

In Good Taste
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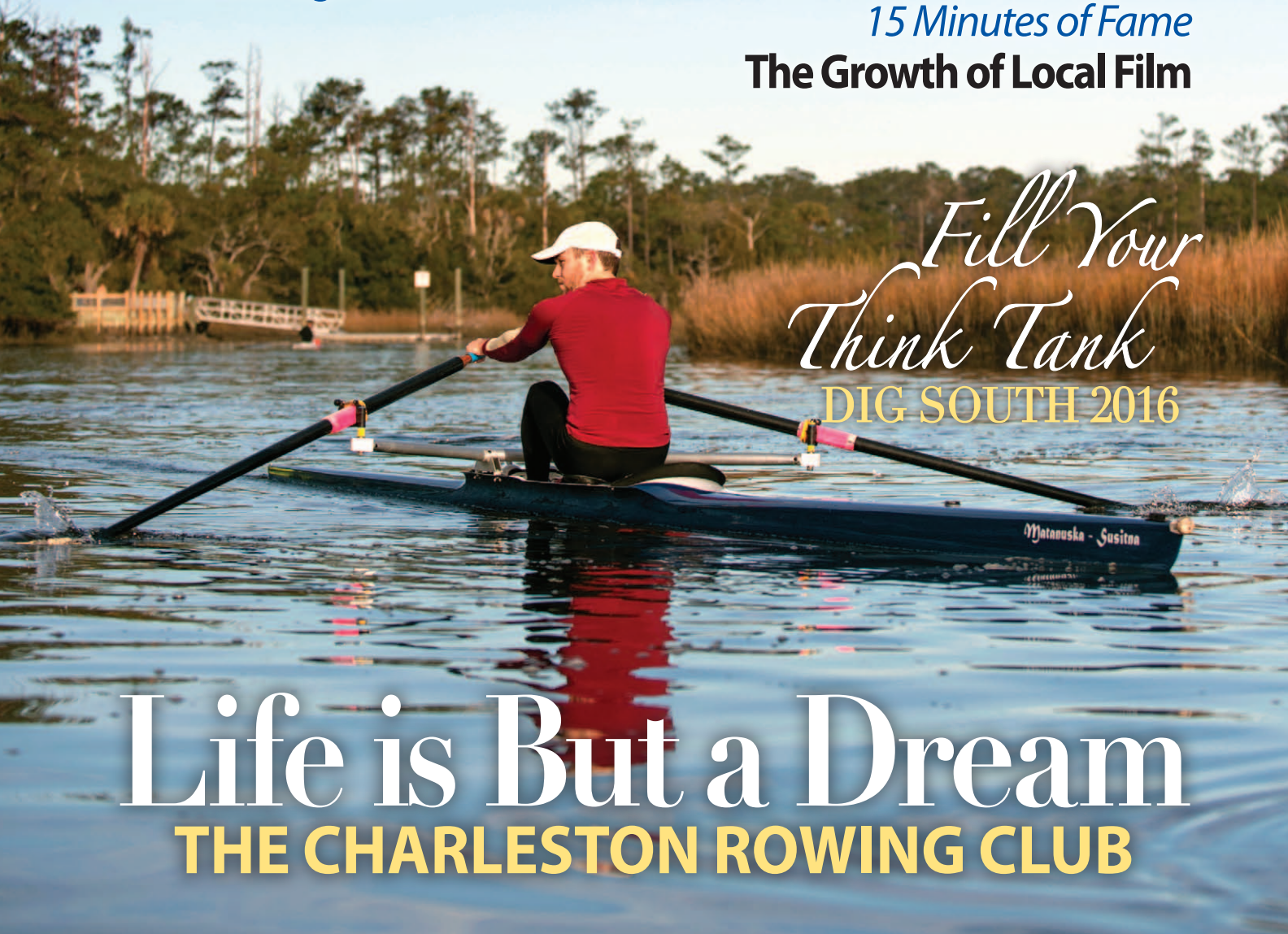
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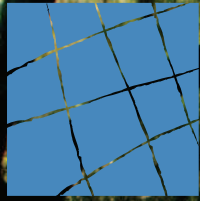
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PUBLISHER'S NOTE

A S YOU THUMB THROUGH THE DIGITAL (www.ReadMPM.com) or print pages of *Mount Pleasant Magazine*, I hope you feel the love our publishing team has for our magazine and the town we serve. I've lived in East Cooper since 1979, and my passion for our town has grown with each decade. This passion motivated me to speak at a recent Mount Pleasant Town Council meeting.

The Council meets the second Tuesday of each month. If you have something you would like to say, you can do so during the public statements portion of the agenda. It's my opinion that our strong council form of government is a great way to govern. In some nearby municipalities, the mayor hires the town staff. But in Mount Pleasant, Town Administrator Eric DeMoura hires staff and runs the day-to-day operations of our town. This keeps the politics out of town services. In fact, many of America's largest and best cities rely on a professional manager. Although Mayor Linda Page is the face of Mount Pleasant, her vote counts the same as the vote of each Council member. In our form of government, each Council member is in a position to request items for DeMoura to consider. In a sense, he has nine bosses. This is one reason why it's important for Council members to work as a team.

Whether you're running a retail business, restaurant, construction company or publishing company, leadership has to be on the same page. In order for DeMoura and his staff to do the best job they can possibly do, he needs clear objectives and a blueprint for the future. If the Town Council is not governing Mount Pleasant as a team, the staff will not be able to efficiently manage our growing town. This is one of the reasons Mount Pleasant residents have to let our Council members know how we feel and why it's important for them to work as a cohesive unit.

Please let our Council members know that you want them to work together. This link goes to the email address of each Council member: www.ReadMPM.com/councilmembers. Let your voice be heard, and let them know how you feel about our town's leadership.

This link goes to minutes from past Council meetings, going back decades: <https://www.tompsec.com/Archive/110>. As you will see, in the past, even when Council members disagreed, they acted like gentlemen. Even when there were differences, they worked through them. 🍷

Enjoy life and be positive – and thank you for reading our magazines.



— BILL MACCHIO
Publisher



MOUNT PLEASANT

MAGAZINE

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From the Managing Editor

THERE ARE LOTS OF REASONS WE HAVE TWO MANAGING EDITORS AT *MOUNT Pleasant Magazine*. Although Brian and I don't always see eye to eye, we have a mutual love for this publication that helps us get the job done and keeps our readers – that's you – at the forefront of everything we do.

Nevertheless, we have our differences, and one disagreement is over the importance of good weather. Brian always talks about how he “never checks the weather” because his mood isn't swayed by the presence of sunlight or rain since they are conditions he can't control. While I don't disagree that the weather is not up to us, I believe it does affect our well-being, especially in the Lowcountry, where we thrive on sunny days and warmth to help us embrace the beauty of our backyards.

That said, I've always thought of spring as a time for good news. After the hardships of January and February (but don't get me wrong; I like winter, too – it's good for writerly reflection), March and April are ideal months to get outside and get excited about the bounty of spring.

Our front cover speaks to this bounty. Taken by photographer John Kurc, it captures a member of the Charleston Rowing Club as he navigates the waters at Palmetto Islands County Park in Mount Pleasant. Doesn't he look peaceful? Because of our magazine timeline, we shot this on a chilly January morning – but thanks to the talent of our models, our photographer and Brian, who planned the shoot, it's a perfect image for why we love Mount Pleasant.



Meanwhile, this issue includes the Spring and Summer edition of our popular “In Good Taste” supplement. The cover photo, taken by food photographer James Stefiuk, includes a few of the leaders for various farmers markets around the Lowcountry. From left to right are Adam Chandler and Meg Moore of the Sunday Brunch Farmers Market, Harrison Chapman of downtown Charleston's market and Tracy Richter of Mount Pleasant's market. My appreciation also goes out to GrowFood Carolina for equipping us with fruit and veggies to brighten up this photo.

Turn to page 104 and read writer Kalene McCort's feature on local markets, the best places to score produce grown in South Carolina soil.

Elsewhere in this issue, you'll find more content to engage you and your family in warm weather fun. Whether you're planning on the Volvo Car Open, the Southern Ground Music Festival, the 29th annual Blessing of the Fleet or the Cooper River Bridge Run, there's no shortage of outdoor events for this time of year. You'll also love reading about DIG SOUTH's return in 2016, local driftwood artist Bob Humphrey, the historic Mount Pleasant light in the Old Village and much more.

I believe that these spring days are a time for living in the moment and enjoying what we have – and I sincerely hope this issue of *Mount Pleasant Magazine* encourages you to do just that. Until next time, enjoy the blue skies and the green leaves. 🌿

Yours,
DENISE K. JAMES
Managing Editor





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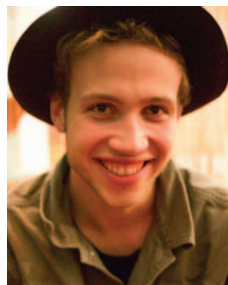
Amy Mercer is a freelance writer living in Charleston with her husband and three sons. She has published two books about living well with diabetes. When she is not writing – or spending time with her family – she is running, reading and writing book reviews for *The Post and Courier*. She

dreams of one day opening her own indie bookstore. Read more of her work at amysmercer.wordpress.com.

Born near Houston, **John Kurc** recently relocated to Charleston and is in awe of the beauty of the Lowcountry and all it offers. He enjoys photographing weddings, ballet performances and musicians – basically anything with people as the subject. He has an intense desire to capture meaningful moments for a lasting record. “The best part of my career



is the people that I meet. Everyone is beautiful and has an incredible story to be told,” he said.



Ben Grenaway hails from the hustle and bustle of St. Louis and lives in the heart of Charleston. He works as a photojournalist for ABC Channel 4 News and as a freelance writer, photographer and graphic designer.

Charlie Morrison brings more than a decade of newsroom experience, his first story hitting the shelves in *Charleston City Paper* back in 2002. Since that time, he has published more than 600 articles for *West Of*, *Charleston City Paper* and the *James Island Messenger*, which he owned until April 2015. He is now freelancing on a wide variety of topics.





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Notes from Friends

We love feedback from our friends, whether it comes from our Facebook page (facebook.com/MountPleasantMagazine) or by email, snail mail or MountPleasantMagazine.com. Letters are edited for length and clarity.

I just read the Jan/Feb 2016 edition and am always impressed with how much you all pack into an issue! Love the piece on Lucy Beckham. She has left a legacy for us to continue in Mount Pleasant, and we are blessed to have been inspired by her! Thank you for sharing the heart of Mount Pleasant and all that makes this wonderful town the best place to live, love, learn and grow!

-Anna E. Dassing

Via [Facebook.com/MountPleasantMagazine](https://facebook.com/MountPleasantMagazine)

Great perspective, especially coming from the Groom (A Blur in the Rearview Mirror, Jan/Feb 2016). Lovely wedding photo.

-Rhodes

Via MountPleasantMagazine.com

What a delightful read! Very well written and all true!! (A Blur in the Rearview Mirror, Jan/Feb 2016).

-Ann

Via MountPleasantMagazine.com

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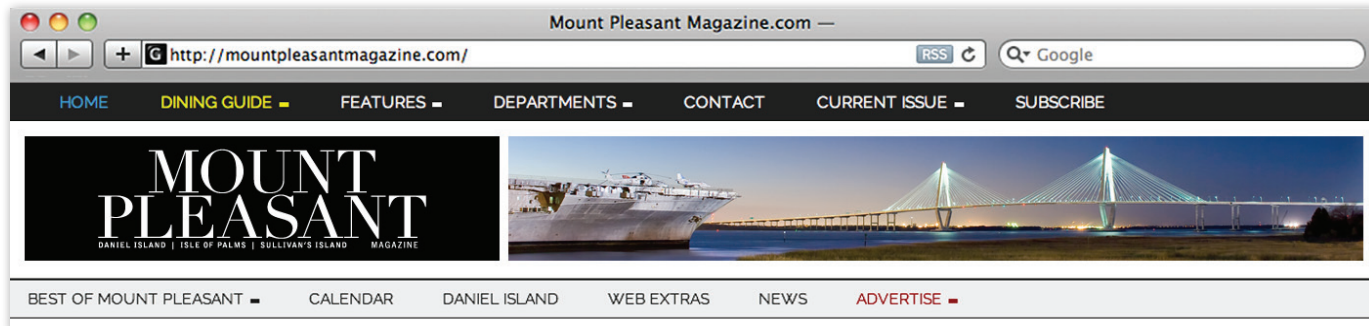
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Don't forget to submit your **favorite and mom and dad nominations** for our popular May/June Favorite Moms and Favorite Dads contest! Your loving mother and heroic father deserve it, after all! Visit www.mountpleasantmagazine.com/favorite-mom-and-dad to enter. But hurry! The deadline is Friday, April 1.



The summer pet issue is also approaching. And that means we're ready for our readers to submit **fun pictures and stories about your pet** at MountPleasantMagazine.com/PetPhotos for a chance to show off your cuddly kitten or devoted dog in the July/August issue. Your dog, cat or parrot deserves its 15 minutes of fame!

We also want to share what a great time we and our **Best of Mount Pleasant** winners had together at the Best of Mount Pleasant party. The party video, shot by Gavin Shelton, includes fun outtakes of folks eating oysters, toasting with champagne and posing on the red carpet. Watch it online at bestofmountpleasant.com/bestofvideo.

Don't forget to connect with us on our new social media accounts, on **Instagram** (@MountPleasantMagazine), **Pinterest** and our open **Facebook** group, located at Facebook.com/groups/MPMCommunity.

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Life is But a *Dream*

THE CHARLESTON ROWING CLUB

*By Brian Sherman
Photos by John Kurc*



Christin Way, left, and Grace Ford-Dirks work out on Horlbeck Creek.

THE CHARLESTON ROWING Club is a product of humble beginnings. Launched by Rando Blyth in 1987, none of the organization's "five or six guys" even owned a racing scull until after Hurricane Hugo blew through the Lowcountry in 1989.

They found a boat that the violent storm had tossed from who knows where. No one claimed the vessel, so, by default, it became the property of the club.

Blyth rented space on Shem Creek to store the group's newfound windfall and, later, the rest of its fleet. Not long after, another key member of the Charleston Rowing Club arrived in the Lowcountry, seeking a way to continue his love affair with the sport of rowing.

Rob D'Italia has been a member of one of the most prestigious rowing clubs in America. He has skimmed across tranquil streams and choppy creeks up and down the East Coast and elsewhere throughout the United

States, and he has put his racing scull in the water at some of the nation's most prominent regattas. At one time, he even had aspirations of competing in the Olympics.

A quarter of a century after relocating to Mount Pleasant from Philadelphia, a hub of the rowing universe, D'Italia, along with Blyth and a dozen or so other Charleston Rowing Club members, is still spreading the word about the grueling but liberating sport.

"Once I started, I never wanted to stop," said D'Italia, now 62.

Since arriving in the Charleston area, D'Italia has worked with and competed alongside the club rowers at the College of Charleston and at one time helped coach rowers at The Citadel. He now hones the skills of members of the Charleston Rowing Club and also serves as vice president and treasurer of the Greater Charleston Rowing Alliance, an organization of area clubs "dedicated to the promotion and development of the sport."

D'Italia has not always been addicted to rowing. At



Photo by Brian Sherman.

Rando Blyth launched the Charleston Rowing Club in 1987, but, until Hurricane Hugo passed through a few years later, no one in the club even owned a racing scull.

Camden Catholic High School in Cherry Hill, New Jersey, he ran track and cross country. But when he arrived at nearby Stockton State College, he sought a sport that presented more of a challenge. A friend suggested the crew club.

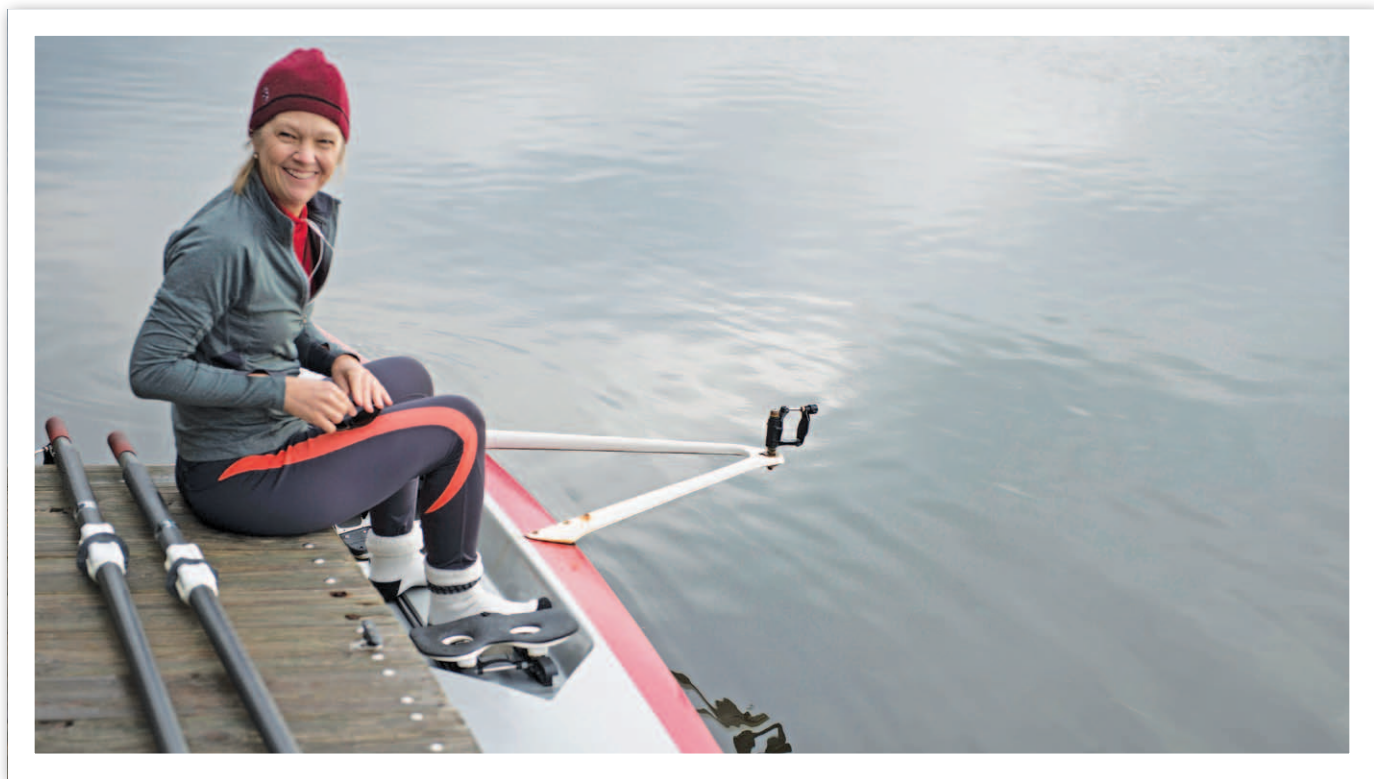
“I wanted to do more than just run,” he explained. “I wanted to use my whole body. I wanted it to be more than a pair of legs and a set of lungs.”

As it is with so many other rowers, his love affair with the sport remained torrid after he finished college. He

swamped many times by tugboat waves,” he said.

The Charleston Rowing Club later moved its base of operations to a former canoe-rental facility at Palmetto Islands County Park in Mount Pleasant. Club members now can access the Wando River by way of Horlbeck Creek.

Blyth, 67, also a Mount Pleasant resident, last year had hip replacement surgery that kept him off the water for five months. He was quick to point out that the injury was not a result of rowing.



Ellen Becker gets ready to row on Horlbeck Creek.

earned a spot with the Vesper Boat Club, established in 1865 and headquartered on historic Boathouse Row along the Schuylkill River in Philadelphia. He rowed for Vesper for eight years and with the nearby Malta Boat Club for another five. During that time, he was part of an eight-man team that took top honors twice at the prestigious Head of the Charles Regatta in Boston.

When D’Italia landed in Mount Pleasant in the early 1990s, he was concerned that his rowing days might be over. However, he soon discovered Blyth and company, though he also found that Shem Creek isn’t the best place to test the capabilities of a racing scull and the strength and stamina of a rower.

“A single scull is not conducive to chop or waves. I was

“Rowing is the best aerobic exercise, and it’s fun,” he said. “I like to row all over the harbor. I’m out there for fun and adventure.”

He added that he was drawn to rowing because he “never got along well with engines.” He spent a lot of time in Arkansas as a child with his grandparents, though he “lived all over” because his father was in the Marine Corps. He learned all about sailing, canoeing and rowing at a Red Cross instructors’ school in Wisconsin and taught others about these watersports. When he relocated to Mount Pleasant in 1978, he sailed off Sullivan’s Island.

Still looking for a hobby he could call his own, Blyth, who already had a pilot’s license by the time he landed in the Lowcountry, took up flying until the cost of fuel made

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that pastime a tad too expensive. He had an epiphany in 1987 after reading a book about open-water rowing.

“I said ‘That’s what I want to do,’” he explained.

Blyth now teaches the younger members of the Charleston Rowing Club the basic rowing strokes, while D’Italia trains them for competition. Blyth also does his best to pass along his own personal outlook about the sport.

“My philosophy is that rowing is fun and an adventure,” he said. “And without realizing it, you get a really good workout. But it’s not a chore. You shouldn’t

boats at a time.

A sculling shell, on the other hand, can be propelled forward by the efforts of one, two or four rowers, each handling two oars that are around 9-and-a-half feet long.

In addition to head races, where strategy is paramount, rowers compete in straight-line, 2,000-meter sprints. D’Italia said an eight-man boat can travel at speeds of up to 24 mph, while a single scull can cover 2,000 meters in seven to eight minutes.

He added that the shape of the oars and boats has changed



Grace Ford-Dirks prepares to put her scull in the water.

think of it like exercise.”

D’Italia, obviously more serious than Blyth about the competitive aspect of the sport, pointed out that there are two major categories of rowing. In a sweep boat, there can be two, four or eight rowers, each handling one oar that is around 12 feet long. In an eight-person boat, there might also be a coxswain who steers the vessel and coordinates strategy, which is especially important in a head race, which generally runs along the course of a river.

Strategy is key, according to D’Italia, because it is difficult to turn a boat that might be more than 60 feet long. And, in a head race, a half dozen or more vessels could be maneuvering to wend their way through an area wide enough to accommodate only one or two

over the years, all for the purpose of increasing speed.

“Everyone is moving in the same direction with a single thing in mind – as much speed as possible,” D’Italia said. “The whole idea is a graceful, flowing movement, dictated by the physics of the boat moving forward as quickly as possible.”

When he was racing with Vesper and Malta, D’Italia would row 800 to 1,000 miles per season, physical training that is necessary for competitive rowers.

“In a 2,000-meter race, after about 500 meters, you’re already oxygen-deficient,” he explained. “You have to learn to force your body to work through that and still perform. Your muscles are burning.”

D’Italia admitted that he no longer trains as diligently



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Rob D'Italia, now 62, said he will continue to row until he is unable to pick up his boat and put it in the water.

as he did when he rowed for Philadelphia's big-time rowing clubs. He said he now travels to compete in five to six races a year. Currently, no races are held in the Charleston area.

Over the years, D'Italia has competed at venues including the Head of the South Regatta in Augusta,

Georgia; the Head of the Hooch Regatta in Chattanooga; the First Coast Head Race in Jacksonville, Florida; the Tail of the Tiger in Clemson, South Carolina; and the USRowing Southeast Regional Championship Regatta. His dedication to the sport of rowing has taken him to the Detroit River, Long Island Sound, the Connecticut River, Miami and various other venues along the East Coast.

How long will he continue to row? When is he going to retire from the sport that has been his passion since he left high school?

"When I can't pick up my boat and put it in the water," he said.

Blyth, just as dedicated to the sport, isn't thinking about trading in his racing scull for a rocking chair anytime soon either.

"I stress to all these kids that rowing is a great way to get in shape and have fun outdoors," he said. 🦋

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Photos courtesy of the Volvo Car Open

Volunteers at the Volvo Car Open

THE ANNUAL WOMEN'S TENNIS tournament on Daniel Island, the Volvo Car Open – formerly the Family Circle Cup – is an incredible showcase of pro tennis players at the peak of their careers, and it's a big event in the Charles-

ton area every year. But it wouldn't be the same without the 500 people who volunteer their time and energy every year to make it run.

Of those 500 volunteers, around 200 make up the ball crew, which consists mainly of teens and kids who spend the tournament on the courts with the players, making sure they have balls for serving. But don't be deceived: Even though it sounds like an easy job, the ball crew goes through a rigorous program of training to earn the right to be on the court during the matches. They work hard.

BY ERIN DANLY

same without the 500 people



“We’ve been told that we’re one of the better ball crews on the circuit,” said Felicia Sperr, Ball Crew Shift Leader at the Volvo Car Open.

Felicia returns this April as one of the trainers and leaders of the ball crew. She’s in her 16th year of volunteering with the tournament, which she called a fun event all around.

Sophie Estoppey, 15, agreed.

“I just love it,” said Sophie, who, as an avid tennis player herself, enjoys the educational aspect of being on the ball crew. “It’s fascinating to see how the professionals play, the techniques they use. There are players from all over the world, and you can see their different styles.”

This will be Sophie’s third year on the ball crew, which makes her a veteran. What are her highlights of her time on the crew?

“I did ball crew for Venus Williams, which was really awesome,” she said.

The main goal of the ball crew is to “make the players’



With up to eight courts in use at a time and six people per court, the tournament needs a big crew from which to draw.



lives easier so they can concentrate on the game,” as Sophie put it. To make that happen, the crew goes through tryouts before embarking on a rigorous training program for six Saturdays prior to the tournament, two hours per day. They work on skills such as rolling tennis balls up and down the court, tossing the balls to the players during a match and even things like how to properly hold an umbrella to shade a player when it’s hot. The crew also gets to actively practice their skills during actual matches, either between veteran ball crew members or for the College of Charleston.

When the tournament begins, volunteers are placed where they’re needed on the court and are rotated in and out frequently, especially when the temperature rises. With up to eight courts in use at a time and six people per court,

they need a big crew from which to draw.

On the ball crew, there’s one place you really want to be, and that’s on the net, said Sophie, who has held that position for the past couple years.

“If you’re the net person, you’re really responsible,” said Felicia. “You have to get the balls from one end of the court to the other person, rolling them during the tie breaker. The net people need to have a ball in their hand, and the balls are switched every two points.”

Being on the ball crew is a prestigious position, she said, and a lot of kids will make it their goal to get there. Being close to the action is what it’s all about. Unsurprisingly, many ball crew members play tennis themselves, and all of them love the sport. That can mean they get a little

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star-struck when working with high-profile competitors such as Venus Williams and Angelique Kerber. During their training, they learn the rules of etiquette concerning how to approach the players. Volunteers aren't allowed to ask for autographs when they are in uniform.

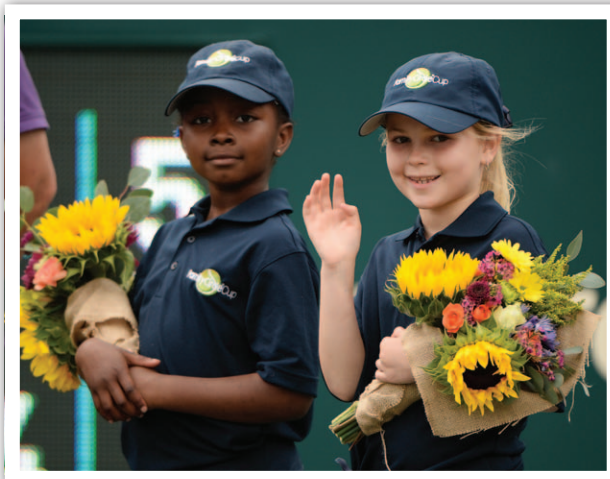
"Everybody's on their Ps and Qs," said Felicia. "They don't bother the players."

Sophie agreed that it can be tough to act professionally the whole time, but she said it's worth it.

"As ball crew, we gain something more than just a signature. We get to be on the court with them," she commented.

She would encourage anyone thinking about trying out for the ball crew to go for it – as long as they love tennis.

"You watch a lot of tennis throughout the day. It's different when you're watching from the stands. It's a whole new experience," she said.



Sophie will be meeting up with old friends on the ball crew this April, and her sister Olivia, 12, will be returning for her second year, too.

What kind of person would be a good fit for the ball crew?

"Somebody who's focused and polite," said Felicia. "You don't necessarily need to be athletic or play tennis."

You can start at age 10 if you play tennis or age 12 if you don't because you wouldn't be as familiar with the game. While the ball crew consists of mostly kids and teens, adults are welcome to try out as well. Felicia said they've had volunteers up to the age of 60. 🍷

To learn more or to apply to be a part of the ball crew, visit www.VolvoCarOpen.com and click on Volunteer, or call Danny Hayes at 850-980-1308. The Volvo Car Open will take place from April 2 through April 10 on Daniel Island.

VOLVO CAR OPEN

The Family Circle Cup is now the **Volvo Car Open**. Volvo Car, USA reached an agreement last year with the Meredith Corporation, the media company that owns popular magazine titles including Family Circle, Shape and Better Homes and Gardens, to become the title sponsor of the tennis tournament.

The new sponsorship and name change, which was announced in August, came a few months after the news that the Swedish automaker plans to open its first American plant in South Carolina. The plant will be located in northwestern Berkeley County near Ridgeville and is expected to create 2,000 jobs within the next decade.

Volvo Car, USA has a three-year contract for the title sponsorship of the Women's Tennis Association's premier event. Nothing else about the women's only tennis tournament, which began in 1973 and has been held on Daniel Island since 2001, is expected to change.





Starting a Movement

ADAM GORLITSKY'S UNUSUAL BRIDGE RUN

*By Erin Danly
Photos courtesy of Adam Gorlitsky*

MOUNT PLEASANT RESIDENT Adam Gorlitsky celebrated an unusual anniversary on Dec. 30, 2015: It had been 10 years since the auto accident that left him paralyzed from the waist down.

During that decade, Adam has faced the challenge of getting used to life in a wheelchair and leaving his sports-playing high school days behind. Now, at the age of 29, he's tackling a new challenge: participating in the Cooper River Bridge Run on April 2, not in his wheelchair but in his exoskeleton, which would make him the first paralyzed

man to walk a large 10K.

According to ReWalk, the company that manufactures the equipment, a “wearable robotic exoskeleton,” or external skeleton, lets people with certain spinal cord injuries stand and walk again – or, in Adam’s case, run the bridge in what he described as “the pinnacle of the Charleston races.”

The bionic contraption consists of braces that strap onto the legs, a harness to keep it on the body and a pack on the back with a rechargeable battery. Sensors at the hips detect subtle changes in balance and pressure, activating



Adam Gorlitsky learned to use the exoskeleton at the MUSC-Roper Hospital Spinal Cord Injury Center.

motorized joints that move the legs. Crutches help keep the body stable. Adam wears a watch that allows him to choose one of three available modes: sit, stand and walk. The exoskeleton soon will be approved for a stair-climbing function, he said.

“I want this technology to come to life,” said Adam, who learned to use the exoskeleton at the MUSC-Roper Hospital Spinal Cord Injury Center. “Not many people know about it.”

Indeed, the equipment, launched in 2012 and the only exoskeleton approved by the Food and Drug Administration for personal home use, is on the cutting edge, still relatively new to the market. Adam believes there might be 70 in the whole world and that he’s only around the 20th person in the United States to have his own exoskeleton.

They’re rare and they’re also expensive. ReWalk gave him 120 days to pay off his exoskeleton, and Adam hopes to raise \$100,000 before then. He sells T-shirts around town and is running a crowdfunding campaign on Go Fund Me. He hopes taking part in the Bridge Run also will help him raise money.

To train for the Bridge Run, Adam first had to gain mastery over the exoskeleton, a long process that typically takes 30 to 50 supervised sessions. Adam’s first three or four lessons were devoted to simply learning how to balance himself in a standing position, and it was another two months before he was comfortable enough to walk. He’s has been attending three-hour-long sessions three times a week at Roper since August 2015 and now plans to shift his training to his home on his own device.

“Roper has to sign you off on a bunch of skills, like a



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driver's test, before you're even allowed to take your exoskeleton home," Adam explained.

He wasn't sure about the exoskeleton at first; after all, he had gotten used to life in his wheelchair. But once he committed to it, which he did in part for his friends and family, he never thought about giving up.

"I felt like this is something I needed to do. That needing to be

wants the foundation to help bridge the gap between able-bodied people and disabled people.

"My disability affects me at a primary level, and it affects my able-bodied friends and family at a secondary level," he said. "There's nothing wrong with able-bodied people admitting their friend or family member's injury is affecting them. But people don't like to talk



there turned into a wanting to be there," he said.

Because the exoskeleton requires crutches and relies on a battery, Adam doesn't expect to use it 100 percent of the time.

"Eventually, a realistic possibility is 60 percent in the wheelchair and 40 percent in the exoskeleton, which I think could be an amazing thing," he said.

Adam pointed out that he can stand and walk in the exoskeleton, but he's still paralyzed. He has no sensation below the waist and can't feel the ground beneath his feet when he walks. Still, he's hopeful that a cure for paralysis will be found within the next five to 20 years.

For now, he's focusing on what he can do in the Bridge Run and with his foundation, I Got Legs, which he and his family started last year. Adam

about stuff like that."

With the support of his friends and family and the community as a whole, Adam is preparing to make history on April 2 and to raise awareness while doing it.

"It's incredible; it really is. I'm helping myself but I'm also helping others," Adam said.

Looking back on his injury, Adam sees it as both the worst and the best thing that ever happened to him because it helped him grow as a person.

"I like seeing it like that," he mused. "I guess that's what adversity does to us – makes us be able to empathize better with people." 🐼

If you'd like to help Adam in his goal of paying for his new legs, visit his foundation page at www.igotlegs.org, where you'll find a link to contribute on his GoFundMe page.

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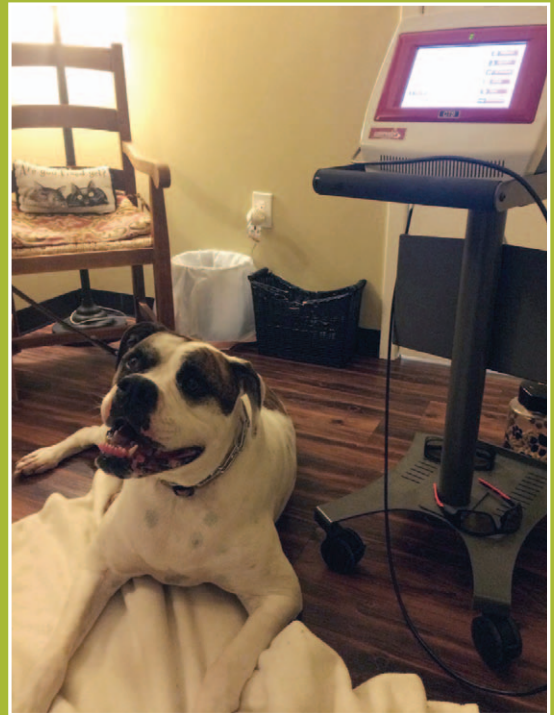
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We asked photographer William Quarles to capture hard-at-work volunteers and staff at the 2015 Cooper River Bridge Run so our readers could enjoy a glance behind the scenes before the 2016 race. A lot of work goes into preparing and cleaning up this epic Lowcountry event, and our gratitude runs – pun intended – deeply. 🐼

Photos by William Quarles





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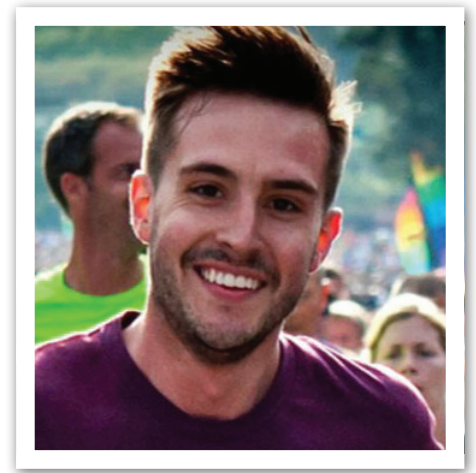
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Smile! It's the Cooper River Bridge Run!

A CHAT WITH OUR RIDICULOUSLY PHOTOGENIC NATIVE

On the day of the Cooper River Bridge Run in 2012, Zeddie “Watkins” Little, a native of Mount Pleasant, found Internet fame without even realizing it or asking for it. The New York City resident returned home to run in Charleston’s most famous race, only to have his smiling mug captured in a photo and appear everywhere on the Web. Basically, thanks to the burgeoning of the meme culture, practically everyone at this point (except my grandma, who’s never used a computer) has seen Watkins’ face.

BY DENISE K. JAMES



In the spirit of this year’s Bridge Run, we caught up with Watkins for a little bit of Q and A about the event that caused him much fanfare. The lesson to be learned from all of this? Smile – it’s the Cooper River Bridge Run. And you never know who’s watching.

MOUNT PLEASANT MAGAZINE: Have you always been a runner? What inspired you to participate in the Cooper River Bridge Run initially?

WATKINS LITTLE: I was always a casual runner. I would run typically at night in a five mile loop on the Peninsula. When I moved to NYC, I would venture to different parts of Manhattan and into Brooklyn, depending on the run, but I had never really run the race before. It was a good reason to come back and see friends and family, and I had always wanted to run it, as both of my parents had when I was younger.

MPM: How were you feeling when your photo was taken? How did that experience that day go overall?

LITTLE: I was only smiling at a friend I spotted along the way – Michael Scognamiglio, chef/owner of Bacco, for whom I used to cook. Immediately following the race, a group of us met at Closed for Business and watched some of the race from there. The rest of the day and weekend was a bunch of meeting up with good friends. I think I cooked pizza in my friend’s backyard wood oven for a big get-together immediately after.

MPM: What did your Mount Pleasant friends and family have to say about your unexpected social media fame?

LITTLE: It was all a weird experience, since meme culture was in a newly developing stage, as was the influence of Reddit and social media beyond the larger platforms like Facebook. Everyone was excited and kinda’ freaking out.

MPM: How has being the “ridiculously photogenic guy” changed things for you? Or has it?

LITTLE: Hah, not so much honestly. There was a little while where I was very noticeable, and I had fun with it. I don’t really mention it day-to-day, so I find it entertaining when friends I have made since then discover it on their own.

MPM: Do you have any tips for people who hope to look good in photos while working out?

LITTLE: Be yourself! I’ve always been my least self-conscious while exercising. I’m 99-percent sure I had bed-head that morning and had been out a little late the night before. ... 🍷

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Photo courtesy of the town of Mount Pleasant.



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BY BILL FARLEY

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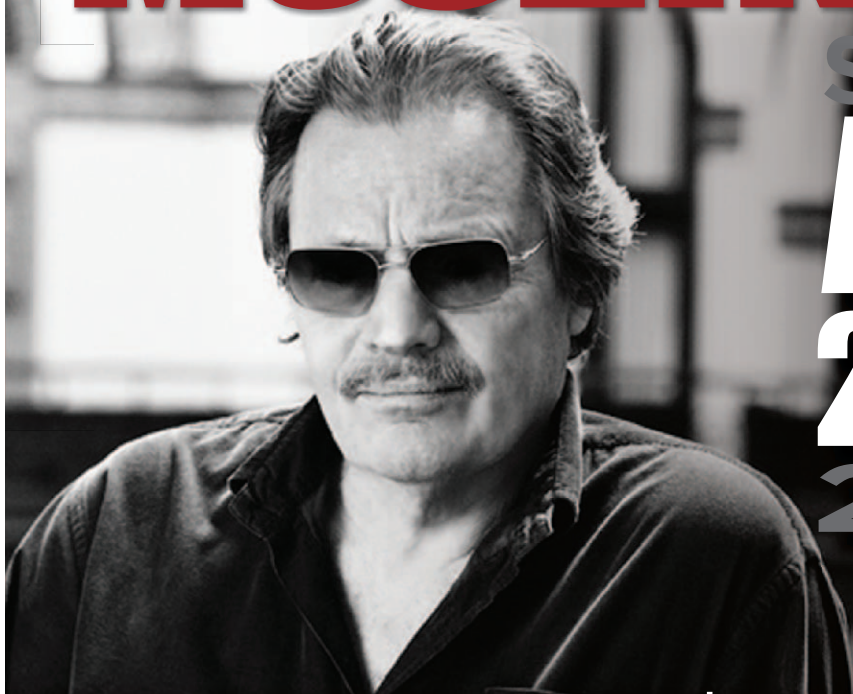
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The 29th annual Blessing of the Fleet & Seafood Festival, presented by East Cooper Medical Center and Harris Teeter, will be held April 24 from 11:30 a.m. to 6 p.m. at the Mount Pleasant Memorial Waterfront Park. The centerpiece of this free festive event is the parade of boats and ceremonial blessing of the fleet delivered by Father Len Williams, the Charleston Port and Seafarers' Society chaplain, along with rotating Mount Pleasant guest ministers.

Of course, the parade of colorfully decorated working commercial fishing boats and the blessing itself are not the only attractions at the festival. Mount Pleasant restaurants serve up delicious seafood while participants of all ages enjoy music by great local bands, shrimp eating and shag dancing contests, kids' activities, an arts and crafts show and an exhibit by the Mount Pleasant Artists' Guild.

Benefiting from the proceeds of the festival, primarily from merchandise sales, are Carolina Children's Charity and Camp Rise Above, an organization offering life-changing camp experiences for children with serious illnesses, disabilities and challenges. Both are first-time festival beneficiaries.

The origins of blessing the fleets of boats that carry crews out to sea, often into life-threatening swells and storms to bring home their all-important catch, are lost in the mists of time. However, there is reason to believe that this tradition dates back many centuries to ancient Greek and Roman societies.

The Mount Pleasant blessing, boat parade and festivities were begun in

1988 by the Magwoods, long regarded as the first family of local fishermen.

The idea of a blessing and celebration of local cuisine from the sea caught hold quickly, and early parades included 20 or more working boats. When Hurricane Hugo devastated many of the boats, along with much of the Lowcountry in 1989, the fleet struggled to stay afloat. Since then, a new threat has arisen from regions such as Asia.

That threat is shrimp farming – growing and harvesting crustaceans under controlled conditions in a bid to undercut the price of wild shrimp by flooding the market with product that has never seen the open sea. This has contributed to a shrinking fleet; for nearly a decade, the parade has featured around 10 Shem Creek boats.

Meanwhile, individuals and organizations including the town of Mount Pleasant have been campaigning to convince area restaurants to showcase locally fished shrimp and seafood while also encouraging diners to ask restaurateurs if they serve local or at least wild-caught seafood (#justask). Their mantra is that seafood lovers should seek out local products for the juiciest, most tender shrimp in the world!

As Captain Wayne Magwood put it, "People depend on local shrimp and the blessing means a lot to local shrimpers."

They still do and it still does. So when your epicurean uncle Osgood from Euclid comes to visit, tell him to plan his trip around April 24 and the Blessing of the Fleet & Seafood Festival. He won't just get a kick out of the food and fun, he'll be part of the kickoff of 2016's annual shrimp harvest! 🍤

To learn more about the Blessing of the Fleet & Seafood Festival, visit www.comeonovermp.com.

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Photo by Denise K. James.

Living the *Rock* *'n'* Roll Lifestyle

HEYROCCO

Tanner Cooper, left, also known as Taco, and Nathan Merli, who goes by his stage name of Natedog, have known each other since they and Chris Cool (Cool) played in a jazz band in school.

THERE AREN'T MANY OCCASIONS I'll depart the comfy cocoon of Mount Pleasant on a Sunday evening and drive downtown to a dive bar decked out in twinkling lights, sticky floors and Miller High Life cans. But a live rock 'n' roll show featuring local stars Heyrocco is one of them. Yes, I'm writing this on a Monday, a bit tired, I'll admit. But it was totally worth it to watch Tanner Cooper, Nathan Merli and Chris Cool take the stage.

BY DENISE K. JAMES

Tanner, Nathan and Chris – or, as they're called in performance, Taco, Natedog and Cool – have known each other for a number of years now. They "all played in a jazz band at school," according to Taco, who grew up in East Cooper and attended the Charleston County School of the Arts. As youngsters, the trio first strummed notes together at A Dough Re Mi in Mount Pleasant, then decided to

start practicing regularly in Cool's garage. Their first official show as Heyrocco was in 2009, at R Pub in West Ashley.

"It was hot outside, so maybe it was summer," Taco remembered. "We opened for The Cool – yes, [Chris] Cool's ma and pa. That show was so much fun. We were like, 15 years old. We just wanted to play as loud and tight as we could."

Today, Heyrocco is pretty much on the rock map, along with their first album, "Teenage Movie Soundtrack," released in 2015. Songs such as "Mom Jeans" and "Santa Fe" are whimsical but rockin', perhaps reminiscent of 1990s grunge with a bit of pop mixed in. Another collection of songs is coming soon, according to the guys. Meanwhile, they're playing live shows and beckoning the muses.

"I never stop creating," remarked Natedog, who said he gets inspiration from driving around in his "2005 Ford Focus with the manual transmission." His soundtrack is mostly Heyrocco songs, with other favorites mixed in.

"I like reggae and beach surf music," Natedog said.

“Peter Tosh and George Clinton are both incredible.”

“We all like people who make music with a real message behind it,” Taco added. “That’s what turns us on. Jimi Hendrix, The Doors ... every time they perform, it’s a movement.”

It seems to be a rock ‘n’ roll lifestyle, not just all the great tunes, that kindles Heyrocco’s vision.

Natedog described how he’s inspired by musicians who “lived cool, free lives and played music, which is the dream.” The correlation between music and life is undeniable for Natedog, Taco and Cool. When they want to feel happy – and who doesn’t? – they help that mood along with music.

“There’s a lot of depressing rock out there that gets the best of people,” Natedog mused. “I think you can be so in love with a song or album that it becomes a trap. But if you get up in the morning and put on soul or something kinda funky and have some breakfast, that’s the recipe for a fulfilling day.”

What’s next for Heyrocco? The band has high hopes, including “moving to Mexico” (Natedog) and “taking over the world” (Taco). But one thing that will remain the same despite mega stardom is their tie to the Lowcountry – and to Mount Pleasant. After cutting their proverbial teeth at A Dough Re Mi, playing “all types of music,” according to Taco, Heyrocco has enjoyed the opportunity to collaborate with many fine musicians East of the Cooper.

“At least 50 percent of my music intake is local music,” Taco said. “We used to play with a lot of Mount Pleasant that we drew inspiration from – I’m looking at The Whisperjets and The Makeshift – and Clay White has performed with us multiple times, live and on recording, while playing his trumpet.”

“I think as a band we are always going to continue to grow and be influenced by the experiences in our lives,” Cool added. “This next chapter is an album of songs waiting to be written, and I’m excited to see where it take us.” 🍸

You can check out Heyrocco’s musical style and download their recent album, “Teenage Movie Soundtrack,” at www.heyrocco.bandcamp.com.



Photo by Denise K. James
Heyrocco performed recently at The Royal American in Charleston.

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NOW IN ITS FIFTH YEAR, the Lowcountry's own Southern Ground Music and Food Festival is set to rock Daniel Island, to the delight of those who like their country gritty, their whiskey straight and their food options varied.

With arguably the most impressive lineup to date, this event may indeed attract more out-of-town music lovers willing to clock the miles in the name of rock 'n' roll. What started as the fairly modest brainchild of Zac Brown has bloomed into a springtime staple, set to reach a new standard come April. With The Marshall Tucker Band, Tedeschi Trucks

BY KALENE MCCORT

Band, and Michael Franti & Spearhead rounding out the roster of scheduled acts, it's no wonder *Rolling Stone Country* has deemed this fest one of the "hottest of 2016."

"We choose these bands not only to make a good festival lineup but to also, selfishly, have some sets that we would flip out about as fans ourselves," said Clay Cook, guitarist for the Zac Brown Band. "We are fans first."

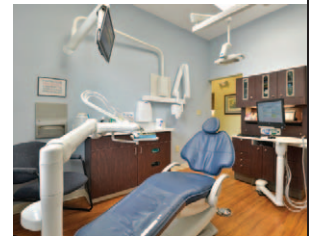
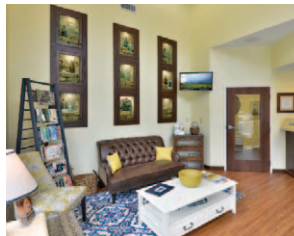
From co-writing songs with Grammy winner John Mayer to being an integral part of The Marshall Tucker band from 2000 to 2009, Cook's career is built on unbreakable bonds of artistry. Savoring time collaborating with his creative counterparts, he looks forward to the endless possibilities touring provides and specifically revels in seeing his tour bus roll into Chucktown.

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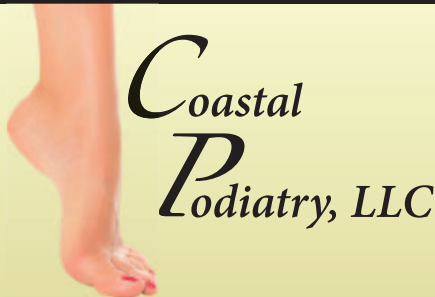
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“It’s just a great place to have this event,” said Cook, reflecting on the overall appeal the Lowcountry provides. “The weather is usually fantastic. It’s easy to travel to. There’s a bunch of fun stuff to do.”

Fans can expect to enjoy local cuisine prepared with love by various Charleston-based chefs – culinary rock stars in their own right. Something tells me those cheesy grits and stacked barbecue plates will taste even better once paired with live tunes.

“Two central elements of our festival are music and food,” said Cook. “I think the biggest win for us is if someone tries a dish they’ve never had and ends up really liking it, while listening to their new favorite band for the very first time.”

Providing a platform for up-and-coming artists, The Southern Ground Music and Food Festival prides itself on showcasing the acts that most definitely deserve an attentive listen.

Take, for instance, Muddy Magnolias – a Nashville-based female duo whose harmonies have been known to bring the house down a time or two. Giving us vocals coated with crystal-line tenderness and the occasional raspy roar, these ladies bring a fierce dynamic to every stage they share. In the vein of Aretha and Janis, their presence is unapologetic, raw and consistently captivating. Heartfelt, and at times gospel-esque, it’s easy to see why these longhaired titans have received much praise. They are gravel and gusto; unfiltered emotion dressed in blue jean cutoffs and motorcycle boots. The very definition of powerhouse, Kallie North and Jessy Wilson are the sort of performers bound to make you rise, reach your hands toward the overhead blue and exhale.

Sam Bush, a maestro of the mandolin, is another welcomed addition to this year’s lineup. You can’t think of bluegrass without thinking of

this Grammy-award-winning artist, who has graced countless stages from Tennessee’s Bonnaroo to Colorado’s RockyGrass. He’s shared the spotlight with the likes of Bela Fleck and Emmylou Harris, and, come April, this humble music man will bring his soulful presence to the Carolinas.

Kacey Musgraves has evolved into the country world’s quirky yet unlikely darling. Hitting the scene with a rhinestone cowgirl edge all her own, she pairs the campy with the conscious in songs about acceptance and trailer park living.

Michael Franti & Spearhead, the high-energy renegades of peace and good vibrations, will be rounding out the primarily country, Southern rock lineup with their distinct sound. Over the years, Franti has become somewhat of a preacher of the people – weaving messages of hope, kindness and political justice against infectious beats.

Zac Brown has jammed with Dave Grohl, started his own record label and manages to make sure up to 200 fans are kept satisfied with a delicious meal prior to every show. The Southern Ground Music and Food Festival is a reflection of this Georgia native’s desire to bring a bit of chicken-fried cheer wherever he goes. From starting his own summer camp for children with autism to branding his own line of barbecue sauces, there’s really no telling what venture he will pursue next. Whatever it is, one thing’s for certain: His fans will be there, eagerly awaiting the next project’s arrival. 🍷

Come experience cold brews, sizzling tunes and festival fare that reaches way beyond those concessions of yesteryear at MUSC Health Stadium, on April 16 and 17.

With a lineup that’s as spicy and diverse as the eats offered, this is one gathering you’re going to want to mark in your calendar.

For more information, visit charleston.southerngroundfestival.com.

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Craft Beers for a Good Cause

THE CHARLESTON BEER GARDEN

“**T**HE 5TH ANNUAL CHARLESTON Beer Garden event is really about fun, not beer snobbery. It’s about coming together for a day and enjoying great beer, good company and listening to fantastic regional music.”

So said Jason Kirk, organizer of the event set for May 14. The director of development for Lowcountry Aids Services, Kirk does much to raise funds for the 25-year-old Charleston based nonprofit, including the Charleston Beer Garden. The event will be held at The Grove at Patriots Point in Mount Pleasant.

“We love that we’re hosting it here in Mount Pleasant. We would like Charleston Beer Garden to grow hand-in-

hand with this great community. Last year we had 3,500 people, and we will be expecting an increase of 10 to 15 percent, which will be a sellout,” he said.

More than 20 breweries will be showcased at the event, including Widmer Brothers, Goose Island, Blue Point, 10 Barrel, Elysian, Sam Adams, Lagunitas, Abita, Terapin, Oskar Blues, Lonerider and Lo-Fi, along with local breweries such as Palmetto, Holy City, High Wire, Cooper River, Frothy Beard and SweetWater.

These local craftsmen not only want to share their pride and joy with the people of Mount Pleasant but also have set up an environment that will provide visitors with a fun and encouraging path to flavorful craft beer efficacy.

There will also be a host of wacky contests. The Beer Games, testing feats of strength, smarts and skill, include

hands-free pizza eating, competition with inflatable ponies, and a beer pong throwdown. It will be a time of joy-filled smiles and full bellies. An aspect of the event that Kirk is looking forward to is the Homebrewer Village.

“People across the region have been brewing their beer in advance, and local brewers will rate the beers and give tips to the contestants and pick a winner,” he said.

Beyond the brew, there will be food trucks, vendors and a stage with live music throughout the day. Music lovers can expect a varied and fun-filled set list featuring reggae, folk, indie and other regional favorites.

Kirk understands the big picture behind this much-anticipated event.

“The proceeds are returning to the community to help those who need it the most. The breweries are not making a dime,” he pointed out.

The community members that Kirk is referring to are those with HIV and AIDS, all-too-common life-threatening conditions.

“HIV rates have been growing greatly in the South, outpacing the rest of the country. We do our best to educate both young people and media outlets on the dangers of unprotected sex. The funding we will receive from the

Charleston Beer Garden is critical to our mission to eradicate this disease,” Kirk explained.

The funds raised from this annual festival of hops and happening music go toward free testing, helping people with AIDS and HIV receive treatment and housing, and encouraging victims of the disease to share their stories with the young people of Charleston. Kirk believes that while many understand the disease more than ever before, misconceptions persist.

“There is a big misconception that the AIDS epidemic is over. To put it simply, it’s not. In fact, in the past year, we found an increase in infection rates in the tri-county area in those under 30. We attribute this to a lack of awareness and education. We are committed to stemming the epidemic. For those who do not have the necessary care, this a very serious disease and we want to tackle it,” Kirk said. 🍷

The Charleston Beer Garden is scheduled from noon to 7 p.m. on May 14. To purchase tickets before the event sells out, visit www.CharlestonBeerGarden.com. For information on how to volunteer or donate to Lowcountry AIDS Services, visit www.aids-services.com.

Automotive Excellence

by Johnny Page



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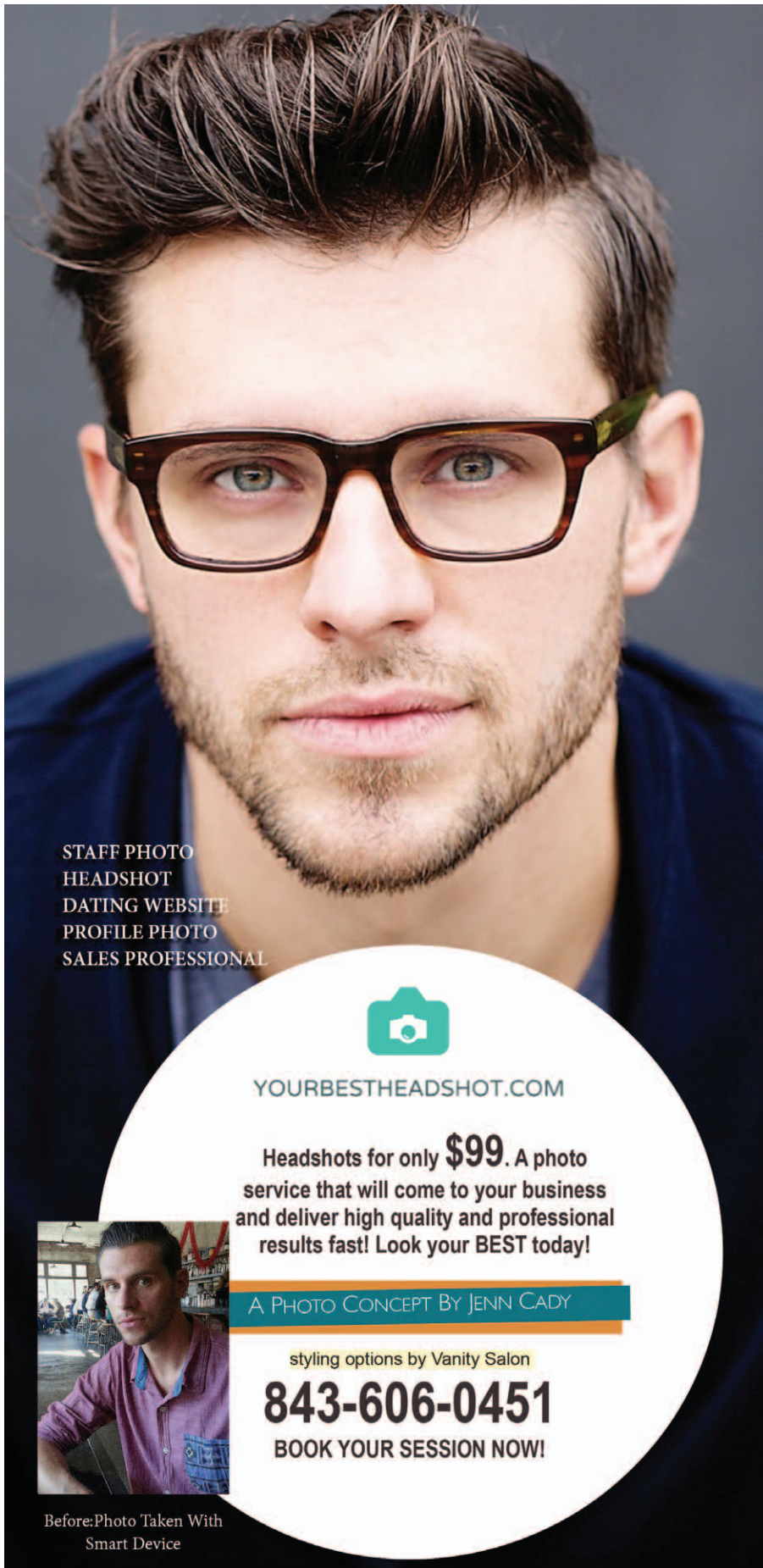
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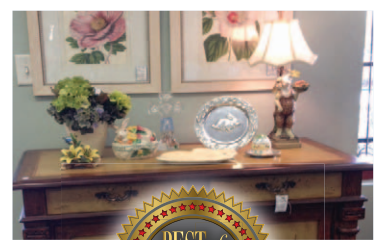
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Calling All Idea People

DIG SOUTH 2016 IS HERE

EVERY SPRING, THE LOWCOUNTRY crackles with the kind of creative energy that could power a locomotive. A multitude of tech and digital innovators descend upon the area to brainstorm, share tales of entrepreneurial ventures and keep the flame of creativity burning bright. On April 26, 27 and 28, 200 speakers and more than 2,000 attendees will come together

BY KALENE MCCORT

to inspire, encourage and connect. Now in its fourth year, we can only expect 2016's DIG SOUTH to exceed expectations – further cementing Charleston and East Cooper as premier hubs of invention.

“On July 4, 2012, I established DIG SOUTH as the Southeast’s interactive festival, the first and foremost event celebrating the region’s digital economy,” said founder Stanfield Gray. “Other tech and creative industry events in Austin, New York, San Francisco and Seattle were successful at that time, and I saw no reason why a similar, large-scale festival

wouldn't thrive in the Southeast, particularly Charleston."

And thrive it has, attracting quite the roster of industry power players from Kickstarter, Twitter, BuzzFeed and Facebook, among many other solid brands. Eclectic doesn't even begin to describe the varied visionaries that have been a part of DIG SOUTH. From zany comic book illustrators to documentarians, the list of presenters reads like a stunning compilation of who you would most likely want to attend a dinner party with – ideal guests each with their own brand of wit, charm and distinct aesthetic in tow.

Among this year's featured speakers, you'll find Gary Vaynerchuk of VaynerMedia, Melanie Deziel of Time Inc., Peter Shankman of ShankMinds, Meghan Keane-Anderson of Hubspot, Kamala Avila-Salmon of Google Play and prized investor and entrepreneur Paul Singh.

While Charleston is known for its historic charm and progressive foodie culture, the Holy City is so much more than cobblestone streets and award-winning shrimp 'n' grits. With prosperous tech companies that call Chucktown home, such as Blackbaud, BoomTown, PeopleMatter, Benefitfocus and Blue Acorn, the area is teeming with the same sort of vigor present in California's Silicon Valley.

"Culture and quality of life are what set the South apart from other regions," said Gray. "Entrepreneurs are now parlaying those assets into business opportunities ripe for the digital age. We have a shared history, original music and delicious cuisine – a true regional identity. It's time to take

the next step."

The Harbor Entrepreneur Center, a creative company with a Mount Pleasant location on Coleman Boulevard, will be pitching its Cohort-5 during Venture and Demo Day. Working one-on-one with those who want to launch their business ideas into the market, The Harbor Entrepreneur

Center provides individuals with the tools, training and mentorship needed to craft a successful start-up.

At last year's DIG SOUTH, East Cooper's own Bidr took home over \$10,000 in investments. The brand's clever text-based bidding platform, founded by Sam Staley, continues to lead the way in the world of fundraising – allowing organizers to raise more money through an easy-to-use app.

DIG SOUTH is a conference that goes beyond PowerPoint presentations and fully engages attendees with cocktail hours, food trucks, nightly meet-ups and bands that could just as easily be taking the stage at megafests such as



Bonnaroo or Coachella.

As a musician himself, Gray knew early on that DIG SOUTH needed a soundtrack that would match the conference's undeniable presence. Scouting out those melody makers from across the country to add a bit of rock 'n' roll to the mix is always a perk of the job for Gray.

"Music is the secret sauce, the sexy part that brings great energy and creativity to our events," said Gray. "We love introducing first-rate, emerging artists to new audiences and presenting them in a professional setting."

This year DIG SOUTH will be graced by Ruby Velle and the Soulphonics. Exuding funk, dipped in R&B soul, topped with powerhouse vocals, this is one delicious act you're going to want to catch. Possessing a sultry sass, frontwoman Ruby holds her own against a backdrop of heavy-horned bravado.

Also adding to DIG's soundtrack will be Major and the Monbacks. Hailing from Norfolk, Virginia, these energetic artists are sure to get attendees on their feet by fusing psychedelic twang with a whole lot of feel good.

The ultimate networking event for those who aren't hesitant about going the route less traveled, DIG SOUTH can reap invaluable benefits for participants – connecting them with other individuals who can truly propel their idea or brand to the next level.

"When our presenters, sponsors and attendees succeed, we succeed," said Gray. "We measure our success by the growth of participating companies and their ability to raise capital, recruit talent and build lasting, impactful relationships within DIG Nation, our member platform."

While the DIG SOUTH conference only happens once a year, Gray makes sure to keep the exchange between participants fresh by hosting monthly meet-ups at The Alley. Presenters and attendees are thought of as alumni, with strong ties to the creative collective.

"We anticipate making a big splash with high-caliber

presenters and exciting brands in 2016," said Gray. "I've always enjoyed the spark of connecting creative, talented people. It's also a rush to pull together a team and watch it become far greater than the sum of its parts."

Blackbaud, a software developing company that helps nonprofits, will have a strong presence at this year's DIG. With an office location on Daniel Island, this company is responsible for fostering the greater good through innovation and dedication. From animal welfare to homeless youth, the number of causes the company supports is unmatched.

"From year one, Blackbaud has been an ardent supporter of DIG SOUTH," said Gray. "Their Social Good Lounge will be a fantastic addition to the DIG Trade Show and highlight their efforts as the world's leading provider of nonprofit software and services."

Have an exciting idea that could change the world? Does your brain percolate with concepts that are looming with untapped potential? Gray encourages those who feel the call to dig in.

"Be passionate and fearless but also know when to cut your losses and explore new opportunities. Keep in mind that we live in a global economy," said Gray. "You are competing with every business in the world, not just the ones across town."

For more information on event locations and schedules, visit www.digsouth.com.



East Cooper's own Bidr was the Wild Pitch winner at last year's DIG SOUTH. Left to right: Mindy Taylor, Sam Staley and Stanfield Gray.



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Photo by Mary Coy.

THE PAST LOOKS BRIGHT

Remembering Our Mount Pleasant Lighthouse

ANY BOATER CAN TELL YOU, navigating Charleston Harbor can be a tricky proposition because of its many sandbars and oyster beds. That challenge is of particular importance for the large commercial vessels entering and leaving this busy port city. Today, modern technology enables harbor pilots to guide ships safely through the main channel. But more than a century ago, ships relied on several lighthouses to keep

BY MARY COY

them on track. One such beacon was the Mount Pleasant Light, located in what is now known as the Old Village.

Designed and built in 1858 by the federal government, the lighthouse and adjoining keeper's house sat atop the 14-foot high bluff at the water's edge of Bank Street. Situated directly across the harbor from the Morris Island Lighthouse and at a right angle to the steeple of St. Michael's Church in downtown Charleston, it was part of a geometric configuration that encircled the harbor.

The local newspaper reported at the time it was

built that the beacon was to primarily assist the Mount Pleasant steamers going at night through Hog Island Channel. The *Charleston Mercury* reported that it would be “a beautiful wooden structure in the Italian style of architecture.” The federal government spared no expense with this project, spending \$2,265 for its construction. Specifications for both the light and the keeper’s dwelling were written by the U.S. Lighthouse Board.

Board and batten siding, a vertical pattern using planks of varying widths, was used to give the house the unique appearance similar to other such structures. The absence of windows on the gabled ends of the house ensured stability from storms. Mortise-and-tenon joint construction, an age-old tongue-and-groove technique, also helped with the lighthouse’s structural integrity.

Local historian Robert Stockton, who has researched the property, discovered that the lighthouse was a fixed

light – rather than a revolving one – and visible for 10 miles when lit, but its light was intended for use mostly within the harbor. All the lighthouses in Charleston were extinguished by Confederates during the Civil War

to deter Union ships from entering the harbor. Although the Mount Pleasant tower survived the war, the light was never reactivated. Stockton surmised that it was later heavily damaged by a series of devastating hurricanes since it was subsequently removed. The keeper’s house, however, remains intact.

After World War II, the federal

government decommissioned many of its military holdings in the Charleston area and sold the property. There have been eight homeowners since then, including the grandparents of prominent attorney and preservationist Gedney Howe III, and local physician Dr. Archibald J. Buist Jr. Tim Scrantom and Leigh Owen Wilkes bought the property three years ago and have



Photo by Mary Coy.

A doorway once led directly from the house to the 44-foot-high lighthouse tower.



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made a few additions to the house. Because the structure is on the National Register of Historic Places, they said their alterations required

Scrantom noted that the structure still smells like oil inside.

A small cistern and a root cellar which is now used as a wine cel-



A small brick building dating to about 1900 was used to store whale oil and kerosene for the buoys in the harbor.

permission from the Old Village Historic District Commission.

The three-story wooden house was originally 2,200 square feet with two rooms of living space on the first floor, two bedrooms on the second and an attic room on the third. The homeowners have learned that there was a doorway on both the first and second floors leading from the house directly into the 44-foot-high lighthouse tower. The pillars left from the tower's foundation mark the structure's exact location.

A small brick building dating to about 1900 also is on the property. Scrantom explained that it was used to store whale oil and kerosene for the buoys in the harbor.

"Part of the light keeper's job was to go out in a small boat and light the buoys. That responsibility continued even after the lighthouse was gone," he said.

lar also remain on the property. A previous homeowner had sheetrock installed over the fireplace in the kitchen, and the wood plank floors show a small burned, blackened mark, hinting at what was behind that wall. A subsequent owner removed the sheetrock and the fireplace is again in use.

The curved stairway leading to the second floor is original, and there is a small brass medallion about the size of a half dollar imbedded in the newel post of the bannister. Scrantom believes that the original deed to the house may be rolled up and hidden inside the hollow post, as was the custom when the house was constructed.

The current owners are happy to be preserving the history of their unique property.

"We even have a list of all the light keepers and their family members who have lived here," Wilkes said. 🏠

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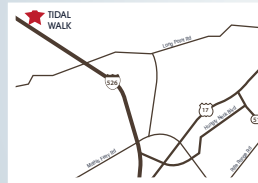


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Mount Pleasant Business Development Officer Amy Livingston, seated, strategizes with Tourism and Marketing Assistant April Adams.



Photos by Brian Sherman.

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BY BRIAN SHERMAN

Now the town is making a concerted effort to extend its innate magnetism to the business world, in part so that

residents of the town can work as well as live and play in Mount Pleasant.

To help attain that lofty aspiration, the town hired its first-ever business development officer in September. Amy Livingston's job will encompass an array of activities, from recruiting companies to come to Mount Pleasant to serving as a liaison between the business community and the town's Planning Department to putting together publications aimed at explaining exactly what start-ups and existing businesses need to do to comply with Mount Pleasant's rules, regulations and guidelines.

Livingston pointed out that the type and amount of assistance she will provide will depend on who she is helping.



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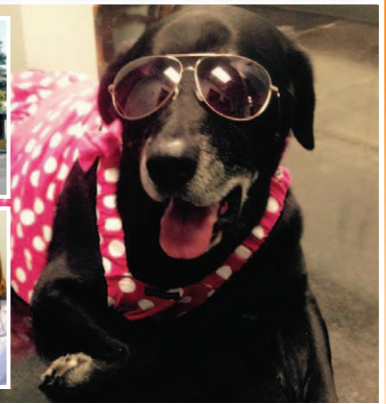
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“The term ‘business development officer’ can mean a lot of different things. There are no cookie-cutter businesses,” she said. “I’m here to service businesses and remove the barriers to their success. We want them to know the town appreciates them and that we want them to be here.”

Livingston, a graduate of Wofford College, provided an example of the diversity of her new job and one of the challenges the town will face in its ever-changing business

environment. Through the Planning Department, she was contacted by the owner of a retail truck – a mobile store not unlike a food truck that sells merchandise other than food. The owners of the retail truck wanted to sell their wares in Mount Pleasant, but the town had no ordinances regulating where, when and how the business could operate.

Another issue involved the new breweries that opened

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their doors recently in Mount Pleasant.

“These aren’t traditional retail businesses. Sometimes they need special attention,” Livingston commented. “As they change the way they do business, we need to keep up with the times and remain progressive and open for business.”

Livingston said she works with the Planning Department to bring issues such as these to the Town Council, which ultimately makes the decision concerning how these companies will do business in Mount Pleasant.

Livingston’s job extends well beyond simply answering questions from members of Mount Pleasant’s current and potential business community. For instance, she’s working on a guide that will explain exactly what steps a new business owner needs to take to be in compliance with the town’s rules and regulations. She said a budding business might have to interact with employees from several departments, including Finance, Planning, the fire marshal and possibly even the Cultural Affairs and Tourism office.

“People who are new to starting a business usually are looking for guidance,” she said, pointing out that the guide will be available online and in print.

She’s also working on a brochure that will be used to

recruit businesses to Mount Pleasant. She said the town is in a position to offer financial incentives to companies thinking about making a home in Mount Pleasant through its Economic Development Incentive Program. Companies can be reimbursed all or part of their impact fees, business license taxes and plan review fees. Livingston said the town has dedicated \$100,000 to the program’s fund through the fiscal year ending June 30, 2016, but she added that the Council can vote to spend additional money to entice companies to come to Mount Pleasant.

Developers are charged impact fees to help pay for services such as fire, police, sanitation and roads. Separate impact fees for water and sewage are paid to Mount Pleasant Water Works.

The incentive program hasn’t been used much in recent years, but that will change in the future. Livingston said it is about to become one of the town’s prime recruiting tools.

The town of Mount Pleasant is working hard to reach out to the business community in more ways than one. Livingston now represents the town on the board of directors of the Mount Pleasant Business Association, an organization with more than 200 members. In addition, the town is continuing a program established about a year ago,



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reaching out to its more than 5,000 businesses, one company at a time.

Every month, Livingston said, Mayor Linda Page, Councilman Mark Smith and Town Administrator Eric DeMoura meet with representatives of a local business.

“They ask what’s working, what’s not and what are the challenges the business faces,” Livingston said. “The companies ask questions as well. It’s nice to be in an intimate setting where people feel comfortable giving feedback.”

Livingston came to Mount Pleasant prepared to cement the relationship between the town and its businesses. She majored in Economics and minored in Spanish at Wofford and earned her masters in Public Administration at the University of Georgia. In her previous job at ECPI University in North Charleston, she

focused on workforce development, completing feasibility studies to see what type of talent local companies would need to succeed and recommending which courses should be added to the school’s curriculum. Prior to that, she was a program manager with the Charleston Digital Corridor.

Throughout her professional career, her work has been all about connecting people and companies with the resources they need. This experience, she said, will serve her well in her new job.

“It’s really about maximizing opportunities in Mount Pleasant,” she commented. “So many companies want to relocate here. The town has a clear vision. We want to recruit businesses with high-paying jobs so we can have the whole live, work, play thing.” 🍷

Mount Pleasant By The Numbers

Retail sales in Mount Pleasant are up approximately 50 percent over the last five years (2014 vs. 2010), from \$1.4 billion to \$2.1 billion.

The number of Mount Pleasant businesses was 5,553 in FY 2014/2015. The town added a net of 139 new businesses between FY 2012/2013 and FY 2013/2014, and 44 more between FY 2013/2014 and FY 2014/2015.

Total business license numbers increased 13.5 percent from FY 2010/2011 to FY 2014/2015.

The population of Mount Pleasant was 76,612 in 2014, based on estimates from the Planning Department. The town has grown from a population of 47,609 in the year 2000.

Mount Pleasant’s median household income from 2009 to 2013 was \$76,085, 169 percent of the South Carolina median of \$44,779.

The median value of owner-occupied housing units in Mount Pleasant from 2009 to 2013 was \$349,200, 254 percent of the South Carolina median of \$137,400.

Among Mount Pleasant residents, 23.5 percent have graduate or professional degrees, compared with 14.8 percent in all of Charleston County and 8.8 percent in South Carolina.

Among Mount Pleasant residents, 39.7 percent have earned bachelor’s degrees, compared with 25.5 percent in all of Charleston County and 15.8 percent in South Carolina.

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Bringing *Driftwood* to *Life*

THE CHARLESTON FISHMAN

By Brian Sherman

MANY PEOPLE RELOCATE to the Lowcountry to enjoy the magnificent weather, take advantage of an almost endless array of water-related outdoor activities and bask in the area's historical significance.

Though these reasons might have provided the impetus initially for his move from Columbia to Mount Pleasant four years ago, Bob Humphrey has discovered additional motivation to make his permanent home along the Carolina coast. The flotsam and jetsam that is carried to the shore each day, courtesy of the roiling Atlantic, is the foundation of a hobby that now fills his garage and consumes the bulk of his spare time.

Humphrey, also known as the Charleston Fishman, has a garage full of driftwood that he's collected at beaches, bays and inlets along the Atlantic coast, mostly on Sullivan's Island but also where the sea meets the

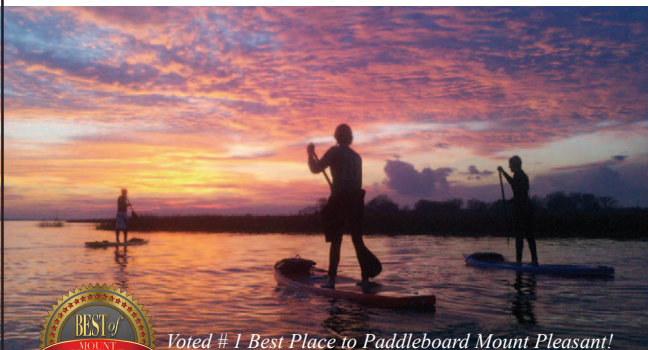
sand on the Isle of Palms, Pawleys Island and in a few places in downtown Charleston. His original plan was to make furniture out of wood that had washed ashore – which he did for a while. He built some benches and an entertainment center that adorn his home. But Humphrey soon changed direction when he discovered that it didn't take all that much creative thought to imagine a chunk of driftwood as a specific fish or animal.

"One day I was walking along the beach, and I found a piece of driftwood that to me looked like a mahi, so I decided to try it out," said Humphrey, who cleans, dries then paints his creations in his garage workshop in the Sweetgrass subdivision in Mount Pleasant.

He never cuts or carves a piece of driftwood, preferring instead to work with his raw material in whatever form he finds it. He will, however, connect two or more pieces with screws or dowels. Maybe a long, narrow piece of driftwood needs to be complemented by a shorter piece that resembles a fin, or a pointed chunk of wood that looks like

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a beak is necessary to turn unrelated pieces of driftwood into a pelican.

Humphrey has not limited his work to likenesses of creatures who hang out in or near the water. His collection includes everything from whales, marlin and rainbow trout to crocodiles, pelicans and sea turtles, but he has drifted into other areas with a grumpy cat, a witch and a product of his vivid imagination: “Ninja Turtle Spongebob.” He’s even started doing people, including two of the Lowcountry’s most distinguished but disparate celebrities: actor Bill Murray and master of mystery Edgar Allan Poe.

“A lady who lives in Canada and has a house on the Isle of Palms asked me to do two Poes, one for her and one to give as a gift,” Humphrey said, adding that he’ll do work for people who request something specific, as long as he can find a piece of driftwood that fills the bill.

Humphrey has painted two Murrays, his favorite being one that looks a lot like Dr. Peter Venkman of “Ghostbusters” fame. And he has sold some of his pieces of art to a few notables in the world of entertainment, including Late Show host Stephen Colbert and comedian, actor and writer Paul F. Tompkins.

He’s even created a few logos out of driftwood, and the sign outside Breakwater Associates in Mount Pleasant, where his wife, Meg, works as a school psychologist, was once floating aimlessly in the Atlantic Ocean.

Humphrey always looks for driftwood when he goes to the beach, but there are certain times when he is more optimistic about finding something that he can transform into a fish, a bird or some other creature. Some Lowcountry residents see coastal storms as a potential

problem, but Humphrey prefers to look at them as an opportunity, a chance for a raucous ocean to bring him a piece of driftwood in a shape he hasn’t seen before.

“When there’s a storm, I usually go to the beach and check it out the next day,” he explained, adding that he’ll sometimes look to see what the tide has dragged in during his lunch break from his real job. A graduate of the University of South Carolina with a degree in business and a minor in graphic design, he currently works as a front-end developer for Blue Acorn in downtown Charleston.

“I look at Google maps, and sometimes I’ll find a little bay that looks like it might be a good place to discover some useful driftwood,” he said.

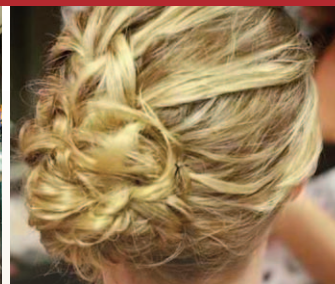
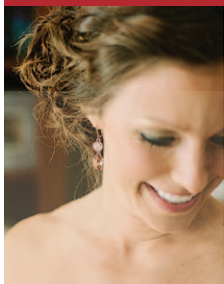
In the past, Humphrey has exhibited his work at the Southeastern Wildlife Exposition, and his fish, fowl and humans are on display online and at Blend Juice Bar in Mount Pleasant and The Co-Op on Sullivan’s Island.

Humphrey exhibited a talent for art at an early age, taking lessons and painting with his grandmother when he was 7 or 8. Though he did produce some more traditional artwork before he started painting driftwood, he described much of his art in high school and college as “doodles and sketches.”

With a full-time job and two young children, Brown, 3, and Thames, 1, his work bringing driftwood to life for the most part is limited to evenings. Does he ever think about becoming the Charleston Fishman on a full-time basis? Maybe not.

“I like doing this as a hobby. As a job, it might be less enjoyable,” he said. “I’ve had to become a night owl. I work mostly at night because of work and the kids, but I really like to relax and paint in my garage.” 🐟

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Photos courtesy of Meeting Street Productions.

Red Carpet Ready

THE LOWCOUNTRY EMBRACES FILM

WHY DID TV SHOWS such as Bravo’s “Southern Charm,” HBO’s “Vice Principals,” Lifetime’s “Army Wives” and CBS’ “Reckless” choose South Carolina as their primary filming location? Although an argument can be made that Charleston’s entertaining, flamboyant and dynamic local reality TV personalities enticed the industry to the region, that theory would not exhaust all the other factors that played a role in their decision.

BY JOE SEMSAR

In 2013, South Carolina’s state Legislature passed a bill allowing film companies to be reimbursed up to 30 percent for supplies purchased from South Carolina vendors. The legislation also increased the rebate film companies could receive for doling out wages, to 25 percent for South Carolina residents and 20 percent for others. Under the law, the incentives became permanent, protecting them from the Legislature’s annual budget process.

Simultaneously with the passage of the South Carolina bill, North Carolina’s lawmakers launched a campaign to simplify the state’s tax codes by eliminating tax loopholes and industry-specific incentives. Ultimately, that came to include the state’s film industry tax credit, which in its last



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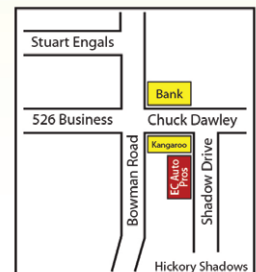
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year in effect returned more than \$60 million to companies that made movies in the Tarheel State.

This series of events stymied the growth of the film industry in North Carolina and ultimately led many in the business to take a hard look at resettling south of the border in the Palmetto State. Among them was Kara Williams, now chief executive officer of Meeting Street Productions. A tenured producer, she has had a hand in box office hits such as “The Hunger Games,” “Reckless” and “We’re the Millers.” She moved from Wilmington, North Carolina, to Charleston to take advantage of South Carolina’s fertile film-industry environment.

Williams opined that “The friendly economic environment in South Carolina planted the seed, but the high



quality of life ultimately sealed the deal.”

Since settling in Charleston, Williams has been busy overseeing films, commercials, TV series’ and music videos. In January, she rolled out a red-carpet movie screening at Cinebarre in Mount Pleasant of a feature film titled “Union Bound.” Its cast included Oliver Stone’s son, Sean, as well as a few local actors.

“Union Bound” was filmed across the Southeast and leveraged myriad Charleston-based Civil War re-enactor groups to tell the story of two Union soldiers who escaped from Andersonville, a notorious Confederate prisoner of war camp in Georgia, and eventually fled safely north back to Union territory with the help of local slaves.

Michael Benson, a local actor who played a young Union soldier in “Union Bound,” got his first experience “in front of the camera” while working on set. Traditionally a producer, Benson got his start locally through Trident Tech’s Film Production program. A caffeine junkie who admits to consuming nearly five cups of coffee and two energy drinks each day, he enjoyed the high-paced environment of shooting a film over the span of 22 days. Benson



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claimed that Trident Tech’s program “is one of the best film programs on the East Coast,” and that he wouldn’t have seen success in the film industry without the support of his Trident Tech professors. Benson is thankful, too, that he doesn’t have to go far to follow his passions: “It’s a dream that there’s a great deal of film work right here in the Lowcountry.”



her to help out with a commercial by acting on-air as an ER doctor. From there, Beebe caught the acting bug and has been working on her trade ever since.

Today, Beebe and her boyfriend work full-time for Litton, and they teach acting classes on the side with hopes of “building the local talent pool for future productions that come to the area.” Tuesday’s

The same friendly economic environment that lured Williams and her team to the Lowcountry also attracted Dave “Buddy” Morgan and Litton Entertainment to Mount Pleasant. Litton, an Emmy Award-winning independent TV distributor who produces Saturday morning hits airing on ABC and CBS such as “Born to Explore” and “The Pet Vet,” has hired a multitude of local talent for acting, producing and directing roles since setting up shop East of the Cooper.

hope is that South Carolina continues to foster an economic environment conducive to attracting film production companies away from Georgia and Louisiana, the two other film industry tax-friendly states in the Southeast.

Tuesday Beebe, a Mount Pleasant resident and Litton employee, completed MUSC’s Physician Assistants graduate program in 2002. While still in school, MUSC asked

Like Beebe, Kara Williams believes that the future of the film industry in South Carolina is up to state lawmakers. Williams and Meeting Street Productions would like to produce four feature films in South Carolina over the course of the next two years, but she admits reluctantly that “although the state has a lot to offer, ultimately filmmakers go where the film incentives are.” 🍷

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Al Bradshaw-Whittemore, co-director of the Hibben United Methodist Church Cold Weather Shelter, and volunteer Doreen Bagley of James Island.



Photos by Brian Sherman.

Warm Regards

THE HIBBEN COLD WEATHER SHELTER FINISHES ANOTHER BUSY YEAR

JUST THREE SHORT YEARS AGO, THE wintry weather of the Lowcountry inspired a group of Hibben United Methodist Church members to reach out to the community in a big way. A congregation member known as “Beth” was able to stay at the church during an ice storm and proposed a new idea: What if Hibben UMC regularly offered four walls and a roof to those who needed it? Thus was Mount Pleasant’s cold weather shelter born.

BY DENISE K. JAMES

Around that same time, Al Bradshaw-Whittemore was

a fairly new member of Hibben UMC and looking for ways to give back to his church family. A transplant from Birmingham, Alabama, and a chemical engineer by trade, Al’s giving spirit initially prompted him to teach Sunday school classes and participate in I-Beam, a mentoring program that helps build literacy, self esteem and other skills. He’d come armed with experience, having taught adult Sunday school classes back in Birmingham, and soon discovered another way to extend his helping hand through the cold weather shelter.

“When the bridge froze, Beth, a member of Hibben, convinced us to open our doors to the homeless,” he re-



Betty Riggs, a member of Hibben United Methodist Church, has volunteered each year in the kitchen.

membered. “Our first guests were from both Mount Pleasant and from downtown Charleston. We would pick them up from various places and bring them to the church.”

Al said that the initial number of guests was quite low but as word spread it grew to between 25 and 30 people. The Christian Life Living Center (CLLC) provided enough room for the guests to stay comfortably and safely and enjoy a shower and a hot meal prepared in the fully equipped kitchen. There was a separate room for the women to stay. The University School of the Lowcountry, a private school located on the Hibben United campus, uses some of this same space when in session.

“Of course, guests would have to leave in the morning

when the school hours began,” Al remarked, “but when the bridge froze, school was out as well.”

After the first – admittedly haphazard – year of hosting the cold weather shelter, the Hibben United volunteers decided to set up a committee and develop a few rules and standard procedures. Al explained that because some of the homeless folk who make use of the shelter are “vulnerable adults,” such procedures are vital to protect both the volunteers and those who stay the night.

Since then, they’ve clearly been doing something right – the second year started with just four guests and grew to 52 the last night, with Al himself and Polly and Dan Graham in the co-director’s chair. During the 2014-15

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cold season, the shelter was open 21 days and had about 700 guests. This year Al again assumed the role of co-director for the winter of 2015-2016, working with his fellow co-director Cecil Miles. The first two nights this year the shelter had a total of 107 guests.

“This year we also have the help of other churches,” Al pointed out. “We have some local churches actively involved, as well as another one preparing some meals for the shelter.”

Other local churches that have sent volunteers for the cold weather shelter include First Methodist on the Isle of Palms; First Baptist in Mount Pleasant; East Cooper Episcopal; Christ Church; and Bethel Church in downtown Charleston. The volunteers go through the necessary training to stay overnight and help out with a variety of tasks such as setting up cots or cooking and serving meals.

Speaking of meals, y’all know me – I had to ask about the food. Al assured me that various businesses around the community have generously provided meals for the shelter guests, and the results have taken dinner from mediocre to marvelous.

“The food is good! We’ve had Longhorn in Mount Pleasant, Harris Teeter, Starbucks and too many other places to name help in providing food or preparing it,” he said.

Even dessert, I noticed, is on the menu – when Brian and I stopped by to see the volunteers hard at work and snap a few photos, plates of freshly baked pie graced the tabletops. Meanwhile, the smiling kitchen crew sliced soft baguettes and whisked giant pots of mashed potatoes.



Al confirmed as of press time that as long as the need is there, the shelter will operate in winter 2016-2017. He’s hopeful that Hibben UMC – as well as other interested churches and individual volunteers – will continue to keep the spirit of giving alive. He

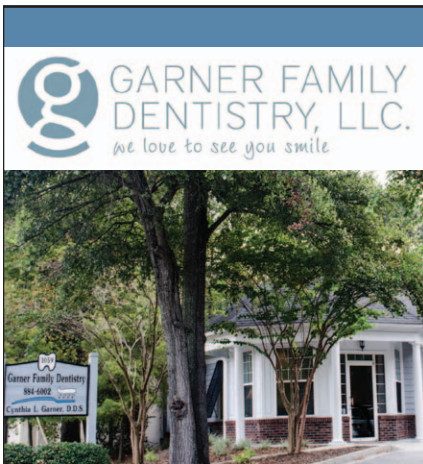
agreed that, especially in the Charleston area, a hot weather shelter could also be useful, and that Hibben United will “think about it for the future.”

“Hibben United has beds and the resources,” he commented. “But other churches are probably planning to shelter the homeless like this in the future.”

Al was quick to point out that categorizing homeless in one way or another is doing them a disservice – and that working the Hibben Shelter has cemented his beliefs that those without a permanent address are worthy of compassion and respect.

“I meet these people, talk to them and get to know them and they’re amazing,” he said. “You can’t generalize all homeless people. It’s the thing to do, to get these people out of the cold. We have to open our doors, our hearts and our hands.” 🍷

To find out more about the Hibben Cold Weather Shelter and inquire about volunteering, visit <http://hibbenumc.org/news-a-events/cold-weather-shelter>.



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Photo by Jenn Cady.

Still at Home on the Island

FORMER U.S. REP. TOMMY HARTNETT

By Brian Barrie





Photo provided by Tommy Hartnett.

In the Oval Office: President Ronald Reagan, far right, with, counterclockwise: U.S. Reps. Tommy Hartnett and Floyd Spence; David Stockman, director of the Office of Management and Budget; Lyn Nofziger, assistant to the president for political affairs; U.S. Reps. Trent Lott and Carroll Campbell; and Vice President George Bush.

YOU CAN HARDLY TALK ABOUT former U.S. Rep. Tommy Hartnett without talking about the Isle of Palms. It's not just the place he has ended up – it's the place where he started. From childhood summers spent on the beach to his first job to the first date with his future spouse, the Isle of Palms has played a supporting role not only in Hartnett's back story but in who he is and what he has accomplished.

Hartnett's story is a fascinating tale of politics and family in the Lowcountry, highlighted by his six years in the U.S. House of Representatives as the first Republican elected from South Carolina's 1st Congressional District since Reconstruction.

THE EARLY DAYS

The foundation of today's Isle of Palms was laid in late 1944, when real estate developer J.C. Long purchased more than 1,000 acres of land and began building roads and houses, putting into motion IOP's transformation from a small summer resort community to a permanent

home for thousands of year-round residents. Hartnett was introduced early on to the island that would become such an important part of his life.

"J.C. Long's wife was my daddy's first cousin. We called her Aunt Alberta," Hartnett recalled. "They would give us a house on the Isle of Palms for two or three weeks every summer. My daddy being handicapped, J.C. always felt it was good for him to come out and get some island air. We would stay near their house when there were hardly any houses out there. The farthest the island went at the time was 21st Avenue. There was a public picnic ground there where you could go out and picnic, but there was nobody on the island then."

Year after year, the family would return to the island where Hartnett and his sisters spent their days playing on the beach and their evenings watching fireflies. The amusement park on the island, with a carousel and swings, was open year-round, and there was bingo, too, but the Isle of Palms was still a strictly local retreat.

"It was very quiet – all local people. It was not any place where people came from afar to vacation with their families because there weren't any big houses here and no

air conditioning,” Hartnett said.

Later, his first job was on the island, with J.C. Long’s construction company, as was his first date with Bonnie Kennerly, his future bride.

“Our first date was a luau on front beach,” recalled Bonnie Hartnett. “We were chaperoned by Henry and Esther Tecklenburg, parents of Charleston Mayor John Tecklenburg. There was a fire and we roasted marshmallows and I think they cooked a pig. You could do that back then.”

Later on, the couple would go to the end of the island where Wild Dunes is now and shoot cans over the marsh.

“That was where I learned to shoot, when I was dating Tommy here at the end of the island,” Bonnie Hartnett remembered.

They were married in 1965, and they determined to start their new life together on the Isle of Palms. They purchased their first house on the island but never moved in.

“We bought the house a month before we got married,” recalled Hartnett. “There was no living together then – she lived with her mom and dad and I lived with mine – but she was teaching school in North Charleston and I was working downtown. We got to thinking about it, and it just wasn’t the practical thing to do, so we sold that house before we ever moved into it.”

More than a decade later, in 1977, the couple bought another house on the Isle of Palms, this time in Wild Dunes. It was their summer home until 2011, when they became permanent residents.

PUBLIC SERVICE CALLS

By the time the Hartnetts bought their home on the Isle of Palms, Tommy was already a leader in the South Carolina Statehouse. He was a rising star in the Republican Party as well, though his political career had begun on the other side of the aisle.

In 1964, at the age of 22, Hartnett entered his first po-

litical contest, running in the Democratic primary for the State House of Representatives. He won that race as well as the general election and went on to be re-elected three more times, serving a total of eight years. He might have spent more time in Columbia, but, in 1972, the Democratic Party nominated George McGovern as its candidate for president, and he was just too liberal for Hartnett.

“I fell out with the Democrats,” Hartnett explained. “My name was already on the ballot for the June (Democratic) primary when I went to a meeting and they were asking all the candidates who they were



The Hartnett children: Tom Jr. and Lee Anne.

planning on voting for for president. I couldn’t lie. I said ‘I’m voting for Richard Nixon, and if me voting for Nixon means I don’t get your vote for the Statehouse, then keep your vote. I quit.’”

Local Republicans quickly recruited Hartnett to run for the State Senate, and, when he and future Gov. James B. Edwards won their seats, half of the Charleston-area Senate delegation was on the Republican side of the aisle. After two terms in the Senate, he was ready for a new challenge. When U.S. Rep. Mendel Davis announced that he would not seek re-election in 1980, Hartnett set his sights on Washington, D.C., and the U.S. House of Representatives.

The last time voters had sent a Republican to the House from Charleston was during the post-Civil War Re-

construction era in 1876, when African-American Joseph Rainey was re-elected to his fourth term. Reconstruction ended the following year when federal troops were withdrawn from the South and Rainey was defeated in the election of 1878.

MR. HARTNETT GOES TO WASHINGTON

While Ronald Reagan was changing the national political landscape with his landslide victory in 1980, Tommy Hartnett was doing some landscaping of his own back in Charleston. In running for Congress in the 1st

District, he was challenging 102 years of Democratic control and also a well-known opponent. Charles “Pug” Ravenel had run unsuccessfully for governor in 1974 and against Strom Thurmond for a seat in the U.S. Senate in 1978. Hartnett won a close race and moved the family to the Washington area.

“It was a thrilling time for the whole family. The kids were young, Bonnie was young. I was excited about it,” Hartnett recalled. “We packed up at Christmas in 1980, rented a house in Alexandria and moved up there. Everyone was enthusiastic.”

Hartnett was elected as the president of an exceptionally large freshman class of congressional Republicans, a position that gave him much more access than most newly-elected congressmen.

“I got to meet with the president, fly on Air Force One, sit in the cabinet room with the president and the leaders of the party,” explained Hartnett. “I really liked that, but it wore on me family-wise and otherwise constantly coming back and forth to Washington.”

During his campaign, Hartnett had pledged to serve no more than three terms – a promise he kept – but his wife and children only made it through the first term. After two

years, they moved back to their home in Wild Dunes, and, during the rest of his time in Congress, Hartnett rented a small apartment within walking distance of the Capitol and flew home on weekends.

“It’s not a very family-oriented profession,” explained Hartnett.

As promised, Hartnett limited himself to three terms in Congress, returning to South Carolina and running for lieutenant governor in 1986. He narrowly lost that race to Democrat Nick Theodore.

Hartnett made one more run for office, this time for the

U.S. Senate against fellow Isle of Palms resident Fritz Hollings.

“That was a wonderful race. I had more fun in doing that than any other political thing I’ve ever done, even though I lost it,” recalled Hartnett. “Nobody thought I could win – and I proved that they were right – but if I had a little more help financially I could have. I lost that race by less than 1 percent statewide. I got more votes for the Senate in South



Bonnie and Tommy Hartnett with President Richard Nixon.

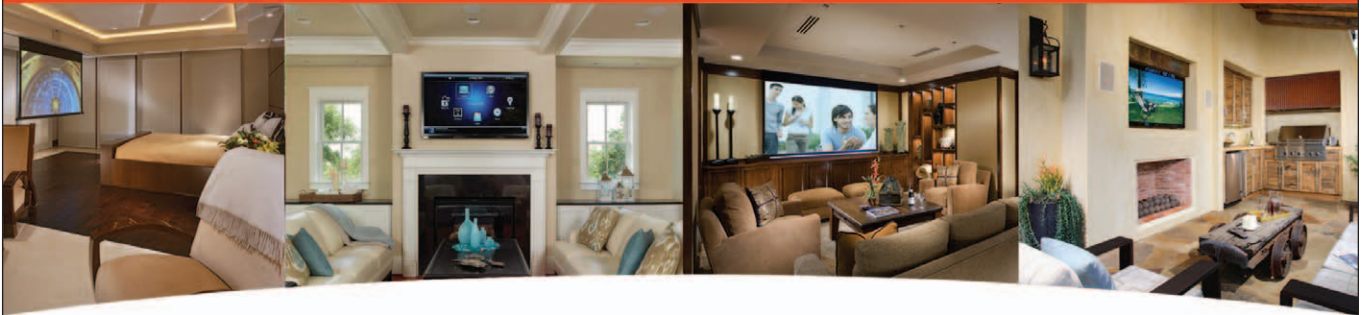
Carolina and lost than anybody had ever gotten to that point and won. The turnout was huge.”

Some might find it awkward to lose such a close election and then have to live in the same neighborhood as your opponent, but Tommy Hartnett isn’t one of those people. Hartnett and Hollings have a long history, and one election, no matter how contentious it seemed, was unlikely to cause a permanent rift.

In fact, Hartnett’s first political activity was volunteering for Hollings’ unsuccessful attempt to win a seat in the U.S. Senate in 1962. Two years later, Hollings was among the first to contribute to Hartnett’s run for the Statehouse. Hollings was at Hartnett’s wedding, and Hartnett helped Hollings’ daughters get jobs as pages in the State Legislature.

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with Democrats and Republicans,” said Hartnett.

Anyone who’s retired from public service after so many years is bound to have regrets about things not accomplished, and Hartnett is no different.

“I was offered the assistant secretary of the Army. I turned it down and I regret that,” recalled Hartnett. “And then I was offered the chairmanship of the Federal Maritime Commission, and I turned that down. I don’t regret that as much as I do the assistant secretary of the Army. I think I would have loved doing that. The other thing I regret after coming home is when Harvard called me and wanted me to come to the John F. Kennedy School of Government and be a lecturer for one semester. It didn’t pay much, and I was just getting set up in business again so I turned that down.”

While there may be a few regrets from his time in



Bonnie and Tommy Hartnett greet President George Herbert Walker Bush.

Photo provided by Tommy Hartnett.

Washington, Hartnett has no regrets about where he’s ended up: “I think I’d stay on the island if I could go anywhere. I’d probably live on the front beach with a view of the ocean, but if I could make a choice of anywhere I could live, it would probably still be here.” 🌴





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Ferrying an Island Forward

THE HEYDAY OF THE CHARLESTON FERRIES

By Charlie Morrison

Photos courtesy of Hal Coste

WHEN THE FIRST BRAVE European migrants arrived at Charles Towne Landing in 1670 and established the first city of Charleston, carving out a life here was tough.

The quality of their existence depended on their smarts, their sweat and their success in negotiating the swampy,

Lowcountry terrain and its many waterways. Those who settled east of the Cooper River, particularly on the barrier islands, exemplified that spirit even more, as the very habitation of Sullivan's Island and Long Island – later renamed the Isle of Palms – depended to a large extent on seaworthy transportation.

The transformation from an uninhabited island to the



For more than a century-and-a-half, a fleet of ferryboats, including the Mount Pleasant Ferry Company's Sappho, catered to those traversing Charleston Harbor and the Ashley, Cooper and Stono rivers.

home of Charleston's primary defensive installation depended for the ensuing two centuries on Charleston's ferry boat industry.

In 1674, standing where Fort Sullivan – later Fort Moultrie – was eventually built, Florence O'Sullivan was tasked to scout the island that would later bear his name as a potential location for a defensive fortification. His observation changed the history of the island – he pointed out that from its easternmost point, it was possible to keep watch on the expansive Atlantic Seaboard as well as the innards of Charleston Harbor.

For a more than a century-and-a-half, a fleet of ferryboats catered to those traversing Charleston Harbor, the Cooper River, the equally powerful Ashley River, which flanks peninsular Charleston's western edge, and even the Stono River. Even the Lowcountry's famed tributaries and marshes were fair game for the able ferry operators, and development, particularly of Fort Moultrie, became an engine that propelled ferries to the prominent position they

held in Charleston society for the next 150 years.

CROSSING THE HARBOR

At the dawn of the 19th century, the Hibben Family Ferry was the area's dominant ferryboat company. In business from approximately 1798 to 1821, it made round trips on most days from the back side of Sullivan's Island at Fisherman's Wharf across the often choppy Charleston Harbor to Adger's Wharf, near the market in downtown Charleston.

The Pressley and Mintz families operated another prominent ferry at that time, the Hildegard, which made daily voyages from the tip of Sullivan's Island to Adger's Wharf. Ferries were a part of life on Sullivan's Island, and, to a lesser extent, Old Mount Pleasant; any trip to acquire provisions required a trek across the harbor.

"The rise and fall of Fort Moultrie had a great effect on the island. The island depended on being a fort and a resort. Those two things ... and the ferries were the life-



Ferries were the lifeblood of Sullivan's Island, bringing food, building supplies and many other necessary items to local residents.

blood. They brought the food. They brought the building supplies and so on,” said Roy Williams, a longtime resident of Sullivan’s Island. “After all, this is an island. What did we produce over here? A few oysters and some shrimp?”

Children of the island laborers were reported to have walked from homes as far away as the western tip of the island – where many of the support staff employed principally by the government lived – all the way to the western tip of the island to catch the morning ferry on their way to school in downtown Charleston

“Because we were on an island, unless you had your own vessel, you were dependent upon the ferryboat system for survival. They carried everything,” Williams explained. “You had people coming over for the summer, wealthy Charlestonians, and they would bring furniture, the family cow, chickens ... and they also brought things like ice over here.”

“With regard to the resort, mom-and-pop stores would have to make their money in the summer because,

in the early days, once October came – mothballs,” he continued with a chuckle. “They moved everything, and, when the trolley came, they used the trolley, but, before that, it was the ferryboats.”

The teams of mariners like those manning the Hibben Family Ferry were able seamen, but the waters of Charleston Harbor are notoriously choppy, the currents strong and the weather unpredictable. As routine as a voyage might begin, by trip’s end, both children and captain might end up with the hairs on the backs of their necks taut with tension.

“It was dangerous getting on these ferryboats. A squall could blow up, and, from here to Charleston ... that’s a trip, and especially with how fast some thunderstorms can whip up,” Williams declared.

Steam power carried the ferry industry into its heyday in the late 19th century. The merciful introduction of the steam combustion engine relieved teams of oarsmen from their posts and preserved many a ship hand’s life in the process.

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FROM FORT TO RESORT

The ever-present cool ocean breezes blowing across Sullivan's Island from the Atlantic provided the impetus for the next stage in the transformation of the economy of Sullivan's Island and Long Island. While other barrier islands were dominated by agriculture and plantation farming, Sullivan's Island was known not for the bounty of its environment but for the exclusivity it offered Charleston's elite.

Once dependent upon the fort, the many service industries supporting Sullivan's Island, including the operators of the cross-harbor ferries, turned their entrepreneurial goals to establishing both Sullivan's Island and, later, the Isle of Palms, into tourist destinations. Beginning

to Mount Pleasant.

Meanwhile, the Mount Pleasant Ferry Company's Sappho ran from 1876 to 1929, when the erection of the first Cooper River Bridge, the Grace Memorial, slowed seaborne transportation. And the Lawrence, a former Confederate blockade runner, also made a name for itself following the War Between the States. Like the Sappho, this boat catered to myriad customers, from day-trippers and summer vacationers to folks moving to the exclusive little island by the sea. The Lawrence made the journey from downtown Charleston to Mount Pleasant, then ultimately to Sullivan's Island before returning to port to refuel for another venture.



The ferry industry took a big hit with the construction of the Grace Memorial Bridge in 1929.

at the end of the 18th century, Charleston's movers and shakers went about securing the island's prime real estate for the purpose of building summer homes. And ready to serve the needs of the new vacationers were, without fail, the ferryboats.

THE HEYDAY OF THE CHARLESTON FERRIES

As the 19th century progressed, the Civil War ended and Reconstruction ruled, the ferry industry in Charleston thrived. Ferries carried Sullivan's Island resident Dr. Joseph Lawrence, president of the Charleston and Seashore Railroad Company. His firm eventually connected the barrier islands with the cross-island trolley system, but not before reaping financial rewards from the company's ferry. Commodore Perry, which catered to Charleston's affluent, transported both family and furniture across the waters of Charleston Harbor. The ferry boarded at the foot of Cumberland Street in downtown Charleston and traveled

Helen Coste Moore, whose family has been on Sullivan's Island for generations, also experienced transportation by boat, as she was the daughter of a federal employee. During Moore's youth in the 1920s – prior to the Grace Memorial – even a car that regularly drove around the island arrived by ferryboat.

"The automobile, a yellow Buick owned by Fritz Werner, came from Charleston aboard the ferry that landed at Mount Pleasant," said Moore in an interview with Thomas R. Waring of *The Post and Courier*.

THE END OF AN ERA

Telling the story of Sullivan's Island, the Isle of Palms and even Mount Pleasant is impossible without referencing the industrious ferryboat industry. The visual image of the ferry crossing the harbor with a family, their furniture and even the family cow onboard is retained as an idyllic symbol of a bygone era – yet it still resonates with us today. 🐮

Golfing for the Greater Good

The 4th Annual Golf Ball

BESIDES PROVIDING A FUN-filled day in the sun, golf tournaments at the local level also serve an important purpose: raising funds for worthy causes and increasing awareness of the efforts of charitable organizations.

East Cooper Community Outreach (ECCO) will host its 4th Annual Golf Ball in May at the Daniel Island Club. The two-

day fundraiser includes a golf tourney on May 9, followed by a gala ball on May 13.

“ECCO’s hope is that everyone who participates in the Golf Ball has a memorable and fun experience while demonstrating their support,” said Director of Development and Marketing Alana Morrall. “We also want to increase the organization’s awareness in the community by engaging new friends and donors and to provide our guests with a deeper understanding of ECCO’s mission.

She expects more than 150 golfers to fill both Daniel Island Golf Club courses and attendance to exceed 300 guests at the gala.

ECCO serves more than 4,500 families each year, and the fundraiser will allow the organization to sustain a meaningful impact in the community by equipping those in need with the tools and knowledge to rise out of poverty.

ECCO is a nonprofit organization that relies solely on the community’s generosity to sustain its programs and services for low-income households.

“Participation in the golf tournament and gala offers another opportunity for individuals and businesses to get involved and support local families in need. Our goal is to raise over \$200,000 from sponsorships, ticket sales and other revenue-generating activities, like a live and silent auction at the gala,” Morrall said.

According to Morrall, ECCO has a dedicated group of almost 30 volunteers on the Golf Ball Planning Committee.

“This event would not be possible without support from more than 125 local community-minded businesses and individuals. We are thrilled to have Nucor as our Presenting Tournament Sponsor for another year, along with Lexus of Charleston as the Hole-in-One Sponsor and Boeing as one of our gala sponsors,” Morrall said.



Photo courtesy of ECCO.

She added that the Daniel Island Club is “extremely hospitable and attentive to the needs of our group. We are lucky to work with such a great staff there.”

It’s all for a good cause, but there will be a lot of fun had by those taking part in the golf tournament and gala. The gala will feature a live band, dancing, world-class cuisine, complimentary wine and beer, as well as a live and silent auction. The silent auction items will be featured online about a week before the gala for guests to preview.

Registration for the golf tournament opens at 11 a.m. May 9, followed by a shotgun start at 12:30 p.m. and an awards reception at 5:30 p.m. The gala on May 13 begins with check-in, food stations and music at 6:30 p.m. The silent auction ends at 8:30 p.m., with the live auction called by Tom Crawford at 8:45 p.m.

The cost of the golf tournament is \$250 per person and \$1,250 for a foursome, which includes four tickets to the gala. The price of the foursome increases to \$1,500 on April 22. Tickets to the gala are \$150 for general admission, \$200 for a reserved seat and \$1,750 for a table that seats eight. Sponsorship opportunities are available for both the golf tournament and gala. 🍷

For more information or to register online, visit www.ECCOCharleston.org.

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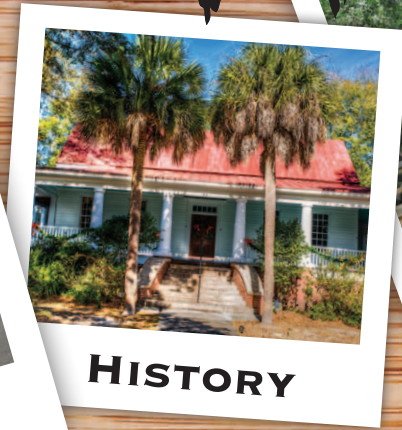
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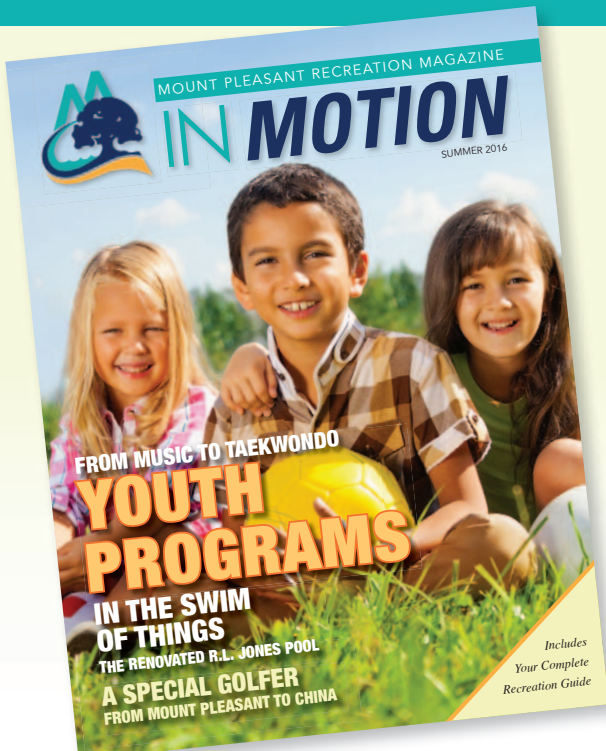
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Some Like it **HOT!**

THE PEPPER TREND IN EAST COOPER

THEY SAY YOUR TASTE BUDS change and develop every seven years, which makes sense to me because I haven't always been a fan of spicy foods. Now I can hardly stand a dish of grits or a serving of chips and salsa without the proverbial kick in the pants from a peppery sensation on my tongue.

BY DENISE K. JAMES

It appears I am not alone in that sentiment. Lately, more than ever, folks in East Cooper are enjoying the opportunity to scout

out pepper plants and grow them in their own backyard gardens. Some do it just for the sport and the chance to tell their neighbors; some look forward to creating scorching delicacies from these heat-packing vegetables.

"People use them for sauces and jellies – and each pepper has a different flavor to it," commented Emme Nichols, owner of Second Harvest Nursery, just up the road in Georgetown. Visitors to Second Harvest in the spring and early summer – roughly from mid-March until June – will find scores of hot pepper plant varieties, from pimento and tabasco to Hungarian wax, cayenne and, yes, ghost

peppers. In fact, Second Harvest will be providing favorite nurseries around Mount Pleasant with pepper plants.

“For many of the hot pepper types, this is our first year offering them,” said Jeff Boss, who works in the nursery at Royall Ace Hardware in Mount Pleasant and mentioned cayenne, habanero, shito, ghost and a few others as members of their pepper parade.

“There’s quite a following for these peppers,” he continued. “It’ll be interesting to see who follows through and eats them. I’m not sure what they’re expecting!”

Because peppers differ in spiciness, Glenda Bradley at Abide-A-While Garden Center in Mount Pleasant keeps a chart to share with her customers so they will know what the “burn factor” will be when picking out pepper seeds or a plant. She noted that two of the most popular (and mega-hot) varieties, the ghost pepper and the Carolina reaper, were not in existence a decade ago, and that the love of these insanely hot varieties is not likely to wane soon.

“People are cross breeding hot peppers to make them as hot as possible, and I think it’s honestly for bragging rights,” she chuckled. “They say that when you eat them, endorphins are released, and it’s some sort of thrill.”

Those seeking their thrill from the Carolina reaper, however, will have to look a bit harder – none of the local nurseries said they’d stock them, and even Emme referred to the locally-bred beast as “a liability.”

“They want the Carolina reaper, but I’m not offering it,” she stated. “Even with the ghost peppers, if you come in and buy a plant, I’ll give you a stern talk about keeping those plants out of reach of pets and children. If you touch them and touch your eye, you’re going to the ER.”

Scared yet? If you’re a pepper novice, why not take Glenda’s suggestion and try out some less powerful – but just as tasty – peppers? One of her personal favorites is the fish pepper, an African-American heirloom from the 1800s that cooks would use to liven up fish sauce.

“It doesn’t change the color of the sauce,” she explained, “even though the peppers are red at peak maturity. For years, these peppers were a secret in the Chesapeake Bay area, and now they’re making a comeback.”

And while pepper shoppers can start scouring the local nurseries in the spring, it’s best to grow them in the heat of summer – the hotter the weather, the hotter the pepper, according to Glenda, who also mentioned that it’s mostly men and boys who are anxious to grow the hottest breed possible.

“It’s all about these hot peppers for the men; the ladies come in and ask on behalf of their husbands and boy-friends,” she said.

“It’s kind of like beer,” Emme mused. “People who grow up around these peppers come to understand them, respect them and love them.” 🌶️

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Photos courtesy of Adam Chandler.

The Local Flavor

FARMERS MARKETS IN THE LOWCOUNTRY

By Kalene McCort



L REMEMBER THE FIRST TIME I SUNK my choppers into a homegrown, perfectly ripe, South Carolina peach. Like taking a bite out of the sun, it filled my senses with aromatic vibrancy and just the right amount of sweet. Grocery-store produce picking falls short of the wonder and sense of community provided at area farmers markets. Stacks of green onions, collards, crimson peppers and quirkily shaped heirloom tomatoes form a mosaic of nutrient-dense goodness there for the taking. We've scouted out the best spots to secure your bounty from East of the Cooper to well across the Ravenel. Consider this list a passport to all things fresh and tasty, crafted and harvested with care by the hands of locals.

MOUNT PLEASANT FARMERS MARKET

Jumping back into the season on April 5, the pavilion on Coleman Boulevard, near Moultrie Middle School, will be filled with flowers, savory treats and fresh produce each Tuesday from 3:30 p.m. to 7 p.m. Never has there been



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such an ideal place to catch up with neighbors while filling your reusable grocery bags with red-ripe strawberries or handmade soap. There's even been a meatloaf cupcake sighting or two at this cherished event, proving there's always potential for the unexpected to sprout up.

"The market provides an event where families can meet and talk to farmers," said Market Manager Tracy

Richter. "Many of these farms are family-owned. Shoppers can see multiple generations working together."

Chef Brannon Florie, whose family has strong farming roots, can be found at many a market sampling berry preserves and mouthwatering kimchi to curious shoppers. As head chef and owner of The Granary and On Forty-One, he takes full advantage of utilizing the produce grown at many





of our area farms. In 2015, Florie and his team launched FloKing Artisan Products. The brand's initial Red Jalapeno Hot Sauce is quickly becoming a condiment the Lowcountry can't live without.

"Local food stays fresher longer," said Richter. "The anticipation of an item coming into season is very exciting."

From plump spaghetti squash to raspberries bursting with flavor, the number of different crops offered is rather impressive. Whether you pick up butter beans from Pinckney Farms or quail eggs from Wishbone Heritage Farms, you're sure to leave satisfied knowing you're supporting locals and providing your loved ones with the best food the Lowcountry has to offer.

"My favorite time of the year is when the muscadines are in season," said Richter. "The market smells so sweet!"

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DANIEL ISLAND FARMERS MARKET

On May 5, the Daniel Island Farmers Market returns for its eighth year. A true treasure for the close-knit community of DI, this event also attracts visitors who reside off the island. Every Thursday, from 3 p.m. to 6 p.m., regional farmers and vendors set up shop on Seven Farms Drive. Attendees can view paintings by local artists while enjoying baked goods from The Cookie Chick. Each week, a featured performer will keep shoppers entertained while they peruse the multitude

of unique finds. From homemade multigrain bread to handcrafted children's clothing, you never know what might find its way home with you. Offering up food trucks and fun for the whole family, this is one market you won't want to miss.

Island, this venue has hosted the likes of many a traveling musician and just last spring started the new tradition of filling the back tree-laden lot with an array of noteworthy vendors. From jewelers with a penchant for using natural gemstones to eco-friendly farmers offering the sweetest spring onions, the diversity of sellers is not to be missed. While the delectable eats take center stage at this market, the music that pours out from it is just as relevant. In between sampling Dig-gity Donuts and dipping focaccia into Holy Smoke Olive Oil, folks can find



their groove and dance to the sweet sounds dispensed by some of the area's most beloved musicians.

SUNDAY BRUNCH FARMERS MARKET AT THE CHARLESTON POUR HOUSE

“We get lots of joy from seeing so many people connecting with one another and celebrating this remarkable community we're all a part of,” said Chandler. “The response from our community has been tremendous.”

Spade and Clover Garden is one such vendor whose options bring delight to those looking for a rich variety of tastes. Asian cucumbers, garlic, leeks, holy basil, edible flowers and sugar snap peas rapidly make their way off the beautifully arranged

When Meg Moore and Adam Chandler were searching for a new locale for their farmers market, The Charleston Pour House seemed like an obvious choice. Located on James

Spade and Clover Garden is one such vendor whose options bring delight to those looking for a rich variety of tastes. Asian cucumbers, garlic, leeks, holy basil, edible flowers and sugar snap peas rapidly make their way off the beautifully arranged

Spade and Clover Garden is one such vendor whose options bring delight to those looking for a rich variety of tastes. Asian cucumbers, garlic, leeks, holy basil, edible flowers and sugar snap peas rapidly make their way off the beautifully arranged

table and into the baskets of enthusiastic home chefs.

Experience this James Island favorite for yourself when it kicks back into action on March 13. The new season, which runs through Dec. 20, is going to bring more chef demos, holistic remedies and, of course, plenty of great live music. The market is open for business from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.

own Rewind Candles. Providing alluring scents like Champagne and Merlot, these candles are sure to set the mood for a dinner party of any variation. A few booths away, you'll discover Rio Bertolini's Handmade Pasta, which pairs perfectly with the sweet basil grown by Lee Burbage of Island Thyme Herbs. The magic of the market truly unfolds when you



THE CHARLESTON FARMERS MARKET

The downtown Charleston Farmers Market, by far the largest in the area, attracts a multitude of residents looking to purchase art, okra and fresh juice every Saturday, from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m., starting April 9 and running through Nov. 26. During Spoleto season, the market is open on Sundays as well to ensure double the weekend fun. Early birds can rise with the sun and get down to Marion Square early to secure the best selection of homegrown goodness. A favorite among locals and visiting tourists, the Charleston Farmers Market provides all the elements for attaining a flavorful life.

Among the hundreds of vendors, working hard under white-tented canopies, you'll find Charleston's

start to envision the delicacies you can cook up for a memorable night. Each vendor offers a little piece of the puzzle that once completed is sure to translate into exquisite meals.

"The most rewarding aspect of my position as manager of the Charleston Farmers Market is definitely having the privilege of working with all of the talented and dedicated vendors," said Harrison Chapman, who admits to consuming an entire watermelon in one sitting. "Going into this position, I understood that I would get a taste of each vendor's offering, but I must say that I had no idea the vendors would teach me so much."

Clocking time in the fields until just after dusk, farmers are a breed all their own. Working close to the earth, in accordance with the seasons, to



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bring the very best to your plate, they sacrifice slumber and clean fingernails for the sake of the crop.

“Many people think eating local is only beneficial to the local economy, which is why we must teach the community about the nutritional benefits as well,” said Chapman. “Produce purchased from your big-box grocery store typically travels 1,500-plus miles before it reaches the store, and, because produce begins losing its nutritional value as soon as it is harvested, you end up with a subpar product. It not only loses a lot of its nutrition, it doesn’t taste or look nearly as good.”



Not only is the Charleston Farmers Market a place where you can get all the items on your weekly grocery list, it also serves as the ideal spot for brunch or lunch. With an impressive number of food trucks at your disposal and performances by a local break dance crew, this is one market that ranks high on the entertainment scale. Roti Rolls offers savory Asian-inspired vegan flatbread sand-



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wiches, in addition to carnivorous options. Yardbirds dishes out a coveted favorite: chicken and waffles that will make you question ever eating the two separately again.

JOHNS ISLAND FARMERS MARKET

Johns Island is home to many a local farm, so it makes absolute sense for this community to have its very own market. Modest yet lively, it offers up an authentic experience, being in such close proximity to the plots of land that produce the freshest of the fresh. Stopping here, you'll feel as though you've stepped back into a time where roadside stands dotted the Carolina landscape. Visit the market on Saturdays, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

FOLLY BEACH FARMERS MARKET

Capturing a bit of beachy bohemian, as only Folly can, this Wednesday evening market, open from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m., provides the mid-week work break you so crave. En-



joy a refreshing acai bowl from Brava Bowls, topped with shredded coconut and fruit, while taking in driftwood canvas paintings made by artists seaside.

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They're On a (Cinnamon) Roll: Another Broken Egg Cafe

THERE COULD BE MANY different reasons that Jennifer Tito, manager of Another Broken Egg Cafe in Belle Hall Shopping Center, is a perfectionist about her cuisine. Perhaps it's the fact that she worked in fine dining for most of her life. Perhaps it's her sincere love of food and of people. Whatever it might be, it is proving to be quite a boon for foodies in Mount Pleasant.

Another Broken Egg Cafe is just the place to enjoy any meal of the day.

"I would never work at restaurant where I don't love the food," Tito declared, gesturing to the samples on the table that she generously brought out for me and my assistant, Rachel, to wolf down.

First on the list was the cinnamon roll French toast: a sweet and flavorful delicacy that made an ordinary Thursday feel like a holiday.

As we ate, we learned that Tito has had a successful run so far with Another Broken Egg Café and plans to share more of the same delicious food that she's come to love with East Cooper residents. The franchise, which started in Louisiana back in 1996, has found other homes in the Southeast, including Atlanta, Charlotte, Raleigh, Asheville and even Florida, with more locations to come. Tito herself started off working at the Morrisville, North Carolina, location before she was fortunate to make a move to the Lowcountry. She now oversees the South Carolina territory, which includes a location on Market Street in downtown Charleston.

"We opened this location in Mount Pleasant after seeing such great success at our Charleston location and realizing there weren't really any breakfast cafes around," she pointed out. "We offer not only breakfast but many delicious lunch options, as well as a full bar. We like to bump it up a notch."

A few of Tito's favorite dishes on Another Broken Egg's menu quickly made my "must-try" list – the aforementioned French toast (which we tried that day), plus creamy shrimp 'n' grits, savory eggs Benedicts in various renditions; an assortment of made-to-order omelets and the homemade sausage – which I also tried and was promptly smitten with. Tito is willing to hear feedback about the menu items and even prepare something off-menu that a customer comes up with, all just to make her guests happy.

"We're happy to do absolutely anything and everything we can for our guests," she noted. "We want everyone to have a great experience."

Fans of the restaurant will be glad to know that Tito and her talented staff offer catering for a variety of events, from business gatherings to baby showers and weddings. Catering clients can expect the same genuine hospitality and quality of fresh food they find in the restaurant – and at a great value.

"It is an unforgettable experience helping to plan the perfect event for our guests," said Tito. "By the time of the event, I have spent so much time with them that they feel like family." 🍷

Visit Another Broken Egg Cafe at 608A Long Point Road or call 843-352-9833.



Photos courtesy of Another Broken Egg Cafe.

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Photo courtesy of the Southern Ground Music and Food Festival.

A Culinary Pioneer

CHEF RUSTY HAMLIN OF THE SOUTHERN GROUND MUSIC AND FOOD FESTIVAL

THE DAYS OF STANDING IN music festival concession lines for a preservative-filled hot dog or dried out falafel are a thing of the past. After all, nothing pairs better with guitar solos and gritty vocals than exceptional farm-fresh cuisine. Chef Rusty Hamlin, a culinary mastermind of fierce flavor, has trekked all over the country keeping the bellies of musicians and fans full. Instead of a guitar, he is armed with

BY KALENE MCCORT

cutlery, spices and a cornucopia of innovative ideas for those Southern staples we just can't live without.

The concept for Zac Brown Band's now-famous "Eat & Greet" was born out of the desire to offer fans a relaxed, family style experience where they could break cornbread with the very musicians they admired. Prior to every show, Hamlin feeds up to 200 guests, embodying the very notion of Southern hospitality. In addition to a lineup of encore-worthy acts, such as Tedeschi Trucks Band, you are sure to find grills ablaze firing up some hits of their own.



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“Being on an amazing journey with Zac and some of my closest friends, while also supporting his vision and building my own brand at the same time, is something that no chef has ever done, and this is what I find most rewarding,” said Hamlin.



very own marinade, apply named “Love Sauce,” can be found at many a gig.

Most cooking sessions are filled with the art of improvisation for Hamlin. Pulling from Creole and Cajun influences, he builds on his repertoire by adding in elements native to

a tour spot. Like a honey-tinged vocal harmony or a chilling instrumental that stops you in your tracks, he blends the obvious with the unexpected to excite diners’ palates. The end result is a much-welcomed surprise.

“Creating a recipe is like writing a song in a way, as songs bring back memories just like food does,” said Hamlin.

This culinary pioneer’s journey to chef stardom has been marinated in hard work, integrity and a general admiration for fare with soul. Raised in the cultural foodie mecca of Baton Rouge, Louisiana, Hamlin’s love of cooking was ignited in his family kitchen. His mom would spend time perfecting the likes of jambalaya and gumbo, of which a 4-year-old Hamlin would be the official taste tester. Now he brings the same love of food to the masses.

The Lowcountry’s foodie scene continues to flourish with local chefs bringing new concepts to the forefront. Whether with a roadside food truck or a low-lit locale in the heart of Chucktown, culinary crooners are showing up in a big way, eager to add to an already vibrant community.

Hamlin goes straight to the source, visiting area farms to best utilize the abundance of local ingredients needed to craft memorable meals. After collecting a variety of culinary treasures, he retreats back to Cookie – a decked out, 18-wheel, 54-foot mobile kitchen where no exact meal is ever executed twice.

“Charleston is a natural fit for us, as some of the freshest ingredients, including seafood, are available,” he added. “We’ve been fortunate to have worked with some amazing local restaurants at our Southern Ground Music and Food Festivals, such as Husk, Opal, The Ordinary and Home Team BBQ.”

“Having the opportunity to travel the country and form relationships with local farmers, in each market where we tour, really allows me to learn the ins and outs of the different growing seasons of the different quadrants of the United States,” said Hamlin. “I’ve always wanted to support and raise awareness for local farmers, so this is a chef’s dream.”

Opal, a restaurant that has received much praise from Hamlin, can be found right in Mount Pleasant’s own Shoppes at Seaside Farms. Beautifully executed and possessing lots of local charm, Opal’s plates range from spicy local shrimp bruschetta to crispy chicken breast. Chef Patrick Owens, who has collaborated with Hamlin at previous Southern Ground Festivals, continues to raise the bar at his eatery close to the IOP Connector. 🍷

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Cultivating Community

The Colleton County Rice Festival

FOR 200 YEARS, RICE WAS literally “Carolina Gold,” as South Carolina was at one time the largest producer of the grain. While the industry essentially disappeared in the early 1900s, following a long decline after the Civil War, it is responsible for growing deeply rooted communities that remain today.

The Colleton County

BY ANNE TOOLE

Rice Festival

honors the county’s heritage in the business. Many of its plantations that once thrived as rice producers remain, as do the old rice paddies, which are commonly used today for hunting.

“This festival is a celebration of our community,” said Bubba Trippe, volunteer chairman of the festival. “In recent years, between 20,000 and 30,000 people have come to celebrate it with us.”

Now in its 41st year, the 2016 Rice Festival will be held April 22 and 23, with several events leading up to and following the official festival dates.

“We’ve got something for every age and every crowd,” said Trippe. “I have been coming to the Colleton County Rice Festival since it started, and it is amazing to see how it has grown. Our Festival Committee has worked hard to organize a series of events that keep people coming back year after year.”

Kicking off the week of the festival, the Taste of Walterboro showcases food and drink from local restaurants, and proceeds help fund the following year’s festival.

Other events include a dog show, BMX ramp shows, tennis and golf tournaments, fireworks, a live band and more.

“The 5K Rice Run has been happening since the festival

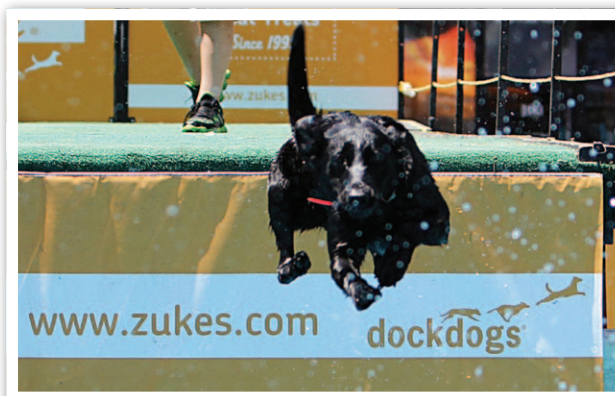
started, and we also hold a Miss Rice Festival pageant,” said Trippe. “One of the newer favorite events is the Palmetto DockDogs, where dogs compete in distance or height while jumping from a 40-foot dock.”

Another event that was added recently, the Tour de Lowcountry, consists of a 66-mile and a 32-mile bike ride from Walterboro that winds past old rice paddies and plantations such as White Hall Plantation, Bluff Plantation and Cherokee Plantation, and returns to Walterboro, followed by food and drinks for the cyclists.

The Colleton County Rice Festival is much more than a remembrance of a long-gone industry or an opportunity to savor one of the South’s favorite staples. It

is a celebration of today’s thriving community, served up with a side of fun. And, of course, a side of rice. 🍚

For more information on the Colleton County Rice Festival, visit www.ricefestival.org.



The Colleton County Rice Festival offers fun and interesting activities for people of all ages and for canines as well.

Photos courtesy of the Colleton County Rice Festival.

Warranting Praise from Foodies and Critics Alike

The Granary

AS EXECUTIVE CHEF AND owner of The Granary, Brannon Florie works hard to deliver the very best flavors to patrons. Over the course of his career, he's received warranted praise from foodies and critics alike. Writer Robert Moss named Florie's pork chop one of the "Thirty Most Memorable Dishes" in Charleston – a meal that could sway even the staunchest vegetarians to rethink their diets.

BY KALENE MCCORT

A native Charlestonian whose farming grandparents played an integral role in his journey to excellence, Florie honors his past and celebrates the present through his culinary ventures.

"The most rewarding aspect of this job is watching the faces of our customers when the food hits the table," said Florie, whose road to restaurateur was built on countless hours in the food and beverage business. From his humble roots as a dishwasher to landing his first restaurant managerial position at the young age of 17, Florie is proof that through passion and persistence greatness can be achieved.

"Hospitality is our number one concern," said Florie, who makes sure to always switch up the well-executed fare according to season. "We want people to feel at home and comfortable. No matter what happens, we want them to leave happy."

With a diverse menu that offers up everything from Breach Inlet clams cooked in Westbrook White Thai to hanger steak complete with sunchoke purée, chimichurri and savory Yukon Gold potatoes, you are sure to find a meal that leaves you satisfied and smiling.

The Granary's happy hour boasts a series of small plates, at prices that won't strain your wallet: Savor a Moscow Mule in a chilled copper mug while sampling spicy fish tacos, veggie-

laden flatbread and short rib and pork meatballs.

"With the upcoming season, we are expecting to see lots of nice local vegetables and seafood," said Florie. "We also are putting extra attention on our charcuterie program, working on new salamis, sausages and hams."

The options for brunch at The Granary are so varied, you are sure to find something for everyone in your Sunday-Funday crew. Those that savor the sweet can load up on cinnamon-orange brioche French toast, which is generously paired with strawberry cream cheese and topped with bourbon

maple syrup. Shrimp 'n' grits, egg white frittata and biscuits and gravy all grace the star-studded menu that will no doubt have you wanting to make a visit to The Granary part of your Sunday ritual. With \$5 mimosas, Moscow Mules and bloody marys, it's the perfect way to close out the weekend.

Innovative, well thought out and never boring, The Granary's meals speak to the creative integrity and vision that has kept Florie a fierce competitor in the game for so long.

In addition to The Granary, Florie has opened On Forty-One, where he also serves as executive chef. He lends his skill set and expertise to several Lowcountry restaurants, including The Rarebit and The Americano and has even crafted his own specialty hot sauce for his brand – FloKing. As if that wasn't enough, he also can occasionally be found at the Mount Pleasant Farmers Market offering up homemade preserves and pickled kimchi.

"In the last five years, I have opened, consulted or operated seven different concepts and had two children," said Florie. "None of that could have happened without my wife, Renee, especially the children part." 🍷

Taste the best of the Lowcountry in an environment where the food and ambience are on point with many of the popular eateries of downtown. For more information on The Granary, visit www.thegranarycharleston.com.



Photo courtesy of the Granary.



Spring Recipes

Enjoy these recipes this Spring!

Recipes and photos courtesy of James Stefiuk

Creamy Spring Peas with Pancetta

Six servings

INGREDIENTS:

Kosher salt
10 ounce bag of thawed frozen peas
1 pound of sugar snap peas, trimmed
1/4 pound of snow peas, trimmed and thinly sliced
4 ounces of pancetta, chopped
2 tablespoons of all-purpose flour
1 1/2 cups of low-sodium chicken broth
1/2 cup of heavy cream
Juice of 1 lemon
Freshly ground pepper

PREPARATION:

Bring a large pot of salted water to a boil over high heat. Fill a large bowl with ice water. If you are using fresh English peas, add to the boiling water and cook until tender, about one minute. Add the snap peas and cook until bright green, about two minutes, then add the snow peas and cook 30 seconds. Drain the peas and plunge them into the ice water to cool.

Cook the pancetta in a large skillet over medium heat until crisp, eight to 10 minutes. Transfer to a paper towel-lined plate with a slotted spoon. Add the flour to the drippings in the skillet and cook, whisking until toasted, about one minute. Whisk in

the chicken broth and cream and cook until reduced by one-third – simmer for about six minutes.

Drain the peas, shaking off the excess water, then add to the skillet (if you are using frozen peas, add them here). Cook, stirring, until heated through, three to five minutes. Stir in the lemon juice and season with salt and pepper. Transfer to a serving bowl and top with the pancetta. ■





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Bacon Wrapped Grilled Peaches with Balsamic Glaze

INGREDIENTS:

4 cups mixed assorted greens
1 cup shredded white cabbage
1 red bell pepper, sliced thin
1 carrot, peeled, sliced into thin strips
2/3 cup alfalfa sprouts or other kind of fresh sprout
1 cup honey roasted peanuts
1/3 cup sesame orange dressing

PREPARATION:

Set a grill to low heat and preheat for 10 minutes or so.
Brush the grill grates with a paper towel dabbed in oil.

Wash and dry peaches. Cut each peach in half and then each half into four quarters. Place one large basil leaf on each side of the peaches.

Cut the bacon slices in half. Wrap each peach slice and basil leaves with a slice of bacon. Pin the loose end of the bacon slice with one or more toothpicks. Repeat with remaining peaches.

Brush the bacon-wrapped peaches lightly with olive oil so the bacon doesn't stick to the grill. Grill the peaches until the bacon is cooked, turning so all sides are evenly cooked, about 20 to 25 minutes.

Transfer to a serving platter and remove toothpicks. Drizzle with store-bought or homemade balsamic glaze.

Serve hot or at room temperature. ■



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Melon and Prosciutto Salad with Parmigiano Reggiano

Eight servings

INGREDIENTS:

- 3 cups (1/2 inch) cubed honeydew melon (about 1/2 medium melon)
- 3 cups (1/2inch) cubed cantaloupe (about 1 medium melon)
- 3 tablespoons thinly sliced fresh mint
- 1 tablespoon fresh lemon juice
- 1/4 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
- 2-3 ounces thinly sliced prosciutto, cut into thin strips
- 1/2 cup (2 ounces) shaved fresh Parmigiano Reggiano cheese
- Cracked black pepper (optional)
- Mint sprigs (optional)

PREPARATION:

Combine first five ingredients, tossing gently. Arrange melon mixture on a serving platter. Arrange prosciutto evenly over melon mixture; sprinkle with Parmigiano Reggiano. Garnish with cracked black pepper and fresh mint sprigs. ■



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The Golden List

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The Ordinary
The Palmetto Room
The Pickled Palate
The Wreck
Toast
Tokyo Bistro
Trattoria Lucca
Triangle Char + Bar
Vickery's
Water's Edge
Wild Olive
Wild Wing Cafe
Xiao Bao Biscuit



The Golden Winners

Here are a few snapshots taken by Mount Pleasant Magazine and In Good Taste staff members at winning restaurants around town. We love to share good news with the community! Be sure to visit these fine establishments for a great meal. For more about the Golden Spoon Award winners, visit GoldenSpoonAwards.restaurant.



General Manager John Parrish and Chef Jacques Larson at Wild Olive on Johns Island.



Chef Frank Klein at Acme Lowcountry Kitchen on the Isle of Palms.



Head Chef Simon Pizunski and General Manager Emily Kearley at Burtons Grill in Mount Pleasant.



Sous Chef Don Drake at Magnolias in downtown Charleston.



General Manager Sara Thompson at Graze in Mount Pleasant.



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Small Scale Community Meets Large Scale World Village Park in Mount Pleasant



Illustrations courtesy of Flyway Realty.

LET'S SAY THAT YOU LOVE being around people. You crave the bustle of city life with its proximity to businesses, shopping and restaurants. Yet during down time, you love nothing more than curling up on a patch of grass beneath a tree or tending the herbs and flowers in your garden.

BY DENISE K. JAMES

In the past, many people had to make the tough choice between life in the heart of a city and life in its outskirts. The suburbs offered space for a larger home with all the luxury a family wanted plus inviting trees and landscape, but it wasn't necessarily close to a business district. Now we can have both, thanks to the vision of Fredda Culbreth, a boutique developer with a heartfelt story.

Culbreth spent her early years at her father's side working in their family garden. Her dad told her that a

house is not about status – it’s a home and living among nature is essential for well-being. Culbreth took those words to heart and grew up wanting to share that philosophy with others in the form of what is known as a “pocket neighborhood,” a term coined by Ross Chapin, architect and creator of this traditional setting. He described it as “cottages tucked off of a busy street, like a pocket safely tucking away its possessions from the world outside.”

Today, that busy street is in the heart of our beloved Mount Pleasant, and that pocket is called Village Park.

“It has taken me six years to develop Village Park,” she said and pointed out that convincing the town, designing the land and working with numerous talented people were important parts of the process.

How will Village Park be distinct from other neighborhoods? For one thing, each home backs up to lush green space, brimming with trees, flowers and other natural elements. Culbreth stressed that this is one of the hallmarks of her design – part of the vision she brought to life.

“I dreamed of green space where each home would face a park,” she explained. “There would be a community table awaiting impromptu invitations for supper and a corner for a fire pit for sipping warm libations in winter.”

As exclusive as that sounds – and it is – residents of Village Park will also love how close it is to other businesses in Mount Pleasant, including grocery stores, pharmacies, independent retailers and the restaurants that put the Lowcountry on the map.

“That’s what we mean by an urban setting,” she said.



“You can walk to meet friends for a drink and you won’t need a car.”

Located right off of Chuck Dawley Boulevard and behind the Sea Island Shopping Center near Sullivan’s Island, Village Park is close to what is quickly becoming “downtown” Mount Pleasant – and Culbreth planned it that way.

“Ben Sawyer and Coleman used to be just a thoroughfare to the beach, but now they are becoming Mount Pleasant’s main streets and business district,” she pointed out. “This is a transitional street and a good place to put a pocket neighborhood. We’re showing people its potential.”

Sixteen homes will face the park in Village Park, each being three stories tall and with the special touches that Lowcountry residents typically seek, including large windows with ample natural light and multiple porches. The homes are affordable, starting in the \$500s.

Meanwhile, what’s next for Fredda Culbreth? She claimed “her light burns bright into the night,” and she’s always seeking ideas about how to transition an old setting into new possibilities. In downtown Charleston, for example, one historic building on Archdale Street – right off King – is awaiting upscale pied-a-terres.

“My intent has always been well-planned living spaces, with greenery and natural light, within an urban community,” she said. 🌿

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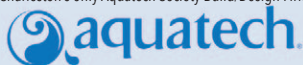
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A Home Buyer's Best Friend

SCR President David Kent

DAVID KENT RUNS HIS business a bit differently than most people who make their living in the Lowcountry's booming real estate industry, representing buyers but

commented.

Kent's duties as SCR president will take him around the state and across the country. He recently hit the road to install the officers of four local associations, and he attends eight meetings a year in Columbia, in addition to the state

not sellers in one of the most lucrative housing markets in the country. His penchant for swimming against the tide has done little to affect his standing among his peers, however. The Mount Pleasant resident is currently serving a one-year term as president of the South Carolina Association of Realtors.

Kent, broker-in-charge of The Real Buyer's Agent in Mount Pleasant, was inaugurated at the SCR's annual meeting last September and officially assumed his presidential duties Nov. 17, 2015. His responsibilities include focusing on the group's strategic plan and budgeting for an organization that represents more than 17,000 Realtors in the Palmetto State. An SCR director since 2003 who has held various other leadership positions in the past 13 years, he obviously has intimate knowledge about how the organization works. He credits Nick Kremydas, chief executive officer since 2006, with making sure everything runs smoothly.

"Nick keeps us going in the right direction," Kent



Photo by Brian Sherman.

convention. He also participates as a director at meetings of the National Association of Realtors. Since 2007, he has held leadership positions in that organization as well.

A former president of both the Charleston Trident Association of Realtors and the local Multiple Listing Service, Kent has garnered a long list of industry awards and honors: Realtor of Distinction; Realtor of the Year in 2008; Leadership Trident with the Charleston Trident

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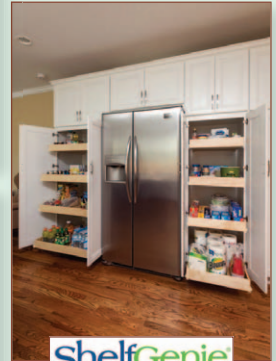
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Though he has had a real estate license since his college days, Kent started his professional career building homes rather than helping people sell them. He owned a construction company and was named Member of the Year by the Charleston Trident Association of Homebuilders in 1995. A graduate of Clemson University with a degree in Building Science and Construction Management, he lived in Cary, North Carolina, as a youngster and completed high school in Bennettsville, South Carolina.

He spent part of his time at Clemson studying architecture in Genoa, Italy. But despite his world travels, he said he always knew where he would end up. The parents of a college friend of his lived in the Old Village, and he visited Mount Pleasant often, moving to town permanently in 1985. The Real Buyer's Agent was born 10 years later.

Kent's decision to represent only buyers grew out of his experience in the construction industry. Some friends of his who were interested in purchasing a home asked for his advice. He realized that buyers can be at a disadvantage, so, when he left construction for real estate, he chose to concentrate on helping people who are looking for a new place to live.

"No one was representing buyers," he commented. "But buyers have the most risk, especially now. It's a seller's market. Sellers have the upper hand. If I'm representing both buyers and sellers, I'm not offering full representation to my client. It's the buyer who needs the most help."

Kent pointed out that for him, helping a client purchase a home is an educational process. He and the potential buyer study the market to see how much homes are selling for, they look at houses that might fit the client's needs and they shop interest rates.

"I'm the buyer's advocate through the whole process," he explained. "My job is to make sure my clients have all the information they need, even though they didn't know they needed it."

"It's a fun process," he added.

Kent cited some issues that he discusses with his clients and that all potential homeowners should consider. For example, flood insurance is required by lenders in some areas of the Lowcountry but not in others. And he pointed out that you can save money by reducing the property taxes you pay on your home if it is your primary residence. Neither should you forget about the South Carolina Homestead Tax-Exemption Program, which erases up to \$50,000 of the value of your home and up to five acres of property from taxation once you pass the age of 65.

In both cases, you must apply for these exemptions with the county assessor's office.

Kent lives in Mount Pleasant with his wife, Minou, and two daughters. Alexandra (Ali) is a sophomore at Clemson, while Hanna is a junior at Academic Magnet High School. The veteran Realtor is confident that Mount Pleasant and its environs will continue to grow at a rapid pace.

"Forty-seven people a day move to the Lowcountry," he stated. "We've got Boeing, Volvo, the military, the ports and the medical organizations. I don't see anything that's going to slow us down." 🏠



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Relaxation Station Palm Casual Patio Furniture Is Ready for Spring

IT'S HARD TO BEAT SPRINGTIME IN THE Lowcountry, and what better way to shed those winter blues than by spending some time relaxing outside?

Palm Casual is ready to help you do exactly that. The family owned and operated company has been specializing in high-quality, custom patio furniture since 1979.

“We do it all, whatever you want,” said owner Aaron Beasley. “A lot of our customers are interested in cast aluminum for a traditional ‘Charleston’ feel. Others lean toward a more contemporary style in wicker. Whatever fits best with your taste, we build it to last.”

While Palm Casual does sell in-stock items, Beasley and his team make sure that the custom design and production process is quick and easy. There are a variety of designs and colors from which to choose, and, as a volume manufacturer, pieces can be made in one to two weeks.

“I don’t know another store in Charleston who builds their own patio furniture. You could compare it to buying a car off the assembly line,” said Beasley.

Custom patio furniture shouldn’t leave you feeling like your wallet got a spring cleaning.

“Since we manufacture and distribute to hundreds of stores nationwide, we are able to streamline the process and make it efficient, which helps control costs. This allows our customers a better price for a high-quality product,” Beasley explained.

If you already have patio furniture, whether it is left outside in the elements or kept in storage through the winter, good upkeep is vital to extending its life.

“Our cushions are all reversible and removable to extend their durability,” Beasley said. “We exclusively use Sunbrella material, which is actually a solution-dyed acrylic that only feels and looks like fabric and can be cleaned with bleach. The same goes for our wicker furniture; it is actually made of woven, high-end plastic, making it easier to clean and more likely to hold up over time.”

Palm Casual offers several free lifetime services to its past customers to ensure that their custom patio furniture is always in top condition.

“We re-stuff cushions for free,” Beasley said. “We do use the highest quality of foam that is made, but even the best foam will eventually collapse over time.”

Other free services include re-buttoning and re-sewing cushions, repairing wicker and fixing chipped paint.

“Customer service is what we do best,” Beasley said. “That’s what has helped us stay in business for 37 years. Customers love us and tell other people – they’re our best advertising.”

Palm Casual puts so much emphasis on customer

satisfaction that they offer a 30-day full refund or replacement – for any reason – on custom-made pieces.

“If they get their cushions and realize the color doesn’t look right in the space, we work with them to find the right color, sometimes making five or six different sets until our client finds the right one,” Beasley explained. “Most people are shocked to learn that this is free of charge, even if we have to build an entirely new custom set.”

Make the most of springtime this year. Palm Casual is here to help revive the furniture sets you already purchased from them or to help you add to your collection. 🌿



Photo courtesy of Palm Casual.

To learn more, visit www.palmcasual.com or call 843-881-0041.

TOP TEN MOST EXPENSIVE HOMES SOLD 2015

Park West, Mount Pleasant, S.C.

MLS LISTED PRICE	LISTING AGENT LISTING COMPANY	SELLING AGENT SELLING COMPANY	DAYS ON MARKET	SELLING PRICE
1) \$1,549,000	Will Dammeyer William Means Real Estate	Nate Gainey Matt O'Neill Real Estate	39	\$1,455,000
2) \$1,399,000	Brian Beatty Keller Williams Realty	Mary Lou Wertz Atlantic Properties	47	\$1,340,000
3) \$1,295,000	Randal Longo & Lauren Pierce iSave Realty	Jay Unger Exclusive Agency	63	\$1,260,000
4) \$1,295,000	Julie O'Reilly Keller Williams Realty	Don Dawson Caroline One Real Estate	70	\$1,175,000
5) \$1,000,000	Anton Roeger Keller Williams Realty	Amy Hungerford Coldwell Banker United Realtors	30	\$942,500
6) \$950,000	Leesa Northrup Carolina One Real Estate	Keith Pruitt Carolina One Real Estate	43	\$918,250
7) \$889,000	Randal Longo iSave Realty	Courtney Delfino Exclusive Realty	38	\$905,000
8) \$865,000	Kay Sims Minson Carolina One Real Estate	Kay Sims Minson Carolina One Real Estate	42	\$855,000
9) \$865,000	Julie O'Reilly Keller Williams Realty	Lea Anne Brown Ravenel Associates Real Estate	87	\$845,000
10) \$825,000	Cathy Sembower Carolina One Real Estate	Mickey Rakes Coldwell Banker United Realtors	92	\$830,000

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TOP TEN MOST EXPENSIVE HOMES SOLD 2015

Seaside Farms, Mount Pleasant, S.C.

MLS LISTED PRICE	LISTING AGENT LISTING COMPANY	SELLING AGENT SELLING COMPANY	DAYS ON MARKET	SELLING PRICE
1) \$1,400,000	Will Freeman & Jace Boozer The Beach Company	Caroline Ragsdale & Carter Helms Disher, Hamrick, & Myers	6	\$1,330,000
2) \$1,200,000	Will Freeman The Beach Company	Marie Ososki Tri-County Properties	3	\$1,165,000
3) \$855,000	Gentry Radwanski & Rebecca Linenger The Boulevard Company	Paige Hutto Avera Keller Williams Realty	53	\$815,000
4) \$825,000	Rene Kramer Carolina One Real Estate	Liza Loadholdt Valero Keller Williams Realty Charleston	49	\$800,000
5) \$620,000	Suzie Smith Carolina One Real Estate	Marie J. Ososki Tri-County Properties	3	\$577,000
6) \$584,900	Betty Poore Dunes Properties of Charleston	Dede Warren Carolina One Real Estate	31	\$565,000
7) \$569,900	Jennifer Maher Coldwell Banker United	Brenda Cook Hayden Jennings Properties	342	\$550,000
8) \$579,900	Charles Salmonsens Salmonsens Realty	Robert Baldwin Carolina One Real Estate	42	\$550,000
9) \$549,000	Meg Watson Keller Williams Realty Charleston	Jim Grady Coldwell Banker United	49	\$540,000
10) \$549,900	Susan Day Agent Owned Preferred Group	Jaymie Dimbath Pulte Homes	38	\$523,500

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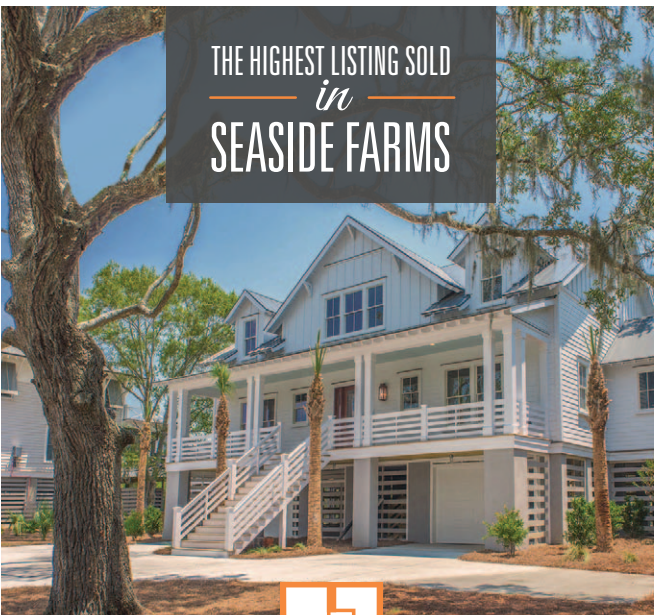
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TOP TEN MOST EXPENSIVE HOMES SOLD 2015

Old Village, Mount Pleasant, S.C.

MLS LISTED PRICE	LISTING AGENT LISTING COMPANY	SELLING AGENT SELLING COMPANY	DAYS ON MARKET	SELLING PRICE
1) \$5,500,000	Mary Molony Carolina One Real Estate	Nancy Hoy Carolina One Real Estate	213	\$4,900,000
2) \$3,249,500	Brown Hamrick Disher Hamrick & Myers	Laurie Thornhill Places LLC	61	\$3,025,000
3) \$1,900,000	Lindsay Malanos Carriage Properties	Lindsay Malanos Carriage Properties	1	\$1,900,000
4) \$1,800,000	Jill Miller Carolina One Real Estate	Edward Andrew Carolina One Real Estate	36	\$1,760,000
5) \$1,695,000	Frances Horton Old Dominion	Non-member Non-member	28	\$1,525,000
6) \$1,500,000	Ed Hunnicutt Carolina One Real Estate	Bob Brennaman The Brennaman Group	52	\$1,490,000
7) \$1,590,000	Lindsay Malanos Carriage Properties	Michael Pitcairn State Street Real Estate	53	\$1,480,000
8) \$1,449,000	Casey Murphy Daniel Ravenel Sotheby's International Realty	Katherine Cox Carolina One Real Estate	55	\$1,449,000
9) \$1,479,000	Michele Marie Miller & Jason Ray Carolina One Real Estate	Non-member Non-member	42	\$1,400,000
10) \$1,450,000	Lindsay Malanos Carriage Properties	Bill Barnhill Keller Williams Realty	44	\$1,399,000

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Village Park will consist of 12 single family homes and two duplex units. All homes have an open floor plan with multiple outdoor living spaces including porches and rooftop decks; and with seven custom floor plans to choose from, you are sure to find your dream home right here.

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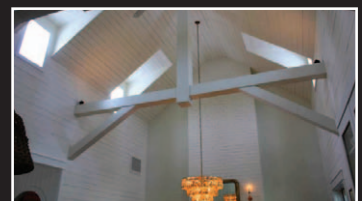
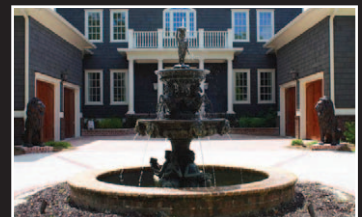


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Make More of Your Space In & Outdoor Cabinetry

KITCHENS, BATHROOMS AND closets seem to have one frustrating thing in common in most homes: clutter. Junk drawers, cabinets full of mismatched pots, pans and lids in disarray, inaccessible kitchen items, a pile of sheets and towels that got crammed onto a shelf that could barely contain them and clothes stored in an inappropriate manner.

That's where In & Outdoor Cabinetry can help. Shoshanna Szuch designs space for indoor and outdoor kitchens, bathrooms and closets. She is also a designer for Shelf-

Genie, a system that retrofits existing cabinets and storage areas, with functionality and accessibility in mind.

"I come to your home and interview you to learn and help you solve your challenges, wishes, objectives and preferences in these very special spaces of your home. Then we work together, based on your needs and budget, to determine your best options. I believe that annoyances must be reduced for better overall health," Szuch said.

Szuch began her career in the roaring '80s as a bilingual food and beverage manager. After a successful corporate career, she chose the entrepreneurial route. Over 20 years, she developed herself as a full-service marketer and salesperson on the forefront of website development and search engine optimization. In 2013, she began looking for something different and was introduced to cabinetry design. With her creativity, organizational skills and ability to work with people, she has thrived in this business.

"I enjoy discussing possibilities; there's never a rush," she said. "I'm an educator. I want my clients to make decisions that are good for them. I love helping my clients add

more pleasure at home. I am frequently appreciated for my attentiveness and value."

Since opening In & Outdoor Cabinetry in 2013, Szuch has transformed more than 150 spaces. She works with home plans to design from scratch and with existing homes as well.

"I've found that each client's needs and requirements are different, based on their lifestyle and how they use their spaces," she pointed out. "I've learned to be a very good listener and create solutions that fit their lifestyle and space needs."

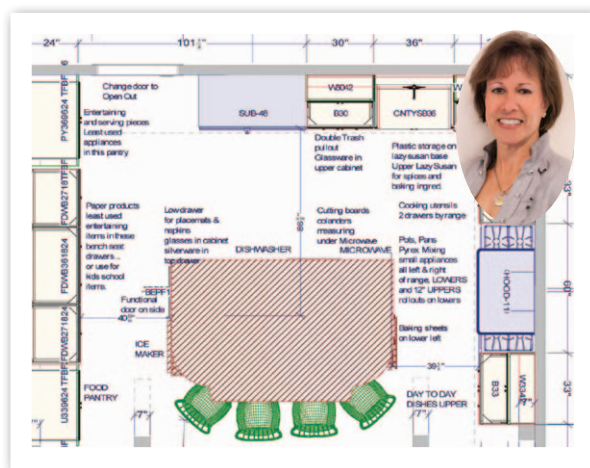
A new or updated set of cabinets will not make life easier if they are not specifically selected for the function they will serve. Szuch spends time brainstorming with her clients to address these needs ahead of time.

"One of the things I do is enumerate where every item goes, and I put it on the plan," Szuch explained. "I label every area as to what will be placed there, so when the project is complete, not only do my clients know exactly where they're putting their items, but those spaces are properly designed for those items."

Szuch offers free, on-site 3-D designs and estimates for ShelfGenie retrofits. For larger projects, she provides complimentary designs and estimates or charges a fee – depending on requirements – that will be credited toward a purchase if the client buys from her.

"I always put my clients' needs first," she said. "They can contact me anytime. More than anything, I want to help them with exceptional service and value and become a resource for them." 🍷

In & Outdoor Cabinetry will soon be opening a showroom at Universal Marble & Granite in North Charleston. For more information, visit www.inandoutdoorcabinetry.com.



Since opening In & Outdoor Cabinetry in 2013, Shoshanna Szuch has transformed more than 150 spaces.

Photo courtesy of In & Outdoor Cabinetry

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Barre Evolution

STEP INSIDE THE STUDIO AT BARRE Evolution, collect your weights, towel and strap and find a spot near the front. Sit on the floor and wait for the class to begin. Look around at the other women as they come into the studio and notice the diversity of age and size. The music starts, the instructor steps forward and the differences disappear. For the next hour, the class will move together,

BY AMY MERCER

and members young and old will “tighten, tone and transform” their bodies.

Barre Evolution co-owners Nancy Meyer and Nicole Wallen have built a successful business based on years of experience, business savvy and heart.

“It’s not just for hot, young women. It’s a lifelong method focused on small muscle movement and is effective over a long period of time,” said Meyer.

The two women met in 2009 when Meyer moved from New York City to Charleston with her family. She’d been taking barre classes in The Big Apple for years and was dismayed to learn that there were no studios in Charleston. Eventually, she discovered a class at Mt. Pleasant Pilates and Wellness, owned by Wallen.

“It was like kismet,” said Meyer of their meeting. “We didn’t really know each other but quickly started talking about opening a barre studio. It just clicked. Our partnership is successful because our strengths compliment each other to create symmetry.”

Wallen is Charleston’s only certified Prenatal and Postnatal Pilates Specialist and has years of experience studying and teaching the classical Pilates method. Both women have backgrounds in business and together studied the “Core Fusion” method with veteran Debbie Frank

in Manhattan.

The Barre Evolution method is high intensity and low impact. It’s designed to elongate muscles, lift seats, flatten abs and chisel the upper body. It’s a full body workout, fusing influences of ballet, Pilates, yoga and orthopedic stretching. Each class is broken down into four segments: warmup/upper body conditioning; thigh/lower body strengthening; glute work; and finally, core conditioning

and back strengthening. What makes it unique is the sense of community. Instructors are trained to form personal connections with their students, asking them about injuries and offering modifications as needed.

“I’m not athletic at all,” said Brittany, a 28-year-old teacher and new mom who learned about Barre Evolution from a parent of one of her students. “It’s more about toning and definition without creating bulk. I’ve taken everything from spinning to kickboxing to aerobics to Zumba, but yoga mostly. Yoga alone didn’t give me the body I’ve achieved with Barre Evolution.”

Barre can be done three to five times a week without taking a toll on the body. There are a variety of classes

that include open level, cardio, express and open level with extended stretch, among others.

Barre Evolution, which already had studios in Mount Pleasant, Greenville and West Ashley, opened its fourth in North Mount Pleasant in March. Meyer and Wallen said their growth will be planned and strategic so they can share their method with a wide range of people without losing touch with values that continue to empower and strengthen women in the community. 🍷

To learn more about Barre Evolution, including classes, schedules and instructors, visit barreevolution.com.



Photo courtesy of Barre Evolution.



John Kurc, Photographer

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Still on the Cutting Edge

Hudson's Import Service



BY ANNE TOOLE

LOT HAS CHANGED IN MOUNT Pleasant's automotive industry over the past 38 years. Cars have evolved from simple mechanical devices to complex computer systems, the economy has had its ups and its downs and the number of automotive repair businesses, once

only a few, is now dozens.

As times change and technology evolves, the staff at Hudson's Import Service has remained on the cutting edge of technology while holding steadfast to the timeless importance of quality customer service.

"We're not just taking care of cars; we're taking care of customers," said company President Cliff Hudson. "That's our slogan for a reason; we do both and we do them well.

We are specialists in the brands we service, but satisfied customers are the reason we have been in business for nearly four decades."

Hudson loves cars.

"They are my career, my hobby and my passion," he stated. "Almost everything I do has something to do with an automobile."

He began tinkering on cars under his family's carport as a child and started working in the automotive industry at the age of 14. He opened Hudson's Import Service in Mount Pleasant in 1978 and continues to take a hands-on approach at the shop, interacting with his staff daily to ensure accurate diagnoses and quality service and repairs. Hudson believes in daily supervision of the shop.

"The quality and efficiency I demand aren't possible as an absentee owner," he said.

Hudson's Import Service specializes in servicing and repairing Volkswagen, Audi, Volvo, Toyota, Lexus, Honda, Acura, Nissan and Infiniti automobiles.

"Our staff is larger than most independents, and we have

a specialist under our roof for each specific brand we service," Hudson explained. "In today's environment, cars are so technologically sophisticated, it makes the best business sense to specialize in particular brands so that we can be proficient in their service and repair. Each model requires special software, training, tools and technical support. Not only is it cost-prohibitive for an independent shop to attempt to service every brand produced, you find yourself wasting what would be productive repair time because you're not familiar with the product."

True to their slogan, the staff at Hudson's Import Service goes the extra mile to take care of their customers. Their repair warranty is twice the industry standard at 24 months or 24,000 miles. They also offer a customer shuttle service, wireless Internet, free carwash coupons for service or repairs over \$50 and a service reminder program to help customers keep their cars

running at their optimal performance. The building's recent renovation was also designed to help better serve customers, and a future expansion is planned.

Hudson has learned a lot about his industry in more than four decades and is a recurring guest on WCIV News 4's Lowcountry Live show, where he discusses a wide range of automotive subjects. He has served on the Trident Technical College Automotive Technology Department Advisory Board for over 30 years and is currently the chairman. He also participates in the college's Automotive Department orientation by addressing new students from an industry perspective and chairs its annual car show, the Spring Spin Off.

As technology continues to drive the future of the automotive repair and service industry, Hudson's Import Service will continue to evolve as experts in their field while providing impeccable customer care. 🛠️

For more information on Hudson's Import Service, visit www.hudsonsimport.com.



The Hudson's Import Service staff: Left to right: Gains Hudson, Marc Olivetti, Frank Myers, John McDowell, Stephanie Shieder, Craig Davis, Phillip Gandy, Cliff Hudson and Sean Rogerson.

Photo by Brian Sherman

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Approach Every Day with a Smile

Dr. Roberta Gardner

ROBERTA Z. GARDNER, DMD, MS, has been practicing orthodontics for 20 years. Her formula for success? Approach every day with a (pardon the pun) smile and create a professional yet relaxed atmosphere for her patients.

“I treat others as I would want to be treated,” said Dr.

BY JOHN TORSIELLO

Gardner. “I consider the entire individual and not just another set of jaws and teeth. I have one office, I’m the only doctor and we give personalized attention.”

The married mother of two high school-age daughters has thrived in Mount Pleasant.

“There are many orthodontists, and patients have several options to find the practice that feels right. Orthodontics is a lifelong investment, involving a long-term relationship. It has to feel right to the patient.”

Dr. Gardner has taught in the Graduate Orthodontic residency program at the Medical University of South Carolina for a decade.

“I have to stay current with new technology, state-of-the-art treatment and current research. Teaching is one way I feel I can give back to the profession, and I love to teach,” she explained.

Dr. Gardner also is passionate about giving back to the community. Her practice sponsors school PTAs and sports, the United Soccer Academy in Mount Pleasant, Recreation Department activities and church functions.

Dr. Gardner is a diplomate of The American Board of Orthodontics, a designation she earned by passing an examination that includes a rigorous set of written, verbal and clinical evaluations. She must be recertified every 10 years.

The personal satisfaction from a job well done and those smiles flashing back at her have motivated Dr. Gardner for two decades.

“I get great joy seeing people feel good about their smiles. I get teary-eyed when I see people look at themselves right after their braces are removed. I feel fortunate to be able to help them not only have pretty smiles but to feel good about themselves. There is not a better feeling,” she said, adding that all her patients aren’t teenagers. “They range from 5 to 82. Recently, one of my middle-aged patients wept with joy when he saw his new smile for the first time. Wow, what a feeling!”

“New technology is improving the treatment options I can offer patients,” Dr. Gardner commented. “The days of headgear are gone. There are shorter treatment times, 3D imaging for better diagnosing and temporary anchorage devices for treatment options that may not have been possible in the past. Invisalign is now able to produce results similar to traditional braces. There is also a shift back to treating patients in one full phase of braces. Some individuals need two phases of braces, but the majority can be treated in one full phase.”

At Dr. Gardner’s office, fun is good.

“We love to decorate for holidays. People come by just to see our decorations,” she said. “We also have patient contests with great prizes. We have

video game stations and a little tots play area for siblings. We have Gordy’s Store, which is an incentive program for good oral hygiene and cooperation. Patients can buy prizes from little toys to gift cards for Starbucks and Barnes & Noble. We love to have fun and believe a patient’s orthodontic experience should be fun.”

It’s that fun, along with excellent orthodontic results, that continues to attract patients to her office. 🦷

Gardner Orthodontics is located at 887 Johnnie Dodds Blvd., suite 120. To learn more, visit www.gardnerortho.com or call 843-881-0767.

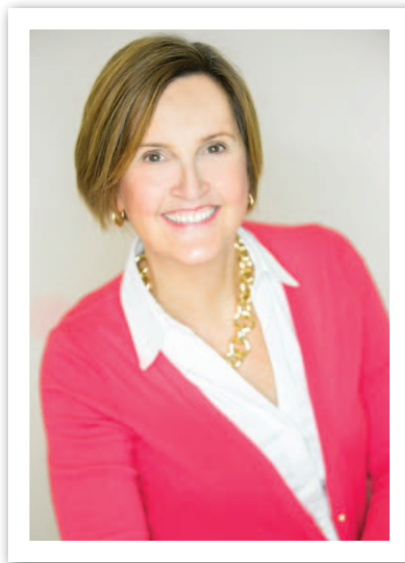


Photo by Jenn Cady.

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Go the Distance Carolina Foot Specialists

THERE IS NOTHING MORE frustrating when training for a race than being sidelined by a foot injury. Dr. Andrew Saffer and Dr. Adam Brown of Carolina Foot Specialists can relate to this frustration because, as athletes, they've suffered some of the same foot conditions.

They grew up in Charleston and played high school basketball on the same team. After graduating from the College of Charleston, Dr. Brown attended medical school at Barry University School of Graduate Medical Sciences, while Dr. Saffer attended Ohio College of Podiatric Medicine. Joining forces in 2006, they opened offices in Charleston and Mount Pleasant.

"We both gravitated to the sports aspect of podiatry, as well as the diversity that this profession provides, such as treating children, foot reconstructive surgery and helping the local active community with various foot ailments," said Dr. Brown.

Today, they both are avid runners and sports enthusiasts who understand how important exercise is for the body.

Heel pain and plantar fasciitis are the most common problems Dr. Brown and Dr. Saffer see. They pointed out that many injuries are a result of overuse.

"Most runners live with aches and pains, thinking that's part of the normal process, and it's not the case," said Dr. Brown. "We are both trained and board-certified in foot surgery but are able to heal most foot conditions, especially chronic heel pain, with conservative treatments. We offer state-of-the-art, minimally invasive surgical options for chronic heel pain that enables patients to get back to their chosen activity sooner," Dr. Saffer said.

According to Drs. Brown and Saffer, training smart is the best way to prepare for the upcoming Cooper River

Bridge Run. They offered advice on some common mistakes to avoid:

Going too fast and too hard - Your body needs time to adapt when you train harder and run farther. We commonly see overuse injuries from increasing mileage too quickly, which can lead to foot injuries such as stress fractures. The take home message is pace yourself and progress slowly to build up over time. You can find training tips for the Bridge Run at www.Carolinafootspecialists.net.

Wearing the wrong shoe - We recommend replacing your running shoes every 300 to 400 miles or every six to eight months.

Running through an injury

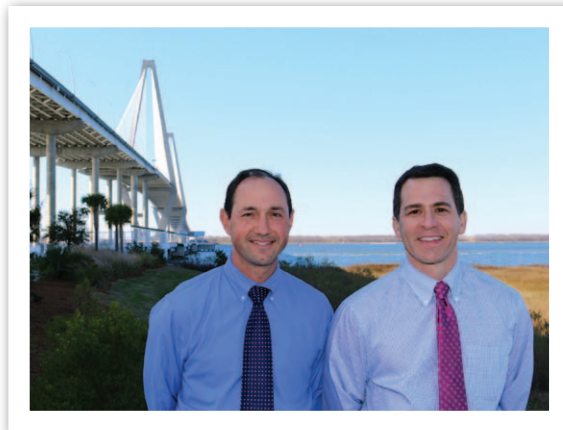
- This can lead to a chronic injury that can take longer to heal. Allow the body to heal. Start with RICE (Rest, ice, compression and elevation), mixed with a short-term NSAID (non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drug.) If there is no improvement after a week, you need to be evaluated by a specialist.

Running only

- Running strengthens some muscles but not others. It's important to retain and improve your flexibility with swimming, spinning, elliptical, strength training and body flow, a mixture of tai chi, yoga and Pilates.

Heel striking - Try landing mid-sole and shortening your stride. A shorter stride will typically lower the force of impact, which should reduce injuries.

Listen to your body - Simple conservative treatments can resolve a majority of acute foot pain. We don't tell our patients to stop exercising; we come up with solutions for treatment. 🦶



Drs. Adam Brown, left, and Andrew Saffer.

Photo courtesy of Carolina Foot Specialists.

The two locations of Carolina Foot Specialists are 501 Bramson Court in Mount Pleasant and 615 Wesley Drive in Charleston. To learn more, visit www.Carolinafootspecialists.net.



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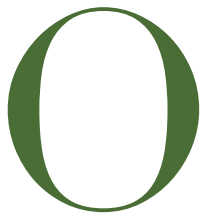
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Apricot Lane



ONE STORE IN MOUNT PLEASANT Towne Centre is bringing both fashion and philanthropy to our community and beyond. Embracing a “think globally, act locally” mind-set, Sandra Barnes, owner of the trendsetting boutique Apricot Lane, is shaking things up in the world of retail and social justice. Working for the greater good, she proves

BY KALENE MCCORT

being altruistic is one trend that never goes out of style.

“I know the opportunity to give back will be the most rewarding aspect of this job,” said Barnes, who runs the shop with her daughter, Ashley Herrin. “We really look forward to getting involved in the community and making a positive difference.”

Among the flowy bohemian tunics and suede fringe boots, you’ll find handmade bracelets by 3Strands Global – an organization that rescues victims of sex trafficking and provides them with an outlet for creative expression and steady income. At first glance, the beautiful bracelets are eye-catching, but they become even more significant once you consider their source. A mission trip to Cambodia, in which Sandra crossed paths with Apricot Lane franchise developer and philanthropist Ken Petersen, would set her on an unlikely journey into merchandising and activism.

“That trip was truly life-changing,” said Barnes. “When you see children as young as 6 sleeping on concrete, you feel the call to help.”

And help, Barnes has – not only by carrying a unique array of colorful beaded or woven bracelets made by 3Strands Global but by encouraging charity right in her own backyard.

“Fashion for a Cause” parties offer guests mouthwatering appetizers and cocktails, with a portion of the proceeds

of items purchased going to a charity of their choice.

“We want to donate to a diverse group of organizations,” said Barnes, “Whether it’s a local library, team or ASPCA, we want to be able to help a lot of organizations meet their goals.”

Carrying brands that often inhabit the hippest Southern California boutiques, Apricot Lane brings the best of the West to Mount Pleasant. With 70 percent of stock imported from companies based in The Golden State, the caliber of couture is high and surprisingly affordable.

From flared blue jean bell-bottoms to distressed leather jackets, the array of styles offered makes it easier than ever

to embrace your inner fashionista. Whether you are looking for a beachy sundress or a killer accessory to tie together an already rocking ensemble, Apricot Lane has got you covered.

Unlike franchises that are limited in what they can offer, Barnes has the freedom to stock her shelves with whatever she feels shoppers will desire. She even encourages customers to come to her with requests. Making sure to bring in new inventory every week, Apricot

Lane is truly leading the way in fresh, fierce fashion. Carrying buzzworthy brands, this local shop is sure to keep the ladies of the Lowcountry looking on point.

Since opening in December, Apricot Lane continues to attract a wide range of multi-generational shoppers. Daughters, mothers and grandmothers can be seen sipping champagne while fully reaping the benefits of retail therapy.

Escape into a world where stackable bracelets, showstopping statement necklaces and Piko tops abound. From fitness to fancy, there is no limit to just what a trip to Apricot Lane can bring. Stroll in today. You’ll be glad you did. 🍷

Visit apricotlaneboutique.com/store/mountpleasant or call 843-971-1800 to learn more.



Left to right: Shelby Kerr, Marlene Koedding, Heather Calk, Danae White, Sandra Barnes, Ashley Herrin and Nicole Westberry.

Photo courtesy of Apricot Lane.

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Building a Loyal Customer Base

Automotive Excellence

JOHNNY PAGE MIGHT HAVE BEEN only 8 when he was sweeping the floor at J.L. Coastal Service, his father's automobile repair shop. But he was learning valuable lessons about how to do business the right way from his dad even at that tender age.

"My father always told me that if I treated every customer like that customer was my mother, I would do well,"

BY JOHN TORSIELLO

said the owner of Automotive Excellence on Coleman Boulevard in Mount Pleasant. Taking care of mom has certainly paid off for Page and his dedicated staff – the shop has built a loyal customer base throughout the Mount Pleasant area and beyond.

"We have customers who bring their vehicles to us from as far away as Pawleys Island," said Page, who opened the shop in 2001 on what he called "a shoestring budget."

"We have worked hard since we opened to build the shop to the great business that it is," he said. "We have phenomenal customers. We have been able to keep employees, and two of them have been with me since the start. We try and buy all our parts locally."

Page said he opened his shop because "we got tired of working for someone else. I wanted to take care of our customers and take care of our employees the right way. We deal in total honesty, just like my father did with his business."

Bringing your car into the shop for analysis and work can be a nerve-racking experience, never knowing if that noise you are hearing will become a \$1,000 repair bill. Page and his staff strive to make customers feel comfortable and

allay any apprehension they may have.

"We calm their fears and shoot straight from the hip. We are totally honest with them," he explained. "We have the latest in diagnostic equipment in the shop, and that has been a major investment on our part. We have Jake Kisor and Johnny Britz (also the head mechanic) doing the diagnostics, and they are both superb at what they do. My brother, Joseph Page, is also with us, and the crew we have assembled is extremely knowledgeable. You can never stop

learning in this business. We have seen carburetors go out and fuel injection come in. It's a different game these days, and you have to be able to diagnose problems electronically. My crew is well-versed on the computer."

Automotive Excellence offers a full range of services, ranging from oil changes to engine repairs on all makes and models, both cars and pickup trucks. Customers should call to make an appointment to bring their vehicle into the shop.

"We sell tires \$5 over a cost," said Page. "We will meet and match anybody in town. The only thing we don't do is body work."

Page, 40, said doing business in Mount Pleasant is a rewarding experience.

"We have a great location, and Mount Pleasant is doing well and

continues to grow by leaps and bounds. Charleston has proven that you can't hold it down, and the same can be said for Mount Pleasant." 🍷

Automotive Excellence is located at 415 W. Coleman Blvd. in Mount Pleasant. To learn more, visit www.automotiveexcellencesc.com or call 843-216-1599.



Johnny Page, left, and his brother, Joseph Page, have loyal customers throughout the Mount Pleasant area.

Photo by Brandon Clark.



It Keeps Getting *Better!*

A RECAP OF THE BEST OF MOUNT PLEASANT

We thought our readers would enjoy looking at a few photos from the Best of Mount Pleasant party and oyster roast in February, plus a few photos of our illustrious winners receiving their awards. Photos of the party are courtesy of James Stefiuk and John Kurc. Thanks again for your vote in the 2016 Best of Mount Pleasant, and we look forward to more fun in 2017! Read about all the winners at www.BestOfMountPleasant.com.
--The Editors



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Palmetto Christian Academy • Best Private School.



Mayor Linda Page with some of the awards won by locations in Mount Pleasant.



Dr. Jack and Michele Hensel - Best Plastic Surgeon and Best Weight Loss Program



Dr. Kerry Solomon • Best LASIK Surgeon.



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Our Mount Pleasant Neighbors

WE'RE SPENDING A LITTLE TIME WITH SOME OF OUR NEIGHBORS TO HELP YOU GET to know them better. Get to know *us* better by liking us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/MountPleasantMagazine. If you want to appear in Facetime or to suggest someone you find interesting, please email the name and contact information (email and/or phone number) to Facetime@MountPleasantMagazine.com.



Ron Fowler

Lives in: Mount Pleasant, South Carolina.

From: Charlotte, North Carolina.

Education: Degree in business.

Employment: Retired – used to be a banker.

Favorite reading: Historical fiction, mysteries.

Favorite music: 60s, 70s, beach music.

Activities: Boating and gardening.

Interests: Sports, my grandchildren.

Likes: People, living on the coast.

Favorite quote or philosophy: “The quality of the world is based on education.”



Robert Dawson

Lives in: Mount Pleasant, South Carolina.

From: Mount Pleasant, South Carolina.

Education: Wando High School.

Employment: Medical assistant; assembler.

Favorite reading: Mysteries.

Favorite music: Hip hop, jazz, R & B.

Activities: Basketball.

Interests: Sports and music.

Likes: People, animals, the library.

Favorite quote or philosophy: “For I know the plans that I have for you,” declares the Lord, “plans for welfare and not for calamity to give you a future and a hope.” - Jeremiah 29:11.



Christy L. Cone, MD

Lives in: Mount Pleasant, South Carolina.

From: Leesville, South Carolina.

Education: B.S. in Biological Sciences from Clemson University; doctor of Medicine from MUSC.

Employment: Physician and owner, AesthetiSpa Cosmetic Skin & Laser Center.

Favorite reading: Good fiction and local publications like *Mount Pleasant Magazine*.

Favorite music: One Republic, Bruno Mars, Maroon 5.

Activities: Planning events for AesthetiSpa's clients; building LEGO masterpieces with my son; hanging out with my sister and her family.

Interests: Food, wine, health, travel, business.

Likes: Getting to know my clients, leisurely brunches, shoe shopping, the beach.

Favorite quote or philosophy: For everything there is a season.



Charles Randolph “Rando” Blyth

Lives in: Mount Pleasant, South Carolina.

From: My father was a Marine. I was born in Oceanside, California. I have lived in California, Arkansas, Virginia and Japan.

Education: I have a bachelor of arts in Theater Arts, with a minor in English, from Hendrix College in Conway, Arkansas.

Employment: I am a self-employed custom finish carpenter and a boat builder. I also teach rowing and am a Red Cross certified small craft instructor.

Favorite reading: I love all the classics of American, British, French and Russian authors. I especially revere Hemingway and Steinbeck.

Favorite music: I love classical music. Beethoven, Mozart, Schubert, Haydn, Janacek, Debussy and Vivaldi are just a few that come to mind.

Activities: I am the commodore of the Charleston Rowing Club. I spend a lot of time rowing and kayaking out of Shem Creek and Palmetto Islands County Park. I love to ride my bike to do errands around Mount Pleasant.

Interests: Art, music, history, nature, nutrition, philosophy, creative writing, naval architecture, religion, gardening, herbology and holistic health.

Likes: Tiny houses, good local food, chiropractic, massage.

Favorite quote or philosophy: “Any boat that is too big for two people to pick up is too big.”



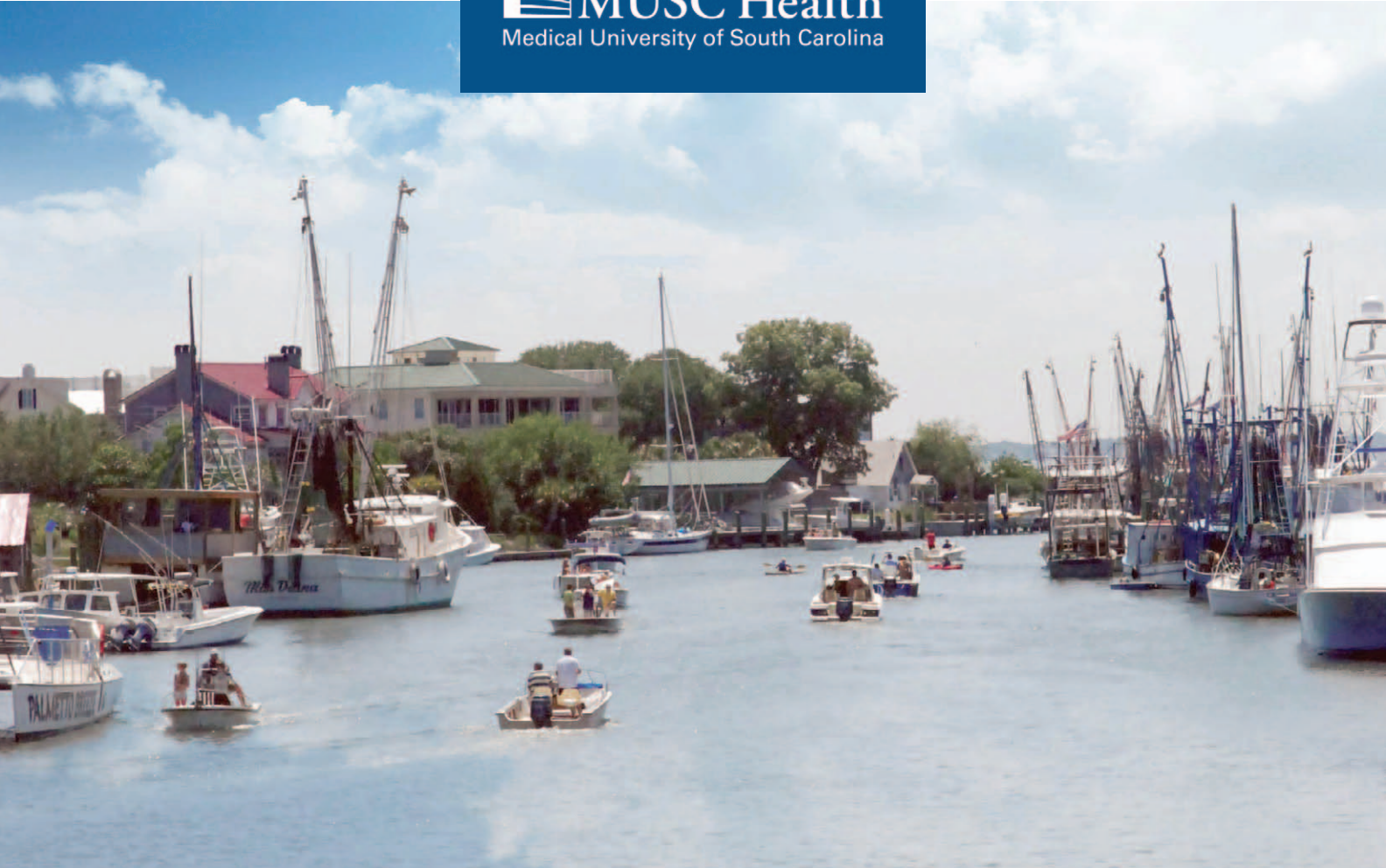
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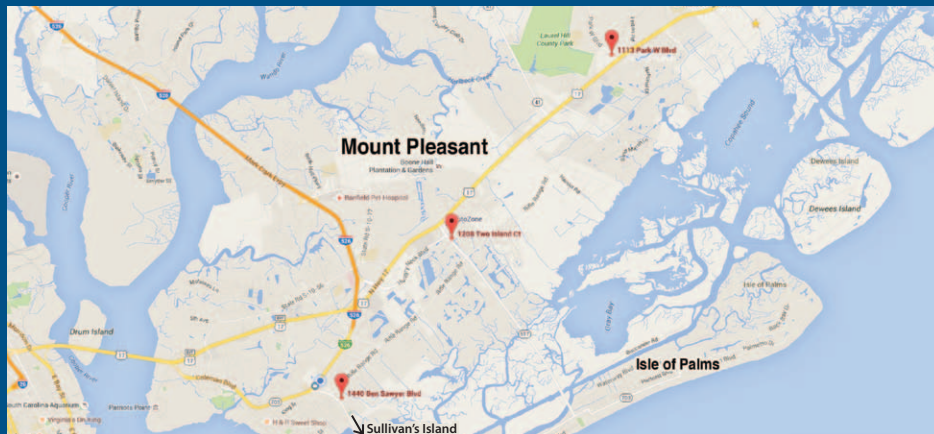
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