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SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER  
2016

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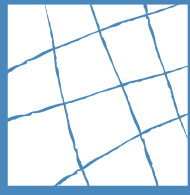
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12

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# PUBLISHER'S NOTE

**M**ANY LOCAL RESIDENTS ARE TALKING ABOUT annoying traffic, growing population and new commercial and residential buildings – and everything else that goes along Mount Pleasant's stature as the fastest-growing municipality east of the Mississippi. And when people discuss this whirlwind of growth, they tend to disagree about how our town got to where it is today. When exactly did the East Cooper boom begin?

Let's take a closer look at that question. The John P. Grace Memorial Bridge linked Charleston with Mount Pleasant long before the Silas N. Pearman and the Arthur Ravenel bridges arrived on the scene. Construction on the Grace got underway on Feb. 7, 1928, and people started driving their cars across the Cooper River on Aug. 8, 1929. Until then, ferries were the only option if you wanted to reach Mount Pleasant from the Holy City. As a result, there was little opportunity for East Cooper to grow.

Two bridges and 87 years later, Mount Pleasant is among the fastest-growing towns in the country. It's certainly large enough to have its own business magazine, which is one reason we are launching one this month. The new publication, *MP Business*, begins on page 81 of this issue of *Mount Pleasant Magazine* and online all the time at [ReadMPBusiness.com](http://ReadMPBusiness.com). Published several times a year, we hope to provide you with valuable information and answer your questions about Mount Pleasant's past, present and future.

I began my Charleston-area publishing career in 1980, working for the *Moultrie News* and later starting my own publishing company. Among the magazines I produced was *East Cooper Magazine*. We've been telling the story of Mount Pleasant and the surrounding islands for nearly 30 years, including an article we published in 1991 about the growth of Mount Pleasant. You can find this interesting article at [ReadMPM.com/1991](http://ReadMPM.com/1991). After reading it, I'm sure you will agree that growth has been an issue in Mount Pleasant for a long time. Today's engaging conversations are nothing new.

This issue of *Mount Pleasant Magazine* has a lot to offer in addition to *MP Business*. Our foodie magazine, *In Good Taste*, the new Calendar of Events and articles on first-time home buyers and breast cancer survivors are just a few worthwhile reasons to spend some time with *Mount Pleasant Magazine*. Share this issue online with a friend or family member using this link: [www.ReadMPM.com](http://www.ReadMPM.com).

Until next issue,



— BILL MACCHIO  
Publisher



The John P. Grace Memorial Bridge was built at a cost of \$6 million. Until 1945, there was a toll of 50 cents per vehicle and driver, with an additional 15-cent charge for each additional passenger.



# MOUNT PLEASANT

MAGAZINE

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**Publisher/Editorial Director**  
BILL MACCHIO  
[Publisher@MountPleasantMagazine.com](mailto:Publisher@MountPleasantMagazine.com)

**Editor**  
DENISE K. JAMES  
[Editor@MountPleasantMagazine.com](mailto:Editor@MountPleasantMagazine.com)

**Managing Editor**  
BRIAN SHERMAN

**Art Director**  
DANA COLEMAN

**Graphic Designer**  
KIM HALL

**Production Manager**  
CRISTINA YOUNG

**Webmaster**  
GEORGE CONKLIN

**Internet Marketing**  
SHERMAN PAGGI

**Editorial Assistants**  
ALEXANDRA KENT • SAMANTHA SULLIVAN  
ALYSSA ZAPINSKI

**Writers**  
DANIEL BROCK • PAMELA BROWNSTEIN  
CHARLIZE BURNS • STACY DOMINGO  
BILL FARLEY • ANNE HASSOLD HARRIS  
KALENE MCCORT • BARBARA M. PATRICK  
ANNE TOOLE

**Photographers**  
JENN CADY • BRANDON CLARK  
JOHN KURC • BRIAN SHERMAN  
CASSANDRA RICHERSON • RICK WALO

**Independent Media Consultants**  
BRANDON CLARK  
[Brandon@MountPleasantMagazine.com](mailto:Brandon@MountPleasantMagazine.com)  
CULLEN MURRAY-KEMP  
[Cullen@MountPleasantMagazine.com](mailto:Cullen@MountPleasantMagazine.com)  
GAYLE WHEELER  
[Gayle@MountPleasantMagazine.com](mailto:Gayle@MountPleasantMagazine.com)  
BERT WOOD  
[Bert@MountPleasantMagazine.com](mailto:Bert@MountPleasantMagazine.com)  
MARGARET BURNS  
[Margaret@MountPleasantMagazine.com](mailto:Margaret@MountPleasantMagazine.com)  
MATTHEW PROSSER  
[Matthew@MountPleasantMagazine.com](mailto:Matthew@MountPleasantMagazine.com)

**Administration & Bookkeeping**  
GINGER SOTTILE

**Distribution**  
U.S. POST OFFICE, PUBLIX,  
HARRIS TEETER, CVS

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**Inquiries to:** *Mount Pleasant Magazine*  
P.O. Box 22617, Charleston, S.C. 29413  
843-881-1481  
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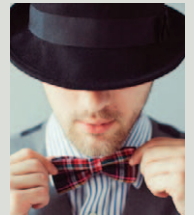
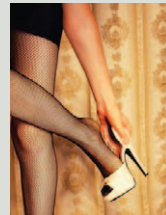
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## From the Editor

*“Already, there was something mysterious and homelike.”*

*-Big Two-Hearted River, Ernest Hemingway*

**M**ORE THAN A DECADE AGO, I enrolled in graduate school at the College of Charleston and moved to Mount Pleasant to share an apartment with my friend Heidi. To my surprise, I felt at home – and I loved Mount Pleasant – right away.

Now it's 12 years later, and I'm living here again, this time in my own place. I still love Mount Pleasant, though a lot has changed. Out of the different places I've resided in the Charleston metro, I've always been partial to East Cooper – and I don't have kids, an expensive car or a boat! In short, I'm not the stereotype that people associate with Mount Pleasant.

Trust me, my friends have always had a hard time with this. Yes, my close pals, mostly in West Ashley, downtown and James Island, are befuddled as to why I love this side of the bridge. And for the longest time, I've been befuddled for an answer. That is, until the issue you're holding in your hands.

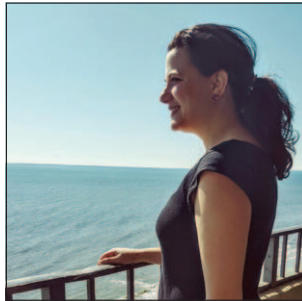
It all started when I got involved with a Facebook group dedicated to the “wonder years” of East Cooper, searching for old photographs to accent this issue. As I read the stories and memories of older residents, I started realizing our town has a lot beneath its exterior. It's true, Mount Pleasant tends to be judged by the surface. But there's a lot of people here with a lot of heart and determination.

Take the cover of this issue, an original piece of artwork by our own Dana Coleman. It's much more than meets the eye, y'all. Hours of brainstorming and painting the right brush strokes went into crafting that scene. It's the same with Mount Pleasant – a lot goes into our town, more than the outsiders have any idea about.

In our September/October issue, we've worked hard to delve beneath the superficial. Inside you'll find the debut of *MP Business Magazine*, including a timeline and old photographs of Coleman Boulevard, right alongside great interviews about the future of this area. Some people think Mount Pleasant is only concerned with development and growth, but it's not. People who have lived here for decades are working to preserve the town's character. However, it takes more than just driving through to feel the heartbeat in our chest.

When I was a kid, my mother warned me never to judge a book by its cover. Now that I'm grown, I still believe in that excellent advice. That said, why not invite a friend or colleague “from off” to spend some time in Mount Pleasant and learn what's truly underneath our surface? There's a culture here that has existed for generations, and it's what makes us proud to call Mount Pleasant home. 🐼

Yours,  
DENISE K. JAMES  
Editor



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## SEPT. 10<sup>TH</sup>

### LOWCOUNTRY RED RIBBON 5K & WALK

**When:** Sept. 10, 2016

**Time:** TBA

**Location:** Wannamaker Park

This annual event has grown since 2009 to become an official, timed 5K run – and the only HIV/AIDS walk in the Lowcountry. The Red Ribbon 5K & Walk continues to raise awareness about HIV/AIDS to eliminate the stigma and shame associated with the disease. The event will be followed by an after party of food, music, fun and games.

**Register online at:** [www.redribbonlowcountry.org](http://www.redribbonlowcountry.org)

### CHARLESTON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA GALA CONCERT

**When:** Sept. 10, 2016

**Location:** Gaillard Auditorium

The Charleston Symphony Orchestra and Charleston Symphony Orchestra League, Inc. will celebrate the 80th anniversary of the CSO Sept. 10 with a gala concert featuring pianist Leon Fleisher, followed by a Gala dinner. Dinner tickets include pre-concert wine, beer and silent auction preview, along with a post-concert dinner, dancing, entertainment and live auction.

**Concert tickets:** [www.charlestonsymphony.org](http://www.charlestonsymphony.org). **Gala dinner tickets:** [www.csolinc.org](http://www.csolinc.org).

## 14<sup>TH</sup> MEGHAN TRAINOR

**When:** Sept. 14, 2016

**Time:** 7 p.m.

**Location:** North Charleston Coliseum

Meghan Trainor, the singer behind hit songs “All About that Bass” and “No,” will be taking her UNTOUCHABLE TOUR to even more cities this summer with special guests Hailee Steinfeld and Common Kings. The upcoming tour, promoted by Live Nation, will be the Grammy-Award-winning multi-platinum pop superstar’s biggest and most ambitious tour yet.

**Buy tickets online at:**

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## 17<sup>TH</sup> 5TH ANNUAL 5K/10K PANCAKE RUN

**When:** Sept. 17, 2016

**Time:** 8 a.m.

**Location:** Laurel Hill Plantation

This is a 5k/10k run through scenic Laurel Hill Plantation in Mount Pleasant – a fantastic event followed by a pancake breakfast.

**Register online at:**

[www.ultrasignup.com/register.aspx?did=34698](http://www.ultrasignup.com/register.aspx?did=34698)

## 22<sup>ND</sup> MOUNT PLEASANT BUSINESS AND COMMUNITY EXPO

**When:** Sept. 22, 2016

**Time:** 2 p.m. to 7 p.m. – Happy hour on the convention floor starts at 5 p.m.

**Location:** Omar Shrine Convention Center

The Expo is East Cooper’s premier networking event. More than 1,000 attendees are expected to interact with more than 70 vendors. Free admission, free food, live music and lots of fun and education.

## 29<sup>TH</sup> MOJA ARTS FESTIVAL

**When:** Sept. 29 through Oct. 9, 2016

**Time:** See MOJA calendar for event times

**Location:** Downtown Charleston – TBA

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**Find out more at:** [www.mojafestival.com](http://www.mojafestival.com).



## ONGOING EVENTS



### BOONE HALL PUMPKIN PATCH

**When:** Open daily throughout October

**Time:** Mon.-Sat. 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. and Sun. 11 a.m. to 6 p.m.

**Location:** Boone Hall Plantation

A Lowcountry tradition, Boone Hall's Pumpkin Patch is here again! Grab the little ones and come out for endless family fun. You can, of course, pick out your pumpkins for carving, and there will be many other fall veggies for sale. The kids can have fun on the hayride down Monster Alley, jump pillow, rock climbing wall, the corn maze and more! Admission is \$10 for everyone 3 and older.



### BEST OF BROADWAY'S DIRTY DANCING

**Time:** 7:30 p.m. (on various days)

**Location:** North Charleston Coliseum

Seen by millions across the globe, this worldwide smash hit tells the classic story of Baby and Johnny, two fiercely independent young spirits from different worlds who come together in what will be the most challenging and triumphant summer of their lives. Featuring the hit songs, "Hungry Eyes," "Hey Baby," "Do You Love Me?" and the heart-stopping "(I've Had) The Time of My Life." London's Sunday Express says, "This crowd-pleasing stage adaptation hits the jackpot!" **Buy tickets online at:** [www.northcharlestoncoliseum.com](http://www.northcharlestoncoliseum.com).



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# OCTOBER 2<sup>ND</sup>

## CHARLESTON CHOCOLATE FESTIVAL

**When:** Oct. 2, 2016

**Time:** 11 a.m.

**Location:** Omar Shrine Convention Center

More than 100 purveyors will join together to celebrate all things beautiful. The event will feature: chocolate tastings, a fine arts exhibit, painting demonstrations, wine, cheese and chocolate pairings, specialty food sampling, artisan gifts, a children's tent, a food and drink court, music and entertainment. A portion of the proceeds will support The Citadel Fine Arts Program.

# 7<sup>TH</sup> ARTWALK - CHARLESTON GALLERY ASSOCIATION

**When:** Oct. 7, 2016

**Time:** 5 p.m.

**Location:** Downtown Charleston

More than 40 art galleries will be participating, and many artists will be in attendance. Refreshments will be served, and this event is free. Start at any gallery and make your way down the historic streets of Charleston. *For a map of the galleries, visit:* [www.CharlestonGalleryAssociation.com](http://www.CharlestonGalleryAssociation.com).

# 15<sup>TH</sup> SUSAN G. KOMEN RACE FOR THE CURE

**When:** Oct. 15, 2016

**Time:** TBD

**Location:** Daniel Island

The Susan G. Komen Race for the Cure series is the world's largest and most successful fundraising and education event for breast cancer. Whether you walk, run, volunteer or donate, your support is helping save lives and provide priceless support to those in need. Not a runner? No problem! You can participate by walking the 5K or one-mile course or just relax by the finish line. *Register online at:* [www.komenlowcountry.org](http://www.komenlowcountry.org).

# 16<sup>TH</sup> 29th Annual Children's Day Festival

**When:** Oct. 16, 2016

**Time:** Noon to 5 p.m.

**Where:** Park West Recreation Complex

Old and new traditions delight at the 29th Annual Town of Mount Pleasant Children's Day Festival, presented by Publix. East Cooper schools will host carnival games, and families will enjoy carnival rides, enormous inflatable slides, live entertainment, wall climbing, face painting and many other activities. Admission and all activities are free. Free parking is available at Cario Middle School and Charles Pinckney/Laurel Hill. The shuttle will run all day, or simply use the cut-through and enjoy a nice short walk. East Cooper Schools will raise funds by selling food at concession stands.

## TALE OF THE FISH: A CELEBRATION OF ITALIAN COASTAL CUISINE

**When:** Oct. 16, 2016

**Time:** TBA

**Location:** Wild Dunes Resort

This culinary event will feature Chefs Ken Vedrinski of Coda del Pesce & Trattoria Lucca; Michael Toscano of Perla in New York City; Clay Conely of Buccan & Imoto in Palm Beach, Florida; Nicholas Steffanelli of Bibiana in Washington, D.C.; and Ford Fry of St. Cecilia in Atlanta. *Tickets are \$85 and can be purchased by calling:* 843-886-2218

# 21<sup>ST</sup> GHOSTLY TIDE TALES

**When:** Oct. 21, 2016

**Time:** 6:30 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.

**Location:** 28th Avenue beach access – Isle of Palms

Are you brave enough to sit on the beach to listen to haunting stories as you sit by an open camp fire? Bring a chair, blanket, flashlight and friends.

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## *Calendar of Events*

### **22<sup>ND</sup> SOUTHERN FRIED CHICKEN CHALLENGE**

**When:** Oct. 22, 2016

**Location:** Patriots Point

This inaugural event will feature 20 local restaurants as they compete to make the most delicious fried chicken in the area and to be crowned the first ever Southern Fried Chicken Challenge Winner by a panel of judges and event attendees. General admission: \$20 in advance and \$25 at the gate. Tasting tickets: \$2 each. **For more information:** [www.SouthernFriedChickenChallenge.com](http://www.SouthernFriedChickenChallenge.com).

### **27<sup>TH</sup> COASTAL CAROLINA FAIR**

**When:** Oct. 27 to Nov. 6, 2016

**Time:** M-F 3 p.m.-10 p.m. / Sat. 10 a.m.-10 p.m. / Sun. 12 p.m.-9 p.m.

**Location:** Ladson Fairgrounds

Heading into its 58th year as one of the Low-country's biggest fall events, the Coastal Carolina Fair is back and bigger than ever. Rides, deep-fried junk food, live music, exhibits and more will keep the whole family having a blast long after the sun goes down. **Buy tickets online at:** [www.coastalcarolinafair.org](http://www.coastalcarolinafair.org).

### **29<sup>TH</sup> HALLOWEEN IN THE OLD VILLAGE (ages 2-5)**

**When:** Oct. 29, 2016

**Time:** 12 p.m. -1:30 p.m.

**Location:** G.M. Darby Building

Join the Mount Pleasant Recreation Department in a ghoulish Halloween celebration. Children can see what or who is behind each of our trick or treating doors, collect a few goodies and participate in games, crafts and, if they dare, get their faces painted. A costume contest will be held at 1:30 p.m. Refreshments will be served. **Contact Florine Russell at:** 849-2061 or visit [www.townofmountpleasant.com](http://www.townofmountpleasant.com).



## Calendar of Events

### 30<sup>TH</sup> LOWCOUNTRY HALLOWEEN FESTIVAL

**When:** Oct. 30, 2016

**Time:** 12 p.m. to 5 p.m.

**Location:** Patriots Point

Halloween is a time for costumes and fun! The Lowcountry Halloween Festival is a unique, safe and free trick-or-treating experience. Children can trick-or-treat, get their face painted, bounce on an inflatable, watch a stage show, meet the Snow sisters and more. Trick-or-treat stations will be set up throughout the event, and there will be costume contests throughout the day.

## NOVEMBER

### 11<sup>TH</sup> 5TH ANNUAL "SMOKE ON THE HARBOR BBQ THROWDOWN"

**When:** Nov. 11-12, 2016

**Time:** Fri. 5 - 9 p.m., Sat. 12 p.m. - 5 p.m.

The 5th Annual "Smoke on the Harbor BBQ Throwdown," hosted by Charleston Harbor Resort & Marina, will be a fully sanctioned national event with the Kansas City Barbeque Society. The state championship competition will feature one night of wings and one day of barbeque competition. Chicken wings and pork butts will be available for purchase, along with numerous options for food and refreshments. Enjoy live music performances, a cocktail competition and a Kids Zone, all in a family friendly, casual and fun atmosphere.

Charleston Harbor Resort & Marina will also host a food drive benefiting East Cooper Meals on Wheels. Those bringing non-perishable food items will receive \$5 off the admission price.

### 11<sup>TH</sup> HOLIDAY FESTIVAL OF LIGHTS

**When:** Nov. 11, 2016-Jan. 1, 2017

**Location:** James Island County Park

Thousands of families attend the Holiday Festival of Lights, where millions of multicolored lights illuminate the sky. Journey through three miles of over 700 magical light displays of all shapes and sizes.



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## Calendar of Events

### 15<sup>TH</sup> BEST OF BROADWAY'S ANNIE

**When:** Nov 15-16, 2016

**Time:** Doors open at 6:30 p.m.

**Location:** North Charleston Coliseum

Leapin' Lizards! The world's best-loved musical returns in time-honored form. Directed by original lyricist and director Martin Charnin and choreographed by Liza Gennaro, this production of "Annie" will be a brand new incarnation of the iconic original. "Annie" includes such unforgettable songs as "It's the Hard Knock Life," "Easy Street," "I Don't Need Anything But You," plus the eternal anthem of optimism, "Tomorrow." **Buy tickets online at:** [www.northcharlestoncoliseum.com](http://www.northcharlestoncoliseum.com).

### 19<sup>TH</sup> ULTRA-CHILI 50K RUN

**When:** Nov. 19, 2016

**Time:** 8 a.m.

**Location:** Laurel Hill County Park

Join us for the 2nd annual Ultra Chili 50K, where you'll navigate through the majestic moss-draped trails of Laurel Hill County Park during this multi-loop race. Individuals and teams are encouraged to enter, and the post-race party includes hot chili and cold beer. Race fees: Individuals: \$90, \$75 for Charleston County residents. Teams: 2-person team: \$110, \$100 for Charleston County residents; 3-person team: \$165, \$150 for Charleston County residents; 4-person team: \$220, \$200 for Charleston County Residents. **Register online at:** [www.ccprc.com](http://www.ccprc.com).

### 24<sup>TH</sup> TURKEY DAY 5K RUN AND GOBBLE WOBBLE

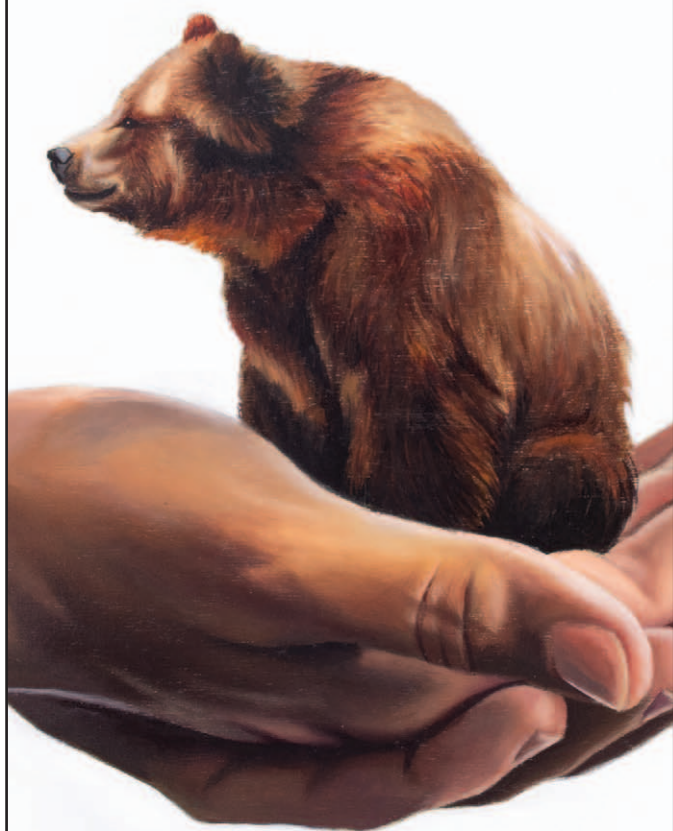
**When:** Nov. 24, 2016

**Time:** 9 a.m.-11 a.m.

**Location:** Marion Square

Burn off your Thanksgiving calories before you've even consumed them. The Turkey Day 5K Run and Gobble Wobble has something for the whole family. With prizes for each age category, a Children's Fun Run and an after party with food, fun and live music, there's something for everyone! The race begins at 9 a.m. and the Children's Fun Run is at 10 a.m. at Marion Square Park. Stick around for the after party. The entire event ends at 11 a.m. - giving you plenty of time to get home for turkey dinner. **To register online, visit:** [www.turkeydayrun.com](http://www.turkeydayrun.com).

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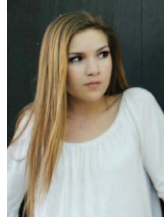
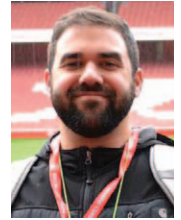
# Our Contributors

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

**Anne Hassold Harris** graduated from Clemson University with a degree in Communications. Originally from the Upstate of South Carolina, Anne's favorite childhood memories all involve vacations to the Lowcountry. Anne works as a designer/selections coordinator for Renaissance South Construction Company. She lives in Mount Pleasant with her husband and two young children. When she isn't working or spending time with her family, you can usually find Anne on the beach or with a book in her hand.



**Daniel Brock** is a Mount Pleasant resident, and, while he's not originally from Mt. P, his wife is, which gives him ample street cred when he strolls down Coleman Boulevard.

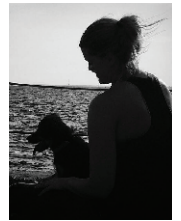


**Samantha Sullivan** is a sophomore at Wando High School. She is on staff at the *Wando Legend* and is a freelance writer for multiple online publications. She hopes to pursue a career in print journalism.



**Erin Danly** focuses on writing for and about businesses and small business owners. In addition to writing articles and marketing materials, Erin is also a produced playwright and helps run a playwrights' workshop. In her free time, she sings with the symphony chorus and dances tango. She lives in Mount Pleasant with her husband, Gian Paolo, and her greyhound, Romeo.

**Charlize Burns** has enjoyed the breezy Lowcountry lifestyle for more than five years. Originally from Atlanta, she feels lucky to live in such a vibrant city full of natural beauty and rich history. Charlize has a passion for writing and storytelling. On the weekends, you can find her at the beach, reading or playing tennis. She also loves spending time with her fiancé and her sweet dog, Charlie.



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## Notes from Friends

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

My Grandfather Borowsky planted those lush pecan trees when he settled here from Germany. (A Veggie Tale – Heath Farms, July/August 2016) Glad everyone enjoyed them!

– Karla Borowsky Kaddas

via [MountPleasantMagazine.com](http://MountPleasantMagazine.com)

Wonderful family! Loved reading this! I remember in high school everyone wanted a job at the packing shed! (A Veggie Tale – Heath Farms, July/August 2016)

– Rosalind Banks

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

Congratulations to Palmetto Christian Academy and Mount Pleasant! The Zubias will be a fantastic addition to your school and community! (Shaping Hearts and Character: Palmetto Christian Academy, July/August 2016)

– Mark Peake

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

Thank you for this encouragement! My husband and I both work in the Mount Pleasant and Daniel Island areas with good jobs and yet cannot afford to move to Mount P where we would ideally love to be with our children. I'll be keeping my eyes out for updates! (A Home for Where the Heart Is: Affordable Housing in Mount Pleasant, July/August 2016)

– Anonymous

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



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# Rules for Participating in the Best of Mount Pleasant 2017

No purchase is necessary.

Each voter must vote only once.

Each voter must provide a name, telephone number, email address and physical address. Your information will be automatically entered into our drawings for exciting prizes such as tickets to events and dinners.

Each voter must provide a total of 15 answers in order for his or her vote to be qualified.

Voting will end at midnight, Nov. 8, 2016.

All voters must keep answers within Mount Pleasant, Awendaw, Daniel Island, Sullivan's Island, The Isle of Palms and McClellanville in order to be qualified.

If your vote in a category does not pertain to that category, the vote will be disqualified. Example: Voting for a steak restaurant in the Best Chinese Food category.

Results will be printed in our January/February 2017 edition of *Mount Pleasant Magazine*, as well as publicized on the web.



**Vote Online at [www.BestOfMountPleasant.com](http://www.BestOfMountPleasant.com)**

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# Best of Mount Pleasant 2017 Ballot

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Best Assisted Living Facility \_\_\_\_\_  
Best Attorney \_\_\_\_\_  
Best Auto Glass Company \_\_\_\_\_  
Best Auto Repair Business \_\_\_\_\_  
Best Bank \_\_\_\_\_  
Best Body Shop \_\_\_\_\_  
Best Car Wash \_\_\_\_\_  
Best Child Care \_\_\_\_\_  
Best Credit Union \_\_\_\_\_  
Best Dance Studio \_\_\_\_\_  
Best Electrician \_\_\_\_\_  
Best Financial Planner \_\_\_\_\_  
Best Gymnastics Facility \_\_\_\_\_  
Best Hair Salon \_\_\_\_\_  
Best Heating and Air Company \_\_\_\_\_  
Best Home Cleaning Service \_\_\_\_\_  
Best Hotel \_\_\_\_\_  
Best Insurance Agent \_\_\_\_\_  
Best Insurance Company \_\_\_\_\_  
Best Interior Decorator \_\_\_\_\_  
Best Kennel \_\_\_\_\_  
Best Landscaper \_\_\_\_\_  
Best Loan Officer \_\_\_\_\_  
Best Local Celebrity \_\_\_\_\_  
Best Nail Salon \_\_\_\_\_  
Best Non-Profit \_\_\_\_\_  
Best Pest Control Company \_\_\_\_\_  
Best Pet Groomer \_\_\_\_\_  
Best Pet Store \_\_\_\_\_  
Best Pool and Spa Company \_\_\_\_\_  
Best Place of Worship \_\_\_\_\_  
Best Place to Get a Mortgage \_\_\_\_\_  
Best Place to Have a Wedding \_\_\_\_\_  
Best Place to Hold an Event \_\_\_\_\_  
Best Plumber \_\_\_\_\_  
Best Private School \_\_\_\_\_  
Best Public School \_\_\_\_\_  
Best Radio Personality \_\_\_\_\_  
Best Radio Station \_\_\_\_\_  
Best Real Estate Company \_\_\_\_\_  
Best Real Estate Team \_\_\_\_\_  
Best Realtor \_\_\_\_\_  
Best Tanning Salon \_\_\_\_\_  
Best Television Personality \_\_\_\_\_  
Best Veterinarian \_\_\_\_\_  
Best Website \_\_\_\_\_

## **FOOD & DRINK**

Best Asian \_\_\_\_\_  
Best Bakery \_\_\_\_\_  
Best Bar \_\_\_\_\_  
Best Barbecue \_\_\_\_\_  
Best Breakfast \_\_\_\_\_

Best Brunch \_\_\_\_\_  
Best Budget-Friendly Meal \_\_\_\_\_  
Best Burger \_\_\_\_\_  
Best Caterer \_\_\_\_\_  
Best Cocktail \_\_\_\_\_  
Best Coffee \_\_\_\_\_  
Best Craft Beer \_\_\_\_\_  
Best Dog-Friendly Restaurant \_\_\_\_\_  
Best Deli \_\_\_\_\_  
Best Dessert \_\_\_\_\_  
Best Food Truck \_\_\_\_\_  
Best French Restaurant \_\_\_\_\_  
Best Fried Chicken \_\_\_\_\_  
Best Frozen Yogurt \_\_\_\_\_  
Best Grocery Store \_\_\_\_\_  
Best Happy Hour \_\_\_\_\_  
Best Hot Dog \_\_\_\_\_  
Best Ice Cream \_\_\_\_\_  
Best Italian \_\_\_\_\_  
Best Kid-Friendly Restaurant \_\_\_\_\_  
Best Mac 'n Cheese \_\_\_\_\_  
Best Mexican \_\_\_\_\_  
Best New Restaurant \_\_\_\_\_  
Best Pizza \_\_\_\_\_  
Best Place to Dine Outdoors \_\_\_\_\_  
Best Place to Take an Out-of-Town Guest \_\_\_\_\_  
Best Raw Bar \_\_\_\_\_  
Best Restaurant Service \_\_\_\_\_  
Best Ribs \_\_\_\_\_  
Best Seafood \_\_\_\_\_  
Best Shrimp 'n Grits \_\_\_\_\_  
Best Steak \_\_\_\_\_  
Best Sushi \_\_\_\_\_  
Best Taco \_\_\_\_\_  
Best Upscale Restaurant \_\_\_\_\_  
Best Wings \_\_\_\_\_

## **SHOPPING & GOODS**

Best Antique Store \_\_\_\_\_  
Best Art Gallery \_\_\_\_\_  
Best Baby Goods \_\_\_\_\_  
Best Board Shop \_\_\_\_\_  
Best Boutique \_\_\_\_\_  
Best Bridal Store \_\_\_\_\_  
Best Children's Clothing \_\_\_\_\_  
Best Cocktail/Dress Attire \_\_\_\_\_  
Best Consignment Clothing \_\_\_\_\_  
Best Consignment Furniture \_\_\_\_\_  
Best Department Store \_\_\_\_\_  
Best Fish and Tackle Shop \_\_\_\_\_  
Best Florist \_\_\_\_\_  
Best Furniture Store \_\_\_\_\_  
Best Garden Center \_\_\_\_\_  
Best Hardware Store \_\_\_\_\_

## Best of Mount Pleasant Ballot, *cont'd*

- Best Home Goods \_\_\_\_\_
- Best Jewelry Store \_\_\_\_\_
- Best Liquor Store \_\_\_\_\_
- Best Lighting Store \_\_\_\_\_
- Best Menswear \_\_\_\_\_
- Best Place to Buy a Boat \_\_\_\_\_
- Best Place to Buy a Car \_\_\_\_\_
- Best Place to Buy a Gift \_\_\_\_\_
- Best Retail Customer Service \_\_\_\_\_
- Best Shoe Store \_\_\_\_\_
- Best Sporting Goods \_\_\_\_\_
- Best Swimwear \_\_\_\_\_
- Best Thrift Shop \_\_\_\_\_
- Best Toys \_\_\_\_\_
- Best Women's Accessories \_\_\_\_\_

- Best Place to Play Tennis \_\_\_\_\_
- Best Place to Take a Date \_\_\_\_\_
- Best Place to Watch Sports on TV \_\_\_\_\_
- Best Place to Walk Your Dog \_\_\_\_\_
- Best Place to View the Ravenel Bridge \_\_\_\_\_
- Best Playground \_\_\_\_\_
- Best Volume Builder \_\_\_\_\_

### **HEALTH & WELLNESS**

- Best Allergist \_\_\_\_\_
- Best Audiologist \_\_\_\_\_
- Best Hearing Aid Provider \_\_\_\_\_
- Best Chiropractor \_\_\_\_\_
- Best Colon & Rectal Surgeon \_\_\_\_\_
- Best Dentist \_\_\_\_\_
- Best Dermatologist \_\_\_\_\_
- Best Eye Doctor \_\_\_\_\_

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# The Family Feud

## CLEMSON VERSUS CAROLINA IN MOUNT PLEASANT

**H**AVING DIFFERENT OPINIONS, viewpoints and preferences than your significant other can make life interesting. He likes Italian cuisine, you prefer Thai. He wants to see the latest action-packed blockbuster at the Cineplex and you long to see a documentary that took home accolades at Sundance. These are things you can work around. But what

BY KALENE MCCORT

happens when you differ about something essential to your being? Do you calmly agree to hear the other person's rationale or do you put on your war paint and stand your ground?

We're talking about rooting for rival college teams, people! In the South, this is serious. Come game day at many Lowcountry households, certain members are draped in opposing colors, aggressively waving their school's pompoms while exuding a shrill battle cry. We at *Mount Pleasant Magazine* have searched high and low to

find Gamecocks and Tigers living in the same house. Luckily, they have opted to stop pointing that oversized foam finger and live harmoniously – most of the time.

These are the stories of those brave enough to reside under the same roof in a house divided.

"When my husband asked me to marry him in 2004, he had only two requests," said Michelle Calhoun, a graduate of The University of South Carolina and a lifelong Gamecock. "The first request was to convert. It was not my religion that needed converting. Oh no, it was much bigger than that! He needed me to become a Tiger fan!"

The second request was to learn to cook up his



Michelle and Johnnie Calhoun.

mother's Chicken Bog, a pilaf dish stuffed with plenty of sausage, butter and bay leaves. Twelve years later, she hasn't given in to either demand. Well, for the most part anyway.

On Thanksgiving 2015, husband Johnny offered to purchase new furniture for his wife Michelle under one condition – she would agree to proudly root for the Clemson Tigers during the 2016 College Football Playoff National Championship Game. For those of us not fully loyal to one team or another, this may seem like a no-brainer. Throw on another team's colors, profess your love for them and score a loveseat and dining room set! For Michelle, it wasn't that easy. What would she do when faced with such a bribe?

"I have to say, I got the better end of the bet," said Michelle. "I am super excited to have my Gamecock fans over to enjoy the games and my new furniture! He would say it was worth it to see me give some praise to Clemson. As for me, I am enjoying my new furniture and the Gamecock allegiance has never been stronger! Now, if I could just get Ethan on my side, we could dominate!"

Ethan, now 3, is their youngest child. On the last game day he was actually changed in and out of opposing team swag a total of 10 times.

"At different times of the day, one of us would sneak off and change him into our jersey of choice," said Michelle. "The poor little fella is going to be so confused!"

The Calhouns have two other children. Sawyer, 14 and Shelby, 8, have stuck with their mama and are loyal Gamecocks.

"There is currently a war being waged over Ethan," said Michelle. "Johnny tells the kids if they decide to attend Clemson, he would pay their college tuition. Of course I have an issue with that."

In the South, we take our college football as seriously as our shrimp 'n grits. Michelle and Johnny were both born and bred in Horry County, South Carolina. They



Ethan Calhoun has worn the colors of both South Carolina and Clemson.



were raised on sweet tea under moss-covered live oaks, taught the bible and encouraged to have a whole lot of team spirit.

"Most everyone back home knows us, and they enjoy keeping up with our banter every year via Facebook," said Michelle. "We have informed our new neighbors here in Mount Pleasant that we are a house divided, and, come September, until that last Saturday in November, it may get a little crazy!"



The Calhoun family on game day.

As for where this family hunkers down to watch the game? It's usually from the comfort of their own Mount Pleasant home. Going to watch it at a local restaurant could actually cause some unexpected drama.

"Johnny hates watching the game in public places. He thinks he helps Dabo coach the team from the comforts of our living room. It's a wonder they don't hear him all the way in Clemson," said Michelle. "If we tried to watch a Clemson game in a public place, we would be thrown out due to his yelling or him getting in a fight with a Gamecock fan."

As for any superstitious practices before or after a game, the Calhouns don't go to the extremes.

"If we're not attending the game on game day, we are parked closely to the TV," said Michelle. "Our day will start off at 9 a.m. with College Game Day on ESPN."

"Our main game day ritual is to wear our team colors all day long," she added. "It doesn't matter if we're attending a wedding, birthday party or funeral. You will find us Calhouns with our team colors on!"

Another couple that proudly wears their opposing

team colors is Angel and Richard Leitner. They met in Charleston, and, while they had a lot of common interests, they found that their love for rival teams



sparked some competition.

“Very early on, we started bringing in aspects of the rivalry, buying cup sets with orange vs. garnet designs and seeing which gets used more,” said Angel,

a die-hard Clemson fan whose husband Richard attended USC.

“I’m especially excited about this year, because I have taught our 2-and-a-half-year-old daughter, Audrey, to chant C-L-E-M-S-O-N,

and she loves watching videos of the Tiger Band on YouTube,” said Angel. “I told my husband that he could ruin the second child, but that she is going to be a Clemson girl.”

Angel cherishes her undergraduate years spent at Clemson, and getting amped about her team during football season brings back the nostalgia full force.

“I loved how happy everyone was to be there, to cheer with each other and celebrate,” said Angel, reflecting on her time tailgating and attending live games. “The amount of noise and excitement in Death Valley is an amazing experience.”

As for advice for other couples struggling to come to terms with their partner’s affiliation with an opposing team, it all boils down to not take it too seriously and to know when to fight your battles.

“Have fun with it,” said Angel. “We are fully supportive of each other’s teams, until that day in November when we play each other.”

Angel and Richard may be good

luck charms for one another and their teams.

“Our friends pointed out that when we started dating, USC went on their winning streak,” said Angel.



Angel and Richard Leitner support each other’s teams – except when Clemson meets South Carolina.

“After our child was born, Clemson finally won again, so it became a big joke that we couldn’t have anymore life-changing events! Being intense but knowing you’re just having fun makes fall the best time of the year!”

She assured me there is still plenty of good-hearted banter between her and her husband: “While we’ve always smack-talked, we generally support each other’s team during the other games of the season, even going so far as to wear supporting gear and colors while watching the games!”

Most people look back at their college memories with pride and a sense of nostalgia. It was a time when all you had to worry about was cramming for your Political Science exam and scouting out a good tailgate spot outside the stadium. Whether you bleed orange or garnet, one thing we can all agree on is that football season is a magical time – one filled with good eats, ice cold brew and plenty of healthy competition. 🍷

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# House Divided



## As seen on: facebook



**Susan Hudspeth** - I'm Clemson, one daughter is Alabama, my husband is LSU and the rest of the family is Georgia. Help us all!

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**Elaine Carpenter** - All of my family are TIGER fans with the exception of one who "claims" he pulls for the Gamecocks, but he only does this to make that one game more exciting for his beloved wife.

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**Linda Gainey** - I am a die-hard Gamecock fan. I like Clemson when they are not playing Carolina. After all, our tax money goes to both schools.

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**Jaime Lambert Jordan** - I'm die-hard Clemson and my husband is die-hard Carolina! Let's just say it gets interesting around here during football, basketball and baseball season!

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**Harold Floyd** - My son and I are Clemson fans and my wife, daughter and daughter-in-law are Gamecock fans. We are truly a house divided.

[www.Facebook.com/MountPleasantMagazine](http://www.Facebook.com/MountPleasantMagazine)

**Marykay Ulmer Martin** - My husband is a USC alum and I am a born and bred, die-hard Tiger. He goes to games with me and actually wears orange to the games and pulls for the Tigers. I, on the other hand, am 100-percent non-Gamecock, won't set foot in that stadium and won't pull for the Cocks in any situation. I am the die-hard and don't miss a game. He doesn't even know or care when the Cocks are playing. Go Tigers!

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**Kristen Rennie Lee** - We are a true house divided. I went to Clemson, and my husband went to USC. We have two sons and they are divided, too! Our playroom is divided, too – one side has a Marcus Lattimore Fathead and the other side has a Sammy Watkins one. A red and orange color scheme. We sit separately at the big rivalry game every year!

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**Lori Mark Wood** - I'm a die-hard Citadel fan; my husband is a Gamecock fan. Needless to say, it's interesting, especially since my team won this year. Each car has both stickers or tags. We get a lot of ribbing from family, neighbors and friends.

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**Ronnie Long** - My wife and her kids are South Carolina, and I am the only one that is Clemson. That's OK, though. Lol.

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# WANNA GO TO THE GAME?

## Raise Your Paw or Claw

**W**HETHER YOU WERE BORN A South Carolinian or are “from off,” if you want to fit in, you have to choose sides – Clemson or Carolina.

When someone asks you ‘Who do you pull for?’, that’s what they mean. (Please, don’t answer “Ohio State or Michigan”)

Your heart either races for ‘2001’ and Cockey, or for running down the Hill and ‘Tiger Rag.’

Some of us have ‘blood that runneth orange,’ and some of us look good in garnet and black.

This rivalry dominates all else in the Palmetto State. By November, the big game will evoke more passion than Trump or Hillary ever could. Many a Thanksgiving has had the trash talk grow more heated than the food on the table.

It doesn’t matter what happens during the first 11 games. Those other games are just a warmup for Carolina-Clemson. Winning bragging rights is all that matters.

There are actually a few of us who try to pull for both teams, and we dread that Saturday morning when we have to choose between wearing orange or garnet.

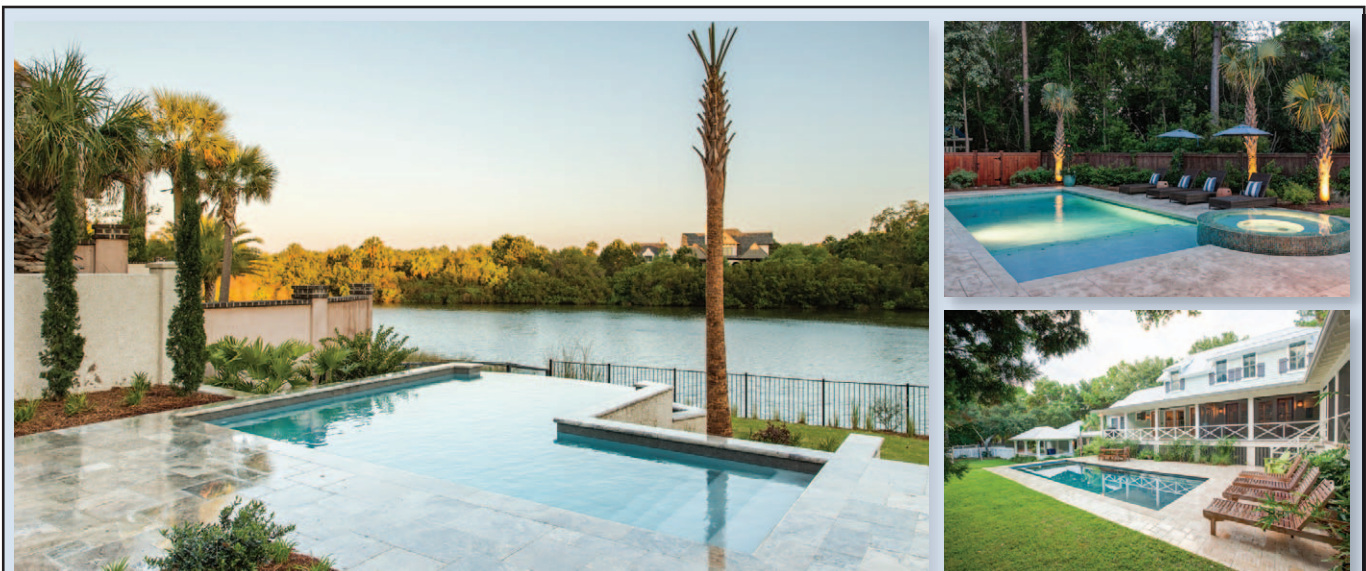
The main thing is we all know in our heart that the only real sport is football. Nothing beats Saturdays in the fall, especially when you’re cheering in the stands.

Register to win two tickets AND a parking pass to this year’s Palmetto Bowl in Death Valley on Nov. 26, 2016.

Go Tigers! Go Cocks! 🐾



See page 18 for locations to register. For more information, visit [www.ClemsonCarolinaTickets.com](http://www.ClemsonCarolinaTickets.com).



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About

# CLEMSON



About

# CAROLINA

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**Orange** – The perfect color for a school. You can go the game on Saturday, hunt on Sunday and pick up trash on the side of the freeway the rest of the week.

**How do you know you're in a Clemson bar?**

• If you call the number on the bathroom wall, you get the farm report.

**How did the Clemson Tigers fan die from drinking milk?**

• The cow fell on him.

**What do you call a beautiful woman on the arm of a Clemson fan?**

• A tattoo.

**Clemson University:** Turn left at the barn and keep driving. You'll get here eventually.

**How do you know that the toothbrush was invented at Clemson?**

• If it was invented any place else, it would have been called the teethbrush.

**What does the average University of South Carolina student get on his final exams?**

• Drool.

**What do you get when you breed a groundhog and the South Carolina Gamecocks?**

• Six more weeks of bad football.

**What do you call a South Carolina football player with a championship ring?**

• A thief.

**How do Gamecocks brain cells die?**

• Alone.

**What's the only sign of intelligence in Columbia, South Carolina?**

• Clemson - 130 Miles.

**What does a South Carolina Gamecock fan do when his team has won the BCS championship?**

• He turns off the PlayStation 3.

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# NICE RIDE!

## CHARLESTON CARS & COFFEE

*By Bill Farley  
Photos by Lane Anderson*

**T**HERE'S A POPULAR CLUB IN Mount Pleasant that meets weekly, regularly attracts more than 100 people – mostly men – to its gatherings but has no admission requirements, no membership rolls, no dues and, pretty much, no rules. Everyone is welcome to join just by driving to Towne Centre and parking in the lot right in front of Atlanta Bread any Saturday between 8:30 a.m. and 10:30 a.m.

The attraction, according to its Facebook page, is automobiles “foreign,



domestic, old, new, clean or dirty.”

Welcome to Charleston Cars & Coffee, one of a host of similar gatherings nationwide but very likely the only one that convenes weekly – rain, shine or 100-degree weather – all year round.

The coffee element isn't mandatory. Some participants bring their own java, and there's always plenty more available inside Atlanta Bread. The key word, not surprisingly, is “cars.”



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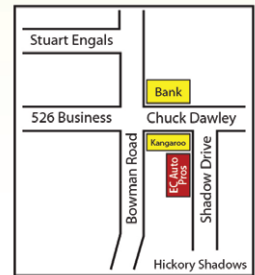
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There are Ferraris and Maseratis, Lamborghinis and Aston Martins, classic MGs, Jags and Triumphs, vintage pickups, tricked out motorcycles and plenty more.

There's no racing and no judging, just the opportunity to showcase everyone's favorite car and give others a chance to admire it, ask questions about it and maybe even sit in the driver's seat and imagine what it would be like to take it out on the road or track.

Charleston Cars & Coffee got its start not long after Hurricane Hugo, meeting for several years at various locations in the Old Village. About five years ago, a handful of the car faithful struck a deal to hold their regular meetings at their current location, and car buffs from as far away as Myrtle Beach and Beaufort began showing up to show off their prized possessions.

One of those founding members is Don Curtis, who lives in Brickyard and drives a Porsche Carrera. Charleston Cars & Coffee continues to grow, he admitted, but added that "It's not about the numbers. We don't have any goals.



We're a niche community of interest. We're a 'multi-marque' gathering, so we've seen everything here: Model Ts, Model As, vintage Packards, McLarens, Vipers, Hummers, half-million-dollar street hot rods – you name it. About the only exotic car we haven't had yet is a Bugatti.

"The Porsche Club has staged their cruises here, and the British Car Club has more or less adopted this as their meeting spot as well."

Of course, not everyone has an Isotta Fraschini in their two-car garage, so you're just as likely to see a Jeep Cherokee or a Hyundai Sonata

parked next to a "Bug Eye" Sprite or a classic 1960s Toyota Land Cruiser looking as if it's ready for a race through the streets of Tokyo in pursuit of Godzilla.

Jim D'Damery of Darrell Creek, who works as safety director at Wando Trucking Company, arrived one Saturday in a pedestrian silver SUV. A

diehard Corvette fancier, he explained that his regular ride was having electrical problems, so he drove his backup vehicle so he wouldn't miss the meet.

"My Vette wouldn't start this morning, so I just jumped in my truck and came anyway. No one even noticed. What's important to me, and, I think, to everyone who attends, isn't so much the showing off of fancy cars

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but the camaraderie. We may come from all walks of life, but our common bond is our love of cars.”

Charleston Cars & Coffee’s unofficial photographer, Lane Anderson of Dunes West, echoed that sentiment.

“Most of us aren’t mainstream sports fans. In South Carolina, you can run into a hard-core football fan just about anywhere. But when you start talking about cars, most people go blank. With the people at our Saturday meets, you can sit around and talk cars forever!”

On this Saturday, he left his BMW 128i at home and arrived in his Beck Speedster, a 2006 factory-built recreation of a 1957 Porsche 356 Speedster that’s guaranteed to have any classic car buff salivating.

Parked nearby Anderson’s Speedster was another vehicle that always attracts lots of attention – a fire-engine red 1939 Ford known as “The Bootlegger.” Owned by Bob Demschick of Mount Pleasant, this meticulously customized street rod comes complete with a whiskey barrel – which Dan swore is nonfunctional – built into its trunk.

Demschick said that when he has shown “The Bootlegger” up North, it’s always gotten its fair share of attention.

“But, down here, folks really crowd around for a close look, and they love it. After all, just about everyone living here seems to know someone or is related to someone who’s run moonshine!”

And Dan Whitton, a lifelong car guy who runs Whitton Marine, Inc. on Clements Ferry Road and calls the Corvette “the backbone of the entire General Motors empire,” noted that all of the attendees at Charleston Cars & Coffee have at least two things in common: “They are car guys. And they are not golfers. Cars are their hobby.”

So, if T-tops are more important to you than tee times, make it a point to motor on over to Towne Centre any Saturday. You won’t be disappointed, And, except for your coffee, it’s all free. ☕



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Manager Bob McCormack insists that what customers have come to trust, know and love about East Cooper Auto Pros will not change – instead, the shop will be enhanced by some important strides in customer convenience.

"We're moving into the next century," he commented. "That means going paperless and making things convenient for our customers. They'll be able to view information on their phones or tablets instead of having to call."

According to McCormack, two different kinds of software will assist with this new, streamlined process. And the introduction of a kiosk at the front desk will make

registration simpler than ever for the busy commuter.

"We're certainly not going to change meeting and greeting the folks who come in here," McCormack assured me. "But for those in a rush, the kiosk will be beneficial – they'll be able to register their information as soon as they walk in. It will also make suggestions based on individual history. It will be like having your own personal mechanic."

Indeed, timing repairs will be a large part of the shop's updated convenience. Customers will be able to set exact appointments for their next oil change, as one example, instead of the "come back in roughly 3,000 miles" plan. Plus, they'll get email reminders.

McCormack explained that East Cooper Auto Pros has grown a lot recently – to the point of having to hire a second front-desk manager as well as new mechanics – and the tech advances will help manage that growth.

Even Dan Hodapp, the new guy at the front desk, had to admit that life at East Cooper Auto Pros is "crazy busy all the time" compared to his last job. Hodapp, a Chicago native, said he prefers the small business culture at East Cooper Auto Pros.

"Here they actually care," he commented.

"I like to pick up the phone and talk to somebody as much as anyone," McCormack added. "We're going to maintain our attitude and our nostalgia, while making things more convenient.

Part of growing is embracing new technology." 📱

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East Cooper Auto Pros will be enhanced by strides in customer convenience. Below: Technician Moe Pelkey.



Photos by Rick Warlo.

# You Only Live Once



Photos courtesy of Angelo Vlcek.

## ANGELO VLCEK TAKES ON THE DAKAR RALLY

**C**LOCKING OVER 5,200 MILES on a motorcycle through the red-dirt, uncharted paths of South America may not sound like an ideal vacation. But for Parrot Surf & Skate owner Angelo Vlcek, it's an opportunity he can't pass up. Never one to shy away from adventure, he has jumped at the chance to participate in The Dakar Rally 2017 – a 14-day-journey that tests patience, endurance and sheer will.

BY KALENE MCCORT

A variety of racers, from motorcycle riders to semi truck drivers, will all descend upon rocky and sandy terrain to brave the elements for that ultimate sense of victory. Fueled by adrenaline, Vlcek, along with a tribe of thrill-seekers, will dig their wheels into dried up riverbeds across

Paraguay, Bolivia and Argentina come January 2017.

“I grew up watching Dakar as a boy in the Czech Republic,” said Vlcek. “I have a real passion for the race and just how far I can push myself mentally and physically.”

As for preparation, Vlcek credits his personal trainer with keeping him motivated and in shape. Athletic by nature, surfing any chance he gets, Vlcek admitted Dakar is still somewhat of an intimidating venture.

“Any time you spend on a motorcycle is a good time, but nothing prepares you for the actual race,” said Vlcek. “I’m what you would consider an amateur rider. I do it as a hobby.”

Only riding for several years, Vlcek has taken the love of the sport to new heights by jumping full force into races that challenge. His passion for riding was ignited when he did the Taste of Dakar in 2013 – a race throughout the sand beds of the Nevada desert, meant to simulate the ac-



tual experience. He's already journeyed on his motorcycle through parts of Mexico, Morocco and Patagonia.

While the varying views of regional wildlife and snow-capped mountains would have been ideal captures for Instagram, Vlcek explained that once in "race mode," your priorities shift.

"Social media is the last thing you are thinking about," said Vlcek. "You could turn around and be faced with a four-foot drop. You have to be fully in the moment and aware of your surroundings."

As the owner of Parrot Surf & Skate on Coleman and co-owner of Channels, on King Street in downtown Charleston, he considers racing and riding to be somewhat of a meditation that helps him unwind from the stress of everyday life and responsibilities.

"When I'm on the bike, my head is 100-percent clear," said Vlcek. "I'm not thinking about anything else."

Never one to call himself competitive, Vlcek's main motive to do Dakar is about not looking back in regret on the chances he failed to take. Expressing the frustration that comes with seeing friends pass without fulfilling many of their life goals, Vlcek seizes each moment as if it were his last.

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“It’s the hardest off-road race in the world,” said Vlcek, reflecting on Dakar 2017. “But it’s definitely a bucket-list goal for me. I’ll just be stoked to finish, but placing in the top 50 to 100 would be great.”

Dakar not only takes a toll on the riders but on the bikes as well. That’s why Vlcek keeps tools handy, in case he has to stop to deal with mechanical problems. The race path isn’t marked out, which adds a whole other element to this off-

road excursion. He also carries three liters of drinking water, along with a CamelBak filled with nutrient-rich minerals to prevent dehydration. In



addition to the racers, seven airplanes and 10 helicopters, carrying 6,500 meals and 12,000 bottles of water, inhabit the sky miles above the competitors.

In addition to trying to eat right and work out at the gym, Vlcek will take a trip to Colorado in order to acclimate to the high altitude of Bolivia, one of race’s stops. Pushing your body to the limit is one thing. Pushing your body to the limit at a whopping 4,000 meters above sea level is quite another.

“I’m fulfilling a lifetime dream,” said Vlcek. “You only live once.”

He credits the outpouring of community support he has received with helping him reach this incredible goal.

“I’d be remiss if I didn’t thank my wife, Caroline, my family, Stokes Automotive, Red Drum Restaurant, Fender Mender, 3 Dudes Band, Premier Fitness, Channels of Charleston, Ryno Power, Carolina KTM, Battery Off Road Park, Spy Optics, Dr. Todd Overdorf with Integrative Health Solutions and all the local families and friends who have been supporting this dream for the past several years,” said Vlcek.

While he has seen fellow riders overcome by injury and illness and forced to abandon races before reaching the finish line, fear is not his enemy.

“There are times when you are totally exhausted, beat up and questioning what you are even doing,” said Vlcek. “But then you remember why you are there. You push through. You keep going.” 🐾





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# The Future Looks Rosy

## SURVIVING BREAST CANCER

*By Barbara Millen Patrick • Photos provided by survivors*

*There is no easy way to get the news. Breast cancer. It sucks the breath from your body. Your world stops turning as you try to comprehend the words your doctor is saying. What now?*

*Breast cancer is not just one disease. There are many variations multiplied by the individuality of each woman's (or man's) body. Medical science has made great strides in treating breast cancer, and doctors are saving more lives than ever. Although the incidence of breast cancer has dropped during the last decade or so, nearly 250,000 women and men will be diagnosed this year. Approximately 2.8 million women – both survivors and those currently undergoing treatment – have added the chapter on this disease to their life stories.*







## SWEET STRENGTH

**Linda McDandel** learned that she had ductal cancer in situ (DCIS) during an especially rough time in her life. She and her husband had just lost their home to foreclosure during the housing market crash. With their financial security gone, they moved to smaller rented quarters and made sacrifices. One was health insurance, so she skipped her mammogram for two years until she just had a feeling.

“I couldn’t put my finger on it, but I knew something was not right. I am very in-tune with my body,” Linda said. “So I thought I better go get a mammogram and pay for it.”

The radiologist found a spot. After a biopsy confirmed the cancer diagnosis, a lumpectomy was performed and was rated a 0 on a scale of 0 to 5. Because it was hormone positive, Linda’s surgeon recommended radiation plus a five-year course of Tamoxiphen. Both treatments carry the risk of side effects, some very serious, so Linda opted against these, preferring to adjust her already healthy diet. She decided to forgo sugar, dairy, processed food and meat, choosing fresh foods and fish instead.



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PHOTOS: MICHELLE BOLTON

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While Linda does not recommend refusing standard treatment, she felt it was right for her since her surgeon was able to remove all of the cancerous tissue. But she does urge breast cancer patients to ask questions, request second opinions and discuss options. Do the research into drugs and their side effects. Above all, she stresses the benefits of exercise and nutrition.

To help educate women, Linda has started Sweet Strength.

"I give people the tools needed to empower them to move with purpose during very challenging circumstances," she said.

She has a lot of experience in that field: financial loss, serious illness and the death of the husband who supported her decisions. But her biggest challenge was not breast cancer.

"Nothing really compares to losing your husband."

## THE CHRISTMAS GIFT

**Deborah Tibbetts Greig**, a former news director at a local television station, was inspired to make her mammogram appointment by the co-host of a national morning show. Amy Robach (who also worked at a local station early in her career) quite unexpectedly discovered that she had breast cancer when she had a mammogram on ABC's "Good Morning America" in 2013.



Deborah already had her doctor's prescription for the mammogram but had not yet made the appointment. She made the call immediately and, during her appointment, it became clear that something was amiss.

"I knew they saw something," Deborah said. "They had me wait, then took more pictures, then the ultrasound."

The diagnosis was invasive ductal carcinoma. It is the most common type cancer, affecting about 80 percent of breast cancer patients. Because it starts in the milk ducts,

there may no symptoms at all in the beginning. The next step was the sentinel node surgery, which examines the lymph nodes for signs that the tumor has spread.

Deborah's cancer had not spread beyond the breast, so she opted for a double mastectomy. It was close to the holidays, and the only time the surgery could be scheduled was Christmas Eve. Her two surgeons told her they would work late that day so she would not have to wait. She was grateful but fretted about being in the hospital instead of being home to open gifts on Christmas morning with her two daughters, Danielle and Nicole.

"Honey," the nurse told her, "your daughters will wake up on Christmas day knowing you don't have cancer. That's a gift."

Deborah's surgery went well, and she woke up to a surprise herself. Her college-age daughters had brought in a tree and decorated her room for Christmas.

"I didn't need chemo or radiation," Deborah said. "I was lucky. It was a good clean removal."

Because her cancer was discovered during a routine mammogram, Deborah feels very strongly that women should be proactive.

"If a woman wants a yearly mammogram, she should have it."

## DOUBLE TROUBLE

**Kathleen Cornely** thought she was good to go after a lumpectomy eight years ago. But during a routine mammogram in 2013, "They found a couple of spots." After more testing, the spots were identified as two different types of breast cancer: lobular carcinoma in situ and invasive



ductal carcinoma. Luckily, both cancers were caught early. They were both classified stage 1.

Lobular carcinoma in situ (LCIS) is a group of abnormal cells that are not yet classified as cancer but carry a

high risk of developing into breast cancer. It's uncommon and is primarily found in women between 40 and 50.

Invasive ductal carcinoma is a more urgent matter since it is cancer that has begun to spread. Kathleen opted for a double mastectomy to assure the best possible long-term outcome. It was followed by three months of chemotherapy – every three weeks at MUSC in Mount Pleasant – which was not as bad as she expected. She experienced weight loss, fatigue and loss of appetite, but, fortunately, no nausea.

“The worst part was losing my hair,” Kathleen said.

A positive person by nature, she was able to maintain a good attitude. It also clarified that time is finite and not to be wasted. She and her sister, who recently underwent treatment for ovarian cancer, made good on their promise to travel “sometime.” This past May, they went to Hawaii on a “sisters’ survivors” trip.

“It makes you feel your mortality,” Kathleen said. “Take nothing for granted.”

Her four children were “very supportive,” especially during the stressful weeks between the mammogram and the final diagnostic results.

“I truly felt lucky,” she said. “I said OK, what is the silver lining? It was caught early and I got new boobs!”

## THE EMOTIONAL SIDE

**Cindy Eley** had a brush with breast cancer in 2007 when a mammogram showed a few calcifications, but the real trouble showed up years later, on July 14, 2011, when her mammogram revealed calcifications in the left breast. The radiologist wanted more images, then an ultrasound.



Cindy realized that the radiologist had seen something suspicious and, waiting for the technician in the ultrasound room, she was alone with her thoughts. The images were enough to require a biopsy at the Medical University of South Carolina.

“They try to let you know within 48 hours,” Cindy said.

Luckily, she had a friend who told her within 24 hours that it was indeed breast cancer. The mother of a young son, Cindy began to worry about the future. She had a double mastectomy Aug. 29. She did not require chemotherapy but found that medication would be a part of her life for 10 years.

“I was on Tamoxifen but I had side effects,” she said. “I was not feeling well.”

Cindy is on Letrozole, a drug that is used for hormone-receptor-positive breast cancers, but said this drug, too, has side effects.

“I have joint pain, brain fog and cognitive issues,” she said.

In spite of the emotional rollercoaster of the treatment, Cindy is grateful.

“It was stage 1 and it was caught early,” she said.

## LIFE MATTERS

“On April 9, 2015, I had an appointment for a mammogram,” **Cara Fowler** said. “That morning I felt a lump in the shower.”

It seemed just as well. Cara figured she'd have that checked out during her appointment, but she was told that would require a different appointment and one was made for the next morning.

“I turned to go, then stopped and asked ‘Do I need my husband with me?’”

The answer was yes. Her husband, meteorologist Rob Fowler, changed his plans to accompany her.

The next morning she learned that there was probable cancer. And so began the whirlwind. She had two biopsies, which confirmed the cancer diagnosis: triple negative invasive ductal carcinoma.

She decided to consult her friend and neighbor, Dr. Megan Baker, who was then a breast surgeon at the Medical University of South Carolina (She is now a Roper St. Francis



Physician Partner) for help in navigating this new journey in her life.

Cara's cancer was aggressive and too large for chemotherapy. Surgery was scheduled, and, just days after, she began the first of eight rounds of chemo, which included the dreaded "red devil" (Adriamycin). The chemo was followed by six weeks of radiation.

Through it all, with careful planning, Cara was able to live her life during this journey. Dr. Baker understood the need to attend a graduation, to celebrate a wedding and to simply enjoy life with her family.

The stories are many, and one leads to another through the unique sisterhood of breast cancer survivors. As I write these words, I'm thinking of my friends. **Sybil Blanton**, who found a lump while taking a shower, has remained steadfast and positive after hearing that she had triple negative cancer. Unlike more common cancers, this one does not respond to newer treatments. She has undergone months of chemotherapy, followed by surgery. And to make sure the cancer is gone, there were weeks of radiation.

And **Betsi Green** who, after 19 cancer-free years, is

staring down an old foe with a different face. Cured of the rare Paget's disease, which attacks the nipple, she now has "no tumor, but a lot of loose cells marching to the lymph nodes." She has just begun chemo and lost her hair. Next are multiple surgeries and radiation. In all, her treatment

will span 18 months. She's a little anxious but always positive and surrounded in love from family and friends.

"I'm still soaring," she said. 🐝



Betsi Green




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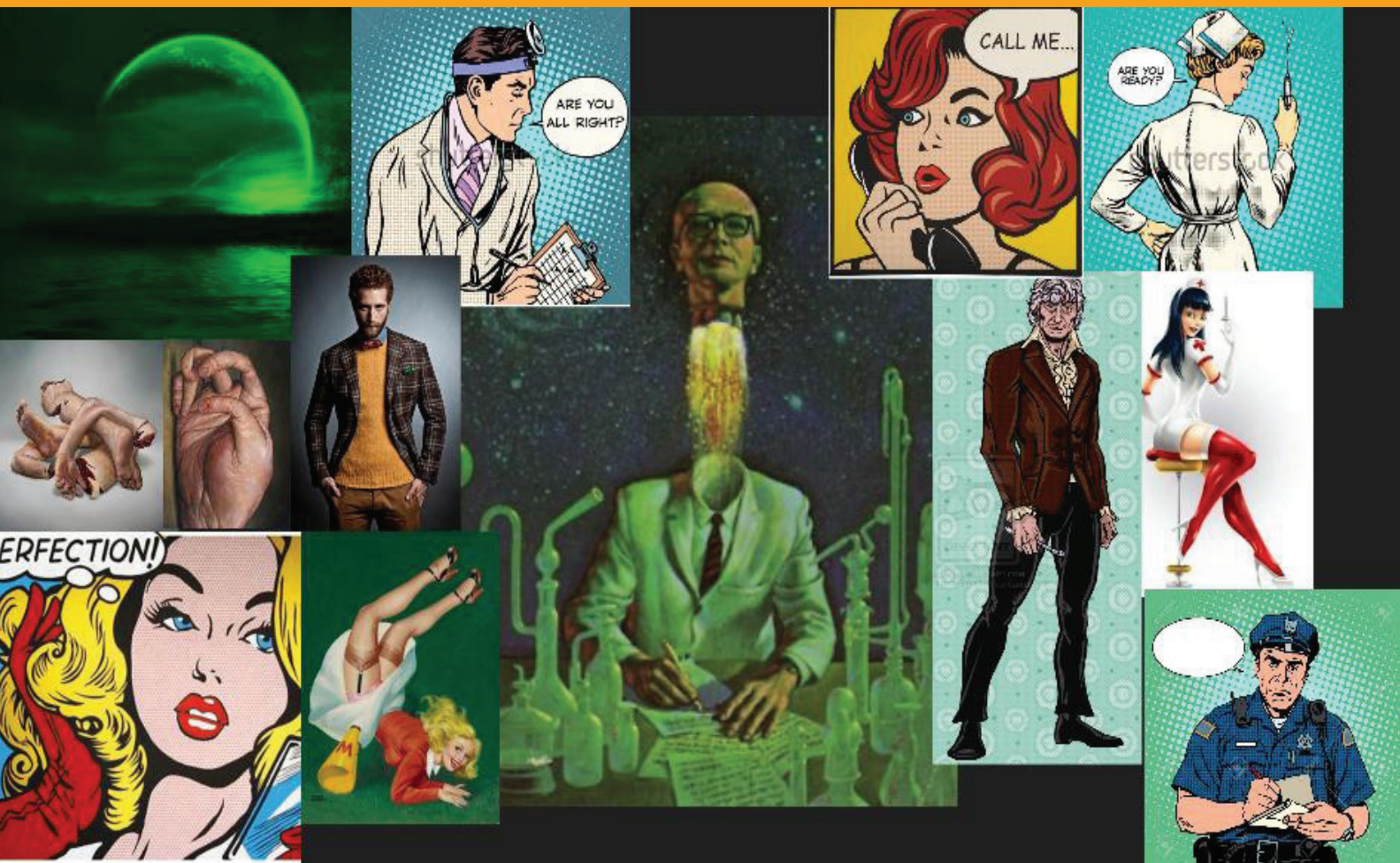


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Artwork courtesy of Linda Eisen.

# MIND GAMES

## East Cooper Residents Launch a Landmark Musical

**I** HAVE TO GIVE MY MOTHER CREDIT for having a nose for the delightfully macabre. This delight led her – and, eventually, me – to “The Brain That Wouldn’t Die,” a low-budget film from 1961 about a mad doctor/scientist who, following a car accident, takes his fiancée’s decapitated head and keeps it alive, with sinister consequences. Although the film didn’t receive the best reviews in its day, it did gain a cult following of people like me and my mom who love it for its sheer weirdness. Now, writer and Mount Pleasant resident Bruce Bernhard, who recently bought the rights to the film, is retelling the story in a darkly comedic musical that we’re all sure to lose our heads over.

BY DENISE K. JAMES

Bernhard, who has worked on Hollywood horror scripts for the last 15 years and recently relocated to the Lowcountry, said the film appealed to him and “begged to be re-imagined.”

“The film had no empathetic characters, so we had to create one,” he mused. “We did that by establishing a love story. We also established new characters.”

Bernhard explained that the musical, unlike its film predecessor, will be decidedly more lighthearted and have a happy ending. One of the new characters, for example, is the doctor’s best friend, Morty, a “skirt chaser” in the words of Bernhard, who wants to put the head on a cheerleader’s body.

Although Bernhard purchased the rights to the origi-

nal film in hopes to do an on-screen remake – and still plans to do just that – he decided on a musical after reading his tweaked script to an audience and hearing their earnest feedback.

“We did a reading about a year ago, and someone suggested putting it on stage,” explained Linda Eisen, the show’s director, also a Mount Pleasant resident.

“I wanted to hear it read out loud and then send it to my creative team in Los Angeles,” said Bernhard. “But people were so enthusiastic, I decided to stage it right away. A film will come eventually.”

Of course, any musical must have the tunes to carry it through, and both Bernhard and Eisen shared their enthusiasm with me about the songs for “The Brain That Wouldn’t Die” and for composer Chris Cassone, whom Eisen dubbed “one of the best.” In fact, Cassone, along with musical director David McLaughlin, ventured to East Cooper from the Big Apple to meet with the rest of the crew for the occasion.

“These songs are smart, entertaining and funny,” Eisen affirmed. “For me, it’s been great putting together an A-team, some of the best people I’ve worked with, all handpicked. And having the opportunity to work with a New York choreographer and songwriter.”

The entire production is going to be first-class, essentially, from the set designed by Daniel Kuhn to the props designed by the folks from “The Inspectors,” a television show filmed locally. Adjectives such as “beautiful” and “fantastic” were uttered to describe the props and set, and it’s clear that a musical of this caliber deserves a fine venue go with it.

“The show will debut at the Footlight Players Theatre in downtown Charleston,” said Eisen. “The space is rented for the event; this is not a Footlight production. But we needed a venue large enough for this production.”

Eisen and Bernhard are joined by Erin Danly, another Mount Pleasant dweller, serving as the show’s stage manager. Bernhard, who admitted that the show is his “maiden voyage” in theater, had nothing but kind things to say about the Charleston area’s theater scene, calling it “fun and invigorating.”

“I’ve got 30 screen credits, but this is new,” he said. “It’s the first original comedy musical of this scale to debut in Charleston since “Porgy and Bess.” It will be a landmark event.” 🍷

*To find out more and to purchase tickets to The Brain That Wouldn’t Die, visit <http://thebrainthatwouldntdie.net/>. Combination tickets that include a ghost tour in downtown Charleston are available.*

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Laura Bowers never quits the search for odds and ends that could later transform to one part of a child's imagination.

# A Harvest of Ideas

## BEHIND THE BOONE HALL PUMPKIN PATCH

**L**AURA BOWERS IS NO STRANGER to the thrill of the hunt. As creative director of the Boone Hall Pumpkin Patch for five years running, as well as CEO of the plantation, she never quits the search for the odds and ends – from foam swimming pool “noodles” to television satellite dishes – that could later transform into one whimsical part of a child’s imagination. Searching the secondhand circuit high and low, including Goodwill stores, Habitat for Humanity and just any gathering of so-called junk, Bowers makes a mountain of treasure out of the molehill of discard. The result is a fall festival that continues to bring thousands of starry-eyed children to Boone Hall Plantation year after year.

BY DENISE K. JAMES

Though Bowers described herself as visual, she hasn’t always been an artist. In fact, she worked with a restaurant group for 21 years, where she learned to be versatile and

quick on her feet. Then, seven years ago, she took a job at Boone Hall Plantation. At that time, the Pumpkin Patch was orchestrated by a third party – until Bowers took over the project and made it shine. Nowadays, the Pumpkin Patch is a celebration of creativity and hard work, something its director takes seriously.

“One thing I do well is bringing people together,” Bowers said, winding her SUV through the dirt paths of the plantation en route to the “tent,” where magic happens to all the miscellaneous items accumulated from thrifting.

“I try to do things 100 percent or not at all,” she continued. “We all work together. The staff is strong here, and everyone loves what they do, especially the Pumpkin Patch!”

At the tent, I was awestruck at, well, the mess. Yet Bowers and her trusty assistant, Henry Way, were quick to tell me the destinies of each odd and end. There was a fortune teller lady housed inside of an old sunglasses case, a sparkling crown made from a wall knickknack, wandering eyes made from ordinary beach balls, horses made out

of swimming pool noodles – and the list went on.

“I would say I’m the queen of 1,001 ways to use a pool noodle,” Bowers admitted with a chuckle. “I scour the thrift stores for materials to make into creatures, scenes, all kinds of stuff – and sometimes, the idea isn’t there until I actually have the stuff in front of me. This tent is the think tank. And things rarely end up how they started.”

Those of you who devote your weekends to Goodwill might secretly be wondering just how many things a town like Mount Pleasant – or a metro like Charleston – can yield. But Bowers assured me that she doesn’t limit herself to the Lowcountry when finding items. Her daughter lives in the Atlanta area, and Bowers has been known to “haul in stuff from 360 miles away.”

“I’m very proud that we reuse and recycle so much,” she exclaimed. “And it’s fun to make something out of, say, an irrigation system!”

After the tent, we took a little ride along what will soon be the mile-and-a-half hayride, a popular aspect of the Pumpkin Patch. One of this year’s highlights, the T-Rex, is a friendlier rendition, grinning with a giant tennis ball in his mouth and sure to bring about “oohs” and “ahs.”

“I need a water bowl for him, but this baby swimming pool is too small,” Bowers mused.

If seeing this kind of magic in person isn’t enough of a reason, it’s worth knowing that proceeds from each weekend of the Pumpkin Patch benefits selected charities. In the past, organizations such as the Center for Birds of Prey and the Berkeley County SPCA have benefited.

Bowers, who clearly is a woman of vast energy, said that once this Pumpkin Patch is over, she’ll start brainstorming about – and shopping for – next year.

“I think we’ve evolved,” she said. “But there are always things we can work on.”

She added that families from all over the Lowcountry and all parts of the state come to Boone Hall’s Pumpkin Patch because of the creativity and love put into it. And the chance to get out from behind a computer screen and onto a farm doesn’t hurt, either.

“We give people the opportunity to get away from technology and get their feet dirty,” she pointed out with a smile. 🍂

*Catch the magic of the Boone Hall Pumpkin Patch, a premier fall festival, between Oct. 1 and Oct. 31. The festival features attractions such as the famed corn maze, sponsored by Ameris Bank this year, a kid-friendly monster hayride and more. See complete details at [BooneHallPumpkinPatch.com](http://BooneHallPumpkinPatch.com).*



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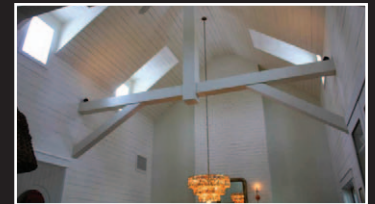
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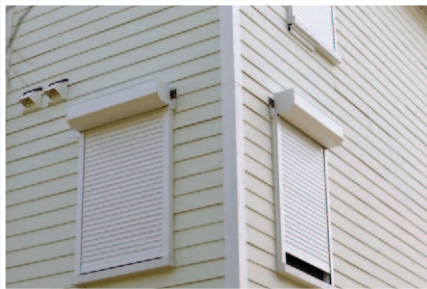


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# Get in the Game

## FINDING AFFORDABLE HOMES IN MOUNT PLEASANT



*Is buying an affordable home in Mount Pleasant becoming an impossible dream? Those who grew up here are struggling to buy in their hometown, yet it is cheaper to buy now than it is to rent. So how do you get in the game and find that coveted, affordable house in Mount Pleasant, competing against the baby boomers, the transplants and the builders?*

*Here is how three recent buyers did it.*

**CARTER HOPKINS** began his search six months before he found his dream home. He grew up in old Mount Pleasant and wanted that desirable south Mount Pleasant location. Keeping it in the family, he hired his aunt, Posey Haynie of Carolina One, as his agent. But the months passed and he grew discouraged.

Meanwhile, his aunt kept an eagle eye on new listings, got her nephew pre-approved and mentally primed herself to move quickly when



Photo by Rick Walo.

the proper time arrived. Then a three-bedroom, two-bath gem showed up in Hickory Shadows for \$250,000. It was the only house Hopkins saw in person, and it was love at first sight. It had the size, location and yard he sought. In a whirlwind of activity, he and his savvy aunt snapped it up. His advice for those searching is to “have patience and it will happen – and have a good agent!”

“Much depends on negotiating skills at this price range,” remarked Christine Pettigrew of Agent Owned Realty.

Pettigrew helped her client, **DANI HECK**, buy a \$200,000 town house in Hunters Trace. All told, they had looked at 21 homes and had been outbid in three earlier offers. The experience taught them to make an offer where



the net for the seller would add up to the asking price – and keep the contract clean of closing costs and warranties.

The town home was on the market for only a few hours, with eight showings scheduled on the first day. Using the new negotiation strategy, Heck beat the competition.

“The search was tougher than I expected, but everything happened for a reason. With every home I saw, I became more educated, opened my mind and prepared myself to move on a home in 15 minutes,” she said.

She is thrilled with her new home.

**ALLIE FRANKLIN** and **JARED SMITH** looked at 10 houses before finding their dream home in Mallard Lakes. The couple began looking in December of 2015 with a budget of \$320,000 and found the home they wanted by spring. Franklin said they decided on Mount Pleasant

because of its proximity to the beaches and to Wando High School, where Smith works as an assistant principal.

“We were willing to take the time to find the location we wanted,” Franklin explained. “We also were willing to



give up certain things on our wish list to have our ideal location, which was near the beaches and Shem Creek.”

Franklin and Smith described how they “hounded Zillow” as well as their agent, Tyler Davidson of Carolina One. Good fortune seemed to befall the couple when they discovered a home behind Shem Creek.

“It was outdated, but you could walk to the creek and it was ideal in many other ways, so we put a bid on it,” Franklin remembered. “We even wrote a letter, and explained why we liked it. But we didn’t get it, and I was heartbroken.”

Fortunately, victory was just around the corner – the couple found their current home at the end of March. Thanks to the diligence of their agent, they were able to see the home one hour before the scheduled open house. Falling in love immediately with its screened porch, “beautiful” master bath, spacious yard and more, they put an offer on it the very next day. Their offer was successful, and Franklin and Smith have settled happily into their new abode.

“My words of encouragement for new buyers in East Cooper are to figure out what’s important to you – narrow down the list,” Franklin said. “Look at older homes for their potential. And be patient and persistent.” 🏡



# Go Green!

## AND STAY CLEAN

**A**S SOCIETY EMBRACES MORE environmentally friendly practices, the choice toward a greener lifestyle can begin inside the home through the use of natural products and organic cleaning methods.

For Dorsey and Heather Fairbains – sisters-in-law and co-owners of Maid Pure Organic Cleaning in Mount Pleasant – the decision to go green became apparent once they started raising their families. They were shocked to discover

BY PAMELA BROWNSTEIN

the prevalence of chemicals in conventional products such as dish soap and bathroom cleaners, and they questioned the safety of these toxins in their homes and around their young children.

“We became more proactive about educating ourselves about the things in our house,” said Dorsey. “We had to teach ourselves a lot about chemical-free cleaning.”

This knowledge, and a love of cleaning, led to a business venture based on natural products that also provides customers a high-quality service, similar to the pampering found at a five-star hotel. What began as a small company run out of their homes has grown into a franchise with offices in Mount Pleasant; Kiawah Island; Charlotte, North

Carolina; and, soon, in Summerville.

The company is committed to raising the awareness of indoor air quality and how it can affect the overall health of a family. Dorsey said even items such as dryer sheets can negatively impact the air quality. Organic cleaning helps reduce the amount of harmful chemicals inside the home, which improves the air quality and makes a safer space for those most susceptible to toxins – children, pets, the elderly and those with compromised immune systems.

“Our philosophy emphasizes preventing illness, prolonging life and protecting the environment,” Dorsey said.

For those who might think organic products are too expensive, Dorsey believes anyone can afford to make their own cleaning products, and going green inside a home is budget-conscious and good for healthy living.

Since Maid Pure opened in 2007, the market for green cleaning has blossomed, and natural products that once were impossible to find are now

available for everyone. Right now, the use of essential oils is taking off, according to Dorsey.

“Cleaning without chemicals, holistically, promoted by the use of essential oils – I love to see that kind of trend,” she said.

Breathe easy knowing that going green when you clean is an effective way to save money and establish a more eco-friendly environment within your own home.



## DIY HINTS TO STAY CLEAN AND GREEN

**TIP:** Dorsey recommends putting a drop of essential oil, such as lavender, on the pad of your steam mop to help disinfect and also to release the natural relaxing properties of the oil.

**SAFETY FIRST:** Before creating DIY cleaning products, homeowners should use caution. Dorsey emphasized that some ingredients should never be used together, such as bleach and ammonia, and vinegar and bleach, and even mixing homemade and store-bought cleaners can be hazardous.

**THE NATIONAL INSTITUTES OF HEALTH:** The NIH Household Products database (<https://householdproducts.nlm.nih.gov>) is a helpful resource that provides health and safety information on hundreds of everyday products, including a breakdown of ingredients and potential health effects.

**DIY RECIPES:** Common ingredients found around the house can be used to create natural cleaning products. Among these are baking soda, white vinegar, kosher salt, toothpaste and club soda. The University of Georgia's Cooperative Extension offers some chemical-free suggestions:

**WOOD CLEANER:** two tablespoons of olive oil/two tablespoons of white vinegar/a fourth of a cup lemon juice. Mix ingredients. Using a soft cloth, rub into the wood in the direction of the grain.

**TOILET BOWL CLEANER:** Try one cup of borax/a half cup of white vinegar. Flush to wet the sides of the bowl. Sprinkle the borax around the toilet bowl, then spray with vinegar. Leave for several hours or overnight before scrubbing with a toilet brush.

**FRAGRANT KITCHEN CLEANER:** Try two tablespoons of white vinegar/two pints of water/four drops of essential oil (lavendar, tea tree oil, lemon or rosemary). Combine ingredients in spray bottle and use as a final rinse after cleaning kitchen surfaces.

**TIP:** Don't like the smell of vinegar? Try vodka instead! Use a 50-50 mix of vodka and water and a few drops of essential oils for an air freshener.

**GREEN PRODUCTS:** If you want to start ridding your house of harsh chemicals but don't feel comfortable making your own cleaning concoctions, using store-bought green cleaning products can be a viable solution. Here are five eco-friendly household cleaners:

- Mrs. Meyer's Clean Day Surface Scrub - [www.mrsmeyers.com](http://www.mrsmeyers.com).

- Green Works Compostable Cleaning Wipes - [www.greenworkscleaners.com](http://www.greenworkscleaners.com).
- J.R. Watkins Home Care All-Purpose Cleaner - [www.jrwatkins.com](http://www.jrwatkins.com).
- Simple Green All-Purpose Cleaner - [www.simplegreen.com](http://www.simplegreen.com).
- Seventh Generation Automatic Dishwashing Packs - [www.seventhgeneration.com](http://www.seventhgeneration.com)

**TIP:** Look for the Environmental Protection Agency's Design for the Environment seal that designates cleaning products made from plant- and mineral-based ingredients. 🌱

To learn more about green cleaning, visit [www.maidpure.com](http://www.maidpure.com) and follow Maid Pure Organic Cleaning on Facebook and Instagram.

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Five new homes are under construction late Sept – early 2017. Home for sale is being built on Lot 6; Lot 1 is SOLD; Lot 7 is SOLD! Two architecturally designed duplexes and two Lowcountry single lots (15 & 16) are remaining. Hurry for your chance to live in this beautiful park neighborhood.

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**VILLAGE PARK**  
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# Refreshing Your Surroundings

## Aiden Fabrics

**A**UTUMN IS IN THE AIR, AND with a change in season usually comes an instinctive need to refresh and update your surroundings. Family-owned Aiden Fabrics has endless options available to do just that: a vast selection of indoor and outdoor fabrics and wall coverings, as well as rugs and home furnishings.

His family had been in the fabric industry for over 35 years when Ed Flanary opened a fabric store in Greenville. His son, Jonathan, worked in the family shop from a young age, and even paid his way through college by selling and delivering fabrics. In 2014, the father-son duo bought an existing fabric store in Mount Pleasant and renamed it after Jonathan's young son. Today, Jonathan manages the Mount Pleasant location along with his wife, Allison, who handles marketing for the store, while Ed continues to manage his shop in Greenville.

"My parents taught me a lot about the value of hard work, a good conscience and ethics through working in this business," Jonathan said. "That's how I run Aiden Fabrics now. People see excellent customer service and are drawn to it. It's very important to me, and I can't wait to pass the same values and experiences to my son and young daughter."

As the name suggests, Aiden Fabrics specializes in indoor and outdoor fabrics and has more than 2,000 bolts to choose from in-store, in addition to the option of

special orders. Several designers are also on staff to help with custom items, including window treatments, indoor and outdoor cushions, throw pillows, upholstered beds and headboards, outdoor porch swing cushions, bolsters, pillows and even bedding and shower curtains.

If the idea of adding flair through fabric leads you to dreaming of new furniture, Aiden Fabrics also offers high-quality lines of designer and custom furniture from trusted companies such as Hooker, Sam Moore, TCS and Dexter.

In fact, Aiden Fabrics offers accessories of all kinds – custom blinds, shades and shutters, lighting, rugs, art and more. You may go to choose the perfect new fabric, but

you could come home with a new look for your home altogether.

"Wall coverings are experiencing a huge resurgence right now, and we carry a wide variety of options from some of the best names, like Thibaut and York," said Jonathan. "This isn't the wall paper craze that fizzled and died in the 1980s. People are covering their walls with grass cloth, wall fabric and even leather."

Grass cloth, he said, is especially popular in the Charleston area.

As summer fades and the cool breeze blows a new season in, if you feel that your home or business could be refreshed with an accent of color, a different feel or a brand-new look, Aiden Fabrics has you covered. 🍷

*For more information, visit [www.aidenfabrics.com](http://www.aidenfabrics.com) or drop by the store in the Iron Gate Plaza at the corner of the Isle of Palms Connector and Hungryneck Boulevard.*



Aiden Fabrics specializes in indoor and outdoor fabrics and has more than 2,000 bolts to choose from in-store, in addition to the option of special orders.

Photo courtesy of Aiden Fabrics.

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# Swimming with the Current

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**R**EX AND JENNY ATKINSON initiated their small pool maintenance company back in 1984 with nothing more than a red supply shed and a pickup truck for making client calls. More than 30 years later, Atkinson Pools and Spas has grown to become the Lowcountry's only full-service swimming pool and spa provider.

According to Josh Atkinson, the company recently purchased the building next to its retail showroom at 1113 Bowman Road and has consolidated all of its

operations – formerly made up of the Bowman showroom plus a location on Clements Ferry Road – into one campus. With a growing construction demand and more clients needing pools and spas than ever before, it made sense to streamline the process.

“We are currently working on remodeling our showroom and operations to better serve our clients,” commented Atkinson. “It has been a banner year across the board, and it is shaping up to be our best year in company history.”

Those who come to Atkinson Pools and Spas to live out their dream of a sparkling swimming pool flanked with a barbecue-friendly patio will find that the process is painless, thanks to the company's devotion to customer service.

“We have a blend of not only design and construction technique but also customer service,” Atkinson explained. “We are not only able to build something that lasts a lifetime and also maintain it. One of our biggest selling points is that we're the only company in town with our last name on the side of the building. It all boils down to

reputation, which means everything to our family.”

For Atkinson himself, design is a big part of the job, and he revels in helping clients figure out what will best suit an outdoor space. With so many new families moving to the Lowcountry, swimming pool construction has become a demand, particularly in Daniel Island, East Cooper and the Islands – but, Atkinson said, sometimes clients need a little style inspiration.

“I suppose I am growing into a visual artist,” he mused, pointing out that he learns a great deal about trends and styles from a variety of designers, artists and architects. “I've also been through extensive training for it, and it's a craft that I'm always developing.”

Clients who are unsure of how to best accent their alfresco living space engage in a discussion with Atkinson regarding color, preferred angles and whether they would like to emulate the architecture of their home – or not.

“I find out what they want and what they like about their space and marry those concepts with the design,” Atkinson said.

Those of you who are fantasizing about a swimming pool for next summer's parties, take heart – autumn and winter are the best times to plan, according to Atkinson.

“Now is the time to talk to us about what you want to do next year,” he said.

When it comes to keeping up with the population growth, businesses in East Cooper find that they must swim with the current or, well, sink. Atkinson Pools and Spas is one company that continues to expand, meeting the needs of a growing client base. 🌿

To learn more, visit [www.atkinsonpools.com](http://www.atkinsonpools.com) or call 843-881-3068.



Photo courtesy of Atkinson Pools and Spas.

# Get the Point?

IT'S MORE THAN A MUSEUM

*By Brian Sherman*

**I**S PATRIOTS POINT A MILITARY MUSEUM, the home of three aging warships and one of the largest collections of airplanes in the nation and a monument to the men and women who kept the Axis Alliance from its sinister World War II goal of world domination? Or is it a high-tech, hands-on collection of science- and history-related exhibits designed to entertain and educate visitors of all ages? Or maybe it's nothing more than a business striving to keep pace with the ever-changing demands of the

hundreds of thousands of people who visit each year.

As Patriots Point approaches its 40th birthday, the Mount Pleasant landmark is all of the above and much more, according to Mac Burdette, who has served as its executive director since 2010. Though the decorated World War II aircraft carrier USS Yorktown is its centerpiece, on its flight deck are jet fighters from a much later era of aviation history. And visitors also can take a firsthand look at two other vitally important pieces of America's past: the Vietnam War and the Cold War, the decades-long standoff



*Photo by Brian Sherman.*

Mac Burdette has been executive director of Patriots Point since 2010. Behind him is the USS Laffey, which served the U.S. Navy from 1943 until 1970.

with the Soviet Union that occasionally brought the world perilously close to a nuclear confrontation.

Burdette, the former Mount Pleasant town administrator, explained that Patriots Point is a museum, but it's also a business that must evolve to survive.

“You have to continue to improve your product. There are tremendous stories to be told here, and, in today's world, telling them takes technology. Kids today don't

want static displays. They want to push a button and something happens,” he said.

A few hundred feet from the Yorktown, the USS Laffey, which served the Navy starting in 1943, embodies Patriots Point's shift to the world of high-tech in the past six years, as well as its deviation from what might seem to be its World War II theme. The Laffey's Combat Information Center opened in June, giving visitors an up-close-and-

# STEP INTO WELLNESS

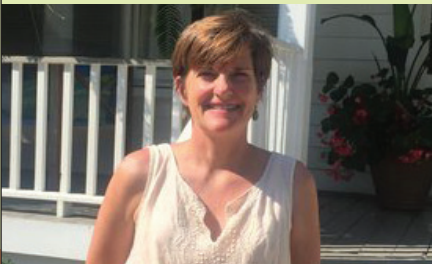


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Photo by Brian Sherman.

Replicas of the dog tags of every South Carolina native who made the ultimate sacrifice hang on a wall at the entrance of The Vietnam Experience.

personal look at what it was like for American crew members who played a never-ending game of cat and mouse with Soviet planes and submarines. The lifelike naval officer is really a hologram; the electronic equipment was aboard the Laffey when it was decommissioned for the final time in 1970, during the Cold War.

“It brings the ship to life,” said Burdette. “You wouldn’t know what you were looking at unless you served in the Navy or watched a lot of war movies.”

Technology also is the key to The Vietnam Experience, a two-acre display that was torn down, rebuilt and re-opened in 2014. When it is completed, it will feature a street scene from downtown Saigon. Visitors already can watch movies that delve into the Tet Offensive, the Mekong Delta and the Battle of Khe Sanh, and they can listen to actual transmissions from soldiers in helicopters, aboard riverboats and in the field.

Burdette, an Army veteran himself, is especially proud of a wall covered with replicas of the dog tags of all the South Carolina natives who made the

ultimate sacrifice in Vietnam and of a “Huey” helicopter. After intensive research, Burdette found that 21-year-old Kenny Plavcon was a gunner aboard that very chopper when he gave his own young life to save American soldiers on the ground. Nearly a half century later, last year, his sister and more than 200 helicopter crewmen from all over the country gathered at Patriots Point to commemorate his bravery.

Virtually everything at Patriots Point is connected in some way. War is a main theme, of course, but more than two decades after the Allies defeated Germany and Japan, the Yorktown stepped out of the realm of battle and into the space race, retrieving the Apollo 8 capsule and astronauts Frank Borman, James Lovell and William Anders from the Pacific Ocean. A replica of that capsule is aboard the Yorktown, and so is a 16-seat theater where visitors can don 3D goggles and take a trip to the end of the solar system and beyond.

Burdette said the space program is one of four options for campers who spend two or more nights aboard the

Yorktown. They also can choose a trip to Fort Sumter, an oceanography program or time in a state-of-the-art flight simulator. In addition to campers, around 22,000 schoolchildren visit Patriots Point every year, and Burdette and his staff reach thousands of others across the state with a \$400,000 a year grant through the Education Improvement Act.

“We reached 100 schools in the past year. That’s four times as many kids than if we didn’t have the Distance Learning Program,” Burdette explained. “Hopefully, this will encour-

timers, Burdette came up with several reasons why Patriots Point is no longer referred to as “cash-strapped” in news stories. He cited an improving economy, the popularity of Charleston and the fact that “we earn it.”

He added that in the past six years, he has increased Patriots Point’s marketing budget by 70 percent.

“It’s a great product, and we have to tell people about it,” Burdette said.

“We’re trying hard to make this one of the great museums in the nation,” he remarked, adding that the support of his board of directors has



At the Vietnam Experience, visitors can watch movies that delve into the Tet Offensive, the Mekong Delta and the Battle of Khe Sanh, and they can listen to actual transmissions from soldiers in helicopters, aboard riverboats and in the field.

age these kids to come here in person.”

Keith Grybowski, a former practicing attorney, came to Patriots Point as a volunteer. Burdette later hired him on a full-time basis as his director of education. His efforts have played a role in increasing the paid attendance at Patriots Point from 220,000 visitors when Burdette arrived in 2010 to 282,000 visitors in the fiscal year that ended June 30. In addition to hard work by his staff of 75 full-time employees and another 35 part-

been a key factor in Patriots Point’s recent success. “As much as we believe in the emotional aspect, we won’t make it without the business aspect. The board supports us 100 percent. It makes a huge difference.”

Patriots Point, an agency of the state of South Carolina, receives no funding from Columbia. Burdette pointed out that it exists on admission fees; revenue from the gift shop; camping and school programs; renting the facility for events such

*Remember, it doesn't have to be new to be awesome!*



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as banquets, parties, proms and political rallies; concessions; helicopter rides; the flight simulator; ghost tours; and donations.

Its most important source of revenue is leasing the land, nearly 300 acres in all. Patriots Point currently takes in \$1.5 million a year in leases, from the College of Charleston, the golf course, hotels, restaurants, cottages and the marina. That figure is expected to reach \$6 million a year eventually, when Bennett Hospitality completes work on a huge complex that will include hotels, office buildings and an amphitheater. Burdette said Patriots Point will need that much money and more to save the Yorktown. Since it is sunk into the mud and can't be moved, repairs will have to be completed in place, at a cost of \$60 million.

"The work has to be done here," said Burdette. "If you pulled it out of the mud, it would sink."

And, without the Yorktown, Burdette and his staff



The USS Yorktown is the centerpiece of Patriots Point.

would be unable to bring their dreams to fruition. One of their aspirations is to establish an area of the ship where visitors can put on goggles and see a 3D version of the Japanese attack on

Pearl Harbor. And, before long, they will be able to download an app for their smartphones that will provide a view of what specific areas of the ship looked like in 1943.

"The technology that's going to be available in the next 20 years is incredible. If we're not a part of it, we'll be left behind," said Burdette. "This is where museums have to go."

"We'll never run out of ideas that will bring this ship to life," he concluded. 🍷

*Patriots Point officially celebrated its 40th birthday on Aug. 27. The admission fee that day was the same as it was in 1976: \$2.*

Photo courtesy of Patriots Point.

## Pain in your head, jaw, neck and shoulders?

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# Cline Homes and the Caldwell's:

## A Match Made in Home Heaven

**J**EFF AND CARMEN CALDWELL SPENT a long time researching communities across the Lowcountry to find the best place to plant roots for their young family of five. Both natives of Hilton Head Island, the couple had followed college and career paths that led them to Georgia and then Ohio.

Recently, they decided they wanted to come home to South Carolina.

“We chose Mount Pleasant particularly because

BY ANNE TOOLE

we loved the sense

of community and the area itself,” said Jeff. “We drove around for days and days – every neighborhood – looking first and foremost for a good fit to raise our family and, secondly, a good fit for our business.”

The Caldwell's are opening Primrose School of Mount Pleasant, a franchised, private preschool providing early education and child care for children age 6 weeks through pre-kindergarten, along with before- and after-school programs for children up to 12 years old.

“Carolina Park grabbed us immediately,” Carmen explained. “We love the development, the amenities, that there are young families very similar to ours. There is a natural component with trails and walking paths and also spaces for future growth. Overall, it is a community full of opportunity. We were hooked.”

Once they decided on a lot in the Riverside community within Carolina Park, the Caldwell's carefully searched through the many floor plans and the list of approved builders. As out-of-state buyers, they had many concerns: trusting someone to design and build their family home

with minimal in-person involvement, syncing employment schedules, timing the move-in appropriately and more.

“We met with Jeff Cline of Cline Homes, and he immediately put us at ease. He understood our situation and walked us through exactly how the design and building process would work – he and every staff member we met were wonderful to work with and looked out for our best interests from start to finish,” Jeff said.

In addition to the detailed process and personal attention, the Caldwell's were very impressed with Cline

Homes' designs and high-quality finishes. Rather than building a completely custom home, they chose to take an existing floor plan and modify parts of it to fit their family's lifestyle.

“We never got a ‘no’ from Cline Homes,” Carmen said, smiling. “They helped us modify the layout and guided us when we were trying to make design choices. They even had a design coordinator help us figure the best style for finishes.”

The Caldwell's moved into their new, custom-built home in May. The family particularly enjoys the custom fireplace in the master

bedroom and also the gorgeous screened-in porch that functions as an outdoor living room, complete with a television and wood-burning fireplace.

“Cline Homes' whole team – every person involved in the process – helped us build the perfect home for our family. Even though we could only come to town every six weeks or so, communication was great, and they put a lot together in a little bit of time to meet our schedule. Planning a move with three kids under 6 isn't easy, and they made it work well,” Jeff commented. “Most of all, they helped us build our dream home. We are so happy to be back in the beautiful Lowcountry.” 🏡



The Caldwell family's screened-in porch functions as an outdoor living room, complete with a television and wood-burning fireplace.

Photo courtesy of Ashley Jones.

# There's Still Nothing Else Like It

## BioSweep

**S** EVEN YEARS AGO, MICHAEL Jager, owner of BioSweep Southeast, was excited to introduce his franchise business to the Lowcountry. His enthusiasm for BioSweep has not waned. “It is seven years later, and there is still nothing else like BioSweep,” said Jager. “The technology and our warranty have established a positive track record. We have not had a dissatisfied review, and we encourage our potential clients to look us up online on multiple websites and read our testimonials.”

BY STACY DOMINGO

BioSweep Southeast's success stems from its one-of-a-kind services that include mold elimination, bacteria and surface germ removal, and odor removal. Property managers, realtors, car dealerships and individual home and automobile owners have called upon the trained staff at BioSweep Southeast to remove mold and unpleasant odors.

Odors from cigarette smoke, fires, cooking, formaldehyde and even the smell from an animal that has died in your home all can be treated by BioSweep.

“One treatment will remove all odors caused by organic materials,” Jager explained. “Our 100-percent guarantee assures our customers that the BioSweep process will be successful.”

BioSweep Southeast does not use any harsh chemicals – unlike dangerous ozone generators, which leave nitrogen oxide as a byproduct of the treatment. With BioSweep's environmentally safe odor removal process, areas that are treated can be safely re-entered within 45 minutes to an hour.

With some companies, the process of removing mold can take several weeks to complete and cost as much as \$50,000.

“With BioSweep Southeast, we have changed the game. Our process generally takes two to three days at approximately one-fifth the cost other companies charge,” Jager said. “We also offer a transferable warranty, which is why so many realtors utilize our services. We are definitely the next evolution in mold removal.”

The science is a bit complex, but to explain it in simple terms, the unit produces hydrogen peroxide and purified oxygen in the treatment chamber. These oxyradicals attack contaminants on exposed surfaces. A home, business or vehicle does not need to be emptied of items because the process is safe for furniture, upholstery, electronics and clothing. The equipment utilized by BioSweep

Southeast is at least 10 times more powerful than most commercial ozone generators.

“It is a green process, so it is not harmful. Once we are finished treating an area, we collect air samples for testing. If the process is successful, we will warranty the property for two years. This is what mold remediation companies are going to, and even the leading servicing companies in the area are hiring us to do

the work for them,” Jager explained.

A further piece of BioSweep Southeast's success deals with bacteria and surface germ removal. The local company has been called upon to sanitize universities, wrestling mats, day cares, schools, hospitals and even a bank to eliminate the MRSA virus.

*With its central office in Ravenel, South Carolina, BioSweep Southeast serves the entire South Carolina coast, from Myrtle Beach to Savannah, Georgia, as well as the entire tri-county area. To learn more or to schedule a free consultation, visit [www.Biosweepse.com](http://www.Biosweepse.com) or call 843-375-6627.*



Left to right: Stephanie White, office manager; Justin Riccio, project manager; Mike Jager, president; Nate Upchurch, project manager; and Jonathan Hart, lead technician.

Photo courtesy of BioSweep.

# MP BUSINESS

MAGAZINE 2016



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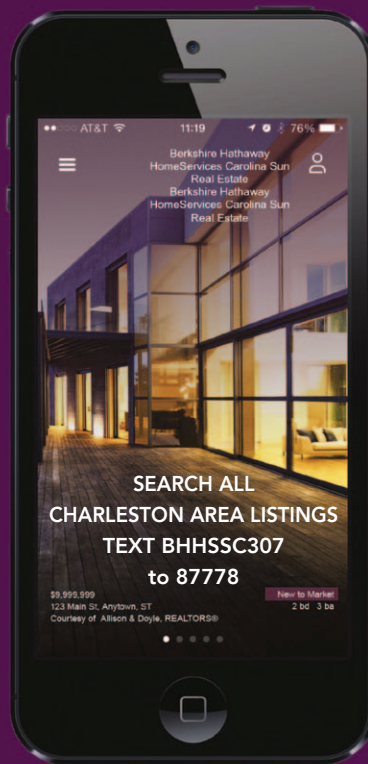


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# For All Your Home Decor Needs

## Southern Accent Designer Showcase

**S**OUTHERN ACCENT DESIGNER Showcase, located at 630 Coleman Blvd., is the ideal place for all your home décor needs. Owned and operated by Janice Cantey, a former interior designer with over 40 years of experience,

this impressive mecca of furnishings will have you coming back for more. From fragrant hand-poured candles to unique accent mirrors, there's just no limit to the vast array of items offered.

BY KALENE MCCORT

With 91 vendor spaces, the possibilities are endless. Not sure what you are in the market for? A stroll through the sprawling showroom is certain to spark some designing ideas.

Walking through the large space, guests can explore lots of different pockets, each with their own flavor. Whether you are in need of a love seat or an oil painting to dress up that hallway, Southern Accent Designer Showcase has got you covered. While tinges of that classic Carolina coastal charm can be found throughout the space, a bevy of rare accouterments take center stage.

While local customers check back weekly to view the new treasures that come in, Southern Accent Designer Showcase has also built a large clientele throughout

the state. Shoppers travel a long way to get the latest in home décor.

People come from downtown Charleston, Savannah, Hilton Head, Seabrook and Myrtle Beach just to check out the selection. From Tiffany-inspired glass lamps to newspaper papier-mâché elephant heads, you are bound

to find something that speaks to you. Regardless of style and budget, all customers walk away satisfied. At this multi-vendor showroom, all merchandise is new and in the pristine quality you would expect from a top-notch establishment.

Bold floral prints, glistening silver, rustic wood pieces, elegant throw pillows and charming clocks all make up a mosaic of décor greatness. It's easy to see why folks travel far distances to get a taste of this establishment, which offers one-of-a-kind pieces to patrons.

Whether you need to warm up your outdoor space with some colorful patio furniture or just want a healthy dose of decorating inspiration for your next project, a visit to Southern Accent Designer Showcase should do the trick. Conveniently open Monday through Saturday 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., this shop is sure to become your new favorite. Discover an

array of items you simply can't find anywhere else! 🏠

*To learn more about Southern Accent Designer Showcase, visit and "like" their Facebook page or call 843-856-9131.*



Photos provided by Southern Accent Designer Showcase.



## Longevity

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

# Kid Friendly Couture

## Southern Belles Children's Boutique

**I**N CHARLESTON AND MOUNT Pleasant, folks are pretty fashion forward. From bold bowties to sweet sundresses, people make sure to dress their very best regardless of the occasion. Adults aren't the only ones rocking eye-catching ensembles in the Lowcountry. Just ask Susie Molony, owner of Southern Belles Children's Boutique. Her shop, at 280 W. Coleman Blvd.,

BY KALENE MCCORT

has attracted quite the up-and-coming clientele. From newborns to preteens, she makes sure to keep those at the kiddie table looking on point.

"I love seeing the smiling face of a little child when they get a new outfit or pair of shoes," said Molony. "It also brings me great joy to know customers have come here to get a special outfit for their child."

From first birthdays to first Holy Communion, Molony has been there to dress children through all the special events of their youth. Getting to know each family and helping their children look their best for all of life's grand affairs, and all the moments in between, has truly been her calling.

As a girl, Molony would spend hours dressing up her dolls or carefully cutting out miniature jackets and skirts for her collection of paper dolls. Creative, innovative and entrepreneurial, Molony comes from a long line of stylish women skilled at the art of crafting.

"My grandmother was an excellent seamstress and made all of my clothes for my sister and me when we were little," said Molony. "My mother would make doll clothes from the leftover fabric, so my dolls had an impressive wardrobe!"

When Molony had her own daughter, she became inspired to create a line of play clothes that were both functional and cute.

"I started hand-painting on T-shirts and casual wear and later changed over to applied designs. I created a line of children's appliqued and embroidered clothing under the label of Southern Belles," said Molony. "I did home shows, holiday markets and trade shows for several years before settling down to a brick-and-mortar storefront. I think my entrepreneurial spirit just evolved over the years."

Whether you are looking for a Clemson shirt, a fitted peacoat or a book bag for school, Southern Belles is

the one-stop-shop for all your kid-related items. They even carry a line of chunky necklaces for moms called Chewable Charms, which are designed to add a little flair to your look while keeping those teething toddlers satisfied. Templeton Silver Pacifier Clips can be worn as bracelets when your child no longer requires them.

"It's hard to set yourself apart these days when there's so much competition in the children's industry, and manufacturers and sales representatives don't protect you like they once did in keeping certain lines exclusive to one

store in an area," said Molony. "I try to set myself apart by offering the very best selection of the most wonderful children's clothing, shoes, gifts and accessories I can find."

In addition to providing her shoppers with the very best in terms of children's retail, she credits the shop's success to the amazing customer service Southern Belles provides. Complimentary gift-wrapping, detailed monogramming and baby registries are just a few of the services she offers. With a knowledgeable and dedicated staff rounding out the Southern Belles shopping experience, it's no wonder they consistently get voted the best year after year. 🍷

To learn more, visit [www.southernbelleschildren.com](http://www.southernbelleschildren.com) or call 843-881-1741.



Photo courtesy of Southern Belles.

From first birthdays to first Holy Communion, Susie Molony has been there to dress children through all the special events of their youth.

Photo by Halger Obmann

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# Taking Care of Business

## MPBA Continues To Grow

**M**OUNT PLEASANT IS HOME to a business organization that is actually growing at a faster rate than the town itself.

Buoyed by East Cooper's population explosion, the success of its annual Expo, its close relationship with the town and the enthusiasm and hard work of the volunteers who run the Mount Pleasant

Business Association, MPBA is more vibrant than ever. In early August, the group's membership included 244 local businesses.

"We are obviously meeting the needs of our members," said MPBA President Chris Staubes, who assumed the helm of the organization in the spring of 2015. "What we're doing must be resonating with local business owners."

So what exactly is it that MPBA is doing? It's a networking organization that gives local businessmen and professionals the opportunity to get together and share ideas at least three times a month. But MPBA also is defined by its philanthropy – its contributions to local charities, help to those in need with its annual un-food drive and the college scholarships it awards to deserving students.

Established in 1992 as the East Cooper Merchants Association, the group's membership has more than doubled in the past two years.

"We are growing because Mount Pleasant is growing, but that's not the whole story," said Staubes. "Our Expo has played a major role in attracting new members, and, in the last year, our Membership Committee, chaired by Shane Griffin, has done an outstanding job of recruiting new people to the organization and making them feel welcome. That makes a big difference."

MPBA holds its regular meetings at lunchtime, the

third Thursday of each month. Recent keynote speakers have included Gov. Nikki Haley, U.S. Rep. Mark Sanford, local meteorologist Rob Fowler, Mount Pleasant Mayor Linda Page, Charleston County Superintendent of Schools Gerrita Postlewait and Jim Newsome, president and CEO of the South Carolina Ports Authority.

In addition to its regular luncheon, the organization hosts two official networking events every month at local businesses: "Before Nine" and "After Hours."

MPBA's main event is the Mount Pleasant Business and Community Expo, held each year at the Omar Shrine Convention Center. As has been the case for the past four years, all 74 booths have been sold for the Sept. 22 Expo. Billed as East Cooper's Biggest Networking Event, the

Expo historically attracts more than 1,000 visitors. This year's goal, according to Co-chairs Frank Frazier and Sue Spearman, is to bring in a crowd of 1,500.

"The Expo continues to grow every year. As with MPBA in general, its success is the result of the hard work of volunteers. We have a lot of members who give of their time and talent to make MPBA a great organization, and that helps make Mount Pleasant a great place to live and work," Staubes said.

"Our organization is dialed into the community like never

before," he added.

And MPBA is working with Mount Pleasant like never before. Business Development Officer Amy Livingston is a member of the MPBA board, and the town and MPBA are combining their efforts on activities for this year's Mount Pleasant Business Appreciation Week, which culminates with the Expo. In addition, the town and MPBA have been hosting a six-month-long business education series, "Food for Thought," where participants learn ways to advance their companies and to maximize business success.

"More than ever, we have a true partnership with the town of Mount Pleasant," Staubes commented. 🍷



MPBA's main event is the annual Mount Pleasant Business and Community Expo.

Photo courtesy of MPBA.

# It's All About Local Incentives for Mount Pleasant Businesses

**T**HE TOWN OF MOUNT PLEASANT is launching one program and revitalizing another, both aimed at helping local businesses grow, expand and thrive along with the town.

The Town Proud Program, to be officially kicked off during Business Appreciation Week, Sept. 19 through Sept. 23, will

BY BRIAN SHERMAN

encourage consumers to do business with local companies.

Meanwhile, the Local Vendor Partnership Program, first passed into law in 1997, is getting a facelift and additional publicity, encouraging local businesses to provide their products and services to the town.

"We're taking a comprehensive approach of supporting our local businesses," said Mount Pleasant Business Development Officer Amy Livingston. "We see both these programs as complementary pieces of the puzzle."

The Local Vendor Partnership Program, established by legislation written by Councilman Gary Santos, has been somewhat dormant for nearly two decades. Not all that many people knew about it, something Santos hopes to change.

"It's the best-kept secret in town," he commented. "We're never going to have a Boeing here, but we have lots of local businesses. I'm hoping they start utilizing this program."

Some of the items the town buys include office supplies; parts for vehicles; printing; contractual services such as graphic design; and "a range of products and services that a town requires to stay up and going," according to Livingston.

"We're pushing this program because it's a win-win for the business community and the town of Mount Pleasant," she said. "We're always looking to find the best quality product. Our robust business community is very capable of doing that. It's a win for the business community because, frankly, the town is a very large customer."

Santos, a councilman from 1996 to 2009 who was elected

again in 2013, explained that bids submitted by approved vendors are evaluated as if their prices were either 5 percent lower for contracts under \$10,000; 2 percent lower for contracts between \$10,000 and \$50,000; and 1 percent lower for contracts worth more than \$50,000, not to exceed a total reduction of \$2,000.

He said the program applies to products, goods and non-professional services, adding that after local reductions are considered, if a non-local company is still the low bidder, the work goes to the non-local business.

To be eligible for the program, a business must have a principal place of business within the town limits, have a current Mount Pleasant business license and "agree to allow the town to audit the applicant's records relating to the town's purchases to ensure the town is receiving the best products or services for the best price." Businesses that are a part of a

chain cannot take advantage of the program. Local businesses must fill out an application to be eligible to participate.

Santos said a trip to a Mount Pleasant business provided the impetus for him to write the law that established the program. A local businessman who was repairing Santos' lawnmower pointed out that the town was giving similar work to a company in

Hollywood. Santos looked into the situation, and, shortly thereafter, wrote the legislation.

"Amy can use this law as a business development tool to recruit companies to come to Mount Pleasant," Santos said. "When we hired her in September, she took it and ran with it." 🐼

*To apply for the Local Vendor Partnership Program, visit [experiencemountpleasant.com](http://experiencemountpleasant.com). The completed application should be submitted to the town's Purchasing Division, along with a short list of products or services provided by your business. It can be submitted by email to [rgriles@tompsc.com](mailto:rgriles@tompsc.com) or in person or by mail at 100 Ann Edwards Lane, Mount Pleasant, South Carolina 29464.*



Amy Livingston and Gary Santos



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Photo courtesy of The Beach Club.

# Life is a You Know What

## THE BEACH CLUB

*By Kalene McCort*

**T**HE CHARLESTON HARBOR Resort & Marina has always been a go-to spot for some much needed R & R. Here, guests and locals can sink their toes in the sand and let the stress of the outside world gently fade with every sip of a piña colada. Gleaming views of the Charleston Harbor serve as the backdrop to this beacon of relaxation.

Recently, this iconic resort has been doing some significant revamping that goes way beyond adding those miniature cocktail umbrellas to a perfectly crafted beverage. Architects, construction crews and staff have all worked together toward the completion of The Beach Club

Photo courtesy of The Beach Club.



With an authentic feel that's anything but cookie-cutter, The Beach Club exudes coastal charm.

— a new state-of-the-art luxury hotel sure to catapult the resort to another tier. With Charleston being named the “Best City in The World” by *Condé Nast*, we couldn't think of a more perfect time for the unveiling of this 92-room seaside sanctuary.

“The customization and attention to detail incorporated in the design of this property are remarkable,” said Shannon Hartman, director of sales and marketing. “From the millwork in the lobby to the customized elements, local artwork and hand-painted elements in each of the guest rooms, each selection with respect to the décor and design has been meticulously considered.”

With an authentic feel that's anything but cookie-cutter, The Beach Club exudes coastal charm. Carefully thought out design elements and fresh touches make you feel like you've stepped in the grand foyer of a relative. Each room boasts warm bamboo floors and expansive balconies that offer those stellar Lowcountry views.

While you may find it hard to leave The Beach Club and explore the surrounding area, this establishment makes it easier than ever to set sail on a water taxi or hop on a

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“We have enhanced the undeniable beauty of our incomparable waterfront location right on the banks of the Charleston Harbor, which has always set us apart from other properties in the area,” said Hartman. “We now have a true luxury option for the most discerning traveler. We are proud to have been accepted as one of the distinctive properties in the Leading Hotels of the World Collection – which I think speaks volumes to the standard of quality and excellence we have achieved with The Beach Club.”

Whether for business or pleasure, The Beach Club offers the modern-day traveler a slice of paradise.

While the new additions of two heated pools amid an expansive deck, complete with private cabanas, will certainly be a draw for future travelers, Hartman credits the company’s embodiment of Southern hospitality to be the real lure.

“I think the key to our continued success will be our focus on providing personalized service and customized, authentic experiences that truly give our guests a feel for Charleston and the aspects of our destination which interest them,” said Hartman. “For some, this will mean being out on the water – whether sailing, offshore fishing or paddle boarding on Shem Creek. For others, it could be a culinary-focused experience centered around the diverse flavors of the South or a fun-filled family vacation where everyone can gather on Moonlight Movie Mondays and watch family suitable movies under the stars, in our heated pool, overlooking the Charleston Harbor and downtown skyline.”

One of the many new additions comes in the form of a 30-seat movie theater, perfect for premieres or relaxed gatherings with friends. A 20-seat boardroom is the ideal place to creatively collaborate with co-workers.

“I think that Mount Pleasant in its own right is a town rich in culture, history and pride,” said Hartman. “This is evident on a drive through Old Mount Pleasant or while taking a walk along the boardwalk on the marshes of Shem Creek. Mount Pleasant now has a true waterfront, luxury resort, which I think will help us in establishing the town as a destination unto itself.” 🏠

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# The Job You Needed Yesterday

## Minuteman Press

**B**UDDY SMITH ONLY THOUGHT he was retiring from the working world when he left his job following a 36-year career with Roadway Express. Thirteen years after purchasing a Minuteman Press franchise and locating it in Mount Pleasant, he stays busy running the business, compiling printing

BY BRIAN SHERMAN

quotes, sending out invoices and serving

as its only salesman.

And, if you need your printing job delivered to your door, that task will be handled by the owner of the business as well. It's all part of Smith's attitude that if you treat your customers right, they'll keep coming back.

"No one will beat our customer service," said Smith, who managed Roadway Express facilities all over the Southeastern United States before moving to the Lowcountry from Greenville. "Because we're small, we're flexible. That's the beauty of a small operation."

With Roadway, Smith managed 500 people at a distribution center. At Minuteman Press, he has only two other full-timers and one part-timer. One of those employees is Richard Geisert, a veteran of the printing business who has been with Smith since the beginning.

"As luck would have it, I hired Richard before I even opened," Smith explained. "He is my franchise. He really knows printing."

Geisert's vast experience is exactly what Smith needed to launch his new business venture. His own experience in the world of printing consisted of two weeks of training in New York after he bought the franchise.

Minuteman Press offers a wide range of printing options, from business cards to posters, banners,

booklets, letterhead and envelopes, "just about anything a business would need," according to Smith. He also sells promotional products.

Smith pointed out that much has changed in the printing business since he opened his doors in July 2003. He said he got rid of his offset press around two years ago, and everything he prints today is digital. That means he doesn't have to charge his customers to set up a press and that in quantities of 250 to 1,000, his pricing is more than competitive. It also means he can turn a job around in record time.

"I've got quality people, but I have good equipment as well. We have the latest equipment as far as digital output," he said.

Technology also has changed the way Smith deals with his clients. He said 90 percent of his customers contact him by email or get printing quotes on the Minuteman Press website.

"The computer and email are our lifeline," he said, adding that customer service is the heart of the business.

"If you walk in the door and you need a job right away, you're going to get it right away, and we never add a rush charge," Smith said, pointing out that with Minuteman Press, there's no delivery charge either.

"When I say free, I mean free," he remarked.

And when he says he'll do whatever is necessary to impress his customers, he means that as well. Hence his company's motto: "Printing for the job you needed yesterday."

*Minuteman Press is located 920 Houston Northcutt Blvd., Building A3. To learn more, visit [www.chsmmp.com](http://www.chsmmp.com) or call 843-388-2599.*



The full-time employees at Minuteman Press include, top to bottom: owner Buddy Smith, Richard Geisert and Kayla Evett.

Photos by Brian Sherman.





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# A Community of Fitness Enthusiasts

## Blue Sky Endurance

**A** NEW CONCEPT HAS LOCAL fitness enthusiasts racing to Coleman Boulevard. Blue Sky Endurance and Premier Physical Therapy have teamed up to offer swimmers, bikers, runners and triathletes not only the latest and best quality in equipment and apparel but also the benefits of on-site physical therapy and education specific to their customers' needs.

"This is more than just a retail shop. We have solutions for chronic injuries and talk about preventive measures with the athletes," said owner Catherine Hollister.

BY ANNE TOOLE

Open six days a week, Blue Sky Endurance takes care to help their customers choose products that are right for their needs. True to their motto, "Fit First," Blue Sky employees will take the cyclists' measurements and run them through an app that calculates the corresponding ideal specifications for either road or triathlon bikes.

Men's and women's apparel range from running clothes to swimsuits, cycling wear and triathlon kits.

"Many of these are lines you won't find elsewhere. Some are local or regional companies, but all are comfortable, high-quality performance gear. These are well-thought-out products," Hollister said.

GPS watches, bike computers, sunglasses and helmets also are available, and the store carries a varied nutrition section, providing fuel for customers before, during and after exercise.

"We have several all-natural options, even vegan or gluten free," Hollister explained. "We provide education about what to take, when and why. But stomachs are sensitive; we encourage everyone to experiment early and often with the nutritional products to find what performs best for you."

Continuing their mantra of "Fit First," Blue Sky Endurance makes sure your shoes fit before you walk – or run, bike or spin – a mile in them. Following a videoed walk or run on the in-store treadmill, the customer's gait is analyzed.

"It takes the guesswork out of choosing the right shoe and right support," Hollister pointed out.

But finding the right shoes is only the first step when it comes to alleviating, correcting or preventing injury. Headquartered in North Charleston, Premier Physical Therapy is available on-site at Blue Sky Endurance two days a week, with plans to soon be there five days. Physical Therapist Jill

Boorman and her team are dedicated to educating people about nutrition,

dehydration, injury and preventive measures. One of Premier's main goals is to help people learn how to exercise in a way that is beneficial for short-term goals and long-term health.

"We believe exercise is the best medicine and encourage our clients to continue working through injury," said Boorman.

The in-house current pool is available for physical therapy patients, wet suit product testing and swim stroke analysis. The handicap-accessible pool can be rented for endurance swimming.

Blue Sky Endurance and Premier Physical Therapy have joined forces to create a community of fitness enthusiasts in Mount Pleasant. In addition to the services and products they offer, they have raised the bar by inviting the best coaches and respected swimmers, cyclists and runners to hold information sessions. They coordinate Meetup and Facebook groups about fitness and also offer triathlon, marathon and half-marathon training programs. 🦋

*When you're ready to hit the ground running, visit Blue Sky Endurance at 725 Coleman Blvd. or online at [blueskyendurance.com](http://blueskyendurance.com) and [premierphysicaltherapy.us](http://premierphysicaltherapy.us).*



Photo courtesy of Blue Sky Endurance.

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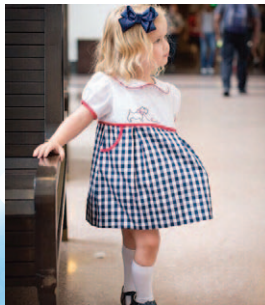
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COLEMAN BLVD

# Then & Now

Photo by Heather Hayward-Stanley.



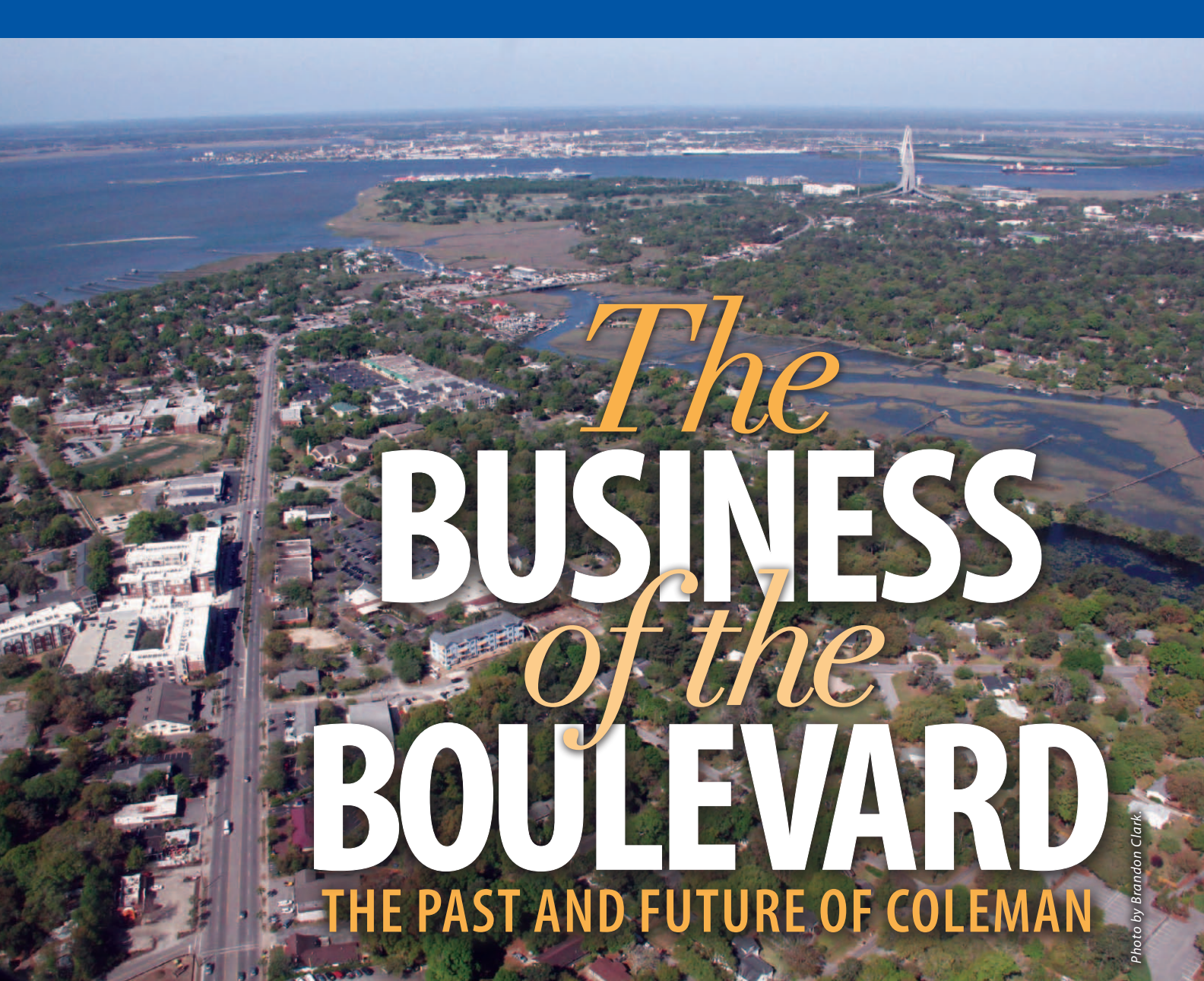
Photo by Rick Walo.



Photo by Rick Walo.



Photo by Rick Walo.



# The BUSINESS of the BOULEVARD

## THE PAST AND FUTURE OF COLEMAN

Photo by Brandon Clark.

Timeline compiled by Alexandra Kent.

### 1600

Coleman Boulevard is a Native American route that brings tribes to the coast to enjoy the ocean's bounty of shellfish.



### 1735

The King's Highway, a 1,300-mile wagon route from Boston to Charleston, South Carolina, is completed.

### 1791

President George Washington makes his Southern tour along the King's Highway. John Trumbell's painting of Washington celebrates his visit.

### 1650

King Charles II of England instructs the Colonial governors to build postal routes linking the Colonies. It is named King's Highway.



### 1770

Andrew Hibben operates Hibben Ferry, the first ferry service connecting Charles Town to the King's Highway.

### 1819

President James Monroe visits Charleston with his secretary of war, South Carolina native John C. Calhoun. They are entertained by prominent East Cooper citizens.



RECENT POST IN THE RIVER of Facebook content related to Mount Pleasant’s ongoing evolution stood out for the visceral reaction it described.

In it, a middle-aged woman detailed how she “burst into tears” at the sight of the office building/parking garage under construction at the corner of Coleman Boulevard and Mill

BY DANIEL BROCK

Street. To many, that may feel like an overreaction. The picture of an adult weeping because of a new building seems like a bit much – not to mention that it’s unsafe to cry while driving.

Yet here we are after years of contention surrounding growth issues, the formation of an influential grass-roots group and last fall’s testy election cycle. Palpable personal angst has risen alongside the The Boulevard apartments, Earl’s Court and the aforementioned parking structure, leading to social media rants, packed Town Council meetings and more than a few hurt feelings.

Now, against a backdrop of heightened emotions, progress must be made on a host of issues that come with governing a fast-growing municipality. Quite simply, town leaders – both elected and administrative – still have business to which they must attend, some of which involves attracting business to Mount Pleasant and the growth debate’s ground zero along Coleman Boulevard.

## COUNCIL FINDS COMMON GROUND

Fundamental discrepancies persist on the Town Council, particularly on the residential growth front, and Mount Pleasant continues to be tied up in lawsuits as the result of action taken by Councils past and present. However, there is common ground in other places, such as economic development, an area in which the town is surging, with 521 businesses opening their doors since the first of the year.

Already in 2016, the Council has voted unanimously on major projects such as the Shem Creek Park Phase 3, a \$26-million Capital Improvements Plan – which includes Memorial Waterfront Park Phase 2 – the town’s annual special events lineup and the creation of the Shem Creek Task Force. Those votes were made, in part, to foster the quality of life that high-paying employers find attractive, town officials said.

The Council’s harmonious track record is similar when it comes to key economic growth policies such as the expansion of the town’s Economic Development Incentive Grant program and the allocation of funds for a \$2-million port area study.

“Mount Pleasant is ‘Open for Business,’” said Councilman Mark Smith, who chairs the Economic Development Committee. “We as a Council are united on this front.”

Last September, the town hired Amy Livingston as its first business development officer. She’s been tasked

## 1825

A survey by Robert Mills denotes a road between Georgetown and Charleston as Georgetown Road, an old Indian “broad path.”



## 1927

Ocean Highway is incorporated into Route 17, a north-south federal road that runs along the coast from Porta Gunda, Florida, to Winchester, Virginia.

## 1929

The Cooper River Bridge opens, and Route 17 joins with Route 40 in Mount Pleasant by way of a road across the Charleston peninsula, thus shortening the route north.

## 1890

A ferry service brings tourists from Charleston to Mount Pleasant, where they board a trolley that takes them to Sullivan’s Island and what is now called Isle of Palms, a new resort.

## 1900

Ocean Highway is created by designating existing roadways along the East Coast for motor vehicles. The route runs from New Brunswick, New Jersey, to Jacksonville, Florida. In South Carolina, where the road turns inland to the village of Mount Pleasant, it is known as Route 40.

## 1958

Plans call for a second bridge across the Cooper River and for Route 17 to bypass Coleman Boulevard. It will later connect to Route 17 near the present day Dick’s Sporting Goods.



Photo by Brandon Clark.

with implementing wide-ranging economic and business development strategies.

Livingston said the town has taken a three-pronged approach to economic development, focusing largely on creating a quality of life and place that is “second to none”; beefing up economic development incentive grants; and offering robust business services, which include the town’s marketing efforts.

The development grants have proven especially

popular, according to town officials. Incentives can include reimbursements for impact, building permit and plan review fees. In February, the Council unanimously voted to expand the program by extending available business license tax reimbursements, a tool that benefits companies looking to locate in existing buildings.

And in July, rising tech firm Job Market Maker relocated its offices to 410 Mill St., just off Coleman Boulevard and along Shem Creek.

## 1958

A 2.4-mile section of Old Georgetown Road – also known as Route 17 – that begins at the foot of the Cooper River Bridge and ends at the fork where it becomes Route 703 – Ben Sawyer Boulevard – is renamed to honor Mayor Francis F. Coleman.

## 1966

The Pearman Bridge across the Cooper River opens, bringing more people into Mount Pleasant. Construction gets underway on the bypass for Route 17 through former farmland in Christ Church Parish.

## 1980s

Businesses shift away from Coleman Boulevard to Johnnie Dodds Boulevard, a frontage road that parallels the Route 17 bypass.

## 1959

A two-year project widens Coleman Boulevard from a two-lane, 18-foot-wide road to a four-lane roadway ranging in width from 52 feet to 62 feet. The Shem Creek Bridge is also widened from 26 feet to 56 feet.

## 1960s

The first restaurants open on Shem Creek.



## 1989

Hurricane Hugo destroys many businesses on Coleman Boulevard.



“This was the ideal fit. Here, we can walk clients to lunch or paddle board along the creek for team-building after work,” said CEO Joseph Hann.

At the same time, expansions are taking place throughout town, most notably with Verge Solutions, Mount Pleasant’s largest tech company, now located in the Automated Trade Desk Complex off Johnnie Dodds Boulevard.

Elsewhere, the town partners with the Mount Pleasant Business Association on educational efforts and with the Harbor Entrepreneur Center – whose flagship site is located on Coleman Boulevard – to provide startup assistance such as flex office space and accelerator services. Meanwhile, in 2015, the long-standing Local Vendor Partnership Program helped funnel 78 percent of general fund expenditures to Mount Pleasant businesses.

“Businesses want to locate and grow in a place where they not only feel valued but also are supported,” Livingston said.

## THE LOOK

Most Council members, as well as town administrative officials, speak in similar terms when it comes to the ultimate outcome for Coleman Boulevard, with words such as “vibrant,” “eclectic” and “walkable” popping up repeatedly.

Exactly what that all looks like, however, has caused consternation on the Council. Newer members have rebuffed the height and density of projects such as The Boulevard and the office building/garage at Mill and

Coleman. And recently the Council overwhelmingly gave initial approval to lowering heights to 45 feet throughout most of the corridor.

Smith, the Economic Development chair, was the outlier in an 8-1 vote, citing lack of study on the issue or the chance for nearly 300 property owners to weigh in. Still, the voting numbers speak for themselves, and Councilman Jim Owens said he thinks the town can stay true to its Coastal roots while attracting high-paying jobs to the de facto city center.

“My vision is something that is more coastal and eclectic that has pitched, tin roofs, Hardieplank siding, three stories and attracting businesses of all kinds,” Owens said. “Insurance companies, attorneys, architectural firms, engineering companies. I think you’ll find that all of those pay a salary that is commensurate with living in Mount Pleasant.”

The aesthetic debate will likely roil on for some time, but the continued arrival of well-paying jobs near Coleman will likely help foster the “main street” live/work/play vision put forth by the Coleman Revitalization Advisory Board in 2008.

Said Livingston, the business development officer: “We designed a master plan to increase walkability and create activity zones – all in the effort to create an ecosystem that affords our citizens and businesses the opportunity to live, work and play in one place.”

Which leaves at least one question: Has the town trademarked the term Silicon Creek? 🦋

## 1993

A revitalization program is announced for Coleman Boulevard.



## 2008

A revitalization/enhancement is announced for Coleman Boulevard as part of the “Main Street” project. Decorative crosswalks, landscaped medians, on-street parking and a traffic circle at the intersection of Coleman, Ben Sawyer and Chuck Dawley boulevards are planned.

## 2016

A parking garage/office building is currently being built at the corner of Coleman Boulevard and Mill Street. Other improvement plans for Coleman are in the works.



## 2005

The Arthur Ravenel Bridge opens, replacing the two Cooper River bridges. Two traffic lanes lead directly onto Coleman Boulevard, where Palmetto trees and decorative lighting greet those entering Mount Pleasant.

## 2009

The town funds improvements at Moultrie Middle School and Shem Creek, and, by mid-summer 2013, the Beach company has already rented more than 125 apartments of the Boulevard, an imposing 325-unit complex that will be one centerpiece of Coleman Boulevard’s renaissance.



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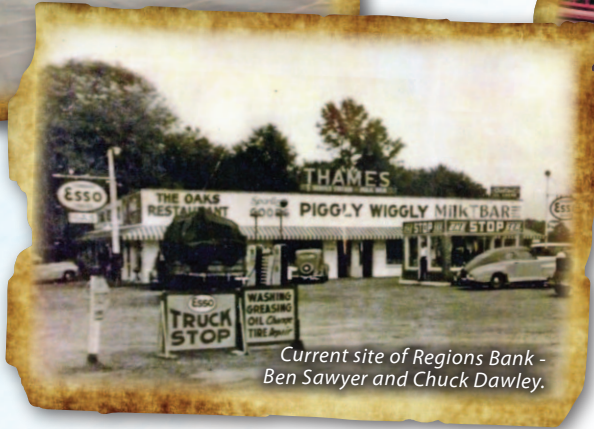
# Back in the Day



Waterslide on Ben Sawyer Blvd.



Mill Street and Coleman Boulevard.

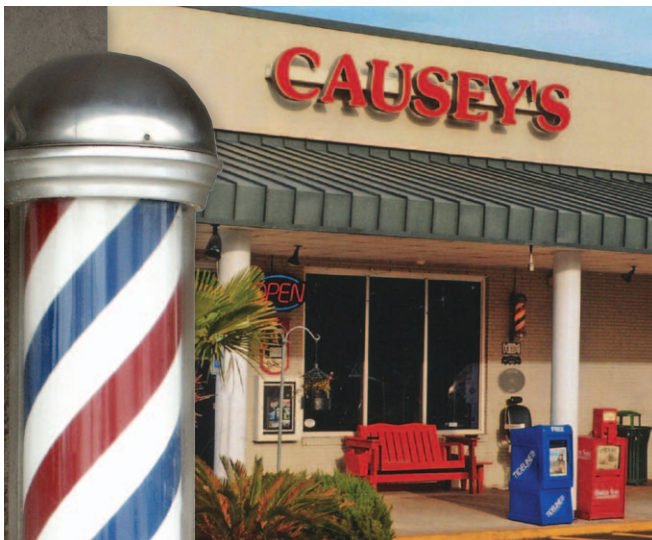


Current site of Regions Bank - Ben Sawyer and Chuck Dawley.



Current site of Good Law Firm on Coleman Boulevard.

Photo courtesy of Summer Eudy via Harper family.



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# A Family Affair

## Jack Tankersley State Farm

**2**017 WILL MARK 60 YEARS THAT STATE Farm Insurance and the Tankersleys have been anchored on Coleman Boulevard, helping the community come hell or high water.

“In 1957, my father became the first State Farm agent in Mount Pleasant. I began working in his office in 1974 to help my family after my mother was diagnosed with cancer,” said Jack Tankersley. “I found I liked the interaction with people of all walks of life. Forty-two years later, I still love what I do.”

In the 1980s, State Farm gave Tankersley an opportunity to open an office in the Upstate, but he chose to wait for an opening in his hometown.

“State Farm agencies are not franchises, so I did not inherit my father’s business. My dad gave me the opportunity to work in his office, but the rest was up to me. State Farm appoints a new agent from a pool of candidates when and where there is a need,” he explained.

Tankersley was appointed agent of record in 1989, just before Hurricane Hugo.

“That was quite a thing to live through. It was a difficult time for a young agent,” he remembered. “Business stopped because we were in recovery mode. We concentrated on service and helping people. But it gave me perspective on what I’m really here for: helping my clients and writing checks. In the long run, it was that dedication to service that helped us grow.”

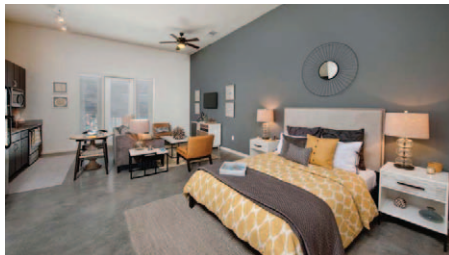
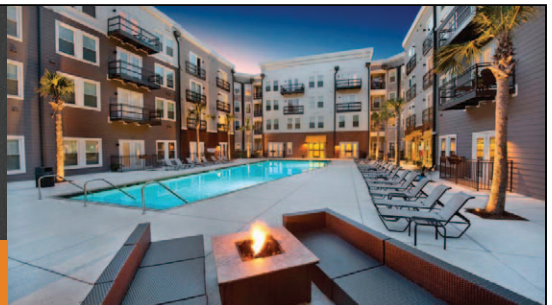
Tankersley’s father passed away in 1994. Today, his daughter Shea and son John have joined his team.

“It’s very special to have three generations of Tankersleys working for State Farm on Coleman Boulevard for 60 years,” he said. “A lot about Mount Pleasant has changed in that time, but, no matter what changes, we’re here to help the community we call our own.” 🐝

To learn more, call 843-881-8888.

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Photo by Rick Walo.

# Pride in What They Build

**GRAMLING BROTHERS REAL ESTATE & DEVELOPMENT**

*By Brian Sherman*

**B**EN GRAMLING BUILT HIS reputation in the Lowcountry on the residential side of the real estate business, developing one of the largest and fastest-growing master-planned communities in the state. In the past eight years, however, Gramling Brothers Real Estate & Development has moved boldly into commercial development, especially in Mount Pleasant.

The company, originally based in the Upstate, has purchased four tracts of land along Coleman Boulevard. Construction on buildings that will house restaurants and office space is well underway on two of them.

A three-story building is scheduled to be completed by the end of this year where Coleman Boulevard and Lansing and Broadway streets intersect. Further east, at the site of the former Fonduely Yours restaurant, construction on a two-story, 12,000-square-foot building is moving along on schedule.

Gramling Brothers also owns the location of the now-defunct Boulevard Diner and the properties behind and beside it, as well as the Peach Orchard Plaza, a shopping center bounded on the east by the other end of Broadway, which forms a semi-circle that touches Coleman in two places.

Gramling, a third-generation builder and developer, is well aware of the controversy that surrounds Mount Pleasant's off-the-charts growth, and he said he intends to remain above the fray. He's not taking sides.

"Building is a very delicate process," he commented. "We want to maintain the character of the town. Our goal is to do the right thing."

Mikell Harper, vice president of business development for Gramling Brothers, explained why the company decided to play a key role in the development of Coleman Boulevard.

"It's the heart of the town," Harper said. "When people come to visit Mount Pleasant, they come to Shem Creek, which is ground zero for it all. Businesses want to be there and people want to live there."

The building at Lansing, Broadway and Coleman, across the street from Metto Coffee & Tea, will be the new home of The Kickin' Chicken restaurant and will serve as the headquarters of Ameris Bank. Gramling said the third floor of the 30,000-square-foot building has not yet been rented. The developer also owns the land behind the building, which will be 50 feet tall, five feet more than the current



In the past eight years, Ben Gramling has moved boldly into commercial development, especially along Coleman Boulevard in Mount Pleasant.

Photo courtesy of Gramling Brothers Real Estate & Development.

maximum at most places on Coleman. When Gramling Brothers bought the property, the limit was 55 feet.

Despite the unexpected zoning change, Gramling Brothers is satisfied that the property will turn out to be a good investment. A traffic light already in place will provide easy access for tenants and customers of the restaurant.

"It's a good corner. When we bought it, there were plans for landscaped medians in the center of the road, so there was a premium on signalized intersections. We had a hunch this would be a valuable property," Harper said.

The Granary, a restaurant currently located in the Belle Hall Shopping Center, will be moving to the building that once was home to Fonduely Yours. Gramling said Dunes Properties and Hibbits Insurance also are renting space there.

Harper said there are no firm plans yet for the Boulevard Diner property, which includes an office building and Automotive Excellence, a business that has been in that location since 2001. He pointed out that one of Gramling's partners, Roberts Perry Miller (RPM), The Kickin' Chicken's parent company, has moved into the office building behind the former restaurant, and that the auto



Gramling Brothers Vice President Mikell Harper has been with the company since 2007.

repair shop would remain, for now, on a short-term lease.

The same is true for the tenants in Peach Orchard Plaza, where Gramling's partner is Rusty Bennett. Harper said they all are on leases of five years or shorter.

According to Harper, Gramling Brothers currently is working on "six to 10" commercial ventures in the Charleston area, including two hotels and an office building downtown, a shopping center in West Ashley and projects on Savannah Highway, Folly Road and Main Street in Summerville. Gramling made his original mark in the Lowcountry in residential construction, developing Cane Bay Plantation, a 4,500-acre master-planned community in Berkeley County consisting of several distinct neighborhoods that eventually will be home to around 7,500 families. Gramling Brothers donated the land for Cane Bay's elementary, middle and high schools.

Gramling Brothers also developed Reverie on the Ashley, a condominium

community on the Ashley River; and Arbor Oaks, Summerhaven and Summer Park, all located in Summerville.

About six to eight years ago, according to Gramling, the company expanded its focus and started looking at the commercial side of Lowcountry real estate. The company's penchant for "creating comfortable, safe, convenient and beautiful communities that people can proudly call home," according to its website, apparently has carried over to its commercial projects.

"I'm inspired by Ben's passion for what he does," said Kelly Seger, who has served as Gramling Brothers' director of marketing since 2009. "He thinks about things from every angle. He does what's best for all involved. It's great to work with someone who cares so much about what he does."

Harper, like Gramling, a Charleston resident, echoed her sentiments.

"We live here. He can't run and hide from something we're responsible for. We intend to be proud of whatever we build," he commented. 🏡



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Photo by Brandon Clark.

# How Does Your Boulevard Grow?

**JIM OWENS REMEMBERS WHEN**

*By Daniel Brock*



# A

S A BOY IN THE 1960S, FIRST-term Mount Pleasant Town Council member Jim Owens would ride his bike up and down the now-demolished Silas Pearman Bridge – while it was still under construction.

It's not surprising that a person with such hometown bona fides might have a different perspective on Mount Pleasant than someone who has never tried she-crab soup, hasn't been to Pitt Street Pharmacy or doesn't remember a time before The Boulevard.

Over at least the past three years, Owens has been on the front lines of the town's most contentious topics, including fast-paced growth, residential density and a quickly evolving Coleman Boulevard. He formed the Saving Shem Creek Facebook group – a less genteel cousin of the Save Shem Creek Corp. page – lost a job because of his public views on a controversial parking project and won a seat on the Town Council.

Now he's an integral piece of a four-man bloc on the Council – backed by a vocal Old Village-centered grass-roots group – that is trying to rein in what they see as out-of-control growth. Disputes have arisen around



Photo by Jenn Cady.

Councilman Jim Owens might see Mount Pleasant from a different perspective than someone who didn't grow up in his hometown.

lowering building heights on Coleman Boulevard, reducing density town-wide, regulating accessory dwelling units and instituting permit allocations and building moratoriums.

Owens is confident that the group that fueled his rise to the Council is eager for quick change, but the 57-year-old father of five is also aware of the realities of political life that call for compromise and restraint. Indeed, Council members have been able to find common ground on everything from numerous quality-of-life projects – such as the Shem Creek pedestrian bridge – to increased business incentives.

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Yet differences centered largely on how and where Mount Pleasant should grow remain. And with those in mind, Owens said he's attempting to build unity every day.

"When the people speak, you either listen or you get voted out, but you also want to do the right thing. You have to build a consensus," he said. "It has to marinate, and, through that marinating process, you have to try to build a consensus, bring people together – like minds, people of all walks. People are going to disagree, but you have to benefit the majority. You have to do what's best for the majority. You're not going to please everybody all the time."

Along Coleman Boulevard, Owens has been a strong proponent of the town emphasizing a traditional "coastal and eclectic look," pointing to businesses such as the Publix



Photo by Rick Waio.

Owens points to the Publix as an example of the "coastal and eclectic look" he favors for Coleman Boulevard.

on Ben Sawyer Boulevard and the complex that includes Royall Ace Hardware as worthy of emulation.

"What I don't want is bricks-and-mortar that is more representative of inner cities – Charleston, Greenville, Columbia, Charlotte," Owens said, noting that the look could be appropriate in other areas of town, such as on Johnnie Dodds Boulevard. "What I want is something that's amenable to everybody in the town of Mount Pleasant. People that I've spoken to want the coastal flair."

Owens has also been a strong proponent of lowering building heights to 45 feet and a maximum of three stories along much of the Coleman corridor. Those numbers would allow for a mix of commercial and residential use, he said. The Council had given overwhelming initial approval to that plan as of this writing.

"Forty-five wasn't an arbitrary number. It was something that gave some flexibility in design," Owens said. "We could have been more rigid and said 40 feet. We could have held everybody's feet to the fire, but we were trying to be flexible."


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Of the 8-1 first-reading vote in favor of the height change, Owens said: “It’s a good sign, but I hope that it continues.”

Owens has not been shy about sharing his opinions on growth, which apparently caused an employer to part ways with him in 2014 after it emerged that the company was working on the office building/parking garage that Owens and others opposed. However, Owens’ steadfast outspokenness and commitment to his ideals won the adoration of a large group of residents who turned out on election day and eventually put him and like-minded candidates into office at the expense of every at-risk incumbent.

The Mill and Coleman site again served as a flashpoint for Owens toward the end of the election and his first months in office. Owens at one point claimed he would invoke eminent domain to stop the project. Later, he and fellow Council members Joe Bustos and Will Haynie staged a press conference nearby – to quash claims they intended to take land from local businesses – that

Photo by Brian Sherman.



This is the view of Shem Creek that will be available to the tenants in the office building/ parking garage currently under construction at Coleman Boulevard and Mill Street.

nearly ended in a physical confrontation, according to media reports at the time. Owens, Bustos and Haynie say those descriptions were overstated.

“Political rhetoric takes place all the time. You’ve got a presidential campaign. Every candidate I heard said they’re going to repeal Obamacare. Does that mean they’re going to or they can?” Owens asked. “You’re one voice; you’re one person. I would take political rhetoric with a grain of salt, particularly during the time that it was said.”

Going forward, Owens hopes the town implements lessons learned on past projects such as The Boulevard, which has been widely viewed as a disappointment and sparked much of the furor surrounding growth. The same holds true for infrastructure projects such as Highway 41 and affordable housing, an issue which Owens said is “of grave interest” to him.

“At least have the foresight to realize the mistakes of the past and do something about them in the future,” Owens said. “We have to pick up the pieces and go on.”

Still, Owens believes in what Mount Pleasant was, what it is and what it can be.

“I couldn’t think of another town where I would have rather grown up, where I would rather raise my family,” he said. “It was an extraordinary town then, and it’s even more so now. We’ve got a lot of great opportunities.” 🍪

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Photo by Brian Sherman.

Robert S. "Tex" Small, right, and his business partner, Tyler Flesch, on the roof of the parking garage/office building they are developing at Coleman Boulevard and Mill Street.

# (S)parking Controversy

**GARAGE/OFFICE BUILDING  
NEARS COMPLETION**

*By Brian Sherman*

**I**N OCTOBER 2013, ROBERT S. “TEX” Small Jr. thought he had an agreement with the town of Mount Pleasant to build a combination parking garage/office building near Shem Creek, at the corner of Coleman Boulevard and Mill Street.

One municipal election and the specter of what might happen when the votes were counted in another apparently served as the impetus that altered that agreement, transforming a public/private project into a strictly private enterprise. The building provided the spark that set off a firestorm of controversy which cost three sitting town councilmen their jobs, as the frustration of some local residents over construction in and near the Old Village and Shem Creek bubbled to the surface.

Despite several pending lawsuits, construction continues. According to Small, CEO of AVTEX Commercial

Properties, the parking garage will be open for business by the end of this year, while he expects tenants to start moving into the 40,000-square-foot office building in January 2017.

From Small’s point of view, the story began when Billy Swails was

mayor of Mount Pleasant, and his company shared the cost of a parking study with the town. The survey showed that there was a tremendous demand for parking on nights and weekends to handle the bar and restaurant traffic around Shem Creek. The economy was struggling, no action was taken and, eventually, the property at Mill and Coleman, owned by the Simmons family, was leased to Roper Hospital.

When the market bounced back, Roper chose to build on the north side of Mount Pleasant, and AVTEX and the town renewed negotiations concerning an office building/parking garage.

“It’s all about supply and demand. There was a demand for parking,” Small explained. “People were parking in the nearby neighborhoods. The town encouraged us to build twice the number of parking spaces than we needed for the

office building.”

According to an agreement reached between AVTEX and the town in October 2013, 132 parking spaces would be reserved for occupants of the building, while another 144 would be available for the general public. For its part, the town agreed to pay AVTEX \$185,000 a year for 15 years, out of its accommodations tax, and a dollar a year after that. The town’s share of the cost could have been reduced if the garage showed a net profit.

So why did the town back out of the project and require Small to redesign the building, reducing the total number of parking spaces from 276 to 234?

“Earl’s Court and The Boulevard were already built. Our project was the next one up,” Small said. “The Save Shem Creek people became proactive against the garage and office building.”

“Public records will show that the Council changed the

setback line from 5 feet to 20 feet on Mill Street and Church Street (now Ronnie Boals Boulevard),” he added. “They only did it for these two streets. Did they do that to kill the project? Absolutely.”

Mark Smith, who

won a seat on the Council in November 2013, after the initial agreement had been signed, pointed out that “There was significant political pressure on the Council to cancel the whole deal.”

“There was a growing frustration with development along Coleman Boulevard,” he added. “For me personally, I spent time struggling to balance the political pressure on me as a Council member and what I felt as a person of integrity to uphold existing agreements that were put in place prior to me being in office.”

Smith said he was torn in opposite directions. He knew local residents were upset about Earl’s Court, cottage-style homes built in the Old Village, and The Boulevard, the large apartment complex on Coleman. He also was well aware that the town had signed an agreement in good faith with the developer.



This is an artist’s rendering of the parking garage/office building under construction at Coleman Boulevard and Mill Street.



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“I don’t think that was something I could morally, ethically and legally bring myself to get comfortable doing,” Smith said. “I’m old school. A handshake agreement means something. I’m a man of my word,

did not seek re-election.

According to Small, the building will cost around \$20 million, a figure that includes impact fees paid to the town and Mount Pleasant Water Works and buying out Roper’s lease



The circled area is the location of the parking garage/office building at Coleman Boulevard and Mill Street. The photo was taken from the air April 6, 2016.

Photo by Brian Sherman.

and I expect others to uphold those standards as well.”

“I was uncomfortable because of the contract with Tex and the spirit in which the contract was drawn,” Smith said. “But there always has to be middle ground.”

Smith joined the majority and voted to change the setbacks for Church and Mill streets and to remove public funding from the project. That action was taken by the Council on April 8, 2014, more than a year before four candidates supported by the Save Shem Creek group – Jim Owens, Joe Bustos, Bob Brimmer and Will Haynie – were elected to the Council. Three incumbents – Chris O’Neal, Chris Nichols and Ken Glasson – were unseated. Longtime Council Member Thomasena Stokes-Marshall

on the property. Its exterior consists of glass and brick, and concrete stained to resemble wood. A financial company and a law firm already have leased space in the building, and AVTEX will have an office there as well. Small said 160 to 180 people will work in the building.

“It’s not just about people who come to the restaurants as patrons. Each restaurant has a large staff. They all need parking, too,” he said.

“It’s a very solid building,” he added. “If there’s an earthquake or a hurricane, that’s where you want to be.”

AVTEX, established in 1974, has developed numerous residential, retail shopping centers, office and industrial properties in the Southeast, including The Market at Oakland in North Mount Pleasant. 🏠



Photo by Charlize Burns.

# A Central Hub on Coleman

**THE SEA ISLAND SHOPPING CENTER**

*By Charlize Burns*



Sea Island Shopping Center is located where Chuck Dawley, Ben Sawyer and Coleman meet.

Photo by Brandon Clark.

**A**NYONE DRIVING OUT TO Sullivan’s Island takes notice: The Sea Island Shopping Center off Coleman Boulevard is bustling. It’s the quintessential stop before heading to the beach and beyond. Residents and visitors stop in to Harris Teeter to pick up groceries, sit down in Mr. Causey’s chair for a haircut or peruse the racks of clothing and home goods at the local Goodwill.

What patrons may not know is the unique history behind one of the oldest centers in Mount Pleasant. What once was a quiet, sleepy fishing village and small town grocery is now a busy epicenter in one of the fastest growing areas in the Southeast. Over the past 50+ years, the center has evolved into a 95,000-square-foot operation with more than 25 tenants and a strong customer base.

The Sea Island Shopping Center was originally owned by the Langley Family and was sold to the Hewitt Family in the early 1960s. Batson L. Hewitt took ownership of the property after his father died unexpectedly in 1962.

The center was Hewitt’s first piece of commercial property and the one that started him on the road to a successful career in commercial real estate. He continues to manage the property today along with other innovative projects such as the Spectator Hotel, the Bee Street Home Historic Restoration and the French Quarter Inn. He was named Commercial Realtor of the Year in 1998 and has held many leadership positions in various commissions and associations over the years.

Back in the 1960s, the center had a strong set of anchor tenants: Piggly Wiggly, Western Auto, Belk and Eckerd drugstore. The economic downturn in the 1970s caused the center to fall on some rough times. Faced with losing two important tenants, Hewitt began plans to redevelop

and expand.

Brooks Pharmacy bought Eckerd, which is now Rite Aid. Hewitt slowly began filling in the spaces with smaller, mom-and-pop stores. Goodwill signed on in the late 1970s and remains a core retail entity today. Throughout the ’80s and ’90s, businesses have come and gone and changed ownerships and names – with one sparkling exception.

Causey’s Barbershop, nestled on the corner, has been around as long as the center itself. The shop’s walls are decorated in vintage sports memorabilia, and some of Dan Causey’s customers have been loyal patrons for decades.

A crucial transition for the center occurred three years ago, when Harris Teeter acquired Piggly Wiggly. The grocery chain spent millions of dollars to renovate from the roof down, creating a brand-new, state-of-the-art retail space that has, in turn, attracted more strong tenants to the center.

Surrounding Harris Teeter today are various stores and restaurants, including a delicious French bistro, a nail bar, a post office, Dante’s Spirits and Baroni’s New York Style Pizza. Local residents come to the laundromat or stop at Charleston Fabrics to begin their next big project. Overall, sales are booming.

Hewitt is extremely pleased with the current mix of retailers in the center.

“A good tenant mix is critical in a neighborhood shopping center like this. There needs to be a certain synergy around the anchor tenants, and I think we have that,” he explained.

One important issue to address in the future is the sheer volume of people expected to move to the area in the coming years.

“The population of Mount Pleasant is going to continue to accelerate for years to come,” Hewitt said. “Sea Island is in a very strategic position. Coleman



Boulevard is a central hub. “

In 2008, the Mount Pleasant Town Council came up with a proactive solution to the growing population and traffic concerns. The Coleman Boulevard Overlay District Plan designated the Sea Island Shopping Center as a high density, mixed-use development consisting of retail, office and residential space. Hewitt plans on making that a reality down the road.

Consultants have said the center should be more pedestrian-friendly. Hewitt promptly answered with colorful landscaping, more overhead lighting and speed bumps around the parking lot, making it a safer and more enjoyable place to shop.

Another concern for the future is the manner in which people shop. These days, customers are looking for convenience and instant gratification.



Photo courtesy of Batson Hewitt.

Batson L. Hewitt has owned Sea Island Shopping Center since his father died unexpectedly in 1962.

Hewitt said Harris Teeter is a great example of adapting to evolving retail trends. Customers can now order their groceries online and pick them up in a drive-through, without having to step foot inside the store.

Crystal Bruce, a longtime resident of Mount Pleasant, is pleased with the look, feel and easy shopping experience at Harris Teeter. She lives across the street from the Sea Island Center and regularly shops online for groceries.

“It saves me a lot of time. I hop on my bike, and my groceries are ready to go. It’s nice to have this option within biking distance,” she said.

“Shopping trends are changing. Habits are changing, and you’ve got to adapt,” Hewitt commented. “You can’t just crawl in a hole and rest on your laurels. I think that’s probably true in any business today.”



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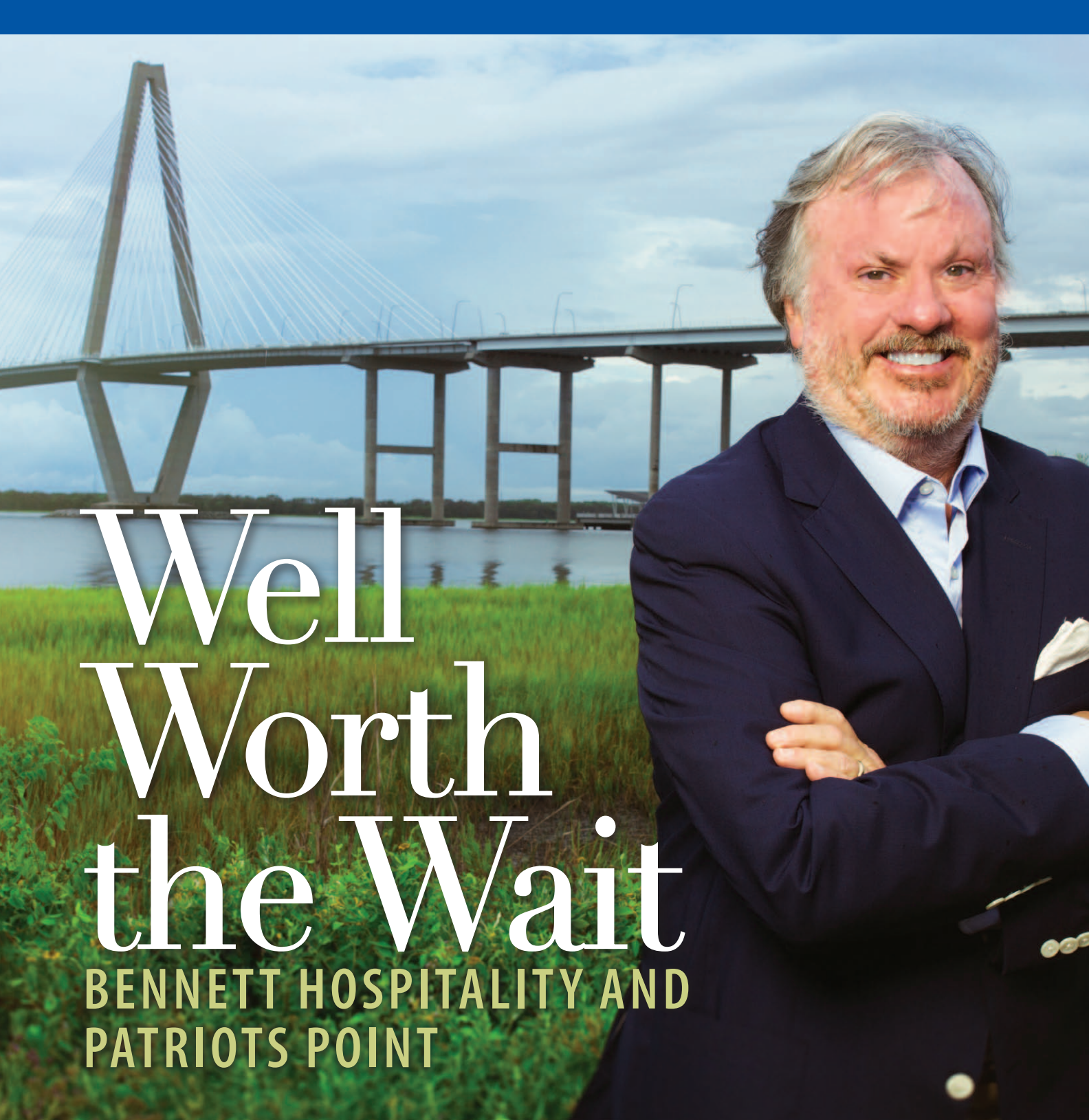
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# Well Worth the Wait

## BENNETT HOSPITALITY AND PATRIOTS POINT

**P**ATRIOTS POINT WAS IN SEARCH OF a large and steady stream of income to save its main attraction. Local developer Michael Bennett was looking for another place in or near his native Charleston to build “beautiful buildings.” A lease agreement that is expected to be approved by the South Carolina State Fiscal Accountability Authority sometime before the

BY BRIAN SHERMAN

end of this year will cover the needs of both.

Under the terms of the 99-year agreement, Bennett Hospitality will lease 50 acres of land at Patriots Point. Though the final plans require the approval of the Patriots Point board of directors and the town of Mount Pleasant, Bennett said he plans to build and operate hotels, restaurants, office buildings, retail space and an amphitheater on a “grand lawn.” He said the entire project will cost in the neighborhood of \$300 million.



Michael Bennett's mantra is to make it beautiful and make it last. That's what he intends to do at Patriots Point.

Photo by Jenn Cady.

Construction is expected to begin in January 2019 and will probably take 10 to 15 years to complete.

“That will be determined by what the market will support,” said Bennett.

When the project is finished, it will be well worth the wait for area residents and visitors, he pointed out.

“This is one of the most significant

pieces of land on the East Coast,” said Bennett. “It’s 50 acres on one of the greatest harbors and communities.”

The lease agreement will give Patriots Point the money it needs to completely renovate the USS Yorktown. According to Executive Director Mac Burdette, that project could cost as much as \$60 million. He said Patriots Point currently takes in around \$1.5 million annually in lease payments from the College of Charleston, the golf course, the marina, restaurants, hotels and the Cottages on Charleston Harbor. That figure will rise to \$6 million a year or more when Bennett Hospitality starts making lease payments.

Burdette explained that the state will sell bonds to pay for the necessary work on the Yorktown, and the bonds will be paid off with the lease income.

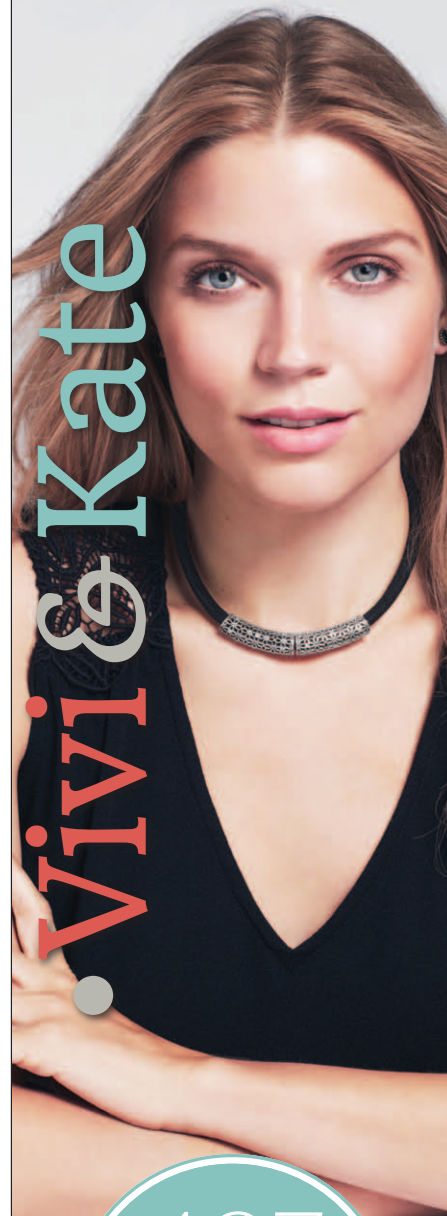
According to Bennett, under the lease agreement, Patriots Point will receive a percentage of the revenue from the hotels, office buildings and restaurants he intends to build on the 50-acre property.

“It’s a great structure for the landlord – Patriots Point – and it’s fair for the tenant,” Bennett commented. “Patriots Point will reap the benefits as the value of the land goes up. As business grows, the revenue will grow for Patriots Point.”

Bennett, a self-described “long-term owner of real estate,” said his passion is to design and own buildings that future generations will be able to enjoy. He pointed out that timeless architecture, quality materials and quality design are the hallmarks of the many projects he has completed and is still working on in the Charleston area and elsewhere.

“I love classic architecture, and that site deserves something special,” he commented, adding that he learned a valuable lesson from former

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Charleston Mayor Joe Riley. “Mayor Riley said that if it ought to be there in 100 years, build it and make it last,” he said.

In addition to building something that will be around long after he is gone, Bennett is concerned about making sure Patriots Point and its attractions remain intact for future generations as well.

“Patriots Point is an American classic,” Bennett said. “It’s a promotion of America’s greatness. I have the chance to create money that will help take care of the Yorktown in perpetuity.”

Bennett Hospitality owns and operates 18 hotels across the country, including three in Mount Pleasant: The Courtyard Marriott off Highway 17 and the Residence Inn Marriott and the Hampton Inn on the Isle of Palms Connector. He built his first hotel in downtown Charleston in 1990, turning apartments on Meeting Street into the Hampton Inn. The \$101-million hotel Bennett is building on Marion Square in Charleston is expected to



Michael Bennett’s son, Jack, right, apparently is following in his father’s footsteps. A recent Clemson graduate, he’s now part of Bennett Hospitality.

Photo by Jenn Cady.

open in the fall of 2017.

Meanwhile, Bennett has launched another project at the foot of the Ravenel Bridge in Mount Pleasant. He hopes to break ground at Ferry Wharf, where the ferries pulled into Mount Pleasant before the first Cooper River Bridge was built, late in 2016 or early in 2017. Plans call for the construction of hotels, retail space and office buildings.

Regardless of where or what he is building, Bennett’s mantra remains to make it beautiful and make it last.

“I don’t ask how much money it’s going to cost,” he explained. “As long as it doesn’t break me, I’m going to build it, and I’m going to build it better than anyone ever dreamed of.”

Among all his many projects, which is his greatest accomplishment?

“Probably the one I like best is the one I’m working on right now,” he said. 🏠

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 drmalarkin@comcast.net  
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 chrisvonlehe@allstate.com  
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 900 Bowman Road, Suite 105  
 Mount Pleasant, S.C. 29464  
 fschwartz@alphacare.biz  
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 Charles Anderson  
 317 Wingo Way, Suite 301  
 Mount Pleasant, S.C. 29464  
 admin@anderson-dentistry.com  
 843-884-2021

Atlantic Coast Advisory Group  
 Karen E. Stawicki & Samantha Stawicki  
 421 Wando Park Blvd., Suite 140  
 Mount Pleasant, S.C. 29464  
 karen@atlanticcoastadvisorygroup.com  
 sam@atlanticcoastadvisorygroup.com  
 843-881-4904

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 PO Box 80367  
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 Cindy Shelor  
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 Mount Pleasant, S.C. 29464  
 cshelor@bbandt.com  
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 990 Lake Hunter Circle, Suite 212  
 Mount Pleasant, S.C. 29464  
 braincore.dianne@gmail.com  
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 222 West Coleman Blvd.  
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 jbrantley@branchtec.com  
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 5190 Forest Oaks Drive  
 Hollywood, S.C. 29449  
 greg@brand-u-media.com  
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Dr. Brad Brunner  
 1051 Johnnie Dodds Blvd., Suite C  
 Mount Pleasant, S.C. 29464  
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2713 Highway 17 North  
Mount Pleasant, S.C. 29466  
kristina.stoddard@carolinaone.com  
843-998-9567

Carolina One Real Estate  
Tim Walter  
2713 Highway 17 North  
Mount Pleasant, S.C. 29466  
twalter@carolinaone.com  
843-670-3035

Carolina One Real Estate  
Debbie Rogers  
2713 Highway 17 North  
Mount Pleasant, S.C. 29466  
deborah.rogers@carolinaone.com  
843-990-2915

Carolina One Real Estate  
Sybil Hill  
2713 Highway 17 North  
Mount Pleasant, S.C. 29466  
s.hill@carolinaone.com  
843-834-6234

Carolina One Real Estate  
Trisha Nicholson  
2713 Highway 17 North  
Mount Pleasant, S.C. 29466  
trisha.nicholson@carolinaone.com  
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129 Cannon St.  
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 217 Lucas St., Suite D  
 Mount Pleasant, S.C. 29464  
 dynamikdc@gmail.com  
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 Mount Pleasant, S.C. 29464  
 jcraven@financeofamerica.com  
 843-972-7820

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 903 Johnnie Dodds Blvd.  
 Mount Pleasant, S.C. 29464  
 devon.ormson@firstcitizensonline.com  
 843-856-9805

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 Mount Pleasant, S.C. 29464  
 bbrazell@firstreliance.com  
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 Mount Pleasant, S.C. 29466  
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 gracen.watts@gatewayloan.com  
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 1407 Stuart Engals Boulevard  
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 paulheinauer@glasspro.net  
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 charleston@gogolaseritag.com  
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 Elaine Domin  
 PO Box 22183  
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 2150 Eagle Drive, Building 100  
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 Elizabeth Ivy  
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 843-936-3941

Halo Branded Solutions  
 Joe Boccelli  
 170 North Shelmore Blvd.  
 Mount Pleasant, S.C. 29464  
 joe.boccelli@halo.com  
 770-853-1590

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89 Broad St.  
Charleston, S.C. 29401  
wesley@hhlawsc.com  
843-212-3188

Heritage Trust Federal Credit Union  
Michael Percival  
1129 Park West Blvd.  
Mount Pleasant, S.C. 29466  
percivalm@htfcu.org  
843-486-1200

Heritage Trust Federal Credit Union  
Tricia Haggerty  
8435 Dorchester Road  
North Charleston, S.C. 29420  
haggertyt@htfcu.org  
843-832-7570

High Value Home Services, LLC  
Jeff Messick  
2271 Sandy Point Lane  
Mount Pleasant, S.C. 29466  
jeff@hvhschs.com  
843-327-7813

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PO Box 12165 • Charleston, S.C. 29422  
jen@organizecharleston.com  
843-695-9947

HookLead  
Zack Hanebrink  
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Charleston, S.C. 29403  
zack@hooklead.com  
740-500-4665

Hudson's Import Service, Inc.  
Stephanie Taylor  
PO Box 1084  
Mount Pleasant, S.C. 29464  
hudsonsimport@bellsouth.net  
843-884-2573

Hyper Growth Business Strategies  
Billie Attaway  
PO Box 1 • Mount Pleasant, S.C. 29466  
drb@hypergro.org  
843-514-2200

iHeart Radio  
Shane Griffin  
950 Houston Northcutt Blvd., 2nd Floor  
Mount Pleasant, S.C. 29464  
shanegriffin@iheartmedia.com  
843-856-6116

Index Strategy Advisors  
Patrick Traverse  
1789 Tennyson Row  
Mount Pleasant, S.C. 29466  
800-984-0268 x700

Infusion Capital Group  
Mark Osborn  
1000 Johnnie Dodds Blvd., Suite 103-302  
Mount Pleasant, S.C. 29464  
mosborn@infusioncapitalgroup.com  
843-714-8196

Integral Solutions Group  
Mike Brewerton  
141 Williman St.  
Charleston, S.C. 29403  
mbrewerton@integralsg.com  
843-513-1531 x4370

I'On Club  
Emzi Wewers  
252 Ponsbury Road  
Mount Pleasant, S.C. 29464  
e.wewers@theonclub.com  
843-971-7834

Island Realty  
Sandy Stone  
1304 Palm Blvd.  
Isle of Palms, S.C. 29451  
sandy@islandrealty.com  
843-242-1084

Jack Martin & Associates  
Lee Casey  
1440 Ben Sawyer Blvd., Suite 1101  
Mount Pleasant, S.C. 29464  
lee.casey@jackmartin.com  
843-986-8766

Jeffrey Smith & Associates LLC  
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Mount Pleasant, S.C. 29466  
jsmith@jeffsmithassoc.com  
843-847-1635

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Kimberly Roberts  
215 Ferryman Lane  
Charleston, S.C. 29492  
kimberlyroberts@kw.com  
843-687-1246

Law Office of Gem McDowell, P.A.  
Melinda Kerr  
2040 eWall St., Suite A  
Mount Pleasant, S.C. 29464  
melinda@gemmcowell.com  
843-284-1021

Lee & Associates  
Jonathan Chalfie  
960 Morrison Drive, Suite 400  
Charleston, S.C. 29403  
jchalfie@lee-associates.com  
843-747-1200

Legacy Wealth Management  
R. Bennett Firestone  
210 Wingo Way, Suite 300  
Mount Pleasant, S.C. 29464  
rbennett@legacywm.com  
843-416-1118

Legare, Bailey & Hinske, LLC, CPAs  
Joe Hinske  
1100 Queensborough Blvd., Suite 100  
Mount Pleasant, S.C. 29464  
jhinske@lbhcpas.com  
843-766-0400

Lowcountry Companions Senior Care  
Wendy Weisner  
1459 Stuart Engle Blvd., Suite 203  
Mount Pleasant, S.C. 29464  
info@lowcountrycompanions.com  
843-856-2582

Lucid Coaching, LLC  
Chris Cunniffe  
510 Live Oak Drive  
Mount Pleasant, S.C. 29464  
chris@lucidcoaching.com  
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1416 Walking Trail Court  
Mount Pleasant, S.C. 29466  
maryannalewis@yahoo.com  
843-884-8661

H. Christopher Moss, CPA  
210 Wingo Way, Suite 303  
Mount Pleasant, S.C. 29464  
chris@chrismosscca.com  
843-768-7100

Moultrie News  
Vickey Boyd  
134 Columbus St.  
Charleston, S.C. 29403  
vboyd@moultrienews.com  
843-729-4741

Mount Pleasant Towne Centre  
Kathleen Herrmann  
1218 Belk Drive  
Mount Pleasant, S.C. 29464  
kherrmann@bayerproperties.com  
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MPN  
Patrick Traverse  
1478 Hollenberg Lane  
Mount Pleasant, S.C. 29466  
travy74@hotmail.com  
508-736-9027

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Bill Northrop  
200 River Landing Drive, #201-H  
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bill.northrop@lifestylepubs.com  
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rwooldridge@wcbd.com  
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Mike Nicholson  
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 Mount Pleasant, S.C. 29464  
 lstewart@tidelandsbank.com  
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# A Reflection of Worldly Adventures Celadon at Home

**C**ELADON AT HOME OPENED over 20 years ago after owner Steve Lesniak moved to the Lowcountry from England and noticed the Charleston market was lacking a fresh, non-traditional, European-style furniture store. Since 1992, he and his staff have not only searched the South but traveled the world to find innovative and eclectic furnishings to sell in the store and to offer a solution for those who want to incorporate a fresh flair to their Lowcountry home.

BY ANNE TOOLE

“Celadon’s buyers never know where the road might lead,” said Head Buyer Rebecca Hawkins. “A showroom in India can lead to a factory that leads to an artisan that leads to a container full of handmade one-of-a-kinds brought directly to our store. A chance meeting on a roadside in Indonesia can lead to a motorbike ride to a workshop where a decade-long relationship is born that brings simplistic, sustainable furniture to our customers at an accessible price point.”

The expansive store is full of character, and full of ever-changing furnishings that range from furniture to rugs to art, textiles, glassware, handbags and more. A combination of clean, simplistic lines, rustic wood, natural fibers, inspiring palette and high quality only enhance the store’s sense of bohemian flair. Many items are handmade and quite literally one-of-a-kind.

Much like the variety of furnishings inside, walking into Celadon is an experience in itself. The staff is friendly and vibrant and puts excellent service at the top of their list. Customers are invited to have a cup of coffee while

they browse and to bring their dogs along to sniff around. While trunk shows and sales are a regular occurrence at Celadon, it would be hard to find another furnishing store in the region that offers events such as tarot card readings, where the public is invited to come to the store to do their work while cozied up on the perfect piece of furniture.

As a locally owned business, the team at Celadon understands the importance of helping hands and makes a point to give back to the community through donations and involvement.

“As a member of Lowcountry Local First, we are able to stand among other businesses in our community with

a similar mission. Through trunk shows and pop-up shows, we highlight local artists and entrepreneurs,” said Lesniak. “We are also huge animal lovers and supporters of Pet Helpers. Additionally, I advise small business start-ups as a SCORE mentor.”

Celadon also helps the international community by working with an ensemble of

fair trade and women’s co-ops.

After more than two decades as a fixture of the Charleston market, Celadon has proven to fill the void in fresh and eclectic home furnishings. It has even grown to include an outlet location in North Charleston that is open to the public at select times throughout the year.

“Celadon is masculine but feminine, current but timeless, chic but comfortable, sophisticated but inviting,” said Hawkins. “Celadon’s selection is a reflection of free-spirited and worldly adventures. And we bring them right here to you in the Lowcountry.” 🍷

*For more information, visit [www.celadonathome.com](http://www.celadonathome.com) or stop by 1015 Johnnie Dodds Blvd.*



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# Caribbean Cool

## TheAmericano

**A**S LOWCOUNTRY LOCALS, we don't want to eat at tourist traps – we appreciate a good cocktail menu paired with innovative cuisine. Luckily, we have TheAmericano on Coleman. The Mount Pleasant restaurant calls to mind Miami during the first half of the 20th century, with its pastel leather, swivel stools and distinctly laid-back vibe. If

BY DENISE K. JAMES

you've been to TheAmericano, you already know that it's a great spot for lunch, brunch, happy hour or dinner. But 2016 ushered in new management and a rejuvenated menu courtesy of restaurateur Brannon Florie, making it well worth another visit.

Florie chose Cary Turman as TheAmericano's general manager. With over 20 years experience in food and beverage, doing everything from waiting tables to owning and operating his own cafe, Turman was the perfect candidate for carrying out Florie's vision. Interested to see what that vision is, I stopped by TheAmericano and caught up with Executive Chef Nate Geier and assistant manager Jackie Gonda for a cocktail lunch and a chat about the updated menu. It all started with a delicious drink known as the Aphrodisiac Margarita – tequila blanco, fresh lime juice, three-pepper infused honey, crème de cacao and chili salt around the rim – after I informed my hosts how much I appreciate a spicy beverage.

"We make everything we have in-house," Gonda said, setting glasses of ginger beer, soda water and tonic in front of me for sipping. Meanwhile, Geier returned from the kitchen with dish of chicken wings and some of the restaurant's popular calamari appetizer. As I happily munched, he told me about his menu plans.

"It's a friendly menu," he explained. "Nothing is too spicy, but it has the Latin and Cuban elements."

The brunch menu, according to Geier, will feature two new omelets: a hearty veggie omelet, with avocado and black beans, as well as a savory steak omelet. And the popular taco assortment – a favorite for lunch, dinner and happy hour – will welcome two newbies to the family: a braised pork taco with Moho Cuban sauce and a veggie taco.

"Tacos are our biggest seller for sure," Geier affirmed. "This concept of a quick but quality meal is at the forefront of TheAmericano's lunch service."

I had a couple of tacos while we talked, including the new pork taco, the seasonal fish taco and the acclaimed skirt steak taco with fried onions.

Though I already felt full when we talked about entree items, I was still excited to learn about the seasonal fish – a red snapper that day, with Caribbean rice plus mango and jalapeno chutney – and a decadent half rack of ribs paired with smoky local grits.

For dessert I opted to indulge in the chocolate flan in a chipotle caramel sauce – but promised myself I'd try the authentic sweet plantains with coconut rum ice cream soon.

"I try to blend local ingredients that people appreciate with our Latin touches," Geier said,

eyeballing my clean plate with satisfaction.

With a killer happy hour from 4 to 7 on weekdays, promotions including Mojito Mondays, Taco Tuesdays, Wine Down Wednesdays and Ladies Night Thursdays, plus awesome events such as salsa dance parties and DJ brunches, there is never a shortage of fun at TheAmericano. 🍹

To learn more, visit [www.theamericanomp.com](http://www.theamericanomp.com) or call 843-352-2641.



Items such as ginger beer, tonic and even soda water are made fresh behind the bar at TheAmericano.

Photo courtesy of TheAmericano.



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# The SOL Will Come Out Tomorrow

**W**ITH THE GROWING population of the Lowcountry, there is a need for more of everything – more houses, more restaurants and especially more SOL

Southwest Kitchen & Tequila Bar. Fortunately, SOL recently announced plans to open a second restaurant in Summerville. The owners are converting the former

BY SAMANTHA SULLIVAN

Charleston Gold and Diamond Exchange into a chic new location, infused with the same Southwestern appeal and friendly ambience as their spot in East Cooper. Considering the promise of a sunny, 1,500-square-foot patio that wraps around the new restaurant, fans of SOL who live a bit farther north could not be more excited.

Owner David Clark assured me they are staying true to their roots, keeping the same menu and featuring the same fresh-squeezed drinks and flavorful food in Summerville. With a recent switch to all antibiotic-free and hormone-free chicken, as well as grass-fed beef, SOL has pledged to provide its patrons with the highest quality food. Even the bloody Mary mix is made from scratch, according to Clark, who ascribes the restaurant's success to its commitment to using fresh ingredients.

To illustrate, Clark shared how SOL purchased enough strawberries from Boone Hall Plantation to last through the summer of 2016 and flash-froze them to keep them available. That means every strawberry margarita and strawberry basil smash that passes over SOL's bar was made with juicy, local berries.

"You won't find a bottled juice in the house; we make everything behind the bar," Clark assured me. "Our facility is nice, but our food and drinks are what has made

us popular. We treat the drinks just like the food."

Fresh ingredients do not end when strawberry season is over. The menu is always evolving to incorporate seasonal bests and feature new items that pair perfectly with the Lowcountry weather. Mid-September through October, the lauded prickly pear margarita, or "pink drink," as it is affectionately called, gets its time to shine. Made from prickly pears imported from California, this drink is a unique hit for East Cooper imbibers.

"Not many people like to mess with the prickly pears because they have so many seeds," Clark explained. "We remove all the seeds and drain the juice for use inside the cocktail."

The fuchsia color of the prickly pear margarita goes along perfectly with breast cancer awareness month in October, making it a seasonal staple. SOL and the featured tequila brand, Milagro, which means "miracle" in Spanish, did their part by raising money for cancer research at MUSC. Last fall, the pink drink helped bring in more than \$3,000 in donations.

"We like to keep money local," Clark commented, adding that this year they hope to include the new location in the fundraiser.

With SOL's growth comes a snazzy new website, better suited to assist restaurant patrons. According to Clark, the updated site will be "more mobile-friendly, with better images of cuisine."

Overall, Clark and his partners are satisfied with the growth of SOL – and are continually inspired to discover new flavors and ingredients.

"We have evolved over the last couple years, just in the ingredients we've brought in and changed up," Clark mused. "Once people get a taste of food made from scratch, they want more of it." 🍹



Owners Joe Sciortino, David Clark and Andy Palmer look forward to the future of SOL Southwest Kitchen & Tequila Bar.

Photo courtesy of SOL.

To learn more, visit [www.solsouthwestkitchen.com](http://www.solsouthwestkitchen.com) or call 843-388-4502.



**T**HE *IN GOOD TASTE* STAFF CAN'T help but notice how excited readers get about food. That's why last year we introduced the Golden Spoon Awards as a way for restaurants throughout the tri-county area to hear good news from the locals. Basically, it's a way to say "I love you" to your favorite restaurants and let them know they've given you a good experience.

The awards consist of five different categories: ambience of the restaurant; quality of service; quality of cuisine; selection of beers, wines and cocktails; and overall restaurant value. Each category is represented by a spoon, and the more spoons a restaurant has, the better.

We are looking forward to hearing more about your favorite restaurants again next year. We urge you to share the news of the Golden Spoon Awards with your family and friends at [goldenspoonawards.restaurant](http://goldenspoonawards.restaurant).



# The Golden List

*The following restaurants received votes in the 2016-2017 Golden Spoon competition. For more about the Golden Spoon Awards, please visit [www.GoldenSpoonAwards.Restaurant](http://www.GoldenSpoonAwards.Restaurant).*

Acme Lowcountry Kitchen  
Another Broken Egg Cafe  
Anson  
Bacco  
Belgian Gelato Café  
Bistro 217  
Bistro Toulouse  
Bricco Bracco  
Burtons Grill  
Charleston Crab House  
Continental Corner  
Crave Kitchen & Cocktails  
Cru Cafe  
Cuoco Pazzo  
Drawing Room  
Edmund's Oast  
Fast & French  
Fat Hen  
Five Loaves  
Fleet Landing  
Graze  
Halls Chophouse  
Henry's  
High Thyme  
Jestine's Kitchen  
Langdon's Restaurant & Wine Bar

La Tabella  
Laura Alberts  
Long Island Grill  
Longhorn Steakhouse  
Magnolias  
Marina Variety Store  
Metto Coffee & Tea  
Mi Xao  
Mozzo Deli  
Not Just Franks  
O-Ku  
Old Firehouse Restaurant  
Old Village Post House  
On Forty-One  
Opal  
Osaka  
Oyster House on Market  
P.F. Chang's  
Page's Okra Grill  
Papa ZuZu's  
Pattaya Thai  
Persimmon Cafe  
Poe's  
Poogan's Porch  
R.B.'s Seafood Restaurant  
Red Drum

Red's Icehouse  
Rio Chico  
Roadside Seafood  
Rusty Rudder  
Rutledge Cab Co.  
Saffron  
Saveur Du Monde  
See Wee Restaurant  
Sermet's  
Slightly North of Broad  
SOL Southwest Kitchen & Tequila Bar  
Sullivan's  
Swig and Swine  
T.W. Graham & Co.  
The Glass Onion  
The Granary  
The Lowdown  
The Obstinate Daughter  
The Pickled Palate  
The Refuge  
The Wreck of the Richard & Charlene  
Toast  
Tokyo Bistro  
Vintage Coffee Cafe  
Xiao Bao Biscuit

# THE GOLDEN 16

## The Winning Restaurants Voted by You

*The following 16 restaurants, as well as the comments, were submitted by our voters. Categories for Golden Spoons included quality of cuisine, quality of service, ambience, cocktail options and overall value. Congratulations to all winners! We hope you enjoy reading what they had to say about these 16 dining spots as much as we did.*

~The Editors

All photos provided, unless otherwise noted.



Page's Okra Grill

### **Page's Okra Grill**

"Food is terrific. Desserts are out of this world, a wide variety of beer, wine and cocktails. Service is always top-notch and atmosphere is family friendly and makes you feel at home. Sunday brunch has live music, bloody Mary bar and the best mimosas in the Lowcountry!"



## WINNING RESTAURANTS



Red Drum

### **Red Drum**

"Red Drum is our favorite neighborhood gem! The food is always great! We have never been disappointed. Not to mention the brunch is outstanding!"



Burtons

### **Burtons**

"Awesome food that is fresh and delicious. They also will modify to accommodate allergies and taste preferences."

## WINNING RESTAURANTS



*High Thyme*

### **High Thyme**

“High Thyme Cuisine consistently delivers great meal after great meal. I eat there frequently and have done so consistently for about one-and-a-half years. I have never had a meal that was less than excellent. The staff is excellent and people are welcomed like family.”



*Crave*

### **Crave**

“This is hands-down the best managed place in town. The staff and food are amazing.”



## WINNING RESTAURANTS



*The Refuge*

### **The Refuge**

"The Refuge has the whole package – great, modern seaside atmosphere; a diverse menu with fresh seafood/gourmet sandwiches; the ultimate craft cocktail bartender; and the best espresso/dessert bar ever! I went there on Saturday night when they had live music, and it was a blast! This is definitely something not only Isle Of Palms needed but also Charleston!"



### **Sullivan's**

"Always great food and a wide assortment, from stuffed flounder to country fried steak."

*Sullivan's*





*The Obstinate Daughter*

**The Obstinate Daughter**

"This is the first restaurant we visited on vacation years ago, and now that we live here and have tried so many around Charleston, this is still our favorite. Food is always amazing with lots of local ingredients. Service is genuinely good with always the pleasure to offer recommendations. Just as good for lunch."

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Photo by James Stefluk.

The Granary

**The Granary**

“Amazing, seasonally changing menu, wonderful staff, neat atmosphere inside, great mixed drinks and rotating local beer selection.”



Langdon's Restaurant & Wine Bar

**Langdon's Restaurant & Wine Bar**

“This restaurant is top-notch. One of our favorites that we always go back to. The food is outstanding. The service is excellent and the wines are great.”



Five Loaves

**Five Loaves**

"This is one of my favorite spots! I'm always impressed by the quality of their food, excellent service and friendly staff! Prices are hard to beat as well! The perfect place for lunch or dinner, and their brunch is killer, too!"

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*Acme Lowcountry Kitchen*

### **Acme Lowcountry Kitchen**

“Acme is my go-to restaurant when friends come to visit. The menu is well-balanced with many options; the specials never disappoint! I appreciate that the kitchen uses local sustainable ingredients whenever possible. Eclectic to say the least! The service is superb – servers actually have personalities and connect with customers. Management is always present, approaching each table to ensure customers are happy.”

### **Old Village Post House**

“We have been here many times, for special occasions or just dinner out. We always take our out of town visitors here on one night. The food is excellent and the service impeccable. And they put the “special” in special occasion!”



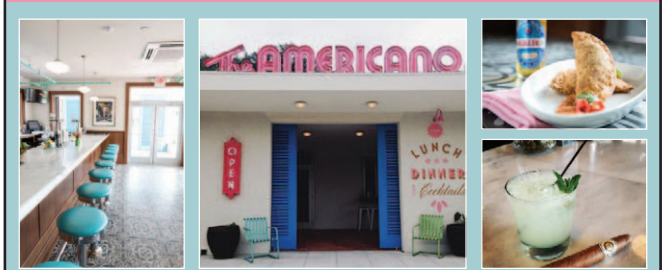
Photo by Cassandra Michelle Photography.

*Old Village Post House*




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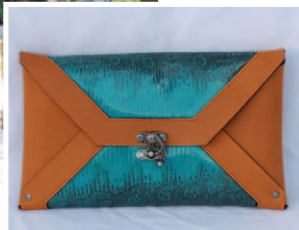
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Photo by Cassandra Michelle Photography.

R.B.'s Seafood Restaurant

### R.B.'s Seafood Restaurant

"It's the entire package at R.B.'s. The food is great, the wait staff is very friendly, drink selections are many and the ambience is beautiful while sitting on Shem Creek."



Graze

### Graze

"I have eaten there 100 times, and I never ever had a disappointment. The food, the service, everything is sensational."



Bistro Toulouse

**Bistro Toulouse**

“Bistro Toulouse greets you like a warm hug. Upon entering, you immediately sense that you’re in capable hands: a thoughtful, knowledgeable staff and truly excellent, classic food. It is a satisfying experience – free of pretense and the trends.”

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EDITORS' PICKS

# Eight of Our Faves

## Editors' Picks for The Golden Spoon Awards

*The following eight restaurants were handpicked by our editorial staff. We hope you enjoy reading about them and eventually trying them for yourself.*  
~The Editors



Wild Flour Pastry

### Wild Flour Pastry – West Ashley

I was doing business in West Ashley one morning, and I stopped in Wild Flour for a cup of coffee and a slice of what would soon be dubbed “the most incredible quiche I’ve ever eaten.” Flaky crust, savory filling, you get the picture. Plus, there are homemade sweets, including the ever-popular Sunday sticky buns. But you’ll have to go to the early church service to snag one.

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## EDITORS' PICKS

Photo by Denise K. James.



**Sea Biscuit – Isle of Palms**  
Regulars who walk the beach or check their post office boxes during the morning hours on the Isle of Palms already know about Sea Biscuit, the island's hole-in-the-wall spot for down-home breakfast and lunch items. It's not a fancy locale, but the food is on point. I highly recommend the crab cake benedict, which I tasted and sincerely loved.



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*The Pickled Palate*

**The Pickled Palate – Mount Pleasant**


When the weather is nice, I take my contributors to lunch at the Pickled Palate as a way to say “thank you.” This quaint, indie restaurant in Mount Pleasant has just the right amount of kitsch, the right amount of outdoor seating and the right prices on their handmade sandwiches and salads.



Lewis BBQ

**Lewis BBQ – Downtown Charleston**


When I said I went to Lewis BBQ for lunch, friends and colleagues were jealous. They all eagerly asked if I got the brisket. Actually, I opted for the turkey, but I tasted both and both were incredible. And though Charleston has its share of barbecue joints, Lewis offers an authentic, Texas-style take on a trend, plus a full bar with the most comfy bar stools I've ever sat my rear end on.




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## EDITORS' PICKS



*The Southern General*

### The Southern General – Johns Island

Not many restaurants can accommodate the gaggle of gal pals that I roll with, but one Saturday this Johns Island sandwich shop made us feel right at home – and then they fed us things like sweet tea chicken wings and an Italian sub made with locally sourced pepperoni. Suffice it to say that we stuffed our faces, even though Southern ladies shouldn't.

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167 Raw

**167 Raw – Downtown Charleston**

As a kid, my favorite food was cereal. Now, as an adult, my favorite food is raw oysters. On a cracker. With hot sauce and a squeeze of lemon. It's like the ocean is inside your mouth. But for those of you who don't dig shellfish, 167 Raw has a lot of other stuff on the menu, too. Try a Po'boy, lobster roll or taco. And leave the oysters for yours truly.

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# EDITORS' PICKS

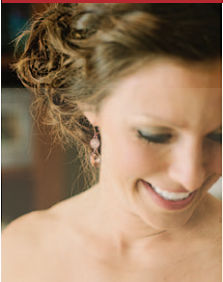


Feathertop Cafe

### Feathertop Cafe – Downtown Charleston

A recent Friday night out with my good friend Ashley culminated in dinner at Feathertop, a trendy spot situated in the train depot. We loved our food – Ash had the rigatoni, and I had the roasted chicken – and our bartender, who kept us engaged and lively throughout.

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**Roadside Seafood – James Island**

There's nothing quite as nostalgic as a plate of freshly-fried seafood. And now, the lucky residents of James Island have Roadside Seafood for when that craving strikes. The menu's got other stuff to choose from, but for a good catch, try the baskets. With everything from frog legs to shark nuggets, it's sure to be an adventure at sea.



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# The Wind Beneath Your Wings Kickin' Chicken

**F**OR MOUNT PLEASANT NATIVES Bobby Perry and Chip Roberts, what started as an idea to help two friends who didn't necessarily want to grow up has now turned into a business that won't stop growing.

When the owners of the now famous Kickin' Chicken were students at the University of South Carolina, they knew a few things – good food, good drinks and that they wanted to work for

BY ANNE HARRIS

themselves. That and a few thousand dollars were all it took to get Perry and Roberts off and running in what was, at the time, primarily a delivery restaurant on Morrison Drive.

Fast forward almost 20 years, and that small restaurant has grown substantially and is now a staple in the Charleston area. With five restaurants, one food truck and a new restaurant opening in Mount Pleasant next year, The Kickin' Chicken is a favorite with families and football fans alike.

The current Mount Pleasant location, located on Johnnie Dodds Boulevard, became the third restaurant the owners opened about 15 years ago, just after their third partner, David Miller, joined the team.

The one item that the owners agree helped fuel their success? The restaurant's namesake – the Kickin' Chicken Sandwich.

As Perry describes, "It's a different take on the chicken sandwich. Hand-breaded and fried or grilled tenders are sliced and placed in a fresh hoagie roll, topped with bacon bits and provolone, then toasted up and served with our very own special sauce. It's been a staple for lunch, dinner and hangovers for nearly 20 years."

While the Kickin' Chicken sandwich may be what they are known for, there are plenty of other items on the Mount Pleasant menu to tempt even the most finicky palates.

"Even after 20 years, I still eat at the restaurant regularly," said Roberts. "Depends on the day, but some of my favorites are the Buffalo Kickin' Chicken Sandwich and the Parmesan Ranch Burger. But it's hard to beat our hand-breaded nuggets or chicken tenders."

It's not just the food that has kept The Kickin' Chicken, well, kickin' for all of these years. From the beginning,

the partners made a commitment as a company to devote themselves to their guests, employees and their community.

Each of the owners can name several people who have been with the company for over 10 years. Over time, employees have built relationships with patrons, and it's that sense of community, plus the great food and reasonable

prices, that the partners say is a big part of the restaurant's success.

These hometown guys are excited to be a part of the Coleman Boulevard dining experience, with their new Mount Pleasant location slated to open in early 2017.


According to Roberts, "The Mount Pleasant location will be a new and improved building and location with a new interior design that will encompass our vibe and feel but will not stray too far from what our loyal guests expect when they come in to visit us. It will also feature an inside/outside bar, with lots of local and craft drafts on tap, a full bar, all opening up onto Coleman Boulevard, making for lively patio dining." 🍷

*To learn more about all things chicken, check out The Kickin' Chicken website at [www.kickinchicken.com](http://www.kickinchicken.com).*



Photo courtesy of Kickin' Chicken.



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# ZAGS: Live in the Light

**L**IFE IN THE SOUTH IS MEANT to be lived outdoors. From relaxing summer days at the beach to the fanfare of a good football game in the fall, most of us in the Lowcountry spend our days in the sun. While great in theory, the sun is damaging to the skin, and, for some, the heat can be oppressive. Luckily there's a new local product

BY ANNE TOOLE

on the market

that will help your day outdoors be made in the shade.

ZAGS sun wraps were created by Mount Pleasant artist Jennifer Horton and have been in high demand since they launched in November of 2015.

"My family spends a lot of time outside, and, as a mother of three, it was an uphill battle to get my children to sit still and re-apply sunscreen every hour or so," she said. "I spent seven years searching for a simple product that was stylish, versatile and that would protect me and my family from the sun. Ultimately, I had to create it myself."

ZAGS come in three sizes – squares, shawls and blankets – and are all colorful, UPF30+ sun wraps made of a high-performing polyester and hand-sewn by local seamstresses.

"What many people don't realize is that the fabric is a wicking, cooling fabric, like your own portable air conditioner," Horton explained. "It has a silky, buttery feel that is antimicrobial, stain repellent and odor resistant."

As an artist, one of Horton's goals was to create a

product that is both functional and fashionable. Using the sublimation process to transfer her original artwork onto the fabric, she has produced 24 vibrant designs that were inspired by locales from the coast of South Carolina to the Mediterranean and Venice.

"Each takes me back to a joyful experience in the sun," Horton said. "The 'Live Oak' pattern is the tree where my husband and I used to meet in college when we were falling in love, and 'Umbrella Fun' is a piece about watching my children play in the water on the coast of Italy."

Some other designs take on Southern names such as "On the Half Shell" and "Paddle Boarding."

"That's part of the fun of these collections. Not only are you getting a healthy, protective product that is locally made, but shopping for your ZAGS is like picking out artwork," she explained.

ZAGS are a natural fit for everything under the sun, from summer poolside and boating excursions to outdoor social events to steamy early-fall tailgates.

In addition to using them simply as a wrap, shawl or blanket, ZAGS fans twist and tie the sun wraps into sarongs, and young mothers use them for stroller and nursing covers. Their versatility is endless.

"The tagline is 'Live in the Light,'" beamed Horton of her faith-inspired brand. "That's really what ZAGS allow us to do. It's what we're called to do." 🌞

*ZAGS are available for purchase online, in boutiques around the Southeast and at private ZAGS trunk parties. Visit [zagslife.com](http://zagslife.com) for more information.*



Photo courtesy of ZAGS.

In addition to using them as a wrap, ZAGS fans twist and tie them into sarongs, and young mothers use them for stroller and nursing covers.

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# Kicking Butt for Their Patients

## Colon Surgeons of Charleston

**T**HERE ARE SOME THINGS YOU may be too embarrassed to talk about even to your best friend. But there is no need to suffer in silence. Margarita Murphy, MD, is the sort of doctor you can confide in about anything. As a colon surgeon, she has dealt with everything from hemorrhoids to invasive colorectal cancer.

Dr. Murphy grew up in a family of lawyers, but she knew, even from childhood, that she wanted to be a doctor. She wasn't sure about the specialty until she was in medical school, but it soon became clear.

BY BARBARA MILLEN PATRICK

"I like results so I got into surgery," Dr. Murphy said. "And colon cancer is highly curable."

She and her husband, Dr. Brendan Murphy, are the owners of a state-of-the-art practice dedicated to minimally invasive colorectal surgeries. Designed by the doctor herself to offer the best diagnostics available in the United States and to treat many patients on-site, Colon Surgeons of Charleston provides a whole new level of care.

Dr. Murphy is rated as the number 2 colon surgeon for fecal incontinence in the country, not only because of her exceptional skills in the operating room but for her compassion for her patients. She has a sense of humor – joking that patients want her to "fix their pain in the butt" – but is serious about changing her patients' lives for the better.

To that end, Colon Surgeons of Charleston is the first to offer Fuse,™ the latest endoscopy technology, which provides a panoramic view inside the colon. It enables the doctors to find even the smallest tumors, up to 69 percent more than traditional technology. Their goal is to reduce the number of deaths from colorectal cancer.

"It means we can bring a higher quality of care to our patients," Dr. Murphy said.

Although not life-threatening, fecal incontinence is life-altering for many patients and a challenge to treat. As a leading expert in this field, Dr. Murphy stays abreast of the very latest technology, often traveling to Europe and South America to speak at conferences and learn about new procedures to help these patients lead normal, active lives.

"These ladies are so grateful," she said about the women who seek help for fecal incontinence.

Dr. Murphy is grateful for her success and has a deep need to help all patients, regardless of their ability to pay. "We all have a way to serve," Dr. Murphy explained.

"I serve patients through Seacoast Church's free clinic, the Dream Center."

Beverly Greene was one of the patients who went to the Dream Center. She had not been feeling well for several months. A colonoscopy revealed "a very large mass" according to Dr. Murphy. The surgery went well and Dr. Murphy had good news for her patient.

"She said, 'Ms. Greene, you are cancer free,'" Beverly said. "We hugged and cried."

That was two years ago, and Beverly Greene remains cancer free and grateful for the medical care she received, even though she had no insurance.

Because Dr. Murphy owns the surgical center, she is able to outfit it with the latest technology and treat patients based on their health needs rather than their ability to pay.

That was a huge relief for Beverly Greene, who received a scary diagnosis but the gift of a good outcome.

"Dr. Murphy is my heart," Beverly said. "I love her." 🐾

To learn more, visit [www.colonsurgeonsofcharleston.com](http://www.colonsurgeonsofcharleston.com) or call 843-853-7730.



Even when she was a child, Margarita Murphy knew she wanted to be a doctor.

Photo by Brian Sherman.



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# Whole Health from the Inside Out

## Better Life Carolinas

**W**HOLE HEALTH begins from the inside out, and you're never too old or too young to get started on the path toward a better life. Dr. Mickey Barber and her experienced team at Better Life Carolinas take an integrative, proactive approach to wellness that is unique to the area in more ways than one.

A resident of South Carolina since the age of 19,

BY CHARLIZE BURNS

Dr. Barber completed her undergraduate education at the College of Charleston. She then went on to medical school at MUSC, with general surgery and anesthesiology residencies at Tulane and Harvard.

Upon returning to the Lowcountry to open her own anesthesiology practice, now in her mid-40s, Dr. Barber suddenly started feeling ill, and she couldn't figure out why. After months of suffering, she was finally diagnosed with a neuropathy that was slowly shutting her systems down. This was a wake-up call. She knew her passion was no longer inside the fast pace of the operating room but in helping people age well, one patient at a time.

A blazing trendsetter in bioidentical hormone therapy for men, she started the Cenegenics Carolinas LLC practice in downtown Charleston. After more than a decade, she opened Better Life in March of 2016 with Dr. Randi Popp, who has an extensive background in primary care. Now they get to help patients from 19 to 88 achieve their best health possible.

Dr. Barber's beautiful new office feels more like a spa than a doctor's office, offering the latest cutting-edge technology and treatments you won't find elsewhere.

From nutrition and exercise coaching to stress

management and disease prevention, Charleston residents can think of Dr. Barber as their personal health and wellness coach. There are also plenty of services offered a la carte – everything from IV treatments to injections, fillers and more.

One of the most exciting new treatments is peptide therapy, which is not found anywhere else. Better Sun is an injection that gradually tans you from the inside out. Athletes can rebuild ligaments faster with Repair and Recovery, and there's even an aphrodisiac called Honeymoon. Dr. Barber is thrilled to be the only

physician in the area to offer these treatments. She also carries vitamin supplements in a new on-site compounding facility, so patients can get their supplements directly.

Dr. Barber and her team value the importance of being completely accessible and available to patients. Since they don't accept private insurance, there is no rush, no waiting on the phone or sitting in a busy, stressful waiting room. They are truly dedicated to providing patients with an enjoyable, non-intimidating experience.

Dr. Barber is an excellent proponent of healthy aging, living it every day both in her practice and her personal life. In her spare time, she enjoys golf and working out, being on the water and spending time with her children, stepchildren and grandchildren. She placed in figure competitions in her 50s and plans to continue competing well into her 60s. She said the most rewarding part of her job is working with her amazing team of people every day and seeing real, positive results.



Photo courtesy of Dr. Mickey Barber.

Dr. Mickey Barber opened Better Life in March of 2016 to help patients from 19 to 88 achieve their best health possible.

*You shouldn't be alone on your journey toward a Better Life. Let Dr. Mickey Barber help you look and feel young at any age. To learn more, visit [www.betterlifecarolinas.com](http://www.betterlifecarolinas.com) or call 843-972-3090.*

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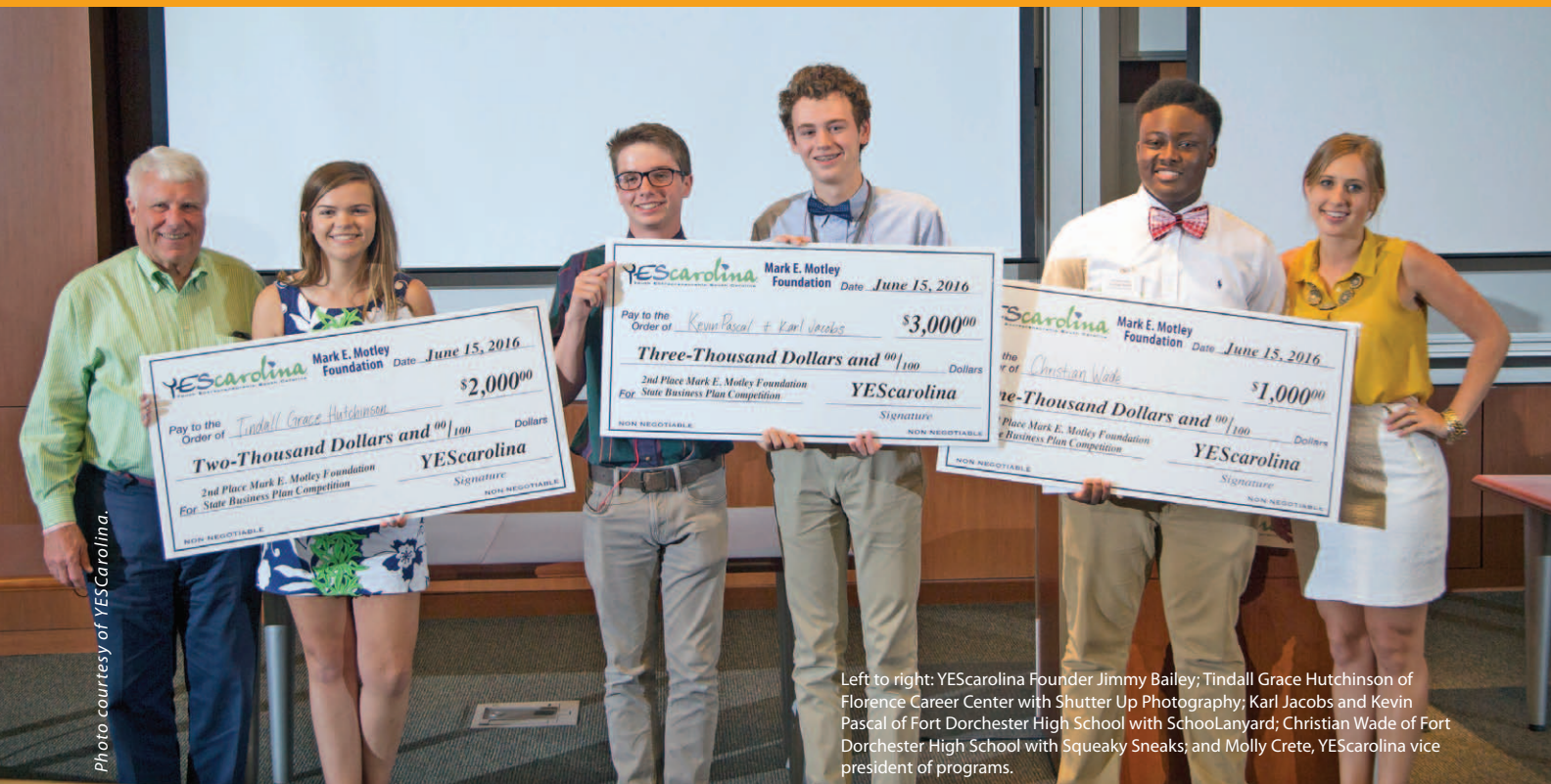


Photo courtesy of YEScarolina.

Left to right: YEScarolina Founder Jimmy Bailey; Tindall Grace Hutchinson of Florence Career Center with Shutter Up Photography; Karl Jacobs and Kevin Pascal of Fort Dorchester High School with SchoolAnyand; Christian Wade of Fort Dorchester High School with Squeaky Sneaks; and Molly Crete, YEScarolina vice president of programs.

# Say Yes to Entrepreneurship

## STUDENTS PRESENT THEIR IDEAS AT LAING

**T**HE BUSINESS LEADERS AND inventors of tomorrow are getting a head start today, thanks to YEScarolina's Business Plan Competition. In a Shark Tank-like event, students across South Carolina present their business plans in the hopes of winning recognition and seed money.

Eight middle school students competed at Laing Middle School of Science and Technology on June 14, vying for the top spots and the money to make their business plans a reality. The top two winners of the middle school competition joined 14 high school students at the College of Charleston School of Business the following day in an even fiercer competition. Participants gave a PowerPoint presentation outlining their

vision for their new enterprise in front of a panel of judges after having submitted a complete business plan. The program is now five years old in South Carolina, but this marks the first year that middle school students were eligible to compete.

"The middle school kids are the best idea generators because they're still so young," said Molly Crete of YEScarolina.

As vice president of programming, Crete oversees the Business Plan competition as well as the organization's other programs. Its mission is to teach entrepreneurship to young South Carolinians of all socioeconomic backgrounds and improve their business, academic, communication and life skills.

YEScarolina, which was founded by Jimmy Bailey in 2004, trains teachers to educate budding entrepreneurs. Over the past 12 years, the organization has trained about

BY ERIN DANLY

900 teachers and reached more than 17,000 students. Entrepreneurship is typically offered in South Carolina public schools as an elective, widely in high schools and increasingly more often in middle schools.

Christine Lloyd, who teaches an elective focused on entrepreneurship at Laing, thinks it has made a difference for the kids and their creativity.

“The 8th grade team at Laing was looking to introduce entrepreneurship into our school’s STEM curriculum, so I signed up for YesCarolina’s summer training. Shortly afterwards, Principal Whitehair reached out to me about teaching it full-time as an elective,” she said.

“YesCarolina’s program motivates my students by exposing them to the tools necessary to create their own small businesses – and, in particular, to understand that it is possible to successfully run one as a teenager! The program also helps spark a desire to learn more about how everyone’s daily lives are influenced by some fairly basic economic concepts,” she added.

“Entrepreneurship is a life-relevant class,” said Crete. “We see the importance of public speaking, leadership, math, finance, composition and teamwork. With entrepreneurship, you learn a lot of really important skills, not only to start your own business if you want to but to be a better employee.”

The competition is open to students who have taken an entrepreneurship class or who have attended a summer business camp taught by a teacher trained by YEScarolina. Students are drawn to the competition, and to study entrepreneurship, because it allows them to work to their existing strengths.

That’s what the students at this year’s competition did. Isaiah Griffin of Military Magnet Academy in North Charleston took first place in the middle school competition with his idea for “Beach Bubble Ice Cream,” a cross between an old-fashioned mobile ice cream truck and a trendy food truck. It’s a twist on something that everyone already

knows, and it’s already a success – Isaiah runs the truck with his dad.

“They’re making it happen,” said Crete. “He really had a full understanding of business before signing up for the summer Biz Camp.”

The winners of the high school competition were partners Kevin Pascal and Karl Jacobs of Fort Dorchester

High School, also located in North Charleston. Their SchoolAnyard is a multifunctional lanyard that helps students keep things such as their school ID, cell phone, MP3 player and other personal items organized. It has headphones and a detachable flash drive. Pascal and Jacobs are already looking at ways to expand the target market beyond

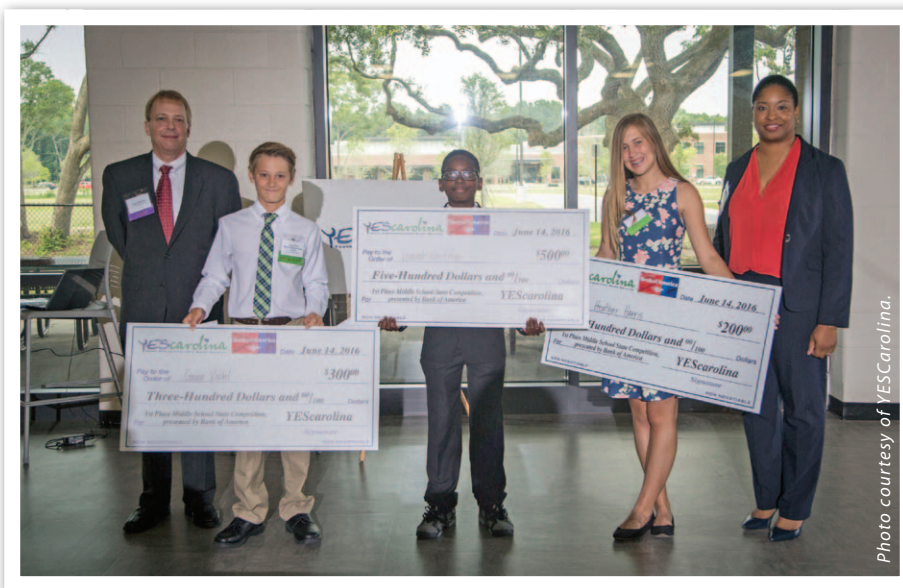
students and are considering bringing their idea to companies that require employees to wear ID badges as well.

In addition to winning \$3,000 in prize money, the team can now compete on a national level at the Network for Teaching Entrepreneurship National Challenge, licensor of YEScarolina. Pascal will represent the pair in New York City this October, where he’ll be going up against 40 finalists from around the country. Crete worked with Pascal to help get a prototype ready for display, help rebrand the business plan, plus polish the presentation for the national competition.

Whether students take home the top prize or simply take part, participation can be the start of a student’s entrepreneurial life.

“One of the entrepreneurship teachers said it best. In school, if the students aren’t good at math, science or English, they think they aren’t good at school. In entrepreneurship, we focus on what they are good at. We focus on their strengths and talents,” said Crete. “Come up with an idea of your own, something you’re good at or love to do. Let’s find a business that works for you.” 🍪

*To learn more about the Business Plan Competition and about YEScarolina, visit [www.yescarolina.com](http://www.yescarolina.com).*



Left to right: Joseph Meachum of Bank of America, final round judge; Gavin Viohl of Laing Middle School of Science & Technology with Miles of Smiles Fishing Charters; Isaiah Griffin of Military Magnet Academy with Beach Bubble Ice Cream; Heather Harris of Laing Middle School of Science & Technology with Heather’s Dog Walking; and Latasha Gandy of Bank of America, final round judge.

Photo courtesy of YEScarolina.



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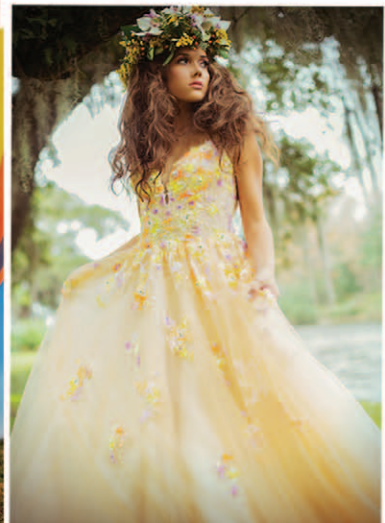
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**MUSC** was also high-performing in gastroenterology & GI surgery, geriatrics, neurology & neurosurgery, orthopedics, pulmonology, and rheumatology.



*“ I am proud to hear that U.S. News & World Report has ranked MUSC as the number one hospital in South Carolina,” said Patrick J. Cawley, M.D., MUSC Health CEO and MUSC Vice President of Health Affairs. “These rankings reflect not just reputation but patient outcomes, teaching the next generation of care providers, developing new innovations to improve health, and healthcare leadership. We are honored to carry on this robust mission for South Carolina and the nation!”*

Read **MORE** about the state of health care in the Lowcountry and MUSC's mission inside the Fall 2016 issue of *HealthLinks Charleston*.

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# Giving Patients a Reason to Grin

## Smiling Oak Dentistry

**A**H, YOUR SMILE. IT'S THE FIRST thing people see and, regardless of which continent you find yourself on, it connotes a friendly message of peace and contentment. One practice in Mount Pleasant is making sure people's pearly whites stay in pristine condition. With a knowledgeable staff, warm environment and an array of state-of-the-art

BY KALENE MCCORT

services, it's easy to see why Smiling Oak Dentistry continues to attract a loyal clientele. Dr. Jeff Gardner and Dr. Jessica Peele consistently give those who visit their office something to smile about.

"I saw many things I liked about the profession itself: a hands-on working environment, a commitment to educational growth and a unique ability to connect with members of your community," said Dr. Peele, reflecting on her decision to break into dentistry. "Every day is a little different, and I'm lucky to be in a field where I am never bored!"

From cleaning teeth to improving smiles with dental implants, Smiling Oak Dentistry can do it all. They pride themselves on forming a relationship with all who step foot into their office. Creating a customized plan that will best meet the needs of each individual is their top priority. While some of their patients live in Mount Pleasant, folks travel from James Island, downtown Charleston and even Folly Beach to receive the top-notch care only Smiling Oak can provide.

"Removing pain and misery from another human being is the ultimate reward. Creating or fixing a smile so that someone feels better about themselves is also rewarding," said Dr. Gardner. "It is also very rewarding to see young employees develop a work ethic and become

outstanding individuals."

Dr. Gardner credits part of his success to hiring people who have a passion for the industry. Before joining the team, Dr. Peele journeyed to Nepal, where she spearheaded an initiative to provide adequate oral health care to those in need. She also has volunteered in the Dominican Republic, lending her skill set to those who require it most.

"Dr. Gardner has built a wonderful dental practice. He's the guru, but he'd probably agree with me in saying that there was no one secret to the practice's success," said Dr. Peele. "With the help of the amazing staff, we treat every patient with respect and as part of the family. I believe through his humble attitude, easygoing nature and good solid dentistry to back it up, his practice has blossomed naturally."

Whether you find yourself dealing with an unexpected dental emergency or just want to know your options when it comes to improving your smile, Smiling Oak is your go-to source for all things dental.

It's fair to say Dr. Gardner's passion for the field stems from his father, who had a successful practice for 50 years and also taught aspiring dental students at MUSC. While Dr. Gardner didn't initially anticipate following in his father's footsteps, he now revels in the satisfaction he gets from working with his hands and having a positive impact on patients.

"Dental schools are full of perfectionists," said Dr. Gardner. "Perfectionism has driven many dentists mad. Remember that anything that one does with his or her hands can always be done better. Never forget the person on the other end of the tooth." 🦷

*Smiling Oak Dentistry is located at 1077 Johnnie Dodds Blvd. To learn more, visit [www.smilingoakdentistry.com](http://www.smilingoakdentistry.com) or call 843-884-0335.*



Dr. Jeff Gardner and Dr. Jessica Peele consistently give those who visit their office something to smile about.

Photo courtesy of Smiling Oak Dentistry.

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# Our Mount Pleasant Neighbors

**W**E'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/MountPleasant-Magazine](http://www.facebook.com/MountPleasant-Magazine). 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](mailto:Facetime@MountPleasantMagazine.com).



## Brian Anderson

**Lives in:** Mount Pleasant, South Carolina.

**From:** Fredericksburg, Virginia.

**Education:** James Madison University, Finance.

**Employment:** Financial planner.

**Favorite reading:** "How to Win Friends and Influence People."

**Favorite music:** Country, beach music.

**Activities:** Soccer, basketball.

**Interests:** Spending time with my wife and 14-month-old daughter.

**Likes:** Social activities by the water.

**Favorite quote or philosophy:** "If ifs and buts were candy and nuts, then oh what a party we'd have."



## Brian Clyburn

**Lives in:** Charleston, South Carolina.

**From:** Spartanburg, South Carolina.

**Education:** College of Charleston.

**Employment:** Allstate agency owner in Mount Pleasant.

**Favorite reading:** Anything Stephen King: "The Green Mile," "Misery," "Pet Sematary."

**Favorite music:** Country/classic rock.

**Activities:** Fishing, golfing and coaching Little League baseball.

**Interests:** Spending time with family, home remodeling and computer science.

**Likes:** College sports, local cuisine and the many activities Charleston has to offer.

**Favorite quote or philosophy:** "The most terrifying words in the English language are: I'm from the government and I'm here to help." – Ronald Reagan



## Anna Grace South

**Lives in:** Mount Pleasant, South Carolina.

**From:** Dunwoody, Georgia.

**Education:** Clemson University.

**Employment:** Just a student, avoiding the real world for as long as I can.

**Favorite reading:** The Divergent Series by Veronica Roth.

**Favorite music:** John Mayer and Jason Aldean.

**Activities:** Hiking, walking my dog on the beach and going out in the boat.

**Likes:** Coffee, binge-watching Netflix, lazy beach days and the Clemson Tigers!

**Favorite quote or philosophy:** "Sometimes I start a sentence and I don't even know where its going. I just hope I find it along the way." – Michael Scott, "The Office."



## Minou Kent

**Lives in:** Mount Pleasant, South Carolina.

**From:** Starnberg, Germany.

**Education:** Undergraduate at the University of South Carolina and masters from the College of Charleston.

**Employment:** 1st grade teacher at James B. Edwards Elementary.

**Favorite reading:** "Bridgett Jones's Diary."

**Favorite music:** Country and hip-hop.

**Activities:** Exercising, reading and traveling.

**Interests:** Interior design, fashion.

**Likes:** Thrift store shopping, jewelry and trying new foods.

**Favorite quote or philosophy:** "Don't put off until tomorrow what you can do today" – Benjamin Franklin.

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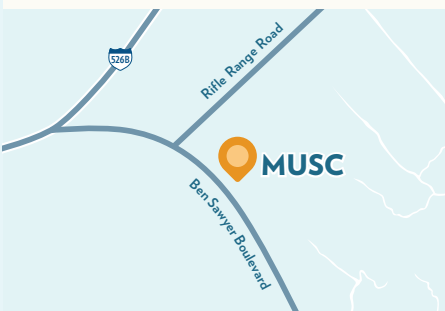
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