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GAMAC
presents
DUELING PIANOS

The Anderson Arts Center will become the hottest piano bar in town when the Greater Anderson Musical Arts Consortium (GAMAC) presents DUELING PIANOS on Saturday, March 26, 2022 at 7:00pm. Featuring four of Anderson's favorite performers, guests will sing along to favorites by Billy Joel, Elton John, The Beatles, and much more while enjoying delicious hors d'oeuvres, beer, wine, and soft drinks. All proceeds from the evening will benefit GAMAC and its mission to entertain, educate, and enrich lives in the Anderson area with great live music.

Serving as creator and director of DUELING PIANOS is Anderson's own Annette Martin. Best known for creating the Festival of Keys at Anderson University, Annette is beloved

SEE GAMAC ON PAGE 2

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Embrace your inner Irish

For many of us, St. Patrick's Day is known for obsessing on all things green, possibly painting a shamrock on our cheeks, and trying, often poorly, to use an Irish accent. Just like Cinco de Mayo,



Jim Harris

it's a holiday that began outside our shores, but we Americans have embraced it like it's our own.

Around Anderson, there's only one go-to spot for the festivities of the day: McGee's Scot-Irish Pub. This year, there's a bonus celebration; they are observing their 25th anniversary. You can enjoy traditional Irish dishes, like Corned Beef n' Cabbage, Fish n' Chips, Shepherd's Pie, Irish Stew, Bangers n' Mash, plus appetizers and soups. There will also be kid's food and a green beer garden. They offer an extensive whiskey and draft beer selection. Get in the Irish spirit with a Guinness, Irish Whiskey, Irish Coffee, or a Bailey's Cheesecake.

Musical entertainment will feature T.J. Lanaghan at noon, 3 PM, 5 PM, and 7 PM inside, and The Steady Hand String Band on the patio from 6-9 PM. The doors will open at 11 AM.

McGee's chef and co-owner, Dixie Benca, has some tips for those coming to join the festivities. Come in early. St. Patrick's Day is the only day of the year



that McGee's doesn't take reservations. Seating is on a first-come, first-served basis. They can't seat you until your entire party has arrived. They have lots of extra seating and will quickly move people to their tables.

McGee's is family-friendly, and they have plenty of experience helping folks enjoy St. Patrick's Day. All you have to do is wear your green and have a great time!

You may wonder, who was this St. Patrick we're honoring? He is the primary patron saint of Ireland and is credited with bringing Christianity to that country. St. Patrick's Day is observed on the anniversary of his passing, March 17th. This day has been a holiday in Ireland for over 1,000 years. Families traditionally attend church in the morning and then

celebrate in the afternoon. This day is so important that, even though Ireland is a majority Catholic country and the holiday falls during Lent, the church's restrictions against consuming meat are waived for the festivities.

One of the many traditions of observing the holiday here in the states is St. Patrick's Day parades. The first one took place in what is now St. Augustine, Florida, in 1601. There are parades in Savannah, Boston, Philadelphia, and Chicago that attract huge crowds. In New York City, the St. Patrick's Day parade has over 150,000 participants and draws 3 million spectators.

In large cities and small towns, celebrations take place around the country. In Chicago, the Chicago River is dyed green each year, a

tradition that Savannah, GA, lays claim to starting. Hot Springs, Arkansas, hosts the world's shortest St. Patrick's parade, drawing 30,000 spectators to its 98-foot long event. O'Neill, Nebraska, paints the world's largest shamrock on the street. In Maine, a group of residents takes the Paddy's Day Plunge, a 5:30 AM dive into the icy waters of the Atlantic Ocean.

If you plan on celebrating St. Patrick's Day, you may want to have a toast ready. One of the most popular is the Irish Blessing. "May the road rise up to meet you. May the wind always be at your back. May the sun shine warm upon your face and rains fall soft upon your fields. And, until we meet again, may God hold you in the palm of his hand."

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PUBLISHERS

Julie Bailes Johnson
864-221-9269
julie@theelectriccitynews.com

Ginny Bailes Fretwell
864-934-1477
ginny@theelectriccitynews.com

LAYOUT/DESIGN

ART DIRECTOR
Zack Mauldin
zack@upstatetoday.com

GRAPHIC DESIGN
Nate Thomason
signal43@live.com

WRITERS

Neal Parnell
dnparn@gmail.com

Jim Harris
jimharris.atl@gmail.com

Rich Otter
ottwill@bellsouth.net

GARDEN & FLORAL
Susan Temple
gardningirl@yahoo.com

MENTAL HEALTH
Mary-Catherine McClain Riner
drmarycatherine@riner counseling.com

FASHION
Kristine March

SPORTS
Bru Nimmons

COLUMNISTS
Kim Acker Von Keller
Katie Laughridge
Ann K. Bailes
Amie Buice

TO SEND INFORMATION

Please make sure photos include the date taken, location and names of people in the photos. If photos are submitted via email, make sure they are a minimum of 300 dpi and saved as a JPEG file. If photos are mailed, we cannot guarantee the photo will be returned. The editor of The Electric City News will make your article/story grammatically correct without altering its content. The publishers of The Electric City News reserve the right to withhold inappropriate content or photos.

GAMAC

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

for her role as producer and director of Senior Follies for 20 years. Now semi-retired, she serves as organist at Central Presbyterian Church in Anderson and teaches piano privately.

Anderson University alum Jamie Hawkins, formerly of Anderson, now lives in Charleston where he performs regularly and serves as organist and choirmaster of St. Paul's Anglican Church in Summerville, SC. He holds a masters degree in music education and serves as choral director at Rollings Middle

School School for the Performing Arts.

Anda Mobley serves as Music Associate and Pianist at Boulevard Baptist Church where she directs handbells and the children's choir in addition to accompaniment for the Sanctuary Choir. A former choral director of 37 years in Georgia and South Carolina, Anda has performed as accompanist for Georgia Southern University, Westminster Choir College, Anderson University, Project Challenge, and the Electric City Playhouse.

Chris Cole is the CEO of MD Virtual Care, a national telemedicine company. He serves as choirmaster at St. Paul's Catholic Church in Seneca, SC. He is a longtime resident of Anderson and a former member of the GAMAC Board of Directors.

All proceeds from DUELING PIANOS

will benefit GAMAC. Established in 1991 with roots in Anderson stretching back to the 1920's, GAMAC is a not-for-profit arts organization which serves as the management "umbrella" for the Anderson Symphony Orchestra & Chamber Orchestra, the GAMAC Chorale, the Electric City Big Band, and the GAMAC Children's Choir. GAMAC performances and outreach programs offer a variety of cultural experiences for music lovers of all ages.

Tickets for DUELING PIANOS are priced at \$65 per person and include hors d'oeuvres, beer, wine, and soft drinks. Seating is by general admission. Tickets are required and must be purchased by March 21. To purchase tickets, please call (864) 231-6147 or visit www.gamac.org.

THE GIFT OF GAB

Eloquent and persuasive speech is something that has been desired by many. The act of talking someone into doing something that they



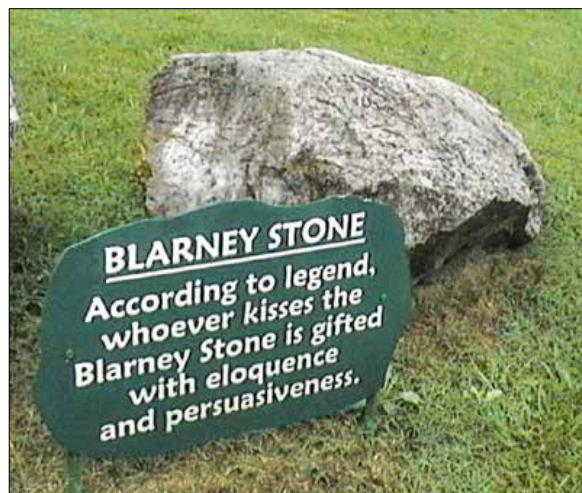
Neal Parnell

would normally not do could possibly be seen as a scam, but in the end, is the choice of the listener. A proficient salesman with a silver tongue can sell you your own pants while you have them on. The gift can also be used for actual conning. Take the case of George C. Parker who infamously sold the Brooklyn Bridge many times. Some of his victims were even arrested for setting up toll-booths on the bridge they believed they owned. I have not yet been to Ireland to kiss the Blarney Stone, which is said to invoke the Gift of Gab onto anyone that does. It must be my Irish blood that has blessed or cursed me with the gift, and I have utilized this per-

suasive power on a few occasions. As the saying goes, "desperate times call for desperate measures" and I found myself away from home with no money and very hungry. I did have a wind-up Casio watch that was in excellent condition. It had a luminous dial and displayed the calendar date. The second hand ticked around the face flawlessly, and the crystal glass didn't have a scratch on it. The problem with the timepiece was that the minute hand was stuck on 12, and the hour hand was stuck on 3. I knew that just asking someone on the street if they wanted to buy a watch would never work, especially when my watch didn't. I needed to project a sense of urgency to my buyer, but where to do that?

I thought of the bus station, but when I got there I realized that

most of the people were like me; no money and no transportation. The airport was an energy and time-consuming three-mile trek that went past the inviting aromas of every restaurant and fast food establishment known to man. Being famished and out of breath worked in my favor as I approached a business-looking man in the ticket line. I am not proud of the next words that came from my mouth back then, but at the time, they were delivered in an Oscar-winning performance. "Excuse me, Sir, my sister is very ill and the plane ticket is forty-five dollars more than I have, could you please buy this watch?" He took my watch and



looked at it, then looked at his own. They both read 3 o'clock. He put the watch in his pocket and pulled out a crisp fifty-dollar bill and handed it to me with good wishes for my sister. I'll never know if my words and the watch duped him, or if he actually saw the hunger in my eyes and the desperation on my face. I do know that I stayed at the twenty dollar-a-night "Wee Blue Inn" and enjoyed the best Whopper

and fries I've ever had. If I had the time I'd tell you how I once sold my motorcycle helmet to a guy with a head twice the size as mine, but I'm currently speaking to a group of investors that are interested in my miles of beach property in Colorado. "Always remember to forget the things that made you sad. But never forget to remember the things that made you glad." — Irish Toast

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FROM THE SHELF

The House on Tradd Street

by Karen White

One of my favorite ways to pick a new read is to look at author events, especially ones that I can actually attend (this is how I discovered Leigh Bardugo and it's been an absolute love affair ever since). Looking at



Sara Leady

events rather than genre or style makes me read outside my comfort zone and discover new things I wouldn't have read otherwise. The Anderson County Library System will have Karen White at the Anderson Main Library on Tuesday, March 29th at 12

PM, so my review this round is the kick-off to one of her mystery series, *The House on Tradd Street*.

Karen White for me has always been a go-to recommendation for 'beach reads' that I give to people at the library. I, however, did not know that she also writes mystery series, including her brand new book that's coming out on Tuesday, March 29th, *The Shop on Royal Street*. The Shop on Royal Street is actually a spinoff from White's original mystery series, *The House on Tradd Street*, which is how I picked that title as my initial foray into Karen White.

The House on Tradd Street follows Melanie Middleton, a highly successful real estate agent who specializes in historic homes, after she inherits 55 Tradd Street, an incredibly valuable but run down historic home in Charleston. A key part of the story

is how Melanie inherits the house as she really doesn't have any ties to the old man who dies and leaves it to her—she just happened to have a meeting with him about selling it, and a week later he dies and leaves the house to her. There is, however, a catch to this inheritance; Melanie isn't allowed to sell the house until she's lived in it for a year. An ultimatum she's not particularly thrilled with considering she sees ghosts and is in fact very aware of the house being haunted.

On top of living in the neglected home, Melanie also has to restore the house back to its former historic glory, which is what introduces the eclectic supporting characters as they all gather to work toward restoring the house. As the work on the house comes underway, mysteries surrounding the home and its previous inhabitants, especially the ghosts, slowly start to surface. One of the mysteries is the ties to a legend surrounding some missing diamonds that dates back to the Civil War. Soon Melanie not only finds herself embroiled in the mystery of why a mother



left her son without any explanation (a parallel to her own story), but also in the middle of a treasure hunt where ghosts and men alike are not afraid to start getting violent.

The cast of supporting characters add to the charm and are honestly a big part of why I'm continuing to read through the series. Upright and very proper Melanie has a best friend who is literally the exact opposite of her, and Sophie just happens to be a leading expert on historic house restoration, especially in the Charleston area. There's also heartthrob Jack Trenholm, a journalist and writer who writes nonfiction historic mysteries and is planning to turn the history of 55 Tradd Street into his next big book, helped of course if he can be the one to discover the diamonds.

With hints at romance (especially as you progress through the series), mysteries, rich South Carolina history (not just Charleston, though the majority is), and ghosts, White has created what I would call the quintessential cozy Southern mystery. I'm found myself quite surprised with how much I'm enjoying them seeing as how my reading habits do tend to stray into hardcore thriller and even horror. While I don't know that I'd call the Tradd Street series perfect for the beach like her other books, I would say they fit in that smooth, easy reading category that also draws you in and completely engages you. White, in combination with a few of my other more typically classified mystery reads this year thus far, just might be making a cozy reader out of me.

If you're interested in attending Karen White's event at the Anderson County Library System, go to our website and register to guarantee your seat. As *The Shop on Royal Street* is the start to a spin off series to the Tradd Street mysteries, we'll be going full New Orleans (where its set) and serving tea and beignets. I for one am definitely excited to jump in the rich history of New Orleans White is sure to deliver in this new series, after I finish the Tradd Street ones of course. calendar.andersonlibrary.org/event/tea-and-beignets-karen-white

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TL Hanna Wearable Art Exhibition



The TL Hanna Art Department brought the fashion runway to Anderson once again. On Saturday, February 26, 2022 the Anderson Arts Center hosted the Fifth Annual TL Hanna Wearable Art Exhibition to a sold out crowd. Viewers were amazed by the 70+ designs that paraded the room, all designed and created by Hanna students and faculty.



Morning people, unite!

You might say that this is the Golden Age of late-night talk-show hosts. First, there's South Carolina's favorite son, Stephen Colbert. Next, SNL alumnus Seth Meyers. There are the battling Jimmys, Fallon and Kimmel, and British import James Corden. I'd love to tell you which is my favorite, but there's a small problem.

I don't stay up that late.

It's not that I'm old, which I am. My mother is considerably older than me, but she still sees the Tonight

Show most nights. It's just that I am, by nature or body clock or circadian rhythm, a morning person. And for me and those like me, we have now moved into the time of year we hate most: Daylight Savings Time.



Kim von Keller

Daylight Savings Time governs the way Americans synchronize their clocks from the second

Sunday in March through the first Sunday in November. In 2022, we set our clocks ahead by one hour, or "sprang forward," during the early hours of March 13. The results? More daylight at the end of our work day. But for early risers like myself, a precious hour of morning light has been stolen, and I think that now is the time for the morning people of the world to unite.

You know who you are, you bastions of the dawn: Teachers. Newspaper delivery people. Postal carriers. Starbucks baristas. Waffle House line cooks. Broadcast news personalities. And let's not leave out daybreak's most essential workers — or as I like to call them, members of the world's oldest profession — bakers.

Thankfully, my workday doesn't begin until 9:00, but that doesn't mean I'm lounging in bed until 8:30. When Elizabeth was in middle school, I was up every day at 4:30 a.m. so that I could get things done before driving her to school. Since then, Ted and I have become 5:30 a.m. people. After an hour of breakfast, newspapers, email, and Wordle, we're out for our daily walk, taking in the cotton candy sky as the sun comes up. Since Daylight Savings Time, our walk is now under cover of darkness, guided by flashlight, like thieves in the night. And as our neighbor, Walt, an ex-Marine with two tours in Afghanistan under his belt and an extensive gun collection, likes to remind us, walking through a neighborhood with a flashlight can make homeowners a little jumpy.

So to my fellow early birds, know that you're not alone. We may be groggy for a few days or weeks, but we'll get through this the way we face every morning, which is to say heavily caffeinated and with a chipper attitude. I've even put together a playlist to keep me going on my morning walk until I can see the sunrise again: "Here Comes the Sun" by George Harrison, "Lovely Day" by Bill Withers, "Can't Stop the Feeling" by Justin Timberlake, and "Beautiful Day" by U2. I'll be sure to lead off with my favorite morning song of all time. It comes from "Shrek, the Musical," and it's entitled "Morning Person."

"A brand-new day with things to do, so many plans to make.

I've had six cups of coffee so I'm really wide awake. I've always been a morning person, a morning girl, hurry."

And I'll be sure to turn the volume down as I pass Walt's.

NIBBLE & SIP

WHERE EARLY BIRDS AND NIGHT OWLS MEET

Some people make it a habit to rise before dawn. Others don't turn in until the sun first peeks over the horizon. But whether you're an early bird or a night owl, there's one thing we all agree on: Brunch is the best meal of the week.

If you're a Morning Person like me, brunch is the opportunity to eat TWO breakfasts and also lunch. And if you're a Creature of the Night, brunch is the perfect motivation to drag yourself out of bed by noon. Brunch is also a good excuse to have a cocktail at midday, something I rarely do.



Kim von Keller

For most restaurants, Bloody Marys and Mimosas are the beverage offerings on a brunch menu. I love both of those, but Imbibe.com recently introduced me to a cocktail that combines my favorite wine, spirit, and citrus fruit, all in the same glass. The Daybreaker, created by Austin bartender Brian Floyd, combines gin, Sauvignon Blanc, and grapefruit juice to create a cocktail that refreshes you with acidity, while the bitter and slightly sweet Aperol brings the drink into perfect balance.

And for a quick and easy Nibble to go with your Sip, you can't beat an old-school Bacon-Wrapped Breadstick. The crunchy breadstick is the

perfect delivery system for salty, delicious bacon.

The Daybreaker

1 oz. Aperol
½ oz. gin (I used Bombay Sapphire.)
2 oz. fresh-squeezed grapefruit juice (I used pink grapefruit.)
2½ oz. chilled Sauvignon Blanc (I used Chateau Ste. Michelle.)
1 dash grapefruit bitter
chilled club soda

In a wine glass, combine Aperol, gin, grapefruit juice, Sauvignon Blanc, and bitters, stirring to combine. Fill with ice, top with club soda, and stir gently before serving. Makes one.

Bacon-Wrapped Breadsticks

24 breadsticks, such as Alessi brand
12 slices bacon, cut in half
2 tsp. garlic powder
1 c. finely grated Parmesan
Preheat oven to 350°. Line a rimmed baking sheet with parchment paper. Starting at the top, wrap each breadstick with half of a bacon slice, winding downward and overlapping slightly as you go. In a bowl, combine the garlic powder and Parmesan and set aside.

Place breadsticks on prepared baking sheet and bake for 12-15 minutes, or until bacon is browned. Remove from the oven and sprinkle each breadstick with garlic-cheese mixture. Serves 12.

The Secret is out

We have a secret, just we three,
The Robin and I and the sweet cherry tree;
The bird told the tree and the tree told me,



Katie Laughridge

And nobody knows
it but just we three.

But of course, the robin knows it best
Because she built the- I shan't tell the rest;
And laid the four little - something in it-
I'm afraid I shall tell it any minute.

But if the tree and robin don't peep,
I'll try my best the secret to keep;

But I know when the baby birds fly about
Then the secret will all be out.

- Anonymous

As I'm sure you've already guessed, the secret, of course, is Spring is about to be sprung! Gone are the icy wintery days, the bitter cold nights and hunkering down inside waiting for

warm days to return. While we'll all miss playing in the snow, sledding down steep hills and drinking hot chocolate by the fire, it's time to say farewell to Jack Frost- at least for a while.

Spring is perhaps my most favorite time of year. It is the season for new life, pretty flowers, baby birds, sunshine and green leaves that once again abundantly adorn every tree in sight. But most of all, spring is the perfect time for spending quality time playing and enjoying the outdoors with your loved ones.

While the list of possible things to do is endless, you may consider compiling a Spring Bucket List to ensure that you and your family embrace every fun-filled moment. Following are few enjoyable and interesting activities that my family has enjoyed over the past few years:

Take a hike, make mud pies, dance barefoot in the rain, plant sunflowers, be on the lookout for four leaf clovers, read books about spring, make Easter ornaments, hang Easter eggs in the trees, make upcycled Easter baskets, decorate eggs, go on an egg hunt, start a garden, paint with spring colors, plant a tree for Arbor Day, take pictures of wild flowers, start a nature journal, build a bird feeder, collect and paint rocks, explore a wild space, pick berries, make spring crafts, skip stones in a pond or the lake, draw with sidewalk chalk, and blow bubbles.

Whatever you and your family decide to do during the spring season, I hope you make memories that will last a lifetime.

Happy Spring to you and your family!

GAMAC
Spring 2022

Countdown
— to —
50



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Be kind to yourself on this journey

We all have those moments when we don't feel like putting in any effort on getting ready for the day, and you know what? That's ok.



Kristine March

The fashion and beauty industry know how to get us hooked, and for most of us, that can feel like a never ending merry-go-round. Keeping yourself up can quite frankly be physically exhausting. It's a constant. We look at Instagram and social media and other outlets

and compare and contrast, and all the while they're really just trying to sell us something. Get this skin care and you will be wrinkle free. Get these pants and you will have the perfect body. Do your hair like this and you will own the room. That's all fine and dandy, but they're unrealistic expectations. It's smoke and mirrors if you will, and we all fall for it.

There are many ways to boost your con-

"If tomorrow, women woke up and decided they really liked their bodies, just think how many industries would go out of business."

fidence and not just in the physical. Mental health is far more important than the way we look every day. I for one am tired of the beauty schemes. I appreciate taking good care of myself, and I love makeup and cute attire, don't get me wrong, but we don't always have to look like a perfect doll to do so. Happiness makes us beautiful. Rest and not being over-



worked. Long walks and being with your loved ones that make you laugh and smile. Hugging your sweet cat or dog. Watching a sentimental film.

Cooking really good comfort food. Reading your favorite book again for the fifth time. Travel and seeing the world. There is no lotion or potion in a jar, or garment that can create that happiness.

Gail Dines, a professor of sociology uses one of my favorite quotes of all time, "If tomorrow women woke up and decided

that they really liked their bodies, imagine how many beauty industries would go out of business". That speaks volumes. Feeling good physically comes from within. So today if you're reading this, just know how special and exceptional you are. Know that you are loved. No one is you and that is your super power. Be kind to yourself on this journey because we have all come so far. Give yourself a big hug today, and as always remember to make the sidewalk your runway and kindness always matters.

Saturday, March 19th | 3pm - 5pm

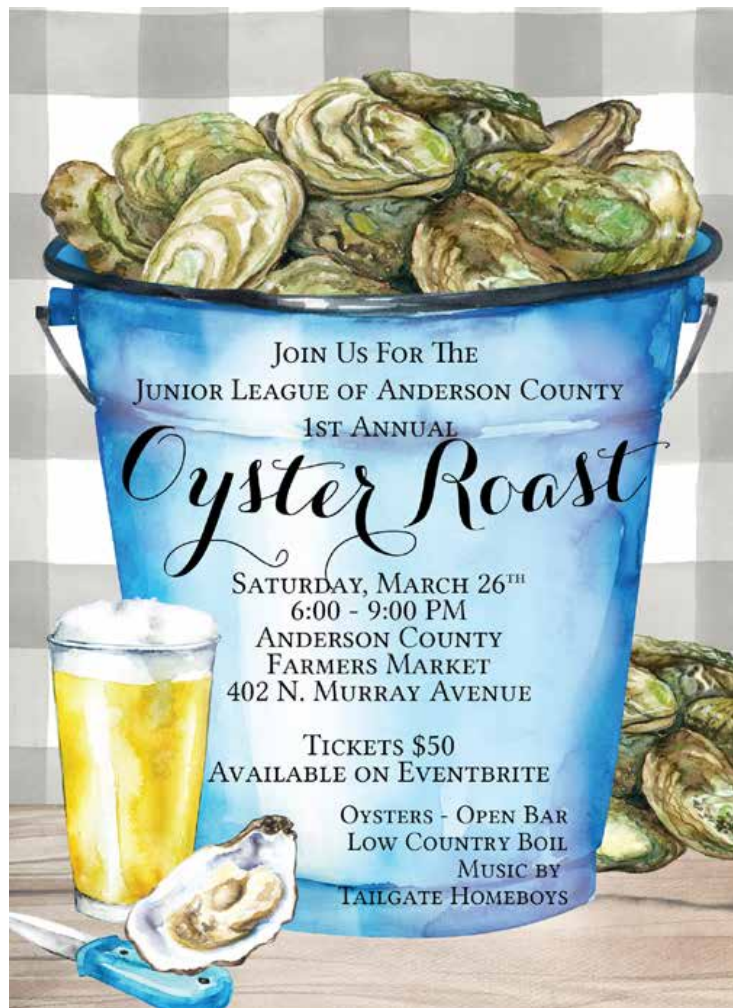


WALK FOR UKRAINE

Meet at the Anderson County Courthouse @ 3pm
Prayer Walk hosted by Anderson Area Churches

We will walk 2.8 miles* to Summer of God church to show our support to our Ukrainian neighbors. Wear BLUE & YELLOW to show your support!

*shuttle available for return



THE WOODY WOODPECKER BIRD

BY ANN K. BAILES

As a child watching old cartoons, I thought that Woody Woodpecker was just a made-up bird. He's not. He looks like the pileated woodpecker, which is the largest woodpecker in the U.S., and stand-alone in its appearance. When you see one of these unmistakable and impressive birds, you will remember it.

The pileated ("PILL-e-ated") woodpecker is considered to be an uncommon permanent resident throughout South Carolina and the entire eastern half of the U.S. It's also present across Canada and down the west coast. "Uncommon" means that though they are present in woods, a person won't run into one every day, or even every week or month. Even though they're not common, they also are not endangered, and have survived much better than the presumed-extinct ivory billed woodpecker, which was its only large counterpart in the U.S.

Pileateds thrive in old, mature forests with plenty of dead wood either still standing or lying on the ground. In the woods, listen carefully, and you may hear the sharp drumming and very loud "yak-yak-yak" calling of this impressive bird. They use their beaks to drill

deeply into dead trees, forming almost rectangular holes for their nests. They also eat insects and larvae that they find when drilling. Even though the birds do not re-use nesting sites, the holes then become useful for many other songbirds and small mammals to use, so in their own way they are contributing to good ecology in the places where they live.

A pileated is huge, almost the size of a crow. It is black with white stripes down its neck and sides and white wing patches when flying. But its most impressive feature is its flaming red crest - e.g. Woody Woodpecker. (The male has an additional red "moustache" on its face.) That red crest is unparalleled to any other bird in our area.

The last pileated woodpecker that we saw was in May 2021 at Huntington Beach State Park in Murrells Inlet, and we got to see an entire family of these beautiful birds. A nest hole had been spotted close to the straight road that we were walking, and a group of observers had gathered to watch the nestlings poking their heads out of the hole. They were as cute as you might imagine. We could hear the characteristic loud call of one of the parents, and a few minutes later, it came flying up to the nest



with food for the little ones. We got there just in time, because the next day the juveniles had fledged and were now on their own.

So now you know a little bit about our

most impressive woodpecker. And the next time you see an old cartoon and hear Woody's characteristic "da da da DA da," you know the real story about where he came from!

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Future of the game

Based on their performance in sanctioned tournaments, the United States Tennis Association ranks competitive junior tennis players from one star to five stars. For the best of the best, there is an even higher category called Blue Chips. Anderson's Noah Johnston, fourteen years old, is one of these. Head, the tennis equipment manufacturer, publishes a list of ranking junior players based on their desirability for college recruitment. In that ranking, Noah was ranked first in 14 and under in South Carolina, fourth in the Southeast, and seventh nationally. The USTA ranks him 14th in the U.S., and the Dunlop Tennis R.P.I. ranks him as the number five eighth-grader in the country. The bottom line: he's an incredible tennis player.

Last December 1100 of the world's top players from seventy countries gathered in Miami for the Junior Orange Bowl International Championship. In prior years, greats like Jimmy Connors, Andre Agassi, Steffi Graf, and Chris Evert competed there. With 256 players in his bracket, Noah finished in the top ten in the world. He finished third in the National Championship in doubles in January. He has defeated some of the world's top players and has a winning record against other blue-chip players.

Noah began playing tennis around age 1½ when he started rolling balls with his racquet, and his Mom would roll them back. He began playing in Little Mo's tournaments around age seven. Noah's Mom, Sophie, grew up in France and came to the U.S. on a tennis scholarship at Clemson. An All-American, she reached

the NCAA Final Four in singles and quarter-finals in doubles. Named the A.C.C. Player of the Year, she was also named a member of the A.C.C. 50 Year team. She owns and operates the Brookstone Tennis Club.



Jim Harris

Noah's dad Andy played tennis for Clemson, then was named head coach of the Clemson women's team in 1987. He led them to five A.C.C. titles and was inducted into the Clemson Athletic Hall of Fame. He produced 51 All-ACC players and 13 All-Americans, one of whom was Gigi Fernandez. She was a two-time Olympic gold medalist and multiple-time doubles grand slam champion. After retiring from tennis, Andy worked as director of operations for the Clemson football team.

Grandparents Lucien and Therese were professional gymnastics coaches in their native France. When Sophie opened Brookstone, they retired and moved here. Lucien trained Sophie as a junior player and drills with Noah daily. Today Lucien, Sophie, the Brookstone team and Andy train Noah.

With all of this ability, accomplishment, and genetic upside, you might expect a different Noah from what you see when you meet him. He's a well-mannered and polite young man and does not at all seem impacted by his success. In the past, he was an avid soccer player but focuses on



Noah Johnston

tennis now. He enjoys spending time with friends, playing video games and is learning to cook. His dad also remarks on his excellent skiing ability.

For Noah, tennis is considered training for life skills. Sophie hopes to see Noah gain from his competitive career: resilience, organization, mental toughness, and time management.

Most junior players at Noah's level live full-time at tennis academies and have tutors instead of a traditional school. Noah attends school and lives with his family. Starting in seventh grade, South Carolina rules allowed Noah to play for his high school team, Wren. In the state championship tournament last year, he made it to the finals even though he was as much as five years younger than many of the competitors.

Sophie says, "Tennis has allowed me to have extra time with him. When we travel to a tournament, it's just Noah and me. We have lunch together, dinner together, I get to watch his

matches and support him. It has made us really close." Her objective for Noah is to have balance in his life. Time for friends and activities other than tennis is vital. The Brookstone environment allows Noah to pursue his tennis goals and stay close to family and home.

Andy's lessons to Noah have been less about tennis and more about sportsmanship and the mental aspects of the game. Noah typically practices around an hour and a half per day, but he takes days off when he needs a break. He usually plays a dozen or so tournaments each year.

Of his game, Noah says, "I try and do everything not to let my opponents find a rhythm. All the spins, flat shots, coming to the net, a variety of serves; that's what I want to do. If something's not working, I want to be able to do something else." His current focus is on increasing his tempo, muscle memory, power, and training his legs for explosiveness.

Noah is most gracious to his school, as they have been "wonderful" in working with his tournament schedule. He intends to play for the Wren team for the remainder of his time there.

On the horizon, this year is the National Championships, called the Easter Bowl, at Indian Wells in California, the National Clay Courts in Dothan, Alabama, National Hard Courts in Mobile, and the National Doubles in Orlando.

Sophie says, "I am super proud of him. I feel like I won the lottery with this kid. His attitude on court, his behavior, and his sportsmanship are unparalleled. He keeps his head on, keeps his character."

ELECTRIC CITY EVENTS

MARCH 18

Blood Connection Drive
Balloon Launch Field @ Anderson Sports & Entertainment Center
3027 Martin Luther King Jr Blvd, Anderson

Cancer Association of Anderson presents Christian concert by Rhett Walker. All proceeds go to support missions to lessen the burden on LOCAL cancer patients. Purchase tickets at www.ticketmaster.com

Electric City Playhouse presents I HATE HAM-LET 7:30 PM
514 N Murray Avenue, Anderson. (864) 224-4248

Clemson Little Theater presents JAMES AND THE GIANT PEACH. 214 S Mechanic Street, Pendleton (864) 646-8100

Palmetto High School Military Ball
Setup Ballrooms & arena 1:00 PM
Ball 7:00 to 11:00 PM
Contact Lt. Col. Mike Creamer (864) 847-1843

MARCH 26

Anderson County Cricket Club
Balloon Launch field 12:00 to 5:00 PM
Contact Sanjeev Kumar (864) 634-1187

MARCH 29

Tea with Karen White, bestselling author.
The Shop on Royal Street - First of her new series
Anderson County Library
12:00 to 2:00 PM
Light snacks, hear about the series, purchase a copy of her books, signing. Please register ahead of time.

MARCH 31-APRIL 3

Hejaz Shrine Circus
Anderson Sports & Entertainment Center

APRIL 2

Pastor Austin Carty, author of "The Pastor's Bookshelf: Why Ready Matters for Ministry" will be available for book signing at Boulevard Baptist Church on Saturday April 2nd from 2:00 PM to 4:00 PM

APRIL 7

Anderson University Travel Club will meet Thursday April 7th at 1:00 PM @ Anderson County Library. Sharon Jacobs will be presenting Mackinac Island. Contact: (864) 245-5501

APRIL 29-30

Anderson Soiree Downtown Anderson
Contact: cgaddis@cityofandersonsc.com



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**SUSAN
TEMPLE**
master
gardener

A recent article catching my attention focused on blue flowers for bees. It said that bees see shades of blue better than other colors. It seems many flowers touted as blue are closer to purple, or at least to my eyes. It can be tricky to find truly blue flowers but I'm always on the lookout because blue blossoms would look great with my gray house and would really stand out in the garden.

While at White Jones last week, shopping for nuts and washers, I cruised through the garden section just to be sure there wasn't something

I couldn't live without. They had seed packets on sale for a quarter each. I don't remember the brand of seeds but do remember from buying these over the years, there aren't many seeds in the packets. But for a quarter, what the heck. Before a piece of land near Mama's became one of those neighborhoods that have what seems like 10 houses to an acre, bachelor's buttons grew in that field. Several times I've picked some of those seeds, as well as another place near downtown where they grow along the railroad tracks. I'm pretty sure there's never been a bachelor's button (*Centaurea cyanus*) at my place anywhere. But hopefully the two dollars I splurged on seeds will do the trick.

Instructions on the packet said to plant after danger of frost. Almost all seed packets say that. No one has ever explained why. Mother Nature

scatters seeds all year long. Zinnias, particularly, seed in late summer, early fall, and come back most every year. But instructions on the packet say plant after danger of frost. It's a mystery even Columbo or Nancy Drew could not solve it seems. Bachelor's buttons are supposedly very easy annuals to grow from seed, some sources saying even reseeding prolifically. I did not wait until after danger of frost has passed. Those seeds were tossed into the area where Bermuda grass has been smothered. I'm still being extremely choosy about digging there. This smother and cover method (what I wittingly call the Waffle House method), worked quite well to kill Bermuda grass in another area of the garden. It's not a quick process. The first spot took about three or four years to get it to blend in. This new spot is probably on its third year.



Blue bachelor's button

But it's getting there.

While reading more about bachelor's buttons, I learned clay soil will cause them to rot. I don't have much clay soil in the garden. But the garden is prone to have plants rot in the winter. Maybe that was part of the problem with other bachelor's button seeds

failing to grow. If drainage has been the problem, the area where these seeds were tossed should be better. It is sort of a raised bed and it does slope a bit. Since it's a combination of leaves, old potting soil, dirt and pine needles from the woods, built up over the cardboard, this may make a difference. I never dig down to the original earth. Anything planted there other than seeds, is a small plant put in the built up soil. Some call that lasagna gardening. A clump of Japanese iris were simply tossed onto the ground there, covered with more leaves and pine needles, and have done fine.

Bachelor's buttons are also good for butterflies, make great cut flowers, and dry well too. The common name came from bachelors wearing them on their lapel while courting. Another common name is cornflower (not to be confused with coneflower). Several sources also said deer pass them by. That is always welcomed in my garden. They have really done a number on azaleas this winter.



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AN OBSERVER WHO IS NEVER OBSERVED

BY RICH OTTER

He is an observer who is never observed. He is the man and voice behind the camera, never seen but heard questioning Anderson's civic leaders. He is filling a void reporting directly with community's administrators, mayors, councilmen and legislators responsible for local government. He is Greg Wilson, communicating through his daily on-line newspaper The Anderson Observer.

An eighth-generation Andersonian, Greg was born in Anderson and describes himself as a "textile brat," moving around while his father worked for Roger Milliken, but back in Anderson for high school. He then attended Carson-Newman College, Golden Gate and Southern seminaries, and for a while served in the ministry.

As a third-grade student, about 1964, a school librarian submitted an article, written by him, for publication in a magazine for which he was paid \$75, a hefty sum for a third grader. The writing bug struck and throughout school and college he continued freelance writing and over the years has written for such publications as the

New York Times, Christianity Today, Sport Magazine, Rolling Stone, S.C. Business Journal and numerous ladies magazines.

Interviews for articles have included Billy Graham, Pope John Paul II, Hosea Williams, Bob Dylan, Ozzie Osbourne, George H. W. Bush, George Shultz, Brian McLaren, Tony Campolo, Jay Bakker and John Perkins.

Writing remained his passion and he returned to Anderson and joined the Independent and Daily Mail where he was mentored by L.S. "Slim" Hembree, who served as editor of the Independent for almost five decades. He left the papers and started a national media relations program at Clemson University and did media training and media relations for some of its colleges.

Not long after starting the Anderson Observer, which he began after encouragement from a number of local leaders, he co-hosted the morning drive radio show with Aly Haley on the local WRIX-FM radio station.

The Anderson Observer, now in its 15th year is devoted to city and county government as well as local stories.



Greg Wilson

He describes himself as "intensely interested in Anderson and Anderson County" and says "a story is a story," meaning it has a particular purpose for the person who lives it or for the person who reads it. The Observer is free and he declares always will be. He supports it and himself by moderate, but not annoying, advertising and by freelance writing on the side. The Observer also has some patrons.

Explaining a reason for his use of video, Wilson cited a comparison he made with printed reporting. He said for a number of years he did monthly written updates of interviews with

Anderson County Administrator Rusty Burns. He reached roughly 20,000 readers. When he changed to video with the same questions and answers, the readership jumped to about 80,000.

He also mentions that printed newspapers generally have news that is at least 12 hours old and has already been reported through other media. One exception has been newspapers with evening delivery and a news deadline by noon. Some such papers have proven successful but there is still the cost of printing and delivery avoided by being on-line or through other electronic media.

Wilson believes the news and features he presents and those of county newspapers, including The Electric City News and the weekly Williamston Journal and Belton-Honea Path Chronical, "sort of cobble together the way local coverage used to be." Combined they reflect more traditional reporting.

Following the demise of the Independent-Mail's Saturday edition earlier this year, the Observer is the last daily newspaper in Anderson.

He believes news should be dis-

tilled to the facts and he has one distinct prejudice – liars. It has been the Observer's policy never to do a story without two independent verifications. Wilson contends it is important to cover City and County Council to maintain a community alert to what is transpiring in local government.

One of the great challenges in Anderson, he suggests, is managing future community growth. It is important to be selective in economic development and not just accept anything that might produce 100 jobs. Consideration must be as to how clean the business is and how much capacity there is for people to grow and prosper. Likewise, the City of Anderson's annexations must be carefully considered as to the impact, including zoning and future development.

Greg Wilson is planning another project unrelated to the Anderson Observer. It would be an autobiographical video program for preserving for an individual's descendants a view of his or her life experiences and historical period. The recording would be guided by an experienced interviewer and be an invaluable gift for the subject's future generations.

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Tantrums, meltdowns and everything in between



**MARY-CATHERINE
McCLAIN
RINER**

Tantrums are a natural part of toddlerhood as children discover his/her personality without having the language to assert and express themselves. Toddlers are passionate about everything, yet the frontal cortex is not fully developed which impacts control and decision making.

Parents are often surprised to learn that what matters more than specific behavioral strategies is how adults monitor, regulate, and ultimately respond to the situation. Specifically, how children interpret facial expressions, breathing patterns, and overall vocal tone directly impacts sense of control and safety. Additionally, younger children



have not nurtured or developed the emotional regulation skills needed to more appropriately interact.

Parents often find this difficult to understand or accept for a variety of reasons; adults may not have been taught how to sit with their respective feelings — often feeling scared of those emotions. As children, expressed emotions may not have been met with compassion, patience, or validation. Tantrums also trigger the need to fix, stop, avoid, or fight back. Tantrums may make adults feel out of control.

To more effectively manage meltdowns and intense emotions, first deconstruct your earlier memories and modeling. Explore how your childhood felt, and identify if you denied feelings or if your feelings were invalidated. Did you repress emotions to satisfy your parent's ideal version of yourself? Second, remind yourself that your child's feelings do not define your successes or failures as a parent.

Focus on:

- Observe the moment and stay present in the experience
- Use puppets to role play

- Ensuring your toddler is not overtired or hungry
- Providing choices and options
- Remaining calm and focus on re-connection
- Maintaining attention and love so there is a full reservoir
- Surrender the power struggle. You do not have to prove you are right.
- Create emotional and physical safety

One of the best gifts you can give your children is being curious about what makes tantrums difficult for you and reminding yourself that tantrums represent internal chaos rather than failing at parenting. Reconnection and reassurance are additional gifts.

Mary-Catherine McClain Riner, Ph.D., Ed.S, M.S., is a Licensed Psychologist with Riner Counseling, LLC. Visit www.rinercounseling.com or call 864-608-0446.

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Rams cap perfect season with state title

BY BRU NIMMONS

ANDERSON — It's almost impossible to top a state championship, but the Westside High School girls' basketball team proved it was possible when it defeated North Augusta on March 5 to finish off a perfect season and win a second straight Class 4A state championship.

Against the Yellow Jackets, it took everything the Rams had to come out with the victory in overtime, 44-40.

Westside hounded North Augusta from the opening tip, jumping out to a 9-3 lead early before a late Jacket run cut the lead to 11-8 entering the second quarter.

In the second quarter, North Augusta had the advantage, outscoring the Rams 11-8 to force a 29-29 stalemate heading to halftime.

Destiny Middleton paced Westside in the opening half, scoring nine points, while Zuri Goldsberry led the Yellow Jackets with 12 points.

Out of the break, North Augusta



took a slight 31-30 lead. The Rams bounced back in the final frame, and with just less than 40 seconds left, Middleton hit a layup to give Westside a 37-35 lead.

However, with time winding down, North Augusta's Peris Smith hit a layup to tie the game at 37-37 and force OT.

The Rams took the lead back in

overtime and never trailed again as they took home their second straight state championship, 44-40.

Seniors Branya Pruitt and Aziyah Bell joined Middleton in carrying the scoring load. Pruitt scored a team-high 15 points, and Middleton was close behind with 14. Bell put up eight points and had the defensive perfor-

mance of her lifetime with seven steals.

The Rams finished the season at 28-0 and have won more than 35 games in a row going back to 2020. For their efforts this season, Middleton and Ahrianna Scott earned all-state and all-region honors, while Pruitt, Bell and Olivia Randolph earned all-region honors.

T.L. HANNA YELLOW JACKETS

Jackets out to hot start on baseball diamond

BY BRU NIMMONS

ANDERSON — Early on in the high school baseball season, the T.L. Hanna Yellow Jackets are rolling, as they've jumped out to a 6-0 start.

The Yellow Jackets started the season on Feb. 28 against Greenville High School, picking up an 8-4 win.

Hanna was in control from the start, scoring two runs in the first off hits by Fletcher Cothran and Walt Smith. Cothran, who also got the start at pitcher, kept his solid play going on the mound, pitching four innings and adding seven strikeouts.

With the early lead and Cothran's performance on the mound, Hanna stayed ahead the rest of the way in the win.

The Jackets returned to action on March 1 against Pickens and

pummeled the Blue Flame 17-1 in a four-inning mercy rule victory.

Cothran kept his impressive play going against the Blue Flame, going 2-2 with two walks and a home run, and five players had at least two RBIs in a game where the Jackets scored early and often.

Over the next two days, the Yellow Jackets continued their run in wins over Crescent and Riverside.

Against county foe Crescent, Jay Dillard brought home three runners,

while Jackson Brooks and Ryan Stovall struck out 11 batters in an 8-2 victory.

Hanna continued its tear in a 13-3 six-inning win over Riverside.

Once again Cothran powered the Jacket offense, bringing home three runs on three hits, including two doubles. Conner Swanson also brought home three runs, while Blaine Wentzky got

the win on the mound.

In their final two games of the 6-0 start, the Yellow Jackets pulled off a season sweep over rival Westside.

In their first matchup on March 9, Hanna got on the board first with back-to-back home runs by Dillard and Brody Winter and never trailed as Cothran pitched a complete game with just one earned run and 10 strikeouts in a 4-1 win.

In the rematch on March 11, things were much closer as the Jackets pulled out a 4-3 win. The Jackets seemed to be in good shape, leading 4-1 in the seventh, but Carson Bacheller struggled with his command on the mound, walking three batters, leading to two Westside runs. Dillard took over for the struggling Bacheller and managed to get the final two outs for the win.

Hanna headed into St. Patrick's Day week hoping to continue its strong play with two games against Daniel High School.

