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April 28-May 11, 2022

Talent, opportunity and fearlessness create

What could you achieve if you weren't afraid to fail?

Anderson native Phil Pickens could tell you a lot about that. To achieve his goal of a life in music, he used his natural talent, the opportunities provided by his community, and a lot of hard work to become a member



Kim von Keller

of one of America's leading opera companies. But at pivotal auditions along the way, he tossed aside any fear of disappointment and simply gave the best performances possible, yielding outcomes he couldn't have imagined as a boy who grew up singing in church choirs and community theater.

A MUSICAL FAMILY

Phil's younger brother, Tim Pickens, has been a drummer

a life in song

for Anderson native Phil Pickens



and vocalist with many Upstate bands. "He's fantastic!" Phil says proudly. And while their father, Walker Pickens, worked in marketing for Duke Power Company, he was best known in Anderson as a singer. He led church choirs, formed his own barbershop quartet, and sang with a radio show gospel group; Phil's birth mother, Bertie Helen Elrod Pickens, was part the group as well. Sadly, she died of a brain tumor when Phil was a toddler and Tim was only 13 days old. The following year, their dad married Alma Lorraine Parker. "Mom' was a godsend for

SEE LIFE ON PAGE 4



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Colorectal screening

Spring forward to good health

BY DEB TUCKER

Spring has officially begun! It's time to get out into your garden, work on your golf game, and watch the kids and grandkids play baseball and other spring sports. And you don't want to be slowed down by a medical condition that could have been prevented if found early.

According to the U.S. Preventive Services Task Force, colorectal cancer is the third leading cause of cancer death for both men and women. Although colorectal cancer is most

frequently diagnosed among persons aged 65 to 74 years old, about 10% of new colorectal cancer cases occur in people younger than 50, and that percentage is growing.

The medical team at AnMed Health can't emphasize enough the importance of regular screenings. Primary care providers, such as Dr. Laurie Rousseau of AnMed Health Pendleton Family Medicine, want patients to understand that colorectal cancer has a 90 percent survival rate if discovered before it spreads outside the colon or rectum. "It all starts with having an established relationship with a primary care provider who knows your health history," Dr. Rousseau says.

Dr. Rousseau says giving patients the best chance at a healthy life is personal for her because her mother passed away from cancer at a young age.

"I want everyone to know that in early stages colon cancer does not have symptoms. So 'feeling fine' is no reason to delay screening," she said. "The first step in preventing colon cancer is to have an established relationship with a primary care provider who knows you very well due to regular check-ups and who will make recommendations based on your health history and current status."

Lee Boggs of Anderson received his first colonoscopy when he was 50 years old. He said he wished he would have talked to his doctor sooner, knowing what all he knows now.

"My granny had colon cancer in her 50s. She survived it, but not without major surgery and a long recovery," he explained. "I now know that I should have been more aware of my family history and talked to a doctor about it and I likely would have been screened in my forties."

During his colonoscopy, it was discovered that he had a flat polyp, which can be more

difficult to remove and has a greater risk of leading to cancer. The polyp had to be biopsied, tested, removed and tested again.

"My doctor told me I was very lucky that the polyp was benign," he said. "Due to the size, shape and location of it, it required an advanced procedure, and there was a good chance that I could have had cancer. He told me it would have been a life changer. I feel very fortunate that I had a wife pushing me to go, an excellent medical team, and a lot of people praying for me."

"I want everyone to know that in early stages color cancer does not have symptoms. So 'feeling fine' is no reason to delay screening."

Questions?

Dr. Rousseau recommends that you talk with your primary care provider about when you should be screened. If you need help finding a primary care provider, please call Wellness Connect at 864.512.3748, or visit AnMed-Health.org/Doctors.



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THANK YOU, VOLUNTEERS!

Life

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

our family,” Phil says. “She was so loving and supportive.”

Phil traces his love of music to his early childhood. “When I was five, my parents took me to see ‘The Sound of Music.’ I instantly fell in love with the movie AND Julie Andrews! ‘My Favorite Things’ and ‘Do, a Deer,’ were the first songs I ever wanted to learn. My dad also introduced me to church music, jazz, musical theater, and classical music. Whenever there was a family get-together, there was always singing. One person would start a song, and by the time they got to the fourth note, everyone else had their harmony picked out and joined in. Those were glorious moments in my life.”

Phil was nurtured by Anderson’s arts community as well. His earliest performances were on the stage of the Anderson Community Theater, under the direction of William Splawn. “When I was in the second grade, my parents asked if I wanted to be in ‘The Sound of Music,’ I, of course, said yes! After auditioning, I was cast as Kurt, the youngest Von Trapp son. I was so small, they had to change the order of the children: Marta, who is supposed to be younger than Kurt, was made to be older. Gretel was still the youngest character, but the girl who played her towered over me! Three years later, my dad was auditioning for a part in the Burt Lancaster film, ‘The Midnight Man,’ which was filmed in Anderson. My mom and I walked into ACT, where the auditions were being held, and someone handed some dialogue to read. I thought I was auditioning for the movie, too, but I was actually auditioning for the ACT’s production of ‘The Music Man.’ After singing ‘My Favorite Things,’ I landed the role of Winthrop Paroo, and through this whole happy accident, I became hooked on theater. I rounded out my elementary school years with what was probably my most favorite project, playing the Artful Dodger in the musical ‘Oliver!’”

Another musical outlet for Phil was the youth choir program at First Presbyterian Church. “I did a LOT of singing there, and I will always appreciate the support that church community gave me when I was a teenager. In fact, the biggest supportive influences of my life were Bill Spawn at ACT and Bill Kutz, director of music at First Presbyterian. Both men treated me like a professional actor and musician, and I’ll always be indebted to them.”

A DISCOVERY

Phil’s college education began in his hometown. As a student at Anderson College, now Anderson University, he was introduced to new form of vocal performance when Professor Bill Bridges took a group of students to see a touring company perform Mozart’s “The Marriage of Figaro.”

“It was glorious!” Phil says. “Unlike a musical, which involves the story moving along through spoken dialogue interspersed

with music, every moment of the opera was sung. The comedic story moved along brilliantly, and the music was absolutely amazing! Professor Bridges’ love of music was infectious. He and his wife, Professor Anita Bridges, shared a passion for the arts that was truly inspirational.”

Phil’s experiences at the University of South Carolina built on his experiences at AC. “By the time I got to USC, I thought I’d died and gone to heaven because I was totally immersed in the arts. I was like a sponge taking in as much as I could. Because of my wonderful professors and like-minded friends, I can honestly say those were some of the best years of my life.” After receiving his undergraduate degree in vocal performance from USC, he received his master’s degree from Florida State University, also in vocal performance.

A SERIES OF FORTUNATE EVENTS

Phil’s professional life started in Chicago when he went to visit a friend. “She picked me up from the airport on her way to an audition in the city. In that instant, I decided I would audition, too, and wonder of wonders, they ended up casting me. So I hurriedly moved to Chicago to find decent work while I rehearsed the show, which paid \$8 a performance. I was fearless back then!”

After that first show, he immediately found work in Chicago’s major dinner theaters.

“Music directors loved me because I could sight-read music, I understood musical terminology, and I learned my parts quickly. I did a lot of ensemble work because I could beef up the sound of a men’s chorus, and understudy work because I was reliable. Soon, I started getting cast in lead roles from musical theater classics, like Charlie Dählrymple in ‘Brigadoon’ and Freddie Eynsford Hill in ‘My Fair Lady.’ My life then turned again after the happy accident of getting cast in America’s longest running NON-musical.”

As a performer, Phil was interested in trying his talents in a straight, or nonmusical, show, but his reputation as a vocalist meant that he was often overlooked at those auditions. Feeling he had nothing to lose, he decided to audition for a part in the interactive comedy “Shear Madness,” which is set in a hair salon and has been playing at theaters across the country since 1987. That fearlessness paid off when he won the role of Tony Whitcomb. “I did ‘Shear Madness’ for a year,” he says, “and it really challenged my improvisational skills.”

While his time in Chicago was exciting, it was a trip to San Francisco in 2004 that would ultimately change Phil’s life. “I wanted to go on a vacation,” he says, “and I realized that if I was auditioning for something, I could take it as a tax write-off. So I decided to audition for the San Francisco Opera.”

While there are many opera companies in the United States, the San Francisco Opera is one of only three with the resources and budget to employ a full-time crew, full-time professional orchestra, and a full-time chorus made up of professional vocalists. In essence, members of the SFO have full-time positions... which they almost never leave.

“I didn’t think I had any hope of being

offered a position,” Phil says, “so I went in with absolutely no fear. Afterwards, the chorus maestro wanted to speak to me, and several people complimented my performance. I laughed and said, ‘Well, nobody gives up these jobs.’ The chorus manager happened to be standing behind me and said that actually, there were openings in the tenor section. When I returned to Chicago, I received a phone call, offering me a job. I was so surprised and excited that my first reaction was, ‘I’m going to be moving to California. They grow avocados in California. I LOVE avocados!’”

Phil would soon learn that avocados paled in comparison to appearing on the stage of the San Francisco Opera’s home, the War Memorial Opera House. His first performance was in “La Boheme,” the story of Bohemian life in 1830s Paris. “What I

remember most about that production in particular was the technical wizardry of the opera company,” he says. At a certain point in the show, a female colleague and I would walk into a doorway and stop. Suddenly, within a span of seconds, the ENTIRE stage would change around us; what was once the outside of a restaurant suddenly became the inside as we stepped through. The audience always gasped and applauded.”

His career with the San Francisco Opera has been filled with such exhilarating moments. “I always love performing Mozart because when I do, I feel as though I’m a part of living art. I think he’s as great an artistic figure with music as Shakespeare was with the spoken word or Michelangelo was with the paint brush. I also love when my company schedules the huge, challenging operas that generally cannot be produced by smaller opera houses. My favorite so far would have to be Boito’s ‘Mefistofele.’ The story, taken from Goethe’s Faust, has scenes that take place in Heaven, in Hell, in the past, and in the present. The opening prologue, written for a massive chorus and children’s chorus, has some of the most sublime music ever written. And I am particularly looking forward to this year’s fall season. We will be performing Francis Poulenc’s opera ‘Dialogue of the Carmelites.’ It’s a 20th-century masterpiece of theater that has a very shocking and haunting final scene.”

A career in the performing arts, however,

is not without its challenges, and for each of Phil’s successful auditions, there were many which resulted in nothing. Dealing with rejection is one of the more difficult aspects of a life in the performing arts. “During my musical theater days in Chicago,” he says, “I was pretty lucky in that I stayed fairly busy, but I remember a number of people who gave up because they couldn’t stand the rejection. The greatest reward for my perseverance, though, is that I have a permanent job in the fine arts in this country; not Europe, but here in the U.S. It still blows my mind! I live for those incredible moments when I’m singing with my SFO colleagues, the orchestra is playing beautifully, and everything just meshes together. There is nothing quite like hearing the sound of a 95-person chorus bouncing off the back walls of the opera house and hitting you again during a musical pause. I’ve

also had the honor to be in world-premiere productions of operas by contemporary composers such as Philip Glass, Tobias Picker, Jake Heggie, and John Adams. In fact, I’ll be performing in my third John Adams world premiere this coming season, which is our centennial. I’d like everyone to learn more about my company at www.sfopera.com.”

It is not lost on Phil that his job is one of the rarest in the country. With only three major American opera companies paying their members a full-time rate, his peers across the U.S. number fewer than 200. “From a young age, I knew that I wanted to live in a big city that was a major cultural hub. I wasn’t looking for fame. I just wanted to be able to live my life working in the arts... and I am. I couldn’t be happier!”

That happiness is something he wishes

for every young person with dreams similar to his own, but he realizes that the success he has achieved is due to more than serendipity.

“My best advice for young artists has always been to learn as much as you can and to study all aspects of music, not just voice lessons,” he says. “Take acting classes! Take dance classes! You never know what will benefit you later in life. Because my voice was one that could easily go back and forth from classical music to musical theater, my knowledge of various musical styles greatly benefited me. And for non-artists, please support the arts in your community. You never know how wonderfully it can affect the life of a child!”

“I always love performing Mozart because when I do, I feel as though I’m a part of living art. I think he’s as great an artistic figure with music as Shakespeare was with the spoken word or Michelangelo was with the paint brush.”



Anderson has always possessed the lion's share of strong and capable mothers. Just think back on the ones who were in your neighborhood growing up. They didn't think twice about handling their own children as well as a few extra kids. Look at the incredible schools Anderson has. They are filled with students who excel, in part because they have strong parents. Today, many mothers that are raising several children and also working full time somehow manage a prize-winning balancing act. Here is a sampling of how these notable mothers keep a family and a career afloat.

BRITTNEY GAMBLE - MOTHER OF THREE - WIFE - PROJECT MANAGER WITH ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FOR CITY OF ANDERSON

What are the three most important things that you think are key in balancing work and family, especially with three kids?

1. An equitable approach with my husband. My husband - who is a full time Pastor and easily works more hours than me in a week - never makes me feel like parenting and household duties are solely my responsibility because I'm the mom. We each have our own "areas" within that framework, but it really keeps things from falling through the cracks and in return saves my sanity knowing that he is my biggest help at home and supportive of me professionally.

2. A supportive work family that reinforces and reminds me to keep my family first. It can be hard to take



Brittney Gamble with her husband, Chad, and children Everly, 6, Rhett, 4, and Wimberly, 5 months

those extra few sick days, leaving early for appointments all the time, and just doing what I have to do to be present... but I'm lucky to work in a very family friendly environment!

3. A relaxed interpretation of what balance means! I often feel like my life is just the opposite of balance. I think balance is a mindset that there will be

seasons of chaos and seasons of rest and if you can embrace them and find joy in each season, you're still on top! Give yourself a break; some things will fall apart and some things will fall right into place.

What is the most difficult thing about balancing family, kids and work?

The most difficult thing for me is wondering if I am doing the right thing by my kids/our home by being a working mom. Most of the time I am confident that work makes me a better mom, but I think it is something I fear I will one day look back on with regret.

Do you have any tips for other working moms to achieve balance?

A good man, a good daily planner, and a strong drink (iced coffee, obviously)! In my time off, I just like to spend time at home or find a fun activity for a family date day.



Kinsley Belcher with her husband, Craig, and children Asher, 8, Carson, 5, and Sadie, 4

KINSLEY BELCHER - MOTHER OF THREE - WIFE - HAIR STYLIST

What are the three most important things that you think are key in balancing work and family?

Three things that I feel are most important in order to balance family and work are not sweating the small stuff, making sure work stays at work and spending valuable time with your family.

What is the most difficult thing about balancing family, kids and work?

The most difficult thing with this balancing act is making time for myself. I truly believe that you can't pour from an empty cup. So each day I make it a priority to do something for myself. It makes me a better wife, mother and business woman."

Do you have any tips for other working moms to achieve balance?

My advice for those who want to balance work and family is to put the important things first and make the most of every moment every day and of course, love your family.

CAROLINE ZION - WIFE - MOTHER OF 4 - FIRST GRADE TEACHER AT NORTH POINTE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

What are some things that are necessary in scheduling two working parents and raising children?

1. Teamwork

Teamwork is essential when you have 2 working parents. If both parents give 110%, the gaps are naturally filled in. We have four boys in our family. My husband's work environment is more flexible than mine. He has been so fortunate to work for employers that understand family comes first. He can take the boys to doctor appts during the day, run errands, attend events at school, etc. My workday ends earlier than his, so I take care of the boys' needs after school.

2. Communication

We have "family meetings" in our house at the beginning of each month. We look at the calendar and discuss any upcoming events or activities. I like to write events on a physical calendar, but my husband prefers a Google calendar.

During this "meeting", we also make sure we give the boys a chance to share anything that may be on their mind. You would be surprised how much they do share. We like to add in a devotion and get our minds set on things above so that we have the right perspective.

3. Help from Friends

Our closest family is 2 hours away. We rely heavily on friends that have truly become family. One of our friends brings our middle schooler home every day. She is like a second mom to him at school and it is so



Caroline Zion with her husband, Billy, and children William, 17, Luke, 14, Bennett, 10, and Henry, 9

comforting knowing she is there.

My husband went through some serious health issues years ago. I truly don't know if we could have survived without our friends. They brought us dinner, kept our children, and prayed over us. If there was one piece of advice, I would give to a new family, it would be to find your people. We visited Concord

Baptist when we first moved to Anderson 17 years ago. God truly blessed us through Concord, and we found our people there.

What is the most difficult aspect of this balancing act?

The most difficult aspect is keeping up with so many different deadlines and schedules. We have

2 boys at North Pointe, one at McCants and one at TL Hanna. Keeping up with each schools' exams, plays, fundraisers, plus sports and church activities can be overwhelming. I also have my own classroom to keep up with so that complicates things even more. Even though we write everything down on our calendars, we have missed deadlines. Over the years, I have learned that it is going to happen, and life goes on.

What is your superpower?

I had to consult my sisters-in-law on this one! Apparently, I am very patient. When you have 4 boys and are an early childhood teacher, patience is not an option. I can deal with a lot of chaos, although I am finding that my patience is getting shorter with age.

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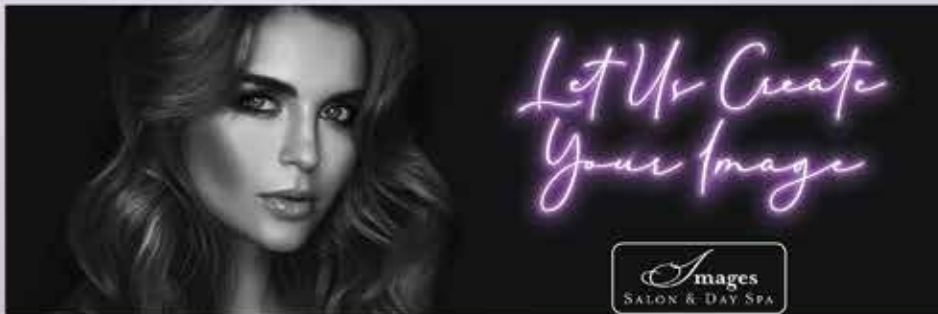


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‘MAMA’

My Mother, Evonne (Lottie) Parnell, is the “Worlds Best Mother”. I know, you think your mom is the best, but mine has the coffee mug and apron to prove it. My sisters and I called her Mommy when we were little, but that evolved into Mama later on.

My Mama is also the happiest person I know. I asked her if she ever woke up Grumpy? She said, “Yes, but he just turns over and goes back to sleep.” I can’t remember ever seeing her boiling mad, but I have seen her quite steamed. She reared three girls and one exceptionally needy boy

with no “timeouts”, only a switch and the threat of having a hissy-fit. A “switch” in case you don’t know, is the young flexible limb of a tree that is used to swiftly educate a child about his or her wayward ways. Moms back then knew that there were nerves on the back of children’s legs that connected to the “What’s Right and What’s Wrong” portion of the brain, and when properly stimulated would guide the child onto a lifetime path of honesty and integrity. I’m not sure how many switches Mama used on me, but the trees in our yard didn’t provide much shade.

My Mama made sure we had plenty to eat. How do I know this? Once at the table I asked for another piece of chicken and Mama said, “No Neal, you’ve had Plenty”. As a child, I saw my Mama give our dog a Milk-bone dog biscuit. I found that box and was about to try one when Mama snatched the doggie treat from my hand and said, “Those are for the dog, don’t ever eat anything that has a



picture of an animal on the box or can”. To this day I’ve never had Frosted Flakes, Fruit Loops, or Tuna.

I remember scrambling all over the car while Mama was driving; that is until she’d had enough and hooked my belt through the armrest, thereby inventing the first seatbelt.

My Mama had to do things that would have today’s modern moms checking themselves into psychiatric wards. Cloth diapers held on with safety pins might not sound so bad until they needed cleaning, Mama did that. Did you know that a pediatrician for Pampers encouraged mothers not to rush toilet training?... Hmmmm, you better believe I

was on the potty before I could walk, Mama did that.

There were no video games or 24\7 cartoon networks to keep us occupied, Mama did that. We didn’t have helmets and knee pads when we rode our bikes, all we had were Band-Aids, Mama did that.

When we tore a hole in our jeans or shirts we didn’t get new ones, they were hand-sewn back together, Mama did that. When our clothes were dirty, they were put in the washer and hung outside on the clothes-line to dry, Mama did that.

If our science project was due tomorrow and we wanted to make a planetary model with the sun in the center, Mama did that.

My sisters and I are decades older now and when we are sad, frustrated, or feeling scared, we know how to pray and seek God’s help. Mama did that.

THANKS, MAMA
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Neal Parnell





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FROM THE SHELF

Daughter by Kate McLaughlin



Sara Leady

As I've previously stated, I am a big proponent of reading books of visiting authors, especially ones that come to the library. A

couple years ago we brought in a group of authors and hobbyists to talk all things steampunk (genre of books, art, cosplay, even music). One of those authors was Kate McLaughlin. I legit can attribute my return to reading adult fiction entirely to her handing

me a copy of *It Takes One*, which was about to come out (written under the name Kate Kessler, the pen name for her adult thrillers).

After I finished my English degree, I bordered on REFUSING to read anything that wasn't YA or Middle Grade. I remember the day after the event sitting in NoseDive (great gluten free restaurant in Greenville FYI), and getting FULLY consumed by *It Takes One*. As a high schooler I had loved thrillers and criminal profiler type books, but I'd never

returned to that genre until Kate got me hooked.

Kate recently released a YA thriller under her steampunk/YA pen name Kate McLaughlin titled *Daughter*. I was beyond stoked when she told me about sending the final manuscript to her publisher because it's YA aaaaand a thriller, so for me it's like the best of both worlds.

Daughter follows Scarlet, a high school senior, living a pretty normal life outside of her mother being crazy overprotective. Scarlet is looking at film schools and her future is the epitome of bright (insert some eerie foreboding music like the *Jaws* theme), until one day the FBI shows up at her door and her life is literally turned inside out.

Turns out, part of the reason that Scarlet's mom is SO overprotective is that Scarlet happens to be the only daughter of infamous serial killer Jeffery Robert Lake. Lake is dying of cancer and in exchange for more names and locations of his victims, he's demanding to meet his only daughter, who incidentally he origi-



nally named after his very first victim. Scarlet's mom is obviously against it, wanting to protect her not only from the monster, but also the likely media frenzy when word gets out that his family has resurfaced.

When Lake was first busted for his horrible crimes (think Ted Bundy but add in necrophilia) Scarlet's mom stood by his side claiming his innocence. Naturally, the entire world turned on her and even accused her of being in on it. While in court testifying, Scarlet's mom learns that the necklace she is wearing on the stand (and several other pieces that were gifts) actually came from a victim. She quickly turns on him and to get away from death threats to her and her daughter, she goes into witness protection.

The choice is left up to Scarlet, and naturally she chooses to engage with Lake and do whatever she can to get as many names and locations as possible before Lake succumbs to his disease. To call it a game of 'cat and mouse' is an understatement. Lake is a master manipulator and an absolute monster. Scarlet goes in with her head held high though, and does her best to dance with him and give the families closure. The tension is sort of a slow build but it's also incredibly intense, so you're basically unable to put the book down.

YA thrillers can sometimes be hit and miss for me because of the teen angst (as it should be since the books are in fact for teens). I've found though it's usually on me to go in with the right mindset and remember I'm reading about a teen written for teens. Anytime I go to write one of these reviews I always look up other reviews just to see if I missed anything (we all read stories differently). Some reviews were adults who struggled with how 'teen' Scarlet is, and it's because of those reviews that I'm making a point to remind readers that she's 17, so of course she's going to read maybe less mature (slash I'd like to see how an adult would navigate this type of curveball too.) I will say that most of Kate's YA books read very teen, but Kate also mentors teen girls and talks with them a lot, so I'd argue we're getting a pretty accurate depiction of teen life.

Bottom line, I'm a big fan of Kate whether she's writing as McLaughlin or Kessler, and this thriller definitely did not disappoint this avid serial killer book reader. If you're unable to set aside the YA nature of *Daughter*, I definitely would recommend her adult thrillers that are written under Kessler. Both the Audrey Harte and Killian Delaney series are to die for, pun absolutely intended. I say this both as an avid reader, and as someone who happens to know the author. I mean, have I steered you wrong yet? (Maybe don't answer that.)

Keeping it 'country chic'

I'm headed on a couples' trip to Nashville. We're going to see a show at The Ryman Auditorium in a couple of weeks and I'm so looking forward to it. Nashville is known for music of course, but the fashion there is everything, too. It leaves me bewildered, already

wondering what to pack.

I'm naturally somewhat of a country gal at heart, but I need the perfect cowboy boots and hat to wear.

I've discovered some incredible "country chic" fashion recently, and whether you're traveling to Nashville or not, these styles would look great on

you anywhere, anytime. These boots were made for walking, and yes, they're out of my price range, but they're stunning and would last you a lifetime. Fraulein Boot Company is top notch and they actually delve into western history. Authentic and vintage styles that will make you swoon. I'm obsessed with their San Antonio Rose boot. It's a buttery, teal blue color with

white roses that go up your leg. Just darling.

Another great boot company I love is out of Texas called Junk Gypsy. Their boots are handmade and just breathtaking. The Spirit Animal tall boots are everything and then some. They're honestly more in my lane as far as price range is concerned. Finally, this cowgirl needs a hat. I'm in the market for a great fitted one that's comfortable. Free People makes a beautiful one called "The Cash" in all black of course. How choice and cowgirl posh is that? It comes in a multitude of colors too, from pink, grey and even white. At eighty-eight dollars, you can't pass it up.

Another great hat company I like is called Country Outfitter. The Idyllwind style Women's Mayberry Western hat is amazing. It comes with this little silver chain the graces the brim. The color is rich and you will turn heads for sure. These two main accessories will get you ready to boot, scoot and boogie. So, what are you waiting for? Country chic never looked so good. As always, remember to make the sidewalk your runway, kindness always matters, and yeehaw y'all.



Kristine March

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6:30PM – 8:00PM – THOSE GUYS BAND

CHURCH STREET STAGE:

6:00PM – 8:00PM – HANNA/WESTSIDE JAZZ BANDS

SATURDAY, APRIL 30TH

MCCOY WRIGHT MAIN STAGE AT CAROLINA WREN PARK

10:00AM – 10:30AM – NEVITT FOREST STEP TEAM

10:30AM – 11:00AM – MCLEES

11:00AM – 11:30AM – CALHOUN

11:30AM – 12:00PM – NORTH POINTE

12:00PM – 12:30PM – CENTERVILLE

12:30PM – 12:50PM – SOUTHWOOD

12:50PM – 1:45PM – STEPPIN' OUT

1:45PM – 2:05PM – CLEMSON LITTLE THEATRE

2:05PM – 3:00PM – ECDA

3:00PM – 3:30PM – A5 STRINGS

3:30PM – 4:00PM – NEW PROSPECT

6:00PM – ERIC SCOTT BAND

7:45PM – ARTIST AWARDS CEREMONY

8:00PM – OUTSHYNE

ANDERSON UNIVERSITY'S SOUTH CAROLINA SCHOOL OF THE ARTS STAGE

12:00PM – 12:45PM – ANDERSON UNIVERSITY JAZZ COMBO

1:00PM – 1:45PM – AU TIM BLACKWELL COMMERCIAL ENSEMBLE I

2:00PM – 2:45PM – AU AFRICAN DRUM ENSEMBLE

3:00PM – 3:45PM – AU TIM BLACKWELL COMMERCIAL ENSEMBLE II

4:00PM – 4:45PM – SENIOR FOLLIES

5:00PM – 5:45PM – AU GREG ALEWINE COMMERCIAL ENSEMBLE I

6:00PM – 6:45PM – AU FACULTY JAZZ ENSEMBLE

7:00PM – 8:00PM – AUTHENTICITY

CHURCH STREET STAGE

10:00AM – 10:45AM – TAILGATE HOMEBOYS

11:00AM – 11:45AM – L.C. BRANCH

12:00PM – 12:45PM – SECOND TIME AROUND BAND

1:00PM – 2:15PM – WANDA JOHNSON

3:00PM – 3:45PM – ALY & THE CRUZ'RS

4:00PM – 5:00PM – TALBERT BLACK

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12:30PM – 1:30PM – THE PALMETTO WHISKEYS

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2:45PM – 4:00PM – MARKET THEATRE PERFORMANCE OF "EVERY BRILLIANT THING"

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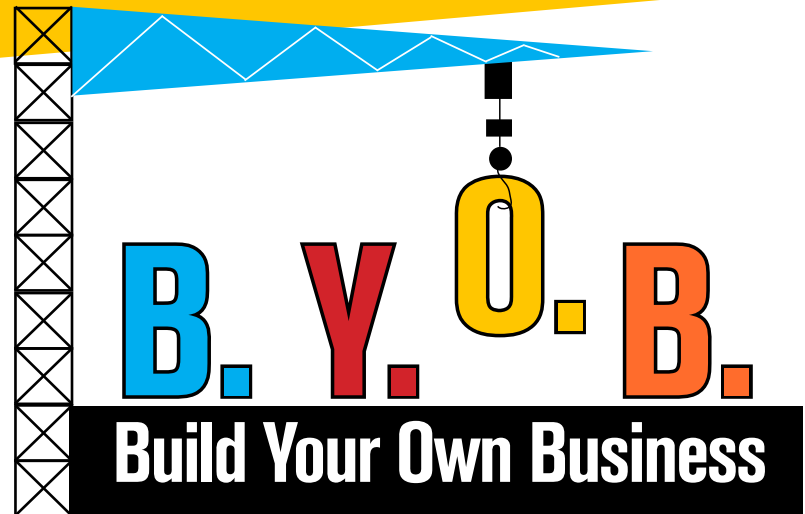
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THE GARDEN SHOP

AIR LAYER FOR MORE PLANTS



**SUSAN
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master
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Years ago I decided to try air layering plants. The motivation was to root camellias and other shrubs that are hard to root from cuttings. Also, if you get a generally slow growing plant like camellias, to root from cuttings, would one of a certain age live long enough to see it grow into a beautiful plant. This coming from someone who had her 59th birthday last week. A friend, obviously good enough friend to say such, told me her husband asked was this my first 59th birthday. I sent word to him that he just better watch his mouth and this was indeed my first 59th birthday!

But as best intentions often go, supplies to air layer are still in the storage container. Never attempted. However, motivation came wafting in on the evening air from Stonewall Jackson native azalea. The confederate series

azaleas are crosses between *rhododendron austrinum* and *rhododendron* x 'Hotspur Yellow'. Hotspur was bred in the UK in 1934. Then how are the confederate series native? Maybe all that cross breeding to make a new plant? Too much to think about when it really doesn't matter I suppose. And no jokes about breeding confederates! I've already been accused of having multiple 59th birthdays. Stonewall Jackson azalea is true Clemson orange, beautiful every year, smells wonderful and I want more. They will be fantastic mixed in with old fashioned Formosa azaleas from Grandmother Cooley's.

Air layering seems simple. It also seems they will produce a larger plant faster. Take a good sized branch, at least as big as a pencil, without blooms, scrape off some of the bark, remove any leaves in that part, put root tone on the wounded areas, and wrap damp sphagnum moss around it. It doesn't need to be a bunch, about a hand full and enough to cover the area well. But don't scrimp either because there needs to be enough for plenty of roots to grow. Wrap it in plastic wrap, tie the ends tightly with twist ties or twine to seal in moisture from the moss. Some say to cover that

with tin foil too. Then you can take the tin foil off and check to see if roots are growing without messing up the sphagnum moss. Several sites also say to slice up into the stem enough to put a toothpick or piece of hard plastic into the sliced stem. Then put root tone, wrap as other method instructs. It was suggested this way may work better for less woody stems. Supposedly within a couple of weeks, maybe a month depending on the type of plant, roots should start showing. After enough roots have grown, simply cut the newly rooted part off from the mother plant. Plant sphagnum ball and all.

Spring is the best time to air layer since plants are beginning to grow. Any time of year is probably fine but it may take longer if the plant is not actively growing. Because of the way I tend plants, or lack thereof, my new plants will be potted up for another year before planting them in the ground. Then I can feed them with very diluted fertilizer every month or so. A good website for general information is gardeningknowhow.com. When researching gardening stuff, this website comes up a lot. I find them easy to follow and useful. One site I read while double checking facts on



Air layering plants

air layering was way above my head. First, it gave instructions per monocot or dicot. Then used language like pre-imbibed in water. Huh? One helpful hint though, which would not have occurred to me, said to put the tin foil shiny side out to reflect the heat. I may have done that without thought. But this complicated site referred to this as using tin foil when baking a cake – putting the tin foil shiny side up to prevent burning the cake. Another reason they were using words that don't mean much to me. Baking?

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Writing utensil reflections

BY RICH OTTER

After they invented words, somebody got clever and decided there had to be a way of putting them in permanent form. That required the painful art of spelling, a talent some of us have never mastered. (Cordes Seabrook often explained, “I never trusted anyone who could spell things only one way.”) It also meant there had to be some way to make a mark. Sure, you could scratch it on your cave or rock wall but then you had a limited audience for your brilliant thoughts. Some clever individual figured out a piece of lead could be used on papyrus and off they went.

Louise Ayer Vandiver in her Traditions and History of Anderson County explained that in the early days in Anderson County there were no pencils available for students and the older boys made pencils by cutting cane off at the joints and pouring melted lead into the hollow center, sharpening it when it cooled.

But there was also the quill pen that dipped in ink and provided a more prominent and permanent mark. The world changer, however, was the fountain pen. There was a little pump on the side to fill the pen with ink so you had a writing machine you could carry around to sign checks.

But there was a problem with the ink pen. What you had written was wet and could easily smear. A blotter was needed. You just pressed it upon the paper after writing, the excess ink was absorbed and there was no mess. That opened up a great advertising tool. On one side of a blotter, if you were in business, you could put a display with your name or that of your company as well as an inviting picture. You then scattered your advertising blotters in places where they could be seen and used, such as on bank counters. All the better, they were not only seen but often pocketed for use at home.

Pens became less messy by having a little ink cartridge that could be installed when you ran dry and you didn’t have to carry around an ink bottle. There was still a problem for some of us who can’t spell. How do you get rid of

the mistake your spouse spots? Along came ink irradiator. It was somewhat smelly but when it (finally) dried, and you wrote over the error, it was a lot better than doing the whole page over.

If you were a bigshot and had a fancy office, you had a big blotter on your desk with a rigid base underneath and nice leather corner pieces to hold it in place. Where did you get those blotters, the same place you got the ink - Fant’s Book Store, of course.

Marshall Fant recalled, “We bought ink twice a year because it was shipped out of Iowa or somewhere by train and you couldn’t buy it in the winter because it would freeze. We sold gallons, quarts, pints, four-ounce and two-ounce bottles.”

Any good ink seller also had to carry blotters. “They were 18-by-24 inches. We didn’t sell the small ones [they were given away by advertisers], but we sold the big ones. They were green or brown.” Sometimes a lady would come in wanting a little blotter without having to steal one off a bank counter and Marshall said he would get a big one and cut it into little pieces for her.

Marshall proclaimed they even carried left-handed fountain pens. He cautioned that you would never let anyone else use your pen. “It was like a toothbrush. You would not lend your toothbrush.”

The other thing that folks these days don’t have the pleasure to enjoy is carbon paper. That was used for making copies when you were using a typewriter. (A typewriter was an instrument that had a keyboard that looked something like what you use with a computer. You can probably see one at the Anderson County Museum.)

A good piece of carbon paper could last you for about 16 copies, but there was also a little problem there. If you misspelled a word you had to erase the word and very carefully type it in the space vacated - if there was appropriate room. Otherwise you either ignored the error or typed it all over.

By gum, those were the good old days.

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Local financial advisor honored for performance

Edward Jones Financial Advisor Shane Hunt of Anderson, SC recently qualified for the firm's Managing Partner's Conference, which celebrates the contributions and achievements of the top 400 of the firm's nearly 19,000 financial advisors. The conference will be held in Scottsdale, Ariz. on April 26-27.

During the two-day conference, attendees will have the opportunity to interact with and learn from firm leaders, confer on timely topics and share best practices for serving clients.

"These financial advisors have demonstrated an exceptional level of care in helping clients to set, prioritize and reach the financial goals that make a difference in their lives. We're proud of the work they do and the significant impact they make for their clients and in their communities," said Chuck Orban, an Edward Jones principal responsible for the firm's recognition events. "As we move into our second 100 years as a firm, we will continue to focus on ways to live out our purpose: to partner for positive impact to improve the wellbeing of our clients and colleagues, and together, better our communities and society."

Edward Jones, a Fortune 500 company headquartered in St. Louis, provides financial services in the U.S. and, through its affiliate, in Canada. Every aspect of the firm's business, from the investments its financial advisors offer to the location of branch offices, caters to individual investors and businesses. The firm's nearly 19,000 financial advisors serve more than 7 million clients with a total of \$1.8 trillion in assets under care. Visit edwardjones.com or the recruiting website at careers.edwardjones.com. Member SIPC.

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FINANCIAL FOCUS: Match your financial goals with the right strategies

To achieve most goals in life, you need some type of strategy. And that's certainly true for your financial goals. Since you likely have multiple financial goals, you may need to pursue several different strategies – but they all should follow a similar process.

What does this process entail? Here are the basic steps:

- *Fully define each goal.* Like most people, you probably have a goal of someday enjoying a comfortable retirement. But have you defined what "comfortable retirement" means to you? Do you plan to spend your retirement years traveling the world, or would you rather stay close to home to be with family members? Would you like to pursue your hobbies? Open a small business? Think carefully about what this goal looks like.

- *Identify the costs.* Once you've identified a retirement vision, you need to put a price tag on it. How much income will you require? You don't have to identify a figure down to the penny, but you should be able to come up with a pretty good estimate. A surprising number of people never reach this point – more than three-fourths of pre-retirees haven't calculated how much they'll need

once they retire, according to Four Pillars of the New Retirement, a study by Age Wave and Edward Jones.

- *Invest appropriately for each goal.* Your investment strategy should reflect your risk tolerance and your goals. So, for example, when you're working toward a long-term goal, such as retirement, you're essentially investing for growth, which means you'll accept the level of risk that always accompanies a growth strategy. But when you're investing for a shorter-term goal, such as taking an international vacation in a few years, you may be somewhat less concerned with maximum growth and more focused on making sure that a certain amount of money is available when you need it. Consequently, you might follow an investment strategy with a lower degree of risk.

- *Understand the potential trade-offs of your financial strategy.* Each of your goals may have its own investment strategy, but you still need to look at your goals holistically. So, for instance, if you decide you need to ramp up your investing for your child's education, will that affect your ability to put away the amounts you've designated for retirement?

If so, do you have the flexibility to change your retirement plans somewhat, perhaps by working an extra year or so? Of course, this might not be necessary, but it does illustrate the potential impact one choice can have on another.

- *Track your progress.* It's important to track the progress of your investments and investment strategies, but you'll want to be careful about using market indexes as benchmarks. Your portfolio was designed for your risk tolerance and goals, so comparing it to an equity index (like the S&P 500) isn't all that relevant, or helpful. Instead, measure your progress at least annually to determine if you're on track to achieve the goals your strategy was designed to meet. When you review your progress, you may also want to determine if any changes in your family situation or your employment might affect your investment strategies. A financial professional can help you in this area.

Achieving your financial goals takes time, effort and commitment. But by following the most appropriate strategies for your situation, you've got a path that can help lead you to success.

When it comes to your to-do list, put your future first.

To find out how to get your financial goals on track, contact us for a complimentary review.



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A glimmer of hope against Alzheimer's disease

Alzheimer's Disease. It's often called the long goodbye or a slow decline into darkness. Singer Lucinda Williams wrote her song "If My Love Could Kill" about her father's battle with Alzheimer's. She later said, in an interview, "The thing about Alzheimer's is that it is sort of like all these little, small deaths along the way before they actually physically die."

Regardless of how we refer to Alzheimer's, it is a cruel and inhumane disease. One in three seniors will die with Alzheimer's or another dementia. Six million Americans have the disease today, and authorities project that 12.7 million will have it by 2050. Just in the U.S., the financial cost is over \$321 billion per year. The cost beyond financial is much greater.



Jim Harris

Currently, there is no cure for Alzheimer's disease, and medications can only temporarily reduce the symptoms. There are, however, glimmers of hope on the horizon, and one of those is now available in the Anderson area.

Care Access, in a partnership with Eli Lilly, is entering a phase three clinical trial for a new drug. That trial is now available to eligible residents of the Anderson area. Potential patients can receive a blood test at absolutely no charge to determine if they have the presence of a specific biomarker that is key to the trial.

Researchers have identified a potential link between the existence of the biomarker, a p-tau protein, and Alzheimer's. This trial evaluates that link and its potential role in treating the disease.

Care Access is the world's leading Decentralized Research Organization. Holly Hoefer is the Vice President and point person



for the trial. She says, "This protein typically builds up in the brain over time. The blood test will actually detect this particular protein. Over time, the assumption is it will continue to build up and lead to an Alzheimer's diagnosis, which is a form of dementia."

She continues, "The target of the trial is to see how this new drug will reduce the protein buildup in the

brain to either prevent or delay any Alzheimer's symptoms in patients. The goal is always to prevent. We'd love to see this come to fruition, with this new study drug, with either slowing the progression of the buildup of these proteins or eliminate them altogether."

The trial looks for individuals between the ages of fifty-five to eighty who do not have any symptoms of Alzheimer's, dementia, or cognitive issues. Each person who receives the initial blood testing will get their results, whether or not they decide to participate in the trial.

Area psychiatrist Dr. Taral Sharma practices in Anderson and Seneca and has a new location opening soon in Greenville. He and his team are an integral part of the trial. In addition to performing the screening process for all potential participants, he will monitor these individuals throughout the program's entirety.

Dr. Sharma credits office man-

ager Drew Hedden for undertaking the massive task of the coordination and administrative requirements of the trial. Dr. Sharma has been impacted by Alzheimer's in his personal life, with a dear family member suffering from the illness.

The evaluation process consists of multiple stages, with Dr. Sharma and his team involved in every step. A blood test will follow an initial questionnaire. Those with a presence of the biomarker who wish to proceed will then have an MRI that establishes a baseline for comparison over the length of the trial. Next, the patient will receive a physical evaluation from Dr. Sharma, who will explain all of the details of the program so potential participants can be fully informed to make their decision. There is no charge for the patient.

Individuals interested in learning more about the trial or being evaluated should visit www.testforalz.com or call 617-663-0722 for additional information and a form to initiate the process.

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BUGS AND A RARE BIRD

BY ANN BAILES

"I can tell you where you can find a red-cockaded woodpecker, but the bugs will be terrible," said the gentleman that Mike and I were chatting with at the Huntington Beach State Park Nature Center. Of course we wanted to know where to find one. And surely in April the bugs wouldn't be that bad!!

The red-cockaded woodpecker (RCW) has been on the Endangered Species List since the inception of that list in 1973. A range map for this bird shows that it is present all over the southeast; however, what is not obvious is that the red-cockaded stays very locally in only a few places within that region. The main reason for its precipitous drop in numbers? Habitat loss. The RCW favors open longleaf pine forests, and that ecosystem has been severely declining in recent years. To further complicate the bird's preferences, it likes trees that are at least 60-100 years old, and especially those that are infested with a certain fungus which makes the pulpwood softer and easier to excavate. Not an easy set of expectations for nature to meet.

RCWs are the only North American woodpecker species known to drill holes in living pine trees. Sap then oozes out, surrounding the nesting area and keeping predat-

tors from getting too close. They tend to live in colonies, with several younger birds helping parents find food for the babies.

Our newfound friend directed us to the Santee Coastal Reserve, where we arrived the following morning about 10:00. Everything came together beautifully for our adventure. Just as we pulled up to the reserve entrance, a DNR biologist wearing insect netting over her face came walking in our direction. She pointed out that the trees with white rings painted around them are known to have had nests at some point, and trees with pink ribbons tied above the white ring contain active nests. She then told us that birds had been spotted there within the past ten minutes!

So we waited. And within another ten minutes, here came two birds! Seeing them couldn't have been any easier. They put on quite a show, flying around the area. The RCW is bigger than the small downy woodpecker, but not as big as a red-bellied or other larger species. It has a large white cheek patch, which is more of a definitive identifier than the rarely seen tiny red cockade on its head. Oh, they were beautiful, even more so because we knew that seeing them is an uncommon experience.

We drove the loop of the reserve, down to



the Santee River, then came back and watched a little more. And here came one of the birds again. This time it practically posed for us, staying still long enough for us to get pictures.

This was one of those peak experiences in watching birds. Yes, we had to brave the

mosquitoes, which were every bit as bad as the gentleman had said. They not only were everywhere, they were huge and positively prehistoric in their appearance. Oh, and the chiggers were bad also. I'm still scratching the bites. It was worth it.

Seeds, shovels, and soil...oh my!

Spring is the perfect time of year to get your family outdoors and planting seeds! Gardening is a great way to keep your children busy, curious, and

learning throughout the spring season, and many future seasons to follow!

Here are a few tips to consider as you make your gardening plans:

The smaller the kids, the larger the seeds should be. You want to make sure they are big enough for small fingers to handle. Some great seeds to plant are peas,

beans, sunflowers, nasturtium, and squash. These plants will germinate and grow quickly, which makes them interesting for any kid to watch! A sandbox-sized planting area is perfect for younger kids. Be sure to give them their own sturdy, child-sized tools, and expect them to get wet and dirty! Gardening is a fun, but messy task.

Let your child outline the borders of your garden area with rocks and define the paths with stepping-stones or mulch. This will clearly define what is "garden" and what is not. Have them create plant tags, using pictures for non-readers and words for readers. Think about using material that won't ruin when it gets wet. You could laminate the tags or use

permanent marker and popsicle sticks.

Be sure to give your young gardeners a pint-sized watering can to use so they don't over-water their young thriving plants with a hose. You can buy these at Target, Walmart, or Lowes!

Older kids might also enjoy planning their garden using a "theme" – such as a "pizza garden," "salsa garden," or one with rainbow-colored vegetables!

There are lots of fun things in the garden to share with kids. One interesting, but also important thing to do, is to point out and identify bugs- explaining which are the good guys and which are the bad guys! Another creative idea is allowing your kids to personalize their growing pumpkins by scratching their names on the skin of the young fruits, and then watching their names grow as the pumpkins mature.

Planting a garden can also be educational! Encouraging your young child to read the instructions on the seed packet to figure out how deep and far apart to plant the seeds is an excellent learning experience. This is a great way to teach them how to "read-to-learn." The more involved they are, the more committed they are likely to be.

Above all, don't worry about perfection; gardening is a learn-as-you-go, trial and error thing, with experience being the best teacher! The point is to make it a fun, family-oriented, learning experience.

Happy gardening to you and your family!



Katie Laughridge



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Struggling Yellow Jackets trying to keep hopes alive for postseason appearance

BY BRU NIMMONS

ANDERSON — With the regular season nearing a close, the T.L. Hanna High School softball team is doing all it can to keep its playoff hopes alive after going 1-3 in its last four games.

For the second time on the season, the Yellow Jackets played Woodmont on April 8 hoping to pick up their second region win against the Wildcats.

However, the Wildcats proved to be too tough a task, as they lit up the Jackets to the tune of 15 runs in a 15-5 win.

After the loss and a 10-day break, Hanna hoped to get back on track as

it traveled to Belton-Honea Path in a non-region game. The

Yellow Jackets got big days from Jada Sanders and Addie Glenn in the batter's box, but gave up two many runs for the second straight game in an 11-5 loss.

Returning to region play, the Yellow

Jackets traveled to Mauldin on April

20 with a chance to take possession of fourth place in Region I-5A. Behind a commanding day from Bell Rainey on the mound, the Yellow Jackets managed to pull out a 7-1 win to move into prime position for a playoff spot.



After taking down the Mavericks, Hanna faced its toughest test of the stretch against the sixth-ranked Hillcrest Rams. Hillcrest dominated Hanna early, with Georgia Lieb striking out eight of the first nine Hanna batters. By the time the Jackets finally got on the board in the fifth inning, it was too little, too late as they fell 9-3.

With just three games left in the regular season, the Yellow Jackets will travel to Woodmont and J.L. Mann for region games before finishing the year against cross-town rival Westside.

WESTSIDE RAMS

After tough out-of-state spring break trip, Westside sets sights on playoffs

BY BRU NIMMONS

ANDERSON — Just a little more than a week away from the start of the playoffs, the Westside High School baseball team is coming off an out-of-state trip and a region split as it turns its eyes toward the postseason.

The Rams began their latest stretch of games traveling to Tri Cities, Tenn., for some out-of-state action during their Spring Break. The Rams went 1-2 on the trip.

Opening up with West Ridge High School, the Rams fell behind early, battling back and tying the game in the sixth inning on an RBI single by Tyler Scott. Despite the comeback, Westside couldn't come out with

the win as a Ram error in the eighth inning allowed West Ridge to pull out the 6-5 win.

Looking to bounce back, the Rams took on Dobyns-Bennett High School the next morning. Another nailbiting effort, neither team could take control, with the game going to extras tied at

4-4. Unlike their previous game, the Rams were able to come out on top in extras when Jaxon Thomas brought home Camden Crosby in the ninth inning for a 5-4 win.

Later that day, Westside played Karns in its final game of the out-of-state stretch. The Rams gave up two early runs in

the first and never found their footing in the batter's box, with just two hits as they fell 9-1.

Returning to South Carolina, Westside hosted Travelers Rest on April 20. In a pitching duel between Westside's Ethan Barbee and TR's Christian Nielson, the Devildogs prevailed as Nielson gave up just one hit on the evening in a 4-1 win.

Two days later, the Rams hoped to return the favor as they traveled to Travelers Rest and did just that in a 9-2 win. Thomas and Mikey Scott had big days at the plate, each picking up a home run and three RBIs as the Rams managed to add the huge region win.

