

MOUNT PLEASANT

FALL 2012

MAGAZINE

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PUBLISHER'S NOTE

I CAN'T THINK OF A BETTER EXAMPLE OF UNCONDITIONAL love than the love of a dog for its owner. Dogs are always waiting for you when you come home. They love you no matter what kind of mood you're in or how horrible your day has been, and they never talk back. They don't care how successful you are, though they do want you to make enough money to keep their bowl filled with food.

Charlie is a goldendoodle – part golden retriever and part poodle. My wife and I fell in love with him while visiting my sister in Florida. He's always happy and he loves my wife and I unconditionally. He's supposed to be our dog, but he's really mine.

Charlie and I go for bike rides together – actually he runs beside my bike. When we go for car rides, his big golden ears flop in the wind. We play and take walks. He relieves some of my stress at the end of a tough day running a magazine. Charlie's world is all rainbows and butterflies, and no one else in my life gives so much yet asks so little.

Charlie always has a copy of Mount Pleasant Magazine close by, and this issue is one of his favorites. He loves to eat, be healthy and be adventurous; that's why he loves the cover. Is it a Clemson/Carolina cover or Carolina/Clemson cover?

I could tell Charlie enjoyed the Old Village Home, Garden & Art Tour article on page 38. I think he pictured himself relaxing on the big sofa in one of the home's spacious rooms.

Although Charlie doesn't consume alcoholic beverages, at least not in front of me, he responded positively when I showed him the Dinner with Friends article on page 48 and the craft beer article on page 58. It might be time for some additional training.

Charlie's excited about attending the Charleston Cup Nov. 11, which is highlighted on page 23. As long as he is well-behaved, he knows he'll be able to enjoy the Mount Pleasant race tent, sponsored by MPM and the advertisers that support the magazine. He hopes whoever wins the Charleston Cup ticket contest on page 57 has a dog he can play with.

When Charlie visits the office, I can tell he feels the passion, creativity and drive displayed by everyone at MPM. When he hears me talk about how much Mount Pleasant residents like the magazine, his ears prick up, so I know he gets it. That's why I know he'll be OK with me spending a little more time at the office and skipping a few of our bike and car rides when we begin publishing every other month instead of quarterly, starting with the November/December edition. After all, he loves MPM and he loves its publisher unconditionally. 🐾



Charlie's world is all rainbows and butterflies, and no one else in my life gives me so much yet asks so little.

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Vol. 2, Issue 3
Fall 2012

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Mount Pleasant Magazine is published six times per year by Media Services, Inc.
1013 Chuck Dawley Blvd., Mount Pleasant, S.C. 29464
Copyright © Media Services 2012.

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Subscriptions available for \$18 per year in the United States.

POSTMASTER: send address changes to:
480 Jessen Lane, Suite H, Charleston, S.C. 29492

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Our Contributors



Tanya Boggs received her masters degree in Photography from the San Francisco Art Institute in 2007. Her work has been shown internationally and published in various magazines, and she has taught photography classes and workshops all over the country. Since moving back to Charleston in 2010, she has taught photography at the College of Charleston while running a successful portrait business with her husband.



Adam Chandler is a freelance photographer and artist whose camera and curiosity have led him from Haiti to Alaska and many places in between. Before moving last year to the Charleston area, he worked as the in-house photographer and media coordinator for Hard Rock International in Orlando, Fla. Having spent many good times over the years on the South Carolina coast, he feels right at home in the Lowcountry and looks forward to continuing to explore the amazing diversity of his new hometown.



For more than 10 years, commercial and advertising photographer **Andy Hagedon**

has been providing corporations with high-impact images that drive business. He has worked with reputable brands in many different industries, including marine, medical, and hotel/resort. With a degree in journalism and a professional background in both public relations and sales, Hagedon has a keen understanding of how the right image can make or break a marketing campaign. He resides in Mount Pleasant S.C., with his wife and two children.



Amy Kehm is new to the Lowcountry. She relocated to Mount Pleasant in September 2011 and adores the region. For the past 10-plus years, Amy has written for regional magazines and served as a TV news anchor, reporter and producer in Virginia and Pennsylvania. Her passion is telling stories about her community: "Mount Pleasant has so many great stories to tell!"



Originally from Los Angeles, **Kristen Wright-Matthews** is an aspiring children's writer. Prior to moving to the Charleston area in 2005, she worked for many years as a publicist and freelance writer. Kristen is a wife and mother who enjoys writing, jewelry making, event planning and spending time with her family.

Interested in contributing to Mount Pleasant Magazine? Email 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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About the Cover

The inspiration for our cover photo is obvious. After all, in the South, college football is king, and, as the fall approaches, the animosity between South Carolina fans and Clemson supporters heats up to a fever pitch. We hear stories of sabotage, rooster crows, neon tiger paws and otherwise happy homes divided by loyalties to one school or the other.

The Spitz family truly represents “a house divided,” with parents and triplets on either side of the field and the youngest member of the family still undecided on which university she will attend.

As we approached the Spitz residence, we passed a couple of vehicles with the well-recognized house divided license plates and even a golf cart sporting what looked a lot like a tiger paw.

Late in the afternoon of a warm and muggy Lowcountry day, the entire family – including two dogs – our crew, veteran Charleston photographer Adam Chandler and a few thousand mosquitoes gathered for the cover shoot along the sleepy banks of a tributary of Hobcaw Creek in Mount Pleasant.

We all had fun with the in-state rivalry, and it was evident that Pete and Patti Spitz relished watching their children perform for the camera. We encouraged a little tug-of-war and playful wrestling among the triplets, so it wasn't difficult to get a photo of them laughing with each other.

Football can bring out the best and worst in people; on this evening, it brought a family together.

I was born and raised in South Carolina and learned at an early age that you must choose whether you're going to wear orange and purple or garnet and black for the rest of your life. My sister and I have always worn one color combination, while my two brothers opted for the other.

I will keep my personal opinion to myself for now and wish both the Gamecocks and the Tigers the best of luck – until game day, that is.

Thank you for reading and sharing Mount Pleasant Magazine with your family and friends. We hope you enjoy our fall issue.

Stacy E. Domingo
Contributing Editor



Interested in contributing to *Mount Pleasant Magazine*? Email 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



VISIT WWW.MOUNTPLEASANTMAGAZINE.COM FOR MORE THAN what you see in the print magazine: more stories, more photographs and more fun stuff in general.

Readers who are interested in learning the **tantalizing recipes** from **"Dinner with Friends"** can go to the website for step-by-step instructions from Chef Pete Twomey. But don't say we didn't warn you about the possibility of being stuck playing host to all your friends each week.



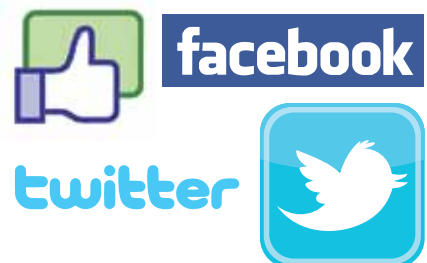
If you enjoyed learning about Charleston opera in this issue, we've got the scoop on the artistic background of **Opera Charleston's founder and Mount Pleasant resident Scott Flaherty**.



And if you find yourself in an unusually football-crazed mood after reading about Mount Pleasant's divided loyalties and the tastiest tailgating options in town, visit mountpleasantmagazine.com for a slew of hilarious (but somewhat tasteful) **jokes about Clemson and Carolina**, two favorite teams of sports

buffs this fall and for all the falls to come.

Visit us on Facebook and Twitter (@mountpmagazine) to share your feedback about this issue with our staff, as well as to vote for the most philanthropic businesses in Mount Pleasant. We can't wait to hear from our readers. And don't forget to share the digital version of this issue with a friend. Thanks for being a part of Mount Pleasant Magazine. 🐼



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East Cooper Football Loyalties:

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*story by
Colleen Dennis
photos by
Adam Chandler*

WHILE VISITING MOUNT PLEASANT LAST November looking for a place to live, I noticed the abundance of Clemson and University of South Carolina flags adorning the front porch of many Lowcountry homes. At the time, I joked with a friend that eventually I probably would need to declare my allegiance to one school or the other.

When I moved to Mount Pleasant, I quickly realized that college football is no joking matter to South Carolinians. Like beaches and waves, hush puppies and honey butter, orange and purple, and garnet and black, college football here is a way of life.

Brewing beneath the bucolic setting of the Palmetto State is a rivalry that has been around since South Carolina posted a 12-6 victory in the first meeting between the schools on Nov. 12, 1896 – and proceeded to lose 65 of the next 108 meetings, with four ties thrown in for good measure. Every season, football enthusiasts gear up for a showdown between the two fierce rivals. Separated by just 132 miles, the Clemson Tigers and the University of South Carolina Gamecocks battle for bragging rights that last only until they battle again.

Inside flag-waving homes from Mount Pleasant to Pickens are families that are steadfastly loyal to the Gamecocks or the Tigers. However, disturbingly for some college football fans, there are some houses where orange and purple and garnet and black share dominance.

Pete and Patty Spitz of Mount Pleasant know a thing or two or three



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Phillip will soon be a Clemson graduate; and Kristyn earned her degree at USC. Their 16-year-old daughter, Ashlyn, has yet to declare her preference for one school or the other.

Despite their differences, the Spitz family coexists peacefully; for the most part, they are respectful of each other's teams.

"We try to keep it in perspective," Patty said.

At the opposite end of the spectrum is the Craft family, owners of Whitney's Collection and Man Cave of the Lowcountry in Patriots Point Plaza in Mount Pleasant. Man Cave, a haven for college football fans and all things manly, is run by father and son Dan and Rob. Off the field, so to speak, they are deeply divided. Dan is a die-hard Gamecock fan, while son Rob bleeds orange and purple.

"We don't talk much during the football season," Rob admitted. "In fact, he says he doesn't even like me during the season and claims I'm obnoxious and the worst fan to go to a football game with."

The family rivalry dates back to when Rob was 5, and his uncle and cousins introduced him to all things Clemson. If there was any hope for Dan bringing his son back to the other side, it ended when Rob attended his first Clemson game at the age of 9.

"I still remember vividly the very first Clemson game I went to. The only thing that ever surpassed it

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The Spitz family:
left to right:
Pete, Michael,
Patty, Ashlyn,
Phillip and
Kristyn.



was the birth of my son,” he said.

While some homes can be characterized as houses divided, it might be more accurate to define others as houses conflicted. Adele Simmons and her son, Banks, are steadfast Gamecock fans, but Banks is actually considering attending Clemson.

“It all comes down to the school,” Adele said. “Banks’ major is something that’s very limited and Clemson is a good school for it.”

“I’ll support Clemson if they’re not playing the

Gamecocks,” Adele admitted. “My son, on the other hand, may have a hard time doing that even if he is going to school there. He may not completely cross over, but he may have a toe over the line for four years.”

Reasons people choose one school over the other range from personal to practical to everything in between.

“It’s just a different atmosphere. Clemson is beautiful. To me, there is nothing like a night game at Clemson,” Rob Craft explained while wistfully gazing at a picture of the school’s Memorial Stadium.

“It depends, too, if you like being the underdog or if you want to be a winner,” he added, making no discernible effort to resist a jab at USC. “If that’s the case, then, historically you would go with Clemson.”

Whatever the reason people choose to support one team over the other, it’s clear that it’s all about heart, soul, loyalty and pride.

I look forward to witnessing the excitement for myself when the Gamecocks and Tigers face off on Nov. 24 at Memorial Stadium, known affectionately to Clemson fans as “Death Valley.” Maybe I will have declared my allegiance by then, but, for now, I remain a spectator waiting to be converted. 🐾

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A Fall Feast

TAILGATING IN THE LOWCOUNTRY

story by Kristen Wright-Matthews

photography by Tanya Boggs

Ken and Joanna Strickland, with their two daughters, Maddie and Lauren. Maddie attends Cario Middle School, while Lauren is a senior at Wando High School. They live in Rivertowne. Ken is the owner of CLC Homes, a custom home builder. Their nephews, Donald Hutson and Christopher Dunkerly, also were on hand.

The entire family gets together regularly for celebrations and tailgating.



A

S FALL APPROACHES, AND WITH IT America's most popular food-related spectator sport, football fans everywhere are preparing to kick off their tailgating plans, a feat that has the potential to become an endurance sport on its own for those who fail to plan effectively and execute a winning strategy. Three local Mount Pleasant restaurants offer options that will prevent you from fumbling your opportunity to host prize-winning tailgating parties every time. With their help, all you have to do is sit back, enjoy yourself and your guests and hope your favorite team is just as prepared as you are.

Sticky Fingers: THE LEGEND

You are certain to avoid penalty flags in the form of complaints from your guests with the help of these veteran players in the tailgating game. Outdoor cooking is typically a laid-back process, so it is easy to overlook the basics of food and grilling safety, which are essential, even for the most experienced chefs.

Here are a few guidelines to get you started: preheat the grill for 10 to 15 minutes with the lid down and the burners set on high; cook on clean grates; don't cross-contaminate, wash your hands often and keep counters and work surfaces clean; marinate meats in the refrigerator, not at room temperature; use long-handled barbecue utensils to avoid burns and splatters; cook meat thoroughly; and brush on your favorite barbecue sauce in the last 10 to 15 minutes of cooking for lasting flavor, preferably Sticky Fingers' own brand, offered in five award-winning varieties.

If you're looking for barbeque and you don't feel like setting up the grill, Sticky Fingers is a winning pick with its "fall-off-the-bone delicious" ribs, pulled pork barbecue and chicken.

FoodEZE Executive Caterers: THE ROOKIE

Although it's a new concept, FoodEZE Executive Caterers is seasoned in its culinary greatness and experience in providing nourishing meals prepared with local ingredients. Teamed up with Palmetto Pig Barbecue,



Sticky Fingers' ribs, pork barbecue and chicken are a winning combination.



FoodEZE Executive Caterers already is renowned for its nourishing meals prepared with local ingredients.

FoodEZE Executive Caterers offers an extraordinarily tasty spin to the traditional tailgating menu.

You will certainly score with your guests if you choose any of these menu alternatives: barbecued pulled pork or fried chicken served with mac and cheese, cole slaw and baked beans; sausage, pepper and onion hoagie sandwiches, chicken tequila hoagies, big game steak sandwiches, deviled eggs and potato salad; or steamed shrimp and crab cakes with a scrumptious dipping sauce trio, stuffed jalapeno poppers and loaded potato skins.

With these divine selections, your guests will think you're a veteran, and you might just get stuck with home-field advantage – serving as the host – all season long.

Raising Cane's: THE PROFESSIONALS

If you've had your share of burgers and brats, Raising Cane's® will help you level the playing field with its menu of 100-percent premium chicken tenderloins – marinated for 24 to 36 hours, hand-battered and cooked to order. You can feel supremely confident passing the ball to these guys. They offer tailgate portions of their fresh, never-frozen chicken fingers, available in any quantity and served with plenty of lip-smacking-good special Cane's Sauce, prepared in-store daily with the highest-quality ingredients. Your guests will be blitzing your food tables from all angles. You can count on each of them eating at least three

chicken fingers, but don't forget to account for the ball hogs.

Cane's dynamic team spirit doesn't stop there. If you purchase a jug of their amazing sweet tea and freshly-squeezed lemonade to wash it all down, you'll also get a pair of sunglasses. Add Texas toast or cole slaw and you are guaranteed to score extra points from your party guests. There's no need to watch the clock – you can call and place your order on your way to Cane's.

With an uncluttered menu and unparalleled quality standards, Raising Cane's® has maintained a superior reputation for its fresh and exceptionally juicy chicken fingers, great crews, cool culture and community involvement.

“At Raising Cane's®, you know what you're getting when you order, and you can expect the same quality on every encounter,” said Dropping Bird, LLC Marketing Manager Aimee Zborowski.

Dropping Bird LLC, a franchise of the thriving corporation, is locally owned. It opened the doors of its Mount Pleasant store in 2010 and added an outlet in North Charleston a year later. A young company developed in Louisiana in 1996, Raising Cane's® boasts 125 stores across 15 states. 🍷

2012 Tahoe provided by McElveen East Cooper Chevrolet; props provided by Royall Ace Hardware; sports logo paraphernalia provided by Man Cave of the Lowcountry; hair and makeup by Vanity Salon.



Raising Cane's will help you score extra points with your guests.

TAILGATING: An American Tradition

Early tailgating cannot be compared to the palatable marathons characteristic of the modern-day activity, but it can be argued that the time-honored tradition got its start as early as July 21, 1861, at the Civil War Battle of Bull Run, or, as the Confederate forces preferred to call it, First Manassas. While participants weren't donned in team paraphernalia, garnished in paint and bizarre costumes and funneling beer down their throats, the camaraderie was analogous. Civilians from the Union rallied along the sidelines, chanting “Go Big Blue!” and even a few Confederates showed up to cheer their side on to an upset victory.

There were no play clocks or predetermined quarters, but baskets of food were on hand for practical purposes – Who knew how long this was going to last? On the other hand, historical documents and photographs reveal members of Washington's elite, including congressmen and



Tailgating got its start at the onset of the Civil War.

their wives, who arrived during the wee hours of the morning, sipped champagne and nibbled on grilled cucumber sandwiches while observing the battle from their coaches. Sound familiar?

Cheering on a war might not have been the smartest or even the safest way to show their support, but, despite the dangers, die-hard “fans” shouted from the sidelines, stuffed their faces and generally enjoyed themselves as they celebrated the big event – a direct correlation to contemporary tailgating. As much as we love our Cougars, Bulldogs, Tigers, Gamecocks and RiverDogs, tailgating at a war probably would not be an option today.

Less than a decade after the Civil War spawned its first recorded experience in the world of war, tailgating was introduced to competitive sports in a pre-game celebration for the inaugural intercollegiate football game between Princeton and Rutgers in 1869 – with a new and lasting twist. Rutgers fans and players differentiated themselves from their opposition by wrapping scarlet-colored scarves around their heads like turbans to show their school spirit. Hence the tradition of dressing in costumes began, and it continues to evolve today.

Tailgating has become embedded into American culture and, in some cases, draws more interest than the corresponding sporting event. There is simply something uniquely American about the combination of friends, food and beverages engendered by a day of tailgating.

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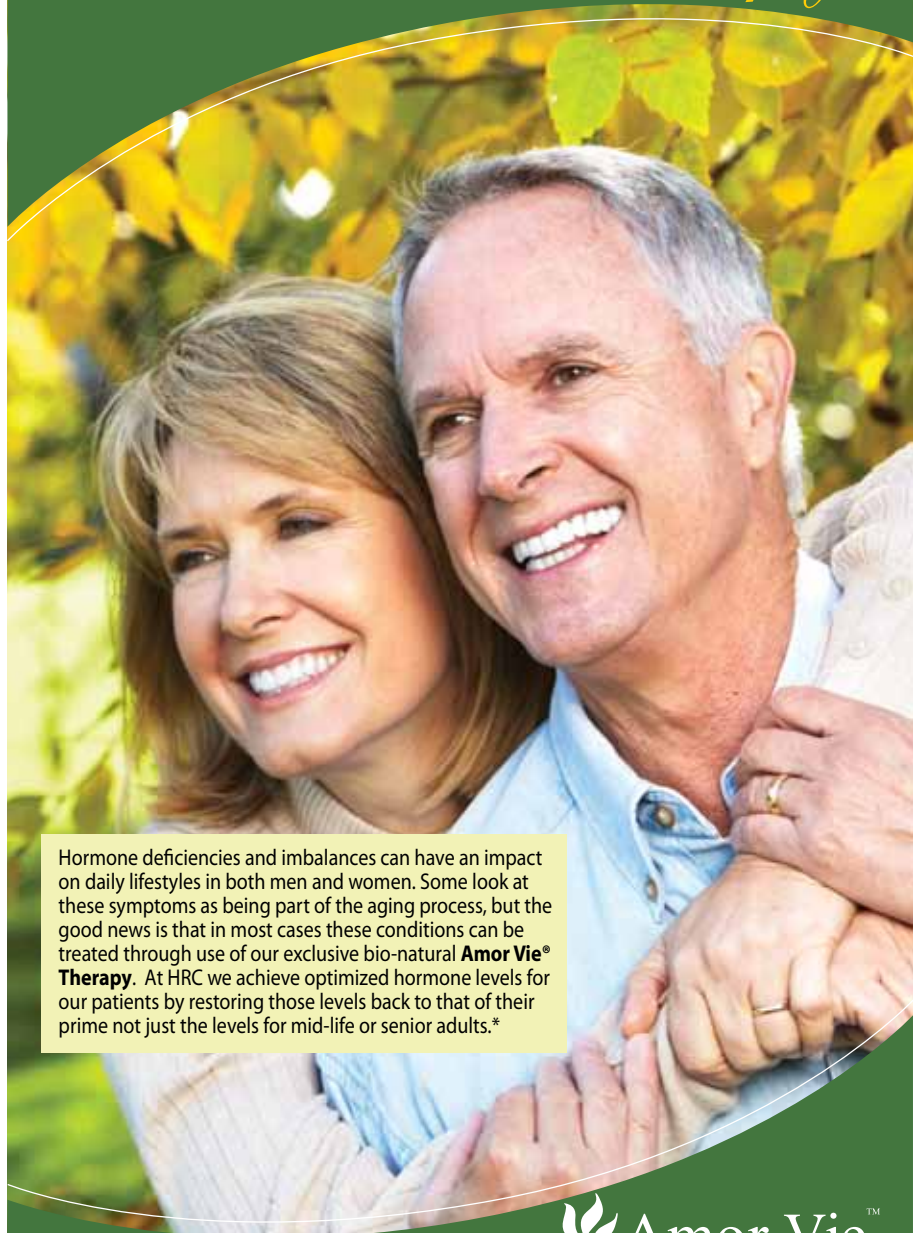
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And They're Off!

The Lowcountry Enjoys the Charleston Cup

WHETHER YOU'RE A POSH aficionado or scruffy smatterer, there is certainly a place for you amid the masses at The Charleston Cup. Last year marked the first time in nearly a decade that hooves graced the grass at Stono Ferry for the celebrated steeplechase races. The increasingly popular event – a Lowcountry tradition since 1986 – returned to celebrate its 25th anniversary in 2011 after an eight-year hiatus.

BY RYAN OVERHISER

Thankfully, according to Karl McMillan, who has been a part of every Charleston Cup since its inauguration, the clamoring hooves weren't the only things gracing the grounds of Stono Ferry; last year's attendance, more than 10,000, reached near record-breaking levels. For McMillan and other organizers of the event, the turnout was reassuring, especially since they acquired the contract for last year's race just three short months before showtime.

"We definitely didn't have a lot of prep time," McMillan said, adding that he is both impressed and awe-struck at the growing buzz surrounding the Cup.

"Eight years ago, we thought the Charleston Cup was fairly well-known, but there's been so much growth in the tri-county area in the past eight years that we were really amazed at the number of people who had never heard of the event," he confessed.

Now, with the help of tools such as Facebook and Twitter, McMillan feels like he and his team have been able to get the word out to an even wider audience, and they hope to see even more people come out to the Cup in 2012.

Last year's race was special for Joe Bartone of Mount

Pleasant. A thoroughbred breeder, he was the owner of the pregnant filly which, just a day after he sold it to Jeff Madden – also a Mount Pleasant resident – gave birth to Southern Admiral, the horse that would go on to take the 2011 Charleston Cup crown.

"The same night that Jeff took the horse home, the baby was born, and he slept with that baby all night long," Bartone said with a sense of emotion in his voice.

Southern Admiral, only 2 years old, had begun race training, but, according to Bartone, had competed in only

one jump race before running in the 2011 Charleston Cup steeplechase. Regardless of his experience, or lack thereof, Southern Admiral put on a show.

"We brought the horse to the Stono, and the horse won the first jump race. It was unbelievable," Bartone said. "Jeff was so happy he was crying. He was really excited, and I was so happy for him to see that."

Always set for the second weekend in November, this year will mark the 19th running of the Charles-



Mark Watts rode Southern Admiral to victory in the 2011 Charleston Cup.

ton Cup. McMillan said the race at Stono Ferry occupies a unique spot in the National Steeplechase Association's circuit, taking place two weeks after the Aiken Steeplechase and just one week before the Colonial Cup, the grand finale of the steeplechase season.

As with all great sporting events, there is more to the Charleston Cup than the race itself. The weekend's events include the traditional Charleston Cup Ball on Friday night, a golf tournament Saturday and then the races, four steeplechase and one flat, on Sunday. Even on race day, tailgating fashionistas flock to the parking lots for classy debauchery.

"It falls on a holiday weekend, so that should make for a good complete package for people," McMillan said. 🍷

Photos by Stephanie Smith.

Looking Good

Poem of the Week



Money

If These Walls Could Talk...

Back-to-School Fashion at Jennie Moore Elementary

Joshua, a rising 6th grader at Cario Middle, is set to make a great first impression. He wears classic khakis by O'Neil with a striped shirt and pairs it with blue Nike's. All of the young menswear was provided by Parrott Surf Shop.

*story by Stacy E. Domingo
photography by Andy Hagedon*

BACK-TO-SCHOOL FASHION CAN PRODUCE a mixed bag of excitement and angst. While a few public and private schools ease the pain by requiring students to wear uniforms or specific colors, most have vague guidelines that allow students to create their own fashion statements or fashion faux pas.

Karen Felder, principal at Jennie Moore Elementary in Mount Pleasant for the past nine years, was gracious in opening the doors of her school, providing the perfect location for Mount Pleasant Magazine to showcase the latest trends in clothing for students and educators alike.

The 2012 school year will mark the last year for the Monarchs in their current building; before long, Jennie Moore and Laing Middle School will share a 60-acre campus at the school's current site.

Mount Pleasant Magazine is thrilled to bring you these photos as we celebrate a school, built in 1953, that has produced so many memories for the residents of Mount Pleasant. If these walls could talk, they would tell stories of the highs and lows of back-to-school fashion over the past six decades.

"As an administrator, I try to dress a step above everyone else because I need to set a good example for teachers, students and parents alike," said Felder, whose career spans 31 years in Charleston County education. "I think teachers have a harder time because it is a struggle with looking young and hip – but the outfit can't be

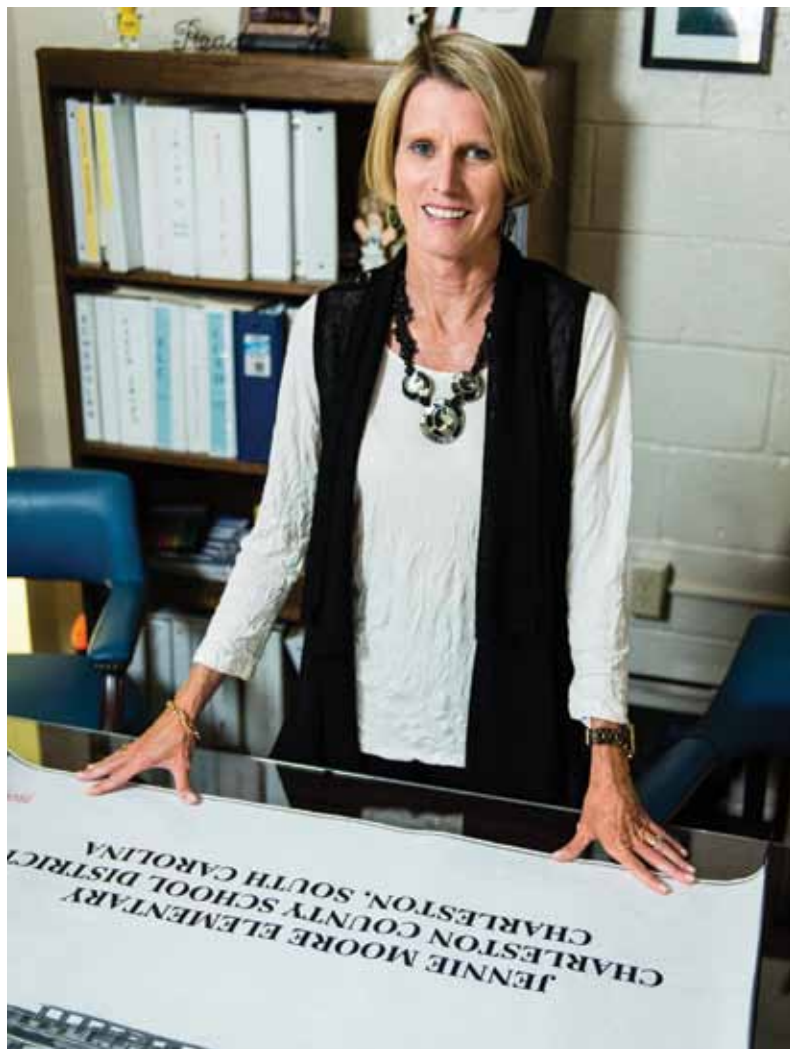
continued on page 26



(Top) Justine is wearing a Fashion Fuse elastic waist top and Match Point pants provided by Affordables and is joined by her daughter, Sophia, who wears Peaches 'N Cream. (Below) All of the girls wear clothing provided by Southern Belles.

Looking Good

continued from page 25



Jennie Moore Principal, Karen Felder is comfortable in an outfit provided by Affordables as she looks over the design plans for the future school.

delicate. Teachers have to move around the classroom and be prepared for anything, from a sick child to paint.”

Camille Bowdoin and Justine Trotta, who share a combined 21 years in elementary education, agreed.

“Teachers definitely have to dress for comfort,” they said.

All three women were dressed by Affordables, which has three locations in the Lowcountry and has been a staple of women’s clothing for many years, as well as a strong supporter of local schools. Zack Kelly, owner of Affordables, lends a helping hand by providing much-needed supplies that have been slashed from school budgets. All the donations Affordables helps collect from area businesses and retailers go directly toward purchasing school supplies.

Photography for the shoot was handled by local professional Andy Hagedon of smART Image. All of the young girls were styled by Southern Belles in Northcutt Plaza.

“The trend for young children has definitely become reminiscent of the 1970s,” said Southern Belles owner Susan Molony. “In our store, we have a lot of items that have bold patterns, peace signs and the solids that uniform students are looking for.”

Wearing uniforms doesn’t seem to be an issue for boys at Jennie Moore, but the girls have figured out ways to style their school colors.

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(Top) Brothers John and Kyle sport Vans of different colors. (Center) Summer showcases retro fashion in this Willoughby dress. (Below) Camille tosses the keys to her son for the vehicle from Morris Nissan.

“It’s all about belts, shoes, jewelry and hair bows for the girls,” explained Felder.

Summer Knight, a seventh-grader at Laing Middle School, knows exactly what she is looking for regarding fashion for the new school year.

“I’m like a lot of the girls. I like anything that is ‘hippieish,’” she explained.

For the boys, dress is much more casual, and the classic surf clothing lines are still a favorite from middle to high school.

“I like my shoes,” said seventh grader John Bowdoin, who is wearing Vans provided by the popular Parrot Surf Shop in Mount Pleasant.

Kyle, a sophomore at Anderson College majoring in Criminal Justice, also looks great sporting a Volcom shirt and Vans shoes.

“At college, the style is definitely laid back. I think some put as minimal effort as possible in their wardrobe, which is different from high school, where people dress to impress,” he pointed out.

All our models were styled and prepped on-site by the capable hands of professionals from Vanity Salon in Mount Pleasant. Kira Caudill and Myra Morgan provided the girls with playful twists and braids while the boys were pampered as well.

continued on page 28

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Looking Good

continued from page 27

“The older girls like the long, straight hair and fun braids, while many of the boys are sporting faux hawks,” Myra explained.

Apart from clothing, hair and makeup, Morris Nissan arrived at this historic photo shoot to show the ultimate in back-to-school fashion – a new car. Camille will drive to her first day of school in a new Nissan.

Back-to-school fashion comes in many forms, whether it is old, new or simply rejuvenated from the past. If your preschooler insists on wearing his

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Halloween costume again or you are at a loss when it comes to modern fashion, check out these retailers in Mount Pleasant, who will be glad to help your student start the new year in style. 🦉



(Above) This Ciara Sun Woo strapped blouse is perfect wear for a teacher. (Here) John looks great in a Volcom button shirt and denim blue shorts. The Dakine striped book bag has a handy insulated cooler pocket that also came from the Parrot Surf Shop.

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Over A Barrel In Beautiful Mount Pleasant, South Carolina

An Essay By Darrel B. Barrel

Editor's Note: Darrel, one of the many construction barrels playing an important role in Mount Pleasant's never-ending road improvement program, generously offered to compose an essay about his experiences living on and near the roads East of the Cooper. We're grateful to Darrel for his interesting perspective, which we could barrel-by get translated. We hope that you enjoy reading this piece, and, on behalf of Darrel and his fellow barrels, please be careful out there.

IT'S AN EARLY MORNING IN ALWAYS pleasant Mount Pleasant, South Carolina, and I'm suddenly jarred awake by a warm stream of water right in my eye. Unfortunately, it's not rain; it's spray from a nearby mud puddle, flung unceremoniously onto me by a passing vehicle. I get it – people around here have places to go. But is it all that necessary for them to speed through standing water, indiscriminately soaking innocent bystanders such as myself?

That's the thing about humans: They think that only they matter. But what about me and my million or so close friends? Do they ever consider how barrels feel? The other day, for example, I was enjoying a sunny, mild day and

the gentle scent of jasmine. It might have been a Sunday because I don't remember the usual flock of workers hanging around. All of sudden, my reverie was interrupted by two SUVs barely grazing each other in a line of traffic. There was no real damage, but both vehicles pulled to what passes as the side of the road these days, practically knocking my friend Barry the Barrel flat on his side. Mayhem ruled. Rather than being thankful that no one was injured – although poor Barry nearly had a heart attack – the drivers were concerned only about the condition of their precious SUVs. I mean, vehicles are inanimate objects, for Pete's sake!

"Watch where you're going!" bellowed a blond woman wearing spandex and grasping a giant cup of coffee. "You practically knocked my daughter's organic



Darrel and his friends direct traffic in Mount Pleasant.

Photos by Gary Coleman

apple juice out of her hand.”

“Well heck, if you hadn’t stopped so quickly, maybe I wouldn’t have had to look your tacky bumper stickers in the face,” retorted the other woman, wielding her gigantic handbag like a weapon.

I couldn’t believe these ladies were bickering on such a beautiful day. I tried to say something but, since human beings never listen to me, anything that emerged from my mouth would have been largely pointless. So I turned myself toward the sun, to the best of my ability, and allowed its soothing rays to reflect off my bright orangeness and shine peacefully on their faces.

“It’s so pretty outside, even with all this going on,” the handbag assassin finally relented. “I don’t think there’s been any harm done.” Sally Spandex agreed, and they both smiled.

It worked!

I haven’t always lived in Mount Pleasant. About a year ago, I rolled down the back of a truck along with my other round, brightly-colored friends, fresh from the factory. I am glad to be here; Mount Pleasant is a beautiful place, and, to be perfectly frank, if I have to spend my days and nights on the side of a well-traveled highway, I’d rather do it here than just about any other place. The weather is almost always warm, and, with the constant construction, there are always other barrels to talk with. Humans generally have little to say to me – at least nothing I can repeat here – but, once in a while, a friendly bird will drop by for conversation and even bring me a grimy french fry or something else good to eat.

All things considered, I’d like to make Mount Pleasant my permanent home. It already seems like I’ve been here forever. 🍷

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A Customer Service Pro: Ed Barbee Keeps Mount Pleasant Informed on Road Projects

WHEN A RESIDENT OR business owner in Mount Pleasant has a question about the town's ongoing road projects, Ed Barbee has an answer. As the city's transportation construction liaison officer, Barbee spends his days communicating with people, a pastime he truly loves. It's obvious

BY DENISE K. JAMES

when Barbee invites you into his office, pulls out a chair and

makes you feel right at home that he's accustomed to listening.

"Customer service is something that we all need to get back to, and it's something I grew up with," he said. "I'm a people person; I love being around people."

Barbee, a native of Charlotte, North Carolina, has worked with the town of Mount Pleasant since 2000, after eight years with the city of Charleston. He's been a purchasing agent for more than 35 years, helping taxpayer dollars go where they're most needed.

"I take better care of the city's money than my own," he joked. "Basically, a purchasing agent seeks out the best products for the best price. We're like the city's shoppers."

In his current job, Barbee enjoys blending his knowledge about Mount Pleasant's fiscal needs with his knack for communicating with residents.

"I'm not exactly sure how I got this job," he said. "Mayor Swails approached me and said he needed someone. ... and I have thick skin. If people are upset about something, I show concern about the situation and help them through it."

Barbee believes that Mount Pleasant and the rest of East Cooper will benefit from the roadway projects at hand, and his optimism and sense of humor help residents see it the same way.

"I got a call from this guy who said the new guardrails were 'ugly and ridiculous,'" he remembered. "I told the guy I thought the exact same thing! He was caught off guard by my honesty, and we both started laughing. Then I explained to him how the guardrails are necessary. I drive these roads, too; I know how people feel. And I empathize with them."

The three different projects currently underway in Mount Pleasant include widening Johnnie Dodds Boulevard, widening U.S. 17 North from the Isle of Palms Connector to Darrell Creek and making

improvements on the Interstate 526 overpass.

"The 526 exit used to dump you out onto 17, which didn't bode well for traffic on the highway," Barbee explained. "With the new plan, folks will be able to drive straight over 17 and exit right behind Towne Centre on

Hungryneck Boulevard. It'll be near shopping and the beach – which is where a lot of people want to be."

Besides keeping Mount Pleasant residents and business owners up-to-date, Barbee stays current on just about everything that happens concerning the town's road-improvement projects.

"I stay involved with the team as a whole," he said. "I keep a good rapport with the contractors, with the design team and everyone involved. I also work with media outlets like newspapers and television stations."

"Sounds like you're the face of the whole operation," I remarked.

"We've all worked to put a positive spin on the projects," Barbee replied. "As with any major city change, there have been skeptics. But traffic hasn't been greatly interrupted, due to a lot of the work being done at night. Some businesses have unfortunately struggled, but we try to help them understand that, in the long run, this will be advantageous for everyone involved. Everything should be completed in one year

"My favorite thing about Mount Pleasant is definitely the people. ..."

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Photo by Aaron Smith.

and Mount Pleasant will be in better shape.”

Barbee doesn't live in Mount Pleasant but said the city “has been good to him,” and he enjoys spending time here even when he isn't working.

“My favorite thing about Mount Pleasant is definitely the people,” he said. “The city and its people

work so harmoniously together. I'm proud of how the town of Mount Pleasant has taken such an interest in the citizens – providing infrastructure, recreational facilities, places to relax and enjoy the beauty East of the Cooper. I'd have to say that the city administrators are visionaries.”

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Playing

The Boys of Fall The Mount Pleasant Recreation Department



FOOTBALL IS A time-honored tradition throughout the United States. In towns and cities large and small, the roar of the crowd can be heard in every corner of the country and everywhere in between. It's no different in Mount Pleasant, where the Recreation Department provides a place to play for nearly 65 teams and a way to participate for 170 volunteer coaches.

"We have a complete football program that begins with flag football that teaches the fundamentals of the game and tackle football which introduces pads," said Jimmy Millar, Athletic Division chief and former football coach. "There are over 980 children who participate in our football programs, and we are very proud of that."

Parents should plan to enroll their children early – signup starts in July – and should expect equipment, which generally lasts for two seasons, depending on the child's growth, to cost around \$200.

Before the start of the season, the Wando High School coaching staff

holds a clinic for volunteer coaches. The games kick off with a jamboree at Wando Stadium; all team members and cheerleaders are introduced on the field, then the teams scrimmage for one quarter.

Flag football is for children ages 5 through 8, broken into two age groups, while tackle football takes in four age groups: small fry, mite, JV middle school and varsity middle school.

"Each year, there is a local NFL Punt, Pass and Kick competition for the players," Millar said. "We also have all-star teams, and last year our 9U and 12U teams won state championships. Since 2005, Mount Pleasant has won 11 state championships."

"I grew up in this program so I know our children have a great situation when it comes to facilities, the program and the people running the program," said Millar, a former Mount Pleasant Recreation Department coach and player. "Overall, we have a great football program with a dedicated staff and committed coaches and players." 🏈

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*story by Denise K. James
photos by Adam Chandler*

The Shingler-Creger library is a vibrant place to read away the day.

THE OLD VILLAGE HAS A REPUTATION for being one of the loveliest areas in Mount Pleasant, and people come from far and wide to find out for themselves if that rumor holds true. The Home, Garden & Art Tour, which takes place each spring, is a labor of love thanks to a group of local residents who take on the occasion and the cause with enthusiasm.

“We’re a strictly volunteer committee,” said Polly Player, who has lived in the Old Village for more than 30 years. “The tour began in 2008, and I’ve been helping out

since 2007, when we initially got together and decided to have a tour the following year.”

The Home, Garden & Art Tour benefits the local area’s Red Cross chapter, an organization that several committee members have served.

“Because a lot of us already lived in the Old Village, it made sense,” said Player. “Neighbors encouraged each other to help out for the cause.”

Committee members work throughout a good part of the year, attending monthly meetings between autumn and spring.

“We begin planning in September,” said Joan Brown,

another committee member who once served on the Red Cross board. “And we finally wrap up in May, when we evaluate how the tour went for that year.”

“Sometimes there are meetings slightly more often than once per month, depending on subcommittees,” said Player.

Each year’s tour tends to have a theme and focuses on a certain section of the Village so visitors will have no problem walking from home to home and to other sites that are often part of the show, including churches, parks and even post offices. Some homes make the tour for their spectacular

gardens alone.

“The Village is such a diverse, historical place – and houses are still being built,” Player said. “The tour reflects the evolution of the area, as well as the variety of people and generations who reside in it. We highlight the neighborhood’s growth.”

“The houses are each different – they’re not in the same categories,” said Brown. “Some were built in the 1800s; some were built that very year.”

Though they are held the same weekend, committee members intentionally keep the tour separate from the city of Charleston’s home tour,

although they said most people enjoy the opportunity to attend both.

“We didn’t want to overlap with the home tour in downtown Charleston when we decided to start this one – that tour has been going on much longer,” said Brown. “It made sense to have ours on the Sunday afternoon of the same spring weekend so that people can do the one in Charleston on Saturday and ours on Sunday.”

“A lot of people visit the Lowcountry just for these home tours,” Player remarked. “They’ve become very popular.”

If the idea of planning a home



Top left, (clockwise): The Shingler-Creger kitchen is filled with natural light. **Right:** The Thomas backyard invites a leisurely evening with friends. **Inset:** The McClain living room is perfect for fireside conversation.

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tour is appealing, you can volunteer to help, even if you don't live in the Old Village.

"Everyone is always welcome, not just Old Village homeowners," said Brown. "Our group is made up of all ages and all genders. The only real criterion is that you're willing to work hard."


Brown and Player agreed that the months of meeting and planning are rewarded the afternoon in April when the tour reaches its successful conclusion for the year.

"Going on the tour ourselves and seeing what we've worked on for so long – the beautiful houses, the gardens – is a wonderful feeling," said Brown. 🐚




Above: The Shingler-Creger porch invokes life on the coast.
Below: The Thomas front room keeps the décor chic and modern.








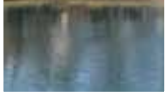

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THE FLORA AND FAUNA OF THE Mount Pleasant area will flourish now and in the future because of the work John Girault is doing today.

Girault is the executive director and only paid employee of the Mount Pleasant Land Conservancy, a volunteer-driven organization whose mission is “to enhance the quality of life for all East Cooper residents through education and preservation of open space by promoting protection, acquisition and stewardship of our land resources.”

The executive director, who has held the job since 2008, said the MPLC focuses on urban areas of Charles-

BY BRIAN SHERMAN

ton County, “preserving the small nooks and crannies,” while leaving larger projects for organizations such as the Lowcountry Open Land Trust.

“We work to preserve small parcels that aren’t necessarily on anyone else’s radar,” Girault explained. “We’ll look at a single tree.”

That doesn’t mean that the Land Conservancy won’t get involved with properties that have lots of trees. At Oakland Plantation, on the north side of Mount Pleasant, the Gregorie family granted the MPLC a conservation easement on 132 acres, restricting future use of the land even if it is sold. Such an arrangement works out well for the landowner, who gets a tax deduction, and for the people of Mount Pleasant, who can enjoy the land in its natural state – forever. Girault pointed out that the Oakland property is not open to the general public, “serving as a kind of amenity” for the people who use the nearby KOA campground. Local school groups visit, and the MPLC holds one of its fundraisers there, a 5k run and oyster roast.

Once the MPLC receives a conservation easement from a property owner, Girault monitors the use of the land, making sure the terms of the agreement aren’t breached.

“If it’s a planned urban development, there’s no guarantee that in 20 years they won’t come back and say they really need the land for a shopping center,” he said. “If there is a conservation easement through a land trust like the MPLC, we’re going to fight for it.”

According to Girault, the MPLC is made up of members of the community who strive to preserve the natural character of Mount Pleasant. Among those concerned citizens is Bill Miller, who retired as director of planning for Charleston County in 2000 and now serves as chair of the MPLC board of directors.

“I’m involved because I’m trying to give back to the Mount Pleasant community through what I’ve learned

during my 31 years in public service,” Miller commented. “People who are interested in preserving open space, views and scenery in Mount Pleasant should support the organization.”

The MPLC reaches beyond the town’s limits, to the rest of East Cooper and even to the other side of Charleston. The organization has procured money for three projects under the Greenbelt Small Landowner Program. Through the MPLC’s efforts, a 3.7-acre lot in West Ashley that once served as an elementary school will be converted into an urban horticultural center by the Charleston Parks Conservancy; 3.84 acres in the Phillips Community in Mount Pleasant will become a community center, nature trail and cultural heritage interpretive park; and four acres off Hamlin Road in Mount Pleasant will feature a nature trail and a celebration of African-American history and culture.

The MPLC recently reached an agreement to permanently protect from development two pieces of land on Sullivan’s Island. A 3.09-acre open field at the end of Station 19 features access to a tidal creek that connects with the Intracoastal Waterway, while a .48-acre plot south of Station 9, a

wooded lot, was once the landing area for the original Pitt Street Bridge.

“The town has partnered with the MPLC to spare these properties from development while preserving their aesthetic, educational, ecological and environmental value for public use and enjoyment,” Girault commented.

The education aspect of the MPLC is evident behind

*“It’s about quality of life
for humans as well as
for the habitat. ...”*



Among the Whitesides Elementary School students who have visited the nearby Mount Pleasant Land Conservancy marsh-view trail are Grace Cooper, left, and Camryn Carter.

Photo by Beth McCall.

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the town's Waterworks building, where Girault's office is located. The MPLC will be placing interpretive markers throughout the 57-acre city-owned tract, which includes a dog park and a hiking trail and is home to an array of animals and birds. Visitors can catch a glimpse of ospreys, eagles and painted buntings, and the MPLC partnered with nearby Whitesides Elementary School to establish a butterfly garden.

"We are a local land trust, and we're community driven," Girault commented. "We want to be guided by what the community wants us to preserve."

The MPLC's roots were planted firmly in Mount Pleasant's fertile soil in 2000, when a committee of councilmen and local citizens was tasked with looking at ways to preserve the town's green space. Mount Pleasant first allocated funds for the Mount Pleasant Open Space Foundation in 2002, and the organization gained non-profit status under its current name in 2004. Today, the MPLC is a free-standing entity; the town, which once controlled its budget, board and bylaws, granted the organization its independence in 2009.

With independence came the responsibility to be self-sufficient; today, the MPLC survives through donations and fundraising events. In addition to February's Race & Roast at Oakland Plantation, the MPLC hosts a Paddle 'N Party on Shem Creek in the fall, featuring barbecue, beer, a silent auction, kayaking and a sanctioned stand-up paddleboard race from Shem Creek into Charleston Harbor and back.

Though it is Girault's job to preserve green spaces in and around Mount Pleasant for future generations, he realizes that some land must be used to build homes, schools, roads and shopping centers.

"We're not going to save every green space. There has to be a balance. We're not out to stop all development," he remarked. "We work with developers."

"It's about quality of life for humans as well as for the habitat," he added. "We're preserving green spaces for future generations. What we do isn't for us; it's for our grandkids. I'll be long gone, but these green spaces will be here forever." 🍷



Paddle 'N Party on Shem Creek is among the Mount Pleasant Land Conservancy's biggest fundraisers. The annual event features barbecue, beer, a silent auction, kayaking and a sanctioned stand-up paddleboard race.

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Photo by Ryan Wilcox

Casserole Queen:

One Woman's Mission to Make Cooking Simple

AMANDA VAUGHN HAGGERTY IS at home in the kitchen. Whether she's putting together brunch for friends or a quiet dinner for her husband, she easily whisks from sink to stove. Yet she realizes that while she loves being in the kitchen, not everyone finds making dinner to be such a delightful task.

BY HOLLY FISHER

So Haggerty has set out to make cooking easy, accessible and delicious for all, and she's doing it through her website, CasseroleQueen.com.

"If I can make someone's life easier so they can spend more time with their family, I am all about doing that," said the Louisiana native.

It all started last fall when Haggerty had a group of girlfriends over for brunch at her Daniel Island apartment. They all wanted her recipes, but Haggerty cooked with the "pinch of this and dash of that" method, so she didn't have formal recipes to

share with her friends.

Their request did prompt her to start measuring the ingredients and writing down her recipes. Later she decided to share her culinary creations beyond her circle of friends and launched CasseroleQueen.com.

Haggerty spends Sundays cooking for the week. She usually makes a casserole so she and husband Cameron – official taste tester and dishwasher – have leftovers for the week.

Once Haggerty has perfected a recipe, she snaps photos of the cooking process with her iPhone and writes out the recipe, along with a story about the dish for the website. It might be a piece of family history or the tale of how she came up with the idea to make a bacon French toast casserole for her husband's birthday.

Haggerty promotes her site through Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn, and family and friends pass it around. City Social, a magazine in Baton Rouge,



Amanda Vaughn Haggerty wants people to look at a recipe and make it their own.

Photos courtesy of Amanda Vaughn Haggerty.

Louisiana, even did an article on Haggerty. Though the website is a hobby for now, Haggerty dreams of turning it into a career.

“I love sharing and entertaining,” she said.

She imagines opening a storefront where people can buy ready-made meals and wants to write a cookbook so she can continue to share her recipes.

People often are intimidated by cooking, especially recipes that have multiple ingredients and several steps, so Haggerty purposely keeps her recipes simple. An avid grocery shopper, she outlines exactly what to buy – a can of this or a bag of that. She incorporates vegetables in many of her dishes – often sneaking them in, which is perfect for kids and picky adults.

She uses the Food Network for inspiration, looking at what those chefs do, simplifying it and making it her own.

“I make it more affordable or less time-consuming,” she said.

Her overall style is Southern, incorporating the tips and tricks learned from her mother and grandmother. Even the idea of cooking ahead for the week is somewhat hereditary. Growing up in a single-parent household, Haggerty would

help her mom get ready for the week on Sundays.

“If you don’t have to cook during the week, it’s easier and more affordable,” she said.

Her grandmother taught her to experiment with flavors, so Haggerty will take a combination such as sun-dried tomatoes and artichokes and craft a recipe around it. Sometimes she just uses what’s in the pantry, or she might take a main course and repurpose the concept as a dip.

“I want the message to be that you can look at a recipe and make it your own. Don’t be afraid to cook,” she said. “I want people to experiment. If you fail, try something different the next time.”

Haggerty is delighted when people post questions about her recipes or ask about how to swap out one ingredient for another. It fulfills the purpose of her site – to help others.

Recently a reader posted a comment that she had tried a recipe for her family and there was nothing left after the meal.

“I burst into tears. It was the best feeling ever,” Haggerty said. “I have to figure out a way to do this all the time.” 🍷

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DINNER WITH FRIENDS

Personal Chefs Bring a Gourmet Experience into Your Home

STORY BY DENISE K. JAMES
PHOTOGRAPHY BY TANYA BOGGS

WHEN YOU GO OUT FOR AN EXCEPTIONAL DINNER IN THE Lowcountry, you aren't likely to order the same ol' dishes you make at home each evening. The purpose of having someone else do the cooking is experiencing exceptional flavor and out of the ordinary service.

These days, you don't even need to go out to a restaurant – you can stay home and enjoy all the incredible attributes of a remarkable dining experience.

Don't worry if that sounds too good to be true or if you're uncertain of your own ability to whip up the kind of gourmet grub found in Mount Pleasant's swankier establishments. The personal chef trend sweeping East Cooper makes it easy to enjoy the most sensational dinner of your life in the comfort of your own dining room.

When Iva and Dick McDermott decided to host an intimate, delicious dinner with a few friends, they called their favorite personal chef,



Pete Twomey of Islands Catering.

“Pete has cooked for us before, and he’s really excellent,” said Iva. “We’ve had his she crab soup, ribs, coconut shrimp. ... everything has been great. It’s fun just to watch him do the cooking.”

The night the McDermotts hosted their gathering, Pete and Juli Twomey, his wife and business partner, brought their expertise and their culinary enthusiasm right into the couple’s kitchen. They were armed

with cookware, dishes and fresh, local ingredients, and Iva, the most relaxed of hostesses, didn’t have to lift a finger.

“We don’t have a special occasion this evening; we’re just friends getting together for a good meal and a nice time,” Iva said.

“This is the only time I remember using real silver at your house,” guest Mike Wisneski added with a chuckle.

While the hosts and their friends relaxed with a glass of wine, Pete

and Juli set about creating a delectable menu: Louisiana barbecued shrimp with sourdough bread, chilled cucumber and dill soup, baby greens with fresh strawberries and pecans, a filet wrapped with bacon and stuffed with crab (seriously), plus bananas Foster for dessert. The meal was put together lovingly, one phase at a time. The guests were able to watch their dinners come to fruition.

“Those are some mighty attractive shrimp,” I said, watching Pete fold



their tails gently into the homemade barbecue sauce.

“They were just swimming yesterday,” he replied with a grin. “I don’t think there is anything better than a Carolina shrimp.”

The guests raved over their first course, sopping their plates with the crusty bread. While they ate, Pete and Juli assembled salads and soup for the second course. I asked Pete what food is his favorite to make.

“I can’t say – it’s like picking a favorite child,” he mused, delicately placing strawberries into their leafy beds. “I would say my influences are mostly Mediterranean and Italian. I enjoy cooking with wine and beer, mustard, and garlic.”

Unlike the McDermotts, their dinner guests – the Wisneskis and the Watsons – had never attended a personal chef party. They were delighted at the opportunity to watch an experienced chef cook them a magnificent meal.

“This is our first time coming to something like this,” said Katie Watson. “It’s exciting to consider a nice meal made in your own house, one you don’t have to prepare or even shop for. So many people spend a lot of money going out to eat at nice restaurants. But this is definitely more

intimate and cost-effective.”

Twomey said most of his menus are a collaboration of what the hosts want and what he suggests.

“We always talk about it, and very rarely will people just say ‘make whatever you think,’” Twomey said. “I try



Even the menu is first class when Pete and Juli Twomey make dinner in your home.

to steer the hosts in the direction of whatever is fresh at the farmers market – whatever’s good that season.”

The guests watched as Twomey created a whiskey peppercorn sauce for the filets. The whiskey caught fire in the pan, lighting up their eyes. I tested the sauce, dipping the corner of a bread slice into the pan. It was irresistible.

“I would take a bath in this,” I declared.

The guests barely noticed my comment; they were too engrossed in their own food euphoria. And let’s face it: If you’ve lived in this area any length of time, you’ve had an amazing dinner or two. I suspect the comfort of the McDermott’s friendly household is what made the meal better than a visit to any restaurant.

“I worked in restaurants for 20 years, and this was the natural progression of my career,” remarked Twomey. “Personal chefing is a great thing; everyone can enjoy themselves within a relaxed atmosphere. We essentially let people be guests at their own parties.”

The rich, sweet aroma of bananas Foster rounded out the cooking portion of the evening.

The Twomeys scooped the caramelized bananas into frosted goblets filled with vanilla ice cream.

“Hiring a personal chef is also a good option for large groups who are renting homes during vacation,” Twomey said, wielding the scooper. “It’s tough to select a restaurant for a group that large – restaurants are busy. This is a way to bring chef quality and service into your home.”

He’s not kidding about the service. Even I was surprised that no

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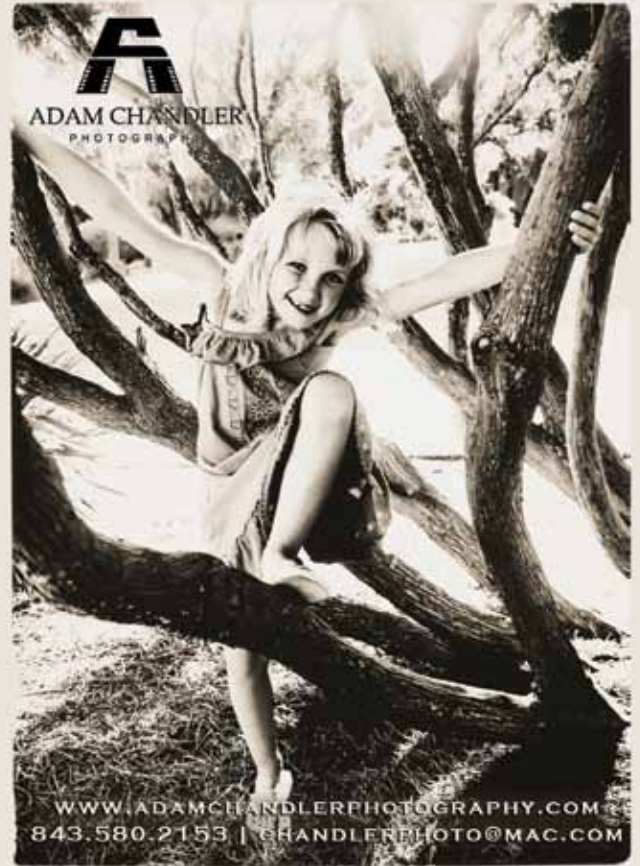
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one at the table had to get up for a napkin or a wine refill once dinner began; the chef and his lovely assistant handled everything.

By the end of the meal, the guests were sighing contentedly and stretching

out their legs beneath the dining room table. The Twomeys set about tidying up the McDermott kitchen – that’s right; they even do the cleaning up.

“This has been absolutely sensational,” everyone gushed. “Everything

was delicious.”

“We’re definitely trying this again,” said Katie Watson.

“Speaking of that,” her husband, Matt, piped up, “What are you doing on my birthday?” 🍷

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TASTE OF CHARLESTON

chart

*story by
Amy Kehm*

*photos courtesy of the
CHART Group for the
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HOW SWEET IT IS. AND HOW SPICY, SAUCY, tangy and tasty as well. The annual Taste of Charleston, now a three-day affair, is set for Sept. 28 through Sept. 30, with the main event hosted by Mount Pleasant’s historic Boone Hall Plantation.

Now in its 32nd year, the brainchild of the Charleston Restaurant Association will mark year number two of its partnership with Southern Living magazine.

“It’s an event like none other,” said Charleston Restaurant Association Special Events Manager Monique Semper-Flynn.

Each year, Boone Hall Plantation is “transformed into a sea of culinary enchantment” according to the CRA. The organization expects 10,000 to 13,000 people to show up at the main event, with about 80 tents set on five acres of green space behind Boone Hall’s main house.

Visitors will treat their palates to sample-sized creations from about 40 casual and fine dining restaurants, as well as food trucks. In addition, guests may visit wine and beer vendors, enjoy live entertainment, watch ice carving, pop into the children’s area and cheer on participants in fun contests such as the crowd favorite waiters’ race. Local servers and restaurateurs will pour wine into two glasses. They must then hold onto the glasses, without spilling the wine, as they navigate an obstacle course of hay bales, tires, swinging doors and the like.

“Oh, they love it. They absolutely love it – especially when they spill it,” Semper-Flynn laughed.

According to Semper-Flynn, the Taste of Charleston has the highest restaurant

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participation of any local event. The idea was sparked 32 years ago by CRA leaders who were grateful for the support they had received from Lowcountry diners.

“The board of directors wanted to get together and give back to the community,” Semper-Flynn explained.

The festival began as a way to showcase a multitude of Charleston-area culinary treasures as well as raise money for community causes. This year, a portion of the Taste of Charleston proceeds will go to the Hollings Cancer Center, the Ronald McDonald House, the Charleston County Schools Science Materials Resource Center and Hospitality Heroes, which offers help to hospitality employees and their families who are impacted by medical hardships.

The event also helps fund scholarships to the Culinary Institute of Charleston, College of Charleston and the Art Institute of Charleston.

Graze, a Mount Pleasant restaurant, will participate in Taste of Charleston for the second year.

“What I really love about the Taste of Charleston is that it is an event that really highlights the talents and restaurants of the Lowcountry,” said Graze co-owner Bradford Bobitt. “It is really all about the Charleston food scene. It is a family-friendly event that allows everyone to take part in the event.”

Last year, Graze served up short rib tacos, and, the next day, customers flocked to the restaurant for more. Bobbit noted that the marketing potential at the Taste of Charleston is significant for most area restaurants.

“The focus for the event is to highlight all of the restaurants and chefs in the Charleston area,” said Bobbit. “The event doesn’t just focus on the restaurants with the big names. The little guys are allowed to participate on the same level as the big boys.”

Red’s Ice House, located on the banks of Mount

Pleasant’s Shem Creek, has participated in the Taste of Charleston for many years. Its employees often pitch a tent and cook appetizers such as bacon-wrapped scallops and friend oysters.



“It’s a good opportunity for a bunch of restaurants to get together for people who live around here and for those from out of town to see what Charleston has to offer,” noted manager Jeremy Cundiss.

Those out-of-towners have begun showing up at the Taste of Charleston in increasing numbers. According to the CRA, before its partnership with Southern Living was sealed, 24 percent to 25 percent of the event’s attendees were visitors to the Lowcountry. After just a year, that figure has risen to 36 percent to 37 percent. For the CRA, more participation means more fun and more money for local organizations.

“We really believe in our charities and we really believe in bringing people

together to eat and drink and celebrating the food scene,” said Semper-Flynn.

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Drink Better



BEEER

CRAFT BOTTLES AND CANS, JUST CLAP YOUR HANDS

*story by Denise K. James
illustration by Anthony Macchio
photos courtesy of Bottles*



AFTER A HARD DAY AS MANAGING EDITOR, nothing unwinds me like a cold glass of beer. There's something about that first sip, the act of wiping foam from the edges of your mouth, that makes you realize that life is not the dire situation you thought it was hours ago while sitting at your desk.

I must confess that the benevolent power of beer cannot be found with typical domestics – though they do have their place in this world. If you're truly looking to be healed, try indulging in a craft beer – and you won't have to leave Mount Pleasant to find a good one. In fact, I learned that you can spend the whole day East of the Cooper, sampling beers no one has heard of. Whether you're looking to pick up an assorted six-pack for dinner at home or you're meeting friends for happy hour, Mount Pleasant's craft beer scene is growing like yeast – pun intended.

My beer expedition started at Bottles on Coleman, where general manager Jason Selby showed me the vast number of choices to pick from for a custom six-pack. While we walked down the dense beer aisles, Selby waxed philosophical about the beer scene in Mount P.

"There's an extreme craft beer phenomenon in East Cooper right now," he

said. “Everyone is realizing that beer pairs well with food just the way wine does, but you don’t have to open an entire bottle like you do with wine. You can grab a single brew from a sixer and save the rest. Also, with beer, you can follow the seasons. Breweries create special releases for different times of year, and people look forward to that.”

One of the cool things about Bottles is that the beers are grouped alphabetically by the name of the brewery, which makes it easy to spot your favorites. If you’re more of a do-it-yourself type, you can even buy the supplies to make beer at home.

“We have kits for all levels of expertise,” Selby remarked. “If you just want to add water and – presto! – instant beer, then we have that, but we also have the supplies for people starting from scratch.”

I had lunch at the Coleman Public House, where I sampled a few picks from their extensive draft beer list. When the weather cools down, I’ll definitely be ordering a full size of the Left Hand Milk Stout, which is creamy, delicious and brewed in Colorado. No matter what you choose off the food menu, the beer menu has something to match it.

“We started off not knowing how the public would receive craft beer,”

said Coleman Public House’s owner, Brian Tanner. “But the reality is that a lot of people in Mount Pleasant enjoy good beer. We have 16 taps, which we rotate a lot and try to keep in balance, style-wise. Put it this way: If I couldn’t sell this beer, I wouldn’t pour this beer.”



Bottles offers a vast number of choices from which to assemble a custom six-pack.

Indeed, the taps at Coleman Public House are varied. While I was there, I sampled the Leffe Brune, a smooth, darker variety, as well as its sister beer, the Leffe Blonde. I tried the Avery Maharaja Double IPA, which was a bit more hoppy than I can usually handle, but I was a good sport about it. A word to the ladies: Lipstick or gloss can make the beers taste differently. To take a true taste test, it helps to start with a clean palate and order food afterward.

If you want to drink beer and shop for beer simultaneously, The House of Brews on Ben Sawyer is the place to be. I could have seriously spent all day and all night there; it’s like being at home except with a bigger, better refrigerator. Rob Davis, the owner, has the kind of personality that makes you want to sit at the bar all day long and discuss everything from politics to travel, which we did. There’s no television, so patrons actually use their conversational skills. For a blabbermouth like me, it was heaven. I made friends with just about all the beer drinkers who visited; craft beer fans are just about the friendliest people on earth. And everyone orders something different, so there’s no squabbling.

“I think beer is a great social lubricant; when people share beers, it’s a good thing,” said Davis. “Beer is a hearty, warm beverage, and it makes people feel that same way.”

continued on page 86

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A Life of Laughter

SAM DRUMMOND BRINGS HUMOR TO MOUNT PLEASANT

story by Denise K. James

IHANG OUT WITH A LOT OF PEOPLE IN COFFEE shops, but almost none of them are clowns. So when I met Sam Drummond for an afternoon latte, I couldn't wait to ask about his fascinating life as a professional gut-buster. On first glance, Drummond seemed like your everyday, mild-mannered East Cooper gentleman. But as soon as he began talking about his adventures, I knew his life has been quite the, uh, circus.

"When I was a young child, I would go to Christmas parades in Greenwood (right outside of where I grew up in '96, a small town in South Carolina) and feel particularly drawn to the clowns," said Drummond. "I would tug on my mother's coattails and say to her, 'Mama, I am going to become a clown.'"

Drummond's aspirations became more serious in college after Halloween weekend inspired him to put on clown makeup.

"Everyone loved it; I had always been a class clown," he said. "That was the moment of realization for me. I started looking into attending the Clown College."

For those of us who had no idea that a clown went to a special school, the fact that the Ringling Brothers and Barnum & Bailey Clown College in Venice, Florida, was able to choose from among more than 4,000 applicants might come as a surprise. Drummond and 60 other lucky clowns made the cut, and about half of them eventually were offered contracts with Ringling Brothers.

"It was a course that lasted 10 weeks, and it was both day and night," Drummond recalled. "The competition was awfully stiff, but I already had a few circus skills under my belt, like juggling and riding my unicycle."

At night, the clowns diligently studied classic comedies – Drummond's personal favorite is "The Three Stooges" – and worked on making their own props. By day they learned about choreography, makeup and movement.

"After school ended, I hit the road with the Ringling Brothers Circus," said Drummond. "It was an exciting five years – very demanding. Everyone called me 'The Count' because I never went



Sam Drummond

to sleep. We had tight schedules; at times we would work something called a six-pack of shows, which meant three on Saturday and three on Sunday. They were tiring.”

During his time with Ringling Brothers, Drummond perfected his act and his trademark look of a blacked-out front tooth and a hat with his name, “SAM,” stitched across it.

“I still use that same look,” he said. “When I left Ringling Brothers, I did several festivals around the United States and Canada. I traveled to Japan, England and France.”

Drummond’s specific clown look is known as an “Auguste” style, which means white around the eyes and mouth. Other clown styles include the classic all white face and character clowns.

“A character clown can be dressed as anything, like a hobo,” he explained. “They aren’t necessarily in a traditional clown outfit.”

Drummond admitted that he sometimes encounters negativity about clowns and even fear of clowns, but he said he hopes to dispel these misguided emotions.

“Clowns exist to make people laugh and feel happy,” he

proclaimed. “There have been evil clowns in horror movies and fiction that gave us a bad name, but it’s all wrong.”

Right now, Drummond enjoys his life of clowning around the Lowcountry. He participates in everything from festivals and events to children’s parties.

“My newest gig is a children’s show at Wild Dunes,” he said. “It’s great for families who are vacationing. The kids can enjoy my act at the amphitheater while the parents go out and relax.”

Drummond keeps in touch with the friends he has made in the world of clowns over the years.

“We clowns have our own tightknit community,” he said. “We just had our 40th reunion in Wisconsin for Ringling Brothers and Barnum & Bailey Clown College. We had another one in Las Vegas, which was fun. We all keep in touch.”

When Drummond and I parted ways in the parking lot of the coffee shop, he dug into his vehicle to give me photos and posters reminiscent of his outlandish life. A pie tin tumbled out of the back seat and came to rest between our feet on the pavement.

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Mount Pleasant, Get Out Your Opera Glass



Photos courtesy of Opera Charleston

“**T**HERE’S NOTHING WRONG WITH doing traditional opera, if that’s not all we’re doing.”

So said Scott Flaherty, founder and artistic director of Opera Charleston, the newest entry on the Charleston music scene.

Opera Charleston is the result of conversations between Flaherty, a resident of Hamlin Plantation in Mount Pleasant, and his longtime colleague David Templeton, who also lives in Mount Pleasant and is director of Opera/Musical Theatre at the College of Charleston. They envisioned a new kind of opera experience, one that would appeal more to novice opera-goers than to traditionalists and, even more radically, that would pay for itself through ticket sales rather than through donations, the normal way opera companies are funded.

At the same time, Flaherty wanted a superior level of performance.

“We had to open with a well-known title and have an important product to present to Charleston because Charleston is an important city. We needed voices and a performance of international standard,” he said.

Opera Charleston accomplished that goal in its inaugural production, Georges Bizet’s “Carmen,” which was

staged at the Memminger Auditorium for two performances in March. Flaherty took a creative approach to budget, staffing and resources: No one was paid for producing or administering the production. He used the Charleston Symphony Orchestra and found superior local voices to fill almost all the roles. For Carmen, he persuaded international star Denyce Graves to come to Charleston. Carmen is Graves’ signature role; she has sung it all over the world to enormous acclaim. The result was a triumph.

“We bet the house on the gate,” Flaherty said.

He wasn’t disappointed: The opera covered its production costs through ticket sales because the two performances played to capacity audiences. It is highly unusual for any opera production to end in the black, and Flaherty is proud that they accomplished this feat the first time out. He intends to

continue collaborating with entities such as the Charleston Symphony and to think outside the box for new solutions to the challenges of staging opera.

Flaherty wants to kick off the 2012-2013 schedule with a solo concert recital by Graves in the fall and stage “Aida” in the spring of 2013 for the 200th anniversary of composer Giuseppe Verdi’s birth. He’s looking to form an ongoing association with the Domingo-Cafritz Young Artist Program at the Washington National Opera, to draw on



Scott Flaherty, a Mount Pleasant resident, is the founder and artistic director of Opera Charleston.

BY SUSAN SLOATE

young singers trained and supported by star tenor Placido Domingo. Flaherty also hopes Domingo will direct an opera in Charleston.

In addition, he's thinking about commissioning original works, including an opera based on the speeches of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. for the spring of 2013, the 45th anniversary of King's assassination.

"I want to create things that resound with new audiences now," he said.

Flaherty welcomes volunteers who want to be the backbone of the opera's administration and eventually become paid staffers. He's looking to use not only the Memminger again but also the Dock Street Theatre and the Gaillard Auditorium for a lavish production of "La Boheme."

"Opera has become about the intellectual experience," Flaherty explained. "I want it to be about the visceral experience."

If his company's debut is any indication, he will get his wish: Opera Charleston will continue to make old music sound new. 🍷



Cast photos of Carmen in Opera Charleston's debut production.

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Harbor Breeze

STEVE JUDY, OWNER OF MOUNT Pleasant's new Harbor Breeze, created a menu that pairs well with the restaurant's relaxing atmosphere. "We're in a laid-back location – right off the bridge and beside the harbor – and we needed the cuisine to go with it," said Judy. "We've concentrated on a fresh, locally-inspired menu."

Peruse the Harbor Breeze selections and you'll see all your favorites – tacos, burgers, salads prepared with local produce and fresh seafood.

"I collaborated with our lead chef, Matt Riley, and we decided simple but delicious fare would be best," said Judy.

A mainstay in the Charleston food and beverage community, Riley was previously at Hank's Seafood in downtown Charleston. Likewise, Harbor Breeze's general manager, Chuck Isenberg, came aboard after a stint at the 17 North Roadside Kitchen. With these masterminds behind the menu, it was destined to exude flair.

And the flair is local for Harbor Breeze, no matter what item you order. Even the decadent desserts are served with a "cold glass of Hickory Hill milk," according to the menu. I tried the milk; it's delicious and refreshing.

"Our milk is from Edgefield, S.C., and it's exclusive to our restaurant," commented Judy as I carefully erased my white mustache. "We don't buy frozen food at all. Our shrimp are caught in the Carolinas; our tomatoes are from Wadmalaw Island."

For lunch I had the tempura-fried grouper taco with tangy crumbles of blue cheese, cabbage and a honey balsamic reduction. It was satisfying, with an interesting symphony of flavors. Tacos are a la carte, so come hungry and order a

few different kinds.

If you drop by for cocktails after work, the list is a pleasing blend of drinks. But if you're more in the mood for a beer, go ahead and order it; it'll be frosty.

"We have exceptionally cold beer. Our six taps pull from the freezer," said Judy. "We also keep our bottled beer on ice."

The beer selection includes a few crafts from breweries such as Holy City and Fat Tire, as well as domestic favorites.

As for the wine list, it's mostly Californian, except that Harbor Breeze also carries its own label in cabernet and chardonnay varieties. I'm not a wine drinker unless food is involved, so I asked Judy what he usually sips with dinner.

"I like all of the wines, really, since we personally selected them," he said. "My favorite pairing is probably the Acacia pinot noir with the pork chop. Our pork chop is probably my favorite entrée; it's tender on the bone and truly awesome. If you're more of a beef person, I suggest the Canyon Road cabernet paired with the skirt steak."

Other plans for Harbor Breeze include a Sunday Brunch – complete with mimosas and bloody marys – and occasional live entertainment, as well as private parties.

"We're in the old Point Grill location, and we've renovated it completely," said Judy. "We're offering the additional room for private events."

Speaking of events, Harbor Breeze's catering is an excellent option for any celebration, from a reunion to a birthday blowout.

"Our off-site catering has really taken off. And we offer all kinds of food or beverages, not necessarily what is on the restaurant menu," said Judy. "We've worked with Piccolo Spoleto events, proms, weddings and other soirees." 🍷

For more information on Harbor Breeze, visit www.harbor-breeze.com or call (843) 606-2110.



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I WALKED INTO CRAVE KITCHEN & cocktails wearing a simple skirt and a sleeveless blouse. I was in good company – the after-work crowd mingled with the beach-goers in a casual, no-frills atmosphere.

“My wife and I moved to Mount Pleasant from New York City,” explained Chris Dolan, Crave’s owner. “New York has plenty of outstanding fine dining restaurants, but, frankly, they were all really stuffy. We wanted to create a place where people enjoy fresh, quality food whether they’ve just come off the beach or are celebrating a formal occasion.”

BY DENISE K. JAMES

Dolan most recently managed a restaurant in New York, but he said he’s done everything in the food business.

“I’ve washed dishes, cooked and managed, and now I own for the first time,” he said.

He described Crave’s concept as American fusion.

“We do a lot of seafood, steaks and salads. There’s something to make everyone happy,” he said.

But don’t think for a minute that Crave’s menu lacks ambition and offers the same old recipes. Executive Chef Landen Ganstrom uses his culinary creativity on a regular basis, according to Dolan.

“I met Landen when he worked at 11 Center on Folly Beach years ago,” Dolan said. “We shared several of the same views about what a restaurant should be. Yet we balance each other out. He’s incredibly ambitious.”

My own meal at Crave consisted of the crab and avocado appetizer, which I ate happily, noting how fresh the crab was. My entree was to die for – pan-seared scallops over lobster risotto and green beans sauteed in garlic. Suddenly I was perfectly satisfied to be dining alone; it would have been a shame to have to share any of it.

While I ate, Dolan explained how one of the niches Crave addresses is gluten-free cuisine.

“I noticed how many gluten-free items you have,” I replied, unabashedly licking my fork.

“It has really taken off in the last few years,” said Dolan. “We opened with the intent to provide Mount Pleasant with gluten-free options, including desserts made in-house by a local company called No Wheat Treats. The chefs here are particularly sensitive to food allergies; guests just tell us what they need and we’ll work with it. Everything is good no matter what modifications we make. For example, our salted caramel gluten-free chocolate cake is out of this world.”

Not one to pass up an opportunity to investigate such a claim, I ordered a piece of the cake. He was right.

But Crave isn’t all about the yummy food – there’s also a fantastic cocktail list and plenty of wine and beer. With a seven-day-a-week happy hour, there’s no excuse not to indulge.

“The bartenders have my full trust,” said Dolan with a laugh. “I let them create the martini list, which rotates every so often. I’d say our most

popular martinis are the Pear Cosmo or, for something a little sweeter, the Nutty Godiva Martini.”

Brunch, another one of Crave’s high points, is served Saturday and Sunday from 10 a.m. until 4 p.m.

“We have a brunch menu of classics and a few surprises,” said Dolan. “Eggs benedict and shrimp and grits are staples. We also offer a rustic skillet and the opportunity to build your own omelet.”

“Hmm ... is tomorrow morning too soon to come back?” I mused. 🍷

For more information and to view Crave’s full menu, visit www.cravemtp.com or call (843) 884-1177.



At Crave, diners can enjoy fresh, quality food whether they’ve just come off the beach or are celebrating a formal occasion.

Lowcountry Live!



Photos by Joe O'Neill and Amy Kehm.

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Check out “Lowcountry Live!,” the area’s first news magazine show, which airs from 10 a.m. to 11 a.m. every weekday on ABC Channel 4, WCIV.

BY SUSAN SLOATE

“Lowcountry Live!” focuses mostly on local events and

personalities. Producer Amy Kehm, who took over the reins in late April, believes the show provides a great local overview.

“It’s a great way to get a feel for the community,” she said. “We have everything on the show – serious topics, fun topics, cooking, decorating, education, lots of local authors. There are non-profit organizations, and it’s a cost-effective advertising outlet for the for-profits. Our target audience is parents at home, who are struggling economically. Sometimes the show is about mortgages or electricity

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Personalities

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The show has three on-air hosts: Jon Bruce, Tessa Spencer and Dave Williams, who also does the weather. Kehm keeps their interests and specific talents in mind when she assigns stories.

“Dave is funny, so I try to give him the funny segments,” she said. “He likes anything nautical, and he also knows the local authors we feature on the show. Jon likes sports, so he gets the RiverDogs stories. Laura’s built strong relationships over the years with certain guests, so she gets those guests.”

Part of Kehm’s job is to make sure each of the three gets equal time on the air, which, she said, “can be a challenge.”

Even more challenging are the times when the show is pre-empted by breaking news from the ABC network. When that happens, Kehm often has to adjust the schedule, since certain segments are paid and must be part of the show. Each show has six to seven guest segments, with multiple people in each.

While similar shows often have large staffs, “Lowcountry Live!” keeps only six people behind the camera: Kehm, the director and the audio operator in the

control room, and a teleprompter and two camera people on the floor. Kehm is the sole producer, books most of the guests herself, edits video and is responsible for obtaining graphics for upcoming guest segments. She typically arrives at work at 6:30 a.m., double-checks the day’s schedule, reviews the graphics she previously requested and starts pre-taping satellite interviews for future segments before the show goes on the air.

The show recently revamped its set, with help from Ethan Allen Furniture. “Lowcountry Live!” also launched an updated website and added a consumer news block.

Kehm constantly works to make the show more visual. “Talking heads are boring,” she said, and, to keep viewers interested, she reviews video constantly and files away interesting bits for possible future use.

To Kehm, a recent transplant from Pennsylvania, what really makes “Lowcountry Live!” work is the audience.

“There’s a different kind of community spirit and community pride here,” she said. “That’s what makes it such a great place to live. Everywhere you go, you’ll find folks where ‘My way is the only right way.’ But there are lots of viewpoints.”

Then she added a plug for her show: “And if you watch ‘Lowcountry Live!,” you get even more viewpoints.” 📺

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Food and Fun in Mount Pleasant

J. Paul'z

YOU MUST ENJOY FUN, FOOD AND people to succeed in the restaurant business, according to Robb Walker. He and his wife, Wendy, despite the 14-hour days, apparently have an affinity for all three. The proprietors of a thriving eatery on James Island, they recently opened their doors in Mount Pleasant, and they are already are talking about adding a third location.

J. Paul'z, at Folly Road and Maybank Highway since 2005, is now in Mount Pleasant as well, on Ben Sawyer Boulevard, just east of Chuck Dawley. The restaurant offers 16 items on its tapas menu, along with four varieties of macaroni and cheese, salads and entrees ranging from sea scallops to filet of beef to a Colorado lamb burger. The menu also features 20 sushi items.

"We take Japanese sushi and make it a little more American," Robb explained. "The sushi is on bamboo leaves with sauces and dips, as opposed to the traditional soy sauce. Our sushi chef, John Browder, is very artistic."

Robb, who described J. Paul'z as "casual upscale," said his restaurant's signature dish is pan roasted salmon, with potato gnocchi, arugula, mushrooms and truffle butter. The truffled macaroni and cheese, made from gemelli pasta, Spanish cheese, white truffle oil and panko flakes – Japanese bread crumbs – is also quite popular.

Choosing Mount Pleasant as the location for their second restaurant wasn't a difficult decision for the Walkers.

"We live here and our kids go to school here," Wendy explained. "We just love Mount Pleasant," adding that she expects the town's Coleman Boulevard revitalization project to attract a large amount of traffic to the area – on foot, on bicycles and in golf carts, as well as in automobiles.

Robb got started in the food service business at the age of 13, busing tables in Greenville. By the time he reached his 17th birthday, he was running his own hamburger stand on

Tybee Island near Savannah, and at 20, he was managing a restaurant on St. Simons Island. He moved on to a similar position in Colorado but left the business for 15 years to manage big box retail stores.

He didn't think he would be returning to the world of food and fun.

The Walker family had migrated to the busy metropolis of Atlanta. They had been vacationing on the Carolina coast

for years – Robb's dad lives on the Isle of Palms – and had decided that the Charleston area would be a much better place to raise a family. They contacted a business broker, and the first thing out of Robb's mouth was "I don't want a restaurant and bar."

Apparently, he changed his mind. While they were in Charleston looking for a business to buy in 2009, they went to a RiverDogs game. There was no baseball that night because of the weather, but the Walker family hit a home run at dinner – at J. Paul'z on James Island.

"What I liked most was the good vibe and the good food. It was something we could build on. We didn't want just one," Robb said.

And now, three years later, they have two.

Like the J. Paul'z on James Island, the Mount Pleasant restaurant features a separate lounge large enough for gatherings of up to 25 people. Furnished with comfortable chairs and couches, its floor once served a long-gone cotton mill in North Carolina. The lounge is ideal for bridal showers, birthday parties and book club meetings. Other interesting features of the restaurant include a chandelier made of hand-blown beer bottles and pendant lights above the bar made of wine bottles.

"We're a restaurant, but we also look at ourselves as a gathering place," Robb commented.

J. Paul'z is open seven days a week, from 4 p.m. until midnight during the week and until 2 a.m. on weekends. For more information, visit www.jPaulz.com or call (843) 884-2425.



The lounge at J. Paul'z is a great place for bridal showers, birthday parties and book club meetings.

Photos courtesy of J. Paul'z.

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DR. MARGUERITE GERMAIN CAN SPOT your problem immediately. Her warm personality puts you instantly at ease even as she assesses the issues with your skin, whether they are wrinkles, moles, odd-looking spots, sun damage or the scourge of adolescence: acne – the worst kind of spotlight on your face.

If you have acne, you are not alone.

“Sixty million people in the United States have acne,”

BY BARBARA MILLEN PATRICK

said Dr. Germain, of Germain Dermatology. “It is

the most common skin disorder. If not treated, it leads to scarring.”

Many people – acne affects those of every age, not just teens – do nothing or try to handle the problem themselves with products from the local drugstore. We don’t see it as an illness, yet it is a condition that can be treated, often with dramatic results, by a physician.

The effects of acne are more than skin deep. Approximately 85 percent of Americans have acne at some point in their lives. About 31 percent admit that facial blemishes have kept them from participating in social events, while 46 percent have suffered from self-esteem issues.

“With proper treatment by a doctor, the severity and duration of acne can be reduced by 80 percent,” said Dr. Germain. “Yet only 10 percent see a doctor.”

Dr. Germain explained that there are three causes of acne: bacteria, oil and “sticky” cells that form tiny plugs deep in the pores. Germain Dermatology has an arsenal of weapons that can fight these causes, including antibi-

otics, topical preparations and procedures such as lasers. Germain Dermatology offers a line of products for acne and to fight the signs of aging as well.

Clear skin requires a commitment on your part. Dr. Germain offers three suggestions for better skin. First, do not pick at your zits. This makes the inflammation worse and sets the stage for scarring. Two, use oil-free products. And three, stick to your routine; not washing your face, even for a single day, is asking for a breakout.

If you seek treatment from a dermatologist, you will be rewarded with less scarring and clearer skin. And if you have scarring from past acne, you will find there are

effective treatments to smooth the skin.

More women than men suffer from acne – one in four compared to only one in 20. Even mature women may have acne but, according to Dr. Germain, “many acne treatments are anti-aging, too.”

In addition to acne, Germain Dermatology provides a variety of medical, surgical and cosmetic treatments for skin conditions ranging from rosacea to cancer. Those seeking to turn back time will find a full range of therapies, including fillers, peels and

microdermabrasion. Laser hair removal and CoolSculpting™ also are offered.

Dr. Germain has been voted Charleston’s best dermatologist for the last seven years, and, when you meet her, the reason why will be very clear. 🍷

Germain Dermatology is located at 612 Seacoast Parkway in Mount Pleasant. For more information, call (843) 881-4440 or visit www.GermainDermatology.com.



Approximately 85 percent of Americans have acne at some point in their lives.



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Charleston ENT Offers Wide Range of Services

OTOLARYNGOLOGY IS DIFFICULT to pronounce and can be even harder to spell. But if you are having any medical problems that involve hearing, breathing, smelling, tasting, speaking or swallowing, it's easy to find Charleston Ear, Nose & Throat, the largest private ENT practice in South Carolina.

Charleston ENT has eight locations spread across the Lowcountry, two of them in Mount Pleasant. The practice, established in 1997, has 10 board-certified/board-eligible otolaryngologists – commonly referred to as ENT specialists. They treat everything from snoring to ear infections to tonsillitis to allergies, all under one roof.

BY BRIAN SHERMAN



Photo courtesy of Charleston ENT.

Dr. Eugene G. Brown treats a patient at Charleston ENT's North Mount Pleasant location.

“We provide a full range of diagnostics and treatment for diseases of the ear, nose and throat,” said Michael Grubb, the practice's executive director for the past 12 years.

Charleston ENT even has its own surgery center, located at its West Ashley office on Savage Road. Serving approximately 4,200 patients a year and accredited by the Accreditation Association for Ambulatory Healthcare, the facility is more patient-friendly than a hospital, Grubb pointed out. And, he added, Charleston ENT employs only board-certified anesthesiologists.

“It's convenient and very well-accepted by our patients,” he said. “We treat only Charleston ENT patients, so you're not next to someone who is having a baby or open-heart

surgery. And the waiting room is close to the recovery room, so you're not three or four floors from your loved one who is having surgery.”

He pointed out that Charleston ENT treats patients of all ages, from children to senior citizens, but added that at the surgery center, kids are on the schedule first, starting at 7 a.m.

“It's an intimate setting, and parents like it because we can get them in and out fairly quickly. Young children can be cranky,” he said.

Some patients are referred to Charleston ENT by their family physician, while others come directly to the practice. Either way, Charleston ENT is well-equipped to handle any ear, nose and throat issues, from sinus congestion to sore throats to hearing problems.

“We can help with anything associated with the ear, nose and throat,” Grubb said. “We provide so many services in-house; it's one-stop shopping for the patient. They can see a physician, have a CT scan done that day in the office, have surgery or have hearing or allergy tests. They don't have to run all over town.”

Charleston ENT opened its first Mount Pleasant office in 2001, on Johnnie Dodds Boulevard, and moved to a larger facility in The Tides Medical Arts Building on Wingo Way in 2007. Its second Mount Pleasant location was established in 2010, near the new Roper St. Francis Hospital on Highway 17 North.

According to Grubb, the steady growth of the practice over the past 15 years can be attributed to its conviction that the most important job of its 10 physicians – soon to be 11 – and 100 or so other employees is the health, happiness and well-being of each patient that comes through its doors.

“We have a very good group of doctors who are dedicated to patient care and to providing services to everybody in the tri-county area and beyond,” he said, adding that Charleston ENT accepts almost every type of health insurance. “We do everything to support our physicians so they can concentrate on taking care of our patients.”

Charleston ENT's Mount Pleasant locations are at 180 Wingo Way, Suite 103, and 3510 North Highway 17, Suite 135. For more information, visit www.charlestonent.com or call (843) 216-8774 or (843) 654-7494.

Want To Feel Like Yourself Again? Hormone Therapy Can Help

WHETHER YOU LIKE IT OR NOT, aging depletes hormone levels in 100 percent of adults. The process of growing older can rob you of your sex drive, affect your vitality, cloud your memory, weaken your muscle tone, keep you awake at night, cause your joints to ache, add unwanted body weight and even drive you to depression.

It's not necessary, however, for you to deal with these issues and others that emerge when your body stops producing the hormones you need for the health and well-being of your mind and body.

Bionatural hormones, which are chemically equivalent to those your body has been producing your entire life, are specifically designed both to enhance and balance

your hormone levels. The treatment certainly worked for Christopher Wells, who first visited the Hormone Replacement Center in Mount Pleasant about a year-and-a-half ago.

"HRC has literally changed my life," said Wells. "I'd been research-



Photo courtesy of Andy Hagedorn.

ing hormone therapy for a while. I've always played a lot of sports and worked out, and I just wasn't recovering rapidly like I did years ago."

Dr. Lori Lyles, lead physician at HRC Medical of Charleston, pointed out that "participatory" therapy, combining a healthy lifestyle with natural hormones, works best.

All potential new patients meet with a consultant for an

informative one-on-one consultation about the exclusive Amor Vie Therapy™ and have blood tests to determine if they are viable candidates for the therapy. After Dr. Lyles reviews the lab results, she develops a plan based on each person's medical history, symptoms and hormone level.

"Each patient needs to be evaluated and counseled individually," she commented.

The hormones, estrogen, progesterone and testosterone, or a combination of two or three of them, are administered by inserting a pellet about the size of a grain of rice under the skin; the hormones are released slowly and steadily. Both men and women usually are given implants every three to four months. It is important to note that HRC's Amor Vie Therapy™ is individualized and that the progress of each patient is monitored and evaluated closely by the medical staff.

Some patients see concrete results within a few weeks of the first insert, while others might take longer to notice increased energy, enhanced memory, a stronger sex drive and uninterrupted sleep at night. In many cases, patients feel better about participating in the activities they enjoy but might have lost interest in.

"I actually started planting a flower garden for the first time in 30 years," one female patient said. "I felt like cooking, smiling more and getting out of the house."

"Most patients benefit in terms of cognitive function, bone density and muscle mass," Dr. Lyles said.

Other patients of the HRC Medical Center in Mount Pleasant pointed out:

"Hot flashes are gone, as well as night sweats";

"I have lost one inch in my waist and gained 10 pounds of muscle";

"If my doctor had not referred me to HRC, I probably would have come close to losing my mind";

"HRC has allowed me to regain a normal life";

"My energy level has increased tremendously. I feel like HRC has helped me establish balance in my life again";

"HRC has helped me so much with my migraines";

"I came here because I no longer could tolerate myself. I knew I could feel better and I do." 🐾

To evaluate your symptoms, visit AmorVieTest.com. To schedule your free consultation, call (843) 606-1649.

The Vein Center

Beautiful Legs Inside and Out

IT STARTS DEEP INSIDE YOUR legs. You probably won't notice at first and, even when symptoms such as swelling or heaviness appear, you might think it is just "getting older."

It is chronic venous insufficiency, and it is progressive. It occurs when the valves that return blood to the heart stop functioning properly. As a result, pooling blood causes the veins to swell. Visible symptoms – varicose veins – appear. They're ugly and, left untreated, they might even be dangerous. In severe cases, the skin can change or ulcers can appear, raising the risk of deep vein thrombosis or even pulmonary embolism. This is far from just a cosmetic problem.

BY BARBARA MILLEN PATRICK

Vein issues are common for people who spend a lot of time on their feet – especially women. That includes health care professionals, those in the hospitality and retail businesses, teachers and many others. Pregnancy also is a factor for women; the more pregnancies, the higher the odds of varicose veins appearing. Symptoms include pain, a burning sensation and a feeling of heaviness in the legs.

Varicose veins are thick and bulge beyond the skin. The valves in these veins cannot be repaired, but several solutions are available. It is important to see a specialist such as Dr. Thomas Wieters at The Vein Center in Mount Pleasant. A general and vascular surgeon, Dr. Wieters has nearly 30 years of experience in the field of vein care.

"I am a general and vascular surgeon," Dr. Wieters said. "With ultrasound and newer technologies, there was a quantum leap in vein care. I chose to focus exclusively on vein care."

He began specializing in vein issues in 2001, opening The Vein Center as an outpatient facility in 2006. Always on the cutting edge of medicine, Dr. Wieters was the first physician in the state to perform the VNUS Closure procedure.



Vein issues are common for people who spend a lot of time on their feet – especially women.

"The VNUS Closure is minimally invasive," said Dr. Wieters. "We can make the diagnosis with ultrasound and treat immediately."

The VNUS Closure procedure is a state-of-the-art treatment for varicose veins. Older procedures such as vein stripping are usually performed while the patient is under general anesthesia. Laser ablation uses heat to collapse the vein; although not as invasive as stripping, it may cause bruising and pain. By contrast, the VNUS Closure procedure is done with local anesthesia and requires less than an hour. There is little or no pain for most patients, and symptoms generally subside within a week.

Dr. Wieters has performed more VNUS Closure procedures than any other physician in the state. Is the procedure right for you? Only a detailed consultation with a doctor can determine that.

The Vein Center is located at 3070 North Highway 17, Suite 202, in Mount Pleasant. For a consultation, call (843) 881-8346.

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Moms ... Get Out Your Two-Piece!

Options to Help Today's Woman Look Her Best

IT'S NO SECRET THAT WE LADIES ARE busier than ever mothering our children and expanding our careers. With so many things to take up our time, we might tend to neglect our appearance, but it doesn't have to be that way.

For young mothers, the desire to achieve that pre-baby physique is common.

"The main two body parts affected by pregnancy are the breasts and the tummy," said Dr. Ram Kalus, founder of Plastic Surgery of the Carolinas, PA. "The breasts can become bigger, smaller or droopy after childbirth and breast-feeding."

Surgery for women who want their breasts to be augmented usually involves the insertion of breast implants, which can be used either for cosmetic purposes or for reconstruction following a mastectomy. Reduction and lift techniques do not require implants, although occasionally they are used if a woman is both saggy and wants to be bigger.

"Unfortunately, breast cancer affects women of all ages, not just older women," said Dr. Kalus. "We do a great deal of reconstruction following mastectomy, but, even after lumpectomy, a type of breast conservation surgery that involves removing only the cancerous tissue, a woman may be left with a smaller or deformed breast that can be corrected with reconstructive surgery."

Some women may want to lift and flatten the tummy after giving birth or after major weight loss. A procedure known as abdominoplasty, or "tummy tuck," can help. Contouring the abdomen can involve different techniques: liposuctioning excess fat, trimming unwanted loose skin and tightening the abdominal muscles – the "six pack" – that might have stretched with pregnancy.

Cosmetic surgery is not just for the body, however.

"Women wear stress on their face, so the skin is important," said Dr. Kalus. "Options for retaining a youthful appearance can include adding your own fat or fillers such as Juvederm or Radiesse where facial fat might have been lost

from the cheeks or around the corners of the mouth, and smile lines can begin to creep in."

To Dr. Kalus, taking care of your appearance is parallel with taking care of your mood.

"None of us would leave our homes with ripped or stained clothing. Appearance and presentation are important; when we walk out the door and interact with others, we project how we feel about ourselves to the world," he remarked. "I help patients feel good about themselves and approach life with confidence."

He also emphasized the importance of helping his patients look their best without going overboard.

"The goal of any cosmetic surgery or other treatments is to make the patient look as if they never had the surgery or intervention at all," he said.

"Also, part of the surgeon's responsibility is to address the patient's concerns and truly determine his or her need. I couldn't have said it better than the French

filmmaker, Jean Cocteau: 'If there is a defect on the soul, it cannot be corrected on the face. But if there is a defect on the face and one corrects it, it can correct a soul.' In other words, if someone is truly unhappy about himself or herself, therapy may be the answer rather than plastic surgery."

Dr. Kalus and his team operate in all the area hospitals, including the Roper system and East Cooper Medical Center, as well as in-office, depending on the magnitude of the surgery.

"Although my practice is largely 'mommy makeovers' and breast reconstruction, we also offer a large array of surgery ranging from removal of birthmarks in kids to skin cancers in grandparents, as well as non-surgical facial rejuvenation options," said Dr. Kalus.



33 year old mother of two seen before and two years after lipoabdominoplasty by Dr. Kalus.

Contact Dr. Kalus at Plastic Surgery of the Carolinas by calling his Mount Pleasant office, conveniently located off of Long Point Road, at 881-3881 or by visiting www.plasticsurgerycarolina.com.



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Beauty Bonanza: Cirque Salon in Mount Pleasant

CIRQUE SALON STUDIOS IN Mount Pleasant and West Ashley has taken the ever-changing world of beauty to the next level.

“Cirque Salon Studios is a collection of beauty professionals all within a single location,” owner and operator David Manzi explained. “It allows beauty professionals to own their own salon for a minimum upfront investment, while clients who visit Cirque Salon are surrounded by multiple beauty professionals, including a massage therapist, a stylist, a barber, an aesthetician and electrolysis technicians.”

BY STACY DOMINGO

Each business has its own location within a larger building. “This allows you to be independent, with a closed door for privacy, but we have the camaraderie that you won’t get at a regular salon,” said Elizabeth Carota, owner of Elizabeth’s Hair & Nails at the Mount Pleasant location. “I specialize in hair coloring and use an organic color line called All Nutrient. I also do natural nail manicures and stay away from acrylic and gel chemicals. It is a healthier option and one my clients here in Mount Pleasant like.”

There are many benefits for business owners who operate within Cirque Salon Studios. They can work their own hours and set their own prices and schedules while working in a secure, private, fully furnished and lockable studio with access to data ports and the Internet, upscale entrance foyers, a waiting area and restrooms.

“It’s a great concept. Everyone brings their unique personalities and visions,” said Sheila Callahan, owner of Sheila’s Hair Design Studio at Cirque Salon Studios. “I’ve had my cosmetology license since 1988

and never thought I could afford retail space on my own. I’ve always worked for someone else until this past February. You can own your own business at Cirque Salon Studios. I was able to bring my current clientele and work off referrals from other business owners here. My clients in Mount Pleasant like the one-on-one care I can give them at this location.”

Carota pointed out that “Cirque Salon Studios is basically a beauty mini-mall, and clients can spend the entire day experiencing the services. Our clients like the privacy and individual attention they get at each location.”

To learn more about becoming a business owner with Cirque Salon Studios or about the beauty professionals at 167 Basketweave Drive, across from Harris Teeter in Mount Pleasant, or in West Ashley, across from Citadel Mall, visit www.cirquesalonstudios.com or call (843) 452-1125.



Cirque Salon offers a secure, private, fully furnished and lockable studio.

Photos courtesy of David Manzi, Cirque Salon owner.

Motherhood: The New Sorority

REMEMBER YOUR COLLEGE DAYS, when mobs of young girls flocked into the courtyard with their matching tops adorned in fancy Greek letters as they chanted their sorority songs? Well, take away the paraphernalia and add a few adorable kids, and you have another sorority of sorts. With more than 20,000 kids in Mount Pleasant – 4,070 of them under 5 years old – you are almost guaranteed to see groups of moms getting together in almost every setting. On school playgrounds, in parks, at the library and in bookstores, restaurants, fun parks and pools, you are

likely to encounter single or married stay-at-home moms, work-at-home moms and career women out there climbing the corporate ladder. Although they might be following a different calling in life, they have a common objective: play dates – arranged appointments for children to get together to interact with other children. While these events are essential to help kids build their social skills and simply have a good time, they also are an excellent way for moms to mingle, make friends and build support systems.

Aaliyah Green, a Wando High School graduate and mother of two, returned home for a year while her husband, a captain in the U.S. Air Force, is deployed. Green joined a Meetup.com group called C.A.L.M. (Charleston Area Laidback Mamas) that hosts numerous events in Mount Pleasant.

“The experience has been great. I immediately made a few friends while keeping my boys busy with a lot of fun activities,” said Green. “I think it is very important to have fellowship with other moms and be involved in stimulating adult conversation to keep from going stir crazy.”

There are other organizations similar to C.A.L.M.; among them are the MOMS Clubs of Mount Pleasant, small chapters of the international support group for stay-at-home mothers, and MOPS, Mothers of Preschoolers, a dynamic network formed to nurture mothers with children from infancy through kindergarten.

MOMS Club – Mothers Offering Mothers Support – was founded in 1983 and boasts more than 1,800 chapters with 85,000-plus members in the United States alone. The



Photo courtesy of Mount Pleasant MOMS Club.

Play dates are essential to help kids build their social skills and have a good time, but they also are an excellent way for moms to make friends and build support systems.

three local chapters are Park West (neighborhoods north of Highway 41 with main entrances on Highway 17), Dunes West (neighborhoods with main entrances on Highway 41) and Mount Pleasant South, which takes in the area south of Highway 41.

Christine Gage, who serves both as the MOMS chapter president and as a MOPS member care coordinator, found interesting elements in both groups.

“When I joined MOMS, I was looking for play groups and a group that did volunteer work in the community,” she said, pointing out that MOMS members visit Franke at Seaside and other senior living facilities, fund programs including Mother to Mother, Happy Wheels and ECCO, and donate the proceeds of the semiannual MOM2MOM sale to a local charity. The next sale will be held at the National Guard Armory on Mathis Ferry Road on Sept. 29.

MOPS was established on the premise that all mothers share a desire to be the best mom they can be. Through various resources and activities such as the fellowship breakfast, Mentor Moms Moments breakfast, play groups and spiritual support, MOPS groups regularly celebrate the joys of motherhood and encourage moms to meet their challenges. The group also offers child care in a preschool-like setting during meetings.

“It is a great time to be alone, relax, hear great messages and really bond with other women,” said Gage. “There is a ton of support.”

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“The Civil War and its Aftermath in Mount Pleasant”

“Typical Town”

This is the first part in a series about Mount Pleasant’s role in the Civil War. It has been offered to Mount Pleasant Magazine by former Post and Courier editor and writer John L. All, who resides East of the Cooper and is passionate about preserving its history. We hope you will enjoy this tale of Mount Pleasant’s past.

–The Editors

IN THE EARLY 1800s, MOUNT PLEASANT was fairly well populated during the summer months, when planters moved their families to higher ground, hoping to avoid the mosquito-borne diseases of malaria and yellow fever that they blamed on miasma, a noxious mist rising in the early morning from the nearby swamps and rice ponds.

At the time, the town had a private school, three churches, a Masonic Lodge, a picnic ground as part of the original Alhambra Hall and a salt works. Steamers of the Mount Pleasant and Charleston Ferry lines crossed the Cooper River six times a day in each direction. The fare was 12-and-a-half cents each way.

The name Mount Pleasant as it is used here refers to a narrow strip of land between Shem Creek and Cove Inlet. Long before the village was chartered by the Legislature in 1809, the area nearest to the mouth of the creek was known as Haddrell’s Point, named for one of the earliest settlers. The entire town of Mount Pleasant and the surrounding area were often referred to by that name. The area along Shem Creek became known as Lucasville, a name it would retain until it joined the town in 1872.

According to an article in The Daily Courier, August 1858, Mount Pleasant residences at the time were “plain, one-story cottages usually inhabited by farmers and planters as temporary retreats from the impure air of their country estates.”

During the 1850s, some of the planters abandoned their plantations completely, relocating to the Gulf Coast, where agriculture was more profitable. Many others gave up the plantation lifestyle, moving the family into what had been their summer cottages in Mount Pleasant or other locations along the coast where they could enjoy the cool ocean breeze.

The Daily Courier article continued:

“We have as spacious and substantial a hotel as any other summer seat of its kind can boast, of where board can be had at \$7 a week, less than any other establishment in the Lowcountry and under the charge of an experienced caterer. ... The present residents are an industrious, hard-working community. They comprise chiefly the planters and farmers who, in accordance with the long-established custom, repair to their country seats at the first dawn of morning and are not seen about until after dark, when they return home wearied and sleepily go to bed, safely out of harm’s way, at a very moderate hour.”

Yet the area was a hotbed of rebellion. A resolution, believed to have been the first in the country, to call for secession if Abraham Lincoln was elected president, was passed at a public hearing in Mount Pleasant. This hearing was held on Sept. 24, 1860, in Ronkin’s Long Room, a tavern located on Ferry Street. 🍷

To be continued ...



Longevity

Companies that have passed the test of time are the backbone of the Mount Pleasant business community.

A Mount Pleasant Jewel Jason Harn Carries on a Local Tradition

TWO YEARS BEFORE JASON HARN was born, his father fulfilled a lifelong dream and opened his own jewelry store on Coleman Boulevard in Mount Pleasant – at the time a reasonably small town that was little more than a suburb of Charleston. Today Loy Harn Jewelers, now in its third location in the fourth largest municipality in South Carolina, is part of Mount Pleasant lore, a longstanding business that has served the needs of generations of East Cooper residents.

Loy Harn launched his career in Savannah, going to work for a local jewelry store at the age of 15. He moved to Mount Pleasant in the 1970s, learning more about the business at White's Jewelers and opening his own store on Coleman in 1980. He later moved to Patriots Plaza and then to Loy Harn Jewelers' current location in the Wando Crossing Shopping Center.

BY BRIAN SHERMAN

Jason, who has worked in the business since he was 14, had considered a career in the aeronautics industry. When his father passed away unexpectedly in 2002, he chose to keep the business in the family. He doesn't regret his decision.

"My dad built a reputation," Jason explained. "I decided to embrace this business and be passionate about it, just like Dad had been. Customers still come in to thank me for keeping it going. It's where I want to be."

Jason and his small but dedicated staff have continued a tradition that has made the jewelry store his father started in 1980 one of the oldest and most respected companies in Mount Pleasant. Jason recently solidified his stellar reputation in the local business scene by hiring Phil Wagers, who helped run his own local jewelry store for a dozen years.

Jason and Phil have more in common than their business experience. They both inherited jewelry stores, Jason from his father and Phil from his wife, who passed away in 2007 and left him with Wagers Jewelers on Coleman Boulevard. He and his daughters ran



Photos by Brian Sherman.

The staff at Loy Harn Jewelers includes, left to right: Jason Loy Harn, Nancy Dean, Tonya Verhanovitz, Phil Wagers and Sally Harrison.

the store for a few years before he temporarily left the jewelry business. He "retired and went fishing" but eventually returned to work with someone he has always considered a friend.

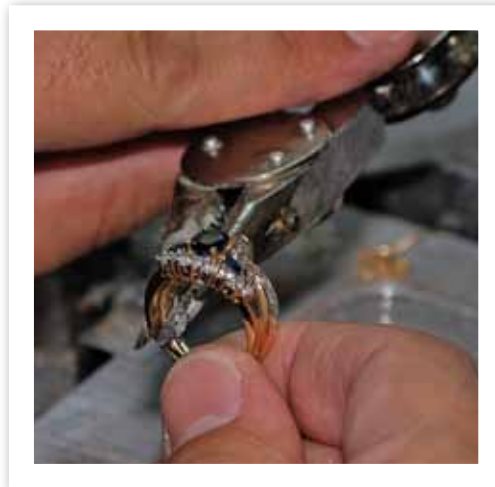
"We were never competitors. We were friends and associates who helped each other, and that's good for the community," Phil commented.

"The business 10 years ago was completely different. Now it's more of a service industry. Good, honest service and integrity are hard to find. I couldn't have come to a better place than Loy Harn Jewelers," he added.

Loy Harn Jewelers sells and repairs a wide range of jewelry and watches and also creates custom pieces. Jason and Phil agree, however, that what sets Loy Harn apart from its competitors is its high level of customer service.

"We still have ladies come in the store who have a ring Loy Harn made for them 20 or 30 years ago," Phil added. "Every day, someone comes in

and says 'Loy did this, or Loy did that.'"



Jason Harn has worked in the jewelry business since he was 14.

For more information about Loy Harn Jewelers, visit www.loyharnjewelers.com or call (843) 881-0111.



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Drink Better Beer

continued from page 59

I drank a beer called Of Love and Regret by Stillwater Artisanal Ales. (OK, I admit I was attracted to the name of it. I am a writer, after all.) The other barflies ordered everything from Bell's Best Brown to New Belgium Trippel.

"We like for people to try things they haven't had before," said Davis. "We never have the same keg back to back."

Shoppers at the House of Brews can peruse the 600 kinds of beer from the Old World and the New World, which are in separate rooms of the house. But take my word for it: It's hard to leave this place without pulling up a barstool and hanging out for a bit. If you come at night on the weekends, there's an open mike in the huge backyard.

"People actually knock on the front door and ask if they can join sometimes," laughed Davis. "I tell them, yeah come on in! We're a business!"

When I shared a beer with Jamie Tenny, we discussed the future of local breweries. Tenny and her husband, David Merritt, of Coast Brewing Company, live in Mount Pleasant and have been brewing the good stuff for a while.

"My husband has been making beer for years. He grew up in Mount Pleasant and attended beer school at 20 years old! It was the '90s, so you could do that," she commented with a laugh.

Tenny and Merritt are leaders of the South Carolina Brewers Association, formerly known as Pop the Cap. With the help of other beer enthusiasts, the organization has changed two of South Carolina's beer laws. In 2007, it became legal to have "high gravity" beers in the state. In addition, it's now OK to hold tastings at local breweries, something that used to be taboo in the eyes of the law.

"The association primarily aims

to bring craft beer to the people by working on these stringent laws," said Tenny. "After we meet our goals, we can work on the fun stuff."

The day was complete with a trip to Westbrook Brewery for one of its notorious Thursday afternoon tasting tours. Located off Long Point Road, Westbrook is Mount Pleasant's local brewery. And although these guys have struck it big distribution-wise, the Westbrook team still has a soft spot for East Cooper.

"The majority of the beers we brew will stay local," said George Seblonka, the Westbrook brew guru who took us around the whole brewery and explained how the process works while we sipped

various fruits of their labor. "We love this area. It means more to us than sending beers to Alabama or wherever else we distribute. We are nothing without Mount Pleasant."

Cheers. 🍺



Mount Pleasant's craft beer scene is growing like yeast.

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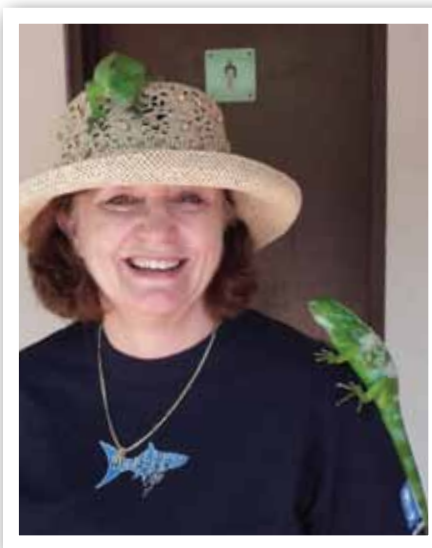
Canadian Couple *Beats the Odds*

Canada's capital city, Ottawa, is home to more than a million people, so imagine the odds against one Canadian couple with travel plans between Hilton Head and Myrtle Beach in South Carolina finding a little-known spot in downtown Charleston known as Vacation Inspirations.



“We decided at the last minute to stop in Charleston, and now we can't wait to go back,” said Patrick Dowsett. “It was while we were walking downtown in November of 2010 that we came across Vacation Inspirations, and we bought our membership. It was a very good decision.”

While Dowsett and his wife, Diana Dixon, a retired aerospace engineer with the Department of National Defence in Canada, had a taste of good food and good spirits on East Bay Street, they also found the key to their vacation bliss.



“Our first booking with Vacation Inspirations was a two-week vacation on the island of Fiji,” said Dowsett. “We stayed at two different top-notch resorts, the Tokoriki Island Resort – from our window we could see the island where the Tom Hanks movie “Castaway” was filmed – and the Outrigger Resort, which was a selection of Missie Blair of Vacation Inspirations. She had actually visited the resort and was able to recommend it personally. We were very surprised at the overall cost, and the amount of our discount was even more thrilling.”

Choosing Fiji was easy because Dowsett and Dixon are avid scuba divers. They are already looking forward to their next trip to the Caribbean, through Vacation Inspirations, of course.

“We have received very good service from them and are saving our dollars for this next vacation. Through our first vacation, we already have earned back at least half of our startup cost, if not

more,” Dowsett said.

Patrick and Diana, both retired from the Royal Canadian Air Force, are looking forward to what the future holds.

“I was in the Air Force for 40 years as a pilot and had the pleasure of serving with many American airmen



in Germany,” Dowsett commented. “We can't wait to take more trips to the states and around the world. We would definitely recommend Vacation Inspirations to others.” 🐠

To learn more about Vacation Inspirations, visit www.CharlestonTravelAgency.com or call (866) 587-6448.

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Deona Smith

Lives in: Awendaw, South Carolina.

From: Awendaw, South Carolina.

Education: Howard University • B.A. in Sociology.

Employment: Publisher • Living Roots Magazine and Sweetgrass Express.

Favorite reading: Historical biographies.

Favorite music: Jazz and reggae.

Activities: Travel, reading, dancing.

Interests: Gullah culture, African-American art.

Likes: Chocolate cake, Lowcountry oysters and views of the marsh.

Favorite quote or philosophy: "Don't wait for extraordinary opportunities. Seize common occasions and make them great. Weak men wait for opportunities; strong men make them." - Orison Marden



Bobby Hartin

Lives in: Charleston, South Carolina.

From: Orangeburg, South Carolina.

Education: University of South Carolina.

Employment: Host of "Fan Talk" at Kirkman Broadcasting.

Favorite reading: Anything sports – newspapers, magazines, books.

Favorite music: Beach music and oldies – because I'm old.

Activities: Tailgating. Going to games.

Interests: Sports, of course. Travel and American history.

Likes: Anything Carolina; Dallas Cowboys; Atlanta Braves; food.

Favorite quote or philosophy: None really. For 19 years I have tried to be fair and honest when on the radio with the listeners. It's fun. When it stops being fun, then I guess I will move on. But right now, I am having a great time.



Bonny Jean Luthy

Lives in: Mount Pleasant, South Carolina.

From: Grew up on a small organic dairy farm in central Minnesota.

Education: Graduated technical college and initiated the school's first desktop publishing program (personal computers hadn't been invented yet!).

Employment: Owner of Office Express, Inc. • Local company providing business services including Dtp/formatting and editing, printing and more.

Favorite reading: Local authors Mary Alice Monroe and Brad Crowther; also P.G. Wodehouse and Lee Childs.

Favorite music: Enjoy lots of music – from country to rock to classical.

Activities: Fishing, shrimping, crabbing, gardening.

Interests: Enjoy the Lowcountry – especially our parks and being out on the water.

Likes: My husband's cooking/smoking and playing cribbage on our deck.

Favorite quote or philosophy: "Life is short; stay awake for it!"



Lisa G. Blalock

Lives in: Mount Pleasant, South Carolina.

From: Fort Lauderdale, Florida.

Education: South Plantation High School.

Employment: Owner of Groove Girl Consignments.

Favorite reading: Who has time to read? When I do have a free minute, then fashion magazines (to keep up with ever-changing fashion) or a cookbook (like trying new recipes).

Favorite music: All types – blues, alternative rock, country, dance and I really love the local music scene.

Activities: Riding my bike, consignment shopping, trying new restaurants.

Interests: Music, cooking, decorating, traveling anywhere and everywhere.

Likes: Spending time with my family and friends.

Favorite quote or philosophy: "If the shoe fits, buy it in every color!!!"

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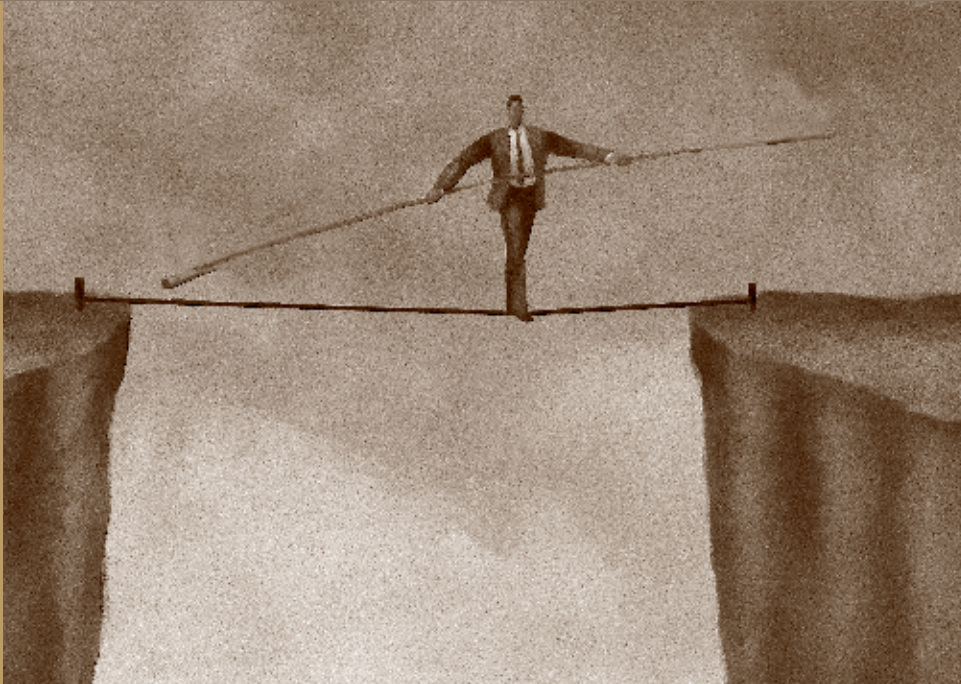
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