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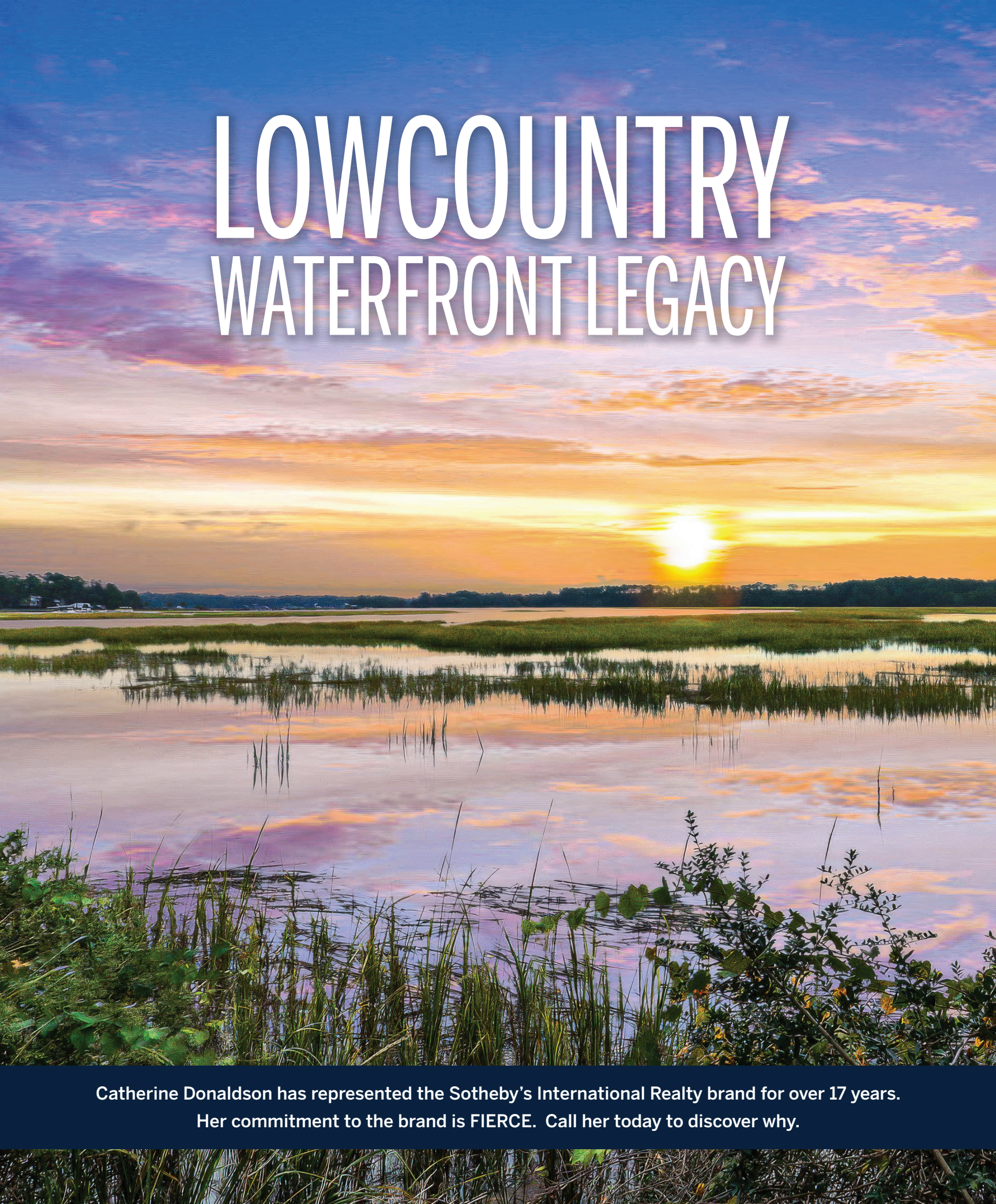
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the team

What is the first sign of spring for you?

"Warm weather and blooming azaleas, of course."
- LORI



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"A thick layer of pollen covering all outdoor surfaces."
- LANCE



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"Ahhhhhh-choooooooo!"
- JEREMY



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"Warm days and cool nights."
- CHARLES



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"Longer days — that extra sunlight!"
- ASHLAN



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"All the baby wildlife peeking out."
- BAILEY



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"When my mom, a teacher, visits on her spring break."
- ALEA



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"Longer evening light and the bright spring greens of the oak trees budding."
- REBECCA



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"Spring training. Batter up!"
- EDWARD



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"The call of the wild to start hitting all of the outdoor garden centers."
- LISA



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"Seeing the daffodils pop out."
- LEAH



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"Hitting the links and enjoying the best time of year to play a round."
- BRUCE



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VOL. 10, NO. 3

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March features



Spring Forward

March in the Lowcountry lives in that sweet in-between, where winter loosens its grip and spring begins to show its hand. Flowers brighten the landscape, the marsh turns green again and patios, gardens and calendars all start filling up. That sense of anticipation shapes this Spring Forward issue, packed with ideas for getting outside, growing something new, embracing native plants and pollinators and making the most of longer, brighter days.

©PATRICK JENNINGS

RED ALERT Want to draw ruby-throated hummingbirds to your backyard? Plant cardinal flower (Lobelia cardinalis). Its brilliant red spikes are irresistible to hummingbirds and serve as a rich nectar source for pollinating insects as well. Pick one up at this year's Spring Native Plant Sale on March 28 at the Coastal Discovery Museum. Learn more on **page 100**.

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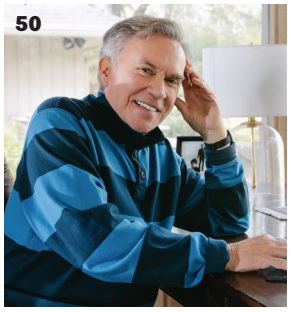
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Marching toward spring

Where gardens wake, birds return, and outdoor living finds its rhythm again



©LISA STAFF

SNIFFING OUT THE SEASON March is Camo's cue that outdoor time is nearly back. After an unpredictable winter, publisher Lori Goodridge-Cribb and her four-legged companion are already looking ahead to beach strolls, park laps and long breaths of fresh air, with sandy paws and warm sunshine just around the corner.

March in the Lowcountry sits between winter's last stand and the first clear signals of what's next, arriving with just enough moodiness to keep things interesting. Days are mild and changeable, increasingly pleasant. A cool-snap can still slip in early on, but winter coats are clearly on borrowed time.

This is when the Lowcountry starts to wake up and stretch. Sunshine becomes more reliable, breezes keep afternoons crisp, and azaleas begin to steal the spotlight. The marsh trades winter browns for fresh greens, sometimes almost overnight. Lawns and landscapes come back to life, new birds appear at backyard feeders, and gardeners feel the familiar pull toward seed trays, soil and open space.

The shift shows up socially, too. Snowbirds begin to thin out. Festivals, parades and seasonal events return to the calendar. Outdoor dining ramps back up, chairs slide onto patios, and favorite places still feel comfortably accessible, at least before spring break and Heritage crowds roll in.

If January and February are about quiet and reset, March is about anticipation. It shows up in longer afternoons, fuller calendars and the sense that the outdoors is calling again. That energy defines this Spring Forward issue.

Inside you will find stories designed for this moment, from guides to the best u-pick farms for fresh flowers and vegetables to smart tools and outdoor upgrades that make time outside easier, greener and more fun. We share five satisfying books to match the change of pace, practical help for pollen and spring allergies and introduce locals whose lives are closely tied to being outdoors this time of year.

You will also find seed-starting advice, tips for growing Asian culinary herbs and guidance on building a pollinator garden, along with a closer look at why native plants matter. We explore spring landscaping strategies, follow migration as birds return to the Lowcountry and offer tips for helping pets adjust to daylight savings time.

Add in garden-inspired art from local artists, fresh ingredients for lighter meals and cocktails that toast the return of sunshine, and the season comes into focus. Nothing has fully arrived yet, but everything feels possible.

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LORI GOODRIDGE-CRIBB
PUBLISHER
lori.goodridge@wearelocallife.com

FRESH PICK: ROSEMARY

Rosemary thrives year-round in the Lowcountry, but it's at its best from late fall through spring, especially March through May. Cooler, drier weather keeps plants vigorous and fragrant, producing tender new growth that's ideal for cooking. Locally, rosemary behaves more like a small shrub than a delicate herb, and regular spring harvesting helps keep it compact while encouraging fresh growth before summer heat sets in. Rosemary and lamb are a natural match. The herb's piney, savory flavor cuts through the richness of the meat and feels right at home on an early spring table.

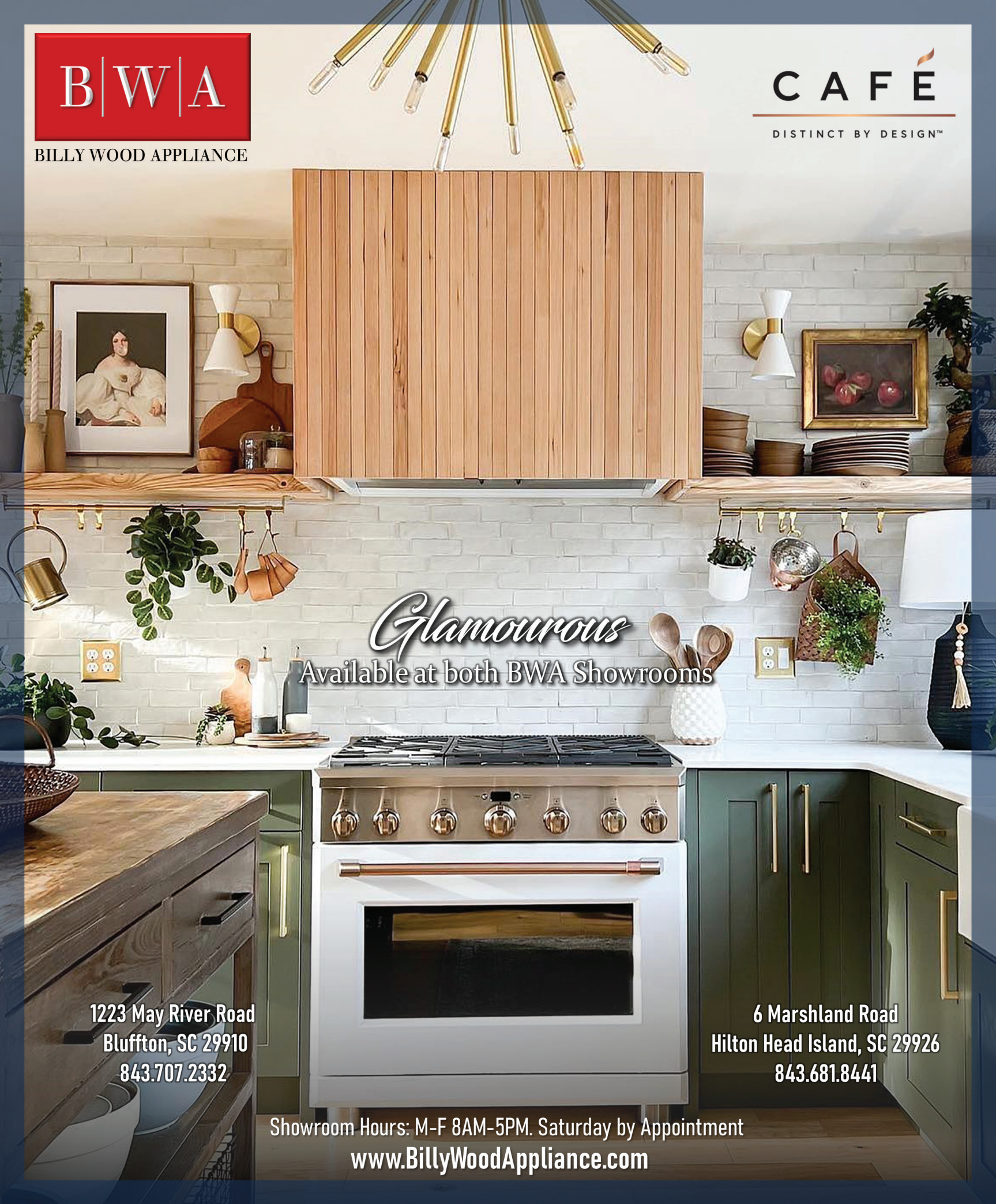


Simple rosemary lamb chops

Rub lamb chops with olive oil, minced fresh rosemary, garlic, salt and pepper. Let sit at room temperature for 20 minutes. Sear in a hot skillet, or grill over medium-high heat for about 3 to 4 minutes per side, until nicely browned and cooked to your liking. Finish with a squeeze of lemon and a pinch of flaky salt. Easy, classic and perfectly suited to the season.



PASSPORT TO FLAVOR Have you spotted the LOCAL Life Jeep around town? This month we pulled up next to Skull Creek Boathouse general manager ***Chris Butler*** and executive chef ***Jesus Lopez***. Mark your calendar for their upcoming Flavors Without Borders event, from 6 to 8 p.m. on March 10, a night designed to showcase flavors from around the world.


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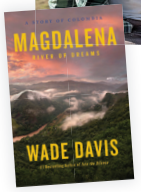
MEET LOCAL CREATIVES BEHIND THE SCENES



Gwen Callas-Miller *Photographer*

FOR THIS ISSUE: Parting shot **HOMETOWN:** East Liverpool, Ohio **CURRENT HOME:** Bluffton **WHAT DO YOU LOVE MOST ABOUT THE LOWCOUNTRY?** I love the natural beauty of our vibrant landscapes and diversity of the local and migrant birds. It inspires me to grab my camera and set off to see what the world outside is up to. **WHAT DO YOU MISS MOST ABOUT YOUR HOMETOWN?** Seeing old friends. **FAVORITE LOCAL PHOTOGRAPHY SPOTS:** Cypress Wetlands in Port Royal, Fish Haul Beach, Pinckney National Wildlife Refuge, Sea Pines, Jarvis Creek Park and my backyard. **WHAT PHOTO ARE YOU STILL CHASING?** It's tough to narrow that down, but two that come to mind are a jaguar on the hunt in Pantanal and an elephant silhouette at sunset on the African plains. I have come close on the sunset shot, but just fell short. **WHAT DO YOU LOVE MOST ABOUT SPRING?** Spring is nesting season and the best time of year to watch and capture the rhythm of life as it unfolds; from courtship and mating to fledging the next generation. **FAVORITE ST. PATRICK'S DAY MEMORY OR TRADITION:** My late husband and I had our first date on St. Patrick's Day and celebrated it annually as our unofficial anniversary for the next 37 years. **WHAT ARE YOU LISTENING TO?** I just saw the Eagles at the Sphere in Las Vegas and have them on repeat. **SOMETHING ABOUT YOU MOST PEOPLE DON'T KNOW:** I was in a rock band in college.





Michele Roldán-Shaw *Writer*

OTHER CREDS: Memoir ghostwriter **FOR THIS ISSUE:** Asian culinary herbs **HOMETOWN:** Long Beach, Washington state **CURRENT HOME:** Levy **WHAT DO YOU LOVE MOST ABOUT THE LOWCOUNTRY?** Marshy wilderness, subtropical forests and deserted barrier island beaches. **WHAT DO YOU MISS MOST ABOUT YOUR HOMETOWN?** Thirty-mile-long uninterrupted sand beach with forested rocky headlands and almost no development. **FAVORITE LOCAL SPOTS:** Hunting Island, Pinckney Island, Savannah Wildlife Refuge, New River, Ebenezer Creek. **WHAT DO YOU LOVE MOST ABOUT SPRING?** I actually like the pollen. **WHAT ARE YOU LISTENING TO?** Spring peepers. **WHAT ARE YOU READING?** *Magdalena, River of Dreams: A Story of Colombia*, by Wade Davis. (I'm half Colombian.) **WHAT ARE YOU DRINKING?** Mushroom "coffee" when it's cold out, sparkling water with homemade herbal exilirs when it's warm. **SOMETHING ABOUT YOU MOST PEOPLE DON'T KNOW:** I need bananas to live. **WORDS TO LIVE BY:** "All conditioned phenomena are impermanent. Strive toward enlightenment with diligence." — Last words of Buddha

Belle Whitfield *Writer*

FOR THIS ISSUE: Hot tech, spring alergies **HOMETOWN:** Tampa, Florida **CURRENT HOME:** Hilton Head Island **WHAT DO YOU LOVE MOST ABOUT THE LOWCOUNTRY?** It's a mix of everything I already love; coastal beaches combined with beautiful marshes. That combination really makes the Lowcountry stand out from other places. **WHAT DO YOU MISS MOST ABOUT YOUR HOMETOWN?** My family and my two cats. **FAVORITE LOCAL SPOTS:** Tin & Tallow, Local Legend, Corner Perk **WHAT DO YOU LOVE MOST ABOUT SPRING?** The warm weather, golf season, hearing the birds chirp more and the longer days. **FAVORITE ST. PATRICK'S DAY MEMORY OR TRADITION:** Pinching people who don't wear green. **WHAT ARE YOU WATCHING?** *The Pitt* on HBO Max **WHAT ARE YOU LISTENING TO?** A mix of 2000's music and some '80s classics. **WHAT ARE YOU DRINKING?** The lemon-lime Poppi. **SOMETHING ABOUT YOU MOST PEOPLE DON'T KNOW:** Until recently, I had never seen snow. **WORDS TO LIVE BY:** Difficult roads often lead to beautiful places.



Others who sprang into action for this Spring Forward issue ...

PHOTOGRAPHERS Kelli Boyd + Arno Dimmling + Patrick Jennings + Rob Kaufman + Cassidy Lackos + Amia Marcell Jeanne Paddison + Ursula Page + Ken Roberts + Chris Smith + Mary Alice Tartler

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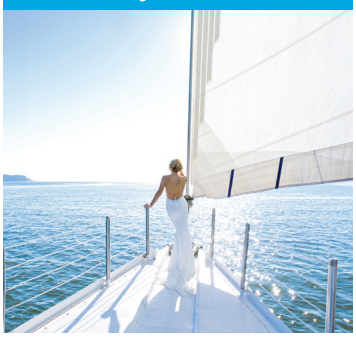
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About the cover



*Few sights announce spring in the Lowcountry quite like the **painted bunting**. Arriving from late February through mid-April, this dazzling visitor looks as if it flew straight out of a painter's studio, dressed in electric blues, fiery reds and fresh greens. For all their brilliance, painted buntings prefer the quiet shelter of maritime scrub, where their bold territorial spirit matches their unforgettable beauty. This striking image was captured by wildlife photographer and Audubon master birder **Mary Alice Tartler**. Learn more about her on page 54, and see additional spring migration photography by her on page 118.*



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Strawberry fields forever

BAREFOOT FARMS, ST. HELENA ISLAND
The hand-painted red letters along Sea Island Parkway are hard to miss, and so is the iconic local farmer behind them. Barefoot Farms is the longtime passion project of Jacky Frazier, who planted his first watermelons here more than 30 years ago and never looked back. Spring kicks things off with u-pick strawberries, followed by a rotating lineup of warm-season produce. Expect the unexpected, from seeded yellow and Black Jack watermelons to Gullah and Geechee melons, speckled butterbeans, pinkeye peas, bull grapes, sugar plums and EverCrisp apples, alongside staples like tomatoes, okra, cantaloupe and field peas as the season allows.

Nearby attractions: *Beedos restaurant, Gay Fish Company, Dempsey Farms*
Get there: *939 Sea Island Parkway, 56 minutes (41 miles) from HHI*

Pick of the season

LOWCOUNTRY AND COASTAL GEORGIA U-PICK FARMS WORTH THE DRIVE

STORY BY LANCE HANLIN

As tempting as the convenience of curbside grocery pickup can be, many shoppers still choose to park the car, brave the weather and wander the aisles of the grocery store for one simple reason: we like to pick our own produce. Great meals start with great ingredients, and we're lucky to have them in abundance. Supermarkets and farmers markets keep fresh fruits and vegetables available year-round, sourced both locally and from farther afield. For those who want to take it a step further, the Lowcountry and coastal Georgia are dotted with u-pick farms, where fruits, vegetables and flowers can be harvested straight from the fields where they grow. U-pick availability varies by weather and crop conditions, so it's always wise to check farm social media pages before making the drive.





©LISA STAFF

Lowcountry grown, generations deep

DEMPSEY FARMS, ST. HELENA ISLAND A drive down Sea Island Parkway offers a living glimpse of Lowcountry farming history at Dempsey Farms, a family-run operation rooted on St. Helena Island since 1938. What began with Davey Dempsey's grandfather growing tomatoes has evolved into a beloved u-pick destination now stewarded by multiple generations. Spring brings strawberries and early-season vegetables like squash, green beans, cucumbers and okra. Summer delivers sweet corn, eggplant, cantaloupe, tomatoes and watermelon, while fall crops carry the season into November before the farm briefly closes and resets for spring. It's farming as it's been done here for decades, with deep roots and an open gate.

Nearby attractions: *Hunting Island State Park, The Shrimp Shack, Barefoot Farms*
Get there: *1576 Sea Island Parkway, 61 minutes (45 miles) from HHI*



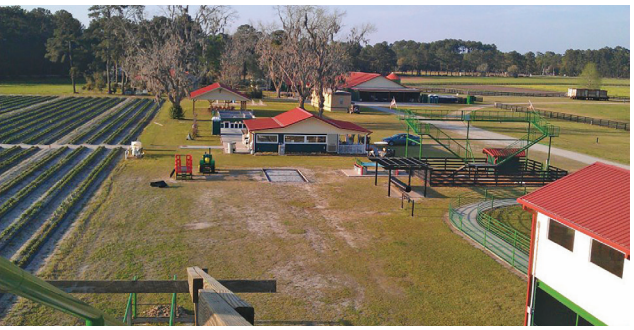


©HELENA HILLS FARM

Stop and smell the flowers

HELENA HILLS FARM, HARDEEVILLE Helena Hills Farm is a blooming sanctuary where flowers, community and hands-on experiences meet. Set amid lush greenery and forested surroundings, the farm is being thoughtfully shaped by owner Chrissy Mozeleski, who brought her lifelong passion for flowers from Upstate New York to the Lowcountry in 2020. Spring opens with cool-season favorites like snapdragons, larkspur, stock and sweet peas, then shifts into vibrant warm-season color with zinnias, sunflowers, cosmos and fragrant basil. In addition to u-pick flowers, the farm hosts workshops, events and photography sessions, inviting visitors to slow down and linger.

Nearby attractions: *Savannah National Wildlife Refuge, Tanger Outlets Savannah, downtown Savannah*
Get there: *577 Bellinger Hill Run Road, 37 minutes (23 miles) from HHI*





©OTTAWA FARMS

Fields of tradition

OTTAWA FARMS, BLOOMINGDALE (GEORGIA) With 350 acres under cultivation and roots stretching back to 1870, Ottawa Farms stands as one of coastal Georgia's most enduring agricultural landmarks. Owner Pete Waller represents the third generation of his family to actively work the land, continuing a legacy built on seasonal rhythms and hands-on farming. Open seasonally, the farm offers a classic u-pick experience, beginning with strawberries and rolling into peak blackberry and blueberry season. Inside the General Store, visitors will find farm goods and locally raised Angus beef, while the surrounding grounds invite guests to linger, thanks to friendly farm animals, a shaded picnic pavilion and plenty of room for group gatherings. Seasonal events such as the Strawberry Festival (April 11-12) and educational field trips add another layer of charm, making it easy to turn a simple farm stop into a full afternoon well spent.

Nearby attractions: *National Museum of the Mighty Eighth Air Force, downtown Savannah, Oatland Island Wildlife Center*
Get there: *702 Bloomingdale Road, 55 minutes (44 miles) from HHI*



©LISA STAFF

OTHER U-PICK HOT SPOTS

U PICK DAFFODILS, OKATIE Chuck and Diane Merrick's daffodil field has long marked the Lowcountry's earliest hint of spring. When blooms cooperate, the field glows with yellow from late January through early March, with daffodils available for 50 cents per stem and plenty of photo-worthy views. Weather and bloom availability determine opening dates, and the field remained closed in 2026 due to winter conditions, making each potential season feel especially meaningful. ***Get there:*** *48 Pinckney Colony Road, 18 miles from HHI*

FUZZY'S FARM FEATURING KERRY'S BERRIES, GARNETT Legendary local fisherman Fuzzy Davis also grows some of the Lowcountry's most sought-after blueberries. When conditions cooperate, the farm opens for u-pick visitors eager to harvest berries prized by chefs and local markets. Davis typically evaluates the crop in early April before opening. ***Get there:*** *2050 Pleasant Hill Road, 55 miles from HHI*

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hot tech

Smart tools and outdoor upgrades that make spring easier, greener and more fun

SELECTIONS BY BELLE WHITFIELD



Clean cut

Greenworks Cultivator/Tiller

Spring prep gets easier with this cordless cultivator. Battery-powered and gas-free, it breaks up tough soil, tackles light weeds and helps mix in compost with minimal effort. Simple to handle and surprisingly powerful, it's a great tool for gardeners who want results without the hassle. ***greenworkstools.com. $329***



Hands off

Mammotion Robot Lawn Mower

A freshly cut lawn without lifting a finger? Yes, please. The Mammotion Luba 3 handles mowing on its own, using GPS, cameras and smart sensors to navigate your yard without boundary wires. Schedule it, set custom zones, and control everything from your phone. Quiet, battery-powered and surprisingly precise, it's lawn care for people who'd rather be doing literally anything else. ***us.mammotion.com. $3,299***



Get dirty

Moen Wireless Soil Sensor

Healthy plants start below the surface. This smart soil sensor tracks moisture, temperature and nutrients in real time and sends updates straight to your phone. No more guessing when to water or fertilize. It helps you care for your lawn and garden with precision, saving water and growing stronger plants along the way. ***moen.com. $113***



Shady life

Sundream S3 Pergola

Sun when you want it, shade when you don't. This motorized pergola lets you open or close the roof with the push of a button, creating instant comfort on patios and decks. Built-in drainage moves rainwater away, and the weather-ready design stands up to wind and storms. It keeps outdoor spaces cooler, drier and far more usable all season long. ***pergoluxshop.com. $8,549***



Buzz off

Solar Bug Zapper Lantern

Fewer bites, better evenings. This solar-powered lantern charges during the day and automatically gets to work at night, keeping mosquitoes and other bugs at bay. No cords, no outlets and no fuss. Bonus: it doubles as a soft outdoor light for patios and pathways. ***techkogroup.com. $59***



Personal forecaster

Vevor Wi-Fi Weather Station

Take the guesswork out of watering with a personal weather station right at home. This Wi-Fi-connected device tracks temperature, humidity, rainfall, wind speed and direction, sunlight and more. All the data is accessible through an app, even when you're away, helping you make smarter decisions for lawns, gardens and outdoor plans. ***vevor.com. $140***



Bear hug

Kuma Lazy Bear Heated Chair

For cool spring mornings and lingering evenings, this heated outdoor chair brings the cozy factor. Adjustable, rechargeable heat settings are controlled through your phone, while thoughtful details like a cup holder, phone pocket and carry bag make it easy to take anywhere. Comfort has officially gone high-tech. ***kumaoutdoorgear.com. $250***



Mulch mode

Worx Electric Leaf Mulcher

Turn yard cleanup into something far more satisfying. This electric mulcher quickly shreds leaves and debris into fine mulch, reducing volume for composting or disposal. Lightweight and low-noise, it's ideal for patios, driveways and yards, without the fumes or heft of gas-powered tools. ***worx.com. $199***



Beat box

Turtlebox Speaker

Bring the party outside. This rugged Bluetooth speaker delivers powerful 360-degree sound and is built to handle sun, splashes and surprise rain showers. Whether it's a backyard cookout or an afternoon in the garden, Turtlebox keeps the music going loud and clear without worrying about the weather. ***turtleboxaudio.com. $430***

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Spring cleaning, simplified

SMART TECH TOOLS THAT HELP CLEAR CLUTTER AND RESET ROUTINES

STORY BY LANCE HANLIN

Spring cleaning isn't just about closets and cabinets. It's also a chance to reset routines, clear mental clutter and make everyday life feel a little lighter. The right tech tools can support that fresh-start feeling, helping you stay organized, focused and ahead of small tasks before they pile up. Here are a few easy, practical ways technology can help you step into spring, feeling refreshed.

THREE tools to make spring cleaning easier

1. Label it all: Brother P-Touch Cube Plus label maker



A smart label maker turns organization into something almost fun. The Brother P-Touch Cube Plus connects to your phone or laptop so you can design clean, consistent labels for pantry containers, storage bins, cords or seasonal décor boxes. The app includes fonts and icons to keep everything easy to find long after spring cleaning is done. $95



2. Quick cleanups: Dyson Car + Boat handheld vacuum

Perfect for cars, pet hair and everyday messes, this cordless handheld vacuum makes quick cleanups fast and effective. Its powerful suction handles crumbs, dust and upholstery with ease, so small messes never turn into bigger projects. $230

3. Breathe easier: Levoit Core 300S smart air purifier

Spring in the Lowcountry brings pollen, humidity and open windows. The Levoit Core 300S smart air purifier automatically adjusts to changes in air quality and connects with your phone so you can monitor pollen levels and run schedules that fit your lifestyle. $149



ONE organizing app

Let Todoist organize your spring reset. If spring cleaning feels overwhelming, Todoist keeps it simple and realistic. The app lets you create clear, manageable task lists for everything from room-by-room cleaning to seasonal home maintenance. You can set recurring reminders for chores like changing air filters or washing bedding, assign priorities and even share lists with family members so everyone knows what needs to be done. Its clean design and gentle nudges make it easy to stay on track without feeling micromanaged.

FIVE ways to refresh your life this spring

1. Declutter your digital life. Spring cleaning starts with screens. Old photos, forgotten files and crowded inboxes can slow everything down. Use Google Photos to automatically sort and categorize your pictures and suggest shots to archive or delete, and CleanMyMac X (macOS) or Files by Google (Android) to find large or forgotten files and clear space in minutes. Even setting aside 15 minutes to clean up one folder or album can bring surprising peace of mind.





2. Let AI create simple cleaning checklists. Big projects feel doable when they're broken into bite-sized steps. Ask ChatGPT or Notion AI to generate spring cleaning checklists for each room, customized to how much time you realistically have each day. These tools can turn vague goals like "clean the kitchen" into clear, time-based tasks you can check off one by one.

3. Set seasonal reminders before problems start. Spring comes with its own to-do list: changing HVAC filters, checking smoke detectors, refreshing sunscreen supplies and prepping outdoor spaces. Use Google Calendar or Apple Reminders with location or time triggers so you get nudges right when you need them. Add recurring tasks for quarterly filter changes or daylight savings checks so they never slip through the cracks.





4. Automate recurring chores. Small tasks feel lighter when they're automated. Smart plugs like TP-Link Kasa Smart Wi-Fi Plugs can schedule lamps, fans or coffee makers, while apps such as Todoist let you create recurring reminders for pet meds, bill payments or trash day alerts. These tiny automations remove mental clutter and free up space for more enjoyable spring activities.

5. Create focus zones at home. Spring often brings renewed motivation, but distractions can derail it. Use smart lighting, such as Philips Hue bulbs, set to calming warm tones, and pair them with a sound machine like LectroFan or a white-noise playlist in Spotify to signal "focus time" in a home office or reading nook. Even subtle changes in light, color and sound help your brain switch gears and settle into the task at hand.




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Turn the page on winter

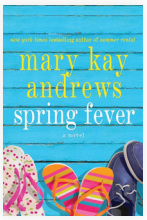
Five smart, satisfying reads to welcome spring

***Denise Friday**, a social worker at Hilton Head Island Elementary and mother of twins, finds both joy and reflection in a good book. Her March picks reflect a love of novels that balance heart and hope, offering the perfect companion to a season defined by renewal.*



WHERE THE GRASS IS GREEN AND THE GIRLS ARE PRETTY *BY LAUREN WEISBERGER*

Peyton Marcus is everyone's favorite New York morning show host. She's beautiful, married to an adoring GQ journalist husband and raising a bright daughter bound for Princeton — until she covers a college admissions scandal, and her husband's arrest becomes part of the story. Peyton's sister, Skye, is her opposite in every way, yet also her closest confidant. When the fallout becomes too much, Peyton and her daughter flee to Paradise, New York, to stay with Skye, who harbors a big secret of her own — one that could destroy her family. Witty, fun and full of drama. Perfect for a Spring Break read.



SPRING FEVER *BY MARY KAY ANDREWS*

Annajane is happy, engaged to a great guy and ready to leave her small North Carolina town behind. She's so over her ex, Mason, that she even attends his wedding. As fate would have it, the ceremony is halted midstream, and Annajane begins to wonder if she might want a second chance with Mason, after all. But secrets and twists run deep in this old town. Andrews delivers a touching tale filled with her signature humor and wonderfully drawn characters.



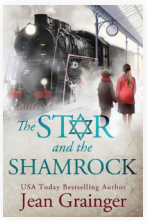
THE VIOLETS OF MARCH *BY SARAH JIO*

Emily Wilson flees to Bainbridge Island to lick her wounds after a struggling career and a cheating husband. While visiting her Aunt Bee, she discovers an old diary from 1943. The journal reveals a story from the past that becomes intricately woven into Emily's present. Both Emily and the diary's author have been betrayed and are searching for real love. The diary holds an enthralling family mystery that Emily is determined to solve, all while she embarks on romantic adventures of her own. Past and present intertwine in a story that celebrates love, family and second chances.



A CURE FOR SPRING FEVER *BY BARBARA ROBINSON*

A sleepy coastal town lies in the shadow of an enchanted forest. The townspeople are none the wiser, thanks to gamekeepers like Stan, who uses magical abilities to keep the two worlds separate. Lately, Stan's powers are failing, and magical creatures are causing a ruckus. While on leave, he attends a spring festival and falls for a local witch, Lynnette, who is struggling with burdens of her own. They may need help from powers above to realize their love could be the cure for all that ails them. A supernatural love story that is tender, funny and touching to the very end.



THE STAR AND THE SHAMROCK *BY JEAN GRAINGER*

Set in Berlin in 1939, Ariella Bannon comes to a devastating conclusion when her husband fails to return home. To save her two children from the Nazis, she must give them up. Through the Kindertransport, she sends Liesl and Erich to a distant relative in Ireland. That relative, Elizabeth, carries burdens of loss herself but cannot turn her back on the children. This historical novel evolves into a thriller, as Nazi attempts to establish a spy network in Northern Ireland put the children in danger. Unsure whom to trust, Elizabeth fights to keep them safe. An informative and exciting read from Grainger. Part of a series, but it stands well on its own.



Chapter chat

*LOCAL Life's **Rebecca Kerns** shares her take on **The Women, by Kristin Hannah,** in her video book review series, Rebecca's Reading Room Chat. The historical fiction novel follows a young Army nurse in Vietnam whose service reshapes her understanding of courage and friendship. Watch her review on LOCAL Life's YouTube channel: **youtube.com/@locallifesc***



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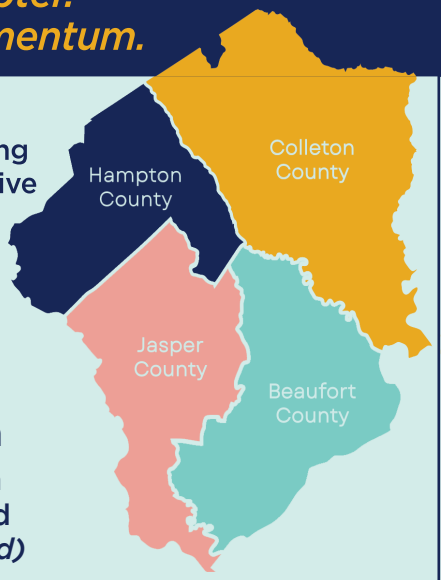
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Local IQ

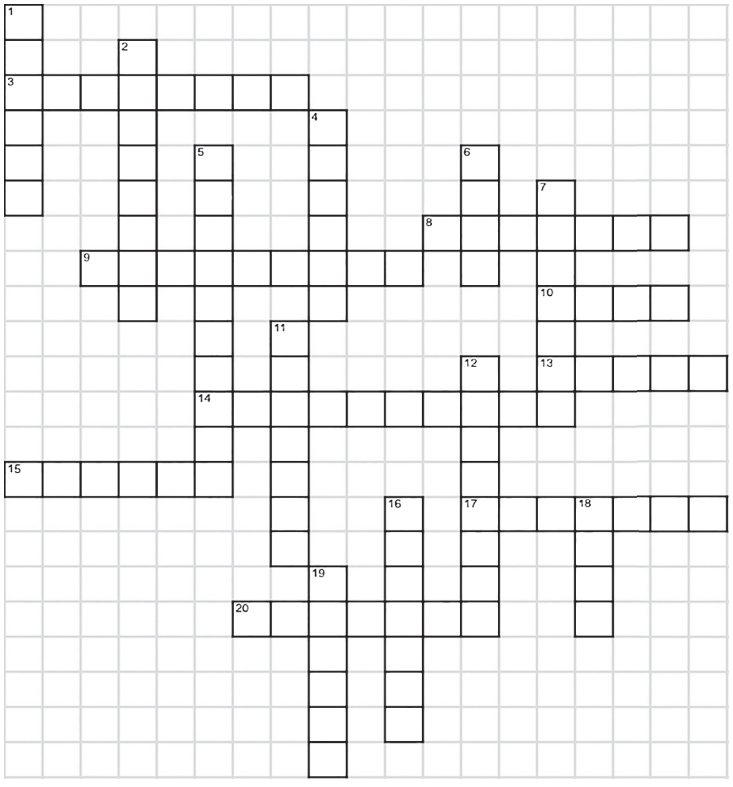
March crossword challenge for locals

CLUES BY LANCE HANLIN + GRID BY JEREMY SWARTZ

ACROSS
3. Home to the Southeast's largest St. Patrick's Day parade
8. Local family behind the HHI St. Patrick's Day Parade
9. Songbirds and shorebirds passing through on their way north
10. Roman god of war and namesake of both March and a planet
13. Color closely tied to March 17
14. March birthstone linked to the sea
15. Springtime nuisance coating cars and porches
17. Direction we "spring" clocks in March
20. What college basketball fans fill out each March



DOWN
1. ***Zodiac sign*** spanning early March
2. Bright yellow March birth flower signaling spring
4. Nickname casual fans long used for musician Darius Rucker
5. St. Patrick's Day mascot with questionable intentions
6. Middle-of-March marker in ancient Rome
7. Breeding colors and displays appearing on birds across the region
11. March moment when day and night balance
12. Saucy March festival on HHI devoted to drumettes and flats
16. A marsh or wetland nesting site buzzing with spring activity
18. What fills the glass at HHI's signature March event
19. Local three-piece band who frequently performs at Ruby Lee's



ANSWER KEY

ACROSS **3.** SAVANNAH **8.** REILLEY **9.** MIGRATION **10.** MARS **13.** GREEN **14.** AQUAMARINE **15.** POLLEN **17.** FORWARD **20.** BRACKET
DOWN **1.** PISCES **2.** DAFFODIL **4.** HOOTIE **5.** LEPRECHAUN **6.** IDES **7.** PLUMAGE **11.** EQUINOX **12.** WINGFEST **16.** ROOKERY **18.** WINE **19.** TARGET

Official Mensa® Challenge

Answers are available on LocalLifeSC.com/Mensa



FEELING LUCKY?

Test your luck and your wits by solving this Mensa quiz?

1. Find a six-digit number in which the third digit is the sum of the first and second digits, the sixth digit is the sum of the fourth and fifth, the first digit is one less than the second and the two less than the last, and the sum of the first and fourth digits is the fifth. The sum of all the digits is 24.

2. The 18 letters below can be anagrammed into a five-word phrase meaning "try it out." What is phrase?

A E E F G H I L L N O P P R T T U U

3. In a footrace, Josh was not last. Wally was neither first nor last. Josh beat Mark. Ted beat Wally and Chuck. Wally beat Chuck. Mark beat Ted. Who was last?

4. Michael went to the supermarket to buy food for a big barbecue. At the meat counter, he spent half of what he had. In the bakery section, he spent half of what was left plus $10. Then he spent half of what was left plus $5 for paper napkins. He had $5 left, so he treated himself to a couple of doughnuts and coffee. How much money did Michael start out with?

5. Which of the words below is least like the others? (It has nothing to do with vowels, consonants or syllables.)

COSMIC CELLAR ALLERGY TEAM EXCESS

ANSWER KEY

1. 347,145 2. RUN IT UP THE FLAGPOLE 3. Chuck (Josh, Mark, Ted, Wally, Chuck) 4. $120 (1/2 of $120 = $60, leaving $60; 1/2 of $60 = $30; $30 + $10 = $40, leaving $20; 1/2 of $20 = $10; $10 +$5 = $15, leaving $5) 5. EXCESS (The four other words can be anagrammed: COMICS; CALLER or RECALL; REGALLY or LARGELY AND GALLERY; MEAT and TAME.)

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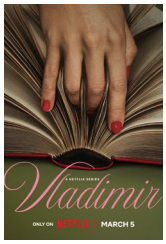
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The hot list

What to watch, read and listen to in March

SELECTIONS BY DAISY DOW

STREAMING









NETFLIX ***Vladimir*** *(comedy-drama)* When a professor at a small liberal arts college (Rachel Weisz) becomes obsessed with one of her colleagues, her mind drifts to fantastical places. The more small encounters she has with Vladimir (Leo Woodall), the more liberties she takes in imagining his character. When reality and fantasy collide, the professor and those around her must reckon with the fallout. **Release date: March 5**

PRIME VIDEO ***Bait*** *(comedy)* The tabloids go wild when Shah Latif (Riz Ahmed) is rumored to be a potential candidate for the role of James Bond. In truth, he only made it as far as an audition, but his photo makes the rounds online, launching a full-blown conspiracy. Landing the audition felt like his last chance at a big break, but being engulfed in chaos before even landing the role, Shah can't tell whether the world is rooting for him or trying to break him. **Release date: March 25**

HULU ***Marshals*** *(drama)* Kayce Dutton (Luke Grimes) has a tenacious spirit honed through his careers as a Navy SEAL and ranch operator. Now working as a U.S. marshal, he teams up with a few familiar faces from the Yellowstone franchise. Confronting gangs, criminals and even close confidants in the line of duty, Dutton must decide when his allegiance belongs to the badge and when it belongs to his loved ones. **Release date: March 1**

CBS, ABC, ESPN, TBS, TNT, TRUTV ***March Madness*** *(college basketball)* Once the brackets are set, the frenzy begins. College basketball's biggest stage erupts into back-to-back days of wall-to-wall games as underdogs chase history and favorites fight to survive. Expect buzzer-beaters, shattered brackets and moments that become pure March legend. The First Four tips things off March 17-19, setting the stage for the full tournament takeover. **Tipoff: March 19-20**

MOVIE THEATERS



The Bride! *(horror)* Frankenstein's Monster (Christian Bale) strikes a bargain with his creator and a Chicago doctor to replicate the process that gave him life. The Bride (Jessie Buckley) is housed in the body of a murdered woman. Once animated, her lack of enthusiasm for merely being Frankenstein's bride becomes clear. Given a second chance at life, however horrifying, she claims an identity of her own and takes a stand for what she was denied the first time. **Release date: March 6**



The Optimist *(drama)* For 60 years, Herbert Heller (Stephen Lang) kept the pain of his past to himself. As a child, he was torn from his home during the Holocaust and tortured at Auschwitz. The atrocities he endured were unspeakable. When he meets Abby (Elsie Fisher), a teenager struggling to find her way, he sees an opportunity to find his voice and help someone else find hers. **Release date: March 11**



Reminders of Him *(Romantic drama)* Based on the bestselling novel by Colleen Hoover, this emotional romantic drama follows a young woman seeking redemption after a devastating mistake, hoping for a second chance at love and forgiveness. Tender, heartbreaking and hopeful, the story explores grief, accountability and the fragile paths that lead people back to one another. **Release date: March 13**

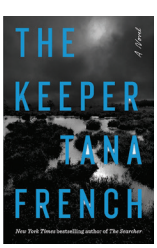
BOOKS & NOVELS



The Disappointment: A Novel *By Scott Broker (fiction)* Jack's life has not panned out as planned. His career as a playwright has stalled, his personal life feels strained, and his husband refuses to go anywhere without his mother's urn. A trip to the Oregon coast is meant to reset the relationship but, instead, becomes a parade of eccentric characters whose unsolicited advice proves oddly helpful. **Release date: March 3**



Judy Blume: A Life *By Mark Oppenheimer (nonfiction)* One of the most iconic and beloved young adult authors of the twentieth century, Judy Blume reshaped the genre. Her books addressed topics rarely discussed in children's literature yet were universal to growing up and handling controversy with grace and humor. Journalist Mark Oppenheimer explores Blume's life and legacy through interviews that reveal how her personal experiences shaped her work. **Release date: March 10**

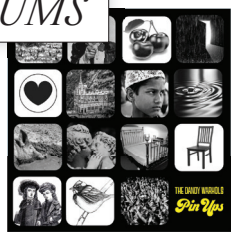


The Keeper *By Tana French (crime fiction)* A woman's murder in a remote Irish village reignites old grudges and exposes the quiet fault lines of a close-knit community. The final installment in Tana French's Cal Hooper trilogy, following The Searcher and The Hunter, this novel delivers her signature blend of atmosphere, moral tension and deeply human storytelling. It stands on its own, but readers who've followed the series will find the payoff especially haunting. **Release date: March 31**

ALBUMS



Kiss All the Time. Disco, Occasionally
By Harry Styles (pop)
Release date: March 6



Pin Ups
By The Dandy Warhols (alternative rock)
Release date March 20



The Way I Am
By Luke Combs (country)
Release date: March 20



Fear of Emotion
By Seafret (indie)
Release date: March 27

PODCASTS



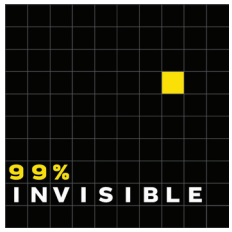
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Community in action

Finding her circle

How one local woman found confidence, support and a way forward through Circles

STORY BY BAILEY GILLIAM



GROWTH THAT LASTS
Melissa Shannon is one of many residents who have benefited from the Circles program, operated by the Deep Well Project. Built on a proven, relationship-based model, the program delivers measurable results. Participants see an average income increase of 69% after six months and 78% after 18 months, with gains that continue well beyond the program's initial timeline.

When Melissa Shannon walked into the ***Deep Well Project's Circles program*** for the first time, she wasn't just carrying the weight of daily life. Sitting at a table with people she didn't yet know, she brought doubt, fear and the kind of resignation that can settle in after years of getting by instead of getting ahead.

"I didn't say much about it, but I questioned myself constantly," she says. "Whether I belonged here. Whether I was capable. Whether I could actually grow in the way I wanted to." Survival had become the goal. Belief in what came next had slipped away.

Support without a stopwatch

Circles is designed to meet people where they are. Participants are paired with trained allies, encouraged to set goals and surrounded by a community that values accountability without judgment. Rather than offering quick fixes, the program focuses on steady guidance, long-term support and relationships that last. For Melissa, that approach mattered.

"Walking into this space was scary," she says. "But Circles didn't rush me. It didn't try to fix me. It just stayed."

Learning to speak up

That consistency began to change things. As weeks passed, conversations felt safer, and moments grew more honest. Melissa found herself speaking up during discussions, sharing ideas she once kept to herself. What she discovered wasn't only help with practical steps, but patience too — people willing to believe in her before she could do that herself.

Over time, her view of herself shifted. "I started to see myself differently," she says. "Not as someone always behind in life, but as someone still becoming." Dreams that once felt out of reach began to feel possible again, not because they changed, but because her sense of worth did.

Through Circles, Melissa learned how to trust her instincts, advocate for herself and keep moving forward, even when confidence wavered. The lesson stayed with her. Growth doesn't come from perfection. It comes from support.

The change shows up in small, daily ways. Melissa now wakes up with a sense of forward motion. "For the first time in a long while, I don't just wake up and survive the day," she says. "I wake up believing my life is still unfolding."

Take action

Want to get involved with Circles and support neighbors working toward stability and self-sufficiency? Volunteers are a vital part of what makes the program work. Through the Deep Well Project, community members can serve as Circles Allies, mentors who walk alongside participants, offering encouragement, accountability and a listening ear. Volunteers don't need to be experts, just consistent, empathetic and willing to show up. Other ways to help include providing meals during Circles meetings, offering childcare support, sharing professional skills or assisting with transportation and logistics. Training is provided, and volunteers are supported every step of the way. Learn more at ***deepwellproject.org***.



CIRCLES OF SUPPORT
The Circles program connects volunteers with families working to overcome financial challenges through in-person training and weekly gatherings. Participants, called Circle Leaders, build supportive relationships with trained volunteers known as Allies. Each week, families share a meal, children join the Circles Children's Program, and parents take part in guided discussions.

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What makes them local



FIND YOUR FREQUENCY In addition to her work with herbs, Amy Spadafora is a sound healing facilitator who offers personalized, one-on-one sound bath sessions designed to support balance and relaxation.

adjective. lo·cal | lō-kəl

1: *characterized by or relating to position in space: having a definite spatial form or location* ***2:*** *of, relating to, or characteristic of a particular place: not general or widespread: of, relating to, or applicable to part of a whole* ***3:*** *primarily serving the needs of a particular limited district of a public conveyance: making all the stops on a route*

Nature knows the way

Amy Spadafora's healing work is rooted in the rhythms of the Lowcountry

STORY BY BECCA EDWARDS



BREWING BALANCE Local herbalist and iridologist Amy Spadafora leads weekly tea ceremonies, hands-on herbal workshops and apprenticeships through her practice, Harmonic Infusions. She plans to offer both online and in-person mini-courses. Learn more at amyspadafora.com.

Amy Spadafora hit landfall on Hilton Head Island just after Hurricane Hugo, which feels fitting. Spadafora is a force of nature.

"It was 1989. I was 16 years old," she says. "My parents wanted to move here after our first visit in 1978. We all fell in love with the trees and the birds, and that's what I most love about living here."

A master herbalist, as well as a master iridologist and sound healing facilitator, Spadafora has always been drawn to the natural world. "Since I was a little girl, I spent most of my days outside, either in our woods or with my dad in the garden," she says. That early immersion shaped how she understands plants not just as ingredients, but as allies.

Today that perspective guides her work through Harmonic Infusions, where she creates herbal blends and experiences rooted in balance and restoration. Her approach emphasizes nourishment of the nervous system and adaptability in a constantly shifting world. It reflects a belief that true wellness begins with listening closely to nature and to ourselves.

Q: When did you know you wanted to be a healer? A: My relationship with herbs really expanded after I healed myself of ulcerative colitis at the age of 20. That experience became the perfect catalyst, propelling me into becoming an advocate for Mother Earth and her plant children. I had to learn their magical ways. I am learning something new every day.

Q: Can you tell us about iridology? A: It is the study of the colored part of the eye. It is an analytical tool that reveals constitution type, tissue integrity, underactivity and overactivity of organs, glands and systems, emotional influences and inherited predispositions. It offers insight into your unique blueprint, showing how your body processes life and how that affects your mind, body and spirit.

Q: Why do you think it's so important to connect with nature? A: We are nature. We are all connected to each other. This is called interconnectedness. Our survival depends on heart connection, plant connection and elemental connection — earth, water, air, the sun and the moon. Where we live is a living immersion of elemental connection.

Q: What is your favorite flower or herb? A: If I were forced to pick just one to always have on hand, it would be dandelion.

Q: Any fun plant medicine stories? A: Yes! It involves a meeting with a hornet. Wow, they are excellent at communicating their boundaries. I was stung on the top of my hand. Instant pain followed by swelling. I made a poultice of comfrey leaf and rosemary: within two hours the pain was gone, and the swelling had virtually disappeared.

Q: What is your motto in life? A: "If you get confused, listen to the music play," and "Sometimes you're the bug, sometimes you're the windshield." LL



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Local business buzz

NEW OPENINGS, BIG IDEAS AND PROJECTS WORTH WATCHING

STORY BY BAILEY GILLIAM

*March flips the switch around here. Days stretch, sidewalks fill, and new ideas start showing up with the season. From fresh storefronts to long-game community projects, these are the **openings and plans** giving the Lowcountry a little extra momentum right now.*



NOW OPEN

Lighthouse Kids Co.

Harbour Town, Sea Pines

Bright, cheerful and hard to leave empty-handed, Lighthouse Kids Co. has landed in Harbour Town with a curated mix of apparel, gifts and accessories for kids, teens and parents. Shoppers will find national and regional brands alongside resort-ready collections like Mommy & Me and Dads & Lads. With colorful murals, an easygoing layout and the Gregg Russell Harbour Town Playground just steps away, it is a natural stop for families and a guaranteed "just one more thing" shop.

Kindermusik Beaufort

Beaufort Town Center, Beaufort

Music, movement and imagination take center stage at Kindermusik Beaufort, now open in Beaufort Town Center. Classes for children from birth through age 7 focus on early development through song, storytelling and play. Owner and educator Alison Chambers has created a warm, welcoming space that emphasizes confidence and connection over performance.





The Vitamin Shoppe

Beaufort Station, Beaufort

Health-minded shoppers have a new option at Beaufort Station with the opening of The Vitamin Shoppe. The store offers vitamins, supplements and sports nutrition essentials, with knowledgeable staff available to help customers navigate options and build routines that fit their goals. Its location among Beaufort Station's shops and restaurants makes it an easy stop while you run errands.



The COVE

Buckwalter Place, Bluffton

Bluffton's first building dedicated entirely to economic development is officially open. The COVE, short for Community, Opportunity, Vision and Entrepreneurship, offers flexible offices, training rooms and collaborative spaces designed to help businesses grow. It also serves as a second home for the Don Ryan Center for Innovation, reinforcing Bluffton's long-term commitment to small business and smart growth.

COMING SOON



The Pottery Studio by Magpie Ceramics

Washington Square, Bluffton

Clay is coming to Washington Square. The Pottery Studio by Magpie Ceramics will offer hands-on classes and workshops for all skill levels, from first-time wheel sessions to private events and community projects. This locally owned woman-led studio is designed as a place to create and connect, whether you are learning a new skill or simply getting your hands dirty for an afternoon.

James Fisher Memorial Foundation YMCA

East Argent, Ridgeland

Slated to open this spring, the James Fisher Memorial Foundation YMCA is set to become a major community hub in Jasper County. The 33,100-square-foot facility will include a six-lane pool, wellness and group exercise areas, childcare and nursery services, a café and outdoor trails. Plans also call for a gymnasium, water park and sports fields, positioning the Y as a long-term investment in health and community life.

Bath & Body Works *Beaufort Station, Beaufort*

Another familiar favorite is headed to Beaufort Station. Bath & Body Works will bring its lineup of fragrances, candles, lotions and seasonal essentials to the shopping center, adding a high-traffic stop for everyday staples and last-minute gifts.

PROPOSED PROJECT



Indoor mini golf

Former Panera building, Hilton Head

Plans are in motion to transform the former Panera site on William Hilton Parkway into a 20,000-square-foot indoor mini golf destination. The proposal includes an 18-hole course, golf simulator bays and food and beverage space within the existing building. Developers are beginning the town approval process, and if approved, the project will add a welcome, weather-proof option for families looking for something fun to do when the forecast does not cooperate.





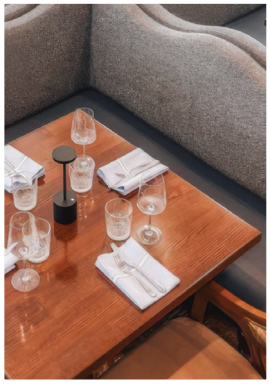
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The worst of both worlds

WHY SPRING ALLERGIES HIT HARDER IN THE LOWCOUNTRY

STORY BY BELLE WHITFIELD



©TRAINWITHLEXI.COM

BREEZING THROUGH THE AIR Pine trees release clouds of pollen that settle on cars and porches across the Lowcountry each spring. The dramatic yellow dust may look alarming, but it's often more of a visual nuisance than the true cause of seasonal allergy symptoms. The pollen you can't see, from juniper, oak, bayberry, pecan and birch trees, is often the real trigger, staying airborne long enough to irritate eyes and sinuses.

If you've lived in the Lowcountry for a while, you know the drill. As spring rolls around, your car turns neon yellow overnight, your eyes feel full of sand, and a box of tissues becomes your new best friend. For many, this season isn't just about beautiful blooms. It's a marathon of sneezing and watery eyes.

Local allergist Dr. Thomas Beller, a board-certified specialist with offices in Hilton Head, Bluffton and Beaufort, says the region's coastal climate creates the perfect recipe for a long pollen season that simply refuses to end. While other parts of the country experience a short burst of pollen, ours lingers like a humid July afternoon.

"We kind of get the worst of both worlds here," Beller explains. Up north, in places like Minnesota, winters are so harsh that trees release their pollen all at once when temperatures finally rise. It's miserable, but it's over quickly. In South Florida the weather stays relatively consistent year-round, and allergy symptoms are often less intense.

Here in the Lowcountry we land somewhere in between. Winters are short, and warmer weather arrives quickly, often starting in March. Instead of a sharp spike in pollen, levels remain elevated for eight weeks or more, "making people miserable longer," Beller says. Essentially, immune systems are under constant attack for months, turning allergy season into a prolonged battle.



RELIEF THAT BUILDS Allergy shots are a long-term treatment that desensitizes the immune system to tree, grass and weed pollens, offering meaningful relief for many patients. Most people begin to notice improvement within two to four months. After about four years, the benefits are long lasting, 15 years or more in roughly 85 percent of patients, and many no longer need continued treatment.

Don't blame the yellow dust

We've all stared at pollen-covered porches and cars and assumed that bright yellow coating must be the culprit. But according to Beller, that visible "pine dust" is mostly a distraction.

"Pine pollen is very heavy," he says. "It falls straight to the ground and doesn't stay airborne very well, so it usually doesn't cause allergy problems."

The real trouble comes from pollen you can't see. In early spring, cedar is often the first trigger. As the season progresses, oak becomes the most significant allergen, followed closely by bayberry, also called wax myrtle, pecan and river birch. Elm, maple and sweet gum can also contribute, with grass pollens taking over as spring moves into early summer. These lighter pollens float easily through the air, finding their way into eyes and noses and lingering all season long.



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WASH ME During peak pollen season, keeping a car clean can feel like a daily ritual for Lowcountry drivers. Monthly memberships at Tidal Wave Auto Spa and Zips Car Wash offer unlimited washes, making them a practical springtime solution when vehicles are coated in yellow dust day after day.

Is it a cold?

It can be difficult to tell whether you're dealing with allergies or coming down with a cold. Beller says allergy mucus is typically clear and thin, while a cold often produces thicker, discolored congestion.

Then there's the itch. "Itchy eyes strongly favor allergies," he says. Another telltale sign is repeated sneezing. If you find yourself sneezing five or six times in a row, pollen is the likely culprit, not a virus.



Timing is everything

If you wait until you're miserable to start treatment, you've already lost the first round. Beller's advice is to be proactive. "Start treatment before symptoms appear, ideally when the weather first begins to turn," he says.

He recommends topical medications that work directly where symptoms occur rather than relying solely on oral pills. While antihistamines can help, eye drops and nasal steroid sprays are often more effective for congestion and itchy eyes. These treatments aren't instant, though. They can take several days to reach full effectiveness, so consistency matters.



ONCE THE DUST CLEARS The best time to power wash a home and outdoor surfaces is right after peak pollen season, typically in late spring or early summer. Washing then removes built-up pollen before it causes staining and helps avoid repeated cleanings if pollen levels rise again.

When to see a specialist

If the drugstore aisle is no longer cutting it, it may be time to see a specialist. Many Lowcountry residents are seeking long-term solutions to end the cycle altogether. Allergy shots are becoming an increasingly popular option for those tired of battling symptoms year after year. By gradually training the immune system to react less aggressively to local triggers, many patients see significant improvement, often within two to four months. LL

TIPS FOR A MORE ALLERGY-FREE SPRING

Clean with purpose: Regularly dust hard surfaces, vacuum carpets, and wash bedding weekly to cut down on pollen that settles indoors.

Park the pollen: Leave shoes at the door to avoid tracking pollen throughout the house.

The quick rinse: Wash your hands after coming inside to keep pollen out of your eyes.

Shut-down mode: As tempting as fresh air can be, keep windows and doors closed during peak pollen times.

Change it up: Change clothes after spending time outdoors, especially after yard work or beach walks.

Shower smart: Rinse off in the evening to remove pollen from skin and hair before it settles on pillows and sheets.

Filter the air: Use high-efficiency filters in your HVAC system, and change them regularly during pollen season.

Time it right: Run errands and exercise later in the day, when pollen counts are often lower than in the early morning.

SPRING ALLERGY SOLUTIONS

Most allergy treatments aren't instant fixes. They take a few days to reach full strength, which is why starting early and staying consistent can make spring symptoms far more manageable.

Start with a daily nasal steroid spray
Reduces inflammation and congestion over time. Daily use is key.
- *Flonase (fluticasone)*
- *Nasacort (triamcinolone)*
- *Rhinocort (budesonide)*

Add an antihistamine nasal spray if sneezing persists
Works quickly by blocking histamines directly in the nasal passages.
- *Astepro (azelastine)*

Treat itchy, watery eyes with targeted drops
Addresses eye symptoms that oral medications often miss.
- *Pataday (olopatadine)*
- *Zaditor or Alaway (ketotifen)*

Use an oral antihistamine for added support
Helpful for overall symptom control, especially when paired with topical treatments.
- *Zyrtec (cetirizine)*
- *Claritin (loratadine)*
- *Allegra (fexofenadine)*

Rinse pollen away with saline
Helps flush allergens from nasal passages before they trigger symptoms.
- *NeilMed Sinus Rinse*
- *Simply Saline spray*



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Off the air with Bob Lacey

ONE HALF OF THE FAMED RADIO DUO BOB & SHERI, A HALL OF FAMER NOW CALLS HILTON HEAD HOME

STORY BY BARRY KAUFMAN + PHOTOGRAPHY BY LISA STAFF

With the simple press of a button, shades slowly emerge from their valances atop the Carolina room windows of Bob Lacey's home office. As they obscure the view of the landscaped wonderland he's created in his Sea Pines backyard, they also create a dramatic hush, dampening sound and creating an acoustic environment perfect for radio. It's an auditory trick he's used since the studios where he and Sheri Lynch recorded their nationally syndicated morning show were abruptly closed during COVID-19.

Thus, one of the most popular shows on the radio became a work-from-home gig for Lacey — at least until he retired this past February.





ON ISLAND TIME Bob Lacey, the longtime co-host of the nationally syndicated *Bob & Sheri* morning radio show, retired in 2025 after a 40-plus-year career. These days he's enjoying a well-earned next chapter in Sea Pines.



DYNAMIC DUO Together for more than three decades, Lacey and Sheri Lynch formed one of radio's most enduring partnerships after launching *The Bob & Sheri Show* in 1992. What began as a Charlotte morning show grew into a nationally syndicated success, reaching hundreds of thousands of listeners worldwide.

"I started working when I was 19 years old. I had to ask myself, 'How long do I have to work, right?' Plus, I just felt that it was better for the show to get a fresh voice in there," said Lacey in timbered tones that have issued from more than 70 radio towers every morning for decades. "When you're watching the Grammys and don't know who half the people are, you may no longer be the mouthpiece of the culture. Sheri runs the show now, and she's a better manager than I am."

Already a 20-year veteran of radio, Lacey's career truly hit its stride when he joined forces with Lynch in 1992. From their beginnings as morning drive-time comic relief in Charlotte, *The Bob & Sheri Show* would grow to reach nearly a million listeners worldwide. In an era dominated by shock jocks, the duo took a different tack, blending humor and heart with a perspective that welcomed women into the conversation.

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THE GODFATHER OF SHOCK ROCK Legendary rocker Alice Cooper poses for a photo with Lacey's wife, Mary, before the 2025 Radio Hall of Fame induction ceremony in Chicago.

"Sheri and I sitting across from one another — we were so compatible on the air," Lacey said. "She's not only the funniest woman in radio, she's the funniest person in radio, male or female." He pauses, then adds the proof. "After just a year on the air, Joan Rivers handed her a Gracie Allen Award for being the funniest woman in radio. I felt pretty vindicated."

That easy chemistry anchored a rotating carousel of guest stars and celebrity interviews, along with the show's defining element: real listeners. Their longtime slogan — Real people. Real laughs. — was no marketing line.

"We took calls from real folks all over the country," Lacey said. "No fake calls, no safety net. The skill was pulling something funny or interesting from a caller live on the air."

The guest list didn't hurt. Lacey recalls interviewing James Taylor, an artist whose music he'd been spinning on air since he was 19. "I told him, 'James, I can't believe you're here!' and he said, 'I can't believe I'm here either!'" Lacey laughed. "I think he was referring to his colorful early years."



ON THE GUEST LIST Lacey and Sheri Lynch share a lighthearted moment with fitness icon Richard Simmons during a guest appearance on *The Bob & Sheri Show.*

Another frequent visitor was Jeff Dunham, who often appeared with his famously grumpy puppet, Walter. "Jeff would sit there with Walter on his lap, and while looking at Sheri, he'd move Walter's head so it stared at me with total disgust," Lacey said. "It was just a puppet, but it honestly freaked me out a little."

For 32 years the show served as the culmination of Lacey's extensive broadcast career, which began with his evening call-in program, *Lacey Listens* in 1971, and included an Iris Award-winning television show along the way. He watched radio evolve from its scrappiest days into a cultural powerhouse.

"FM radio wasn't a big deal when I started," he said. "It became big-time with album rock. That was a golden era for radio."

That career earned him induction into the National Radio Hall of Fame last year. His wife, Mary, was there to cheer him on — and to snap a selfie with fellow inductee Alice Cooper. Soon after, they were back on Hilton Head Island, a place that had felt like home long before retirement made it official.



"People warned me that I'd wander around asking, 'What's my purpose?'" Lacey said with a laugh. "I haven't had that problem. I drive by a horse stable every day. The island has this incredible natural feel. It still feels exotic, especially for a kid from Connecticut." *LL*

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Spring in full bloom

It's been a long, cold winter, and we're all itching to get outside. Want some spring inspiration? Check out a few locals who are doing the season right

STORY BY BARRY KAUFMAN
PHOTOGRAPHY BY LISA STAFF

We don't need to tell you that we've had just about enough winter in the Lowcountry. Once again, we somehow found ourselves getting snowed on, something many of us moved here specifically to avoid. It was magical for about an hour, sure, but then it was just cold.

That all changes now. This year March is coming in less like a lion and more like a house cat, curling up in our laps with gentle warmth. As a community, we needed this. So let's embrace the spirit of spring and get out among the natural beauty of the place we call home, restored to its acceptable range of temperatures.

As you prepare for the season, pay a visit to three locals whose passions and callings speak to the rejuvenating atmosphere and outdoor exploration of spring.

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Maryanne Fearer

BOTTLING SWEETGRASS WISDOM TO KEEP SPRING'S TINIEST PESTS AT BAY

Not to start this love letter to spring on a down note, but we would be remiss if we didn't point out the one drawback to warmer weather. Even as the mercury rises and the outdoors beckon, seasoned locals know that something is waiting in the sunshine and blooming foliage. They never really leave us, but in spring they remind us whose domain the Lowcountry really is.

They are gnats. They are legion. And in spring, they are hungry.

Like many of us, Maryanne Fearer was tired of being on the menu. But unlike most of us, she had years of esthetics experience and generations of cultural knowledge to draw from, and she fought back.

"I used to live on Hilton Head back in the '90s, then moved back five years ago to Bluffton. I forgot how bad the bugs were. So I wanted to find out what the locals were using, and nothing worked for me or my family," she said. "I was already making my own eco-friendly cleaning products and cosmetics for family and friends, so I knew I had the background. I started working on it."

The solution she arrived at is called G'Bye G'nats, a no-see-ums' worst nightmare — a repellent that actually works. The closely guarded formula draws inspiration from skincare ingredients Fearer used in her profession, as well as traditional bug-repelling herbs known for centuries.

"I'm a tribal member of the Cherokee Nation, and we use sweetgrass as a ceremonial herb, but it's also an excellent bug deterrent," she said. "I put that together with my skincare research. The first attempt wasn't perfect, but I couldn't get it out of my mind. I would go to bed thinking about it. I would wake up thinking about it. It was just something I had to do."





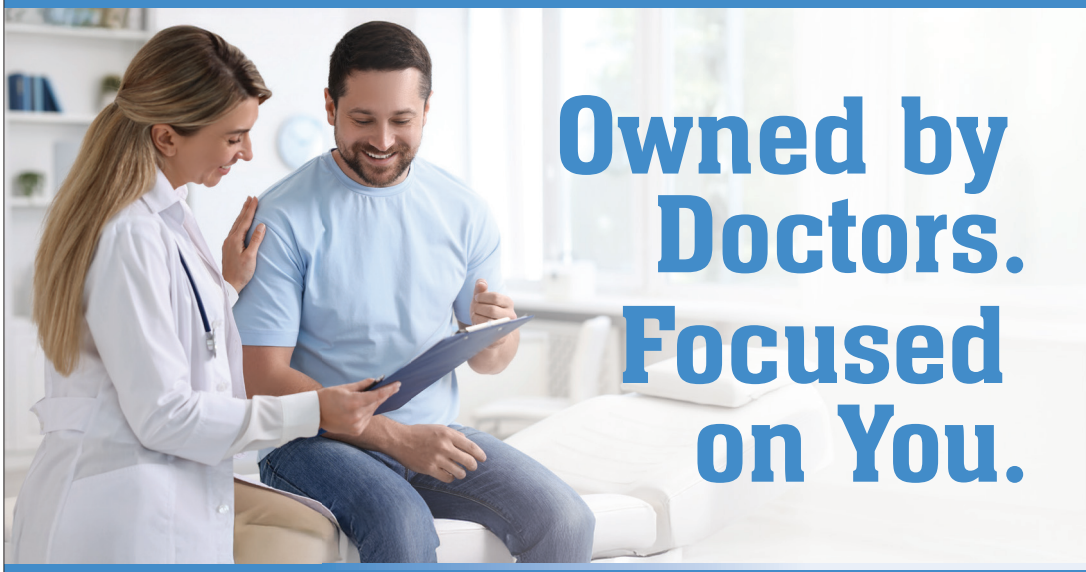
SWEETGRASS AND SCIENCE A former esthetician turned entrepreneur, Maryanne Fearer blends Indigenous tradition with modern skincare knowledge to create a repellent that's as gentle as it is effective. Each batch of G'Bye G'nats is hand-poured in Bluffton, proof that innovation sometimes starts with simply refusing to swat and surrender.

Finding a formula that kept bugs away while remaining safe for sensitive skin required extensive testing. Particularly helpful was Fearer's daughter, someone gnats seem to gravitate toward. When it worked for her, Fearer knew she was on to something.

Today G'Bye G'nats is carried in more than 30 locations across the Lowcountry, as well as in Savannah and the Virgin Islands. Fearer still handcrafts each bottle. As spring approaches, she knows the long hours are worth it.

"It's amazing to hear from baseball parents and cheerleading coaches who won't go anywhere without it," she said. "I'm so grateful for that and for the stores and farmers markets that carry it. I couldn't do it without them."

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(from left) Nicole Clegg, MSN, APRN, FNP-C, Van Gauby, MD, Joel Johnson III, MD, Franics Imbarrato, MD, Carlos Cordero, MD

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Mary Alice Tartler

FOLLOWING THE FLIGHT PATHS THAT DEFINE LOWCOUNTRY SPRING

Along with warm spring breezes, the clearest sign that winter has retreated north is the music in the air. Trilling, chattering and lilting, bird calls become the season's soundtrack.

For many, the return of migratory birds signals the reopening of a favorite pastime. For Mary Alice Tartler, birding has become far more than a hobby. It's a calling.

"One of the first birds I ever saw that I just fell in love with was a ruby-crowned kinglet," she said. "When they're feeling feisty, they raise that red crown. When I saw that, I said, 'Oh, I'm hooked.' That was my spark bird."

That spark added a new dimension to the photography she had pursued since youth. After retiring from 20 years at the Naval Hospital in Bethesda, Maryland, she immersed herself fully. She joined birding groups, upgraded her equipment, studied field guides and began leading talks and presentations.

"It really just evolved," she said. "It gets me out of the house to do something I love."

Earning the title of Master Birder from the Audubon Society, she contributes to conservation efforts through







LIGHT CHASER Whether standing knee-deep in tidal shallows at sunrise or tracking silhouettes along a maritime forest trail, Mary Alice Tartler follows the light as faithfully as she follows the birds. A retired medical professional with the patience of a scientist and the eye of an artist, she finds beauty in fleeting wings across every Lowcountry landscape.

programs such as the International Shorebird Survey, Osprey Watch and the annual Christmas Bird Count. Her work has appeared in Birds & Blooms and the Peterson Field Guide to North American Bird Nests.

One photograph even documented a previously unconfirmed hybrid between a black-throated blue warbler and a yellow-rumped warbler, later accepted by Cornell's Lab of Ornithology.

"That will probably be my legacy," she said. "How lucky could a birder be?"

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The eagle has landed

Mary Alice Tartler insists the bald eagle photo you see here is not among her best. In fact, she called it "absolutely awful."

But the story behind it says more than technical perfection ever could.

"Oh my God. An eagle just landed 20 feet away from me," she said during our interview. "Can I call you right back?"

Moments later, she returned to the call, apologizing unnecessarily.

"For the last four days, three juvenile eagles and an adult have been flying around my lagoon. I've been waiting for the adult to land right where he just did," she said. "I couldn't believe it happened at that moment."

For a master birder, spring is never off the clock.



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— Marino R. (Patient)



THE RELUCTANT RETIREE

Frank Turano doesn't believe in idle hands. When he's not working in engineering and public service, he's out among camellias, azaleas and crepe myrtles, building layers of color with the discipline of a planner and the heart of an artist. At 86, his garden grows right alongside his curiosity.



Frank Turano

CULTIVATING COLOR, CALM AND COMMUNITY ONE SEASON AT A TIME

When Frank Turano moved into his Palmetto Hall home six years ago, he saw what others might have missed: possibility.

"There wasn't a blade of grass or a single bush. I had an open canvas," he said. "I got a general plan for the backyard, and then I started working on it."

Today his garden is a layered composition of texture and color, from shaded evergreens to vibrant loropetalums. Native plants mingle with more unusual selections. A fountain anchors the space. Seasonal blooms rotate through the year.

Having previously gardened in Port Royal Plantation and on Long Island, Turano understands adaptation. "Up north I planted rhododendrons," he said. "Here you have to watch for deer."

At 86, he still tends his yard personally, balancing his gardening passion with his professional roles as director of business development for Alliance Consulting Engineers and chair of the Hilton Head PSD Commission.

"That keeps me sharp," he said. "But the yard is what relaxes me. I can just get lost in it."

And is it ever finished?

"Every year I add to it," he said. "This year I'm adding two wisteria trees for more color up front."

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How does your garden grow?

As an avid gardener, Frank Turano has crafted meticulously landscaped yards in Palmetto Hall, Port Royal Plantation and Massapequa, New York.

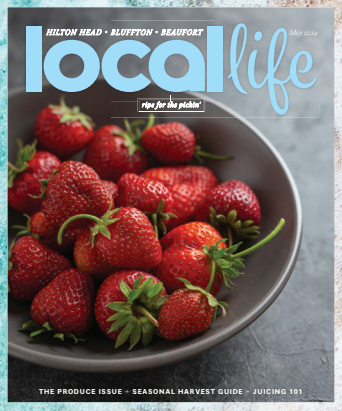
His advice for Lowcountry gardeners?

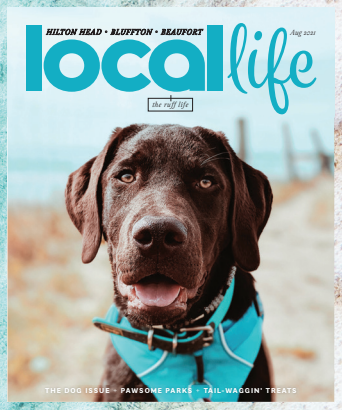
"Take a year and study your property. Depending on where you are on Hilton Head, you could be in Zone 9A or 9B. That makes a difference," he said. "Start with deer-resistant plants, but remember, if they're hungry enough, they'll still eat them."

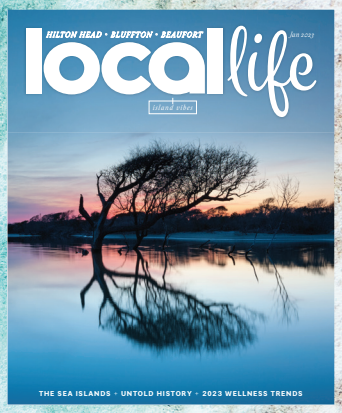
He also recommends planning for height and layering.

"You want the tallest elements farthest from the house, then work inward with shrubs and texture," he said. "Azaleas make great borders and focal points. In the fall and winter, camellias carry the color."

In the Lowcountry, spring may arrive gently. But with the right hands at work, it can bloom boldly. *LL*









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DON'T FORGET TO LIVE LIKE A LOCAL



ISLAND TIME Robin's egg blue chairs embellished with floral backs add a subtle pop to the otherwise neutral kitchen. The color scheme, curated by Leah Bailey Interiors, feels serene and coastal, offering a welcoming transition for the homeowners as they move from California to Palmetto Bluff.



HOME SHOWCASE

Sweet escape

A PANDEMIC-ERA HOME DESIGNED TO GET AWAY FROM IT ALL, TOGETHER

STORY BY ALEA WILKINS
PHOTOGRAPHY BY KELLI BOYD

When the owners of this Palmetto Bluff property bought it in 2021, they were seeking an escape. From their home in California, they envisioned a vacation retreat for the present and eventually a full-time family hub in retirement. In the early days of the COVID-19 lockdowns, a place to retreat felt essential. But instead of returning to wide-open concepts and all-purpose rooms, their vision leaned toward separation and privacy.

"A recurring theme during COVID was to give everybody their own space to be separate without having to leave the house," says Evan Goodwin, principal architect on the project.

The homeowners embraced this mindset, presenting an extensive wish list to the team at ***Pearce Scott Architects***: a gym, a recreation room and an outdoor pool. On a Palmetto Bluff lot, fitting it all in was no small feat.

"Part of the problem-solving was making sure we could fit everything," Goodwin says.

The solution took shape as a winding sequence of rooms to explore, each with a clear purpose and its own privacy door. Despite its segmented layout, the home never feels closed off.



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A SPACE FOR EVERYONE
The great room opens to the glass porch through sliding doors, inviting in natural light and creating an airy atmosphere. With four armchairs, a plush sofa and two ottomans that double as extra seating, there is room for the entire family to gather comfortably.

Like an all-inclusive retreat, this residence is a hideaway in the truest sense. It offers ample room for work, play and rest without requiring shared space at every turn. Designed during a historic period of isolation, the home reflects that moment while avoiding loneliness. Instead, it gives everyone room to breathe, allowing them to be alone, together.



Do not disturb

Early on, the homeowners prioritized creating a personal retreat for every family member. In response, the Pearce Scott team designed a primary suite that functions more like a private bungalow than a traditional bedroom. Double doors shield it from the great room, creating the impression of an office or guesthouse that does not invite casual entry.

Each homeowner has a dedicated office and walk-in closet, allowing for independence without distance.

For their children, the request was simple and specific: three identical bedrooms.

"They didn't want to play favorites," Goodwin says. "They wanted all the rooms to be the exact same size, with the same views and the same bathrooms."

Guests are equally well accommodated. A carriage house provides a comfortable place to stay without disrupting the rhythm of the main home. While secluded, these rooms do not suggest reclusiveness. Instead, they offer a welcome pause for peace and quiet.



DARK SIDE
Deep navy blue walls in the back kitchen create a striking contrast to the home's bright palette. Leah Bailey Interiors proposed the darker hue at the clients' request, transforming the space into something more engaging than a simple catchall for cooking and clutter. While designers often avoid dark colors in smaller rooms, the bold choice works here, adding depth and drama.



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Personal space

Even in the home's gathering areas, there is room to breathe. Goodwin credits the abundance of natural light, noting that even the winding stairwell connecting the main house and carriage house never feels enclosed.

"It's flooded with light from a series of high windows," he says.

On the second floor, hallways open up with pairs of colonial grid windows, while, below, the dining room and kitchen overlook the backyard. Throughout the home, a palette of crisp white and soft blues enhances the brightness. The glass porch, however, stands apart. Opening directly to the great room through sliding doors, it frames views of the preserved wetland. On sunny days it fills with light, and during storms it glows from within, warmed by a brick fireplace. Like the home's other shared spaces, it balances openness with comfort, inviting people to gather without feeling crowded.







VENDOR LIST

Architect: *Pearce Scott Architects*
Interior Designer: *Leah Bailey Interiors*
Exterior Designer: *Witmer-Jones-Keefer*
Builder: *CS Thomas Construction*
Pool Designer: *Year Round Pool Company*



Alone, together

Though born out of an isolated time, the home's purpose is ultimately about connection. Under one roof, family members can enjoy a quiet dinner while a lively game night unfolds elsewhere, unnoticed. Everyone has space for solitude, but even more square footage is devoted to togetherness.

It is a retreat that avoids cabin fever and embraces possibility, answering a simple question: What if a vacation could belong entirely to you? This home makes a compelling case. *LL*



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Going up?

THIS THREE-STORY STAIR TURNS CIRCULATION INTO AN EXPERIENCE

STORY BY ALEA WILKINS + PHOTOGRAPHY BY KELLI BOYD



There are moments when architecture feels like sorcery, when the viewer, awestruck, can't help but wonder how a building took shape. This winding staircase, designed by ***Pearce Scott Architects***, is one of those.

Connecting three stories and two homes in one vertical space posed quite the challenge for the team on this Palmetto Bluff project. "They were really tricky to figure out, like a Swiss watch," says principal architect Evan Goodwin. The solution was a twisting, three-story elevation that is as functional as it is sculptural. Each level reveals a door or passageway, like expanding into the conjoining carriage house on the second floor or dipping out to the service yard at ground level. Like the work of M.C. Escher, some may find the maze-like configuration dizzying. Goodwin finds it playful. "On this oversized stair, I could see you pulling up a chair or a bean bag and hanging out to read," he says, referencing a generously sized landing between the first and second floors.

While its labyrinthine layout could feel confining, tall windows and abundant light transform the stairwell into a place to pause rather than simply pass through. It's its own spectacle to behold, a puzzle expertly solved — no magic required.



SIDEWINDER Moving up, down and side to side within one stairwell could easily feel claustrophobic. To counter that, Evan Goodwin and the Pearce Scott Architects team flooded the space with light. Tall windows illuminate the entire stairwell, creating an open, airy experience that changes the feel of the space entirely.

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Keeping cool

A flooding challenge did not stop this dreamy Palmetto Bluff pool design

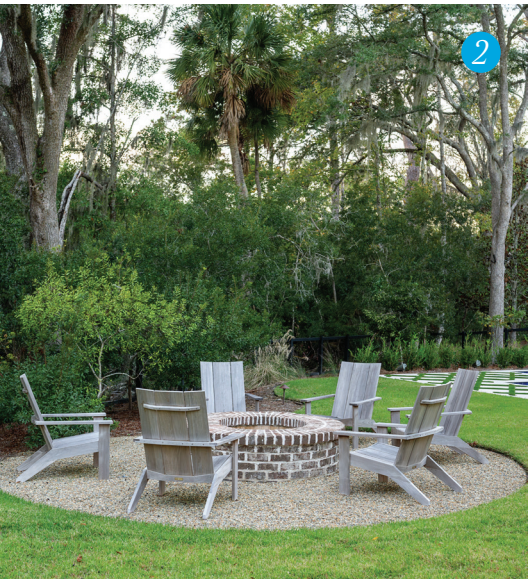
STORY BY ALEA WILKINS + PHOTOGRAPHY BY KELLI BOYD



Designing a pool in a flood zone presents challenges, but for the team behind this Palmetto Bluff retreat, that was only the beginning. With restrictions on excavation depth, the goal became maximizing visual impact while keeping costs in check.

"We wanted it to feel like a 'wow' moment rather than just a pool in the yard," says Evan Goodwin, principal architect at ***Pearce Scott Architects***.

The solution, designed by Year Round Pool Company, uses a striking arrangement of pavers to deliver style without excess.



1. MAKING A SPLASH Crisp white pavers arranged in a diamond pattern add unexpected drama to the backyard. Paired with striped lounge chairs, the design makes a statement while respecting the landsca



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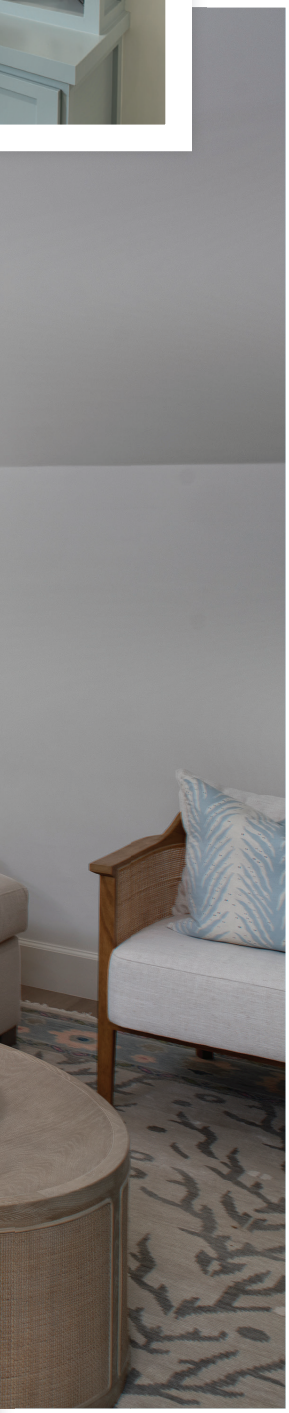




GAME TIME A generous sectional anchors the entertainment room, creating a comfortable gathering spot for movie nights, game days and relaxed family time. Soft coastal tones and layered textures keep the space inviting, while the foosball table adds an element of playful competition.



SMART STORAGE Thoughtful details shine in the custom cabinetry, where open shelving showcases books and collected objects alongside concealed storage below. Brass hardware and soft finishes elevate the room while keeping it practical for everyday use.



ROOM OF THE MONTH

Play hard, rest easy

THIS FULLY STOCKED ENTERTAINMENT ROOM IN SEA PINES ENCOURAGES FUN FOR THE WHOLE FAMILY

STORY BY ALEA WILKINS
PHOTOS BY ROB KAUFMAN

Leave your worries at the door. This Sea Pines entertainment room is built for fun. Designed by ***RCH Construction*** for a family of six, the space is outfitted with every favorite stress reliever. From heated tournaments at the foosball table to quiet moments practicing scales on the keyboard, the room encourages the family to cozy up, compete and create together.

After a long day, having a place to fully unwind benefits both body and mind. As more jobs shift from the office to the home, designating a space devoted entirely to recreation helps create a healthier work-life balance. Stepping inside means choosing to relax, taking time for yourself and enjoying it with loved ones.

Thanks to its thoughtful design, the room naturally evokes a sense of serenity. Ample seating and gentle materials invite guests to settle in for movie nights, while soft hues inspire creativity during arts and crafts. It's an atmosphere curated to calm, offering a seamless transition from busy days to unhurried evenings. However each family member prefers to de-stress, the perfect remedy can be found here.

MOVIE NIGHT Designed for both fun and function, custom built-ins frame the television and provide ample storage for games, media and décor. The muted blue cabinetry brings a calm, tailored look to the room, balancing its role as both entertainment hub and retreat.

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THE LOWCOUNTRY'S NATURAL BEAUTY SHINES IN THIS ELEGANT, EASYGOING PORCH

STORY BY ALEA WILKINS + PHOTOGRAPHY BY CASSIDY LACKOS

The dawn of a warm spring makes dreary winters worthwhile, and a beautiful porch helps take it all in. This outdoor haven from a ***BESTNEST by Beverly Serral*** *home in Sea Pines exemplifies laid-back, coastal elegance to a tee. Layered textures, subtle patterns and organic materials pair naturally with the surroundings, while a muted palette puts the stunning Lowcountry scenery on vivid display. With this view, when it comes to exterior design, simple really is best.*





SIT BACK, RELAX

The perfect porch is incomplete without comfortable seating, and these patio chairs make the ultimate resting spot. Wicker detailing on the frame nods to coastal cool, while deluxe cushions make all-day lounging a breeze. All that's left is a cold drink, good company and Lowcountry sunshine.



FIVE-STAR COMFORTS

To go with the patio chairs, a matching sofa transforms the porch into a lavish retreat. Additional seating welcomes larger gatherings, and the cohesive ensemble feels naturally upscale. Whether cozying up with a loved one or stretching out for a nap in the sun, a patio sofa delivers resort-level luxury at home.



ON THE TABLE

There's more to go around with a circular coffee table. Anchoring the seating area, this outdoor table sets the stage for charcuterie boards and cocktail hours; as well as quiet mornings with a cup of coffee. Its abstract texture echoes the surrounding woodland scenery, while the crisp white hue feels clean and contemporary.



FAMILIAR FAVORITE

Like a beanbag but better, a pouf is the fun seating option worth sinking into. The diamond-patterned cover and prism shape feel far more elevated than typical dorm-room furniture, while the pillowy softness remains just as inviting. Plus, weather- and mildew-resistant fabric makes it worry-free to leave outdoors season after season.



FUSS AND FEATHERS

A feathered end table may seem over the top, but on the porch it fits right in. Scalloped detailing echoes leaves or plumage as an homage to the wildlife beyond, and its sculptural form reads almost classical. The understated, solid finish strikes the perfect balance — not too much, but just right.



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EXPERT ADVICE

Organizing made easy

Custom storage spaces to simplify your spring cleaning routine

STORY BY ALEA WILKINS + PHOTOS PROVIDED BY CLOSET FACTORY

Like a breath of fresh air after a winter in hibernation, a well-organized home prepares for the active months ahead — yet the task often looms large at the top of "to-do" lists. Where to begin? For reluctant spring cleaners and meticulous organizers alike, ***Closet Factory*** *presents an easy storage solution: custom closets. Designed to maximize space, reduce clutter and match your home décor, these three custom closet ideas make organization simple and stylish. Whether tackling a crowded cabinet, a busy kitchen or a chaotic home office, explore how a custom closet can reset your cleaning routine.*



Walk-in wonders

A custom walk-in closet transforms storage into an experience. Thoughtfully planned layouts, adjustable shelving and personalized features create a space unique to every homeowner. Tired of fumbling around for a matching pair of shoes? Vertical storage racks save time and back pain. Proud to put your prized jewelry on display? Accessory bars show them off while keeping them organized and tangle-free. Walk-in closets combine function with luxury to make getting ready not just easy but enjoyable.

LUXURY IN THE DETAILS Bright, balanced and beautifully efficient, this custom walk-in closet proves that smart design makes organization feel effortless. A central island adds extra storage and a perfect drop zone, while tailored shelving and shoe displays keep everything easy to see and grab. When storage works this well, getting organized feels less like a chore and more like a daily indulgence.

Perfection within reach

Perfect for bedrooms, hallways or guest spaces, custom reach-in closets prove that small spaces can still be highly functional. Tailored shelving and hanging areas allow for all-in-one storage, and built-in drawers bring order and efficiency without sacrificing style. Reach-in closets are also the perfect option for refreshing your home on a budget. They're significantly less expensive than a walk-in while still being customizable to fit your lifestyle and your home. Organizing doesn't need to clean out your wallet — a smart, effective layout makes all the difference.



HIDDEN COMFORT A Murphy bed is the ultimate space-saving solution, turning one room into a multi-tasking powerhouse. Tucked neatly into custom cabinetry by day, it frees up valuable floor space for work, guests or everyday living, then folds down effortlessly when it's time to rest. Stylish, practical and surprisingly comfortable, it's proof that smart design can make even small spaces feel flexible and thoughtfully planned.

Sort everything out

Custom closets aren't limited to the bedroom. Home offices, pantries, laundry rooms and garages can also be optimized for cleanliness and convenience. With help from an expert, rearrange your space with thoughtful shelving, racks or hooks to tidy up clutter and increase productivity. In the kitchen, rifling through your spice drawer can be a thing of the past. In the garage, never worry about digging out that old leaf blower again. With a custom storage solution, every room in the home can be built for success. *LL*



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COLORS OF THE MONTH

Spring reset

A SOFT NEUTRAL AND WARM WHITE SET THE STAGE FOR BRIGHTER DAYS AHEAD

STORY BY LANCE HANLIN + PHOTO BY URSULA PAGE

March is the month when rooms start to breathe again. Windows are uncovered, daylight lingers a little longer, and winter's heaviness begins to lift. This sunlit room captures that shift, using a gentle neutral and a warm white to create a backdrop that feels fresh without losing its sense of comfort. Walls in Sherwin-Williams Agreeable Gray set the tone, offering just enough contrast to frame the windows without competing with the sunshine pouring in. The color feels clean and coastal, with a subtle warmth that keeps it from reading cold. Paired with white trim and ceilings in Benjamin Moore White Dove, the palette reflects daylight beautifully, making the space feel larger, calmer and ready for the many sunny days ahead.



WALLS

SHERWIN-WILLIAMS AGREEABLE GRAY (SW 7029)

This versatile gray strikes an easy balance between warm and cool. In daylight it feels soft and welcoming, allowing greenery and outdoor views to take center stage. It's a natural choice for this time of year, when spaces begin to transition but still need a sense of ease. An eggshell finish keeps the look polished and livable.

TRIM AND CEILING

BENJAMIN MOORE WHITE DOVE (OC-17)

Clean without feeling stark, this creamy white brings clarity to the space while highlighting architectural details like window casings and ceiling beams. It reflects daylight softly, enhancing the bright, open feel that defines early spring. Use a flat finish on the ceiling to minimize glare. On the trim a satin finish adds subtle definition without unnecessary shine.

Get the look ...

This is a palette that works best in rooms with good natural light and architectural detail. *By allowing brightness to lead the design, it becomes an especially smart update for spaces with tongue-and-groove paneling and an abundance of windows. In the room shown here, the soft gray walls emphasize the paneling's vertical lines, adding texture without visual weight.*

Carrying a warm white across the trim, window casings and ceiling creates a continuous, cohesive backdrop. *This minimizes visual breaks and helps daylight move effortlessly through the space, which is especially effective in rooms with multiple windows, beams or built-ins.*

If privacy allows, keep window treatments minimal so the outdoors remains part of the room. *Bare windows or simple shades let shifting daylight cast soft shadows across the paneling, adding depth without relying on bold color or pattern.*

Balance the light palette with natural materials. *Dark wood floors anchor the space and provide contrast, while simple wooden furniture, woven baskets and potted greenery add warmth and softness. Cushions in muted patterns bring in just enough interest without distracting from the room's clean lines.*

The finished look feels fresh, calm and quietly optimistic, exactly what March calls for. *For homes with good light and strong bones, this kind of refresh proves that sometimes the smartest update is simply stepping back and letting the room do what it already does best.*



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The great reset

SIMPLE HOME UPDATES THAT MAKE EVERYTHING FEEL LIGHTER FOR SPRING

STORY BY LANCE HANLIN



CLEAR THE CLUTTER Winter layers accumulate. Spring benefits from restraint. Keep coffee tables to a few purposeful pieces and let open space become part of the design.

March sunlight has a way of exposing everything. It slips through the windows and quietly reveals what winter left behind: heavier fabrics, dimmer corners and rooms that suddenly feel a little too cozy. The good news? You don't need a renovation to change the mood. A handful of intentional updates can brighten your space and make it feel open, airy and aligned with the season ahead.

Rethink the light

Start overhead. Winter's amber glow feels comforting, but spring calls for something cleaner and crisper. Swapping soft white bulbs for brighter white options mimics longer daylight hours and subtly lifts the energy of a room. Adding dimmers allows you to adjust as afternoons stretch longer and evenings stay softer.

Lighten the layers

Trade velvet and lined panels for linen or airy cotton that filters sunlight instead of blocking it. Apply the same mindset to your floors. Moving a familiar rug into a different room can completely shift its presence, and natural fiber or flatweave styles introduce a relaxed texture that feels right this time of year.



SCENT THE SEASON A reed diffuser offers a subtle seasonal shift. Choose lighter notes like citrus, fresh linen, eucalyptus or soft florals for a clean backdrop that never overpowers.

Let the room breathe

Consider how your furniture interacts with natural light. If sofas, plants or chairs are crowding the windows, shift them slightly. Even a few inches can open sightlines and make a room feel noticeably brighter. Artwork and accessories deserve the same restraint. Bring forward pieces with more white space or softer tones, and thin out what's on your shelves so each object has room to stand on its own. When surfaces feel lighter, the entire space follows.



FLIP THE SWITCH In spring and summer, set your ceiling fan to counterclockwise. The downward airflow creates a cooling breeze that makes rooms feel fresher without touching the thermostat.

Bring in the outdoors

Spring in the Lowcountry is as much about texture as color. A few clipped branches in a clear glass vase, woven accents that nod to marsh grasses or a simple bowl of citrus on the counter can quietly shift the mood. The goal isn't to add more. It's to reflect what's happening just beyond your windows and let your home breathe with the season. *LL*

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A season of quiet abundance

A restrained white palette captures the soft, intentional beauty of early spring

STORY BY KIM EPLEY + PHOTO BY AMIA MARCELL

***Kim Epley**, artistic director at The Studio at Farmer Blue, designs with blooms grown on her 12-acre farm in Seabrook. This month, she highlights an arrangement of sculptural whites, soft textures and emerging buds that quietly capture the essence of March.*



March is when the farm exhales. After winter dormancy, the fields at Farmer Blue begin to stir as buds swell, greens stretch and stems lengthen almost overnight. This month's arrangement leans into that quiet shift, choosing restraint over bold color and letting form, texture and movement carry the design. It's a small celebration of early spring's greatest luxury: freshness.



Design notes

Let the field lead:
Choose what's emerging naturally rather than forcing a color story. Early spring is about discovery.

Edit the palette:
A restrained color range allows texture and shape to shine and keeps the arrangement feeling timeless.

Celebrate the unopened:
Pods, buds and berries are just as compelling as full blooms. They tell the story of what's coming next.

Care with ease:
Refresh water every other day and trim stems lightly as they soften. Let the arrangement change. It's part of the beauty.

The arrangement

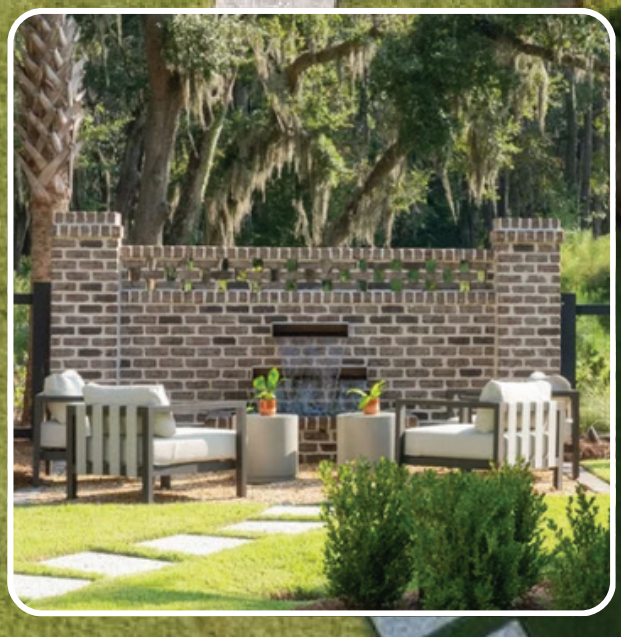
Spring does not burst in here. It settles in. This refined design leans on a soft white palette with gentle pastel notes for a calm, lived-in feel. Butterfly ranunculus set the romantic base while white calla lilies add clean, sculptural height. Lisianthus and fragrant white delphinium fill things out, with unopened poppies offering small, sculptural reminders that more blooms are on the way. Wisps of astilbe and natural berries keep the look relaxed and seasonal. March flowers know exactly what they are doing. No shouting required.

1. Butterfly ranunculus
2. Calla lilies
3. Lisianthus
4. White delphinium
5. Poppy
6. Astilbe
7. Broom berries

EARLY LIGHT
A spring-forward floral arrangement from Farmer Blue Studio featuring butterfly ranunculus, white calla lilies, white delphinium, lisianthus, astilbe and emerging poppy pods, grown locally and designed to celebrate the quiet abundance of March.

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Grow from the ground up

INDOOR SEED-STARTING TIPS THAT BUILD CONFIDENCE AND WELCOME THE SPRING GROWING SEASON



Chrissy Mozeleski *is the owner of Helena Hills Farm, a U-pick flower farm in Hardeeville. This month she shares a few indoor seed-starting secrets. Find details on her upcoming seed-starting and floral workshops at* ***helenahillsfarm.com****.*

Spring is the perfect season to try growing something from seed. Whether you're dreaming of fresh tomatoes, armfuls of flowers or simply curious to see what you can grow, seed starting is one of the most rewarding ways to begin a home garden. The trick is choosing plants that sprout easily and grow with minimal fuss, giving you quick confidence and visible success.

Start with easy sprouters

If you're new to seed starting, focus on varieties that germinate quickly and tolerate a few beginner mistakes. Cherry tomatoes are a classic favorite. Their seeds sprout reliably, the plants grow vigorously, and they produce generously in garden beds, raised beds or containers. Basil is another great choice. It's fast-growing, fragrant and forgiving. Even one pot can provide weeks of fresh leaves. For flowers, zinnias are hard to beat. They sprout in just a few days and bloom nonstop through summer, making them perfect for cutting and sharing. Sunflowers are especially fun for families and first-time gardeners. Their large seeds are easy to handle, and watching them grow is part of the joy. Dwarf varieties work well in small spaces, while taller types add drama to the garden.



GOOD TO GROW In the Lowcountry a successful spring garden starts indoors. Place seed trays or small pots near a sunny, south-facing window, fill them with a light seed-starting mix, and keep the soil evenly moist. Water from the bottom by setting containers in a shallow tray of water to encourage deeper, stronger root growth.

Simple setup makes a big difference

You don't need a greenhouse to start seeds at home. Small pots, seed trays or recycled containers with drainage holes all work well when filled with a light potting mix. Place them in a warm, sunny window, ideally south-facing, and keep the soil evenly moist. One helpful trick is bottom watering. Instead of watering from the top, place pots in a shallow tray of water and allow moisture to soak up from below. This encourages strong root growth and helps prevent seeds from washing away.

Don't skip hardening off

Before moving seedlings outdoors, they need time to adjust. This process, called hardening off, means gradually exposing plants to outdoor conditions over seven to 10 days. Start with a few hours in a sheltered, shady spot, and slowly increase sun and wind exposure. Skipping this step can lead to transplant shock, while taking the time results in stronger, healthier plants.

What to plant now vs. later

Here in the Lowcountry we garden in Zone 9a, with an average last frost in mid-March. At the farm we start cool-season annuals like snapdragons, larkspur, stock and sweet peas early for spring blooms that can be planted out before the last frost. As temperatures warm, we shift to warm-season favorites such as zinnias, sunflowers, cosmos and basil, which carry us into early summer harvests.

Gardening without a fence

If deer are part of your landscape, you're not alone. One surprisingly effective solution is a motion-activated sprinkler. We use a Scarecrow-style device that sends out a quick burst of water when movement is detected. It's humane, effective and works well. Just be sure to warn your neighbors so they don't get an unexpected splash. Rotating deterrents and changing routines can also help keep curious visitors guessing.

Seed-starting supply list

You don't need much to get started. A simple setup goes a long way.

- *Seeds (easy starters like cherry tomatoes, basil, zinnias and sunflowers)*
- *Seed trays, small pots or recycled containers with drainage holes*
- *Lightweight potting or seed-starting mix*
- *Shallow tray or dish for bottom watering*
- *Plant labels or masking tape and a marker*
- *Sunny window or bright indoor space*
- *Watering can or spray bottle*



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Garden to wok

EASY-TO-GROW ASIAN HERBS FOR LOWCOUNTRY GARDENS

STORY BY MICHELE ROLDÁN-SHAW



If you love dining out for Asian cuisine but don't think you could ever duplicate those exotic flavors at home, think again. Many of the signature herbs that make Asian dishes so fresh and exciting can be grown right here in the Lowcountry. Armed with a few good cookbooks, you'll soon be turning out fantastic curries, stir-fries, summer rolls and other dishes you once left to the professionals.



Ginger

Love it: The spicy bite of ginger is beloved across Asia and well known in the West. Beyond its bold flavor, it is a potent immune booster, digestive aid and all-around vitality herb.

Grow it: Ginger loves heat but needs protection from harsh midday sun. It's a heavy feeder and prefers consistent moisture but otherwise requires little care. You can sometimes sprout organic ginger from the grocery store, but it's even easier to buy live rhizomes and plant them after the last frost. When the greens die back in late fall, harvest by pulling off knobs of new growth, then replant the "mother" rhizome in a pot for next year.

Use it: Peel and mince ginger for stir-fries, add bruised slices to broths, grate it into marinades and salad dressings, juice it, or brew it into tea.

Lemongrass



Love it: The bright, fresh flavor of lemongrass features prominently in Thai, Vietnamese, Indonesian, Lao, Cambodian and Malaysian cuisines. Stalks are simmered in curries and soups, while minced lemongrass is pounded into spice pastes, stirred into fresh sambals, or sprinkled over finished dishes.

Grow it: This fragrant Asian staple is a grass — and it grows like one. Plant it in a patch of barren sand, do very little, and watch it thrive. Lemongrass needs full sun and will die back in a freeze, but unlike many other tropical plants on this list, it will sprout again the following year.

Use it: Only the tender, whitish-purple heart of the stalk is eaten. Bruise it first with the back of your knife to release the oils before mincing. The fibrous outer layers can be used to make a fragrant, healthful tea. Whole lemongrass simmered in soups and sauces should be strained out.

Turmeric

Love it: The sunshiny orange color, earthy flavor and potent medicinal qualities of turmeric make this one worth growing yourself. A few plants will yield a generous harvest of fresh rhizomes, which can be stored in the refrigerator for a few weeks or sliced and frozen for year-round use.



Grow it: Turmeric care and harvesting are similar to ginger, except turmeric prefers full sun.

Use it: Pound fresh turmeric into spice pastes, or use it to make health tonics such as Indian golden milk and the Indonesian elixir jamu.



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Galangal

Love it: The piney, peppery, citrusy, floral aroma of galangal has no substitute. It loses nearly all its flavor when dried, so growing your own will take your Southeast Asian cooking to the next level.

Grow it: Galangal care is similar to turmeric, though harvesting can be more challenging because the rhizomes are tougher and woodier.

Use it: Pound into spice pastes or add bruised slices as aromatics in broths.



Thai basil and lemon basil

Love it: The anise flavor of Thai basil and the citrus notes of lemon basil set them apart from their Italian cousin.

Grow it: Plant these as you would any other annual herb. They require full sun and minimal care.

Use it: Fresh leaves shine in soups, curries, salads and summer rolls.

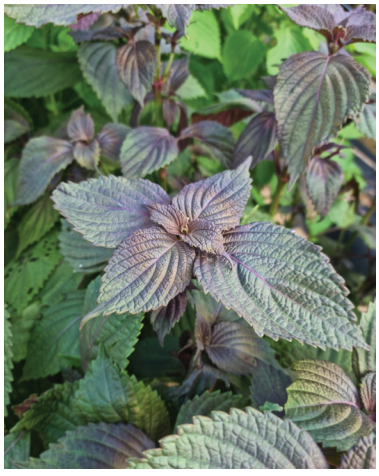


Kaffir lime

Love it: The leaves of this tree have a bright, citrusy, floral, slightly pungent perfume-like quality that makes them an essential aromatic in Southeast Asian cuisine. They add that elusive "something" that makes a dish feel truly authentic.

Grow it: Kaffir lime trees are not cold tolerant and are best grown in a greenhouse or in containers that can be brought indoors during winter.

Use it: De-vein the leaves before finely shredding, then grind into spice pastes, or sprinkle over finished dishes. Whole leaves used in soups and sauces are removed before serving.



Shiso (perilla)

Love it: Beloved in Japanese and Korean food cultures, shiso has a complex flavor that's difficult to describe and best experienced firsthand.

Grow it: This leafy herb is easily grown as an annual and comes in green, purple and two-toned varieties.

Use it: Tear fresh leaves into sushi, summer rolls and noodle bowls alongside other bright herbs like mint and cilantro. Shiso can also be dried for medicinal tea.



Curry leaf

Love it: Curry leaves lend an earthy, herbaceous depth to Indian, Sri Lankan, Malaysian and Burmese cuisines. Not to be confused with curry powder or curry pastes, curry leaves come from the shrub Murraya koenigii.

Grow it: Curry plants need full sun and heat. They are not cold tolerant and must be brought indoors during winter.

Use it: Simmer curry leaves in sauces, or sizzle them in oil with other spices to make tarka, the finishing touch for dishes like dal (Indian lentils).



FLAVOR, DECODED

Favorite Asian dishes and the fresh herbs that make them great:

Phở: *Thai basil, cilantro, sawtooth*
Chana masala: *Ginger, curry leaves*
Pad Thai: *Scallions, garlic chives, chili peppers*
Lemongrass chicken: *Lemongrass, garlic*
Tom kha gai: *Lemongrass, galangal, kaffir lime*
Beef rendang: *Lemongrass, galangal, kaffir lime, turmeric leaf*
Larb: *Mint, cilantro, Thai basil, chili peppers*
Massaman curry: *Lemongrass, shallots, galangal*



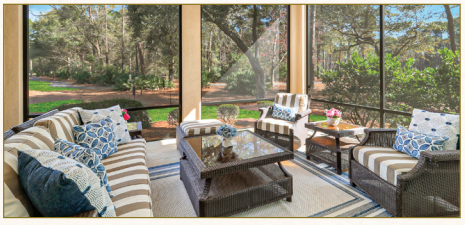
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Garden for good

A PRACTICAL GUIDE TO PLANTING A POLLINATOR-FRIENDLY YARD

STORY BY LANCE HANLIN

A pollinator garden is more than a pretty patch of blooms. It's a working landscape, designed to support butterflies, bees, hummingbirds and other beneficial insects as they go about their essential work. In the Lowcountry, where development and manicured lawns have replaced much of our native habitat, these gardens serve as critical rest stops and reliable food sources. The payoff is immediate and lasting: healthier plants, stronger blooms, more birds and butterflies and a yard that feels alive rather than static. With the right plant choices, pollinator gardens are low-maintenance, resilient and perfectly suited to our long growing season and coastal climate.

Milkweed (Asclepias)

Milkweed is the non-negotiable plant for monarch butterflies, whose caterpillars eat only milkweed leaves. In return, monarchs reward gardeners with one of nature's most captivating life cycles, from egg to chrysalis to winged adult. Native milkweed varieties are especially valuable, providing the right nutrition at the right time.

When to plant: Spring after the last frost or early fall

Care: Full sun and well-drained soil are key. Once established, milkweed is drought tolerant and prefers to be left alone. Avoid pesticides, which harm caterpillars.

Pollinators it attracts: Monarch butterflies, native bees and other beneficial insects





Coneflower (Echinacea)

Coneflowers are garden workhorses that look good from early summer through fall. Their bold, daisy-like blooms stand up well to heat and humidity, making them a reliable choice for Lowcountry gardens.

When to plant: Spring or fall

Care: Plant in full sun with average water. Deadhead for extended blooms, or leave seed heads in place to feed birds later in the season.

Pollinators it attracts: Bees, butterflies and, later, seed-loving birds such as goldfinches



Black-eyed Susan (Rudbeckia)

Bright, cheerful and nearly foolproof, black-eyed Susans bring a classic summer meadow look to any yard. They pair beautifully with native grasses and other wildflowers and spread easily once established.

When to plant: Spring or fall

Care: Full sun is best, though they tolerate partial shade. They are drought tolerant once established and do not require rich soil.

Pollinators it attracts: Native bees, butterflies and small beetles that assist with pollination





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Bee Balm (Monarda)

Bee balm brings a bit of drama to the garden with its shaggy blooms and minty scent. Its red, pink or purple flowers are a favorite of hummingbirds and add lively movement to planting beds.

When to plant: Spring or fall

Care: Plant in full sun to partial shade with consistent watering. Good air circulation helps prevent mildew during humid Lowcountry summers.

Pollinators it attracts: Hummingbirds, bees, butterflies and moths



Goldenrod (Solidago)

Goldenrod often gets blamed for seasonal allergies, but it is insect-pollinated and not the culprit. Instead, it is a critical late-season food source with golden plumes that light up the fall garden just when pollinators need it most.

When to plant: Spring or fall

Care: Full sun and average water. Goldenrod is hardy and spreads easily, so give it room to roam.

Pollinators it attracts: Bees, butterflies, wasps and migrating pollinators preparing for winter



Lantana (Lantana depressa)

Lantana blooms nonstop through the hottest months and shrugs off drought, heat and salt. It is a go-to choice for dependable color and heavy pollinator activity all summer long. Choose sterile or native varieties to prevent aggressive spreading.

When to plant: Spring, once the soil has warmed

Care: Full sun and moderate watering. Lantana is tough and forgiving, making it a great option for new gardeners.

Pollinators it attracts: Butterflies, bees and hummingbirds



Blanket Flower (Gaillardia)

Well suited to coastal conditions, blanket flower thrives in sandy soils and tolerates salty air. Its red and yellow blooms feel right at home in beachy landscapes and informal gardens.

When to plant: Spring

Care: Full sun and excellent drainage are essential. Blanket flower prefers lean soil and minimal watering once established.

Pollinators it attracts: Bees and butterflies, especially long-tongued species

TIPS FOR SUCCESS

Plant in clusters: *Group plants together rather than scattering them, as pollinators find mass plantings more easily.*
Plan for all seasons: *Aim for blooms from early spring through late fall to provide continuous food sources.*
Add water: *Include a shallow birdbath or shell-lined dish filled with water so pollinators have a safe place to drink.*
Skip the chemicals: *Avoid pesticides and herbicides, and let nature strike its own balance.* LL

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Native know-how

THE COASTAL DISCOVERY MUSEUM'S SPRING PLANT SALE MAKES IT EASY TO GARDEN SMARTER

STORY BY LANCE HANLIN



THE SCENT YOU DON'T SEE COMING
Carolina allspice (Calycanthus floridus) is best known for its deep maroon flowers and unexpectedly spicy fragrance, which drifts through the garden in late spring and early summer. This native shrub is remarkably adaptable to sun or shade and forms a handsome, spreading shrub when given room. Butterflies and other nectar-loving insects appreciate it, but it is the scent that makes gardeners fall hard.

With the first real hint of spring in the air, one of the Lowcountry's most beloved gardening traditions returns: the native plant sale at the Coastal Discovery Museum. For local plant lovers, this is not just a sale. It is an event. It is the day you show up with a plan and leave with a trunk full of leafy optimism. This year's sale (March 28) features more than 85 varieties of plants native to our coastal region, each selected for its ability to thrive in Lowcountry heat, humidity and sandy soil. These plants know how to live here. They require less watering, little to no fertilizer and fewer pesticides, which means less work for you and less runoff into the marshes and waterways we all treasure. Native gardens also provide critical habitat and food for birds, bees and butterflies.



FALL COLOR WITH SPRING MANNERS
Sweetspire 'Henry's Garnet' (Itea virginica) pulls off a rare double act. Fragrant white blooms arrive in early spring, followed by one of the best fall color shows among native shrubs.

According to Clemson Cooperative Extension, roughly one-third of the food on our plates depends on pollinators. A native plant purchase is more than landscaping. It is ecosystem support.

What's in the lineup

The spring selection reads like a greatest hits album of Lowcountry natives, with something for sunny borders, shady corners and everything in between.

Trees and shrubs

This year's lineup leans heavily into beautiful and functional native shrubs. Five native azaleas, including coastal, swamp and flame varieties, promise a showy spring display. Buttonbush, a magnet for butterflies, produces distinctive globe-shaped blooms that resemble tiny fireworks. Fringetree offers delicate white blossoms that float like fringe in late spring.

Oakleaf hydrangea returns with its bold foliage and dramatic fall color, while sweetshrub, also known as Carolina allspice, delivers deep maroon flowers and an unexpected spicy fragrance that stops gardeners in their tracks. Sweetspire 'Henry's Garnet' performs a rare double act with fragrant white blooms in spring followed by brilliant red foliage in fall.

For gardeners who enjoy edible rewards, three rabbiteye blueberry varieties, 'Premier,' 'Powder Blue' and 'Brightwell,' will be available, along with native strawberry and Jerusalem artichoke.

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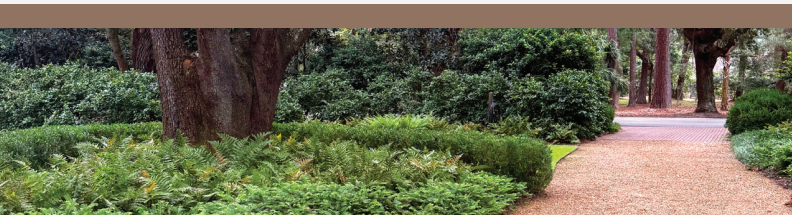
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A QUIET POLLINATOR FAVORITE
With soft white to pale lavender blooms floating above slender stems, Eastern beardtongue (Penstemon laevigatus) adds an easy, natural feel to sunny gardens.

Perennials, the real stars of the show

Pollinator favorites lead the lineup, with milkweeds for monarchs and dependable bloomers like coneflowers, black-eyed Susans and blazing star delivering long-lasting color. Bee balm, mountain mint and dotted horsemint keep gardens buzzing, while swamp sunflower and giant ironweed add height and late-season drama.

In part shade, Carolina phlox, robin's plantain, green and gold, and dwarf crested iris offer softer beauty, with Atamasco lily emerging after spring rains. For bold summer impact in moist areas, scarlet hibiscus, swamp rosemallow and cardinal flower steal the show.

Vines for fences and arbors

Vertical interest is well covered. Crossvine and coral honeysuckle are reliable favorites for trellises and fences. Passionflower, available in both purple and yellow varieties, feeds Gulf fritillary butterflies while adding an exotic flair. Native wisteria 'Amethyst Falls' offers more restrained growth than its aggressive Asian relatives, and pipevine serves as a host plant for swallowtail caterpillars. Trumpet vine, as always, makes its presence known.

Ferns and shade lovers

Southern shield fern and southern wood fern provide lush texture in low-light areas. Pair them with woodland natives such as dwarf woodland iris or partridge berry to create layered plantings beneath live oaks.

Expert help included

One of the best parts of the sale is that you do not have to figure it out alone. Museum staff, volunteers and Master Gardeners will be onsite to answer questions about plant placement, sun exposure and how to give your new additions their best start.

Prices remain refreshingly reasonable. One-gallon plants are $10 and three-gallon plants are $20. Cash or check only.

NURTURE NATURE

What: Coastal Discovery Museum Native Plant Sale
When: 10 a.m.-1 p.m., Saturday, March 28
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Details: Free admission and parking. Cash or check accepted. Come for the plants, stay for the inspiration and leave with a garden that looks good, behaves itself and gives something back to the Lowcountry we love.



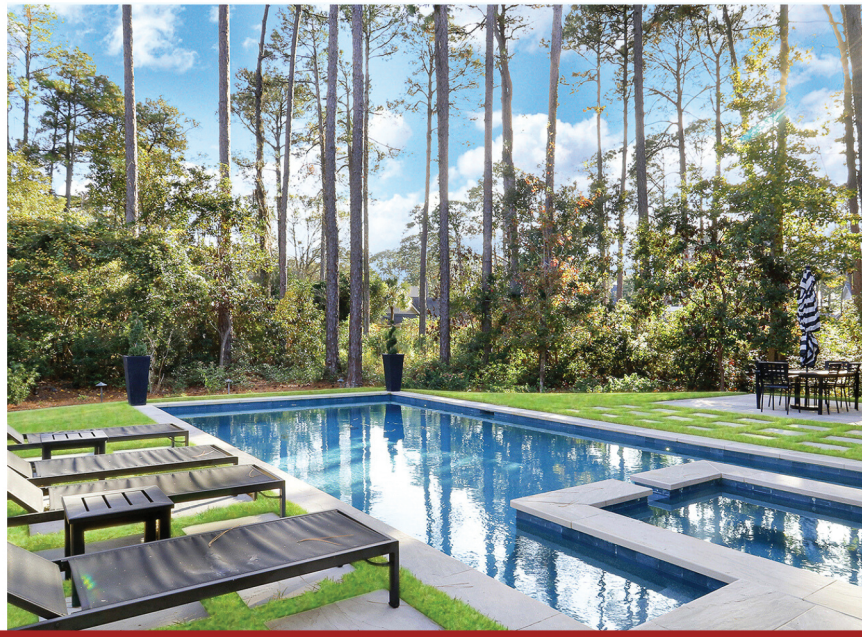
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TROWEL TALK

Spring into action

EXPERT TIPS AND DIY SOLUTIONS TO BRING YOUR INDOOR PLANTS AND GARDEN INTO FULL BLOOM

STORY BY ALEA WILKINS AND SUZANNE BARTON





Brighter days are ahead in the Lowcountry. As the air warms and azaleas begin to bloom, spring ushers in the beginning of a new growing season. With tips from The Green Thumb's manager and certified professional horticulturist ***Suzanne Barton***, here's how to make the most of it.

[LOCAL Life] Should I repot my indoor plants? [Suzanne Barton] Now is a great time to repot houseplants. They know it's spring, and they'll become more active as the days lengthen. Repotting gives plants extra room to grow and refreshed soil, which can break down and lose nutrients over time. The timing will depend on the specific plant and how fast it is growing, but most plants should be repotted at least every couple of years. When you do that, you can also sanitize your pots with a homemade solution of one part bleach to nine parts water. Soak for 15 to 30 minutes, rinse to remove all residue, and you'll be ready for the season.

A WINDOW OF COLOR Azaleas typically bloom from late March through mid-April in the Lowcountry, sometimes stretching into late April, depending on the weather. Warm spells can push blooms to open earlier and move through quickly, while cooler temperatures tend to slow things down, extending that peak window of color.



ROOM TO GROW Early spring is an ideal time to check root health, loosen compacted soil and give indoor plants room to stretch out. A fresh pot and new soil help set the stage for steady growth, especially for plants that haven't been repotted in a few years.

[LL] Between managing my indoor and outdoor plants, how can I keep track of everything? [SB] People are going to roll their eyes, but I always recommend keeping a garden journal. It doesn't have to be fancy; just something you can take outside and use to jot down observations that help create a constructive routine. You can revisit notes week by week or year by year. For me, if I write things down, I remember them better. Over time, that information really starts to stick.

[LL] Which insects should I look out for, and how can I get rid of them? [SB] Insects like aphids, cottony mealybugs and spider mites start to appear this time of year. If you notice yellowing spots, black sooty mold or webbing between leaf axils, you likely have an infestation. To get rid of them, you can make your own insecticide with ingredients you probably already have at home. Mix one gallon of water, two tablespoons of mild dish soap and one tablespoon of vegetable oil. I prefer canola, but do not use olive oil. Shake well, since oil and water separate, then spray infected plants every 10 to 14 days. Make sure the spray has time to dry on the plant before the sun hits it. Spraying at night may cause the solution to stay damp and encourage fungus, so early morning is ideal. That way the oil sticks to the plant to aid in suffocating the insects.



UNINVITED GUESTS Clusters of aphids are an early-season sign that pests are waking up along with the garden. Spotting them early makes infestations easier to manage before they spread to healthy leaves and stems. A simple mix of water, dish soap and vegetable oil can help keep garden bugs in check.

Whistle while you work

Smart seasonal tips from Lowcountry Gardening, a guide written and produced by the Lowcountry Master Gardener Association



MAKE IT RAIN Early March is the ideal time to check sprinklers, adjust heads and make sure water is reaching plants where it's needed before spring growth takes off.

Because of our usually mild winters, it can be hard to tell when winter ends and spring begins. Using the last frost date in mid-March is fairly reliable.

Check your irrigation system to make sure it is working properly and that all areas of the landscape are covered appropriately. Do this in early March, as irrigation professionals become very busy as the season progresses.

Remove fallen leaves and winter debris from mulch with a hand-held leaf blower or rake. Most mulch needs to be renewed every year or two. Before applying new mulch, side-dress shrubs out to the drip line with a 1/2- to 1-inch layer of organic material, such as compost.

Inspect trees, shrubs and perennials to be sure plant debris, including deciduous leaves and mulch, is not too close to stems or trunks and not so deep that it smothers plants.

Cut back perennials with dead foliage. Divide overcrowded clumps of perennials: replant or share them with a friend as soon as possible.

Excerpted from Lowcountry Gardening, written and published by the Lowcountry Master Gardener Association. Grab a copy of this handy guide to all things Lowcountry gardening for $5 at The Greenery, Bruno Landscape & Nursery, The Green Thumb or the Master Gardener booth at the Bluffton and Port Royal farmers markets. For more information, visit ***LowcountryMGA.org****.*

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STORY BY BAILEY GILLIAM

Spring is the perfect time to refresh your outdoor spaces, but creating a landscape that's both beautiful and functional can feel overwhelming. To help, six local businesses share their top tips for the season. From choosing durable pavers that withstand the Lowcountry climate to planting gardens that support pollinators, designing outdoor living areas that flow naturally, and timing your lawn care for healthy turf, these experts offer practical advice you can put into action immediately. Whether you're upgrading hardscapes, welcoming butterflies or simply trying to keep your grass green through unpredictable spring weather, their insights make it easier to enjoy a landscape that's ready for both everyday life and seasonal entertaining.



STONE IN ITS ELEMENT This pool deck features Pennsylvania bluestone, prized for durability and beauty. In the Lowcountry's damp, pollen-heavy climate, proper sealing helps prevent stains and moisture intrusion, keeping high-traffic areas looking their best.



PORCELAIN AND POISE Porcelain pavers offer a sleek, low-maintenance surface that resists stains, mold and mildew. Easy to clean and non-fading, they're ideal for outdoor kitchens and patios built for frequent spring use.

Pave the way

As spring landscaping ramps up, choosing the right pavers is key to managing seasonal rain, pollen, fallen leaves and increased outdoor use. ***Savannah Surfaces*** recommends three paver options for spring in the Lowcountry: porcelain, natural stone or concrete and clay.

"Porcelain pavers offer a low-maintenance alternative to natural stone, with a dense, stain-resistant surface, small grout joint and non-fading color," says exterior sales manager Lisa Bakke.

Most outdoor stains originate from everyday debris, such as tannins from oak leaves or food and drink spills. When it comes to upkeep, Bakke emphasizes the ease of cleaning porcelain pavers, saying, "These areas are easily cleaned off with Dawn dish soap and water or, at most, a light pressure wash or spot cleaning with a nylon brush." She adds, "No need for harsh chemicals that may damage your other surfaces or plants."

Bakke also highlights how porcelain performs in the local climate. "The hard surface is not affected by the high moisture content in the Lowcountry climate, making it difficult for mold or mildew to grow on the pavers," she says.

For homeowners considering natural stone, dense stones such as Pennsylvania bluestone, wet-cast pavers like Artistic Paver, and high-density concrete pavers like Techo-Bloc HD2 can also provide low-maintenance surface options. She cautions that sealing is essential. "Natural stone and concrete pavers should be sealed with a high-quality sealer to protect from stains and prevent moisture from penetrating, which can allow mold and mildew to grow," Bakke says.

She explains that penetrating sealers buy time to clean up a stain before it penetrates deeper into the surface. For high-traffic areas like driveways and patios, she recommends clay pavers such as Pine Hall.

"Clay pavers are naturally resistant to staining, and heavy stains like automotive fluids will naturally burn off with sunlight and rain," says Bakke. Savannah Surfaces even uses clay pavers for commercial parking lots, plazas and public sidewalks. As for the Lowcountry weather, Bakke says, "Fired natural clay products will not fade in the Lowcountry sun and salt air."

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NECTAR IN ACTION A Gulf fritillary pauses on a bright zinnia, a perfect example of how simple plant choices can fuel the broader ecosystem. Sunny bloomers like zinnias, lantana and salvias provide the nectar and pollen butterflies, bees and hummingbirds rely on throughout the Lowcountry spring and into the heat of summer.

The bee's knees

As spring brings new growth and color to the landscape, ***The Green Thumb*** encourages gardeners to consider how their plant choices support the broader ecosystem.

"The buzz for spring is all about pollinator-friendly gardens, and this trend has continued to gain in popularity with good reason," says Suzanne Barton, general manager of the retail division. "It helps create a beautiful landscape and is beneficial for bees, butterflies and hummingbirds."

When it comes to plant choices, Barton says lantana, zinnias, salvias, echinacea, penta, milkweed and cuphea are great options for sunny beds and containers. "These plants provide food in the form of nectar and pollen to butterflies, bees and hummingbirds," she says.

She emphasizes that food alone, though extremely important, isn't enough. "Along with food, they also need a water source, especially during the high heat and drought we frequently experience here in the Lowcountry," she says.

Adding a water station is simple: a glazed saucer, shallow dish, pan or bowl with rocks, a pinch of sea salt and fresh water. Keeping this feature near the food source is important. "Set this atop an upside-down flower pot or bucket as a stand close to your food source," she recommends.

Lastly, remember that butterflies and bees do not swim, so check the water level frequently. The rocks should remain exposed so they have a perch and a place to drink.



A SIMPLE SIP A shallow dish filled with rocks and fresh water offers bees a safe place to land and drink. Placed near flowering plants, this easy water station supports pollinators during hot, dry stretches, with exposed stones serving as essential perches for insects that can't swim.



COOKING WITH CONNECTION Just steps from the back door, this outdoor kitchen creates a natural flow between indoor prep and open-air entertaining. Grilling, counter space and storage are thoughtfully arranged for efficiency, so the cook stays part of the conversation instead of tucked away from it.

By design

As spring brings longer days and more time outdoors, ***Earthworks Landscape*** encourages homeowners to consider how their yards function, not just how they look. Landscaping that supports everyday living and entertaining can make outdoor spaces easier to use and more inviting throughout the season.

"As you plan your garden or yard for spring, consider functionality just as much as beauty, especially when it comes to outdoor living and entertaining," says Elizabeth Turner, director of sales and marketing. "One of the most impactful design choices is creating seamless proximity between your home and your outdoor gathering spaces."

Turner explains why this matters in daily use. "Whether it's an outdoor kitchen, dining patio or lounge area, placing these features close to the house allows for easier access, comfort and flow when hosting guests or enjoying everyday life outside," she says.

She encourages homeowners to think intentionally about movement. "Grilling should feel effortless, seating should invite conversation, and pathways should connect key areas without interruption," she says. "By designing your landscape as an extension of the home, you create an outdoor environment that is visually inviting, purposeful, livable and ready to be enjoyed all season long."



AN EXTENSION OF HOME Framed by clean lines and purposeful layout, this pool and patio design functions as a true outdoor living room. The kitchen, bar seating and lounge areas are placed for effortless access, ensuring that grilling feels easy, seating sparks conversation, and the entire space works beautifully for everyday life and spring entertaining.

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A PATIENT PAUSE As lawns wake from winter dormancy, timing is everything. Waiting until soil temperatures consistently reach 65 degrees before fertilizing helps prevent common Lowcountry issues like brown patch fungus and sets turf up for steady, healthy growth through spring.

The grass is greener

As lawns emerge from winter dormancy, there is a critical spring window when proper timing can make or break turf health for the rest of the year.

"The two biggest mistakes during the spring transition period of turf grasses are typically over- or under-watering as well as fertilizing too early," explains ***Lawn Doctor*** general manager Carson Taylor.

Lowcountry weather is unpredictable: it varies year to year and even day to day. Lawn care professionals base their decisions on soil temperatures, which are directly influenced by air temperatures.

"When it comes to fertilizing a lawn, if you jump the gun and apply too early, you are allowing the turf to become susceptible to fungus," Taylor says. "Fungus can display in a few different ways, but the most common in our area is a large brown patch."

Lawn Doctor recommends waiting to fertilize until soil temperatures are consistently above 65 degrees for at least a week. "This is typically in early to mid-April, but it varies year to year," Taylor says.

When it comes to watering, temperature remains a major factor. "Typically in March we are seeing temperatures in the 60- to 70-degree range, and at this point we recommend watering only one time a week for about 20 to 25 minutes per zone," Taylor says. "Moving into April, when we are seeing temperatures more in the 70- to 80-degree range, you still want to keep your irrigation set to once a week but increase the duration closer to the 30- to 35-minute range per zone."

Less frequent, deeper watering helps establish a healthy root system, allowing the lawn to perform better throughout spring and into summer.

Taylor also stresses the importance of monitoring rainfall. "If we have received an inch of rain, then that week of irrigation can be skipped," he says. "We highly recommend keeping a rain gauge somewhere on your property to accurately monitor rainfall."

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Groundwork for growth

As spring landscaping kicks off, planning what and when to plant can make the difference between a garden that thrives and one that struggles.

The Greencoast Landscape and Hardscape recommends checking plant availability and testing soil before planting. Owner Israel Guerrero says taking these steps early helps new plants establish strong roots and ensures a healthy start for the season.

Irrigation is another key factor. "Ensure your irrigation system is up to date before you begin planting to avoid stressing new plants," Guerrero says.

Choosing the right plants also improves success. "Select plants according to our specific hardiness zone," he says. "A thoughtful design ensures year-round beauty."

For gardeners looking to create a unique outdoor space, Guerrero encourages creativity. "Don't be afraid to create unique spaces," he says. "If a project becomes too complicated, seek professional advice."

When planting, Guerrero recommends feeding plants from the start. "Add a slow-release fertilizer to the bottom of the hole when planting to encourage growth," he says.

This is also a good time to plant summer bulbs, finalize heavy pruning and re-pot indoor plants. For ongoing maintenance, he adds, "Fertilize your azaleas, camellias and rose bushes," ensuring that both new and established plants flourish through the spring.



BUILT TO BLOOM A checkerboard of stone and turf leads to a shaded garden retreat, proof that good planning pays off. Testing soil, updating irrigation and choosing plants suited to our hardiness zone, along with adding slow-release fertilizer at planting, set the stage for strong roots and lasting spring growth.



SMART AND RESILIENT Society garlic brings soft purple blooms and reliable deer resistance to Lowcountry gardens. When combined with proper fertilization and thoughtful plant selection, choices like this help create a spring landscape that's both lush and built to withstand local wildlife pressures.

Feed and flourish

Spring growth doesn't happen by accident. It starts with giving plants the nutrients they need right out of the gate.

At ***Bruno Landscape and Nursery***, nursery manager Jordan Bruno says timing is everything. "Spring has sprung, and mid-March is the perfect time to fertilize," she says. "We recommend our favorite organic Espoma fertilizer and soil, which are kid- and pet-safe."

Choosing the right product matters just as much as applying it at the right time. Feeding early in the season helps strengthen root systems, encourage blooms and set the tone for months of healthy growth.

"Espoma has a large variety to choose from to support all your needs, from planting in the ground to nourishing existing plants and establishing new and potted flowers," she says.

Wildlife is another consideration. "One other thing to keep in mind this spring season, especially here in the Lowcountry, is looking for deer-resistant plant options," Bruno says. "Two of our favorites in the nursery are dwarf oleander and society garlic."

For gardens that include more tempting varieties, products such as Messina's Deer Stopper can help protect less deer-resistant plants.

By pairing proper fertilization with smart plant selection, Bruno says homeowners can build a spring landscape that's not only lush and colorful, but resilient as well. *LL*



FEED FROM THE START A colorful lineup of blooms, soil mixes and organic fertilizers highlights the importance of early spring feeding. Applying the right Espoma products in mid-March strengthens roots, encourages vibrant flowers and supports healthy growth in beds, containers and potted plants alike. Pairing nourishment with deer deterrents helps protect that investment all season long.

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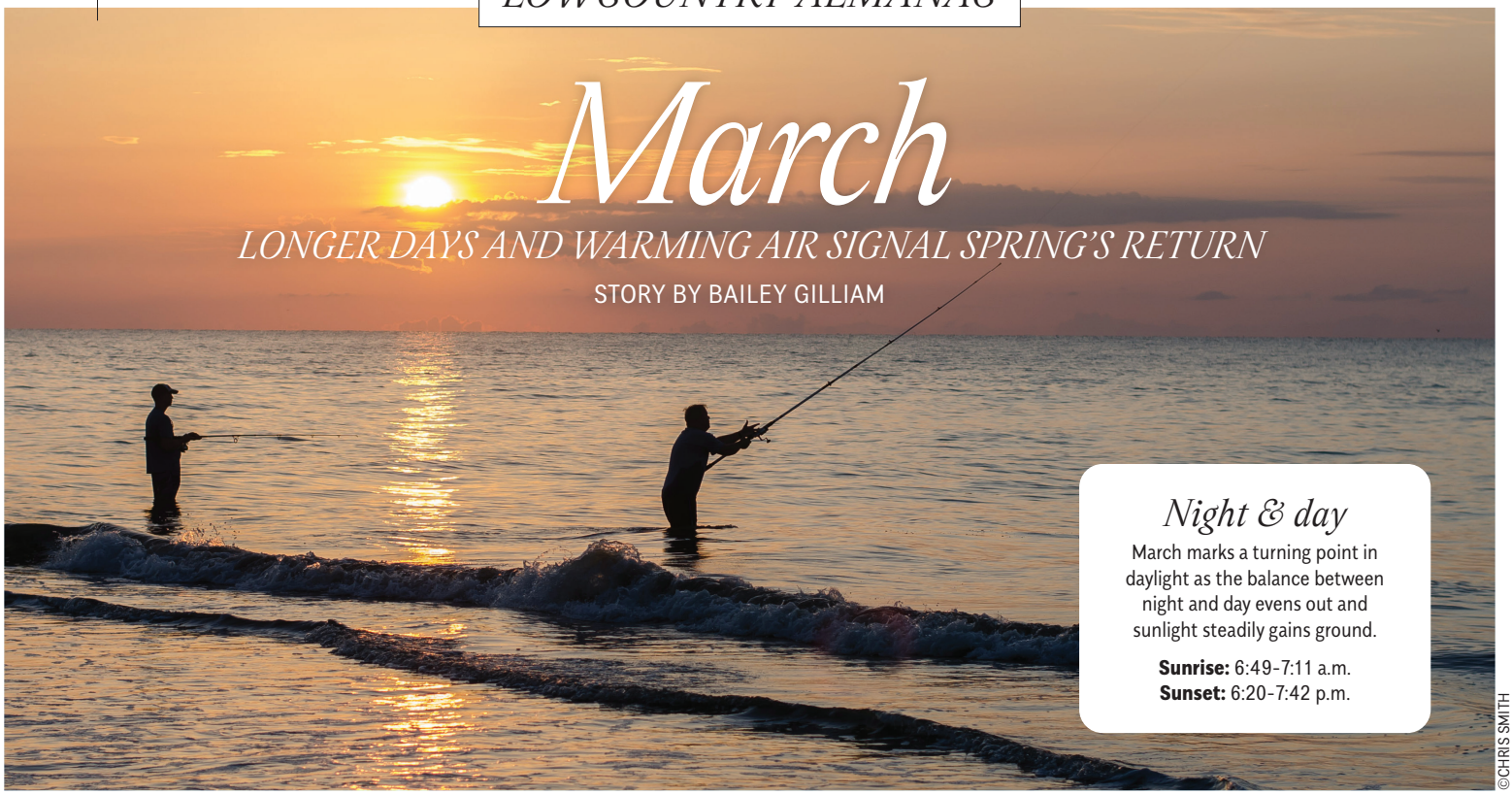
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LOWCOUNTRY ALMANAC

March

LONGER DAYS AND WARMING AIR SIGNAL SPRING'S RETURN

STORY BY BAILEY GILLIAM



Night & day

March marks a turning point in daylight as the balance between night and day evens out and sunlight steadily gains ground.

Sunrise: 6:49-7:11 a.m.
Sunset: 6:20-7:42 p.m.

©CHRIS SMITH

MORNING BITE Two surfcasters greet a late-winter sunrise near Folly Field Beach in this image captured by photographer Chris Smith. As winter transitions to spring, nearshore waters around Hilton Head Island begin to stir, and surf fishing can produce species such as whiting, bluefish and pompano along the beach, as bait fish and migrating fish become more active.

March arrives with a sense of motion across the Lowcountry. Morning light lingers a little longer, the marsh begins to green, and garden beds stir from their winter rest. Along the coast, daily rhythms feel lighter and more active as the season turns. Named for Mars, the Roman god of war and action, March has long been associated with momentum and renewal, an apt match for this moment of seasonal change. Drawing from the *2026 Old Farmer's Almanac* and *Grow Great Vegetables South Carolina*, this month's almanac offers guidance for stepping confidently into the growing season ahead.

Weather predictions

March ushers in a noticeable change with warmer temperatures, shifting skies and the first true taste of spring.

Average temperature: 55 degrees (1 degree below average)
Rainfall: 4 inches (1/2 inch below average)

FORECAST BY WEEK
March 1-7: Sunny, cool
March 8-16: Periods of rain, chilly
March 17-22: Sunny, warmer
March 23-29: Scattered showers, warm
March 30-31: Sunny, cooler

Astronomical events

The night sky is highlighted by the spring equinox and increasingly bright evenings.

March 3: The full moon, known as the Worm Moon, reaches peak illumination early in the day, lighting up the evening and early morning sky. The name comes from traditional lore tied to thawing soil and increasing natural activity.

March 3: A total lunar eclipse occurs as the moon passes fully through Earth's shadow and can take on a reddish tint, often called a blood moon.

March 19: A new moon phase begins, leaving the night sky temporarily moonless and creating ideal conditions for stargazing.

March 20: The March equinox marks the official astronomical start of spring when the sun crosses the celestial equator and day and night are nearly equal before daylight continues to increase.

Tides & currents

Stay in step with the Lowcountry coast. ***Scan this QR code*** *for up-to-date tide and current predictions from NOAA.*

In the garden

Momentum builds in the garden this month as warmer soil and longer days invite planting, pruning and early spring growth.

PREP Prepare beds, and cover with plastic to warm the soil. Weed perennials, then fertilize and side-dress garlic and onions with compost.

PLANT March offers ideal planting conditions, with warming soil and consistent daylight supporting strong root development.

Indoors: *Set sweet potatoes in flats under cover to produce slips, lightly covering them with potting mix or compost.*



Outdoors: *Plant radishes, carrots, beets,* ***turnips****, fava beans, spinach and beans. Finish transplanting collards, cabbage, broccoli and Asian greens. Later in the month, transplant tomatoes, peppers and eggplants.*

HARVEST Seasonal harvests include arugula, beets, carrots, collards, kale, leaf celery, lettuce, mustard greens and radishes.



Best days

Based on lunar phases, these are March's most favorable days for select activities:

Go fishing: March 1-3, 18-31
Wearing green: March 15-17
Spring cleaning: March 17-20
Camping: March 9-11
Leisure travel: March 27-29







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Raising kits, dodging myths

INSIDE DENNING SEASON OF THE LOWCOUNTRY'S GRAY FOXES

STORY BY BAILEY GILLIAM + PHOTOGRAPHY BY JEANNE PADDISON



If luck is on your side, you might spot one at dawn or dusk. A gray fox slips along a tree line, pauses near the edge of a marsh, then disappears just as quickly as it arrived. Alert, curious and almost always misunderstood, gray foxes have long carried an unfair reputation shaped by folklore and modern fear.

The truth is far less dramatic. Gray foxes are canines, relatives of one of our most beloved household companions. And much like shy dogs, they prefer to stay out of sight.

Where fear fills the gaps

In the Lowcountry, where wooded edges give way to marsh grass and backyards blur into wildlife corridors, gray foxes move through spaces most people rarely notice. They help control rodent populations drawn in by bird feeders, spilled chicken feed and other human activity. But because foxes look wild and unfamiliar, fear often fills the gaps where understanding should be.

According to wildlife rehabilitator Jeanne Paddison, that fear is misplaced.

"Foxes are one of the most nonconfrontational animals there are," she says. "They're not after your cats or dogs. They're after rodents, and they're doing us a service."

At Savannah Wildlife Rescue Center, many gray foxes arrive, not because they are aggressive or dangerous, but because they have chosen sensible places to den. Under sheds, garages and abandoned buildings, these quiet, sheltered spots are ideal for raising young, especially during denning season. Unfortunately, their presence often triggers alarm among property owners.

"People trap them because they're afraid," Paddison says. "And that fear is based on a myth."

Gray foxes avoid confrontation whenever possible. They slip away unseen, focusing their energy on hunting rodents and navigating a landscape shaped by people. When backyard chickens enter the picture, tensions tend to rise, but Paddison is clear about where responsibility lies.

"Chickens are the bottom of the totem pole in the food chain," she says. "If we decide to bring chickens into an area, it's our job to protect them. That doesn't mean killing wildlife. It means building a chicken coop like Fort Knox and learning how to coexist."

Gray foxes are simply doing what nature designed them to do. Punishing them for that behavior only disrupts the balance they help maintain.



HANGING OUT Three gray fox kits lounge together in a hammock at the Savannah Wildlife Rescue Center, discovering the simple joys of play, exploration and sibling bonds as they prepare for life back in the wild.



RELENTLESS LOVE This mother was trapped for three days while her kits waited nearby. Desperate to reach them, she injured her paws and mouth digging and chewing at the trap before being rescued and brought to the Savannah Wildlife Rescue Center.



Denning season, misunderstood

In the Lowcountry denning season typically runs from March through August, with the most sensitive weeks in early spring.

One of the most heartbreaking outcomes of fear-driven decisions is the live trapping and relocation of foxes during this time. In one case, a gray fox mother was trapped for three days while her kits waited nearby. Desperate to reach them, she injured her paws and mouth trying to dig and chew her way out.

"Her mothering instinct was overwhelming," Paddison recalls.

Once reunited in care, the fox reclaimed her two kits and accepted an orphaned kit from another litter, raising all three as her own. Stories like this reveal the hidden cost of relocation. While it may seem humane, moving wildlife often leads to suffering or death. Animals removed from familiar territory struggle to find food, shelter and safety. Many fall victim to predators or starvation. Any young left behind rarely survive without their mother.

"It's tragic," Paddison says. "And it's almost always preventable."

Patience pays off

The solution, she explains, is patience. Denning season is short. Within a few weeks, fox families move on naturally. When intervention is truly necessary, homeowners can gently encourage relocation by making an area less appealing. Lights, noise or strong scents can help, as long as the mother is given time to move her kits safely.

"We're here to help," Paddison says. "For both the people and their wild house guests."

At the rescue center gray fox kits are given the time and space they need to grow up wild. Raised together, moved into outdoor enclosures and gradually exposed to the sights, sounds and smells of nature, they build strength, instincts and independence before release.

"They play, they explore, they learn how to be foxes," Paddison says. "Then they're given a second chance at life in the wild."

Gray foxes are not villains lurking at the edges of our neighborhoods. They are quiet caretakers of the ecosystem, skilled mousers, rodent controllers and devoted parents doing their best to survive and raise their young in a human-shaped world. With a little understanding and respect, coexistence is not just possible. It is often the simplest and best outcome for everyone. *LL*



Who you gonna call?

If you find an injured, orphaned or trapped gray fox, contact:

- ***Savannah Wildlife Rescue Center:*** *912-596-1237*
- ***Paws Animal Wildlife Sanctuary:*** *864-683-3190*

BUILT TO CLIMB Unlike red foxes, gray foxes are capable of climbing trees to escape predators or hunt.



The great return

SPRING MIGRATION IN THE LOWCOUNTRY

STORY + PHOTOGRAPHY BY MARY ALICE TARTLER



Sometime between late February and mid-March, there comes a morning when the air finally loosens its winter grip. It is a subtle shift, barely perceptible at first, when the Lowcountry's edges soften and the landscape exhales. That moment coincides with the opening note of spring migration.

Situated along a vital stretch of the Atlantic Flyway, the Lowcountry's maritime forests, tidal creeks and salt marshes provide essential fuel for waves of migrating birds arriving from Central and South America. For some this is a brief but critical stopover to rest, feed and gather strength before continuing north. For others the journey ends here, where the serious business of nesting and raising young begins. One morning, the buzzy trill of a Northern parula or the sudden flash of a painted bunting stops you in your tracks, and you realize there is nowhere else you would rather be.

Tree Swallow (February to March)

These iridescent aerialists arrive early, slicing through the sky with speed and precision. Their acrobatics signal the true end of winter, bringing a rush of motion and energy as the Lowcountry stirs back to life.



Northern Parula
(early March)

The parula's buzzy song feels inseparable from the maritime forest itself, as if it were woven into the Spanish moss draped from ancient oaks. Look closely, and you may uncover a secret: a perfectly camouflaged nest tucked into the moss, nearly invisible to the untrained eye.



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Image Duet (detail)



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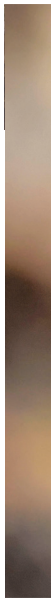
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Yellow-throated Warbler
(early March)

Calmer than many of their frenetic warbler cousins, these birds linger just long enough to reward patient observers. High in the canopy their golden throats flash against a softening spring sky, a gentle promise of warmer days ahead.

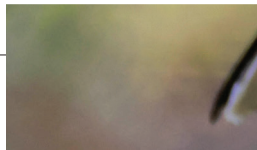




Blue-gray Gnatcatcher *(March)*

Tiny, tireless and endlessly entertaining, these birds bring motion to every branch they touch. Their sharp "pwee" calls provide the soundtrack for early morning walks. Watch closely as they build exquisitely crafted nests, binding lichen, grasses and oak catkins with spider silk to form a velvety cup that blends into the branch.







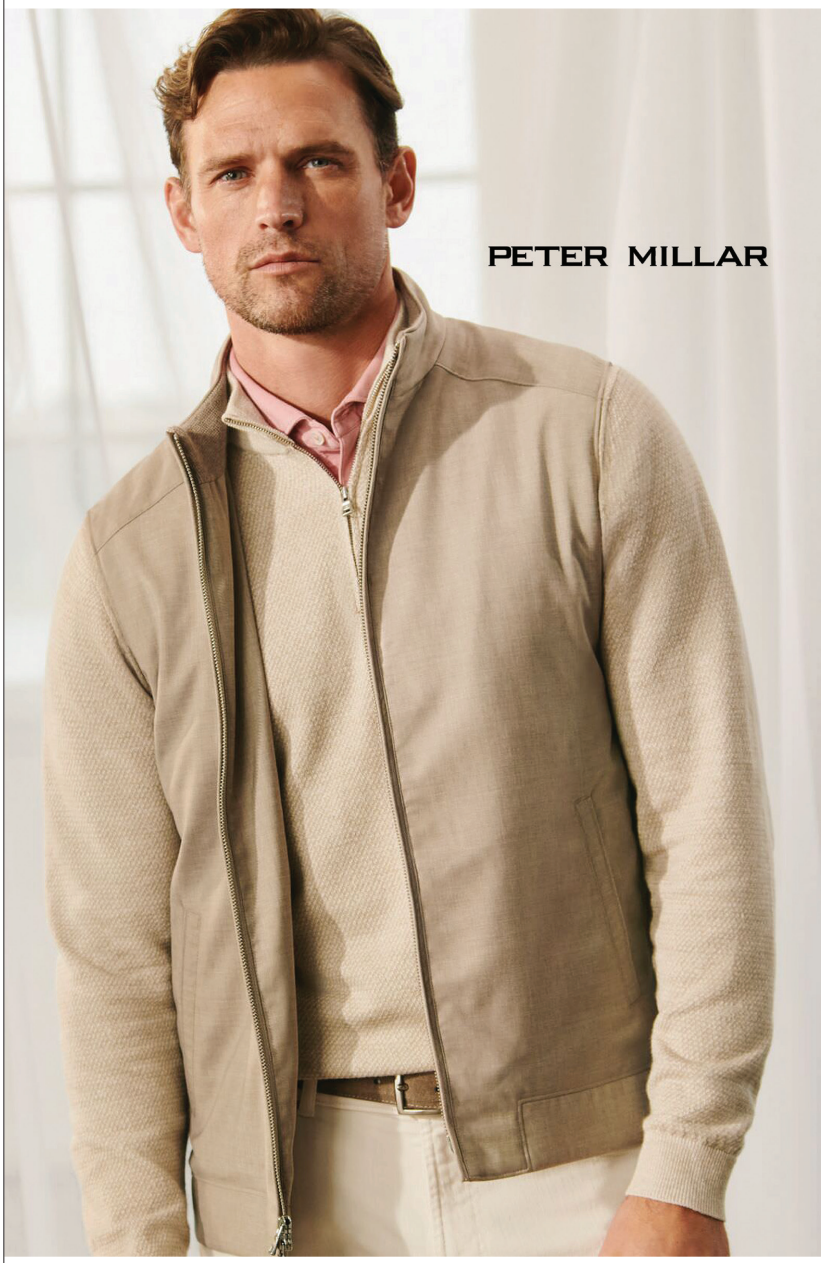




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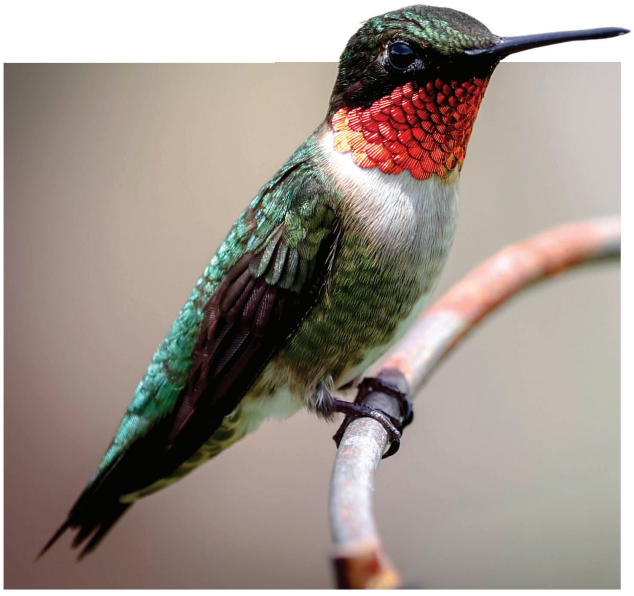
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Prothonotary Warbler

(mid- to late March)

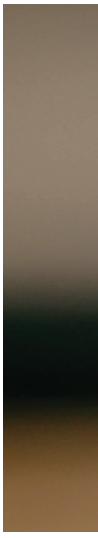
Often called "swamp candles," these glowing yellow birds illuminate the dark understory of wetlands. Their arrival brings a sudden brightness to cypress swamps, where they reclaim old woodpecker holes and transform them into nurseries for the next generation.



Ruby-throated Hummingbird

(early to late March)

Arriving on the heels of the first wildflowers, these tiny jewels return in perfect sync with spring's nectar. The mechanical whir of their wings sounds like a miniature helicopter as they dart past your ear. Fierce and fearless, they remind us that even the smallest creatures carry astonishing strength.



Great Crested Flycatcher

(late March to early April)

Along woodland edges their loud, rising "wheep" call is unmistakable. Famous for weaving shed snake skins into their nests, these birds employ a clever bluff that warns would-be intruders to think twice before approaching.















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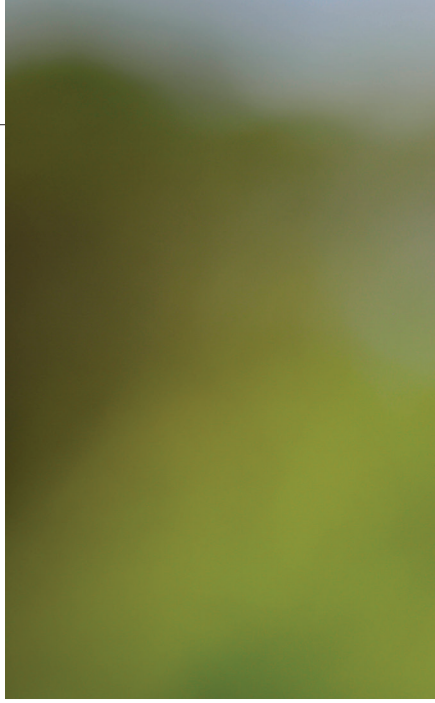
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Eastern Kingbird
(early April)

Bold and unyielding, these birds rule open fields and waterways alike. Watch as they hover briefly before dipping down to snatch insects from the water's surface. Their fearless dive-bombing of much larger intruders is a master class in determination.



Painted Bunting *(late February to mid-April)*

With a palette that seems borrowed from a painter's studio, these birds are the undisputed showstoppers of spring. In contrast to all of their color, they favor the shelter of maritime scrub. Boldly territorial and fiercely spirited, they are as commanding in behavior as they are breathtaking in appearance.





Orchard Oriole

(early March to mid-April)

Subtle and refined, these burnt-orange songbirds are among spring's earliest arrivals and quickest to depart. They move quietly through dense canopy, offering fleeting glimpses before slipping away ahead of the summer heat. *LL*

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FREQUENT FLYER

Finders, keepers

Fish crows thrive along the coast by being curious, adaptable and unapologetically opportunistic

STORY BY BAILEY GILLIAM



©MARY ALICE TARTLER

LISTEN CLOSELY Fish crows are often identified by ear long before they're confirmed visually. Their nasal call is one of the most reliable ways birders distinguish them from American crows.

If Fish crows are the gypsies of the bird world. If they had a theme song, it would be *Gypsies, Tramps and Thieves* by Cher, because that title alone explains almost everything about how they live. At first glance they look nearly identical to American crows, but fish crows give themselves away if you pay attention. Their call is slightly more nasal, often delivered as a doubled caw, and their behavior is far less buttoned-up. These are free spirits. They roam, they improvise, and they show up wherever opportunity presents itself, usually in the company of others.

Home is where the food is

You'll find fish crows near water most often, along beaches, marshes, estuaries, rivers and lakes. They are equally at home in parks, parking lots, docks, golf courses and landfills. They have adapted beautifully to human landscapes, expanding northward and inland, following food rather than tradition. They do not put down deep roots, and they do not pretend to.

That nomadic mindset shows up everywhere in their lives. Fish crows move in groups, often mixing with American crows, especially in winter, when hundreds or even thousands may gather near reliable food sources. They build new nests frequently and sometimes abandon a site to start fresh elsewhere, even creating several nests in a single season. Commitment for fish crows is flexible. They are looser than American crows when it comes to pair bonds, forming breeding pairs for the season but without the same long-term devotion.

Females build the nest alone, gathering materials and doing the work themselves, while males may linger nearby without contributing much. Pairs may nest close together, particularly in marshes where trees are scarce, and fish crows sometimes tuck their nests into heron colonies, taking advantage of safety in numbers and the occasional unattended egg. Social, intelligent and playful, young fish crows are known to swing from branches or toy with objects just for fun, living proof that curiosity is central to their character.

Light on loyalty, heavy on larceny

And yes, the "thieves" part of the song fits perfectly too. Fish crows steal. A lot. They raid the nests of other birds, dig up turtle eggs, harass gulls, ibis and ospreys and swipe food whenever they get the chance. Around water they feast on crabs, marine invertebrates, eggs and nestlings, but their menu is famously broad: carrion, fruit, grain, trash and anything else that looks edible or steal-able.

They often forage among gulls, stealing from birds that are already expert thieves themselves. In confrontations with American crows, fish crows usually give ground, but they make up for it with timing, persistence and a knack for being in the right place at the right moment. Nomads, opportunists and rule-benders by necessity, fish crows live by their own code. Like the characters in Cher's song, they drift through the landscape together, living by opportunity, bending the rules and never staying anywhere longer than the pickings are good. LL

Where to find them

"Fish crows are the American crow's smaller, more specialized coastal cousin. While both look nearly identical to the untrained eye, they have unique behaviors and distinct personalities, and their call is usually the easiest way to tell them apart. As their name suggests, fish crows are coastal birds that forage along shorelines for fish, crabs, shrimp, crayfish and small invertebrates."

– Mary Alice Tartler, Audubon master birder



©GWEN CALLAS-MILLER

THE ART OF ANNOYANCE Fish crows are rarely shy around larger birds, including ospreys, herons and gulls. They often swoop, call loudly or harass from a distance, hoping to distract it or force it to drop food.

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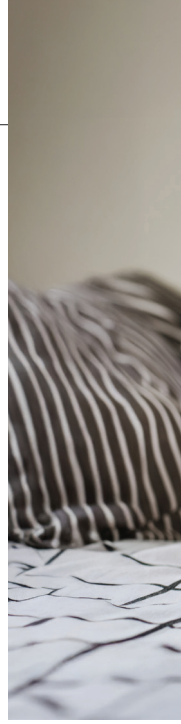
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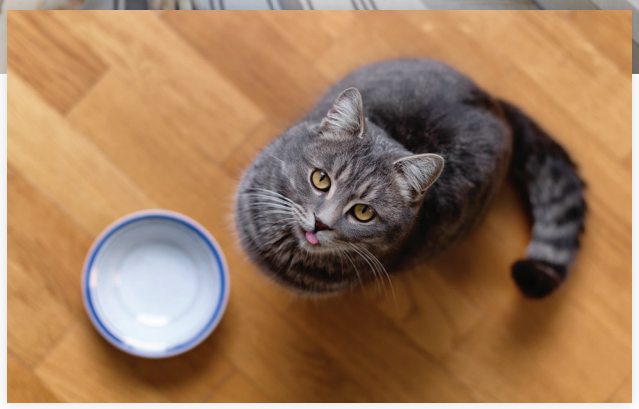
WHAT DOGS AND OTHER PETS KNOW ABOUT DAYLIGHT SAVINGS TIME, ROUTINES AND THE RHYTHMS OF DAILY LIFE

STORY BY BAILEY GILLIAM

If you've ever lived with a dog, you know this much is true: they absolutely know what time it is. Or at least they know when it's supposed to be dinner. When the clocks change, your dog's internal alarm doesn't budge. Dinner arrives at what feels like 5 p.m., and the look on your dog's face says this was not part of the agreement. Something feels off. But how do pets know? Can they actually tell time? And do other animals experience it the same way dogs do?

The short answer is yes. Just not the way we do.





THE DINNER STARE
Your pet doesn't need a clock to know when it's time to eat. Hunger cues, light shifts and longstanding routines all line up, and once they do, there's no ignoring them. Whether it's a slow stare, a pointed sit or a quiet wait by the bowl, dinner time rarely sneaks up on a pet.

A built-in clock

At the heart of it all is the circadian rhythm, the internal clock that regulates daily behavior in humans, animals, plants and even some bacteria. The term comes from the Latin circa (around) and diem (day), meaning roughly 24 hours. It's what tells bodies when to sleep, wake, eat and move.

Most dogs, like most people, are diurnal. They're awake during the day and rest at night. Other animals run on different schedules. Bats, raccoons and opossums are nocturnal. Some marine worms and cave fish are influenced by lunar cycles. Cats sit somewhere in between. They're mostly diurnal but famously active at dawn and dusk, a pattern known as crepuscular. Birds, rabbits, hamsters and reptiles all follow rhythms tuned to their biology and environment.

That helps explain why pets seem so tuned in to household routines.

Dogs don't read clocks, but their bodies give them plenty of cues. Hormone changes, hunger, light levels and even your daily habits help set their schedule. They learn quickly. When you wake up, head for the coffee pot and grab the leash, your dog's internal clock takes notes. Cats do the same thing. A cat yowling at dawn or a parrot greeting the sunrise isn't being dramatic. They're responding to their own built-in rhythms.



ONE HOUR, ALL CONFUSED When daylight savings time hits, your dog doesn't get the memo. Their internal clock stays put, while the rest of the household shifts an hour forward. Meals feel early, walks arrive at odd times, and for a few days everything seems slightly off.

How pets read their world

Smell plays a bigger role than most people realize. In "Being a Dog," researcher Alexandra Horowitz explains that dogs can track time through scent. Your smell is strongest when you're home. It fades after you leave and slowly builds again as you return. Dogs can even detect how scents move, which gives them clues about where you've been and how long you've been gone.

Cats, rabbits and rodents also rely on changes in familiar smells to orient themselves in time and space, though they use those cues in different ways.

There's also evidence that dogs experience time differently than humans. With faster metabolisms, time may feel stretched, making an hour seem longer than it does to us. Short absences are tracked through body cues and scent. Longer ones rely more on memory. That may explain the over-the-top greeting when you come home after a few hours, or the full reunion performance after a long day.

Sleep patterns add another wrinkle. Dogs don't usually sleep in one long stretch. Instead, they nap in short cycles, drifting off for brief periods before waking again. Cats and many small mammals do the same. Birds, reptiles and rodents each follow sleep and activity rhythms shaped by survival and environment.



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Why routines matter

What does all this mean for pet owners? Routines matter.

Dogs, cats and other pets thrive on predictability. Sudden changes like late meals, skipped walks or weekend sleep-ins can throw them off, especially animals that are anxious, aging or managing health issues. Understanding how pets perceive time helps us structure their days in ways that work with their natural rhythms, not against them.

Pets don't need clocks. They live by their bodies, the light, the smells and the patterns we set. Their sense of time is finely tuned to the world around them and, more often than not, to ours. So the next time your dog settles in front of the food bowl, quietly waiting for dinner that feels late by his count, remember this: he may not know the hour, but he knows the rhythm of your day. And he's counting on it.





BUILT ON ROUTINE Pets don't just follow routines. They anticipate them. A certain time of day brings certain expectations, and when those expectations aren't met, they notice immediately. Routine is their version of a schedule, and they take it seriously.

Tips for transitioning through time changes

Just like people, pets feel the shift when daylight savings time rolls around. Suddenly moving meals, walks and bedtime by an hour can leave them unsettled. A few small adjustments can help ease the change.

Ease into new schedules: *Move meals, walks and playtime by 10 to 15 minutes a day until you reach the new schedule. Pets that struggle with change, including puppies, kittens, seniors or animals with medical needs, may do better with even smaller shifts. Dogs may also need extra potty breaks during the transition.*

Be patient with sleep changes: *Your pet's internal clock won't reset overnight. Early wake-ups or restless evenings are normal for a few days. Natural changes in daylight can also affect activity levels, so allow for a little flexibility.*

Check in if needed: *If your pet seems unusually anxious or doesn't adjust after a week or two, a veterinarian, trainer or behavior consultant can help tailor a plan.*

Watch the details: *Time changes can affect medication schedules, so confirm any adjustments with your veterinarian. Seasonal shifts may also influence how much outdoor time or stimulation your pet needs. Pay attention to light, activity and energy levels.* LL





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SPRING STYLE

Garden variety glamour

FLORALS, FLOWING SILHOUETTES AND FRESH COLOR CAPTURE THE SPIRIT OF SPRING

PHOTOGRAPHY BY LISA STAFF
STYLED BY BAILEY GILLIAM

The Lowcountry doesn't tiptoe into spring. It shows up in full color. Inspired by that shift, this month's fashion spread was photographed at The Green Thumb, where fresh leaves and blooming plants set the tone. The looks are easy, polished and made for real life here. Think florals that feel playful, breezy silhouettes that move with you and pieces you'll reach for on farmers market afternoons or brunch with friends. Spring isn't subtle in the Lowcountry, and your wardrobe doesn't have to be either.



In bloom

*Framed by layers of green at The Green Thumb, Suzanne Barton, general manager of the retail division, leans into the season in a floral dress from **Spartina 449**. The long tropical print feels lively but unfussy, picking up on the leaves and blossoms around her. A gold half-zip at the neckline catches the light and gives the look just enough shine. As she moves through the nursery paths, the silhouette sways with ease, a reminder that in the Lowcountry, florals are never out of place.*





Garden grace

Tucked among cascading houseplants, The Green Thumb's Kathy Butkevich steps into spring in a coordinated set from ***Maggie & Me****. The deep blue top and matching pants are scattered with a soft light blue floral print that feels seasonal without trying too hard. The fit is easy but pulled together, the kind of outfit that works just as well wandering through the nursery as it does settling in for lunch with friends. It's polished, practical and perfectly at home in the Lowcountry this time of year.*

Florals, refined

Spring florals don't have to shout. This look by Suzanne Barton shows how blooms can feel tailored, modern and easy to wear. By pairing subtle pattern with structured pieces and thoughtful accessories, you can nod to the season without looking like you're headed to a garden party at noon.



Tailored touch

A structured blue V-neck top from ***Evelyn & Arthur*** keeps the look grounded. The clean lines and slight sleeve volume add shape and polish, balancing the softness of the print below. It's feminine but pulled together, which is exactly the point.



Coined style

A statement necklace and coordinating earrings from ***The Back Door*** add shine and movement. The real coin details bring a hint of history and personality, giving the outfit depth without overpowering it.

GET THE LOOK





Subtly spring

These jeans from ***Outside Hilton Head*** feature a soft floral print that reads more like texture than pattern. From a distance, they look like classic denim. Up close, they offer a quiet wink to the season. It's an easy way to freshen up a closet staple.



Petal-perfect carryall

A brown leather handbag from ***Palmettoes*** introduces warmth and texture. The layered detailing echoes the shape of petals, while the rich tone anchors the blues and keeps the look practical for everyday errands or lunch on the patio.



Step into spring

Blue textured slip-on loafers from ***Currents*** finish things off. They're comfortable enough for a full day out and polished enough to hold their own. The subtle texture ties back to the denim and keeps the outfit feeling considered, not fussy.

Fresh picks for spring

Spring has arrived in full color, and local boutiques are leaning into it. Florals show up everywhere this season, not just on dresses but on accessories, menswear and even little details that make an outfit feel intentional.

Floral finesse

The G-Fore performance polo at ***John Bayley Clothier*** weaves a subtle floral pattern into a classic silhouette. Offered in several colorways, it's polished enough for dinner and comfortable enough for a warm round on the course.





Blooming classic

Brims on the Bluff updates its signature hat with dried florals and a ribbon tie. The shape stays timeless, but the added detail gives it a soft, seasonal lift that works from farmers market mornings to beach walks.



Magical blooms

A unicorn headband from ***Island Child*** doubles as a crown of flowers, equal parts sparkle and imagination. It's made for twirling, birthday parties and any afternoon that calls for a little extra magic.



Tropical elegance

The Moon Stroll Dress Lys Bouquet from ***Jean-Pierre Klifa*** brings bold color and movement to the mix. The adjustable tie neckline and flowing silhouette create an easy statement that feels right at home at a daytime gathering or an evening out on the patio.



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Clean slate

Start with a gentle daily cleanser that removes dirt, oil and sunscreen without leaving your skin tight or dry. This first step sets the tone for everything that follows. ***Neocutis Neo Cleanse Gentle Skin Cleanser***, available at Coastal Skin Studio, washes away buildup while supporting moisture with glycerin and essential fatty acids. Skin feels clean, not stripped.



Lock it in

Finish with a moisturizer that protects and strengthens your skin's natural barrier. ***Triple Lipid Restore 2:4:2*** from MedSpa by Symbiosis Health replenishes essential lipids and improves texture, especially if your skin runs dry. Used daily, it helps skin look smoother and feel more resilient.



Targeted treatment

Serums are where you get specific. Brightening, firming, calming, smoothing. A lightweight formula delivers concentrated ingredients before you moisturize. ***Alumier MD Ultimate Boost Serum***, also at Coastal Skin Studio, focuses on hydration and barrier support while softening fine lines. It absorbs quickly and doesn't leave a heavy finish.





Reset with a mask

Once or twice a week, press pause with a mask. It's a quick reset that can smooth texture, boost hydration or clear congestion, depending on what your skin needs. The ***Kelzyme Mask*** by Moor Spa uses sea kelp, enzymes and mineral-rich ingredients to exfoliate, brighten and refine. Think of it as a deep breath for your face.



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Soft, clean, and quietly uplifting, Misty Morning Room Mist captures the feeling of an early spring morning on the coast. Designed to gently scent a space with just a few sprays, it's an easy way to bring spring indoors.

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HOW'S IT GROWING?

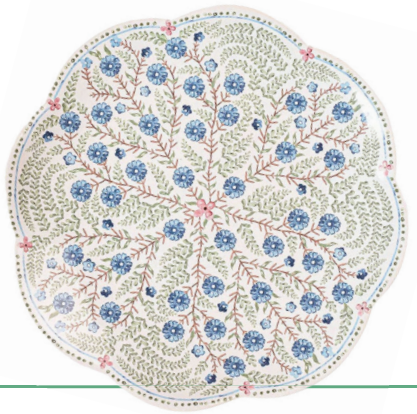
These custom floral arrangements are made with hydrangeas and eucalyptus and are perfect for adding a touch of spring to your home.

Available at Pyramids

JUST DESSERTS

These scalloped salad and dessert plates feature a pretty floral design and are the perfect addition to a spring table setting.

Available at J. Banks Design





JUST PEACHY

Fresh greens deserve a beautiful bowl. This spring peach salad bowl is certain to bring a pop of watercolor charm to your table.

Available at Hilton Head Oils and Balsamics

SPRING IN YOUR STEP

Get ready for the new season with this beautiful collection of springtime decor.



VIOLETS ARE BLUE

Just in time for spring, this enamel vase from MacKenzie-Childs features a Violet Check pattern and is perfect for displaying all of your springtime florals.

Available at Forsythe Jewelers



SPRING CLEANING

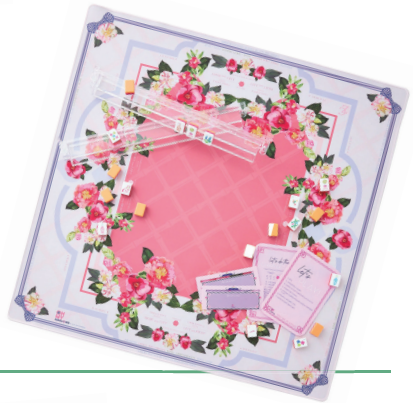
These super absorbent microfiber towels are exclusive to Gifted and feature a festive and seasonal flower design.

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PLAY IT AGAIN

Add some seasonal beauty to your game table with this Mahjong mat featuring a stunning floral design.

Available at Marsh on the May





COME SAIL AWAY

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5-MINUTE HISTORY

The fall of Fort Balfour

How an audacious 1781 raid helped turn the tide of the Revolutionary War in the Lowcountry

STORY BY RICHARD THOMAS

Richard Thomas is an owner and guide for Hilton Head History Tours and is the author of Backwater Frontier: Beaufort Country, at the Forefront of American History.

In the turbulent spring of 1781, the Revolutionary War in South Carolina reached a critical juncture. The British, though dominant in the areas of Charleston and Savannah, faced mounting resistance in the interior. Among the most daring Patriot leaders in the Lowcountry was Colonel William Harden, a militia commander whose bold raid on Fort Balfour in Beaufort District marked a turning point in the struggle for control of the southern corridor between Charleston and Savannah.

Fort Balfour, situated near the Pocotaligo River crossing, was a strategic British outpost guarding a vital transportation route. Garrisoned by a mix of Loyalist militia from Granville County and South Carolina Light Dragoons under Colonel Nicholas Lechmere, the fort served as a linchpin in British communications and supply lines and was central to their control of Beaufort District. In mid-April 1781 Colonel Harden commanded a force of approximately 100 Patriot militiamen from Colleton and Beaufort Districts. They had been regrouping after a recent defeat near the Salkehatchie River crossing on the King's Highway and were eager to strike a blow against British authority. Knowing that two of the most despised Loyalist leaders in the area, Andrew DeVeaux and Edward Fenwick, were at Fort Balfour, Harden devised a plan.



OUTNUMBERED BY ILLUSION This illustration by LOCAL Life designer Charles Grace captures the moment Patriot forces compelled the surrender of Fort Balfour in 1781. Victory came not through superior numbers, but through deception, local knowledge and the calculated use of militia tactics that made a small force appear overwhelming.

A calculated assault

His tactics were both cunning and psychological. He sent Lieutenant Tarleton Brown with a mounted detachment of 13 men to lure the Loyalists out of the fort, while Harden's main force of about 80 men encircled the position, spacing themselves to convey the impression that a much larger force had laid siege. Many of the fort's defenders were friends, neighbors and relatives of the men in Harden's ranks, and due to British harshness toward local citizens, their Loyalist allegiance had weakened.

By chance, Colonel Fenwick, Colonel Nicholas Lechmere and seven dragoons were at a nearby tavern after visiting a Pocotaligo field hospital, leaving Lieutenant Colonel Fletcher Kelsall in command of the fort. With the commanding officers absent, Harden demanded Kelsall's surrender, warning that no quarter would be given if resistance continued. After a tense two-hour standoff and a mutiny within the Loyalist ranks, Kelsall capitulated. More than 90 men, including officers and dragoons, marched out of the fort in an orderly column, tethered their horses on the abatis along the walls and formed a line in surrender. Harden and his men worked through the night processing paroles and sending the prisoners on their way.

The next morning, while preparing the fort for occupancy, Harden received word that a strong Loyalist force was advancing from

Charleston and nearing the Salkehatchie. Despite assurances from Tarleton Brown that "no 1,000 men assembled for battle could take the fort if defended," Harden ordered an evacuation and burned the fort to the ground. Before departing the area, the Patriots threw the cannon into a nearby creek to prevent its reuse.

Aftermath and legacy

The fall of Fort Balfour was more than a tactical victory; it was a symbolic triumph for the Patriot cause in Beaufort District. Harden's success disrupted British land communications between Charleston and Savannah, forcing Loyalist forces to retreat and regroup. It also demonstrated the effectiveness of decentralized militia warfare, which relied on mobility, local knowledge and psychological pressure, rather than brute force.

Soon afterward, Harden was proposed for promotion to general commanding the Beaufort District militia but was passed over in favor of Edward Barnwell, a member of one of the district's oldest and most influential families. In response Harden abruptly resigned his commission. From the outset his men refused to obey Barnwell's orders, forcing Barnwell to resign. Francis Marion then assumed command from a remote location, and the lack of on-site leadership led to the immediate fragmentation of the formerly cohesive unit into lawless gangs exacting targeted retribution on former enemies and area Loyalists.

Harden's campaigns, particularly his victory at Fort Balfour, helped solidify Patriot control in the region and contributed to the broader collapse of British influence in South Carolina by late 1781. At the end of the war Harden was elected as a senator and was present at the Jacksonboro Assembly in January 1782.

He later returned to private life in Beaufort District, where he was recognized as a local hero and a symbol of resistance. Like many Revolutionary officers, he was entitled to compensation in the form of land grants or property for his wartime service. He appears in public records as a landowner near Pocotaligo and a respected figure, though he never achieved the broader fame of other partisan leaders. He is believed to have died in November 1785, and genealogical records indicate he was deceased before 1789. Although it has been reported that he was buried on his Pocotaligo plantation, it is also believed he may be interred in the Prince William Parish Church (Old Sheldon) churchyard. *LL*

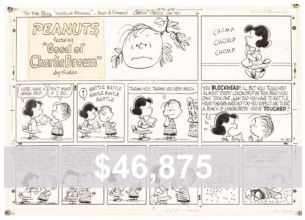
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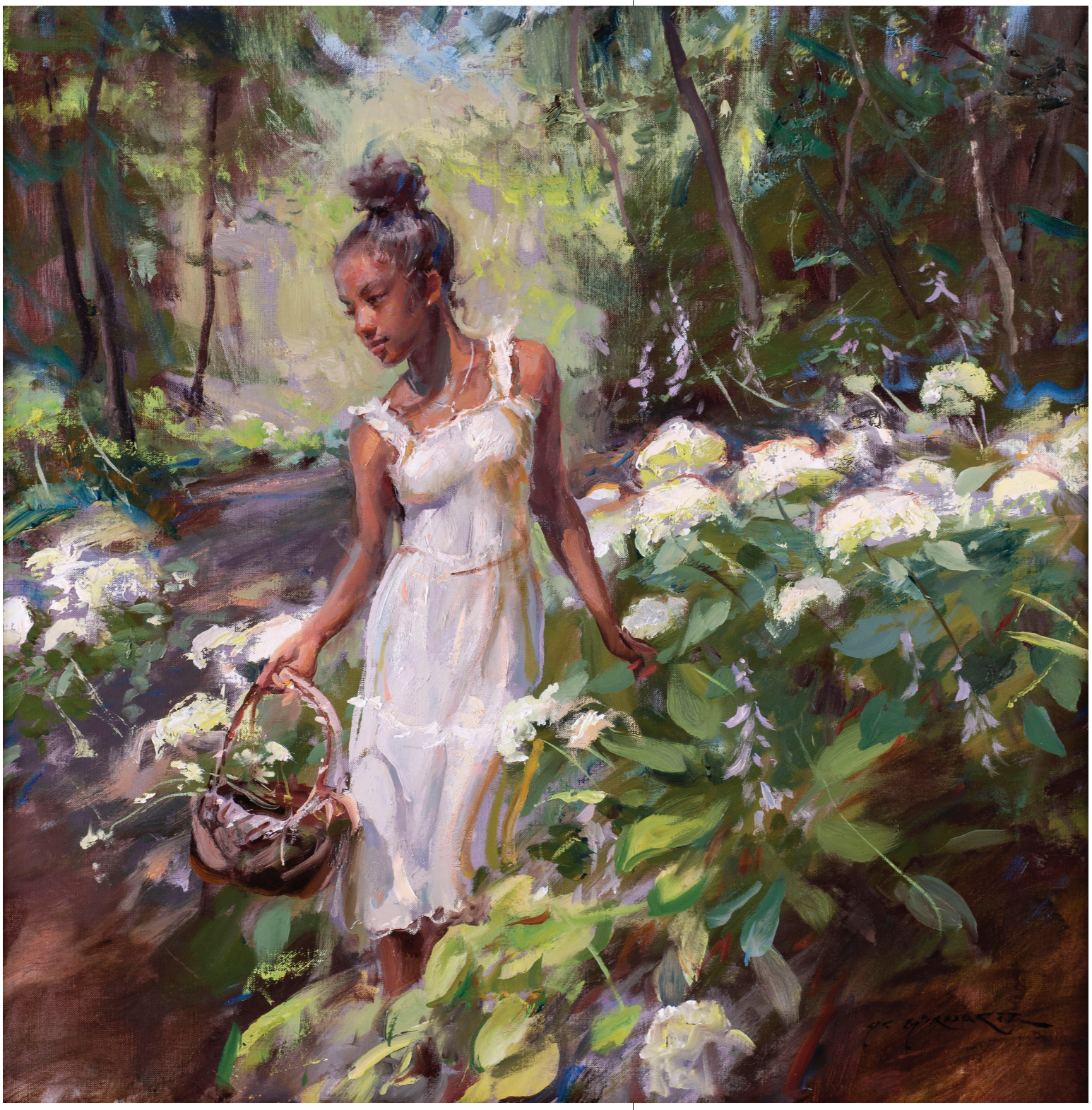
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DAN GERHARTZ
Sunlight, Hostas, and Hydrangeas
Oil, Red Piano Gallery

In a world filled with uncertainty, my deepest hope as an artist is to create images that speak of hope and promise. As I painted our daughter, Tsion, in this garden bathed in layered light and foliage, my aim was to capture not only the beauty of the setting but the quiet radiance within her. Every line, rhythm and harmony was crafted in service of that intention.



Down the garden path

SIX ARTISTS BECKON US WITH FLOWERS

STORY BY CAROLYN MALES

Six artists invite us to leave the present world, with its cacophony of insistent noise and news intent on hijacking our attention, and step into their real and imagined terrains to contemplate the botanical beauties they've captured in a particular moment in time.

We begin by entering a dreamy, luminescent garden where Dan Gerhartz's daughter, in her gauzy white dress, seems to float in a beam of sunlight among the hostas and hydrangeas. Meanwhile, Stephanie Amato's painted tapestry of peonies beckons us with a bee's-eye view of the soft, varied hues and curves of petals nestled into each other. And who wouldn't want to pause in the meadow of wildflowers that Carson Overstreet rendered in a soft, Monet-like palette?

From there we venture into the realm of pure imagination. In Natacha Cash's *Echoes Between Dreams & Tomorrow*, we join Lilliputian figures gazing in wonder upon a fantastical waterscape of giant swans and aquatic blooms amid multicolored eddies. Then, on firmer ground, we amble down Virginia Cassidy's storybook path lined with trees of candy-colored flowers beneath a radiant sky. From there, it's back to eye level, where Carolyn Shultz's Moroccan-inspired vase bursts with vibrant, collaged paper-and-paint blooms.

Now let's join them in the garden.







STEPHANIE AMATO
Eternal Blooms
Oil, Four Corners Fine Art

I'm an impressionistic oil painter working in the alla prima style. My work focuses on landscapes, seascapes and floral compositions, which I paint directly from life to capture the immediacy and energy of the scene. I enjoy painting flowers and get inspiration from my garden, which includes peonies. After making a collection of smaller studies, I like to take them and paint larger, more abstracted works, translating them into more creative pieces, seeing them less as individual flowers and more in terms of form, shape and light.



CARSON OVERSTREET
Graceful
Acrylic, Camellia Art

I paint a variety of subject matters in both oil and acrylic and consider my style modern impressionism. I like to capture Nature's intrinsic beauty and whimsical way, and it was the blues, pinks, yellows and whites of these wildflowers that drew my eye to this scene. When I paint florals, my approach is different from a landscape, where I might spend a substantial amount of time in the planning phase. Painting florals, on the other hand, is an intuitive, playful and fun painting experience. After creating a rough thumbnail sketch indicating light, mid and dark values, I allow myself to meander with the painting as it unfolds.



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NATACHA CASH
Echoes Between Dreams & Tomorrow
Acrylic, Art League

My art is about exploring intuitive mark-making and emotional response. I work figuratively, but I allow form to remain fluid and responsive, often merging with color, rhythm, and organic patterns. "Echoes" was meant to capture the feeling of being immersed in life — the way memories, feelings, people, dreams and nature blend as one living moment.



©LYNDSI CAULDER



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VIRGINIA CASSIDY
Mystical Journey
Mixed Media, Art League

For me, art is like magic. It allows me to bring my imagination to life. Everything I do comes from what I see in my head — colors, shapes, imaginary scenes. One day I noticed how asphalt sparkles in the sun. That inspired me to create a shimmering path as the start for this whimsical vision. Nothing in the painting is based on reality — the size and colors I chose for the flowers; the texture of the sky and the crushed glass I used for the pathway as the centerpiece.



CAROLYN SHULTZ
Saffron
Mixed Media, Carolyn Shultz Art

I'm a mixed media artist, blending collage textiles, hand-painted papers and acrylic paint to create whimsical and joyful floral and still-life compositions. The variety of layers in my work invite you in, to look closely. I love when people see my pieces in person and realize with surprise all the interesting elements woven together, like a puzzle — bits of fabric or maybe a wallpaper remnant peeking out underneath the paint. Saffron is a bit of departure from my typical chinoiserie floral. It was inspired by a recent trip to Morocco, where I was in awe of the artisan work I found while wandering the tiny alleys of souks in Fez and Tangiers. I wanted to convey that exotic feel of a faraway place by weaving saturated colors, pattern and interesting textures into this bold statement piece.



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From Italian garden to table in watercolor

LINDA WARNER CONSTANTINO'S CULINARY ART AND ILLUSTRATION

STORY BY CAROLYN MALES

When Linda Warner Constantino first walked down the dirt driveway at Spannocchia 17 years ago, she found herself embarking on a culinary and artistic adventure. Here on a hilltop in Tuscany, 34 miles from Siena, a collection of rustic stone buildings sat overlooking the property's 1,100 acres of fields and vineyards. The estate, dating from the 12th century, was a working organic farm and retreat dedicated to preserving local traditions. For Constantino, it would mean wandering through rows of grapevines, vegetables, fruit and flowers and finding a spot to take out her sketchbook and paint. Evenings she'd join other guests on the covered terrace where she'd pass plates of antipasti, handmade pastas like artichoke lasagna, stuffed zucchini, saffron panna cotta, served with the farm's own terroir-driven wines. What's more, she could take cooking classes to learn how to re-create these seasonal dishes.

Her stay at Spannocchia had been the culmination of a month-long journey through Italy. Constantino had won a fellowship from SCAD, where she'd been teaching illustration, with a project she'd titled "Illustrating The Italian Culinary Experience From Garden To Table." Through those weeks of travel to Rome, Florence and other Italian towns, she immersed herself in paintings by Renaissance masters of botanical art and researched food imagery in modern Italian packaging and design. Along the way she'd painted small watercolors in her sketchbook of gardens, eateries and whatever else caught her eye.

These little informal pieces were one approach she uses with watercolors. "If I'm painting loose little landscapes in my sketchbook, I'm thinking in terms of visual poetry," she explains. Like poetry, they're intimate, suggestive of a scene caught mid-breath, a fleeting glimpse of hills and a weathered farmhouse, fields of flowers, produce markets, a cook paring an apple. This contrasts with her approach to botanical illustrations, which she compares to prose. "They're detailed and faithful to nature's intricacies." For those, she begins with looking at the plant from all angles, studying its texture and how it catches the light.

Selected recipes from Le Ricette di Spannocchia
Purchase cookbook: spannocchia.org
© 2025 by Tenuta di Spannocchia



PRIMI E SALSE

Where the garden leads

Rustic Italian farm cooking is rooted in memory, with recipes handed down over generations. The garden — what's in season and at its peak — guides the menu. Recipes, grounded in regional tradition, embrace authenticity, simplicity of ingredients and intuition, relying on taste, feel and eye rather than strict measurements or timers. They're unfussy and meant to be served family-style.

Pesto al Finocchietto Selvatico (wild fennel pesto)



(4-6 servings)

INGREDIENTS

1/4 cup Parmesan cheese
1/2 cup almonds, sunflower seeds, or walnuts
1 garlic clove
3 cups wild fennel or fennel tops
3/4 cup olive oil
Salt and pepper

DIRECTIONS **[1]** Using a food processor, blend together the cheese, nuts and garlic. **[2]** With the blade running, add the wild fennel and salt. Once the mixture is well combined, slowly drizzle in the olive oil until the pesto comes together.





ASK ME WHY.



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She'll work out the range of colors, painting squares of varied hues before carefully sketching it out, paying strict attention to proportion and structure. From there she builds detail, layer by layer. The finished illustration invites us to stop and look more closely.

In the coming years, Spannocchia's bucolic setting would become the venue for her to host annual artist retreats she teaches. Here she'll lay out a colorful buffet of the farm's produce — tomatoes, eggplants, kale, persimmons, berries, herbs on long wooden tables and demonstrate how to render them in watercolor. But she also encourages students to go outside in the gardens and paint loose landscapes in the small sketchbooks she'd made for them.



Recently when Spannocchia decided to publish a new edition of their cookbook *Le Ricette Di Spannocchia* (The Recipes of Spannocchia), they chose Constantino as illustrator and book designer. It was a perfect pairing. Not only was she an extraordinary illustrator (This year she's been awarded membership in the British Botanical Society of Artists International Fellows — notably one of only two Americans), but love of farm-to-table cuisine ran in her blood. Her cousin, Alice Waters, who pioneered that culinary movement at her renowned California restaurant, Chez Panisse, had eschewed glossy photographs and used illustrations with a tactile, artistic touch. Constantino's own illustrations — a cabbage that looks as if you could pick if up and cup it in your hands, a strawberry so luscious you're tempted to bite into it — plus formatting recipes in a easy-to-read font, complements the rustic farm aesthetic and theme. A feast for the taste and the eye. *LL*



Risotto di Rapa Rossa e Gorgonzola (beet and gorgonzola risotto)

(6 servings)



INGREDIENTS

1 large onion
6 tablespoons olive oil
1/2 cup white wine
420 grams (2 1/3 cups) risotto rice
1 cup cooked beets
2 liters (8 cups) vegetable broth
20 grams (1 1/2 tablespoons) butter
1/2 cup Gorgonzola cheese
Grated Parmesan cheese
Salt and pepper

DIRECTIONS [1] Heat the vegetable broth in a pot, and keep covered. While the broth is heating, blend the cooked beets in a food processor and set aside. **[2]** Finely chop the onion. Add the onion and olive oil to a large pot, and sauté over low heat until translucent, about 5 minutes. Add the white wine and cook until it evaporates. Still over low heat, add the rice and toast it, stirring continuously for several minutes. Season with salt and pepper. **[3]** Using a ladle, slowly add the hot broth one or two ladle fulls at a time, stirring until the liquid is absorbed before adding more. Continue for 15 to 20 minutes, until the rice is cooked and creamy. You may not need to use all the broth. **[4]** Remove from heat and stir in the beet purée, butter, Gorgonzola and Parmesan to taste, mixing energetically. Adjust seasoning with salt and pepper.

Salame Dolce (chocolate salame)

(6 servings)



INGREDIENTS

250 grams dry vanilla cookies
50 grams sugar
50 grams butter
65 grams dark chocolate
65 grams sweetened cocoa powder
2 small pasteurized eggs
1/4 glass Vin Santo, rum, or cognac
Powdered sugar

DIRECTIONS [1] Place the cookies in a resealable bag, and crush them with a rolling pin or other heavy object. The crumbs should be uneven, with some larger pieces remaining to create the "salame" effect. **[2]** Melt the butter and chocolate together in a bowl set over a pot of gently simmering water (bain-marie). **[3]** Beat the eggs and sugar until fluffy. Pasteurized eggs are used raw, as a nonna would do, but if you're unsure of egg quality, beat the mixture over a bain-marie to gently cook the eggs while maintaining a light texture. Add the cocoa powder, melted butter and chocolate, Vin Santo, and crushed cookies, and mix well.

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Shore Notes

MAKING BEAUTIFUL MUSIC TOGETHER

STORY BY CAROLYN MALES

I hadn't planned on singing. Not a single note. After all, I was here to write a story about the award-winning Shore Notes A Cappella Chorus. So there was no way that someone like me, who'd made her last singing stage appearance in middle school, was going to warble among these 24 experienced women who not only perform locally but also compete regionally and internationally. I was here to take notes and observe.

So how did I find myself standing on the second riser from the top, amid baritones, basses and tenors, singing melody with the leads?

It all began a week earlier when tenor Marcia Cornell, who's been a member of the Shore Notes since 2002, reached out to me for a story about the barbershop chorus's 25th anniversary this month. I must confess, up until now my picture of barbershop, with its four-part harmony, had been based on old movies and reinforced by an uncle who'd been a member of a men's group. The word barbershop itself conjured up stereotypical images of guys in striped vests and straw hats crooning "Sweet Adeline" (written in 1903) under a streetlamp. What's more, the Shore Notes were part of an international organization named Sweet Adelines.

A GLOBAL SISTERHOOD Shore Notes is a chapter of Sweet Adelines, a non-profit organization of approximately 20,000 members in choruses and quartets worldwide.



Marcia quickly disabused me of my stereotypical thinking. In the heyday of barbershop from the 1890s through the early 1900s, when Tin Pan Alley, vaudeville and road shows boosted those perfectly tuned harmonies, it was performed by women and mixed groups as well as all-male choruses. But when the big band era, along with jazz and radio, swept away much of the genre mid-century, enthusiasts intent on preserving this American art form focused on men's quartets.

Then, in 1945, Edna Mae Anderson brought women's barbershop back into national consciousness when she founded Sweet Adelines. Today, Sweet Adelines International has chapters around the United States and Canada and overseas in Europe, Australia and New Zealand. Competition requirements state that no matter their nationality, choruses and quartets must sing in English — American English, to be precise — without accents. As for music, songs they can perform include American standards, with show tunes, swing, folk, rock, country and other contemporary selections, all arranged in barbershop harmony, rounding out the repertoire.

Rehearsal night, Monday, 6:15 p.m.

Now Marcia invites me to a Shore Notes weekly rehearsal so I can see and hear for myself. That's the plan when I walk into their practice space at the Church of the Palms in Okatie. However, before I can settle into a seat to watch them rehearse for their big anniversary show in March, Director Iris Christ holds up a hand and says, "The only way you can get a good understanding of barbershop is to sing along with us."

I immediately wave her off with an "Oh, I can't sing." Iris, hands on hips, is having none of this. She's heard it all before. Indeed, some of the two dozen women standing on the risers had used that excuse at one time. When I trot out my lack of post-middle school experience and the fact that I can't read music (I'm a piano dropout), she ignores all that and asks, "What part did you sing?"

"Second soprano."

She grins. "Ah, that means you can sing along with the leads. That's the melody. And we're starting a new song tonight, so everyone will be learning their parts."

Before I can demur further, the other women are waving me in, making room on the riser, urging my ascension up the steps with encouraging words.

When someone hands me sheet music, another member leans in and confides, "Don't worry, I can't read music either. You'll be okay." And much to my relief, I quickly find out she's right.

Auditory learning — listening to Iris and how the other leads sing — helps me follow all those notes, previously hieroglyphics, on the page.

Rehearsal starts with loosening up body and voice. I've missed the first group exercise but arrive in time for pursing my lips and making a bubbling sound like a playful two-year-old, while concentrating on correcting my breathing by lifting my palate and practicing different pitches. A few more exercises and — whoa — I can feel my posture change and my voice open up. When we begin warming up with the chorus from "Hey, Jude!" I realize I'm hitting notes that had been eluding me in recent years.

Four-part harmony

The new song we're about to learn is "All I Have to Do Is Dream," a 1958 hit by the Everly Brothers. As she did for our "Hey Jude" exercise, Iris rehearses our initial run-through by part. "I'm going to start with the leads, but everyone else can sing along if you want to so you can understand where the melody goes," she tells us. Once the leads — the storytellers of the group — sound solid, she adds the basses, who provide the foundation for the chords; then the baritones, who bring color; followed by the tenors, whose high notes complete the lush harmonic sound.

All the while, Iris, a 5'2" dynamo, gestures, shaping our sound, keeping us on beat, smiling when we get it right. She reminds us of the importance of breathing, posture and focusing on the meaning and emotion of the words as we convey them in song. And if something sounds amiss? She grimaces and cuts us off with a quick flip of her hand. That's fine. We're all united in an adrenaline-fueled camaraderie. In the end, we are creating beautiful music together.

We rehearse "Dream" up to the final section, where there's a key change — that's for another time. Meanwhile, the Shore Notes need to prepare for an upcoming show in Sun City, plus a regional competition in Florida in May. I feel a bit of a letdown when I step off the risers, but then I get to be the audience as they work through the concert program, and that's a treat. Afterwards, as I'm taking my leave, I'm invited to come back and sing again. I head out on a musical high.

Channel surfing on the car radio on the way home, what comes up but the Everly Brothers harmonizing on "All I Have to Do Is Dream..." Kismet. I sing along. LL

Magical Musical Journey, Shore Notes' 25th Anniversary Show

When: 7 p.m., Saturday, March 28
Where: Hilton Head Island High School
Tickets: Purchase online at shorenotes.com or in person at Burke's Pharmacy.

Rehearsals

When: 6:15 p.m., Monday nights
Where: Church of the Palms, Okatie
Details: Visitors and prospective members are invited to attend. Find more information online at shorenotes.com, email info@shorenotes.com or call 206-595-6915.



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Birds of a feather

Tiny sparrows come begging
for crumbs from my morning sandwich.
What a way to make a living.
Yet soon, inside, we will light
on our chairs, competing for bread,
scouring the halls for morsels of approval,
tilting our heads at little angles
to listen for hints on what to say next,
inching toward telling the truth
then flying away at the first sign of danger.

— Barry Dickson

ABOUT THE POET **Barry Dickson** is a retired Madison Avenue creative director whose poetry blends sharp wit, humor and satire with moments of striking emotional clarity. His work has appeared in literary journals including North American Review, PEARL and HazMat Literary Review, and he has been a finalist for the Hearst Poetry Prize as well as a recipient of a Pushcart Prize Special Mention. His 2021 poetry collection, *Maybe Today*, skewers the absurdities of the human condition through humor before quietly revealing the deeper truths beneath the laugh. A native of West Pittston near Scranton, Pennsylvania, Dickson has lived on Hilton Head Island since 2012, where he divides his time between writing and golf.

ABOUT THE ARTIST **Ezra Tucker** is an award-winning artist whose four-decade career began in commercial illustration. His most recognized projects include iconic paintings of the Budweiser Clydesdales, the illustrated novel *Star Wars: Dark Forces — Rebel Agent* for Lucasfilm Ltd. and movie poster art for *The Ten Commandments*. Today, Tucker focuses almost exclusively on wildlife art, drawing on a lifelong fascination with nature and animal behavior to capture moments of intelligence, personality and quiet drama. His work is held in permanent collections including the Booth Western Art Museum, Anheuser-Busch, the Texas Rangers Historical Museum and the Rossignol Cultural Centre. His work can be seen locally at The Red Piano Art Gallery in Bluffton.



Ruby Throated Hummers #9 by **Ezra Tucker**

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WHAT'S FRESH IN MARCH?

Close encounters of the veggie kind

KOHLRABI MAY LOOK ALIEN, BUT ITS CRISP BITE AND MILD SWEETNESS MAKE IT A COOL-WEATHER TREASURE

STORY BY BAILEY GILLIAM



OUT OF THIS WORLD Kohlrabi may look like those little green aliens from the *Toy Story* films, but beneath their odd, otherworldly exterior is a crisp, refreshing vegetable at its very best in March.

With its bulbous body and spindly stems, kohlrabi looks more like a tiny UFO than something destined for your plate. But beneath that sci-fi exterior is a crisp, mildly sweet vegetable at its best in March, whether pulled straight from the garden or spotted at a local farmers market. Just as happy shaved raw into slaws as it is roasted, sautéed or baked, kohlrabi rewards anyone willing to look past its oddball appearance with real versatility and flavor. It is an easy win for late winter and early spring cooking.

Bulbous benefits

Low in calories and high in fiber, kohlrabi supports digestion and helps promote satiety. It's rich in vitamin C and potassium for immune and heart health, while antioxidants common to cruciferous vegetables help protect cells from damage. With just 36 calories per cup and a satisfying crunch, it's an easy way to add nutrition without sacrificing flavor.

Roots that run deep

A member of the brassica family alongside cabbage, kale and broccoli, kohlrabi traces its roots to northern Europe, where it likely developed from marrow cabbage, a wild coastal plant with a thick stem. First documented in 1554 by botanist Matthiolus, it spread across Germany, England, Italy and the Mediterranean before arriving in America around 1800. While strongly associated with European cooking, kohlrabi also appears in Asian cuisines, from Indian curries to Korean kimchi.



LOCAL LIFE TEST KITCHEN

Kohlrabi fries

These kohlrabi fries are a flavorful twist on a classic snack. They're tender like sweet potato fries rather than ultra-crispy, but satisfying, savory and a great new way to enjoy this versatile vegetable.



INGREDIENTS

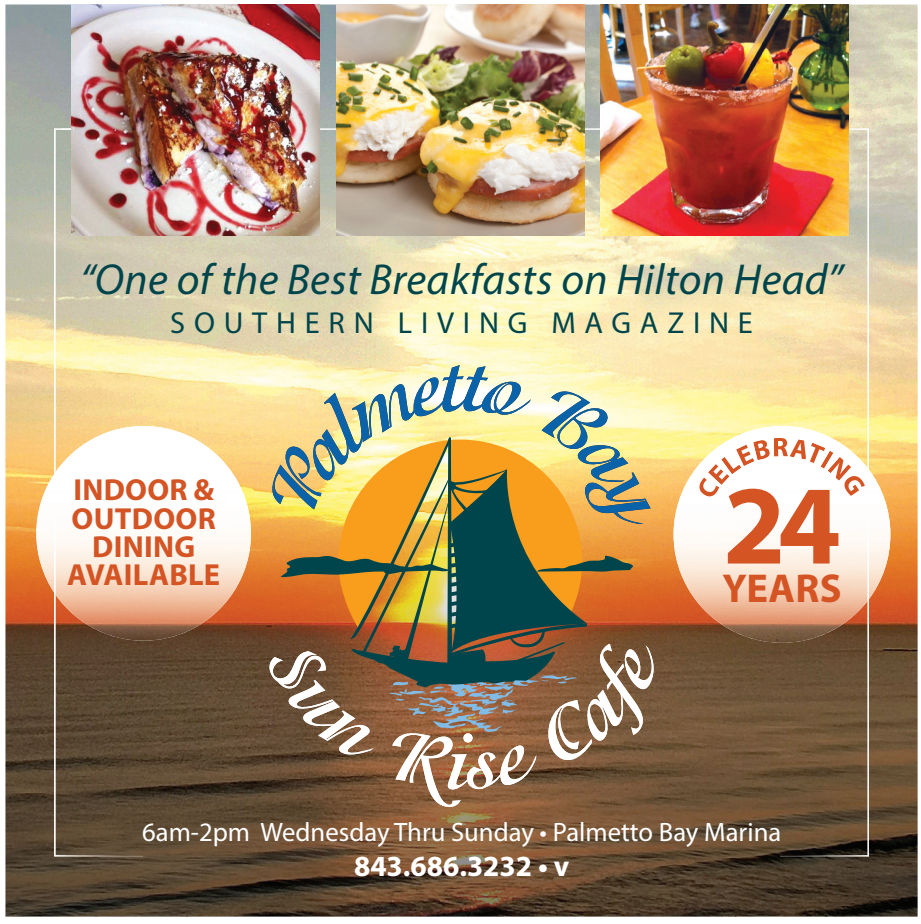
1 large kohlrabi, peeled and cut into fries
2 tablespoons olive oil
1/2 teaspoon ***chili powder***
1/2 teaspoon smoked paprika
1/2 teaspoon garlic powder
1/2 teaspoon onion powder
Salt, to taste

DIRECTIONS [1] Heat oven to 400 degrees. In a large bowl, combine olive oil, spices and salt. Add kohlrabi sticks and toss until well coated. **[2]** Spread fries on a baking sheet lined with parchment paper and bake 20 to 25 minutes, flipping halfway through, until golden brown.

From seed to sphere

Kohlrabi is one of the easiest cool-season vegetables to grow, maturing in as little as six weeks. Plant it in full sun with well-draining soil and keep moisture consistent. According to the Clemson Cooperative Extension, harvest when swollen stems reach 2 to 3 inches in diameter, before they turn tough and woody. Cut just above the soil line, trim the tops and refrigerate for up to two weeks. Look for small, firm kohlrabi with crisp, vibrant leaves if attached. Smaller bulbs tend to be sweeter and less woody than oversized ones. Once home, remove the leaves and store them separately, keeping the bulbs in the produce drawer until ready to use.







Peel & prep

Kohlrabi is easy to prep once you know the steps. Cut off the stems and leaves, trim the top and bottom to create flat sides, then peel away the tough outer skin with a vegetable peeler or paring knife. Slice into thick discs, trimming any fibrous edges if needed, then cut into matchsticks, cubes, fries or shreds. Once peeled, kohlrabi reveals a crisp, mildly sweet interior with a light peppery bite.

A versatile veggie

Kohlrabi shines both raw and cooked. Thinly sliced, it adds crunch to salads and slaws, holding its texture beautifully.

"I like to use it in crunchy vegetable slaws," says Hampton Hall Club Chef John Huffenberger. "I really like to use it that way on fish tacos. It has a flavor and texture like broccoli stems."

Light roasting, steaming or adding kohlrabi at the end of a stir-fry keeps it tender, while the edible leaves can be sautéed just like collards or mustard greens, making the most of the whole plant.





Love at first slice

Bluffton resident Ken Roberts remembers the first time kohlrabi caught his eye at a farmers market and it hasn't left his kitchen since.

"My curiosity made me buy some. I tend to be that way with anything new and unique I see at a farmers market," he says. Part of the appeal, he adds, is the reaction it gets. "I like to make sure guests see the bulbs before they're prepared. They're so unusual looking that even kids are intrigued."

Most guests, Roberts notes, have never tried kohlrabi before and are "pleasantly surprised by the taste and texture," as well as the fact that green and purple bulbs taste the same. For Roberts, that element of surprise is part of the fun.

"Bottom line, it leads to some interesting conversations," he says.

After sampling a crisp, refreshing slice offered by a farmer, which he describes as tasting a bit like cabbage with the texture of a turnip, Roberts discovered that the simplest preparation is often the best.

"They usually roast or sauté it and finish it with Parmesan," he says. "That's been my go-to." *LL*

KEN ROBERTS

Roasted kohlrabi

INGREDIENTS

4 kohlrabi, stems removed and bulbs peeled
1 tablespoon olive oil
1 garlic clove, finely minced
Salt and pepper, to taste
1/3 cup freshly grated Parmigiano-Reggiano
1 to 2 tablespoons fresh parsley, finely minced (optional)

DIRECTIONS [1] Heat oven to 450 degrees. Cut kohlrabi into 1/4-inch-thick slices, then cut in half to form half-moon slices. **[2]** Combine oil, garlic, salt and pepper in a bowl. Add kohlrabi and toss to coat both sides. Spread kohlrabi in a single layer on a baking sheet lightly brushed with olive oil. **[3]** Bake until lightly browned, about 15 minutes. **[4]** Sprinkle cheese over the kohlrabi (top side only), return to the oven and bake about 5 minutes, or until the cheese has lightly browned. **[5]** If using parsley, sprinkle lightly over the kohlrabi before serving.

NOTES

- *The outer peel of kohlrabi is typically light green or deep purple. Regardless of color, the inside flesh is white or pale yellow, and the taste is the same.*
- *Raw slices or sticks of kohlrabi are delicious and refreshing. They're great added to a crudité platter or salad.*





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Local flavor: Spring edition

SEASONAL RECIPES AND SMART TIPS FROM LOWCOUNTRY KITCHENS

STORY BY BAILEY GILLIAM

Spring is in full bloom, and so is the Lowcountry's culinary scene. This season we're celebrating all things fresh, floral and flavorful, with recipes, tips and guides from local chefs, restaurants and culinary creatives. From garden-inspired appetizers to smart, simple ways to cook with edible flowers, we've gathered the best of spring to help you bring the season to your table. Whether you're cooking at home, hosting a garden party or sampling new flavors around town, consider this your invitation to eat, sip and savor what spring does best.

CHEZ GEORGES BISTRO & BAR

Gougères (French cheese puffs)



Light, airy and quietly irresistible, these classic French gougères are the kind of bite that sets the tone for an entire meal. Chef ***George Casalicchio*** of Chez Georges Bistro & Bar describes them as "little savory and light cheese puffs that can open any meal, much like the first buds in spring," and it's an apt comparison. Crisp on the outside and tender within, the puffs are enriched with nutty Gruyère, fresh herbs and a gentle whisper of black pepper. Served warm with cocktails, passed as a prelude to dinner or enjoyed straight from the tray, they feel celebratory yet wonderfully simple. This recipe yields about 40 elegant puffs.

INGREDIENTS (Choux paste)

1 cup water
1/2 cup unsalted butter, cut into pieces
1/2 teaspoon kosher salt
1 cup all-purpose flour
4 large eggs, room temperature
1 to 1 1/4 cups grated Gruyère
1 tablespoon finely chopped chives
*1 teaspoon finely chopped **fresh thyme***
1/4 to 1/2 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper



DIRECTIONS [1] Heat oven to 400 degrees. Line two sheet trays with parchment paper. **[2]** In a saucepan, bring water, butter and salt to a full boil. **[3]** Remove from heat. Add flour all at once and stir vigorously. **[4]** Return pan to medium heat and cook for 1-2 minutes, until the dough pulls away from the sides and a light film forms on the bottom. **[5]** Transfer dough to a bowl and cool for 1-2 minutes. **[6]** Add eggs one at a time, mixing thoroughly after each addition, until smooth and glossy. **[7]** Fold in cheese, herbs and black pepper until evenly incorporated. **[8]** Pipe or scoop 1- to 1 1/2-inch mounds onto prepared trays. **[9]** Bake 20-25 minutes, until puffed and deep golden. Do not open the oven during baking. **[10]** Turn off oven, crack the door and let them rest for 5 minutes. Serve warm.



Mousse de Fromage (cheese mousse)

Light, creamy and just structured enough to pipe beautifully, this classic French cheese mousse is an elegant companion to gougères or puff pastry shells. The recipe yields enough to fill about 20 small pastry cases, delivering a savory flavor that feels refined without being fussy.

INGREDIENTS

3/4 cup + 2 tablespoons full-fat cream cheese, Philly-style
1/2 cup fromage frais or ricotta
1/2 cup cold heavy cream (30-35% fat)
1/2 cup Comté or Gruyère, finely grated
1-2 teaspoons lemon juice
1 teaspoon Dijon mustard
Salt and white pepper, to taste
Optional add-ins (choose one):
Finely chopped chives
A pinch of nutmeg
Finely minced garlic or shallot



DIRECTIONS [1] Whip cold cream to soft peaks. Refrigerate. **[2]** In a bowl, beat cream cheese and fromage frais until completely smooth and airy. **[3]** Mix in grated cheese, lemon juice, Dijon, salt, white pepper and any optional flavoring. **[4]** Gently fold in whipped cream in 2-3 additions. **[5]** Refrigerate at least 30 minutes to firm up before piping. **[6]** Transfer to a piping bag with a star or round tip, and fill just before serving.

CHEF'S TIPS: Filling gougères with confidence

When it comes to filling gougères, a few simple techniques help home cooks achieve professional results. Chef George Casalicchio emphasizes that texture is key.

"If the mousse feels too soft, chill it longer, or add a bit more grated cheese," he says. "If it's too firm, fold in a tablespoon of cream or milk. Small adjustments make a big difference."

Timing matters as well. "For warm puff pastry, let the mousse come slightly closer to room temperature before piping — better texture, better flavor."

Once the basics are mastered, Casalicchio encourages experimentation: swap chèvre for a goat cheese mousse, use Roquefort with a touch of honey for a blue cheese variation, or add fresh herbs and lemon zest for a seasonal twist.



WHAT THE PROS LOVE

We asked local chefs and cooks their favorite spring ingredient:



SLAP TRUCK

"I've always been excited when peas come into season and disappointed when they come out. Their sweetness and bright flavors, especially with a touch of citrus, capture the freshness and balance of spring from start to finish. Those qualities help reset the palate after heavier winter foods and bring a sense of lightness that can lift any dish, whether paired with vegetables, seafood or richer proteins."

– Chef Matt Valentino



ALFRED'S RESTAURANT

"New Zealand spring lamb because it's the best, and I'm from New Zealand!"

– Heath Prosser

THE PURPLE COW

"I love everything lemon because it just speaks warmth and color. And warmth and color bring joy and happiness! To me, they do anyway."

– Lisa "Bernie" Bernstein





THE MAINE CAFÉ

"Lavender because it bridges the gap between sweet and savory. Lavender as an ingredient is a whisper rather than a shout. It adds a sophisticated floral note with a slightly citrus depth to the kitchen. A taste of the meadow."

– Chef Donna Mello

PALMETTO BLUFF CLUB

"A favorite spring ingredient is fresh green peas. They pair well with refreshing soups and dips, as well as interesting takes on risottos and spring ragùs. I've taken fava beans, asparagus, green peas and other aromatics and turned them into a really bright, vibrant, light sauté that goes perfectly with grilled fish."

– Chef Beth Cosgrove



ASK THE CHEF

Question:

Dear Chef,

How do you handle high-moisture vegetables? My favorite spring ingredients seem to make my stir-fries and pastas soggy or mushy. Any tips?

— Waterlogged in Windmill Harbour



SHOCK THERAPY An ice bath stops the cooking process instantly, locking in bright color and crisp texture. This simple blanch-and-shock step keeps spring vegetables vibrant and prevents them from turning soft or waterlogged later in the pan.

Answer:

Dear Waterlogged,



***Chef Will Overacre** of Michael Anthony's Cucina Italiana says the secret is strategy before the vegetables ever hit the pan.*

"High-moisture vegetables need a little planning," he said. "Blanch, shock and then cook fast over high heat. That's the foundation."

Overacre explains that briefly blanching vegetables like asparagus, green beans and peas helps set their color and structure, while an ice bath stops the cooking process so they don't soften too early.

For vegetables with even more water content, such as zucchini, squash and mushrooms, he recommends an extra step. "I'll often roast them first to cook out some of that moisture," he said. Once excess water is removed, they're far less likely to turn a stir-fry or pasta dish soggy.

The final piece is confidence at the stove. Hot pans, quick cooking and restraint matter. Let vegetables caramelize instead of steam, and they'll stay vibrant, structured and full of flavor.

The takeaway? Prep with intention. Use high heat. Don't overcrowd the pan. When moisture is managed, spring vegetables shine exactly the way they're meant to.


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Tiger's milk

How Peru's iconic leche de tigre brings brightness, heat and depth to seafood

SECRET INGREDIENT



CEVICHE IN A GLASS Served chilled and garnished with onion, chile and cilantro, leche de tigre is often enjoyed on its own in small glasses. Bright, bracing and deeply savory, it showcases the citrus-forward intensity that defines Peru's ceviche tradition.

You may or may not have heard of leche de tigre, but you have almost certainly heard of ceviche. The name literally translates to "tiger's milk," though it has nothing to do with dairy. Instead, leche de tigre is the electric, citrus-forward marinade at the heart of Peru's most iconic dish.

Traditionally, leche de tigre was simply the liquid left behind on the plate after the fish was eaten. A potent mix of lime juice, onion, chile and fish essence, it was far too good to waste. For generations Peruvians have spooned up the last drops, believing it could revive the weary, cure a hangover or even spark a little extra bravado. That belief is where the "tiger" reputation comes from.

As ceviche's popularity spread, this once humble byproduct became a star in its own right. Modern leche de tigre is intentionally crafted, with fresh lime juice forming its acidic backbone and fish stock and pieces of firm white fish, such as sea bass or flounder, adding depth. Aromatics like garlic, celery, ginger and onion bring savory complexity, while cilantro and Peruvian ají or rocoto peppers contribute brightness and heat. The mixture is typically blended until smooth, then strained into a clear, intensely flavored liquid.

Purists argue it should remain simple, but contemporary variations sometimes include evaporated milk for a silkier texture. Bartenders have even been known to spike it with a splash of pisco.



SKULL CREEK BOATHOUSE

Leche de tigre ceviche

This vibrant, bite-sized ceviche is Skull Creek Boathouse's tribute to Peru's bold coastal flavors and one of the featured dishes at its upcoming Flavors Without Borders event from 6-8 p.m. on March 10. Designed for sharing, the dish is built around ultra-fresh fish, bright leche de tigre and crisp tostone cups, reflecting the spirit of the evening by celebrating global cuisines through thoughtful, approachable plates. Chef Jesus Lopez says simplicity and freshness are essential, allowing the citrus, chile and seafood to shine without overworking the ingredients. Served in golden-fried plantain cups, this Peruvian-style ceviche is lively, balanced and unmistakably festive. Tickets are available at ***skullcreekboathouse.com***.



INGREDIENTS (leche de tigre)

1 cup fish trimmings (sea bass, snapper, corvina or tilapia)
*1 cup fresh **lime juice***
1 stalk celery, chopped
1/2 small red onion, chopped
1 garlic clove
1-inch piece fresh ginger
1-2 tablespoons ají limo or ají amarillo paste
Salt, to taste
Ice cubes

DIRECTIONS [1] Blend all ingredients except ice for 30 seconds. Add ice, and blend briefly. **[2]** Strain and chill.

INGREDIENTS (ceviche)

1 pound very fresh white fish, cut into 1/2-inch cubes
3/4 cup leche de tigre
1/2 red onion, very thinly sliced
1-2 tablespoons ají limo or ají amarillo paste
Fresh cilantro, chopped
Salt, to taste

DIRECTIONS [1] Lightly salt fish. Add leche de tigre, and chill, tossing for 30-60 seconds. **[2]** Fold in onion and cilantro. Adjust seasoning.

INGREDIENTS (tostone cups)

2-3 green plantains
Oil for frying
Salt

DIRECTIONS [1] Cut plantains into thick slices. Fry at 325 degrees until pale yellow. **[2]** Smash into cups, then fry again at 375 degrees until golden. Salt immediately. **Assembly:** Spoon ceviche into tostone cups. Drizzle with extra leche de tigre, and garnish with onion and cilantro.

Chef's tip: *Use key limes for the brightest flavor, keep the marinating time brief, and start with impeccably fresh fish so the leche de tigre truly shines.*

Today leche de tigre is far more than ceviche's leftovers. It is served on its own in small glasses as an apéritif or palate cleanser, featured as a starter in seafood restaurants and even treated as a savory cocktail or nutrient-dense "smoothie." At home it works as a secret ingredient that instantly elevates seafood, adds punch to dressings and sauces or brings a sharp, coastal edge to unexpected dishes. However it is made, leche de tigre remains a bold expression of Peruvian flavor that is bright, bracing and very much alive.

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Flavor in bloom

Use edible flowers to add a touch of magic to everyday meals



Remember sneaking a flower off the playground as a kid and popping it in your mouth? It may feel a little unusual as an adult, but edible flowers prove that playing with your food can still be delicious, beautiful and surprisingly versatile. Hardee Greens, celebrated locally for its vibrant microgreens, also cultivates an array of edible blooms that bring color, flavor and flair to the plate. We spoke with Jennifer Harsta, CEO of Hardee Greens, about how these flowers elevate both everyday meals and special occasions.

"The chefs we work with choose ingredients not just for flavor, but for visual impact," Harsta says. "We grow flowers for signature wedding cocktails, dessert garnishes, wedding cakes and more. Flowers are wonderful in salad mixes, too. They bring so many different flavor profiles."

Favorites at Hardee Greens include borage, marigolds, gem marigolds and violas, all grown in a rotating palette of seasonal colors. "Each flower has its own personality," Harsta explains. "Some are spicy, some citrusy, some slightly bitter. You can sprinkle petals or use the entire bloom. It's all edible."

Edible flowers enhance both sweet and savory dishes with ease. Scatter them over cakes, petit fours and tarts, float them in champagne or iced tea, or freeze them into floral ice cubes for a striking presentation. "Violas, for example, are very nutrient-dense," Harsta notes. "They contain vitamins A and C, antioxidants and anti-inflammatory benefits."

From grazing boards and layered cakes to composed salads and plated entrées, edible flowers add color, texture and sophistication. "Our community shops with us not just for beauty, but for the health benefits," Harsta says. "It's rewarding to see people embrace the diversity and creativity flowers bring to their cooking." Available in assorted colors and varieties, these blooms make it easy to brighten a plate, impress guests and add a touch of magic to everyday meals.



FLOWER POWER

Chefs use edible flowers to add color, texture and subtle flavor to dishes across the menu. Think beyond petals. Nasturtium, calendula and bachelor's button brighten salads. Marigold, dianthus and viola elevate desserts. Mint, basil and borage add aroma to drinks, while rosemary, thyme and sage blossoms enhance savory plates. Let creativity lead the way. ***Below is a quick guide to edible blooms, their flavor profiles and the best ways to use them.***

FRUIT & VEGETABLE BLOOMS

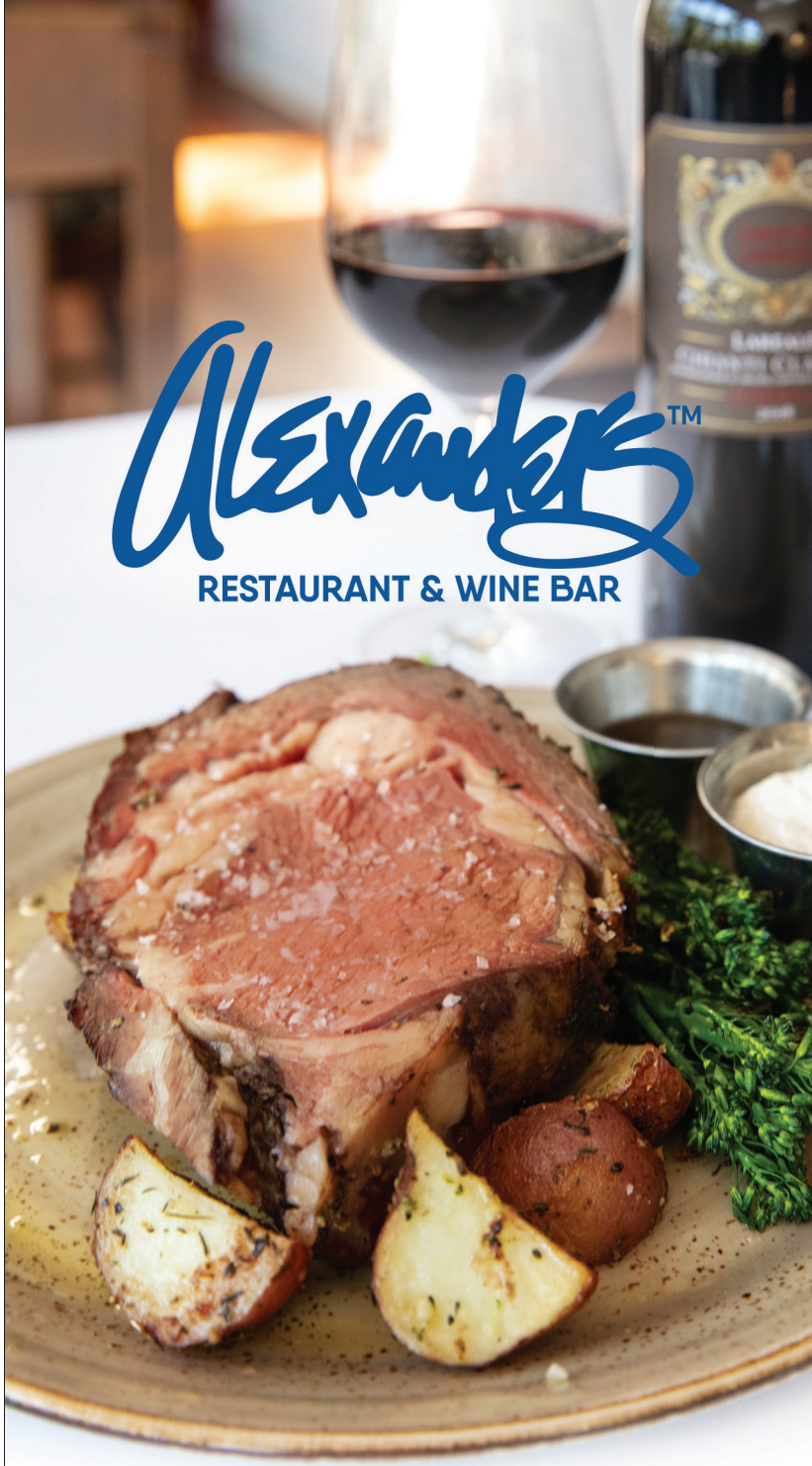
Arugula: *Nutty. Add to salads, savory dishes or as a garnish.*
Fava bean: *Mild bean flavor. Use as garnish or in sweet and savory dishes.*
Mustard: *Spicy. Add to salads and soups for a peppery kick.*
Pea: *Mild pea flavor. Mix into salads or use to garnish desserts.*
Strawberry*: Mild strawberry flavor. Sprinkle petals on salads or desserts; use whole flowers as garnish.*

HERB BLOOMS

Anise hyssop: *Sweet anise and mint. Use flowers and leaves in drinks, teas, desserts or marinades.*
Basil: *Intense basil flavor. Substitute for basil leaves in any dish.*
Borage: *Mild cucumber flavor. Add to salads, drinks or freeze in ice cubes.*
Chives/garlic chives: *Mild, sweet onion. Sprinkle florets on salads, dips, soups and potatoes.*
Cilantro/coriander: *Mild cilantro flavor. Use raw on salads, chicken or Southwestern dishes.*
Dill: *Classic dill flavor. Garnish salads and fish; add umbels to pickles.*
Fennel: *Sweet anise. Use florets with fish, eggs, potatoes, tomatoes and beets.*
Lavender: *Sweet and fragrant. Use sparingly in desserts, baked goods and teas.*
Mexican mint marigold: *Sweet licorice flavor. Sprinkle on desserts or use as garnish.*
Mint: *Fresh and cooling. Garnish salads, desserts and drinks.*
Sage: *Mild sage flavor. Batter and fry flower spikes or use blooms as garnish.*

FLOWER BLOOMS

Bachelor's button: *Mild and sweet. Sprinkle on salads and desserts.*
Calendula: *Tangy and slightly bitter. Use petals in soups, rice dishes, baked goods and salads.*
Dianthus: *Mild, clove-like. Garnish salads, desserts and cakes.*
Hyacinth bean: *Mild and sweet. Eat raw or steamed; use as garnish.*
Marigold: *Spicy and citrusy. Use petals in salads or as garnish.*
Gem marigold: *Spicy and citrusy. Both leaves and flowers are edible.*
Monarda: *Spicy and minty. Sprinkle over desserts, fish or fruit salads.*
Nasturtium: *Peppery. Use leaves, pods and flowers in salads or stuff blooms with soft cheese.*
Scarlet runner bean: *Bean-like flavor. Garnish salads, soups and desserts.*
Snapdragon: *Bitter and floral. Use sparingly as a garnish.*
Stock: *Clove-like and peppery. Garnish salads, desserts and drinks.*
Sunflower: *Bittersweet. Fry buds or use petals as garnish.*
Viola: *Wintergreen flavor. Garnish salads, desserts and hors d'oeuvres.*



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The art of the garden party

HOW TO HOST AN OUTDOOR GATHERING THAT FEELS EASY AND INVITING

Hosting a garden party is about leaning into the outdoors and letting it do some of the work for you. As Carrie Hirsch of the Culinary Institute of the South at Technical College of the Lowcountry puts it, "A garden party is a way to celebrate the beauty of the outdoors, transforming your green space into a magical, intimate setting. The goal is to create a joyful, welcoming environment where guests can connect in the fresh air."

Start by thinking big picture rather than chasing perfection. Hirsch encourages hosts to focus on how the pieces come together. "Sunshine, flowers, lush greenery, cozy seating and delicious food," she says. "You want your guests bragging about it and hoping for the coveted invitation next time." That sense of ease and flow is what makes a gathering feel special instead of staged.

Plan for movement

Layout matters more than many hosts expect. A successful garden party invites people to wander, mingle and settle in where they're comfortable. "Depending on the number of guests, consider a few round high-top tables where people can stand, chat and set down a drink or small plate," Hirsch says. "They're affordable, easy to store and useful for future gatherings."

Mix casual seating with standing areas and open space. That flexibility keeps conversation moving and prevents guests from feeling anchored to one spot.

Keep the menu light

When it comes to food, simplicity is your friend. "Think light bites," Hirsch advises. "It's so much easier without utensils." Tea sandwiches, cheeses, fruit and salads wrapped in colorful lettuces all fit the bill.

Dessert is where you can have a little fun. "Desserts should be memorable," she says, suggesting lemon ricotta cookies, macarons, madeleines, financiers, mini brownies, white chocolate-covered strawberries or a platter of cake pops.

For drinks, set it and forget it. "A self-serve drink station is key," Hirsch notes. Pitchers of lemonade, iced tea and a signature cocktail or mocktail keep guests refreshed without pulling the host away from the party.



Set the mood

Thoughtful details elevate a garden party from casual to charming. Cloth napkins and proper glassware add a touch of elegance, while colorful table linens and wildflowers in mason jars keep the look relaxed and seasonal.

As the light changes, ambiance becomes essential. "String fairy lights in trees, and layer in candles or lanterns," Hirsch suggests. "That warm glow extends the party well past sunset." With a few intentional touches and a laid-back mindset, hosting becomes less about managing the moment and more about enjoying it alongside your guests. LL



CARRIE HIRSCH

Sesame ginger chicken salad

This refreshing salad makes about 4 cups and is ideal for entertaining or a light lunch. Bright with ginger, lime and sesame, it can be served in endive or radicchio leaves for an elegant, bite-sized presentation.

INGREDIENTS (chicken)

1 tablespoon vegetable oil
4 boneless, skinless chicken thighs
Salt and pepper, to taste

DIRECTIONS [1] Heat a nonstick skillet over medium heat with vegetable oil. Cook chicken thighs until browned on both sides, flattening them to ensure even cooking. **[2]** Season with salt and pepper near the end. Transfer to a cutting board.

INGREDIENTS (dressing)

4 mini cucumbers, cut into 1/2-inch dice
1/2 cup mayonnaise
2 tablespoons honey
2 tablespoons lime juice
1 1/2 teaspoons sesame oil
1 teaspoon ginger powder
*2 **garlic cloves**, minced*
1/2 teaspoon salt
Endive or radicchio leaves, for serving
Mini cucumber slices, for garnish

DIRECTIONS [1] In a medium bowl, whisk together all dressing ingredients. **[2]** Slice chicken into bite-sized pieces, and fold into the dressing. **[3]** Cover and refrigerate for 2 hours or overnight. Just before serving, spoon salad into radicchio leaves, and arrange on a platter.

***Optional serving idea:** For a dramatic display, halve a papaya, remove the seeds, and fill with sesame ginger chicken salad. Garnish with mini cucumber slices, and serve with crackers on the side*

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FROM SCRATCH

Creamy scalloped potatoes

THIS HEARTY SIDE COMES TOGETHER IN ONE DISH FOR EASY WEEKNIGHT MEALS

STORY + PHOTOGRAPHY BY ALEA WILKINS



The perfect weeknight side dish should be as simple as it is satisfying: few ingredients, minimal prep and maximum flavor. Publisher **Lori Goodridge-Cribb's** creamy scalloped potatoes check all the boxes. Thinly sliced russet potatoes soften under luscious heavy cream, while nutty Parmesan and mild onions add rich depth of flavor. Fresh dill lightens the hearty dish, making it the perfect complement to springtime roasts and vegetables. All done in one dish for easy cleanup, it is the seasonal side of your dreams.

Watch & learn

*Watch Lori prepare this dish "From Scratch" on LOCAL Life's YouTube Channel **@LocalLifeSC**.*



Creamy scalloped potatoes

INGREDIENTS

3 medium russet potatoes, thinly sliced
2 cups heavy cream
1 cup Parmesan cheese, grated
1/2 white or yellow onion, thinly sliced
1 teaspoon salt
1/2 teaspoon black pepper
Fresh dill, chopped

DIRECTIONS [1] Heat oven to 350 degrees. Lightly grease a baking dish. Add one layer of sliced potatoes to the bottom, then top with onions. Season with a sprinkle of salt, pepper, dill and Parmesan. Repeat layers until the dish is full. **[2]** Pour heavy cream evenly over the potatoes so it fills the dish halfway. Top with the remaining cheese. **[3]** Bake uncovered for 50 minutes to an hour, until potatoes are tender and the top is golden brown. **[4]** Garnish with a sprinkle of fresh dill. Serve hot.

SHARPEN UP

Though it may seem intimidating, no tool compares to a mandolin for perfectly thin, even slices. Lori takes away the worry with an inexpensive, easy-to-use hand guard. The device gently feeds the vegetable into the mandolin while keeping fingers safely out of harm's way, easing stress and elevating your cooking game.



SPUD LOVE

With their high starch content, russet potatoes turn irresistibly tender and creamy when cooked, happily soaking up butter, cream and every bit of seasoning you give them. They shine in everything from classic baked potatoes to bubbling scalloped dishes fresh from the oven.



locallife

PRESENTS

From Scratch

an online video cooking series featuring publisher Lori Goodridge-Cribb

COMPANY'S COMING. The table needs setting. The oven is warming up. And LOCAL Life publisher **Lori Goodridge-Cribb** is right there with you. Each month on "From Scratch," Lori invites readers into her kitchen to share a seasonal recipe that brings people together. She believes the best memories are made around the table, and she is not afraid to show you exactly how she makes it happen. In March, she is preparing creamy scalloped potatoes, a rich, comforting classic that feels right at home on any Lowcountry table.

To see Lori in action and watch every episode of "From Scratch," scan the QR code or visit LOCAL Life's YouTube channel at @LocalLifeSC.

Follow the recipe on the left, then head to LOCAL Life's YouTube channel at @LocalLifeSC to watch the full episode. You will pick up smart kitchen shortcuts, simple hosting ideas and a few well-earned stories from Lori's years of cooking for family, friends and anyone lucky enough to pull up a chair.

Planning ahead

A PRACTICAL GUIDE TO BUILDING HEALTHIER EATING HABITS WITHOUT THE PRESSURE

STORY BY MACKENZIE LIONBERGER + PHOTOS PROVIDED BY HILTON HEAD HEALTH







PREP LIKE A PRO A Hilton Head Health Wellness Resort & Spa instructor sautés fresh vegetables during a healthy cooking demo at H3's Healthy Kitchen, showing how simple prep can make balanced eating easier all week long.

Sorting out meals for the week can be difficult, especially if you're struggling to meet your nutritional goals. While it might seem easier to pop that TV dinner in the microwave, it's possible to create realistic habits that combine balance, planning and enjoyable eating. Here are some ingredients for nutritional success from Elizabeth Huggins, registered dietitian and nutritionist at Hilton Head Health Wellness Resort and Spa.

Avoid extremes

While diets are one of the most common resolutions each year, many can be extreme and lead to burnout. It's important to set realistic expectations for yourself and fuel your body with food that will give you energy. Stick to fruits, vegetables and lean protein. If you have a colorful plate, you're most likely meeting your nutrition goals. Allow social media to provide healthy recipes or a source of inspiration, but don't let others' routines become your expectation.

Cancel cheat days

"Erase the whole cheat day thing – it's just a day where you might choose to relax a little, and that's okay," Huggins said. Anytime you indulge in your favorite food, try not to associate it as a negative. Mindful eating isn't depriving yourself, but appreciating your favorites. If you decide to have some ice cream, you don't need to punish yourself the following day.

SMART goal setting

Specific. Measurable. Action-oriented. Realistic. Time-bound. Make this easy acronym your new mantra on your journey to maintain your health goals. It's important to always have a backup plan when purchasing food. Set aside time to plan meals that are attainable to make without worrying about time management. If you notice a certain habit is derailing you, or certain foods aren't a good match, take note, and find alternatives. Consistency and routines are the secret ingredients to creating lasting healthy habits. "Make sure you're straight on why you're even doing it," Huggins said. Between maintaining your social and work life, finding a way to stay healthy can feel overwhelming. Let your goals be the light at the end of your tunnel, guiding you towards a happy and healthy life. LL

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RESTAURANT news&notes

FRESH FOOD + NOW OPEN + HOT PRODUCTS

BY BAILEY GILLIAM

A fresh table for spring

March brings a noticeable shift to the Lowcountry dining scene. Patios reopen, seasonal menus make their debut, and the familiar hum of spring returns to our favorite gathering spots. Behind the scenes chefs are refining concepts, restaurateurs are expanding their footprint, and a few longtime fixtures are taking their final bow. From fresh openings and ambitious renovations to heartfelt farewells and quick-hit updates, here's what's shaping where we'll be dining this month.

NOW OPEN



North End Tavern

MAIN STREET, HILTON HEAD

North End Tavern has reopened, following a full renovation and re-brand of the former Main Street Island Pub, giving the longtime island favorite a brighter, more modern look while keeping the same beloved staff and menu staples. *The refreshed space serves up New American classics, from crisp salads and stacked sandwiches to seafood favorites, plus a few new additions. Whether you're dining on the patio, cooling off inside or grabbing takeout, it's the same easy neighborhood feel, just polished up for a new chapter.*

COMING SOON





Union Proper

FRESH MARKET SHOPPES, HILTON HEAD

Anne Sergent, the chef and owner behind Jane Bistro on Hilton Head Island and Wren Bistro in Beaufort, will open her third American bistro April 1 at Fresh Market Shoppes. *Union Proper will be located next to Gruby's New York Deli. The new restaurant will feature classic bistro fare served in a thoughtfully designed dining room and bar meant for lingering with friends and family. In addition to the main dining space, Union Proper will include a dedicated event room, accommodating 25 to 60 guests, ideal for celebrations and private gatherings. Guests can also browse Anne's Home and Garden retail shop, creating a blend of dining, entertaining and shopping under one roof.*



©ALCHILE MEXICAN GRILL

Alchile Mexican Grill

BRIDGE CENTER, BLUFFTON

A favorite in Ridgeland is expanding to Bluffton. *Alchile Mexican Grill is opening a second location at Bridge Center, taking over the former Kenny B's space. Family-owned and led by Marcello Vera Jr., who grew up in the area, Alchile has built a loyal following over the past six years with its bold, authentic Mexican flavors layered with Texan and Californian influences. The new Bluffton outpost will serve up customer favorites, along with an expanded menu and fresh offerings tailored to its growing fan base. If all goes according to plan, doors will open in April.*



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NEWS & NOTES





Hampton Hall renovating clubhouse

Hampton Hall in Bluffton is embarking on a $6.6 million renovation and expansion of its main clubhouse, adding nearly 2,000 square feet to enhance dining, social and arrival experiences within the 1,100-acre community. *Plans include a new covered porte cochere entrance, expanded casual dining areas, a reimagined dinner-focused social hub, a renovated kitchen and a significantly larger bar to better serve its active membership. Designed by Chambers and built by Shoreline Construction, the project marks the first phase of a broader master plan for the club.*

Return of the Tyger

Belly Full by Tyger closed its brick-and-mortar restaurant in Yemassee on Jan. 24, nearly two years after opening the location. *Owner Tyger Snell shared that while the storefront is shutting down, the beloved brand is far from finished. The popular Belly Full food trailer will continue operating throughout the Lowcountry, returning to regular rotating stops in Beaufort and Yemassee and appearing at local festivals and events. Fan favorites like the Belly Blesser platter and signature fried seafood trays will remain on the menu, with catering services also continuing as the business shifts its focus fully back to its mobile roots.*





Farewell to Kenny B's

Kenny B's French Quarter Cafe, the longtime Lowcountry favorite known for its New Orleans-style cuisine and festive Creole flair, has permanently closed. *Opened in 1999 by Ken and Lavern Ballard, the restaurant built a loyal following over nearly 25 years, first on Pope Avenue and later at Bluffton's Bridge Center. With its colorful décor and soulful menu, Kenny B's became a go-to for beignets, jambalaya and étouffée, drawing both locals and visitors. During summer on Hilton Head, lines often stretched out the door and down the sidewalk. For many patrons the pre-COVID Sunday brunch buffet still holds a special place in memory. Ballard sold the business last year due to health reasons. After roughly two years in its Bluffton location, the restaurant has now closed, marking the end of an era for those who cherished its Big Easy spirit.*



SERG eyes Atrium Building for event venue

Plans are underway to transform the Atrium Building on Hilton Head Island into a large-scale event venue for SERG Restaurant Group. *PDG Architects has submitted proposals to renovate the property at 840 William Hilton Parkway, between the former Stacks Pancakes and Home2 Suites by Hilton. The project calls for a comprehensive exterior overhaul of the 1987 building and the creation of three event spaces inside. Under the proposal the first floor would house offices, a retail takeout concept, a new commissary kitchen and a smaller event space. The second floor would be reconfigured into two large venues separated by a folding partition. Combined, the upstairs spaces could accommodate up to 360 guests. The redevelopment has displaced two longtime restaurants that operated there. Red Stripes Caribbean Cuisine and Lounge closed its Hilton Head location on Jan. 17, though its Bluffton restaurant remains open as ownership searches for a new island space. DryDock Seafood & Spirits, a 32-year fixture, has also confirmed it will close. If approved, the renovation would introduce one of the island's larger dedicated event venues, reshaping a prominent stretch of William Hilton Parkway and marking a notable shift for the site.*

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Spring has officially arrived on the plate. Think garden-fresh starters, bright pastas, just-landed seafood and citrus-kissed sweets. Crisp, colorful and full of energy, these Lowcountry dishes celebrate the flavors of the season in ways that feel both comforting and new.



Delicate bites

Farm Bluffton's *beef carpaccio lets quality shine. Paper-thin slices are topped with peppery arugula, Pecorino Toscana and a spoonful of vibrant salsa verde. Crisp sourdough crostini bring the crunch, making this an ideal spring starter.*



Seaside saffron

At ***Tio's Latin American Kitchen*** *paella arrives golden and aromatic, saffron rice studded with fresh seafood and bold flavor. It's a dish made for passing around the table, the kind that turns dinner into an occasion.*

Spring by the sea

At ***Coast Oceanfront Dining****, seared scallops rest on a silky English pea purée with sweet corn succotash, bacon crumble and a bright lemon beurre blanc. It's coastal cooking at its finest, light yet layered, with every bite tasting like an ocean breeze.*





Twist and sprout

The Pearl Kitchen + Bar's *flash-fried Brussels sprouts strike that perfect sweet-savory balance. Tossed with dried cranberries, parmesan, lemon and a drizzle of balsamic glaze, they're crisp, craveable and built for sharing in Old Town Bluffton.*



Springtime simplicity

Piatti's *linguini alla Pampalina pairs housemade pasta with sweet peas, ribbons of prosciutto and delicate shavings of Grana Padano. A fresh egg yolk melts into the warm noodles, creating a silky sauce that feels indulgent without weighing you down.*

Heating up

Fraser's Tavern *gives spring greens a bold twist with its Nashville hot chicken salad. Crispy chicken brings the heat, while shaved Brussels sprouts, romaine, carrots, blue cheese, pickles and hard-boiled egg add crunch and contrast. Ranch or blue cheese dressing ties it all together.*





Bright and breezy

Ronnie's Bakery & Cakes by Lou *closes things out on a sunny note with lemon meringue cheesecake. Tangy lemon filling meets cloudlike toasted meringue for a sweet-tart finish that tastes like pure spring.*

Quick Bites

NUGGETS FROM THE LOCAL FOOD & BEVERAGE SCENE

The ***Olive Branch Café*** *and* ***Bordertown BBQ*** *in Beaufort are officially open.*

Da Shack, Saltwater Siren *and* ***Cupcakes 2 Cakes*** *are permanently closed.*

Pool Bar Jim's, Up the Creek Pub & Grill *and* ***OG Fresh*** *are open for the season.*

Al's Aloha Kitchen *now serves iced coffee, hot coffee, frozen coffee and espresso.*

Boujee Bowls *in Beaufort will reopen for the season on March 14.*

The Coffee Lab *now has a coffee cart available for rent as well as the original trailer.*

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What would Margaret drink?

Margaret Pearman, *a certified sommelier with the Court of Master Sommeliers, curates the celebrated wine list at Charlie's L'Etoile Verte. For March, she shares the white wines she's reaching for as the days grow longer and palates turn toward lighter fare.*

Out of winter, into white

REFRESHING BOTTLES FOR THE SEASON OF SEAFOOD, GREENS AND SUNSHINE

As winter fades and the first signs of spring emerge, our palates naturally shift toward lighter, fresher flavors. This is the time of year to enjoy the season's bounty of vegetables like asparagus and artichokes, along with seafood and light cheeses. Nothing pairs better than refreshing whites like Chardonnay, Sauvignon Blanc, Pinot Gris (or Blanc) and Riesling. With lively acidity and clean flavors, these wines are full of character and perfectly match our energy as we emerge from the cold into the most vibrant time of the year.

Take your usual picks to the next level. If you've been loving Chardonnay, try one from Italy that brings layers of minerality and finesse. Instead of Sancerre, consider a Chenin Blanc from the Loire or an Albariño from Rías Baixas. Chenin tends to offer all the acidity with fewer grassy notes, while Albariño delivers beautiful hints of white fruit.

As I refresh the wine list at Charlie's for spring, I'm including some exciting new palate refreshers. Here are a few of my current favorites:

Coppa Chardonnay, Piedmont: *Green apple, pear and subtle citrus. $20*

Justin Girardin Aligoté, Burgundy: *Burgundy's other white grape, full of zip. $20*

Antinori Guado al Tasso Vermentino, Toscana: *White peach with undertones of thyme and sage; easy to pair with almost anything or sip on its own. $22*

Topette Chenin Blanc, Loire Valley: *The name means "see you later" in the local dialect, and it's made in an easy, bistro-style expression. Lovely floral notes with citrus on the palate. $18*

Matthiasson Napa Valley White Wine: *Sauvignon Blanc, Ribolla Gialla, Sémillon and Tocai Friulano. What the winery calls the "ideal" white, with tropical fruit notes woven into a textured mouthfeel and mineral undertones. $42*



AN IDEAL WHITE This is the white wine that put Matthiasson on the map in 2005. Blending grapes native to Italy and France, Matthiasson Napa Valley White Wine represents the winery's vision of a mythical "ideal" white, which is how it earned its name.

Sip into spring

TWO COCKTAILS THAT TOAST THE RETURN OF SUNSHINE

STORY BY BAILEY GILLIAM

As days stretch longer and the air softens, spring makes its presence known in our glasses. Heavy winter warmers give way to brighter spirits, fresh citrus and floral notes that feel light, lively and full of promise. These two ***spring cocktails*** *embody that shift, delivering sips that feel fresh, joyful and perfectly suited for the season ahead.*

BROAD CREEK SPIRITS GROUP

Blood Orange Lavender Gimlet

Bright and botanical, this blood orange lavender gimlet is spring in a glass. Created by Tony Bagnulo of Broad Creek Spirits Group, the drink highlights Bulrush Blood Orange Gin's vivid citrus notes, balanced with lavender, fresh lime and a subtle floral finish. Crisp, refreshing and subtle, it's the kind of cocktail that signals warmer days are officially on the way.

INGREDIENTS

2 ounces Bulrush Blood Orange Gin
3/4 ounce fresh lime juice
3/4 ounce lavender-infused simple syrup
1 dash orange bitters (adds depth; optional)



DIRECTIONS [1] Add gin, lime juice and lavender syrup to a shaker with ice. **[2]** Shake hard for about 12 to 15 seconds until well chilled and slightly frothy. **[3]** Double strain into a chilled coupe or Nick & Nora glass. **[4]** Garnish by gently floating one cocktail-safe edible flower on top so it sits centered. Daisy, pansy, viola or chamomile all work beautifully.



CARRIE HIRSCH

Spring in Your Step

With a sugared rim, lively bubbles and a hit of strawberry-bright citrus, this cocktail is made for longer days and lighter moods. Created by Carrie Hirsch of the Technical College of the Lowcountry's Culinary Institute of the South, this playful yet polished cocktail blends strawberry lemonade, Champagne and Grand Marnier into a sip that perfectly matches the season.

INGREDIENTS

1/2 tablespoon honey
1 tablespoon granulated sugar
4 ounces strawberry lemonade, chilled
4 ounces Champagne or Prosecco, chilled
1 ounce Grand Marnier liqueur
1 strawberry, hull intact, for garnish

DIRECTIONS [1] Drizzle honey onto a shallow plate. Invert the glass, and swirl the rim in the honey until evenly coated. Pour sugar onto another shallow plate, and dip the honey-coated rim into the sugar to coat evenly. **[2]** Pour in the strawberry lemonade, Champagne and Grand Marnier. Do not stir. **[3]** Slice the strawberry almost in half, and secure it onto the rim. Serve immediately.



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Pour decisions, made easy

AN INSIDER'S GUIDE TO FIVE CAN'T-MISS EVENTS AT THIS YEAR'S HILTON HEAD ISLAND WINE & FOOD FESTIVAL

STORY BY LANCE HANLIN

The Hilton Head Island Wine & Food Festival has a way of turning late March into something special. Over the course of the week, the island fills with winemakers, chefs, longtime locals and first-timers, all moving between tastings, dinners and casual gatherings that feel as much about connection as what's in the glass. With so much happening across several days and settings, it can be hard to know where to start and what to expect. Here are five key events, plus insider tips, to help you enjoy each one like someone who's done this before.



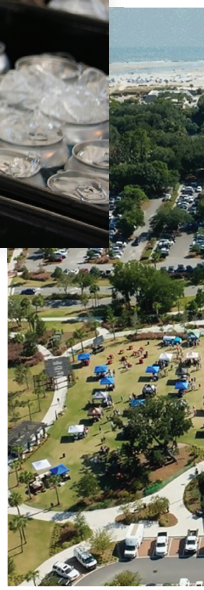
©HILTON HEAD ISLAND WINE & FOOD FESTIVAL

Wander, sip, repeat

What: Sip and Stroll
When: 4-7 p.m. Wednesday, March 25
Where: Shops at Sea Pines Center
Why it's worth your time: This one's made for wine lovers who prefer exploring over elbowing their way through a crowd. Tastings are spread throughout the Shops at Sea Pines Center, giving you the freedom to wander, linger and follow whatever catches your interest. With live music and pop-up art woven in, it feels less like a formal tasting and more like a perfectly planned evening out. It's social without being crowded, relaxed without losing energy and easy to enjoy without a game plan. Tickets are $55 and include all drink tastings, making this one of the better values of the week.



©HILTON HEAD ISLAND WINE & FOOD FESTIVAL



Beach views, better brews

What: Craft Beers at the Beach
When: 2-5 p.m. Sunday, March 22
Where: The Westin Hilton Head Island Resort & Spa
Why it's worth your time: This is the easiest way to ease into festival week without overthinking it. Expect more than 50 pours from local and regional craft breweries and distilleries, live music that keeps things lively without overpowering conversation and a crowd that's there to enjoy the moment, not take notes. The Westin's culinary team will have food available for purchase, with cocktails and wine on hand if beer isn't your only love. Tickets are $50, and this event reliably sells out. Floor-to-ceiling windows and outdoor access deliver sweeping beach views, making this one of the Lowcountry's most anticipated beer tastings of the year.

Only the gold stuff

What: Stay Gold: A Lowcountry Wine, Food and Music Experience
When: 6:30-8:30 p.m. Thursday, March 26
Where: Roller's Wine & Spirits
Why it's worth your time: This event is for anyone who likes knowing they're tasting something special. The focus is on Double Gold winners from the festival's international wine competition, paired with Lowcountry-style food and live music in an intimate setting. The lineup is curated, the crowd is engaged, and the overall vibe encourages conversation rather than rushing from table to table. It's one of the best events for learning without feeling like you're in class. Tickets are $155, with all drink tastings included.



©HILTON HEAD ISLAND WINE & FOOD FESTIVAL



©HILTON HEAD ISLAND WINE & FOOD FESTIVAL

Where the weekend begins

What: Grand Tasting
When: 5:30-7:30 p.m. Friday, March 27
Where: Country Club of Hilton Head
Why it's worth your time: The Grand Tasting sets the tone for the weekend. Held at the Country Club of Hilton Head, it brings together curated wines, light bites and a dressed-up crowd ready to linger and toast what's ahead. Conversations flow easily, glasses stay full, and there's a shared feeling that the festival has officially hit its stride. Tickets are $180 and limited to just 200 guests, making this one of the Lowcountry's most intimate and polished wine events of the year.



©HILTON HEAD ISLAND WINE & FOOD FESTIVAL

The big, beautiful finale

What: Public Tasting
When: 12-3 p.m. Saturday, March 28
Where: Lowcountry Celebration Park
Why it's worth your time: This is the moment everything comes together. The Public Tasting is the festival's largest and most lively event, bringing hundreds of wines, spirits and craft beers into one place, alongside chef demonstrations, food vendors, live music and a wide-open park setting that invites you to settle in and explore. It feels festive without being overwhelming, whether you're tasting with purpose or simply soaking in the atmosphere. General admission tickets are $84 and include unlimited tastings and a keepsake wine glass. VIP tickets are $190 and add early entry, access to the VIP lounge, exclusive pours and shaded seating, a welcome perk during a typically sunny afternoon.





MARCH happenings

The Main Event

Luck lives here

With island tradition and Savannah spectacle, locals get two chances to celebrate St. Patrick's Day

St. Patrick's Day is not a one-day event in these parts. It is a commitment. The green comes out, the bagpipes warm up, and suddenly everyone has very strong opinions about parade routes and parking strategies. The good news this year is that the celebration comes with a built-in two-for-one. With Hilton Head Island's parade on a Sunday and Savannah's legendary procession on a Tuesday, locals have plenty of time to recover, reload and do it all again. Twice the parades, twice the marching bands and twice the excuse to wear something aggressively Irish. Sláinte.



GREEN DAY
Savannah's St. Patrick's Day Parade is one of the largest in the United States, right behind New York City and Chicago, drawing between 300,000 to 400,000 visitors each year.

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SUNDAY, MARCH 8, 2026
MONDAY, MARCH 9, 2026

Daniel Wiley, *guest conductor and host*

First Presbyterian Church
540 William Hilton Parkway
(Business Route 278)

The Great Frame Up

This fun and family-friendly celebration of the music and magic of the Harry Potter films features dazzling orchestral scores by John Williams, Patrick Doyle, and Alexandra Desplat. Come dressed in your best wizarding attire for an evening of spells, trivia, contests, and brilliant orchestral fireworks.



Special Events

HILTON HEAD INTERNATIONAL PIANO COMPETITION

MONDAY, MARCH 16 THROUGH MONDAY, MARCH 21, 2026

The 28th HHIPC marks our 7th Young Artist competition, featuring 20 pianists (ages 13–17) from around the world. Each performs two recital rounds, after which a distinguished jury selects five finalists to play a concerto movement with the HHSO and Maestro John Morris Russell. Winners share a $25,000 prize pool, and the first prize winner returns for a concerto performance in the 2026–27 season. Tickets available January 2026 at hhipc.org.



FREE SYMPHONY UNDER THE STARS "CELEBRATE AMERICA"

TUESDAY, APRIL 7, 2026, 7:30 PM

Lowcountry Celebration Park At Coligny

American Tradition Vocal Competition stars **Michael Maliakel** and **Alysha Umpress** star in an uplifting evening of iconic American music, Broadway favorites, and patriotic classics.

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Free lawn seating—bring a blanket or chair, a picnic, and enjoy the HHSO and JMR al fresco. The park opens at 6:00 PM.

Limited reserved table seating at $75/person (tables of 10). Call **(843) 842-2055** for table reservations.

Tickets are available now. Visit hhso.org or call (843) 842-2055.



©ARNO DIMMLING

FORTY YEARS OF GREEN The Hilton Head Island St. Patrick's Day Parade draws thousands of spectators each year who line the streets to watch colorful floats, spirited marching units and standout pipe bands, such as the Boston Police Gaelic Column Pipes and Drums. This year's parade is set for 2 p.m. on Sunday, March 15.

Hilton Head Island St. Patrick's Day Parade

The Hilton Head Island St. Patrick's Day Parade hits a major milestone this year with its 40th anniversary celebration. Founded in 1983 by local business icon Tom Reilley, the event has grown into South Carolina's oldest St. Patrick's Day parade and one of the island's most cherished traditions. After last year's weather cancellation, expect this year's return to feel especially celebratory.

The parade steps off at 2 p.m. on Sunday, March 15, drawing upward of 25,000 spectators to Pope Avenue, more than half the island's permanent population. This year's grand marshal, Diane Reilley, continues the family legacy behind the event's decades of success.

The route begins at the beach parking lot across from Lagoon Road, travels down Pope Avenue, turns onto Office Park Road and finishes at Park Plaza. Along the way, expect high-energy marching bands such, as the Bishop Moore Catholic Black & Gold Brigade, the Charleston Pipe Band, Battery Creek High School, U.S. Border Patrol Pipes & Drums, the Boston Police Gaelic Column Pipes and Drums and the U.S. Marine Corps Band from Parris Island.

Pop-up food tents lining the route, along with go-to gathering spots like The Bank, Sandbar Beach Eats, One Hot Mama's and Reilley's Grill & Bar, turn parade day into a South End celebration and one of the most anticipated parties of the year.



©THE BREEZE TROLLEY

MAKE PARADE DAY A BREEZE The Breeze Trolley will offer one-way trips from 11 a.m.-2 p.m. on March 15, picking up at USCB Hilton Head and dropping off near Lowcountry Celebration Park.



MARCH TO SAVANNAH Savannah's St. Patrick's Day Parade ranks among the South's most unforgettable spring traditions and makes an easy day trip for Lowcountry residents. Expect hours of marching bands, Irish pipe and drum corps, colorful floats and generations of family groups winding through the historic downtown streets. This year's parade steps off at 10:15 a.m. on Tuesday, March 17.

Savannah St. Patrick's Day Parade

Just across the river, Savannah stages one of the world's largest and most historic St. Patrick's Day celebrations. The parade, dating from 1824, blends massive spectacle with generations of tradition. The parade steps off at 10:15 a.m. on Tuesday, March 17, and continues until roughly 2 p.m., featuring nearly 280 units, ranging from marching bands and Irish societies to military groups, family organizations and elaborate floats winding through historic downtown.

Savannah's festivities build all month during what locals call Irish Season. Highlights include the greening of the fountain at Forsyth Park, the Celtic Cross ceremony at Emmet Park and the Sgt. William Jasper ceremony in Madison Square. Together they form a celebration that blends pageantry, history and community pride.



©VAGABOND CRUISE

ROLL ON THE RIVER Celebrate the Savannah St. Patrick's Day Parade in style with Vagabond Cruise. Enjoy a festive ferry ride from Hilton Head Island to Savannah, and experience one of the country's largest and most beloved St. Patrick's Day celebrations. Tickets ($100) are available at vagabondcruise.com.

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CHARTERONE REALTY

Arts & Culture



La Cage Aux Folles

When: Times vary, now-March 8
Where: May River Theatre
Details: Don't miss the classic French farce centering on the confusion that ensues when the son of a night club owner and his gay lover brings his fiancée's ultraconservative parents for dinner. ***mayrivertheatre.com***



Terpsichore

When: 7:30 p.m., March 27 & 2:30 p.m., March 29
Where: Seahawk Cultural Center
Details: Hilton Head Dance Theatre presents an exciting program of classical and contemporary dance featuring company members and distinguished guest artists. ***hiltonheaddance.com***



The White Chip

When: Times vary, March 20-29
Where: Main Street Theater
Details: Lean Ensemble presents The White Chip by Sean Daniels, a wry and wild theatrical journey to sobriety. ***leanensemble.org***



Curtain up for 30 years

Thirty years of bringing theater, music and big-stage talent to Hilton Head is worth celebrating, and the Arts Center of Coastal Carolina plans to do it in style on March 28. The 30th Anniversary Spring Benefit pairs a festive evening of food, drinks and auction excitement, with a headline performance by Broadway favorite Sutton Foster, whose powerhouse voice and magnetic stage presence have made her one of musical theater's most admired stars.

30TH ANNIVERSARY SPRING BENEFIT
When: 5:30 p.m., March 28 **Where:** Arts Center of Coastal Carolina
Details: The Arts Center is celebrating 30 years with their annual spring benefit, featuring amazing food and a very special performance by Broadway's Sutton Foster. ***artshhi.com***

Member-Donated Exhibition

When: Times vary, March 3-April 4 **Where:** SOBA Gallery
Details: The Society of Bluffton Artists is launching a meaningful new exhibition that blends art, legacy and community support at their new gallery on Church Street. Attend the receptions from 4-6 p.m., March 5. ***sobagallery.com***

OTHER ARTS & CULTURE EVENTS

Now-March 8: *I Love You, You're Perfect, Now Change at Coligny Theatre*
Now-March 23: *It's Thursday! Artists of the Round Table at Coastal Discovery Center*
Now-April 30: *Beyond the See at the Sea Pines Community Center*
Now-June 20: *The History and Archaeology of Fort Motte at the Morris Heritage Center*
March 3: *SOBA Gallery reopens its new location at 7 Church Street*
March 5-8 & 12-15: *Newsies, The Broadway Musical at Main Stage Community Theatre*
March 7: *The 13th Annual Rising Stars at Hilton Head Preparatory School's Main Street Theater*
March 9: *Candlelight Celtic at USCB Center for the Arts*
March 10-13: *Unveiled: 62nd Spring Art Show at Beaufort Art Association Gallery*
March 13-14: *Dancing With Our Stars Supporting CAPA at USCB Center for the Arts*
March 15-May 5: *Nikon's Small World Photo Competition Exhibit at Coastal Discovery Center*
March 19-21: *Bright Star at Hilton Head Christian Academy's Performing Arts Center*



March Palmetto Bluff Artist in Residence

When: Times vary, March 18-21
Where: FLOW Gallery + Workshop
Details: Chris Wilson is this month's featured artist. Purchase his work or attend a workshop. ***palmettobluff.com***



Secret Gardens of the Lowcountry

When: Times vary, March 3-April 10
Where: Art League of Hilton Head Gallery
Details: Judy Blahut is the featured artist this month. See her work and attend the reception from 5-7 p.m., March 4. ***artleaguehhi.org***

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PATRICIA RESNICK

ORCHESTRATED BY
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March 5–7 | 7 p.m.
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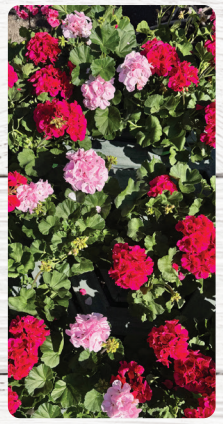
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Charity & Community



Hilton Head Island Wine & Food Festival

When: March 22-28
Where: Locations vary
Details: Don't miss exceptional wine dinners, the "Sip and Stroll", the "Stay Gold," the traditional Grand Tasting and the well-loved Public Tasting.
hiltonheadwineandfood.com



Marsh Madness

When: 12-6 p.m., March 21
Where: Port Royal Sound Foundation
Details: Support research and conservation efforts with an oyster roast and barbecue, live music, auctions and more at this annual fundraiser.
portroyalsoundfoundation.org



Hilton Head Wingfest

When: 11 a.m., March 21
Where: Lowcountry Celebration Park
Details: Taste the best local wings at this annual competition benefiting the Island Rec's Scholarship Fund.
hiltonheadwingfest.com



Chalk It Up! Beaufort

When: March 27-29
Where: Freedman Arts District, Beaufort
Details: Expect bold color, thoughtful design and works of art that transform everyday spaces into moments of wonder at this annual chalk festival.
chalkitupbeaufort.com



Paradise Quilt Festival

When: March 20-22
Where: Hilton Head Beach & Tennis Resort
Details: See the intricate details of over 150 displayed quilts, shop vendors and boutique items, try your hand at raffles, auctions and more at this annual festival.
palmettoquiltguild.org

OTHER CHARITY & COMMUNITY EVENTS

March 5-8: *Maison Beaufort at Tabby Place*
March 6: *The Bluffton Rotary Club Annual Oyster Roast at Bluffton Oyster Factory Park*
March 6-7: *Beaufort Charities Oyster Roast at Live Oak Park*
March 8-April 12: *Kiwanis Club of Bluffton's 8th Annual Online Auction*
March 13: *Bluffton St. Patrick's Block Party at Oyster Factory Park*
March 14: *Ole Fashioned Gullah Oyster Roast at the Gullah Museum of Hilton Head Island*
March 14: *R U Smarter Than a 5th Grader Game Show Gala at The Westin Hilton Head Island Resort & Spa*
March 19-21: *SEWE (Southeastern Wildlife Exhibition) at the Bluff at Palmetto Bluff*
March 21: *The Bluffton Flower Show at Martin Family Park*
March 21: *Dancing with the Local Stars at Seaquins Ballroom*
March 22: *The 2026 Great Helicopter Easter Egg Drop at Beaufort Academy*
March 28: *Blue & BBQ at Historic Mitchelville Freedom Park*

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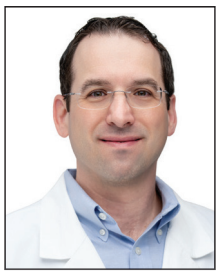
Family medicine
Cindy Steinberg, MD
Hilton Head Island
Novant Health Hilton Head Primary Care
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Internal medicine
Kyle McMillen, DO
Bluffton
Novant Health New Riverside Primary Care
854-235-2840



Internal medicine
Paige Wooten, MSN, AGPCNP-BC
Bluffton
Novant Health Westbury Park Primary Care
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Internal medicine
William Kyle, DO
Bluffton
Novant Health New Riverside Primary Care
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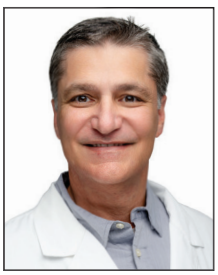
Internal medicine
Tore Flavin, FNP
Bluffton
Novant Health New Riverside Primary Care
854-235-2840



Interventional cardiology
Donald Yakel Jr., MD, MBA, FACC
Hilton Head Island & Okatie
Novant Health Heart & Vascular - Physicians Plaza
843-682-2800



Cardiology
Vicki Wild-McLeod, MSN, NP-C
Hilton Head Island & Okatie
Novant Health Heart & Vascular - Physicians Plaza
843-682-2800



Vascular surgery
Christopher Wixon, MD
Bluffton
Novant Health Heart & Vascular - Persimmon
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Vascular surgery
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(843) 686-3945 x 305

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MARCH 28
5:30 PM



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MAY 18 | 4 & 7:30 PM

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Food & Drink



Flavors Without Borders

When: 6-8 p.m., March 10 **Where:** Skull Creek Boathouse
Details: Dine from Peru to Germany, Jamaica, Thailand, Turkey and back home again, one flavor at a time, without leaving the island, at this SERG event. Get tickets online at ***skullcreekboathouse.com***.



OTHER FOOD & DRINK EVENTS

March 5 & 26: *The Art of Tiki Cocktail Class at Hilton Head Distillery*
March 6: *Prime Rib Night at Chef Frank's Bistro*
March 7: *5th Anniversary Celebration at Burnt Church Distillery*
March 8: *Barre to the Bar at Shellring Ale Works*
March 12 & 19: *The Spirit of Whiskey Class at Hilton Head Distillery*
March 13: *Knife Skills & Mise en Place at TCL Culinary Institute of the South*
March 19: *Cigar Night at Shellring Ale Works*
March 19: *A Southern Table, Italian Soul at May River Manor*
March 25: *Knife Sharpening at Cassandra's Kitchen*

WEEKLY FOOD EVENTS

Tuesdays: *Battles & Bread at Wine Time Bluffton*
Tuesdays: *Tuesday Wine Tasting at Blacksheep X Sabbatical*
Wednesdays: *Pasta Night at Wine Time Bluffton*
Wednesdays: *Wine Tasting at Wine Time Washington Square*
Thursdays: *Featured Wine Tasting at Wine Time Bluffton*
Thursdays: *Pint Night at Fraser's Tavern*
Fridays: *Friday Uncorked at Windhorse Gallery & Marketplace*
Saturdays: *Oyster Roasts at Coast, Oceanfront Dining*
Saturdays: *Saturday Spotlight Wine Tastings at Sister Sister Deli*
Sundays: *Mimosas & Melodies at Windhorse Gallery & Marketplace*



Hibachi Dinner Cruise

When: 6-8 p.m., Fridays
Where: Outside Palmetto Bluff
Details: Set sail on a 2-hour Sunset Hibachi Dinner Cruise in Palmetto Bluff, featuring live hibachi cooking, stunning May River views and a full dinner aboard a luxury catamaran.
outsidehiltonhead.com



Lowcountry Boil Dinner Cruise

When: 6:30-8:30 p.m., Thursdays
Where: Shelter Cove Harbour & Marina
Details: Outside Hilton Head and Sprout Momma present a two-hour sunset cruise complete with a chef-prepared Lowcountry boil, Southern desserts and a full bar.
outsidehiltonhead.com



Menu Favorites Demonstration Class

When: 11:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m., March 6
Where: Michael Anthony's Cucina Italiana
Details: Learn the secrets behind Michael Anthony's most alluring recipes at this cooking demo. ***michael-anthonys.com***

feed your soul!





Tempting soul food with full bar service, premium sports, and musical entertainment featuring local and regional artists.

Check music lineup online for special covers.

46 Old Wild Horse Road, Hilton Head
843.715.2122 rubyleeshhi.com

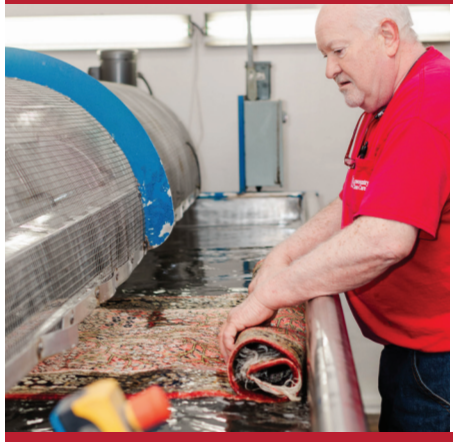
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Rain water is used in all processing for a softer feel.







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VILLAGE at WEXFORD

Proudly Presents

WINE DOWN WEDNESDAY

FOR A CAUSE

March 11th
5-7pm

Proceeds to benefit
Deep Well Project

DEEP WELL PROJECT
Reaching Deep for Neighbors in Need

Through service and advocacy, The Hilton Head Island Deep Well Project partners with neighbors to meet their basic needs and create a bridge to self-sufficiency.

Enjoy wine tastings at participating merchants

Special promotions, sales & in-store demos

Live music & more

Tickets available online at villageatwexford.com

$15 per person

Limited tickets available day of event $20

SCAN FOR TICKETS



Food & Drink





Culinary events at The Sea Pines Resort

Enjoy one of these wine dinners, tap takeovers and more this month at one of the restaurants in The Sea Pines Resort. ***seapines.com/events***

UPCOMING EVENTS

Horse Soldier Bourbon Dinner: *6:30 p.m., March 6, Sea Pines Beach Club*
Stags' Leap Wine Dinner: *6:30 p.m., March 13, Harbour Town Clubhouse*
Tap Takeover: 5*-8 p.m., March 17, Fraser's Tavern*



Bodegas Faustino Wine Dinner

When: 6-9 p.m., March 19
Where: Alexander's Restaurant & Wine Bar
Details: Enjoy a selection of Spanish wines, spectacular food and lively conversation at this wine dinner.
alexandersrestaurant.com



Rollers events

Rollers Wine & Spirits is the perfect place to try new libations. Sample and purchase new beers, wines and more at one of these upcoming tasting events each week. ***rollerswineandspirits.com***

UPCOMING EVENTS

A Taste of Alexander Valley: *5-7 p.m., March 11*
Oysters & Argyle: *2-4 p.m., March 22*
Tasty Tuesdays: *5-7 p.m., Tuesdays*
Thirsty Thursdays: *5-7 p.m., Thursdays*





Hilton Head Olive Oils & Balsamics events

Learn how to make the perfect salad dressing, try some new dishes, or engage in friendly competition at one of these upcoming events. ***hiltonheadoils.com***

UPCOMING EVENTS

Salad Dressing 101: *3 p.m., Thursdays*
Olive Oil & The Mediterranean Diet: *2 p.m., March 18*
Tasty Trivia: *6 p.m., March 2*



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Treat yourself (or someone special) to the intriguing people and places, food and fashion, culture and creativity of LOCAL Life Magazine.

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locallife INSIDERS

DON'T FORGET TO LIVE LIKE A LOCAL

UNITE FOR GOOD

LOVE IN ACTION

Rotary Scholarships | 2025–2026

At Rotary, we believe love is more than a feeling — it's an action.

Through our scholarship program, we proudly invest in students who are committed to learning, leadership, and service in our community.

AVAILABLE SCHOLARSHIPS:

FOUR-YEAR ACADEMIC SCHOLARSHIPS
Two renewable scholarships supporting students pursuing higher education.

INTERACT SERVICE AWARD (NEW)
A one-time scholarship recognizing outstanding commitment to service.

TECHNICAL COLLEGE OF THE LOWCOUNTRY SCHOLARSHIPS
Faculty-awarded scholarships supporting technical and career-focused education.



Front Row (L to R): Nancy Mielcarek - HHIHS Counselor, Lilly Friday - 2025 Recipient, Chelsea Manueles - 2025 Recipient, Julie Markle - HHIHS Counselor, Maria Ibarra - 2024 Recipient
Back Row (L to R): Karl Scharrer - HHI Rotary Club Scholarship Chair, Steve Schidrich - HHIHS Principal

INVESTING IN STUDENTS. STRENGTHENING OUR COMMUNITY.

Learn more through your school counselor or local Rotary club.

SCAN TO ACCESS APPLICATIONS

Rotary Hilton Head Island

UNITE FOR GOOD

Check Us Out | Get Involved | Come to a Meeting | Participate

Meetings are held on Thursday at 12:30 pm.
Palmera Inn & Suites on 12 Park Lane, Hilton Head Island.

843.686.4100 HILTONHEADROTARY.ORG

Lectures & Classes

Annual Community Meeting

When: 4:30-6:30 p.m., March 18 **Where:** Arts Center of Coastal Carolina
Details: The 4th Annual Community Meeting will be an informative and inspiring celebration of philanthropy in the Lowcountry. ***cf-lowcountry.org***



Lowcountry Jobs Now

When: 9 a.m.-4:30 p.m., March 26 **Where:** TCL Culinary Institute of the South
Details: Designed to strengthen the workforce pipeline, Jobs Now 2026 brings together students, job seekers, career advancers, encore workers, educators and employers in one collaborative setting. ***lowcountryjobsnow.org***





Restorative Medicine Seminar

When: Noon-1 p.m., Tuesdays **Where:** Fraum Center for Restorative Health
Details: Attend a free educational event on the latest advancements in restorative medicine, with a complimentary lunch. Learn how you can help your body heal itself with highly effective, non-invasive solutions to chronic pain. ***fraum.com***



6th Annual Women's Summit of the Lowcountry

When: 9 a.m.-2 p.m., March 13 **Where:** Berkeley Hall
Details: Don't miss this vibrant, high-impact event dedicated to empowering women.
womenofthelowcountry.com



Art League Hilton Head classes

Learn a new skill and unleash your creativity with one of these workshops at the Art League Academy on Cordillo Parkway. For a complete list of classes, visit ***artleaguehhi.org***.

UPCOMING CLASSES

Mixed Media: Scenic Lowcountry: *2-5 p.m., March 11*
Wine Down Wednesday: Mini Art Masterpieces: *5-7 p.m., March 11*
All About Art & Where To Start: *1-4 p.m., March 24*

OTHER LECTURES & CLASSES

MEMORY MATTERS EVENTS:

March 25: *Memories Do Matter 2026 Speaker Series*

LIBRARIES FOR KIDS INTERNATIONAL EVENTS:

March 16: *Author Series: Millie West*

HISTORIC BEAUFORT FOUNDATION EVENTS

March 21: *Spring Architect's Tour in Historic Beaufort*

HILTON HEAD AUDUBON EVENTS:

March 7: *Sharing Our Shores at Hilton Head Library*
March 28: *Understanding Bird Migration with Kay Grinnell at Coastal Discovery Museum*

COASTAL DISCOVERY MUSEUM EVENTS:

March 14 & 28: *Sweet Basket Workshop*
March 26: *Sea Glass Wind Chime Workshop*
March 28: *2026 Spring Native Plant Sale*



BEAUFORT COUNTY LIBRARY EVENTS:

March 7: *The Art of Quilting Exhibit Opening Reception at the Bluffton Library*
March 19: *How To Know What's True: How Journalists Check Their Reporting at the Bluffton Library*
March 26: *Adult Crafts: Hammered Flower Prints at the Hilton Head Library*

WACHH EVENTS:

March 6: *Juan Cruz Diaz: Argentina-US Relations Under Presidents Millei and Trump*
March 20: *Sean McFate: Sneaky War and the Dark Arts*

PAT CONROY LITERARY CENTER EVENTS:

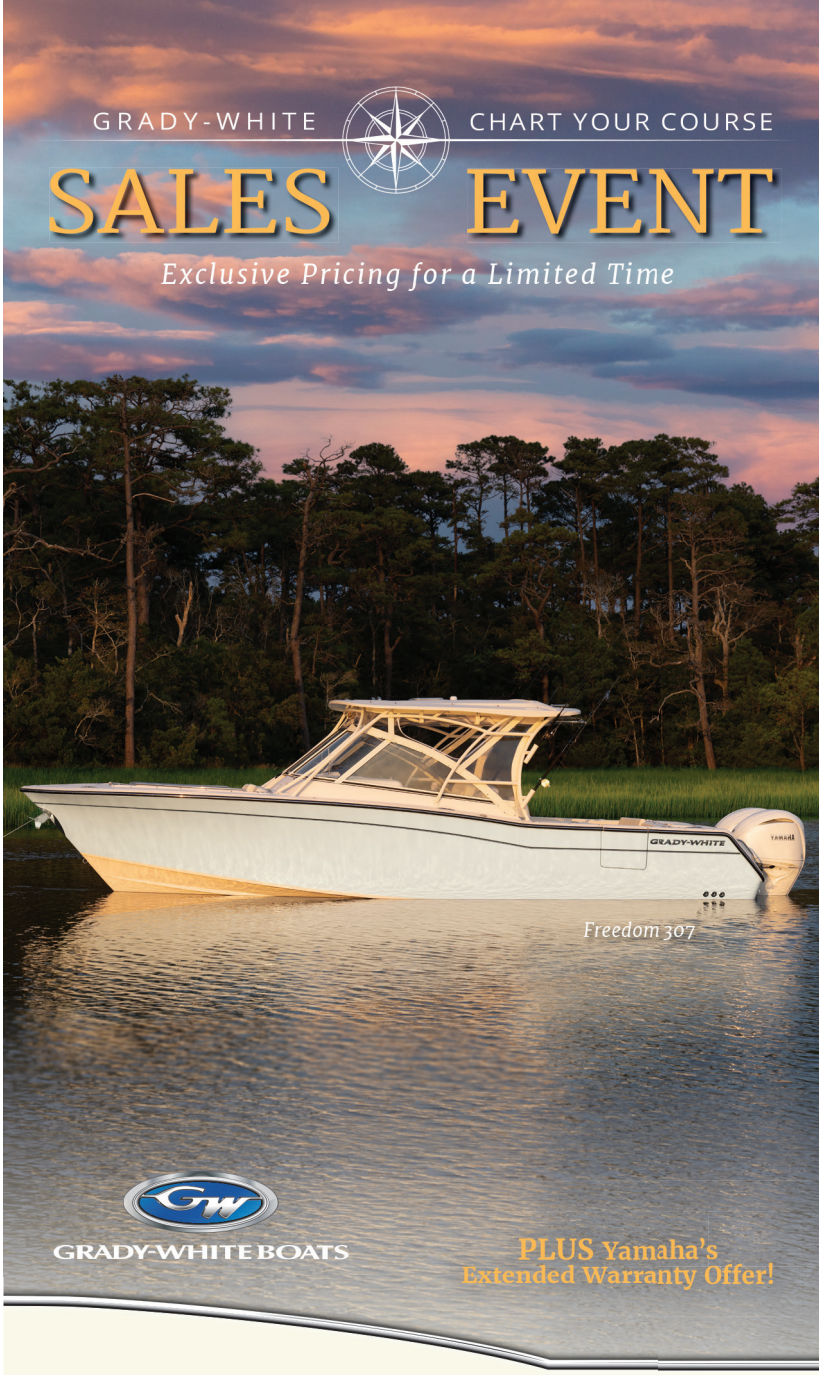
March 2-8: *10th Annual March Forth*
March 21: *An Afternoon with Poet Myra Shapiro*

HISTORIC BLUFFTON FOUNDATION EVENTS:

March 18: *Tea by the Tide: A Lowcountry Legacy*
March 25: *May River Night Lecture*

PORT ROYAL SOUND FOUNDATION EVENTS:

March 5: *Lecture Series: White Shark Conservation*
March 7: *Nature Writing: Kayaking on the Chechessee and Writing about It*
March 14: *Plant Native!*
March 28: *Indigo Tie Dye Workshop*



See this beautiful Grady-White and others at the Savannah Boat Show, March 13th - 15th at the Savannah Convention Center on Hutchinson Island.

Let us tell you about special savings and Yamaha incentives during Grady-White's Chart Your Course Sales Event!

THE BOATHOUSE EST. 1987 SALES · SERVICE

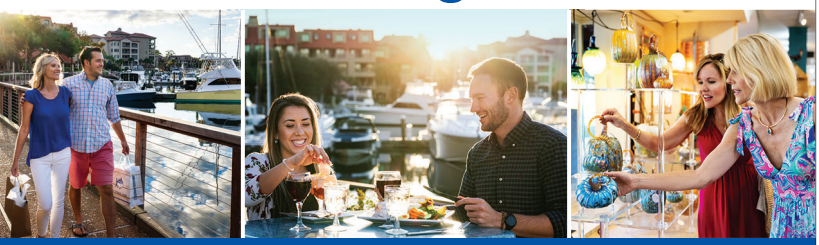
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HARBOUR & MARINA

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APPAREL / JEWELRY / GIFTS / ART
A Coastal Christmas • Nash Gallery • Neptune's Niche
Pure Salt Studios • Southern Tide Signature Store
Ship's Store • Tradewinds • Treasure Island

DINING / TREATS
Bistro 17 • Daily Café • ELA'S On The Water • Scott's Fish Market
Frosty's Ice Cream • Hilton Head Social Bakery • San Miguel's
Top Dawg Tavern & Pizzeria
LIVE ENTERTAINMENT AT PARTICIPATING RESTAURANTS

SERVICES
Harbourmaster's Office/Ship's Store
Memory Lane Portraits • Pure Salt Studios • Salon Shelter Cove

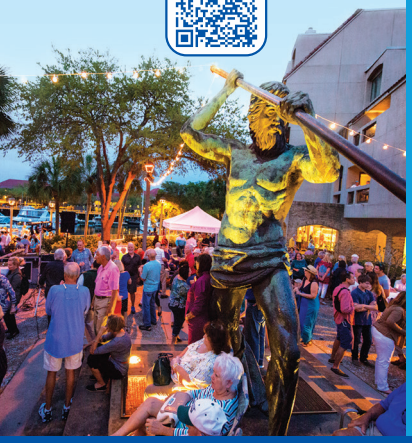
BOATS / MARINE
Harbourside Yacht Sales • Ship's Store/Marina Office

TOURS, FISHING & WATER SPORTS
Marina Charters & Water Sports Kiosk • Outside Hilton Head

REAL ESTATE / VILLA RENTALS
Palmetto Dunes/Shelter Cove Villa Rentals • Dunes Real Estate
Harbourside III • Trident Villa Rentals

MUSIC & TASTE
ON THE HARBOUR

FREE ADMISSION!



LIVE MUSIC
plus two restaurants
featuring light appetizers &
drink specials for purchase.

****NO COOLERS OR OUTSIDE FOOD & BEVERAGES PERMITTED****

THURSDAYS • 6-9 P.M.
March 26: Deas Guyz
April 2: Target *(with Headliner Horns)*
April 9: Deas Guyz
April 16: The Nice Guys
April 23: Deas Guyz
April 30: Deas Guyz
May 7: Target *(with Headliner Horns)*
May 14: Deas Guyz

Subject to change without notice. Weather permitting.

PLEASE BRING CANNED GOOD DONATION FOR DEEP WELL PROJECT

Located mid-island, mile marker 8, across from Palmetto Dunes, 13 Harbourside Ln.
ShelterCoveHiltonHead.com

Markets & Shopping



FARMERS AND ART MARKETS

Enjoy the local flavors of the Lowcountry with some of these regular farmers and art markets:

Bluffton Farmers Market: *12-4 p.m., Thursdays, 68 Boundary St.*

Hilton Head Island Farmers Market:
9 a.m.-1 p.m., Tuesdays, Coastal Discovery Museum

Port Royal Farmers Market: *9 a.m.-noon, Saturdays, Naval Heritage Park*

Forsythe Farmers Market: *9 a.m.-1 p.m., Saturdays, Savannah*

Beaufort First Friday: *5-8 p.m., first Friday of each month, Downtown Beaufort*

Hilton Head Community Market:
9:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m., Saturdays, Shelter Cove Community Park

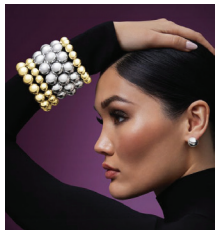
Habersham Farmers Market: *4-7 p.m., Fridays, Habersham Marketplace in Beaufort*

Farmers & Fishermen Sunset Market at Savannah Harbour:
4:30-8:30 p.m., 1st, 3rd & 5th Saturdays, Hutchinson Island

Side Hustle Brewing Co. Farmers Market:
1-5 p.m., third Sunday of each month, Side Hustle Brewing Co.

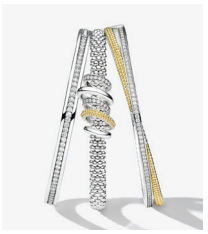
Second Saturday Shop & Stroll:
10 a.m.-2 p.m., second Saturday of each month, The Shops of Paris Avenue

First Thursday Artisan Alley:
3-6 p.m., first Thursday of each month, Shops at Sea Pines Center



LAGOS Trunk Show

When: March 25-26
Where: Forsythe Jewelers
Details: Discover the Art of Caviar and the new LAGOS spring collection during this trunk show at Forsythe Jewelers.
forsythejewelers.biz





Wine Down Wednesday For A Cause

When: 5-7 p.m., March 7
Where: Village at Wexford
Details: Enjoy wine tastings at participating merchants and special promotions that benefit Deep Well Project. ***villageatwexford.com***

OTHER MARKETS & SHOPPING EVENTS

March 26 & April 2: *Memory Matters Shop Hop, various locations*
March 28: *Collect treats on the Bunny Trail and get pictures with the Easter Bunny at Village at Wexford*



JOBS 2026 NOW

YOUR NEXT CHAPTER STARTS HERE.

Whether you're exploring an encore career, making a career pivot, or simply looking for your next best opportunity, the Jobs Now Expo is designed with you in mind. This regional workforce event brings together employers hiring now, education and training partners, and career support services—all in one accessible, welcoming space at the Culinary Institute of the South.

- **Explore full-time, part-time, and seasonal roles**
- **Learn about training programs, certifications, and degree pathways**
- **Connect with employers across a range of industries**
- **Get support with résumés, interviews, and career transitions**

Whether you're reentering the workforce, advancing your career, or ready for a fresh start, this event meets you where you are.

THURSDAY
3/26/26

FROM
9 AM - 4:30 PM

LOCATION
Culinary Institute of the South at TCL, 1 Venture Dr, Bluffton, SC 29910

HOSTED BY:

University of South Carolina Beaufort
Savannah State University
Technical College of the Lowcountry
SCAD — The University for Creative Careers

PRESENTED BY: LOWCOUNTRYJOBSNOW.ORG

HILTON HEAD DANCE THEATRE 40 Years
presents
Terpsichore
A Retrospective
MARCH 27 @ 7:00
MARCH 29 @ 2:00
SEAHAWK CULTURAL CENTER



This year's program includes
Raymonda
Gotcha Gottschalk
Rock Ballet II
Ramalama Bang Bang
Sunny Side of the Street
and more!

For tickets visit
HiltonHeadDance.com
hhdancetheatre hiltonheaddance

Music & Entertainment



Regular live music venues

Life is better with music, so why not enjoy live music every day of the week? Check their websites and Facebook pages for details.



DAILY SHOWS

Brother Shucker's
Coast, Oceanfront Dining
Coligny Center Stage
Fishcamp on Broad Creek
FISH Casual Coastal Seafood
Frosty Frog
Harbourside
Kind of Blue
Lincoln & South Brewing Company
Luther's Rare & Well Done
Quarterdeck
Ruby Lee's
San Miguel's
Scott's Fish Market
Skull Creek Boathouse
The Boardroom
The Crazy Crab Jarvis Creek
The Jazz Corner
The Salty Dog Cafe
The Sandbar Beach Eats
The Studio
Tiki Hut



MORE GREAT SPOTS (SELECT NIGHTS)

A Lowcountry Backyard Restaurant (Mondays-Fridays)
Agave (Thursdays-Saturdays)
Big Bamboo Cafe (Mondays-Saturdays)
Black Marlin Bayside Grill & Hurricane Bar (Wednesdays-Saturdays)
Bluffton Oyster Co. Family Seafood House (Fridays & Saturdays)
Burnt Church Distillery (Thursdays-Saturdays)
Captain Woody's Bluffton (Tuesdays)
Celeste (Fridays & Saturdays)
Cheap Seats Tavern 2 (Fridays)
Chophouse 119 (Fridays)
Hilton Head Brewing Co. (Mondays, Wednesdays & Fridays)
Hop Dog (Fridays)
Island Winery (Saturdays)
Lot 9 Brewing Company (Saturdays)
Nectar Farm Kitchen in Old Town Bluffton (Fridays-Sundays)
Okàn (Thursdays and Saturdays)
Pomodori Too! (Thursdays-Saturdays)
Red Fish (Tuesdays-Saturdays)
Reilley's Grill & Bar (Wednesdays-Fridays & Sundays)
Rollers Wine & Spirits (Tuesdays & Thursdays)
Santa Fe Cafe (Wednesdays-Saturdays)
Shellring Ale Works (Fridays-Sundays)
Sprout Momma (Wednesdays)
The Clubhouse at Okatie Creek (Mondays, Tuesdays & Thursdays)
The Dunes House (Mondays-Fridays)
The Rooftop Bar at Poseidon (Wednesdays, Thursdays & Saturdays)
Tio's Latin American Kitchen Bluffton (Fridays)



HHSO March events

Don't miss these spectacular concerts presented by the Hilton Head Symphony Orchestra. For details, visit ***hhso.org***.

UPCOMING CONCERTS

An Evening at Hogwarts - The Music of Harry Potter: *4 p.m., March 8 & 7:30 p.m., March 9 at First Presbyterian Church*

Hilton Head International Piano Competition: *March 16-21, locations vary*



Music & Taste

When: 6-9 p.m., March 26 **Where:** Shelter Cove Harbour & Marina **Details:** Dance the night away on Thursday nights in the spring at Shelter Cove Harbour & Marina, featuring local favorite bands, great food and all the dancing you can do. ***sheltrcovehiltonhead.com***



Arts Center March shows

The Arts Center of Coastal Carolina has a great lineup this month, from jazz to radio hits. Get tickets at ***artshhi.com***.

UPCOMING CONCERTS

Metta Quintet: *7:30 p.m., March 10*

The Casey Kasem Experience: *7:30 p.m., March 21*



Celebrate Renewal

When: 7 p.m., March 27 **Where:** First Presbyterian Church **Details:** This concert will feature favorite pieces and special performers from the past, plus fresh seasonal selections as the HHSC steps into the next 50 years. ***hiltonheadchoralsociety.org***

OTHER MUSIC & ENTERTAINMENT EVENTS

March 9: *Candlelight Celtic at USCB Center for the Arts*

March 19: *Electric Avenue: The 80's Movie Soundtrack Night at USCB Center for the Arts*

March 22: *Beaufort Orchestra presents Dedicated to Dvorak at USCB Center for the Arts*

March 28: *Shore Notes A Cappella Chorus 25th Anniversary Show at Hilton Head High School*

OPERATION PATRIOTS FOB PRESENTS

CONCERT FOR THE HEROES

A CONCERT TO CELEBRATE, HONOR, & REMEMBER OUR HEROES



Sports & Outdoors



MARCH RACES

Sign up for one of these March races to support a good cause and stay in shape.

UPCOMING RACES

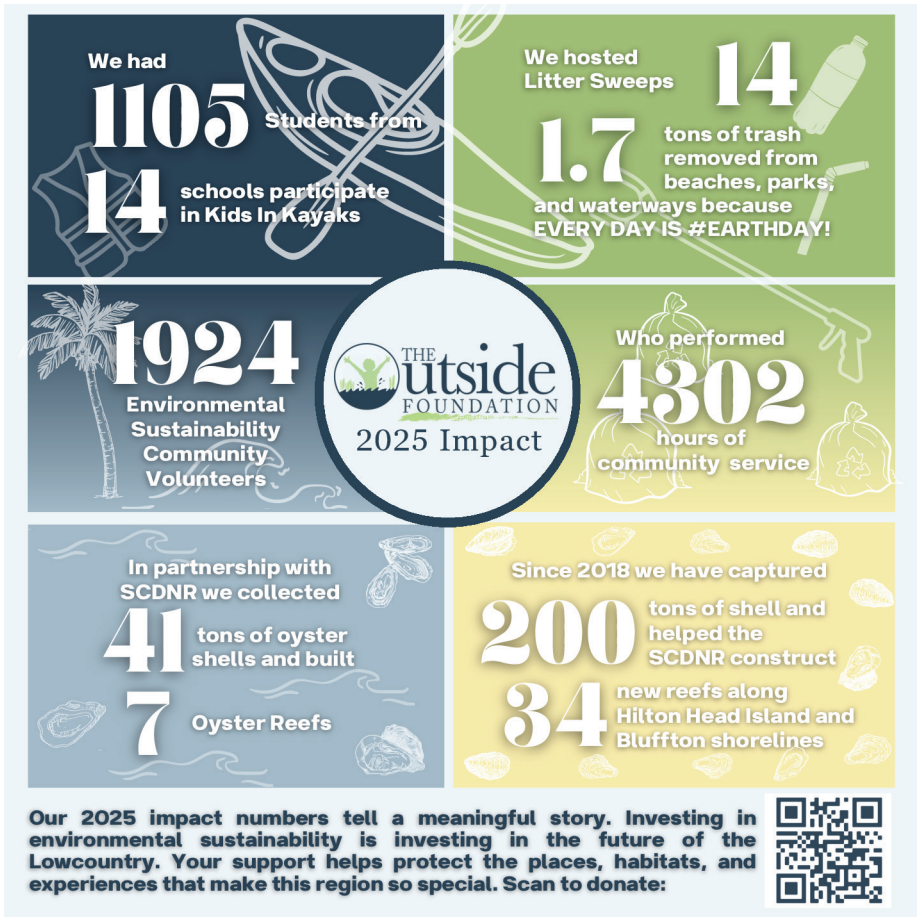
Red Cedar Foxes Trot 5K:
9 a.m., March 7, Red Cedar Elementary
Hilton Head Island Shamrock Run:
8 a.m., March 14, Pope Avenue
Bluffton St. Patrick's Day 5K:
9 a.m., March 14, Martin Family Park
Radiance Run 5K:
9 a.m., March 14, Radiance Pregnancy Care Center
2nd Annual Socks to the Flame 5K:
3-6 p.m., March 21, Windhorse Gallery & Marketplace
Spring Pub Run at Lot 9:
6 p.m., March 25, Lot 9 Brewing Company
2026 Lowcountry Tulip Trot:
8:30 a.m., March 28, Rose Hill Plantation Equestrian Center
Beaufort Twilight Run:
4 p.m., March 28, Habersham in Beaufort



Pockets Full of Sunshine Annual Clay Shoot

When: March 6 **Where:** Forest City Gun Club
Details: Pockets Full of Sunshine provides opportunities and connections for adults with disabilities. This annual event makes their weekly programming possible.
pocketsfullofsun.org







Sea Pines adventures

Check out one of these outdoor events this month at The Sea Pines Resort. ***seapines.com***

UPCOMING EVENTS

Lightouse Doubles Experience:
March 13-15, Sea Pines Racquet Club
Beach Sweep: *2 p.m., March 13, Sea Pines Beach Club*
Harbour Town Spring Fest:
11 a.m.-6 p.m., March 22, Harbour Town
Gregg Russell Spring Concert:
7:30 p.m., March 30, Harbour Town
Night at the Preserve: Full Moon Wagon Ride:
7:30 p.m., March 31, Heritage Farms



Palmetto Bluff Conservancy events

The PBC team facilitates tours, classes and workshops, programs, research and field trips to promote conservation. Visit ***palmettobluff.com/conservation*** for a complete list of events.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Volunteer Day - Pollinator Garden: *1-3 p.m., March 6*
Brown Bag Lunch: Common Lowcountry Birds:
12-1 p.m., March 11
Research Excursion: Cavity Nest Box Survey:
1-4 p.m., March 17



OTHER SPORTS & OUTDOORS EVENTS

March 12: Special Olympics at May River High School

March 21-22: Beaufort Water Festival Golf Tournament on Fripp Island

March 28: 2nd Annual Scales and Tails Kids Fishing Tournament at The Sands Boardwalk





Celebrate the Pour

HILTON HEAD ISLAND WINE & FOOD FESTIVAL

PRESENTED BY Publix





Public Tasting

SATURDAY, MARCH 28, 2026 | NOON-3 PM $80

Come ready to sip and sample at the Festival's largest event, celebrating our 41st anniversary at Lowcountry Celebration Park!

EVENTS YOU MIGHT ALSO ENJOY



UNCORKED $35

FRIDAY, MARCH 20, 2026 | 6:30-8:30 PM

Bring a special bottle to share with friends & fellow wine lovers to kick off the HHI Wine and Food Festival! Celebrate the pour and enjoy scrumptious bites + incredible beachy views.



CRAFT BEERS AT THE BEACH $50

SUNDAY, MARCH 22, 2026 | 2-5 PM

Enjoy the afternoon sipping your way through 50+ offerings from multiple local craft breweries to find your new favorite beer to kick off the spring season on Hilton Head Island.



SIP & STROLL $55

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 25, 2026 | 4-7 PM

The onset of spring is the perfect time to stroll the Shops at Sea Pines Center with a glass in hand and friend by your side.



STAY GOLD: A LOWCOUNTRY WINE, FOOD & MUSIC EXPERIENCE $150

THURSDAY, MARCH 26, 2026 | 6:30-8:30 PM

Taking place at the golden hour, this one-of-a-kind experience will feature the best in local live music and Double Gold wines from our international judging competition paired with delicious appetizers.



GRAND TASTING $175

FRIDAY, MARCH 27, 2026 | 5:30-7:30 PM

The Grand Tasting event is one to remember— the culmination of award-winning wines from our international judging competition and top wines from our wine partners.

HILTONHEADWINEANDFOOD.COM

HILTON HEAD ISLAND WINE & FOOD FESTIVAL

BMW VIKING

*Must be of legal age to purchase or participate.





SAVANNAH EVENTS

March 1-15: *The Sound of Music at the Savannah Theatre*
March 5-7: *The 10th Annual Savannah Antiques and Architecture Weekend*
March 10: *International Ballet Stars - The Sleeping Beauty at Johnny Mercer Theatre*
March 12: *Off the Coast of Paradise: Artists and Ossabaw Island, 1961-Now Opening Reception at The Jepson Center*
March 13-16: *Savannah Boat Show at the Savannah Convention Center*
March 14: *Matt Rife at Enmarket Arena*
March 14: *Rick Ross with Michelle K. at Johnny Mercer Theatre*
March 14-15: *Savannah Home Show at the Savannah Convention Center*
March 25-April 5: *Savannah Music Festival*
March 26: *Wait, Wait... Don't Tell Me at Johnny Mercer Theatre*
March 28: *Katt Williams at Enmarket Arena*
March 28: *The Thorn at Johnny Mercer Theatre*
March 28: *Savannah Philharmonic presents: Music of Empire: Elgar's Enigma at The Lucas Theatre for the Arts*



SCAD March events

Check out one of these artistic events this month at the Savannah College of Art and Design, the University of Creative Careers. ***scad.edu***

UPCOMING EVENTS

Courtyard Concert Series with Wayne Bucknor Jr.: *7 p.m., March 5, SCAD Museum of Art*
9 to 5: The Musical: *Times vary, March 5-8, Lucas Theatre for the Arts*
Concert: Sarod Trilogy: *3 p.m., March 28, Trustees Theater*



SAVE THE DATE

April 2: *Sea Pines Dolphin Dash at Sea Pines Beach Club*
April 3: *Hors d'Oeuvres class at TCL Culinary Institute of the South*
April 3: *2026 Taste of Bluffton: Food Truck Edition at New Riverside Barn*
April 4: *Scrap Iron 5K on Daufuskie Island*
April 4: *Bluffton Bunny Hop 5K at Washington Square*
April 4: *Easter Eggstravaganza at Shelter Cove Community Park*
April 4: *Lowcountry Food Truck Festival on Paris Avenue in Port Royal*
April 5: *Easter Egg Hunt in Harbour Town*

TO SHOWCASE AN EVENT

You may be able to post your event for free in our Happenings section. Head to ***locallifesc.com****, click "Contact Us," and include a title, date, time, location, description, a link to the webpage and photos if possible.*

Nacho Average Newsletter

the dish

Newsletter from Local Life

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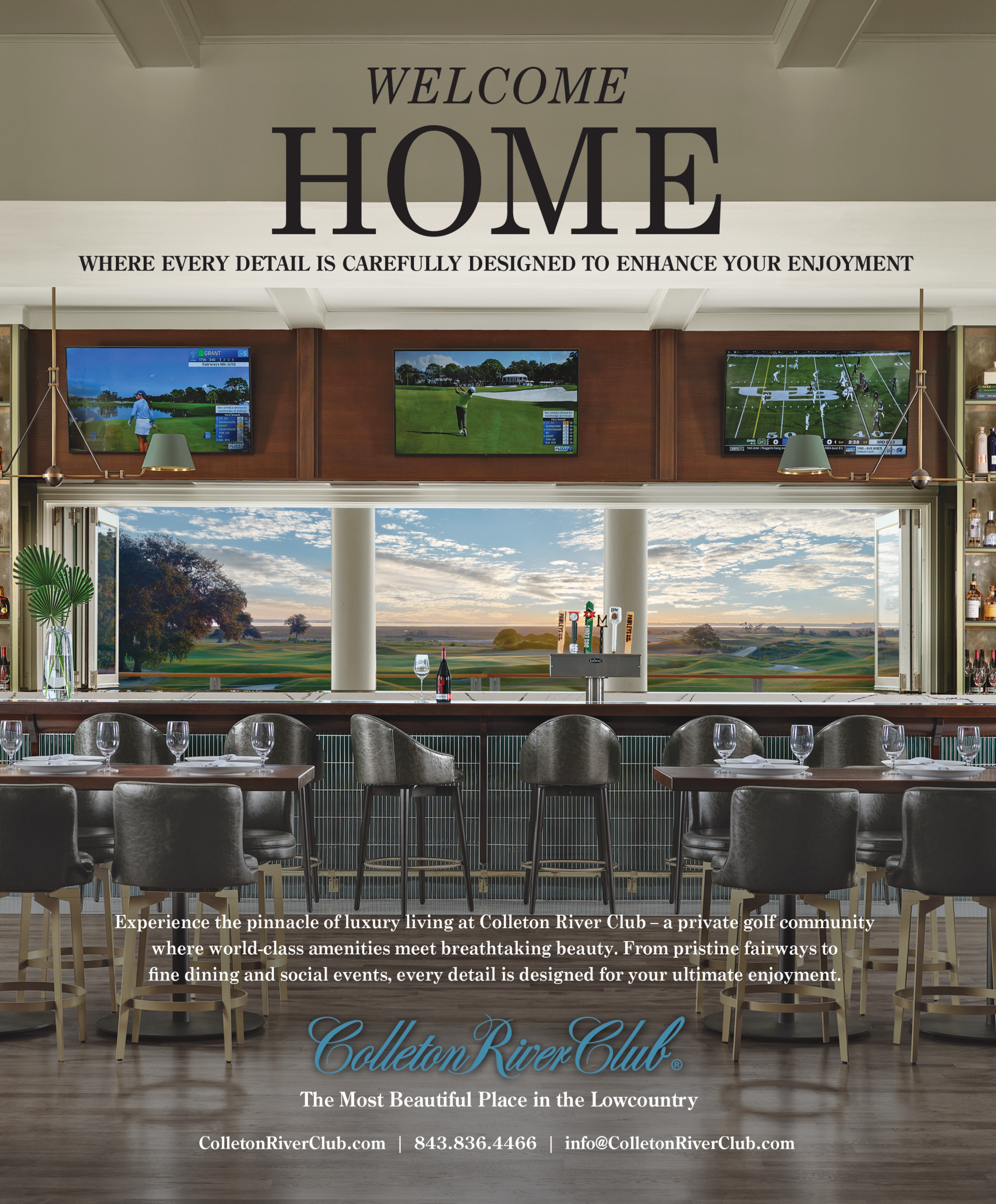
Keep your head up



Cypress Wetlands, Port Royal

A male great egret lifts his bill skyward, fanning delicate breeding plumes known as aigrettes in a spring mating display. March through May are peak months to witness this courtship behavior at local rookeries, including Cypress Wetlands in Port Royal, where this image was captured by Bluffton photographer Gwen Callas-Miller. During breeding season, the bird's lores, the area between the eyes and bill, shift from olive-yellow to vivid green. Once hunted nearly to extinction for their prized feathers, great egrets are now a thriving and striking presence across the Lowcountry.

HIT US WITH YOUR BEST SHOT **Have you taken a great local photo?**
Send your high-res image to info@wearelocallife.com or upload it at locallifesc.com/partingshot.


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LAGOS EVENT

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 25 10:00 AM - 7:00 PM
THURSDAY, MARCH 26 10:00 AM - 5:00 PM