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May 21-June 3, 2026

Come dream with me

On Friday, May 22, a magical evening will take place at the Anderson Civic Center as Honor for Heroes and Area 14 Special Olympics in South Carolina host Come Dream with Me Prom.



Kim von Keller

This annual event, which welcomes individuals of all ages with physical, intellectual, and developmental disabilities, is in its third year following a COVID-era hiatus, and the coordinators are just as excited as the guests.

“Come Dream with Me Prom is a night that is all about celebrating and having fun in a place where individuals can be themselves and not be judged,” says Sherry Fuller, a member of the prom committee. “They get to see their friends and dance and just be happy.”



Fuller founded Come Dream with Me Prom in 2011 following the death of her daughter, Amanda, who never got to attend

a prom but, as her mom says, “loved a great

SEE DREAM ON PAGE 2

Edward Jones
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Dream

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

party.” Matthew Hilley is the president and founder of Honor for Heroes, one of the organizations which took over the prom two years ago.

“In 2024, when the prom was being revived, we recognized there was a real need to help build a solid foundation that would allow the prom to continue successfully for many years to come. Honor for Heroes partnered with Area 14 Special Olympics and worked alongside Sherry Fuller to form a governing committee and officially take ownership of the Come Dream with Me Prom to help ensure its long-term stability, consistency, and success for the community we serve.”

Guests of Come Dream with Me Prom will enjoy the same things that all prom guests enjoy, such as food, live music, and dancing. As Co-Area Director for Area 14 Special Olympics in South Carolina, Kathy Schofield is reminded of her own prom.

“Some of my favorite memories from my own prom are the excitement of getting a ‘fancy’ dress, dancing with friends, and having such a special event to look forward to. Taking pictures with friends or a date and receiving a corsage made the night feel even more special. Each year, I have the honor of helping plan an experience where our participants arrive excited, walk into a room filled with energy and excitement, and leave already looking forward to the next prom.”

Tessa Hilley, also Co-Area Director for Area 14 Special Olympics in South Carolina, wants Come Dream with Me Prom guests to remember their prom as she remembers hers.

“I remember the excitement of getting my hair done, finding the perfect dress, and getting to ride in a limo with my friends. It was such a fun and memorable experience. And today, Come Dream with Me Prom is one of my favorite events that Area 14 is involved in. I love seeing the joy it brings to all of the participants. Watching everyone out on the dance floor having fun and making memories truly makes it the best night.”

Prom guests, along with their chaperones, attend Come Dream with Me Prom free of charge, and the planning of the next prom begins right after the current year’s prom is over. Matthew Hilley is appreciative of all the support that makes the event possible.

“So many individuals and companies help make this event special every year. The Band Silver performs every year, and Jackie’s Starr Mart provides the meal for all the participants. Pizza Buffet provides pizza for all the



Above: The Come Dream with Me Prom, an event hosted by Honor for Heroes and Area 14 Special Olympics in South Carolina for individuals with physical, intellectual, and developmental disabilities was held at the Anderson Civic Center earlier this month. The prom, founded in memory of Amanda Fuller, gives participants a night filled with music, friendship, and unforgettable memories in a welcoming and joyful atmosphere. Right: Guests dance and celebrate during the annual event.

volunteers and workers behind the scenes. Coca-Cola Consolidated provides the drinks for the participants. Bethel Baptist Church and Shiloh Baptist Church provide the desserts for everyone. LCA Photobooth does prom photos on site. All the above-mentioned donations of products, time, and service are provided completely free of charge, and we have the full support of Anderson County as well.”

With its Under the Big Top theme, the 2026 Come Dream with Me Prom is sure to be fun event. But it won’t be long before Honor for Heroes and Area 14 Special Olympics in South Carolina begin planning for 2027.

The organizations are always looking for new volunteers and sponsors, and committee member Nikki Simpson wants others to experience the joy she feels on that one special night each year.

“Being a part of the Come Dream with Me Prom is truly an honor, and it’s a blessing to be part of something so special. For one beautiful night, it feels like heaven on earth as our special needs community is cel-



ebrated and made to feel extra special. This prom gives our guests and their families a night filled with joy, love, and unforgettable memories. From the singing and dancing to the decorations, photos, and live music, every moment is filled with happiness and excitement. Seeing the smiles on everyone’s faces is something I will always cherish.

To learn more about Come Dream with Me Prom, visit honor4heroes.com/about-us, You’ll also find Come Dream with Me Prom on Facebook.

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THE SECRET LIFE OF CORAL REEFS

BY NATHAN GREENSLIT
ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENTIST
RPI ON CONTRACT WITH NOAA'S
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COASTAL OCEAN SCIENCE

When you hear the word “coral”, do you think plant, animal, or rock? It’s a tricky question, and here’s why. Corals are true animals, belonging to the phylum Cnidaria. They are considered “cousins” to other sea creatures like anemones and jellyfish. If you were to get super close to a coral colony, you would see that they are made up of hundreds of tiny animals called polyps. Broadly, polyps consist of a mouth for eating and waste disposal and tentacles used to capture and ingest their food (usually plankton). Within the polyp’s tissue, you can find zooxanthellae (pronounced “zoo-zen-thel-aye”), which are small plant cells that photosynthesize, turning sunlight into energy for the coral. This process can provide up to 90% of the coral’s energy intake, so they are very important for survival. The plant cells are also what provide the different colors you see in coral reefs (oranges, browns, greens). Underneath the tissue lies their stony calcium carbonate (limestone) skeleton. So while corals are animals, they also have plant (zooxanthellae) and rock (skeleton) components!

Corals can reproduce both asexually (via breakage or one polyp growing from another) or sexually (via the fusion of egg and sperm). Corals reproduce sexually via a process known as spawning. Corals will synchronously release their eggs and sperm into the water column, where fertilization will take place. This typically occurs 1-2 times a year in the summer, close to a full moon.

Importance of Coral

Other than their natural value, corals are important for a multitude of reasons that can be categorized in two ways. Ecosystem functions are physiological and biological processes that occur within an ecosystem to maintain life. That is, how animals interact with one another and their environment to create a healthy ecosystem.

Coral reefs are the most biodiverse ecosystems in our oceans. Despite covering <1% of the ocean floor, these ecosystems support at least 25% of marine life directly through habitat, food sources, and nurseries for young fish.

Ecosystem services are direct/indirect benefits that humans receive from these ecosystems. Have you ever gone snorkeling, SCUBA diving, fishing, or kayaking around reefs? Then you have experienced an ecosystem service. These services bring in billions of dollars each year to the U.S. economy.



Above: Coral polyp with zooxanthellae (green), which are small plant cells that photosynthesize, turning sunlight into energy for the coral. Right: One of the many factors that are driving declines in coral reefs around the globe is coral bleaching, which is caused by rising ocean temperatures.

Coral reefs are also important for coastal protection, and have been shown to significantly break down wave energy and height, drastically reducing risk of coastal erosion and land loss, and protecting our wonderful beaches.

Factors Driving Decline

Sadly, there are many factors that are driving declines in coral reefs. One prime example is coral bleaching, which occurs when ocean waters reach warm temperatures for an extended period of time. As a stress response, the polyp will expel the plant cells from their tissue and thus lose the energy they gain from photosynthesis- that is like cutting out 90% of your diet! Since the plant cells are what provide the color of the coral, all that is left is the polyps’ tissue layer and their white skeleton, giving a “bleached” appearance.

While a bleached coral is not dead, the coral is more susceptible to disease and mortality since it has lost such a vital energy source. It is possible for a bleached coral to regain their photosynthetic functions, but it depends on the severity and length of the warming period. Other factors of decline include disease, poor water quality, and ocean acidification.

Restoration and Science

A lot of really cool work is being done to combat coral decline. Many people have turned to coral restoration practices, which entail planting small fragments of coral back out onto the reef. Corals are typically slow-growing animals, but scientists have recently discovered a method known as micro-fragmentation that can rapidly speed up their growth process. This process uses a coral’s ability to reproduce and grow through breakage to speed up growth. When a coral is micro-fragmented, it can grow 10-40 times as fast. What would normally take 25-100 years to reach a size favorable for survival now only takes 1-2 years!

Conclusion

Coral protection and restoration are not a one-solution issue. It requires diverse minds and backgrounds to tackle these issues on multiple fronts. It is helpful to think of the big picture: What are the causes of decline? What restoration practices can be used? How can we spread awareness? Communication becomes key when making a change. Baba Dioum, a conservationist from Senegal, put it this way:

“We will only conserve what we love, we



will only love what we understand, and we will understand only what we are taught”.

It takes collaboration, communication, education, and passion to be able to make a difference. Whether you choose to use reef-safe sunscreens, reduce plastic use, or educate yourself and others, each of these steps can aid in making a positive change for the reefs.

Sources

Coral Biology, Coral Disease and Health Consortium (2026)

Close-up of a Coral Polyp, Smithsonian (2026)

The Coral Reef Economy, National Ocean Service, NOAA (2026)

Seafood, Florida’s Coral Reef (2026)

Coral Reefs Reduce Wave Energy and Height, PEW (2014)

Saving Coral, BBC Earth (2026)



BELL



CAMPBELL



MAGIN

T.L. Hanna High announces 2026 top award recipients

T.L. Hanna High School has announced the recipients of its top senior awards for 2026, recognizing students for leadership, integrity and contributions to the school community.

The Bailes Ring, one of the school's oldest and most prestigious traditions, is awarded annually to the graduating female senior whose integrity, honesty, fairness and respect for others have made the greatest impression on the faculty. The award honors George H. Bailes Sr., a prominent Anderson businessman and civic leader known for his high ethical standards.

This year's Bailes Ring recipient is Abby

Campbell.

The Prince Ring, established in 1924 by the family of Samuel L. Prince, is presented each year to a senior male student who leads by example and demonstrates strength of character, honesty, integrity and consideration for others.

This year's Prince Ring recipient is Gavin Magin.

The T.L. Hanna Award, endowed by former Latin teacher Pat Price, is presented by the faculty to the student considered to have made the greatest contribution to the school.

This year's T.L. Hanna Award recipient is Kaylin Bell.

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THE GARDEN SHOP

SPRING CLEANING THE HOUSE AND THE FLOWERBEDS



**SUSAN
TEMPLE**
*master
gardener*

These days, it seems to be undoing what was slowly done. Isn't it funny how we accumulate to turn around and clean out; unless one becomes a hoarder. I used to watch those shows just to be sure I did not become one, but I've never been much of a packrat. However, I've done a lot of spring cleaning this year. How many flower vases does someone need? The shed had things from decorating days gone by. Even if there might be a use for some of that stuff in the future, I've reached that point in life where I am not going to lug it in the house, clean it, pack it, haul it somewhere, then put it back in the shed when such is over. I had the same spell in the garage. Vases, containers, stuff, a slow accumulation until one day I said this has not been used since I don't know when and off it went. Some recycled, some back to a thrift store whence it came.

A bit of the same thing is happening in the front garden. It's been a

wonderful spring and even being dry, some plants are flourishing. Solomon seal (*Polygonatum* spp) grows on both sides on the breezeway sidewalk. Variegated on one side and solid green on the other. It's a nice plant for just about anywhere but afternoon sun. Its arching branches have encroached over the sidewalk. Japanese anemones, commonly called windflowers, come up in the mix every year. I've tried to move them several times and pieces of roots get left behind. They bloom in the fall and are dainty, pretty, bouncy flowers. But they flop onto the sidewalk. Foamflower (*Tiarella cordifolia*) is a great groundcover for shade. It is along the breezeway sidewalk as well. It's a favorite. Depending on the variety, leaves can be multi-colored and blooms are either white or pale pink. It also needed to be moved back from the sidewalk a tad. When pulling the solomon seal, some tiarella came with it. Deer sometimes eat solomon seal but I don't know about tiarella. What was pulled up was simply tossed with some azaleas on the edge of the woods. If it lives, fine. If the tiarella does, and deer don't eat, I'll move some and plant

it appropriately.

Last fall, three dwarf wax myrtles were added to a section of the front garden to give a different texture. Being evergreen, there would be something there in the winter too. In that section, several amsonia (*Amsonia ciliata*) were removed. Commonly called fringed bluestar, this native variety had seeded some. It has lovely blue flowers in early summer, but by late summer, some bug loves it and makes it home in the leaves. It curls up in the leaves and the plant looks quite ratty. I learned what this bug is years ago but don't remember. No pesticides are used so nature runs its course. All three wax myrtles died. Those very cold nights killed them. One amsonia missed is growing next to the sidewalk. For now, a bit of pruning will fix it. As life goes, if it were where one of the dead wax myrtle was, it would be in a better spot. Amsonia has a heck of a tap root and moving it may be more effort than I care to give.

As summer progresses, maybe some other plants will be removed that are getting a bit too close to the sidewalk. Billowy, blousy can be nice, but sometimes, it can be like looking at a slow accumulation of stuff, and needs to go.





Chic in the Carolinas

We don't realize how incredibly fortunate we are to live in a place where the mountains span to the sea. I have always wanted to make a break and leave the south. I've been about



Kristine March

everywhere exciting and grand and this place just feels like home. I took it for granted in my youth, but as I'm getting older and wiser, I realize how special it is. Now don't get me wrong, there are days when I'm a bit negative and having a bad attitude

and I'm like "is that all there is," but travel and wanderlust will suffice. We are really favored to live in such a gorgeous place. The upstate

has huge acreage and beautiful fields with barns and livestock, quaint little towns and people that would do anything for you if you needed them.

The mountains are progressive and radical with Michelin Star restaurants and the ocean has perfect sand with crisp waves as far as the eye can see, and don't forget those old angel oak trees and spanish moss. The best seafood on the planet and all of the dolphins in the intercoastal waterways.

I don't know if you can get much better. Here's where I come in. The fashion part. Supporting local businesses should be like a civic duty. We need to do it as often as possible to keep it thriving here. We have some of the most intriguing little boutiques and clothing made like no other. We have our own quirky style here in the south and I'm going to tell you some of the best little hidden gems I've discovered. If you're in Anderson go to Cates. It's a woman owned boutique that's so girly and darling. Owned by Caleigh Thomas. She carries lots of unique and classic southern styles and brand names. Its decorated beautifully like a little boutique in Beverly Hills and will instantly put you in a good mood with her ambiance. It has a Texas meets coastal vibe. Something for everyone. Her 3 D printed bolo ties are just precious. It's a new trend in jewelry that I adore. Check out Cates, if you haven't already.

Next on my list is a little bit further down the road in South Carolina and it's a boutique in Gaffney called Waxing Moon Boutique. This is also a woman owned store and it's dreamy.

Midgie Blackwell is a dear friend and she has curated pieces that will transport you to a little rustic village in France. She carries Magnolia Pearl. Yes it's true, and that alone makes me gasp in sheer amazement. It's truly remarkable to be in Gaffney and I'm super proud of it being in my downtown stomping grounds, a place I grew up in and am proud to call home. You won't regret making a trip to buy something rare that absolutely no one else has. Her pieces are absolutely magical and gorgeous.

The last local place of business is "up the hill" in Asheville North Carolina. It's called Haunt. It's also woman owned by a lovely lady named Anneliese Gormley. She is an extremely talented wood sculpture maker or whittler. Her pieces are out of this world beautiful and her

charcuterie boards she makes are some of the most beautiful pieces I've ever seen. She has made her shop into a posh general store if you will. It's full of locally sourced items like candles, her wood-working pieces, local art, grab and go food and star quality finds like Wonder Valley olive oil and delicious wines and cheeses that are all beautifully curated. The vibes are just immaculate and stellar. It just screams

"I'm in Asheville". Funky, chic all the way. These ladies are all truly talented and have made our area a better place to live. So, I encourage you to hit the road with your besties and go support the babes! Remember to make the sidewalk your runway and love where you live. Support Local and women owned businesses, y'all.



Supporting local businesses should be like a civic duty. We need to do it as often as possible to keep it thriving here.

FROM THE SHELF

On 'The Astral Library' and libraries in general

One of my least read genres is historical fiction. I'm not sure what my hang up is other than it feels all very formulaic. But Kate Quinn is one of my favorite authors, and I will always read whatever she puts out there. Quinn is best known for her incredible historical fiction (no the irony is not lost on me). If you like historical fiction, Quinn is probably the top author I recommend to people for it.



Sara Leady

Quinn's most recent book is not historical fiction, not even a little bit. A fun(ish) surprise for me. Since I started almost exclusively reading audiobooks, when I know an author I tend to not bother with reading a summary before I actually dive in. So going into *The Astral Library* I had ZERO idea how far of a departure from her regular stuff this book would be. *The Astral Library* is 'magical realism.' This basically means a book is set in either historical or contemporary times, and

that there are light magical elements added to the story. Quinn's title is not only 'magical realism,' but it's also set in contemporary Boston, more specifically the Boston Public Library (sorta), so not even historical magical realism.

Alix is in her late 20s, down on her luck, and admittedly maybe a bit whiny (and oddly snobby). One day while Alix is in the Reading Room of the Boston Public, she stumbles through a new door and into 'The Astral Library.' There, she meets the Librarian and it's explained to her that Astral is a sanctuary, especially for the desperate, where visitors are given the opportunity to go live in a book that's 'public domain' (because licensing and stuff). Soon we learn that the library is facing an outside threat that's not just threatening the mission of library and its books, but the patrons who've taken refuge inside its own magical world.

The reviews for *The Astral Library* (mine aside) have certainly been mixed. I personally really enjoyed it, but a lot of others have not. I've been trying to take books (or people, definitely dogs, etc.) where they're at and

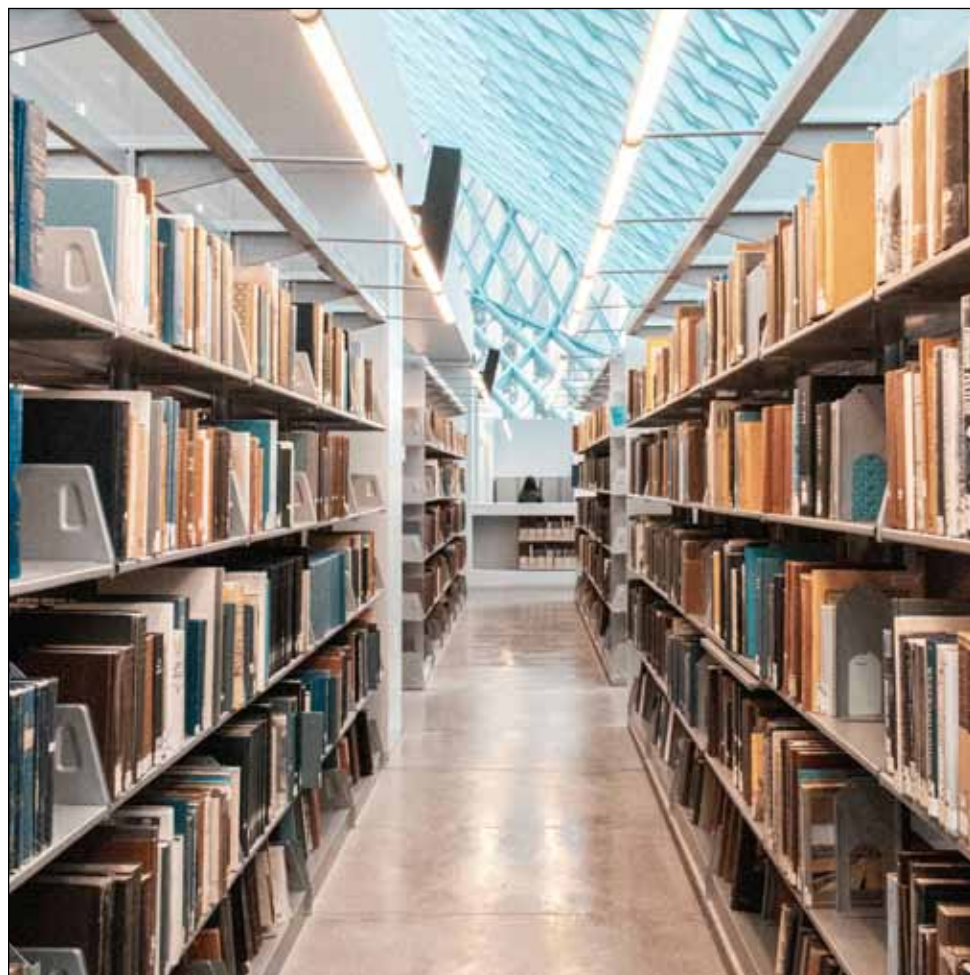
not put added pressure on them to meet my (sometimes insane) expectations. I mostly attribute this philosophical shift of mine to my deeper dive into dog training/behavior, but in the case of books, I think it largely comes from my rarely reading book summaries anymore.

I think some of the response to Quinn's latest stems from her huge departure from what readers generally expect from her. Not only is the book not historical, Quinn also departs from her typical makeup of a heroine, normally one you can't help but cheer for, even when she's doing bad things (like sniper shooting people). I sympathize with Alix and the hard life that she's lived, but there's definitely moments where it's a bit hard to cheer for her— even if I'm on board with her feelings about libraries and life.

Quinn also steps out with making some bigger statements about libraries and different social issues. Speaking specifically to the

library statements Quinn makes, I love her emphasis on the importance of the 'sanctuary' aspects of libraries. Public libraries are maybe the last place you can go these days where you're allowed to exist without having to pay money to do so. Libraries should be a safe space for everyone, but (at least to me) especially for those who truly have nowhere else they can go to exist, and engage with knowledge and technology on their own terms.

If we can't preserve this base mission of a library, perhaps we could shift efforts to creating more spaces where people are allowed to exist in this way (how beautiful would that be?) Quinn's execution of this message might be a bit heavy-handed, while also managing to be a bit twee at the same time, but the bones of the love for libraries is there. Maybe she just sold me because (spoiler alert) the Librarian also can shift into a giant 'book dragon' and like, I want to be a book dragon too (please and thank you).





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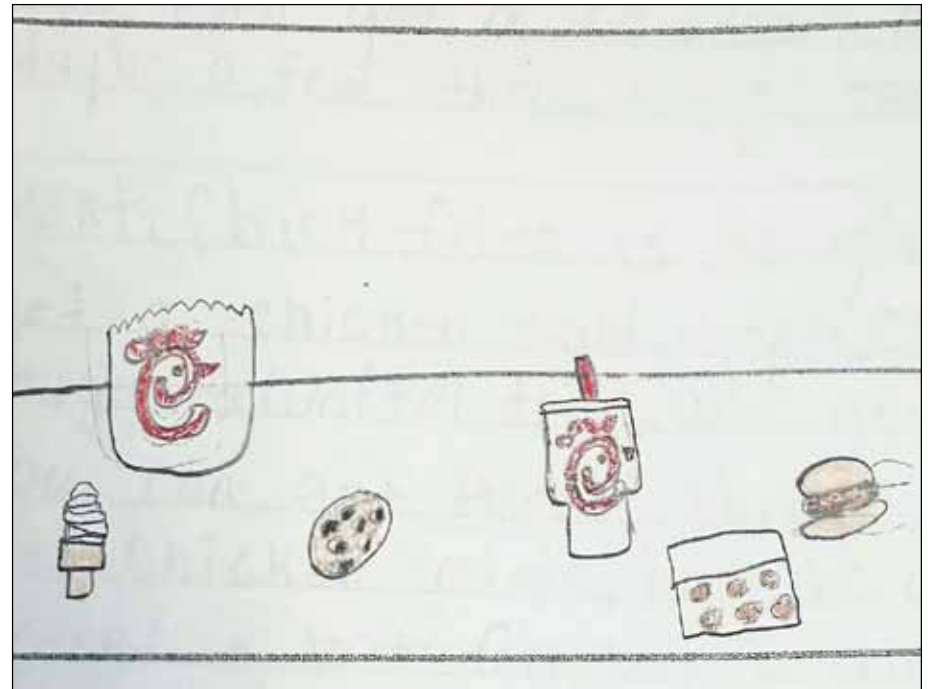

THE Electric City News

Kids Corner

Pet of the Month

BY CONNOR CLAMP
4TH GRADE

In Anderson, South Carolina there are many good pets. But I want to tell you about my dog his name is Chopper. He is a corgi and coyote mix but he definatily sure doesn't act like a coyote. Of course he goes around digging in my bed. He has the zoomies A LOT but he is a very good dog you don't have to put him on a leash overall he is just a very good dog. He always respects people but sometimes when we are walking him he gets very scared. I got him last year when I was nine. His weirdest habits are digging in my bed and he likes to bite my other dogs. He also likes to play fight my pitbull named Duke. I just shared about my dog and you should too.



CHICK-FIL-A

BY CANNON CRAFT
3RD GRADE

I am going to give you three good reasons why Chick-fil-a should be open on Sundays. Do you like Chick-fil-a and wish it were open on Sunday too?

First, it is one day until school, work and other things. You can grab Chick-fil-a before and after church. Also, you can get it for lunch and dinner. If you want a little treat, you can even get an ice cream or a cookie. Maybe a few other things too.

Next, Chick-fil-a is so good. You can get a chicken sandwich, chicken nuggets, waffle fries, and grilled nuggets. You can get

these things for breckfist: chicken minis, hash browns, and breckfist brito. Oh, and I almost forgot! The spicy chicken sandwich.

Last, somtimes you just want to sleep in a little but all of the other fast food breckfist places don't serve breckfist anymore but Chick-fil-a serves breckfist until 10:30!! I hope nobody is sleepin in later then 10:00! I know my mom's not. Me and my sister wake up, and we are hungry. Me, my sisters, and mom all love Chick-fil-a.

In conclousin, I think Chick-fil-a should be open on Sundays. Sometimes you could really use some chicken minis at 9:00am or whatever you like.

THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING AN UNCLE

My uncle's passing has made me realize the profound impact he had on my development into a strong, young woman. Uncle Gerald, my father's brother, was a steady source of love, support, and encouragement. I was honored to speak at his funeral and I let my heart speak to celebrate the amazing person he was. He would frequently take me along on errands, praising my strengths and urging me to reach my full potential.



Linda Cox

His visits after his time in Korea were always a highlight. His help with household tasks showed his unwavering dedication to our family. He was a true role model and his influence has had a lasting, positive impact on my life. Research emphasizes the importance of family relationships in shaping children's self-esteem and identity, with uncles like Gerald serving as a vital source of inspiration and guidance. For young girls, uncles can play a powerful role in shaping their expectations and self-worth, imparting valuable lessons about relationships and their own value.

The most rewarding aspect of being an

uncle is that one can be remembered in whatever capacity they choose; as the encourager, the listener, the sender of birthday cards, the attendee at recitals when fathers are absent, the teacher of fishing, biking and car maintenance or the vigilant presence during times of illness. The main responsibility of an uncle is to be a good example. The other special words and moments come from your heart and knowing what she needs. So, put on your cape and start exercising your superpowers as Uncle. She may have the honor one day of speaking at your funeral. She may refer to you as "Her Superhero."



Where the first note took hold, and I never let go

A story of gratitude to Alex Spainhour and Kay Gilbert

BY MICHAEL SPAKE

Life calls to us in every season. My earliest calling—music—found me in fourth grade at Concord Elementary, not through a familiar tune, but Alex Spainhour's lively, booming voice, long before I understood its significance.

A few weeks later, I was holding a cello, trying to make music, but only thin, wavering sounds emerged from its hollow body. The instrument resisted me at first, but Mr. Spainhour's patience showed me that progress is built quietly, through repetition and attention. He taught us to listen—not only to ourselves, but to one another—and over time, we became something more than individuals struggling with our instruments. We became parts of a whole. Music demanded cooperation, each section dependent on the others in ways that could not be ignored. More than anything, it gave us a sense of belonging and a way of understanding both ourselves and each other.

In those early days, I became a “clock-watcher,” counting down the hours each Tuesday and Thursday, often redirected by teachers—Mrs. Suit, Mrs. Moore, and Mrs. Mosley—as I waited for ten o'clock rehearsal time to arrive. I also remember the nervous energy before performances. Yet Mr. Spainhour with a quick gesture or a knowing look, would loosen the pressure, and when the music began, we did not carry our nerves, but his steady confidence with us.

Leaving Concord for McCants Middle School was bittersweet. But I soon discovered another presence, Kay Gilbert, who would expand my musical foundation. As the music grew more complex and performances moved from the cafeteria to the Anderson College Fine Arts Building, Mrs. Gilbert taught us that it was no longer enough to play correctly; we were expected to infuse our art with meaning, and that even the strongest players were only one voice among many, and success depended on balance, not dominance.

Mrs. Gilbert had an inviting and jovial tone that drew us in, and she, too, understood the art of humor. I still remember the Friday before Halloween when she dressed as

a witch, broom in hand, and greeted us with the sounds of Bach's Toccata and Fugue in D minor—a memorable moment perfectly suited to the season.

Over the years and into high school, classes shifted, friendships evolved, and responsibilities grew, but somehow music became a steady haven from the stress of adolescence, as the orchestra room became a refuge where mistakes were part of growth and where flourishing was always possible.

Orchestra taught me skills that have stayed with me long after graduation. It shaped how I work with others and how I appreciate my role in the community I live in. Even more, they continue to define who I am.

Today, if I close my eyes, I can go back to the orchestra room and hear the chairs moving across the floor, sheets of music rustling on the stands, and the voices of Mr. Spainhour and Mrs. Gilbert, who long ago called to me.

No, it is not gone at all, only settled deep in my soul.




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From Pendleton to Clemson: The legacy of Richard Wright Simpson

BY RICH OTTER

Richard Wright Simpson was a farmer and attorney, born in 1840. He was raised in Pendleton. He became a close friend of Thomas Green Clemson and his attorney during Clemson's later years. They shared an interest in agriculture.

As an attorney, Simpson's practiced in Anderson. A client of his was the Blue Ridge Railroad and he commuted to Anderson daily on the Blue Ridge train. Thanks to his involvement with the railroad, by doing so he saved a long horse or buggy ride as well as about thirty cents each way by not having to pay on the train.

He was a signor of the Ordinance of Succession for the State. His legal education was earned at South Carolina College and he served in the State legislature from 1874 to 1881.

When Thomas Clemson moved to Pendleton, he and Simpson got together with their mutual interest concerning agriculture. They worked with the Pendleton Farmers Society gaining support for an institution that could emphasize agriculture education.

Simpson's farm was inherited from his mother, Mary Margaret Tallaferro Simpson. It was a portion of what originally had been composed of some three thousand acres deeded to her family by King George, III prior to the American Revolution.

Simpson and his brother, Tally, enlisted in the Confederate Army. Tally was a casualty at the Battle of Chickamauga. Simpson returned, and it was reported after the war his concern was raised with regard to destitute farmers. He argued that education needed to be an answer to problems in the State, including for farmers.

He served in the legislature and on Governor Wade Hampton's staff, achieving a position of Colonel of Cavalry. He had advocated that the Pendleton Brigade wear red shirts during Hampton's campaign for governor. The usage spread throughout the state.

In 1886, a meeting was held at the home of Thomas Green Clemson that included Benjamin Ryan Tillman, Daniel Keating Norris and Richard Wright Simpson. The subject of the meeting was later assumed to have been to consider the formation of an agricultural college where Clemson's home was located. Simpson and Tillman disagreed as to the meeting's purpose. Simpson said that Clemson independently came to the conclusion that such an educational institu-

tion should be formed and the details of a final plan were developed by Clemson and Simpson working independently.

The 814 acres where Clemson lived had passed from John C. Calhoun to his daughter, Anna Maria. Anna Maria was Clemson's wife and had predeceased Clemson, leaving the property to him.

Simpson argued that Clemson's final will was totally the developed between Clemson and himself. It including provisions that a Board of Trustees would retain sole authority stating: "nor shall the duties of said board be taken away or conferred upon any other man or body of men." It was provided that the legislature could never alter such powers. Simpson was named executor for Clemson's estate.

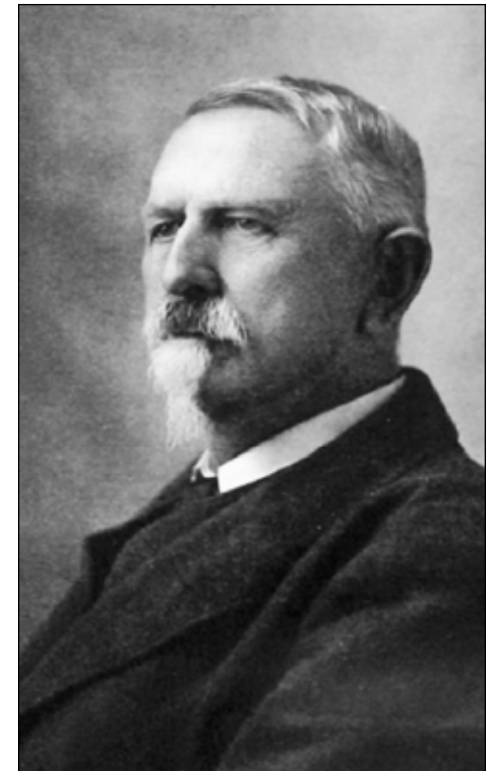
There was controversy in the state after Clemson's death in 1888 as to whether another such educational institution was needed in South Carolina. It already had South Carolina College. Tillman became a tireless advocate in support of the proposed institution. Tilman and Simpson worked together in spite of their differences. Simpson engaged in a fierce fight to sustain the will's intent. The approving act for the institution finally came with a tie-breaking vote by Lt. Governor William L. Mauldin. (Mauldin happened to have been a Furman

graduate, not Carolina.)

Clemson's situation was further complicated by a lawsuit filed by his son-in-law on behalf of Clemson's grand-daughter. It was an attempt on her behalf to invalidate the will. It delayed a final determination by the State as to the creation of the school, but the will was sustained.

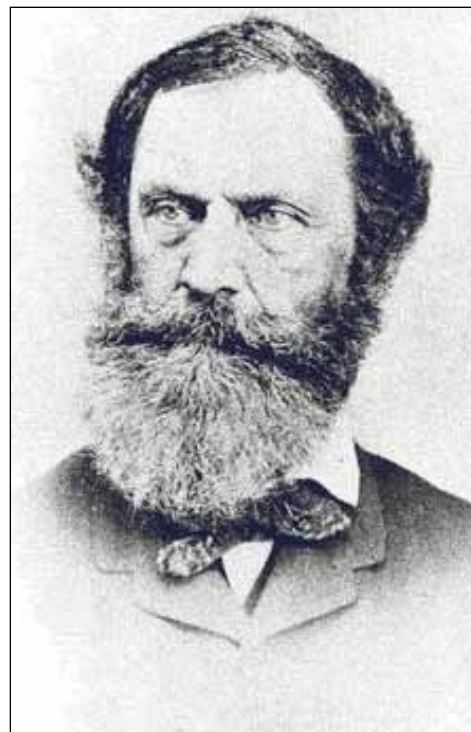
Clemson University's Simpson Hall and the Simpson Experiment Station were named in Richard Simpson's honor. He willed his farm property where the Experimental Station stands to the Clemson Agricultural College when he passed away in 1912.

Simpson authored a book, History of Old Pendleton District, to preserve information about prominent families in the area, including extensive family history information about the Calhoun and Clemson families.



SIMPSON

Richard Wright Simpson was inducted into the Anderson County Hall of Fame in 2011.



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An aerial ballet

We saw two aerial ballets at our farm in the past year, only with two kites instead of dancers.

Kites are more than just geometric shapes that children like to fly on breezy days. They are also a group of birds in the falcon family, and two of these kinds of kites—swallow-tailed and Mississippi -- pass through our area. Our encounter this time was with Mississippi kites.



Ann K. Bailes

These birds remain in our area from spring to fall. They are not as dramatic as swallow-tailed kites, which have forked tails. Both types fly high in the sky, and at first glance appear to be vultures sailing around. On second glance, however, an observer will notice that the Mississippi's wings are considerably more narrow than a vulture's, and it has a fan-shaped tail.

Mike's first interesting encounter with Mississippi kites was last year while working at our farm. I've asked him to relate the story:

"The grass in the pasture was waist-high and full of insects, so it was time to clean it all up. I started bush hogging and noticed all the bugs taking off every time I made a pass through the field.

"I saw the shadows of two birds flying around and when I looked at them, I thought they were small hawks, like kestrels. I just assumed they were, but then

noticed they had more of a slate gray back with white tipped wing feathers along with some black markings also. They had white on their heads and breasts.

"I still thought they were kestrels, and so took a video and sent it to Ann. She thought they might be Mississippi kites.



I looked them up on my phone, and they were an exact match.

"The two kites followed me around wherever I was mowing, and when big grasshoppers would take off when I got close with the mower, the birds would dive-bomb them and catch them in the air. I got as close as 20 yards to the kites at times, and got great views of them as they caught insects scared up by the bush hog.

"I'd never seen them that close. They followed me the entire time I was mowing, and then they flew away after I was done."

Mike's encounter with the two kites was a year ago this month. But a couple of weeks ago, we had an identical experience, only this time with a single kite instead of two. I watched Mike bush hogging for about an hour, but paid more attention to the elegant swooping and diving of the kite as it caught grasshoppers that were thrown up by the mower. The movement was constant, so getting a good photo

was difficult, but maybe the description will suffice.

Watching the aerial ballet was mesmerizing. The Mississippi kite was only trying to get his dinner, but the art he created in the process will stay with us for a long time.

Watching the aerial ballet was mesmerizing. The Mississippi kite was only trying to get his dinner, but the art he created in the process will stay with us for a long time.



From left: Faye Goodale, Tracy Hall, Johnny Prentice and Celine Mattie are pictured at Skydive Carolina in Chester, SC, on Saturday, May 16.

SKY DIVING AT ANY AGE

Faye, 88, inspired me to go skydiving last year in 2025. Faye talked about how she used to be afraid of heights and told me that she had to face her fear head on. I listened to her tell me how exhilarating and peaceful her jump was all at the same time. It sounded amazing. Faye was 81 years old the first time she went sky diving. She is an incredible human being with an amazing life story. She has overcome so many hurdles and enjoys life more than anyone I know! She inspires me each and every day. Somehow, we got to talking and decided to take some newbies with us to go skydiving again and this time, together.

Celine, 83, happily agreed to join us.

Celine is always up for an adventure. Years ago, Celine's husband bought her a flying lesson for a present. She says that she's not even nervous before the jump. She said she has always wanted to take to the skies. Celine said after the jump that she felt like she accomplished something. She did something incredible, and it felt good.

Johnny, 73, also joined in on the fun. Johnny said that he also did not feel too nervous but excited for the jump. "It was a thrill!" Johnny wants to do it again. The best part of the sky dive was being able to do it together. Not only that, but to have friends and family watch safely on the ground. It was a great time!

SUBURBAN COWBOY

When I was 4 years old, I was another person living another life. I was a Cowboy. No, I didn't just want to be a cowboy; I was one. All I could think of was ridin', ropin' and wranglin'. I had a white cowboy hat, a white western-style cowboy shirt with tassels, and a wild rag around my neck with a bolo knot. I wore Wrangler jeans with genuine artificial sheepskin chaps and a pair of the cheapest cowboy boots on the planet. I also wore a white belt with rhinestones and two holsters that contained silver Colt revolvers loaded with deadly rolls of caps.

It wasn't easy being an Anderson cowboy in 1959. I kept a scowl on my face most of the time because I figured all the men were out on cattle drives, leaving me to tend to the women. There I was wanting to draw down on some rustlers when all I got was perfumed housewives pinching my cheeks and saying, "Ain't he a cute little cowboy." I could barely keep from becoming a bad guy; dying my clothes and hat black, and tying those cheek pinchers to the railroad track. There was only one thing that kept me from it: a horse.

When I first saw Red, I was with my mom in Sears. I begged her to buy me the horse that I had already given a name to.

"No, Neal, you cannot have a horse, period." I could not get Red out of my mind; he was all I thought about and dreamed about.

The next day, I was waylaid by my grandmother. We were in Woolworths 5 and 10 in downtown Anderson when, amazingly, I saw Red again at this different store. He was in a large box with a fence printed on the outside, and he was with at least 20 other horses.



Neal Parnell

"Can I have a horse, Grandmother?" "Sure, baby, which one do you want?" She lifted him by his red broomstick body and handed him down to me. Wow, that was easy. I should have asked grandmother for a real horse. I straddled Red and took the reins. I quickly turned Red around, and he kicked Grandma in the shin, so I turned him back, and he knocked over a row of Betsy Wetsies as Grandmother grabbed Red by the neck, took control of him and commanded that I watch where I led that horse. I'd forgotten that Red was a wild Mustang that had never

been ridden, and it was my first time riding, but once we were out in the open range of downtown Anderson, we felt right at home. I rode Red around the square, shootin' and hollerin', but never got into a full gallop because, as usual, I was stopped by housewives who now wanted to pet Red and pinch my cheeks. We trotted behind Grandmother into the Bailes Department store where I'm sure Red was the first horse to get on an escalator.

Red and I stuck our heads out the back car window on the way home, and I waved and hollered at anyone that I saw.

I had some great times with Red. We went on western adventures and chased bank robbers, and some nights he'd stay in the bunkhouse with me. Red remained wild his whole life, and so did I. I rode Red hard and wore down his hind end until it didn't touch the ground. Red ran into a lot of things, and the time came when he didn't look much like a horse, and I'm sorry to say I had to put him down.

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A EULOGY FOR PAM

BY DR. SHEILA FINLEY HILTON

Pam informed me four years ago that I would be doing her eulogy. She was half-way through her battle with Stage 4 colon cancer. She gave me the conditions for this eulogy – no one should be crying and if they are, I should tell some jokes. I should not wear black but a pink and orange dress I got at T. J. Maxx, two colors that she said should never be put together in one garment. She said I should wear my hair down, not in the “messy bun” that makes me look like “an old grandma.”

If Jesus allowed an earthly visit on the day of her service, she would be somewhere in the room to check the quality of my work. This is undoubtedly revenge for when the former English teacher in me would correct spelling and grammar in her Facebook posts.

She said she would be there in her new spirit body, with no rolls of fat, hair that does not frizz when the humidity is high, and a new body weight that would never again fear the scales. I am supposed to make this eulogy funny and entertaining.

Pam and I met in 1984 in Lamaze class when we were pregnant with our daughters. These were the early days of Lamaze, when husbands were not yet sold on taking part in the birthing process. Pam and I were placed beside each other in the class. The instructor stood in this room full of nervous couples wearing polyester pants and sensible shoes, saying things like, “Your husbands will coach your breathing.” Pam looked at me and said, “My husband can’t find the ketchup in the refrigerator.” I said, “Yeah, I know. Mine says if he goes into the delivery room, he will gag and throw up – this from a man who eats gas station chili dogs on fishing trips.” As if by magic, we looked at each other, and she said, “We are going to be great friends.” And so it began.

Pam loved dogs, especially her misunderstood “pitties.” You must understand that any dog that lived in Pam’s home was provided a fabulous life of luxury. Rescued pups Axel and Sammy were the latest recipients of the world’s greatest doggy mama lottery. They received the best medical care, the best food, including gourmet caliber table scraps of steak and chicken divan. They had a human servant named Pam who was on call 24 hours a day to meet their every need, including middle of the night bathroom breaks, sleeping accommodations on the wider part of the bedroom mattress, and a luxurious Pottery Barn heated fur blanket, the one I had given to Pam for Christmas, that she apparently regifted to Axel. Seeing Axle lying on it, on his back, with all body parts exposed, just thrilled my heart.

Shopping was an important part of Pam’s life. Our favorite store was T. J. Maxx. We anticipated our trips there with the joy of going a Caribbean vacation. In what other store could



Pam Nalley

one buy dog shampoo, a sequined jacket, wrapping paper, a designer handbag, and a hand towel with a pumpkin on it? We would usually spend fifteen minutes on the candle aisle. It was a euphoric experience to inhale these lofty fragrances until we felt a little disoriented and dizzy. Her proudest purchase was a designer candle called Midnight Cashmere Coconut Rainstorm. It did not smell like any of those words, but Pam said it would work nicely in Bebo’s bathroom.

When Pam and I were in medical mode, at appointments or in Charlotte for cancer scans, she always made a big deal of getting weighed. The scale was never the small one as one might

have at home. It was always the one that could have handled livestock. Her routine was always the same. She would hand me her purse, her coat, her cell phone, her scarf, her jewelry, and her shoes. She would then exhale all the air out of her lungs and step on the scales. She would frighten young nurses attempting to weigh her when she would say, “Here, hold my shirt. I am going to take my bra off.” I would have to put my hand on their shoulders and say, “Don’t worry. She is just kidding.”

Pam could not eat before scans, so as the good friend I was, I would not eat either. When we were finally finished with all the scans, tests and appointments, we were STARVING. Pam only ate from one fast-food restaurant – Chic-fil-A. Her reasoning? It is always clean; the employees are nice, and she feels like confessing her sins at the pick-up window. After picking up our food, I pulled out into traffic, during rush hour in Charlotte, and I could smell the savory aroma of that fried chicken. My mouth watered. I already imagined the Polynesian sauce dripping from that chicken tender. Without warning, Pam took a chicken tender, dipped it in the sauce, and held it in front of my face. I promptly ran into the car in front of me. For three years, we debated whose fault it was. I claimed that she impaired my vision, and she claimed that I was so enamored with a piece of chicken that I lost all sanity and self-control. This was an unresolved issue between us. It was just three weeks ago we went through the whole issue again. We

argued. We both refused to relent, each of us wanting to have the last word.

Pam loved flamingos. Her home is filled with them. Jewelry, pictures, beach towels, cards – just about anything that can have a flamingo on it, she owns. We chose a flamingo themed program for her service. I tried to remember how many flamingo gifts I had given her over the years. A few days before she went to Hospice, I was looking at this wall sized painting of flamingos in her bedroom. I asked Pam when she first began to love flamingos. She paused, looked up, and said, “I never did.” Which means for years — YEARS — this woman quietly accepted flamingo gifts with the politeness of a saint and the commitment of an undercover operative. Not once did she say, “You know... I’m not really into flamingos.” She just let the collection grow until her entire home looked like a tropical bird sanctuary sponsored by National Geographic.

On the day of her service, we were there to honor her and the difficult journey she navigated beautifully. Her message was clear – that loving Jesus and living for him can provide a joyful life, even when the challenges seem overwhelming.

I see her clearly in heaven. Her spirit body is too lite to register on scales, the colors of the rainbow never allow pink and orange to mix, and Sammy and Axel are lying beside her on soft clouds. Though I know heaven is unimaginably so much more than our minds allow us to perceive, somehow her sweet soul is at peace, finally healed, resting in the arms of Jesus.

Pam would tell me that sounds too solemn for her eulogy, so just let end by saying: “Girl, it was your fault that I ran into the back of that car.”

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Hanna, Westside athletes take first place at state track meet

COLUMBIA — Anderson was well represented at the South Carolina High School League track and field state championships over the weekend, with more than a dozen athletes from each school competing in events all over the field.

The Westside High School girls track and field team turned in a strong overall performance Saturday, finishing second in the Class 4A team standings with 58 points behind Hilton Head's 65.5 at the state meet.

The Rams were powered by standout performances in the jumping events, led by senior Janilah Rhodes, who captured titles in both the girls long jump and triple jump. Rhodes won the long jump with a leap of 5.35 meters and tied for first in the triple jump at 11.52 meters with teammate Gervonna Williams.

Freshman Brooke Bryant added a sixth-place finish in the triple jump at 10.79 meters and tied for fourth in the high jump after clearing 1.55 meters.

The Lady Rams also scored valuable points on the track. The girls 4x100-meter relay team finished fourth in 48.78 seconds. The Rams added a ninth-place finish in the 4x400 relay with a time of 4:11.99.

Na'ima Jackson led the hurdles group with a



fourth-place finish in the 100-meter hurdles in 15.53 seconds and later placed 15th in the 400 hurdles. Jordynn Rhodes finished 12th in the 100 hurdles.

Amber Henry also contributed in the sprints, placing sixth in the girls 100-meter dash with a time of 12.59 seconds and 14th in the 200-meter dash. Carolynanna Williams added a 10th-place finish in the 400-meter dash in 59.57 seconds.

In field events, Madison Richardson finished fourth in the girls shot put with a throw of 10.40 meters, while Rhodes also placed eighth in the high jump.



The Westside boys tied for 31st overall with five points. The Rams' top individual finish came from Pharez Simpson, who placed 15th in the boys high jump after clearing 1.80 meters.

Westside also posted solid relay performances, including a sixth-place finish in the boys 4x800 relay in 8:29.39 and ninth in the 4x400 relay in 3:25.84. Jaedon White placed seventh in the boys 100-meter dash in 11.16 seconds, while Isaiah Simmons finished 12th in the 400-meter dash in 50.92 seconds.

T.L. Hanna High School also produced several standout performances at the Class 5A-D2 meet, highlighted by event titles from seniors

Amos John Heaton and Mekhi Malcolm.

Malcolm delivered one of the top marks of the meet in the boys shot put, winning with a throw of 19.80 meters and breaking a state-record that had been in place since 1989. He also placed second in the discus with a throw of 50.10 meters.

Heaton captured the boys 110-meter hurdles title in 14.85 seconds and later placed 11th in the 400 hurdles in 58.71.

In field events, Darius Hanna tied for 10th in the boys' high jump at 1.80 meters and finished 13th in the long jump. Owen Hodges tied for seventh in the boys' pole vault after clearing 3.50 meters, while Manse Land placed seventh in the javelin with a throw of 42.84 meters.

On the girls' side, Charleigh Waters and Erin Lyda finished second and third, respectively, in an early section of the 100-meter dash. Wren Kirby placed 15th in the girls 3,200 meters with a time of 12:28.15.

T.L. Hanna freshman Elle Bailey placed fourth in the girls' 100 hurdles in 14.77 and sixth in the 400 hurdles in 1:05.71.

The Yellow Jacket boys team tied for 10th overall with 31.5 points, while the girls team finished 16th with 22 points.

HANNA'S ERLLENKEUSER WINS SECOND CONSECUTIVE STATE CHAMPIONSHIP

MYRTLE BEACH — Fresh off the program's first Upper State golf title since 2005, the T.L. Hanna boys golf team traveled to Myrtle Beach earlier this month to compete in the Class 5A-Division 2 state championship.

Although the Yellow Jackets fell short of claiming a fourth straight team state title, senior Erik Erlenkeuser captured his second consecutive individual state championship at the James Hackler Course at Coastal Carolina University.

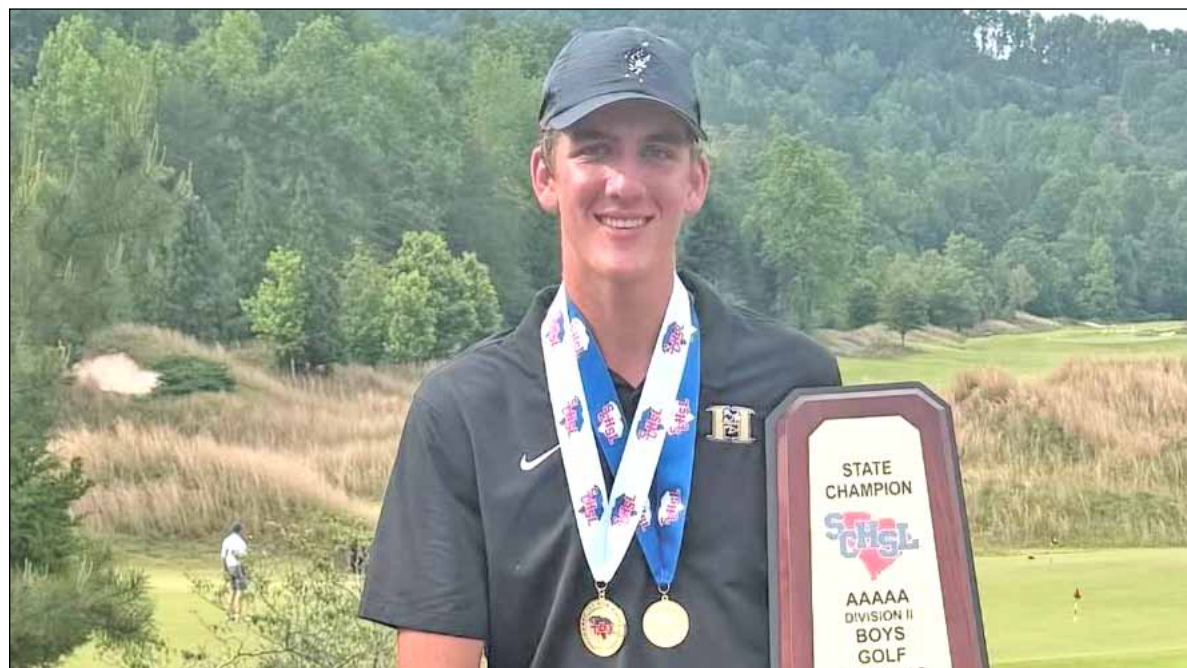
A Georgia Southern signee, Erlenkeuser entered the final round of the two-day event tied for second before shooting seven-under-par on the day to secure the individual crown.

Erlenkeuser wasn't the only Jacket to shine, as junior Bennett Scaletta earned All-State honors

for the third time in his career after finishing one-under par. Eighth grader Wilson Cauley, senior Cal Harbin and sophomore Bryce Ritter also delivered strong performances as Hanna battled for the state title.

As a team, the Jackets placed third in the Class 5A-D2 standings with a score of 582. T.L. Hanna was one of only three teams in the division to finish under par, combining to shoot three-under as a team. Greenville High School won the championship, while Riverside finished runner-up.

While the Jackets' season has concluded, Harbin will have one more opportunity to represent T.L. Hanna after being selected for the North/South All-Star Match. A three-time state champion, Harbin was also named the 2025 Region Golfer of the Year.



Erik Erlenkeuser, pictured above following the 2025 Class 5A-D2 championship, won his second consecutive individual state championship earlier this month in Myrtle Beach.



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