met a Southerner who couldn't tell a story.



Kim von Keller

And that includes all of my friends. What they have in common is the ability to describe settings and characters so completely that their stories become almost like memories. The main reason my supper club schedules early mealtimes isn't that we're old, but that we want as many hours around the table as possible to tell and listen to stories.

Like the one my friend Debi tells about riding the school bus in Chesterfield County through cotton fields and peach orchards and the time the driver let her get behind the wheel one afternoon... when she was 11 years old.

Like the one my mom used to tell about her first visit to New York City with her mom and my dad in the late 1950s. Standing on the sidewalk in a dress more suited to church, she saw a group of screaming young girls circling someone the way buzzards circle roadkill. She likes to call that The Time I Almost, but Couldn't Exactly, See Elvis Presley.

Like the one my daughter's friend Emily tells about being in a college bar and encountering a woman with a crutch, and she's using it to poke potential rivals for the attention of

a man she has her eye on. Emily does all the voices. I could listen to her tell it over and over.

But the best story I ever heard involves Ed, the husband of my husband's cousin Amanda. (Many Southern stories start like this. It's important to establish the relationship between the players.) Ed is a native of Mississippi. He always says that if there's something on a table arrangement that looks like it's to be eaten, even though it's not, he will put it in his mouth every time. This includes benign items, like a large sprig of parsley, or something that is dangerously inedible, like a plastic grape.

It seems that Ed was at a reception at a state-old home in Jackson. The refreshment tables were set with white linen and polished silver serving pieces. As a man with a sweet tooth, Ed was excited when he saw a tray of small, decorated petit fours beside the coffee urn. He picked up the one topped with the most beautiful royal icing flower, popped it in his mouth, and bit down on it... only to realize that it was actually a sugar cube meant to accompany a cup of coffee.

Just as he was choking down the last of the sugar, he heard a small, aged voice say, "Goodness gracious, I thought this was a petit four."

He turned to find Eudora Welty, one of Mississippi's most beloved authors and winner of the Pulitzer Prize, the Presidential Medal of Freedom, and the Order of the South.

"I did the same thing!" Ed exclaimed, having found communion with the beloved writer.

"I'm forever trying to eat things that aren't meant to be eaten," she said.

It would be a shame to miss such gems, so spend some time this summer on your porch or around the dinner table, telling your best story. Go long on details, like the feeling of sugar between your teeth or what it was like to get poked in the shoulder with a crutch. Practice it in front of a mirror. And don't be surprised that at your next dinner party, you're happily at the table until midnight.



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AUTHENTIC AND AHEAD OF HER TIME

My Grandmother was ahead of her time. She was authentic and I don't even think she realized how beautiful she was. Not only was she physically lovely, but there was something about her that just shined.



Kristine March

Everybody in my family always said that her eyes twinkled and they really, truly did. I think Bill Withers says it best in his song Grandma's

Hands. The things my Nana taught me were always with her hands and she did such good with them. I can still to this day remember my Nana's hands. She wore emeralds and turquoise, her pretty diamond from my grandfather and silver nail polish that went so well with her olive complexion. I've yet to find that exact

color, but hopefully someday I will.

When I was little, I remember her sewing closet. Inside she had a beautiful little basket that opened up with her tomato pincushion and all of her little bits and bobs. She could get a stain out of your dress and sew a hole in your jeans in five minutes, tops. She taught me that it was okay to be confident and not to worry about how short your hemline was. That women's bodies were beautiful and should be celebrated. To get up and always dance at parties and to be loud and bold and take up space. When she was a young girl, she made and designed her own bathing suits herself and what I would give to have her rodeo design that she came up with all on her own. It was a white two-piece high-waisted bikini with a vintage cowboy riding a bull on the applique. It would certainly be current and in style today. She was innovative. A sort of rebel in a sense.

She wore a dark plum lipstick when everyone else wore red. She always matched her gorgeous handbags and her shoes and always had on her Add-a-Bead necklace, which I gratefully inherited and I wear almost every day. I remember summer time just being absolutely magical with her. She wore cap sleeve knitted tops and rolled up her denim shorts with her little beaded Minnetonka moccasins. She always sliced a gigantic watermelon on a pretty red and white checkered tablecloth on her outdoor picnic table or made a Coca-Cola float or chocolate ice cream for me. She had my little kitty pool filled up in her car port with icy cold water

from the hose and we would sing along to her little retro radio outside together while she sunbathed.



I can still hear that screen door shut. She had a yard full of extraordinary tiger lilies and roses that were so beautiful. She put clear nail polish on my chigger bites to make them go away swiftly and trimmed my long hair. She made sure my dance

costumes fit me perfectly before my recital every May and made me learn every Natalie Cole song ever written. She was my biggest fan and I definitely think I was hers too. She was really a Bohemian now that I think about it. She would every so often take me to underprivileged neighborhoods and we would

donate all of our gently used clothes to people that she knew needed help and that didn't have it so easy like we did. It really made me think.

Everybody knew her in my hometown and she was considered a philanthropist there. She loved to give and help people and definitely instilled that in me. When she passed away in 2015, I distinctly remember our pastor saying she had a heart just like Jesus and that's the best way to describe my sweet Emily Sue. She had style and grace and wisdom that I will never forget, but pass on to my son. She was and will forever be my favorite person. I miss her deeply, but there is always something I see in my every day that reminds me of her. A pretty bird or a sweet smell. I think she sends me signs a lot, from above. What lessons did your grandmother or loved one teach you? Remember to make the sidewalk your runway and please be kind!

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FROM THE SHELF

On ‘A League of Extraordinary Women’ by Evie Dunmore

Historical romance has always been sort of hit and miss for me. I find myself easily falling into the assumption of historical romance being synonymous with ‘Harlequin’ and/or ‘bodice ripper.’ A League of Extraordinary Women series by Evie Dunmore came to my attention when my co-leader for the Library’s Romance Book Club suggested it for book club.

A League of Extraordinary Women is set in the Gilded Age, late 19th century, with the suffrage movement at its core. The series focuses on four friends that have met each other through Oxford and the suffrage movement. Each book features one of the women and her romance as it’s shaped by the movement, and how each woman has been directly affected by the lack of rights for women during that time period.

A really cool part of the books is

how deep Evie Dunmore went with her research, even including an extensive list of notes at the end of each novel showing where she pulled inspiration from the real history of the UK suffrage movement.

Through this, Dunmore pulls an added layer into each book with her representation of life in England during the Gilded Age, a time we often romanticize despite the class issues, hardship, and general lack of rights for anyone not born a wealthy white man.

The series starts out with Bringing Down the Duke, in which our four starring ladies meet. Annabelle, the star of this first installment, meets banking heiress Hattie, Lady



Sara Leady

Lucie, and bookish Lady Catriona at a suffrage meeting, one of which Annabelle is required to attend as part of her scholarship for studying at Oxford. Annabelle, Hattie, and Catriona are all students at Oxford, while Lucie is the very formidable leader of the local suffragists chapter.

Annabelle, the daughter of a vicar, has long dreamed of getting an education, an opportunity she could lose should her uncle find out about her suffragist activity. Her involvement in the movement leads to her assignment: get the Duke of Montgomery on their side regarding the Women’s Property Act. Despite their different classes, personalities, and ideals, the two obviously end up sparking a romance that of course leads to the Duke tossing social expectations aside to marry Annabelle.

A Rogue of One’s Own follows Lady Lucie and a childhood enemy,

stubbornly matching wits over the fate of a London publishing house. Lucie has moved to purchase the publisher in order to spread word of the suffrage movement, while notorious rogue Lord Tristan Bellantine sees it as a sound investment, with the added perk of torturing Lucie.

Portrait of a Scotsman focuses on bank heiress Hattie. Hattie dreams of becoming a renowned artist and marrying a Gentleman, emphasis on ‘gentle.’ Brooding Scottish financier Lucien Blackstone is a brute with a reputation of being an absolutely ruthless businessman. In a power play against Hattie’s father, a business rival, he tricks Hattie into a compromising position, forcing them to marry. A highlight for me in this one was Dunmore’s spotlight on classism and the abhorrent conditions of working in the mines in the late 19th century.

The last installment, The

Gentleman’s Gambit, follows Lady Catriona, a very quiet and bookish young woman who never thought she would find love. Awkward and easily overwhelmed, Catriona is surprised to find herself so comfortable with the stranger Elias Khoury. Elias has come to her family’s castle in Scotland to meet Cat’s father, an acclaimed archeologist. Elias however is set on stealing back stolen heirlooms and returning them to the Middle East.

The last book gets more historical than romantic, whereas the other three keep a really wonderful balance between the two. As I read The Gentleman’s Gambit I was really hoping for the introduction of a new suffragist character to continue the series, but alas, book four is also the final book of the series. I do however look forward to whatever Evie Dunmore chooses to write next. While the historical elements bring a heavier weight to the titles, these delightful romances are quick, intelligent reads that would be perfect for your summer vacations.

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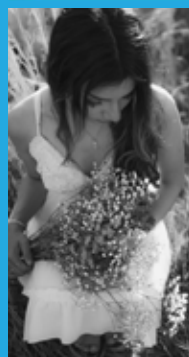
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FORMIDABLE FERAL HOGS

BY RICH OTTER

South Carolina is generally quite protective of its wildlife neighbors, but there are three mammals for which there is definite animosity: the coyote, the armadillo and the feral hog. Their destructive tendencies have not made them beloved inhabitants in the state. Where the coyote and armadillo wandered into SC of their own accord, the arrival of the feral hog was involuntary.

It is said that Christopher Columbus, on his second voyage to the new world, dropped off some domestic pigs in Cuba and Jamaica and others arrived in Florida with Hernando de Soto in 1539. Enjoying the good weather in the new world, the pigs escaped and began rapidly increasing and evolving. There was a marriage of convenience with wild boars brought over by European settlers for hunting.

Over the years, the spreading

species became prey that fed upon a variety of creatures from rodents to deer, including nesting birds. They also developed a nasty temperament, a considerable threat to human beings. They have very sharp tusks and a male could weigh up to three hundred pounds. At that weight the animal is even a danger to an automobile encountered on the highway.

They are able to "overrun" an area. The feral hogs are attributed with causing millions of dollars a year of agriculture damage by rooting and trampling through a wide variety of habitats. They also have been found to have damaged archaeological sites.

It is said their meat, if prepared properly and if the age is proper and depending upon its previous diet, may be digestible, but often has a distinctly gamey taste. Feral hogs have monocular vision. Each eye functions independently. Their red

eyes are due to albinism.

Due to its aggressive nature, size, tusks, and speed, it is a very dangerous creature. If seen, it is best to quietly retreat. They may be encountered by hunters, hikers, farmers, golfers and picnickers. Pets are also at risk.

In a heavily wooded or brush area, they may be heard grunting but not seen, except for the rustling of bushes. It may be wise to stop, look, listen and wait to see if it can be determined what has caused the commotion. It might also be wise to scan the immediate area to see if there is a tree to quickly climb.

Feral hogs may be hunted at any time of the year on private property. There is no closed season if during daylight. Dogs may be used as well as baited traps and electronic calling devices.

Greg Wilson with the Anderson Observer, following a discussion

with a representative of the US Forest Service in 2023, reported that "The spread of the animal continues to be expedited by hunters who transport the animals for sport from county to county." He said many of those individuals have been caught but the practice has continued. It is illegal, without specific authority, to transport a live wild hog by vehicle.

Wilson also conveyed that the service did not see any way for the actual elimination of the animal. They breed too quickly. It would be illegal to use poisoning which would endanger other animals, as well.

There are legally authorized organizations in South Carolina that maintain feral hogs for hunting purposes on their own land. They often use tree stands to minimize danger. Such an operation may also provide lodging and provisions for processing of the meat.



In addition, the hogs may be hunted in state wildlife areas during season. They can be trapped on private land at any time but care must be taken not to endanger other wildlife. If pens are used, property owners must be certain to remove any bear or deer that might be caught. Removing a bear might be an interesting endeavor.

This is not to imply that the coyote and armadillo are much better off. They just don't register the same physical threat to South Carolina voters to receive equivalent attention.

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Beginning June 2

9:00 am Worship

"Sins Hurting Us and Others"

Pride: People as Ugly as Camels

Anger: The Sin Destroying America

Greed: America's Golden God

Temptation: The Devil's Trap Door

Complaining: Destroying Your Home

10:00 am Fellowship Time

"Getting to Know You Better"

10:30 am Worship (New)

Hymns / Prayer Requests

Sermon / Discussion

"Learning to Pray"

Prayer - "The Life of Prayer"

Prayer - "Alone Time with God"

Prayer - "Difficult and Necessary"

Prayer - "The Only Way to Defeat Satan"

Prayer - "The Only Way to Find True Happiness"

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Every new church should have some purpose, especially when people see a need for some kind of Christian ministry. Pastoring Concord Baptist Church for 31 years, I have long felt the need to get Christ's love, our love and ministry to the less fortunate in the West Anderson neighborhood.

The last, "Hands on Help", is vital. Most of the time, people outside the church, don't see Jesus' love until they experience it from those who love Him.

My good friend, Mark Duncan, Pastor of Bethel Baptist Church (The Old "Oakwood") calls his church's ministry, "Loving Out Loud."

And Brother, it sure is loud. Every Wednesday night about 100 people are being fed "Seven Thousand Sandwiches" (EVERY YEAR), plus some... "Goodies" and a "Gospel" devotional.

More than that, Mark knows those who come, by name, and countless times I have seen him with his arm around people, listening to them and praying for them. Members of our church are helping them on Wednesday nights.

On the other end of the neighborhood is Pastor Kurt Stutler and the "Mercy Chapel on South Main." The church is for the people from the neighborhood and those who have joined the Church to help.

In a beautiful Sunday Morning Service, I took the Lord's Supper. On my right was a homeless lady and on my left was a retired doctor who practiced in Anderson.

We are helping support several West Anderson Christian ministries financially, and these two are at the top of our list. I also began this church for another reason. The emphasis on "Praise and Worship" has replaced the hymns with constant praising. If you like hymns and would like to help us help people in need, come and help us.

Pastor Bob Marcaurelle
"Preacher Bob"