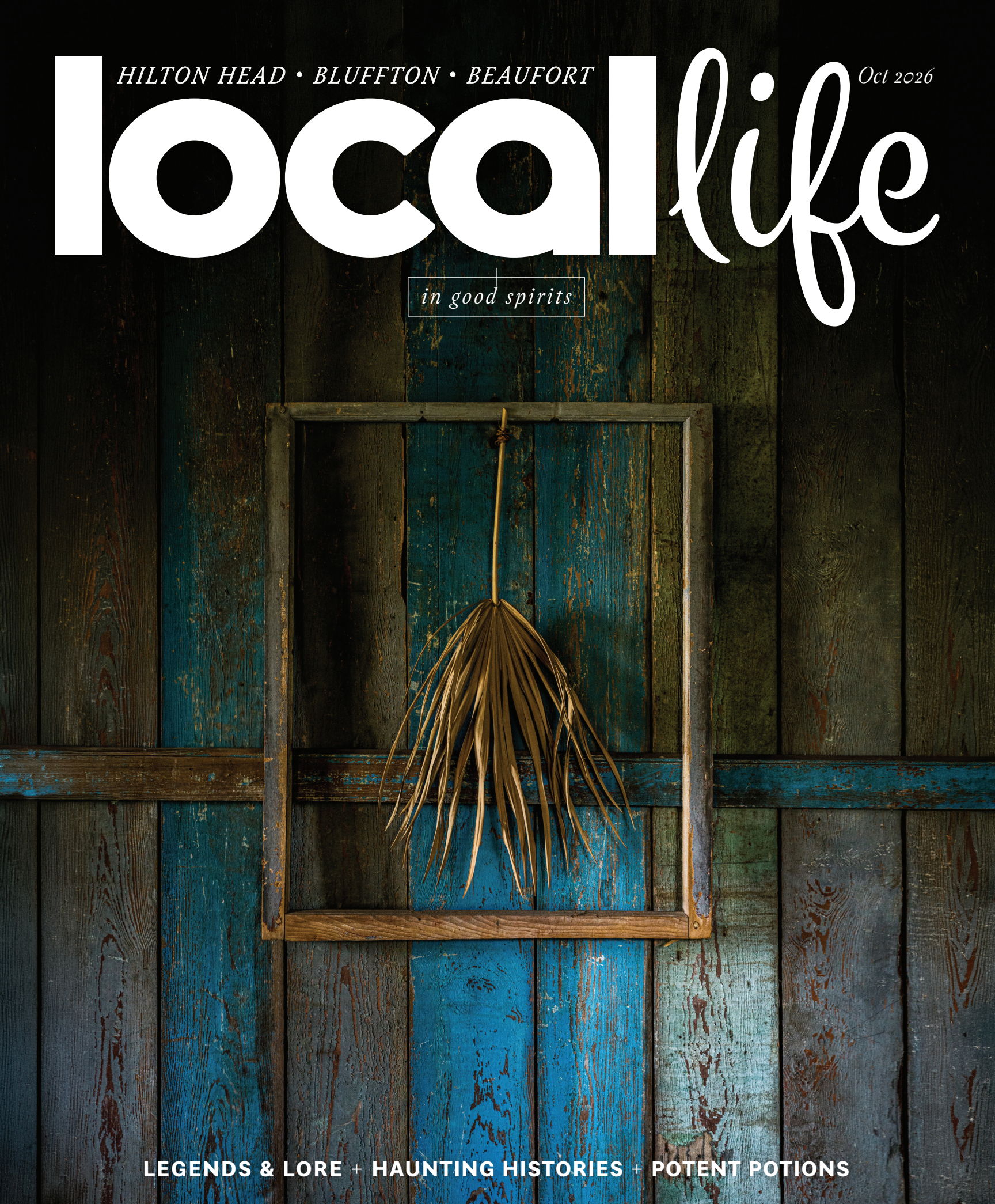
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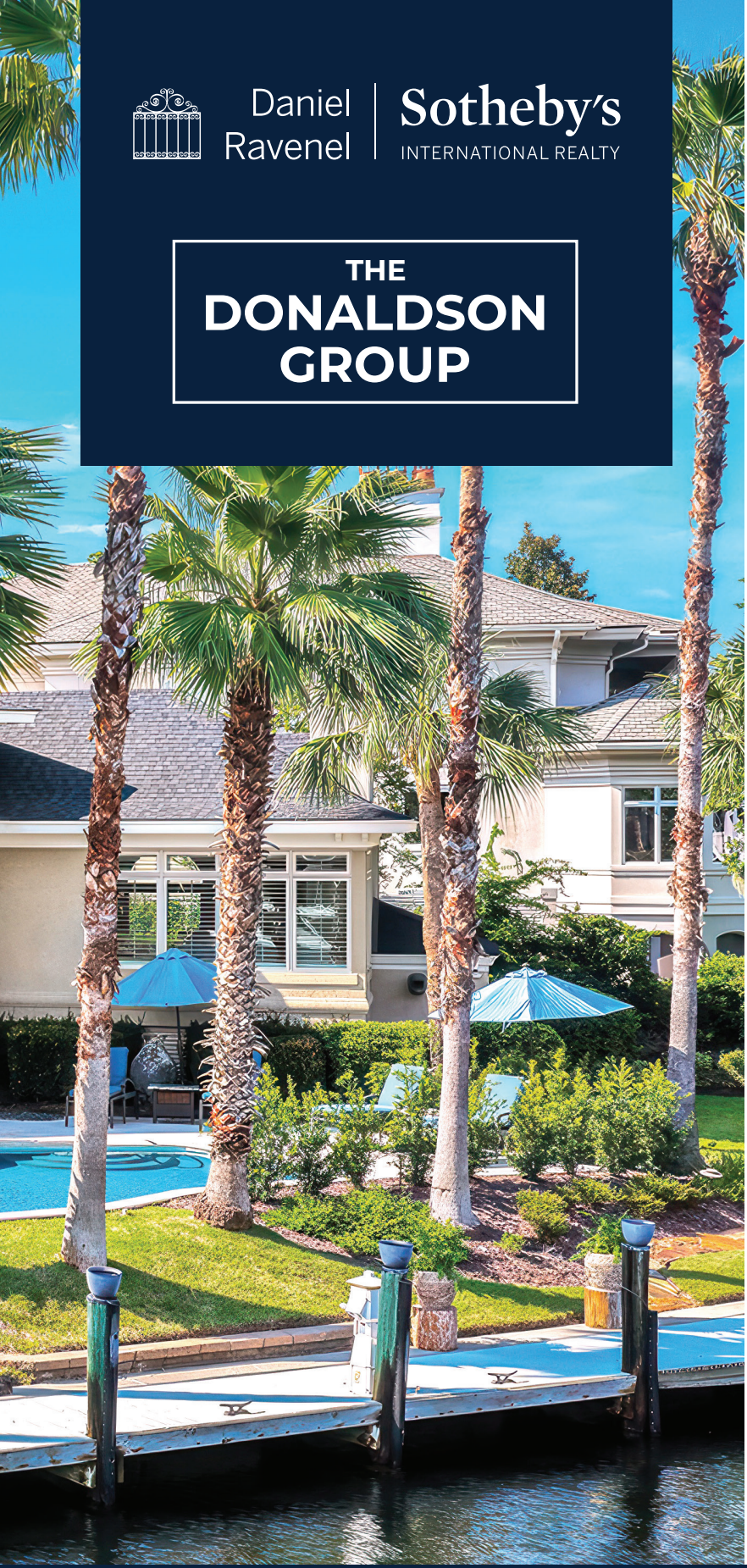




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the team

What legend or ghost story scared you most as a kid?

"Casper. He did not scare me, but was he real?"
- LORI



"Deerman, said to haunt the woods around Kewanee, Illinois. If you see him three times, you die." **- LANCE**



"The headless motorcycle man of Elmore, Ohio. A specter haunts the bridge where he met his untimely demise. I've been chased!"
- JEREMY



"The Maco Light, the ghost of a headless train conductor said to wander the tracks in North Carolina with a lantern." **- CHARLES**



"The legend of Constitution Drive in Pennsylvania turned many high school nights into ghost hunts." **- ASHLAN**



"Lydia's Bridge in Jamestown, N.C., where a woman killed in a car crash is said to hitch rides on rainy nights." **- BAILEY**



"The Michigan Dogman — or anything in the woods at night."
- ALEA



"Growing up in West Virginia, it was Tailypo and Mothman."
- REBECCA



"Leprechauns. The movie, the character, the whole folklore around it. I don't like them!"
- KENNY



"The Jersey Devil, while at Girl Scout camp in the Pine Barrens of New Jersey."
- LEAH



"The Creature from the Black Lagoon gave me nightmares as a kid."
- BRUCE

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Oct features

Legends & Lore

The Lowcountry is a place where history and mystery are never far apart. This issue explores the legends, ghost stories and superstitions woven into life along the coast, from mysterious lights and restless spirits to root doctors, haunted landmarks and traditions meant to keep the haints away. Discover the stories behind some of the region's most fascinating tales, explore places steeped in history and legend, and uncover beliefs and traditions passed down through generations. Some stories can be documented. Others survive through the telling. Together they reveal a darker, more mysterious side of the Lowcountry.

©MICHAEL HRIZUK

WHAT LIES BENEATH Skull Creek looks peaceful at sunset, but one of Hilton Head Island's oldest treasure tales gives these waters a darker edge. Somewhere beneath a pair of live oaks, legend says, pirate gold was buried with a gruesome form of protection. Read more about Skull Creek's buried treasure and its supernatural guardian on **page 126**.

30
Scare tactics
Haunted houses, ghost tours and scares worth the drive

54
See the light
Searching for St. Helena Island's legendary ghostly glow

58
Rooted in mystery
Inside the enduring legend of local root doctor, Dr. Buzzard

68
Spirit protection
Local traditions meant to keep troublesome spirits away

106
Creepy greens
Strange and spooky plants that thrive in the Lowcountry

114
Still among us
Ghost stories where history, mystery and legends collide

160
Kitchen magic
Recipes, rituals and superstitions reveal food's mysterious side

177
Potent potions
Two haunting cocktails made for sipping after dark

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Oct contents

22
Publisher
The Lowcountry's legends, ghost stories and mysteries come alive after dark.

24
Contributors
Meet the creative locals who brought this month's issue to life.

26
Links
Exclusive articles and extras waiting online at locallifesc.com



80
Dream sequence
A homeowner's childhood wish for a grand staircase inspired this elegant Colleton River residence.











42
Blend
The hot list: What to watch, read and listen to in October

48
Business
What's new, what's next and what's making waves

50
Wellness
Plants, faith and tradition shaped Sea Islands healing

64
Legends
Local places where history, mystery and legend meet

92
Living
Choosing the right surfaces for coastal living

102
Outdoors
Horseshoe crabs follow the moon to Lowcountry shores

108
Style
Fresh looks ease Lowcountry wardrobes into fall

112
Shopping
Seasonal orange decor brings a warm touch of fall home

114
Folklore
A tragic love story said to linger at the Chapel of Ease

140
Culture
Artists bringing Gullah spirits and traditions to life

150
Music
Olga Kern takes on Beethoven's mighty "Emperor"

154
Poetry
A poetic celebration of the trees that shelter local wildlife

156
Eats
How the Carolina Reaper became a worldwide legend

176
Libations
California's forgotten wineries come back from the dead

178
Happenings
Festivals, concerts and events in October worth your time

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The darker side of paradise

The Lowcountry's legends, lore and things that go bump in the night



IN GOOD SPIRITS
Publisher Lori Goodridge-Cribb enjoys a good ghost story, but her favorite October spirits are usually served over ice. Give her a little pumpkin spice, a splash of vodka and room to mix one of her signature potions, and she's ready for spooky season.

Most people picture the Lowcountry in daylight: sunny skies, sparkling water, ancient live oaks and miles of beautiful beaches. Spend enough time here, though, and you discover paradise has a darker side.

Maybe it's the landscape. Spanish moss hangs from twisted limbs. Fog settles over marshes and lonely roads. Centuries-old cemeteries hide behind churches and beneath towering oaks. Our forests, swamps and maritime woodlands can feel wonderfully wild by day and downright unsettling after dark.

Then there's the history. Our towns have witnessed centuries of war, hurricanes, shipwrecks, tragedy and triumph, with fascinating characters whose stories still linger. According to legend, a few of those characters have lingered, too.

That inspired this month's Legends & Lore issue.

Many of us who now call the Lowcountry home brought ghost stories from wherever we grew up. Ask someone which tale frightened them most as a kid, and chances are the answer has a ZIP code. Maybe it was North Carolina's mysterious Maco Light, West Virginia's Mothman, the Michigan Dogman or New Jersey's infamous Jersey Devil. These stories were whispered at sleepovers, repeated around campfires and passed from one generation to the next.

The Lowcountry has plenty of its own.

There's the mysterious Land's End Light, the legend of famed root doctor Dr. Buzzard and cemeteries where the dearly departed are rumored to be not quite so departed. There are famous phantoms such as the Blue Lady, the Gauche, Maggie, William Baynard and the Fripps. And if ghosts aren't enough, there are tales of strange creatures lurking deep in the swamps, including the elusive skunk ape.

Spend a night alone in one of those wild places, and suddenly every squirrel in the leaves sounds 10 feet tall.

That's part of the fun, especially in October. The sun sets earlier, the nights turn cooler, fire pits come alive, and ghost stories somehow sound a little more believable. We've filled this issue with plenty to get you into the spirit. You'll find a field guide to haunted houses, ghost tours and scares worth the drive; hauntingly beautiful images of places said to be haunted; stories of ghostly encounters; and a fascinating look at Gullah root work, healing traditions, folklore and superstitions. We explore magical realism, recommend books filled with mysteries, myths and witches, uncover hidden powers in your iPhone and spotlight clever technology for exploring what comes alive after dark.

Do we believe every story in these pages? That isn't the point. Legends survive because we keep telling them. They connect us to the people, places and mysteries that came before us, leaving just enough unanswered to make us wonder. So enjoy the Lowcountry sunshine. Walk the beach. Admire the moss-draped oaks. Just remember: Paradise looks and feels a little different after dark.

LORI GOODRIDGE-CRIBB
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Trick or treat: WHERE TO GO

Grab your bags and buckets. These local neighborhoods and hot spots have earned a reputation for fright-night fun and plenty of candy.

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Ashton Cove
Chinaberry Ridge
Allenwood
Victoria Square
Coligny Plaza

BLUFFTON
Bluffton Park
Hidden Lakes
Westbury Park
Old Town Bluffton
Victoria Bluff

BEAUFORT AREA
Pigeon Point
The Point
Habersham
Downtown Beaufort
Port Royal

Before you boo:

Neighborhood participation and public Halloween events can change from year to year. Before heading out, check community announcements and event schedules, respect gated-community access, and look for that universal sign that candy awaits: a glowing porch light.



DRIVING CHANGE
Have you spotted the LOCAL Life Jeep around town? This month we pulled up alongside ***Gwen Chambers***, executive director of BlacQuity, a local nonprofit dedicated to promoting, elevating and empowering Black-owned businesses while advancing equity in our local economy. Learn more at blacquitysc.org.


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MEET LOCAL CREATIVES BEHIND THE SCENES



Tim Conroy *Poet*

OTHER CREDS: Retired educator, founding board member of the Pat Conroy Literary Center, author of the poetry collections *Theologies of Terrain* and *No True Route*. **FOR THIS ISSUE:** Poem, *The Community Tree*. **WHAT INSPIRED IT?** Through the lens of a tree, I wanted to express how our magnificent trees provide habitat for so many of our beloved creatures and how we must protect them. These living witnesses of history must reflect a community's sacred stewardship. **HOMETOWN:** Using a military brat's prerogative, I chose Beaufort. **CURRENT HOME:** Beaufort **WHY THE LOWCOUNTRY?** How can you enter a tidal creek and hear the windswept marsh, then be blessed by the visitation of dolphins, blue crabs and shorebirds, and not be transformed by its miracles? A soul-worthy task is to ponder the tracks in pluff mud on a barrier island, then watch the water rise over them. Each sunset, you're struck: God is the poet of these rivers. **POETIC INSPIRATION:** Cardinal flowers, butterflies, green sweat bees, skinks, birdsong, how our senses react to every minuscule facet of the natural world, and messy lives and struggles to find a way back to love. Isn't love the only response to our predicament? **BEST WRITING ADVICE:** In 1993 my brother, Pat Conroy, gifted me a journal and wrote on its first page: "Find your voice. Most people never find theirs. You've got to write down what you think, or you never hear what you are trying to say." Both Pat and my sister Carol, a poet, encouraged me to say Cavafy's "The Great Yes" and muster the conviction to become a writer.



Bob Speare *Artist and wildlife photographer*

OTHER CREDS: Naturalist, former Mass Audubon environmental educator, Lowcountry Master Naturalist, South Carolina Master Gardener **FOR THIS ISSUE:** Great horned owl sculpture **WHAT INSPIRED IT?** Owls are a favorite subject of mine, and the great horned owl is so widespread and beautiful. I'm sure I'll create more. **HOMETOWN:** Chicopee, Massachusetts **CURRENT HOME:** Hilton Head Island **WHY THE LOWCOUNTRY?** You mean besides the birds? The amazing habitats. **FAVORITE LOCAL SPOTS:** Our dock, Fish Haul Beach and Wednesday nights at Sprout Momma. **OTHER PASSIONS:** Music, hiking, gardening and travel. **BEST CREATIVE ADVICE:** From my wife: "You've got to get into the studio and work!" **WHAT MIGHT SURPRISE READERS?** I'm learning to play the banjo. **FAVORITE LOCAL LEGEND:** There are Gullah legends that describe herons and egrets guarding the boundaries between land and water, keeping the Boo Hags at bay. **MOST MAGICAL LOCAL PLACE:** The foggy creeks on an early-morning paddle. **BEST HALLOWEEN COSTUME:** I've made several mascot-style costumes for nature-related Halloween events. My favorite was a rotting log because I could lie down in it.



Lyla Zawatsky

Writer and designer

OTHER CREDS: University of Cincinnati student, Class of 2028; fine arts major and marketing minor **FOR THIS ISSUE:** Hot tech, Historic Bluffton Arts & Seafood Festival preview **HOMETOWN:** Cincinnati **CURRENT HOME:** Hilton Head Island **OTHER PASSIONS**: I love expressing my creativity through large-scale oil paintings. When I'm not painting, you can usually find me working out or soaking up the sun on the beach. **LOWCOUNTRY BUCKET LIST:** Getting out on the water: jet skiing, boat rides and beach picnics. I'd also love to do yoga and paint on the beach and, if I'm lucky, catch and cook my own fish. **FAVORITE HALLOWEEN CANDY:** Anything chocolate. Reese's, Kit Kats and Almond Joys are my go-to Halloween treats. **FAVORITE THING ABOUT OCTOBER:** Fall is by far my favorite season. There's something nostalgic and wistful about the crisp, cool weather and changing leaves. Fall fashion is the best, I love football season at my university and, of course, Halloween is my favorite holiday.

Other locals who brought the legends to life...

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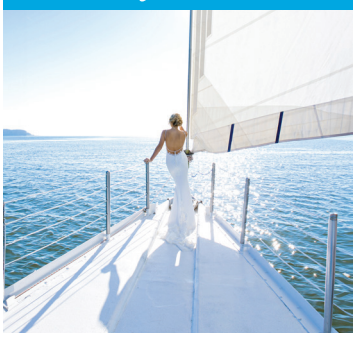
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2. What your dog's DNA can reveal about their health and behavior 
3. A guide to Bluffton's best art galleries and creative spaces 

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About the cover

*A dried palm frond hangs against weathered blue boards at Bluffton's historic **Garvin-Garvey House**, creating a hauntingly simple image for our Legends & Lore issue. Photographer Michael Hrizuk captured the scene for "Keeping the haints away" on page 68, which explores Lowcountry traditions surrounding spirits, superstition and protection, from haint blue and bottle trees to brooms and horseshoes. Readers can experience the historic setting for themselves at Oyster Factory Park in Old Town Bluffton. The house is open from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays. Hrizuk is the art director and photographer behind Hrizuk Studio. See more at hrizukphoto.com.*



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More LOCAL Life to read, watch, shop and explore online

Savannah haunted houses

Why settle for a staged haunted house when the real thing is waiting just across the Savannah River? This October, trade artificial thrills for the authentic, spine-tingling experiences that only Savannah can provide. Named the most haunted city in America by the American Institute of Parapsychology, the Hostess City is home to many eerie landmarks and historic homes where ghosts are said to roam. Fuel up the car, and embark on a spirited nighttime adventure where the paranormal may be more than just a story. **locallifesc.com/savannah-haunted-houses**





Send a little Lowcountry

Share a piece of the Lowcountry with LOCAL Life's "A Shell of an Issue" greeting card, featuring Michael Hrizuk's memorable crab-pot cover from July 2019. Cards start at $6.22 and are available in multiple sizes, finishes and quantities, with envelopes included. Find this card and other LOCAL Life favorites at **local-life-magazine.myshopify.com.**

Taco the town

In honor of National Taco Day on Oct. 6, we compiled a list of local restaurants and food trucks that deliver exceptional flavor in a soft shell. From authentic Mexican eats to Lowcountry-inspired originals, these favorite spots make every Taco Tuesday worth celebrating. View the full roundup on LOCAL Life's Instagram. **@LOCALLifeSC**





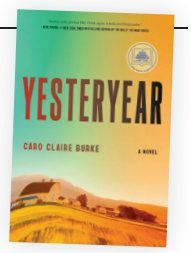
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CHAPTER CHAT

*LOCAL Life's **Rebecca Kerns** reviews **"Yesteryear" by Caro Claire Burke**, an electrifying examination of tradition, fame, faith and the grand performance of womanhood, from a thrilling new talent in fiction. Watch her review on LOCAL Life's YouTube channel: **youtube.com/@locallifesc***



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THE HAUNT AT HHIHS

70 Wilborn Road, Hilton Head Island

The scare: Student stagecraft gets a sinister makeover. The shortest drive on our list might also be the easiest way to get yourself into trouble. Each year Hilton Head Island High School theater students transform their performing arts space into a maze of shadowy corridors, sinister scenes and strategically placed scares. This is more than a few cobwebs and plastic skeletons. Students put their theatrical skills to work with sets, lighting, sound, music and costumed actors lurking out of sight for just the right moment to make you jump. The result is a homegrown haunt with the feel of a live production and an easy entry point for families and Halloween fans not quite ready to venture deep into the woods.

Experience it: 7-10 p.m. Oct. 25, 27, 28, 29 and 30. Tickets ($10-$30) are available at the door of the HHIHS theater.

Worth the fright

A field guide to October's haunted houses, ghost tours and other scares worth the drive

STORY BY MARIE MCCAA

Some haunted attractions are a quick detour after dinner. Others require a full tank of gas, a brave friend in the passenger seat and the uneasy acceptance that whatever scratches the car door on the way home is probably best left unexplained. When October rolls around, the Lowcountry gets a little darker. Cornfields become corridors, forest trails disappear into blackness, and perfectly normal people suddenly develop a disturbing interest in chasing strangers through the woods. Plenty of scares are within striking distance of Hilton Head, from student-built haunts to sprawling forest trails and candlelit walks through one of America's most famously haunted cities. Consider this your field guide, starting close to home and working outward. Choose your scare wisely.



©THE REAPER'S DUNGEON

THE REAPER'S DUNGEON *280 Recreation Lane, Walterboro*

The scare: A long walk through the woods where you're definitely not alone. Reaper's Dungeon understands one of horror's oldest rules: Sometimes what you can't see is much scarier than what you can. The attraction builds its scares around a long wooded trail, using isolation and anticipation as much as actors and effects. Live performers lurk along the route, but the trees do plenty of the psychological heavy lifting. You hear movement before you see anything. Something flashes between the trunks. Then you spend the next hundred yards wondering whether the noise behind you is part of the attraction or something you would rather not meet. Recommended for ages 12 and older.

Experience it: 7-11 p.m. Fridays and Saturdays in October. General admission is $8. About 70 miles, or 1 1/2 hours, from Hilton Head. ***reapersdungeon.com***



©ALEE SHRINERS

ALEE SHRINERS HAUNTED HOUSE

100 Eisenberg Drive, Savannah

The scare: Moving floors, monsters and classic haunted-house mayhem. If you like your Halloween scares served with a side of Why is the floor moving?, this Savannah haunt is a strong contender. The trouble starts with a hand-built vortex tunnel designed to scramble your sense of balance before you have even found your footing. Simulated walkways, a suspension bridge and shifting environments make simply getting through the place part of the ordeal. Then come the masked characters, creepy creatures and chainsaw-wielding maniacs. Fake blood, spider webs, severed limbs and themed rooms add to the old-school chaos, while the floors, walls and scenery seem just as interested in messing with you as the actors. Alee describes the attraction as family-friendly, but don't mistake that for scream-free.

Experience it: 7-10 p.m. Fridays and Saturdays in October. Tickets are $25. About 45 miles, or 1 hour, from Hilton Head. ***aleeshriners.org***

SAVANNAH HISTORY & HAUNTS

17 W. McDonough St., Savannah

The scare: Ghost stories told where they supposedly happened. For Halloween fans who prefer goosebumps to jump scares, Savannah supplies plenty of atmosphere before the storytelling even begins. This 90-minute outdoor walking tour winds through historic squares and cobblestone streets as guides recount ghosts, superstitions, tragedies and some of the city's darker chapters. There are no elaborate sets or chainsaw-wielding actors here. The scenery is Savannah itself: moss-draped oaks, centuries-old buildings and shadowy squares. It's a slower, more atmospheric kind of fright, best suited to those who would rather hear a chilling story beneath an old oak than have someone leap out from behind it.

Experience it: Tours are offered year-round with dates and times varying. Reservations are required. Tickets are $30 for adults, $20 for ages 7-12 and free for ages 6 and younger. About 45 miles, or 1 hour, from Hilton Head. ***savannahhistoryandhaunts.com***



©SAVANNAH HISTORY & HAUNTS



©WICKED SOUTH HAUNTED FOREST

WICKED SOUTH HAUNTED FOREST

3001 Lawrence Church Road, Pembroke, Georgia

The scare: A lost carnival, dark woods and nowhere comfortable to hide. For anyone who thinks haunted houses have far too many walls, Wicked South takes the terror outside. Its backstory begins with a traveling carnival whose performers set up camp in the woods. Something went wrong, the performers disappeared, and the abandoned camp was swallowed by the forest. According to the legend, when the mist settles between the trees, you can still hear them. That creepy premise unfolds along twisting trails filled with elaborate sets, props and live scares. Limited visibility may be the attraction's most effective trick: You can't see far ahead, you don't know where the trail will lead, and nearly every tree looks capable of hiding something. Visitors should be ready for uneven terrain and whatever October weather decides to add to the production. If you hear carnival music somewhere deep in the woods, don't say we told you to follow it.

Experience it: Select nights Oct. 3-Nov. 1. Hours vary by date. Timed entry; admission is $15, parking is $2. About 73 miles, or 1 1/2 hours, from Hilton Head. ***wickedsouthproductions.com***

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SELECTIONS BY LYLA ZAWATSKY



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UltraFire 502UV PRO UV Light

Some of nature's strangest colors don't reveal themselves in ordinary light. This rechargeable 15-watt UV flashlight is offered in 365 nm and 395 nm versions for making certain fluorescent materials glow. Take it outside after sunset and see what appears. ***ultrafire.com. $26***



Deep-sea director

OCTOMASK Dive Mask for GoPro

Turn your next dive into an underwater documentary. The OCTOMASK incorporates a GoPro mount directly into the dive mask, leaving your hands free to swim while your camera captures fish, sea turtles and anything more mysterious that happens to cross your path. Camera not included. ***octomask.com. $80***



Did you hear that?

Zoom H1essential Stereo Handy Recorder

Footsteps in an empty hallway? A strange call from deep in the woods? This pocket-sized recorder uses stereo X/Y microphones and 32-bit float recording to capture the sounds of the night in impressive detail, including those you may wish you hadn't heard. ***zoomcorp.com. $100***



Proof positive

HP Sprocket Portable Instant Photo Printer

Every unexplained sighting needs photographic evidence. This pocket-sized Bluetooth printer connects to your smartphone or tablet and turns digital snapshots into 2-by-3-inch ZINK prints. Perfect for haunted-house adventures or that blurry image you're absolutely certain contains something supernatural. ***sprocketprinters.com. $90***



Batting around

Wildlife Acoustics Echo Meter Touch 2 Bat Detector

The night isn't nearly as quiet as it sounds. Plug this ultrasonic detector into a compatible smartphone or tablet to hear bats' high-frequency calls. Its companion app can record calls, display colorful spectrograms and even suggest possible species based on their calls. ***wildlifeacoustics.com. $179***



Watts haunting you?

A dead phone is scary enough. A dead phone miles from home is worse. This 20,000mAh solar power bank has four built-in cables, 20W fast charging, a camping light and flashlight, and enough connections to power up to six devices at once. ***blavorpowerbank.com. $70***



Night of the living zoom

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Thermal imaging finds heat; night vision reveals the scene. This digital monocular combines 10x magnification with an 850 nm infrared illuminator, letting you peer into dark surroundings while capturing 4K UHD video and photos up to 48 megapixels. Now you can find out what snapped that branch. ***minoltadigital.com. $240***



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Para4ce Polterscript Device

Ghost hunters have long listened for electronic voice phenomena, or EVPs. The Polterscript takes a different approach, converting what its maker describes as environmental energy changes into voice and text. Does that mean the spirits are talking? We'll leave that investigation to you. ***ghosthuntersequipment.com. $399***

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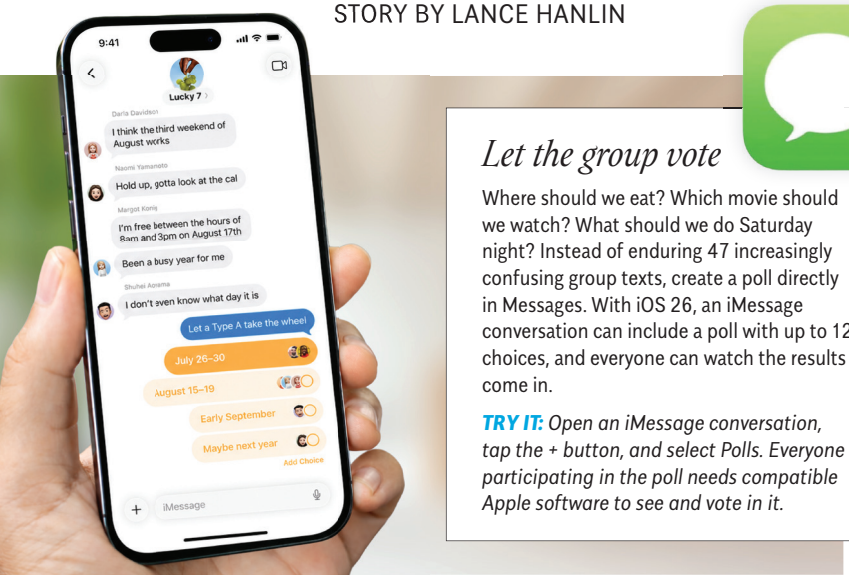




Hidden powers

YOUR IPHONE KNOWS A FEW TRICKS YOU MAY NEVER HAVE DISCOVERED

STORY BY LANCE HANLIN



Let the group vote

Where should we eat? Which movie should we watch? What should we do Saturday night? Instead of enduring 47 increasingly confusing group texts, create a poll directly in Messages. With iOS 26, an iMessage conversation can include a poll with up to 12 choices, and everyone can watch the results come in.

TRY IT: *Open an iMessage conversation, tap the + button, and select Polls. Everyone participating in the poll needs compatible Apple software to see and vote in it.*

You use it to text, check the weather, take pictures and figure out where you're going. But hiding behind that familiar screen are features that can do things that seem almost supernatural. Your iPhone can remember where you've been, help settle a group debate, reduce motion sickness and even turn a lengthy webpage into a quick summary. Some of these powers arrived with recent software updates. Others have been hiding in plain sight. Consider this your guide to a little digital magic, no crystal ball required.

Remember where you've been

Can't remember the name of that great restaurant you stumbled across on vacation? Your iPhone might. With Visited Places enabled, Apple Maps can keep track of restaurants, shops and other places you visit, then let you search your history by name, category, city or date. You can even add private notes to saved places. According to Apple, Visited Places are end-to-end encrypted and can't be read by Apple.

TRY IT: *Open Maps, tap Places, then Visited Places. If it isn't enabled, go to Settings > Apps > Maps > Location and turn on Visited Places.*

Cure the back-seat blues

Reading your phone in a moving car can be a recipe for queasiness. Vehicle Motion Cues may help. The accessibility feature places animated dots along the edges of the screen that move with the vehicle, giving your eyes visual cues that better match the motion your body is feeling. You can even set the feature to turn on automatically when the iPhone detects that you're riding in a vehicle.

TRY IT: *Go to Settings > Accessibility > Motion > Vehicle Motion Cues and choose Automatic. Just remember that this one is for passengers, not drivers.*

Summon the short version

That fascinating article you found online would be even more fascinating if it weren't 5,000 words long. On compatible Apple Intelligence devices, Safari can generate a summary of a webpage, giving you the main points without requiring you to read the whole thing. It's useful for getting the gist, but don't treat an AI summary as gospel. Apple notes that generated results can vary, so check important information against the original.

TRY IT: *In Safari, open a web page, tap the Page Menu button, and choose Summarize.*

Give your alarm a personality

For years the iPhone's snooze button operated on Apple's schedule. iOS 26 finally lets you choose your own. Want seven minutes? Twelve? Fifteen? You can customize the snooze duration for an alarm instead of accepting the standard setting.

TRY IT: *Open Clock > Alarms, create or edit an alarm, turn on Snooze, then choose your preferred Snooze Duration.*

Find that mysterious PDF app

Notice a new Preview icon on your iPhone? Don't banish it to the App Library just yet. The familiar Mac app arrived on iPhone with iOS 26, putting a surprisingly capable document toolbox in your pocket. You can use it to view and edit PDFs and images, scan documents, fill out forms with AutoFill and export files in different formats and sizes.

TRY IT: *Open Preview the next time someone sends you a PDF instead of immediately hunting for another app.*

Turn Apple Music into a DJ

Apple Music picked up a few tricks that can make listening feel a lot more interactive. AutoMix blends compatible songs using techniques such as beat matching and time stretching, creating smoother, DJ-style transitions instead of awkward gaps. And when a favorite song is in another language, Lyrics Translation can help explain what the words mean, while Lyrics Pronunciation shows you how to say them.

TRY IT: *Start playing music and look for AutoMix in the playback controls. For a supported song in another language, open the lyrics and look for translation and pronunciation options.*

Reminders is smarter than you think

Apple's Reminders app can do much more than nag you about an appointment. On compatible Apple Intelligence devices, share a recipe from Safari, and it can identify grocery items for your list. Create a Groceries list and Reminders automatically sorts items into categories such as Produce, Seafood and Frozen Foods. You can even build Smart Lists that automatically collect reminders based on tags, dates, locations, priority and other rules.

TRY IT: *In Reminders, tap Add List and choose Groceries for an automatically organized shopping list or Smart List to create your own filters.*

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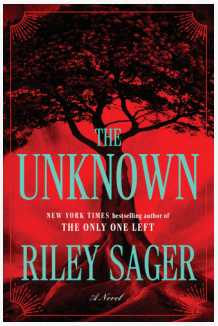
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Legends on the page

Five books filled with mysteries, myths, witches and larger-than-life characters

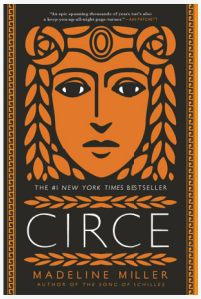
***Denise Friday**, a social worker and mother of twins, finds both escape and reflection in a good book. This month she turns the page on legends, lore and unforgettable characters.*



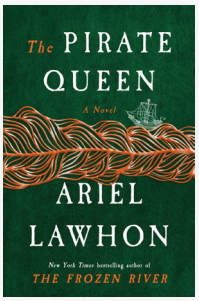
THE UNKNOWN *BY RILEY SAGER*

In 1926 five women vanished from a remote Vermont island called New Avalon. There was no trace except their clothes hanging from a tree. There were never any answers, just an enduring mystery soaked in folklore and fear. One hundred years later a filmmaker wants to make a movie about the island and sends his cast there to experience the surroundings. Written with a slow, creeping sense of doubt and dread, the tension between the characters contributes to their growing terror of the island. An unpredictable thriller that will have you keeping the lights on!

CIRCE *BY MADELINE MILLER*



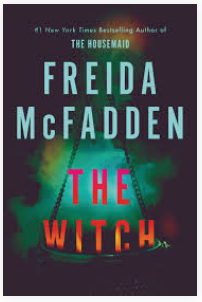
The legend of Circe is expanded in this brilliant retelling. In *The Odyssey,* Circe is mostly known for turning Odysseus's men into pigs. Miller takes Circe out of the background and expands her story to show that life is not what you are born into, but what you make of it. Born into a powerful house but seemingly without powers of her own, she is scorned by her family. Yet she discovers the power of witchcraft, and her craft threatens gods and angers mortals. A flawed outcast, she must ultimately decide between two worlds: her family of gods or the mortals she loves.



THE PIRATE QUEEN *BY ARIEL LAWHON*

This historical novel portrays the life of Grace O'Malley, a 16th-century Irish noblewoman who became a legendary sea captain and pirate. She gained her love of the water from her seafaring family but was pushed into a brutal marriage for status and land. Ousted from her husband's lands, she eventually returns to the sea, leading her clan's fleet and fighting to protect her people against English incursions. Blending Irish legend with real history, Grace's story is one of violence, danger, family and a woman determined to protect what is hers.

THE WITCH *BY FREIDA MCFADDEN*



A new release from McFadden arrives just in time for spooky October. Julia Barlow has lost her home and job, so she retreats to her family's 17th-century Massachusetts estate to check on her aging grandmother and hide out for a while. Odd disturbances in the house lead her to research its history, and the dual timeline shifts between the present day and the witch trials of 1692. She soon discovers some very unpleasant events connected to her family home, and they may not be entirely in the past. You will not see these plot twists coming!

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Local IQ
October crossword challenge for locals

CLUES BY LANCE HANLIN + GRID BY JEREMY SWARTZ

ACROSS

2. Name attached to Sea Pines ruins with a legendary resident ghost
5. Legendary St. Helena Island root doctor famed for his conjure work
6. Break this for a supposed seven-year streak of bad luck
8. African American spiritual tradition associated with root work and conjure
9. Beaufort cemetery that inspired the "garden" in Midnight in the Garden of Good and Evil
10. Color traditionally believed to keep evil Lowcountry spirits at bay
11. Hilton Head lighthouse where the Blue Lady is said to linger
14. Object carried for luck, protection or supernatural aid
15. Gullah term for a troublesome or restless spirit
16. Legendary young woman said to haunt Daufuskie's Haig Point Lighthouse
18. What Mom said to wait an hour to do after lunch

DOWN

1. Walk under this if you're willing to tempt fate
3. What cracking your knuckles doesn't cause, despite the family warnings
4. Sweep someone's feet with this and superstition says they may never marry
5. ___ tree, where wandering spirits supposedly get bottled up
7. Sign believed to foretell the future
11. What mysteriously appears along St. Helena's Land's End Road
12. Jester who reportedly never checked out of Beaufort's "Castle"
13. Surname of Edgar and Eliza, whose spirits are said to haunt the Chapel of Ease
17. Swallow this and childhood lore gives you seven years to regret it





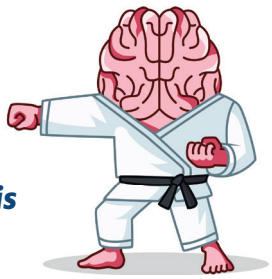
Answer key

ACROSS: ***2.*** *BAYNARD* ***5.*** *BUZZARD* ***6.*** *MIRROR* ***8.*** *HOODOO* ***9.*** *CITIZENS* ***10.*** *BLUE* ***11.*** *LEAMINGTON* ***14.*** *CHARM* ***15.*** *HAINT* ***16.*** *MAGGIE* ***18.*** *SWIM*
DOWN: ***1.*** *LADDER* ***3.*** *ARTHRITIS* ***4.*** *BROOM* ***5.*** *BOTTLE* ***7.*** *OMEN* ***11.*** *LIGHT* ***12.*** *GAUCHE* ***13.*** *FRIPP* ***17.*** *GUM*

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1. The names of three animals are hidden in the sentences below. Can you find them? (The letters are in consecutive order.)

"See the bad ogre," said the storybook reader. "It was a delicate matter because the ogre was, maybe, arguably not ogre-like."

2. Each of the following definitions can be answered by two words that rhyme.

More overweight record _____ _____
Ticket on a piece of furniture _____ _____
Trick done with an improvement on papyrus _____ _____

3. A palindrome is a word, sentence or group of words that reads the same backward or forward.

For Mother's Day, the children called the florist to place a ___ _____ _____.

4. The following 17 letters can be anagrammed into a two-word phrase meaning "not yet finished."

D R E I O O U U C C R S T T N N N

5. Each of the crystal or china manufacturers is associated with one country. Match each one with the correct country in the list at the right.

1. Lenox	a. France
2. Wedgwood	b. United States
3. Waterford	c. England
4. Lladro	d. Ireland
5. Limoges	e. Spain

ANSWER KEY

1. *dog, cat, bear* ***2.*** *flutter, platter, table, label, paper, caper* ***3.*** *RED ROSES ORDER* ***4.*** *UNDER CONSTRUCTION* ***5.*** *1 - b; 2 - c; 3 - d; 4 - e; 5 - a*

Mahjong mastery

You're halfway through the game with a promising hand and a first-line consecutive run taking shape on the right side of the card. Then disaster: The third 7 is discarded, leaving you no way to complete the pair. Time to pivot. How many possible pivots can you spot?



ANSWER: *Four*

Did you find them all? *Watch Jennifer Kenwell's video to see the four possible hands and how to make the switch. Find it at locallifesc.com or on the LOCAL Life YouTube channel (@locallifesc).*



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Inside LOCAL Life

October marks nine years of LOCAL Life! Rather than celebrate with a wooden plaque on the wall, we once again invested in an independent readership audit. Why? Because our advertisers deserve to know that the numbers we share about you, our loyal readers, are accurate and independently verified. October also brings a little required transparency. The U.S. Postal Service requires mailed periodicals to publish an annual Statement of Ownership with circulation and distribution information. ***So while we're opening the books, we thought we'd share a few more numbers that tell the LOCAL Life story.***

Statement of Ownership, Management, and Circulation (Requester Publications Only)

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15b3	Sales through Dealers and Carriers, Street Vendors, Counter Sales, and Other Paid or Requested Distribution Outside USPS	0	0
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PS Form 3526

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Here's what an independent readership survey revealed about LOCAL Life readers:



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Readers named LOCAL Life their **favorite media** source in the Lowcountry.

READERS DO THEIR HOMEWORK

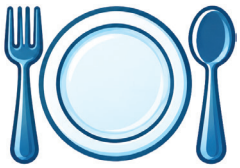
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Any reader or advertiser may request a copy of our Audit, Survey, raw data or postal and printer statements directly from the audit company, printer or us. Our advertisers trust us with their advertising dollars, so we ensure our audience claims are true and transparent.

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EQUAL HOUSING OPPORTUNITY

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The hot list

What to watch, read and listen to in October

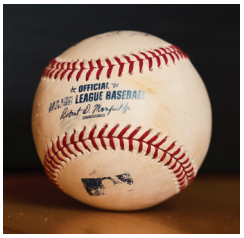
SELECTIONS BY DAISY DOW

STREAMING









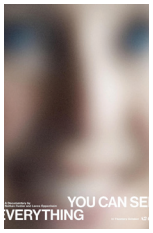
HBO ***War*** *(drama)* Morgan (Dominic West) and his soon-to-be-ex-wife, Carla (Sienna Miller), try to talk through their failing marriage. When it becomes apparent that reconciliation is not going to happen, lawyers, gossip columnists and everyone in between begin circling to see how they can capitalize on their high-profile divorce case. Any iota of amicability left between the couple vanishes under the theatrical lights of a legal battle played out in front of opportunistic strangers. **Release date: Oct. 1**

NETFLIX ***Doing Life*** *(drama)* Anika (Naomi Baker) is a single mother and former corrections officer who once crossed paths with an inmate named Carousel (Jay Reeves) during a violent prison riot. Years later, after he is released, the two reconnect and form an unlikely bond. As Anika looks beyond his past, their relationship becomes a story of second chances, redemption and unexpected love. **Release date: Oct. 2**

APPLE TV ***Tenzing*** *(historical)* When you think of the first successful summit of Mount Everest, the name that likely comes to mind is Edmund Hillary (Tom Hiddleston). The monumental feat, however, would not have happened without the decades of Everest-specific knowledge and mountaineering expertise of Tenzing Norgay (Genden Phuntsok). Through years of preparation, the two adventurers prove themselves worthy of their place in the history books, even though their attitudes toward the mountain starkly differ. **Release date: Oct. 16**

FOX ***World Series*** *(baseball)* October saves its biggest swing for last. Baseball's two league champions meet in the best-of-seven World Series with the 2026 title and a place in history on the line. If the series goes the distance, a winner-take-all Game 7 will be played on Halloween night. **Game 1: Oct. 23**

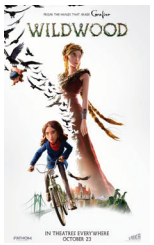
MOVIE THEATERS



You Can See Everything *(documentary)* Convicted Theranos founder Elizabeth Holmes is serving time for defrauding investors, but before entering prison she spent her final weeks of freedom being followed by deadpan comedian Nathan Fielder and filmmaker Lance Oppenheim. The unlikely pairing promises a strange collision of personalities and perspectives, fitting for a subject whose unwavering self-belief helped fuel one of Silicon Valley's most notorious frauds. **Release date: Oct. 16**

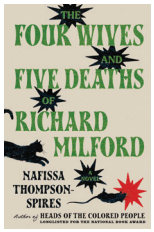


Digger *(drama)* Digger is positioned as a Dr. Strangelove-style movie for the modern age. Digger Rockwell (Tom Cruise), described as the most powerful man in the world, finds himself racing to prove that he can save humanity from a disaster he unleashed. Whether his frantic mission is driven by genuine concern or something more self-serving is part of the question. **Release date: Oct. 2**

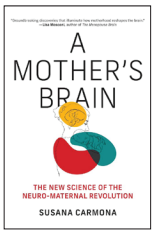


Wildwood *(stop-motion)* Prue (Peyton Elizabeth Lee) lives a relatively idyllic life in Portland, Oregon, enjoying nature and the normal adventures of being a kid. What she doesn't know is that just beyond the world she knows lies an enchanted forest, filled with fantastical creatures that don't always operate with the purest of intentions. When her brother is kidnapped by a flock of birds, Prue jumps into action to confront the unknown and do whatever it takes to get him back. **Release date: Oct. 23**

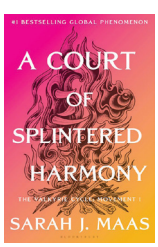
BOOKS & NOVELS



The Four Wives and Five Deaths of Richard Milford *By Nafissa Thompson-Spires (fiction)* In 1920s Oklahoma, tensions linger after the Tulsa Race Massacre. When moonshiner Richard Milford unexpectedly dies, suspicion falls on the four women considered his wives. With Milford gone, Lally, Sophronia, Georgette and Vivianne become both suspects and confidants as they search for the truth. **Release date: Oct. 6**

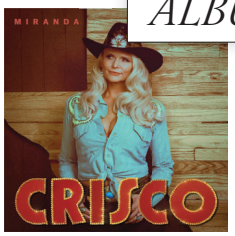


A Mother's Brain *By Susana Carmona (nonfiction)* Pregnancy and motherhood bring enormous changes to the body, but scientists are still learning just how dramatically the brain changes along with them. Drawing on research from her neuroscience lab as well as interviews with mothers, Carmona explores shifts in brain anatomy, hormones and the immune system. **Release date: Oct. 6**

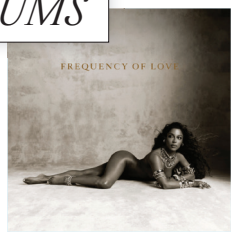


A Court of Splintered Harmony *By Sarah J. Maas (fantasy romance)* The wait is almost over for millions of ACOTAR fans. Fantasy powerhouse Sarah J. Maas returns to Prythian with the sixth book in her wildly popular A Court of Thorns and Roses series. The novel launches the new Valkyrie Cycle, with romance, danger and intrigue unfolding as Koschei the Deathless threatens the Fae territories and old alliances begin to fracture. **Release date: Oct. 27**

ALBUMS



Crisco
By Miranda Lambert (country)
Release date: Oct. 2



Frequency of Love
By Victoria Monét (R&B)
Release date: Oct. 2



Mud
By Remi Wolf (pop)
Release date: Oct. 9



Everything Under the Sun
By Nickelback (rock)
Release date: Oct. 30

PODCASTS



Love Trapped
Subject: True crime



Life of an Architect
Subject: Architecture/design

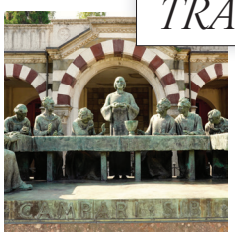


Lingthusiasm
Subject: Linguistics



Art(s) on the Air (local)
Subject: Savannah arts & culture

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Community in action

Finding her voice again

HOW RESTORING A SMILE HELPED ONE WOMAN REDISCOVER HER CONFIDENCE, HER COMMUNITY AND THE JOY OF SINGING

STORY BY BAILEY GILLIAM

For ***Erica Lewis***, losing her smile also meant losing her voice. When she first came to Volunteers in Medicine Clinic of Hilton Head Island, she was living with constant dental pain and missing several teeth. Even speaking clearly had become difficult. But one of the hardest losses could not be measured on an X-ray.

Erica loved to sing. Her faith was central to her life, and singing in the choir at Central Oak Baptist Church was how she worshipped and connected with her church family. As her dental problems worsened, singing became difficult too.

"Family and church are everything to me," Erica says.

Without the ability to comfortably speak or sing, she felt separated from something that had always made her feel most like herself.

Someone who listened

Erica needed extensive dental work, but finding care she could afford was another challenge. Volunteers in Medicine provides free medical and dental care to people who live or work on Hilton Head and Daufuskie islands and lack access to insurance or cannot afford treatment.

VIM's dental team developed a comprehensive treatment plan that included fillings, extractions and eventually upper and lower partial dentures.

"They listened when other dentists didn't," Erica says. "They explained everything in a way I understood and helped calm my fears."

Treatment stretched over more than a year, requiring patience and commitment from Erica and the volunteer dental professionals caring for her. Through it all, she never missed an appointment.

"My experience at VIM has been one of the best experiences of my lifetime," she says.

More than a smile

When Erica finally received her partial dentures, the change went far beyond appearance. She could speak with greater confidence and, most importantly to her, sing again.



A REASON TO SMILE After more than a year of dental treatment at Volunteers in Medicine, Erica Lewis has regained her smile, her confidence and the ability to sing with her church choir.

"Even my mother is grateful to VIM," Erica says. "She gets to see me smile again and says I have more confidence."

Her experience also illustrates something easy to overlook: Dental care is health care. Oral health can affect eating, speaking and quality of life, and problems with the teeth and gums can cause pain and infection. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention also notes connections between oral and overall health, including an important relationship between gum disease and diabetes.

For patients who have delayed treatment because they cannot afford it, access to dental care can restore everyday things oral disease has taken away — eating comfortably, speaking clearly, smiling without hesitation or, in Erica's case, lifting her voice in song.

Back where she belongs

Today Erica is back in the choir at Central Oak Baptist Church. In a fitting full-circle moment, one of the people singing alongside her is Dr. Hirsh, one of the VIM dentists she credits with helping her get there.

"I want to thank Dr. Hirsh, Dr. Atkins and the entire staff at VIM," Erica says.

After more than a year of treatment, Erica regained her oral health and the freedom to return fully to a community and calling that mean so much to her. A new smile was never simply about how she looked. VIM helped restore her smile. In the process, Erica found her voice again.

Take action

Since 1993, Volunteers in Medicine Clinic of Hilton Head Island has provided free medical and dental care to people who live or work on Hilton Head and Daufuskie islands and lack access to insurance or cannot afford care. Community members can support VIM by volunteering or donating. Learn more at ***vimclinic.org***. *LL*



A TEAM EFFORT Erica Lewis with dental assistant Esmeralda and Dr. Hirsh, members of the VIM dental team that helped restore her oral health and get her back to doing something she loves: singing.

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What makes them local



THE MAN IN THE MANSION This portrait of Capt. Strachan once hung inside Strachan Mansion, where 5-year-old Dillon Heffner claimed to have seen his ghost sitting at a table.

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*

Seeing is believing

After 26 years on Daufuskie, Maryrose Heffner has more than a few ghost stories to tell

STORY BY BECCA EDWARDS



KINDRED SPIRITS Maryrose Heffner is shown with her son, Dillon, whose childhood encounter with an unexpected visitor on Daufuskie Island became the family's first brush with the unexplained.

WATCH IF YOU DARE
Scan the QR code *to watch the eerie footage Dillon Heffner and his friends captured at the Melrose Inn on Daufuskie Island.*

Most people do not expect to encounter a ghost while walking their dog, but Maryrose Heffner did. After seeing an apparition in Haig Point, she called her father, expecting to tell him an unbelievable story. Instead, he replied, "Maryrose, we believe in heaven, so why not believe there could be another dimension of life around us right now? We just have to be open-minded enough to believe — and see what's right in front of us." That wasn't the family's only brush with the unexplained. During their 26 years on Daufuskie Island, the Heffners collected a lifetime of eerie encounters, and her son even captured cell phone footage of what appears to be a specter.

Q: When you moved to Daufuskie, did you know much about Lowcountry lore? Why did you decide to raise your family there? **A:** Back in January 1991, I finally traded my grueling commute from Boston for a fresh start on Hilton Head. Daufuskie Island was honestly the most magical place to raise our boys. They got to have that classic, old-school childhood — riding bikes, fishing and staying out until the streetlights came on — without us ever having to worry about their safety.

Q: Your son Dillon was the first family member to see a ghost. Can you tell us about that? **A:** Back when Dillon was around 5 years old, he had a little run-in with Capt. Strachan. It was late at night and we'd just stepped off the boat from Hilton Head. While I ran into the mansion to grab the mail, my husband Tom and our sons, Sean and Dillon, were walking along the outside path. Dillon looked through one of the windows and noticed a man sitting inside. When I walked out the back door to meet up with them, Dillon immediately asked, "Mommy, who was that guy sitting in the mansion?" I looked at him and said, "Dillon, I didn't see anyone in there." He insisted, "Mommy, you walked right by him! He was sitting right at the table." I asked him what he looked like. He said he was a guy with a cap, a dark jacket, a beard and a mustache. I had to tell him again — I really hadn't seen a soul. A couple of days later, Dillon and I headed back to the mansion to grab the mail and a light bulb suddenly went off in my head. There's a framed portrait of Capt. Strachan hanging right above the fireplace. I pointed to it and asked Dillon if he knew who it was. He looked at the picture and said, "Yeah, that's the guy who was sitting in the mansion." "Well, Dillon," I told him, "you just saw a ghost."

Q: Why do you think ghosts visit some people and not others? **A:** That is a hard question. I truly feel blessed that I got to see a spirit and I do believe younger children are open to seeing spirits as well. I was just telling a client today about what my son saw when he was little. She shared that her granddaughter has been visited by her grandfather, who passed away years before she was born.

Q: Why do you think ghosts linger in certain places? **A:** After living on Daufuskie, I believe some spirits remain connected to the land where they lived and simply aren't ready to move on to the next life in heaven.

Q: What is your motto in life? **A:** Be better, not bitter! One small positive thought in the morning can change your whole day. LL



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Local business buzz

New arrivals, big investments and what's catching attention across the Lowcountry

STORY BY BAILEY GILLIAM

October brings another wave of openings, expansions and ambitious plans across the Lowcountry. New arrivals range from antiques and indoor golf to cultural experiences and personalized healthcare, while major projects are reshaping what's ahead for the region. From entrepreneurs opening businesses to healthcare systems investing in a growing population, here's what's new now and what's coming next.



NOW OPEN

American Gullah *824A Paris Ave., Port Royal*

American Gullah opened its flagship Cultural Heritage House in Port Royal, creating a new destination devoted to the living heritage of the Gullah Geechee Sea Islands. Founded by artist Sonja Griffin Evans, the brand grew from a single painting created for the South Carolina Aquarium's R.I.C.E. Project into an international traveling cultural exhibit. Its new home brings that story together through contemporary fashion, jewelry, fine art prints, heritage objects and cultural experiences inspired by the history, traditions and visual language of the Sea Islands.



10 Petals Antiques & Interiors

138 Arrow Road, Hilton Head Island

Treasure hunters have a new place to browse, with the opening of 10 Petals Antiques & Interiors. Located in the former Michael & Co.'s Antiques and Consignments space on Arrow Road, the shop features an ever-changing collection of consigned furniture, antiques, vintage pieces, new home décor and distinctive finds. The store also accepts consignments, giving well-loved furnishings and décor a chance to find a new home.

Beaufort Memorial Concierge Care

300 New River Parkway, Hardeeville

Beaufort Memorial expanded its primary-care options with the opening of Beaufort Memorial Concierge Care in Hardeeville. Led by board-certified family medicine physician Dr. James K. Frost, the membership-based practice offers extended appointments, smaller patient panels, same- or next-day visits when needed and direct communication with providers. The model focuses on prevention, early detection, chronic-condition management and long-term wellness while giving patients greater access to their healthcare team.



Coastal Home Designer Partner Program

Coastal Home has launched a Designer Partner Program for local interior designers and decorators. The program offers access to its expanded showroom, curated furniture, accessories, artwork and trusted brands, along with space to meet clients and review selections. The Coastal Home team can also assist with product details, special orders and coordination, giving designers a convenient local resource for bringing their visions to life. coastalhomehhi.com



Birdies Golf Club *115 Persimmon St., Bluffton*

Golf season never ends at Birdies Golf Club, Bluffton's new 24/7 indoor golf simulator studio. Designed as a private club for golfers of all skill levels, Birdies combines Uneekor EYE XO2 launch monitors and GSPro software with premium hitting areas, comfortable seating and a relaxed, modern atmosphere. Members can reserve sessions around the clock to practice their swing, play virtual rounds on courses around the world or unwind with friends, no tee times or favorable forecasts required.

COMING SOON

Maison & Cambren

The Promenade, Old Town Bluffton



Maison & Cambren is coming soon to Old Town Bluffton, bringing a new destination for gifts, entertaining and gracious living to the Promenade, just in time for the holidays. Built on the belief that bringing people together should feel joyful, not overwhelming, the thoughtfully curated shop will offer beautiful gifts, entertaining essentials and special touches for celebrations big and small. Everything is selected to make hosting and gift-giving a little easier, so hosts can spend less time stressing over the details and more time enjoying the people around them. maisonandcambren.com

The Readery

Shelter Cove Harbour & Marina, Hilton Head Island

Books, bites and a little booze come together at The Readery, a new concept headed to Shelter Cove Harbour & Marina. The cozy café-meets-library will offer a place to settle in with a good book, grab a bite and enjoy a drink, whether you're an avid reader or simply there for the atmosphere. The concept adds a playful new gathering place where literary culture meets Hilton Head's social scene.



Reform Modern Pilates

105 Persimmon Place, Bluffton

Reform Modern Pilates is coming to Bluffton with a boutique fitness concept centered on building strength through intentional movement. Offering reformer and mat Pilates classes, the studio will focus on high-intensity, low-impact workouts designed to improve core strength, stability and endurance for everyday life. The studio aims to help clients move with greater confidence while supporting long-term health and wellness.

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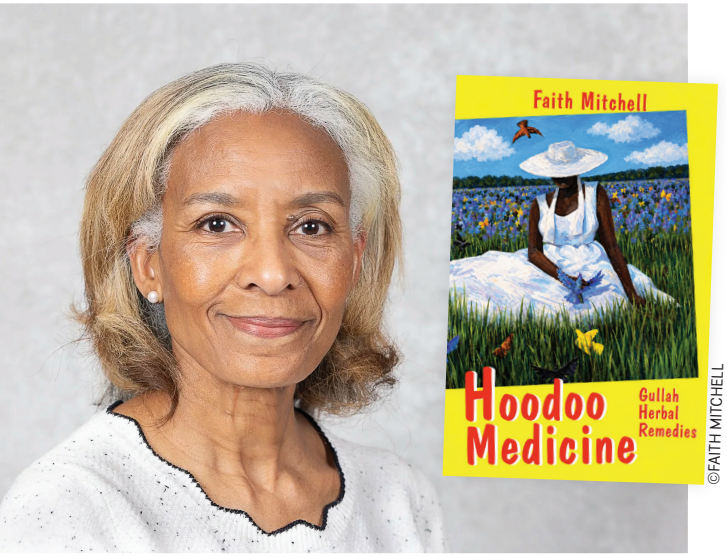
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HOW PLANTS, FAITH AND GENERATIONS OF KNOWLEDGE SHAPED SEA ISLANDS' HEALING TRADITIONS

STORY BY MARIE MCCAA



PRESERVING THE ROOTS Medical anthropologist Faith Mitchell began documenting Gullah herbal traditions in the Sea Islands in the 1970s, gathering firsthand knowledge from people who practiced natural healing. Her research became the book *Hoodoo Medicine: Gullah Herbal Remedies*, a pioneering record of more than 50 medicinal plants and materials and the traditions surrounding their use.

Across the Sea Islands, sources of healing once grew as close as the woods, fields and marsh edges. Leaves, roots, bark and berries became remedies in the hands of people who knew where to find them, how to prepare them and when to use them. That knowledge was passed through families, elders and informal apprenticeships, blending plant medicine, faith and spiritual traditions into a system of care shaped by generations of Gullah/Geechee people.

Historian Deirdre Cooper Owens grew up hearing stories about that knowledge. Her grandfather, King Solomon Cooper, told her about his grandmother, Grandma Polly, whom he remembered as a root doctor and healer. Cooper Owens remembers hearing how Polly gathered plants with her grandchildren. Her grandmother remembered a different side of Polly, illustrating how the role of a root doctor could encompass both physical healing and spiritual practices.

"You have the power to heal, but you might also have the power to curse in a kind of supernatural world," Cooper Owens said.

For Cooper Owens, that complexity was part of a larger system of community care.

"Black people had to rely on each other and then had to rely on the healers and doctresses and doctors in their community, even if those people did not have the formal titles," she said.

Knowledge could be acquired through family, apprenticeship, heredity or a "call." African, Indigenous and European practices came together through contact, settlement, slavery, trade and a shared environment, creating an evolving body of knowledge shaped by the people and landscape of the Lowcountry and Sea Islands.

What's in a root doctor's medicine cabinet?

Along the Sea Islands, leaves, bark, roots and berries became part of a household system of care. Knowing the plant was only part of the equation. Healers also understood which part to use and how it was traditionally prepared.

In the early 1970s medical anthropologist ***Faith Mitchell*** began documenting that knowledge on Wadmalaw Island. There was no medical facility on the island, she recalled, and the nearest clinic was on Johns Island. Without public transportation, Mitchell walked the roads with residents who identified plants and explained their uses. For Mitchell, documenting that knowledge became urgent. Many of the elders she interviewed belonged to generations whose knowledge had largely been passed down orally.

"I could be of service if I write this down and publish it because these older people don't really have anybody to pass this information along to," Mitchell said.

Her research eventually became the 1978 book *Hoodoo Medicine: Gullah Herbal Remedies*, which documents Gullah herbal knowledge and more than 50 plants and other materials. Depending on the plant and its purpose, traditional remedies could take different forms, including teas, washes, poultices and other preparations.





NOTE: *These traditional uses are presented for historical and cultural context and are not medical recommendations.*

REDROOT *Also called bloodroot in Mitchell's documentation, redroot grew in dry woodlands. Healers dug up the root and used its bark in preparations for poor circulation and for medicinal and spiritual purposes. Because historical names such as redroot and bloodroot can refer to different plants, modern identification can be tricky.*

ELDERBERRY *Found in wet thickets, along streambanks and near ponds, elderberry blooms with clusters of white flowers in late spring, followed by dark berries in summer. Mitchell documented its leaves being used for sores in African American, Native American and European American healing traditions.*

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SWEET GUM *Common in Lowcountry woods and other moist areas, sweet gum is recognizable by its star-shaped leaves and spiky "gumballs," which mature in fall and often last into winter. Mitchell documented the leaves for sores and stomachaches, while the tree's fragrant balsam also had a place in formal American medicine.*



PINE TAR *Pines are a year-round presence across Lowcountry forests, roadsides and old fields. Pine tar was traditionally made by slowly heating resin-rich pine wood and collecting the dark liquid it released. Mitchell associated it with treatments for colds, congestion, fevers, stomachaches and whooping cough.*



SASSAFRAS *Found in woods, old fields and other disturbed areas, sassafras produces small yellow-green flowers in spring and colorful foliage in fall. Its aromatic roots and root bark were traditionally used in teas and tonics. Mitchell documented sassafras for strength, general health and backaches, as well as its use as a spring tonic.*

The examples reveal just how specific that knowledge could be.

"People knew how to pick these different plants, and they knew all of the animals that lived in the environment," Mitchell said.



©QUEEN QUET

KEEPER OF THE CULTURE Queen Quet, also known as Marquetta L. Goodwine, is chieftess and head of state for the Gullah/Geechee Nation. She has spent decades preserving Gullah/Geechee culture, land and traditions. The St. Helena Island native became the first Gullah/Geechee person to speak before the United Nations in 1999 and later received South Carolina's Order of the Palmetto.

More than medicine

Herbal medicine and spiritual rootwork could overlap, but they were not the same. In traditions documented by Mitchell, natural illnesses might be treated with roots, herbs, barks and teas, while other conditions were understood through religious or supernatural frameworks.

Queen Quet, chieftess of the Gullah/Geechee Nation, cautions against reducing traditional healers to stereotypes.

"Non-Gullah/Geechee folks need to understand that a healer is not a 'witch,'" she said, adding that terms such as "witch doctor" are a "Hollywoodization" of authentic Gullah/Geechee traditions.

Cooper Owens similarly described traditional healing as part of a knowledge system that blends physical and spiritual understandings of health.

"It is born out of a knowledge system that has protected Gullah/Geechee people for centuries," she said.

Queen Quet also cautioned against labeling all Gullah/Geechee healing practices as "voodoo," noting that it is a distinct spiritual practice.

What does modern medicine say?

Modern science can investigate the chemistry of plants, but finding an active compound does not prove a historical remedy was safe or effective.

"Just because something is active against a specific target doesn't mean that it's necessarily safe," said ethnobotanist Cassandra Quave.

Scientists can study a plant's biological activity, toxicity and chemical compounds, with human clinical trials providing the strongest evidence of safety and effectiveness. Preparation matters, too.

"The way that we prepare things really does matter," Quave said.

Different parts of a plant can contain different compounds, and preparation methods can change what is extracted. Even identification can be difficult because historical common names may refer to different species.

Still, Quave said traditional knowledge can provide valuable clues about which plants to use, when to harvest them and how to prepare them.

"Traditional ecological knowledge is incredibly valuable," she said.

Historical use and science ultimately answer different questions. Traditional knowledge records what generations observed and practiced; science can test chemistry, biological effects, safety and effectiveness. Some remedies may reveal useful properties, while others may prove ineffective or unsafe. Their cultural significance, however, does not depend on laboratory validation.

Knowledge that remains

For Mitchell, these traditions were never simply a collection of old remedies. Decades after her original fieldwork, she was struck by how much remained in use.

"With all the change that's come to the Sea Islands in the last few decades, these traditions are strong, and they're continuing," she said.

The knowledge was never only in the root. It lived in the people who knew where plants grew, the elders who remembered what their mothers taught them and the healers who passed that knowledge forward. Across the Sea Islands, traditional healing remains a record of survival, adaptation and continuity.

The roots still grow here. So does the knowledge attached to them. *LL*

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IN DAYLIGHT Draped in Spanish moss, the massive live oak stretches across Land's End Road like a gateway. By day it's a striking Lowcountry landmark. After dark it marks the spot where generations have waited for the legendary Land's End Light.



Light at the end

On a lonely St. Helena Island road, one of the Lowcountry's most haunting mysteries still glows

STORY BY LANCE HANLIN
PHOTOGRAPHY BY MICHAEL HRIZUK

Drive far enough down Land's End Road after dark, and the Lowcountry begins to feel different. The houses thin out. Ancient live oaks stretch over the pavement. Spanish moss hangs from their limbs, and the farther you travel toward the southern end of St. Helena Island, the darker and quieter the road becomes.

Then you reach the tree.

Its enormous limb arches over the roadway like something conjured for a ghost story. By day it is unmistakably Lowcountry. After dark it becomes the landmark generations of thrill-seekers have used while searching for the Land's End Light, one of Beaufort County's most enduring legends.

The phenomenon is usually described as a mysterious light appearing far down the long, straight stretch of road. At first it resembles a single automobile headlight. But instead of becoming two headlights as it approaches, witnesses say the glow grows larger, sometimes hovering above the pavement or drifting toward waiting cars before suddenly disappearing. Decades ago the legend drew such crowds that accounts tell of as many as 100 cars gathering along the road on a single night.

What is carrying the light depends on whom you ask.

The most chilling version belongs to a headless soldier. According to folklore, a Confederate sentry guarding the area in 1861 was surprised by Union soldiers, decapitated and left behind. His ghost supposedly continues along Land's End Road, carrying an iron lantern as he searches for his missing head. Other versions attribute the light to a Union soldier or an enslaved man forever searching for the family from whom he was separated.

Unlike the other spectral suspects, Private Frank J. Quigley was very real. Quigley was a U.S. Army soldier stationed at nearby Fort Fremont. In 1910 violence broke out between soldiers and local residents, leaving six soldiers wounded and Quigley dead. Over time, his spirit became another proposed identity for the Land's End Light.

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IS THAT IT? See that tiny glow beyond the oak? That's what you're watching for. The Land's End Light is said to appear as a lone point in the distance, growing larger as it approaches before suddenly disappearing. If you see it, don't start the car. According to legend, the moment the engine turns over, the light vanishes.

Naturally, there are less supernatural explanations. Researchers who investigated the phenomenon in the 1970s proposed that distant automobile headlights could create the illusion of a single floating light, appearing and disappearing as vehicles traveled through supposed dips in the roadway. Local historian Gerhard Spieler disputed the theory, arguing that the straight stretch was much shorter than researchers claimed and had no dips at all.

No explanation has managed to kill the legend. Perhaps that is because the setting does so much of the work. Long before you see anything unexplained, you're sitting beneath an enormous moss-draped oak on a dark Sea Island road, staring into a tunnel of blackness and waiting for something to stare back.

Maybe the light is a ghost. Maybe it's a distant car. Maybe nothing appears at all.

But once you see a single point of light glowing far down Land's End Road, deciding what you believe becomes considerably more interesting. *LL*

SEE THE LIGHT

The legendary viewing area is about 48 miles from Hilton Head Island, roughly a one-hour drive. *Head toward Beaufort, then follow U.S. 21/Sea Island Parkway onto St. Helena Island. Near Frogmore, turn onto Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Drive, following signs toward Penn Center. The road eventually becomes Land's End Road. Along the way you'll pass Penn Center and, farther south, the tabby ruins of the historic Chapel of Ease. Continue beyond the intersection of Bermuda Bluff and Land's End Road. Watch for the massive live oak pictured here, with its thick horizontal limb reaching over the highway. When you see it, you've found the traditional Land's End Light viewing spot. Older accounts instruct visitors to pull safely off the road on the right side, facing the tree. Turn off the engine and headlights, and watch the straight stretch of pavement ahead. The light, if it comes, is said to begin as a single distant point before growing larger as it approaches. According to legend, if you panic and start the car, it disappears.*

NOTE: *Land's End Road is a public roadway through a residential community, not a designated paranormal attraction or parking area. Never block traffic, don't stop where it is unsafe, stand in the roadway or enter private property. If conditions do not allow you to pull completely and legally off the pavement, keep driving.*



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Under the root doctor's spell

Inside the legend of Dr. Buzzard, the Lowcountry's famous root doctor

STORY BY MICHAELA SATTERFIELD + PHOTOGRAPHY BY MICHAEL HRIZUK



CHARMED LIFE Known as "Johnnys" or Johnny Conqueroo charms, objects like these were used in Lowcountry rootwork for protection, luck or spiritual power. Some were carried in small cloth bundles, often called mojo bags, filled with roots, herbs and other meaningful objects.

He dressed in black, drove expensive cars and was known to sit quietly inside Beaufort County courtrooms, watching the proceedings through purple-tinted glasses. His name was Stephen "Stepney" Robinson, but almost everyone knew him as Dr. Buzzard. From his home on St. Helena Island, Robinson became one of the Lowcountry's most famous root doctors, drawing clients from near and far and building a reputation so powerful that stories about him blurred the line between history and folklore. Some sought his help. Others feared him. Even Beaufort County's sheriff became fascinated enough with rootwork to learn its traditions himself. Nearly 80 years after Robinson's death, separating the man from the legend is not always easy. Perhaps that is why the legend of Dr. Buzzard refuses to die.

Getting to the root

Rootwork, sometimes called conjure or hoodoo, is an African American folk tradition with deep roots in the South. It should not be confused with Vodou or Voodoo, distinct religious traditions that developed elsewhere in the African diaspora. In the Sea Islands rootwork historically combined knowledge of plants and natural remedies with spiritual beliefs, charms and rituals. Practitioners known as root doctors might be called upon for healing, protection, good fortune or to help with personal troubles. Some were also believed capable of placing or removing curses. Among the objects associated with the tradition were small packets or charms containing combinations of herbs, roots and other materials. Graveyard dirt also appears frequently in accounts of Southern rootwork, its meaning tied to the spirit and characteristics of the person buried there. Whether the power came from the ingredients, the practitioner or the believer depended on whom you asked. Few inspired more belief than Dr. Buzzard.



THE DOCTOR IS IN Dr. Buzzard's legend lives on in this Daufuskie Island mural. Though Stepney Robinson lived on St. Helena Island, his name became woven into Daufuskie folklore, including tales of a curse on island development.



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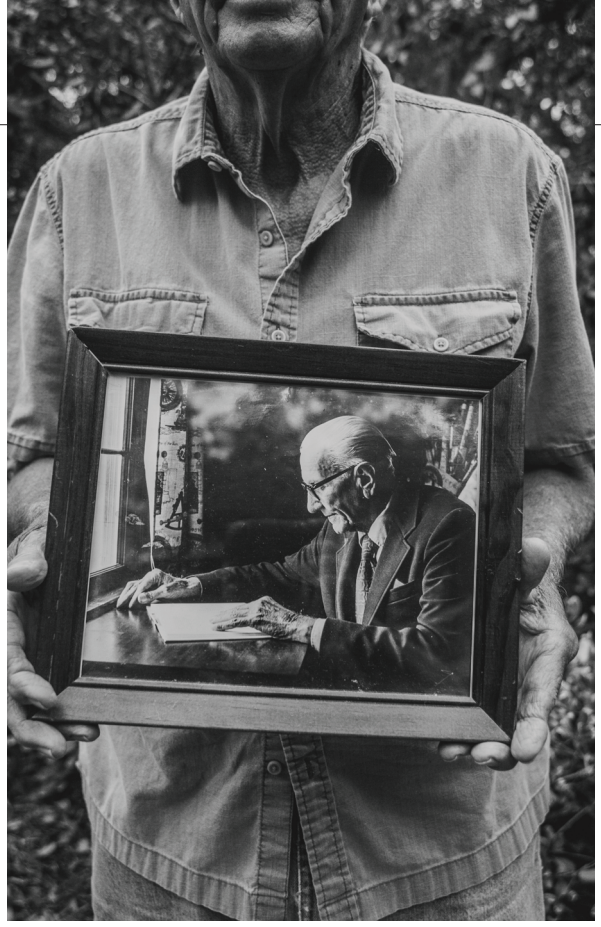
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Will the real Dr. Buzzard please stand up?

Even the name carries some mystery. "Dr. Buzzard" eventually became associated with multiple root doctors, but the Lowcountry figure most famously connected to it was Stepney Robinson of St. Helena Island. Accounts describe Robinson as gentle in appearance and typically dressed in black. He became prosperous enough to own expensive automobiles at a time when car ownership itself was far from universal, and his reputation attracted clients from well beyond the Sea Islands.

Then there were the courtrooms. Robinson was known to attend trials, where legend held that he could influence witnesses and juries through a practice known as "chewing the root." He would sit quietly in the courtroom, sometimes wearing distinctive tinted glasses, while believers wondered whether something more than the law was at work. That reputation eventually put him on a collision course with Beaufort County Sheriff J.E. McTeer.

McTeer attempted to prosecute Robinson for practicing medicine without a license. According to accounts that became part of Dr. Buzzard lore, one prosecution took a bizarre turn when a key witness began convulsing before testifying. Was it rootwork? Fear? Coincidence? McTeer apparently decided there was only one way to find out.



ROOTS RUN DEEP Thomas Heyward McTeer holds a portrait of his father, longtime Beaufort County Sheriff J.E. "Ed" McTeer, who famously studied rootwork while pursuing Dr. Buzzard and became known as the Lowcountry's "white witch doctor."







ART & ANCESTRY This historic St. Helena Island building was home to the Red Piano Too Art Gallery for three decades and now houses Lybensons' Gallery and the Gullah Geechee Visitor Center. Inside, African art and artifacts reflect the broader cultural connections between Africa and the Sea Islands that shaped generations of Gullah-Geechee life and tradition.

Fight rootwork with rootwork

Rather than dismiss the beliefs surrounding Dr. Buzzard, McTeer began studying them. The sheriff eventually became famous in his own right as a self-described "white witch doctor," claiming that he could remove spells and counter the work of root doctors. He developed his own clientele and later chronicled his experiences in *Fifty Years as a Low Country Witch Doctor*. It made for an irresistible Lowcountry rivalry: the sheriff and the root doctor, each trying to beat the other at a game in which belief could be as powerful as evidence.

Stories about their strange contest grew with each retelling. One of the darkest involves the drowning of Robinson's son. According to accounts of the legend, Robinson blamed McTeer's supernatural meddling for the tragedy and called a truce. When Robinson eventually faced prosecution, he did something surprisingly conventional for a man supposedly capable of swaying a courtroom with a root: he hired an attorney. Robinson escaped with a relatively small fine and reportedly agreed to stop practicing medicine without a license. Conjuring, however, was another matter. His clients kept coming. And the legend kept growing.

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The legend lives on

Before his death in 1947, Robinson reportedly passed his business to his son-in-law, who became known as "Buzzy." Other practitioners would later use the Dr. Buzzard name, making it increasingly difficult to separate the original man from those who inherited his reputation. Rootwork itself never completely disappeared from the Lowcountry. In 2014, an 85-year-old Beaufort woman contacted police because she believed a neighbor had placed a curse on her. Stories like hers are increasingly rare, but they reveal how traditions carried across generations can linger long after the people who made them famous are gone. And perhaps that is the real power of Dr. Buzzard. Nearly eight decades after his death, people still tell his stories. They still debate what was history and what was legend. Most telling of all, they still speak his name. For a man whose power depended, at least in part, on belief, there may be no greater legacy. *LL*

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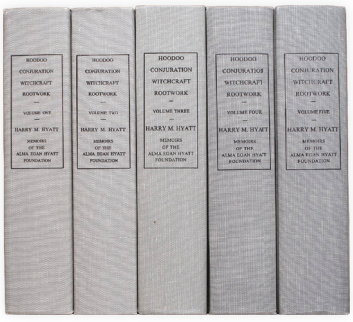
Here are four books that illuminate Dr. Buzzard, rootwork and the traditions of the Sea Islands.



Fifty Years as a Low Country Witch Doctor
BY J.E. MCTEER
The Beaufort County sheriff recounts his encounters with Dr. Buzzard, root doctors and the Lowcountry world of conjure.

Blue Roots: African-American Folk Magic of the Gullah People
BY ROGER PINCKNEY
A fascinating exploration of rootwork, conjure and folk beliefs in the South Carolina Sea Islands.

God, Dr. Buzzard and the Bolito Man
BY CORNELIA WALKER BAILEY WITH CHRISTENA BLEDSOE
A celebrated memoir preserving the traditions, beliefs and stories of Gullah-Geechee life on Sapelo Island.



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Stories in the shadows

FIVE LOCAL PLACES WHERE HISTORY, MYSTERY AND LEGEND MEET

STORY BY LANCE HANLIN + PHOTOGRAPHY BY MICHAEL HRIZUK

In the Lowcountry the past is never far away. It reveals itself in ruined churches, old mansions and weathered cemeteries, where ghost stories, spiritual traditions and historical mysteries blur the line between fact and folklore. ***Here are five local places where the two intertwine.***





The Castle, Beaufort

Few Beaufort homes come with a ghost story as colorful as the Castle. The Craven Street mansion was still unfinished when Union forces occupied Beaufort in 1861 and used it as part of a military hospital, with a small building behind the house serving as a morgue. But its most famous resident, according to legend, arrived nearly 300 years earlier. Gauche, a dwarf and jester said to have accompanied French explorer Jean Ribaut in 1562, is believed to haunt the property. Stories about Gauche credit him with tapping messages, moving furniture, jingling bells and leaving red handprints on windows. No records prove Gauche ever existed, but his legend has become inseparable from the Castle.



Citizens Cemetery, Beaufort

Along Hamar Street lies an unlikely piece of literary history: the burial ground associated with the "garden" in John Berendt's *Midnight in the Garden of Good and Evil*. Buried here is Percy H. Washington, a well-known Beaufort root doctor called Dr. Eagle. His common-law partner, fellow rootworker Valerie Boles, inspired Minerva, the mysterious spiritual adviser in Berendt's bestseller. The couple practiced rootwork from their home just two blocks away on Congress Street, giving the famous tale of mysticism and the supernatural a very real Beaufort connection.





Old Sheldon Church Ruins, Sheldon

With towering columns, ancient graves and moss-draped oaks, Old Sheldon Church looks built for a ghost story. The 18th-century church was partially burned by Loyalists during the American Revolution and later rebuilt. For generations lore held that Federal troops burned it again in 1865. But the current historical marker says the church survived the war and was dismantled by local freedmen around 1865-67, an account supported by an 1866 letter reporting that Sheldon had not burned. It's a fascinating historical mystery, where even the story of how the church became a ruin has changed with time.

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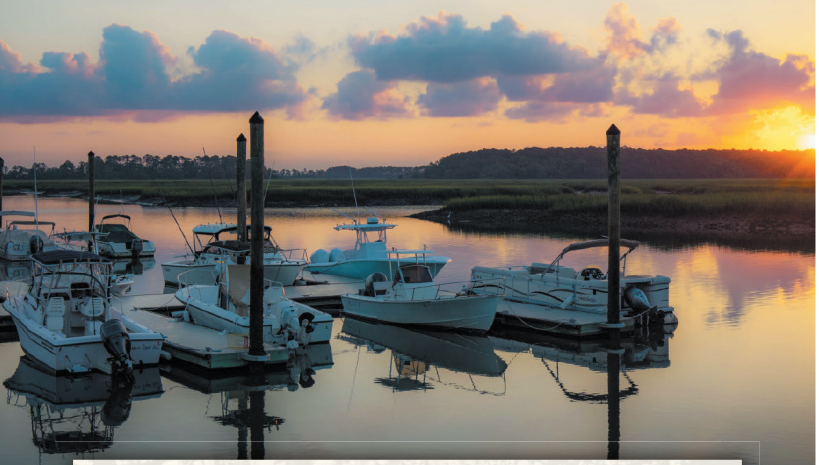
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John Mark Verdier House, Beaufort

Built around 1804, this grand Bay Street home is associated with Lafayette's celebrated 1825 visit and later served as Union Army headquarters during the Civil War. A popular ghost story claims a Verdier family member was killed in a duel and still haunts the house. There really was a Verdier duel at nearby Pigeon Point, but researchers have not confirmed who fought it, and records indicate John Mark Verdier Jr. died years later after a long illness. It's a fitting Beaufort mystery, where a real event appears to have taken on a supernatural afterlife of its own.

Cooper River Cemetery, Daufuskie Island

At Cooper River Cemetery, even the location tells a story. With roots reaching back to Daufuskie's plantation era, the historic Gullah burial ground was established beside moving water, reflecting a tradition that spirits of the dead could travel across the water home to Africa. Generations of Gullah families have buried loved ones here, and some graves were traditionally marked with personal possessions, or "grave goods," rather than carved headstones. The cemetery remains a powerful link to Daufuskie's Gullah heritage, where beliefs carried across the Atlantic centuries ago can still be read in the landscape. *LL*





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Keeping the haints away

LOWCOUNTRY TRADITIONS ROOTED IN SPIRITS, SUPERSTITION AND PROTECTION

STORY BY LANCE HANLIN + PHOTOGRAPHY BY MICHAEL HRIZUK



A HOUSE WITH HISTORY Built during Reconstruction by Cyrus Garvin, believed to have been formerly enslaved, Bluffton's Garvin-Garvey House is one of the earliest known freedmen-owned homes still standing along the May River.

A blue bottle hangs from a live oak. A broom rests beside the house. Seashells line a windowsill and a horseshoe stands nearby. Familiar pieces of Lowcountry style, these everyday objects also have deeper connections to beliefs about spirits, luck and protection. Across generations, West and Central African traditions retained by Gullah-Geechee people blended with European and Christian folk beliefs throughout the coastal South, giving ordinary objects extraordinary meaning. The Garvin-Garvey House in Bluffton provides a fitting backdrop. Built during Reconstruction by Cyrus Garvin, believed to have been formerly enslaved, the historic home helps illustrate traditions found across the Lowcountry, though the objects photographed here should not be interpreted as evidence that the Garvin family practiced each custom.



BOTTLED UP In Southern folklore, blue bottles hung from trees were believed to trap wandering spirits before they could reach the home.



BEHIND THE BLUE A dried palm frond hangs against weathered blue boards, where the color recalls haint blue, traditionally believed to help keep troublesome spirits from entering the home.

Haint blue: A watery defense

Perhaps no supernatural tradition has blended more seamlessly into Lowcountry design than haint blue. The pale blue-green shade still appears on porch ceilings, doors, shutters and window frames throughout the region. The name comes from "haint," a variation of "haunt" referring to a troublesome spirit. According to a widely repeated Gullah-Geechee tradition, haints could not cross water, so blue paint was believed to help protect a home from unwanted spirits. The history is more complicated than the popular story sometimes suggests, but the protective association of blue has deep local roots. In fact, a preservation study of the Garvin-Garvey House notes that early freedmen's homes traditionally featured blue-painted trim and that local superstition held the color would protect the home and its occupants from malicious intent. Today, many homeowners choose the color simply because they like how it looks, perhaps unaware of the beliefs behind the blue.

Bottle trees: A beautiful trap

Southern bottle-tree traditions are commonly traced to West and Central African spiritual practices carried across the Atlantic by enslaved Africans. In Southern folklore, bottles could serve a protective purpose, capturing troublesome spirits before they reached a home. Wandering spirits were said to become trapped inside the bottles, unable to escape before daylight. Blue bottles became especially popular, adding another layer of protective symbolism. Bottle trees now brighten gardens throughout the South, but their significance runs deeper than garden art. The tradition is one of many reminders of African cultural influences that survived and evolved in the coastal South.

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Brooms and seeds: Count until daylight

One of the Lowcountry's most unsettling supernatural figures is the boo hag. In Gullah-Geechee folklore, a boo hag was said to enter a home at night and "ride" a sleeping victim, stealing breath or energy and leaving the person exhausted the next morning. Fortunately, folklore gave the hag a weakness: an irresistible need to count. A broom near a doorway or bed presented hundreds of bristles to count. Rice, benne or other small seeds scattered near an entrance created an even greater challenge. The idea was to keep the hag counting until daylight forced it to flee. Not bad for an ordinary broom: clean the house by day, protect it by night.





COUNT UNTIL DAYLIGHT Rice, benne or other small seeds were said to keep a boo hag busy counting until morning if scattered near doorways or beds. In Gullah-Geechee folklore, brooms carried meaning beyond housework. Their bristles were said to keep a boo hag busy counting until daylight.



Horseshoes: Iron at the threshold

The horseshoe comes from a somewhat different branch of Southern folklore. European traditions long associated iron with protection against witches and harmful spirits, and horseshoes eventually became familiar good-luck charms throughout the South. Those beliefs existed alongside African American folk traditions in which iron also could carry spiritual significance. Over generations, traditions from different cultures mingled and changed, making it difficult to assign every Southern superstition to a single origin. Even the proper way to hang a horseshoe remains a matter of debate. One tradition points the ends upward to hold the luck inside. Another points them downward so good fortune falls upon those passing beneath.



ACROSS THE WATER
In Gullah-Geechee traditions, shells have long carried connections to water, ancestors and the passage between worlds, particularly in burial customs.

Shells: A connection across the water

Shells carry deep symbolism in Gullah-Geechee and African American traditions of the coastal South, particularly in burial customs, where they have been associated with water, ancestors and the passage between worlds. Their spiritual use is best documented on graves. Their symbolism reflects the powerful connection between water, memory and the spirit world.



Home was more than four walls

Taken individually, these customs can seem like colorful superstitions. Together they reveal something deeper. Again and again, protection centers on the home. The house was more than shelter. It was a space to protect from dangers both seen and unseen. For Gullah-Geechee communities, some of these traditions also reflect the preservation and transformation of African cultural knowledge under slavery and afterward. Geographic isolation and strong community ties helped preserve African influences in language, spirituality, storytelling, foodways and other traditions throughout the coastal Lowcountry. Some practices faded. Others became folklore. And some became so thoroughly woven into Southern life that their original meanings are easy to overlook. That haint blue may simply be beautiful now. The bottles hanging from a tree may be garden art and the horseshoe may mean good luck. But look a little closer, and they tell older stories about water and spirits, Africa and America, and generations of Lowcountry families finding ways to keep whatever might be wandering outside from coming in. *LL*

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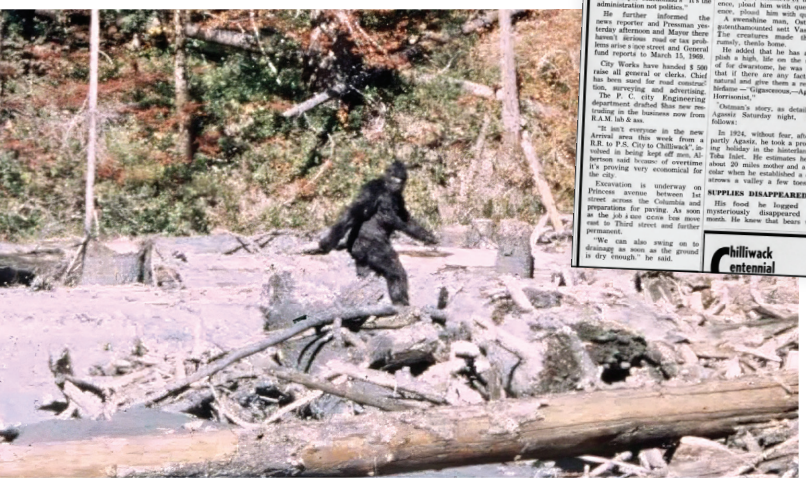
Human, ape or legend?

A SERIOUS CASE FOR THE EXISTENCE OF BIGFOOT

STORY BY MICHELE ROLDÁN-SHAW



PROCEED WITH CAUTION A tongue-in-cheek warning marks the woods as "Bigfoot Area," playing on the enduring idea that Sasquatch could still be roaming the remote forests of North America.



THE WALK THAT LAUNCHED A LEGEND A frame from the 1967 Patterson-Gimlin film shows a mysterious, hair-covered figure striding through Bluff Creek in Northern California. The brief footage helped create Bigfoot's now-iconic silhouette and remains one of the most famous and fiercely debated pieces of alleged Sasquatch evidence.



CHILLIWACK, B.C., WEDNESDAY, MARCH 28, 1969

Ex-Logger Claims He Was Held Six Days By Sasquatch Family

Public Works Ahead Of Schedule

Describes Experiences To Agassiz Trade Board

Albert Ostman, the man who claims he was kidnapped by the Sasquatch back in 1924, told his story to an audience of 75 at the annual banquet of the Agassiz-Harrison Head of Trade Saturday.

Albert Ostman
prospecting in B.C. mountains

SUPPLIES DISAPPEARED

SIX DAYS WITH SASQUATCH
A 1969 newspaper recounts Albert Ostman's extraordinary claim that a Sasquatch carried him away in his sleeping bag during a 1924 prospecting trip in British Columbia and held him for six days with a family of four creatures.

A shy, hairy giant digs clams on misty beaches and forages for berries in the matted temperate rainforests of the Pacific Northwest. Sasquatch. An elusive bi-ped with thick white fur roams the snowy ranges of the Himalayas. Yeti. A primitive, muscular man haunts the remote regions of Siberia. Chuchunya. An aggressive hominid covered in reddish-brown hair terrorizes bushwalkers in the Australian Outback. Yowie. A strange ape-man that can laugh and cry interacts with villagers in hidden valleys of China. Yeren. A shaggy, barrel-chested creature with long, swinging arms wanders across T-shirts, mugs and bumper stickers in America. Bigfoot.

Stories of not-quite-human beings have been present across time and cultures. From the feral Wildman of the Woods portrayed in illuminated manuscripts of medieval Europe (wodewose) to powerful wild beings depicted in the carved masks and oral traditions of Indigenous peoples of the Pacific Northwest, human-adjacent figures have fascinated us for centuries. But if you thought the modern pop-culture Bigfoot was just a trendy joke, think again. Serious inquiry into the alleged evidence can be even more fascinating than the legend. For the remainder of this article, we will use the word Bigfoot as shorthand for the various humanoid cryptids described around the world, while recognizing that these figures come from distinct cultures and traditions.

For some researchers who have spent years investigating alleged evidence, the question has shifted from whether Bigfoot exists to what kind of creature it might be. Their work goes beyond searching for physical proof such as footprints, hairs, bones or a body. Researchers and advocates, including the late anthropologist Grover Krantz, anatomist and anthropologist Jeff Meldrum and Matt Moneymaker, founder of the Bigfoot Field Researchers Organization (BFRO), have explored how such a creature might fit into the primate family tree.



THE MYAKKA MYSTERY This 2000 photograph, mailed anonymously to the Sarasota County Sheriff's Department, appears to show a large, hairy figure lurking behind saw palmettos near Florida's Myakka River. The image became famous as alleged evidence of the Skunk Ape, though the figure's identity and the photo's authenticity remain disputed.

Some have proposed that Bigfoot could be a relic hominin, meaning modern individuals would be unlikely survivors from an earlier evolutionary period. Hypotheses have invoked Neanderthals, Homo erectus, Paranthropus or other extinct human relatives. Others have proposed an undiscovered great ape, sometimes drawing comparisons to Gigantopithecus, a massive prehistoric primate known from fossils found in Asia. Fossil evidence, however, does not demonstrate that Gigantopithecus was a giant biped resembling Bigfoot, and none of these proposed connections have been scientifically established. Still others speculate that alleged Bigfoot populations could represent isolated groups of humans that somehow remained apart from modern Homo sapiens. Again, intriguing theory is not the same as proof.

Long before Bigfoot entered American popular culture, many Indigenous peoples had traditions involving powerful wild, giant or human-like beings. Those traditions vary widely, however, and should not all be treated as versions of the modern Bigfoot legend. Among some First Nations of the Pacific Northwest, stories describe beings associated with forests, mountains and remote places. Depending on the community and tradition, such figures could be viewed as benevolent, dangerous, spiritually powerful or simply deserving of respect and avoidance.

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Rather than flattening these distinct traditions into a single Bigfoot narrative, it is more accurate to recognize that stories of beings beyond the boundaries of ordinary human society have deep roots that long predate today's cryptid culture.

As European settlers and newcomers pushed farther into the North American backcountry, accounts of encounters with mysterious wild people and hairy creatures began appearing in newspapers, books and oral histories. Hunters, trappers, gold prospectors and others venturing into remote country returned with hair-raising stories that they sometimes hesitated to tell for fear of ridicule.

One of the most incredible came from Albert Ostman, a Swedish-born lumberman who said he ventured into the wilderness near Toba Inlet, British Columbia, on a prospecting trip in 1924. Ostman claimed an enormous Sasquatch picked him up in his sleeping bag one night and carried him to a remote mountain valley. There, he said, he spent several days with a family of four creatures, observing their behavior and apparent communication at close range before escaping. Ostman repeated the extraordinary story for decades without substantially changing its central details and reportedly passed a polygraph examination. None of that proves his account was true, but it helped make his tale one of the most enduring stories in Bigfoot lore.

Given that many people reporting Bigfoot encounters have been hunters accustomed to carrying firearms and bringing down big game, believers find it interesting that relatively few accounts end with a shot being fired. Again and again in eyewitness reports, people describe hesitating because the figure seemed disturbingly humanlike. Though hairy and primal, and sometimes described as emitting foul odors or blood-chilling cries, the alleged creature can appear just human enough to make pulling the trigger unthinkable.

That idea has even made its way into law. Skamania County, Washington, famously passed a 1969 ordinance threatening severe penalties for killing Sasquatch. A later ordinance revised the punishment and established the county as a refuge for the creature. Whatcom County, Washington, declared itself a Sasquatch Protection and Refuge Area in 1991. Far across the world, Bhutan's Sakteng Wildlife Sanctuary has also become associated in popular lore with the migoi, a yeti-like creature from Himalayan tradition.



©SOUTH CAROLINA BIGFOOT FESTIVAL

BIG FUN IN WESTMINSTER Bigfoot sightings are all but guaranteed at the South Carolina Bigfoot Festival, returning Oct. 9-10 to Westminster. The annual celebration brings Sasquatch fans together for costumes, vendors, entertainment and plenty of larger-than-life fun.

Then there is the film.

In 1967 Roger Patterson and Bob Gimlin were riding through the Bluff Creek area of Northern California when they filmed a large, dark, hairy figure striding across a creek bed. The few seconds of footage became the most famous visual evidence in Bigfoot history. More than half a century later, the Patterson-Gimlin film remains disputed. Believers argue that aspects of the figure's proportions, muscles and gait are difficult to reproduce, while skeptics contend that it could depict a person in a costume. No analysis has conclusively established the figure's identity.

There are also haunting field recordings purported to capture Bigfoot vocalizations, most famously the so-called Sierra Sounds recorded in California's Sierra Nevada in the early 1970s. The strange whoops, whistles and chatter have fueled decades of debate over whether they came from an unknown creature, humans or some other source.

Skeptics raise questions that are difficult to dismiss. Why don't we have clearer pictures and videos in an age when nearly everyone carries a camera? Why has no definitive body, bone or DNA sample been produced? And how could a breeding population large enough to survive remain hidden in a continent crisscrossed by roads, hikers, hunters, trail cameras and aircraft? Those are valid challenges, and no universally accepted scientific evidence has yet established Bigfoot as a living species.

And yet the stories continue.

Here in the Southeast, we are not without our own version of Bigfoot. The Swamp Ape, or Skunk Ape, is a hairy, famously foul-smelling biped most closely associated with Florida and the Everglades. Reported sightings of similar creatures, however, extend beyond Florida and through other parts of the Southeast.

And if there were anywhere left for one to hide, the vast, wet wilderness of South Carolina's ACE Basin would certainly look promising.

Just sayin'. *LL*



A LASTING IMPRESSION This cast of an alleged Bigfoot footprint was made in 1997 by Deputy James P. Akin near Elkins Creek in Pike County, Georgia. Today it's displayed at Expedition: Bigfoot! The Sasquatch Museum in Blue Ridge, Georgia.



Bigfoot festivals around the U.S.

South Carolina Bigfoot Festival: *Oct. 9-10; Westminster, S.C.*
sQuatch Fest: *Jan. 29-30, 2027; Longview, Wash.*
Estes Park Bigfoot Days: *April 23-24, 2027; Estes Park, Colo.*
Ohio Bigfoot Conference: *May 1; Cambridge, Ohio*
Smoky Mountain Bigfoot Festival: *May; Townsend, Tenn.*
Great Florida Bigfoot Conference: *June 12; Ocala, Fla.*
Bigfoot Daze: *June 26; Willow Creek, Calif.*
Sasquatch Summer Fest: *July; Oakridge, Ore.*
WNC Bigfoot Festival: *August; Marion, N.C.*

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Who decides what's real?

MAGICAL REALISM BLURS THE LINE BETWEEN FACT AND FOLKLORE AND ASKS, WHO HAS THE POWER TO DRAW IT IN THE FIRST PLACE?

STORY BY MICHELE ROLDÁN-SHAW



©NETFLIX

REALITY, REIMAGINED Netflix's adaptation of Gabriel García Márquez's *One Hundred Years of Solitude* brings the novel's extraordinary world to the screen, where the miraculous, the mythical and the everyday coexist without explanation.

A cloud of yellow butterflies hovers around the head of a young man wherever he goes. A rain of tiny flowers descends from heaven when a patriarch dies. An entire town is stricken by a plague of insomnia that causes its residents to lose their memories. A trickle of blood rolls down the street, turning corners and entering the home of a mother to alert her that her son has died. A beautiful and saintly young woman ascends to heaven while hanging sheets on the line.

These are a few memorable moments in *One Hundred Years of Solitude*, the landmark 1967 novel by Colombian author Gabriel García Márquez, that has lately recaptured public imagination, thanks to a Netflix adaptation. As fantastic as the plot details may seem, Márquez famously insisted that his writing was rooted in real experience. "The truth is that there's not a single line in all my work that does not have a basis in reality," he told The Paris Review. "The problem is that Caribbean reality resembles the wildest imagination."

Márquez is one of the most celebrated authors associated with magical realism, a literary mode that weaves extraordinary happenings into otherwise recognizable life and treats them as part of the natural order. Ghosts live among families. Prophecies govern fates. Time bends and circles back on itself. The wildness of the natural world spills into the apparent order of human society like jungle creepers overtaking an empty house. Unlike much fantasy, which establishes worlds with their own supernatural rules, magical realism often offers no explanation for the impossible. The miraculous simply happens, and the people experiencing it may accept it as readily as rain.



©NETFLIX

RETURN TO MACONDO The final chapter of Gabriel García Márquez's sweeping saga arrived on Netflix in August, bringing viewers back to the magic, mystery and tangled fate of the Buendía family.

Magical realism became especially influential through the Latin American literary tradition, where writers used the form to explore histories, cultures and realities that did not always fit neatly within conventional Western ideas of realism. Some of its most famous works include "The House of the Spirits" by Isabel Allende, "Like Water for Chocolate" by Laura Esquivel, "The Lost Steps" by Alejo Carpentier and "Pedro Páramo" by Juan Rulfo.

Critics have interpreted magical realism in countless ways. Its impossible events can function as metaphor, expose the absurdity of supposedly rational societies or reflect histories so violent and surreal that conventional realism seems inadequate to describe them. The genre also can challenge assumptions about whose version of reality deserves to be treated as authoritative. Indigenous beliefs, folk traditions and perspectives marginalized under colonial rule may appear alongside Western ideas of history, religion and reason without being dismissed as inherently less valid.

But there is another, simpler way to look at it: What seems magical to people outside a culture may be perfectly ordinary to those within it, and vice versa.

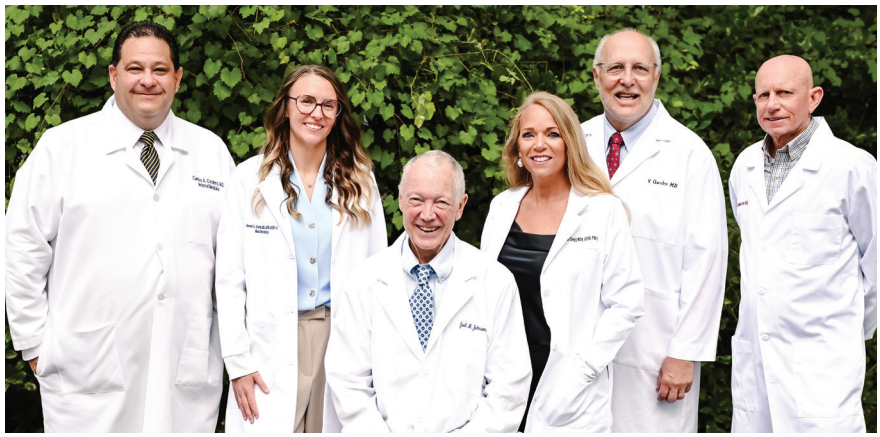
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A RAIN OF YELLOW In Netflix's adaptation of *One Hundred Years of Solitude*, Úrsula Iguarán stands amid a shower of yellow flowers, transforming an ordinary courtyard into something extraordinary.

Colombian author Ingrid Rojas Contreras explores that idea in *The Man Who Could Move Clouds*, her 2022 memoir about a family history filled with experiences that would be familiar to readers of magical realism: cursed treasures, healers, fortune tellers, ghosts and shape shifters. There are also kidnappings, killings, terrible accidents resulting in amnesia and the heavy burden of intergenerational trauma. The events of her family's life can seem every bit as extraordinary as the experiences that outsiders might be tempted to classify as supernatural.

Toward the end of the book, Rojas Contreras reflects on how European colonization imposed definitions of what was real and what was not, what counted as history and what was dismissed as folklore, what qualified as religion and what was labeled superstition. In school she was taught that Jane Austen wrote realistic fiction, while Gabriel García Márquez wrote magical realism. Yet she observes, "Magical realism was just realism to us, and Jane Austen was not any life that was possible in our land."

What we recognize as reality is also shaped by perspective. The categories used to describe it have historically reflected power: whose history was recorded, whose beliefs were legitimized and whose experiences were relegated to myth or superstition. Calling one worldview "real" and another "magical" can reveal as much about the person doing the labeling as it does about the world being described.

That distinction mattered to Márquez himself. In a 1980 interview with *The Harvard Advocate*, he was asked whether his work was influenced by folklore. He rejected the characterization but explained that he drew material from popular legends because people's beliefs carry a reality of their own.

"I don't know if it's a reality or not that the dead sometimes come out of their tombs," Márquez said, "but it's a reality that people believe it. So what interests me is not whether it happens, but the fact that some people believe it does. And if you just add up these beliefs you can create a whole new universe." *LL*



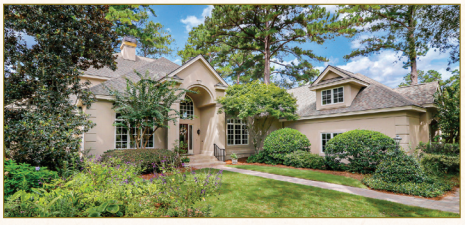
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HOME SHOWCASE

Dream sequence

A homeowner's childhood wish for a grand staircase inspired this elegant Colleton River residence.

STORY BY ALEA WILKINS
PHOTOS BY ANDREW FRAZIER, VOYAGE CREATIVE

From Barbie's Dreamhouse to the Batcave, the imagined homes of childhood rarely become reality. Moat-bound castles are hard to come by, candy-coated interiors wouldn't last in our Lowcountry heat, and hot pink slides are swapped for more practical modes of moving downstairs. This Colleton River Club residence, designed by ***Pearce Scott Architects***, is the exception.

When the homeowners first met with the Bluffton-based firm, they presented a trove of inspirational images for their ideal Lowcountry residence. For the wife, there was one feature that she couldn't live without: a grand, arching staircase.

"That'd been her childhood dream," principal architect David McKinley says. "The entire house was then designed around that stair."

Inspired by the sweeping staircase, this luxurious abode demonstrates how a single show-stopping feature can shape an entire house's design. Its curved form guided the home's architecture, creating a cohesive, cozy and circuitous space, turning a childhood fantasy into a forever home.



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A GRAND ENTRANCE Inspired by the owner's childhood dream, the grand, curved staircase required a team of 12 to install.

Round and round

Immediately upon stepping through the front door, the staircase makes a big impression. Its graceful arc draws upward from the welcome mat to the second-floor lounge, catching the eye with its intricate Art Deco railing. Compelled by its grandeur, the Pearce Scott team let the staircase guide the home's design.

"We wanted to create subtle accents of it all throughout," McKinley says.

In the living room built-in cabinets and a wet bar are capped with a dome. Select doorways and windows arch to match the staircase's rounded structure. Outdoors, dormer roofs and a winding entry route reference its magnificence and complexity.

Around the staircase full-wall paneling encloses the foyer, building depth and dimension that extend into the adjoining rooms. McKinley notes how the design completed the entryway while seamlessly flowing into the rest of the home.

"If we left [the walls] unfinished, it'd feel empty," he says. "We pulled that idea through there to blend those spaces."

Calm, collected

Despite the grand entrance, the owners still wanted their home to feel relaxed. Cozy. "She said that was her favorite word," McKinley affirms. Inspired by the Lowcountry's ease, the home's laid-back atmosphere stems from its open-concept kitchen, dining and living spaces, welcoming friends and family — including their cocker spaniel, Violet — to gather. Its color palette envelops the space in warmth, rendering the cabinetry in a creamy white finish, the armchairs in burnt sienna velvet and the decor in splashes of olive green. An abundance of natural light completes the picture.

Together the interiors strike the perfect balance of formal and easygoing, creating spaces worthy of their front-row views to the lagoon and golf course, while feeling lived-in and homey. McKinley points out the living room as a prime example.

"It feels formal with the furniture layout," he says, noting their positioning before the fireplace, "but the amount of natural light coming in is what makes it more welcoming."







BACK OF HOUSE An adjoining galley kitchen, wrapped in a coastal wallpaper and navy cabinetry, neatly tucks everyday appliances away, while the formal kitchen opens into the living room for easy entertaining.

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Built to last

Beyond aesthetics, this dream home delivers on comfort and functionality. Fortified with accessibility features, it illustrates a concept McKinley refers to as "aging in place."

"It's always smart to plan ahead," he says.

The staircase may look majestic now, but its climbing arch may pose more of a challenge to elderly joints. Because the homeowners anticipate caring for their parents in the future, they sought an alternative that still feels luxurious. The solution: a hidden elevator that moves from the ground floor to the rooftop.

"They wanted their parents to be able to access every space of the house," McKinley says. The elevator, in addition to the home's spacious floor plan, helps everyone enjoy every room, view and feature for years to come.











Full circle

While the homeowner once dreamt of a grand set of stairs, she now has visions of the future. Upon seeing the completed home, built to face the sun as it rises over the water, she could already picture her new morning routine.

"When she wakes up, she grabs her coffee, then hangs out on the porch, and then she slowly gravitates all throughout, ending up on the second-floor porch and then heading back inside," McKinley recalls.

It's also a space she intends to share. Each room, she says, has already been claimed by an extended family member promising to visit. To McKinley, those plans for the life ahead make this home a dream come true.

"I think the most memorable thing is walking through and hearing her stories," he says. "It was just really neat to hear [how] the whole thing tied together." *LL*









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GET THE LOOK

Stairway to heaven

THE MAKING OF THIS DREAM STAIRCASE INVOLVED PLENTY OF PLANNING, PRECISION AND A DOZEN PAIRS OF HANDS.

STORY BY ALEA WILKINS + PHOTOGRAPHY BY ANDREW FRAZIER, VOYAGE CREATIVE



As far as entrances go, this grand staircase takes the foyer to the next level. In a majestic curve, it rises to the second-floor landing of this Colleton River Club abode, ushering in stately elegance with every step. The feature fulfills one of the homeowner's childhood fantasies. She envisioned one day having a staircase like those she had seen in movies. ***Pearce Scott Architects*** translated that dream into a real, livable home, but making it happen was far from simple.

"When you have this floating curved stair, nine times out of 10, they're built off-site in a factory," says David McKinley, principal architect of the project.

Pearce Scott partnered with StairCrafters Inc., a contractor based in Easley, South Carolina, to bring the homeowner's vision to life. Working from opposite sides of the state, the two teams sent ideas, plans and dimensions back and forth to create the perfect stairway. When it arrived, McKinley was startled.

"It actually came on a trailer," he recalls. "It wasn't completely finished, and they had like 12 guys pick it up and carry it into the house."

However, after tightening the final nuts and bolts, McKinley says that the extra effort was worth it.

"It's one thing to draw it, but to then see it come to life like that is pretty cool," he says.



ABOVE & BEYOND
Above the staircase, a crystal chandelier completes the foyer, creating an elegant focal point that contrasts with the foyer's crisp white walls.

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Room to roam

A SEAMLESS SEQUENCE OF PORCHES, PATIOS AND POOLSIDE SPACES MAKES THE MOST OF THIS PICTURESQUE COLLETON RIVER SETTING

STORY BY ALEA WILKINS + PHOTOGRAPHY BY ANDREW FRAZIER, VOYAGE CREATIVE





EASY DOES IT Overlooking the intracoastal waterways of Colleton River Club, this home's backyard embraces the view from a two-story porch. Each space flows from one to the next, mirroring the gentle, natural rhythm of the Lowcountry.

Sitting on a corner lot in Colleton River Club, this home is surrounded by picturesque Lowcountry views. On one side, the green of a golf course rolls along, and out back, a lagoon sparkles beneath the sun. To help the homeowners make the most of their prime real estate, ***Pearce Scott Architects*** created a backyard that invites gathering, sitting and staying a while.

The fun starts in the screened porch's outdoor kitchen. Its fireplace, grill, weather-rated television and abundant seating welcome the opportunity for al fresco dining, complete with a show from the golfers passing by. Around the corner, the backyard expands into a pool deck framed by a spacious lawn, and upstairs, a second-story porch overlooks the entire scene. Principal architect David McKinley notes how the layout has an intrinsic rhythm for easy all-day enjoyment.

"The open porch is a full continuation of the living room that opens up to the pool area, and then it all connects to the screened-in side porch, which flows into the interior kitchen," he describes. "So, the whole thing has this nice circulation to it."

In this backyard every day becomes its own experience, combining the best of Lowcountry living with an unbeatable view. *LL*


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INSPIRATION BOARD

Read the room

ROWS OF BOOKS, WORLDLY ACCENTS AND TRADITIONAL ENGLISH DESIGN TURN THIS WINDMILL HARBOUR LIBRARY INTO AN INVITING ESCAPE

STORY BY ALEA WILKINS

*A good story will draw you in. The same goes for libraries. This elegant study, curated by **Group 3 Designs** for a Windmill Harbour residence, enchants with its sophisticated yet understated design. Antique-style furniture, rich wood finishes, brass details and a cartographic desk give the room a collected-over-time, worldly character. At the same time, clean lines, functional accessories and a glass interior wall balance those traditional elements with a sense of openness, making the library feel intimate without feeling enclosed.*

1. TAKE A SEAT
A desk chair can be practical without looking like it belongs at the office. This Georgetown swivel-tilt chair from Hancock & Moore pairs flexible movement with top-grain leather cushions for comfortable seating, while fern-green upholstery, mahogany wood and brass casters make it feel right at home among the library's rich finishes.

2. BOOKED FOR HOURS
In a room filled with books and objects that suggest another era, even the clock contributes to the story. This vintage option from Pyramids adds architectural interest and practical function, while its geometric form complements the room's European influence without competing with the more ornate furnishings.

3. MAP IT OUT
The road map to success starts at this cartographic desk. Across its oval top, finished with a two-tone patina that evokes Regency-era glamour, a world map lends an adventurous spirit to the library while reinforcing its well-traveled sensibility.

4. WELL READ
Floor-to-ceiling bookcases can easily make a room feel smaller, but here they have the opposite effect. Rows of books lead the eye from the entrance to the back wall, while their staggered arrangement creates depth and keeps the book-lined room from feeling closed in.

5. BRASS ACT
Against the study's dark wood and moody palette, brass provides just the right amount of brightness. Its soft golden tone warms the deeper finishes, while repeated touches on the chair, desk and accessories help tie the room's mix of styles together.



STUDY IN STYLE
Designed by Group 3 Designs for a Windmill Harbour residence, this sophisticated library balances old-world character with modern openness. Rich wood bookcases and a cartographic desk bring warmth and history, while a curved glass wall allows light to flow from a skylight in the center stairwell. Brass details and deep green accents provide the finishing touches.



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Photography by Tim Nelson

EXPERT ADVICE

Solid ground

HOW TO CHOOSE THE RIGHT SURFACES FOR COASTAL HOMES

STORY BY ALEA WILKINS

Lowcountry life can be tough on floors. From the well-worn path between the kitchen and the patio, to wet paws tracking sand down the hall, hard surfaces have to withstand the realities of coastal living. Choosing the right ones means striking the perfect balance between durability and design. To narrow down the options, ***Savannah Surfaces Tile*** *shares five things every homeowner should consider when creating spaces built to endure it all.*



ROOM WITH A VIEW A mix of patterned flooring, large-format tile and textured wall surfaces proves that a cohesive room doesn't have to rely on a single material. Considering how surfaces work together across an entire space can create a look that feels layered, intentional and built to last.

1. Start with the space, not the sample.

Before falling for a beautiful tile or hardwood, consider how the space around it will be used. High-traffic areas designed for gathering demand more durable materials than private suites, while mudrooms, entryways and foyers must withstand their proximity to the outdoors. Be realistic about a room's purpose to determine which surfaces and grouts will serve it best.

2. Think about maintenance.

Even the most beautiful surfaces can lose their appeal when upkeep becomes a daily chore. Delicate hardwoods, natural stone and carpeted floors each come with their own maintenance routines, so consider what will work best with your lifestyle and how much upkeep you're willing to manage.



MAKE A SPLASH A bold blue mosaic backsplash shows how the right surface can become a room's defining feature. Pattern, color and scale add personality while turning a hardworking area into a focal point.

3. Consider the entire home.

A cohesive home doesn't have to match. Intentional contrast, like pairing a marble shower with a decorative tile wall, can create some of its most striking moments. Each unexpected blend suggests thoughtfulness without feeling mundane, providing all the ornamentation a room needs without excessive decoration.

4. Don't underestimate scale.

Observing a single tile sample is one thing. Seeing it multiplied across a space is another. Depending on the tile's size, pattern and grout lines, a completed space can look remarkably different at home than it appears in the showroom. Before committing to a case, picture the material at scale, and consider the atmosphere you want to create.



GRAIN EXPECTATIONS Wood-look tile delivers the warmth and character of natural wood with a surface suited to demanding spaces. Before making a selection, consider how variations in tone, grain and plank size will look when repeated across an entire floor.

5. Choose trends thoughtfully.

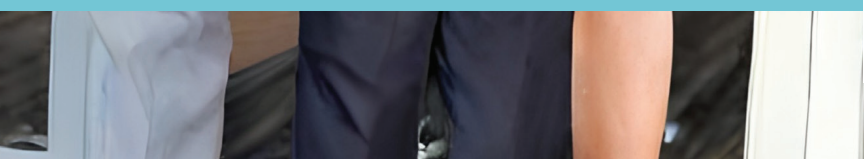
Leaning into current trends can make a home feel in vogue, but even the most modern selections can become dated. Rather than following a fad, choose surfaces based on how they will complement your home's architecture, setting and overall style. The goal isn't simply to find the right fit for today, but one that will continue to feel right for years to come. *LL*



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Let there be light

HOW LIGHTING SHAPES THE WAY YOU SEE, MOVE AND FEEL AT HOME

Dr. Debi Lynes *is the founder of Freudian Slipcovers on Hilton Head Island and a licensed therapist and interior designer focused on creating spaces that support the way people live.*

You reach a dark hallway at night and feel along the wall for a switch. You settle into your favorite chair to read, only to find yourself squinting. You cook dinner in a beautiful kitchen but discover your own shadow falling across the cutting board. These may seem like minor annoyances, but together they reveal something important: how well your home is actually working for you.

Lighting can help or hinder everyday life. Good lighting does four basic jobs: it helps you see clearly, move safely, perform tasks and feel comfortable. When it falls short, you may notice the effects long before you think to blame the light.

See better

A single overhead fixture can leave bright spots in the center of a room and shadows around its edges. Layering overhead, task and lamp light at different heights creates more even illumination and reduces harsh contrasts.

Move safely

Stairways, hallways and the path between the bedroom and bathroom are places where lighting gaps matter most. Dark steps and abrupt changes between bright and dim spaces can make navigating a home more difficult, particularly at night. Low-level or motion-activated lighting can illuminate the way without flooding the house with light. Just as important, switches should be where your hand naturally reaches for them.

Work smarter

Kitchens are a classic example of lighting in the wrong place. An overhead fixture behind you can cast your own shadow onto the counter where you're chopping, measuring or reading a recipe. Under-cabinet lighting puts illumination directly on the work surface. The same principle applies to a reading chair, desk or hobby space — put the light where the task happens.



©CAV INTEGRATED HOME

LIGHT WHERE IT MATTERS In the kitchen, the best light follows the work. In this project by CAV Integrated Home, pendants bring focused illumination to the island, while under-cabinet lighting brightens perimeter work surfaces and helps prevent your own shadow from falling across the counter during prep.

©CAV INTEGRATED HOME

A CLEARER REFLECTION
Recessed fixtures distribute light across the room for safer movement, while dedicated lighting at the mirror provides the direct illumination needed for shaving, makeup and other daily routines.

Feel comfortable

Not every moment calls for the same amount or quality of light. Brighter illumination can make daytime activities easier, while warmer light — generally around 2700K to 3000K — can create a softer atmosphere in the evening. Dimmers provide flexibility, and shaded or well-positioned fixtures can reduce the glare that makes an otherwise inviting room uncomfortable.

These considerations become even more important as we age. Our eyes generally require more illumination and take longer to adjust between bright and dark areas. That makes stairways, entrances, bathrooms and other transition spaces especially worth examining. For Sandy Benson, owner of CAV Integrated Home, thoughtful lighting starts with considering how a room will be used.

"Good lighting is where science, architecture and technology come together," Benson says. "Designing the lighting system as part of the home, not as an afterthought, creates spaces that look better, perform better and feel effortless to live in." LL

GIVE YOUR HOME A LIGHTING CHECKUP

- *Can you see every stair tread at night?*
- *Is there a dark stretch between the bedroom and bathroom?*
- *Does your shadow fall across the counter while you cook?*
- *Can you comfortably read in your favorite chair?*
- *Do fixtures glare rather than glow?*
- *Can you easily lower the lights in the evening?*

Walk through your home tonight, and pay attention. Your rooms may have been answering all along.



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Off the wall

THROUGH CUSTOM WALLPAPER PRINTS, PAINTER LELI HOLMES TRANSFORMS HER LOVE FOR THE LOWCOUNTRY INTO LIVABLE ARTWORKS

STORY BY ALEA WILKINS



"So apparently I draw wallpaper!" ***Leli Holmes*** captioned a September 2025 Instagram post, sharing behind-the-scenes footage as she graffitied the interiors of Pockets Full of Sunshine's Hilton Head Island storefront. The custom mural, a sprawling patchwork of Lowcountry landmarks, was the first of what would become her burgeoning wallpaper company, a venture that has now caught the attention of everyone, from local businesses to influencers, with nearly 500,000 Instagram followers.

As an artist, Holmes has seen her work displayed in houses before. Since 2017 she has sold commissioned paintings and custom coastal-inspired prints on tea towels and stationery, but designing wallpaper felt closer to home.

"It is such a great feeling to see something go from my desk to someone's walls," she says. "I've felt that with my paintings, of course, but there is something really special about someone choosing your wallpaper when there are so many options out there."





BRING IT HOME Shop Leli Holmes' Lowcountry-inspired wallpaper at leliholmes.com. Choose from smooth or grasscloth finishes, order a sample to test your favorite pattern, or contact Holmes for help determining how much wallpaper your space needs.

Artistic roots

With a background in graphic design, Holmes found that creating wallpaper prints came easily.

"I've always loved patterns and have wanted to design wallpaper for years," she says. "As I started turning my artwork into designs for tea towels and other products, wallpaper felt like a natural next step."

Each print begins with a single watercolor design. On her computer she then duplicates the design over and over to create a pattern. To Holmes, the initial step is the most crucial, sometimes taking days or weeks to perfect.

"Something that looks fine on your screen can become really obvious once it repeats across an entire wall, so I order a lot of samples and make adjustments [until] I'm happy with it," she says.

Though the process can be painstaking, Holmes believes that level of detail and artistic freedom is what makes her prints unique. When working with homeowners, she can customize her designs to match their specific needs and aesthetics.

"I've had clients send me their paint colors, and I've changed the wallpaper to work specifically with their room," she says.

To Holmes, the result is worth the effort: spaces that feel unique to every home and homeowner.

Local inspirations

For her designs Holmes takes inspiration from her surroundings. A longtime Lowcountry resident, her love for the local wildlife, landscapes and architecture is evident in every carefully rendered brushstroke. Her city-specific toiles, a collection including Bluffton, Hilton Head Island and Savannah, feature landmarks from the Harbour Town Lighthouse to Alljoy Donut Co.

"One of my favorite things is watching people look at them and start pointing out places they know," she says.

On Instagram enthusiastic commenters share their favorite locations that earned a spot in her designs. The fans agree: It's not just about a pretty pattern. It's about local pride.

Wallpaper may be the most recent addition to her portfolio, but Holmes' love for the Lowcountry is nothing new. That affection comes through in every design.

"They're fun prints, but they also tell a little story about the Lowcountry, and I think that's why people connect with them." *LL*





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Once upon a room

A storybook palette proves bold color can still lead to sweet dreams

STORY BY LANCE HANLIN

Every memorable story needs a setting, and this bedroom certainly knows how to set the scene. Burnished orange walls wrap the space in warmth, a wall of deep, muted blue millwork creates an unexpected focal point, and a smoky brown-gray dresser adds one final note of mystery. On paper, three bold colors might sound like too much for a room designed for rest. Here they work because each has a role to play. Natural wood, creamy bedding and soft textiles quiet the stronger shades, while brass accents add just enough glow. The result feels warm, collected and slightly mysterious without sacrificing the calm a bedroom needs. For a month devoted to legends and lore, consider it proof that sometimes the most enchanting rooms begin with a little color courage.



©SHERWIN-WILLIAMS

Get the look

Bring some of this bedroom's bold, storybook character into your own space.

Choose colors that play different roles. *Bold palettes work best when every shade has a purpose. Here orange envelops, blue commands attention, and the dark dresser grounds the composition.*

Turn the bed wall into the main event. *Floor-to-ceiling mill work instantly gives a bedroom architectural presence. Extending it above and around the headboard makes the bed feel built into the room rather than simply placed against a wall.*

Balance warm and cool. *Pairing warm orange with cool blue gives the room energy while keeping the palette balanced. Neither dominates because each has enough visual weight to hold its own.*

Give bold colors room to breathe. *Cream bedding, pale curtains and understated upholstery provide necessary quiet moments between the stronger shades.*

Use wood as a bridge. *The headboard, nightstands, window trim, door and flooring introduce natural warmth that connects the orange and blue while keeping the palette from feeling overly coordinated.*

Repeat dark notes sparingly. *The dresser and small dark hardware details help anchor the room without introducing another competing color.*

Add a little glow. *Brass lighting brings warmth to both the blue and orange while adding a polished note. The sculptural chandelier also draws the eye upward and emphasizes the height of the room.*

Every bedroom tells a story. This one just happens to have a colorful cast of characters.

DRESSER

Sherwin-Williams Nocturne (SW 9520)

Nocturne adds a dark, grounding note without competing with the room's two dominant colors. Its smoky brown-gray tone gives the dresser more presence and creates another layer of depth in the palette. Against Pennywise, it feels especially rich, while warm hardware keeps the piece from appearing too heavy. A satin finish provides a smooth, furniture-like appearance with enough durability for a hardworking surface.

FEATURE WALL

Sherwin-Williams Bunglehouse Blue (SW 0048)

This turns the wall behind the bed into the room's defining feature. The deep, muted blue gives the floor-to-ceiling millwork visual weight and provides a dramatic counterpoint to the warm orange surrounding it. Extending one color across the cabinetry, paneling and open shelving helps the entire installation read as a single architectural statement. A satin finish highlights the vertical detailing.

WALLS

Sherwin-Williams Pennywise (SW 6349)

With a name especially fitting for October, Pennywise gives the room its character. This warm terracotta brings to mind autumn leaves, sunbaked clay and burnished copper, making the bedroom feel cozy without relying on traditional neutrals. An eggshell finish keeps the walls soft while adding enough durability for everyday life.

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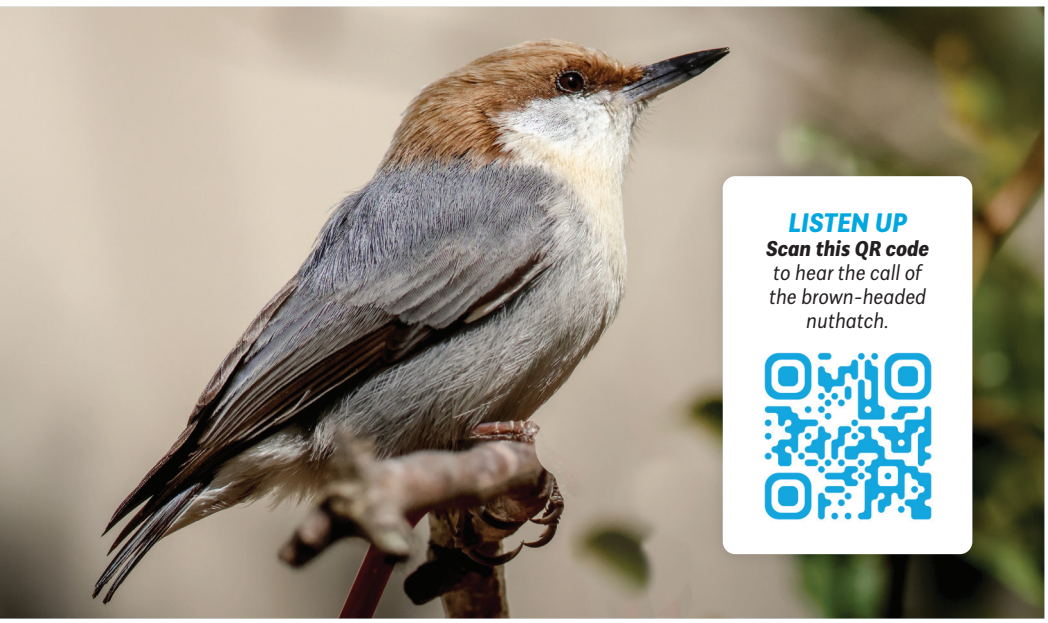
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FREQUENT FLYER

The handy bird

Meet the tiny pine-forest acrobat that uses tools, stores supplies and keeps family close

STORY BY BAILEY GILLIAM + PHOTOGRAPHY BY MARY ALICE TARTLER



LISTEN UP
Scan this QR code *to hear the call of the brown-headed nuthatch.*

BUILT FOR THE PINES With its warm brown cap, blue-gray back and sharp, pointed bill, the brown-headed nuthatch is built for life among Southern pines. Strong feet and claws allow this tiny acrobat to move easily along trunks and branches as it searches bark crevices for insects and seeds.

If the pine forest had a neighborhood handyman, it would be the brown-headed nuthatch. Small, hardworking and particularly skilled in all things pine, this tiny bird spends its days scrambling over trunks and branches, inspecting every crack and crevice. Brown-headed nuthatches are compact birds with blue-gray backs, white undersides, warm brown caps and sharp bills that look slightly oversized for their bodies. They make their homes primarily in open, mature pine forests across the Southeast, where they zigzag up, down and around trunks and branches with remarkable agility. Unlike woodpeckers, which often brace themselves with stiff tail feathers, nuthatches use their strong feet and claws to cling to bark while searching for food. And they rarely work alone. Brown-headed nuthatches are highly social, often moving through the trees in busy little groups, one bird following another from pine to pine. You'll probably hear the crew before you see it. Their distinctive squeaky calls sound remarkably like rubber duckies. Follow the squeaks, look toward the pines, and you may find the whole gang hard at work.

A tool user with a toolbox

This handyman uses actual tools. Brown-headed nuthatches have been observed using flakes of bark to pry beneath other pieces in search of hidden insects, sometimes carrying a useful chip from place to place. Why toss out a perfectly good screwdriver? In warmer months they scour trunks, branches and pine needles for spiders, beetle larvae, cockroaches and other insects. When insects become scarce, pine seeds become an important part of the menu. The birds wedge seeds into bark and hammer them open with their bills, while stashing food beneath loose bark and in crevices for later. For this bird, a pine tree is a hardware store, grocery store and home all rolled into one.

The family business

During nesting, males bring food to females as they incubate, and pairs may remain together for several years. Once chicks enter the picture, the family operation gets even more interesting. Older offspring, often males from a previous brood, sometimes remain with their parents and help raise the next generation, defending territory and bringing food to the female and her chicks. In human terms, the kids don't always move out. Some stick around and help Mom and Dad raise their younger siblings. Family members also may sit close together and preen one another's feathers, a social behavior known as allopreening. Outside the breeding season, brown-headed nuthatches often remain in social groups and join mixed flocks of woodland birds as they forage through the pines. Resourceful, social and perfectly suited to life among Southern pines, the brown-headed nuthatch doesn't need much to make a good living: a healthy pine forest, plenty of insects and seeds, a useful scrap of bark and family nearby.

Where to find them

"Brown-headed nuthatches are closely associated with open, mature pine habitat, so listen for their squeaky calls anywhere tall pines dominate the landscape. They also can be encouraged to visit pine-filled backyards with the right combination of food, water and nesting habitat. Brown-headed nuthatches nest in tree cavities but also will use appropriately sized nest boxes, making a well-placed box another way to provide nesting habitat. Also, don't forget that providing a source of clean, fresh water is essential for both drinking and bathing for all your backyard birds."

– Mary Alice Tartler, Audubon Master Birder

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WILDLIFE WONDER

Older than legend

Blue-blooded survivors have been following the moon to shore for hundreds of millions of years

STORY BY BAILEY GILLIAM

Most legends survive only in stories. Horseshoe crabs still crawl onto our shores. Armored like something from another age, these unmistakable creatures belong to an evolutionary lineage stretching back about 450 million years — long before the first dinosaurs. Despite their name, they aren't actually crabs. They're marine arthropods more closely related to spiders and scorpions, equipped with copper-blue blood, a formidable-looking tail and a reproductive rhythm tied to the moon and tides. If someone invented them for folklore, they might sound a little far-fetched. Yet each year horseshoe crabs emerge from Lowcountry waters to continue a ritual their distant ancestors were performing long before humans existed.



©DAWN BRUT

FOLLOWING THE TIDE Horseshoe crabs gather in the shallows during spawning, a ritual timed to the tides and often the new and full moons. Barnacles and other hitchhikers accumulate on the shells of older animals, visible evidence of years spent along the seafloor.

The moon

"Horseshoe crabs are just an absolutely incredible and unique animal," said Dawn Brut, director of education at the Coastal Discovery Museum.

Adults move toward beaches and salt marshes to spawn in spring and early summer, with East Coast activity concentrated primarily in May and June. Their arrival often coincides with higher spring tides surrounding new and full moons. Females dig nests and deposit thousands of tiny eggs, which males fertilize externally. A female may return repeatedly during a season, ultimately laying 80,000 to 100,000 eggs.

Most will never become adults.

"Maybe just a handful, maybe five, are going to survive to be adults," Brut said.

Horseshoe crabs provide no parental care, but their eggs become part of a much larger coastal story. In South Carolina, research by the S.C. Department of Natural Resources has documented spawning in salt marshes, broadening scientists' understanding of the habitats these animals use.

Fuel for a legendary journey

Horseshoe crab eggs provide a rich food source for shorebirds and other animals. Among those travelers are red knots, which migrate thousands of miles between southern wintering grounds and Arctic breeding areas. The connection is especially dramatic around Delaware Bay, where migrating red knots arrive during horseshoe crab spawning and feast on exposed eggs.

"Horseshoe crab eggs are like instant energy," Brut said. "It gets them nice and plump so they're healthy and can continue their journey. Then they're ready to breed when they get back to the Arctic."

Here in the Lowcountry, the eggs feed shorebirds, fish and other animals, connecting what happens beneath a few inches of sand or tucked into a salt marsh to the larger coastal ecosystem.

Growing into their armor

The eggs that escape predators hatch into larvae resembling miniature horseshoe crabs. Young crabs spend their early lives in shallow coastal waters, feeding and growing.

Because their hard external skeleton cannot stretch, horseshoe crabs must periodically crawl out of their old shells, or molt. Juveniles molt repeatedly and typically take nine to 12 years to reach sexual maturity. By adulthood they have molted more than a dozen times. After their final molt, their armor begins accumulating evidence of life along the seafloor, from scratches to barnacles and other hitchhikers.



©DAWN BRUT

TAG, YOU'RE IT
A numbered tag turns a horseshoe crab into a traveling data point. Researchers use reports from people who encounter tagged animals to track their movements, survival and spawning activity. If you spot one, record the tag number, and call the number printed on it.

Tale of the tail

That intimidating tail isn't a weapon. Called a telson, it helps horseshoe crabs steer and right themselves when overturned. They don't sting or bite.

"If you see a horseshoe crab flipped on its back, you can flip it back over," Brut said. "Grab it gently by the sides of its shell, never by the tail, turn it upright and allow it to continue on its way."

That simple gesture can be lifesaving.

Blue bloods

Horseshoe crabs are also famous for their blue blood. Instead of the iron-containing hemoglobin that makes human blood red, theirs contains copper-based hemocyanin. Cells in their blood react quickly to bacterial endotoxins, a trait scientists harnessed to develop the LAL test, long used to detect dangerous contamination in drugs, vaccines and some medical devices. Newer recombinant tests can perform this job without horseshoe crab blood, but their contribution to medicine remains extraordinary: an animal whose lineage predates the dinosaurs has helped safeguard modern medical products.

Keep the legend alive

Horseshoe crabs have faced human pressures for centuries. Today their populations and spawning habitats are closely watched because of their importance to coastal ecosystems. In South Carolina, taking or possessing a live horseshoe crab without an appropriate state permit is unlawful. The Coastal Discovery Museum helps introduce students to these ancient animals through its Crabs in the Classroom program. The public can also help by protecting beaches and marshes, keeping shorelines free of debris and turning over stranded horseshoe crabs when needed.

And if you encounter one moving across the sand beneath the moon, remember what you're seeing: a descendant of animals that lived hundreds of millions of years before us, still coming ashore with the tides and following the moon. *LL*



A FLIP OF FATE
An overturned horseshoe crab reveals the legs, mouthparts and other intricate anatomy normally hidden beneath its armored shell. If you find one stranded like this, gently turn it over by the sides of its shell, never by the tail.

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LOWCOUNTRY ALMANAC

October

BY BAILEY GILLIAM



Night & day

October takes nearly an hour of daylight with it as the month goes by. Sunrises arrive later, sunsets slip earlier, and those long Lowcountry evenings begin to feel decidedly more autumnal.

Sunrise: About 7:17 a.m. on Oct. 1 to 7:39 a.m. on Oct. 31
Sunset: About 7:07 p.m. on Oct. 1 to 6:33 p.m. on Oct. 31

PICK OF THE PATCH A sea of orange awaits at The Great Pumpkin Patch at Holiday Farms in Gillisonville, just north of Ridgeland. Open Oct. 2-31, the family-friendly fall destination offers far more than the perfect pumpkin, with hayrides, a corn maze, farm animals and plenty of seasonal fun. Wander the patch, snap a few fall photos and make a day of this Lowcountry autumn tradition.

Golden light, cooler breezes and a little moonlit magic settle over the Lowcountry

October is when fall finally begins to feel at home in the Lowcountry. Mornings turn cooler, humidity loosens its grip, and golden light stretches across marsh grass beginning to take on its autumn glow. Gardens get a second wind, evenings arrive earlier, and suddenly sitting outside sounds like a good idea again. With guidance from the *2026 Old Farmer's Almanac* and *Grow Great Vegetables South Carolina*, here's what to watch for, plant and enjoy this October.

Weather predictions

Fall should have a little more fall in it this year. The Old Farmer's Almanac predicts a cooler and drier-than-normal September and October for the Atlantic Corridor, with temperatures averaging about 1 degree below normal and rainfall running about an inch below normal.

Average temperature: 67 degrees (1 degree below average)
Precipitation: 3 inches (1 inch below average)

FORECAST BY WEEK
Oct. 1-14: Periods of rain, then sunny; cool
Oct. 15-20: Rain; cool
Oct. 21-28: Sunny; milder
Oct. 29-31: Showers, then sunny; warm

Astronomical events

October has plenty happening overhead, from two meteor showers to one of the most evocatively named full moons of the year.

Oct. 3: The moon reaches its third-quarter phase, beginning a stretch of darker evening skies as it wanes toward the new moon.
Oct. 8: Look north after nightfall for the peak of the Draconid meteor shower.
Oct. 10: The new moon arrives at 11:50 a.m.
Oct. 21-22: The Orionid meteor shower peaks, producing swift meteors from debris left behind by Halley's Comet.
Oct. 26: October's full Hunter's Moon reaches its peak at about 12:11 a.m.

Tides & currents

Stay in sync with the rhythms of the Lowcountry coast. ***Scan this QR code*** *for the latest tide and current predictions from NOAA.*

In the garden



PREP Clear out spent summer plants, remove weeds and diseased material, and refresh beds for cool-season crops. Keep an eye on moisture as rainfall becomes less reliable, and have row covers ready for tender plants when the first truly chilly nights arrive. Fall also is a good time to add mulch around established beds and shrubs, but keep it a few inches away from stems and trunks.

PLANT There's still plenty of time to put something new in the ground. Plant collards, kale, lettuce, mustard greens and garden peas, along with Brussels sprout transplants early in the month. Mustard and Brussels sprouts should be planted by midmonth, while collards and kale can go in through October, lettuce into early November and peas through November. Plant garlic cloves this month, pointed ends up, in well-drained soil, for harvest next year. It's also prime time for onions and annual strawberries, which can establish strong roots now for spring fruit.

HARVEST October is one of those wonderful Lowcountry months when summer and fall can overlap in the garden. Depending on planting dates and conditions, gardens may still produce okra, peppers, eggplant and late tomatoes while fall crops and leafy greens begin joining the harvest. Sweet potatoes, pumpkins and winter squash bring the season firmly into fall.



Best days

October days are especially favorable for these particular activities:

Go fishing: Oct. 10-26
Harvest above-ground crops: Oct. 16-18
Schedule dental care: Oct. 7-8
Bake something: Oct. 3-4 and Oct. 30-31







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TROWEL TALK

Boo-tanical gardens

STRANGE AND SPOOKY PLANTS THAT FLOURISH IN THE LOWCOUNTRY

STORY BY ALEA WILKINS





This time of year, jack-o'-lanterns find their place on the porch, "beware" signs warn passersby, and 12-foot skeletons loom large. For a dose of holiday "fear" without the kitschy decor, these spooky-looking plants can thrive in Lowcountry homes and gardens while celebrating the season naturally.

Venus flytrap (Dionaea muscipula)

Best known for its fanged, gaping trap that snaps shut on unsuspecting prey, the venus flytrap is perhaps the most recognizable creepy plant. Recognized as South Carolina's official state carnivorous plant, this native perennial famously feeds on insects and other small arthropods that trigger its open traps. Over several days it digests its prey, absorbing nutrients that are scarce in the acidic, nutrient-poor soils of its natural habitat. At home it grows best in containers with plenty of sunlight and consistently moist, acidic growing conditions.



Cockscomb (Celosia argentea var. cristata)

The velvety, wrinkled blooms of cockscomb look uncannily brain-like during spooky season. Named for their resemblance to a rooster's comb, these plants originally hail from tropical regions but have become a familiar sight in warm-weather gardens. Their blooms, which can reach impressive sizes, come in red, pink, orange, yellow or white. Keep an eye out for pollinators, which are drawn to their vibrant blooms — or zombies, which may mistake the plants for their favorite snack.



Ghost plant (Graptopetalum paraguayense)

No succulent embodies the spirit of the season more than the ghost plant, a small, ashen botanical native to Mexico. Also referred to as mother-of-pearl plant, this succulent forms rosettes that vary in color, depending on growing conditions. Hot, dry weather can turn its pale leaves slightly pink, while some protection from intense sun can shift them toward a bluer hue. As ground cover, it makes a dimensional addition to garden beds, while in a container it makes charming-yet-ghoulish decor. Wherever it's planted, it looks simply boo-tiful.



Bat-faced cuphea (Cuphea llavea)

A purple calyx and a set of red "ears" give this whimsical bloom its name. Native to Mexico and Central America, bat-faced cuphea thrives in hot, humid conditions, making it a colorful addition to Lowcountry gardens or hanging baskets. Its moniker may sound frightening, but the plant is more cheerful than chilling, drawing hummingbirds, butterflies and other pollinators to the backyard.



Ghost pipe (Monotropa uniflora)

Rising from the ground like the undead, ghost pipe earns its name from its pale, translucent appearance. Each spindly stem, generally growing several inches tall, produces a single nodding flower. This unusual perennial is found in forests throughout much of the United States. Unlike the other plants on this list, however, ghost pipe is not a practical choice for the home garden. It lacks chlorophyll and obtains nutrients through a complex relationship with fungi and trees, making it extremely difficult to cultivate. In the Lowcountry it has been documented on Pinckney Island National Wildlife Refuge.



OCTOBER BIRTH FLOWER

Marigold

With fiery flowers in shades of yellow, orange and red, marigolds bring fall color to the garden until the first frost. Long associated with remembrance, they hold special meaning during Mexico's Día de los Muertos, when their petals are traditionally used to honor the dead and help guide their spirits home.

WHAT'S IN BLOOM THIS MONTH?



October brings a fresh wave of color to Lowcountry gardens as cooler days give fall flowers their time to shine. Many will keep the show going well into the season while providing valuable late-season food for bees, butterflies and other pollinators.



Annuals: *Celosia, marigold, pentas, vinca, zinnia*
Perennials: *Asters, blue mistflower, goldenrod, spotted beebalm, swamp sunflower*

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STYLE

OCTOBER



The fall shift

FRESH COLORS, RICHER TEXTURES AND VERSATILE PIECES EASE LOWCOUNTRY WARDROBES INTO AUTUMN

PHOTOS BY MICHAEL HRIZUK
STYLED BY BAILEY GILLIAM

October attire in the Lowcountry is less about layering up and more about shifting the mood. Muted florals, warm golds, rich leathers and earthy neutrals bring fall into focus, while a mix of textures adds depth without the weight. With warm afternoons holding on and cooler mornings beginning, this month's looks ease into the season through richer color, touchable texture and a few distinctly autumnal details.

Bluffton resident Jennifer Kenwell wearing ***The Back Door***



New season, new mood

October calls for richer color, touchable texture and pieces that nod to the season without getting ahead of the Lowcountry weather. From romantic florals and earthy neutrals to supple leather and Western-inspired details, these finds from local boutiques capture the mood of autumn while staying light enough for coastal days.



Earthy elegance

Spartina 449 welcomes the season with Tabby, a new capsule collection launching this month in a palette made for October. A green floral dress layered with a warm brown sweater sets the tone, while a leather belt and handbag add richness and structure. Gold jewelry provides the finishing glow, pulling together color, pattern and texture in one effortlessly polished look.



Flower power

The Amara dress from ***Island Child*** gives florals an autumn update with an oversized hibiscus print in rich, romantic hues. A ruffled collar, gathered neckline and waist, three-quarter sleeves and navy glitter buttons make the silhouette every bit as special as the pattern. Bold and playful, it's a sweet way for little ones to step into the new season.



Western romance

Brims on the Bluff heads west for October with a look that balances romance with a little rugged charm. A sweeping dark floral dress meets brown cowboy boots and a classic felt hat, pairing soft pattern with Western staples for an easygoing look made for cooler days.



Neutral needs

This PAIGE shirt from ***John Bayley Clothier*** makes a strong case for going neutral this season. The linen-blend button-down comes in Vintage Dusty Trail, a warm, earthy hue that feels right for October, while its lightweight, breathable fabric keeps things comfortable when Lowcountry temperatures haven't quite gotten the seasonal memo.

GET THE LOOK

One wardrobe, endless possibilities

Fall style is all about versatility, especially in the Lowcountry, where the weather rarely follows the calendar. The key is choosing pieces that move easily between polished and casual, workday and weekend, and warm afternoons and cooler mornings. Soft textures, sophisticated neutrals and unexpected pops of color give classic 9-to-5 dressing a fresh, modern point of view. Consider it workwear with more personality and plenty of life after quitting time.

Hilton Head Island resident Jackie Wells-Lindstrom wears ***The Back Door*** *(soft knit suiting),* ***Maggie & Me*** *(boots and handbag) and* ***Gifted*** *(jewelry)*



style

Simple swaps

The best pieces don't belong to just one outfit. Starting with the separates from this soft knit skirt suit, a few strategic changes in color, texture and accessories transform the original ensemble into three distinctly different looks.



Dress down

Keep the tan knit jacket from ***The Back Door***, but trade the matching skirt for a dark blue floral dress from ***Outside Hilton Head***. Brown leather sneakers, also from ***Outside Hilton Head***, relax the look without sacrificing polish, creating an easy combination for in-between October days.



Denim days

Take the same jacket in a more casual direction with a neutral sweater and statement jeans from ***Evelyn & Arthur***. Studded details on the denim play off the jacket's warm tones, while tan sandals from ***Maggie & Me*** keep the look light, relaxed and ready for whatever the day brings.



Texture play

This time, let the tan skirt do the work. Pair it with a textured white top from ***Evelyn & Arthur*** where an unexpected gold-zip neckline adds a little edge. Leopard-print boots from ***Maggie & Me*** introduce pattern and personality, and delicate earrings from ***Gifted*** finish the look with just the right amount of shine.

Sapphires aren't just for September anymore. Fall in love with these brilliant blues all year long.



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Local Love

PICK OF THE PATCH

Make your home an elegant, autumnal wonderland with this decorative pumpkin from MacKenzie-Childs, featuring a white and orange pattern and trimmed with gold leaf on the stem.

Available at Forsythe Jewelers



BEST BUD

Decorate your home for the season with these pretty painted pumpkins featuring a variety of floral designs. They come in a range of colors such as orange, blue, green and pink.

Available at Marsh on the May



WITCH WAY

Decorate your home for the spooky season with this display featuring a striking Halloween witch, glowing owl lantern, feline companions and glittered pumpkins. A magical statement piece perfect for a mantel, entryway, or Halloween display.

Available at Pyramids



ORANGE YOU GLAD

Celebrate the changing season with this collection of orange decor.



ROYAL FLUSH

Perfect for the fall season, this orange card holder adds a pop of color to your home.

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LET'S PLAY

Settle in for a cozy game night with this pink-and-orange, champagne-inspired Oh My Mahjong mat and tiles.

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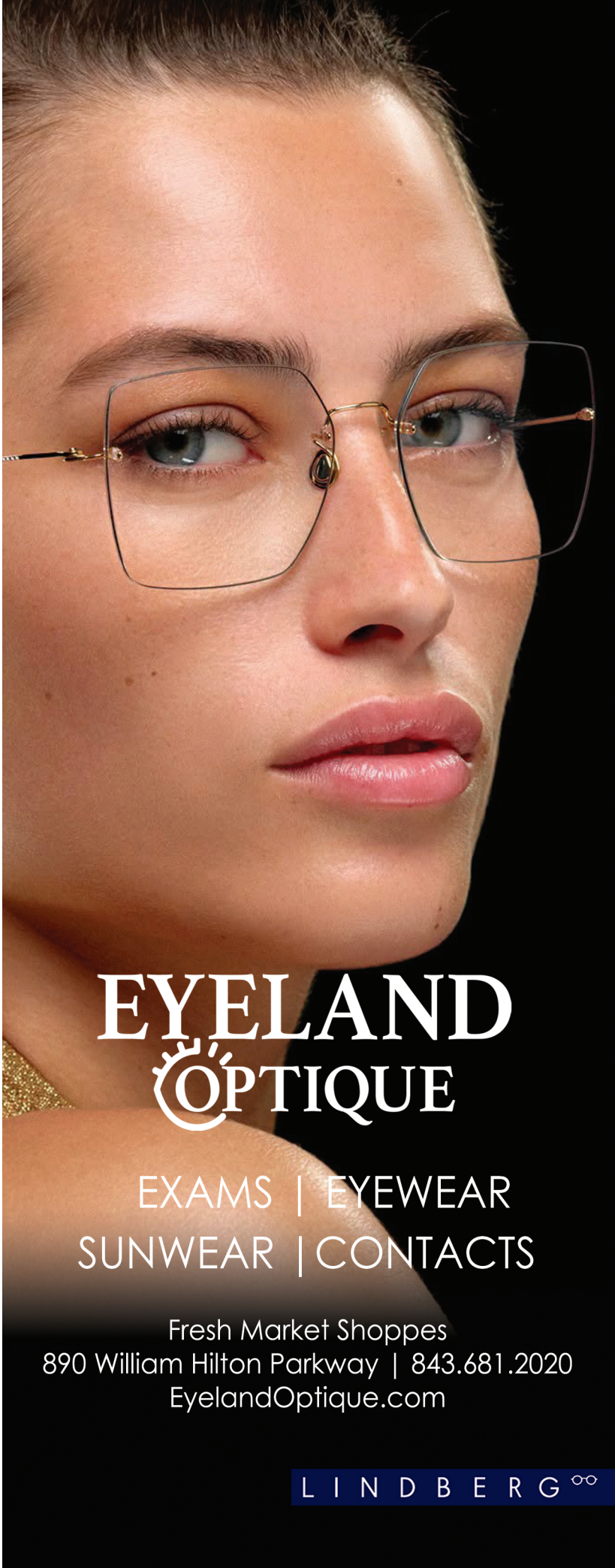
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Still among us

The Lowcountry's most haunting legends blur the line between history, memory and myth

STORY BY RICHARD THOMAS + PHOTOGRAPHY BY MICHAEL HRIZUK





The Lowcountry has never been short on ghosts. For generations, stories of restless spirits, tragic romances, mysterious lights and unexplained encounters have been passed from one storyteller to the next, often attaching themselves to some of the region's most historic places. Lighthouses, plantation ruins, old cemeteries and moss-draped roads provide the settings, while real people and events often form the threads from which the legends were spun.

The stories that follow are rooted in historical people, places and events, but they are legends, not historical accounts. As stories pass through generations of oral tradition, names and dates shift, recollections blur, and documented history becomes intertwined with folklore, legend and myth. What remains is part history, part mystery and part the enduring power of a good story. Whether you believe every eerie detail or simply enjoy the folklore, these tales offer another way to explore the people, places and mysteries of the Lowcountry. The ghost stories on the following pages are adapted and abridged with permission from stories developed for a manuscript entitled *Hilton Head Haunted History Tales* by local historian, Richard Thomas.

WHERE LEGENDS LINGER Beneath live oaks and Spanish moss, the ruins of the Chapel of Ease on St. Helena Island feel made for a ghost story. Built around 1740, the old tabby chapel is one of many historic Lowcountry places where documented history and generations of folklore have become intertwined.

Forever waiting

THE LEGEND: Two young lovers separated by tragedy are said to reunite after dark at the Chapel of Ease

By daylight, the tabby walls of the Chapel of Ease ruins on St. Helena Island stand silent beneath sprawling live oaks draped in Spanish moss. The old cemetery is peaceful, its weathered stones leaning gently with the passing centuries. But when twilight settles over the island and the marsh begins to breathe its cool evening mist, the old church seems to awaken. In one telling of the legend, the figures who return are a young couple named Eliza and Edgar, whose identities have become intertwined with the Fripp family as the story has passed through generations.

The story reaches back to the early history of the Chapel of Ease, built during the colonial era to serve families living on St. Helena Island. As the tale has been passed down, Edgar was a young man from a prosperous planter family, admired for his quiet manners and adventurous spirit. Eliza was equally well born, graceful and intelligent, and before long the two fell deeply in love. The chapel, where the legend says they first met, was to be the site of their wedding. Invitations had been sent, flowers gathered, and neighbors spoke of little else. But only days before the ceremony, Edgar rode to Beaufort on business. Somewhere along the lonely shell road, his horse stumbled. Edgar was thrown violently to the ground and suffered terrible injuries. By the time help arrived, he was dead.

When the news reached Eliza, she refused to believe it. Every afternoon she walked alone to the Chapel of Ease, convinced Edgar would come riding beneath the ancient oaks just as he always had. Days became weeks, and weeks became months. Friends begged her to leave the island for a time, but she would not.

"This is where he promised to meet me," she would quietly answer.

One autumn evening, as the sun disappeared beyond the marsh, Eliza was seen standing in the churchyard wearing the white gown she had intended for her wedding. A passing carriage stopped to offer her a ride home, but she smiled and politely declined.

"Thank you, but I won't be alone much longer," she said.

The next morning she was found beneath one of the great live oaks, her wedding dress stained with dew and her hands folded peacefully across her chest. No one could explain how she had died, and the legend holds that she was buried near Edgar, within sight of the chapel they had never entered together. Not long afterward, strange stories began to spread across St. Helena Island. Travelers returning home after sunset reported seeing a young couple walking slowly through the cemetery. The gentleman wore a dark riding coat and carried his hat beneath one arm. Beside him walked a woman dressed in white, her hand resting lightly upon his sleeve. They never spoke, simply wandering among the gravestones before disappearing into the ruins of the old chapel.

Others have claimed to hear faint music drifting through the broken windows on moonlit nights. The sound is said to resemble a distant violin playing a wedding march, though no musicians are ever found. Some visitors have even reported seeing two indistinct figures standing together inside the empty doorway, only to discover moments later that no one was there. Perhaps moonlight simply plays tricks through the moss, and perhaps the wind carries strange sounds across the marsh. Or perhaps, as the old story insists, Eliza and Edgar are still keeping the wedding appointment fate denied them in life.



A VIEW THROUGH TIME Seen through a window of the Chapel of Ease ruins, the Fripp mausoleum stands beyond the old tabby walls. The atmospheric setting has inspired generations of stories, including a legend of two young lovers said to reunite after dark at the chapel.



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The light still burns

THE LEGEND: A lighthouse keeper's daughter is said to linger at Haig Point, waiting for a love who sailed away

No one can say exactly when Maggie Comer became part of the folklore surrounding the Haig Point Lighthouse. Some versions say she died of a broken heart. Others acknowledge what the historical record tells us: Maggie lived well beyond her years at the lighthouse, married, helped raise a family in Savannah and died in 1930. Somewhere between those facts grew one of Daufuskie Island's enduring ghost stories.

The lighthouse was new in 1873 when Patrick Comer became its first keeper. His daughter, Maggie, grew up overlooking the restless waters of Calibogue Sound, watching ships come and go and helping her family with life at the light station. According to the legend, a lighthouse service engineer arrived aboard a tender to work on the lantern. During his stay, Maggie became enamored with

BEACON OF A LEGEND
Built in 1873, the Haig Point Lighthouse has watched over Calibogue Sound for more than 150 years. It also became the setting for one of Daufuskie Island's enduring ghost stories, the legend of Maggie, a lighthouse keeper's daughter, said to still watch the water for a love who never returned.









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the visitor. Then he departed and never returned. The story says Maggie continued climbing the tower, watching the channel and waiting for his vessel to appear on the horizon. With each retelling, the waiting grew longer and the romance more tragic until Maggie herself became part of the lighthouse's lore.

More than a century later, guests have reported soft footsteps on the spiral staircase, a rocking chair moving on a still evening and doors seemingly opening or locking on their own. Fishermen have told of a woman dressed in white appearing in the lantern room just before fog rolls across the sound. Others claim to have seen her standing motionless in an upstairs window, her gaze fixed on the shipping channel. History gives Maggie a less tragic ending. Family accounts say she married her deceased sister's widower, Capt. Walter John Thompson, helped raise her sister's three surviving children in Savannah and died in 1930. She is buried in Laurel Grove Cemetery. Yet on Daufuskie, fact has never entirely displaced folklore. The Maggie who lived a full life and the Maggie who eternally watches the water now exist side by side — one preserved in records, the other in stories. At Haig Point, both versions still linger.

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STILL HIS GROUND
The Stoney-Baynard Ruins stand beneath a canopy of live oaks and Spanish moss in Sea Pines. Once part of Braddock's Point Plantation, the site became the setting for a Hilton Head legend about Isaiah Stoney, whose restless spirit is said to have returned to reclaim the land he lost.



Get off my land

THE LEGEND: A man who lost the property he worked to own allegedly returned to Braddock's Point to reclaim it

Local tradition holds that Isaiah Stoney was born into slavery on Hilton Head Island and later pursued something once unimaginable: ownership of land connected to the plantation where he had been enslaved. In the turbulent years surrounding the Civil War and Reconstruction, land across the Sea Islands changed hands through confiscation, tax sales and government programs. Records involving formerly enslaved landowners are incomplete, and generations of oral history have filled some of the gaps. One such tradition holds that Isaiah purchased a portion of land at Braddock's Point, only to lose it when members of the Baynard family reclaimed property after the war. The loss, the story says, embittered him for the rest of his life.

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Golf may be the setting for this story, but the bigger picture is about life on Callawassie Island: thoughtful stewardship, intentional investment and the space to enjoy the things that brought you to the Lowcountry in the first place.







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Later versions of the tale place Isaiah in the phosphate industry along the Coosaw River and say he died around the time as the devastating Charleston earthquake of 1886. By then, members of the Baynard family had returned to Braddock's Point. The original plantation house burned, and a later generation is said to have built again on the property. Then, according to the legend, the voices began. One evening, someone drawing water from a well near the house reportedly heard a faint voice rising from below:

"Get off my land."

Soon the warning grew more ominous. Strange noises were heard around the property. Animals and crops suffered unexplained misfortune. Eventually that later house, too, vanished from the landscape, and the ruins of Braddock's Point were reclaimed by forest. Decades later, as Sea Pines was being developed, stories of strange occurrences around the ruins surfaced again. Workers spoke of unexplained sounds and an uneasy feeling around the old site.

Today visitors still report unsettling experiences at the Stoney-Baynard Ruins. Some hear faint sounds carried on the evening breeze. Others describe an overwhelming feeling that they are not alone. Wind through the trees can sound like many things. According to this old island story, one of them is a warning.

"Get off my land."



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BURIED SECRETS As the sun sets over Skull Creek, live oaks and Spanish moss fade into silhouette. The peaceful Hilton Head waterway provides an atmospheric setting for a much darker legend involving buried treasure, two Union soldiers and a dead pirate said to guard his gold from beyond the grave.

Dead men guard their gold

THE LEGEND: Buried treasure along Skull Creek is said to have a supernatural guardian

During the Civil War, Hilton Head became headquarters of the Union Department of the South. Tens of thousands of Union troops passed through the island, while thousands of formerly enslaved people sought refuge and paid work within Union lines. From that turbulent period grew a much older-sounding Skull Creek tale, one involving pirates, buried treasure and a guardian who never left his post. According to the story, a woman whose family had lived along Skull Creek for generations told two Union soldiers about something an ancestor had witnessed long before the war: pirates burying two heavy sea chests beneath a pair of live oaks. But the treasure did not go into the ground alone.

The pirate captain supposedly murdered one of his own men and buried the body beside the chests, binding the dead man to the treasure as its eternal guardian. Intrigued, the soldiers supposedly set out one night with a pick and shovel to find it. The two live oaks stood where the story said they would. As the men dug, the sky darkened, and a cold wind swept through the trees. Then a pick struck something solid beneath the sand. At that instant, according to the legend, a brilliant flash illuminated a figure standing nearby: a dead pirate in tattered clothing, holding a gleaming cutlass. The soldiers fled.

No contemporary account documenting the encounter is known to survive, leaving the episode firmly in the realm of oral tradition. But the tale of treasure beneath Skull Creek — and something guarding it — endured. People have been searching the Lowcountry for buried treasure for centuries. This particular story suggests knowing when to stop digging.

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Revenge across the sound

THE LEGEND: A Revolutionary War killing left a restless spirit searching for vengeance

In the closing months of the American Revolution, Hilton Head and Daufuskie islands found themselves on opposite sides of a bitter conflict. Patriot militia operated from Hilton Head while Loyalist forces remained active across Calibogue Sound. Among those caught in the violence were Charles Davant and Loyalist militia leader Philip Martinangel. In October 1781, Martinangel led a Tory raiding party onto Hilton Head. Before dawn, his men ambushed a Patriot patrol near Broad Creek. Davant was mortally wounded but managed to remain in the saddle long enough for his horse to carry him home. The killing demanded revenge.

Two months later, members of the Patriot militia crossed Calibogue Sound to Daufuskie. Martinangel was killed and his plantation house burned. History records the bloodshed. Legend tells what happened next. Stories began circulating of a ghostly figure wandering the grounds associated with Martinangel. The apparition was said to wear bloodstained clothing and emit a mournful moan that sounded like wind rushing through live oaks before a hurricane. Eventually, the legend crossed the water.



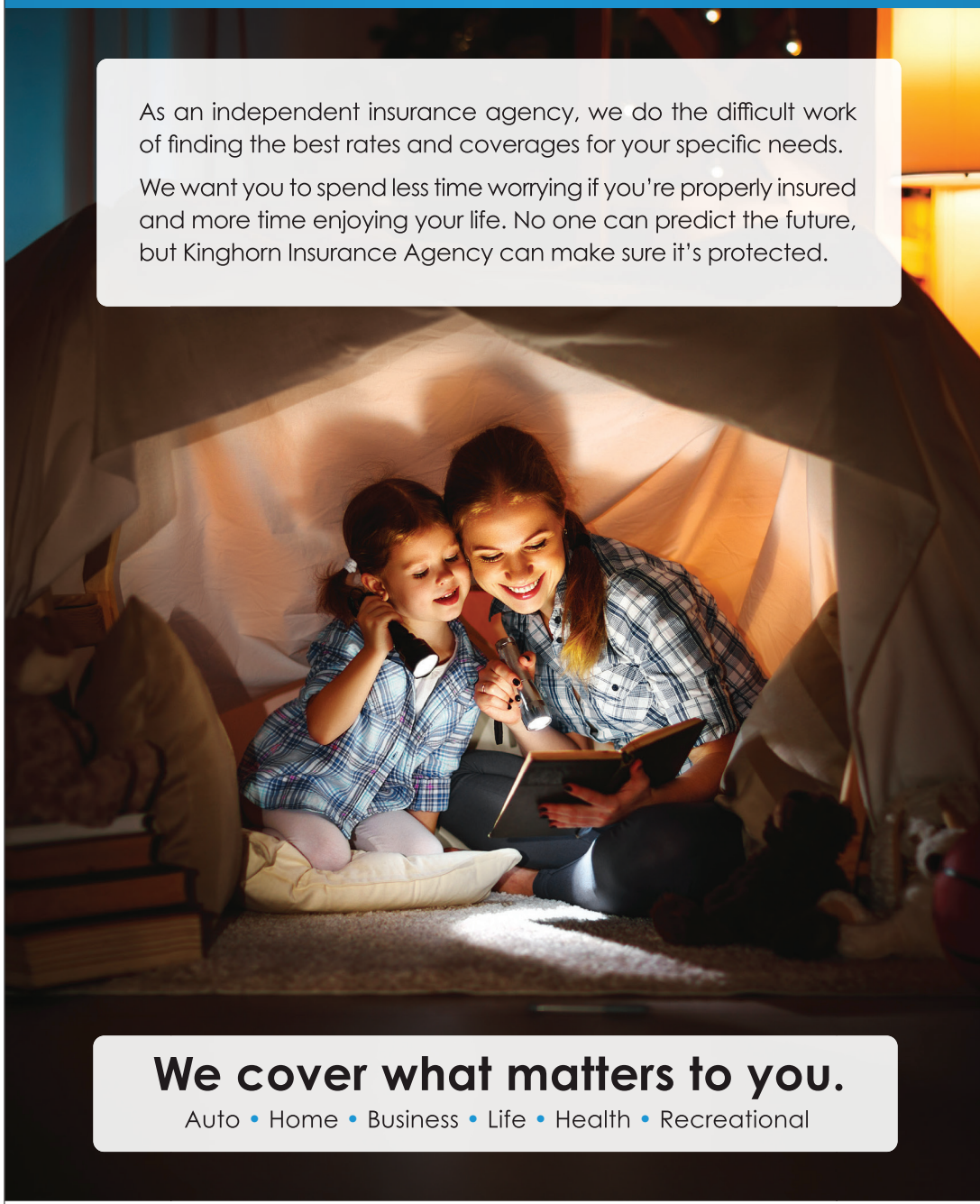
WHERE THE LEGEND RESTS Mary Dunn Cemetery on Daufuskie Island is believed to be the final resting place of Capt. Philip Martinangele, the Loyalist militia leader killed by Hilton Head Patriots in December 1781.



A MARKER OF REVENGE A historical marker on Daufuskie Island recounts the death of Loyalist militia captain Philip Martinangel, who was killed by a Hilton Head Patriot force in December 1781. His violent death became the historical foundation for a darker island legend, one in which Martinangel's restless spirit continued searching for vengeance long after the Revolution ended.

One version of the story tells of a bicyclist riding on Hilton Head in December 1981 — two centuries after the Revolutionary War violence — who encountered a strange figure near the area associated with Davant's ambush. Gunshot-like sounds reportedly followed as the cyclist fled. No surviving documentation of the episode has been located, leaving the encounter firmly in the realm of folklore. But on nights when strange sounds drift through the trees near Calibogue Sound, the old Martinangel story still gives them a name.

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Buried too soon

THE LEGEND: Scratches inside the Baynard Mausoleum fuel one of the Lowcountry's most chilling tales

Few fears were more terrifying in the 19th century than being buried alive. Long before modern medicine could reliably distinguish death from certain states of unconsciousness, stories of premature burial circulated widely — and across the Lowcountry several old tombs eventually acquired legends of their own. On Hilton Head that story became attached to the Baynard Mausoleum at Zion Cemetery.

The legend identifies the victim as Josephine Baynard, a young member of the prominent family that owned Braddock's Point Plantation. No definitive historical record identifying Josephine as one of the Baynard children has been found, and versions of nearly the same story are told elsewhere in the Lowcountry. But Hilton Head's version has one particularly eerie detail: scratches visible inside the old mausoleum.

According to the story, Josephine became gravely ill during a diphtheria outbreak. Believing she had died, the family placed her inside the mausoleum and sealed the chamber. Years later, when the tomb was opened for another burial, Josephine's remains were said to have been found outside the chamber where she had been placed. The horrifying explanation quickly became legend: Josephine had not been dead at all. She had awakened inside the crypt. The scratches on the mausoleum walls became part of the story, said to be the marks of a terrified child desperately trying to escape.

Whether those marks have anything to do with a young Baynard — or whether a widespread fear of premature burial simply found the perfect setting inside an old Hilton Head tomb — may never be known. Either way, once you have heard the story, the scratches are difficult to look at quite the same way again.

BEHIND THE IRON GATE The Baynard Mausoleum stands beneath moss-draped live oaks at Zion Cemetery on Hilton Head Island. The 19th-century tomb became the setting for the chilling legend of Josephine Baynard, a young girl said to have awakened after being sealed inside, with mysterious scratches on the mausoleum walls adding an unsettling detail to the tale.









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JOURNEY'S END
Weathered headstones stand beneath ancient live oaks at Zion Cemetery on Hilton Head Island, where William Eddings Baynard was laid to rest in 1849. According to island legend, the funeral procession that carried him here never truly ended with ghostly wagons said to still make their way toward the cemetery on dark, rainy nights.

The funeral that never ended

THE LEGEND: A ghostly procession is said to still carry William Baynard toward his final resting place

William Eddings Baynard was a wealthy planter from a prominent Charleston and Edisto family who acquired Braddock's Point Plantation during the 1840s. A deed held by the South Carolina Historical Society places his purchase from the Bank of Charleston in 1845, the same year he acquired the Davenport House in Savannah. The following year he built the family mausoleum overlooking the Zion Chapel of Ease Cemetery.

Local legend offers a more colorful version of the transaction, insisting Baynard won Braddock's Point in a poker game. History points instead to the Bank of Charleston. Baynard enjoyed only a few years on Hilton Head before contracting a fever and dying in Savannah in October 1849. According to island tradition, his body was returned to Hilton Head for an enormous funeral. A procession made its way from Braddock's Point toward Zion Cemetery, accompanied by family, friends and island residents. The sadness of that journey, legend says, never left.

For generations Hilton Head residents have told of seeing a ghostly funeral procession traveling toward Zion Cemetery on dark, rainy nights. Witnesses describe shadowy wagons gliding through the mist, while an eerie wailing drifts from the moss-covered oaks and nearby marshes. One story passed down by early Sea Pines employees tells of a grounds worker who encountered "Mr. Baynard's funeral wagons" in the early 1960s. So shaken was he by the experience, he reportedly tried to resign. He was persuaded to stay, only to encounter the procession again several years later. This time, the story goes, nothing could convince him to remain. The account survived through longtime Sea Pines employees, including Tom Norby and Happy Mitchell, becoming another strand in Hilton Head's oral history. On the right kind of night, when rain hangs in the air and the island grows quiet, some say the old procession can still be heard making its way toward Zion.



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The headless surgeon

THE LEGEND: A Confederate doctor killed at Fort Walker is said to still wander the old battlefield

On Nov. 7, 1861, Union warships opened fire on Fort Walker during the Battle of Port Royal, unleashing a devastating bombardment that helped force Confederate troops from Hilton Head. Among the Confederate dead was surgeon Dr. Edward S. Buist. Accounts of exactly how Buist died differ. Historical reports indicate that he was killed by an exploding shell during the bombardment. Over generations, however, the story became considerably more gruesome. Buist was said to have been struck by a cannonball while tending the wounded, leaving him without his head. That image became the foundation of one of Hilton Head's darker ghost stories.

According to the legend, Buist's headless figure has been seen wandering the former Fort Walker area, today part of Port Royal Plantation. Witnesses describe a bloodstained Confederate uniform and a figure moving silently through the darkness as though searching for something lost during the battle. The story grew further after graves from the old Union Cemetery were relocated in the late 1950s and early 1960s. Later island tradition held that Buist's remains may have been among those exhumed and moved.

That added a particularly unsettling wrinkle to the legend. Did everything leave with him? Perhaps the apparition searches for something left behind on the battlefield. Perhaps a violent wartime death simply became fertile ground for generations of storytelling. Either way, Hilton Head folklore remembers Dr. Buist, not simply as one of Fort Walker's casualties, but as the surgeon who never quite left.

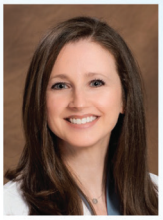
REMNANTS OF WAR The remains of a Civil War-era steam gun battery stand near the former site of Fort Walker in Port Royal Plantation. The surrounding ground was the scene of intense bombardment during the Battle of Port Royal on Nov. 7, 1861, when Confederate surgeon Dr. Edward S. Buist was killed. His death later inspired one of Hilton Head's darker ghost legends.

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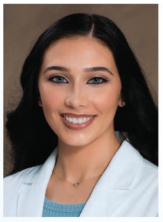
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The warrior beneath Harbour Town

THE LEGEND: A Yemassee spirit is said to guard ground beneath one of Hilton Head's famous landmarks

Long before Europeans settled the Carolina coast, Native American communities lived along Hilton Head's rivers and salt marshes. Among the traces they left behind were enormous shell rings and middens — accumulations of oyster and clam shells marking places where people had lived and gathered for generations. Over centuries, many of those shell deposits disappeared. Shells were removed, burned for lime, crushed for building materials or simply displaced as Hilton Head developed.

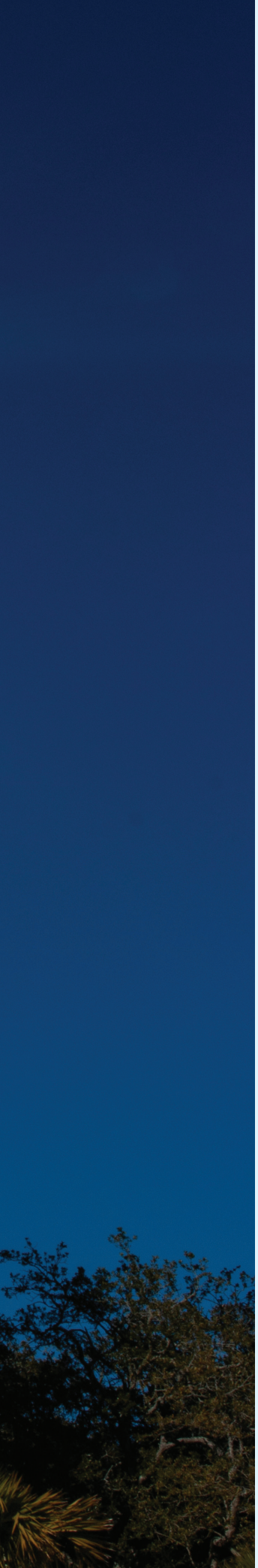
Island oral tradition has long associated one such concentration of shells with the area around Harbour Town. During the late 1600s and early 1700s, the Yemassee lived along this coast, sometimes as allies of the English and eventually as enemies. Years of mounting tensions helped ignite the Yemassee War of 1715, a devastating conflict that reshaped the Carolina Lowcountry.

Centuries later, as Charles Fraser developed Harbour Town and reshaped its shoreline, large quantities of shells were reportedly encountered and moved. Early Sea Pines stories, including recollections attributed to Tom Norby, helped connect those discoveries to an older legend. According to that legend, a Yemassee warrior left Hilton Head to fight and returned to discover that his wife and children had been killed. Unable to find peace, his spirit remained near the place where his family had lived.

As Harbour Town took shape, strange stories followed. Workers reportedly spoke of unexplained occurrences around the site, and later visitors climbing the lighthouse described sudden chills, strange cries and the sensation that someone was following close behind them on the stairs. Whether those experiences have anything to do with ancient shell deposits — or whether generations of Hilton Head storytelling simply connected two intriguing pieces of island history — is impossible to know.

But legends have a way of attaching themselves to places. At Harbour Town, this one apparently never left.





WHAT LIES BENEATH
The Harbour Town Lighthouse rises above one of Hilton Head Island's most recognizable destinations. According to island legend, however, the ground beneath Harbour Town is haunted by a Yemassee warrior whose restless spirit has been blamed for unexplained sounds, sudden chills and the feeling of an unseen presence following visitors up the lighthouse stairs.

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BEACON OF THE BLUE LADY The Hilton Head Rear Range Lighthouse still stands in Leamington, a surviving link to the island's maritime past. It also provides the setting for the legend of Caroline Fripp, the mysterious "Blue Lady" said to appear near the tower on stormy nights, forever connected to a light she once struggled to keep burning.

The lady in blue

THE LEGEND: A young woman is said to still tend a Hilton Head lighthouse after a deadly hurricane

Before GPS and electronic navigation, ships entering the waters between Charleston and Savannah depended on coastal-range lights to guide them through shifting shoals and sandbars. One of those lights stood near what is now Leamington on Hilton Head Island.

The historical record identifies Paulson Schwarzer as the keeper associated with the station around the time of the devastating 1898 hurricane. But Hilton Head folklore remembers another keeper: Adam Fripp and his daughter, Caroline. No Adam Fripp appears in surviving Lighthouse Service keeper records, a discrepancy that has never stopped the story from becoming one of Hilton Head's best-known ghost legends.

According to the tale, Adam and Caroline were tending the light when the Great Hurricane of 1898 struck. As the storm intensified, Adam climbed the tower to make sure the beacon remained lit. Caroline later found him collapsed inside. With the hurricane raging and ships depending on the light, the young woman took over her father's duty. Through wind and rain, she kept the beacon burning.

What happened afterward depends on who tells the story. In one version, Caroline survived the storm but became gravely ill and died soon afterward. Other versions allow her a much longer life. The ghost story, however, gives her no retirement. For generations people have reported glimpses of a pale blue figure near the lighthouse site, particularly on stormy nights. Other tales place Caroline's spirit around buildings said to have connections to the old light station. Witnesses describe unexplained noises, objects moving and fleeting glimpses of a woman dressed in blue.

Perhaps Caroline Fripp never existed as the legend remembers her. Perhaps several lives and events became blended together as the story passed from one generation to another. But on Hilton Head, she has become the Blue Lady. Storm clouds, an old lighthouse and a flash of blue are sometimes all a legend needs to survive. *LL*

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Shaping the spirits

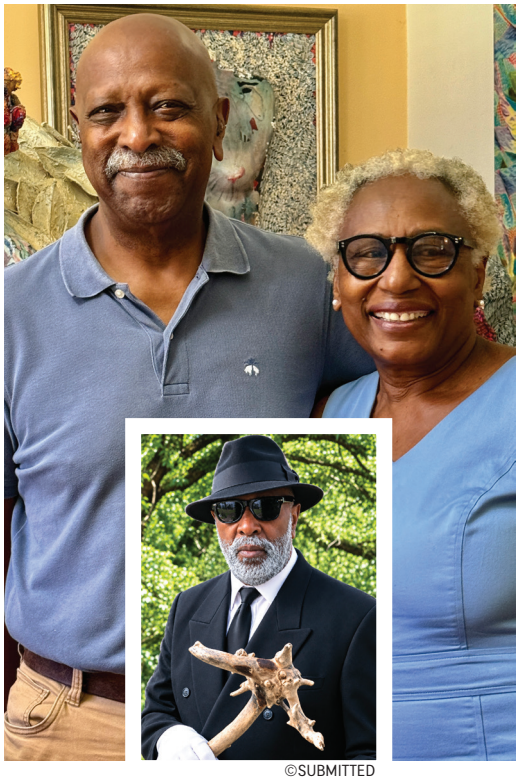
THE ART OF BERNICE AND ANDY TATE

STORY + PHOTOGRAPHY
BY CAROLYN MALES

The Angel

This is no ordinary angel. A large heavenly being, her body swollen with child, spreads her wings over a world peopled by Gullah women and spirits sculpted by artist Bernice Mitchell Tate. Beneath the angel, a conjure woman, swathed in masses of red, blue and orange, leans into a boo hag, her jewel-encrusted bone poised to cast a spell on the unsuspecting. Meanwhile, a warrior woman, with one breast shorn off in battle and spear raised, looks away from her mysterious neighbor, who seems to have shielded herself against the world with blue dreadlocks that hide her face. What's even more intriguing is that these life-size figures are all created from collaged paper that Tate has snipped, pleated and draped over fabric and mannequin parts she's scavenged from thrift stores.

To walk through room after room of these figures, caught mid-gesture among wood sculptures from Africa and beyond, is to step into a mystical realm of ancestral spirits from the Sea Islands. Their vividly patterned skirts and shawls come from the designs of hand-sewn quilts made by Tate's late mother, Veronica Robinson-Mitchell. Women like her mother, Tate points out, sustained traditions brought from African shores throughout the oppression of slavery and established new ones imbued with their beliefs, memories and ingenuity.



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Enter Dr. Buzzard

I'd come here to the Tates' Bluffton home and studio to meet with Bernice and her husband, Andy, both artists, albeit in different mediums — Bernice for her sculptures and collage works, Andy for his illustrations and performance art. A few years back, I'd visited their joint Doctah Buzzard's Root Works installation — a walk through an imagined "apothecary" fringed in Spanish moss and stocked with the famed root doctor's cures and hoodoo items like dolls and chicken feet — that they'd staged in Beaufort and Savannah. Over the years they also collaborated on a children's storybook series and staged exhibitions of Bernice's women. Meanwhile, Andy, a dedicated historical researcher, produced podcasts and presentations in which he took on the persona of this real-life Lowcountry legend.

Now the three of us sit side by side on a re-purposed old church pew in their living room among this colorful extended family of women. Talking with the Tates feels like stepping into one of Bernice's mixed-media collages. They finish each other's sentences, interject clever observations and quips into each other's stories and punctuate the conversation with laughter. It's teamwork that spans 57 years.





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Bernice's mixed-media sculptures begin with Andy photographing selections of patterns from Bernice's mother's hand-sewn quilts and printing them on paper that Bernice cuts and shapes onto her armatures. Afterward, Andy does the grunt work of placing each completed piece in whatever scenario she's envisioned. And upon an exhibition's opening, if there's a piano in the room, you might find him playing his original compositions.

[LOCAL Life] Bernice, you spent a good chunk of your life in New York where you were a nurse, met and married Andy and had your son, Derek. What compelled you to move back to the Lowcountry in 2006?

[Bernice Tate] I've been privileged and done a lot of traveling in my life, but I always say, 'You went down a dirt road to get to my house and at the end of the day, I'm the daughter of a Gullah farmer.' My eight siblings and I grew up in Sheldon on the same farm where my father and grandfather did. My parents believed education was the most important thing, and they encouraged us to go out in the world and do well.



[LL] The themes of your work, you've said, are Womanism and Ancestralism. We see women at work — carrying rice or blocks of indigo dye in baskets on their heads — and we meet conjure women and boo hags. But the one piece you bring to every exhibition is a woman's pregnant torso, banded with rusted chains and covered in historic ads announcing "NEGROS FOR SALE."

[BT] "Unspeakable Horror" was the first sculpture I ever did, and I have not sold her. I only do women because I want women to know the hardships we went through. I do want them to move forward, to step out and be what they want to be. But let's not forget. When I was a child, we were poor, but we didn't know we were poor. My mother made quilts out of scraps of fabric, sacks and whatever she could find. That's the stuff I put in my exhibitions, like my 'Sacred Scraps' exhibition in Aiken, to show where we came from. We honor the ancestors.



[LL] Given the importance of tradition, are there any rituals you go through when creating?

[BT] My inspiration comes from here. [She points to her heart.] My mother was a quilter, and my grandmother made fancy dresses. So, when I begin a piece, I call on them. 'Mom, Grandma, how am I going to do this?' That's how I create my art.

[LL] Andy, you grew up in New York City and worked in international finance technology for Wall Street firms. But given your expertise in African sculpture and performance art, you clearly had your own artistic leanings.

[Andy Tate] Art is everywhere in New York — in museums, galleries, on the streets. It was always a part of me growing up, and I would go to the Metropolitan, attend lectures and openings, and had friends who were artists. Along the way, I learned a lot about African art and was perceived as being a kind of curator.

[LL] And acting?

[AT] I took voice and acting lessons, and I did act Off-Broadway for a while with the Negro Ensemble Company. But I never could really decide what I wanted to do in the theater."

[LL] I read a quote from you that said when you moved down here, you connected with your spiritual guide.

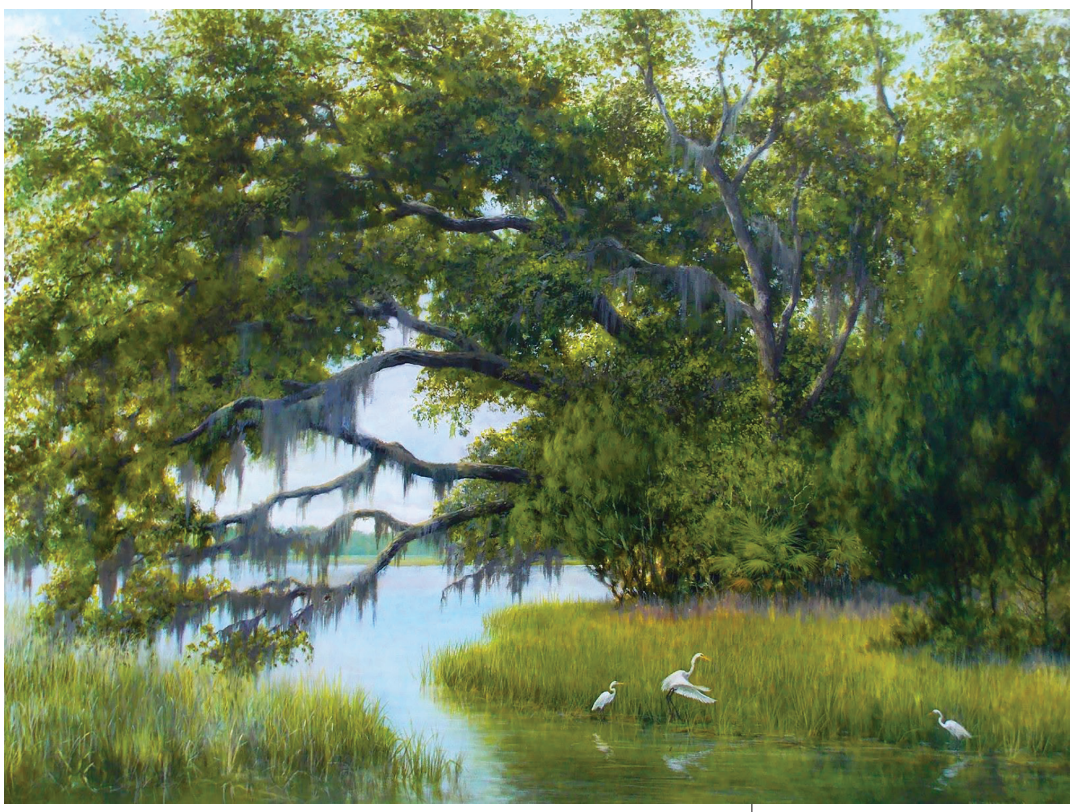
[AT] Bernice's father, Rufus Mitchell, would talk about things like hoodoo and Dr. Buzzard. One time when we were driving on St. Helena, he said, 'That road is where Dr. Buzzard is buried.' I said, 'Let's go.' He said, 'No, no, no. We can't go down there.' I was fascinated and started doing research. Stephany Robinson was born in the 1860s and grew up listening to the stories told by the women and old men, and somehow he put it all together. Hoodoo is a plantation religion, and he navigated through life understanding that people needed more than the church. I was always interested in the occult, so I hooked into it, created the character and began giving performances. Most people want to see blood on dragons and all that, but I documented the real story and made him human.

As I leave, I turn back to listen to the wind chimes jingling in the trees. That's when I spot a bottle tree in the yard. Ah, any restless spirits or haints that were trapped inside have surely dissolved in this bright sunshine. The ancestors are smiling down. *LL*

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Jim and Addison Palmer

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TWO GENERATIONS OF ARTISTS PAINTING THE LOWCOUNTRY

STORY BY CAROLYN MALES

It was only fitting that artist Addison Palmer and I had decided to meet up at the Harbour Town Lighthouse. Towering 90 feet above its surrounding plaza, the red-and-white column has stood as "a visual exclamation point" at the edge of Calibogue Sound for 56 years. While developing a master plan for Sea Pines Plantation on Hilton Head, developer Charles Fraser traveled in Europe, studying harbor towns like Portofino, noting their pedestrian-friendly spaces and how they were organized around a feature that gave them a strong identity. He had wanted an iconic symbol for his innovative resort community with its expansive tree canopies, earth-toned buildings and curved roads. A lighthouse, he decided, would serve as a welcoming beacon.

Now, as Addison and I settle into the waterfront's signature red rocking chairs, he begins our conversation with a jolt. "Our view of the lighthouse might have been very different if it hadn't been for my father," he says. Okay, he's got my attention. In the mid-1960s his parents, Jim and Barbara Palmer, had taken a detour on a road trip from Naples, Florida, and followed a sign to Hilton Head. Barbara would end up taking a job with the Sea Pines Company, serving as a community liaison, while Jim would settle in to paint sky, water, marsh and trees. Their children, Elise and Addison, would grow up here, and at age 12 Addison would launch his own art career with a painting of pelicans flying over the sand dunes that would fetch four figures at the gala island fundraiser, An Evening of the Arts.

And the lighthouse? How did it end up with its red-and-white horizontal bands? I'd read about Fraser's brother, Joe, pointing to a rusty stake as inspiration for the color red, but then Addison puts me on the phone with his father, who tells a more interesting origin story. We connect, and Jim Palmer's voice comes over the phone from his home on St. Simons Island.

"I got a call from Charles Fraser, who wanted me to do a painting of the lighthouse for a holiday card. I went down to meet him in Harbour Town, where we stood at the end of the marsh. I said, 'Charles, there is no lighthouse!' 'Well, it's going to be there,' Charles said, pointing to a couple of iron posts sticking up in the ground. So I got the dimensions and came up with a painting. He didn't tell me the color, but since it was Christmastime, I made the lighthouse red and white like a candy cane."

ART THAT ELEVATES



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Spreading the word

"*The Islander*," Addison prompts, nudging me to ask his father about Hilton Head's first big publication, which debuted at a time when developers and businesses wanted to entice more drivers from the mainland to cross the swing bridge to the growing community.

"In those days the Chamber of Commerce sat in a little white building across from Honey Horn, and they'd been putting out a small weekly, which I'd done some drawings for," Jim replies. "One day I approached them and said, 'Why don't we start a magazine?' They said, 'You come up with a name and a design, and we'll do it.' So I created a cover with the name *The Islander*. They were pleased and gave me $75."

The Islander, published from 1967-1992, not only served as a promotional organ for the fledgling resort but also as a news source for locals and visitors alike, with articles about the island's history, people, businesses, environment and events. Jim designed many of the covers, including one he calls a "Girl from Ipanema"-type illustration (featuring Barbara walking down the beach) to draw in more tourists.

Shadows on the salt marsh

In the meantime, Jim had been showing his work at The Red Piano Art Gallery on Cordillo Road and taking commissions. But in 1969 he got into what some might term "trouble for a good cause." He became a behind-the-scenes activist against BASF, a huge German chemical company with plans to turn five miles along the Colleton River into a sprawling petrochemical plant. The company promised Beaufort County and the state investments in the millions, along with hundreds of jobs. Politicians rubbed their hands in anticipation, and some locals applauded the promised employment opportunities. But a coalition of environmentalists, developers like Fraser, residents, artists and, most crucially, Black shrimpers saw the threat to the pristine estuary system. While *The Islander* documented these events, Jim mobilized some nationally known journalists, like Marshall Frady (writing for *Harper's Magazine*), and sports figures like Arnold Palmer, who brought the story to the attention of the Nixon White House.

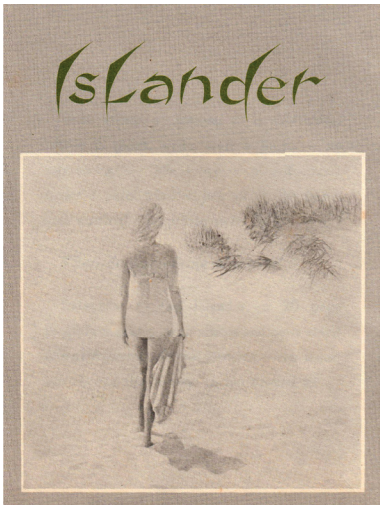
Meanwhile, even though Jim had worked in the shadows, word had gotten out about his role. Facing threats, the Palmers made a middle-of-the-night escape to their property in North Carolina, hunkering down until they felt it was safe to return. Then, in April 1970 the *Capt. Dave*, a 41-foot shrimp trawler with its Gullah crew carrying a boatload of shrimp and a petition signed by 45,000 protesters, arrived in Washington, D.C., amid great fanfare. The BASF project went on life support, and by 1971 it was dead.

Running man

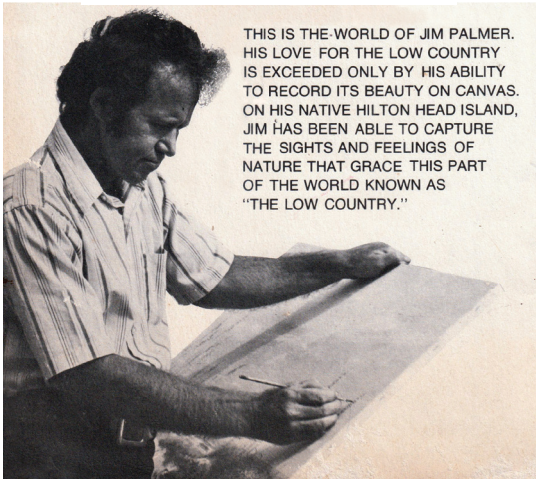
For Addison all this meant that he could grow up in a place that he felt was paradise. He tells me this as we gaze out toward the big Liberty Oak, around which Charles Fraser (who is buried at its base) shaped this part of the harbor.

"Back then everybody knew everybody. And you could go from one end of the island to the other and barely see a car."

From the age of 6, he'd been a runner along these same quiet roads. He'd set state records, later earning a spot in Hilton Head High School's Athletic Hall of Fame. He graduated with offers for athletic scholarships at different colleges.



The Islander cover by Jim Palmer, with Barbara Palmer as model



Promo for Jim Palmer



The painting of the lighthouse Jim did for Charles Fraser's Christmas card



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But he'd wanted an art career. Over the years he'd observed his father and renowned local artists like Coby Whitmore and Joe Bowler at work. Then he'd go out with a camera and paint wildlife and landscapes he'd captured on film. He'd gotten commissions and been in gallery shows.



Addison Palmer

Now top art schools like the School of the Art Institute of Chicago beckoned. But they had a big drawback. No athletics! Happily, he found what he wanted at Brevard College in Florida — a strong arts and athletics program along with a scholarship, and a beach! Afterwards as his art career flourished, his long-distance running skills gave him a shot at the Olympics, but a blown-out knee injury had cut that short.

'I've soaked in thousands and thousands of sunrises and sunsets'

A year later a new adventure, along with the opportunity to experience dawns and dusks in other parts of the globe, arose. Cruise lines like Seabourn and Cunard reached out, inviting him to teach art classes to their passengers.

"I ended up going around the world five times," he exclaims.

When asked if he painted markets in Hong Kong or temples in Bali, he says, "It seems as if almost every subject you can think of, I've put down on canvas."



Home · Addison Palmer



But today a look at his portfolio reveals the subject that most captures his heart: birds.

In fact, it was a painting of an osprey, its wings spread across a nest of twigs atop a channel marker, that won him a spot in the prestigious *Birds in Art* international show in 2018.

"It was like winning the lottery," he tells me. "People were shocked when they learned I got in on the first try. Many artists had applied 10 or 20 times before they were accepted."

In the 1990s the Palmers left Hilton Head and opened a gallery on St. Simons Island. Today they still live there, but Addison often returns for arts events and to teach at the Hilton Head Art Academy. He'll also be making that roughly 210-mile round trip to Camellia Art Gallery's new location in Bluffton, where his kingfishers, egrets, herons, ibises and marshes will share wall space with other large Lowcountry contemporary landscapes, flora and fauna.

As Addison and I stand to leave, a visiting couple takes over our rockers. I glance back at the lighthouse with its red-and-white bands, surrounded by folks gazing up, and picture that long-ago day when Charles Fraser and Jim Palmer stood on the banks of the Calibogue, eying those stakes in the ground, envisioning what might be. *LL*

See the art

Explore more of Addison Palmer's Lowcountry landscapes, wildlife and coastal scenes at addisonpalmer-artist.com, or see his work in person at **Camellia Art Gallery**'s new Bluffton location at 53 Persimmon St., just off Bluffton Parkway.





THE ACCLAIMED PIANIST OPENS THE HILTON HEAD SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA'S SEASON WITH BEETHOVEN'S MAJESTIC "EMPEROR" CONCERTO

©CHRIS LEE

Olga Kern returns in grand style

STORY BY BAILEY GILLIAM

When the Hilton Head Symphony Orchestra opens its new season, it will do so with a pianist and a piece made for the occasion. Internationally acclaimed pianist Olga Kern will join conductor John Morris Russell and the HHSO for a one-night-only performance on Sunday, Oct. 25, performing Ludwig van Beethoven's Piano Concerto No. 5, better known as the "Emperor" Concerto. The program also includes Tchaikovsky's "Romeo and Juliet" Fantasy Overture.

Born into a family of musicians, Kern began earning international recognition at an early age, winning first prize at the Rachmaninoff International Piano Competition at 17. Her American career took off in 2001 when she became the first woman in more than 30 years to win the Gold Medal at the Van Cliburn International Piano Competition. Since then she has performed with leading orchestras around the world, built a Grammy-nominated discography and helped guide the next generation of pianists as a teacher and competition juror.

Kern previously visited Hilton Head Island as a juror for the Hilton Head International Piano Competition. Ahead of her return, she spoke with LOCAL Life about her memories of the island, Beethoven's revolutionary ideas and why the "Emperor" is the perfect way to begin a season.

[LOCAL Life] What first brought you to Hilton Head Island?

[Olga Kern] I was on the jury of the piano competition. It is a very well-known competition and always produces fantastic winners, talented pianists who go on to the next level of their careers. When they invited me, I said, "Of course I will come," because I had heard about its reputation. I had a great time. The level of the jurors and participants was extremely high. I also gave a master class and worked with Jonathan Mamora on a Rachmaninoff sonata. I love that piece so much, and I remember that very well.

[LL] What stands out most from that visit?

[OK] Hilton Head is such a beautiful, special place. I remember the wonderful atmosphere, the talented young pianists and the warmth of the audience, but the island's natural beauty especially stayed with me. The natural beauty is incredibly inspiring, and I can't wait to return.

[LL] How did you choose Beethoven's "Emperor" Concerto for the season opener?

[OK] We talked about what would be appropriate for the beginning of the season, and we chose Beethoven's "Emperor." I love this concerto. I play all five of Beethoven's piano concertos, and I think this majestic piece is perfect for an opening.

[LL] What makes it such a fitting piece for the occasion?

[OK] First of all, it is Beethoven's last piano concerto, and it is such a grand, monumental piece. The incredible first movement is like a symphony by itself. Then it has one of the most beautiful slow movements. It is written in E-flat major, and it is a triumphal piece, especially the third movement, which is so full of life. Near the very end, the music almost stops. It is just the timpani and piano, and it feels as though the heartbeat is stopping. Then, in one moment, it comes back to life and finishes in a very happy, positive way. It is a philosophical piece because it is his last concerto, but at the same time, there is so much light in this music. Audiences leave feeling happy. It is a wonderful piece to open the season because it puts people in a wonderful mood.

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COMMAND PERFORMANCE Olga Kern brings her signature intensity and expressive style to the piano during a performance at Prague's Smetana Hall.

"To me, it is called the 'Emperor' simply because it is grand and majestic. It is one of those concertos that stands on a pedestal at the highest possible level of genius.



©CHRIS LEE

A GRAND RETURN Olga Kern returns to Hilton Head Island Oct. 25 to perform Beethoven's majestic "Emperor" Concerto with the Hilton Head Symphony Orchestra at First Presbyterian Church.

[LL] Why is it called the "Emperor" Concerto?

[OK] Beethoven did not give it that title. There are different opinions about its origin, including connections to Napoleon and the political events of the time. But in my opinion, it has nothing to do with the military or politics. To me, it is called the "Emperor" simply because it is grand and majestic. It is one of those concertos that stands on a pedestal at the highest possible level of genius. It has everything. It is perfect from the first note to the last. It is a masterpiece.

[LL] What should listeners know before hearing it?

[OK] It begins in a very unusual way. During the Classical period, the orchestra traditionally played the introduction before the piano entered. Beethoven experimented with that form. Here the orchestra gives one E-flat major chord, and the piano immediately begins with arpeggios in an almost improvisational way. The piano is present from the very beginning. Only after that does the orchestra begin its introduction. That was revolutionary. Nothing like it had been written before.

[LL] How does Beethoven rethink the relationship between the piano and orchestra?

[OK] The word "concerto" comes from an idea of competition between the soloist and orchestra. Composers treated it almost as though the piano and orchestra were competing, which is why the orchestra often had such a substantial opening. In this concerto, Beethoven blends them together. He does not write a traditional, large solo cadenza. He gives the piano smaller moments here and there, but everything remains connected to the orchestra. It is more symphonic than competitive. The piano and orchestra become almost like one enormous instrument.

[LL] Is there a particular moment you especially love?

[OK] I just wish Beethoven had made the second movement a little longer because there is nothing else like it. There are a few bars near the beginning that never return. They are out-of-this-world heavenly music. I always wonder why he did not bring them back. The concerto may be grand, but it passes so quickly. It was a very modern piece for its time, and it remains fascinating to hear. It is a very special concerto, and I cannot wait to present it to the audience on Hilton Head.







Olga Kern: Beethoven's "Emperor"

When: 4 p.m., Oct. 25
Where: First Presbyterian Church, Hilton Head Island
Details: John Morris Russell conducts the Hilton Head Symphony Orchestra with internationally acclaimed pianist Olga Kern performing Beethoven's majestic Piano Concerto No. 5, "Emperor." The program also includes Tchaikovsky's passionate "Romeo and Juliet" Fantasy Overture.

Following the performance, guests can continue the season-opening celebration with a prosecco welcome, three-course dinner and live music. hhso.org

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The baby Grey Squirrel crawls
from my limbs, a trembling leaf
before the first leap.

When the Northern Cardinals sing
with Carolina Wrens,
I produce a musical.

If one of them goes missing,
my bark cracks open.
The Great Horn Owl whispers
to my empty cavity
etched in my ring
of faith and family.

When Raccoons waddle
through moonlight and shadow
on nightly raids, I pray.

Praise God of sunlight and rain.
Praise God of wild growth.
Bless me with the strength to give them shelter
to watch their dance for hundreds of years.

— Tim Conroy

ABOUT THE POET

Tim Conroy is a Beaufort poet and retired educator whose work often explores themes incorporating ordinary struggles with spiritual elements. He is the author of two poetry collections, Theologies of Terrain and No True Route, and his writing has appeared in numerous journals and anthologies. A founding board member of the Pat Conroy Literary Center, Tim is the younger brother of celebrated Lowcountry novelist Pat Conroy.

LOCAL ART & POETRY



Great Horned Owl by **Bob Speare**

ABOUT THE ARTIST

Bob Speare is an artist, wildlife photographer and naturalist whose lifelong fascination with the natural world informs his creative work. Before moving to the Lowcountry in 2015, he spent roughly 25 years with Mass Audubon, teaching about wildlife, birding and nature photography. A Lowcountry Master Naturalist and South Carolina Master Gardener, Speare has continued to share his knowledge through birding and photography programs while finding artistic inspiration in the creatures, textures and materials of the natural world.


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WHAT'S FRESH IN OCTOBER?

Fear the Reaper

SOUTH CAROLINA'S MOST INFAMOUS PEPPER BUILT A WORLDWIDE REPUTATION ON RECORD-BREAKING HEAT

STORY BY BAILEY GILLIAM



There are hot peppers, and then there is Smokin' Ed's Carolina Reaper. Wrinkled, bright red and armed with a tiny scythe-shaped tail, this homegrown fireball spent a decade as the hottest pepper on the planet. Yet behind its fearsome looks and legendary burn is a surprisingly complex pepper with sweet, fruity flavor and a story rooted right here at home. From its record-breaking rise to its starring role in hot sauces, spice blends and daring home kitchens, Smokin' Ed's Carolina Reaper has become one of the Palmetto State's most famous homegrown creations. Some South Carolina legends come with a ghost story. This one comes with a warning label.

BORN TO BURN
With its wrinkled red skin and distinctive pointed "stinger," Smokin' Ed's Carolina Reaper looks every bit as fierce as it tastes. Developed in South Carolina, the pepper averages about 1.64 million Scoville Heat Units, making it roughly 200 to 650 times hotter than a jalapeño.





PEPPER PIONEER
Pepper breeder Ed Currie holds a basket of Smokin' Ed's Carolina Reapers, the South Carolina-born peppers he developed at his PuckerButt Pepper Company in Fort Mill. The famously fiery Reaper held the Guinness World Record for hottest chili pepper for a decade before Currie's even hotter creation, Pepper X, claimed the title in 2023.

©PUCKERBUTT PEPPER COMPANY

Reap what's sown

Smokin' Ed's Carolina Reaper was born in Fort Mill, where pepper breeder ***Ed Currie*** began developing it in the early 2000s. Currie has described crossing an exceptionally hot pepper from the Caribbean island of Saint Vincent with a Naga-type pepper from South Asia, then selectively breeding the offspring for consistent heat and appearance. Originally known as HP22B, the pepper eventually earned a more memorable name: "Carolina" for its South Carolina birthplace and "Reaper" for the curved tail resembling a reaper's scythe. In 2013 Guinness World Records crowned it the world's hottest chili pepper, with an average heat of about 1.64 million Scoville Heat Units. It held the title for a decade before being dethroned in 2023 by Pepper X, another creation from Currie.



NECTAR FARM KITCHEN

Raspberry Carolina Reaper Jelly

Sweet meets serious heat in this fiery jelly from SERG Group culinary director and partner, Alan Ford. Ripe raspberries and sweet bell peppers balance the Carolina Reaper's infamous burn, creating a sweet, spicy spread with plenty of personality. Spoon it over cream cheese, pair it with a cheese board, or brush it onto grilled meats. Yield: 10 to 12 4-ounce jars.

INGREDIENTS

5 Carolina Reaper peppers, deseeded
2 sweet red bell peppers
1 sweet green bell pepper
12 ounces frozen raspberries, defrosted
2 1/4 cups water
1 cup vinegar
1 3/4 ounces powdered dry pectin
4 cups sugar

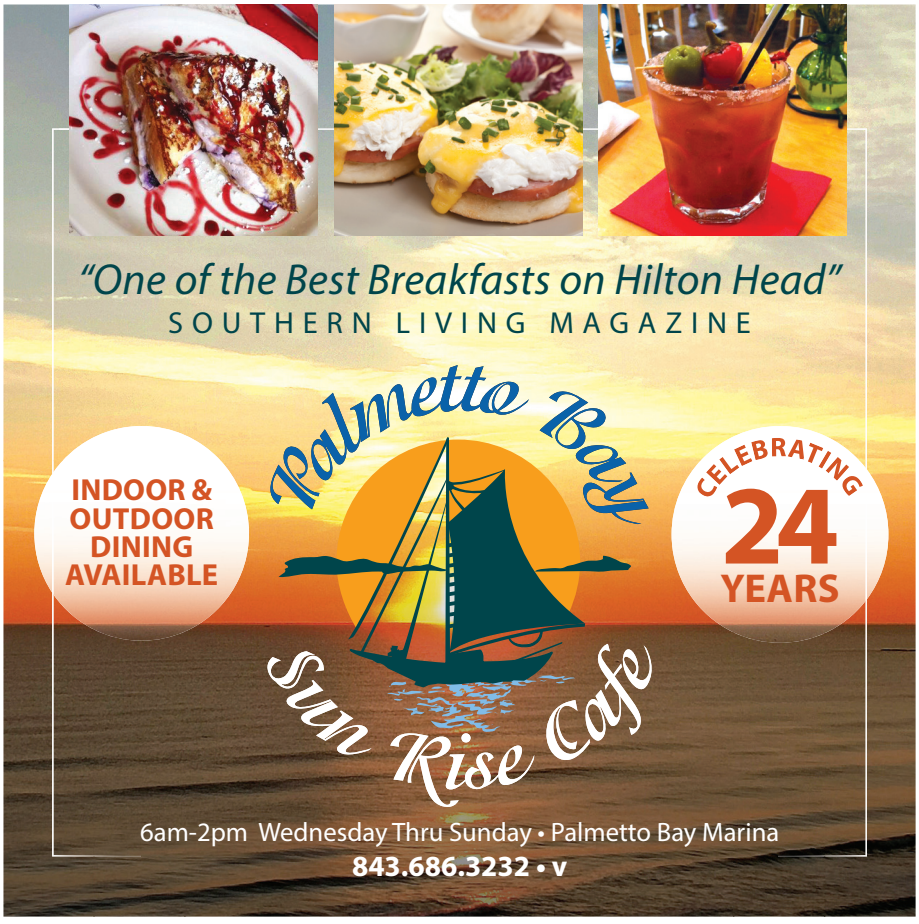
DIRECTIONS [1] Wearing disposable gloves, finely chop the peppers in a food processor. Avoid breathing directly over the processor when removing the lid. Reserve 1/4 cup of the chopped peppers. Place the remaining peppers in a saucepan with the raspberries and water. Bring to a boil; cover, reduce the heat, and simmer for 15 minutes. **[2]** Press the mixture through a fine-mesh sieve or jelly bag. You should have about 2 cups of prepared juice. **[3]** Return the juice to a clean pot. Add the vinegar and reserved chopped peppers. Let cool for 15 minutes. **[4]** Stir in the pectin, and bring the mixture to a full boil. Add the sugar, return to a full rolling boil, and boil hard for 2 minutes, stirring as needed to prevent scorching. Remove from the heat, and skim away any foam. **[5]** Carefully ladle the hot jelly into clean, heat-safe jars, leaving room at the top. Cool, cover and refrigerate. The jelly may initially appear loose but should continue to set over the next one to two days.

Storage note: *This recipe is presented as a refrigerated jelly, not a shelf-stable preserve. Keep refrigerated.*

Feel the burn

Like other chili peppers, Smokin' Ed's Carolina Reaper contains vitamins and minerals, but its claim to fame is capsaicin, the compound responsible for its extraordinary heat. Capsaicin is also used in topical products designed to relieve certain types of pain. At the concentration found in a Reaper, however, even a small amount can cause intense burning and digestive distress, making careful handling and portioning essential.







Hotter than hot

Smokin' Ed's Carolina Reaper doesn't actually set your mouth on fire, but your brain may beg to differ. Capsaicin activates TRPV1, a receptor involved in detecting heat and pain, essentially sending the nervous system a heat-and-pain warning signal. The result can include intense burning, watery eyes, a runny nose, sweating and flushed skin. Smokin' Ed's Carolina Reaper averages around 1.64 million Scoville Heat Units, compared with roughly 10,000 to 23,000 for a serrano pepper and just 2,500 to 8,000 for a jalapeño. That makes the Reaper roughly 200 to 650 times hotter than a jalapeño. In other words, this is heat on an entirely different scale.

Homegrown heat

Smokin' Ed's Carolina Reaper may have a fearsome reputation, but Hilton Head gardener David Cribb says the plants themselves are surprisingly easy to grow. "The best time to plant them is as soon as you know the frost is cleared," Cribb said. He points to March as a possible starting point locally, once the threat of frost has passed and temperatures have warmed. From there he keeps things simple with consistent water and fertilization and plenty of sunshine. "Full sun," he said. Reapers are slower producers than familiar peppers such as cayennes or jalapeños, but once established, the plants can continue producing throughout the warm season. Seeds can sometimes be difficult to find, though Cribb said plants are often available at big-box stores and local garden centers. Cribb said he doesn't typically wear gloves simply to pick the peppers, but he offered one important piece of advice after handling them: Keep your fingers away from your mouth and, especially, your eyes.



DRIED AND DANGEROUS Drying Smokin' Ed's Carolina Reapers concentrates their fiery potential and makes them easy to keep on hand. Crumble a tiny amount into chili, soups or stews, grind them into powder for spice blends and dry rubs, or steep a small piece in sauces and marinades.

Sweet before the sting

Believe it or not, Smokin Ed's Carolina Reaper is more than pure pain. Before the heat takes over, the pepper offers noticeable sweetness and a fruity aroma. That complexity makes it particularly well suited for hot sauces, marinades, salsas and spice blends, where a tiny amount can flavor an entire batch. Its fruity character also pairs naturally with ingredients such as mango, peach and berries. Reapers can be fermented into hot sauce, dehydrated into flakes or powder or used sparingly in salsas, chutneys, curries and other chile-forward sauces. The key word is sparingly. With Smokin' Ed's Carolina Reaper, a sliver can season an entire pot — and another sliver can make it nearly impossible to eat.

Try it:

- *Blend a tiny amount into homemade salsa or hot sauce.*
- *Pair with mango, peach or other fruit for a sweet-and-fiery sauce.*
- *Add a pinch of dried Reaper powder to chili, soups or stews.*
- *Mix a small amount into a dry rub for grilled or smoked meats.*
- *Use sparingly in pepper jelly for a sweet-and-fiery spread.*

LOCAL LIFE TEST KITCHEN

Carolina Reaper Hot Honey Chicken

Crispy fried chicken gets a fiery-sweet finish in this Smokin' Ed's Carolina Reaper take on hot chicken. A touch of the famously potent pepper turns honey into a glossy glaze with serious heat, while white bread and tangy pickle chips provide the classic cooling counterpoint. The key is restraint. With a Carolina Reaper, a little goes a very long way. Serves 4.

INGREDIENTS (chicken)

4 boneless, skinless chicken thighs
1 cup buttermilk
1 teaspoon kosher salt
1/2 teaspoon black pepper
1 cup all-purpose flour
1 teaspoon paprika
1/2 teaspoon garlic powder
Vegetable or peanut oil, for frying

INGREDIENTS (hot honey)

1/2 cup honey
2 tablespoons unsalted butter
1 tablespoon apple cider vinegar
1/4 teaspoon smoked paprika
1/8 teaspoon garlic powder
1/8 teaspoon kosher salt
1/16 teaspoon Carolina Reaper pepper, minced

INGREDIENTS (for serving)

4 slices white bread
Dill pickle chips

DIRECTIONS [1] Marinate the chicken. Place the chicken thighs in a bowl with the buttermilk, salt and pepper. Cover and refrigerate for at least 1 hour or up to overnight. **[2]** Make the hot honey. Wearing disposable gloves, combine the honey, butter, vinegar, paprika, garlic powder, salt and minced Carolina Reaper pepper in a small saucepan. Warm over low heat until the butter melts and the ingredients are combined. Do not boil. Taste cautiously, and add more Reaper only if desired. Keep warm. **[3]** Bread the chicken. Combine the flour, paprika and garlic powder in a shallow dish. Remove each thigh from the buttermilk, allowing the excess to drip off, then dredge thoroughly in the seasoned flour. **[4]** Fry. Heat about 1 1/2 inches of oil in a heavy skillet or Dutch oven to 350 degrees. Working in batches, fry the chicken until deeply golden and the thickest part reaches 165 degrees, about 5 to 7 minutes per side, depending on thickness. Transfer to a wire rack. **[5]** Glaze. While the chicken is still hot, generously brush both sides with the warm Carolina Reaper hot honey. **[6]** Serve. Place each piece of glazed chicken over a thick slice of white bread, and top with dill pickle chips. Drizzle with a little extra hot honey for those willing to tempt fate.

Safety note: Carolina Reapers are exceptionally hot. Wear disposable gloves when handling fresh peppers, avoid touching your face or eyes, and wash utensils and surfaces thoroughly afterward. Avoid heating or blending large amounts of fresh Reaper in ways that can send capsaicin into the air. Start with an extremely small amount, and increase only after tasting.

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LOCAL FLAVOR

A taste of magic

Recipes, rituals and superstitions reveal the mysterious side of the kitchen

STORY BY BAILEY GILLIAM

Food has always come with a side of storytelling. Recipes are passed down through generations, ingredients take on mysterious reputations, and kitchen rituals endure long after anyone remembers why they started. For our Legends & Lore issue, Local Flavor is exploring the superstitions, strange traditions and little bits of magic simmering beneath the surface. We're casting a spell with Black Marlin's voodoo shrimp, embracing the dark side with black garlic and tracing the curious origins of culinary customs, from breaking wishbones to tossing salt over your shoulder. After all, every good dish has a story, and some come with a little superstition on the side.

Under the spell



There's no single recipe for voodoo shrimp, and that may be part of its magic. The name is often associated with Louisiana-inspired shrimp dishes that draw on the bold, spicy flavors of Cajun and Creole cooking. One particularly famous version was served at Uglesich's, the beloved family-run New Orleans restaurant that operated from 1924 to 2005 and built a devoted following for its inventive seafood. The spell changes from kitchen to kitchen. Some versions combine cayenne, hot sauce and Worcestershire with butter or cream; others bring beer, herbs or additional spices into the mix. Some arrive saucy over rice or grits. Black Marlin takes a different approach, wrapping jumbo shrimp in bacon, firing them on the grill and balancing the smoky spice with bright papaya vinaigrette. There may be no official formula, but big flavor seems to be the one requirement.

MORE THAN SHRIMP

Don't let leftover voodoo spice go to waste. Its smoky, sweet and spicy blend works as a rub for grilled chicken, fish or pork or as a seasoning for roasted potatoes and vegetables. Sprinkle it over corn before it hits the grill, toss it with fries or add a pinch to rice or grits for an extra kick. Because a little voodoo can work its magic on just about anything.

BLACK MARLIN BAYSIDE GRILL & HURRICANE BAR

Voodoo Shrimp

Sweet, smoky, spicy and just a little tropical, voodoo shrimp is a popular appetizer at SERG Group's Black Marlin Bayside Grill. The recipe from general manager ***Randy Aleman*** starts with jumbo shrimp wrapped in bacon and marinated overnight in a bold house-made voodoo spice blend of curry, coriander, thyme, cayenne, paprika and brown sugar. On the grill the bacon turns crisp and smoky, while the shrimp stay tender and juicy. A bright papaya vinaigrette with peppers, ginger, cilantro and jalapeño cuts through the richness with a fresh, fruity finish.

VOODOO SPICE



INGREDIENTS

1/8 cup black pepper
1/2 tablespoon cayenne pepper
1 tablespoon white pepper
1/4 cup granulated garlic
1/4 cup onion powder
1/4 cup yellow curry powder
1/4 cup ***dried thyme***
1/8 cup kosher salt
1/2 cup brown sugar
1/4 cup coriander
1 cup paprika

DIRECTIONS Combine all ingredients in a bowl and mix until thoroughly blended. Set aside.

PAPAYA VINAIGRETTE

INGREDIENTS

15 ounces papaya puree
1/8 cup rice vinegar
1/4 cup diced green and red peppers
1 tablespoon jalapeño
1 tablespoon green onion
2 teaspoons grated ginger
1 teaspoon kosher salt
2 tablespoons chopped cilantro

DIRECTIONS Combine all ingredients in a bowl and mix well. Set aside until ready to serve.

BACON-WRAPPED SHRIMP

INGREDIENTS

Shrimp, peeled and deveined, tails on
Bacon
Voodoo spice
Oil
Papaya vinaigrette

DIRECTIONS [1] Wrap each shrimp with one piece of bacon. Soak wooden skewers in water to help prevent burning, then skewer each bacon-wrapped shrimp through the tail and body. **[2]** Combine the voodoo spice with enough oil to create a marinade. Pour over the shrimp, making sure each piece is evenly coated. Cover and refrigerate for 24 hours. **[3]** Remove the shrimp from the marinade, allowing the excess to drip off. Grill for 4 to 5 minutes per side, depending on the size of the shrimp, until the bacon is crisp and the shrimp are cooked through. **[4]** Remove from the grill, drizzle with papaya vinaigrette and serve.




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WHAT THE PROS LOVE

We asked local chefs and restaurateurs their kitchen superstitions:



PALMETTO BAY SUNRISE CAFE
"In my family, if anyone ever gives someone else a knife, the receiver has to pay for it with a penny. It's so the knife won't sever the friendship between the giver and the receiver. It is a custom my father held with every knife he gave and is still carried on in our family."
– Leslie Stewart



MICHAEL ANTHONY'S CUCINA ITALIANA
"I toss a pinch of salt over my shoulder before service."
– Chef Will Overacre



HUDSON'S SEAFOOD HOUSE ON THE DOCKS
"We eat collards and Hoppin' John on New Year's Day."
– Andrew Carmines



CACTUS STREET CANTINA
"I don't let people stand over me and watch me cook because I think the person's energy can affect the outcome of the dish."
– Chef Adolph Aguilar

SIGNATURE DISH

Simply swordfish

A BRIGHT LEMON-CAPER SAUCE LETS THIS FRESH CATCH DO THE TALKING



Every cook has a signature dish, the recipe friends request, the one that always makes an appearance at gatherings or the meal they can practically make from memory. Each month we ask someone in the local community to share theirs, along with the story behind it, then nominate another local cook to keep the chain going. This month Geist Ussery passes the plate to ***Tonya Hudson***, owner of Benny Hudson Seafood, who shares a simple preparation that lets fresh swordfish take center stage.



TONYA HUDSON

Swordfish with lemon-caper sauce

Meaty swordfish needs little embellishment when the fish is fresh and the preparation is simple. Tonya Hudson pairs grilled swordfish steaks with a buttery lemon-caper sauce that brings just enough brightness and briny bite without overpowering the fish. A sprinkle of fresh parsley finishes a dish that's elegant enough for company but easy enough for a weeknight dinner.

INGREDIENTS

3 swordfish steaks (about 1 1/4 inches thick)
4 tablespoons unsalted butter
1 large lemon, peeled, cut crosswise into eight 1/4-inch slices and seeded, juices reserved
2 tablespoons nonpareil capers, drained
Sea salt
Ground white pepper
3 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
2 tablespoons finely chopped parsley, for garnish

DIRECTIONS [1] Melt the butter in a small saucepan over medium-low heat, stirring constantly, until it turns light brown, about 3 minutes. **[2]** Cut the lemon slices into quarters. Add the lemon pieces, reserved juice and capers to the saucepan. Reduce the heat and cook, gently shaking the pan several times, until the lemon and capers are heated through, about 1 minute. Taste and adjust the seasoning as needed. **[3]** Heat a grill, or preheat the broiler. Brush both sides of the swordfish with olive oil, and season with sea salt and white pepper. **[4]** Grill or broil the swordfish about 4 inches from the heat, turning once, until lightly charred on the outside and cooked to your liking, about 3 to 4 minutes per side. **[5]** Transfer the swordfish to a serving platter and leave the steaks whole, or cut them into thick strips. Spoon the warm lemon-caper sauce over the top, garnish with parsley and serve immediately.

Tonya's tip: *Don't overthink swordfish. Its natural flavor does most of the work. The key is not to overcook it. Look for fish that is opaque and just beginning to flake but still feels firm and springy when gently pressed.*

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SECRET INGREDIENT

DARK TRANSFORMATION Ordinary garlic takes on a dramatic new identity when aged for several weeks under carefully controlled heat and humidity. The process turns the cloves jet black and gives them a soft, almost jammy texture, replacing raw garlic's sharp bite with sweet, tangy and deeply savory flavor.

Black magic

BLACK GARLIC LOOKS MYSTERIOUS, TASTES SURPRISINGLY SWEET AND BRINGS DEEP UMAMI TO JUST ABOUT ANYTHING

If regular garlic keeps vampires and other creatures of the night away, imagine what black garlic can do. This jet-black ingredient may look a little sinister, but its flavor is anything but scary. Sweet, tangy, savory and loaded with umami, it can bring unexpected depth to everything from steak and pasta to salad dressings and even chocolate desserts.

Despite its appearance, black garlic isn't a special variety of garlic, nor is it simply roasted. It starts as ordinary garlic that spends several weeks in a carefully controlled warm, humid environment. During that time chemical reactions, including the Maillard reaction responsible for many of the browned, complex flavors we love in cooked foods, transform the cloves. They darken, soften to an almost jammy consistency and lose the sharp, pungent bite of raw garlic.

What emerges tastes remarkably different from what went in. Black garlic is often compared to balsamic vinegar for its sweet-tart depth, with flavors reminiscent of molasses, tamarind, dried figs and raisins. Beneath all that sweetness is a deep savory quality that hints at its garlicky origins without the familiar raw-garlic heat.

The trick is to treat black garlic as an ingredient of its own rather than a substitute for fresh garlic. It won't provide the same aromatic foundation as a clove sizzling in olive oil. Instead, use it where its concentrated sweet-savory character can stand out. Mash the soft cloves into a paste before adding them to sauces, dressings and dips, or blend them with a little liquid to help

distribute the flavor. Because their natural sugars can scorch, black garlic is generally best added toward the end of cooking rather than exposed to prolonged high heat.

Black garlic also can be made at home with ordinary garlic, steady warmth, controlled conditions and plenty of patience, but the process takes weeks. The reward is a familiar ingredient transformed into something darker, sweeter and far more mysterious.



Black garlic, shiitake & zucchini pasta

Earthy shiitake mushrooms, tender zucchini and sweet-savory black garlic give this pasta plenty of depth without a heavy sauce. Caramelized shallots add sweetness, red pepper flakes bring a subtle kick, and a generous shower of Parmesan ties everything together. Fresh basil adds a bright finish to all those rich, earthy flavors. Serves 4.



INGREDIENTS

8 ounces spaghetti or linguine
2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil, divided
4 ounces shiitake mushrooms, stems removed and caps sliced
2 small zucchini, spiralized or cut into thin matchsticks
2 shallots, thinly sliced
4 ***black garlic*** *cloves, mashed into a paste*
1/2 teaspoon red pepper flakes
1/2 cup reserved pasta water, as needed
1/2 cup finely grated Parmesan, plus more for garnish
Salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste
Fresh basil leaves, for garnish

DIRECTIONS [1] Bring a large pot of salted water to a boil. Cook the pasta according to package directions until al dente. Reserve 1/2 cup of the pasta water, then drain. **[2]** While the pasta cooks, heat 1 tablespoon olive oil in a large skillet over medium-high heat. Add the shiitake mushrooms, and cook for 5 to 7 minutes, stirring occasionally, until deeply browned around the edges. Season lightly with salt and pepper, then transfer to a plate. **[3]** Reduce the heat to medium and add the remaining tablespoon of olive oil. Add the shallots and cook for 3 to 4 minutes, until softened and beginning to caramelize. Add the zucchini and red pepper flakes, and cook for another 2 minutes, just until the zucchini begins to soften. **[4]** Add the mashed black garlic and 1/4 cup of the reserved pasta water. Stir until the black garlic dissolves into the liquid and forms a light, glossy sauce. **[5]** Add the drained pasta and half of the mushrooms to the skillet. Toss until everything is evenly coated, adding more pasta water a little at a time as needed. Stir in the Parmesan and season with salt and pepper. **[6]** Divide among four bowls. Top with the remaining browned shiitake mushrooms, additional Parmesan and fresh basil.

Pro tip: *Black garlic can scorch because of its natural sugars. Add it after the shallots and vegetables have cooked, then loosen it with pasta water rather than frying it directly in the hot pan.*

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A taste of superstition

Humans have always been a superstitious bunch. We knock on wood, avoid walking under ladders, eye black cats with suspicion and think twice before opening an umbrella indoors. So, naturally, some of our strangest beliefs have followed us into the kitchen and gathered around the dinner table. For centuries food has represented far more than sustenance. It has been used to summon good fortune, predict marriages, protect against evil, encourage prosperity and even promise a longer life. Many of these beliefs have faded into folklore, but the rituals they inspired are still surprisingly familiar. Why do we break wishbones, throw salt over our shoulders and blow out birthday candles? Here's the history behind some of the culinary superstitions we just can't seem to shake.

FOOD FOLKLORE



SCORE A CROSS INTO YOUR BREAD

THE SUPERSTITION: A cross keeps the devil away from your dough.
Scoring bread helps it expand as it bakes, but medieval European bakers gave the practice a supernatural purpose too. Cutting a cross into dough was believed to bless the bread and keep evil forces from interfering with the loaf.

BREAK A WISHBONE

THE SUPERSTITION: Get the bigger half and your wish comes true.
The tradition is often traced to the ancient Etruscans, who considered chickens lucky and reportedly preserved their wishbones so people could touch them while making wishes. The custom eventually evolved into two people pulling the bone apart, with the larger piece earning its owner a wish.

THROW SALT OVER YOUR SHOULDER

THE SUPERSTITION: Spill the salt and bad luck is coming unless you toss some over your left shoulder.
Once an extremely valuable commodity, salt has long symbolized preservation, friendship and protection. Throwing spilled salt over the left shoulder was said to repel or blind an evil spirit lurking behind you.



EAT 12 GRAPES AT MIDNIGHT

THE SUPERSTITION: Twelve grapes bring 12 months of good luck.
In Spain and parts of Latin America, revelers eat 12 grapes as midnight arrives on New Year's Eve. Each represents one month of the coming year and a wish for good fortune throughout it.

BLOW OUT YOUR BIRTHDAY CANDLES

THE SUPERSTITION: Make a wish and blow out every candle in one breath.
Ancient Greeks offered round, illuminated cakes to Artemis, goddess of the moon, while the German tradition of Kinderfest later helped establish candles on birthday cakes. Eventually, blowing them out while making a wish became part of the celebration, with the smoke said to carry wishes toward the heavens.

KEEP GARLIC CLOSE

THE SUPERSTITION: Garlic keeps vampires, demons and other evil forces away.
Garlic's supernatural reputation predates Dracula. For centuries it has been associated with protection from evil in cultures across Europe and beyond. In Greece garlic has traditionally been used to ward off the evil eye and is sometimes hung near entrances for protection.

DON'T CUT YOUR NOODLES

THE SUPERSTITION: Long noodles mean a long life.
Longevity noodles have been eaten during Chinese birthdays and other celebrations for centuries. Their length represents longevity, making cutting or biting through them symbolically unlucky. Slurping is encouraged.

EAT BLACK-EYED PEAS ON NEW YEAR'S DAY

THE SUPERSTITION: Black-eyed peas bring luck and prosperity.
This beloved Southern New Year's tradition has accumulated several origin stories over time, including Civil War-era tales connecting the humble peas with survival during food shortages. Today they're often joined by greens for money and golden cornbread for wealth.

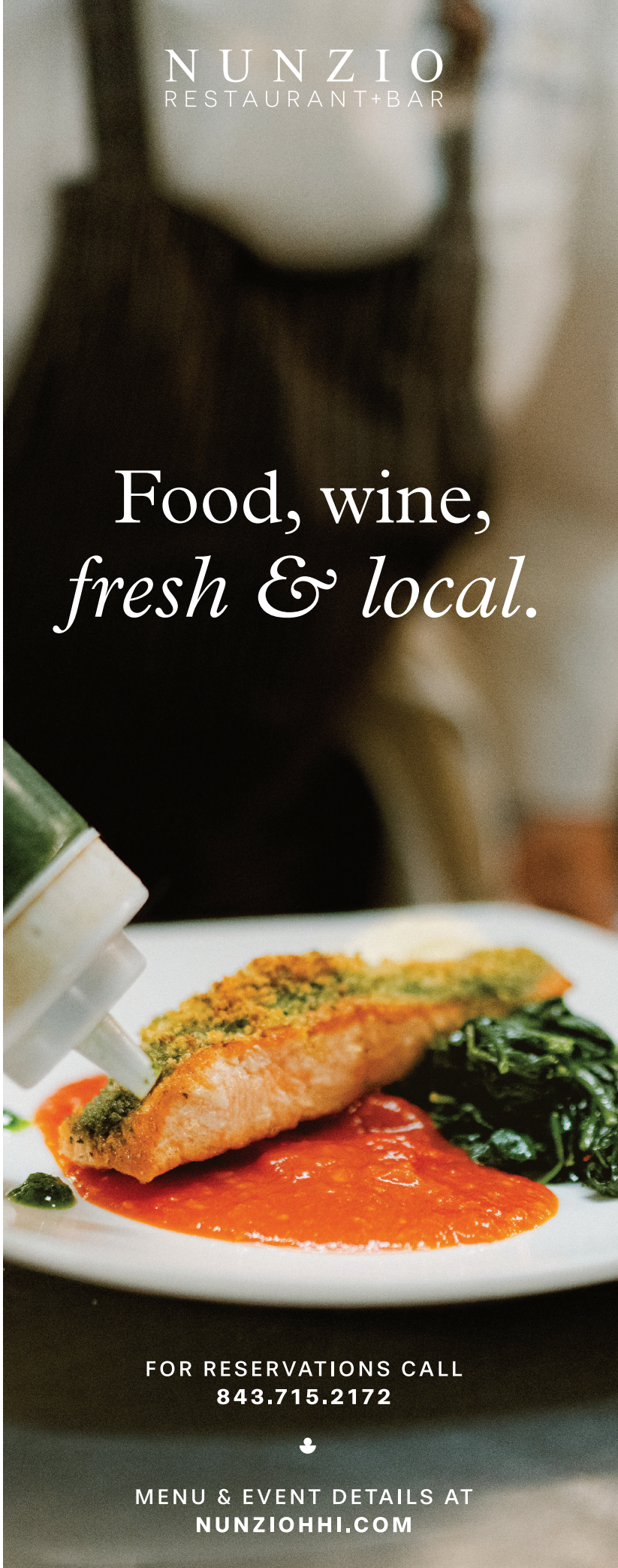


CRACK OPEN A DOUBLE YOLK

THE SUPERSTITION: Two yolks could mean twins or a wedding.
A double-yolk egg has long inspired predictions about what comes next, with folklore linking the unusual find to marriage or the birth of twins. In reality, it simply happens when a hen releases two yolks in quick succession, but that's not nearly as fun.

BEWARE OF 13 AT THE TABLE

THE SUPERSTITION: Thirteen dinner guests are bad luck.
One explanation points to the Last Supper and its 13 diners, while Norse mythology tells of a feast disrupted when Loki arrived as an uninvited 13th guest. Either way, you might want to find one more dinner guest. LL



A wicked good chili

THIS SMOKY, CREAMY WHITE CHICKEN CHILI CASTS ITS SPELL WITH POBLANOS, JALAPEÑO, LIME AND PLENTY OF CRUNCH

STORY + PHOTOGRAPHY BY ALEA WILKINS



Autumn in the Lowcountry rarely dips below 60 degrees, but LOCAL Life publisher ***Lori Goodridge-Cribb*** finds plenty of reasons to make this cozy stovetop classic. Her white chicken chili combines smoky poblano peppers, creamy white beans and warm spices for a savory base. Then she adds shredded rotisserie chicken for a simple-yet-delicious protein hack. Fresh lime juice, cilantro and jalapeño brighten the dish, and a generous handful of homemade tortilla strips (which come together in 15 minutes or less) finishes the bowl with a satisfying crunch. It's comfort in a bowl, no matter the weather.



White chicken chili



INGREDIENTS

2 cans white beans
1 large white onion, chopped
4 garlic cloves, minced
*1 **jalapeño pepper**, diced*
2 medium poblano peppers, chopped
2 limes, juiced
1 rotisserie chicken, meat shredded
4 cups low-sodium chicken broth
1 tablespoon ground cumin
1 1/2 teaspoons ground coriander
1 teaspoon ancho chili powder
1/4 cup fresh cilantro, chopped
Optional toppings: cilantro, sour cream, tortilla strips

DIRECTIONS [1] Drain and rinse white beans. Pour half into a bowl, and mash with a fork until broken up and slightly creamy. **[2]** Add a drizzle of oil to a large Dutch oven over medium-high heat. Add peppers, onion and garlic, then season with salt and pepper. Sauté until softened. Add cumin, coriander and chili powder, and stir to combine. Add chicken broth, lime juice and white beans (whole and mashed). Simmer for 20 minutes. **[3]** Stir in rotisserie chicken and cilantro, and continue simmering until warmed through, about 5 minutes. Ladle into bowls, then top with more cilantro, sour cream and tortilla strips for serving.



FINISHING TOUCH While the chili simmers, slice store-bought tortillas into 1/2-inch strips. Place on a baking sheet and coat with oil and a pinch of salt. Bake at 350 degrees for about 10 minutes, or until the strips are golden and crispy. Sprinkle over soups, salads and more for the ultimate crunchy topping.

Watch & learn

*Watch Lori prepare this white chicken chili recipe on From Scratch, LOCAL Life's cooking series on YouTube **@LocalLifeSC**.*



MASH MADE IN HEAVEN Mashing half of the white beans before they hit the pot creates a naturally creamy base for the chili, no heavy cream required.



localLife

PRESENTS

From Scratch

an online video cooking series featuring publisher Lori Goodridge-Cribb

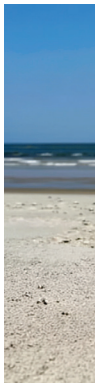
COMPANY'S COMING. The table needs setting. The oven is warming up. And LOCAL Life publisher Lori Goodridge-Cribb is right there with you. Each month on From Scratch, Lori invites readers into her kitchen to share a seasonal recipe made for gathering. She believes the best memories happen around the table, and she is happy to show you exactly how she brings it all together. For October, she is preparing her own creamy white chicken chili.

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.

RESTAURANT news & notes

FRESH FOOD + NOW OPEN + HOT PRODUCTS



Fresh on the scene

The Lowcountry dining scene continues to serve up something new. From fresh openings and new concepts to African flavors, dock-fresh seafood, social gatherings and spooky pop-ups, here's what's opening, what's coming and what's worth knowing around the region.

BY BAILEY GILLIAM

NOW OPEN





One More Row Coffee Co.

10 KITTIES LANDING ROAD, BLUFFTON

Coffee, meet crafting. *One More Row Coffee Co. is a new coffee bar tucked inside Low Country Shrimp and Knits, which recently moved into a larger space on Kitties Landing Road. Owner Tracy Winslow added the coffee concept with espresso drinks, teas, pastries and flavored syrups ranging from pistachio to toffee. Tables and couches give customers space to settle in with a latte, a knitting project or both. shrimpandknits.com.*







Dub's Seafood Co.

1421 RIBAUT ROAD, PORT ROYAL

The catch doesn't travel far at Dub's Seafood Co. *The new seafood stand next to Alvin Ord's sells wild-caught Lowcountry seafood harvested from its own local boat six days a week, connecting customers more directly with the fishermen behind their dinner. The business emphasizes responsible harvesting and stewardship of local waters. Shoppers also can catch Dub's every Saturday morning at the Port Royal Farmers Market. Find them on Facebook.*





Luci's Cafe *FESTIVAL CENTRE AT INDIGO PARK, HILTON HEAD*

Breakfast, lunch and locally roasted coffee are on the menu at Luci's Cafe, a new family-owned spot in the former Corner Perk location at 45 Pembroke Drive. *The cafe serves brunch favorites alongside Corner Perk coffee and handcrafted drinks made with house syrups. The opening marks a longtime dream for owner Lucio, who spent more than 30 years in the restaurant industry as a chef and general manager before opening a place of his own. Built around food, faith and family, Luci's was created as a welcoming gathering place for locals and visitors. luciscafe.com.*



Catch the Vybes *FOOD TRUCK*

West African flavors are hitting the road with Catch the Vybes, a new food truck serving dishes rooted in tradition and culture. *The menu features specialties such as egusi with fufu, jollof rice with plantains and beans, and plantain porridge with chicken or turkey. Locations, menus and specials will rotate, giving adventurous eaters plenty of reasons to follow along. catchthevybes.com.*



Dunkin' *1002 FORDING ISLAND ROAD, BLUFFTON*

Bluffton has another place to fuel up along U.S. 278. *Dunkin' opened its third Bluffton-area location at 1002 Fording Island Road, adding another drive-thru for coffee, doughnuts, breakfast sandwiches and quick bites.*

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NEWS & NOTES

COMING SOON



7 Brew Coffee *NORTHRIDGE PLAZA, HILTON HEAD*

Another drive-thru coffee concept could be headed to Hilton Head. *7 Brew Coffee has proposed redeveloping a portion of the Northridge Plaza parking lot for its first island location and is working through the town approval process. If approved, the coffee stand would be the chain's second Beaufort County location, joining its existing shop on Fording Island Road in Bluffton.*





Sea Eagle Market rolls out new food truck

Sea Eagle Market has a new set of wheels. *The Beaufort seafood market recently added a new food truck to its catering and festival operation after passing its original concession trailer along to another growing local food truck business in June. Look for the new truck at festivals, community events and catered gatherings, serving the local seafood favorites Sea Eagle Market is known for.*



New law puts shrimp origins on the menu

Starting Oct. 28, South Carolina restaurants and other establishments serving ready-to-eat imported shrimp will have to say so. *A new state law requires imported shrimp to be identified on menus and entrance signs, giving diners more information about where their seafood comes from while drawing attention to local shrimpers competing with lower-priced imports. Closer to home, the Beaufort Area Hospitality Association plans to launch its "Only From Our Waters" certification program to recognize restaurants serving local and American wild-caught shrimp.*



Halloween haunts Starbird

Something wicked is stirring at Starbird. *From Oct. 1-31, the Hilton Head cocktail bar will transform into The Haunting at Starbird, a Halloween pop-up filled with candlelight, cobwebs, creepy details and appropriately spirited drinks. The themed cocktail lineup includes eerie creations such as the Liquid Lobotomy served from an exposed skull, plus plenty of oddities, mystery and mischief planned throughout the month.*





Tin & Tallow gets social

Tin & Tallow is taking its name literally with the launch of The Tallow Social Club, a new event series designed to bring people together over food, drinks and shared interests. *Plans include bourbon nights, ladies nights, tastings, tap takeovers, coffee events, mahjong mornings and more. Some gatherings will be casual drop-ins, while others will be ticketed experiences with guided tastings and limited seating. Despite the "club" name, there's no membership required. The first events will be announced soon.*



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Dishes with legendary potential

Hungry for something different? This month's finds range from crispy pan pizza and a filet mignon burger to Lowcountry seafood, steakhouse indulgences and bakery sweets. Here are a few dishes worth adding to your must-try list.



GOLDEN HOUR
Hogshead Kitchen and Wine Bar lets a beautifully prepared piece of fish do the talking, pairing it with golden risotto and fresh greens. Creamy risotto, crisp greens and tender fish make for a simple combination that looks as good as it tastes.

PAN PERFECTION
Radici has rolled out a new lunch menu and the pizza al Tegamino deserves attention. This Turin-style pizza is baked in a small, oiled metal pan, giving it a light, airy interior and a golden, crispy bottom. Consider it another very good reason to do pizza for lunch.





BOIL OVER
The Salty Dog gives the Lowcountry boil a snow-crab upgrade with its Snowcountry boil. Local shrimp, andouille sausage, corn and potatoes share the pot with a half-pound of snow crab legs, with everything tossed in Old Bay garlic butter.

SICILIAN SWEET
Save room at ***Nunzio Restaurant + Bar*** for the cannolo Siciliano. A crisp pastry shell is filled with creamy ricotta, chocolate, orange zest and pistachio, delivering a little crunch, creaminess and citrus in every bite.





BUTTER BELIEVE IT
WiseGuys offers plenty of ways to dress up its 14-ounce Delmonico ribeye. Choose black truffle, cowboy or Roquefort compound butter, or finish your steak with cabernet demi-glace, béarnaise or au poivre. The hardest part may be picking just one.



FANCY BURGER
Filet mignon gets a more casual calling at ***Charlie's L'Etoile Verte***. The bistro burger puts grilled filet mignon on a potato roll with Boursin cheese spread and fresh greens. Who says a burger can't have fine-dining credentials?

CREAMY MEETS BRIGHT
Burrata gets a bright, citrusy counterpoint at ***Pomodori Italian Eatery***. The burrata e pesto pairs creamy cheese with kale pesto and preserved meyer lemon tapenade for a starter that balances richness with plenty of freshness.





COASTAL COMFORT
Skull Creek Boathouse gives Carolina catfish a Southern-on-Southern treatment. The fish is blackened with Cajun spices, topped with house-made pimento cheese and served with Savannah red rice and collard greens.

TOP IT OFF
Can't decide between steak and seafood? At ***The Pearl Kitchen + Bar***, add two blackened scallops to an 8-ounce filet mignon for a serious surf-and-turf combination. Whipped potatoes, asparagus, oyster mushrooms, blistered tomatoes, Gorgonzola butter and red wine demi complete the plate.





SWEET STRIPES
Meet the banderilla at ***Pan Casero Tradicional Mexicano***. A staple of the traditional Mexican panadería, these long strips of flaky puff pastry are sprinkled with sugar and baked until crisp. Pair one with coffee for an afternoon treat.

BAGEL MEETS BURGER
Rain-N-Bagels proves bagels aren't just for breakfast. Its Angus beef burger trades the ordinary bun for a cheddar bagel, then piles on roasted red peppers, grilled onion, spinach, Havarti and jalapeño honey mustard for a sweet, spicy and savory combination.



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What would Margaret drink?

Margaret Pearman, *a certified sommelier with the Court of Master Sommeliers, curates the acclaimed wine program at Charlie's L'Etoile Verte. This month she raises a glass to California's ghost wineries and the bottles bringing their stories back to life.*

Drink with the ghosts

CALIFORNIA'S FORGOTTEN WINERIES ARE BACK FROM THE DEAD



CELLAR SECRETS
Tucked beneath Buena Vista Winery in Sonoma, this private tasting room offers an atmospheric glimpse into California's wine history. Stone walls, a barrel-vaulted ceiling and candlelit warmth make an appropriate setting for a winery founded in 1857.

Speakeasies have made Prohibition stylish. Hidden doors, secret passwords and cocktails let us play at the illicit glamour of the 1920s. But in California wine country, Prohibition left behind something intriguing: ghosts. Not the chain-rattling kind. The wine kind.

"Ghost winery" describes historic California wineries that fell silent, many during or around Prohibition, then sat abandoned for decades. Their stone walls, caves, cellars and vineyards became remnants of an earlier wine era. Some disappeared. Others came back to life.

Buena Vista is a prime example. Founded in Sonoma in 1857 by Agoston Haraszthy and recognized as California's first premium winery, its stone buildings and caves remain a link to early winemaking.

At Frog's Leap in Rutherford, history lives on through the Adamson Winery barn, built in 1884 and among Napa Valley's oldest surviving winery structures.

High above Sonoma Valley, Mount Peak Winery represents another comeback. Established in the 19th century before going dormant, the Mount Peak name was revived more than a century later.

Like the best legends, these places blur the line between what's gone and what remains. Buildings crumble. Generations pass. Yet vines grow, cellars survive, and old wineries get another chapter.

This October, forget the haunted house. I'd rather drink with the ghosts.

TRY THESE

Buena Vista Chardonnay: *Full and rich, with just enough oak to bring warmth and texture. A natural fit for fall. About $70*

Frog's Leap Merlot: *One of the estate's flagship wines, with depth, balance and character that prove just how compelling Merlot can be. About $50*

Mount Peak Gravity Red Blend: *Sourced from high-elevation vineyards, this Cabernet-driven blend is bold, structured and made for fall. About $50*

Spirited sips

TWO HAUNTINGLY GOOD COCKTAILS TO SUMMON THIS SPOOKY SEASON

STORY BY BAILEY GILLIAM

Every good legend deserves a spirit, and this month we're taking that idea literally. In honor of our Legends & Lore issue, these Halloween-inspired cocktails from ***Tito's Handmade Vodka*** *bring a little mystery to the glass.*



Dark magic

Tito's Smoky Spirit

Dark, fiery and appropriately mysterious, Tito's Smoky Spirit looks like something conjured over a cauldron. Blackberries bring tart sweetness, jalapeño delivers a flash of heat, and a crack of black pepper deepens the spice, while cranberry and orange add a tart, citrusy lift. A rosemary sprig provides the final witchy flourish. It's just the thing for sipping after dark, preferably with a horror movie playing or a scary story close at hand.

INGREDIENTS

1 1/2 ounces Tito's Handmade Vodka
3/4 ounce cranberry juice
1/2 ounce fresh orange juice
4 blackberries
1 slice jalapeño
1 crack of black pepper
1 blackberry, for garnish
1 rosemary sprig, for garnish

DIRECTIONS [1] Muddle the blackberries and jalapeño in a shaker. **[2]** Add the vodka, juices, black pepper and ice. **[3]** Shake well, then strain into a glass over fresh ice. **[4]** Garnish with a blackberry and rosemary sprig.

Drop-dead gorgeous

Tito's Terror-tini



Don't let its polished appearance fool you — the Terror-tini has a sinister streak. Lemon and simple syrup create a crisp sweet-and-sour base, while pomegranate juice sinks through the cocktail in a dramatic blood-red swirl. Finished with a cherry, it strikes just the right balance between eerie and elegant — an easy choice for Halloween parties, horror-movie marathons or an evening spent swapping your favorite local legends.

INGREDIENTS

1 1/2 ounces Tito's Handmade Vodka
1 ounce lemon juice
3/4 ounce simple syrup
1/2 ounce pomegranate juice
1 cherry, for garnish

DIRECTIONS [1] Add the vodka, lemon juice and simple syrup to a shaker with ice. **[2]** Shake well, and strain into a chilled martini glass. **[3]** Slowly pour the pomegranate juice over the back of a spoon to create a blood-red layer. **[4]** Garnish with a cherry.



Buckle up

THE 2026 HILTON HEAD ISLAND CONCOURS D'ELEGANCE & MOTORING FESTIVAL SHIFTS INTO AN ENTIRELY NEW GEAR

STORY BY BARRY KAUFMAN



©HILTON HEAD ISLAND CONCOURS D'ELEGANCE & MOTORING FESTIVAL

HERITAGE IN MOTION
The Lowcountry Driving Tour puts Concours cars on the road for a scenic journey through Hilton Head Island. This year's tour runs from 8:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m. Friday, Oct. 30, taking participants along scenic island corridors and past historic landmarks while combining automotive history with Lowcountry culture and camaraderie.

With the notable exception of a certain golf tournament, few events on the calendar can claim to define our community as profoundly as the Hilton Head Island Concours d'Elegance & Motoring Festival.

Let's start with the name itself. Just as the mouthful of sponsors that surround the golf tournament's name are usually jettisoned in favor of everyone just calling it "The Heritage," the motoring festival is simply known in local circles as "The Concours." The difference here is that simply calling it "The Concours" tends to put the focus on the main event: the two days, October 31 and November 1, when more than 200 rare and incredible vehicles pull up to Port Royal Golf Club's Planter's Row course, while forgetting that there is far more to the motoring festival.

The first attraction comes October 30, when the Lowcountry Driving Tour serves as one part parade, one part love letter to the island. From 8:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m., you'll be able to cruise alongside some of these amazing cars on a relaxing journey through the island and its many historical landmarks, immersing yourself in Hilton Head's culture along the way. That first day's festivities will culminate in Motorcars & Music, an open-air performance by American Idol winner Taylor Hicks starting at 6 p.m. on the 18th fairway.

Even the main event itself is often misconstrued, even by diehard locals.

"I still think a lot of people assume they come Saturday, see the cars, and Sunday is essentially a repeat. It isn't," said spokesperson Kelly Broome-Smith. "Saturday, October 31, is the Car Club Showcase, when clubs and enthusiasts travel to Hilton Head to fill the field with an incredible range of automobiles. Then overnight the field completely transforms. Sunday, November 1, is the nationally judged Concours d'Elegance, with an entirely different collection of vehicles and a completely different experience. So someone can absolutely come both days and have two very different days at the festival."

Essentially, you drive on Saturday for show, you drive on Sunday for dough. Running through both days, however, are a score of special exhibits that set our Concours apart as a multidimensional celebration of motoring. You'll note that the word motoring applies to far more than just cars.

"This year we have the boats coming back, which will be a great showing," said Special Exhibits Chairman Huntley Tarleton. "I introduced the boats 15 years ago, and it's a group that really loves coming to our show."

Those boats also add to the experience at Locals Lane (sponsored by this very publication). Dedicated to those who hang their hat here, this special pass gives residents a chance to vote for their favorite boat as well as enjoy special offers and benefits.

"We welcome collectors and guests from across the country each fall, but this event belongs to the Lowcountry," said Executive Director Rick Sabol. "Locals Lane is our way of inviting Beaufort County residents to experience this hometown event in a whole new way, with special access, exclusive perks and a few well-deserved bragging rights. We want our neighbors on the showfield with us, because they're not just our guests. They're the people who make this place, and this event, so special."



©HILTON HEAD ISLAND CONCOURS D'ELEGANCE & MOTORING FESTIVAL

SOUL IN THE SPOTLIGHT
American Idol winner and platinum-selling artist Taylor Hicks brings his signature blend of Southern soul, blues and rock to Hilton Head Island for Motorcars & Music, a special benefit concert kicking off Concours weekend at 6:45 p.m. Oct. 30 on the 18th fairway of Port Royal Golf Club.



©HILTON HEAD ISLAND CONCOURS D'ELEGANCE & MOTORING FESTIVAL

CLUBS TAKE THE FIELD The Car Club Showcase brings together everything from vintage classics to contemporary performance machines, giving enthusiasts a chance to see some of the region's finest club-owned vehicles in one place. This year's showcase runs from 9 a.m.-4 p.m. Saturday, Oct. 31, along the first and 18th fairways of Port Royal Golf Club's Planter's Row course, with invited clubs competing for awards.

Cruise the collections

We locals shouldn't pat ourselves on the back too hard. We know full well that the real draw is the cars, and some special collections that will run both days prove it. This year's honored collector, Ivan "The Car Nut" Ruiz, will be bringing out a selection of the gorgeous Maseratis that made him famous. Motorsports Collector Robert Dyson will have a curated collection of racing cars, including the world's first successful six-cylinder racing car, a 1904 Napier L48 "Samson." And those are just two of the featured collections.

Part of the festival's mission this year is appealing to a new generation of car collectors who are less enthralled with gas lamps and wooden chassis than they are with American horsepower. Examples include Pinnacle collector Stephen Plaster, who will be showcasing "The Car That Was Too Dangerous to Sell," a 1969 Chevy Yenko Camaro, as well as Velocity Collectors Mike and Debbie Rogers' 2017 Lamborghini Huracán.

"Even my son, who's 24, loves the old stuff but is enjoying seeing these rare cars from the '80s and '90s, so with the Velocity Collectors we wanted to have more of those modern vehicles," said Tarleton. "That's really what the younger crowd wants to see. And honestly, the older crowd too."

Those younger visitors will not only find a newer breed of car on the grounds of the Concours, but they'll also experience an introduction to the broader world of motoring.

"There is a real need for the next generation of restorers, technicians, designers, craftspeople and preservationists. We want a child to leave this event curious, not only about the car they might someday drive but about who designed it, who built it, how it works, who restores it and why preserving these machines matters," said Broome-Smith. "I think the heart of 2026 is really this: honoring the history of motoring while making sure there is a next generation excited enough to carry it forward."

That new energy also comes from a new sponsor, Lowcountry GT. Founded by local Steve Menzies, profiled in last month's edition of LOCAL Life, the organization is all about bringing the Concours to the next level.

"We're really excited about this year's event," Menzies said. "I'm on the board and working with a great team of people who are truly committed to the automotive world. With the 25th anniversary of the Hilton Head Island Concours coming up, it's a special time to be involved."



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More than just a car

THE INCREDIBLE FLEET OF VELOCITY COLLECTORS MIKE AND DEBBIE ROGERS HAS A STORY TO TELL

Every car ever built has had the capability to take you somewhere. That's the basic job description. But some cars don't just take you somewhere down the road. They take you somewhere in your soul, a place that you may have forgotten. They take you back to a time when the promise of youth lay all around you, even if the financial opportunities didn't.

Few know that better than Mike and Debbie Rogers, this year's Velocity Collectors at the Hilton Head Island Concours d'Elegance & Motoring Festival. For them, the true beauty of a car lies in the story it tells you when you turn that engine over. It's a journey Mike has felt with every one of the dozens of cars he's added to the collection over the years.

"My equation for adding a car is to look at somebody who went into the dealership when that car came out, and at 20 years old were just slobbering all over themselves, thinking about how badly they want it. They just didn't have the money," said Mike. "So 30 years down the road, that 50-year-old has made some money, and he'll pay five or six times what that thing would have cost him brand new. But he does that just to relive his youth. To be able to take his sweet wife he's shared a home with for 40 years out for a drive on Sunday."



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SHELBY SANCTUARY
Mike and Debbie Rogers' collection is rich in automotive history, with Carroll Shelby's legacy taking center stage. Among the rarities is a 1999 Shelby Series 1, foreground, one of just 249 produced. A selection from the Rogers' collection will be featured at this year's Concours, where the couple will serve as Velocity Collectors.

Viewing a car through the eyes of the person whose story it may eventually tell is a byproduct of the Rogers' constantly shifting collection. Growing up on the west side of Charlotte, Mike saw Datsun Z cars coming and going from his father's body shop.

"He made a living buying and selling them, and I would go to my dad's body shop and work till 5 o'clock. Then I would leave there and go to UPS and work till 10 o'clock. And I did that solid for two years, but unlike a lot of other kids, I always had nice cars," he said. "These old collector cars are assets. I mean, they're tangible assets. The whole key to collecting cars, in my opinion, is rarity."

In what is every car collector's dream, he found that his wife, Debbie, immediately understood how a collection could become self-sustaining with the right buyers.

"I started getting into cars when I met him. He took me to Barrett-Jackson one year, and I sat there and watched an entire week of people filing in and filing out, spending ungodly amounts of money on cars, and hearing their stories," she said. "They'd talk about being able to enjoy the cars, sell them and make money. People always have great stories."

While they are happy to sell some of the collection and turn a profit, there are precious machines in their garage that tell stories of their own and are thus off the table. During the Concours d'Elegance they will share their stories with the crowd as this year's Velocity Collectors.

For example, there's the 2007 Ferrari 599 he'll have on display. During an era when Ferrari fully embraced Formula One-style paddle shifters, his is one of just 30 that were built with a manual transmission. The bulk of his cars, however, will tell the singular story of an automotive genius named Carroll Shelby.

"He was an American icon. I mean, this guy was John Wayne and Elvis Presley all melded together. He was a badass, salesman and a self-promoter who did a lot of great things," said Mike. "He was a California hot rodder, and he would take different cars, put big motors in them and make hot rods out of them."

Shelby's legacy is written across hundreds of different models, some of the rarest of which will be on display as part of Mike's collection. There's the 1966 Shelby 427 Cobra, one of about 10 that remain in the "narrow hip" design. There's the 1999 Shelby Series 1, whose expensive Aurora V8 engine, carbon-fiber body and aluminum chassis proved too expensive to mass-produce, leaving just 249 in existence. There's one of just 25 50th Anniversary Shelby 427 S/C Continuation Cobras. And the kicker: Shelby's swan song, the Shelby 1000 Mustang, built just months before his death.

For Mike and Debbie, the Concours is a chance to share these stories with an appreciative audience while enjoying a weekend with their fellow collectors.

"It's something we can do together. We've got friends at these shows that we do not see unless we're at a car event. So it's always like a little reunion," said Debbie. "You see people you haven't seen all year … and you just spend a long weekend catching up with people and looking at beautiful cars."



Their *smiles* say it all.

(Give *your "baby"* a reason to smile!)



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Way off the assembly line

THIS YEAR'S HONORED NAMEPLATES PROVE VARIETY IS THE SPICE OF AUTOMOTIVE LIFE



GRACE, PACE AND SPACE Jaguar takes center stage as the 2026 Concours' Honored Marque, with a special display tracing the British automaker's evolution through decades of distinctive design, engineering and performance. This classic XK roadster embodies the sculpted lines and sporting elegance that made Jaguar one of the world's most celebrated automotive nameplates.

The curved swoosh of a bumper wrapped around a wheel in the logo of the Hilton Head Island Concours d'Elegance & Motoring Festival may evoke the aerodynamic flair and bold styling of a certain era of automotive design, but its focus has always been much wider.

From antique brass-and-wood horseless carriages that represent the art form's primordial past to the technological marvels now prowling our roads, the Concours has always been a celebration of every step in that journey. There are the classic hot rods that would inspire an entire generation of racers, the European masterpieces that elevated automotive design and the American muscle cars that defined a nation.

And beyond what it can do on four wheels, this open-air salute to motoring has always made room for boats, motorcycles and more. In essence, the Concours is a love letter to the things that move us.

The cars being honored this year are a perfect example. Each represents a wildly different interpretation of the automobile, with a shared love of motoring at their intersection.

This year's Honored Marque, Jaguar, represents the subtle sophistication and refinement of luxury automobiles.



BUILT FOR ADVENTURE The Ford Bronco celebrates 60 years at the 2026 Concours, honoring six decades of rugged design and go-anywhere spirit. Introduced for the 1966 model year, the Bronco evolved from a compact off-roader into an American automotive icon, earning generations of fans on the trail and the show field.

"We'll be bringing together exceptional Jaguars representing the history and evolution of the marque, including some truly unusual and significant examples," said Concours spokesperson, Kelly Broome-Smith. "For someone who loves design, engineering and automotive history, this should be a beautiful display."

Contrasting with the upscale British sensibilities of Jaguar is the high-octane Americana of Pontiac, celebrating 100 years during this year's Concours.

"That gives us another wonderful opportunity to look at an American marque across generations and remind people how much cultural history is wrapped up in these cars," added Broome-Smith.

And sometimes a car isn't about wrapping yourself in luxury or burying the needle on the freeway. Sometimes a car is about setting off into the untamed wild to see just how far it goes. In celebrating 60 years of the Ford Bronco, the Concours is showing it doesn't mind a little mud on the fenders.

"I think this will have enormous appeal beyond the traditional Concours audience," said Broome-Smith. "The Bronco has become such an enduring piece of American automotive culture."

A car can elevate the ordinary drive into something unforgettable. A car can pin you back in your seat as it puts hundreds of horses to work under the hood. A car can take you through the winding trails of the unknown.

No matter how, a car exists to move you. In honoring this trio of wildly different automobiles, this year's Concours is inviting you along for the ride.



PURE PONTIAC POWER Pontiac marks its 100th anniversary at the 2026 Concours, celebrating a century of American performance and personality. From stylish cruisers to tire-smoking muscle cars, the marque became synonymous with horsepower, and the view under this hood offers a fitting reminder of that legacy.



Never forgotten

OPERATION PATRIOTS FOB'S DINNER FOR THE HEROES REMINDS US ALL OF THE PRICE OF LIBERTY

STORY BY BARRY KAUFMAN



©STEVE MACK

CENTER STAGE Former NFL center Bart Oates speaks at a 2011 event in New York City. The three-time Super Bowl champion and former New York Giant will deliver the keynote address at OPFOB's Dinner for the Heroes on Nov. 7.



GIANT ACHIEVEMENT Bart Oates suited up at center for the New York Giants from 1985 to 1993, helping the team win Super Bowls XXI and XXV. He later won a third Super Bowl with the San Francisco 49ers and was inducted into the Giants Ring of Honor in 2022.



Twenty-five years ago, everything changed.

What those hateful acts of 9/11 did to our country can never be understated, fully understood or forgotten. But one aspect of that dreadful day's impact that often goes unexplored is the generation that answered the call when our nation needed them most. Moved by images on TV and memories of those lost in the attacks, they signed up to serve, ready to sacrifice during the decades of war that followed.

Few can understand those who stood up in our darkest hours like those men and women themselves. We can try, but ultimately it's a language they alone speak.

Operation Patriots FOB was formed to take that connection and turn it into something positive: to give these brave warriors a place to come together after their war is over, meet with others who had also prepared themselves to give all in the cause of freedom and realize that they are not alone.

Former NFL player and three-time Super Bowl winner ***Bart Oates*** has seen firsthand how OPFOB can reach veterans and serve them through shared experience.

"My son is a veteran of the 82nd Airborne and after meeting with OPFOB, they invited us both down to visit. We spent a weekend at the FOB, and the outreach, the way they just help these guys, is amazing. I saw my son relax because he was around people with common experiences,"



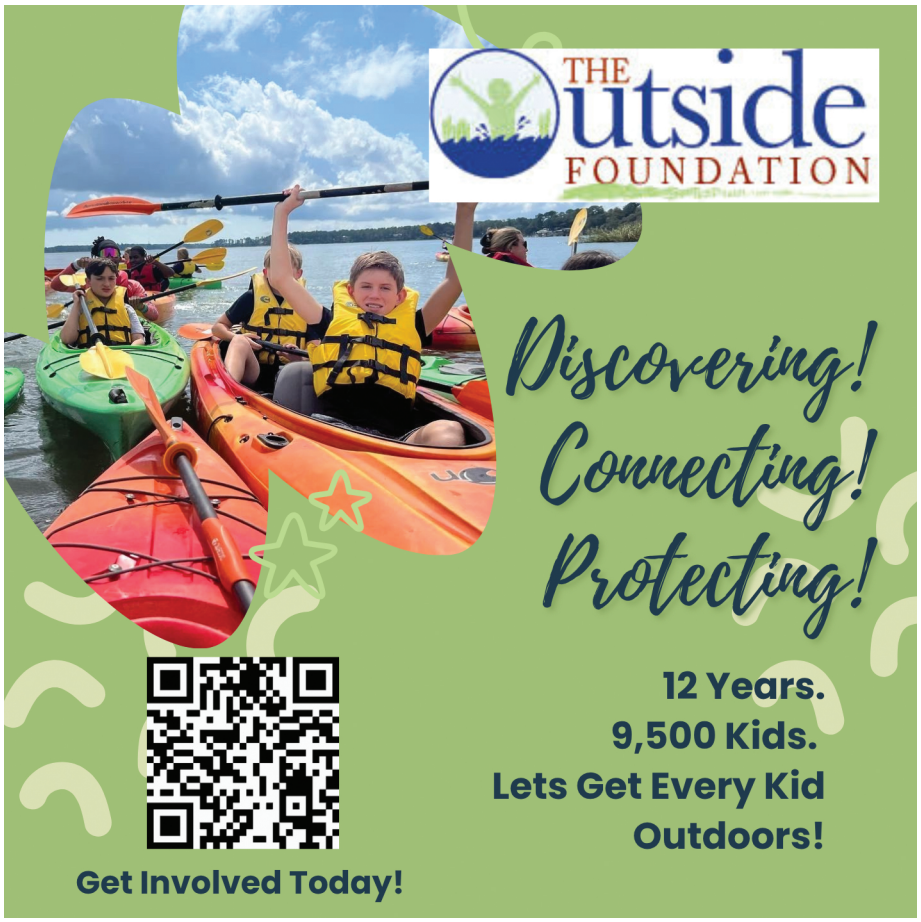
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A HERO HONORED President Donald Trump presents the Medal of Honor to retired U.S. Marine Corps Maj. James Capers Jr. during a June 18 ceremony at the White House. The decorated Vietnam War veteran will be the special guest at OPFOB's Dinner for the Heroes on Nov. 7.

said Oates. "People come back from war, and even if they are physically unscathed, there are a lot of emotional issues. And there's a comfort and familiarity at OPFOB. They were all complete strangers, but there was this automatic connection and friendship. It really resonated with me."

Oates will share his experiences as the keynote speaker during OPFOB's fifth annual Dinner for the Heroes on Nov. 7, which this year doubles as a solemn remembrance of 25 years since the 9/11 attacks. Oates has a close connection to New York City, having spent eight of his 11 years in the NFL as a center with the Giants, bringing home two Lombardi trophies. Like many of us, he watched the towers come down on TV and then watched his child go off to fight.

"I'm not the guy who was at Ground Zero. I didn't go to Iraq. I played football. But I think I represent the majority of Americans who have appreciation and respect for everyone who was involved," he said. "We didn't know if he was going to come back or not. We just knew he was in harm's way, so we just relied on our faith."





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UNITED FOR A CAUSE Guests are shown at last year's OPFOB Dinner for the Heroes. The annual gathering brings the community together to honor veterans and first responders while raising funds to support OPFOB's mission.

Oates' perspective as a parent will inform his keynote speech and add to an evening that will also feature guest of honor and Medal of Honor recipient Maj. James Capers Jr., USMC (Ret.). Held at "The FOB," the organization's private retreat in Ridgeland, the event raises funds to support its mission to prevent veteran and first responder suicide by restoring purpose, building community and creating lifelong connections.

This year's Dinner for the Heroes also serves as a tribute to one OPFOB volunteer who has always gone above and beyond.

"Craig Ostergard really brought this dinner to the table for us. It's his signature event. He always led the charge in terms of sponsorships and programming, really getting into the nitty-gritty details. We're taking this on for the first year without his leadership, so we wanted to honor what he did for this event," said Stephanie Brown, founder and CMO of OPFOB.

Now called the Craig Ostergard 5th Annual Dinner for the Heroes, the event will still count Craig among its presenting sponsors, along with his wife, Andra, as well as Robin Howell, John and Diane Hynes, and Hilton Head BMW.

"This is our fifth one, and it's grown every year," said Brown. "We're already at capacity."

To learn more about OPFOB's mission and lend your support to the heroes who came back changed by their sacrifices, visit opfob.org.



©MIKE RITTERBECK

Save the date

What: The Craig Ostergard 5th Annual Dinner for the Heroes
When: 5:30 p.m. Saturday, Nov. 7
Where: Hilton Beachfront Resort & Spa
Details: $300 per person. Special guest Maj. James Capers Jr., USMC (Ret.), is a Vietnam War veteran and the most recent recipient of the Medal of Honor. Former NFL player and three-time Super Bowl champion Bart Oates will deliver the keynote address. ***opfob.org***

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A feast for the senses

AN INSIDER'S GUIDE TO THE ARTS & SEAFOOD FESTIVAL'S STREET FEST



©HISTORIC BLUFFTON ARTS & SEAFOOD FESTIVAL

In Bluffton art and seafood have always made a pretty good pair. ***The Historic Bluffton Arts & Seafood Festival*** returns Oct. 9-18 for 10 days of coastal flavors, creativity, live music and unmistakable Bluffton character. It all builds to Street Fest on Oct. 17-18, when Old Town transforms into an open-air gallery and food crawl with more than 100 juried artists, restaurants, food vendors and musicians filling the streets. With so much to see, taste and discover, consider this your cheat sheet to the grand finale: five festival foods worth seeking out and five standout artists to find along the way.

THE ART OF THE CROWD Street Fest fills Old Town Bluffton with more than 100 juried artists, local food, live music and plenty of festival energy. The signature weekend and grand finale of the Historic Bluffton Arts & Seafood Festival takes place Oct. 17-18.

FOOD WORTH FINDING



Palmetto Kettle Corn

Sweet, salty and just a little fiery, Palmetto Kettle Corn's signature Sweet Heat puts a spicy spin on a festival classic. Each batch is handmade in small quantities for that fresh-from-the-kettle crunch. Traditionalists can stick with the classic while caramel, cheddar and other sweet and savory varieties make it easy to snack your way through the lineup. Samples are encouraged, so taste before choosing your bag.



The Sugaree

A little taste of Maine has become a Bluffton festival tradition. The Sugaree, a Bluffton bakery and cafe, serves a true Maine-style lobster roll generously packed with tender lobster meat, lightly dressed and tucked into a buttery, toasted New England-style split-top bun. The local favorite returns for its 15th festival appearance. Find the booth, say hello, and grab the lobster roll that keeps festival-goers coming back.



©LISA STAFF

PARTNERS IN SMOKE Marquith "Roscoe" and Danielle Green bring two family food traditions together at Mother Smokin' Good BBQ. Roscoe commands the smoker while Danielle brings her Alabama roots to the sauces, sides and flavors that round out their festival-ready menu.

Bluffton Oyster Co.

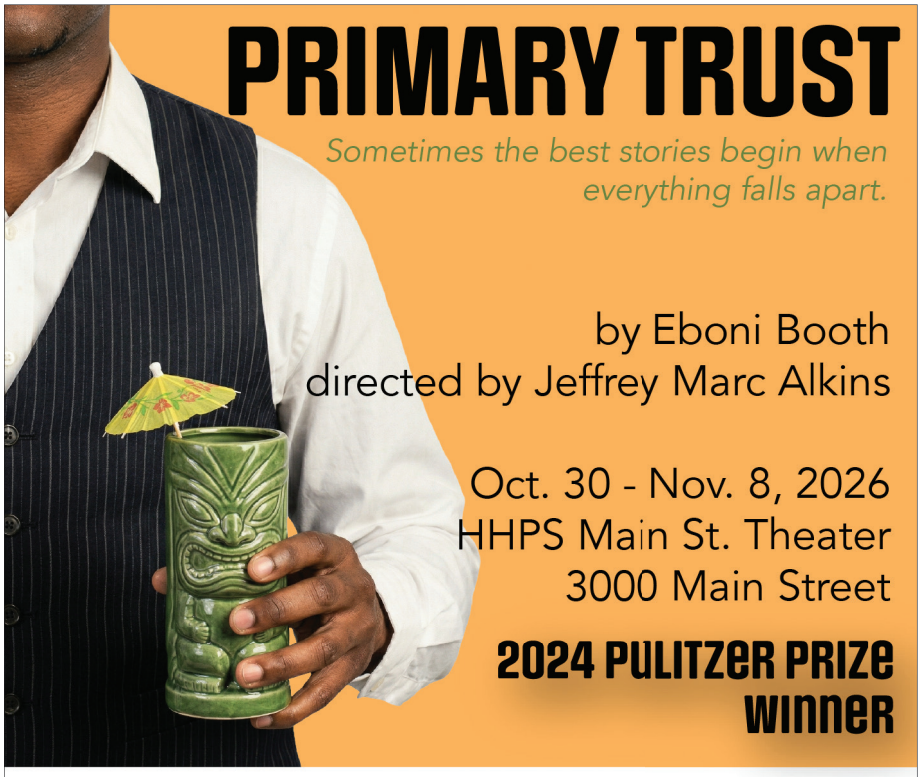
October is prime time for local white shrimp, and few names are more closely tied to Bluffton seafood than Bluffton Oyster Co. The family-run waterfront operation has been part of the town's seafood story since 1899, serving up a taste of the Lowcountry that's about as local as it gets. Seek out the fresh local shrimp, then make room for the company's famous local oysters, another festival favorite worth getting a little messy for.

Southern Spice Deli & Catered Events

Whether it's a shrimp burger slider or a steaming bowl of seafood chowder, this popular Hardeeville deli and catering company knows how to make fresh local seafood shine. Don't overlook the sides either. Tomato-cucumber salad and fried garlic cheese curds make this a booth where ordering more than one thing is highly encouraged.

Mother Smokin' Good BBQ

Smoke is the star at Mother Smokin' Good BBQ, where pitmaster Marquith "Roscoe" Green serves up a hearty lineup of slow-cooked Southern favorites. His signature Roscoe ribs helped earn him the title of Rib Champion on Discovery+'s "Moonshiners: Smoke Ring," but they're just the beginning. From smoky meats and barbecue classics to satisfying sides, the menu is built for festival appetites. Come hungry, grab a plate, and taste the barbecue that put Roscoe on the map.



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DINNER FOR THE HEROES

SATURDAY, NOV. 7, 2026 | HILTON HEAD ISLAND

The 5th Annual Dinner for the Heroes commemorates the 25th Anniversary of 9/11 by honoring the courage, sacrifice, and service of our Post-9/11 veterans.



FEATURING KEYNOTE SPEAKER
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JOIN ONE OF THE LOWCOUNTRY'S MOST ANTICIPATED EVENINGS OF PURPOSE & IMPACT.

ARTISTS WORTH ADMIRING

Stephanie Lavender

Stephanie Lavender brings color, texture and a touch of coastal glamour to her distinctive mixed-media art. Inspired by the landscapes and lifestyle of South Florida, her work combines unexpected materials, intricate craftsmanship and bold design to create pieces that are as tactile as they are eye-catching.

Michael Allen

Greenville artist Michael Allen brings the natural world into vivid focus through richly colored oil paintings. Birds, wildlife and underwater scenes come alive in saturated color and striking realism, capturing the beauty and detail of the natural world.

Shelby Dillon

Bluffton artist Shelby Dillon channels a life of travel into colorful, expressive works filled with bold brushwork and patterns. Her paintings and mixed-media pieces draw inspiration from water, tropical landscapes and the simple pleasure of slowing down and taking it all in.

Rachael Newman

Water, sky and solitude define Bluffton artist Rachael Newman's atmospheric seascapes. Soft horizons, distant boats and shifting light create a sense of stillness, giving her coastal scenes a peaceful, almost dreamlike quality.

Winthrope Hiers

Guyton photographer Winthrope Hiers finds extraordinary moments in wildlife, landscapes and familiar Southern scenes. His careful use of light, timing and composition transforms recognizable subjects into fine-art images that invite a second look.



©STEPHANIE LAVENDER

PALM PERFECTION Look closely at Stephanie Lavender's *Palm Royale*, and the details begin to reveal themselves. The 42-by-60-inch mixed-media work combines hand-cut, hand-painted Portuguese cork with individually set glass mosaic, creating layers of texture and shimmer inspired by life along the South Florida coast.



©PEACH PATROL

JUST PEACHY Bluffton-based Peach Patrol brings its freewheeling mix of rock, jazz and blues fusion to this year's Street Fest. The five-piece band will close Stage 2, located at Bridge and Calhoun streets, on Sunday, Oct. 18.



©BLUFFTONARTSANDSEAFOODFESTIVAL.ORG

LISTEN TO THE MUSIC

Saturday, Oct. 17

Main Stage (Martin Family Park)

The Close, 10 a.m.-12:20 p.m.
Spike Ivory, 12:45-2:30 p.m.
Bottles and Cans, 3-5 p.m.

Stage 2 (Bridge and Calhoun)

Delta Circle, 10 a.m.-12:20 p.m.
Julie Gribble, 12:45-2:30 p.m.
Gary Byrd Band, 3-5 p.m.

Sunday, Oct. 18

Main Stage (Martin Family Park)

John Brackett, 11 a.m.-1:15 p.m.
The Nice Guys, 1:45-4 p.m.

Stage 2 (Bridge and Calhoun)

Domino Theory, 11 a.m.-1:15 p.m.
Peach Patrol, 1:45-4 p.m.



IF YOU GO

WHAT: 22ND ANNUAL HISTORIC BLUFFTON ARTS & SEAFOOD FESTIVAL

When: Oct. 9-18
Street Fest: 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Saturday, Oct. 17; 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Sunday, Oct. 18
Where: Old Town Bluffton
What to expect: More than 100 juried artists, local seafood and Lowcountry cuisine, live music and entertainment
Admission: Free to Street Fest
Details: blufftonartsandseafoodfestival.org

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A Coastal Christmas • Nash Gallery • Pure Salt Studios
Neptune's Niche • Southern Tide Signature Store • Ship's Store
Tradewinds Trinkets & Treasures • Treasure Island

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Hilton Head Social Bakery • San Miguel's
Top Dawg Tavern & Pizzeria • Scott's Fish Market
LIVE ENTERTAINMENT AT PARTICIPATING RESTAURANTS

SERVICES
Harbourmaster's Office/Ship's Store • Pure Salt Studios
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Oct. 1: The Nice Guys
Oct. 8: Deas Guyz
Oct. 15: Deas Guyz

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OCTOBER happenings

Arts & Culture





October Artist of the Month

When: Times vary, Oct. 14-16
Where: FLOW Gallery + Workshop
Details: Discover the beauty and wildlife of the Gulf Coast through oil painter Brandon Finnorn's vibrant work during his artist residency at Palmetto Bluff. ***palmettobluff.com***



Young Frankenstein

When: Times vary, Oct. 30-Nov. 15
Where: May River Theatre
Details: Get ready for monstrous laughs as Mel Brooks' "Young Frankenstein" brings madcap comedy, memorable music and beloved characters to the stage. ***mayrivertheatre.com***



Featured artist: Kathy Tortorella

When: Times vary, Oct. 5-31 **Where:** Maye River Gallery
Details: Take in expansive Lowcountry vistas captured in pastel and oil by featured artist Kathy Tortorella. ***mayerivergallery.com***



Dear Evan Hansen

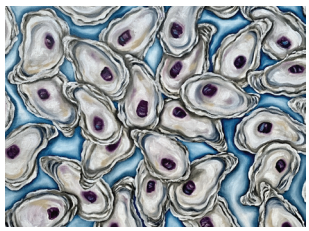
When: Times vary, now-Oct. 25
Where: Arts Center of Coastal Carolina
Details: Winner of six Tony Awards, this powerful contemporary musical follows a lonely teenager whose longing for connection sets off a chain of events that changes his life. ***artshhi.com***

OTHER EVENTS
Vitamin String Quartet:
4 & 7:30 p.m., Oct. 5

OTHER ARTS & CULTURE EVENTS

Now-Oct. 23: *"All Creatures Great and Small" at the Sea Pines Community Center*
Now-Oct. 31: *Habersham Artist Community at USCB Center for the Arts*
Now-Oct. 31: *Lisa Tupper at Beaufort Art Association Gallery*
Now-Nov. 1: *"A Better Life for Their Children" photo exhibit at Coastal Discovery Museum*
Oct. 9: *2nd Annual Port Royal Plein Air Invitational at Windhorse Gallery & Marketplace*
Oct. 13-Nov. 23: *"Long Story" at the Hilton Head Library Corridor Gallery*
Oct. 16-18 & 23-25: *"Barefoot in the Park" at Coligny Theatre*
Oct. 18: *Rock N Ribs 2026 at Coligny Plaza*
Oct. 28: *Pasture to Palette opening reception at the Sea Pines Community Center Gallery*
Oct. 29-Nov. 21: *Between Tide & Sky at Four Corners Art Gallery*





Love Where You Live

When: Times vary, Oct. 4-31
Where: SOBA Gallery
Details: Explore featured artist Julie Jones' work in "Love Where You Live," and meet the artist during a reception from 4-6 p.m., Oct. 10. ***sobagallery.com***



Primary Trust

When: Times vary, Oct. 30-Nov. 8
Where: HHPS Main Street Theater
Details: Experience Lean Ensemble's "Primary Trust," a funny, tender and moving play about friendship, resilience and finding the courage to begin again. ***leanensemble.org***

HHSO
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2026-2027 | 45th Season
John Morris Russell, Music Director



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OCTOBER 25

Opening Concert at 4 PM · Gala immediately following

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Charity & Community

10th Annual SIPS Party

When: 5-8:30 p.m., Oct. 16
Where: Palmetto Bluff Farm
Details: Sip, bid and give back during an evening featuring auctions and a wine pull, all benefiting Bluffton Self Help's programs and services. ***blufftonselfhelp.org***



Night on the Sound

When: 6-9 p.m., Oct. 17
Where: Port Royal Sound Foundation
Details: Spend an evening on the water with live music, signature drinks and local flavors while supporting efforts to protect the Port Royal Sound watershed. ***portroyalsoundfoundation.org***

Historic Bluffton Arts & Seafood Festival

When: Oct. 9-18 **Where:** Locations vary
Details: Experience 10 days of Lowcountry seafood, art, music and culture, culminating with Street Fest and its juried fine art show featuring more than 100 artists. For a complete schedule, visit ***blufftonartsandseafoodfestival.org***.

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

Daufuskie Island History & Artisans Tour: *8 a.m., Oct. 9, Church of the Cross*
May River Ducks Unlimited Fall Frenzy: *5 p.m., Oct. 9, Martin Family Park*
Bluffton State of Mind Supper Soirée: *6 p.m., Oct. 10, Calhoun Street*
Art in the Park: A Celebration of All Things Local: *11 a.m., Oct. 11, Martin Family Park*
Blessing of the Fleet Boat Parade: *4 p.m., Oct. 11, Wright Family Park*
Oyster Fest: *5 p.m., Oct. 11, Oyster Factory Park*
May River Boat Tours: *8 a.m., Oct. 12-18, Calhoun Street Public Dock*
Dinner & Learn: Cherish Our Waterways: *5 p.m., Oct. 12, Waddell Mariculture Center*
May River Oyster Farm Tour: *10 a.m., Oct. 13 & 15, Calhoun Street Public Dock*
Okàn Dinner & Art Exhibit: *6 p.m., Oct. 13, Okàn*
Author Night: Cherishing Bluffton's Past: *5:30 p.m., Oct. 14, Rotary Community Center*
Symphony Under the Stars: *7:30 p.m., Oct. 15, Martin Family Park*
Bluffton Self Help Sips & Seafood Party: *5 p.m., Oct. 16, Palmetto Bluff Farm*
Russo's Fresh Seafood: *6 p.m., Oct. 16, Russo's Fresh Seafood*
Old Town Oyster Run 5K: *8 a.m., Oct. 17, Oyster Factory Park*
Street Fest: *10 a.m., Oct. 17 & 18, Calhoun Street*
Take a Kid Fishing Tournament: *10:30 a.m., Oct. 17, Wright Family Park*
Children's Art in the Park: *11 a.m., Oct. 17 & 18, DuBois Park*
Rockin' on the Dock: *6 p.m., Oct. 17, Oyster Factory Park*



16th Annual Italian Heritage Festival

When: 11 a.m.-4 p.m., Oct. 17
Where: Coastal Discovery Museum
Details: Experience Italian culture and cuisine with live music, arts and crafts, a kids' zone, a silent auction and plenty of family-friendly fun. ***iachh.org***

Community BBQ

When: 11 a.m.-2 p.m., Oct. 9
Where: Correll Insurance Group, HHI
Details: Celebrate the Lowcountry community at Correll Insurance Group's eighth annual appreciation barbecue, featuring food, drinks, games, giveaways and plenty of fun. ***correllhhi.com***

Fun with the Fox

When: 6-8 p.m., Tuesday, Oct. 6
Where: Community Center at The Shops at Sea Pines Center
Details: The fifth annual Fun with the Fox brings together experts in Parkinson's research for a discussion on the latest progress toward better treatments and a cure. Mark Frasier, chief scientist of The Michael J. Fox Foundation for Parkinson's Research, will be among the featured panelists. Hosted by Hilton Head Island photographer Jeff Keefer and presented by VIVID Gallery, the evening includes refreshments from Lulu Kitchen. Each guest will receive a signed copy of Keefer's Where Sea Meets Sky. All ticket proceeds benefit The Michael J. Fox Foundation. ***FunWithTheFox.com***



Concert for the Kids

When: 5:30-9 p.m., Oct. 21
Where: Poseidon Rooftop
Details: Catch live music by local favorite Pretty Darn, enter raffles and enjoy family-friendly fun while supporting The Children's Center. ***childrenscentersc.org***

Jeep Island

When: Oct. 9-10
Where: Lowcountry Celebration Park and other locations
Details: Join fellow Jeep enthusiasts for a Show + Shine, live music, family fun, vendors, raffles and the new Slider Showdown, all benefiting the Island Recreation Association's Children's Scholarship Fund. ***islandreccenter.org***

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

Meet & Greet: *5-7 p.m., Oct. 9, Lincoln & South Brewing Company*
Main Event, Show + Shine & Slider Showdown: *Noon-3 p.m., Oct. 10, Lowcountry Celebration Park*
Official Afterparty: *3-7 p.m., Oct. 10, The Bank*



2026 Crescendo

When: Times vary, Oct. 10-Nov. 23
Where: Locations vary
Details: Immerse yourself in Hilton Head Island's vibrant arts scene during more than a month of concerts, performances, exhibitions, festivals, historical experiences, hands-on activities and special events. ***culturehhi.org***

OTHER CHARITY & COMMUNITY EVENTS

Oct. 6: *Town of Port Royal Police Department's National Night Out at John S. Parker Park*
Oct. 9-11: *Habersham Harvest Festival in Habersham, South Carolina*
Oct. 10: *Renegade Paws Rescue Adoption Event at Petco Bluffton*
Oct. 10: *Hilton Head Humane's Paws & Pastries at Sprout Momma*
Oct. 16-18: *2026 Fall Festival of Houses & Gardens in Beaufort*
Oct. 17: *Gullah Food Festival at the Gullah Museum of Hilton Head Island*
Oct. 17: *Boots, Barbecue & Oysters at the Golf Club at Indigo Run, benefiting PEP*
Oct. 17: *Downtown Halloween Celebration at Henry C. Chambers Waterfront Park*
Oct. 20: *2026 State of the Region at Hilton Beachfront Resort & Spa*
Oct. 23: *Pumpkin Patch at Shelter Cove Community Park*
Oct. 24: *Mac & Cheese Festival at Lincoln & South Brewing Company*
Oct. 24: *Haunted Hallows Festival 2026 at Naval Heritage Park*
Oct. 25: *Community Halloween Party at Hilton Head Humane's Hilton Head Campus*
Oct. 30: *Circle of Caring Gala at Hilton Beachfront Resort & Spa*



HHSO Gala

When: Oct. 25, following the opening night concert
Where: Wexford Hilton Head
Details: Toast the Hilton Head Symphony Orchestra's 45th anniversary with a prosecco welcome and elegant three-course dinner following the season-opening concert. ***hhso.org***

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HILTON HEAD ISLAND
ITALIAN
HERITAGE
FESTIVAL

Saturday 11AM - 4PM
October 17, 2026

Coastal Discovery Museum at
Honey Horn, Hilton Head Island

Admission $8
Children under 10 admitted Free
Rain or Shine - No Pets Please
Lawn Chairs Encouraged
Proceeds of this event support charities of the Lowcountry

Food & Drink





Hilton Head Olive Oils & Balsamics events

Brush up on your culinary skills with classes and tastings covering everything from salad dressings and olive oil blends to sourdough and Mediterranean-inspired dishes. ***hiltonheadoils.com***

UPCOMING EVENTS

Salad Dressing 101: *2-3 p.m., Thursdays*
Olive Oil & the Mediterranean Diet: *2-3 p.m., Oct. 5 & 19*
Sourdough with Marina: *1-3 p.m., Oct. 6*
Appy Hour: *2-3 p.m., Oct. 9, 16, 23, 27 & 28*

SERG Culinary Cup 2026

When: Oct. 12-Nov. 12 **Where:** Locations vary
Details: Watch rising local chefs battle it out over four weeks, transforming mystery ingredients into creative dishes before the competition culminates in a final showdown from 6-9 p.m. Nov. 12 at the USCB Center for the Arts. ***serggroup.com***

The Harvest Table at Kirks Mansion

When: 5:30 p.m., Oct. 7 **Where:** Kirks Mansion, Bluffton
Details: Savor the flavors of fall with an intimate six-course dinner by Chef Antonio Albano celebrating the autumn bounty of the Lowcountry. ***eventbrite.com***





Culinary events at The Sea Pines Resort

Wine dinners, oyster roasts, tap takeovers and more are on the menu this month at restaurants throughout The Sea Pines Resort. ***seapines.com/events***

UPCOMING EVENTS

Jazz Night at the Harbour Town Clubhouse: *6:30-8:30 p.m., Oct. 16, Harbour Town Clubhouse*
Tap Takeover: *5-8 p.m., Oct. 20, Fraser's Tavern*
Heritage Farm Benefit Dinner: *6-8:30 p.m., Oct. 21, Heritage Farm*
Día de Muertos Tequila Dinner: *7:30-8:30 p.m., Oct. 29, Sea Pines Beach Club*
Oyster Roasts: *1-4 p.m., Saturdays starting Oct. 10, Coast, Oceanfront Dining*
Pint Night: *5-9 p.m., Thursdays, Fraser's Tavern*
Lobster Bake: *11:30 a.m.-4 p.m., Sundays, Harbourside*





Aperture Cellars Wine Dinner

When: 6-9 p.m., Oct. 15
Where: Alexander's Restaurant & Wine Bar
Details: Discover the wines of California's Aperture Cellars during a special dinner pairing exceptional pours with a thoughtfully prepared menu. ***alexandersrestaurant.com***



Cooking School at Michael Anthony's

When: 11:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m., select dates
Where: Michael Anthony's Cucina Italiana
Details: Sharpen your kitchen skills with hands-on classes and chef-led demonstrations at Michael Anthony's popular cooking school. Visit online for menus and additional class offerings. ***michael-anthonys.com***

UPCOMING CLASSES
Oct. 8: *Fall is in the Air! Cooking Demo*
Oct. 9: *Apple Harvest Cooking Demo*

OTHER FOOD & DRINK EVENTS

Oct. 8: *Dessert Cocktails at Hilton Head Distillery*
Oct. 11: *Barre to the Bar at Shellring Ale Works*
Oct. 15: *Cigar Night at Shellring Ale Works*
Oct. 15: *The Art of Tiki Cocktail Class at Hilton Head Distillery*
Oct. 19: *Sip & Craft: Halloween Wine Glass Set at Burnt Church Distillery*
Oct. 21: *St. Francis Wine Dinner at Old Oyster Factory*
Oct. 27: *Sip & Craft: Chunky Pumpkin Workshop at Burnt Church Distillery*
Oct. 29: *Boos & Booze Cocktail Class at Hilton Head Distillery*

WEEKLY FOOD EVENTS

Tuesdays: *Battles & Bread at Wine Time Bluffton*
Tuesdays: *Tasty Tuesdays at Rollers Wine & Spirits*
Wednesdays: *Pasta Night at Wine Time Bluffton*
Wednesdays: *Wine Tasting at Wine Time Washington Square*
Wednesdays & Thursdays: *Outside Hilton Head Happy Hour Cruises at Shelter Cove Harbour & Marina*
Thursdays: *Thirsty Thursdays at Rollers Wine & Spirits*
Thursdays: *Jazz on the Patio at Okan*
Thursdays: *Featured Wine Tasting at Wine Time Bluffton*
Fridays: *Friday Uncorked at Windhorse Gallery & Marketplace*
Sundays: *Mimosas & Melodies at Windhorse Gallery & Marketplace*
Sundays: *Lowcountry Tailgate Party at Skull Creek Boathouse*



An Exclusive Offer for LOCALS ONLY:

LOCALS LANE

POWERED BY locallife

Available exclusively to Beaufort County residents, this pass comes packed with perks, including:

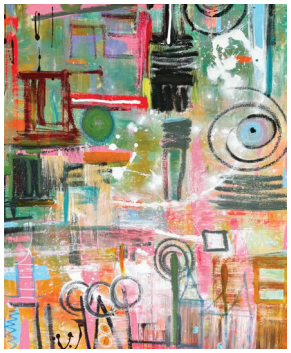
- **VIP Lanyard**
- **$20 off VIP Parking**
- **10% Discount on official festival merchandise**
- **A locals-only vote in the "Life on the Water Exhibit Presented by Butler Marine" boat competition.**

Kids and students under 18 get in free, making it an easy way to share the excitement with the whole family.

To join, visit **hhiconcours.com/locals**, confirm your Beaufort County zip code and register online. Then pick up your lanyard at the show entrance, and get ready to see your hometown event in a whole new light.

hhiconcours.com/locals

Lectures & Classes



SOBA art classes

Get creative at SOBA Gallery with hands-on classes in watercolor, acrylics and abstract painting. For a complete schedule, visit ***sobagallery.com***.

UPCOMING CLASSES

The Beachcomber: *3-Hour Watercolor Workshop: 1-4 p.m., Oct. 15*

Beginners Acrylic Painting: *1-4 p.m., Oct. 19 & 26*

Abstract Painting Your Way: *9 a.m.-noon, Oct. 31*







Guided Play Mahjong with Andrew Baldino

When: 6:30-8:30 p.m., Oct. 6 & 20
Where: Nectar Farm Kitchen, Old Town Bluffton
Details: Sharpen your mahjong skills over great food and friendly competition with guided and independent play options for experienced players. ***nectarfarmkitchen.com***

OTHER LECTURES & CLASSES

LIBRARIES FOR KIDS INTERNATIONAL EVENTS
Oct. 19: *Author Series with Cele and Lyn Seldon*

HILTON HEAD AUDUBON EVENTS
Oct. 7 & 26: *Fall Shorebird Walk and Wildlife Beach Area Tour at Fish Haul Beach Park*
Oct. 9: *2026 Lantern Making Workshop at Public Service Electric*
Oct. 22: *Origin and Lore of Bird Names at Hilton Head Library*
Oct. 24: *Introduction to Lowcountry Bird Identification at Coastal Discovery Museum*

BEAUFORT COUNTY LIBRARY EVENTS
Oct. 7: *Pat Conroy's Lowcountry and His Legacy of Literacy at the Bluffton Branch*
Oct. 14: *Adult Craft: Book Pumpkins at the Hilton Head Branch*

PAT CONROY LITERARY CENTER EVENTS
Oct. 22-25: *11th Annual Pat Conroy Literary Festival*
Oct. 29: *An Evening with Rena Winchester*

ART LEAGUE OF HILTON HEAD EVENTS
Oct. 12: *Introduction to Painting with Pastels*
Oct. 28: *Wind Down Wednesday: Fantastic Felted* Works

WORLD AFFAIRS COUNCIL HILTON HEAD EVENTS
Oct. 16: *Michael Ratney: A New Saudi Arabia in a Volatile Region*
Oct. 30: *Kurt Volker: Russia's War on Ukraine: How Will It End?*

HISTORIC PORT ROYAL FOUNDATION EVENTS
Oct. 15: *Third Thursday at Live Oaks Park*

MEMORY MATTERS EVENTS
Oct. 8: *Mark Sennet: A Celebrity Photographer Turns His Lens to Alzheimer's*

HERITAGE LIBRARY EVENTS
Oct. 16-17 & 23-24: *Ghosts and Myths of Hilton Head Island*

USCB EVENTS
Oct. 22: *Lunch with Authors featuring Katherine Reay at Belfair Clubhouse*

COASTAL DISCOVERY MUSEUM EVENTS
Oct. 15: *Discovery Night at the Museum: Create an Indigo Scarf*
Oct. 29: *Discovery Night at the Museum: Pumpkins, Posies & Prosecco*



ROOTS & RIVERS FESTIVAL

THANK YOU, LOWCOUNTRY

Roots & Rivers Festival 2026

Thank you for celebrating culture, music, food, local entrepreneurs, and community with us at Oyster Factory Park.

A fundraiser supporting BlacQuity and opportunities for Black entrepreneurs and the wider community.



bluffton
HEART OF THE LOWCOUNTRY

The Roots & Rivers Festival is partially supported by Town of Bluffton Accommodations Tax Funds.

Oyster Factory Park, Bluffton, South Carolina

www.RootsAndRiversFestival.com

Photo credit: Denolis Polite Photography

ARTS CENTER OF COASTAL CAROLINA
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"THEATRICAL MAGIC. ONE OF THE MOST REMARKABLE SHOWS IN MUSICAL THEATER HISTORY."
The Washington Post

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VSQ
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OCT 5 | 2 SHOWS!
The romance of *Bridgerton*, the genius of Taylor Swift, and the cinematic magic of Danny Elfman—plus much more—brilliantly reimagined for strings.
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NOV 5 & 6 | 2 SHOWS!
Get ready to Boot Scootin' Boogie the night away with this powerhouse female vocal trio, performing the greatest, most beloved hits in Country Music from today and yesterday.
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2026 2027 THEATER SERIES

DEAR EVAN HANSEN
SEP 23 – OCT 25 2026

Annie
DEC 2 – JAN 3 2026-27

Good Night, OSCAR
FEB 3 – FEB 21 2027

CRAZY for YOU
APR 28 – MAY 30 2027

Jimmy Buffett's Escape to Margaritaville
JUN 23 – AUG 8 2027

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Markets & Shopping





FARMERS & ART MARKETS

Shop fresh produce, local foods, handmade goods and original art at these Lowcountry and Savannah markets.

Bluffton Farmers Market: *Noon-4 p.m., Thursdays, 68 Boundary St.*
Farmers Market at Coastal Discovery Museum:
9 a.m.-1 p.m., Tuesdays, Coastal Discovery Museum
Port Royal Farmers Market: *9 a.m.-noon, Saturdays, Naval Heritage Park*
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., third Friday of each month, Habersham Marketplace, Beaufort
Side Hustle Brewing Co. Farmers Market:
1-5 p.m., third Sunday of each month, Side Hustle Brewing Co.
Forsythe Farmers Market: *9 a.m.-1 p.m., Saturdays, Savannah*
River Street Art Market: *10 a.m., Oct. 16-18, Savannah*
Palmetto Bluff Farmers Market: *9 a.m.-1 p.m., Oct. 7 & 21, Palmetto Bluff Farm*



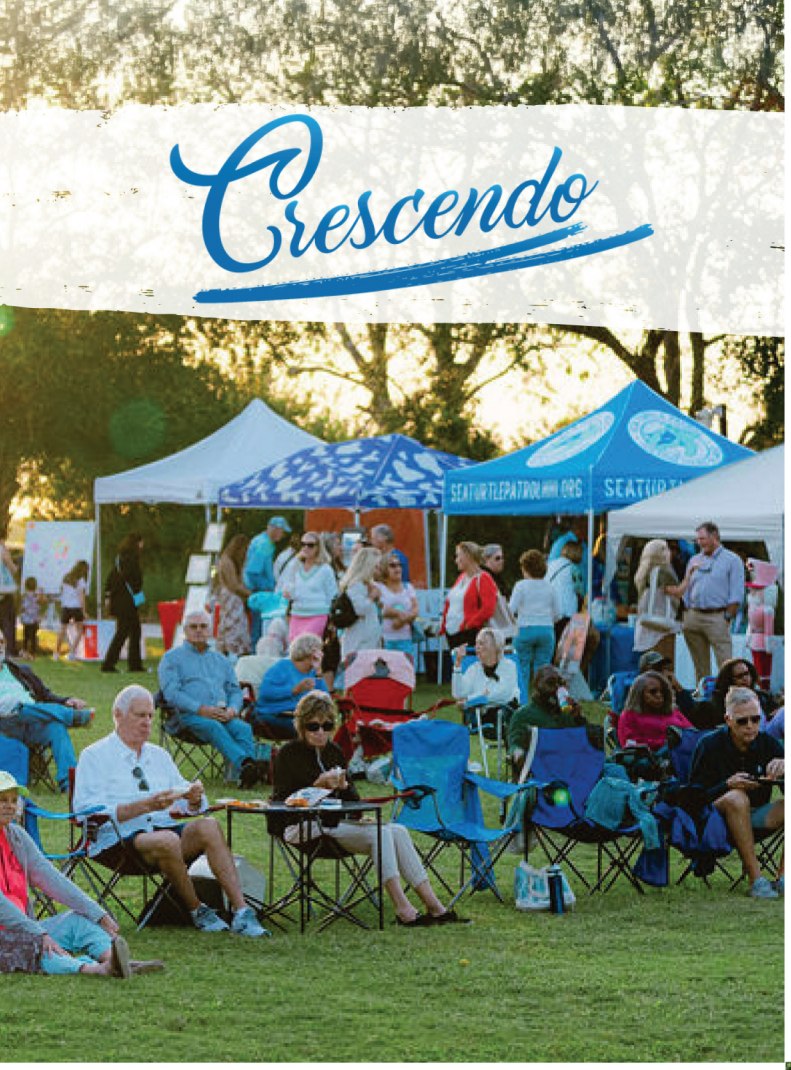
Anniversary Celebration

When: 10 a.m.-1 p.m., Oct. 10
Where: Coastal Skin Studio
Details: Celebrate Coastal Skin Studio's anniversary with one-day-only specials, surprises and more.
coastalskinstudio.com

Roberto Coin Trunk Show

When: 10 a.m.-5 p.m., Oct. 22-24
Where: Forsythe Jewelers
Details: Explore Roberto Coin's newest fall collections and one-of-a-kind designs during this special three-day trunk show. ***forsythejewelers.biz***





UPCOMING EVENTS

CRESCENDO KICK-OFF CELEBRATION

Wed., October 14 from 5 - 7 p.m.
Shelter Cove Community Park - 39 Shelter Cove Lane

Join us for a special performance by *Mark Rapp and the Soda City Brass Band*! Experience musical performances, exhibits, original artwork, and displays from over 30 organizations.

CRESCENDO SONGWRITER SHOW

Fri., Oct. 23 from 6 - 8 p.m.
Lowcountry Celebration Park - 94 Pope Avenue

Eric Reid & The Hebron Road Ramblers
With Special Guests *Matt Eckstine* and *Nick Poulin*

OCTOBER 9 – NOVEMBER 22

Celebrate National Arts & Humanities Month with over 100 arts and culture events happening across Hilton Head Island.

DISCOVER LOCAL...

Experience the world-class art, culture, history, and entertainment that Hilton Head Island has to offer. Your one-stop shop for art & culture on the island.

OFFICE OF CULTURAL AFFAIRS
Hilton Head Island



AN ANNUAL CELEBRATION OF ARTS & CULTURE
Check the event calendar at culturehhi.org

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Music & Entertainment



Music & Taste on the Harbour

When: 6-9 p.m., select Thursdays
Where: Shelter Cove Community Park
Details: Catch live music by the water while enjoying specially priced bites and drinks from Shelter Cove Harbour restaurants during this free outdoor concert series. ***sheltercovehiltonhead.com***

UPCOMING LINEUP
Oct. 8 & 15: *Deas Guyz*



Roots, Rhythm & Soul

When: Times vary, Oct. 10-11
Where: USCB Center for the Arts
Details: Experience the gospel, jazz, soul and rich Lowcountry musical traditions of Marlena Smalls and the Hallelujah Singers during this uplifting performance. ***uscbcenterforthearts.com***



Music with Friends on the Bluff

When: 7-8:30 p.m., Oct. 19
Where: Longfield Equestrian Center at Palmetto Bluff
Details: See legendary singer-songwriter John Oates in an intimate setting while supporting The Outside Foundation and honoring the legacy of Dr. Jean Fruh. ***outsidefoundation.org***



HHSO events

The Hilton Head Symphony Orchestra kicks off its 45th season with outdoor concerts, a performance by acclaimed pianist Olga Kern, an anniversary gala and more. hhso.org

UPCOMING EVENTS
Symphony Under the Stars Bluffton: *7:30 p.m., Oct. 15, Martin Family Park*
Symphony Under the Stars Hilton Head: *7:30 p.m., Oct. 16, Lowcountry Celebration Park*
Olga Kern: Beethoven's Emperor: *4 p.m., Oct. 25, First Presbyterian Church*
45th Anniversary Gala: *5:30 p.m., Oct. 25, Wexford Country Club*
HHIPC BravoPiano! Recital: *7:30 p.m., Oct. 30, SoundWaves*

OTHER MUSIC & ENTERTAINMENT EVENTS

Oct. 10: *Outlaws for a Cause Charity Concert at Captain Woody's Bar & Grill*
Oct. 11: *Fripp Island Friends of Music presents Nicole Henry at the Fripp Island Community Center*
Oct. 17: *SC Ballet's Disco Inferno*
Oct. 17: *Music on Malphrus: Rod Macdonald at Unitarian Universalist Congregation of the Lowcountry*
Oct. 18: *Beaufort Symphony Orchestra presents German Masters at the USCB Center for the Arts*
Oct. 27: *Halloween Costume, Dance & Pizza Party at Hilton Head Ballroom Dance Studio*



FOLLOW THE OYSTER TO

THE 22ND ANNUAL HISTORIC BLUFFTON ARTS & SEAFOOD FESTIVAL

OCTOBER 9-18, 2026

Celebrate 22 years of tradition with plenty of activities showcasing locally harvested seafood and Lowcountry cuisine while highlighting the rich history and culture of the area. The celebration culminates with a juried fine art show and street fest on October 17th and 18th.

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HEART OF THE LOWCOUNTRY

blufftonartsandseafoodfestival.org

Bluffton Oyster Co. Family Seafood House
Seaglass Windowscapes — Style · Shade · Secure
Sparklight
Savannah Hilton Head International
Howell Chase — Heating, Air Conditioning & Plumbing
Bumble Bee Blinds — Window treatments to Buzz About
Bluffton Rotary Club — Service Above Self — since 1988
The Island Packet
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EVENTS

SAVANNAH EVENTS

Now-Nov. 7: *"Mamma Mia!" at The Savannah Theatre*
Oct. 8-11: *75th Annual Savannah Greek Festival at St. Paul's Creek Orthodox Church*
Oct. 9: *ZZ Top at VyStar Pavilion*
Oct. 10: *Savannah Wiener Dog Races at Plant Riverside District*
Oct. 10: *Blues, Brews, BBQ & Bourbon at The Park at Eastern Wharf*
Oct. 10: *Garba Festival at VyStar Pavilion*
Oct. 10: *SC Ballet's "Dracula" at Johnny Mercer Theatre*
Oct. 15: *The Red Clay Strays at Enmarket Arena*
Oct. 16: *Savannah Ghost Pirates Opening Night at Enmarket Arena*
Oct. 16: *Mark Paul at Johnny Mercer Theatre*
Oct. 17: *Humane Society's 7th Annual Fall Fair at the Humane Society for Greater Savannah*
Oct. 17: *Ty Myers at VyStar Pavilion*
Oct. 18: *The Doobie Brothers at Enmarket Arena*
Oct. 24: *Trick or Treat on River Street*
Oct. 24: *The Big Bash Fall Festival at Tanger Outlets Savannah*
Oct. 24-25: *21st Annual Wag-O-Ween in downtown Savannah*
Oct. 24-31: *SCAD Savannah Film Festival at SCAD*
Oct. 27: *"The Wiz" at Johnny Mercer Theatre*
Oct. 29: *Ocean to Table: Lowcountry Boil at UGA Marine Education Center & Aquarium*
Oct. 29-Nov. 8: *South Georgia State Fair at the Fairgrounds*
Oct. 30: *Fine Arts Showcase at SCAD*
Oct. 30: *Gavin Adcock at Enmarket Arena*

SAVE THE DATE

Nov. 1: *Hilton Head Half & Quarter Marathon & 5K at The Sea Pines Resort*
Nov. 2: *Swing Fore the Symphony at Wexford Golf Club*
Nov. 5: *"You're a Good Man, Charlie Brown" at Hilton Head Christian Academy*
Nov. 7: *SOAR's Cocktails on the Coast at The Rooftop at Poseidon*
Nov. 14-15: *12th annual Bob Masteller Jazz For All Ages Music Festival at Sonesta Resort Hilton Head*



Sparkle Hour by Kessler Fine Jewelry

When: 5-7 p.m., Thursdays
Where: Kessler Fine Jewelry
Details: Sip handcrafted cocktails, sample sparkling bites and browse Kessler's fine jewelry collections during this weekly happy hour. ***plantriverside.com***



October Southern Estates and Collections

When: Times vary, Oct. 27-29
Where: Everard Auctions & Appraisals
Details: Browse and bid on fine and decorative art from Southern estates and collections, with an early look at the auction offerings during a special preview reception on Oct. 20. ***everard.com***

Tuscan Harvest Festival

When: 10 a.m.-3 p.m., Nov. 5
Where: Le Cookery
Details: Meet VIETRI master artisan Cristian Massaro and watch him bring his craft to life while enjoying live music, cocktails, bites, demonstrations, special discounts and holiday shopping. lecookery.***myshoplocal.com***



TO SHOWCASE AN EVENT

Want to see your event in Happenings? Submit it for consideration at ***locallifesc.com***. Click "Contact Us" and include the event title, date, time, location, a brief description, website link and photos, if available.

HILTON HEAD ISLAND

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Community & Lowcountry Tradition

FEBRUARY 22–28, 2027

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Cocktails on the Coast

SATURDAY
NOVEMBER 7
4 TIL 8 PM

THE ROOFTOP BAR

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Join us for an unforgettable evening of delicious food, handcrafted cocktails, live entertainment, breathtaking views, and an exciting auction featuring incredible items — all while supporting SOAR's Special Olympics athletes.

Tickets are limited so please register early.

Scan for tickets for Cocktails on the Coast

If you can't make the event, you can still participate in the **LIVE AUCTION ONLINE.**

Scan to visit the live auction page.

SOAR Special Recreation

Special Olympics South Carolina AREA 8

SUPPORT SOAR & OUR ATHLETES

Sports & Outdoors



October races

Lace up for a busy month of runs and walks, with opportunities to get moving, have fun and support local causes.

UPCOMING RACES

Oktoberfest Pub Run: *6 p.m., Oct. 7, Local Legend Brewery*
Lowcountry Breast Cancer Walk: *9 a.m., Oct. 10, Old Town Bluffton*
NAMIWalks Lowcountry: *9:30 a.m., Oct. 10, Shelter Cove Community Park*
Old Town Oyster Run 5K: *8 a.m., Oct. 17, Oyster Factory Park*



Sea Pines adventures

Get outdoors this October with festive wagon rides, Halloween fun and a moonlit adventure at The Sea Pines Resort. ***seapines.com***

UPCOMING EVENTS

Halloween Wagon Ride:
11 a.m., Oct. 24, Heritage Farm
Halloween on the Harbour:
1:30-3:30 p.m., Oct. 25, Harbour Town
Night at the Preserve: Full Moon Wagon Ride: *7:30-8:30 p.m., Oct. 26, Heritage Farm*



Palmetto Bluff Conservancy events

Explore the wilder side of Palmetto Bluff with nature programs highlighting spiders, nocturnal wildlife and even a few ghost stories. Visit ***palmettobluff.com/conservation*** for a complete schedule.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Brown Bag Lunch: Spiders:
Noon-1 p.m., Oct. 14
Explore PBC: Creatures of the Night:
7-9 p.m., Oct. 23
Brown Bag Lunch: Ghost Stories of the Bluff:
Noon-1 p.m., Oct. 28

OTHER SPORTS & OUTDOORS EVENTS

Oct. 10: *Tom Reilley Memorial Golf Tournament at Hilton Head Lakes*
Oct. 21-25: *Multihull Regatta Hilton Head Island 2026 at South Carolina Yacht Club*
Oct. 26: *Tee It Up For Life Golf Classic at Palmetto Hall Golf Club*





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- Hilton Head Symphony Offer
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- Hilton Head Soap Co. Offer
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And every Insider gets a birthday treat from Carolina Coffee and Crumbs.





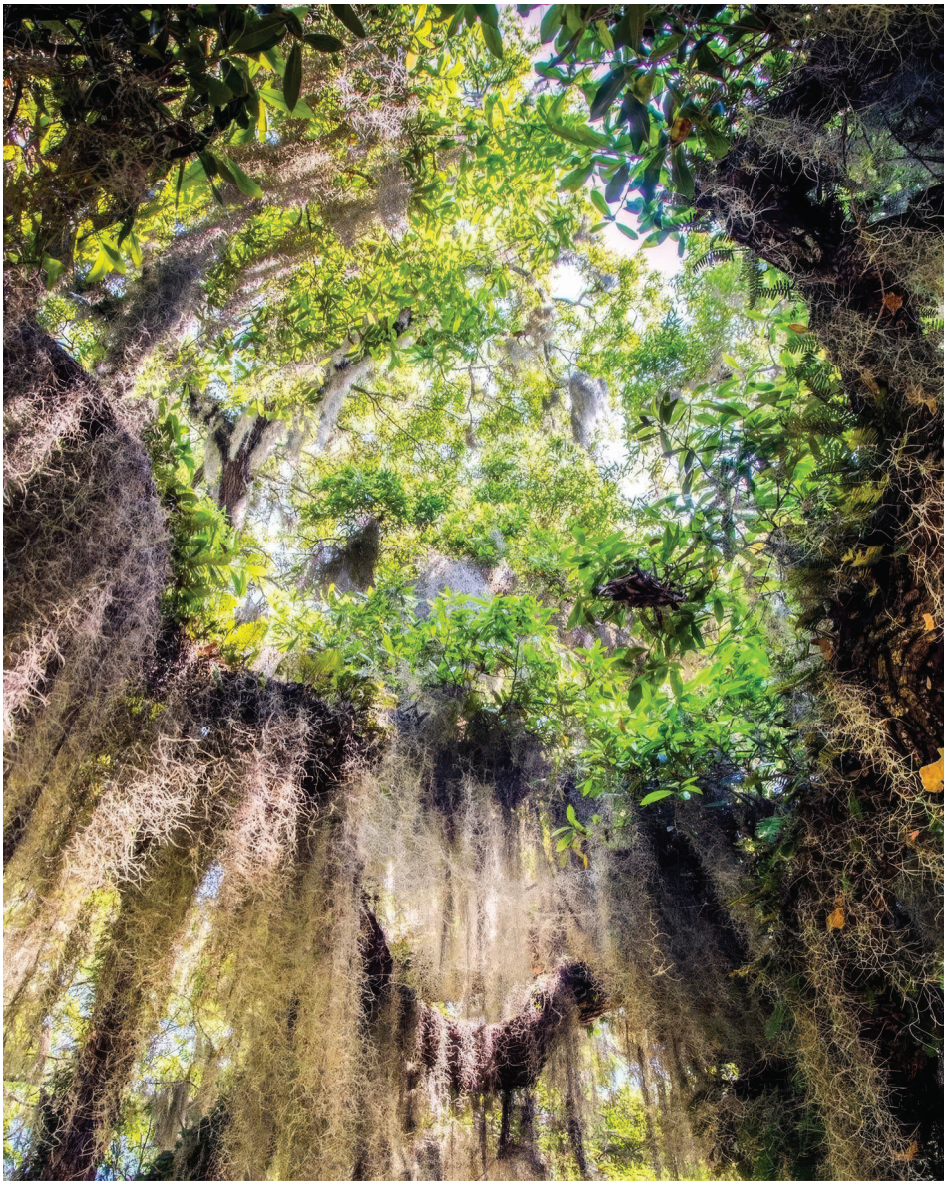


Scan to join or fill out and send the card with your payment near the front of this magazine.

local life INSIDERS

DON'T FORGET TO LIVE LIKE A LOCAL

Do you see what I see?



Lowcountry Visitor Center & Museum, Yemassee

The Lowcountry has a way of revealing things when you least expect it. While waiting for a photo shoot at the Lowcountry Visitor Center & Museum at historic Frampton Plantation, photographer Michael Hrizuk looked up into the moss-draped canopy and found something looking back. "I looked up, and it looked right back at me." With his camera gear in the van, he reached for his iPhone and captured the eerie face hidden among the branches. No Photoshop. No AI. Just sunlight, Spanish moss and a centuries-old Lowcountry landscape with something hiding in plain sight. Do you see it?

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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