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'ONE MAN'S TRASH IS ANOTHER MAN'S TREASURE'



Pictured, from left, are Anderson County Solid Waste Department director Greg Smith, project manager Jeff Hanks, convenience center supervisor Dean Brown and convenience center and truck drivers foreman Donnie White.

An inside look at the Anderson County Solid Waste Department

BY JANA MACKIN

Anderson is not a sanctuary city but it is a place of refuse where waste management ambassadors help locals clean up their act at 18 trash, debris and recycling sites.

"One man's trash is another man's treasure," said Greg Smith, director of Anderson County Solid Waste Department.

"We love our jobs," said Smith, who also heads the county's Environmental Enforcement and Keep Anderson County Beautiful departments. "We enjoy working with the public and do our best to keep everybody happy."

"We've got a lot of good things going on," Smith said, explaining the complex-

ities of running this department with a \$7.3 million annual operating budget and 73 employees.

In other words, this ain't your grandfather's dump.

The Solid Waste department provides residents with programs that offer various recycling/reusing and disposal opportunities for household garbage, construction and demolition material, yard debris, and recyclables from cardboard to motor oil to electronics to metals. They offer several anti-litter education, community clean up and beautification programs such as Keep Anderson County Beautiful and Adopt-a-Spot. The county owns the Starr

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Iva plans for a new public library

The Anderson County Library System, Anderson County and the Town of Iva have collaborated to bring an updated library to the citizens of Iva. To date, full funding has been awarded for the campaign. The total projected cost is one million dollars. Steve Newton, Director of Governmental Affairs and Special Projects, applied and received a \$500,000 grant from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's Community Development Block Grant Program. In addition, Senator Mike Gambrell was able to secure the other \$500,000 from the S.C. state budget.

The proposed plans are to renovate an



existing storefront on East Front Street on the town square in Iva. This designated building once housed the old Iva Fire Department. The building's architectural features will be preserved and integrated into the design of the new library. The old library building will be sold to Anderson School District 3.

"The completion of the project will take a minimum of 18 months," says Anderson County administrator, Rusty Burns. "Having this modern, up to date facility will offer resources equal to those in Anderson. The new library will bring people to the square and inspire the revitalization of downtown Iva."

This project will promote efforts by the Anderson County Library System to better serve the current needs of its citizens.

Treasure

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

C&D Landfill and oversees proper disposal of construction/demolition materials and land clearing debris for residents and businesses. At their Materials Recovery Facility (MRF), they prepare the recyclables for sale at market. The county's several convenience centers offer solid waste disposal and recycling collection. The code enforcement department enforces county and state laws against litter, illegal dumping and open storage on county properties.

Imagine the proliferation of roadside dumping and redneck yards of the week if such enforcement didn't exist.

"People call it the dump," said Smith. "They can call it what they want to, but we do a lot more than take your regular trash. We provide a lot of ways to recycle."

"It helps from the standpoint of space at landfills," Smith said. "You don't have to expand."

"Nobody wants a landfill in their backyard," he said.

Over the years, county employees have witnessed a wide array of

strange, disgusting or even valuable trash- dead animals, trashed money and jewelry, cars driving into dump containers, marijuana and anything else imaginable short of a cold case.

Jimmy Hoffa has yet to be found in the Anderson landfill.

"We've seen stuff thrown away, it's kind of unreal," said Donnie White, convenience center and truck drivers' foreman.

Newcomers are often amazed that there is no direct charge for dumping and recycling at the convenience centers, he said.

"We've had people from up North ask, 'How much do I owe you?' I say, 'You don't owe me a dime.'"

As far as bodies, White adds, "We never found a body." However, decades ago before the dump sites were manned, people would dump the heck out of stuff.

"When the sites were unmanned, some people would do the right thing, but then some would put a dead animal carcass at the site," he said.

"It was a mess. It would take workers with bulldozers and equipment days to clean up," White said.

Smith recalls a couple times drivers pulled a Thelma and Louise at a site, negotiating a big



Larry Davenport, 77, is a regular at the Whitefield Convenience Center.

drop into a monster dumpster.

"Years ago, a gentleman threw trash away and went to get into the vehicle. He wanted to hit the brake and he hit the gas and drove into the container. We had to get the fire department to get him out," Smith said. "The exact same thing happened years later. He somehow ended up straddling almost into the bin."

"He looked a little embarrassed," Smith said. He added they have become quite adept at finding needles in hay stacks, sometimes dumping out tons of trash on a floor if necessary to find money or valuables.

"We are usually pretty good at finding them," Smith said.

Besides being dumping sites, waste management convenience centers serve as a kind of market place of ideas, gossip and of course trash talk especially with the regulars who regard the sites as their own.

"We try to help the residents out as much as we can," said Jeff Hanks, project manager.

"You see the regular people at the same sites," Hanks said. "They claim that this is their convenience center."

"People who live around there like to talk, catch up with the gossip, with what's going on in the neighborhood," he said. "The old timers like to do the trash themselves. They used to be called attendants," Hanks said about the center employees, "but Rusty Burns stressed that we call them ambassadors because they are the face of Anderson County recyclables."

The old timers are straight up serious about keeping their site clean. In fact, litterers be warned: check your guns at the door and your trash at the dump.

"Take it to the dump," said Larry Davenport, 77, a Whitefield Convenience Center regular. "Don't burn it and don't leave it by the roadside."

"Come here to get rid of it," he said.



ELECTRIC CITY EVENTS

ANDERSON SPORTS & ENTERTAINMENT CENTER

Friday, January 6th Striped Bass Registration Dinner Ballrooms Registration: 3:00 p.m. – 5:30 p.m. Dinner: 6:00 p.m. – 9:30 p.m. Contact: Neil Paul 864-716-3660 neil@visitanderson.com

Saturday, January 7th Gun Show Arena 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. Contact: Robert Chipley 864-453-0074 mwxmarketing@aol.com

Sunday, January 8th Gun Show Continued Arena 10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Friday, January 13th MLK Breakfast Ballrooms 7:30 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.

Monday, January 16th MLK Celebration Arena 4:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m. Contact: Rosalind McGinnis 770-910-3169 rmcginnis@uncf.org

Thursday, January 26th Crescent H.S. Shooters Ballrooms 5:00 p.m. – 10:30 p.m.

ELECTRIC CITY PLAYHOUSE

CLUE - February 24th through March 5th Contact Electric City Playhouse for information and tickets (864) 224-4248

ANDERSON COUNTY MUSEUM

Tuesday January 10th @ 5:30 PM CELEBRATION OF CORPORAL FRED-DIE STOWERS Please RSVP to AC-MRSVP@andersoncountysc.org

MAKE BEADED BRACELETS WITH CJ Sign up with Palmetto High School senior CJ to learn how to make your own one of a kind bracelet. All supplies provided. Limited seating. Saturday January 14th 2:00 to 3:00 PM Please RSVP to ACMRSVP@andersoncountysc.org. Ages 8 to 18.

SIT AND SEW

Join Tommy and friends at the Anderson County Museum for the weekly meet up. Every Thursday at 10:00 AM.

This program is FREE but donations are accepted. Please email your RSVP to AC-MRSVP@andersoncountysc.org. Limited seating.

ANDERSON COUNTY LIBRARY

Join us on Tuesday January 10th at 6:00 PM for January Board Game Night. Seats are limited. To register, sign up at <https://bit.ly/3HSfMtv>.

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OUT WITH THE OLD, IN WITH THE NEW

Out with the old and in with the new. It's time to transform your space, your clothing, your fashion, your hair or whatever is bogging you down. Getting rid of things that don't bring or spark joy. It doesn't necessarily have to be all physical goals either. Mental clarity is going to be my number one this year. That being said, it's hard to do. It's a somewhat frustrating process, but once it's done you feel so much better.



Kristine March

Your space or your home is decluttered, your mind is more livable and everything's feels like Zen again. We usually set New Year's goals and we do them for about a week, and they're never achieved, but this year I'm going to set a goal that I will really follow through with. For me personally I'm striving to do more meditation. Long nature walks and eating really good whole foods. Remembering to take my vitamins every day and to stop rushing so much. Saying the word no. Resting when I'm tired and not feeling guilty about it and really giving myself a reboot. Cleaning out those pesky closets that are just sitting there with junk that I don't use anymore is one of the best ways to feel better and it's a great start. We don't realize it but that really scrambles the mind. Get rid of old clothes that you don't wear anymore. If there's something that's been sitting in your closet for over 2 years, donate it to the Goodwill or give it to a friend or family member that you think might like it. If you're tired of your hair, change it. It may be something that's bothering you and you may want to try a new color or cut for the New Year. Do it, after all like I always say, it's just hair.

Don't be afraid to try something that you're afraid of. You're never too old to start a new talent or finish a talent that you were really good at but have placed on the back burner so to speak. Just the other day I saw a middle-aged man taking piano lessons. He had always loved to play the piano when he was young. For some reason or another he just stopped because life gets in the way sometimes. He had been practicing his lessons for two years with a professional and now he can play absolutely incredibly. It was beautiful to watch. It just goes to show you that you're never too old to do anything or to start something fresh.

The only thing that you need in 2023 is courage. Just go for it. That goes with everything in our daily lives. Embrace failure. Train your brain and let it know that you are safe. I get anxious sometimes, but if I keep doing the things that make me anxious and letting myself know that I'm safe in those moments, I get better and better. Don't set something unrealistic. Instead do something that you know you'll enjoy this year. Do what makes you happy and don't worry about what other people think. These are goals that I'm going to set this new year. I think they will positively improve my life. What are some goals you're going to set? Cheers to a happy and healthy fresh start and the best year ever! Remember to make the sidewalk your runway and kindness always matters.

Falling backward, moving forward

What was your biggest event of 2022? I'll go first!

As I lay on the second set of stairs, my left leg twisted unnaturally underneath me, my shoes thrown off by the force of the fall, all I could think of as I went in and out of consciousness was, I really need a pedicure.

On June 10th, we were visiting the home of an acquaintance in Asheville for the first



Kim von Keller

time. Unaccustomed to the layout, and not knowing that I was standing right in front of a staircase, I took a step backward into the air. I bumped down on my back, hit the landing, and continued partly down a

second flight of stairs.

After a trip to the ER, I was diagnosed with a Tibia Plateau Fracture V, meaning that I broke a bunch of bones in my left leg from my kneecap down. After three nights in the hospital and two surgeries, I was in a wheelchair for about three months before moving to a walker, then a crutch, and then a cane. I didn't walk unassisted until September. My scars look like I was attacked by a shark.

Why am I boring you, the readers of The Electric City News, with my personal tale of woe?

Because last night, I danced. Six months ago, I wasn't even sure I'd walk again, at least normally. A lot went into getting me here, and I wanted to share my story. My hope is that if you're at the beginning of something similar, my experience

might be of some benefit. These are my suggestions to get back to the dance floor.

FIND AN ADVOCATE

You need someone to help you navigate treatment if you're going through something catastrophic. Pain medication, while a wonderful thing, can make it hard to make decisions or answer questions. Until I was able to exist on OTC meds, I was likely to answer most questions with, "I like corn." Luckily, my husband went into command mode and made sure that I got everything I needed for the best outcome.

SHARE YOUR STORY

In the beginning, only my closest friends and coworkers knew what had happened as I was too depressed to talk about it. But once I opened up, I found others who had experienced this same type of fracture: a woman who was in her 20s when she was injured in a college judo class; a friend who was in her 40s when she was hit by a falling log and rolled down a hill; a friend's mother who was in her 60s when she fell down a rocky path. All of them made a full recovery, which gave me so much hope.

I also found a Tibia Plateau Fracture support group on Facebook. Facebook groups of this type are a double-edged sword. On one hand, you can ask questions of those who are farther along in their recovery and answer questions from those who are new to the group. Video posts of people taking their first steps were particularly inspiring. On the other hand, groups like this are often populated with those who are having the most difficulty, so it's important not to spend too much time on social media.

DO THE WORK

Physical therapy was important. I didn't need a cast — I now have more hardware inside of me than a Home Depot — but when the bandages were removed, my left leg looked like it belonged to another person. Did I like the therapy exercises? I did not. Did I trust that my therapists knew what they were doing? I did, so I did the exercises at home, too, twice a day. I've regained muscle mass and range of motion, but I was told to never run again. Take that, Tibia Plateau Fracture. I HATE running!

SAY YES TO EVERYTHING

Our closest friends and family immediately went into action, organizing a meal train, driving me places, showing up for board-game nights, building a wheelchair ramp. Everything they did relieved my husband, lifted my spirits, and made it easier to keep going. When people offer assistance, it's because they want to, and I'm so glad we never said no.

WHEN THE OPPORTUNITY PRESENTS ITSELF, DANCE!

Last night, we went to listen to a favorite band at a club. When they played a slow song, my husband and I took a spin — sort of — for the first time in six months. It will take me a while to restore my full complement of dance moves, but it felt like a victory. If you are recovering from an injury or illness, my New Year's wish is that you'll find small victories too. And if you want to share your story, drop me a line at editkim50@gmail.com.

NIBBLE & SIP

Restoring order in January

BY KIM VON KELLER

It was the cinnamon rolls that put me over the edge.

Up until Christmas morning, I'd been pretty good at not overindulging. But it turns out that cinnamon rolls are just a gateway drug to casseroles, pasta dishes, and anything with cheese. In all honesty, I just finished a handful of kettle chips. But January is a good time to see the error of our ways and try to restore some nutritional order, both in what we eat and what we drink.

Many people take part in Dry January, and there

has never been a better year for that than 2023. Brands like Seedlip and Ritual offer zero-alcohol spirits so that you can still have your favorite cocktail. But it is just as easy to mix up something delicious from what's already in your fridge. Torani products are so versatile, and their almond syrup is a great starting point for a mocktail that tastes like a specialty drink. And if you are going to pay for your holiday sins with crispy raw vegetables, you might as well dip them into something delicious. Roasted Red Pepper Dip is a

flavor bomb that makes even a raw broccoli spear taste good!

Almond Orange Soda
3 T. Torani Almond Syrup
6 sage leaves
3 oz. fresh-squeezed orange juice
good-quality club soda, such as Fever Tree

In a cocktail shaker, muddle the almond syrup and sage leaves. Add orange juice and ice, and shake until chilled. Strain into a Collins glass filled with ice, top with a splash of club soda, stir gently, and serve. Makes 1.

Roasted Red Pepper Dip
8 ounces feta, drained and chopped
1/4 cup Greek yogurt
2 teaspoons lemon juice
1/2 teaspoon smoked paprika

1 clove garlic, minced
grape tomatoes, broccoli florets, cucumber spears for serving
In the bowl of a small food processor, combine feta, Greek yogurt, lemon juice, smoked paprika, and garlic. Process until smooth, and serve with your favorite raw vegetables. Serves 6.

YOUR DENTIST CAN SAVE YOUR LIFE

Starting your New Year on the right foot

Proven habits successful people share

Here we are again at the start of a new year. This is a time for looking ahead. And many of us – after taking stock of our ups and downs from the “old” year – start setting goals for what we would like to accomplish in the new.

If you are of that mindset, it can be beneficial to consider proven habits that – well, may not guarantee your success but can help you better your odds of achieving your goals and at the same time enjoy a more worthwhile and fulfilling life.

Remember success IS subjective. Maybe your

focus is on completing your education, a promotion, earning more, or raising a family. Whatever it is, it can be helpful to consider “tried and true” habits that continue to benefit those who follow them regardless of how you define success. Here are a few for your consideration I consider to be key ones. Feel free to add on:



Dr. Gabrielle F. Cannick

Positive attitude.

There is ample evidence to suggest succeeding

in any endeavor is a mindset. Successful people get up in a good mood and look forward to starting another day of achievement.

Believe in yourself. A cliché or fact? No debate here. You need to believe you can accomplish your goals, whatever they are. “The only one that can tell you that you can’t win is you – and you don’t have to listen.”

Surround yourself with others who are

successful. Become a good judge of character. Find people who challenge and inspire you. “If I have seen further than others, it is by standing upon the shoulders of giants.” – Isaac Newton

Be willing to work hard to develop skills that make you a high value individual.

Constantly strive to be better than you were yesterday.

Ignore the naysayers. As you work hard to develop yourself and begin succeeding you may encounter those that seek to “pop your balloon”. Let it roll off your shoulders. Swallow your pride. Ignore your ego. Never let the downers get in the way of your goals.

And finally, let’s be honest – we all feel out of sorts from time to time. There are moments when we question ourselves. It’s natural and we all experience it. The key is to find the good in bad situations. Being grateful for every moment in your life is one of the most important keys to success – and happiness. Consider today to be a reset of where you are and where you want to go. It’s about the impact we leave behind as we cross paths

with others. The moment is now. The person is you. Make this your best year ever. We’re here for you! Think of us as your hometown resource for guidance and support.

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

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



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HALLEY'S COMET RETURNS

A comet is a cosmic snowball the size of a small town, made up of frozen gases, rock and dust. When its orbit brings it close to the sun, the snowball heats up and spews these gases and dust that create a glowing head



Neal Parnell

with a long tail. Edmund Halley (the pronunciation by those that have the name say it rhymes with Valley) did not discover the comet which is recorded as early as 250 B.C., but he did discover that it returned every 75 years. Halley's Comet is the only comet that can

be viewed with the naked eye and be viewed twice in a human lifetime.

Many of you saw the return of Halley's Comet in 1986, I know I did. When you're standing on a Navy ship in the middle of the ocean, in the middle of the night, there are more stars visible than you've ever seen standing on land, it's incredible. And there below all those stars was Halley's Comet, streaking across that sparkling black space, saying good-



bye to those who were seeing it for the second time, and hello to those like me who were seeing it for the first time.

I've begun preparing for the return of Halley's Comet on Friday July 29, 2061. That's only 39 years away. If I take advantage of advanced medical technologies I'll be a young hundred and six year old whipper-snapper when Halley's Comet shows itself again. But I'm not going to count on the medical community to get me there; let's face it, they could have me in

the waiting room for 39 years. I did see a commercial for a vitamin that could add years to my life, but the guy pitching them looked like the last prune in the box and I'm not counting on a gluten-free, sugar-coated gummy bear to be around for the next four decades. There was a place online that would allow me to contribute thousands of dollars

towards longevity research, but the people who ran the website died. The so-called health experts tell me that just changing my diet could possibly get me ten more years, but I told them that Mama Penn's and Besto got me to 67, and I don't see kale and turkey bacon taking me down the home stretch. I tried the latest anti-aging serum, and I thought it was working when a few wrinkles faded away, but I dang near broke my hip trying a double kick-flip on my old skateboard; that stuff is worthless. There is a thing called Cryosleep, where for \$5000 a day they freeze you at -300F and at some point in the future reanimate you. That wouldn't work for me because I actually freeze when the temperature gets below 70 and at that price, they'd have to remove me from the freezer after just twenty minutes. A Navaho Indian claims that



he is 121 years old and got there by drinking rattlesnake venom once a week. Nope, first thing is I'd need to capture a rattler a week for the next 39 years and secondly, I'd have to milk the thing and I don't have a stool that short. Oh well, I know some of you will still be around in 2061 to see Halley's Comet for the first or second time, but if some of us miss it, there's always 2134 to look forward to.

Avian airport

BY ANN K. BAILES

The Christmas deep freeze has been slowly leaving, but all through the arctic weather my side yard has looked like an avian airport. I couldn't see all the happenings during the extreme cold because we had to keep the blinds closed most of the day. Open blinds may let in the beauty of the birds coming and going, but they also let in the bitterly cold air.

This list is what visited our yard on the sub-freezing days: house finches, pine warblers, ruby-crowned kinglets, white-breasted nuthatches, northern juncos, mourning doves, Carolina chickadees, tufted titmice, Carolina wrens, white-throated sparrows, chipping sparrows, northern cardinals, downy woodpeckers, and a single red-bellied woodpecker whose red head stripe shined brilliantly in the morning sun. That's quite an assortment. I've been hoping for something unusual, but so far that hasn't happened.

People ask me how we are able to attract such a variety of birds to our yard. Maybe some of it is dumb luck, but two major factors are definite. The first is habitat. Birds need cover or they won't stay in an area. They are constantly alert to their surroundings and must have shrubs or trees close by so they can flee in case of a threat - which, in the case of songbirds, is usually a Cooper's or sharp-shinned hawk. A family member tried to establish feeders at her house; however, she lives in a mostly treeless subdivision with wide open spaces and little shrubbery. A few birds may come to her yard, but most are going to avoid the area because it is not safe.



The second major factor is food. In the Upstate, the two best feeding choices are sunflower seeds and suet cakes - at least, that's what's brought birds in to my yard. Anytime I try to veer off of those two menu items, I have leftover uneaten seed that attracts more undesirable birds (such as starlings and grackles) who prefer the alternate choices. Sunflower seeds, like everything else, have gone up in price but are still not unreasonably expensive. Suet cakes are found at any grocery or hardware store and usually cost between one and two dollars apiece. During extreme cold, songbirds especially need seeds and suet first thing in the morning, and also late afternoon before they go to roost. They must have abundant food to keep up their metabolism, or they will freeze to death.

We do have a birdbath out there also, though during this cold snap the water in it was frozen, so it was not much help. But ordinarily a birdbath will also attract birds since they need water as well as food.

I like knowing that I've helped our local birdlife survive the brutal temperatures. And the side benefit is getting to watch them as they come and go from our friendly avian airport.



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The facade grant program provides financial assistance for improvements to building facades to invest in business development and enhance the street experience in Downtown Anderson. Grants up to \$5,000 may be provided to property owners or tenants. Eligible invoices include items such as outdoor furniture, fixtures, signage, awning, paint, windows.

Design assistance is available and requires a consultation with staff.

All grants are reimbursement basis.

For more information email:
bgamble@cityofandersonsc.com

APPLY SEPTEMBER 15, 2022 - MARCH 15, 2023

TO APPLY VISIT: andersonsc.viewpointcloud.com

ADMINISTERED BY: City of Anderson Economic Development Division



THE LASTING LEGACY OF JOHN TOM ASHLEY

BY RICH OTTER

He served 24 years as County Supervisor. He had his friends, and he had his enemies. Most of his enemies were political or residents of the stockade. The political because he did what he wanted regardless of what some bigshots wanted. In the stockades because he was demanding in the work he had prisoners doing and those who objected ended up in the hole.

Except for the fact that he had to get funding from the County Delegation, he was the man if you wanted anything done.

In John Tom Ashley's last campaign to retain his position as supervisor (which he lost), he recited his accomplishments while supervisor:

"Over 1200 miles of roads graded by County crews; more than 1300 miles of blacktop roads topped; 400 streams bridged with concrete and steel bridges or serviced with concrete pipe; all roads and bridges paid for and at the lowest possible cost; now operating the Road and Bridge Department on the same appropriations as since 1967;

"Cooperated with the County Delegation in

the upkeep of county owned buildings and property; cooperated with community clubs and the Post office Department in marking county roads and streets with metal name signs throughout the county; cooperated with the Anderson County Library in the grading of the New Anderson County Library property;

"Assisted the Anderson County Memorial Hospital in removing trees and cleaning property for the new parking lots on Greenville Street and North Street; rebuilt the County prison at minimum cost, and supervised the land fill operation at no cost to Anderson County."

He failed to mention that he had helped the City of Anderson. That was for a Republican administration. Disclosure would not have been helpful during a Democrat primary. He also did not take credit for the many driveways he had graded and cut for individuals over the years or trees he had cut down for folks.

But, if you wanted a road cut or a driveway tared-and-graveled, he would obtain, in return, rights of way for the county or wood from cut trees for the stockade. If not a direct swap, it could be a favor later to be redeemed for the county.

In a previous campaign he had won he also mentioned the following under his supervision: "Anderson County owns one of the few herds of registered Brown Swiss cattle in the county. We furnish milk from our own dairy to the County Home and jail.

"We grow enough wheat, corn and sweet potatoes to support the [County] Home and chain gang. We grow vegetables in season and feed for the cattle.

"We have nearly 400 laying hens which produce eggs for the County Home and both chain gangs. County trucks haul school commodities for some 32,000 school children."

In fact, the information given by John Tom in

both of his campaign publications was not just puffing. It appears to have been accurate.

The "hole" mentioned was a 5x5x5 foot cinderblock building with no windows or facilities, occupied by disobedient prisoners. He felt it was absolutely necessary to maintain order. It was hated by prisoners and disliked by many as inhumane. The stockades also were deemed to be inhumane as well as prisoner balls-and-chains to a large degree phased out during his tenure. Prisoner groups working the roads were continued to be referred to as chain gangs even when not in chains.

John Gates once observed that if it hadn't been for the chain gangs, Anderson County would not have the impressive road system it now enjoys. Some roads, especially going to Lake Hartwell and through what are now major subdivisions, owe their heredity to the chain gangs.

Before the Civic Center and Martin Luther King Boulevard were built, there existed there the only county operated illegal dove hunting field. If you were in good with John Tom, you might get an invite.



John Tom Ashley

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From zero temperatures to 60 in less than a week. Go ahead and get your mind right to let those plants burned from the cold look the way they look for several months. Best practice will be wait until spring to tend them. Depending on the plant and its exposure, leaves could be brown, black, mushy, yellow, or even white. Also, just because they look fine now doesn't mean they are. It could take many weeks for full damage to show. Thankfully we had plenty of rain before our arctic blast and plants were not already stressed from being dry. That could have made for potentially lots of very bad

damage. If we don't get consistent rain (which more is predicted at writing time of this Garden Shop issue), then keep what is damaged watered well.

Another reason plants may be exceptionally damaged is how fast the temperatures dropped. Plants didn't have time to curl their leaves for protection, which is most obvious in rhododendrons when temperatures get lower than normal. There are all sorts of botanical lingo about how plants protect stomas, etc. but that's above my head and is information I don't need in day to day gardening life. This severe damage may show up most in gardenias, acuba, camellias, azaleas, palms, boxwood, most any evergreen really. Each winter I try to add interest to the front garden. It is mostly perennials and very little is evergreen. Three Japanese boxwoods were added several years ago. One struggles every



Cold damage on azalea

winter, losing leaves in the top half. It puts back out but what's the point of it for winter interest. It's strange because this one is closest to the woods. The one that is out at what I would think is the most exposed area doesn't lose many leaves. Two tea olives in different areas of the yard have a yellow side every winter. I am curious to see what happens now. Leaves do not fall off and once weather warms the leaves turn green again. This is a curiosity every winter. A sweetbay magnolia (*Magnolia virginiana*), planted a couple of years ago, has grown great and fast. It had one bloom this year. I've read how fragrant they are but never smelled

one. It does smell wonderful. The past month has been tough for it though. Deer rubbed on it and broke a lot of branches and skinned two of the trunks. Leaves turned brown almost immediately from the cold. It will get some extra attention this growing season.

We may forget all this potential plant stress come April. Once trees start growing, bark could crack from where it was frozen. Sap in the trunks may have froze and cause cracking. Japanese maples are prone to these problems. A young bloodgood Japanese maple was killed one year simply from a late frost. I think I'm about over these beauties anyway.

Purple Ghost, which I had great hopes for, has struggled. Japanese beetles did a lot of damage this year. Even though it gets afternoon shade, it generally is not doing well. And I've babied it. Crepe myrtles may show damage come spring as well from frozen bark. The base of two oak trees, just planted a few weeks ago, are visibly dark now. I don't ever remember rosemary turning brown in winter.

Plants we get our heart set on that are borderline hardy, and/or we think since they've changed the hardy zone, we might can grow now may not make it through this. It will be interesting to see how hydrangeas do come summer.

For now, just chill (pardon the pun). Don't prune any damaged plants. If you normally prune something this time of year, don't. Roots need all the protection they can get. Pruning out dead or damaged parts will leave the rest of the growth exposed. If we have another cold blast, then that foliage will most likely be further damaged. However, maybe it will be a great year for peonies and other plants that need winter chill.

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FROM THE SHELF

'Killers of a Certain Age'

By Deanna Raybourn

The premise of *Killers of a Certain Age* had me hooked from just the tagline on the cover. "It's kill or be killed," and the premise is a whole bunch of old lady assassins who've been in the game a long while. I assumed it'd be a combo of the movies *RED* (stands for Retired: Extremely Dangerous) and *Calendar Girls* (lovely British film about a group of older women who make that kind of calendar). Both movies feature older characters showing exactly how much they're still in their prime and are absolutely hilarious (seriously, just the casts should compel you to watch them). *Killers of a Certain Age* did not disappoint, but it also wasn't what I expected. *RED* features older assassins obliterating the agencies and young guns trying to kill them, but it's also VERY funny. *Killers of a Certain Age* was significantly more action than humor, and despite that expectation I still really liked it.

Killers of a Certain Age follows four women, all cold hard assassins who trained together, and over the years (between missions) managed to maintain friendships. Now in their 60s, The Museum, the clandestine agency that

handles them and their cases, opts to retire them and send them out in style with an all-expenses paid cruise. The only problem is that the cruise is a guise to get them all together and eliminate them. Billie, our lead, happens to recognize an agent she's previously worked with, and when she goes to investigate they

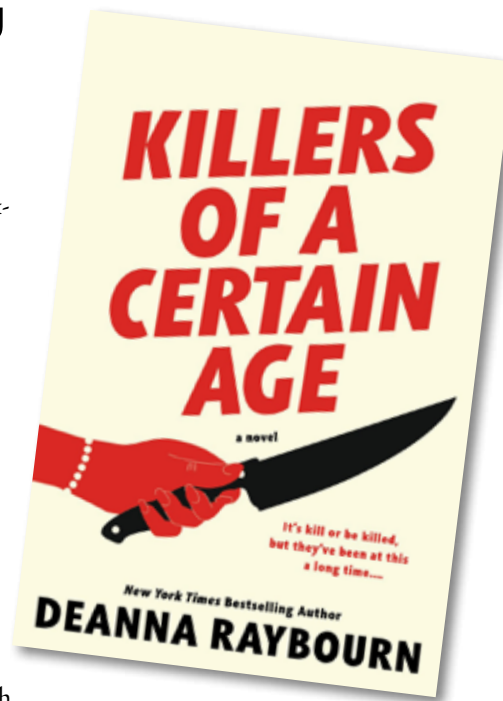


Sara Leady

just barely take the dude out AND save the entire cruise ship from exploding. Presumed dead, the women head to Billie's safe house and attempt to ascertain why The Museum put a hit out on them. Calling in old friends for information

leads to more attempted hits (obviously), which leads to the women going after the big wigs themselves to put an end to the hunt.

The book takes the reader all over the world, as the women and their ragtag group of sidekicks piece together exactly how serious the threat truly is. Mixed in with the present hunt are flashbacks to their original training days and various missions, all giving context to the current skills and motives unfolding in the present.



While some of these flashes initially threw me a bit, they always served a later purpose which I really appreciated. It was also fun to get flashbacks to their selection for the program and training from one of the original Furies (SOE female operatives in WWII).

There are some funny parts since these are older women (and they absolutely lean into

that identity as it makes everyone underestimate them) but Raybourn also keeps it super real. Like, there's murder by knitting needles which feels like it should be funny, but it's presented in a very realistic manner so there's definitely an edge to it that dampens the humor. Most of the humor comes from how the four interact with each other, which falls in line a bit with the vibes with the movies I mentioned. The four women are as different as their specialties for murder, which both creates the fun conflict between them but also really helps flesh out their different characters, and make them feel like they really could be your grandma or eccentric older aunt.

It's not something I do often, but I even have a cast in mind for if they made this a movie. I'd prefer a TV show or miniseries just so we could get more backstories and past hits, but I'd be happy with anything. I think I would cast Cate Blanchett, Tilda Swinton, Meryl Streep (cliche I know but Streep as an assassin? Yes please), and I think Julie Walters. I don't toss Helen Mirren in, but only because she's in *RED* already and that character cannot be topped. The characters in this book are absolutely worthy of these incredible actors and I will always be in support of showing older women in all their glory kicking-butt and taking names, whether on screen or page. I seriously want to see this book unfold on screen though, someone call Hollywood.

Operation Organization

Now that Christmas is over, there are toys all over my house. While watching my children enjoy playing with all of the goodies Santa brought brings me so much joy, I also need to be able to clean it up when the playing is done.



Katie Laughridge

The day after Christmas I found myself looking for storage containers—of all shapes and sizes. There were Magnatiles, Matchbox cars, Barbie accessories, earrings, clothes, and art materials to organize. I like for everything in my house to have a "home" because this makes it easier for everyone to help clean up, even my two year

old. As the new year begins and you are trying to figure out what to do with the misplaced toys in your home, I thought I'd share some of my favorite organizing containers/items in hopes that it will help you, too.

Jewelry Organizer: With three girls in our home, we have A LOT of bracelets, earrings, and necklaces. They tend to get tangled and lost in our jewelry boxes, so these hanging organizers are great! I found them on Amazon for a little over \$10. They have two sides which makes them even better.

Matchbox Car Case: I have a Matchbox car fanatic in my house. There are cars everywhere and every time he wants a specific car, I — of course — can't find it. This display case is great for cleaning up and it makes it easy to find that one car your little one is looking for. You can find this on Amazon for around \$30.

Drawer Stack: Whether you need to find a home for small Legos, office supplies, or craft materials—this drawer stack is perfect for you. You can even put labels and/or pictures on the drawers to help you find the items you need with ease.

Under the Bed Wheeled Storage Boxes: We don't have a lot of storage in our house and these storage boxes have been a huge solution to our problem. You can fill these boxes with off-season clothes, doll clothes, Barbies, dress up clothes, etc. The possibilities are endless, but one thing is for sure—they are very useful and will fit perfectly under the beds in your home.

Clear Storage Bins: You can't forget these handy, simple storage solutions. These are great because they are stackable, easy to label, and they are clear. It makes organizing and cleaning up easy for everyone involved. You can find these at any local retail store near you.

I hope these storage solutions help you organize all of the new treasures Santa brought your family this year. Here's to a new, wonderful year with our precious families. -Katie



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Rams win Daniel High School tournament

BY BRU NIMMONS

ANDERSON — With region play nearing, the Westside Rams boys basketball team continues to look like one of the best Class 4A teams in the state. Sitting at 12-1 on the season, the Rams are ranked fourth in the state in Class 4A by the South Carolina Basketball Coaches Association and they fit the bill as they won the D.W. Daniel High School Christmas Basketball tournament last month.

The Rams opened tournament play on Dec. 21 against Liberty High School and the winless Red Devils proved no problem as Westside cruised to 77-32 win. A commanding first quarter put Westside ahead 23-6, but a Liberty run in the second quarter managed to cut the lead to 12 before the Rams finished the half on a 18-0 run. From then on, the Rams dialed things back outscoring Liberty 25-15 over the

final two quarters for the win.

The Rams were led by big days from sophomore Zeke Marshall

and senior Lamaurion Scott.

Marshall put together a double-double with 12 points and 11 rebounds, while Scott had eight points, eight boards, four assists and three steals.

The Rams also saw every player on the roster score in the win.

The next day, the Rams took on Greenwood High School and managed

to keep their winning ways going with an 80-61 win. A close battle heading into the third quarter, the Rams

managed to come alive outscoring Greenwood on a 45-26 second half run to take the win.

Marshall once again led the way for the Rams scoring 24 points and adding 7 rebounds while shooting

82 percent from the field. Junior guard Joshua Williams also had a solid game with 19 points and six steals in the win.



With the tournament championship on the line, the Rams faced tournament host Daniel the following evening and despite trailing for most of the night, Westside managed to pull out a 61-55 win. Trailing 31-23 at halftime, the Rams were in dire need of some offensive help and Williams answered the call by coming alive and willing them back into the action. Tied at 55-55 late in the final quarter, senior guard Jayden Torbert hit a shot to take the lead with 37 seconds left and Westside held on for the win.

Williams led the Rams in scoring with 16 points, all of which came in the second half, while Torbert was the only other Westside player in double digits as he put 11 points.

Coming off the tournament win, the Rams will return to play on Friday before beginning region play at Pickens on Jan. 10.

T.L. HANNA YELLOW JACKETS

Hanna girls impress in Charleston

BY BRU NIMMONS

ANDERSON — A little over a week away from opening up region play, the T.L. Hanna Yellow Jackets girls basketball team has already surpassed their win total from the 2021-2022 campaign and their growth this season was on full display during the Charleston Invitational tournament last week.

The Yellow Jackets opened the tournament against the Lawrence County Bulldogs of Kentucky on Dec. 28, dropping their first game after a two-game winning streak, 65-60. It was disaster from the start as the Bulldogs opened the game on a 10-0 run and led 17-6 before the Jackets managed to close the gap just before the half with a 19-8 run. The Bulldogs came out hot again in the second half to regain control and despite another furious attempt to

comeback, the Jackets fell in their opening game.

Senior forward Grace Ikenegbu and sophomore forward Tamerah Wynn led the way for the Jackets with each scoring 15 points. Ikenegbu also managed to put up a double-double with 11 rebounds and freshman guard Asia Clinkscales filled up the stat sheet with 11 points, five rebounds, three assists and four steals.



Coming off the loss, The Yellow Jackets returned to action the following day against

Bishop England pulling out 46-35 win over the Battling Bishops. A low scoring game throughout, Hanna managed to stay in control before exploding for a 20-point fourth

quarter to secure the victory.

Ikenegbu and senior Taylor Wessel were the entirety of the Jacket offense scoring 37 of their 46 points. Wessel

scored a game-high 20 points along with four boards, two steals and two blocks, while Ikenegbu proved to be a force inside with 17 points and nine rebounds.

With the win, the Jackets advanced to their final game of the tournament against the Riverside Rams of Virginia. In a close battle to finish, Hanna pulled out a 56-53 win to move to 2-1 over the course of the tournament.

Wessel once again led the Jackets in scoring with 13 points alongside eighth grader Khalia Hartwell who also added 13. Clinkscales also had another strong performance putting nine points in the win.

The Yellow Jackets returned to action this week with games against Hart County and Fountain Inn, with results unavailable at press time. They will open region play Jan. 10 at Mauldin.