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FALL 2011
PREMIER ISSUE

MAGAZINE

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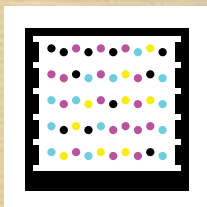
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On the Cover: Billy Swails is a hardworking community leader, a local business owner and a proud father and grandfather. From his roots in the Lowcountry to his deep love for the town, he is our All-America mayor.

PUBLISHER'S NOTE

THERE IS SO MUCH I WANT TO SAY, BUT I'LL START with thanks for reading the premier edition of Mount Pleasant's new magazine. We hope you will enjoy these pages and our website, www.MountPleasantMagazine.com and our green online edition, www.MountPleasantMagazine.com/GreenEdition.



I am getting ahead of myself. Let's go back to 1985 when I began publishing *East Cooper Magazine*. Mount Pleasant was not the same town we know today. Our population was only 21,859. In 2011, it stands at 67,843.

There were very few businesses, which, of course, meant there were fewer advertisers to support our publishing efforts. We were ahead of our time and, because of that, we decided to discontinue the publication. But we always remembered the concept of a magazine for Mount Pleasant.

Over the past two years, I gave increasing consideration to bringing back *East Cooper Magazine* as *Mount Pleasant Magazine*. As we moved forward to publish the premier edition, it was surprising and rewarding to find that so many people remembered *East Cooper*. The response to *Mount Pleasant Magazine* has been the most enthusiastic I've ever received for a new magazine.

Published quarterly, *Mount Pleasant Magazine* will be the new houseguest to 10,000 Mount Pleasant homeowners to whom we are mailing a copy. Another 10,000 Mount Pleasant residents will be able to pick up *Mount Pleasant Magazine* at Harris Teeter, Piggly Wiggly and restaurants, boutiques, businesses and professional offices throughout the town.

Everyone at Media Services has a passion for their work, and we all hope you will find the results entertaining and enlightening. Few Mount Pleasant residents have more passion about our town than Mayor Billy Swails. This comes through in the article on page 6. We also interviewed Peggy Swails; read what she has to say about her husband.

Every day we dodge those orange cones and maneuver through the traffic congestion on Johnnie Dodds Boulevard. We want to know where it's leading and if it's worth it. Editor Margaret Ann Michels outlines how getting through town is changing.

Your Facebook friends or neighbors can read the magazine online. Just send them a link to our green edition at www.MountPleasantMagazine.com/GreenEdition.

Before you turn the page, I want to bring your attention to the Longevity Logo in our advertisements. The logo identifies businesses that have been offering their products and services to Mount Pleasant residents for a decade or more. As you visit all our advertisers' businesses, please mention you saw them in *Mount Pleasant Magazine*.

As *Mount Pleasant Magazine* grows, we'd like to hear what you want to see and read about. Send suggestions to Editor@MountPleasantMagazine.com or visit us at [Facebook.com/MountPleasantMagazine](https://www.facebook.com/MountPleasantMagazine). Thanks for spending time with us. Until November – happy reading! 🍷

— BILL MACCHIO
Publisher

MOUNT PLEASANT

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OUR CONTRIBUTORS



Gary Coleman is a professional photographer based in Charleston. While he most enjoys outdoor photography, he makes a living shooting on-location corporate events from Branson to Bermuda. Gary and his wife Amy are happy living close to the city and raising their daughter Morgan in a country setting on Johns Island.

Stacy E. Domingo shares a plentiful life surrounded by her family including two wonderful children, Sierra and Joe, and her husband of 15 years, Henry. A native of North Charleston, Stacy now resides near the banks of the Ashley River and enjoys spreading the word about the beauty of the place she calls home.



Following a long career in print and broadcast journalism, **Bill Farley** spent 25 years as a senior executive for Playboy Enterprises, Inc. in Los Angeles. He retired in 2005, moving

with his wife Judy to Charleston National in Mount Pleasant. Bill writes frequently for local publications and recently published his first novel. He plays guitar and keyboard and fishes “when someone with a boat invites me out.”

Kayla Jones is an on-location lifestyle photographer in the Charleston area. She specializes in children, teen, family and wedding portraiture. It’s Kayla’s mission to help people celebrate every stage of life with natural, modern photography that reflects their own style. She loves to help people capture their family memories.



Born to missionary parents in Zaire, Africa, **Chris Smith** developed a passion for photography in high school and earned a degree from the New York Institute of Photography. He and his wife Cami now live in Charleston and run a successful studio. Their work has been featured in publications such as *Charleston Magazine*, *Sports Illustrated* and *Tennis* magazine.



Eileen Robinson Smith has been a major contributor to Fodor’s Travel for two decades; writing for the Carolinas/Georgia guide and as author of the “In-Focus” guides for Charleston and Savannah. She has been published in travel and in-flight magazines such as *Caribbean Travel & Life*, *Condé Nast Traveler*, *SKY* and *Latitudes*. Eileen is former editor of *Charleston Magazine*.



Wendy Snyder is a Charleston-based freelance writer who covers travel, food, business, health and lifestyle topics for regional publications. With her busy writing schedule and public relations business, she relies on taking her dog Hamlin for a walk around her Mount Pleasant neighborhood to be sure she gets outside at least once a day.



Interested in contributing to *Mount Pleasant Magazine*? E-mail your contact information (name, phone, mailing address) and one sample of work you have created (or a link to your work online) with the subject “**Aspiring MPM Contributor**” to Editor@MountPleasantMagazine.com.



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WEB EXTRAS



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Mount Pleasant's Farmers' Market is a happening spot on Tuesday afternoons. Check out additional photographs on the www.MountPleasantMagazine.com website, and check out the market this Tuesday. Be sure to tell Rina and Mike we sent you.

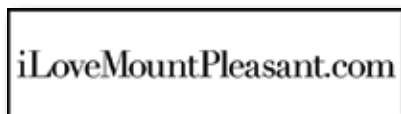
Photographer Gary Coleman and editor Margaret Ann Michels spent a few hours at the **Johnnie Dodds Boulevard construction** site amidst the heavy equipment, hot asphalt and, yes, dozens and dozens of orange barrels. See more from their photo shoot – and more images of what the finished roadway will look like – on our website.



Didn't know Mount Pleasant has two libraries? If so, you are not alone. Many residents are surprised to hear about **the little library in the Old Village**. See more photos on the website in preparation for your first in-person visit.

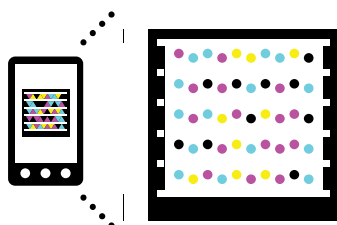


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Billy and Peggy Swails enjoy spending time with friends and family in the backyard of their Mount Pleasant home.

Billy Swails

FROM LOWCOUNTRY BOY



photography by Chris Smith
story by Eileen Robinson Smith

TO ALL-AMERICA MAYOR

BILLY SWAILS IS THE TOP ELECTED OFFICIAL IN South Carolina's fourth largest municipality, a vibrant and growing town that has attracted a wide range of cultural and culinary events and festivals, as well as the attention of the National Civic League and its coveted designation of All-America City.

Swails, mayor of Mount Pleasant since winning a three-man race among a trio of sitting town councilmen in 2009, is neither overwhelmed with the job nor overly impressed by his own importance.

"Don't call me 'Mr. Mayor.' My name is Billy," he insisted in a smooth Southern drawl perfected by a lifetime in the town he now helps run. His Lowcountry origins are depicted in the hunting and fishing prints that adorn his office at City Hall.

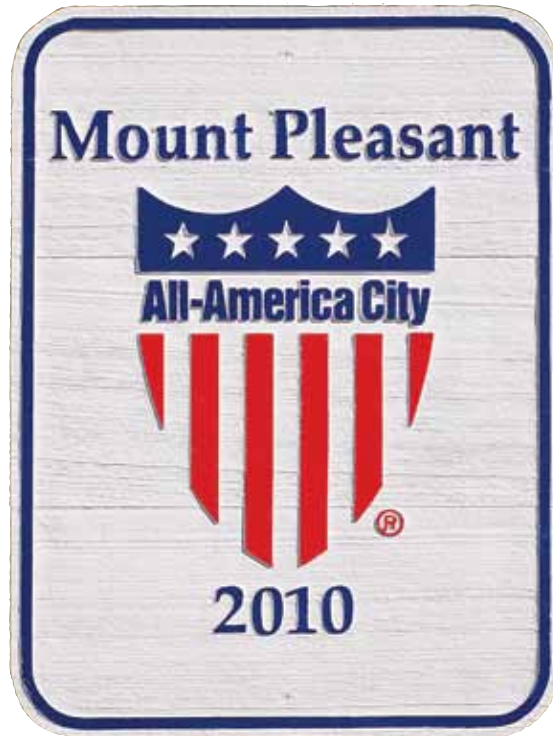
At 64, Swails has fond memories of the town he will always call home, which, a half century ago, was no more than a dot on the map, a brief rest stop for motorists headed north to Myrtle Beach or south to Charleston and beyond.

"In 1960, there was one red light on Highway 17, which was called Ocean Highway," he remembered. "Tourists stopped here, mainly to gas up on the way to Myrtle Beach and the land of oranges. I pumped gas. The Colonial Store [then on the corner of Coleman Boulevard and Fairmont Avenue in the current GDC Home Interiors location] was the largest grocery store. I bagged groceries and at night swept and mopped the floor. I was never scared of hard work."

Billy Swails

The town of Mount Pleasant has grown exponentially during the past half century, from 5,116 residents in 1960 to 67,843 in 2010, but Swails' attitude toward the value of hard work hasn't changed a bit. Though he puts in full-time hours as mayor, the position, and the \$24,000 per year salary, are officially part-time. His real job, the one that pays the bills, is as a State Farm insurance agent.

Over the years, Swails, who graduated from Moultrie High School and attended The Citadel and Charleston Southern University, has always found the time to serve his town and its residents. He was a councilman from 1976 to 1984, then again from 2006 until he won the mayoral election, and he has coached



and sponsored youth football, baseball, basketball, soccer and volleyball teams for more than 30 years. "No public service could be

more rewarding or pay higher dividends," he remarked.

The national recognition the town earned last year must have come close, however. Swails was among 41 Mount Pleasant residents who traveled to Kansas City, Mo., to convince the judges that their town deserved to be a 2010 All-America City. Their efforts were rewarded.

"It was quite a thrill, I'll tell you," Swails said. "When I was first elected, I said let's go for it. We raised \$18,000 and put together a 10-minute dog and pony show. We chose three projects: the \$5 swimming lessons for kids, the revitalization of Coleman Boulevard and the construction on Johnnie Dodds Boulevard."

Part of the money the town raised to compete for All-America City honors came from what should have

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been the mayor's modest salary. Practicing what he preaches about public service, Swails accepts none of his \$24,000 annual pay, choosing instead to let the town spend it on projects that make life a little more interesting for those who call Mount Pleasant home.

The list of things to do in Mount Pleasant certainly has grown since Swails' days of pumping gas and mopping floors in a sleepy little

Four traffic lanes and a pedestrian/bicycle path on the Ravenel Bridge lead to Mount Pleasant from west of the Cooper.

town between Charleston and the Atlantic Ocean. Annual events include the Scottish Games and Highland Gathering held each September, the Taste of Charleston in October, the Lowcountry Oyster Festival in January, the Blessing of the Fleet each April and the Sweet-grass Cultural Arts Festival in June.

2 Children

4 Grandchildren

1947 Born William David Swails

1965 Graduated from Moultrie High School

1965-1969 Attended The Citadel and Charleston Southern University

BY THE NUMBERS

Billy Swails

1976-1984 Mount Pleasant town councilman

1985 Married Peggy

2006-2009 Mount Pleasant town councilman

2009 Elected mayor of Mount Pleasant

2010 Mount Pleasant named All-America City

Billy Swails

The town's farmers' market has gained fame as a weekly extravaganza from April through October; it is held each Tuesday from 3:30 p.m. until dark at the Mount Pleasant Farmers Market Pavilion on Coleman Boulevard. April also heralds the summer-long Shaggin' on the Cooper dance parties on Saturday nights, family-oriented

“The town is moving forward. It's not backing up.”

Splash Days, Movies at the Mount Pleasant Pier and Party in the Park free concerts, all taking place at the beautiful facilities of the new Memorial Waterfront Park.

And, of course, there's the Cooper River Bridge Run, which begins in Mount Pleasant, ends in Charleston and draws more than 40,000 runners from around the



Courtesy of the Swails family

world. Marking its 35th year with the April 2012 event, the run is a unique opportunity to showcase Mount Pleasant's attractions, from picturesque Shem Creek to Patriots Point Naval & Maritime Museum to Memorial Waterfront Park.

Under the leadership of Billy Swails, the town of Mount Pleasant, though it treasures its small-town

The Swails family in 2009. Left to right: daughter Michelle Austin, Rhett Austin, Maryn Austin, Peggy Swails, Billy holding Ivy Austin, Brooke Swails, Cameron Swails, Tracy Swails and son Billy Swails.

past, also savors what is to come and is solidifying its infrastructure and road system, building a bridge to what is certain to be a bright future.

“The town is moving forward,” the mayor commented. “It's not backing up.” 🍷

Mount Pleasant's contemporary landmark, the Arthur Ravenel Jr. Bridge, is a great source of pride. Many of the town's events take place in its shadow.



Billy Swails *“I Can’t Imagine Anyone Loving It More”*

MOUNT PLEASANT MAYOR BILLY SWAILS is an honest, hardworking, generous man who is absolutely dedicated to his wife, two children and four grandchildren. However, according to Peggy, his wife since 1985, his most outstanding attribute might just be his undying devotion to the town of Mount Pleasant.

“His heart is in the right place. What he does for the town, I can’t imagine anyone loving it more,” said Peggy Swails, a retired federal probation officer.

“He is the most generous person, with his money and his time.”

A graduate of James Island High School, Peggy earned a bachelor’s in sociology and psychology from Newberry College and a master’s degree in criminal justice from the University of South Carolina. In 1969, she was the first female juvenile parole officer in South Carolina. She worked for the federal probation system for 20 years, the last 13 as officer-in-charge for the Charleston division. These days, along with her own community involvement and precious time with her grandchildren, Peggy is her husband’s biggest fan.

She pointed out that among Billy’s exceptional qualities is his work ethic.

“He has old-fashioned values that

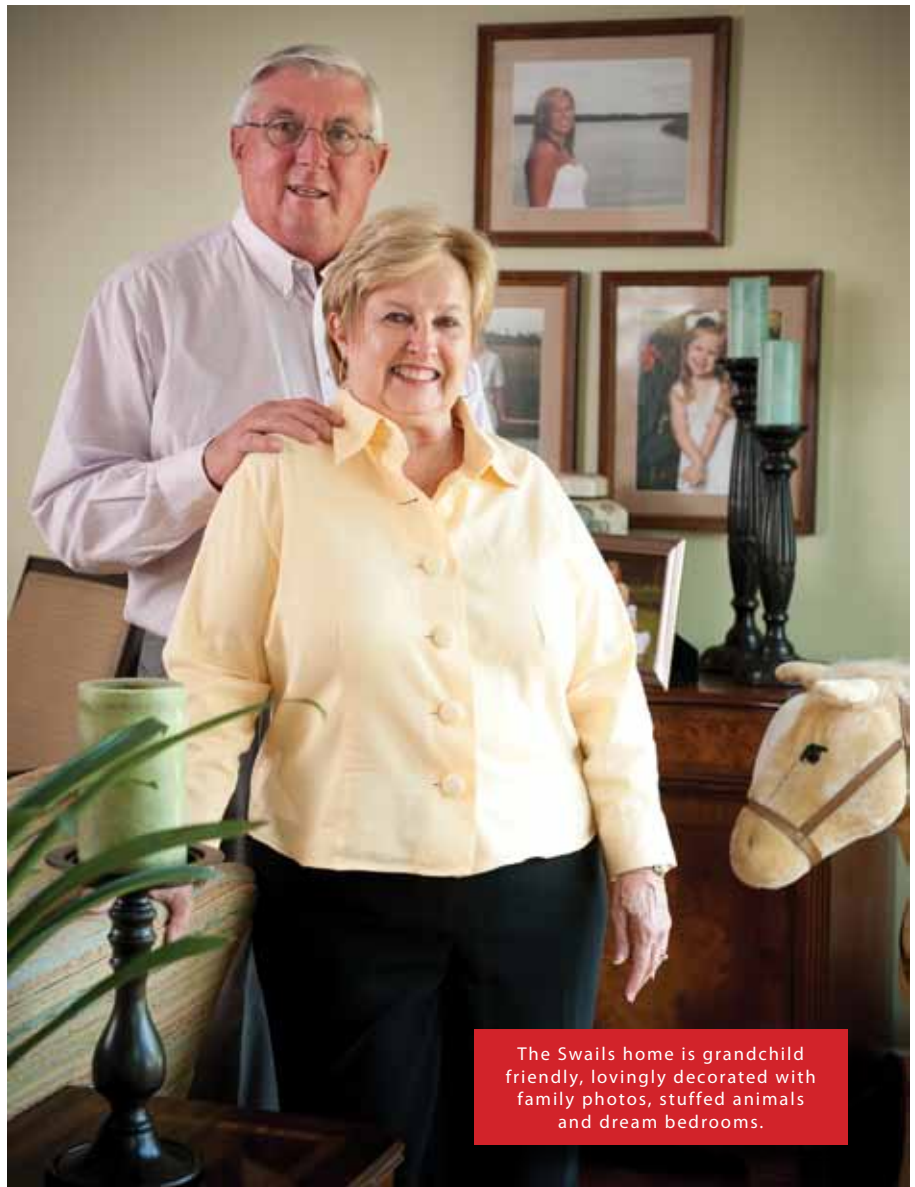
people now respect again,” she said. “When I met him, he was working in the State Farm office with his father Lloyd, who was the founder of the business and a wonderful man. He

passed on his values to his son.”

“Billy will go into Town Hall early and, if necessary, will stay late and even work seven days a week,” she added.

“He goes over to his State Farm office at 6 or 6:30 in the morning and on Saturday and Sunday. He is still active in his large insurance business, but, thankfully, he has a wonderful, professional and competent staff.”

“He is the most generous person, with his money and his time,” she added. “No one has sponsored as many sports teams, and he’s coached football and baseball. And he is so giving to charities. If he goes to his grave penniless, the money will have been well spent.” 🐾



The Swails home is grandchild friendly, lovingly decorated with family photos, stuffed animals and dream bedrooms.

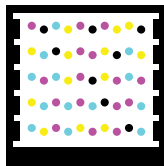
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Invasion of the Orange Cones

JOHNNIE DODDS BOULEVARD
CONSTRUCTION

*photography by Gary Coleman
story by Margaret Ann Michels*

The asphalt is heated to 290 F coming out of the spreader. Even a few minutes later, it's still measuring 269 F. For comparison, according to the Consumer Product Safety Commission, most adults will suffer third-degree burns if exposed to 150 F water for two seconds.



IN THE MOVIES, WHEN aliens invade Earth, they generally say they come as friends and intend to do no harm; most of the time, they are lying. The invasion underway along Johnnie Dodds Boulevard is an exception to the rule. When the hundreds of orange cones and barrels have completed their mission and returned home, wherever that is, Mount Pleasant will be left with only the magnanimous results of their visit.

The Johnnie Dodds Boulevard project consists of widening three miles – from the Arthur J. Ravenel Jr. Bridge to the Interstate 526 interchange – to three lanes from two in each direction. Improvements to the two frontage roads and some side streets along this stretch of U.S. Highway 17 are included in the plan.

New curbs and gutters are the beginning of the visual improvements; both are being installed along the



.....
Top Right: With the road widening, losing some trees is unavoidable. Orange fencing surrounds those that definitely will be retained. **Left:** Dump trucks load hot asphalt into a shuttle buggy, which loads the spreader, which spreads it onto the roadway. Several workers follow behind, checking the fresh blacktop for proper depth and slope and filling in imperfections before the compactor compresses it to a scientifically calculated level for the road and environmental conditions.



Left: Coleman-Snow Consultants. Right: Town of Mount Pleasant

highway and the two frontage roads. While they'll look nicer than the current shoulder and median edges, they also will improve safety and drainage, alleviating the deep puddles that now appear during heavy rains.

The median between the northbound and southbound lanes will be landscaped with plants, hedges and trees, and street lighting there will be enhanced. The green spaces between the highway and the frontage roads also will have new grass, plants and trees.

The major intersections with Johnnie Dodds Boulevard are being improved with upgraded traffic lights and pedestrian crosswalks at Magrath Darby Boulevard, Mathis Ferry Road/Houston Northcutt Boulevard, Shelmore Boulevard and Anna Knapp Boulevard. Dedicated turn lanes are being installed in some locations where they don't currently exist, with the option of adding a second lane off Johnnie Dodds onto Anna Knapp and Shelmore if they are needed in the future.

The frontage roads on both sides of the highway are being widened, and, along with the current one-lane in each direction for automobiles, marked bicycle lanes and sidewalks are planned. New traffic lights are being installed where East Frontage Road intersects with Houston Northcutt Boulevard. Along West Frontage Road, intersections at Mathis Ferry,

Anna Knapp and Bowman are getting new traffic signals.

In addition to making it safer to cross over and make left turns at these Frontage Road intersections, the traffic

If you think the view of the Ravenel is dramatic now, imagine what it will look like from the new overpass.

signals' timing will be coordinated with those on Johnnie Dodds to help traffic flow more smoothly.

The biggest change, both visually and in project scope, is the addition of a bridge. Johnnie Dodds Boulevard is being elevated above Bowman Road, alleviating backups on both roads during heavy travel times. If you think the view of the Ravenel is dramatic now, imagine what it will look like from the new overpass.

Bowman Road is being widened to five lanes to where it crosses Shem Creek, and a new bridge will be constructed over the creek, with sidewalks and drainage improvements. On the west side of Johnnie

Dodds, Bowman is being widened, and an improved intersection will be added at Hospital Drive. On both sides, traffic lights will be installed where the new offramps from Johnnie Dodds connect to Bowman.

It all sound very complicated, but it's worth the temporary inconvenience. With today's configuration, one car turning left onto Johnnie Dodds Boulevard from Bowman Road during rush hour can trigger a light change that backs up traffic on the main thoroughfare for 50 or more other vehicles.

While rumors that you'll be able to travel along Johnnie Dodds from the Ravenel to I-526 without stopping at a single light are false, congestion on the bridge will be lessened. The standstill at Bowman Road will be gone. Businesses along the frontage roads will benefit from increased foot traffic with the addition of sidewalks and landscaping. And we'll all enjoy the improved view of the thoroughfare from our new flyway 30-feet above Bowman.

Mount Pleasant residents who would like to know more about the project, view a model of the Bowman overpass or see aerial photographs of the design plans for the entire U.S. Highway 17 expansion are welcome at the project information office at 1603 N. Highway 17, at the corner of Hungryneck Boulevard. Ed Barbee,

Mount Pleasant's road construction information officer for the project, is available to answer questions and enjoys showing the plans to those interested in seeing them.

"We're really fortunate with the coordination going on for this project between the town, county, state and federal government, as well as all of the utilities involved," said Barbee, explaining that everyone is conscious of the concerns of the driving public and business owners in the area.

The contractors and workers are aware of the issues and have been very accommodating. For example, they've walked the easement with a homeowner who was concerned about how the changes would affect his backyard, replaced a palmetto tree when a construction vehicle accidentally backed into it and stood in waist-high, mucky water to unclog a storm water drain during a downpour in early July.

Barbee explained how most of the

construction work is being conducted at night, from 9 p.m. to 6 a.m. And while the noise is unavoidable for some nearby homeowners, efforts are being made to cause as little inconvenience as possible. As another widening project begins further down U.S. Highway 17 in more-densely-populated residential areas, new sound walls will help alleviate the noise from the construction and from the traffic once the project is complete.

In the meantime, be patient with the orange barrels and the men and women working on the other side of them. They are here to do a job for us. By spring 2013, they'll be moving on to another sorely-needed roadway construction site. And we'll be left with a wider, more efficient and, yes, prettier, Johnnie Dodds Boulevard through Mount Pleasant. 🐼

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MPBA

Helping Mount Pleasant Businesses Prosper

IS THE MOUNT PLEASANT Business Association a group of community leaders who get together once a month to socialize, eat lunch, listen to a speaker, network and discuss ways to grow their businesses? Or is it a philanthropic group that gives back to the community by donating money to local charities?

BY BRIAN SHERMAN

Maybe MPBA's focus is education; after all, the group awards up to \$5,000 each year in college scholarships to deserving local high school students.

It's possible that the organization, established in 1992 as the Mount Pleasant Merchants Association, is all of the above and well on its way to being the closest thing the fourth largest municipality in South Carolina has to a chamber of commerce.

MPBA, which meets the third Thursday of the first 11 months of the year at the Holiday Inn on Highway 17, always has had a cordial relationship with the town of Mount Pleasant. It's been a tradition for the mayor, Billy Swails now and Harry Hallman before him, to speak to the business group at least once a year, a meeting that regularly draws a large crowd. MPBA's relationship with the city has grown tighter in recent years, however, due in part to a close alliance between MPBA's leaders and the town's Community Development and Tourism Office.



MPBA President Shawna Garris

"The town has always supported us," MPBA President Shawna Garris, assistant vice president at Tideland Bank, commented. "But now the Community Development and Tourism Office provides an avenue for the town to work on more projects with us. They are trying to support business and bring new industry to Mount Pleasant."

That avenue leads directly to a joint project of the town and MPBA – the first of what is expected to be an annual event – the Mount Pleasant Entrepreneur and Business



MPBA honored its scholarship winners May 19. Left to right: Danielle Greir, Shannon McGue, Shannon Turner, Mackenzie Hutchins and Mayor Billy Swails. At the podium is MPBA Charity/Education Committee Chair Jason Biggs.

Expo, scheduled for Sept. 8 at the Omar Shrine Temple. The expo will give MPBA members and additional Mount Pleasant companies the opportunity to market their products and services to other businesses and to a crowd that is expected to surpass the 500 mark.

MPBA and the town of Mount Pleasant are working together in other ways, as well. For example, the group holds a members-only nighttime networking session each month, an event that is sponsored jointly by the town once a quarter. And Quin Stinchfield, the town's business development and tourism coordinator, also serves as MPBA's events coordinator.

According to Garris, who took over as president of MPBA in January 2011, the organization strives to provide its 100 or so members with information, advocacy and education.

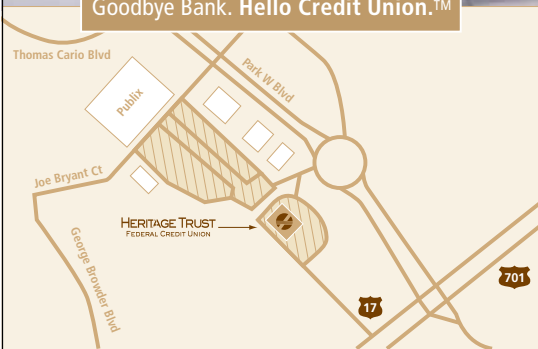
"MPBA brings together businesses and professionals to work together to help us all succeed," Garris said. "The last couple of years we've been moving more toward networking and strengthening our partnership with the town of Mount Pleasant."

She pointed out, however, that the group's most important job is to do everything possible to help local businesses prosper. 🍷





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He added that it is crucial for drivers to take care of their vehicles, even during economically sluggish times.

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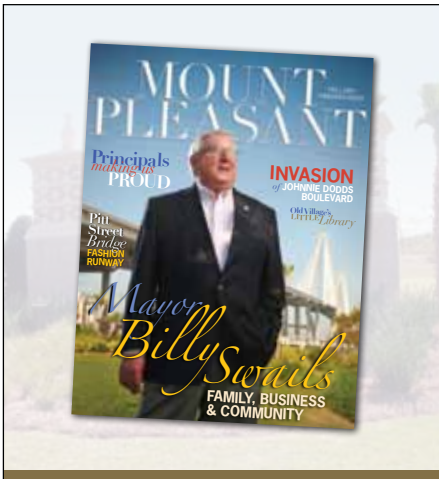
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Recreation FOR ALL

The Revolution boys under 10 soccer team raced to a first place trophy in the 2011 Crescent Cup Tournament.

THERE IS NEVER A SHORTAGE OF recreational opportunities in Mount Pleasant, with so many great neighborhoods to explore on foot or bicycle, an assortment of parks with tennis courts, basketball hoops and big grassy areas for playing ball, and the waterways available for all means of aquatic pursuits. And the Mount Pleasant Recreation Department does a terrific job of offering a wide range of activities for those who prefer organized sports.

BY STACY E. DOMINGO

“It is important for the citizens to know that we are here to provide them with a service that will create many good memories for them and their children while at the same time offering opportunities for them to learn and be active,” said Ken Ayoub, who has 33 years of experience in the recreation field, the past 15 as Mount Pleasant recreation director.

The website, www.MtPleasantRec.com, is the access point to find information about recreation activities for

all ages and interests. According to Ayoub, the site “will be presented to the residents of Mount Pleasant in a new and improved fashion in September. It offers the entire recreation program at your fingertips and a click of the mouse. Our entire 50-page program brochure is available online through the website, thus not only offering the convenience of quick and easy access to information about all of our programs but helping us save paper by eventually printing fewer brochures.”

“Our focus is to present the residents of Mount Pleasant with exceptional, comprehensive, yet sustainable and affordable recreation and leisure opportunities,” said Ayoub.

There are six recreation locations in Mount Pleasant and more than 12,000 participants in the youth athletic program alone. Baseball, basketball, soccer, softball, volleyball and cheerleading are all open for children through the seasons. The department also offers wrestling, lacrosse and ultimate Frisbee, along with dance, art and fitness classes, tennis, Wii bowling and boat safety.



photo: Town of Mount Pleasant

photo: Stefanie McCarron

Left: Football is popular. **Above:** Yamato girl's soccer team cheers for the penalty kick.

Town residents, who highly regard their football, are proud of having taken the South Carolina Athletic Program Football State Championship in three separate divisions for several years. This program gives middle schoolers a chance to play football as an organized competitive sport prior to beginning high

school. For those whose professional football career dreams are behind them, the Recreation Department hosts an adult flag football league.

Individuals, young and seasoned, can bring their skateboards and enjoy the skate park located at the Richard L. Jones Center on Egypt Road.

Annual memberships are available,

continued on page 61

MOUNT PLEASANT RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES FALL AND WINTER SPORTS

ACTIVITY	REGISTRATION DATE	AGE RANGE
Cross Country MPTC	07/18-09/02	5-18
Baseball Instructional	07/18-09/19	8-14
Basketball Academy	08/15-09/02	9-16
Volleyball Academy	8/19-9/9	5th-10th grade
Wrestling	10/17-10/28	5-13
FUNDamental Basketball	10/17-10/28	5-8
Basketball Youth	10/17-10/28	9-18
Basketball Youth Senior	10/17-11/18	16-18
Unified Basketball	10/17-10/28	5-adult
Track & Field Beginner	1/2-1/13	9-14
Lacrosse Youth	1/2-1/13	5-8
Lacrosse Senior	1/16-1/27	15-19
Soccer Recreation Program	1/16-1/27	9-17

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Mount Pleasant, New York

RESIDENTS OF MOUNT PLEASANT, S.C., tend to believe their town is unique, and, in many respects, it is. By the same token, a quick scan of U.S. geography reveals there are numerous other Mount Pleasants scattered across America.

In an attempt to discover the similarities and differences among these like-named towns, *Mount Pleasant Magazine* has begun reaching out to their municipal officials.

Our first call was easy to make. I grew up in Westchester County, where a Mount Pleasant is nestled among the rolling hills between the Kensico Reservoir, which supplies much of the water to New York City, and the Hudson River.

As a cub reporter many moons ago, I spent a fair amount

of time in Mount Pleasant and its villages, covering government and other activities. I spent more than a fair amount of time in the town's many fine watering holes, but that's a story for another day.

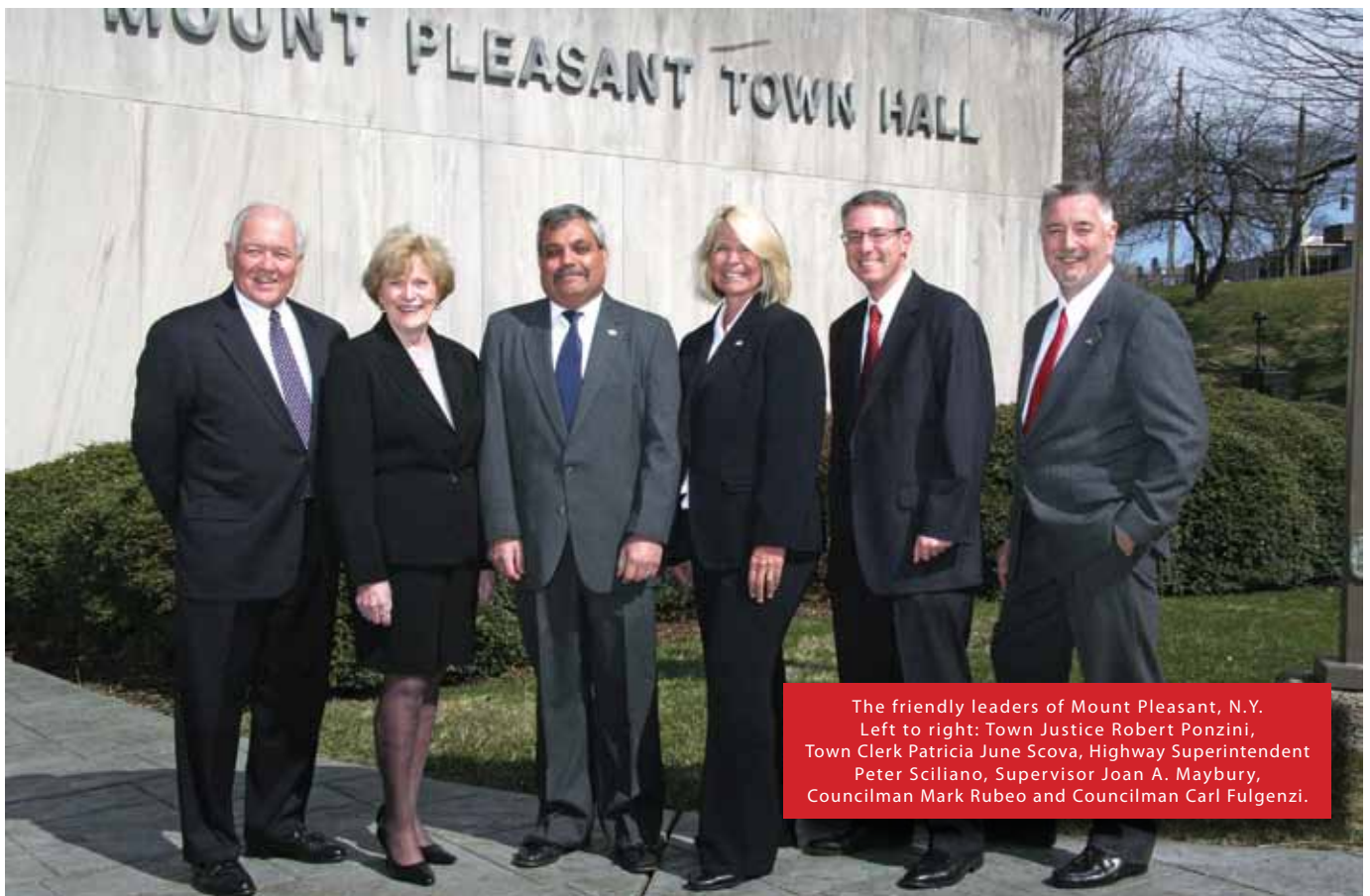
Mount Pleasant, N.Y., is somewhat smaller than our town – around 44,000 residents. Like our Mount Pleasant, it is largely residential, with no heavy industry or manufacturing but several corporate offices. Surprisingly, it is older than its South Carolina namesake, having been founded in the 1780s. We've been incorporated since 1837.

The town's chief executive is a supervisor; Joan A. Maybury currently holds that office. Her background is



Supervisor Joan A. Maybury

continued on page 62



The friendly leaders of Mount Pleasant, N.Y.
Left to right: Town Justice Robert Ponzini,
Town Clerk Patricia June Scova, Highway Superintendent
Peter Sciliano, Supervisor Joan A. Maybury,
Councilman Mark Rubeo and Councilman Carl Fulgenzi.

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Sweetgrass

Cultural Arts Festival

This event features an assortment of unique handmade arts and crafts, paintings, live performances and documentary films. Enjoy a day filled with entertainment that includes gospel songs and praise dance, storytelling and Gullah-Geechee skits, and live basket-making demonstrations.



The Sweetgrass Cultural Arts Festival provides an excellent opportunity to take advantage of great food and entertainment and a vast array of the Charleston area's signature souvenir, all the while enjoying coastal Carolina's near-perfect late-spring weather. But the event, held each year in Mount Pleasant, South Carolina, also can be a learning experience, a chance to **BY BRIAN SHERMAN** delve deeply into the history of a people and an art they have practiced for more than three centuries on two continents.

"The festival serves as a venue to educate locals as well as tourists about the heritage of the Gullah-

Geechee people, their culture and traditions," according to Sweetgrass Cultural Arts Festival Project Director Thomasena Stokes-Marshall. "We also have entertainment, gospel songs, folklore, arts and crafts, and, of course, the largest display of sweetgrass baskets anywhere in the Lowcountry."

A growing Charleston area tradition beginning in 2005, the festival is now held each June at Mount Pleasant's Memorial Waterfront Park, in the shadow of the Arthur Ravenel Jr. Bridge. Named a Top 20 Event for 2010 and 2011 by the Southeast Tourism Society, the festival offers Gullah cuisine cooked up by Lowcountry restaurants and food vendors, family fun and games, music, performances by the Adande African Drummers and Dancers, basket-making demonstrations and, of course, the opportunity to admire and purchase a wide range of sweetgrass baskets and other products created by local artists and crafters.



nearby Berkeley County, speaking on Gullah culture.

The fun continues Saturday afternoon, but, in the morning, attendees have the chance to listen to and talk with area scholars during a seminar concerning health, education and land issues in the African-American communities along the Gullah-Geechee Heritage Corridor. Established by Congress in 2006 to recognize the important contributions made to American culture and history by African-Americans originally brought to the Southeast coast as slaves and their descendants, the corridor runs from Wilmington, North Carolina, to Jacksonville, Florida.

An important part of that history has to do with sweetgrass baskets. Through oral history, the technique can be traced from West Africa to the plantations in the South to modern-day South Carolina. Though baskets were made to store food during and after the era of slavery, they were not sold commercially until well into the 20th century. As the story goes, according to an article written by J.V. Coakley, Ida Jefferson set up the first sweetgrass basket stand on Highway 17 in the 1930s after losing her job as a day laborer. The road had been completed recently and tourists had started to use it to travel from the North. Her immediate success spawned competition from other basket makers. Today, dozens of artisans sell their baskets along the stretch of Highway 17 that runs through Mount Pleasant. 🍯

For more information about the Sweetgrass Cultural Arts Festival, visit www.sweetgrassfestival.org. For tickets to “The Real Taste of Gullah Cuisine,” visit www.tasteofgullah.eventbrite.com or call (843) 856-9732.

For those who tire of eating, playing games, listening to music and looking at baskets, the festival offers another interesting option. As part of the festival’s educational mission, organizers arrange viewings of movies depicting the culture and art of the Gullah-Geechee community. Two such films are: “Grass Roots: The Enduring Art of the Lowcountry Basket,” and “Bin Yah: There’s No Place Like Home.”

“Grass Roots” follows Mount Pleasant basket makers as they harvest sweetgrass, weave their baskets and discuss the meaning of their work.

“Bin Yah” is a documentary that considers how growth and development have threatened historic African-American communities in Mount Pleasant. In the words of local African-American residents, the film “explores the culture, the history, the importance of land and the concept

of home, giving a voice to those who seldom have a chance to be heard.”

The festival is scheduled from noon to 8 p.m. Saturday, but the festivities actually get underway Friday at 6 p.m. in the Cooper River Room at the Visitors Center. “The Real Taste of Gullah Cuisine” features the creations of some of the area’s top chefs, including Kevin Mitchell, an instructor at the Culinary Institute of Charleston at Trident Technical College. The evening’s activities include an unusual fashion show – featuring hats, evening purses and table vases made of sweetgrass. Entertainment is provided, such as the 2011 performances by vocalist Zandrina Dunning, violinist Daniel D., Devon Gary on the saxophone, poet Samara Simmons, and, to complete the evening, world-renowned artist Jonathan Green, whose studio is on Daniel Island in



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An Elite Fivesome

Kiawah Will Host 2012 PGA Championship

THE OCEAN COURSE AT Kiawah Island will join an elite group of golf venues in August 2012, when the best golfers in the world compete for top honors at the 94th PGA Championship.

Kiawah, located 21 miles south of Charleston, will earn the distinct honor of being only the fifth course to host the PGA Championship, the Ryder Cup and the Senior PGA Championship. The others are Laurel Valley Golf Club in Ligonier, Pa.; PGA National Golf Club of Palm Beach Gardens, Fla.; Oak Hill Country Club in Rochester, N.Y.; and Valhalla Golf Club in Louisville, Ky.

Designed by Pete Dye and built in

1991, the Ocean Course is located at the east end of Kiawah and has more ocean-side holes than any course in the Northern Hemisphere. Ten of the 18 holes border on the Atlantic, and the entire par-72 course was raised to give golfers magnificent views of the ocean. The downside to this beautiful panorama is that raising the course made the already tricky winds even more unpredictable.

The Ocean Course was the setting for "The War by the Shore," the 1991 Ryder Cup match decided by the final putt on the final hole, and also for the 2000 movie "The Legend of Bagger Vance," starring Will Smith, Matt Damon and Charlize Theron.

Golf Digest has honored the Ocean

Course on several occasions, ranking it as the fourth best public course in the country and "America's Toughest Resort Course." The course also has earned the designation "Certified Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary" by the Audubon Sanctuary System and has been named Golf Course of the Year by the National Golf Course Owners Association.

The PGA Championship, first played in 1916, annually draws the strongest field in golf. The 2011 tournament will be played at The Atlanta Athletic Club in Johns Creek, Ga.

Besides the Ocean Course, Kiawah Island Golf Resort features four other championship courses: Turtle Point, designed by Jack Nicklaus; Osprey Point, designed by Tom Fazio; Cougar Point, built by Gary Player; and Oak Point, a creation of Clyde Johnston.

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Mayor Joseph P. Riley, Jr., (right), cooked with Top Chef contestant and fan favorite Bryan Voltaggio, during a cook-off at the 2011 official opening ceremonies of the BB&T Charleston Wine + Food Festival in Marion Square.

Photo provided by the BB&T Charleston Wine + Food Festival, courtesy of Andrew Stephen Cebulka.

IN 2010, A BILLBOARD ON HIGHWAY 17 South in Charleston featured Bobby Flay, the Food Network's grill king. A year later, another celebrity chef, Sara Moulton, was spotted walking down East Bay Street after a celebratory brunch at High Cotton. And longtime Mayor Joe Riley took a stab at culinary immortality at the 2011 Charleston Wine + Food Festival, donning a chef's jacket and competing alongside Bryan Voltaggio of Bravo's "Top Chef" against local chefs such as Marc Collins of Circa 1886.

BY EILEEN ROBINSON SMITH

Charleston has become a restaurant destination. A sign of the importance of Charleston in the world of fine dining is that in 2010, *Forbes* called the festival one of

the top five of its kind in the nation. The following year, attendance was up at nearly every event, from the restaurant dine-arounds to the gospel brunch to the main attraction, the Culinary Village. The festival has made remarkable progress, according to Rick Widman, who serves as its chair.

"The exposure it brings to our city is a major factor in Charleston's enviable reputation as a gastronomic destination," said Widman, who also is president of Charming Inns, owner of the Wentworth Mansion and co-owner of the adjacent restaurant, Circa 1886. "The event is about showcasing our chefs and learning from the influx of celebrity chefs and chefs from top restaurants in major cities."

"Another factor that has led to our high-profile position is

the success of Charleston's chefs in winning the James Beard Foundation Award for Best Chef in the Southeast," he added. "Some 10 years ago, architecture, art and history were the top reasons people came here. Now food is tied for number one and two."

For food lovers, the festival offers a good time and good value. They can purchase a pass to the Culinary Village and spend the day on the festival grounds at Marion Square, including up to four hours of sampling food and tasting wine in the Grand Tasting Tent. They can continue the experience by taking in cooking demonstrations and competitions in the SCE&G kitchen, sampling in the grilling area, sipping wine at the BB&T hospitality tent and attending book and wine bottle signings. A highlight of the day is the Charleston Chop Battle, a timed cook-off among six of the top chefs in the Lowcountry.

Few Charleston chefs have received as much ink in recent years as Sean Brock, executive chef at McCrady's and now Husk as well. His post-modern cuisine has attracted attention nationwide. For example, a *New York Times* article commended this son of Dixie for his dedication to using only local and Southern ingredients at Husk and for his small experimental farm in nearby McClellanville.

Nathan Richard is the pastry chef at Husk, and everything he creates is a Mardi Gras for the mouth. If you believe that kids think dessert is the best part of a meal, prepare to be childlike at Husk. For instance, the pecan pie, with perfect crust and filling, is a variation on his grandmother's recipe. If you prefer this Southern favorite with just a hint of chocolate and liquor, this is the place to be. However, rather than bourbon, the whipped cream gets a hit of Herbsaint, the brand name of an anise-flavored liquor similar to absinthe.

Richard (French pronunciation: Ree-chard) has created a process for smoking ice cream. If you are lucky enough to try it, pecan-wood-smoked ice cream will become embedded in your culinary memory bank, and the stack of pecan wood at the front entrance will take on a whole new meaning for you. For those with a Krispy Kreme glazed-donut habit, the takeoff on it at Husk will have you closing your eyes and swearing you are sitting at a Formica counter.

Richard is a talented chef who had an enviable job in a top shop in a major culinary destination (Commander's Palace in New Orleans) for six years. He grew up in Thibodaux, along the bayous of south Louisiana, and is part of a new wave of chefs who have found Charleston. When asked why he moved to the Holy City, he replied: "I fell in love with this city. It is a great foodie town, with chefs doing really cool stuff. In New Orleans, you were only allowed to be just so independent, as the tourists coming in expected pecan-encrusted fish, barbecued shrimp, bread pudding and soufflés. Don't get me wrong: I think Cajun and Creole cooking are among the best, but this was a new challenge. At Husk, we source everything not only from the South but as much locally as we can. We found salt and paprika smoked in bourbon barrels in Kentucky and olive oil being made in Texas. Who knew?"

Next to the cord of wood out front, there is a wall-high chalkboard listing the products and the farms and states each day's ingredients come from, right down to the pigs' ears. 🐷

Charleston's Dining Scene Recognized Nationwide

The big buzz in culinary circles is that for three consecutive years, Charleston chefs won the coveted "Best Chef in the Southeast" title given by the revered James Beard Foundation. Sean Brock, executive chef at McCrady's and Husk, won in 2010, while Mike Lata, chef at FIG, took honors in 2009. Robert Stehling, chef at Hominy Grill, was the 2008 winner.

Sam Sifton wrote in the Feb. 8, 2011, issue of *The New York Times*: "Charleston is one of the great eating towns in the American South." He lauded Brock's Southern-spiked cuisine, as well as Martha Lou Gadsden's soul food at Martha Lou's Kitchen. He mentioned several other restaurants, including Slightly North of Broad and Peninsula Grill. Charleston chefs and restaurants also have been mentioned in *Southern Living*. Brock has been featured twice in both the *Times* and *Southern Living* and won "Next Great Chef" honors on the Food Network. Bob Waggoner was featured in *Southern Living* for promoting the Lowcountry's wild shrimp industry. Travel sections on Charleston in that renowned magazine have applauded the city's dining scene, recommending such restaurants as Grill 225 and The Pavilion Bar at The Market Pavilion Hotel, Slightly North of Broad, Middleton Place and Hominy Grill.

In "Best Charleston, South Carolina, Restaurants," AOL Travel said: "The 1980s and '90s brought an influx of new Southern cuisine - chefs getting creative. A number of Charleston's best restaurants follow this model." News that *Southern Living* wanted in on the annual Taste of Charleston, a landmark event spanning three decades, inspired a second day of activities as well as interactive exhibits, cooking demonstrations and appearances by *Southern Living* editors and writers.

Tennis Town, U.S.A. CHARLESTON, S.C.



CHARLESTON HAS long been known for its crucial role in American history, its distinctive brand of architecture, its abundance of churches and its welcoming attitude toward visitors from throughout the Southeast, the nation and the world. An early and decisive battle of the Revolution was waged nearby, and the first shots of the Civil War were fired at a fort in its harbor. Centuries old buildings stand strong and tall as a reminder of the Holy City's storied past, while year after year, Charleston is touted as one of America's friendliest cities.

BY BRIAN SHERMAN

Now Charlestonians have something new to crow about. The city recently claimed honors as the United States Tennis Association's "Best Tennis Town" for 2010, an honor Charleston will own at least until 2012.

Along with a trophy, Charleston earned \$100,000 that can be used for tennis programs or to build or improve tennis facilities. The Holy City competed for top honors with 81 other U.S. cities, including second-place Atlanta and third-place Richmond, Virginia. Other cities finishing in the top 10 were Beaverton, Oregon; Clearwater, Florida; Delray Beach, Florida; Manchester Center, Vermont; Rome, Georgia;

Rosemount, Minnesota; and Snow Hill, North Carolina.

"Charleston is the best tennis town in America because here, tennis is for everybody," Mayor Joe Riley said in a video prepared for the competition. "It starts with kids from inner city schools, and you've got a world class Family Circle facility that is owned by the city of Charleston and available for our citizens."

The winner of the prestigious prize was announced at the 2010 U.S. Open in Flushing, New York. The contest got underway in April, when 82 cities submitted their entries. A panel of judges narrowed the field to 10, then tennis enthusiasts around the country had the opportunity to vote online during an 11-day period in July.

Each April, Charleston hosts the Family Circle Cup on Daniel Island, a nine-day tournament where the best female tennis players in the world compete for cash prizes totaling more than \$700,000. Launched in 1973 on Hilton Head Island, the event was moved to Charleston in 2001. In 2011, 94,241 fans went through the turnstiles to watch Caroline Wozniacki claim the singles title and Sania Mirza and Elena Vesnina come out on top in the doubles competition. Past champions include Chris Evert, Rosie Casals, Martina Navratilova, Steffi Graf, Gabriela

Sabatini, Jennifer Capriati and Venus and Serena Williams.

However, tennis in the Charleston area does not begin and end during a nine-day stretch in April at the 10,200-seat Family Circle Tennis Center. The facility hosted the premier international men's tennis competition, the Davis Cup, in 2004. Meanwhile, the Kiawah Island Tennis Center has been cited as the world's best tennis destination four of the past five years by Tennis Resorts Online, and, in 2010, the Wild Dunes Resort on the Isle of Palms soared all the way from 10th place to the runner-up spot. The rankings were based on a 17-category survey of serious tennis players.

Those who play for fun, recreation and the opportunity to pass the sport on to the next generation also are prevalent in the Charleston area. The Lowcountry Tennis Association boasts more than 12,000 members, while the 2010-2011 season of the Charleston Area Ladies Tennis Association included competition among 53 teams and 736 players participating at 22 tennis centers throughout the area.

Meanwhile, with an eye on producing a whole new generation of tennis players, the United States Tennis Association recently provided the Charleston County School District with a three-year, \$150,000 grant that eventually will provide equipment and lessons during and after school to students at 45 CCSD schools. And the Family Circle Cup has teamed up with the city Recreation Department's Courting Kids program for inner-city children, committing more than \$50,000 in financial, material and promotional support. Founder and coordinator Delores Jackson launched Courting Kids in 1992 with a \$12,000 grant from the Paul Newman Foundation, long before the city's connection with the sport of tennis was enhanced by the nationally-televised Family Circle Cup. 🎾

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Celebrating All Things



NAUTICAL

CHARLESTON HARBOR FEST

BY MEREDITH ARMSTRONG

IF YOU LOVE BEING ON the water, you'll adore the annual Charleston Harbor Fest, a family-friendly and tourist-friendly celebration of all things nautical.

Held each spring just as the outdoor weather beckons again, Harbor Fest offers just the right balance of maritime elements, whether you like to board the tall ships – classic beauties from around the world – witness an animated sword fight between swashbuckling pirates or dance the night away to the sound of the wind in the riggings.

You'll be able to walk the piers and

take in the salt air, view the maritime exhibits at the interactive education village, browse the artists' tents and point the children to the ever-popular Kid Zone, where little mariners can learn to build a model sailboat and launch it, search for buried treasure, don a pirate's hat and learn to tie nautical knots.

A tall ship is a large, traditionally-rigged sailing vessel. It can be a schooner, a brigantine, a barquentine, a brig, a ketch, a sloop or a full-rigged ship, depending on the number of masts and the cut of the sail.

Visiting vessels are docked at the Maritime Center piers, and anyone

who pays the price of admission has access to them.

Spirit of South Carolina, the state's tall ship, is docked and available for tours. The vessel provides educational opportunities for young people with programs that focus on the history, math, science and literature of South Carolina's water resources. These programs strive to develop personal responsibility, stewardship of the environment and a love of the sea. The ship carries its student crew on coastal and ocean voyages as they serve as goodwill ambassadors to the world for the state of South Carolina.

Spirit of South Carolina is owned



Photo provided by Vanessa Kauffmann

and operated by the South Carolina Maritime Foundation. For more information, visit www.scmaritime.org.

In 2011 Harbor Fest coincided with the restart of the 5 Oceans, which is among the most challenging around-the-world solo sailing races. Charleston hosted skippers from four countries after their run from Uruguay, en route to the finish line in France. The event held special appeal for the Charleston community since local skipper Brad Van Liew was racing.

Along with listening to pirate tales, touring tall ships and learning about Charleston's maritime history, Harbor Fest participants

can take to the water themselves on a catamaran cruise or just enjoy the sites, sounds and flavors of the Charleston waterfront. 🍷

Tickets for Harbor Fest are available at the gate. To purchase advance tickets and learn about VIP packages, visit www.charlestonharborfest.org.



KITEBOARDING

Sullivan's Island has earned a measure of fame for various reasons over the past few centuries, from the part it played in the Revolutionary War to its connection to famed author Edgar Allan Poe. Now it is being touted as one of the best launching beaches on the East Coast for kite-boarders.

Locals and visitors alike watch in awe as the colorful sails of the kite-boards dance across the blue horizon.

Oranges, yellows, stripes – the graceful, billowing sails are poetry in motion. An environmentally-friendly leisure activity, kite-boarding is considered to be an extreme sport because it requires a learned skill and upper body strength, and there is a certain amount of risk involved.



Charleston is one of the country's fastest growing venues for wind-powered sports, especially with the explosive success of Charleston Race Week, held annually in April. The area can now add extreme sailing to its water-oriented resume, with the launching of the first annual Kite Week Invitational Kite-boarding Championship, held during Charleston Harbor Fest in May 2011. The event features a maximum of 25 kite-boarders racing over two days just off Sullivan's Island. Competitors challenge a windward/leeward triangle course on Saturday, with a series of downwind races on Sunday.

Hunter Stunzi, co-director of the race, said: "We think [Kite Week] will really highlight the sheer awesomeness of Sullivan's Island as a kite-boarding venue. We hope to draw attention to the excitement of kite-board racing and also fuel the debate on adding kite-boarding as an Olympic sport. With a community of more than 100 active kites, Charleston and Sullivan's Island are perfect for this."

Kite Week is yet another big event that benefits from a partnership with the South Carolina Maritime Foundation, the owner and operator of the educational tall ship Spirit of South Carolina and an organizer of Charleston Harbor Fest.

For more details, visit <http://charlestonharborfest.org/charlestonkiteweek.shtml>.

Craft Beer Industry

Grows In Charleston Area



OF THE MORE THAN 1,700 breweries in the United States, better than 95 percent are small, independent craft brewers known for their business innovation and their passion for brewing full-flavored beer. While overall U.S. beer sales were down 1 percent by volume in 2010, craft beer sales were up 11 percent.

BY MARGARET ANN MICHELS

In fact, whether they know it or not, most Americans live within 10 miles of a brewery. As of 2011, the Charleston area boasts of four operational craft breweries.

Palmetto Brewing Company took its name from a brewery that operated in Charleston from before the Civil War until the early 1900s. At its Huger Street location, the company now brews four beers for its loyal customers in the Charleston and Hilton Head areas.

Coast Brewing Company is a small, family-owned brewery in North Charleston. Its motto, “We brew beer we want to drink, and tastes are ever changing and evolving,” seems to sum up the entire craft beer movement.

The owners at Westbrook Brew-

ing Co. in Mount Pleasant like to experiment. Their White Thai is a different take on traditional Belgian witbier, using unique ginger root and fresh lemon grass flavorings. They also are trying red wine barrels and whiskey barrels.

Like many craft beer brewers, Joel Carl’s interest grew from using home brewing kits. The owner of Charleston Pedicab, he built a brewing stand one winter from leftover bike parts, and the idea for Holy City Brewery was born. The North Charleston location is the newest to begin production.

A great place to try craft beers from local breweries and from across America is The Griffon, established in 1995 as a traditional English pub. Owners Scott London and Dan Wenz got into the bar business at the right time. A longtime patron and a long-term employee, they purchased The Griffon in 2008, just as the craft beer phenomenon was taking off.

In May 2007, a change in South Carolina law allowed bars to serve beer with a higher alcohol content, now up to 14 percent. London explained the impact of the legislation: “It opened the door for South Carolina bars and restaurants to import from smaller breweries that are

experimenting more, not just with alcohol content but also with flavor.”

At first, bar patrons wanted to try high gravity beers, those with the highest alcohol content. According to Wenz, “They started to realize that the new selections weren’t really about high alcohol content but about taste. They started to get interested as new flavors were introduced.”

At The Griffon, where Wenz changes out four or five taps each week, two or three of the 15 taps are reserved for local beer. Since small breweries usually brew small batches, The Griffon often carries a beer that isn’t available anywhere else locally.

Located in a historic building with a tradition of housing a tavern or bar, The Griffon is a cozy neighborhood pub, its walls papered with dollar bills pinned up by patrons. The great food and ever-changing selection of unique beers make it the perfect place to take a break from Charleston sightseeing. It’s a great traveler’s stop and a craft beer lover’s paradise. 🍺

The Griffon is located at 18 Vendue Range, one block off East Bay in Charleston’s Historic District. To find out what new beers are on tap, call (843) 723-1700, visit www.griffoncharleston.com or check out The Griffon on Facebook.

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CHARLESTON RACE WEEK

SKIPPERS & CREWS COME FOR TIGHT RACING AND WARM SUNSHINE

BY MEREDITH ARMSTRONG

Sperry Top-Sider Charleston Race Week Creates Sailing Memories

IN MID-APRIL, WHEN traditionally Americans are racing to file their income tax returns, sailors are racing to catch the Charleston Harbor wind in what is now the largest keel board sailing regatta in the United States.

The popularity of the Sperry Top-Sider Charleston Race Week, organized by the South Carolina Maritime Foundation and the Charleston Ocean Racing Association, has continued to

grow since the first event in 1996. Held at Mount Pleasant's Charleston Harbor Resort & Marina, it attracts competitors from across the country, and those who attend once usually return.

Officials counted up to 270 boats registered at the 2011 version of the annual event, from darting, 22-foot Vipers to 42-foot Beneteaus. Why do so many sailors show up for Race Week? You can start with Charleston, one of the top 10 U.S. cities, according to *Condé Nast Traveler*; move on to the hospitable



Photo courtesy of Meredith Block

town of Mount Pleasant; continue with the sun, temperature and wind conditions that prevail in the spring in coastal Carolina; consider the well-tuned organization of Race Week; mention the camaraderie among those returning from previous years and the Southern hospitality enjoyed by newcomers; bring up the host hotel, with one of the largest marinas in the Southeast; and finish by taking note of the serious fun quotient of the event.

Much of the fun is fueled by Gosling's, one of the corporate sponsors. Traditionally, the opening party on Thursday evening is a "Dark 'n' Stormy" night – the name of Gosling's classic drink, its Black Label rum and ginger beer. Held on the resort's beach, with libations dispensed from tiki huts, as many as 2,000 people

come out for the round of parties. The kickoff event is ignited by a rock band and the final awards ceremony late Sunday afternoon is always a "chili" night, with draft beer as the thirst quencher.

Kristen Lane, a skipper from Tiburon, Calif., looks forward to attending each year. "You just can't beat this venue," she said enthusiastically.

She's not the only sailor who loves these exciting, short courses, with big fleet races and some large, hypercompetitive classes.

"This is probably my favorite regatta, too," her husband, Peter, remarked. "Shorter courses with tides, sand bars and land features are just so much more interesting than your classic longer courses."

Charleston Race Week is typically held in mid-April, when the ideal

tidal conditions give a push to sailors as they head out and return.

All profits from Race Week support educational programs aboard the Spirit of South Carolina, a traditional tall ship serving the Palmetto State's youth. In addition to Gosling's, corporate sponsors for the event are Charleston Harbor Resort & Marina and Vineyard Vines. Associate sponsors are the town of Mount Pleasant, Gill North America, Coral Reef Sailing Apparel, North Sails, Daniel Island Real Estate and Newport Shipyard. 🍷

For more information about Race Week, visit www.charlestonraceweek.com, call the South Carolina Maritime Foundation at (843) 722-1030 or e-mail dhavens@scmaritime.org.

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CARIO MIDDLE SCHOOL &
WHITESIDES
ELEMENTARY

*stories by
Brian Sherman*

with photography by Brian Sherman and Joel Cardwell

Leading from the Top WANDO HIGH SCHOOL

IN EDUCATION, bigger isn't always better. Under different circumstances, South Carolina's largest secondary school could have posed a frightening and unenlightening experience for some students and a bureaucratic nightmare for administrators, teachers and guidance counselors seeking to nurture the dreams and aspirations of more than 3,400 individuals, each with unique plans for life after Wando High School.

Under the leadership of longtime Principal Lucy Beckham, Wando has instead garnered statewide and national attention for academic excellence, athletic achievement, a wide range of extracurricular activities and challenging course work in diversified subjects ranging from architecture to hospitality management to aerospace engineering, all aimed at preparing each student to thrive in an ever-changing world.

Beckham, who took the reins of the school in 1998 when it was located on Mathis Ferry Road and now supervises the sprawling cam-

2010 National Secondary School Principal of the Year, Lucy Beckham has served as principal at Wando High School since 1998.

pus completed on the north side of Mount Pleasant in 2004, was cited as the National Secondary School Principal of the Year in 2010. Representing her colleagues across the country, she has visited Congress and the White House, traveled to China and spoken at several education-related events throughout the United States. She insisted, however, that the national honor belongs not to her alone, but to Wando High School and the people of Mount Pleasant.

“It’s not about me. I was recognized on behalf of the students, parents, staff and community of Mount Pleasant. I received this recognition because of their good work,” she commented. “I had an opportunity I never dreamed of based on the work of all the wonderful people here at Wando.”

Beckham played an important role in putting together the team of 215 teachers, nine assistant principals and 12 guidance counselors who serve the educational needs of Wando’s ever-growing student population.

She said she doesn’t take the recruitment aspect of her position lightly.

“Part of my job is to find the best teachers, staff and counselors in America,” she said. “I’ve been very good at hiring. We are blessed to have a wonderful faculty and staff, a supportive parent group and a great relationship with the town of Mount Pleasant. They are all focused on the kids. This community is focused on kids.”

The partnership between the school and the town has spawned benefits for both. For example, in exchange for the use of the baseball fields at the old Wando site, Mount Pleasant put \$600,000 into a performing arts center at the new school. In addition, the Police Department has assigned four officers to the high school, and the school district works closely with the town’s Recreation Department.

“The citizens of Mount Pleasant understand that excellent schools are important to our town,” Beckham commented.

Beckham and her staff strive to maintain a level of excellence that not only draws potential Lowcountry homeowners to Mount Pleasant, but also prepares students for success once they leave Wando. Ninety percent of them continue their education beyond the 12th grade.

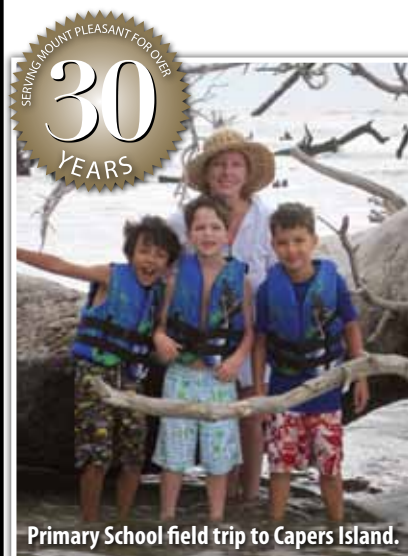
“Every student needs a viable plan for what to do next, whether it’s go to college to study engineering or attend Trident Tech. High school used to be the finish line. It was possible with a high school diploma to get a job



photo by Joel Cardwell



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and have a career. We don't consider that to be a viable plan anymore," she said.

To make certain every student is ready for what waits beyond Wando, the school offers approximately 250 courses, many of them challenging, rigorous and unavailable in smaller high schools. Wando students have the option of taking eight different engineering courses, more than in any other school in Charleston County or in the rest of South Carolina, according to Beckham.

"We still have a very strong college prep program, and the arts opportunities here are as good as at any arts conservatory in a high school," Beckham commented. "Students here excel in multiple areas."

Beckham's success in her chosen field is no surprise; she hails from a family of educators. Both her grandmothers, her mother and aunts and uncles were teachers, and her sister is

a special education instructor in Columbia. The tradition continues with her son, son-in-law, daughter and daughter-in-law, all of them teachers.

Beckham, who was a teacher, assistant principal and principal in Berkeley County before moving to Wando, has turned down opportunities for promotions that would bring her more money – and less satisfaction.

"I truly love this job. I have no plans to leave," she said. "This is a high-energy place full of great kids. I feel like we're making a difference. It's very rewarding work." 🐼



Best in the Middle

CARIO MIDDLE SCHOOL

THOMAS C. CARIO Middle School Principal Benjamin Bragg isn't interested in helping some of his students bridge the gap between elementary school and high school. His goal is to make sure each one of them gains the knowledge, confidence and experience to excel in the ninth grade and beyond.

"We believe every kid can be successful," said Bragg, who took the principal's job at Cario in August 2010, after five years in the same position at St. Andrew's Middle School in West Ashley. "Middle school is the



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To help prepare students for academic success, the school offers high school classes in subjects including Spanish, algebra and pre-engineering. Each student completes an entrance assessment in math and English, “to see where they need assistance and where they need to be challenged,” according to Bragg, a 2011 finalist in the statewide Middle School Principal of the Year competition.

Academic excellence is only part of the story. The school’s band, orchestra, chorus and Art Department all have claimed statewide honors.

Bragg attributes much of the school’s success to his staff of 72 dedicated teachers and a heavy dose of parent involvement. Cario moms and dads work the front desk, make copies, help monitor the lunchroom, serve as volunteer athletic

coaches and participate in fundraising activities. In August 2011, they will start helping with an after-school tutoring program.

The business community also plays a role in preparing Cario students for the future. More than 50 companies took part in the school’s career day, and some students shadowed local entrepreneurs at their businesses. Local leaders also are involved with forming a foundation to raise funds for staff, supplies and maintenance at Cario and the other two schools in the Park West community – Pinckney Elementary and Laurel Hill Primary School.

With 1,400 students, Cario is the third largest school in Charleston County, trailing only Wando High School and West Ashley High School. Bragg’s goal, though, has more to do with quality than quantity.

“We want to be the best middle school in the state,” he said. 🐾

Light Bulbs from the Beginning

WHITESIDES ELEMENTARY

AS THE SCHOOL year opened in August 2010, Mamie P. Whitesides Elementary Principal Lona Pounder was at the helm of a new facility that dwarfs the school’s former home both in size and technology. A key aspect of the Whitesides’ success, however, transferred seamlessly from the old building to the new: a family atmosphere nurtured by involved parents and caring teachers.

Pounder, who came to Whitesides

continued on page 63



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Looking Good

SOME LOCAL RESIDENTS refer to our characteristic mode of dressing as the Mount Pleasant dress code. Casual is the main theme here, laid-back, preppy and beachie all tell the story.

One place Mount Pleasant residents gravitate toward for this classic look is **Oops!.** Patrica Kears, who manages the

BY EILEEN ROBINSON SMITH

Left: Chad Carlile dresses according to the Mount Pleasant code, with light-green khakis, a classic, white, button-down shirt and an orange paisley tie that bespeaks early autumn. The gracious waterfront homes of Sullivan's Island act as a backdrop. Chad's classic clothes are from **Oops!** in Mount Pleasant.

Dress Code

photography by Kayla Jones



Oops! stores in Mount Pleasant and downtown Charleston, pointed out that in addition to female attire, she carries the male version of the Mount Pleasant dress code, as well.

“We pretty much have everything a casual guy will want – minus suits,” she said. Khakis, button downs and three-button knits are some of the particulars.

She further explained: “Shopping at Oops! is always an adventure because customers never know what they will turn up. We get in golf and tennis wear and sundresses that can go out at night, as well as the layered look.”

Even Patricia does not know what she is getting until it arrives; the store sells overruns of brand name items for about half price. Teens, college kids, beach-goers, moms, retirees and all other lovers of casual and sportswear frequent her stores.

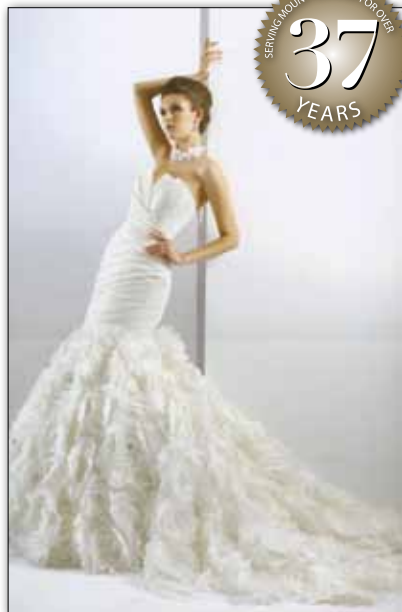
Down Ben Sawyer Boulevard in the small shopping center known as Gateway to the Beach, Kathryn Poe owns **Mary Mojo Boutique**.

“We are more affordable than ladies’ high-end boutiques and cater to an array of ages and sizes from 2 to extra large,” Poe pointed out. “Although we don’t go heavy into trends, we do carry the asymmetrical tunics, long sweaters and the distressed or worn look, like our Nic + Zoe jeans. We have scarves, fun jewelry and other accessories that can transform the classics.”

Big into color, Poe said navy and cranberry, as well as neutrals such as blacks, grays, tans and taupes, will be in this fall. Funky tunics worn with leggings will make the transition to autumn.

Above: Model Kelly Dudinyak, who doubles as a sales associate at the Mount Pleasant **Oops!**, picked this black and white floral sundress with its black-ruffled bodice off the rack. The turquoise market bag, ideal for Tuesday’s Farmers’ Market, and the apple-green pashmina, are also courtesy of **Oops!**. Both vibrant colors pop when paired with black. The leather sandals are available at the **Shoe Fairy**.

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Looking Good

continued from page 47

A near neighbor to Mary Mojo is the **Shoe Fairy** – like a fairy godmother for all who love shoes. Marjorie Small is passionate about being the shoe fairy. She told us what to expect as summer wanes and autumn arrives.

“I feel like we can continue to wear open shoes, maybe not our

Right: Donning an ultra-feminine coral, mock-tube dress, Katie Miller accessorized with an oversized, beige, swap bag, yellow elasticized belt and wooden wrist bangles, all from **Mary Mojo**. Once again, the kind **Shoe Fairy** provided her shoes. This breezy, weekend ensemble can go from day to evening smoothly. Katie adds a jean jacket on cooler nights.



Left: In his classic “code” outfit, Chad looks the ideal male companion for Kinsey Green, as they share a quiet moment on the short bridge with a long history. Kinsey looks stunning in her **Mary Mojo** separates, a gray silky tee accented by a variegated, striped scarf and dangling earrings. She wears Nic + Zoe cream-colored slacks.



Right: Chad found his shades at **Oops!**; they add casual appeal to his pale blue shirt and khaki shorts. Here, he talks with Kelly, who shows a little attitude. She wears distressed jeans and a gray tee top and swathes her neck in an apple-green scarf. All clothes and accessories are thanks to **Oops!**.





colorful flip-flops (within code parameters in the spring and summer) but sandals, 'cage sandals' and 'peep toes.' With heels, there is not one particular style, and we are seeing more pointy toes and decidedly round toes, like in the 1940s. Most Mount Pleasant residents go for two- to three-inch heels rather than stilettos. Wedges are still popular, as are boots and animal prints, and, in keeping with the Mount Pleasant dress code, safe, comfortable shoes with feminine looks."

The Pitt Street Bridge, a Mount Pleasant icon, was the site of our first fashion shoot. Locals visit the bridge, which years ago extended all the way to Sullivan's Island, to stroll, sit idly on a park bench, cast a fishing line or ride their bikes. Ocean breezes cool a steamy summer day, and the view at the end of the bridge features both the Sullivan's Island lighthouse and the spit of land that juts into the Atlantic and its enviable, waterfront homes. 🏠

Left: Kinsey turns heads with her playful, all-American style. As a salute to Halloween, she wraps a pumpkin-orange scarf around her neck to bring alive a silky, charcoal tee atop a light gray one. As predicted, the layered look will continue through fall. All items can be found at **Mary Mojo**.

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Finding a Doctor Made Easier MountPleasantPhysicians.com

THE CHARLESTON AREA IN GENERAL and Mount Pleasant in particular are drawing interest from people across the United States, those who already are planning to move to the Lowcountry to take a new job or to retire and those who are still thinking about relocating to a region that offers magnificent weather, a beautiful coastline, year-round outdoor activities and a wide array of educational and entertainment opportunities.

BY BRIAN SHERMAN

Regardless of why people from all 50 states and the District of Columbia are at least considering a move to the Lowcountry, they have access to a research tool that can help them complete one of the most important tasks related to relocating to a new town: finding a nearby doctor who has the expertise and experience to meet their family's medical needs. **MountPleasantPhysicians.com** is a free Internet service that offers information about every physician in the Mount Pleasant area.

Surfers have viewed tens of thousands of pages during the website's first year-and-a-half in existence, and multiple visits have come from residents of every state and Washington, D.C. According to Google Analytics, more than 15 percent of the people who see the site once return for another look.

"There's no other local website where a current or future resident of the town can locate all the doctors in the area," said Bill Macchio, publisher at Media Services (also publishers of *Mount Pleasant Magazine*), which launched and maintains MountPleasantPhysicians.com. "The only place that comes close would be a local hospital, and they only promote doctors who practice at their hospital. Our data reflects all doctors in Mount Pleasant, no matter where they practice."

"A lot of people are moving to Charleston and Mount Pleasant and they want to find out about medical care," Macchio added.

People who visit MountPleasantPhysicians.com can search for a doctor by location, specialty, address or phone number. They can review lists of doctors who have privileges at all area hospitals, including East Cooper Medical Center, Roper St. Francis Healthcare, Trident Medical Center and the Medical University of South Carolina. A map will show them where the doctors' offices are in rela-



Home page

tion to where they are considering buying or renting. In addition, the site includes profiles of area physicians.

The website offers visitors the opportunity to read *HealthLinks*, Media Services' health-related magazine, online or to order a free hard copy of *Hot Retirement Towns*, another Media Services publication. The site also includes information on a wide range of health-related topics, including women in health, local orthodontists and dentists, the flu, fitness clubs and spas, local hospitals, urgent care and neighborhoods that are near hospitals.

Media Services has launched other websites that offer similar information, including CharlestonPhysicians.com, SummervillePhysicians.com and LowcountryHospitals.com.

"We're not affiliated with any hospital, insurance or doctors' group," Macchio explained. "We're independent. It's free to the public, and it's also a great way for doctors and hospitals to reach potential customers." 🐼



Sample search results

Losing Lbs.

WE ARE BEGINNING THE BETWEEN months of the weight loss calendar – between dieting to look good in a bathing suit and taking off post-holiday pounds. Why not put the time to good use? Weight you lose now will put you ahead of the curve in January.

The Center for Medical Weight Loss in Mount Pleasant offers a medically supervised regimen customized for each patient. Every program begins with a complete body composition profile. Then resting metabolism is calculated to determine the appropriate daily caloric intake and expenditure for healthy weight loss.

“We meet with each patient and discuss everything from medications to shopping,” explained Dr. Loren Frankel, the program director. “We have three programs patients can choose, depending on their motivation and finances. We have patients who have success with one plan and tran-



The Center for Medical Weight Loss at 1300 Hospital Drive.



Dr. Loren Frankel's main concern is that her patients reach their target weight safely.

sition to another to reach additional goals.”

Yvonne Gregory, an active 58-year-old participant, struggled to lose weight on her own but did well with the structured program. She lost nearly 30 pounds for her high school reunion.

“It is nutritionally balanced so you don't have to worry about not getting the important vitamins. This has been a wonderful thing for me,” Gregory said.

Ari and Christina Buchanan are a typical American family: two young children and two full-time jobs. They weren't interested in a fad diet, and knowing an experienced physician was directing their efforts was a comforting thought.

“We learned the strategies together and we watched out for each other,” said Christina. “We needed a healthier lifestyle, and Dr. Frankel's program took us in that direction.”

The team at the center is available to help participants use their time wisely, focus their efforts and come out the other end of the “between” knowing they are healthier and feeling good.

For more information, visit www.pwhealthmp.com.

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Going TO Market



Above: Little boys are big on market treats, from sweet shaved ice to funnel cakes. Right: The market pavilion is a new architectural landmark on Coleman Boulevard.



THE ATMOSPHERE IS FESTIVE, A cross between a country marketplace, a state fair and a small-town carnival, complete with funnel cakes, the peanut man and the come-hither aroma emanating from the Kettle Korn machine. Zeus, with its Greek gyros, the French crepe stand and Rio's raviolis, officially Rio Bertolini's Fresh Pasta Co., add an international element to the **Mount Pleasant Farmers' Market**, a Tuesday tradition adjacent to Moultrie Middle School on Coleman Boulevard.

BY EILEEN ROBINSON SMITH

A musician strums and sings "Blowin' in the Wind" as a stream of kids, bicyclists and dogs on leashes passes by and Mount Pleasant residents greet their neighbors at the market, which opens at 3:30 p.m. from April through October.

Mount Pleasant Seafood Co., family-owned and located on Shem Creek since 1945, was among the first vendors at the Farmers' Market 12 years ago. Rial M. Fitch Jr. works the market with his daughter Sarah and his son Rial. He offers a wide assortment of fish, from sea bass to salmon to red snapper, but market-goers who come to eat dinner come for his shrimp. He serves them

up, along with homemade cocktail sauce, for only \$2.

The Johnson family is seated at a picnic table – Stewart, wife Paula, Martha and her sister, Helen Lowry, who boasts that she was the first resident at The Ponds retirement community in 1985. They're eating boiled shrimp with sides from John G's, which is how locals refer to Charleston Bay Gourmet Catering because it is owned by John G. Thornhill. According to his son Chris, the company has expanded its offerings beyond barbecued chickens and pulled pork. Their top sellers now are barbecue and St. Louis-style ribs. All dinners come with two sides; the choices include squash casserole, shucked-corn salad and baked beans.

Boone Hall Farms, the agricultural arm of Boone Hall Plantation, is recognized by its red tablecloths. The produce, from succulent strawberries to plump red tomatoes, is always in demand.

Marty Belk, of Carolina One on the Isle of Palms, who carefully selected a perfect tomato, said she and her husband, Don, make the Tuesday market a weekly affair. They always stay for supper.

"We keep thinking that we are going to change, but Don simply must have supper at John G's," she explained.



Top: The most sought after in the corn family – Silver Queen – straight from Joseph Fields Farm. Left: Rina Palmer, owner of Rina's Kitchen, proudly stands by her jams and relishes. Above: Luscious Carolina peaches by the basketful.

Nearby is Mike Shaughnessy, owner of Mike's Peanuts, with his old-time rig for boiling and deep-frying peanuts. He represents a dying breed on the Carolina landscape, even though boiled peanuts are the official state snack. His calling card boasts that he sells a "Certified SC Product."

The Great Harvest Bread Co., known for its catchy slogan, "Baking a Difference in Mount Pleasant," is a hit with its creative whole grain breads, many of which, like apple crunch, sound more like dessert.

Ashley Swider, the owner of Yes You May Cookies, shares space both at the market and at her kitchen on Coleman Boulevard with Romeo Organic Baby Foods. Both products will soon be available at Whole Foods.

Mepkin Abbey's fresh gourmet mushrooms can often be found at

the market, and the dried version is always available. Up from Gardens Corner, S.C., Les Lambert, owner of Great Food Co-op, is surrounded by his preserves and relishes, his fruit-flavored ciders and dried fruits. He explains his wares to Tabi Jaglowicz, director of marketing for Island Realty, who listens intently and then buys a bagful.

The farmers of Johns Island round out the market offerings with stalls of freshly harvested produce: tomatoes, corn, yellow squash, watermelon, cantaloupe and more. Joseph Fields Farm and Freeman Farms are among the most well-known entities. 🍄

To see additional photos from the Farmers' Market, visit www.mountpleasantmagazine.com. For a complete list of vendors, visit www.townof-mountpleasant.com.



Dining room manager, Ann Warner serves up a seafood platter.

The Wreck of the Richard & Charlene

106 Haddrell Street, Mount Pleasant
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The Charleston *City Paper* on March 3, 2010 said, "The most unique Shem Creek dining experience, however, is to be found at **The Wreck of the Richard and Charlene**, named for a trawler wrecked by Hurricane Hugo near the spot where the restaurant stands today. That spot is a little hard to find, since it's tucked away down in the Old Village neighborhood almost at the mouth of the creek (*between Magwood & Wando*).

The Wreck is a low-key, bare-bones place that sits on a big dock looking out over Shem Creek. It specializes in big, freshly made portions of local seafood, and the menu is simple: various combinations of grilled or fried fish, shrimp and scallops, along with fried oysters, deviled crab and stone crab claws, too."

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Eurasia

O

NE OF MOUNT PLEASANT'S hottest new eateries gives residents good reason to stay East of the Cooper when they're looking for a little downtown dazzle without the downtown hassle. Eurasia Café & Wine Bar, located in the Whole Foods shopping center, has a cool bistro vibe and a modern American menu that take the

concept of fusion to another level.

Earthy tones and minimalist décor combine for a Zen-like ambience at Eurasia Café & Wine Bar. The soothing setting is in stark contrast to the no-holds-barred-dining experience driven by the inventive palate of executive chef Meredith Adams. Her eclectic menu builds on regional cuisine, European classics and Asian influences that she transforms using farm fresh local and regional fare and her own distinctive style.

One of only a handful of female chefs in the region, Adams teamed up with veteran front-of-house manager Andy Fallen – think Peninsula Grill and 39 Rue de Jean – to bring some sizzle to the suburbs.

“I want sexy food on the plate,” she said.

The chef wants diners to have fun with their food, too, and that playfulness begins on the menu with dishes such as Reuben “In The Sky With Diamonds,” her delicious take on the Reuben sandwich, served with “millionaire mayo.” “Veggin’ Out” turns the open-faced melt into something special with hot summer squash, fire roasted peppers, hand-pulled mozzarella and a basil “veganaise.”

Summertime starters such as bloody mary gazpacho refresh with the cocktail classics – celery leaves, house Worcestershire – and kick it up with heirloom toma-



toes, sweet corn, squash and cucumber. Japanese-style steamed mussels turn another classic sideways by spiking Prince Edward Island mussels with sake, ginger, basil and cilantro.

Adams' award-winning sweet potato bisque with Carolina wildflower honey is a fall menu must-have – a velvety concoction enhanced with white truffle and Virginia's Surry County country ham. Its explosion of savory sweetness is guaranteed to warm the heart and soothe the soul.

The Thai green curry seafood bowl leads an entrée list that mixes the classics with the unexpected – “Cordon Crab Bleu” pairs fried chicken with country ham, blue crab and a bleu cheese Mornay.

The list goes on: a flame-kissed beef tenderloin; sauteed shrimp and smoked gouda stone grit cake; portabella pot pie with risotto filling. The chef's “Off The Hook Rockafella” tops the daily catch with briny, lightly breaded oysters hot from the deep fryer.

“It's already supposed to be good,” said Adams. “Make people crave it.”

Fallen's New World-driven wine list consists of more than 70 varietals from smaller, high-quality producers, 25 of which are available by the glass. The full bar also offers an excellent selection of microbrews.

Outdoor seating is available in Eurasia's garden patio, where wide umbrellas, a bubbling fountain and a wall of lush plants create an island of tranquility for feasting under the sun – and one more reason to dine in Mount Pleasant.

For more information, visit www.eurasiasc.com.

BY WENDY SNYDER

Top Center:
Flash-fried fantail shrimp with Asian slaw.
Upper Right:
Beef tenderloin carpaccio with truffled egg salad.
Lower Right:
The bar is a sleek setting for wine, craft beer and specialty cocktails.



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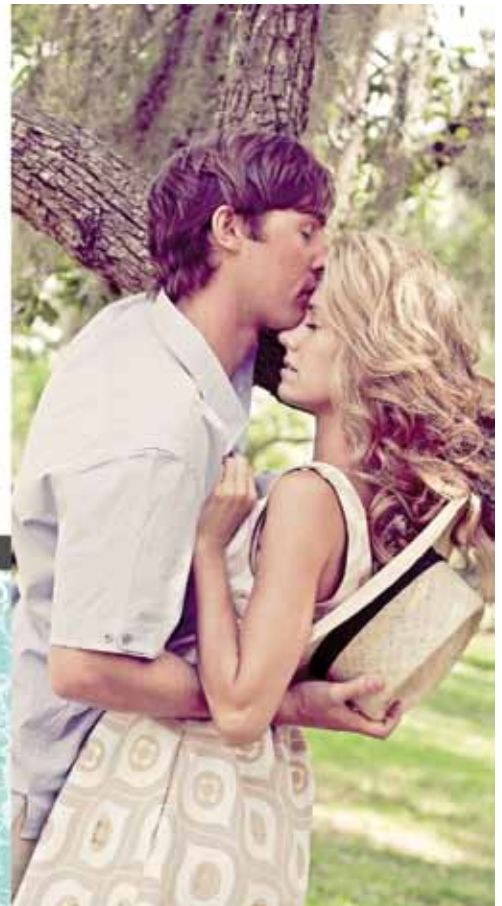
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The Buzz on Ben Sawyer

Triangle Char & Bar

SINCE ITS OPENING IN JUNE, the second coming of Triangle Char & Bar has turned heads in Mount Pleasant with a restaurant that takes its inspiration from the original location west of the Cooper.

The Triangle Char & Bar has been the social center of the trendy Avondale section of West Ashley for some five years. A former filling station, its open garage doors and triangular lot at 828 Savannah Highway create an outdoor dining environment like no other. It has become known for its grass-fed beef burgers, won an award for its Sunday brunch and recycles cooking oil and food waste. The new restaurant at 1440 Ben Sawyer Blvd. has the same mantra: waste not, recycle and reinvent.

BY EILEEN ROBINSON SMITH

“Last year we helped Triangle divert 52 tons of waste from the landfill,” said Michael Pectol of Southern Sustainable Resources. “One-third was food waste, which was donated to local pig farmers to help them offset feed costs. It saved them \$5,000; reducing waste saved Triangle \$1,200.”

Both Triangle locations are creations of Whitney Rietz Eller, a Mount Pleasant-based designer who earned the International Interior Design Association’s Silver Award for Hospitality Design with the Saltus River Grill in Beaufort.

The interiors of both restaurants feature interesting components such as recycled car hoods fabricated into tabletops. Some booths in the new Triangle even come with seat belts. Design elements include shellacked wood pallets repurposed as walls; garage doors with blue trim; and an outdoor lounge area with red couches.

Graffiti artists Patch Whisky and Ishmael collaborated on the doors and tabletops, a 40-foot mural that spans the length of the bar and 4-foot by 8-foot panels juxtaposed against corrugated metal walls.

Top Center:
Watermelon salad.
Upper Right:
The Wilbur burger
is capped with a
succulent pork belly.
Lower Right:
The Mount Pleasant
location’s design is
nouveau garage.



In the kitchen, chef Damian Ambs puts his own exciting spin on fresh, innovative dishes such as a seared tuna taco with watermelon pico de gallo; watermelon salad with prosciutto and green goddess dressing; and turkey burgers with raspberry sauce and brie. Ambs’ strong relationships with local farmers and bakers give him access to the freshest seasonal ingredients available.

Burgers with a multitude of toppings, such as the General Lee, with pimento cheese and caramelized onions, are a trademark of Triangle, as is a comprehensive list of craft beers from area breweries and beyond. Ambs will put just about anything into an egg roll; one of his favorites combines avocado with sweet Thai chili sauce.

Children are mesmerized by the dangling, colored lights as they eat their mini-burgers and are rewarded with cake lollipops and triangular, watermelon popsicles.

Charlie Caldwell, who represents Hill Creek Farms in Darlington, S.C., which supplies a half-ton of beef to the original Triangle every week, answers the obvious question: “Not only does grass-fed beef taste better than factory-farmed beef, but it’s way more nutritious. It has less saturated fat, cholesterol and calories.”

According to co-owner Skipper Condon, he and partner Scott Long had to find an alternative source of grass-fed beef for the Mount Pleasant Triangle because of the increased volume. McCutchen Farms in Kingstree, S.C., is the supplier.

With its high-decibel music, funky design and unique menu, Triangle Char & Bar brings a new look and a new attitude to the Mount Pleasant restaurant scene. 🍷

For more information, visit www.trianglecharandbar.com.



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Travel to Sullivan's High Thyme Cuisine

EVER FEEL THE URGE TO GET out of town – even for just a few hours? Instead of driving over one of the big bridges, take a trip across the little bridge on Ben Sawyer Boulevard and spend some time on Sullivan's Island. After the obligatory walk on the beach, stroll down Middle Street to **High**

BY MARGARET ANN MICHELS

Thyme Cuisine for a meal that is a vacation in itself.

The patio provides a relaxing environment for conversation and people-watching, while the inside atmosphere is cozy bistro. The crowd is a mixture of locals and tourists, who discover High Thyme through recommendations from friends or from airport taxi drivers who enjoy sending their passengers to a great spot off the beaten path.

Dinner is served Wednesday through Saturday. Tuesday nights are reserved for the tapas menu featuring smaller portions. High Thyme is open for lunch Thursday through Saturday, and Sunday is all about brunch. Chef Taylor Still, who has been with the restaurant for over six years, has created a tempting menu; just reading it is a mouthwatering experience.

Go with a group on tapas night to order a sample of many different flavors: seared tuna with chili ginger honey, Szechuan beef tenderloin over wasabi glazed potatoes or grilled scallops with jalapeño creamed corn and bacon gastrique – which is unbelievable. They could serve the sauces by themselves in a soup bowl.

Some bistro staples appear – grilled beef tenderloin, pan seared salmon and baby spinach salad – but Still's sides and sauces raise tradition a notch. Two good ones are the smoked gouda grits with arugula and lemon caper brown butter, and Yukon Gold mashed potatoes



with succotash and avocado lime puree. The shrimp and braised fennel linguini is a light take on pasta, combining grape tomatoes, wilted spinach, herb butter broth and shrimp that is always domestic and local when possible.

Emily Daniels, High Thyme's manager and occasional bartender, recommends the risotto to anyone who will listen; she is right to sing its praises. Chunks of roasted mushrooms and tender cut asparagus spears are folded into the creamy rice, then topped with shaved parmesan cheese and white truffle oil. A protein from the night's offerings, such as sautéed shrimp or roasted chicken, can be added, but it certainly isn't needed.

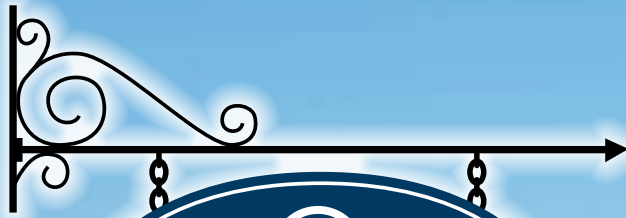
The dessert menu always includes key lime pie, a decadent flourless chocolate bomb and a flavored crème brulee. Lately though, sous-chef Will Doss has been making bread pudding. The name does not do it justice. The base features nuts and seasonal berries, and each serving is individually baked, then topped with caramel and served with vanilla ice cream. It's worth every one of the 25 minutes you'll wait if you don't order it at the beginning of the meal.

High Thyme has a full bar, a good selection of bottled beer and a nice wine list. Reservations are recommended since the dining room seats about 40, with 32 more spots outside. 🍷

For more information, visit www.highthymecuisine.com.



Top Center: Sunday brunch's cinnamon brioche French toast with fruit compote.
Upper Right: Grilled scallops served with two delicious sauces.
Lower Left: The patio is nice for enjoying evening breezes.



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Our Mount Pleasant Neighbors

IN EACH ISSUE, WE'LL SPEND A LITTLE TIME WITH SOME OF OUR NEIGHBORS TO HELP YOU get to know them better. Get to know us better by Liking us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/MountPleasantMagazine. If you would like to appear in Facetime or to suggest someone you find interesting, please email the name and contact information (email and/or phone number) to Facetime@MountPleasantMagazine.com.



Mary Lou Hellman

Lives in: Charleston National.

From: Memphis, Tenn. via Ramsey, N.J.

Education: Bachelor's in education from Memphis State University in 1977.

Employment: Teacher for 22 years, the last 12 in middle school science and math, with the last five at Thomas Carlo Middle School in Park West. Currently following her lifelong dream of being an artist with her new company, MLWatercolors.

Favorite reading: Cooking and gardening books.

Favorite music: Claire De Lune, classical music, Jimmy Buffet.

Activities: Beach, reading, beach, cooking, beach, gardening.

Interests: Following her passion and not living to work.

Likes: The beach.

Favorite quote or philosophy: If you are not following your dream, you are following some else's dream.



Barbara Millen Patrick

Lives in: Landings Run, off Whipple Road near Long Point Road.

From: Berlin, Germany.

Education: University of South Carolina; degree in broadcast journalism.

Employment: Past WCIV producer of commercials for 21 years. Currently a freelance writer and owner of Elope to Charleston.

Favorite reading: Nelson DeMille, Patricia Cornwell, Kathy Reichs, Sophie Kinsella, Jane Green and Pat Conroy.

Favorite music: All kinds.

Activities: Walking the beach.

Likes: Reading, writing and savoring the joys of Lowcountry life. My cats!

Favorite quote or philosophy: Consider the uses of adversity.



Steve Skardon Jr.

Lives in: Snee Farm

From: Summerville, S.C.

Education: Graduated from Porter-Gaud School in 1970; 1974 graduate of The George Washington University School of Public and International Affairs.

Employment: Executive director of The Palmetto Project.

Favorite reading: Currently, "Innocent" by Scott Turow.

Favorite music: Free Will, a Christian rock band whose lead singer/drummer is his niece.

Activities: For this summer, backyard weed, insect and varmint reduction.

Interests: Most college sports, St. Gregory Choir at Grace Episcopal Church.

Likes: Anything South Carolina.

Favorite quote or philosophy: "In the middle of every difficulty lies opportunity."— Albert Einstein



Thomasena Stokes-Marshall

Lives in: Snowden Community in Mount Pleasant.

From: Mount Pleasant, S.C. and New York, N.Y.

Education: New York University, bachelor's degree in public administration and community organization.

Employment: Retired after 24 years with the New York City Police Department. Currently executive director of the Sweet-grass Cultural Arts Festival Association and elected member of the Mount Pleasant Town Council.

Favorite reading: "The Prophet" by Khalil Gibran.

Favorite music: All kinds.

Activities: Drawing and sewing.

Interests: Gullah-Geechee culture.

Likes: People.

Favorite quote or philosophy: Do unto others as you would have them do unto you.

Playing

continued from page 23

as are camps and free skateboarding days beginning in September.

The Mount Pleasant Recreation Department also offers unified athletics, which gives youngsters with disabilities the chance to play a sport on a team of players with and without disabilities. Teammates are matched according to ability and skill level. Some players participate with a buddy, while others can play on their own. Smaller fields with modified equipment and rules are sometimes utilized to ensure fairness and safety.

“Whether a child wants to play lacrosse or learn how to play the piano, the opportunity to do so is here,” said Ayoub.

With everything the town offers, an entire multi-generational family can find activities at www.MtPleasantRec.com.

“If a community is committed to provide their residents with a superior quality of life, the way Mount Pleasant is committed, recreation departments are without a doubt one of those components necessary for that goal to be reached,” said Ayoub. “We play a very important role in not only the development of a community but also the total development of our children.”

If you aren't the athletic type, volunteers are always needed to help organize and supervise activities. Spectators are also welcome at all events. Squeeze the last bit of summer out of this year – and take advantage of the upcoming fall weather – by going out to show your support and cheering on your neighborhood teams. You might even be inspired to participate; this year's spectators could be next year's winners. 🐾

For more information, visit www.MtPleasantRec.com.

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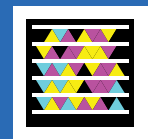
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Pondering

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considerably different from that of our mayor's; she grew up in New York City's Riverdale section, earning her bachelor's degree from the College of Mount Saint Vincent and a master of science and professional diploma in administration from Manhattan College.

She had never lived in a house – much less in the country – until her family moved to Mount Pleasant some 27 years ago, where she began her career as a teacher.

"It was wonderful," she said. "There was grass and dogs and all that."

"Our Mount Pleasant sounds a lot like yours," she added. "People love their community. They take roots. They join churches and participate in their schools. They have a real sense of neighborhoods."

In 1992, Maybury was asked to

run for the town board; she did and she won, serving while still working as a teacher and as the mother of three girls. She became supervisor 18 months ago when the person who held the position for 20 years left to join the county executive's office.

In an unexpected development, Maybury revealed that she is actually quite familiar with Mount Pleasant, S.C., because of our nationally recognized Medal of Honor Museum. Town Hall in Mount Pleasant, N.Y., has three Medals of Honor in a special case in its lobby. The town obtained them through the efforts of an American Legion commander "who worked tirelessly to get them." A monument outside the building lists the names of New York residents who earned the medal.

Asked if she is ever kidded about her last name, sort of a homonym of one of television's most famous Southern towns, the supervisor

good-naturedly observed that her surname "is often misspelled, so it comes out like Andy Griffiths' fictional hometown."

She confessed that one day she might like to move to Dixie.

"Our Mount Pleasant is not a retirement area. Most of our citizens are local business people or commuters to New York City. But I've noticed that a significant number of our residents with the wherewithal to do so have pulled up stakes and moved south to avoid New York's high real estate prices and taxes."

Told she would always be welcome to visit her sister city and the Medal of Honor Museum aboard the USS Yorktown, the supervisor said that sounded like an excellent idea. And, having read an article about our Mount Pleasant's chief executive, she added, "I'd like to meet your Mayor Billy Swails. He seems like a really fine fellow." 🍷

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Back to School

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as an assistant principal in 1993 and has been principal since 2003, pointed out that parents are regular visitors to the school, which, like its predecessor, is on Rifle Range Road. They help out in the library, read to students, help teachers with various tasks, monitor kids in the cafeteria and attend field trips. They spend so much time at Whitesides that they have their own room to meet and plan activities.

Pounder added that parents also have helped make Whitesides a better place to learn by donating items including artwork and countertops in the reception office.

"This is a wonderful community," said Pounder. "The parents are really involved in the school."

Pounder's staff includes around 55 full time teachers and another dozen

or so who work at more than one school. Their efforts, always exemplary, according to their principal, are now enhanced by three computer labs and a smart board in every classroom.



Principal Lona Pounder plans to have a long future at the school's new location.

photo by Brian Sherman

Approximately 650 students will attend Whitesides this fall, and there's room for another 150. Unlike in the past, there's space for students, parents and relatives to attend an event in the cafeteria/au-

ditorium combination. And parking is no longer a problem. Even if the lot is full, there is overflow parking at the Mount Pleasant Waterworks facility next door.

Mamie P. Whitesides Elementary School was named for a long-time Mount Pleasant teacher. The school's principal, who already has been at the school for 18 years, plans to stay a while as well.

"If you love what you do, why would you leave?" she asked. "This is a great place to work. I love the challenges and all the moving parts that go with running an elementary school."

"The children are excited about learning," she added. "You can see the light bulbs coming on when they explain what they are learning. It makes you feel good about the future."

For more information, visit www.wandohigh.com, <http://cario.ccsdschools.com> and <http://whitesides.ccsdschools.com>.

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Our Village Library

SIMILAR TO OTHERS NATION-wide, the first library in Mount Pleasant was started by a group of women as a lending room. The King's Daughters operated it out of their hall on Whilden Street in what is now known as the Old Village. The first official Mount Pleasant Library opened on June 19, 1931, as a branch of the Charleston Free Library. It was housed in a small one-room building next to the old post office on Church Street.

BY MARGARET ANN MICHELS
PHOTOGRAPHY BY KAYLA JONES

The library eventually moved to a little house on the corner of Hibben and Church streets. According to "The History of Mount Pleasant" by Petrona Royall McIver, this temporary space was originally Huthmackers Drugstore and was located in the yard of Mrs. Julia Hamlin.

In the 1940s, members of the Mount Pleasant Exchange Club raised funds for a new building, and their donations were combined with allotments from Charleston County and the town of Mount Pleasant, which provided space at 430 Whilden St. Other organizations contributed money for books, and the Mount Pleasant Garden Club took on landscaping and maintaining the grounds; the town of Mount Pleasant now handles this job.

From its exterior, the structure appears to have been a home in an earlier life, but Harold Tatum of Mount Pleasant designed it as a library. The little brick building tucked under the oak trees is a fitting design for this older residential neighborhood. The library opened on Aug. 2, 1948.

Residents of the Village appreciate having a neighbor-

hood library branch, and it is especially nice for introducing children to the library system. Programs include story times, crafts and shows such as Joy the Clown and the South Carolina Aquarium Rovers. Ann Dupre, a resident of the Village since 1973, raised her daughter going to the Village Library.

"It's not overwhelming for a child; it's a nice contained area," she said. "If I still had young children, I would love having this library to bring them to. I look forward to being able to bring my grandchildren there."

Dupre now finds the Village Library convenient for returning books borrowed from the larger Mount Pleasant Regional Library.

Frank Newham has been using the Village Library since moving to Pitt Street in 1994.

"It's a tiny little thing, but they've got a lot of stuff in there," he said. "You can just stop by and pick up a book, and, if they don't have it, they'll get it for you in a few days."

When the regional branch on Anna Knapp Boulevard opened in 1992, the Village location was expected to close, but its loyal users lobbied to save it. Librarian Marvin Stewart works to keep the branch operating by publicizing its programs — although some older

patrons get a little upset when he does.

"They like it quiet and with little competition for the books they want to read," Stewart explained.

He enjoys sharing this unintentionally well-kept secret and looks forward to celebrating the Village Library's upcoming 65th anniversary.

Now, don't ya'll go all at once. 🐼

For more information, visit www.ccpl.org.



Top: Branch manager Marvin Stewart enjoys hearing about the library's past from his older patrons and sharing its wonders with new users. Above: Benches in the shade of the oaks make cozy spots for reading outside.

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Virginia Fouche' Bolton (1929 - 2004) moved to Charleston when she was 14. In 1961 she began her teaching career at St. John the Baptist Cathedral School, later teaching at Moultrie, Wando and Bishop England High Schools. She was tremendously loved by her students and those who knew her.

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