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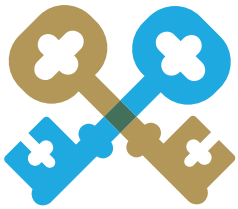
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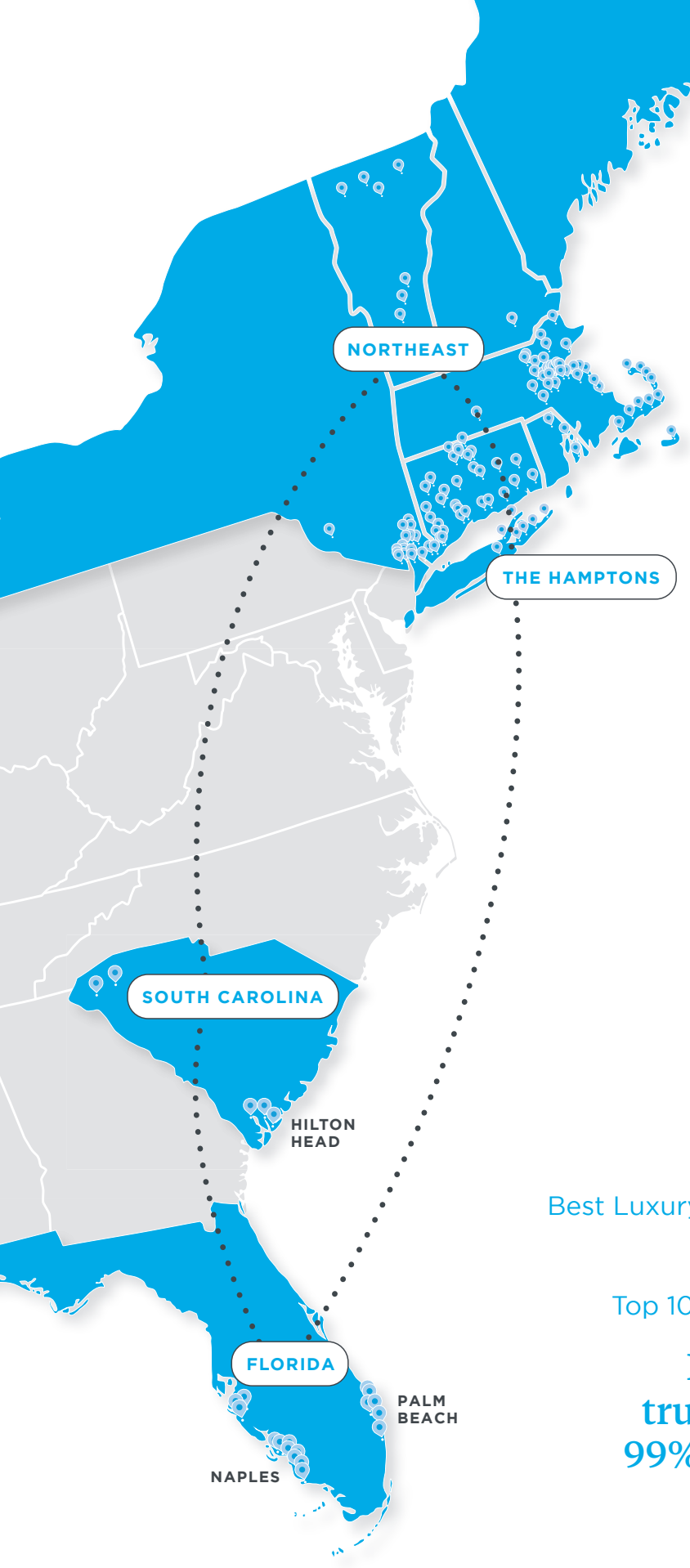
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the team

Where is your favorite summer escape?

"The beach, right in our own backyard."
- LORI



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"All of the mid-island beaches, especially Driessen."
- LANCE



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"Under an umbrella in front of Jamaica Joe'z Beach Bar."
- JEREMY



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"The mountains and/or the beach."
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"Bethany Beach, Delaware."
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"At the pool with a good book."
- BAILEY



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"Somewhere deep in a Bloody Mary."
- SHEILA



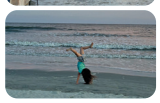
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"Cheat Lake, West Virginia."
- REBECCA



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"Sunset Beach, North Carolina."
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"Mary's Mountain near Sod, West Virginia."
- MARCI



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"Floating in the pool with my partner in crime."
- LISA



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"Heading to the mountains for some cooler temps and outside activities."
- LEAH



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"Islanders Beach for sun and surf in the a.m."
- BRUCE



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June features



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Summer Escapes

From close-to-home adventures to once-in-a-lifetime getaways, this issue is your guide to making the most of the season. Explore road trips, splash pads and daytrips across the Lowcountry, or set your sights on far-off destinations with expert travel advice, trending hotspots and unforgettable journeys from local globetrotters. Inside you'll find wanderlust-worthy fashion, perfect beach reads and movies tailored to your vacation style. Whether you're venturing around the world or just around the corner, these summer escapes offer new inspiration and a welcome change of pace.

TAKE THE PLUNGE Soak up the resort life at The Westin Hilton Head Island Resort & Spa, where three outdoor pools, a hot tub, ocean access and steady sea breezes set the scene for total relaxation. Enjoy all the amenities with a $65 day pass through ResortPass or opt for the full overnight experience at this four-star retreat. Local residents can score exclusive rates by using promo code "L9Z" at westin.marriott.com or mentioning it when booking by phone. Find more local escapes starting on **page 102.**

28
Road trip refresh
Scenic, crowd-free getaways just a drive away

82
Local travel trends
A travel expert shares the hottest summer trips locals are planning

94
Beyond first class
Explore the planet's most jaw-dropping luxury escapes

98
Journeys of joy
A local couple finds healing through a shared love of travel

102
Daufuskie daytrip
Rediscover this quiet island full of stories, sand and surprises

108
Make a splash
Cool off with local splash pads built for family fun

112
Think inside the box
Cool off indoors with clue-filled fun at local escape rooms

114
Screen-time escapes
Experience cinema under the stars with an outdoor movie night

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June contents

22
Publisher
From staycations to far-flung adventures, this summer-ready issue is filled with road trip ideas, local getaways, jet-set daydreams and smart ways to soak up the season. Whether you're hitting the highway or keeping it coastal, inspiration starts here.

24
Contributors
Meet the locals behind this issue

26
Links
Special content you can find online at locallifesc.com



60
Bathed in light
Unique family memories and expert light manipulation transform a Sea Pines home into a sun-drenched stunner.











38
Blend
The hot list: What to watch, read and listen to in June

44
Business
Fresh faces, bold moves and big plans in the Lowcountry

46
Faces
Meet the minds behind three unique local summer camps

72
Living
Learn why quartzite is an ideal choice for local kitchens

88
Destinations
Top travel publications reveal the hottest summer escapes

116
Outdoors
The eastern kingbird rules the skies with attitude

128
Pets
Adopt a fearless fuzzball that is all play and heart

130
Style
Outfits for sun-drenched escapes and staycations

136
Shopping
Trendy items available at local shops and businesses

138
History
The story behind a 1781 raid and the Talbird Oak

140
Culture
Paddles up for DragonBoat Beaufort Raceday

150
Eats
Savor summer's sweetness with easy-to-grow blackberries

171
Libations
Refreshing cocktails that turn any day into a getaway

172
Happenings
The best festivals and events worth attending in June

190
Live like a local
Insider tips for the best local restaurants and experiences

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Michael B. Karas *Coastal Moment* 30" x 40" Oil

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Plan your escape

Whether you stay local or venture far, this issue is packed with ideas to help you make the most of summer.

"When all else fails, take a vacation."

- BETTY WILLIAMS, WRITER

Summer isn't the only thing rolling in. As you read this, a steady stream of SUVs and minivans is creeping toward the bridge, packed with beach chairs, boogie boards, a week's worth of outfits (plus a few extras, just in case) and enough snacks to fuel a soccer team. For first-time visitors, it's wide eyes and curiosity. For seasoned regulars, it's the comfort of returning — the smell of pluff mud, that first sweeping view of the island from the bridge and the quiet confidence of knowing your way around.

Most of the year, Hilton Head runs on the pace of about 40,000 full-time residents. In the summer that number jumps well past 150,000. And it's easy to see why. With 12 miles of beach, sunshine that won't quit, a long list of kid-friendly activities, great restaurants and more ice cream shops than seems reasonable, this island ranks high on the list of places people love to revisit.

While most visitors get one great week, those of us who live here get the full stretch. We catch the sunsets, the fireworks, the live music, the festivals and the joy of skipping the traffic with a few smart detours. Personally, I like swinging by the Piggly Wiggly at Coligny. Yes, I'm picking up fresh seafood, but I'm also there for the people-watching — the excitement of families just getting started on their vacation. You can spot it instantly: that Saturday glow, carts stacked with groceries and optimism. By week's end those same families show up a little pink, a little tired and already planning next year.

Of course, summer is also when locals plan their own getaways. Some head overseas, others hit the road for a change of scenery, and many stick around for a staycation. However you define escape, this issue is here for it.

Inside you'll find weekend road trips that feel like a full reset, ideas from globetrotters with well-worn passports and books and movies that will take you somewhere new.

We've also sprinkled in a bit of daydreaming: private jets, yachts and island buyouts, because who among us hasn't played the "if I win the lottery" game? And back on Earth, we're sharing the best spots for splash pads, Daufuskie day trips and a few locals behind the area's top summer camps. Staying put? We've got you covered with fashion picks and home finds that make everyday life feel a little more like vacation.

There's something about summer that invites a different rhythm. A chance to say yes more. Yes to travel. Yes to rest. Yes to the people and places that make life feel full. However you're spending the season, we hope this issue gives you ideas, inspiration and maybe a new favorite spot or two.

Let the summer begin. Your next escape might be closer than you think.



©LISA STAFF

SWEET ESCAPES For publisher Lori Goodridge-Cribb, most travel these days means cruising up I-77 to Charlotte or across I-26 to Greenville, chasing the laughter, hugs and joyful chaos that come with spending time with her four growing grandchildren and their families.

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WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU

Help shape the future of LOCAL Life, and you might just win dinner on us.

Hi there, LOCAL Life reader. Whether you've been with us from the beginning or this is your first time flipping through, we want to know what you think. What do you love? What do you skip? What do you want to see more of?

***Scan the QR code** to take a short, five-minute survey and tell us how we're doing. Your answers help shape everything from the people we feature to the stories we chase. And if you feel like sharing your email at the end (totally optional), you'll be entered to win a $200 gift card to a local restaurant.*

So go ahead and chime in. We're listening.



FRONT AND CENTER Have you seen the LOCAL Life Jeep around town? This month we rolled up next to ***Katie Thompson, Tom Grieve and Julie Callaway*** of Front Light Building Co. If you are considering a custom build, visit their new state-of-the-art design studio in Bluffton.

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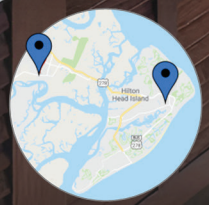
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MEET LOCAL CREATIVES BEHIND THE SCENES



Frank Gorman *Artist*

OTHER CREDS: University of Illinois, architecture; licensed 50 years. April show as Featured Artist at Art League of Hilton Head. **FOR THIS ISSUE:** Local art, *Flying*. **HOMETOWN:** Chicago area and the West Michigan coast **CURRENT HOME:** Beaufort **LOCAL SINCE:** 2015 **HOBBIES:** Painting the Lowcountry **WHAT ARE YOU READING?** Non-fiction history: *The Devil at His Elbow* by Valerie Bauerlein and *Patriot* by Alexei Navalny. **WHAT DO YOU LOVE MOST ABOUT THE LOWCOUNTRY?** The vast and peaceful marshlands; seeing them from our home in Habersham (Beaufort). **WHAT DO YOU MISS MOST ABOUT YOUR HOMETOWN?** My 104-year-old mother who recently passed away. **WHAT INSPIRES YOUR ART?** The beauty around us — ocean, marshlands, beautiful birds and this thriving Beaufort County. **FAVORITE ARTISTS:** Rembrandt, Joaquín Sorolla and J.S.Sargent **FAVORITE SUMMER ESCAPE:** Summers in Michigan **WHAT DO YOU LOVE MOST ABOUT JUNE?** It's cooler than July or August **SOMETHING ABOUT YOU MOST PEOPLE DON'T KNOW:** I was a Peace Corps volunteer 55 years ago. In retirement I've worked in over 20 countries doing volunteer architectural design of hospitals and universities in developing countries.

Diane Turner Valeri *Poet*



FOR THIS ISSUE: Local poem, *Whoopy* **HOMETOWN:** Ambler, Pennsylvania **CURRENT HOME:** Latitude Margaritaville **LOCAL SINCE:** 2022 **HOBBIES:** Bike riding, line dancing, writing **WHAT ARE YOU WATCHING?** People, endlessly fascinating. **WHAT ARE YOU LISTENING TO?** *Daily Gratitude Meditation* by Jessica Heslop (YouTube). Bird songs using the Merlin app to identify them. **WHAT ARE YOU READING?** *Social Change 2.0* by David Gershon, *Remarkably Bright Creatures* by Shelby Van Pelt **WHAT ARE YOU DRINKING?** Kombucha, I love Gingerade. **WHAT INSPIRES YOUR POETRY?** Things that delight me, fascinating new facts and stuff I don't say out loud because it's too sassy. **FAVORITE PLACE TO WRITE:** On napkins, the back of receipts. I lose a lot of great ideas if I don't jot them down. **FAVORITE POETS:** Shel Silverstein, Maya Angelou, Rumi **FAVORITE SUMMER ESCAPE:** Waynesville, North Carolina **WHAT DO YOU LOVE MOST ABOUT JUNE?** Planting things that mostly die, but I keep trying. **SOMETHING ABOUT YOU MOST PEOPLE DON'T KNOW:** I've walked across hot coals, did stand-up comedy, and I belong to a psychic club.



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Kelly Brock *Travel consultant*

FOR THIS ISSUE: Summer travel trends **HOMETOWN**: Newport News, Virginia **CURRENT HOME:** Hilton Head Island **LOCAL SINCE:** 1996 **HOBBIES:** Travel. I believe we all need something to look forward to, and I do not let moss grow. Boating, cooking/entertaining, and now my latest obsession is my new (and perfect) grandson, Wes. **WHAT ARE YOU WATCHING?** All things in the *Yellowstone* collection, *Lioness*, and I do like the girly mindless stuff like *Emily in Paris*. **WHAT ARE YOU LISTENING TO?** Kenny Chesney, reggae, yacht rock, nursery rhymes and local, live music whenever possible **FAVORITE SUMMER ESCAPE:** All things boating/being on the water with my guy, sneaking away whenever possible to our beloved Darien, Georgia, and my trek up to the Outer Banks for our multi-gen annual family reunion. **FAVORITE VACATION MEMORY:** From childhood, a horseback trail ride and visit to Mexican Hat with my sibs and dad. In adulthood there are many, but I will never forget how calm and how moving Nepal was. **WHAT DO YOU LOVE MOST ABOUT TRAVEL?** Cultural differences, food, people-watching. It's a constant reminder to love and respect all and that laughter sounds the same in all languages. **SOMETHING ABOUT YOU MOST PEOPLE DON'T KNOW:** That my BFFs keep a running list of the stupid stuff that comes out of my mouth when I am relaxed and having fun and not "on." Oh, and I can hambone.

Others adventurous souls who helped hatch this escape plan ...

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Corryne Jackson, Beth Drake, Hampton Drake, and Lauren Dooley







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On the web: Articles our readers are loving at ***LocalLifeSC.com***.

1 Meet some of the most **famous horses** in Beaufort County



2 **Learn to make pasta** with a beginner's guide from Michael Anthony's



3 **Create an entryway** that makes a quiet first impression



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About the cover



*Captured by photographer **Justin Fisher**, the sunlit image on this month's cover leads us down a sandy path to one of Hilton Head Island's favorite summer escapes: the beach. For locals it's a place to exhale. For visitors it's the start of something unforgettable. Whether you come for sunrise strolls, castle-building or toes-in-the-surf therapy, the island's shoreline delivers. A beach renourishment project will begin in August to help keep it that way. The good news is that all beaches will stay open, and most folks won't even notice the work. What you will notice is the same magic that has drawn people here for generations: warm breezes, salty air and the promise of another perfect beach day.*

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Pictured left to right – Back row: Alan Perry NMLS# 866734, Susan Smith NMLS# 278903, Aaron Benton NMLS# 1717095, Gina Cavano NMLS# 1182146, and Jason Goldstein NMLS# 2180858. Front row: Tricia Lowman NMLS# 2440257, David Crowell NMLS# 12620, Kim Capin NMLS# 158295, and Clara Good NMLS# 2169516.

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Want to get away?

HIT THE ROAD THIS SUMMER WITH THESE CLOSE-TO-HOME BUT FAR-FROM-ORDINARY ESCAPES.

STORY BY LANCE HANLIN

Even paradise has its peak season. When the heat settles in and beaches, parks, restaurants and grocery stores start to overflow, it's the perfect time to seek out somewhere quieter, even if just for the weekend. Whether you're after cool mountain air, a change of pace or a well-earned reset, these four accessible escapes deliver breathtaking scenery and unforgettable experiences. Each is a scenic drive from Hilton Head, with charming detours and unexpected delights along the way. Gather your essentials, let the music set the mood, and slip away with the horizon in your sights. The road is calling.

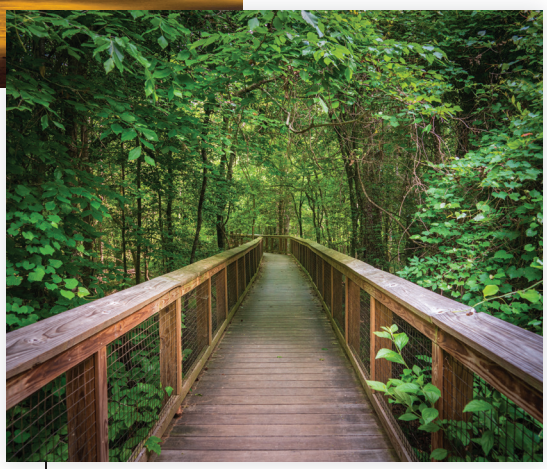
Escape to driftwood dreams

JEKYLL ISLAND, GEORGIA **Drive time:** *2 hours (130 miles)*

If you love the beach but not the bustle, Jekyll Island offers a peaceful retreat with a rich and storied past. Once the exclusive playground of America's wealthiest families — including the Rockefellers, Vanderbilts and Pulitzers — this barrier island now welcomes all who crave a slower, more refined kind of coastal escape. Stroll along beautiful pathways, tour preserved landmarks from the island's Gilded Age heyday, and experience the grandeur of Jekyll Island Club Resort.

Slow down by the sea

- *Wander the driftwood monuments that line the waterfront along Driftwood Beach.*
- *Visit the Georgia Sea Turtle Center to meet rescued turtles.*
- *Explore the island's 20-plus miles of scenic bike paths.*
- *Walk along Millionaire's Row of opulent winter cottages built between 1888 and 1928 by the country's elite.*
- *Treat the kids to slides and splash zones at Summer Waves Water Park.*



Escape to the forest primeval

CONGAREE NATIONAL PARK
Drive time: *2.5 hours, 156 miles*

Just outside Columbia, this under-the-radar national park offers a strikingly different kind of natural beauty. Home to the largest intact stretch of old-growth bottomland hardwood forest in the Southeast, it protects an ecosystem that was once widespread but is now increasingly rare. Towering bald cypress and loblolly pines soar above a lush, water-shaped landscape of blackwater creeks, seasonal floods and thriving biodiversity. It's a haven for nature lovers in search of stillness, solitude and the quiet awe of walking among giants.

Let the forest lead

- Walk the Boardwalk Loop Trail for an elevated view of the forest floor and its cathedral-like canopy.
- Paddle Cedar Creek through a maze of cypress knees and tupelo trees.
- Join a ranger-led full moon hike or owl prowl for a glimpse of the park's nocturnal life.
- Take the quieter Weston Lake Loop to spot deer, barred owls and possibly a wild hog.



Escape to the mountains

HIGHLANDS, NORTH CAROLINA ***Drive time:*** *5.2 hours, 332 miles*

When Lowcountry heat and humidity hit their peak, many locals head for the hills, and Highlands is a favorite refuge. Tucked high in the Blue Ridge Mountains at over 4,000 feet above sea level, this town was founded in 1875 as a planned mountain resort, so city dwellers could escape the summer swelter. Today it still delivers on that promise, offering cool breezes, stunning waterfalls and a refined mix of nature and luxury.

Rise above it all

- Hike through Nantahala National Forest for panoramic views and crisp mountain air.
- Walk behind the cascade at Dry Falls, or admire the roadside beauty of Bridal Veil Falls.
- Browse for mountain-chic goods, art and antiques in Highlands' boutique-lined downtown.
- Indulge in a spa treatment at Old Edwards Inn & Spa, a historic European-style retreat.



Escape to the wild side

CUMBERLAND ISLAND, GEORGIA

Drive time: *2.5 hours plus ferry, 155 miles*

Looking to fully disconnect? Cumberland Island is the ultimate back-to-nature escape. With no cars, no crowds and no cell service, this remote barrier island offers raw beauty and deep quiet, a rare kind of wilderness that feels like stepping back in time. Once the retreat of the Carnegie family, the island is now preserved as a national seashore, its wild horses, live oaks and historic ruins telling stories of both opulence and isolation.

Unplug in the wild

- Roam the Dungeness ruins, remnants of the Carnegies' once-grand estate, now overtaken by vines and time.
- Catch glimpses of wild horses grazing near the dunes and drifting through maritime forests.
- Follow sandy trails and boardwalks to wide, untouched beaches where your footprints may be the only ones.
- Step inside Plum Orchard, the island's last-standing Carnegie mansion.
- Camp beneath a canopy of stars in a setting so quiet, you'll hear the Atlantic before you see it.

OTHER GREAT ESCAPES

More destinations worth the drive, sorted by vibe and distance from Hilton Head.

BEACH ESCAPES

Hunting Island State Park (1.15 hours, 52 miles)
Tybee Island (1.25 hours, 60 miles)
Edisto Beach (2.25 hours, 105 miles)
Folly Beach (2.25 hours, 110 miles)
Amelia Island, Florida (2.5 hours, 131 miles)

NATURE ESCAPES

Savannah National Wildlife Refuge (1 hour, 40 miles)
Lake Warren State Park (1.5 hours, 64 miles)
Skidaway Island State Park, Georgia (1.5 hours, 75 miles)
Okefenokee Swamp, Georgia (3 hours, 142 miles)
Little Talbot Island, Florida (3 hours, 150 miles)

CULTURAL ESCAPES

Savannah (45 minutes, 40 miles)
Charleston (2 hours, 100 miles)
Augusta, Georgia (3 hours, 140 miles)
Columbia (3 hours, 160 miles)
St. Augustine, Florida (3.5 hours, 195 miles)

MOUNTAIN ESCAPES

Greenville (3.5 hours, 206 miles)
Brevard, North Carolina (4.5 hours, 240 miles)
Asheville, North Carolina (5 hours, 265 miles)
Helen, Georgia (5 hours, 265 miles)
Blue Ridge, Georgia (5 hours, 280 miles)

IT'S TIME TO GET TROPICAL!



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SELECTIONS BY ALEA WILKINS



Resting beach face

Ballast Beach Pillow

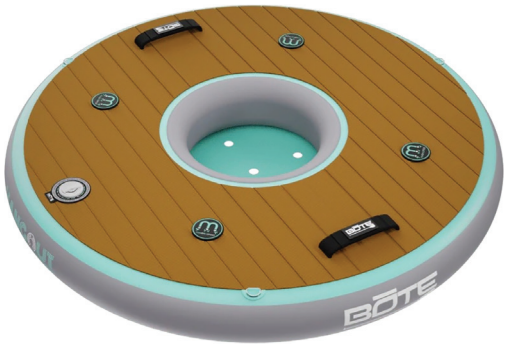
Doze off with a pillow built for the beach. Soft padding supports the head and neck, while durable material wicks away water and sand, ensuring total relaxation. When it's time to hit the waves, a compartment on the cushion's backside can be filled with sand to prevent it from flying away in the coastal breeze. Compact and travel-friendly, the pillow elevates poolside lounges, sleeping bags or any resting spot to unlock the sunbathing of your dreams. ***ballastgear.com, $35***



Rock the boat

JBL Charge 5

Keep your song of the summer on repeat with a speaker powered for any adventure. Wireless, waterproof and dustproof, the JBL Charge 5 can set the mood for beach days or pool parties. Its dual-pumping JBL bass radiators deliver clear audio, and when paired with similar JBL speakers, they become an impromptu surround-sound system. With a battery life of 20 hours, the speaker can play long after the sun sets. Phone needing some juice? There's also a built-in charging port. Rock on. ***jbl.com, $180***



Personal libation device

BÕTE Inflatable Hangout Bar Classic

Whether you're anchored at the sandbar or partying at the pool, an inflatable swim-up bar transforms your gathering into the ultimate watering hole. Stabilized with a multi-textured deck pad and magnetic cup holders, the inflatable bar lets you swim and sip without worrying about spills. Its center fits coolers to store all your favorite beverages, and its lightweight, military-grade material is built to keep spirits high wherever you party. ***boteboard.com, $409***



Just keep sweeping

Betta SE Solar-Powered Smart Robotic Pool Skimmer

Like a robovac for your living room, your pool deserves a hassle-free upgrade. Solar-powered to filter leaves, pollen, insects and other debris from the surface, the Betta SE can continuously run for over 30 hours, even in overcast weather. It's compatible with any water type and durable enough to withstand harmful UV rays season after season. Reviewers praise it as an investment to complete outdoor luxury, saving stress and time to fully appreciate their backyard oasis. Go ahead, soak it in. ***bettabot.com, $470***



Grill out on the water

Magma Original Marine Kettle Gas Grill

Seafood and sailing represent the best of the coastal South, but don't leave the barbecue at the docks. Mount a marine grill to your vessel for steaks, burgers or the catch of the day done the captain's way. Magma's original Marine Kettle® Gas Grill heats up quickly to appease hungry passengers, and its controllable fuel system makes cooking on the water safe and simple. The stainless steel exterior is built to withstand harsh marine environments while also looking classy. It's waterfront dining, unlimited. ***magmaproducts.com, $240***

À la mode

Ninja CREAMi 7-in-1 Ice Cream Maker



TikTok's viral Ninja CREAMi brings the frozen-treat aisle to your kitchen. Blend pints of ice cream, gelato or milkshakes for an indulgent dessert, or whip up lighter options like ultra-creamy smoothie bowls or sorbets. The flavor possibilities are endless. Personalize your pints with classic scoops or creative mix-ins to make one-of-a-kind treats. Plus, the appliance is compact and dishwasher-safe, ensuring cleanup and storage are a breeze. Homemade desserts are the cherry on top of a perfect summer day. ***ninjakitchen.com, $230***

Thirst trap

BrüMate Hopsulator Slim



Chill out with a refreshed version of your average koozie. Designed for 12-ounce slim cans, the Hopsulator Slim uses patented triple insulation to keep beverages ice-cold with every sip. Its non-slip base and grip technology prevent spillage as you move from the boat to the beach; and it's cup-holder and dishwasher-friendly. Choose from 25 colors and patterns to satisfy everyone's taste. Whether sipping on seltzers at South Beach or brews at Broad Creek, the Hopsulator Slim keeps it cool. ***brumate.com, $25***



Pitcher perfect

Capresso Iced Tea Maker

Beat the heat with a pitcher of iced tea that's ready within minutes. Just add ice and your favorite loose or bagged tea, and the machine will automatically take care of the rest. Bring the removable glass pitcher out to the porch, or store it in the fridge for whenever thirst strikes. For a refreshing twist, add fresh or frozen fruit while it steeps, or keep it simply Southern with a brew that's sippin' pretty. ***capresso.com, $70***



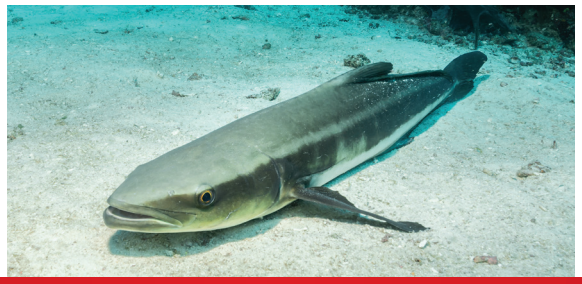
Tanner Sutphin *(Real Estate Advisor)*
and Cash *(Rescued from Rogue Rescue)*.

To fetch your dream home on the May River you're gonna need a Realtor that is Top Dog.

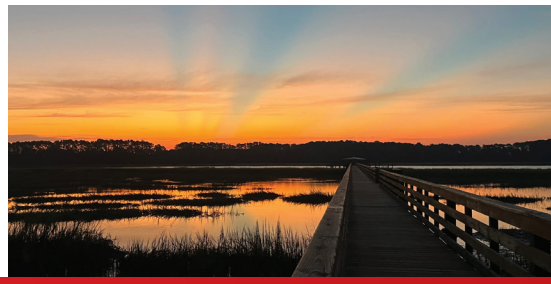
If you're looking to buy or sell your Lowcountry dream home, Tanner Sutphin is here to make that dream a reality. As a trusted expert in May River real estate, Tanner has achieved over $20M in sales on the May River — including a record-breaking $6.2M sale at 135 Gascoigne Bluff and the highest price per square foot ever recorded at 51 Colcock *(according to Hilton Head MLS)*. Tanner doesn't just know the May River lifestyle — he lives it. Now he's ready to help you make it your home too.



FULL MOON
(Strawberry Moon) *June 11th*



WHAT'S BITING
Cobia



BREWS ON THE BLUFF
June 13th

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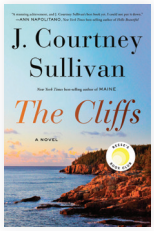
843.707.9083



Booked for departure

Let your imagination take flight with these five destination-worthy stories.

***Denise Friday**, a school social worker at Hilton Head Island Elementary and mother of twins, finds both escape and inspiration between the pages of a great book. This month, she shares a selection of summer reads that promise to sweep you away.*



THE CLIFFS *BY J. COURTNEY SULLIVAN*

Head to Maine in this sweeping tale centered around an old Victorian house with breathtaking ocean views and many secrets. As a teen, Jane Flanagan discovers the abandoned home, its contents eerily preserved as if someone walked out and never returned. She finds solace in its stillness. Years later, tasked with researching the property's history for a new owner, Jane uncovers a long legacy of fame, heartbreak, loss and even ghosts. A wonderful portrait of a seaside community.



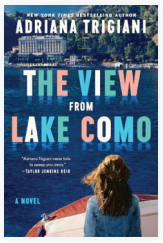
IT HAPPENS IN THE HAMPTONS *BY HOLLY PETERSON*

Head to New York with Katie Doyle, who moves to Long Island for the summer with her handsome boyfriend to start fresh. She soon discovers a wild mix of wealthy summer visitors and working-class locals. Amid betrayals, affairs, lavish parties and a missing person, Katie is forced to reconsider what she truly wants, for herself and her young son. A fun, fast-paced summer read.



THAT LAST CAROLINA SUMMER *BY KAREN WHITE*

Head to Charleston with Phoebe Manigault, a West Coaster who returns to her childhood home to help her sister Addie care for their ailing mother. As a child, Phoebe was haunted by nightmares she couldn't explain. Now, back in the Lowcountry, the dreams intensify, leading her to a shocking, long-buried truth. A story of mystery, family and second chances.



THE VIEW FROM LAKE COMO *BY ADRIANA TRIGIANI*

Head to New Jersey. Okay, but also to beautiful Italy. Jess Capodimonte is caring for her aging parents in blue-collar Lake Como, N.J., while recovering from a painful divorce. A gifted draftswoman in the marble industry, Jess gets the opportunity to pursue her dreams abroad. On the shores of the other Lake Como, she begins to carve out a life in an old world that's entirely new to her. A hilarious and heartwarming story of reinvention.



A HUNDRED SUMMERS *BY BEATRIZ WILLIAMS*

Head to Rhode Island in 1938. Lily Dane is hoping to escape the city and her former best friend Budgie, now married to Lily's ex-fiancé. A quiet summer by the shore is just what she needs — until the couple arrives too. As the season unfolds, Lily and Budgie cautiously rekindle their friendship under the looming shadows of war in Europe and an approaching hurricane. A layered, atmospheric work of historical fiction not to be missed.



Welcome Summer

The summer months are traditionally quieter months for real estate transactions, but very busy for rentals and all things vacation.

If you are considering purchasing real estate, this can be a very good timing. Fewer active buyers could mean more opportunity for you.

Let's start with a confidential conversation.

And if you are considering selling, likewise, summer is a great time to strategize and prepare for listing in August or September. We are pros at positioning for maximum return via renovation, furnishing, and design.

For all things rental and real estate, just buzz us.

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Photographed at 15 Bald Eagle, Sea Pines by Silver Cup Media

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TODAY as seen on THE TODAY SHOW

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Stream your way to paradise

Pick the perfect vacation movie based on your personality, no passport required.

STORY BY LANCE HANLIN



We all have our dream escapes: white sand beaches, misty mountain cabins, bustling foreign cities or a theme park that costs as much as a used car. But when a real trip isn't in the cards, or you'd rather vacation in flip-flops from your couch with unlimited snacks and zero airport stress, a good movie is the next best thing. The best vacation films do more than entertain. They transport you. Whether you're dreaming of a summer fling in Rome, belly laughs on a tropical cruise or a soul-searching journey with postcard-worthy views, there's a film ready to take you there. No suitcase or sunburn required.

For the sun-chaser



Mamma Mia! (2008)

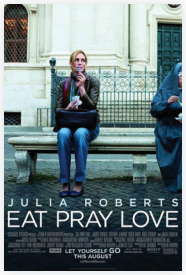
Personality: You're sunshine in human form. You live for spontaneity, spontaneous dancing and Greek island daydreams.

Why you'll love it: It's an all-out escape to a sparkling island paradise, packed with infectious music, big emotions and the kind of joyful chaos that feels like summer in a bottle.

SUITCASE SCALE

Wanderlust: *You'll Google "villa rentals in Skopelos"*
Tears: *Mild*
Feel-good vibes: *Practically glowing*
Stream it: *Peacock*

For the solo traveler at heart



Eat Pray Love (2010)

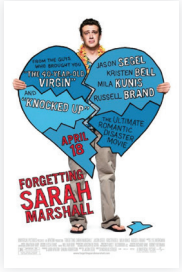
Personality: You're introspective, adventurous and always chasing your next big breakthrough, preferably with a passport in hand.

Why you'll love it: Follow one woman's journey across three countries and three emotional states: pasta-fueled bliss, spiritual awakening and Bali beach healing.

SUITCASE SCALE

Wanderlust: *Deliciously high*
Tears: *Medium-rare*
Feel-good vibes: *Quiet and meaningful*
Stream it: *Netflix*

For the comedy connoisseur



Forgetting Sarah Marshall (2008)

Personality: You always find the humor in heartbreak and believe laughter is the best post-breakup therapy.

Why you'll love it: A guy tries to escape a breakup by going to Hawaii, only to run into his ex. Cue awkward run-ins, quirky characters and a Dracula puppet musical.

SUITCASE SCALE

Wanderlust: *Solid*
Tears: *Mostly from laughing*
Feel-good vibes: *Chill with a side of chaos*
Stream it: *Prime Video*

For the road warrior



Thelma & Louise (1991)

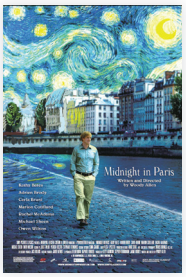
Personality: You live for open roads, bold choices and the kind of friendship that can handle anything, even the Grand Canyon.

Why you'll love it: It's the ultimate ride-or-die story, with fast cars, big skies and even bigger feelings. Just don't expect a tidy ending.

SUITCASE SCALE

Wanderlust: *Desert dreams*
Tears: *Bring tissues*
Feel-good vibes: *Fierce, with a heavy heart*
Stream it: *Hulu*

For the city dreamer



Midnight in Paris (2011)

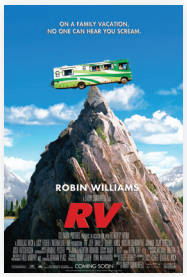
Personality: You're an old soul with a thing for typewriters, candlelight and Paris in the rain.

Why you'll love it: Every night, our daydreaming writer time-travels to 1920s Paris. If you've ever wanted to have cocktails with Hemingway, this one's for you.

SUITCASE SCALE

Wanderlust: *Très élevé*
Tears: *Low, like a wistful sigh*
Feel-good vibes: *Artfully nostalgic*
Stream it: *Prime Video*

For the family vacation planner



RV (2006)

Personality: You're the glue of the group, the keeper of the snacks and the master of making memories out of mayhem.

Why you'll love it: Robin Williams leads a chaotic, cross-country RV trip that proves the best adventures are the ones that don't go as planned.

SUITCASE SCALE

Wanderlust: *Moderate, with a GPS reroute*
Tears: *Lighthearted*
Feel-good vibes: *Classic family comedy*
Stream it: *Starz*



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Local IQ

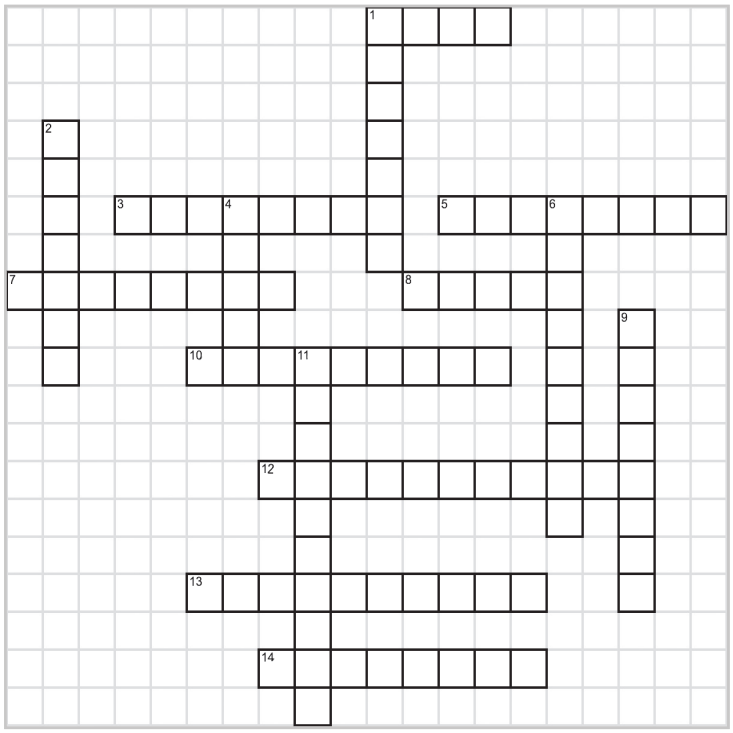
June crossword challenge for locals.

Test your summer smarts with this puzzle packed with seasonal clues, from salty snacks and steamy weather to Lowcountry critters and holiday fun.

ACROSS
1. Honored with a red, white and blue holiday on June 14
3. Tart treat at a kid-run stand
5. Must-have for overseas summer adventures
7. It's not the heat, it's the ...
8. Pelican species known for splashy water landings
10. Hilton Head park with three youth baseball fields
12. Fireworks fly at this Tuesday night tradition
13. Commemorates the end of slavery in the U.S.
14. Lowcountry pastime using chicken necks and string



DOWN
1. Marsh crab with one oversized claw
2. Savory boiled snack sold roadside in Ziplocs
4. Slick swimmer with whiskers, often mistaken for a seal
6. SPF-packed summer essential
9. Kicks off summer in the Northern Hemisphere
11. Berry that shares its name with June's full moon



ANSWER KEY

ACROSS 1. FLAG 3. LEMONADE 5. PASSPORT 7. HUMIDITY 8. BROWN 10. CROSSINGS 12. HARBOURFEST 13. JUNETEENTH 14. CRABBING
DOWN 1. FIDDLER 2. PEANUTS 4. OTTER 6. SUNSCREEN 9. SOLSTICE 11. STRAWBERRY

Official Mensa® Challenge

Answers are available on LocalLifeSC.com/Mensa

IT'S STARTING TO HEAT UP!

Don't sweat this Mensa quiz.



1. The following simple substitution cryptogram, in the form of a rhyme, can be easily solved.

18-15-19-5-19 1-18-5 18-5-4

22-9-15-12-5-20-19 1-18-5 2-12-21-5.

20-8-9-19 3-18-25-16-20-15-7-18-1-3

23-1-19 4-5-19-9-7-14-5-4 6-15-18 25-15-21.

2. In the school lunchroom, one table and half a table ate a pizza and a half in a minute and a half. At the same rate, how many pizzas could two tables of hungry children eat in three minutes?

3. A line from a song from a famous movie is given in fancy language below. Put it back into usual phraseology.

There is a remote location beyond an arc of a spectrum of colors. In this location, the ethereal atmosphere is cerulean.

4. What two words, formed from different arrangements of the same seven letters, can be used to complete the sentence below?

Harriet tried to write a history of her father's infantry _____, but it turned out to be so long that she had to _____ the whole middle section.

5. Tom is one-fourth Denise's age. In three more years, he'll be half as old as Denise is now. In five years, he'll be two-thirds Denise's age now. Neither one is a teenager yet. How old are Tom and Denise now?

ANSWER KEY

1. *Roses are red, violets are blue. This cryptogram was designed for you. (Code: A = 1, B = 2, C = 3, etc.)* **2.** *four pizzas (Each table eats a pizza in a minute and a half, so the cafeteria manager will need four pizzas.)*
3. *Somewhere over the rainbow, skies are blue.*
4. *brigade, abridge* **5.** *Tom is 3; Denise 12.*

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The Light Adjustable Lens from the Lowcountry's Cataract Experts.

The cataract experts at Bishop Eye continue to lead the way in eye care in the Lowcountry with the Light Adjustable Lens. This unique lens technology allows your Bishop Eye surgeon to non-invasively adjust your lens power after surgery to achieve the highest performance level based on your personal preference. Our goal at Bishop Eye is to offer our cataract patients an exceptional cataract surgery experience and best-in-class results.

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The hot list

What to watch, read and listen to in June.

SELECTIONS BY DAISY DOW

STREAMING









APPLE TV+ ***Echo Valley*** *(thriller)*
A mother's love can push past every limit. When Claire (Sydney Sweeney) shows up at her mother's (Julianne Moore) doorstep with blood on her hands, their bond is tested like never before. As Kate helps cover her daughter's tracks, their quiet Pennsylvania life spirals into chaos.
Release date: June 13

PRIME VIDEO ***Countdown*** *(crime series)*
After a shocking public assassination, LAPD officer Mark Meachum (Jensen Ackles) joins an elite task force formed to prevent more attacks. As the team uncovers a growing threat, they must rely on each other to protect the city before time runs out.
Release date: June 25

NETFLIX ***The Waterfront*** *(drama)*
The Buckley family has been part of Havenport, North Carolina, for generations. But when personal choices threaten their reputation and legacy, the family must decide how far they'll go to hold onto what matters most.
Release date: June 19

ABC, ESPN, ESPN+ ***NBA Finals*** *(live basketball)*
The road to the championship ends here. The league's top teams face off in the final series of the NBA season, delivering high-stakes drama, buzzer-beaters and legacy-defining performances. Whether you're tuning in for the matchups or the storylines, the finals promise some of the most exciting basketball of the year.
Game 1: June 6 (best-of-seven series)

MOVIE THEATERS



The Materialists *(drama)*
Lucy is a top-tier matchmaker in New York City who always knows what's best for everyone but herself. When a chance meeting with Mr. Right (Pedro Pascal) sparks something new, her unresolved feelings for her ex (Chris Evans) complicate what could be her last shot at real love.
Release date: June 13

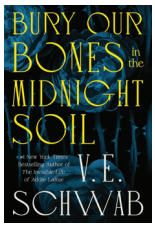


Everything's Going to Be Great *(comedy)*
Two parents (Bryan Cranston and Allison Janney) uproot their lives in Ohio to follow a dream of running a community theater in New Jersey. As reality sets in and their kids struggle to adjust, the family learns just how tough chasing a dream can be.
Release date: June 20

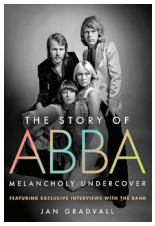


F1 *(action)*
Retired Formula 1 driver Sonny Hayes (Brad Pitt) is asked to get back behind the wheel to help revive a struggling team. Between internal rivalries and physical setbacks, he'll have to prove he still has what it takes to win.
Release date: June 27

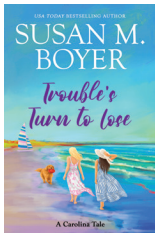
BOOKS & NOVELS



Bury Our Bones in the Midnight Soil
By Victoria E. Schwab (fiction)
This sweeping novel follows three women across centuries as they grapple with identity, risk and self-discovery. From 16th-century Spain to modern-day college life, each must confront what they truly want — and what they're willing to sacrifice to get it.
Release date: June 10



The Story of ABBA: Melancholy Undercover
By Jan Gradvall (nonfiction)
Through rare interviews and cultural analysis, this revealing portrait of ABBA looks beyond the glitter to explore the personal cost of fame and the impact of their music on generations of fans.
Release date: June 17



Trouble's Turn to Lose
By Susan M. Boyer (local mystery)
In the latest installment of her beloved Carolina Tales series, Boyer brings back Hadley Cooper and her team of lovable misfits for a fresh mystery that pushes friendships, instincts and small-town secrets to the limit.
Release date: June 24

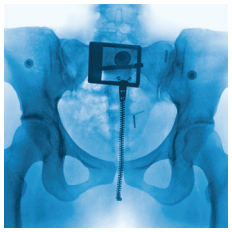
ALBUMS



I Forgive You
By Cynthia Erivo (R&B)
Release date: June 6



Broken Branches
By Dierks Bentley (country)
Release date: June 13



Virgin
Lorde (pop)
Release date: June 27



Dangermuffin
By Dangermuffin (rock)
Release date: Out now

PODCASTS



Odd Lots
Topic: News



Scratch and Win
Topic: Culture



The Belgrano Diary
Topic: Documentary



Buried Under Beaufort
Topic: Local lore

TRAVEL



Seattle
High of 66 degrees, low of 54 degrees. Catch a clear day and visit the Space Needle for panoramic city views.



Vilnius, Lithuania
High of 71 degrees, low of 51 degrees. Celebrate creativity and contemporary art at ArtVilnius Art Fair in late June.

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Unsung heroes

Turtles, teamwork and a trail of love

HOW KATHY SANDERS CLIMBED INTO SEA TURTLE CONSERVATION

STORY BY SHEILA PAZ

The Lowcountry thrives, thanks to countless volunteers whose efforts often go unnoticed. *These unsung heroes are the driving force behind local nonprofits, making a difference in the lives of many. Each month we'll feature one of these inspiring individuals to highlight their contributions and raise awareness for the organizations they support. Know someone deserving of recognition? Email* ***sheila.paz@wearelocallife.com,*** *and help us honor the heroes among us.*



ALL IN A DAY'S WORK For members of Sea Turtle Patrol Hilton Head Island, the day begins before sunrise, usually around 5 a.m. Kathy Sanders and her fellow volunteers comb all 14 miles of Hilton Head's shoreline, scanning for nests and the telltale trails left by flippers in the sand.

When Kathy Sanders' daughter married a Hilton Head Island local, it wasn't long before Kathy followed. She and her husband traded the city streets of St. Louis for sandy toes and sunrise strolls, embracing Lowcountry life with open arms and full hearts.

A self-described "retired travel wrangler" from the corporate incentive world, Kathy didn't sit still for long. Her next journey began with a Turtle Talk, led by the ever-passionate Amber Kuehn of Sea Turtle Patrol Hilton Head Island. One talk turned into beach walks, and soon Kathy was volunteering to fill holes, sweep trash and chat with curious beachgoers about the miracle of loggerhead hatchlings.

Her enthusiasm didn't go unnoticed. Before long, Kathy joined Sea Turtle Patrol's core team, a group of 20 dedicated locals with permits and purpose to protect Hilton Head's turtle population. Though she initially hesitated, not wanting to miss out on precious grandma duties, Kathy soon found a way to balance both. Bonus: Her grandkids now appear in Sea Turtle Patrol's videos as pint-sized turtle ambassadors.

These days Kathy is known as one of the patrol's MVPs. She brings her planning skills to the team and even recruits her husband's handyman talents for beach-friendly builds. For Kathy, it's not just about turtles. It's about legacy, love and leaving the beach better than she found it.



DEDICATE A NEST Sea Turtle Patrol Hilton Head Island is a volunteer-driven organization that relies on community support to continue its vital work. One meaningful way to contribute is by dedicating a sea turtle nest in honor of a loved one or fellow turtle enthusiast. Your donation not only helps fund daily patrols and nest protection but also offers a unique educational experience. Both you and your dedication recipient will receive updates throughout the season from the patrol team, tracking the progress of your adopted nest.

Sea Turtle Patrol HHI: Protecting turtles one nest at a time

From May through October Sea Turtle Patrol Hilton Head Island is on a mission to give every nest and hatchling the best possible start. Armed with permits from the S.C. Department of Natural Resources, this 20-member team monitors, maps and protects more than 200 sea turtle nests each year. The members also play a key role in educating locals and visitors, helping to keep Hilton Head's beaches safe for both turtles and beachgoers. To combat natural erosion and support tourism, Hilton Head's beaches undergo renourishment every 8 to 10 years. This involves adding sand dredged from offshore to rebuild the shoreline, a process that, while necessary, can disrupt sea turtle nesting. With a major renourishment project scheduled during this nesting season, the Sea Turtle Patrol will be out every night keeping a close watch. If a turtle comes ashore to nest in an active construction zone, all operations pause, and the nest is carefully relocated to a safer spot. It's a delicate balance between preserving our beaches and protecting the wildlife that calls them home.

TURTLE TROUBLE?

If you spot a sick or injured sea turtle, call the S.C. Department of Natural Resources's 24-hour hotline at ***800-922-5431***, and be prepared to answer the following questions:

- *What is the exact location of the animal?*
- *Is the turtle alive or dead?*
- *What is the approximate size of the turtle?*
- *Is the turtle marked with spray paint?*
- *What is the location of the closest access point to the turtle (GPS coordinate or beach marker)? If the turtle is alive, be prepared to stay with it until help arrives.*

SEA TURTLE PATROL · HILTON HEAD ISLAND ·

SAVING SEA TURTLES

It's A Way of Life

How you can help

You don't need a biology degree or a beach permit to make a difference. Sea Turtle Patrol HHI welcomes volunteers with all kinds of skills, from marketing and fundraising to spreading the word. Want to help out on the sand? Fill in holes, pack out trash, switch white lights to red and keep beachfront lights off by 10 p.m. And always avoid touching hatchlings or nests. Visit ***seaturtlepatrolhhi.org*** to learn more or get involved.



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What makes them local



EDGE OF THE WORLD
The Alsko family stands at the Cape of Good Hope, where dramatic cliffs mark the southwestern tip of the African continent.

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*

Around the world with the Alskos

FROM AFRICAN SAFARIS TO LAKE CHAMPLAIN SUMMERS, THIS LOWCOUNTRY FAMILY HAS TURNED TRAVEL INTO A LIFESTYLE.

STORY BY BECCA EDWARDS



GLOBETROTTING TOGETHER
Gillian and Mike Alsko, joined by their children Wynn and Ella, pause for a photo at the Batu Caves in Gombak, Malaysia. With visits to more than 40 countries, this family has turned travel into a way of life, collecting memories, passport stamps and priceless perspectives along the way.

Globetrotters Gillian and Mike Alsko and their two children have traveled to over 40 countries as a family. "Our favorite spots include Tanzania, where we went on a two-week safari, and the Middle East, UAE, Qatar and Bahrain," began Mike. "Both trips gave us enlightened perspectives on world cultures and probably had the greatest impact on our kids," added Gillian. Local for over 20 years, Mike and Gillian shared their exploits with LOCAL Life and why traveling is so important to them.

Q: Why do you think people should travel?
A (Gillian): Traveling is a passion our whole family shares and is something that we love and look forward to doing together. Not only has it opened our minds to many different cultures and environments, but it has also given us many memories that will last our lifetime. We found that traveling with our kids at a young age gave all of us a well-rounded perspective of the world.

Q: What have been your favorite trips?
A (Gillian): Hands down, an African safari is the best family vacation anyone can take. There is something about this specific experience that brings a family closer together. Everything is taken care of for you, so all you have to do is show up, live in the moment and spend time together. Although not as exotic, Charleston is a great destination for a girls' weekend. It is so close and has something for everyone, from great food, to fun rooftop bars to fantastic shopping, and it has a great overall vibe.

Q: Any trip flops? A (Mike): Fortunately, the only nightmare we have ever encountered was on the first night of our trip to Cape Town, South Africa. We had two credit cards compromised by a taxi driver. Thankfully, Gillian had two other cards we could use, and we now travel with backup cards and grab some local cash from an airport ATM wherever we land.

Q: What is a travel must-have? A (Gillian): Our favorite, and most-used travel accessory is a packable duffel bag. It is handy to have for all the extra things we acquire along our travels.

Q: Any future travel plans? A (Mike): We have an Alaskan cruise scheduled for next summer, but our bucket list still includes Antarctica, a gorilla trek in Rwanda and spending time in New Zealand.

Q: Whenever you travel, is it good to be back in the Lowcountry? A (Mike): We love where we live, and there is no better feeling than coming home after a great trip. We love to get away both far and often; however, there is a comfort in being home and back to a routine.

Q: What is your family motto in life?
A (Mike): Life is short and the world is wide.

Q: What is one fun fact about your family that people may not know? A (Gillian): Despite all of our travels, our favorite family vacation has always been staying in a rustic cabin on the shores of Lake Champlain in Vermont for two weeks each summer. We love it so much there that we purchased a home on the lake in 2021. *LL*



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Local business buzz

FRESH FACES, BOLD MOVES AND BIG PLANS IN THE LOWCOUNTRY

STORY BY SHEILA PAZ

From stylish new boutiques to groundbreaking cultural centers, the Lowcountry is buzzing with new energy. Whether you're updating your wardrobe, discovering a new outdoor sport or exploring early education options, there's something new to experience this summer. ***Here's a look at what's just opened, and what's on the horizon.***



NOW OPEN

The Graveyard Disc Golf Course

7 Union Cemetery Road, Hilton Head

Disc golf has landed on Hilton Head in a big way with the island's first-ever public 18-hole course. The Graveyard Disc Golf Course is PDGA-sanctioned and ready to challenge everyone from weekend warriors to seasoned pros. With winding fairways and wooded charm, it's a hole-in-one for local recreation. The course is located at the Mid-Island Tract with parking/entrance at the intersection of U.S. 278 and Union Cemetery Road. The course is free to play, but a minimum $5 donation is requestetd, if able.



Sea Island Sprouts

802 15th Street, Port Royal

A fresh approach to early childhood education has arrived in Port Royal. Sea Island Sprouts blends Reggio Emilia and Montessori philosophies to offer children ages 1 to 5 a nurturing, play-centered learning environment. It's a space where curiosity grows, creativity blooms and little minds thrive.



Dollar Tree

1460 Fording Island Road, Bluffton

Bargain lovers, rejoice! Dollar Tree is now open in Tanger 2, offering aisles of everyday essentials, party supplies, snacks, cleaning products, home goods, seasonal décor and more — all for just a buck and a quarter. Whether you're prepping for a party, refreshing your pantry or grabbing classroom supplies, this go-to spot makes it easy to get more for less.

Jean-Pierre Klifa

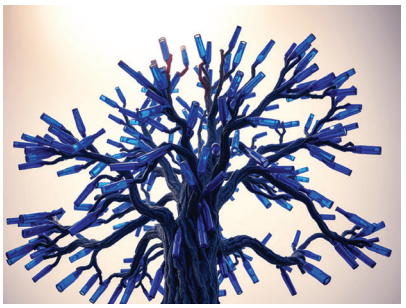
1 Forest Drive, Unit M5, Hilton Head

Bonjour, ma belle! Fashion meets flair at Coligny Plaza, where renowned designer Jean-Pierre Klifa has opened a new boutique. Known for bold, signature prints and Parisian sophistication, his collections bring refined style with a modern twist. Whether you're shopping for resort wear or statement accessories, this is a new go-to for chic island style.



COMING SOON





Bluffton Gullah Cultural Heritage Center

1255 May River Road, Bluffton

Bluffton is about to welcome a powerful new addition to its cultural landscape. Opening this summer, the Bluffton Gullah Cultural Heritage Center will celebrate the enduring legacy of the Gullah Geechee people through immersive exhibits, storytelling and hands-on educational programs. A striking highlight of the center is its iconic showpiece: America's tallest twin bottle trees. Towering at 15 feet tall with 75 limbs each, the sculptures were crafted by renowned Gullah artisan Julian Williams, a fifth-generation Gullah descendant and former apprentice of legendary blacksmith Philip Simmons.

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  (1 with Cardiac Catheterization Lab)
- 2 Endoscopy Procedure Rooms
- 20 Pre-Operative/Recovery Rooms

Acute Inpatient Care
- 28-Bed Nursing Unit



Beaufort Memorial
BLUFFTON COMMUNITY HOSPITAL

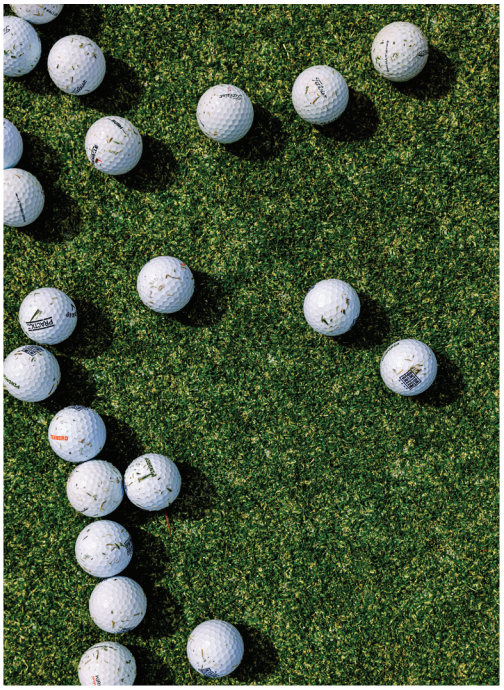
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Find additional images from these photo shoots online at **LocalLifeSC.com**

Camp confessions

Three local leaders share how their summer camps mix fun with learning, helping kids grow in all the right ways.

STORY BY BARRY KAUFMAN
PHOTOGRAPHY BY LISA STAFF

Summer is almost here, and if you're a parent, you already know what that means. The "I'm bored" chorus is just around the corner.

Even with Beaufort County School District's move to a year-round calendar, there is still plenty of time for kids to run out of things to do. Fortunately, there is an easy fix for those summertime blues.

All across the Lowcountry, a wide range of summer camps is ready to keep kids engaged, inspired and happily worn out. Whether your child loves nature, golf, the arts or a little of everything, there is a camp designed to spark their curiosity and keep them active.

We spoke with three local leaders who are running some of the season's most exciting programs. From muddy marsh adventures to golf, with life lessons and hands-on creativity in art and theater, these camps offer more than just a way to pass the time. They are helping shape young minds and build lasting memories, one camper at a time.



Jessica Kochman

This naturalist and camp leader brings science to life, one muddy adventure at a time.

Long before she set foot on the grounds of the Port Royal Sound Foundation, where she now leads the Pluff Mudder Summer Camp, Jessica Kochman was already a seasoned camp leader.

"I had worked at a summer camp for years as an education coordinator, doing similar stuff there," she said. "We were a traditional summer camp in the summer months. Camp is all-consuming, and you work a lot, so I was looking to find something new."

That "something new" presented itself when she discovered the Foundation and learned about its mission. Its focus on environmental education mirrored much of what Kochman had been teaching at camp. And, as luck would have it, they needed someone who could not only guide students through field trips but also lead their Pluff Mudder camp.

"Pluff Mudder started before I got here, but it was a little different. I was able to bring a lot of my camp background to it," she said. "One thing I was able to add was shark dissection for the older kids. That's a lot of fun. Stinky, but fun."

In addition to hands-on experiences like that, Pluff Mudder campers get a deep dive into the ecology of the Lowcountry. Activities include fishing off the dock, kayaking in local waters and learning about the "animal of the day," which can include live encounters with native species like snakes.

"Sometimes it's their first time holding a snake, and just seeing their facial expression is really cool," Kochman said. "We've had a few kids catch their first fish off our dock, and that's amazing, and a few kayakers who have never been out on the water before."



The Pluff Mudder camp essentially expands on what students experience during field trips to the Port Royal Sound Foundation, blending real-world interaction with the Lowcountry's flora and fauna with educational lessons in wildlife biology and environmental science. But through camp, Kochman has the opportunity to take it further, giving kids a deeper and more lasting experience with the natural world around them.

"For me it's different than field trips because we only have those kids for a few hours, and then they leave," she said. "With summer camp you really get to know the campers and their personalities, especially when they come back summer after summer. That's a lot of fun, building those relationships with the campers and their families."





BORN TO BE WILD Jessica Kochman is the education coordinator for the Port Royal Sound Foundation and leads the popular Pluff Mudder Summer Camp, where kids explore the wonders of the Lowcountry through hands-on science, outdoor adventures and plenty of muddy fun.

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HURRICANE SEASON IS HERE

As we enter another hurricane season with high activity predicted, we want to provide some basic information that will help you in the event another storm visits the Lowcountry.

BE ALERT – Keep an eye on storm tracks as they develop. Most will not endanger the South Carolina coast, but if they do, you will want to know. Try www.noaa.gov. We have found them to be the most reliable in the US.

BE PREPARED – As Risk Managers, we must tell you the importance of having a personal hurricane plan. Knowing what you and your family or business will do before a hurricane arrives will save you time, money, and possibly lives. Consider the following:

PROTECTION PLAN – Know how you intend to protect your home or business. Start a minimum of 72 hours in advance. Hurricane shutters or boarding up will help tremendously. Bring in all property that could be damaged or become a missile if the wind is high enough. Have valuables stored in a safe place.

EVACUATION PLAN - Know where you will go and make necessary reservations early. It is better to have accommodations booked and cancel if they are not needed. Experts recommend preparing for 3 to 5 days. Also, plan for the protection of your pets. If you can't take them with you know that kennels will fill up fast.

BE PATIENT - Your personal safety is the number one priority. Only come back to your property when the State and Local authorities have given the "all clear". There are many hidden dangers such as electricity, water, and trees that can cause further harm once the storm is over. The authorities monitor these and will let you return when it is safe.

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Tales from the mud

As the naturalist and education coordinator at the Port Royal Sound Foundation, Jessica Kochman's job is to share her love of the outdoors with kids across the Lowcountry. Through the Pluff Mudder camps during the summer and field trips year-round, she gets to incorporate lessons from her years working in traditional summer camps and, sometimes, a bit of personality management.

"We hire interns to help us during the summer, and I always tell them, 'It's controlled chaos, but within the chaos, it's just a ball.' Even though it's a lot of work, it's a lot of fun."

And sometimes, she gets to witness a child's life trajectory shift in real time.

"It happens a lot; when someone gets a chance to hold an animal, they'll decide that this is what they want to do."

At press time, the Junior Pluff Mudder camp was full, but spots remained for rising 5th-7th graders in the Pluff Mudder sessions running July 14-18. Visit portroyalsoundfoundation.org for more information.



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4/25 • SCR-1000024b

Aaron Immel

This youth leader blends life lessons and long drives to help kids grow on and off the course.

The programs that First Tee — The Lowcountry has introduced to our region since its founding in 2013 likely need no introduction, especially if you have children. Over the past 12 years, including eight at its state-of-the-art facility on Gumtree Road, the organization has become deeply embedded in the community. Beginning with outreach in local schools, volunteers have crisscrossed the Lowcountry, lifting up the next generation through the game of golf.

Because what they offer goes far beyond the course. Yes, they teach kids the fundamentals of the game, many of whom would otherwise never be exposed to it. But more importantly, they help students grow far beyond a better swing. Their nine core values—honesty, integrity, sportsmanship, respect, confidence, responsibility, perseverance, courtesy and judgment — are the foundation of a curriculum designed to build strong character, alongside a solid approach shot.

"We start off on the golf course, showing kids how to be respectful on the course, then we branch that out into their daily lives," said program director Aaron Immel. "Things like how to show respect to their classmates, how to be responsible for something outside themselves, like a pet. We seamlessly integrate golf skills and life skills to create something really special."

Immel has long been an advocate for the unique approach First Tee takes to youth development. He began his journey with First Tee of Central Carolina and has now been part of the organization for six years.



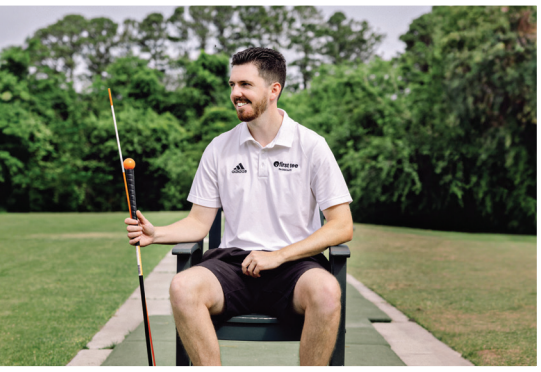
"I've always been a huge lover of golf, so it starts with that," he said. "And I've always enjoyed being around kids. I was the baby in my family, so it's something I really value since I never had a little brother or sister."

A little over three years ago, Immel made his way to Hilton Head Island to serve with First Tee — The Lowcountry, where he now facilitates several of their programs, including their highly popular summer camps. These camps, one for ages 7–11 and another for ages 12 and up, offer a fun, expanded version of the life-changing instruction First Tee is known for.

"The classes are a little more intensive and golf-focused. The camp is a bit more laid back," he said. "It is very difficult to transform a swing in just four days, but we start kids off with the basics and make sure they have lots of fun doing it."

That fun takes many forms, from putting, driving and chipping to water balloon fights and the occasional game of golf baseball. Through it all runs a common thread: helping children improve both their golf game and their character.

"I like to call it a three-part camp. We golf, we practice life skills, and we have fun," he said. "There's a lot of stuff we don't normally get to do in the classroom, and the kids love it."



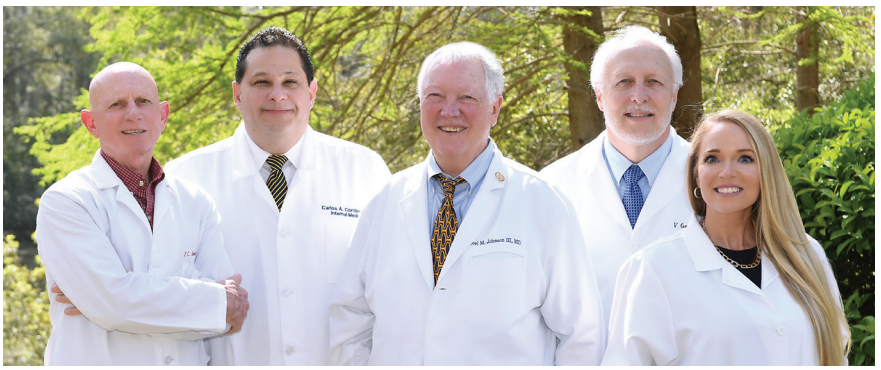
TEEING UP LIFE SKILLS Aaron Immel is the program director at First Tee — The Lowcountry, where he leads summer camps that blend golf instruction with character-building lessons and a whole lot of fun.

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

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Tee time meets playtime

Because First Tee — The Lowcountry's camps combine the mentorship and skill-building of their regular programming with a few extra weeks of fun and flexibility, Aaron Immel is able to add some light-hearted touches.

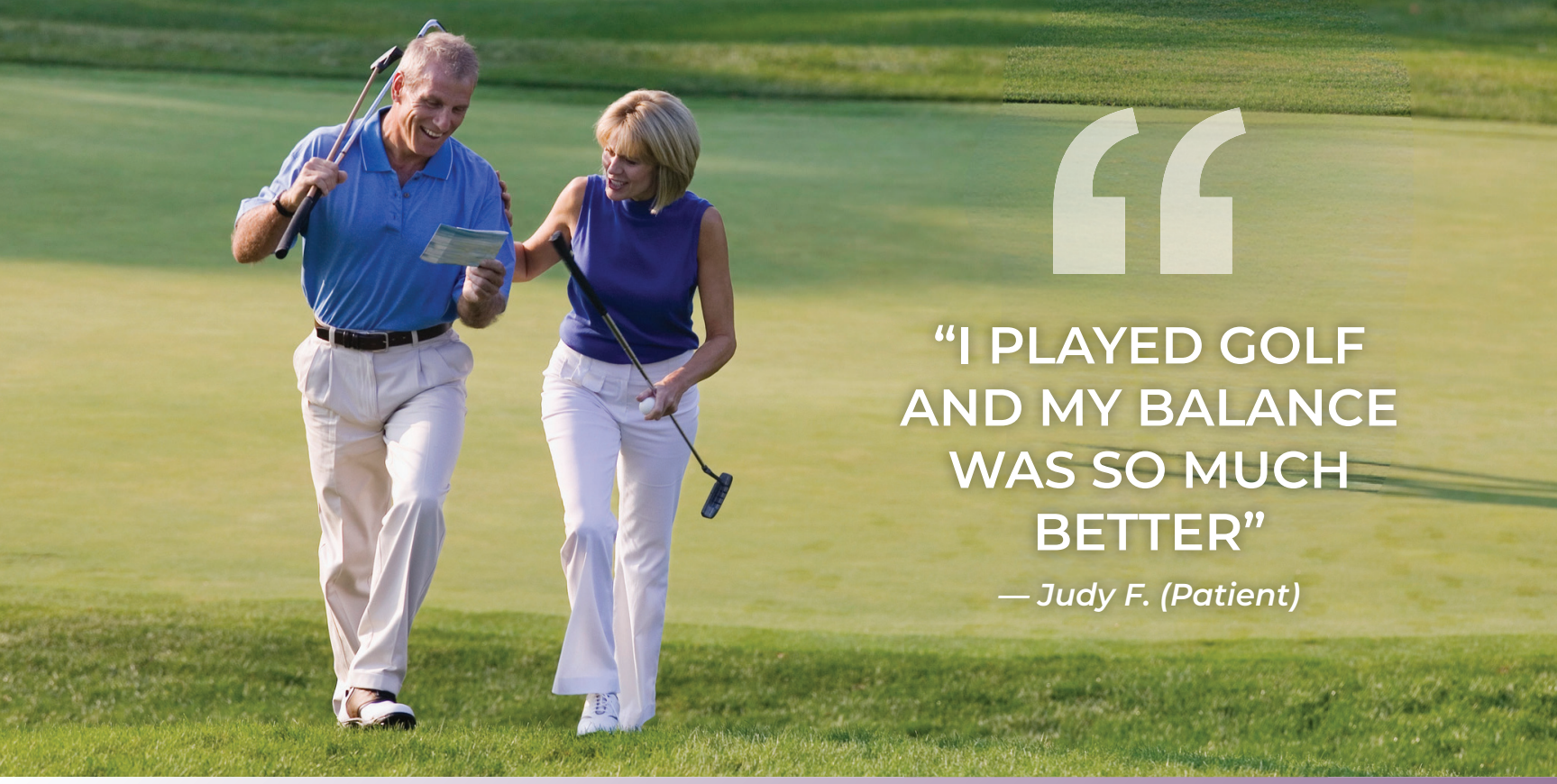
Sometimes that means a water balloon fight. Other times, it means taking the kids off the course for a fast-paced hybrid game of golf baseball.

"If anyone has ever played kickball, they can pick up the rules pretty quickly. You have one team in the field and one team hitting," he said. "It's just that the hitting aspect is a little different."

Instead of a bat, players use an oversized plastic golf club. From their home-plate tee, hitters drive a tennis ball into the outfield and round the bases, combining the fun of golf with the energy of a playground game.

"For a program built on making golf fun, it's a match made in heaven," Immel said. "I haven't had a single kid come to camp who didn't love that game."

Camps are held on Hilton Head Island June 9-14 and in Bluffton July 21-31. Costs range from $120 to $160 per week, and scholarships are available. Visit firstteelowcountry.org for more information.



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Alana Adams

This art teacher blends science and self-expression to spark young minds.

Alana Adams is, at heart, an art teacher. And like any art teacher, she is so much more than that.

"My brain is very two-sided. I have the creative side, but I'm also very organized when it comes to budgets and planning," she said. "Being a teaching artist means I'm not stuck at a desk all day. I'm making an impact, but I'm also getting my hands dirty with the kids — seeing them create and watching the satisfaction that brings them."

As the senior director of education outreach for the Arts Center of Coastal Carolina, she oversees all of the organization's educational programs while continuing to serve as a teaching artist, allowing her to exercise both sides of her brain. And when she's in a classroom setting — like she will be during the Arts Center's upcoming summer camps — she gets to witness the joy of a child's creativity run wild while delivering a little left-brain education at the same time.

"During Kids N Clay, we're not just making ashtrays or mugs. I'm teaching them about the firing process and the science behind the chemical makeup of clay — how when it's dry, the physical water is gone, but the chemical water is still there. Then, when you heat it to 2,000 degrees, the H's and O's break apart," she explained. "Everything I do is arts-integrated in some way, especially with kids with disabilities."

Those particular kids hold a special place in her heart. Through the Arts Center she works in schools across Beaufort County, helping special-needs children discover their own creativity. It's a left-brain/right-brain approach — teaching art while adapting to their capabilities. One nonverbal student, who lacked fine motor skills, was finally able to paint, thanks to Adams, and the moment deeply moved her.

"She was able to make some marks on the paper, and you could tell she was focused and trying so hard. When I came back to check on her, she had written on her tablet, 'I am an artist and I'm proud of myself,'" Adams recalled. "It showed how art can truly make a difference in her life."

Adams is thrilled to be teaching the Art Around the World Camp in an inclusive setting.







ART MEETS HEART Alana Adams blends science, creativity and compassion in her role as senior director of education outreach for the Arts Center of Coastal Carolina. Whether she's teaching the chemistry of clay during a Kids N Clay session or helping a nonverbal child discover their artistic voice, she uses the arts to spark confidence, curiosity and connection in every student she meets.

She will be joined this summer by a passionate group of teachers who share her love for the arts. Fellow art teacher Treva Kent will lead Creative Explorers and Mixed-Up Masterpieces, while an all-star lineup of working actors will guide the theater camps.

"We're super excited for the theater camps this year because we have an all-new staff," she said. That includes actress Brooke Procida teaching the Create a Play camp, Broadway veterans Meredith Inglesby and Steve Blanchard leading the Technical Acting Skills Intensive and Beth Herring directing Take the Stage! — joined by a cast member from the Arts Center's upcoming summer show.

"It's the first time we've had actual working actors who are still active in the industry teaching at these camps," Adams said. "It gives the kids exposure to professionals and shows them that being an actor or artist isn't just something we do for fun — it's a real career path."

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Behind the curtain

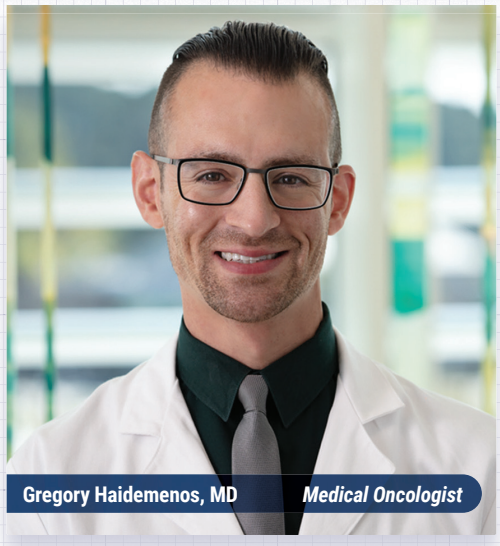


One of the unique aspects of the Arts Center of Coastal Carolina's Create a Play camp is that it lets students explore every element of putting on a production — from writing the script to designing sets and costumes. And this year they'll do it all under the guidance of professional actress ***Brooke Procida***. With stage and screen credits, as well as two original off-Broadway musicals (*Reddi High* and *Sally Six String*), Procida brings real-world experience to the role.

"The students come in with their ideas, and there's no preconceived notion of what the play will be about. They work together as a team to create a play by Friday, then perform it in the black box theater for their parents," said senior director of education outreach Alana Adams. "I'm always a little nervous on Monday about whether they'll pull it off. But they always do. The kids are so creative — they've never put on a bad show in all my years here." *LL*

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ROOM TO BREATHE Soaring ceilings, expansive windows and a dramatic central lightwell infuse the great room of this Sea Pines home with a sense of openness and ease.





HOME SHOWCASE

Bathed in light

UNIQUE FAMILY MEMORIES AND EXPERT LIGHT MANIPULATION TRANSFORM A SEA PINES HOME INTO A SUN-DRENCHED STUNNER.

STORY BY BARRY KAUFMAN + PHOTOS BY KATE MORRISON

While there are many things to love about the Keystone State — its rich history, stunning mountain landscapes and, of course, its chocolate — Pennsylvania isn't exactly famous for its sunshine. So when the family who now calls this Sea Pines property home began construction, their goal was clear: Bring in as much South Carolina sun as possible.

"The various forms of light manipulation we incorporated into this home were a welcome challenge, balancing the desired results with code compliance and practicality," said Angelina Carper with ***RCH Construction***. "Hilton Head Island has been the family's retreat for many years, and this new home was meant to be a gathering place. So it was important to include plenty of outdoor and hangout spaces for the grandkids."

With soaring windows, a stunning glass elevator that would make Willy Wonka jealous and a dramatic lightwell, RCH and architect Neil Gordon infused every space with sunlight. Inspired material selections and thoughtful design touches ensured that each room earned its moment in the spotlight.

Let there be light

The great room embodies the home's dual purpose as both a family gathering space and a sunlit sanctuary. Expansive glass transom windows gaze out onto the Carolina room, sunlight pours through the double front doors, and a massive skylight takes center stage.

"Neil Gordon, the home designer for this project, included a lightwell in the center of the floor plan, which was a brilliant way to bring in more natural light," said Carper. In addition to brightening the great room, upper-story windows looking into the lightwell allow natural light to reach the laundry room, hallway and bathroom upstairs. "The lightwell essentially acted as a funnel to brighten the darkest areas of the home."

Beyond the natural light, the great room showcases exquisite carpentry and finishes throughout the home, thanks to a collaboration between Gordon and interior designer Heather Cherichella of Babsarella Designs. Entryway wainscoting sets a formal tone that transitions beautifully up the staircase and into the second-floor hallways.

Bright ideas

At the heart of the kitchen, the lightwell needed to be both beautiful and easy to maintain, a challenge RCH and Gordon tackled with clever solutions.

"Our primary concern was ensuring access for cleaning and maintenance," Carper explained. "We added an operable window casing in the laundry room so the upper part of the lightwell could be reached. We also trimmed the beams in the lower area so the top surfaces would be flat, preventing dust from collecting in hard-to-clean spaces."



CRAFTED FOR COMFORT The kitchen was designed to shine, literally. Thoughtful architectural solutions, including a lightwell and custom cabinetry by Ronald Buck, blend functionality with family history, incorporating reclaimed wood from a Pennsylvania barn.







The kitchen cabinetry was custom-built by craftsman Ronald Buck, who works exclusively with RCH Construction and proudly claims he can "build anything you can think of."

"While the cabinetry throughout the home is stunning, we included a few personal touches to complete the vision," said Carper. "The hallway benches and reading nook top were crafted from wood salvaged from a barn on the family's property in Pennsylvania. A table was also made from a tree that had to come down on the same property. You can still see the original nail holes in the planks."





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Suite sunshine

The primary suite goes beyond the traditional bedroom and bath layout, welcoming streams of natural light from the upper-story deck into a serene bedroom, private office, coffee bar and cozy reading nook with long views of the water.

The Carolina blue paneled accent wall above the bed flows throughout the suite, transitioning into a deeper shade in the office and a subtle tint in the quartz countertops of the ensuite bath.













Gleam team

A striking tile mosaic designed by Cherichella brings character to the mudroom and adjacent laundry area, adding artistic flair to the space's crisp white utility. It's just one example of how every corner of the home received the same care and creativity as its more prominent spaces.

"The tile selected for the mudroom and each bathroom includes spectacular mosaics, natural stone and hand-fired ceramic varieties that work together cohesively from one end of the home to the other," said Carper. *LL*

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GET THE LOOK

Framed by nature

THIS SOARING CAROLINA ROOM'S LAYERED TEXTURES FRAME A STUNNING SEA PINES VIEW.

STORY BY BARRY KAUFMAN + PHOTOS BY KATE MORRISON



Recreate the room

Want to bring this inviting Carolina room style into your own home? Here are a few key design elements to help you capture the look.

Mix materials: *Pair brick, wood and shingle siding for warmth and texture.*

Elevate the ceiling: *Use vaulted or arched ceilings with exposed beams for rustic charm.*

Let the light in: *Install oversized windows or retractable screens to connect with the outdoors.*

Add year-round comfort: *Include ceiling heaters, a gas fireplace and weather-ready features.*

Build in function: *Incorporate a grill station, durable floors and cozy seating.*

Keep it natural: *Use earth tones and neutral finishes to highlight the view and textures.*



In a home designed from the ground up to be a family compound, built on the edge of serene marshland in Sea Pines, this Carolina room pulls double duty. It not only offers an expansive space for multiple generations to gather, but it also beautifully showcases the surrounding scenery.

"This space was the perfect opportunity to take advantage of the breathtaking marsh views and enjoy them in a gathering area," said Angelina Carper of ***RCH Construction***. "It was thoughtfully constructed for year-round use, with a large gas fireplace, ceiling-mounted heaters and retractable screens that open the space completely during our bug-free months."

As throughout the rest of the home, architect Neil Gordon and Heather Cherichella of Babsarella Designs placed a strong emphasis on blending textures and patterns to create visual interest. Overhead, knotty pine ceiling beams contrast with shaker shingle walls, and together with the barn-like arched ceiling, they evoke a warm, rustic atmosphere. That layering continues in the inspired stone and tilework. Dark floor tiles play off the patterned mosaic backsplash at the grilling station, while a brick accent wall flanks the countertop and continues up the chimney, framing the fireplace with character and cohesion. LL

THE VIEW WITHIN The rich layering of brick, wood and shingle siding adds warmth and character to this Carolina room in Sea Pines. Expansive windows frame uninterrupted marsh views and blur the boundary between inside and out. With a built-in grill, comfortable seating and year-round functionality, the space is made for gathering in any season.



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Double the fun

TWO STORIES OF SUN-KISSED SPLENDOR CREATE A MULTI-GENERATIONAL OUTDOOR RETREAT IN SEA PINES.

STORY BY BARRY KAUFMAN + PHOTOGRAPHY BY KATE MORRISON

Any time the entire family gets together, it quickly becomes clear that each generation views the outdoors a little differently. The older generation, grandparents, and even some of the parents after a long day, simply want to unwind and soak up the sun amid lively conversation. The younger generation, the grandkids and the more energetic parents just want to have fun.

With the dual levels of this Sea Pines home, ***RCH Construction*** and architect Neil Gordon has given both sides of the family exactly what they want. Up above, Ipe planks provide full-sun enjoyment without scorching bare feet, and sleek cable railings ensure uninterrupted views of the marsh beyond. Down below, an outdoor kitchen and pool deck set the stage for summertime revelry.

"The lower area really brings the home's overall intention together by creating functional family spaces that beautifully tie into the structure," said Angelina Carper of RCH Construction. "On one end, there's an outdoor kitchen with the same countertop material used in accent areas throughout the home and a grill that doubles as a convenient snack station for poolside bites. On the other end, we incorporated a fireplace into the privacy wall, using the same stacked stone as the kitchen to create a cozy spot where parents can watch the action or little ones can warm up on a crisp early fall day between swim sessions."

A rough-textured, tabby-style breezeway connects it all, offering sight lines to the marsh and reinforcing the Lowcountry authenticity of this family's Hilton Head Island retreat. *LL*



TWO LEVELS, ONE PERFECT ESCAPE The thoughtfully designed outdoor spaces of this Sea Pines home bridge generations, pairing marsh-view lounging above with poolside play and cozy seating below.



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BEAUTY THAT LASTS The engineered white oak flooring in this Sea Pines entryway offers more than visual appeal — it's a smart investment for a high-traffic vacation rental. Easy to clean and resistant to wear, it delivers long-lasting performance while maintaining a warm, upscale aesthetic that guests notice the moment they arrive.

PRO TIP

An extra layer of protection

A well-placed area rug does more than enhance the design. In a busy entry like this, it helps guard against scratches and everyday wear, extending the life of the flooring beneath.



ROOM OF THE MONTH

A warm welcome

Engineered white oak breathes coastal charm into this Sea Pines foyer.

STORY BY SHEILA PAZ
PHOTOGRAPHY BY GREG ELLISON

Owning an oceanfront rental requires strategic planning to handle frequent guest turnover without sacrificing beauty. Chris McCollum and his team at ***Old Town Flooring*** approached this Duckhawk Road home in Sea Pines with both style and performance in mind. Their choice — engineered white oak — strikes an ideal balance between durability and design, creating a light-filled, welcoming foyer that reflects the home's coastal setting.

The white oak's soft grain pattern and pale, neutral hue perfectly complement the surrounding finishes. Engineered for stability, it resists the humidity and temperature swings common to the Lowcountry, making it a smart option for rental properties that see year-round use. Its resistance to warping and wear ensures long-term elegance with minimal maintenance.

Extra-wide planks visually stretch the space, reducing seams and allowing the natural character of the wood to shine. The finish and custom-stained risers echo the rich tones of the front door and tongue-and-groove ceiling, creating a warm visual rhythm that moves the eye upward and outward.

But it's not just the flooring that makes this room special. Natural light pours in through side windows and the glass-paneled front door, brightening the space and enhancing the wood's subtle glow. A large-scale coastal landscape painting introduces marsh-inspired hues, grounding the home in its Lowcountry surroundings. A tailored bench and textured ceramic vase filled with tall greenery offer both utility and softness, welcoming guests with understated style.

The ceiling detail adds depth and texture, while a wide drum pendant provides warm, ambient light that complements the natural palette. Altogether, the space is more than just an entry — it's a carefully composed introduction to the relaxed, refined experience that awaits beyond. *LL*

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EXPERT ADVICE

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A STRIKING COUNTERTOP BRINGS BEAUTY, DURABILITY AND PERSONALITY TO THE HEART OF THE HOME

STORY BY SHEILA PAZ

A kitchen island does more than hold your cutting board and coffee cup. It sets the stage for the entire space. It's where design meets function and where your style really gets to shine. If you're dreaming of a new build or kitchen renovation, choosing the right stone can take your island from basic to breathtaking. To spark your creativity, the expert team at ***Distinctive Granite and Marble*** *pulled back the curtain on two of its recent projects.*



©JOHN MCMANUS

Bold by nature

The Torrento Quartzite island top in this Berkeley Hall kitchen brings drama to the heart of the home. Its swirling pattern of earthy browns, creams and vivid turquoise creates a focal point that feels refined and fearless. Paired with the soft wood tones of the cabinetry and the sleek Black Absolute Honed granite on the perimeter counters, the result is a high-contrast, high-impact space that balances sophistication with Lowcountry warmth.



©LISA STAFF

Beauty in the contrast

In this Indigo Run kitchen, bold meets balanced through the striking pairing of Patagonia granite and Fountain Blue quartzite. The island, clad in richly patterned Patagonia granite, commands attention with its blend of whites, creams, blacks and golds. Its expressive movement and vivid coloration make it a natural centerpiece. Along the perimeter, the Fountain Blue quartzite offers a quieter presence. Its subtle veining and warm undertones complement the granite without competing, allowing the island to shine while grounding the space in refined, coastal charm.

Why quartzite is a top choice for kitchens

When it comes to combining beauty and performance in the kitchen, quartzite checks all the boxes. The professionals at Distinctive share what makes this natural stone such a standout choice.

Exceptional durability: Quartzite is one of the hardest natural stones available, making it highly resistant to scratches, chips and everyday wear — perfect for high-traffic kitchens.

Impressive heat resistance: This stone can withstand high temperatures, so setting down a hot pan won't cause damage. That said, using a trivet is still a smart move to preserve its finish.

Striking aesthetic appeal: Quartzite offers the elegance of marble with the strength of granite. Its natural veining, soft color variations and dramatic movement bring beauty to both modern and rustic kitchens.

Low maintenance: Caring for quartzite is easy — just clean with mild soap and water, and reseal periodically to keep it looking pristine for years to come.

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SMART, STYLISH IDEAS FROM A RIBAUT ISLAND SPACE DESIGNED FOR COASTAL LIVING.

STORY BY LANCE HANLIN + PHOTOGRAPHY BY JOHN MCMANUS

*A poolside bath is often the unsung hero of a waterfront home, handling everything from muddy hands and dripping swimsuits to damp towels and quick outfit changes. In this Ribaut Island retreat within Hilton Head Plantation, **Group 3 Designs** proves that style and function can live in harmony. Located just off the screened porch, the bath is steps away from the pool, dock, outdoor kitchen and lounge area, serving as a polished, practical hub for post-swim relief and laid-back comfort. Interior designer Taylor Stone reveals the design choices behind the space and how to bring its relaxed sophistication home.*



SPLASH-PROOF STYLE This cheerful poolside bath in Hilton Head Plantation is equal parts form and function, with durable porcelain tile underfoot, colorful wallpaper that reflects the waterfront setting and thoughtful touches like a sliding barn door, bench seating and hooks for easy poolside transitions.

1. Floored by function

When it comes to poolside performance, durability is key. Porcelain tile is a top choice for its water resistance, easy maintenance and stylish good looks. A brick pattern adds texture and lends an indoor-outdoor feel.

2. Let the light in

Natural light works magic in small spaces. Amplify its effect with a bright, airy palette such as this watercolor floral wallpaper, paired with reflective finishes that keep the room feeling fresh, open and inviting.

3. Storage options

From towels and sunscreen to bug spray and backup swimsuits, built-in storage keeps poolside essentials right where you need them. No more dripping through the house in search of a towel.

4. Lights that weather the weather

Poolside baths often blur the line between indoors and out, so lighting needs to be up to the challenge. Opt for exterior-rated fixtures that can handle humidity, heat and salt air without missing a beat.

5. Hooked on organization

Wet towels have a way of multiplying. Hooks offer a quick, clutter-free solution. They're simple to install, endlessly useful and one of the most underrated upgrades for any pool bath.

6. Sit, change, chill

A built-in bench offers the perfect spot for swapping swimwear, slipping on sandals or just catching your breath between cannonballs. Comfortable, practical and always appreciated.





CONNECTED BY DESIGN The poolside bath connects to a screened porch, creating an easy flow to the pool deck and outdoor living areas.



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COLORS OF THE MONTH

Easy breezy

A WASH OF SOFT BLUE, CRISP WHITE AND PLAYFUL GEOMETRY TURNS A SUN ROOM INTO A BREATH OF FRESH AIR.

STORY BY LANCE HANLIN



©BENJAMIN MOORE

Some colors whisper calm. Others sing it. Tranquil Blue by ***Benjamin Moore*** does both — a soft, refreshing hue that channels the cool hush of a morning breeze and the gentle rhythm of Lowcountry tides. It's a natural fit for coastal homes where sun, salt air and a relaxed pace are part of everyday life. Paired with crisp White Ice on the ceiling and grounded by bold, geometric tile underfoot, it creates a palette that's bright, cheerful and just cool enough to outsmart the summer heat. Add rich Black Panther accents to sharpen the edges, and introduce a touch of modern contrast, and this light-filled nook proves that when color and light work in harmony, slowing down comes naturally.

Get the look ...

This sun room gets its charm from simplicity and a willingness to play. Start with Tranquil Blue everywhere: walls, trim, even window mullions. The tonal consistency enhances the room's architectural lines while letting the light do the heavy lifting. Paint the ceiling in White Ice to maintain brightness from top to bottom, and don't be afraid to let pattern into the picture. A geometric tile floor adds just enough edge to keep the sweetness in check.

LAYER IN A FEW NATURAL TEXTURES: A woven rattan coffee table, a wicker-wrapped vase filled with oversized palm leaves and a basket of beach reads ready for the picking. Add crisp black accents in Black Panther, such as the airy bench frame and the sculptural pendant overhead. These touches ground the palette and lend a bit of modern drama. The result is a sunny, sophisticated hideaway that captures the spirit of the coast: easy, breezy and always in season.

WALLS AND TRIM

TRANQUIL BLUE (2051-50)

This airy, beach-glass blue creates a light and open feel, especially in rooms flooded with natural light. Using the same hue in two finishes brings subtle dimension: matte on the walls for softness, semi-gloss on the trim for a polished frame that catches the sun.

CEILING

WHITE ICE (OC-58)

Cool and crisp with a touch of modern edge, White Ice (Waterborne Ceiling Paint, Ultra Flat) keeps things light above the eye line. It bounces light beautifully and keeps the overall palette feeling fresh and never frosty.

ACCENTS

BLACK PANTHER (2125-10)

Use this rich, saturated black on metal furniture or lighting to add graphic contrast and sharpen up soft hues. It plays especially well with cool tones like Tranquil Blue and White Ice, offering a dose of coastal sophistication with a modern edge.



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INSIDE THE DREAM

An everyday escape

A SKYLIT PORCH IN THE 2025 HGTV DREAM HOME TURNS SOUTHERN CHARM INTO A YEAR-ROUND INVITATION TO RELAX.

STORY BY LANCE HANLIN + PHOTOGRAPHY PROVIDED BY HGTV



HGTV is handing over the keys to its 2025 Dream Home in Berkeley Hall to Tricia Smith, a 48-year-old special education teacher from the Bronx. Originally from Antigua, Smith was selected from over 118 million entries and is now a first-time homeowner. This month, we're stepping through the French doors to one of her new home's most inviting spaces: the covered back porch.

Let the light in

There's something magical about a porch that delivers sunshine without the sweat. Thanks to custom solar-powered skylights from Velux, this outdoor haven is flooded with natural light all day long, rain or shine. Crisp white columns, a classic tongue-and-groove ceiling and oversized windows create a natural flow between indoors and out. Whether you're lounging on the woven sofas or gazing out at the pool, the view is always front and center, and the vibe is always easy.



Swing into comfort

A porch swing is practically a Southern birthright, but this one is in a league of its own. Suspended from chunky rope and layered with plush, patterned pillows, the oversized daybed was made for everything from lazy naps to late-night gatherings. It's the crown jewel of the porch, flanked by two woven resin chairs and a glossy green ceramic side table, the perfect trio for coffee, mimosas or an evening toast as the sky turns pink.

Get the look

Carol Solid Wood Daybed ($720)
Live Casual Twin Outdoor Cushion ($1,219)
Borgen Patio Chair ($550)
Layana Ceramic Tabletop Candleholder ($45)
Julian Steel Patio Coffee Table ($245)
Emeka Outdoor Patio Sofa ($930)
Sooner Than Later Green Handwoven Rug ($305)
Trex Transcend Lineage Decking
Velux Solar Powered Skylights



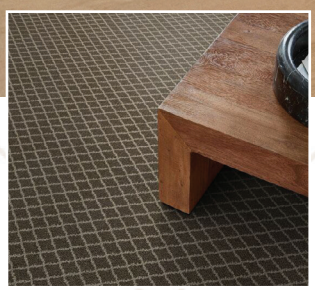
Naturally inviting

Sunlight streams in. A breeze flows through. The Trex decking adds warm, weatherproof beauty underfoot. It's all designed to make relaxing feel second nature. Soft green and sandy tones in the textiles echo the natural landscape, while cozy seating and a handwoven striped rug pull the look together. The French doors swing open to the living room, creating a flow as smooth as a well-read putt. LL

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FLORAL OF THE MONTH

A colorful escape

A FREE-SPIRITED FLORAL ARRANGEMENT CELEBRATES SUMMER'S WILD SIDE.

STORY BY SHEILA PAZ + PHOTO BY RUTHE RITTERBECK



This exuberant summer arrangement by ***Kim Epley***, artistic director at The Studio at Farmer Blue, is a floral daydream come to life. Grown with intention and just enough wild abandon, it captures that magical moment when spring's final blooms mingle with the bold newcomers of summer. Each stem feels like a brushstroke in nature's own painting — bright, expressive and full of character. It's a reminder that even in the hottest months, there's room for surprise, softness and story.



Why it works

A wild-hearted medley: Some flowers were planned, others simply appeared — the result is a mix that feels more like a garden gathering than a formal display. It's joyful, unscripted and full of personality.

Breezy and sculptural: The open composition and varied stem heights give the bouquet a windswept, painterly feel. It looks like it was shaped by sea breezes and sunlight.

Unexpected guests: A few mystery blooms — likely hitchhikers from a seed mix — add charm and curiosity. They make the point that sometimes the best moments in life (and gardens) are the ones we didn't plan.

Care tips

Hydrate often: Change the water daily, and give stems a fresh cut every other day. It keeps everything perkier longer.

Handle poppies with care: Sear freshly cut poppy stems with a flame to preserve their delicate, crepe-like texture.

Stay cool: Keep your arrangement away from heat and direct sun to help the blooms stay vibrant longer.

1. ANEMONE-TYPE DAHLIAS
2. BUTTERFLY RANUNCULUS
3. BUTTERFLY RANUNCULUS
4. BUTTERFLY RANUNCULUS
5. POPPIES
6. DELPHINIUM
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Ultimate summer escapes

WHERE LOCALS GO WHEN IT'S TIME TO TRADE HEAT AND CROWDS FOR COOLER TEMPS, OPEN SPACES AND NEW ADVENTURES

STORY BY LANCE HANLIN



For many, Hilton Head Island and the surrounding Lowcountry are the ultimate summer escape — sun-soaked beaches, fresh seafood and that easy coastal rhythm. But for those of us who live here, summer also means high heat, heavy traffic and a sudden craving to be anywhere else for a few weeks. Sometimes the best way to recharge is to step away from paradise for a bit.

Locals are no strangers to adventure, and their summer travel plans span the globe. To find out what's trending for 2025 and where locals are heading when it's time to beat the heat, we turned to Kelly Brock of The Auto Club Group (AAA). From cool-climate cruises to island getaways, here are her top picks for summer trips that offer the perfect change of scenery when you need it most. *LL*

Hungarian Parliament Building, Budapest



European river cruising

Old-world charm meets stress-free travel

Summer is the ideal time to float down Europe's most iconic waterways. Danube, Rhine and Seine cruises offer breathtaking views of castles, vineyards and medieval towns, without the chaos of crowds or packing and unpacking every day. On-board perks include locally inspired cuisine, guided excursions and a more intimate ship experience.

"This is by far the hottest travel experience right now," Brock said. "River cruising has skyrocketed in popularity, especially with repeat travelers. It's relaxing, culturally rich, and there's a river for every interest."

Lowcountry traveler's guide

When to go: June through August for long, sunlit days
Fly to: Paris, Amsterdam or Munich
Pack: Casual layers, a rain jacket, comfy walking shoes and a universal power adapter.
Why locals love it: It's like drifting down the May River, but with more castles and less humidity.
Best bet: A seven-night Danube cruise from Budapest to Vilshofen, featuring classical concerts, wine tastings and postcard-perfect towns.



Alaska Cruise



Alaska by land & sea

Wild beauty, whales and glaciers — oh my

Summer brings long daylight hours and lots of wildlife activity to Alaska. From the comfort of your cruise ship, you might spot humpback whales, otters and towering glaciers. Extend your trip inland to Denali National Park, and travel by rail for a deeper look at Alaska's wilderness.

"Alaska is a bucket-list trip, especially for families traveling together," Brock said. "A cruise gets you close to the marine life and glaciers, but a Cruisetour lets you explore the interior, too."

Lowcountry traveler's guide

When to go: Mid-June to late July for the best weather and wildlife sightings
Fly to: Seattle or Vancouver
Pack: Waterproof layers, binoculars, hiking shoes and a sense of adventure
Why locals love it: It's everything the Lowcountry is not: cool, rugged and full of moose
Best bet: A seven-night Inside Passage cruise followed by a Denali land tour via luxury rail.







Cliffs of Moher, Ireland

Ireland & Great Britain

Green landscapes, rich history, no language barrier

From the cliffs of County Clare to the streets of London and the castles of Scotland, the British Isles offer something for every traveler. Long summer days make it the perfect time to road trip through Ireland, stroll through Edinburgh or enjoy a proper tea in London.

"Ireland and the UK are an easy sell," Brock said. "The summer weather is lovely, the people are welcoming, and for first-time international travelers, there's no language barrier."

Lowcountry traveler's guide

When to go: June through early August for the greenest views and mildest weather
Fly to: Dublin, London or Edinburgh
Pack: Layers for cool mornings, a light rain jacket and a good travel adapter.
Why locals love it: It's like exploring Charleston on a cooler, older and even more charming scale.
Best bet: A 10-day loop through Dublin, Killarney and Galway — or pair London with a scenic rail journey to Edinburgh and the Highlands.



London



Eilean Donan Castle, Scotland



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Junkanoo Beach, Nassau, Bahamas



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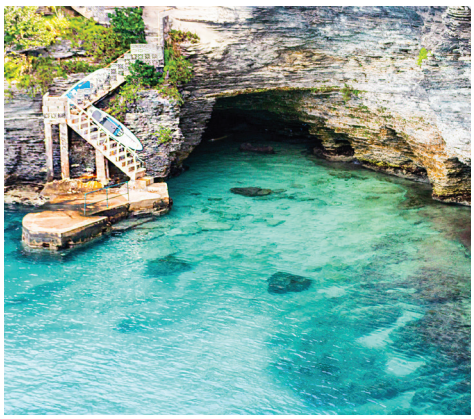
Close, easy and all about togetherness

Cruises to Nassau, Bermuda or Cozumel are low-stress, high-reward. You get all the sunshine, activities and tropical vibes without the hassle of flying. Departing from drive-to ports like Charleston or Port Canaveral, they're perfect for families or friend groups looking for an easy summer reset.

"People say, 'I've been there, done that' — but that's why it works," Brock said. "It's affordable, drivable and ideal for multi-generational trips. It's all about being together."

Lowcountry traveler's guide

When to go: Anytime, but summer is especially popular for school breaks.
Depart from: Charleston, Jacksonville or Port Canaveral
Pack: Swimsuits, sandals, SPF gear and a sense of fun.
Why locals love it: It's the tropical version of an oyster roast — laid back and full of fun and flavor.
Best bet: A five- to seven-night cruise with stops at private islands like Half Moon Cay or CocoCay for white sand and crystal waters.



Horseshoe Bay Beach, Hamilton, Bermuda



Junkanoo Beach, Nassau, Bahamas



Portugal

Old-world soul, island escapes and a glass of port in hand

Portugal has quietly become one of Europe's hottest destinations, and not just because of the summer sun. Whether you're cruising the Douro River past terraced vineyards or road-tripping through the Algarve's seaside cliffs, Portugal offers a magical blend of history, affordability and natural beauty. Add in the Azores and Madeira for an exotic island twist, and it's no wonder even travel pros are picking Portugal for their own vacations.

"Portugal checks every box — culture, scenery, weather and value," Brock said. "I've personally chosen it as my own summer getaway this year."



Lowcountry traveler's guide

When to go: May through October for dry, sunny days and fewer crowds
Fly to: Lisbon or Porto (one layover common)
Pack: Lightweight clothing, a good pair of sandals for cobblestones and a taste for wine
Why locals love it: It's scenic, affordable, easy to explore and filled with the kind of food and wine that makes you want to linger a little longer.
Best bet: A seven-night Douro River cruise paired with a few nights in Porto — or explore Lisbon, Sintra and the Algarve on a scenic land tour.





Douro River, Portugal





Lisbon, Portugal

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Summer's hottest tickets

LEADING TRAVEL PUBLICATIONS REVEAL THE HOTTEST DESTINATIONS FOR 2025 ADVENTURES.



STORY BY LANCE HANLIN

This summer, travelers are skipping the been-there, done-that beach vacations and chasing something a little bolder — think jagged peaks, remote trails, far-flung islands and eco-luxe hideaways. According to top travel authorities like Travel + Leisure, National Geographic, Condé Nast Traveler, Southern Living and Business Insider, the summer of 2025 is shaping up to be the season of bucket-list breakers and surprise show-stealers.

INTERNATIONAL HOTSPOTS

The Caucasus (Georgia, Armenia, Azerbaijan)

Travel + Leisure calls this region one of the best-kept secrets in Europe — but not for long. The dramatic landscapes of the Caucasus Mountains are pulling in trekkers and photographers, while ancient monasteries, bustling bazaars and a growing reputation for bold wines (hello, qvevri-aged reds) are drawing in the culturally curious. New direct routes and tour packages make it easier than ever to go from Tbilisi's street art scene to the shores of Lake Sevan.

Tbilisi, Georgia

Ilulissat City, Greenland



Greenland

Travel + Leisure spotlights Greenland for the adventurous soul. With a sleek new international airport opening in Nuuk and fresh cruise itineraries on the horizon, it's never been easier to witness calving glaciers, meet Inuit communities or kayak next to whales in deep blue fjords. This is the Arctic off the beaten path: raw, rugged and unforgettable.

Kanchanaburi, Thailand

Forget the chaos of Bangkok. Kanchanaburi offers a slower, more soulful side of Thailand. Think floating raft houses on the River Kwai, jungle waterfalls, elephant sanctuaries and poignant WWII memorials. *Travel + Leisure* suggests it's the perfect escape for travelers looking for equal parts beauty and history.



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Stockholm Archipelago, Sweden

National Geographic loves the new Stockholm Archipelago Trail, a stunning route across 21 islands connected by ferries and bridges. Visitors can paddle, hike or bike from one sun-dappled isle to the next, stopping for smoked fish, cinnamon buns and midsummer festivals. Long days, cold swims and cozy saunas? Sign us up.

The Red Sea Project, Saudi Arabia

Condé Nast Traveler calls this one of the boldest tourism projects in the world. Imagine diving pristine coral reefs in the morning and sipping mocktails under the desert stars by night. With eco-chic resorts like Shebara and Desert Rock, this Saudi project blends sustainability with serious wow factor.



U.S. FAVORITES

Puerto Rico

Google's Summer Travel Trends reports a surge in interest, and it's easy to see why. No passport required, but you'll feel a world away with El Yunque rainforest hikes, Old San Juan's pastel streets and vibrant bomba beats. Foodies, don't miss the roadside lechoneras or the island's booming rum scene.

Juneau, Alaska

Also ranked by Google, Juneau offers a front-row seat to Alaska's untamed beauty. Zip past glaciers by seaplane, hike through mossy rainforests, or take a whale-watching cruise where orcas and humpbacks steal the show. Cool air, long days and wild experiences await.

Pigeon Forge, Tennessee

Southern Living says bookings are way up — and Dollywood might have something to do with it. From thrilling roller coasters and mountain views to dinner theaters and moonshine tastings, it's a classic American family trip with a Southern twang.

Lake Placid, New York

According to AAA, Lake Placid is more than an Olympic memory. It's a summer haven where you can hike the High Peaks, paddle Mirror Lake or just relax with a cold drink and mountain views. Bonus: You can visit the ski jump towers and channel your inner Olympian (minus the cold).

Eureka Springs, Arkansas

Also featured by AAA, this quirky mountain town oozes character. Victorian homes, natural springs, underground art galleries, haunted hotels and scenic Ozark trails all roll into one charming and unexpected summer stop.













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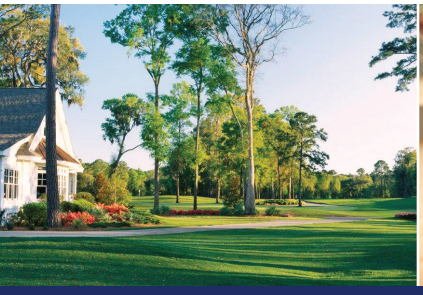
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UNDERRATED GEMS



Pakistan

Business Insider's Tia Thomas swears by it: Fairy Meadows looks straight out of a storybook, while the Karakoram Highway is one of the most thrilling drives in the world. Add in friendly locals and mountains taller than dreams, and you've got a trekker's paradise waiting to be explored.



Montenegro

Croatia's chill cousin, Montenegro, boasts medieval towns like Kotor, stunning Adriatic beaches and a dramatically craggy coastline — all without the crowds. *Business Insider* calls it an affordable and authentic European getaway.



Albania

White-sand beaches, jagged mountain ranges, Ottoman towns and shockingly low prices? Albania is having a moment. *Business Insider* tips this as one of Europe's last true hidden gems, especially for adventurous travelers and backpackers.

TRENDING BEACH ESCAPES



Curaçao & St. Lucia

Google Trends shows a big jump in interest, likely because these Caribbean spots hit the sweet spot between postcard-worthy and culture-rich. In Curaçao, wander pastel Dutch-style streets in Willemstad. In St. Lucia, hike the Pitons and soak in the mud baths.



Maui, Hawaii

Despite wildfires, Google reports Maui is rebounding beautifully. With tourism dollars supporting recovery efforts, visitors can enjoy bamboo forests, secret beaches and hula under the stars, all while giving back.



Boracay, Philippines

Condé Nast Traveler praises Boracay's eco-reset, which reined in over-tourism and re-centered local culture. Expect soft white sand, fire dancers, boat festivals and stunning sunsets, all with a new commitment to sustainability.



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The pinnacle of wanderlust

INSIDE THE WORLD'S MOST EXTRAVAGANT, UNFORGETTABLE TRAVEL EXPERIENCES.

STORY BY LANCE HANLIN

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SLEEP ON THE EDGE OF THE WORLD

White Desert's Echo Camp, Antarctica

This futuristic camp offers a rare chance to sleep in luxury domes on the most remote continent. Accessible only by private jet from Cape Town, Echo Camp provides heated pods with floor-to-ceiling windows, gourmet meals and excursions to visit emperor penguins and ice tunnels. The cost is around $100,000 per person for a 7-day adventure.



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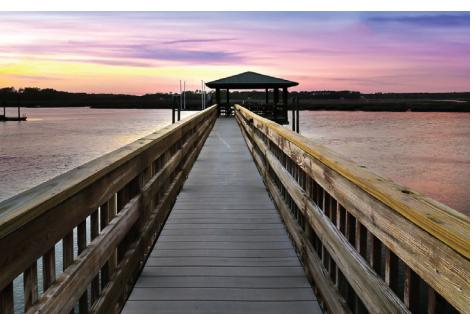




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A PRIVATE ISLAND BUYOUT

Musha Cay, Bahamas

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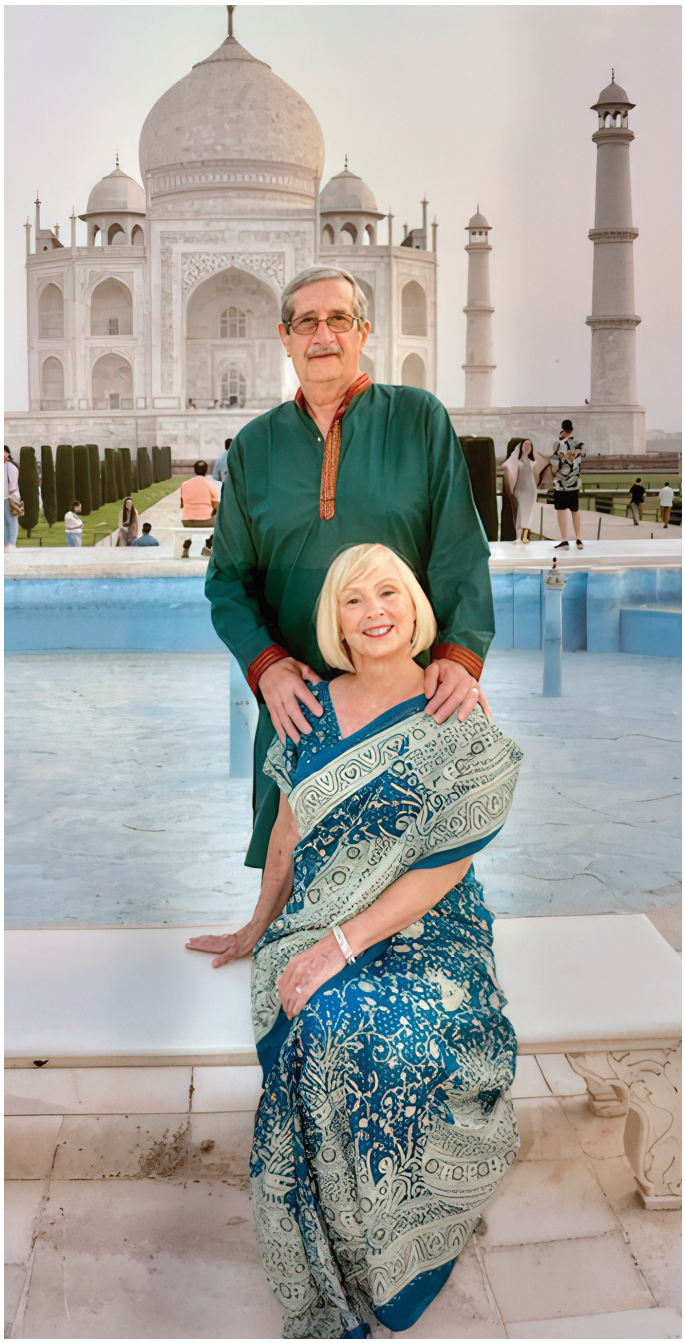
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Love, loss and the journey ahead

EDITOR'S NOTE: We asked Hampton Lake residents and avid travelers **Rich and Arlene Schaltegger** to share a few highlights from their many adventures. What Rich gave us was something far more meaningful. It is a deeply personal reflection on love, loss and the unexpected joy of finding each other later in life. Their story, which has taken them around the world, is a beautiful reminder that it is never too late to start a new chapter or set off on your next great adventure.

AFTER LOSING THEIR LONGTIME SPOUSES, TWO HAMPTON LAKE NEIGHBORS FOUND HEALING, COMPANIONSHIP AND A SHARED LOVE OF SEEING THE WORLD.

STORY BY RICH SCHALTEGGER



Taj Mahal, Arga, India

Arlene and I are a relatively new couple. We've been together for about four years and married for just over two. Before we met, Arlene had been married for 53 years before losing her husband, Ken, to a heart attack. I had been married for nearly 50 years before my wife, Peggy, passed away after a 10-year battle with cancer.

Interestingly, Arlene and I were already neighbors. Ken and I were golf buddies, and I was with him on the course when he suffered the heart attack. Along with others, I performed CPR until the paramedics arrived, but sadly, he did not survive.

About a year after Ken's passing, my wife, Peggy, also died. Arlene had been attending a grief support group, which she found incredibly helpful. She encouraged me to try it and even offered to take me. That simple act of kindness marked the beginning of our journey together.

The support group eventually led to more social activities, and over time Arlene and I grew closer. Eventually, we began dating.

A new life in the Lowcountry

Arlene and her husband had moved several times during their working years but settled in the Baltimore area, where they raised their three sons, and lived there for more than 35 years before relocating to Hampton Lake in 2016. Similarly, Peggy and I moved often for work before settling in North Attleboro, Massachusetts, where we raised our children and lived for 37 years before moving to Hampton Lake in 2017.

Arlene and her family had often vacationed on Hilton Head and fell in love with the Lowcountry's charm. Retiring here had always been their dream. Peggy and I, longtime Cape Cod vacationers, found the Lowcountry offered the same coastal beauty without the snow, so it became our retirement destination as well.

One thing Arlene had always wanted to do was travel, but Ken wasn't fond of it. I had enjoyed traveling with Peggy, but we had to stop once her illness progressed. So when Arlene and I became a couple, we made a pact: to travel as much as we could, for as long as we could.

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Two suitcases, one promise

Our first trip together was a two-week cruise around Italy, with stops in Croatia and Greece. That was quickly followed by two river cruises along the Rhine and the Seine.

Despite being in our 80s, we're both healthy and active, so for our next adventure we decided to go big: a 180-day around-the-world cruise. And we're so glad we did. It was truly the adventure of a lifetime. We visited breathtaking places, were pampered and entertained and made lifelong friends along the way.

When we first started traveling, Arlene was a little nervous about being away for two weeks. But after the world cruise, she now jokes that it's not even worth packing unless we're gone for at least a month.

Shortly after returning from that incredible journey, we went on a two-week African safari and have taken several quick trips to the Caribbean. Each new adventure has only deepened our love for travel.

Huế, Vietnam

Cruising into the next chapter

Coming up, we have a month-long Mediterranean cruise, followed by a two-week Nile River cruise in September and October. Then in January, we'll set sail on a two-month cruise around South America.

We love the cruising lifestyle but stick to smaller ships. They offer a more intimate, comfortable way to travel while letting us explore somewhere new every day. Each stop brings something different — local people, cultures and unforgettable sights. It's eye-opening to experience the world this way.

If there's one downside, it's that cruise stops are often too short. You only get a glimpse of each place. But for us, it's a great way to see so much of the world in a relatively short time, all while living in comfort.

Lessons from the journey

During our visits to holy sites, especially mosques, we learned a great deal about Islam and how it is rooted in the teachings of the Quran. We came to understand that most Muslims are nothing like the radical extremist groups often portrayed in the media. In fact, they are peaceful, loving people who welcomed us warmly into their communities.

Among the many highlights of our world cruise were seeing the majestic Taj Mahal in India, marveling at the Great Wall of China and standing in awe before the terracotta soldiers in Xi'an. We explored the ultra-modern skyline of Dubai, relaxed on the beaches of Tahiti and Bora Bora and took in the views of the Sydney Opera House and Harbour Bridge in Australia. In Cape Town, we rode the cable car up Table Mountain and immersed ourselves in the vibrant local culture.

Travel has become more than just a shared passion. It's a celebration of this new chapter in our lives. After experiencing deep loss, we've discovered the joy of a second chance and the meaning that comes from exploring the world together. Each destination adds to our story, and while we may have come together later in life, we're making the most of every moment — embracing each adventure with gratitude, curiosity and love. *LL*







©YOHAN MARION

Daytrip to Daufuskie

REDISCOVER THIS QUIET ISLAND FULL OF STORIES, SAND AND SURPRISES

STORY BY SHEILA PAZ

Just a short ferry ride from Hilton Head Island, Daufuskie feels like stepping into another world — a place where sandy lanes meander toward deserted beaches, lined with weathered cottages and tucked-away art studios. This remote, mostly car-free haven is a true Lowcountry treasure where nature, history and culture drift together on the ocean breeze. For locals craving peace, quiet and a slower pace, Daufuskie offers the ultimate summer escape. Spend your day sipping a signature Scrap Iron cocktail, exploring by golf cart, strolling empty shores, wandering underdeveloped maritime forests or immersing yourself in the island's rich Gullah history and traditions. However you choose to spend your time, Daufuskie invites you to unplug, breathe deeply and savor the sweet, unhurried spirit of island life.



©ALYSSA FRANCK









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Getting there

There are two ways to reach Daufuskie: by ferry or powerboat. While it may be tempting to kayak or swim, strong currents, boat traffic and the sharks of Calibogue Sound make that a risky proposition — although it's not unusual to spot deer swimming between the islands. Fortunately, reaching Daufuskie via boat is part of the fun. It's a 20- to 45-minute ride across the sound. Many ferry services offer golf cart rentals, a must for covering ground unless you're planning to hit well over 10,000 steps. Here are the best ways to get there:

H2O SPORTS

Price: $45 for adults, $35 for children 12 and younger

Golf cart rental: $80 (half day), $120 (full day)

Details: The quickest ferry to Daufuskie departs from Harbour Town Marina and takes about 20 minutes. Multiple departure and return times are available daily. H2O Sports also can arrange your golf cart in advance so it's waiting for you when you arrive at the dock. **h2osports.com**

Silver Dew Winery



©ALYSSA FRANCK

VAGABOND CRUISE

Price: $40 for adults, $20 for children, free for infants

Golf cart rental: $85 for 3 hours

Details: Year-round morning ferry (9 a.m.-1 p.m.) departs from Harbour Town, reaching Freeport Marina in about 30 minutes. You'll have three hours to explore with a four-seater golf cart available on arrival. An afternoon ferry (11:30 a.m.-5 p.m.) is available April–September, giving you 4 1/2 hours on the island. **vagabondcruise.com**

LOWCOUNTRY FERRY

Price: $30 for adults, free for children 5 and younger

Details: Offers one-way tickets (return must be booked separately) with daily departures from the C.C. Haigh Jr. Boat Landing at 7 a.m., 10 a.m., 1 p.m. and 4 p.m. Departures from Daufuskie's Melrose Landing are at 8:30 a.m., 11:30 a.m., 2:30 p.m. and 5:30 p.m. Pets are welcome but must remain leashed. Golf carts must be reserved separately. **lowcoferry.com**

ISLAND HEAD

Price: $50 for adults, $40 for children ages 3-12, $10 for children 2 and younger

Details: Departing from Broad Creek Marina, this ferry offers both one-way and roundtrip options, with a 45-minute cruise each way. For the best value, opt for the Meals & Wheels package, which includes roundtrip ferry service, a golf cart rental and a $20 meal voucher — $95 for adults and $75 for children 12 and younger. **islandheadhhi.com**

HAIG POINT

Details: Haig Point offers private ferry transportation exclusively for its residents and guests, featuring a fleet of double-decker ferries and high-speed water taxis. Service is reliable, with ferries departing on a set schedule — or water taxis available on call 24/7 for a nominal fee. Departures are from the private Haig Point Embarkation Center on Hilton Head, just below the Cross Island Bridge. Valet service ensures your luggage, golf clubs and other belongings are transported directly to your accommodations, so you can simply relax and enjoy the ride. **haigpoint.com**



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SCAN ME

Where to roam

Cruising the sandy lanes in your rented golf cart, you'll quickly discover that Daufuskie Island is full of hidden treasures. From historic landmarks and scenic beach strolls to farm-fresh finds, every turn leads to a new adventure. Here's where to point your cart for the ultimate island experience.

FIRST UNION AFRICAN BAPTIST CHURCH

Built in 1884 after the original structure was lost to fire, the First Union African Baptist Church stands as one of Daufuskie's oldest and most cherished landmarks. The church has welcomed worshippers for generations, and Sunday services remain open to all who wish to attend.

SANDY LANE BEACH

If swimming, shelling and sweeping coastal views are calling your name, follow Beach Road to the end. There, a rainbow of chairs will guide you to Sandy Lane Beach, where you can soak in views across the Calibogue Sound to Harbour Town and all the way down to Savannah.

MARSH TACKY SOCIETY

A visit to Daufuskie isn't complete without meeting its most legendary residents — the marsh tackies. These small, hardy horses once helped early settlers navigate the swamps and sands of the Lowcountry. Stop by to learn about their history and conservation efforts to protect this unique breed.

THE ROOST FARM

Tucked away on three acres, The Roost Farm is a sustainable slice of paradise owned by Laura and Adam Furfari. Home to chickens, ducks, guinea hens, pigs, a mini pony, donkeys, horses and a cow, this working farm invites visitors to experience chemical-free, farm-fresh living. Book a guided tour at theroostdaufuskie.com.

MARY FIELDS SCHOOL

Built in the early 1930s, this two-room schoolhouse served generations of Daufuskie children and gained literary fame as the setting for Pat Conroy's The Water is Wide. Though it closed in 1997, the building now houses School Grounds Coffee and Daufuskie Blues, continuing its role as a community hub.











©ALL IMAGES BY ALYSSA FRANCK











SILVER DEW WINERY

Next door to the lighthouse museum, you'll find Silver Dew Winery, set in a historic wick house once used to store lighthouse supplies. Wander the vineyard, taste muscadine wine, and savor a refreshing sip of island history.

SCHOOL GROUNDS COFFEE

Need a caffeine boost? Step inside School Grounds Coffee, located in the historic Mary Fields School. Sip a handcrafted brew while browsing historic photos and documents that tell Daufuskie's story. Pro tip: Ask owners Brian and Pam for a custom drink recommendation; they love creating something special.

DAUFUSKIE BLUES

Also located within the old schoolhouse, Daufuskie Blues is where artisans Leanne McJunkin Coulter and Rhonda Davis bring the ancient art of indigo dyeing to life. Stop by to admire their creations, and learn how oxygen transforms indigo into its signature deep blue.

BLOODY POINT LIGHTHOUSE MUSEUM

Unlike towering lighthouses you may know, the Bloody Point Lighthouse was built as a lightkeeper's home with a rooftop tower guiding sailors away from Daufuskie's treacherous shores — once a haven for pirates and shipwrecks. Today the restored house serves as a museum brimming with island lore.

OLD DAUFUSKIE CRAB COMPANY

No trip to the island is complete without a meal at the Old Daufuskie Crab Company. Dig into local seafood, watch the tide roll in and, if you dare, order a Scrap Iron — the island's signature cocktail with a serious kick. Word to the wise: a few too many, and you just might miss your ferry back.

IRON FISH GALLERY & STUDIO

Local artist Chase Allen creates whimsical, hand-crafted metal sculptures of fish, mermaids and other coastal creatures. His outdoor gallery, tucked beneath a canopy of trees, is a must-visit for art lovers and souvenir hunters alike. Don't be surprised if you leave with a piece of Daufuskie to hang at home.



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Make a splash

COOL OFF WITH THESE LOWCOUNTRY SPLASH PADS AND SPRAYGROUNDS BUILT FOR FAMILY FUN.

STORY BY ALEA WILKINS
PHOTOS BY ALYSSA FRANCK

Splash pads are a hot parks-and-recreation investment in the Lowcountry — three have been added to Beaufort County in the past five years, with plans to build another by the end of 2026. In between a traditional playground and a waterpark, they offer interactive water features like jets and fountains to excite kids while keeping them cool. Brooke Plank-Buccola, Port Royal's assistant town manager, says they're especially welcoming for children who may not be fit to swim in the ocean.

"This is a wonderful chance for kids who might not be comfortable in water to splash around and cool off during these warm summer days," she says.

Parents also can unwind with a light mist, escaping the heat while appreciating the lush summer greenery. Explore four local "spraygrounds" that are making a splash.

Coligny Beach Park **Hilton Head Island**

Whether you are rolling in from a beach day, cruising along the shoreline on two wheels or loading up shopping bags from Coligny Plaza, the dry deck fountain at Coligny Beach Park is the perfect place to hit pause and cool off. Located right at the entrance at 1 Coligny Circle, this ground-level fountain delivers sweet salvation from the sweltering afternoon sun. Feel like a kid again by darting through 26 vertical streams, or if you prefer to stay (mostly) dry, take a tip from the locals and linger nearby while the ocean breeze carries a refreshing mist your way. Especially after a sandy day at the beach, it is the ideal spot to cool off, reset and revive any cranky kids. Everything you need is just steps away, including shaded seating, public restrooms, bench swings, Wi-Fi, colorful local art and, of course, the iconic Tiki Hut, always ready with an oceanside cocktail. Paradise found!



Lowcountry Celebration Park **Hilton Head Island**

Ahoy, mateys! Set sail for fun at the Adventure Playground at Lowcountry Celebration Park (94 Pope Ave.), a partially wet, partially dry wonderland inspired by the ship that Capt. William Hilton sailed to discover the island. At the helm, a towering play structure modeled after his vessel invites young sailors to climb, slide and fire misting cannons that send refreshing sprays into the air. Venture a little farther and you will find a wading pool designed to resemble a winding creek, complete with jet streams that arch overhead. When it is time to rest between quests, parents and pirates can retreat to shaded seating, take advantage of public restrooms and stay connected with Wi-Fi. A stroll along the perimeter trail reveals even more hidden treasures. Turtles, birds and the occasional alligator have been spotted gathering near the pond. At Hilton Head Island's most swashbuckling park, adventure is never far away.



Oscar Frazier Park **Bluffton**

With showering buckets, larger-than-life animal sculptures and jets spraying from every direction, Oscar Frazier Park (7 Recreation Court) delivers all the fun of a mini waterpark. Kids will love the gushing geysers and flower-shaped sprinklers, while parents, if not already drenched, can enjoy the gentler showers and plenty of shaded benches nearby. The splash pad is just one of many ways to enjoy the outdoors at this community favorite. A traditional playground, walking trails and nearby baseball and soccer fields offer even more room to roam. Even four-legged family members can join the fun at the dog park, where separate areas for different-sized pups ensure everyone plays safely. Planning a party? Oscar Frazier Park can be rented for birthdays, anniversaries and other summer celebrations that could use a refreshing twist.



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New Riverside Barn Park **Bluffton**

The Lowcountry's newest sprayground made a big splash at the February grand opening of New Riverside Barn Park (30 Red Barn Drive). Part of a 37-acre Bluffton development, the park features picnic areas, walking paths, the namesake barn and a state-of-the-art play space designed to entertain the entire family. Young adventurers can climb the mast of a wooden ship, scale the ropes course or soar through the air on a zipline (yes, a real zipline). Follow the turf trail to the splash pad, where blue cushioned flooring speckled with lily pads sets the scene. Water sprays from tall reeds like an upgraded backyard sprinkler, keeping kids cool and active even in the warmest months. While the park's red barn is still undergoing renovations, the rest of the grounds are ready to kick off their first full summer of fun. Pack a picnic for the open-air pavilions, or set out on over five miles of scenic hiking trails winding through the wetlands. Whatever adventure you choose, be sure to pack the sunscreen!



©TOWN OF PORT ROYAL

Bruce Edgerly Field **Port Royal**

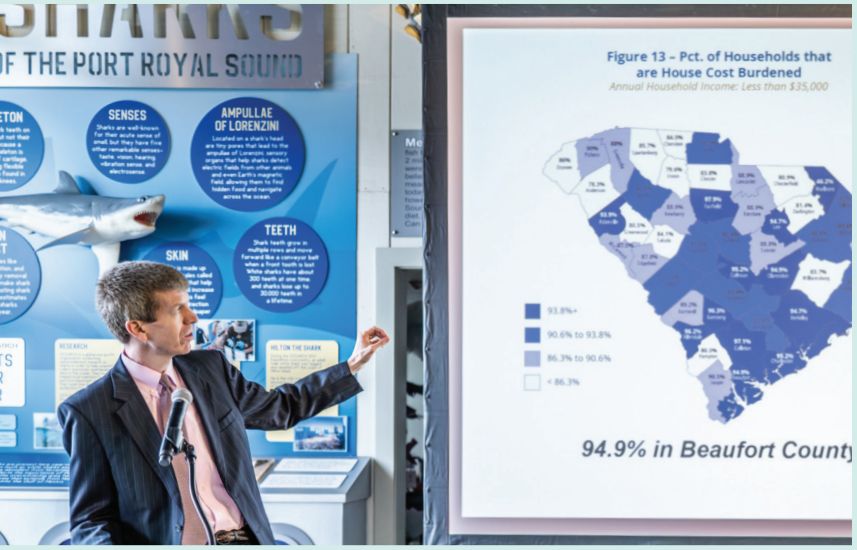
Big news is making waves in northern Beaufort County. The Town of Port Royal's splash pad is set to open by the end of 2026. This will expand the inclusive playground at Bruce Edgerley Field, creating more opportunities for children of all ages and abilities to stay cool and have fun as the temperatures rise. Stay tuned to the Town of Port Royal's website and social media channels for updates on this refreshing addition. *LL*

COMMUNITY FOUNDATION OF THE LOWCOUNTRY

BUILDING BETTER FUTURES









A sustainable workforce is imperative to the development, health, and success of our region. Community Foundation of the Lowcountry is taking a leadership role in addressing the affordable housing shortage crisis by providing support for local housing nonprofits through our **Affordable Workforce Housing Fund**, as well as convening nonprofits, public officials, and advocates for informative events like the Lowcountry Affordable Housing Symposium.

To learn more about Community Foundation of the Lowcountry's affordable housing initiatives, visit cf-lowcountry.org/about/news or contact us at 843.681.9100.

Please click on the QR code to support CFL's Affordable Workforce Housing Fund.

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Escape the heat

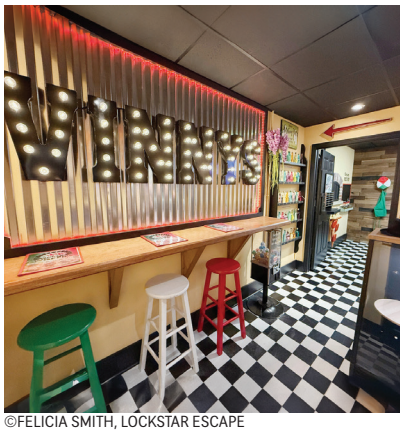
WHEN SUMMER SWELTERS OR STORMS ROLL IN, THESE CLUE-FILLED ADVENTURES OFFER THE PERFECT WAY TO PLAY INDOORS.

STORY BY ALEA WILKINS



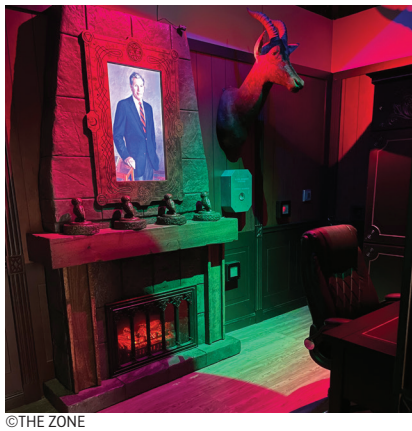
For Clue fanatics and amateur detectives, the key to summertime entertainment lies behind closed doors. As beachgoers swarm to Coligny and the weather thwarts outdoor adventures, escape rooms offer indoor play to excite puzzle solvers of all ages. Like laser tag or indoor mazes, they encourage teamwork through activity and deciphering clues. The concept is simple: a group of players enter a "locked" room and must uncover a chain of puzzles that will release them before the timer runs out. While guests are never actually trapped (there is an exit for use at any time), the real-world simulation immerses players in an elaborately themed mystery orchestrated to thrill (and chill: hello, air-conditioning). Better yet, the Lowcountry's offerings of escape rooms are all locally owned, meaning more original storylines for expert players and first-timers alike. Once the countdown starts, the game is afoot!





©FELICIA SMITH, LOCKSTAR ESCAPE





©THE ZONE

Lockstar Escape

For partners or partners-in-crime, Lockstar Escape promises the most private escape room experience. With no additional charge, groups of any size can reserve a room entirely for themselves, dismissing worries of awkward cooperation or interrupting date night. Guests can choose from two rooms themed to a "The Godfather"-esque mafia mission or a case of a cursed motel. Another perk: there is no limit on hints should players wish to use them. Because Lockstar Escape books their two rooms by appointment only, large groups are also welcome to reserve the entire place for a puzzle-filled party. Just save time to peruse the extensive gift shop, which is stocked with souvenirs like stickers, keychains, board games, cards and toys. Browse Lockstar Escape's rooms on their website, complete with a difficulty scale, to determine the best one for your unit of detectives.

The Zone

At Bluffton's hotspot for edu-tainment, escape rooms are just one selection from The Zone's activity board. A first-of-its-kind playground, The Zone emphasizes financial education through each of its 10 exhilarating games — including its escape rooms. Whether creeping through a haunted attic or navigating the New York City subway, the rooms tie monetary lessons into their storylines. The escape rooms are intended for no more than six players, but combined with The Zone's array of activities like laser tag, mirror mazes and a mechanical shark, it's the perfect place to entertain even large parties. Plus, parents can relax at the snack bar while kids play all day. The Zone offers ticket packages that include access to their most popular attractions, spanning multiple hours of educational fun when the rain hits or the heat is too high.



Hilton Head Escape Room



©NATHAN ADDY

For Island-goers looking for a break from the sun, Hilton Head Escape Room takes the action indoors. Less than a mile from Coligny Beach, the business houses four exciting escape rooms to choose from, ranging from a tale of cursed pirates to an "Alice In Wonderland"-inspired mad tea party. Guests praise the number of challenges hidden within the rooms that also accommodate players of all skill levels. They also suggest it as the perfect pre-dinner activity or to burn some energy on a rainy day. Potential players should note that Hilton Head Escape Room may group multiple parties together to allow as many people as possible to participate. This also means couples and solo players can join without the higher costs to reserve an entire room, extending the fun to everyone. Visit Hilton Head Escape Room's website to schedule your time slot, and get sleuthing!





©ESCAPE ISLAND

Escape Island

Beat the dog days of summer (and the buzzer) at Escape Island on Hilton Head, where the newest of three escape rooms is themed to a search for a sneaky pup. The game's light-hearted, family-friendly atmosphere counters the more chilling options — a sinister surgeon's lab or a western jail breakout — to excite all ages of players. Reviews from experienced gamers rank Escape Island's mysteries among their favorites, noting the elaborate theming and unique set of puzzles. Escape Island also grants an optional traffic light guide system to indicate player progress. When the green light is on, the group is on track for a timely finish, but when yellow or red appears, it's time to pick up the pace. This system can assist novice escapists or rooms shared by multiple small parties. All guests must book their experience in advance, and private rooms can be reserved at an additional cost.



©THE ESCAPE COMPANY

The Escape Company

Cheers to a case successfully solved at The Escape Company in Savannah, where clues meet brews. The in-house Hideaway Lounge is a full-service bar that invites players to enjoy a pre-game cocktail or, if thirst strikes mid-mystery, phone a drink to be delivered to their escape room via a walkie-talkie. Uninterested in sleuthing? The lounge is open to all guests, and it holds a selection of board games like Scrabble or Jenga for a more low-key evening. On select nights it also hosts exciting events like trivia or a Super Smash Bros tournament. The Escape Company's e-ticket offerings include five intricately designed escape rooms, each leaning into a more thrilling theme. Investigate the case of the "Suburban Serial Killer," or spend a night in the eerie Greyside Manor. Escape from Alcatraz or an uncharted cavern. Whatever adventure you choose, The Escape Company guarantees a good time.



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STORY BY ALEA WILKINS



©TIN & TALLOW

Behold the silver screen beneath the open sky this summer at the Lowcountry's outdoor movie showings. From Hilton Head Island's family friendly festivities to Beaufort County's only drive-in, there's an open-air arena to entertain all audiences. Pack a picnic for dinner and a show, or satisfy the movie munchies with treats from favorite local spots. Plus, find bounce houses, playgrounds and plenty of open space to kick back with friends and family for the ultimate watch party. Make movie nights more memorable this summer with screenings as cinematic as a feature film.



©FRAN ROBERTS

Hwy 21 Drive-In **55 Parker Drive, Beaufort**

Catch a flick the old-fashioned way at the Hwy 21 Drive-In, the Lowcountry's only drive-in theater. Every Thursday through Sunday, three screens feature the newest blockbusters beginning at 8:30 p.m. Plus, on Fridays and Saturdays, they host double-features to keep the movie magic rolling into the night. With renovated sound and lighting systems, the drive-in boasts old-timey charm with modern improvements, and its entire grounds are outfitted to make every viewing a unique experience. Before the movie begins, toss a frisbee on the spacious lawn, take kids to the playground or enjoy a meal as the sun sets. Visitors rave about all the goodies at the concession stand, but the fresh funnel cake is the real showstopper. Since the drive-in is in a wooded area, it's also a good idea to bring bug spray. Arrive early to secure a prime spot.

Tin & Tallow
2 Spanish Wells Road, Hilton Head Island

Parents, this one's for you. While the selected showings are appropriate for young audiences, they tap into a slightly more mature crowd's memories. At Tin & Tallow's storefront off of Spanish Wells Road, the outdoor dining area includes a screen projecting golf or local broadcasts by day, but every Tuesday night a nostalgic flick takes over. Escape to yesteryear with a re-watch of classics like "Mrs. Doubtfire" or "The Goonies," and introduce the kids to some oldies but goodies. Complete the viewing with Tin & Tallow's gourmet selection of smash burgers, handhelds and brews, including crowd-pleaser chicken sandwiches and limited-time offerings. Movie showings begin at 6 p.m., and the kitchen closes at 8 p.m., so grab your snacks early. Visit Tin & Tallow's store to see the monthly entertainment schedule, or check its Instagram for weekly event updates.



©ALLISON ABRUSCATO - PLANT RIVERSIDE DISTRICT

Plant Riverside District
400 W. River St., Savannah

For the finale to a Savannah day trip, stick around for a movie on the riverfront. At the Plant Riverside District's Martin Luther King, Jr. Park, free film screenings are scheduled to wrap up the festivities on the Fourth of July and Labor Day. Following Memorial Day's screening of "Toy Story," the later dates will show the sequels "Toy Story 2" and "Toy Story 3." Seating is available on a first-come, first-served basis, but guests are encouraged to bring their own blankets and chairs to the lawn. Arrive early and pick up a movie snack from the district's seafood or smokehouse joints, or indulge with a to-go cocktail from nearby bars. With films on-screen and the picturesque view of the river, Savannah's outdoor theater is its own cinematic escape.



©CRUSH ENTERTAINMENT

Shelter Cove Community Park

40 Shelter Cove Lane, Hilton Head Island

A Hilton Head summer tradition, Shelter Cove Towne Park's annual "Movie Nights" series welcomes the entire family for a one-of-a-kind movie night — pets included. Beginning Thursday, June 12, Shelter Cove will show a family-friendly movie each week through Aug. 14. Spread lawn chairs or blankets out on the lawn, and watch the sun set over Broad Creek. Then, as the stars begin to appear, the real show begins on a 20-foot inflatable screen. Excite the kids with recent releases like "Mufasa: The Lion King" or "Paddington in Peru," or parents can reminisce with nostalgic favorites like "Yours, Mine & Ours." Hungry for an extra special evening? Dine-in or take-out from Shelter Cove's selection of fine restaurants, and sweets found at Kilwins or Crumbl Cookies make for a happy ending. The series is free and open to the public, and movies play rain or shine at 8:30 p.m. For the full film lineup and more details, follow Shelter Cove's social media or visit its website.



©TOWN OF BLUFFTON

Town of Bluffton Movie Nights

Buckwalter Place Park, Bluffton

Bluffton's beloved Movie Nights in the Park series is back, and it's bigger, better and more family-friendly than ever. This spring and summer the town is lighting up local parks with free outdoor showings, live music, games and bounce houses that keep the kids happy long before the opening credits roll. Locals flocked to Oscar Frazier Park for "Despicable Me" in April and danced along with "Moana 2" in May at Martin Family Park. Up next: "The Garfield Movie" on June 6 at Buckwalter Place Park. Pack your picnic basket with favorite movie munchies, or give in to the scent of fresh popcorn from the concession stand. The amphitheater at Buckwalter Place adds a little extra movie magic with tiered seating for great views under the stars. And for the little ones who prefer action over intermission, the on-site playground promises plenty of fun, no matter what's on screen.

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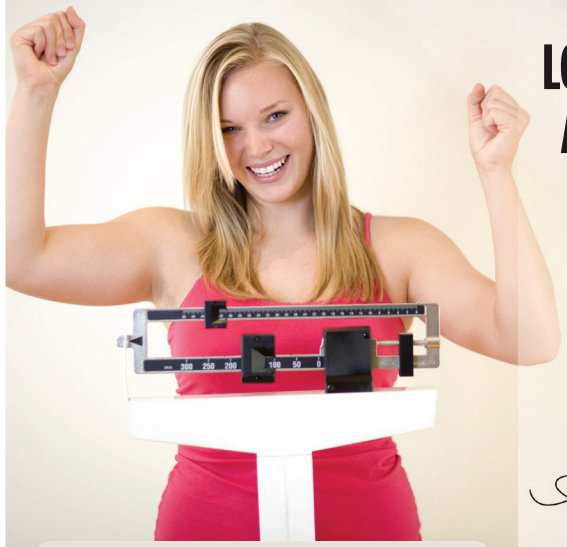


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FREQUENT FLYER

Eastern kingbird

THIS PINT-SIZED POWERHOUSE RULES THE SKIES WITH ATTITUDE, DRAMA AND A HIDDEN CROWN.

STORY BY BAILEY GILLIAM + PHOTOS BY ALAN BIGGS



LISTEN UP
Scan this QR code *to hear the call of the eastern kingbird.*

The eastern kingbird is the kind of monarch you'd expect to find in a Shakespearean drama. It's equal parts regal and ridiculous, bold and bratty. Think Henry VIII in feathers: moody, overconfident and prone to tantrums. Don't let the crisp gray suit and neat white tail tip fool you. This bird rules its kingdom with an iron beak. And, yes, it wears a crown. A fiery crest is usually kept hidden, only revealed when it's time to intimidate. Picture this pint-sized tyrant flaring its crown, beak wide in a bold red gape, dive-bombing anything that dares challenge its authority. Subtlety has no place in this court.

Even its scientific name, Tyrannus tyrannus, screams power trip. And the bird lives up to it. Kingbirds fearlessly chase hawks, crows, herons and even squirrels. They've been known to knock blue jays right out of trees. This isn't just sky dominance — it's aerial tyranny. When hunting, the kingbird waits patiently on a perch, scanning for insects. Once spotted, it launches with precision. Larger prey like grasshoppers and beetles are slammed against branches before being swallowed whole. Smaller ones barely cause a pause. Effective, yes. Graceful, not quite.

Parenting also comes with royal flair. Eastern kingbird chicks are fed a steady diet of insects for nearly seven weeks. That long period of dependence usually means just one brood per season. No need to rush when you're raising royalty. Courtship is equally dramatic, featuring exaggerated flights and fluttering displays. Mated pairs often return to the same breeding grounds each year. It sounds romantic, but royal life has its secrets. DNA studies reveal frequent infidelity. Females lay eggs in other nests or raise young that aren't their mate's. There's no shortage of scandal. Fights break out over a few feet of territory, complete with aerial duels, locked talons and shredded feathers. In the kingbird's world, drama and dominance go hand in hand.

Then winter comes, and everything changes. In South America's Amazon Basin, the eastern kingbird trades its crown for a calm, fruit-filled life. It joins relaxed flocks in the treetops, with no territory to defend and no tantrums to throw. One imagines them stretched out on a branch, savoring berries and soaking in the breeze. It's a full royal vacation. Here in the Lowcountry we get the bird's boldest chapter. From spring through summer the eastern kingbird returns to play out its dramatic reign. So pull up a chair, keep your binoculars close, and enjoy the show unfolding in your own backyard.

Where to find them

Local birder Mary Alice Tartler: "When in the field, always scan the water's edge — rivers, lakes and lagoons — for eastern kingbirds. They often perch on exposed branches or wires overhanging the water, putting on aerial displays as they dive and hover to catch insects. They'll also skim the water's surface to catch prey, often returning to their original perch after a successful snatch to eat. In addition to waterways, look for them in orchards and gardens, where they perch on poles or fences, scanning for insects before diving to catch them. Be prepared for their aggressive behavior as they fearlessly chase other birds from their feeding grounds. Always familiarize yourself with their distinctive high-pitched 'kip' call, and it'll become easier to spot these birds in action."

Local birder Alan Biggs: "Eastern kingbirds like to perch on wires in open areas and fly out for insects — or you might spot them fluttering low over the grass. I often see them near ponds."



Essentials

Get everything you could possibly need for your backyard birding needs at ***Wild Birds Unlimited*** at the Festival Centre at Indigo Park on Hilton Head Island.

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When dolphins fly

DISCOVER THE REASONS BEHIND THEIR HIGH-FLYING ANTICS AND WHERE TO CATCH THEM IN ACTION.

STORY BY LANCE HANLIN + PHOTOGRAPHY BY SUSAN TROGDON



HANG TIME Hoping to catch an Atlantic bottlenose dolphin in midair? Keep an eye out for high-energy social behaviors like tail-slapping, chasing or playful bursts at the surface; those are your best chances of seeing one take flight. In the wild these agile marine mammals can leap up to 10 feet out of the water. In trained settings they've been known to soar as high as 15 feet.

There's something almost meditative about watching dolphin fins bob in and out of the water along the Lowcountry's scenic shores. Graceful and elusive, they often appear just long enough to spark a sense of wonder. But every now and then, they offer more than just a glimpse — like this display of airborne acrobatics, beautifully captured by Beaufort native and wildlife photographer Susan Trogdon.







It was a calm, golden afternoon in Port Royal Sound when Susan and her husband, Doug, set out on their flats boat for a relaxing day of fishing. As they drifted quietly, a playful pod of dolphins surfaced nearby. The couple kept a respectful distance so as not to disturb them — but one especially spirited dolphin had other plans. With a burst of energy, the dolphin leapt from the water not once, but six times, putting on a spontaneous show that left the Trogdons in awe.

"This fella was extremely happy," Susan recalled. "I've been lucky enough to witness them jumping, strand-feeding and frolicking over the years, and I've gotten some very fortunate photos. I still get excited every time I see them — I don't think I'll ever tire of watching and learning about their behaviors."

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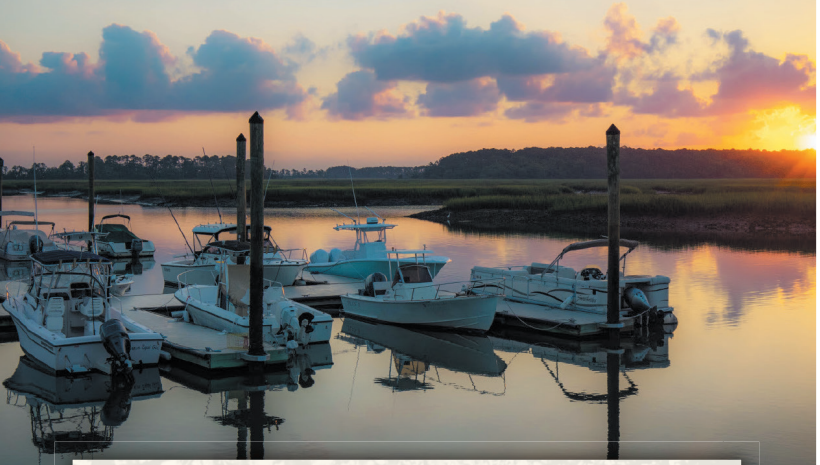
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Why do dolphins jump?

It's a question that has fascinated scientists and beach goers alike. Why do they fling their sleek gray bodies through the air with seemingly effortless grace? According to marine biologists, there isn't just one reason behind this acrobatic behavior — dolphins leap for a variety of purposes.

One reason is communication. A high jump followed by a loud splash can be a way to signal other members of the pod, especially when they're spread out over a distance. It's like sending a ripple through the creek that says, "Over here!"

Jumping also can serve a practical purpose. Dolphins may launch themselves out of the water to dislodge parasites or hitchhiking remoras clinging to their skin. It's a kind of high-speed exfoliation, helping them stay healthy and hydrodynamic.

Another reason? Vision. While dolphins primarily navigate underwater using echolocation, a quick aerial leap offers them a literal bird's-eye view of the water's surface — useful for spotting prey, predators or even boats.

And sometimes, it's just for the thrill of it. Observers have long noted that young dolphins, in particular, seem to jump purely for fun. They twist, spin and surf the wakes of boats, appearing to delight in their own agility. In these moments it's hard not to believe that joy — simple, unfiltered joy — plays a role in their impressive leaps.



Where and when to see dolphins jump

Dolphins are a familiar sight in the Lowcountry's tidal creeks and open sounds, but witnessing one leap out of the water is always a rare and unforgettable moment. Want to boost your chances of catching this spectacular show? Here's when and where to look:

Top spots: Keep your eyes on the waters of Port Royal Sound, the Beaufort River, Skull Creek, Broad Creek and the waters around Hunting and Fripp islands. These dolphin hot spots are known for frequent jump sightings.

Tidal timing: Mid to rising tides tend to spark more activity, especially when schools of baitfish are present — a dolphin's favorite snack.

Best times of day: Early mornings and late afternoons usually bring the calmest waters and the most surface activity, making it easier to spot high-flying dolphins.

Prime seasons: Spring through early fall is peak jumping season, thanks to warmer waters and an abundant food supply that keeps dolphins active and playful. *LL*





LOWCOUNTRY ALMANAC



June

Night & day

Longer days mean more time for beach walks, bike rides and that critical third sunset cocktail you definitely deserve.

Sunrise: 6:15-6:18 a.m.
Sunset: 8:26-8:35 p.m.

FEEDING FRENZY From June to early July, the little blue heron's mealtime looks more like a wrestling match. As captured in Gwen Callas-Miller's image at Cypress Wetlands in Port Royal, nestlings leap for the parent's beak to score a freshly regurgitated snack. It's instinctual, chaotic and a bit dangerous for mom or dad, who must serve dinner without getting pecked in the face. The madness lasts about six weeks until the chicks fledge and the parents finally get a break.

STORY BY BAILEY GILLIAM + PHOTOGRAPHY BY GWEN CALLAS-MILLER

June brings a sense of balance to the Lowcountry with long days, rising heat and the first real taste of summer. Named for Juno, the Roman goddess of women and renewal, the month overflows with life, from ripening tomatoes to chirping hatchlings in the rookery. With Flag Day, Father's Day, summer solstice and Juneteenth on the calendar, there is plenty to honor and enjoy. Let this guide, with insights from the *2025 Old Farmer's Almanac* and *Grow Great Vegetables South Carolina*, help you soak it all in.

Weather predictions

Time to sweat stylishly. Summer kicks into high gear this month with above-average temps and spotty rainfall.

Average temperature: 80 degrees (1 degree above average)
Precipitation: 3.5 inches (2 inches below average)

FORECAST BY WEEK

June 1-9: Sunshine and rising temps. Time to dig out the floppy hat
June 10-19: Thunderstorms and a surprise cool-down
June 20-30: Heat returns with isolated storms (read: pop-up showers and steamy skies)



Astronomical events

June's skies are putting on a show.

June 1: The greatest elongation offers the best time to observe Venus.
June 11: Full Strawberry Moon. A sweet name for a moon that glows with golden-pink light.
June 21: Summer solstice at 10:41 p.m., the longest day of sunlight of the year.
June 25: New moon. A good night to stargaze and dream.

Tides & currents

*For the best paddle, cast or coastal stroll, **scan the QR code** and stay in tune with the latest tides (courtesy of NOAA).*

In the garden



Don't let the calendar fool you: summer started weeks ago in a Lowcountry garden. The beds are buzzing, the vines are stretching, and gardeners are working up a healthy sweat.

PREP Keep your crops happy with regular watering, vigilant weeding and generous mulching. When broccoli goes bitter, thank it for its service, and replant with cover crops or peas. Mulch everything from tomatoes to okra. Pathways? Mow or mulch them to keep critters and weeds in check.

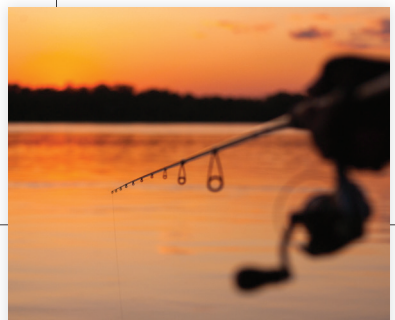
PLANT Yes, it's hot. But your garden's not taking a vacation.

Indoors: You're off duty.
Outdoors: Sow heat-hardy greens like crowder peas, okra and lettuce. Keep summer veggies coming with staggered plantings of corn, melons, beans, squash, edamame and more. Don't forget to finish planting sweet potato slips and watermelons. Feed the soil generously between rounds.

HARVEST Your June haul could rival the farmers market: Beans, beets, blueberries, broccoli, cabbage, carrots, celery, chard, cherries, collards, cucumbers, garlic, lettuce, new potatoes, onions, peas, peppers, plums, raspberries, scallions, squash, tomatoes, turnips and zucchini.

Best days

According to lunar wisdom, here's when to make your move:



Fish with Dad: June 1-11, 25-30
Travel for fun: June 1, 27-28
Brew beer: June 7-8
Go camping: June 9-11
Tie the knot: June 4-6
Buy a house: June 7-8
Start something new: June 26

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Cool tips for hot plants

LOCAL GARDENING ADVICE FOR SURVIVING THE LOWCOUNTRY SUMMER.

STORY BY SHEILA PAZ AND SUZANNE BARTON


Vincas

SUN SEEKERS Vibrant and heat-tolerant, vincas are a go-to for Lowcountry gardens in the summer. These hardy bloomers thrive in full sun and bring lasting color to beds and borders.

Rooting for summer

*Smart seasonal tips from **Lowcountry Gardening**, the trusted guide by the Lowcountry Master Gardener Association:*

"Summer time is the time for maintenance and water. Irrigate when there is less than an inch of rainfall per week. Irrigate deeply so roots won't gravitate to the top of the soil. Water early in the morning so foliage can dry out by evening.

Plants often droop from mid-day heat. If this occurs during the morning or evening, water is needed.

June is a difficult time for planting. Treat new plants very gently. Soak the plant in water for an hour before planting; fill the planting hole with water, letting it subside before planting; mix plenty of compost into the backfill soil. If the plant is in direct sun, protect it with a large cardboard box for a few days. Water daily for at least two weeks, then every other day until you see new growth. Plants want moist, but not water-logged soil."



The heat is on — and your garden knows it. With summer nearing full scorch, even the hardiest plants can start to wilt under the pressure. To help your greenery beat the summer heat, we turned to ***Suzanne Barton***, manager of The Green Thumb, for expert advice. From drooping leaves to thirsty soil, she answered the most common summertime gardening questions we're hearing right now.



[LOCAL Life] My planters are looking tired. What can I do to get through the heat? [Suzanne Barton] Start by replacing your cool-weather plants with heat-tolerant plants such as vincas, pentas, rosemary and russian sage. If you can provide it, place plants in shade during the afternoon. Don't forget to water plants adequately.

[LL] What can I do to prepare for the tired stage? [SB] You must deadhead! Remove all of the spent flowers from the head of plants to help encourage continued blooming. Start fertilizing before the weather gets too hot, and check for insects and diseases. The healthier and stronger your plant is before the summer heat, the better it will do when stressed.

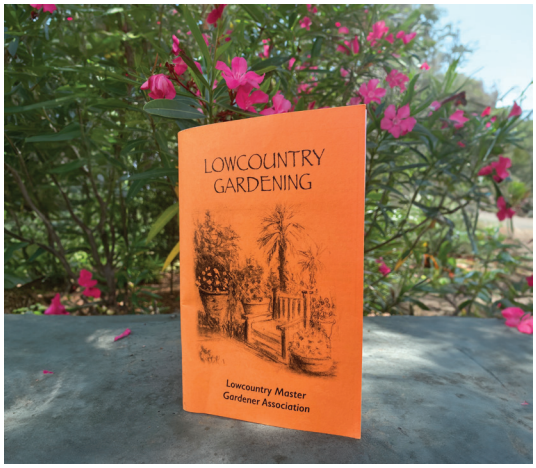
[LL] Hot summer months mean the pesky mosquitoes are back. Can I do anything about that in my garden? [SB] Yes! Some plants will naturally deter mosquitoes from your garden, such as citronella, lemongrass, lemon balm, citrosa, lemon verbena, marigolds, basil and eucalyptus – just to name a few. Anything with strong citrus fragrances will deter mosquitoes, and you can take the leaves of these plants to rub on your skin to keep them mozzies from biting!


Lemongrass

ZEST WITH BENEFITS Lemongrass pulls double duty, adding bright flavor to summer dishes while naturally repelling mosquitoes. It's a smart and stylish addition to any Lowcountry garden.

Grow like a local

Gardening in the Lowcountry isn't for wimps. Between the blazing sun, swampy humidity and soil that sometimes feels more like beach sand than garden bed, it takes grit and a little guidance to make things grow. That's where the Lowcountry Master Gardener Association comes in. Each month we'll share advice straight from Lowcountry Gardening, the ultimate local guide penned by seasoned master gardeners who've battled every bug, blight and heatwave this region can muster. Grab a copy for $5 at The Greenery, Bruno Landscape & Nursery, The Green Thumb or the Lowcountry Master Gardener booth at the Bluffton and Port Royal farmers markets. For more info, head to ***LowcountryMGA.org***. *LL*



LOCAL WISDOM, ROOTED DEEP This handy guide from the Lowcountry Master Gardener Association is packed with expert tips, seasonal advice and local know-how to help your garden thrive. It's like having a master gardener in your back pocket.



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STORY BY LANCE HANLIN



In a world that rarely slows down, sometimes the best escape isn't a far-off destination but a quiet moment in your own backyard. You don't need a boarding pass or a packed bag, just a spark of imagination and a willingness to get your hands a little dirty. Creating a fairy garden is more than a weekend project. It's a chance to pause, breathe and reconnect with the simple joy of making something magical. Whether you're building a whimsical world for curious grandkids, channeling your inner child or carving out a peaceful corner just for yourself, these miniature landscape ideas offer big enchantment in the smallest of spaces.

Birdbath bliss (minus the birds and mosquitoes)

Idea: Repurpose an unused birdbath into a fairy garden centerpiece. An empty birdbath can feel a bit sad, not to mention be a breeding ground for mosquitoes. Instead, fill it with potting soil and turn it into a scene straight out of a fairytale. Add tiny houses, mossy paths, pebbles and props. Think fairy bridges, beach umbrellas or a mermaid lounging on a stone. **Make it a tradition:** Switch up the theme each summer. Try a mermaid lagoon one year, an enchanted forest the next. Take a snapshot of the grandkids beside it each visit. These gardens create far better memories than a bug-filled bowl ever could.



The tree with a secret

Idea: Add a tiny wooden door to the base of a tree trunk. Instant magic. It might look like an old oak to some, but to a child it could be the home of a traveling elf or a bashful woodland pixie. To make one yourself, find a flat piece of wood, or pick up a pre-made fairy door from a local craft store, and secure it with weatherproof adhesive. Place it among plants, or tuck it behind grasses to make it feel like a true hidden portal. **Make it memorable:** Add to it each year. Maybe a window appears next summer, a miniature bench the year after that. The joy of discovery becomes part of the tradition and something little ones will race to revisit.

Cracked pot? Perfect village

Idea: Transform a broken pot into a multi-level elf village. Don't mourn your shattered terracotta: embrace it. Stack the broken pieces like steps or terraces in a tiny amphitheater, then fill them with soil, moss and pint-sized décor. Add gnome statues, mushroom houses or even a clothesline made from string and twigs. Fittonia, creeping thyme and mini ferns make it lush and lively. **Seasonal twist:** Swap decorations with the seasons. Use autumn leaves and pumpkins in fall, twinkle lights and wreaths in winter, pastels and blossoms in spring. Summer is perfect for bold blooms and cheeky gnomes soaking up the sun.





Stacked pots, layered charm

Idea: Build a tiered fairy garden village using multiple planters. You don't need a big garden to build something magical. Stack a few pots at varying heights to create a hillside village feel. Use moss as ground cover and colorful blooms for contrast. Connect each level with a handmade twig bridge. **Bring the magic to life:** Add miniature homes, fences, signs, toadstools and storybook characters. Designate the top pot as the hilltop with a special welcome sign or lookout tower. Switch the details seasonally, or build on the scene each year so visitors of all ages can spot what's new. *LL*

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Show-off!

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The Eastern Kingbird's diet consists mostly of flying insects (like bees, wasps, and dragonflies) during spring and summer. Later in the season, they may also eat berries and other small fruits. Offer mealworms (live or dried) in an open tray feeder. You can encourage their visit by making your yard a good insect habitat and offering water and natural fruits.



Eastern Kingbird

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STORY BY SASSA ENSCOE



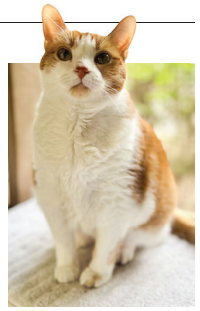
Ladybug is living proof that resilience comes in a 24-pound package. When this spirited terrier mix arrived at Hilton Head Humane, she was nearly bald from a skin condition, but she didn't let that cramp her style. Thanks to the magic of vet care (and a whole lot of tail wags), Ladybug's velvety black coat is growing in beautifully. At just six months old, she's equal parts wiggle, wonder and wiggle again.

This social butterfly (or should we say, social bug?) is brimming with confidence and charm. She adores making new friends, whether they walk on two legs or four. Ladybug is working hard in obedience classes, learning to balance her boundless energy with moments of calm, although her version of calm usually still involves a toy. If you're looking for a joyful, affectionate pup who lives life like it's a party, Ladybug is ready to RSVP yes.

MORE ABOUT LADYBUG

Colors: Black **Age:** 6 months **Weight:** 24 pounds
Likes: Toys, cuddles, attention, playmates (human, canine or feline, she's not picky).
Dislikes: Being left out (prepare for the world's most convincing sad puppy eyes).
Adopt: Meet Ladybug at Hilton Head Humane between 11 a.m. and 4 p.m. daily. For more information, call ***843-681-8686*** or view her profile at ***hhhumane.org***.

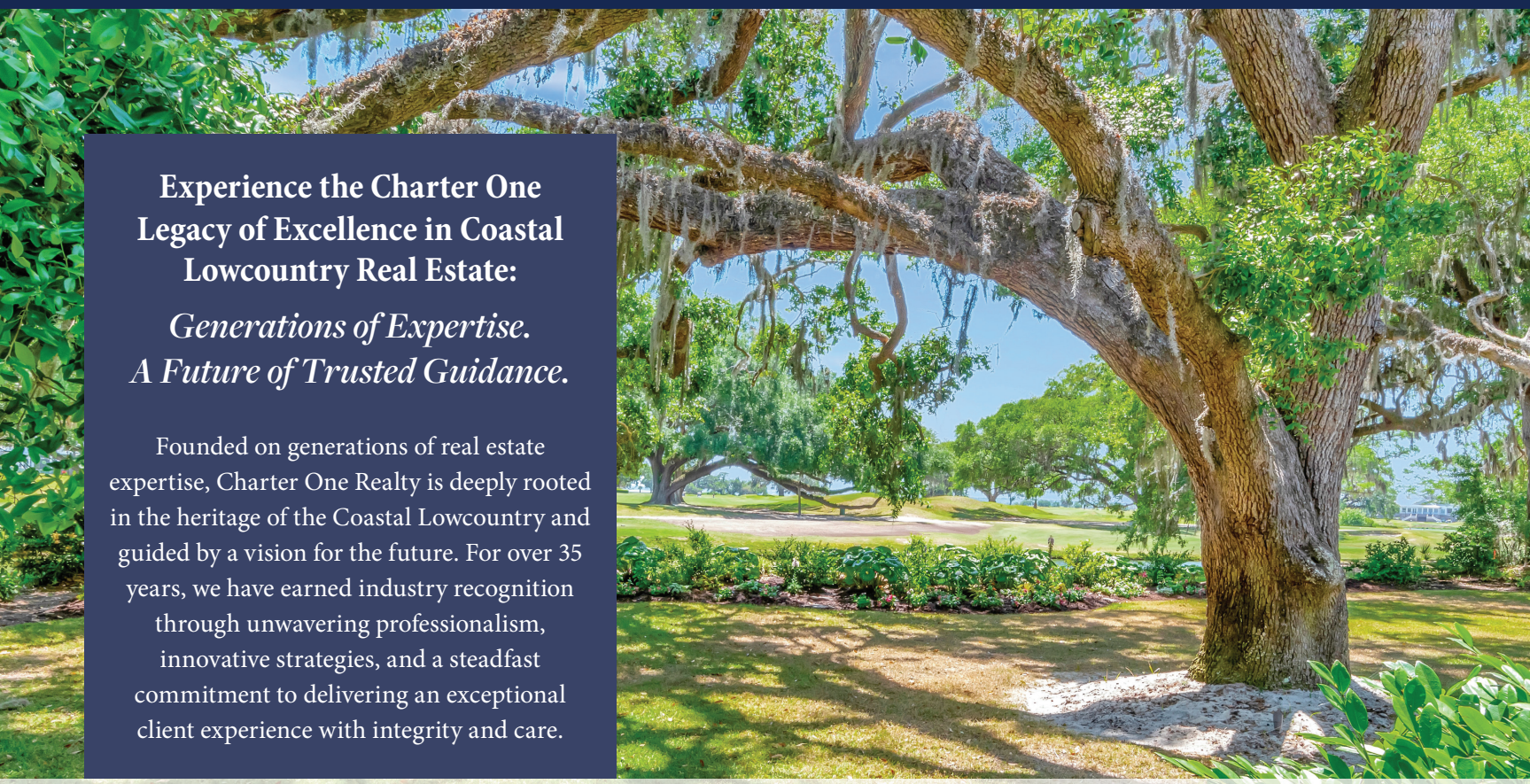
COOL CAT: Popple



Popple is what happens when cozy meets charisma. At 6 1/2 years old and 16 pounds of pure snuggle, this orange and white beauty lives up to her name, reminding us of the soft, round toys from the '80s that inspired it. Surrendered along with her three feline siblings, Popple has taken shelter life in stride, charming everyone she meets with her sunny personality and biscuit-making skills. She's a fan of window gazing, lazy lounging and greeting friends with a gentle purr and a slow roll onto her back. While she's not thrilled about the recent diet plan, Popple's sweet nature hasn't wavered. She's sociable, affectionate and always happy to curl up beside someone who appreciates a low-key companion with a big heart. If your home could use a little more warmth and a lot more purring, Popple is ready to make it her own.

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PHOTOGRAPHY BY LISA STAFF
STYLED BY BAILEY GILLIAM

Summer has arrived, and with it a fresh wave of fashion made for sun-drenched escapes and stylish staycations. Whether you're poolside at your favorite local resort with a cocktail in hand or jetting off to your dream destination, your wardrobe deserves to feel just as luxurious as your itinerary. This season's must-haves include airy neutrals, bold prints and modern takes on classic resort wear. These pieces are elevated, effortlessly chic and ready to travel.

To bring this vision to life, we staged our fashion shoot at the Westin Hilton Head Island Resort & Spa, where ocean breezes and refined surroundings created the perfect setting. Modeling the season's standout looks were stylish local couple Chris Tassone and his wife, Nicole Tassone. Together they captured the essence of summer sophistication and proved just how stunning a well-dressed staycation can be. No matter where your summer takes you, these looks are your ticket to style.



Poolside perfection

*Nicole Tassone relaxes by the pool in the ultimate summer dress from **Island Girl**. With its neutral tones and rustic-chic details, this dress strikes the perfect balance between effortless elegance and head-turning style. Sipping drinks by the pool has never looked so divine.*

Coastal cool

Step into summer like you own the sunshine. These three looks, curated from local boutiques, are your ticket to easy, breezy style with serious flair. They combine cool comfort with coastal chic and are perfect for everything from rosé-fueled patio brunches to golden hour strolls by the water.



1 Easy breezy

Channel coastal cool in this relaxed yet refined look that's perfect for everything from farmers market strolls to last-minute beach dates. It's sunshine style without even trying. Available at ***The Haven Boutique****.*



2 Poolside posh

Pour the mimosa and strike a pose. This effortlessly elegant ensemble was made for slow Sunday mornings by the pool, where the dress code is equal parts chic and chill. Available at ***Outside Hilton Head****.*



3 Run away into summer

Flirt with sunshine in this playful sundress that has it all: cute, comfy and ready for adventure. Whether you're chasing sunsets or snapping selfies, this is the piece you'll reach for every time. Toss it in your weekend bag and go. Available at ***Maggie & Me****.*



POOLSIDE STYLE

Sporty escape

*Chris Tassone embraces laid-back summer living in this athletic-inspired look from **John Bayley Clothier**. A moisture-wicking tee, bold swim trunks and casual flip-flops come together to create an outfit that is both functional and fashionable. It is ideal for sunny days, cool dips and effortless relaxation.*

Hot looks, cool vibes

Shop local for the season's most swoon-worthy summer styles. From breezy silhouettes and beachy fabrics to statement accessories and bold prints, these finds are all about effortless elegance with a splash of fun.













1. She sells seashells

Island Child's frilled crop bikini is a mini must-have for the beach-bound set. Seashell prints and soft ruffles make it sweet and splashy, while the practical fit ensures it keeps up with every cannonball and sandcastle. Perfect for little mermaids with big summer plans.

2. Just keep swimming

Elevate your swim game with the Tide to the Shore Swim Trunk from ***Southern Tide***. With a micro-mesh liner, 6-inch inseam and pockets where you need them, it's the kind of trunk that's as polished as it is practical. Classic, coastal and ready for the boat or the beach.

3. Summertime, and the living Is easy

The Moon Stroll Dress by ***Jean-Pierre Klifa*** brings Riviera romance to your closet. Its vibrant hue turns heads, while the tie-neck and full-length flow create a silhouette made for moonlit dinners or barefoot beach-front moments. Glam it up with heels, or keep it breezy in flats — either way, it's a stunner.

4. Summer neutrals

Spartina 449 does it again with a collection that captures the soul of the Lowcountry in every stitch. Soft pinks meet earthy browns in easy, breathable linens and cottons. These lightweight layers radiate understated elegance and keep things cool — perfect for sun-drenched strolls or golden-hour cocktails.

5. Leaf it to me

Turn over a new leaf with this fresh wrap dress from ***Palmettoes***. Lightly puffed sleeves and a waist tie offer flattering flexibility, while the crisp white-and-emerald Verdant print delivers tropical polish with a playful twist. It's a breath of fresh flair.

6. Style in motion

Lilly Pulitzer's Luxletic active dresses, available at ***SM Bradford Co.***, are your warm-weather MVPs. With built-in UPF 50+ protection and figure-flattering cuts, they move with you from morning walks to midday errands — all while looking fresh and fabulous. It's performance wear, prettied up.

GET THE LOOK

Vacation mode

From Hilton Head to the Amalfi Coast, this effortless ensemble worn by Nicole Tassone proves that sun and style go hand in hand. Light layers, sun-kissed hues and locally curated pieces come together for a look that's equal parts playful and polished.



White hot

The hero of every summer wardrobe? A clean white tank. Fitted but breathable, it's the layer that anchors your look and keeps things cool. Available at ***The Haven Boutique***.



Frame the moment

Sunnies that do more than shield, they shine. These oversized frames bring playful elegance and total UV protection. Available at ***Eyeland Optique***.



Carry summer vibes

Structured yet beachy, this woven white tote adds a nautical twist to your outfit. The basket-weave texture feels fresh, while gold accents lend a hint of glam. Available at ***Palmettoes***.





Shade meets chic

This straw hat brings charm with a twist, literally. A bright ribbon band adds a splash of color, turning a classic into a signature piece. Available at ***Brims on the Bluff***.



It's a wrap

Add a dose of drama with a bold, patterned sarong. The vibrant mix of fuchsia, gold and turquoise pops against the poolside backdrop, making it your go-to piece for instant vacation energy. Available at ***Outside Hilton Head***.



Step into summer

A classic flip-flop gets the island treatment. Olukai's signature comfort and durability make these your all-day, every-day choice for sandy strolls and sunset cocktails. Available at ***Maggie & Me***.



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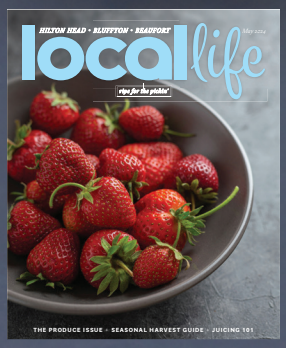
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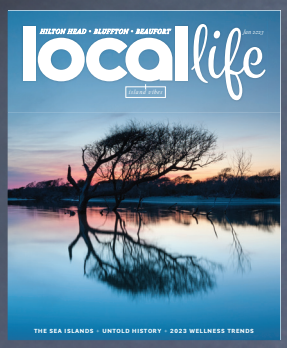
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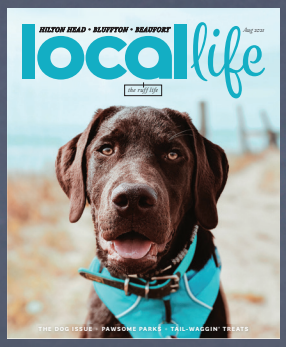
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Local Love



REST YOUR HEAD

Bring a touch of coastal flare to your home with these outdoor-safe pillows decorated with sea-inspired designs.

Available at Pyramids



JUST KEEP SWIMMING

Make a statement on the beach this summer with these cotton towels featuring a colorful screen-printed seahorse design.

Available at Marsh on the May



PLATES THAT POP

Designed to mimic ceramic, these colorful and vibrant dinner plates are sure to light up your table during summertime gatherings.

Available at Cassandra's Kitchen



TOSS IT UP

Decorated with subtle ocean elements, this salad bowl and utensil set by Beatriz Ball is sure to help set the scene for the changing season.

Available at Forsythe Jewelers



SEASIDE PICNIC

Summer days are made for the beach with a seaside picnic using this handcrafted picnic basket. The inside thermal insulation will keep your items warm or cold, perfect for whatever you choose to eat.

Available at Le Cookery

IT'S SUMMERTIME!

Welcome in the new season with this collection of summer- and beach-themed decor.

TROPIC LIKE IT'S HOT

The Tiki Hut candle captures Hilton Head's barefoot beach bars with notes of lemongrass, coconut and cedarwood. It is poured in a 15-oz. glass which is perfect for tropical drinks once the candle's gone.

Available at Hilton Head Soap Co.





WAVE HELLO

This board and cheese knife set is made with food-safe epoxy and is a great addition to your table for summertime entertaining.

Available at Gifted

ROLLING ALONG

Keep your space feeling bright and happy this summertime season with these framed drawings featuring positive phrases.

Available at The Pelican's Pouch





YOUR TURTELY AWESOME

The calming blues in this extraordinary melamine serving bowl are perfect for summer outdoor entertaining in the Lowcountry.

Available at Hilton Head Oils and Balsamics

POSITIVELY PINK

These pretty pink salad servers are from Beatrice Ball and are certain to add a splash of color to your table this summertime season.

Available at Finch & Co



Coastal Treasures



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5-MINUTE HISTORY

Retribution on the river

HOW A LOYALIST RAID SET FIRE TO HILTON HEAD ISLAND AND LEFT A LIVE OAK TO TELL THE STORY.

STORY BY RICHARD THOMAS

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



BENEATH THE BOUGHS This illustration by LOCAL Life graphic designer Charles Grace portrays Mary Ladson Talbird on Oct. 19, 1781 — nine months pregnant — standing beside her salvaged belongings beneath the tree now known as the Talbird Oak, while her home near the southern mouth of Skull Creek burns in the background.

Six months after the ambush killing of Loyalist militia leader Richard "Tory Dick" Pendarvis and his second-in-command William Patterson in 1781, retaliation swept across Hilton Head Island. In a coordinated act of vengeance, the Daufuskie Royal Militia joined forces with British troops in Savannah and Loyalist militias across the Beaufort District. Their target: the Patriot homes belonging to those believed responsible for the deaths.

Roughly 150 men landed near John's Island at the southern mouth of Skull Creek. Leading the column was Isaac Martinangele, younger brother of Loyalist officer, Phillip Martinangele. Their march brought them to the home of imprisoned Patriot John Talbird. His wife, Mary Ladson Talbird, nine months pregnant, pleaded for mercy. The militia officer, married to Mary's sister, refused to spare the house but showed a measure of



ROOTED IN HISTORY The Talbird Oak stands just inside the back gate of Hilton Head Plantation near Outerbridge Circle, its massive 64-inch trunk marking it as one of the oldest trees on the island. With roots dating back to the 1700s, this live oak is a living witness to centuries of Hilton Head history.

compassion: he ordered his men to remove the contents before setting the house ablaze. The belongings were placed beneath a towering live oak in a nearby meadow.

As flames consumed the home, Mary wept beneath the branches of the great tree. After the raiders departed, enslaved members of the Talbird household emerged to construct a temporary thatched shelter under the oak. That night — Oct. 19, 1781 — Mary Talbird gave birth to her son, Henry. It was the same day Cornwallis surrendered at Yorktown, signaling the beginning of the end for British rule in America. That oak still stands today, known as the Talbird Oak.

News of Yorktown would take several days to reach the region. Just three days later, on Oct. 22, Charles Davant, believed to have orchestrated the ambush that killed Pendarvis, was gunned down in a Loyalist reprisal. In response, Patriot fighters from Hilton Head, including James Davant (Charles' brother), Israel Andrews and Isaac Baldwin, began plotting revenge.

On Dec. 23 a Patriot raiding party of eight or nine men crossed the sound to Daufuskie. Their target: the Martinangele Plantation. According to Patriot accounts, they stormed the manor during breakfast. While the family was held at gunpoint, Israel Andrews shot a bedridden Phillip Martinangele. The house was looted and set aflame.

A second version of the story suggests that both Phillip and his brother, Abraham, were killed in the raid. However, Abraham was later named in their mother's will, indicating he survived. The Loyalist perspective on these events — and further fallout — will be explored in a future issue. *LL*



Standing: Heidi Yoshida, CFP®, Michelle Myhre, CFP®, Sarah Huie, CFP®, Kevin Myhre
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Paddles Up! Unleashing the dragon

STORY BY CAROLYN MALES



©GREG RAWLS

Raceday, Beaufort.

"Paddles Up!" goes the command. A bullhorn sounds, and they're off.

The dragon head is looking mighty fierce as it cuts through the water. The 20 paired paddlers aboard this dragon boat look determined as well. As the drummer, perched on a seat in the bow of this narrow vessel, pulses out the heartbeat, the crew lifts and dunks their paddles 60 strokes a minute, in unison. But the brains of the beast? That's the steersperson or caller, standing in the stern, back to the dragon tail. He or she is the one who calls out "Paddles Up!," commanding the crew to raise their paddles in ready position, then directing them through the different parts of a stroke — reach, catch, pull, exit and recovery, as they race toward the 200-meter finish line.

Alongside them, three other dragon boats mirror the action. It's one of the race's early heats, clocking a fast-paced minute and a half run from the Richard V. Woods Memorial Bridge to the finish line at the Safe Harbor Beaufort marina. Throughout the day, a mix of teams with names like Bluffton Paddle Club, Paradise Paddlers and Leatherneck Warriors, compete for Beaufort's annual DragonBoat Raceday, while crowds line the sea wall at Henry C. Chambers Waterfront Park. The competitors include adults of all ages in both single-gender and mixed teams of clubs, co-workers, and community groups vying for the championship.

But besides garnering accolades and medals, these racers and their supporters have one goal in common: raising money for the DragonBoat Beaufort's OUTREACH Program, a nonprofit that helps those with cancer pay bills, get medical supplies and cover other expenses. In fact, many of the racers themselves and their loved ones have had a cancer diagnosis. Teams like Cancer Crushers and Rack Attack carry that theme and spirit directly in their names.



©GREG RAWLS

Dragons rising

The spark for the DragonBoat Beaufort Raceday was lit at a screening of the indie film *Awakening the Dragon* at the Beaufort International Film Festival in 2012. The title refers to unleashing a hidden power that leads to transformation. The movie follows a group of cancer survivors, Dragon Boat Charleston, who take to the water, uniting as a dynamic force in these competitive races. Working together, they challenge not only themselves but us and the medical field to see them, not as "sickly," but as courageous in confronting life's difficulties head-on. Inspired by what they'd seen, a group of Beaufort residents set out to form a nonprofit whose mission would be to help cancer patients who live, work, or receive treatment in Beaufort County.

DragonBoat Beaufort is born

That spring anyone coming across the first team practice in Waterfront Park would have done a double take. There sat 20 or so women and men on folding chairs paddling away on the grass with brooms. By that May they had a real boat and paddles and, ready or not, took the plunge and competed in the Charleston Dragon Boat Festival. A year later they launched DragonBoat Beaufort Raceday.



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Awakening the dragon

Festival day kicks off with the drummers' parade, a colorful pageant of percussionists who have outfitted themselves as pirates, mermaids, sea creatures or whatever other resplendent regalia. Crowds stroll among the team tents and food and craft stalls, while deejay Jeff "T-Bone" Taylor spins tunes.

But it's the ritual opening ceremony, the dotting of the eye, that unleashes the dragon's power.

Here a local cancer survivor and/or dignitary dips a brush into red paint and "dots the eye" of the dragon masthead, arousing it from sleep, sending its energy coursing through the strong arms and movements of the paddlers as they stroke in sync through the water.

Doreen Pierce, president of the Beaufort club and a cancer survivor, points to the sense of empowerment that the sport's teamwork and camaraderie generate. "Being out on the water feels like a cleansing. Dragon boating helps you heal not only physically but psychologically from the effects of cancer. And when we go out to compete, we dedicate our paddles to those who have died or are going through treatment."

Greg Rawls, one of the club's founders, attests to its inclusivity. "Dragon boating is for everyone — men and women, young and old, cancer survivor or supporter. Everyone can be an athlete. And you meet folks who become lifelong friends."

To date, this all-volunteer festival's OUTREACH program has assisted 685 people who have been referred to the program from cancer centers, hospitals, doctors and other charitable organizations. "We do fundraisers throughout the year," Pierce adds, "but the DragonBoat festival, which brought in $83,117 last year, is our major fundraiser. And all that money goes right back to the community."

"Dragon boating is booming," said Morgan Crutchley, coach for the Bluffton Paddle Club. "As soon as people start to race, they get hooked. The water is wide, and we've got a lot of room here to play." *LL*



©GREG RAWLS

DragonBoat Beaufort Raceday

When: 8 a.m.-4 p.m., Saturday, June 28
Where: Henry C. Chambers Waterfront Park, Beaufort
Details: info@dragonboatbeaufort.org, dragonboat-raceday.com/2025/



©GREG RAWLS

The legacy of dragon-boat racing

Legend has it that these competitive festivals are rooted in an ancient tragedy and mythology. More than 2,000 years ago in the Yangtze River Valley Kingdom of Chu, poet and court official Qu Yuan, despairing over the regime's corruption and his own exile, drowned himself in the Milou River. Fishermen took to their boats, hoping to recover his body and scare away scavenger fish by beating their paddles and drums. The dragon, a symbol of power and good fortune in Chinese culture, was believed to control the rains, and veneration of the beast was in hopes of warding off famine and ensuring a good harvest.

In the 20th century, dragon boating took on a new form. "Avoid strenuous upper arm motion," surgeons were counseling breast cancer patients after surgery. The danger, they warned, was lymphedema, a buildup of lymphatic fluid resulting in swollen limbs. But in 1996 Vancouver surgeon Dr. Don McKenzie challenged that medical caveat and formed a dragon boat team of breast cancer survivors (named "Abreast in a Boat"), which proved his theory that vigorous upper body exercise was safe and beneficial not only to their physical health but their mental health as well. Other teams followed, many with names like Chemo Savvy (from Winnipeg, Canada) and Hope Chest (Buffalo New York), adding humor to a scary diagnosis.

Today dragon boat competitions are held all over the world. Victoria Hooper, who paddles with DragonBoat Bluffton and the Charleston Fire Breathers, raced with the latter team in the highly competitive Club Crew World Championship in Ravenna, Italy, last September. "There are 200-, 500-, and 2,000-meter races, and the competition is tough," she exclaims. Closer to home, along with DragonBoat Raceday in Beaufort, other southeastern dragon boat venues include Atlanta and Jacksonville in September and Charleston, Andersonville and Charlotte in May.







TAKING CENTER STAGE Lizzie Caldon performs 'Rose's Turn' in SSTI 2024 production of *Gypsy*.



©CAROLYN MALES

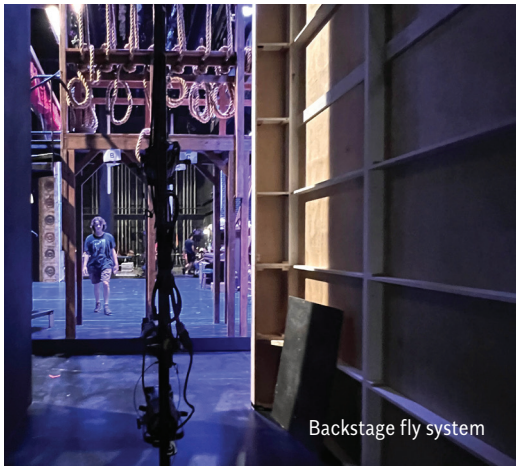
PAWS AND APPLAUSE SSTI founder and director Ben Wolfe shares a moment with company mascot Georgia during a rehearsal for *Gypsy*.

Southeast Summer Theater Institute: Catching rising stars and stagecraft

STORY BY CAROLYN MALES

The house lights dim. Cymbals crash! And from the orchestra pit, trumpets sound a fanfare. Trombones, drums and woodwinds rush in, and that big brassy musical *Gypsy* unfolds: Mama Rose will scheme and push. Baby June will tap-dance her heart out, while Herbie will have his shattered. And the mousy Louise? She will metamorphose into that glamorous burlesque star Gypsy Rose Lee!

Last year, as I was sitting in the Seahawk Cultural Center watching this Tony-award winning musical, I had to keep reminding myself that these performers, stage crew, set builders, lighting and sound techs, propmakers and costume makers were all high-school aged. That is, they may not have Equity or union membership cards yet, but they were creating a production worthy of the professional stage. But this wasn't just any group of talented teenagers getting together. This was the crème de la crème of theater kids from across the country who'd been accepted into one of the Southeastern Summer Theatre Institute's (SSTI) intense four-week programs. What's more, under the direction of seasoned professionals from Broadway and top university theater programs, these teens had put together the production in three weeks.



Backstage fly system

©CAROLYN MALES

Behind the scenes

To see how it was done, last summer SSTI's founder and director, Ben Wolfe, invited me to wander around behind the scenes before *Gypsy* opened. I began by settling into an empty row out front, just behind student and professional designers who sat with their laptops open, coordinating sound, lighting, actors and stage crew. The latter were onstage practicing how they would rotate the massive turntable supporting the two-story set. Meanwhile the stage manager called out instructions as the actor playing Louise got her cue to step into the spotlight. Faster, slower, quarter-turn, half-turn… the stagehands pushed the device forward and back until they got the timing right.

Wolfe had settled in beside me, explaining the intricacies of all that was happening, while Georgia, his miniature white golden doodle, curled up on his lap. Georgia, it should be noted, is the theater's mascot. "The reason for the season," Wolfe declared with a grin. A favorite with staff and students, Georgia keeps an eye on what's going on when she's not napping or nuzzling. She's even had walk-on parts. "But," Wolfe confides, "she has a notorious track record of missing entrance and exit cues."

A few minutes later we headed backstage to the workshop where the teens, under the instruction of the scenic designer and professional carpenters, had fabricated the two-story set. Today it stood silent: wood remnants lined the walls and blueprints were spread open on worktables. From there we headed to the rear of the stage and watched two student techs grab a ladder to replace the one dim bulb from amongst the other 299 bright ones in the "Rose" sign that would illuminate Mama Rose's closing number.

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"Sunset at The Hi-Da-Way" by Jeanne Landreth

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BEHIND THE BOARD Lindsey Putnam, an SSTI sound designer and professor at North Carolina School of the Arts, makes repairs to cables that are used to get the sound from the stage to the audience.



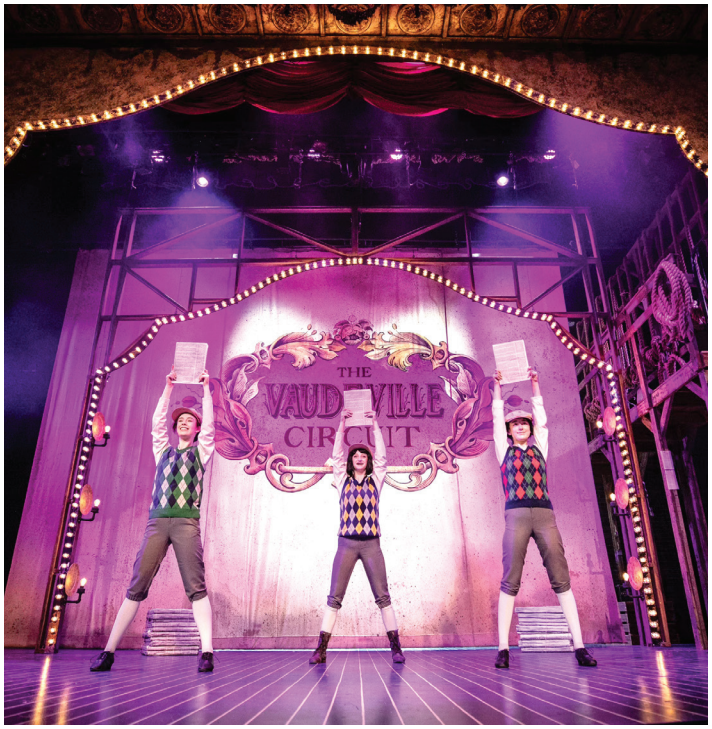
©CAROLYN MALES

WIRED FOR SOUND Audio associates build custom microphone belts for each actor, with each position dictated by the actor's movement and costume design.

Next, tucked into a corridor, we encountered two young women, testing mics and figuring out how they'd secure them on the actors. But I had to laugh when we entered a side room and came face-to-face with the disembodied head of a pink-nosed, black-and-white cow head that seemed to be casting a blue eye on a teen unfurling a sewing pattern, perhaps awaiting the construction of the rest of her body. After a quick peek at a student styling wigs and a stroll past the piano where the musical director was coaching Herbie, we arrived at the black-box theater. There the dancers and singers were rehearsing, learning to hit their marks, while a student notated the choreographer's vision on her computer.

A new season

This summer SSTI is staging two more hit shows from the Golden Age of Theater: *9 to 5 The Musical* and *Anything Goes*. When I spoke to Wolfe via phone recently, he was in his New York apartment, working out logistics in front of a bank of computer screens, each with a dozen tabs open. "Kind of like being an air traffic controller," he joked as Georgia snoozed by his desk. I'd caught him wrestling with the problem of a stage curtain stuck in port while he worked on licensing, staffing, scheduling, housing, transportation and all the thousands of other details this 38-year-old impresario has to tackle pre-season.



©BEN WOLFE

EXTRA, EXTRA! The ensemble performs upon the turntable set in SSTI's 2024 production of Gypsy.

[LOCAL Life] What got you interested in the production side of live theater?

[Ben Wolfe] When I was in elementary school, I liked doing shows with my action figures — moving them around like puppets on scaled sets I'd built. Then I'd charge my family to see them. Even at that time, I realized I was much better at organizing productions than performing in them.

[LL] How did you get from staging shows starring Power Rangers to staging Broadway musicals with real teen-aged kids?

[BW] When I was a sophomore at Armstrong (now Georgia Southern University), I needed to do a three-credit-hour independent study. I'd been working part-time at Savannah Country Day School, and some of the parents said, "Why don't you do a summer camp?" And I thought, *why not?* But I quickly realized no one was going to rent a theater to a 19-year-old. Happily, White Bluff Presbyterian Church let me build a platform stage in its social hall, and that's how this all started.

[LL] But obviously that concept changed dramatically.

[BW] I kept it going in Savannah while teaching theater at Hilton Head Prep. Then in 2015 we moved to Hilton Head High, which offered a more versatile theater space. In SSTI's early summers, I did every job, and the program's success is thanks to my firing myself from those roles and hiring people who are 30 times better than me. Today SSTI employs 60-70 people, ranging from directors, designers, carpenters, welders and electricians, to a company management team handling housing, rental cars and meals for the full team. We fly in a New York orchestra for performances and have videographers filming SSTI's weekly docu-series.

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BEHIND THE SET A look inside the workshop where SSTI sets are built.



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DESIGNS IN THE DETAILS Many costume designs begin with a custom pattern or the alteration of a pattern that exists commercially.

[LL] And there's a high bar for the students who want to be in the program.

[BW] Auditions open every year on Oct. 1. By March our costume team has already met virtually with all the actors, as preparations like costumes begin long before the students arrive. For our tech program we accept 17 or so students a session who apply by submitting portfolios and resumes.

[LL] What I noticed about SSTI is all the positive energy.

[BW] We build a community. Mornings everyone in the company gathers in a circle where we share what we're all working on. We get to know who all these people are, and it makes the whole operation smoother and more empathetic and collaborative. But it's more than that. Once you're in the SSTI circle, you're in for life. The last week they're here we give master classes and coach them on applying for college. We also have a scholarship program that generates funds to help students not only to attend SSTI but to tackle the expensive process of auditioning for colleges. It really changes these kids' lives. *LL*

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— Diane Turner Valeri

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WHAT'S FRESH IN JUNE?

Blackberry bliss

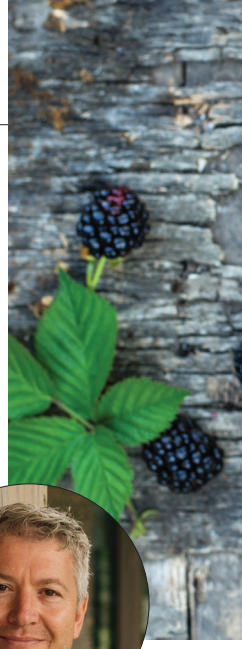
THESE BOLD BERRIES THRIVE IN THE LOWCOUNTRY AND SHINE IN EVERYTHING FROM COBBLERS TO COCKTAILS

STORY BY BAILEY GILLIAM



There's something magical about the first bite of a sun-warmed blackberry. It's sweet, tart and just a little wild. In the South these berries aren't just fruit: they're memory-makers. They stain fingers, spark nostalgia and sweeten everything from cobblers to cocktails. If you grew up around here, chances are you've tiptoed barefoot through brambles, braving thorns for that one perfect berry. Good news: you can still taste summer's best without the scratches.

Blackberries thrive in the Lowcountry's heat and humidity, making them one of the easiest and most rewarding fruits to grow or forage. While it's tempting to gobble them up straight from the carton or vine, blackberries are surprisingly versatile. Think jams, sauces, baked treats, salads, cocktails, even pickles. Yes, really. These deep purple beauties are culinary chameleons, equally at home on a biscuit or a beef tartare.





PALMETTO BLUFF CLUB

Blackberry jam

For Palmetto Bluff Club chef ***Rhy Waddington***, blackberry season is pure nostalgia. "Growing up on a large farm in regional Australia, blackberry picking was a summer tradition," he said. "The whole family would spend the early, cooler mornings picking buckets of sun-drenched blackberries that would be turned into a vibrant jam that could be served in the cooler months ahead." His version is infused with orange zest and cinnamon. It's perfect on toast, over ice cream or tucked into a care package for someone you love.

INGREDIENTS

10 cups ripe blackberries
4 cups sugar
2 tablespoons lemon juice
2 teaspoons pectin
Zest of an orange
1 sprig of thyme
1 cinnamon quill

DIRECTIONS [1] In a heavy-based saucepan add all ingredients and slowly heat and simmer for 35 minutes. **[2]** While still hot, pour into sterilized preserving jars and tightly fasten the lids. **[3]** Steam or simmer the jars covered in water for 15 minutes. **[4]** Let cool at room temperature and store in a cool dark place until needed.





A berry old story

Blackberries have been charming palates and soothing ailments for millennia. Indigenous people used them for food and medicine, while ancient Greeks and Romans swore by their healing powers. Medieval scribes even used their juice as ink for illuminated manuscripts, proof that blackberries have always been good for storytelling. British folklore, however, offered a warning: never pick blackberries after Old Michaelmas Day (October 11), when the devil was said to curse the fruit.

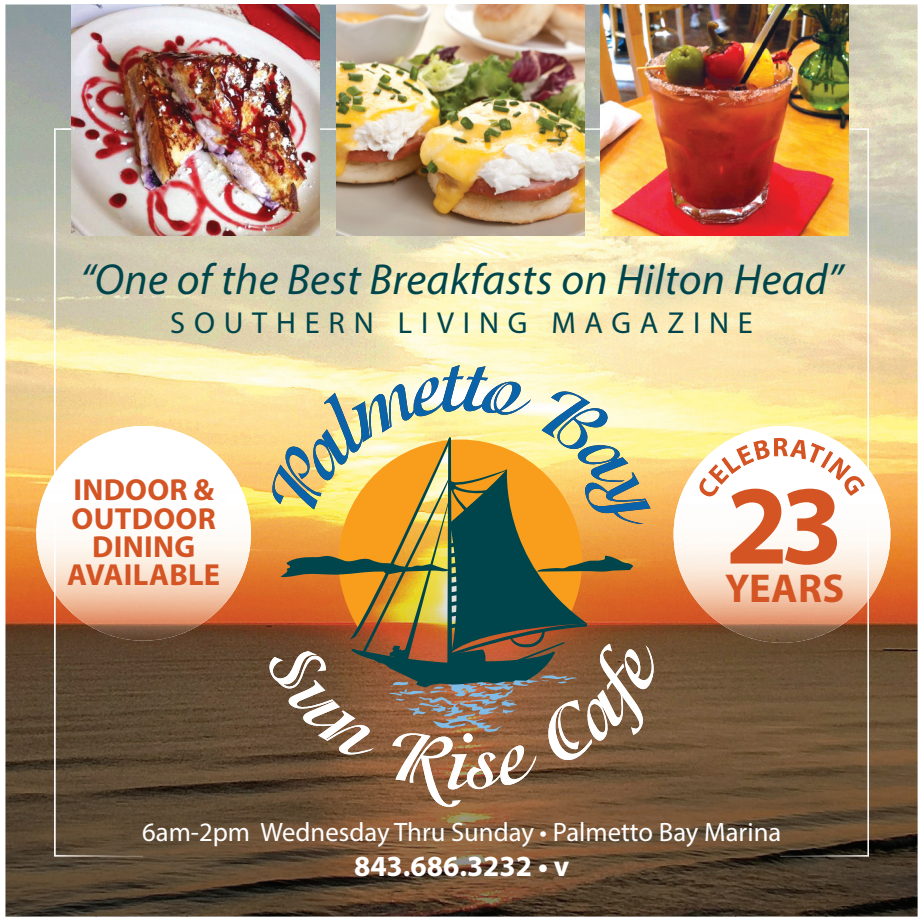
Though they lost favor for a few centuries, blackberries came roaring back in the 18th and 19th centuries, becoming staples in preserves, pies and wine. In Australia they were brought in to control erosion and promptly took over the landscape. Wild or cultivated, they remain one of the South's most beloved fruits.

Raspberry vs. blackberry: Know your bramble

You might think the difference is color, but the real giveaway is what's left behind. Raspberries detach cleanly from the stem, leaving behind a hollow center. Blackberries keep their core, giving them that juicy, dense bite. And just to keep things interesting, black raspberries exist, and unripe blackberries are bright red, making them easy to confuse.

Their canes give more clues. Blackberries grow on taller, thornier, purplish-red canes. Black raspberry canes are pale with a dusty coating and small hooked thorns. Red raspberry canes are bristly and less intimidating. Brambles, all of them, but deliciously so.





Why they're good for you

Blackberries are the superfood that doesn't act like one. They're packed with antioxidants, fiber and vitamins (especially C and K) and may help fight inflammation, boost brain function, support digestion and even keep your heart healthy. Their deep, dark color hints at their antioxidant power, which is among the highest found in fruits. Just one more reason to eat the whole pint in one sitting.



Growing in the Lowcountry

These heat-loving plants are a match made in heaven for Southern gardeners. Choose a sunny spot with well-draining soil, and plant in early spring. Most varieties need support, so set up a trellis to encourage air flow and easy picking. Mulch generously, water regularly, and fertilize as needed.

"We always grow blackberries here at the farm," says Joan LaBoiteaux, president of The Farmers' Club of Hilton Head Plantation. "My husband prunes them drastically in late fall. We raise thorny ones as opposed to the thornless ones that most farmers grow. It's all a matter of whether or not you risk the scratches, but I think the thorny ones taste better. We sell them raw and make jam from whatever ripens after the market. They have very few pests to deal with. Blackberries love the South!"

Varieties worth knowing

Blackberries can be trailing, semi-trailing or upright, thorned or thornless, and fruiting once or twice a year. Newer primocane types produce fruit in both their first and second years, which means twice the bounty and less waiting. If you're planting in South Carolina, the Clemson Cooperative Extension suggests trying Arapaho, Natchez, Kiowa, Triple Crown, Von or Prime-Ark.



How to store them

Blackberries are fickle. Eat them the day you buy them, or refrigerate them in a breathable, shallow container with a paper towel base. Don't wash until you're ready to eat. To freeze, rinse gently, pat dry, and spread them out on a baking sheet before transferring to a freezer bag. Use within a year. Odds are they won't last that long.

Flavor notes

Ripe blackberries are juicy and sweet with a subtle tartness and earthy depth. Unripe ones lean sour, so taste before you toss them into a dish. They shine in desserts, sauces, drinks and savory dishes alike.

"Personally, I love to pickle blackberries," says Chef Ben Harris of Sea Pines Resort. "You can infuse them with herbs like rosemary or thyme, and that pop of acidity makes them great in salads, on meats or just eaten straight from the jar." LL



LOCAL LIFE TEST KITCHEN

Blackberry Crumble Bars

Like a slice of summer pie with none of the fuss. These bars are buttery, jammy and irresistible, especially with a scoop of vanilla ice cream.

INGREDIENTS (crumble)

3 cups flour
1 cup butter, cut into pieces
1 cup sugar
1/2 teaspoon salt
1 teaspoon baking powder
1 egg, beaten

INGREDIENTS (filling)

4 cups blackberries
1 tablespoon lemon juice
1 tablespoon cornstarch
3/4 cup sugar

DIRECTIONS [1] Heat oven to 375 degrees and grease a 9x13 baking pan. Stir together the flour, 1 cup white sugar, baking powder and salt. Cut in the butter until the butter is in pea-sized pieces. **[2]** Stir in the egg with a fork. Divide the dough in two. Press half of the dough into the bottom of the baking dish and set the other half aside. **[3]** Combine the filling ingredients in a medium-size mixing bowl and stir to combine. **[4]** Scatter the berry mixture over the crust in the pan. Sprinkle with the other half of the dough mixture. **[5]** Bake for 30-35 minutes, or until lightly browned.

***PRO TIP:* Cut the butter**

In baking, "cutting in butter" refers to the process of breaking down cold butter into smaller pieces while incorporating them into dry ingredients. The goal is to leave some small pieces of butter intact, which will melt in the oven, creating steam and flakiness in the final product. This technique is commonly used for pastries, biscuits and scones.


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RECIPE OF THE MONTH

Local flavor: Summer edition

FROM SUN-RIPENED PRODUCE TO BOLD COASTAL BITES, SUMMER IN THE LOWCOUNTRY IS A FEAST WORTH CELEBRATING.

STORY BY BAILEY GILLIAM



Summer has clocked in with clear skies, salty breezes and the unmistakable scent of something sizzling on the grill. It's that time of year when meals are best served al fresco, ingredients are at their peak, and simplicity reigns supreme. Whether you're rinsing off just-picked produce from the garden, peeling shrimp on the dock or searing a just-caught fillet of fish, summer cooking in the Lowcountry is equal parts ease and indulgence. In this month's edition of Local Flavor, we're serving up everything you need for a delicious summer: grilling tips from local chefs, fresh takes on Southern staples and recipes designed to impress without the stress. From juicy heirloom tomatoes and crisp garden herbs to tropical fruits and flaky seafood, it's all about keeping things light, bright and bursting with flavor. So grab your tongs, pour something cold, and let the flavors of summer do the talking.



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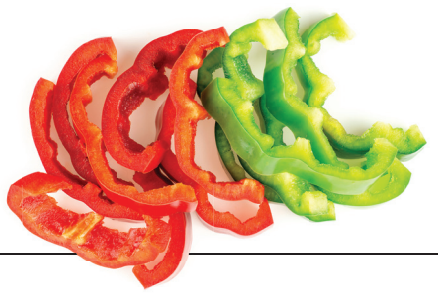
Summer salad

Bright, fresh and bursting with the flavors of the season, this summer salad from SERG culinary director and partner ***Chris Carge*** is a celebration of bold ingredients and simple preparation. Designed to serve four, the dish combines crisp julienned vegetables, fragrant herbs, juicy heirloom tomatoes and watermelon with the briny depth of kalamata olives. Tossed in a light red wine vinaigrette and crowned with creamy burrata, this salad strikes a perfect balance between refreshing and indulgent. Whether entertaining guests or elevating a casual meal, this salad delivers summer on a plate.

INGREDIENTS

1 cucumber, julienned
1/2 red bell pepper, julienned
1/2 green bell pepper, julienned
1/4 red onion, julienned
1 sprig of basil, julienned
1 sprig of mint, julienned
2 teaspoons red pepper chili flakes
1/2 cup pitted kamalata olives, halved
1 large heirloom tomato, diced
1/4 cup seedless watermelon, chopped
1/4 cup extra virgin olive oil
3 tablespoons red wine vinegar
4 balls burrata
4 turns fresh cracked pepper
1 pinch sea salt

DIRECTIONS [1] Mix the first 12 ingredients (everything except cheese, salt and pepper) in a mixing bowl and let stand for 5 minutes. **[2]** In serving dishes, lay the burrata in the middle of the bowl, and place the mixed ingredients around the cheese. **[3]** Crack the fresh pepper and sea salt over the dish. Serve.



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CHEF'S FAVORITE THINGS

We asked local chefs their favorite summer ingredient:



HOLY TEQUILA

"Wreckfish. Every summer you'll see it featured at different restaurants. But when you see it, you should grab it. It's very delicious. In my opinion, it's a little better than snapper for a little lower price point. It's called a wreckfish because it likes to hang around big objects and structures in the water, like bridges and shipwrecks. They feed on crustaceans, crabs, oysters and things of that nature. That travels through the meat, giving them a nice, sweet, mild and flaky white texture. And they come to the South Carolina coast every summer."

– Chef Michael Beeler



HAMPTON HALL CLUB

"I love peaches. You get maybe a good month and a half, maybe two months, for local peaches where they're just so good off the tree. Everything from a salsa to adding it as a purée to grits or something like that just adds a sweetness and a little acid."

– Chef John Huffenberger

PALMETTO BAY SUNRISE CAFÉ

"Tomatoes. When I was a little kid, my dad grew tomatoes, and they were just delicious. Tomatoes are just fresh to me. It's summer. I like my tomatoes to be more acidic than sugary, so I think summer is when they get to that peak. And they pretty much complement any summer dish you could ever want."

– Leslie Stewart





THE SEA PINES RESORT

"Corn is a warm place for me. Corn is especially a favorite summer ingredient because when I was a kid, we would sit on my grandmother's carport with around probably 100 bushels of corn, and it was our job to clean it all day, and she'd can all of the corn. It was a fun memory."

– Chef Ben Harris

HUDSON'S SEAFOOD HOUSE ON THE DOCKS

"When I think of summer, I think of shrimp. Shrimp season comes at the end of March and then goes through the end of June, beginning of July – it's probably my favorite summer ingredient."

– Andrew Carmines



ASK THE CHEF

Question:

Dear Chef, when I cook on the grill, I can't seem to get my meat or fish cooked through while still getting those nice grill marks. What am I doing wrong?



Answer:

*Red Fish chef **Melissa Coocran** says the issue likely comes down to trying to do everything on the grill. "If you've got a thick piece of fish, like swordfish, you can get great grill marks, but the inside often ends up undercooked," she explains. "What we do is sear it on the grill first to get that nice char, then finish it in the oven. The grill cooks from the outside in, but the oven gives you a more even cook throughout." Her advice? Don't be afraid to combine methods. "You don't have to choose between a good sear and a properly cooked center — you can have both if you use the grill for flavor and the oven for control."*







MARKED FOR GREATNESS

Perfect grill marks aren't just for show, they're a sign of flavor, technique and a well-tuned grill. Here's how to master those sizzling stripes like a pro.

Don't overcrowd the grill, as placing too much food at once can lower the heat and prevent proper searing.

Always preheat the grill thoroughly to ensure it's hot enough for bold sear marks and even cooking.

Wait before flipping your food; allow the first side to develop a solid sear before turning.

Practice your technique regularly, since perfecting grill marks takes time and a bit of trial and error.

Choose the right grates, as some are specifically designed to create better grill marks.

Keep the grates clean and well-oiled; using a grill brush helps prevent sticking and improves sear lines.

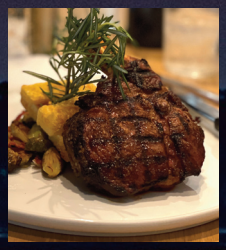


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SECRET INGREDIENT

Golden slice, bold bite

Yellow watermelon steps into the spotlight as a sweet, spicy and surprising star of the summer plate.



Chef ***Bernard Bennett*** of Okàn doesn't just cook — he challenges expectations. Known for his innovative takes on familiar dishes, he gravitates toward ingredients that surprise, delight and sometimes confuse diners. Case in point? Yellow watermelon.

In a recent conversation, the 2023 James Beard Award semifinalist for Emerging Chef talked about the ingredients that set his menus apart. When asked about his signature blue grits, his answer was cheeky but revealing. "Because I'm fancy," he joked. But beneath the humor lies a clear mission: to break from the ordinary. "We don't do shrimp and grits because everybody does shrimp and grits," he said. "I don't do white or yellow grits because everybody does white and yellow grits. I don't want to be everybody." Then came the curveball: "Have you ever had yellow watermelon?"

That's when he lit up. "In the summertime when watermelon hits, we'll use yellow watermelon because people haven't known that," he explained, leaning into the ingredient with visible excitement. For most, watermelon conjures visions of red or pink flesh — but yellow watermelon flips the script. It's unexpected, unfamiliar and exactly the kind of ingredient Bennett loves to champion.

One of his standout creations? A summer dish featuring crab and yellow watermelon, seasoned with berbere spice, coconut vinegar, green onions and a sprinkle of Maldon salt. "It was salty, had a little

heat, a vinegary bite — and the watermelon was just such a great vehicle for it," he said. "Not overly sweet but definitely not bland. That watermelon was my favorite summer ingredient to use last year."

While yellow watermelon looks identical on the outside to its red counterpart, slicing it open reveals flesh ranging from pale yellow to deep gold. It's not genetically modified — the hue comes from a natural lack of lycopene, the antioxidant responsible for the red color in tomatoes and traditional watermelons. What it lacks in color, it makes up for in flavor, with a sweeter, more honeyed taste and subtle notes of apricot.

Despite more than 1,200 known watermelon varieties, yellow watermelon remains a rarity. It's not something you'll often find at the grocery store — and unless labeled, the only way to know is to slice it open. That sense of mystery is something Bennett embraces. "People are scared of what they don't know," he said. "So I put a glossary on the menu. If there's a word you don't understand, maybe it's in there."

To Bennett, this kind of unfamiliarity isn't a barrier — it's an invitation. Whether it's oxtail prepared his way or dips like Muhammara — "not red pepper hummus," he emphasized — he's committed to presenting food honestly and unapologetically. "I could call it that. But it's Muhammara. I'm not going to dumb it down. People will learn."

In Chef Bennett's kitchen even the most unassuming ingredients are re-imagined. His food doesn't just nourish — it sparks curiosity. And when watermelon turns up yellow, it's not just a surprise. It's a statement.

GROW YOUR OWN

Missed out on yellow watermelon this year? Don't sweat it. Next summer's slice of sunshine can start in your own backyard. This golden-fleshed gem grows much like its red cousin, thriving in full sun and well-drained soil. Opt for a variety like Yellow Crimson or Desert King, and plant seeds directly after the last frost, or get a head start by starting indoors. Enrich the soil with compost and balanced fertilizer, and give the vines plenty of room to roam by spacing plants 3 to 5 feet apart. Keep the soil consistently moist, watering at the base to prevent mildew. As the melons begin to ripen, ease up on watering to concentrate their sweetness. With a bit of planning and a sunny spot, you'll be enjoying your own honeyed harvest next summer.

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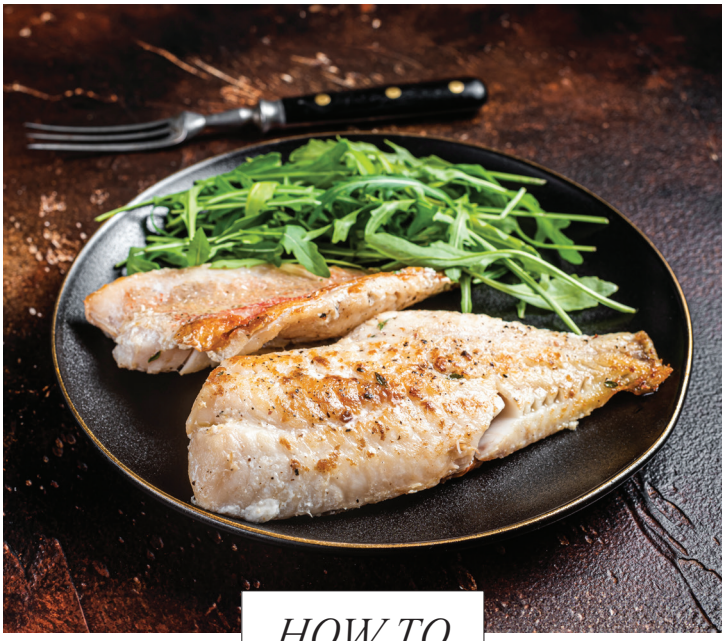
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HOW TO

Seafood, simplified

MASTER THE TIMING, SKIP THE STRESS, AND LEARN WHY COOKING SEAFOOD AT HOME IS EASIER THAN YOU THINK.



Cooking seafood at home can feel overwhelming, especially for those used to cooking heartier proteins like beef or chicken. But according to ***Andrew Carmines*** of Hudson's Seafood House on the Docks, it doesn't have to be complicated. "Seafood, it intimidates people for some reason. I don't know why," he says. "Probably because it's so fast and it's just easy to mess up if you overcook it, I guess."

Overcooking is, in fact, one of the most common mistakes home cooks make with seafood. Because it cooks quickly — and continues to cook even after being removed from heat — it's easy to go from perfectly done to dry or rubbery in just a minute. Carmines recalls a recent call from a local who had ordered lobster tails for his wife's birthday and was panicking. "He said, 'I'm freaking out here because I don't know how to cook these,'" Carmines says. "I told him, just take the tails out of the shell, lay them out, and broil them on medium heat. Keep an eye on the internal temperature — if it hits 140 to 150 degrees, you're good."

When it comes to fish, Carmines favors a minimalist approach that emphasizes timing and technique over complexity. "Literally, when I cook it at home, I sear it for a minute and a half on one side and a minute and a half on the other side and then just let it rest," he says. "People are shocked when they hear that. But if you cook

it any longer, especially with a thinner piece, it's not going to be right." This method works exceptionally well for delicate white fish like flounder or snapper, but the principle applies broadly: the thinner the cut, the faster the cook time.

Another pro tip: let your seafood rest, just like you would with steak. "It's still cooking a little when it comes off the heat," Carmines says. Resting allows the juices to redistribute and keeps the texture tender and moist. Skipping this step is another common mistake that leads to dryness.

Finally, don't be afraid to practice. Seafood is fast and forgiving, as long as you're paying attention. "You'll mess it up once or twice, sure," Carmines says. "But once you get a feel for it, you'll realize it's not hard. Just respect the timing, and you'll be fine."





QUICK AND EASY When it comes to cooking seafood, technique is everything. Whether you're pan-searing scallops to a golden crust or giving shrimp a quick sauté with garlic and herbs, the key is high heat, short cook time and a watchful eye.

PERFECT TIMING

A cheat sheet for when to pull it from the heat.

Shrimp: Cook 1-2 minutes per side, or until pink and opaque. Internal temp: 120-125 degrees. Overcooking = chewy disappointment.

Scallops: Sear for 1.5-2 minutes per side until golden brown with a slight jiggle in the center. Internal temp: 125-130 degrees.

Flounder, snapper & other thin fillets: Sear for 1.5-2 minutes per side. If it flakes easily with a fork, it's ready. Internal temp: 135 degrees.

Salmon: Cook skin-side down for 5-6 minutes, then flip for another 2-3. For medium-rare, aim for 125-130 degrees.

Lobster tails: Broil for 5-7 minutes until the meat is opaque and white. Internal temp: 140-150 degrees.

Clams & mussels: Steam for 5-7 minutes until shells open. No thermometer needed, just discard any that stay shut.

Pro tip: *Use an instant-read thermometer for peace of mind and juicy results.*

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Leaf it to the pros

A FRESH LOOK AT LETTUCE: FROM OVERLOOKED GREENS TO PUN-PACKED WISDOM FROM SKULL CREEK BOATHOUSE.



When you think of salad, do you picture a sad bowl of iceberg with a lonely cherry tomato and a splash of store-bought ranch? According to ***Chris Butler***, general manager of Skull Creek Boathouse, that image is in desperate need of a refresh. "Welcome to the pun stop shop of vegetation fit for a Caesar!" he jokes. "Salads have gotten a bib wrap, causing them to fall on chard times. But lettuce romaine calm — we will not leaf you hanging!"

At Skull Creek Boathouse they're not just tossing salads, they're elevating them. "We try to turnip the beet here with our unbe-leaf-ably talented chef team," Butler says. "We're rooting for the kale comeback. So we'll put this lettuce to bed … Arugula glad we had this talk? Iceberg ahead!"



HEADS OF THE TABLE A bountiful crate of leafy greens bursts with character and crunch, featuring a mix of butterhead, romaine, oak leaf, frisée, curly leaf, iceberg and Napa cabbage. From tender to crisp, each leaf brings its own flair to the bowl — ready to mix, toss and steal the show at your next summer spread.

Not all leaves are created equal

While many diners stick to the classics — romaine, iceberg — Butler encourages branching out. "Most people look at the main categories and think all lettuce is the same," he says. "But they're missing out on a wide range of flavors and textures."

Take arugula, for example. Known as "rocket" in the Mediterranean, it delivers a tender bite and a peppery kick that makes it perfect for topping a pizza. "You'd never throw cabbage on a pizza, but arugula? That's a whole different story."



Texture is just as important as flavor. "Want a burger?" Butler asks. "Personally, I go for iceberg. It's crisp and refreshing without being too tough." On the other end of the spectrum, kale has gone from garnish to superfood. "It's not my favorite, but I do like it flash-fried with tajín. Delicious."

Lettuces to try now

"If you're only eating romaine and iceberg," Butler says, "you're leafing a lot on the table." His underrated picks:



Swiss chard: Earthy and slightly bitter, it softens beautifully when sautéed or added to warm salads.



Sorrel: Bright, tart and bold. "Let your sorrel be the star," Butler says — just pair it with something mellow.



Watercress: Peppery, nutrient-rich and once used to treat scurvy. Blend with sweeter greens to tone it down.



Little or Sweet Gem: A fine-dining favorite that blends romaine crunch with butter lettuce sweetness. Great for handheld bites or single-leaf salad presentations. "Top it with heirloom tomatoes and mozzarella and you've got a showstopper," Butler says.



Lettuce rethink everything

"There's a whole rabbit hole you can go down with lettuce," Butler says. "From texture to flavor to presentation, the possibilities are endless." His advice? Be curious. Experiment. Find the greens that match your tastes and elevate your dishes.

"What's your next big leafy adventure? Lettuce pray it's a good one." *LL*





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RESTAURANT news&notes

FRESH FOOD + NOW OPEN + HOT PRODUCTS

Fresh finds and a smoky comeback

The local dining scene is on fire, in the best way. With four new places to wine, dine and scoop dessert, plus the return of a fan-favorite barbecue joint, there's never been a better time to dig in.

NOW OPEN



Reopen: Bullies BBQ

Regency Parkway, Hilton Head Island

Good news for barbecue lovers: Bullies BBQ is back, and original owner Bob Sutton is once again at the helm. Sutton opened the restaurant in 2012, and over the years it earned a loyal following, climbing the ranks on restaurant review sites with glowing praise from locals and visitors alike. If you haven't been, Bullies is an old-school, counter-service joint tucked beside a former mid-island gas station on Regency Parkway. Bob's motorcycle often sits parked out front, and the Kansas City Barbecue Association sticker on the door hints at the serious smoked goodness inside. Step through the door, and you're greeted by the unmistakable aroma of meats slow-smoked over hickory and mesquite. The menu delivers house-made sauces, hearty sides and standout bites like hot slaw and some of the best fries in the Lowcountry. With French Bulldog photos and handwritten notes from happy customers again lining the walls, the return of Bullies feels less like a reopening and more like a reunion.

Scoopasaurus

Buckthorn Lane, Daufuskie Island

There's a new creature on Daufuskie Island, and it's serving scoops by the dozen. Say hello to Scoopasaurus, the remote island's newest ice cream trailer, dishing out cups and cones from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m., Thursday through Sunday. It's usually parked just off Buckthorn Lane in front of Up in Smoke BBQ, making it dangerously easy to follow ribs with a waffle cone. Ferry ride-worthy? Absolutely.







Sea Island Eatery and Homemade Ice Cream

Island Square, Beaufort

Sweet news for dessert fans: the family behind Southern Sweets has taken over Stellar Ice Cream and given it a tasty new twist. Now scooping as Sea Island Eatery and Homemade Ice Cream, the shop blends small-batch taste with familiar favorites, and, yes, some Southern Sweets staples are making the leap too. Located next to Grayco on Sea Island Parkway, it's the perfect stop for a scoop (or two) and a bite of something homemade.

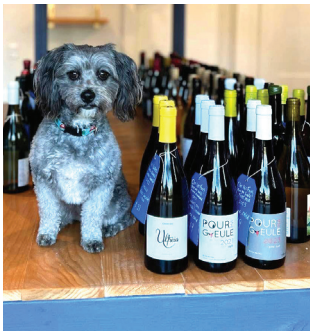


Starbird Spirits & Bites

Village at Wexford, Hilton Head

Hilton Head's cocktail game just got a serious upgrade. Starbird Spirits & Bites is shaking things up at The Village at Wexford with its sleek design, moody lighting and menu that feels more big-city lounge than beachside cocktail bar. It serves reimagined classics and seasonal sips that show off the skills of the bartenders, paired with inventive small plates by celebrated chef Daniel Eddy. Add in live music and themed chef's nights, and you've got the kind of place that turns a casual drink into the highlight of your week.





Juicebox Natural Wine and Craft Beer

May River Road, Bluffton

This isn't your average bottle shop. Juicebox brings a fresh pour to Old Town Bluffton with a come-as-you-are vibe and a lineup of natural wines and craft beers that's anything but ordinary. Every bottle on the shelf is handpicked by owners who know their stuff and love to share it with customers. Whether you're a curious sipper or a seasoned enthusiast, you'll find something new to love.

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Gone, not forgotten: The legacy of Tom Reilley

The Lowcountry recently lost a quiet giant, someone who helped shape the heart and spirit of Hilton Head Island. *Tom Reilley wasn't one to seek the spotlight, but his presence was unmistakable. He gave generously, showed up when it mattered and made things better just by being there. His namesake restaurant, Reilley's, has long been more than a place to grab a bite. It's where locals gather after a big game, meet friends for happy hour and keep the celebration going after the St. Patrick's Day Parade. That parade, which Tom started in 1983, began as a modest neighborhood tradition and grew into one of the state's longest-running events. Through his Coastal Restaurants and Bars (CRAB) group, which includes Fishcamp, Benny's Coastal Kitchen, Old Oyster Factory, The Crazy Crab and others, Tom created jobs for thousands and supported countless local nonprofits. He never asked for recognition. He simply believed in giving back. Tom was a steady, grounding force in the local business world, and even more so in the lives of those who knew him. His usual seat at Reilley's may now be empty, but his legacy lives on in the businesses he built, the traditions he started and the many lives he touched. Hilton Head is better because of him.*

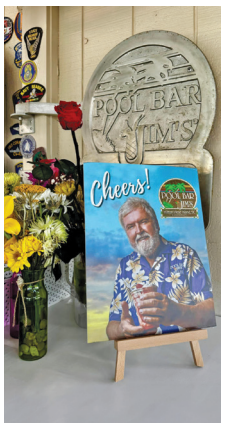
Spanish Moss Gin: A taste of gold

Rotten Little Bastard Distillery's Spanish Moss Gin just earned a Gold Medal at the 2025 San Francisco World Spirits Competition. *This boldly botanical gin pays tribute to Southern craft and culture. Elegant, distinctive and now officially award-winning, Spanish Moss Gin is putting RLB on the global spirits map, one unapologetic pour at a time.*



Coming soon: Nala's Beach

Get ready to taste the tropics. *Opening June 28 at 14 Folly Field Road (in the former Lucky Beach location), Nala's Beach brings Caribbean-inspired cuisine to Hilton Head Island with a bright, breezy vibe from breakfast through dinner. The new spot, led by owner Susan Lagare, promises a flavorful menu made entirely in-house with top-quality ingredients. Doors open daily at 7 a.m. For the latest updates, visit nalasbeach.com.*



Pool Bar Jim's lives on

A beloved island staple is entering a new chapter. *Pool Bar Jim's will continue to honor the legacy of its iconic founder, Jim Lisenby, thanks to a heartfelt promise made at his bedside, to keep the bar going just the way he wanted. The drinks are still fresh, the faces behind the counter are still familiar and the vibe is just as easygoing as ever. New owners Raina and Dave Peck are dedicated to preserving everything that made Pool Bar Jim's a Hilton Head favorite. They plan to relaunch the website for online ordering and revive vintage merchandise, giving longtime fans something to smile about. A remodel is also in the works, transforming the space into a tribute to Jim's life, the history of the bar and the community that continues to raise a glass in his honor.*

Quick Bites

NUGGETS FROM THE LOCAL FOOD & BEVERAGE SCENE

The parking lot at ***Nectar*** *Bluffton just got a fresh resurfacing. Your tires (and your coffee) thank you.*

Gloria's Filipino Food *is hitting the road with a new trailer. Keep an eye out: lumpia on wheels is coming your way.*

Got dreams of slinging gourmet dogs? ***The Hot Dawg House*** *food truck is for sale.*

Nosh NY Bagels *is open and serving the chewy, crusty real deal. Bring your appetite (and maybe a napkin).*

Big news: ***E-Tang Bluffton*** *now has its liquor license. Craft cocktails incoming.*

The team behind ***Blacksheep X Sabbatical*** *now offers catering. Stalk its socials for menus, updates and serious food envy.*

Forrest Fire BBQ in Coligny Plaza is closed temporarily, but don't fret. *The owner has plans to reopen in the same location with a new name. Check the Hilton Head Guest Services or Forrest Fire BBQ websites for updates.*

GIVING BACK

FEEL-GOOD BITES FROM THE LOCAL FOOD SCENE

Cactus Street Cantina *spiced things up for a good cause, donating 10% of May bowl sales to the Island Recreation Center.*

Throughout May, ***Burnt Church Distillery*** *poured out some love, supporting the Boys & Girls Club of Bluffton and Bigvision Community with a portion of sales.*

The ***Village at Wexford*** *turned wine into a win, raising $2,000 for Sea Turtle Patrol during May's Wine Down Wednesday.*

Giuseppi's Pizza & Pasta *served up more than slices, sponsoring the Michael C. Riley Special Olympics Showcase in support of local athletes.*

The team at ***Thai Smile Cuisine*** *stepped up in a big way, preparing hot meals for the rescue crews and staff working around the clock to help the beached whale on the island.*

On May 7, ***Eggs Up Grill Bluffton*** *donated 10% of sales to the Amazing Grace Sulak Scholarship Fund — a heartfelt way to support future dreams.*

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Pitchin' Berries *just turned three; that's three sweet years of blending up berry goodness.*

Pops of Hilton Head *hit the five-year mark. Here's to five years of poppin' flavor and fun.*

Cassandra's Kitchen *has been keeping local kitchens stocked and stylish for 17 years. That's a lot of spatulas and sheet pans.*

Chef Frank's Bistro *celebrated two years on May 9. If you haven't tried it yet, now's the time to toast its success with something delicious.*

Hardee Greens *was named 2024-25 New Business of the Year by the Jasper County Chamber of Commerce. Fresh, local and now officially award-winning.*

Southern Barrel Brewing Company *is raising a glass to 10 years of brewing excellence. Cheers to a decade of hops, barrels and good times.*

School Pizza *just turned a year, already earning high marks with fans of a good slice.*

Sabor De Casa Food Truck *marked three years of serving up authentic Mexican cuisine from the road.*

WHAT TIME IS IT?

UPDATED HOURS YOU SHOULD KNOW

British Open Pub Bluffton *is now teeing off on Mondays from 4 to 9 p.m. Swing by for a pint and a proper meal to start your week right.*

Locals Only Taproom *is keeping the midweek buzz alive with new Wednesday hours, 4 to 8 p.m., all summer long. Consider it your new favorite hump day hangout.*

Maria's Mexican Kitchen *has updated its hours, so you've got more time to taco. Now open 11 a.m.–9 p.m. Monday through Thursday, 11 a.m.–10 p.m. Friday and Saturday, and 11:30 a.m.–9 p.m. on Sundays.*

WHAT'S ON THE MENU?

NEW OFFERINGS AND CHANGES

Rollers Wine & Spirits *just released a one-of-a-kind collaboration with Ophelia Bourbon and Colleton River: Driftless Glen Single Barrel Straight Rye Whiskey. Sip it while you can.*

Spring Island's River House and Golf House *are serving new seasonal menus, perfect for summer dining with a view.*

SERG Takeout Kitchen *made its fish fry a Friday regular, thanks to high demand. Hot Meal Fridays just got hotter.*

The Juice Hive *leveled up its acai game with more bowls, more toppings and more reasons to feel good about breakfast.*

Healthy Habit *launched an iced latte lineup; cool, caffeinated and ready to go.*

Hilton Head Distillery *is rolling out a summer menu worth sipping. Think seasonal cocktails with serious vacation energy.*

Ribaut Social Club *has a brand-new menu with fresh takes and elegant plates.*

Annie O's Kitchen *added deli-style sandwiches to its lunch menu; quick, satisfying and easy to crave.*

Zunzibar *debuted a seafood-forward menu exclusive to Hilton Head. New flavors, same bold vibe.*

Driftwood Diner *on Daufuskie is serving brunch. Your island mornings just got tastier.*

Cafe Al Dente *introduced a happy-hour menu daily from 3 to 5:30 p.m. Small plates, good drinks, great timing.*

TRY THESE

***Cultural cuisine** picks to send your taste buds on a summer escape.*



KEYED UP

*These Sweet Heat Tacos from **Black Marlin Bayside Grill & Hurricane Bar** bring the bold, beachy flavors of the Florida Keys straight to your plate. Blackened mahi-mahi meets tropical fruit salsa for a combo that's bright, spicy and just the right kind of messy.*

PINING FOR A TASTE

*Craving a vacation in a bite? **Thai Smile Cuisine** delivers with pineapple fried rice, a mix of shrimp, scallops, calamari, mussels and softshell crab all tucked into a hollowed-out pineapple. It's sweet, savory and beautifully over the top — like a postcard from Thailand, but edible.*





CIAO, ITALIA

*Take your taste buds on a tour of Italy with the Aglio Nero fettuccine from **Miramare Italiano** in Beaufort. This rich, garlicky dish is tossed with black garlic and finished with ricotta salata and crunchy walnuts. One twirl in, and you'll be saying arrivederci to anything bland.*

LET'S TACO 'BOUT IT

*The ahi tuna taco at **Agave** is reason enough to drop what you're doing and grab a seat. Seared tuna, creamy avocado and a tequila wasabi lime sauce come together for a flavor combo that's sharp, smooth and impossible to share.*





SHISO FINE

***Locals Raw Bar** brings Japanese flair to Lowcountry seafood with its hirame crudo. Featuring local flounder, fresh strawberry, shiso and a touch of wasabi, it's delicate, surprising and just the kind of dish that makes you pause between bites — in the best way.*



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WWMD

What would Margaret drink?

Margaret Pearman *is a certified sommelier under the Court of Master Sommeliers and curates the award-winning wine list at Charlie's L'Etoile Verte.*
Here is her sipping suggestion for June:

Summer in a bottle

Aromatic and sunkissed, this floral white evokes the charm of Italy's Adriatic coast with every sip.



SUMMER SIPPER Bursting with floral aromas, tropical fruit and a crisp, lingering finish, Lu'Li Bianco pairs beautifully with oysters, grilled shrimp and warm-weather get togethers.

If I had my choice this summer, I'd be jetting off to Puglia, the sun-drenched region along Italy's Adriatic coast, known for turquoise waters, pristine beaches, fresh-caught seafood and baroque architecture that feels frozen in time. My love affair with Italy began during a college year abroad in Florence, where I caught the travel bug hard and explored the peninsula top to bottom. Or so I thought. Somehow, I skipped the heel of the boot, where the wine region of Puglia has been reinventing itself after years of industrial winemaking.

While I won't be hopping on a plane anytime soon, I recently discovered a bottle that gets me close. Enter Masca del Tacco Lu'Li Bianco, made from a nearly extinct grape varietal called fiano minutolo. Resurrected in the early 2000s, this aromatic grape bursts with notes of peach, mango and pineapple. The winemaker uses a technique called cryomaceration, which involves freezing the grapes before pressing, to coax out extra tannin and depth. The result is a fruity white with real structure and a surprisingly long finish.

You'll find me on the pool deck under a lemon-yellow umbrella, kids cannonballing nearby, glass of Lu'li Bianco in hand. It's sunshine in a glass, and a little taste of the Italian coast for just $20 to $25 retail.

Sip into summer

Refreshing cocktails that turn any day into a getaway.

Escape is just a glass away. This month we're toasting to wanderlust with two vacation-ready cocktails crafted right here in the Lowcountry. One captures the sunbaked spice of the Southwest with a citrusy kick and a hint of peppered intrigue. The other evokes the romance of coastal Italy with fresh strawberry sweetness and a sparkling Prosecco finish.



PALMETTO BLUFF CLUB

Spiced Oasis

Let this cocktail carry you west, where adobe-colored sunsets stretch across the sky, and the air is spiced with citrus groves and desert bloom. Crafted by Gene Castellino, beverage director at the Palmetto Bluff Club, this drink channels the heat and brightness of a perfect summer day in the Southwest. A zesty mix of citrus and tequila sets the tone, while a kick of black pepper adds intrigue.

INGREDIENTS

1 1/2 ounces black pepper-infused reposado tequila (Agave Loco, Ghost, etc.)
1 ounce Licor 43
1 ounce grapefruit juice
3/4 ounce lemon juice

DIRECTIONS [1] Combine ingredients with ice in a rocks or Collins glass. **[2]** Top with Topo Chico. **[3]** Garnish with a lemon wedge.

NUNZIO RESTAURANT + BAR

Strawberry Rossini

Imagine yourself perched at a seaside café, the Mediterranean breeze tousling your hair and the clink of glasses echoing across a sun-dappled piazza. This recipe from Nunzio Restaurant + Bar captures that carefree Italian spirit in every sip. Bright, bubbly and bursting with fresh flavor, it's a dazzling blend of strawberry purée, crisp Prosecco and a splash of soda water.

INGREDIENTS

6 ounces chilled Prosecco
*Splash of **strawberry purée** (recipe below)*
Splash of soda water
Fresh strawberry and mint (garnish)



DIRECTIONS [1] Pour chilled Prosecco into a wine or flute glass. **[2]** Add a splash of strawberry purée and top with soda water. **[3]** Garnish with a sliced strawberry and mint for a touch of Italy.



STRAWBERRY PURÉE

Easy to make and bursting with fresh flavor, this strawberry purée is perfect for cocktails, mocktails, desserts or even a sweet swirl into yogurt or pancakes.

INGREDIENTS

1 cup fresh strawberries (plus 1 for garnish)
1 teaspoon lemon juice
1 teaspoon sugar

DIRECTIONS In a blender, purée the ingredients until smooth. Strain through a fine sieve to remove seeds, if desired.

GRAND OPENING
JUNE 28th

NALA'S BEACH
BAR & GRILL

Bright, breezy, and full of flavor, Nala's Beach brings easy island energy to Hilton Head. Just steps from the sand, it's your go-to spot for feel-good food – all crafted in-house with love and seriously good ingredients. With a hint of Caribbean inspiration and a whole lot of beach-day vibes, Nala's serves up soulful bites in a fun, relaxed setting inspired by the friendly pup who started it all.



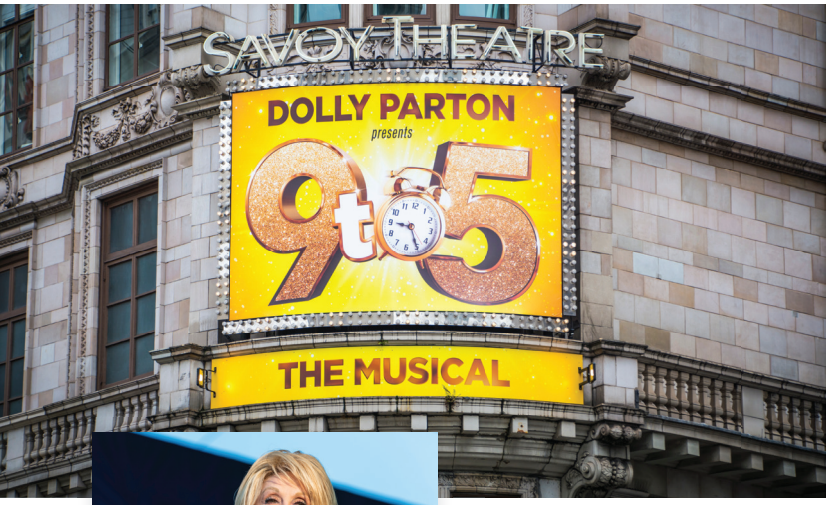


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JUNE happenings

Arts & Culture



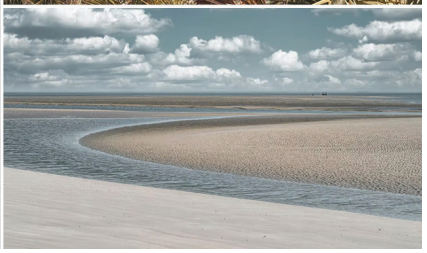


9 to 5 the Musical

When: June 20-29, times vary
Where: Hilton Head High School
Details: Dolly Parton's sharp, sassy workplace comedy kicks off the Southeastern Summer Theater Institute's 18th season. Big voices, big hair and even bigger laughs. ***hhisummermusicals.com***







Palmetto Bluff Artist in Residence

When: 9 a.m.-3 p.m., June 6 **Where:** FLOW Gallery + Workshop
Details: This month's spotlight is on Andre Berg of Daufuskie Photography. Catch his local landscapes, chat with the artist, or get hands-on in a workshop. ***palmettobluff.com***





Wild Bees photography exhibit

When: Now through August 17, times vary **Where:** Coastal Discovery Museum
Details: These stunning close-up photos of native bees will make you see pollinators in a whole new way. ***coastaldiscovery.org***





Reflections of the Lowcountry

When: June 1-28, times vary **Where:** SOBA Gallery
Details: See the Lowcountry through the eyes of Marie Camenares, SOBA's featured artist for June. Meet her at the reception from 4-6 p.m. on June 6. ***sobagallery.com***

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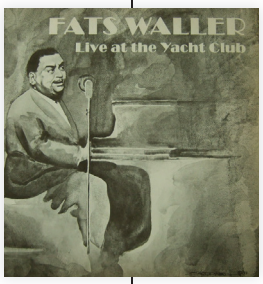
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Arts & Culture



The Rhodes Collection of African American Art

When: Now through June 30, times vary **Where:** USCB Center for the Arts Gallery
Details: Explore a powerful collection of African American art full of color, culture and meaning. ***uscbcenterforthearts.com***



Ain't Misbehavin'

When: 7:30 p.m., June 12-14; 3 p.m., June 15
Where: USCB Center for the Arts
Details: This toe-tapping tribute to Fats Waller brings the spirit of the Harlem Renaissance to life. A fun night out for jazz lovers and anyone who loves a little swing.
uscbcenterforthearts.com

Art League of Hilton Head events

If you love art, clear your calendar. The Art League has something happening almost every week. ***artleaguehhi.org***

COMING UP

2025 Biennale: *Now through June 13, times vary*
Gallery Night Out: *6-8 p.m., June 6*
Featured artist Joan Moreau McKeever: *June 17-July 18, times vary*
Artist reception for Joan Moreau McKeever: *5-7 p.m., June 18*





Shrek the Musical

When: June 19-22 and 26-29, times vary
Where: Main Stage Community Theatre
Details: Everyone's favorite swamp-dwelling ogre is taking the stage in this big-hearted musical adventure. Bring the kids or just bring your inner child.
mainstagecommunitytheatre.org

Charity & Community





Fun in the Sun for EVERYONE

When: 10 a.m.-12:30 p.m., June 6 **Where:** Marriott Surf Watch Resort Beach
Details: This inclusive beach event makes sure everyone, regardless of age or ability, can enjoy a safe, fun morning on the sand. ***pocketsfullofsun.org***



2025 HarbourFest

When: Now through Labor Day (Sept. 1), times vary
Where: Shelter Cove Harbour & Marina
Details: This all-summer celebration brings fireworks every Tuesday, plus spinning hats, carnival games, face painting, music and more. It's a Hilton Head tradition worth catching. ***sheltercoveharbourfest.com***

Rotary Club of HHI 2025 Annual Educational Scholarship Sweepstakes

When: Now-June 12 **Where:** Mail to 99 Main Street, Suite 2, HHI, 29926
Details: Enter this Rotary Club sweepstakes to support scholarships for local students. ***hiltonheadrotary.com***

Party in the Park + Car Show

When: 6-8:30 p.m., June 12 and 26
Where: Lowcountry Celebration Park
Details: It's a little bit car show, a little bit concert, and a whole lot of fun. Bring the family for music, food trucks, bounce houses and cool cars. ***islandreccenter.org***

COMING UP
June 12: *Carolina Dreamers Car Club, The Chiggers, Slap!Truck*
June 26: *Palm Trees and Pistons, Soul Remedy, Mother Smokin' Good BBQ*



SHELTER COVE HARBOUR & MARINA



SHANNON TANNER
Two shows: 6:30 & 8:00 p.m.
Now to August 20: Monday, Tuesday & Wednesday

Parrot Palooza SUNSET CELEBRATION

SHANNON TANNER & THE OYSTER REEFERS
Thursdays at 7:00 p.m.
June 12, 19 & 26; July 3, 10, 17, 24 & 31; August 7, 14 & 21. Two shows on Labor Day Weekend: August 30 & 31

2025 Fireworks*
Start on Tuesdays when sky is dark
June 3, 10, 17 & 24
SPECIAL SHOW on Friday, July 4th!
July 8, 15, 22 & 29; August 5, 12 & 19



CAPPY THE CLOWN
Face painting, balloon animals & more!
6:00 – 9:00 p.m. Now to August 29: Monday to Friday. Plus Labor Day Weekend: August 30 & 31

HARBOURFEST™

SCAN TO VIEW ENTERTAINMENT & FIREWORKS SHOW UPDATES

ShelterCoveHarbourfest.com

LOCATED MID-ISLAND, MILE MARKER 8, ACROSS THE ENTRANCE TO PALMETTO DUNES. *All events subject to change without notice. Weather permitting.

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GO TO YOUR HAPPY PLACES!

Charity & Community



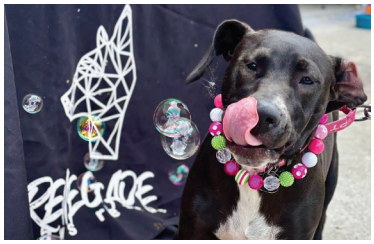


11th annual Juneteenth Celebration

When: June 12-14, times vary
Where: Historic Mitchelville Freedom Park
Details: Honor freedom and heritage at this multi-day celebration of African American culture. ***exploremitchelville.org***

COMING UP

June 12: *Celebrating Naycha and B'uhds, 11 a.m.-2 p.m.*
June 12-13: *Sleepover, 6 p.m.-6 a.m.*
June 13: *Children's Day, 11 a.m.-1 p.m.; Drum Circle, 5:30-7:30 p.m.*
June 14: *Celebration Party, 10 a.m.-4 p.m.*
June 19: *Juneteenth 5K, 8 a.m.*



Renegade Paws Rescue at Petco Bluffton

When: 10 a.m.-noon, June 7
Where: Petco Bluffton
Details: Swing by to meet adoptable dogs and support a great cause. Donations welcome. ***renegadepawsrescue.org***

5th annual Kiwanis Club of Bluffton Jazz Night

When: 7-9 p.m., June 22
Where: Seaquins Ballroom
Details: A smooth night of live jazz, good company and giving back. All proceeds support local programs through the Bluffton Kiwanis Foundation.***blufftonkiwanis.org***





Bluffton Juneteenth Festival

When: June 6-15
Where: Various Bluffton locations
Details: Ten years strong, this celebration features food, music, art and community events organized by the Bluffton MLK Observance Committee.

COMING UP

June 13: *Black Food Truck Friday Festival, 5-10 p.m., Buckwalter Commerce Park*
June 14: *Juneteenth Festival, 4-10 p.m., Burnt Church Distillery*
June 15: *Jazz Brunch, 11 a.m.-2 p.m., Burnt Church Distillery*





4th annual Black Moses Freedom Festival

When: June 6-8 **Where:** The Penn Center, St. Helena Island
Details: Celebrate Harriet Tubman's legacy with a weekend of cultural events and community gatherings.
blackmosesfreedomfestival.com

South Carolina Vision Connection: Spring 2025

When: 10:30 a.m., June 10
\Where: Hilton Head Island Senior Center
Details: A supportive, in-person gathering for the blind and low-vision community hosted by the Foundation Fighting Blindness. ***fightingblindness.org***

Celebrating Bluffton 2025

Bluffton is turning up the fun with a full calendar of events designed to bring neighbors together. ***townofbluffton.com***

COMING UP

June 6: *Movie in the Park, Garfield the Movie, 6-8 p.m., Buckwalter Place Park*
June 21: *Jump Into Summer, 9 a.m.-noon, Oscar Frazier Park*
June 28: *Brunch and Ballet in the Park, 9 a.m.-noon, Buckwalter Place Amphitheater*



Brews on the Bluff

When: 5:30-9:30 p.m., June 13
Where: Bluffton Oyster Factory Park
Details: A summer favorite. Sample craft and international brews, grab dinner from a food truck, and enjoy live music as the sun goes down. ***bearfootsports.com***

WE'RE WAGGING WITH EXCITEMENT!



Evergreen Pet Lodge is thrilled to add Red Rover on Hilton Head to our pack.
Two locations. One mission: Keeping your pets safe, happy, and loved.

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evergreenpetlodge@gmail.com
EvergreenPetLodgeHHI.com

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843.671.9274
redroversouth@gmail.com
TheRedRover.info



Critter Meet & Greet
Mon, Wed, Fri | 9:30 am–12:30 pm

Tuesdays at the Museum
Farmers Market | 9 am–1 pm
Indigo Tie-Dye Party | 10 am–Noon
Face Painting | 10 am–Noon

Life Under the Sea
Tues and Thurs | 2-4 pm

Sweetgrass Basket Class
Select Thurs in June, July & Aug | 6 pm

COASTAL DISCOVERY MUSEUM
70 Honey Horn Drive
Hilton Head SC 29926
843.689.6767
coastaldiscovery.org

The LOCAL Life Newsletters

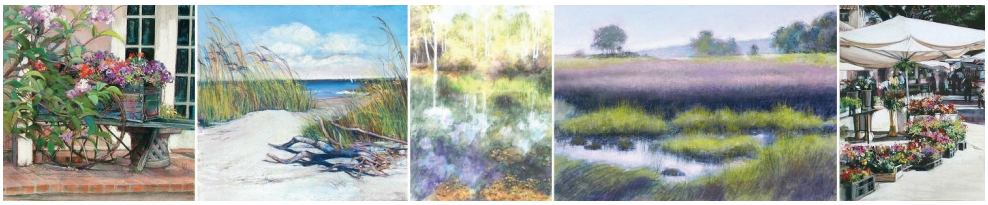
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Lectures & Classes



Art League Hilton Head classes

Tap into your creative side at one of the guest-led workshops at the Art League Academy. Whether you're a beginner or looking to sharpen your skills, there's something here for everyone. ***artleaguehhi.org***

COMING UP

Pastel Painting for Beginners & Advanced Beginners: *1 p.m., June 9*
Paint & Sip: Lowcountry Marsh: *4:30 p.m., June 19*
Painting on Glass - The Triple Dipper Platter: *9:30 a.m., June 27*



Coastal Discovery Museum events

From crafts to critters, the Coastal Discovery Museum offers a little bit of everything. Great for kids and curious adults alike. ***coastaldiscovery.org***

COMING UP

Sweetgrass Basket Class: *6 p.m., June 12 & 26*
Blue Crab Discovery: *9:30 a.m., Tuesdays*
Marsh Critters: *11 a.m., Thursdays*



Turtle Talks

When: 8-9 p.m., Mondays
Where: Lowcountry Celebration Park
Details: Learn how Sea Turtle Patrol Hilton Head Island protects local sea turtles and what you can do to help. It's a great family outing after dinner. ***seaturtlepatrolhhi.org***

Restorative medicine seminar

When: Noon-1 p.m., Tuesdays
Where: Fraum Center for Restorative Health
Details: Grab a free lunch and learn how non-invasive treatments can help ease chronic pain. This weekly talk covers the latest in restorative medicine and how your body can heal itself. ***fraum.com***



SOBA art classes

Try something new this month at the SOBA Gallery, where talented local artists teach hands-on classes in a laid-back setting. ***sobagallery.com***

JUNE WORKSHOPS

Vibrant Landscapes in Acrylic: *10 a.m.-4 p.m., June 17-19*
Palette Knife Painting with Acrylics: *Times vary, June 21-22*



Port Royal Sound Foundation classes & events

Get to know the Lowcountry up close. These programs focus on local wildlife and outdoor skills. ***portroyalsoundfoundation.org***

COMING UP

Kayak Tour: *10 a.m., June 14*
Reptile Meet and Greet: *10:30 a.m. & 1:30 p.m., June 21*



For three decades, the Hilton Head Island Gullah Celebration has honored the soul, spirit, and stories of the Gullah people—descendants of West Africans who preserved their culture, cuisine, language, and artistry here in the Lowcountry.

Each February vibrant art and music to powerful storytelling and community rituals, the Gullah Celebration uplifts a legacy that shaped our island's past—and guides its future.

This year, we invite you to give back. Your $30 supports educational scholarships for Native Island youth, empowers Gullah artists and community programs, and helps preserve Gullah culture for generations to come.

Scan me to give.

GULLAHCELEBRATION.COM/THIRTY

Sports & Outdoors



June races

Whether you're racing for a cause or just for the fun of it, these upcoming events offer great ways to stay active outdoors.

COMING UP

Palmetto Dunes Turtle Trot 5K: 8 a.m., Wednesdays, Dunes House
Sea Pines Dolphin Dash 5K: 8 a.m., June 12, 19 & 26, Sea Pines Beach Club
Juneteenth Freedom 5K: 9 a.m., June 19, Mitchelville Freedom Park
Beach Bum Triathlon & Duathlon: 8 a.m., June 21, Coligny Beach Park
Mindful Triathlon: 8 a.m., June 22, Coligny Beach Park
PRC Summer Pub Run: 6:30 p.m., June 25, The Bank
Ladies Only Beach Yoga and Run: 7 a.m., June 29, Coligny Beach Park

Beaufort Water Festival events

The main event kicks off in July, but June has its share of action to tide you over. ***bftwaterfestival.com***

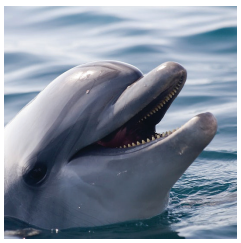
COMING UP

Paddle Battle: 9 a.m., June 7, White Hall Boat Landing
Sailing Regatta: 2 p.m., June 7, Beaufort Yacht & Sailing Club
Corn Hole Tournament: 3 p.m., June 14, Beaufort Academy









Palmetto Bluff Conservancy events

Learn something new about the land and wildlife through guided walks and casual lunchtime talks. ***palmettobluff.com/conservation***

COMING UP

Discovering the Past - Wilson Cemetery Walk: 8-9:30 a.m., June 5
Let's Talk About... Reptiles!: 11 a.m.-noon, June 12
Brown Bag Lunch: Dolphins: 12-1 p.m., June 25

MAY RIVER THEATRE
"Some stories stay with you forever"
MAY RIVER THEATRE PRESENTS
SPRING AWAKENING
JULY 3 - JULY 13, 2025
Tony Award Winning!
May River Theatre
20 Bridge St, Bluffton, SC
Book & Lyrics by Steven Sater
Music by Duncan Sheik
Based on the play by Frank Wedekind

Upcoming EVENTS
19 July — Gullah Traveling Theater — Da' Gullah American Revolutionary Experience — Saturday
03 Aug — 4:00 pm - Auditions — Reefer Madness the Musical Show Dates 10/31 - 11/16 — Sunday
08 Aug — Check MRT Website for Updates — 10 Minute Play Festival Lowcountry (Un)Told — Weekend
19 Sept — Tickets Now Available — Ken Ludwig's Baskerville: A Sherlock Holmes — Thursday
bluffton
20 BRIDGE STREET - BLUFFTON HEART OF THE LOWCOUNTRY MAYRIVERTHEATRE.COM



Sea Pines adventures

Outdoor fun is part of the daily rhythm at Sea Pines Resort. These events are perfect for family night or a fun evening under the stars. ***seapines.com***

COMING UP

Gregg Russell Concerts: 8-9:30 p.m., Mondays-Thursdays
DJ Alan Family Show: 8-9:30 p.m., June 6 & 20, Liberty Oak Tree
Full Moon Wagon Ride - Night at the Preserve: 8-9 p.m., June 11, Heritage Farms
Full Moon Shore Explore: 8-9 p.m., June 12, Sea Pines Beach Club
Rick Hubbard's Great American Kids Show: 8-9:30 p.m., June 13 & 27, Liberty Oak Tree



Mitchelville Freedom Park Litter Sweep

When: 8 a.m., June 7
Where: Mitchelville Freedom Park
Details: Help clean up this historic park before Juneteenth celebrations begin. Hosted by Palmetto Running Company. ***palmettorunningcompany.com***

Outside Foundation events

Make a difference outdoors with local reef builds and cleanups. ***outsidefoundation.org***

COMING UP

Mitchelville Litter Sweep: 8-10 a.m., June 7
Tom Peeples Oyster Reef Build: 11 a.m.-3:30 p.m., June 10
Haig Point Oyster Reef Build: 9 a.m.-2 p.m., June 11





DragonBoat Beaufort Race Day 2025

When: 8 a.m.-3 p.m., June 28 **Where:** Henry C. Chambers Waterfront Park
Details: Watch or join teams paddling 42-foot dragonboats for a cause. This community event supports local cancer survivors. ***dragonboatbeaufort.org***

BLACQUITY

Celebrating the Rise of New Business Leaders in the Lowcountry





BlacQuity, a nonprofit based in the Lowcountry, is on a mission to promote, elevate, and empower Black-owned businesses through education, resources, and community connections.

At the heart of this movement is **Black Equity University (BEU)** — a 12-week accelerator program designed to reshape the entrepreneurial landscape by equipping Black entrepreneurs with the tools to build sustainable, successful businesses.



BEU, rooted in equity and community transformation, equips emerging business owners with the coaching and confidence to turn vision into viable ventures, creating inspiring entrepreneurs who are now poised to lead and thrive.

This year BlacQuity will host the

ROOTS & RIVERS FESTIVAL

Saturday, September 6, 2025, at Oyster Factory Park in Bluffton

This annual celebration of Black entrepreneurship and cultural heritage features live music, food, art, and local vendors.

Scan for Tickets

JOIN US.
Empower Entrepreneurs.
Transform Communities.

www.blacquitysc.org

Food & Drink



The Lush Life rosé wine tasting

When: 4 p.m., June 18
Where: Nunzio Restaurant + Bar
Details: Rosé all day? Almost. Find your favorite pink sip with Sommelier Mirium Gonzalez while nibbling on Chef Nunzio's seasonal snacks. ***nunziohhi.com***



Outside Hilton Head Lowcountry Boil Dinner Cruise

When: 6:30-8:30 p.m., Thursdays
Where: Shelter Cove Marina
Details: Enjoy a Lowcountry boil meal prepared by Sprout Momma at this new weekly Outside Hilton Head cruise. ***outsidebrands.com***



Salad Dressing 101

When: 3:30 p.m., Thursdays
Where: Hilton Head Oils & Balsamic
Details: Learn the secrets to a great homemade dressing in this popular class.
hiltonheadoils.com

Westin Mixology: Father's Day whiskey tasting

When: 5:30-6:30 p.m., June 14
Where: Oceans Lounge at The Westin
Details: Treat Dad to a whiskey-tasting just steps from the beach. ***westinhiltonhead.idaypass.com***



Happenings at Okàn

Flavor meets rhythm at Okàn, where the food celebrates West African, Caribbean and Southern roots. ***okanbluffton.com***

WEEKLY EVENTS
Thursdays at 7 p.m.: *Jazz on the Patio*
Saturdays at 10 p.m.: *100 Okàn, a late-night experience*



Omakase tastings at CRUDO

Bluffton's CRUDO Modern Raw Bar hosts omakase dinners where the chef calls the shots, based on what's fresh and in season. ***crudobluffton.com***

UPCOMING THEMES AT 7 P.M.
June 4: *Sicily*
June 11: *Hokkaido*
June 18: *Germany*



Sprout Momma events

Sprout Momma is cooking up fun this month with tasty dinners and hands-on classes. Check their Facebook page for updates.

COMING UP
June 5: *Tequila Dinner*
June 7: *Bread Class*
June 19: *Wine Dinner*

Mixology class at Burnt Church Distillery

When: 6 p.m., June 11 & 25
Where: Burnt Church Distillery
Details: Craft three unique cocktails. Two with spirits, one with a non-alcoholic twist. ***burntchurchdistillery.com***



Salty Dog events

It's never a dull moment at The Salty Dog Café. ***saltydog.com***

COMING UP
Sundays at 2 p.m.: *Turtle Trackers at South Beach Marina*
Wednesdays & Fridays at 6 p.m.: *Colorpalooza Glitter Dance Party*
Thursdays at 6 p.m.: *Family Game Night*



An Evening With Meals on Wheels

When: 5 p.m., June 7
Where: Lincoln & South Brewing Company
Details: Raise a glass and give back. Ten percent of all beer sales go to support Meals on Wheels. Live music and good vibes included. ***lincolnandsouth.com***

HILTON HEAD PREPARATORY SCHOOL

Congratulations



CLASS OF 2025

James Aragon	Reagan Boyse	Luke Eanes	Charles Hardwick	Aiven Lorenz	Maksim Pekar
Gabriel Arnold	Jacob Butler	Ellen Edwards	Sophia Haroutunian	Gabrielle McFadden	Julia Pulliam
Anders Askeland	Connor Campbell	Layla Esquivel	Ty Harpring	John Moody	Charles Schweppe
Samuel Bach	Courtney Campbell	Thomas Fernandez	Bella Johnson	Brendan Moore	Jake Sheahan
Aron Bakala	Daniela Corona	Paul Franseen, Jr.	Alexei Katelevsky	John Nail, III	Maya Shimada
William Barron	Shturman	Chelsea Gradzki	Casey Knipe	Jenna Oremus	Juliana Sperry
Isabelle Bauer	Emma Crocker	Theodore Graziano	Cade Kriscunas	Colin Paris	Jackson Stanyard
Samuel Bocian	Callah Dando	Samuel Gregory	Zhaokun Li	Luciana Parrilli	Sienna Vaughn
Ella Boorom	Olivia Denny	Jamie Hanley	Mark Lofye	Aden Parsick	Jacob Vickrey

Members of the Class of 2025 have been accepted to:

Appalachian State University | Auburn University | Bentley University | Berry College | Boston University | Butler University
Charleston Southern University | Citadel Military College of South Carolina | Clemson University | Coastal Carolina University
College of Charleston | Colorado College | Columbia College | Drexel University | Elon University | Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University
Flagler College | Florida Institute of Technology | Florida Polytechnic University | Florida State University | Fordham University
Furman University | Georgia Southern University | Hamilton College | High Point University | Indiana University-Bloomington
Jacksonville University | Juniata College | Kenyon College | Lynn University | Marquette University | Mercer University
Michigan State University | Mississippi State University | Montana State University | Muhlenberg College | Northeastern University
Palm Beach Atlantic University | Pennsylvania State University-Main Campus | Point Park University | Presbyterian College | Radford University
Rhodes College | Rochester Institute of Technology | Rollins College | Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology | Rutgers University-New Brunswick
Seton Hall University | Sewanee: The University of the South | Skidmore College | Southern Methodist University | Spring Hill College
St. Andrews University | Syracuse University | Texas Christian University | The Catholic University of America | The University of Alabama
The University of Tampa Thomas Jefferson University | University of California-Davis | University of California-Irvine
University of California-Santa Cruz | University of Colorado Boulder | University of Connecticut | University of Dayton | University of Denver
University of Georgia | University of Maryland | University of Maryland-Baltimore County | University of Mississippi
University of Missouri-Columbia | University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill | University of North Carolina at Charlotte
University of Oklahoma-Norman Campus | University of Pittsburgh-Pittsburgh Campus | University of South Carolina-Beaufort
University of South Carolina-Columbia | University of Utah | University of Wisconsin-Madison | Virginia Military Institute
Washington University in St. Louis | William & Mary | Winthrop University | Wofford College

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Hello Reader!

We want to hear from you.

Help shape the future of LOCAL Life, and you might just win dinner on us.

Hi there, LOCAL Life reader. Whether you've been with us from the beginning or this is your first time flipping through, we want to know what you think. What do you love? What do you skip? What do you want to see more of?

Scan the QR code to take a short, five-minute survey and tell us how we're doing. Your answers help shape everything from the people we feature to the stories we chase.

And if you feel like sharing your email at the end *(totally optional)*, y**ou'll be entered to win a $200 gift card to a local restaurant.**

So go ahead and chime in. We're listening.

local life

DON'T FORGET TO LIVE LIKE A LOCAL

Food & Drink





Sushi-making class

When: 1-3 p.m., Saturdays **Where:** Kung Fu Cantina
Details: Only 10 spots per class, so book early for this hands-on sushi experience.
kungfucantina.com



Apéritif Wines & Curated Plates: Spring in France

When: 5 p.m., June 9
Where: Chez Georges Bistro & Bar
Details: Enjoy wines hand-selected by beverage manager Monica Collins accompanied by curated plates developed by George Casalicchio. ***chezgeorgeshhi.com***

Links Somm Series

When: 5 p.m., Mondays
Where: Links, an American Grill
Details: Enjoy special one-hour tastings with certified sommeliers every Monday throughout the month of June. ***seapines.com/events***

Tuesday wine tasting

When: 4-6 p.m., Tuesdays
Where: Blacksheep X Sabbatical
Details: Taste four wines for just $20, and find a new favorite.
blacksheeponboundary.com



Honey & Thistle tastings

Sip, learn and browse at this charming tasting room and shop.
honeyandthistlehhi.com

COMING UP

June 6 & July 4: *First Friday Wine Preview Party, 4-6 p.m.*
June 9: *Second Monday Pub Night, 5-7 p.m.*
June 26: *Wine class, How to Drink in Public, 5-7 p.m.*



Fraser's Tavern events

Fraser's at Sea Pines is rolling out the fun this month.
seapines.com

COMING UP
June 17: *Tap Takeover*
Thursdays: *Pint Night*



Shellring Ale Works happenings

There's always something brewing at Shellring.
shellringaleworks.com

COMING UP
June 8: *Barre to the Bar*
June 18: *Sea Glass Wind Chime Crafting*
June 19: *Cigar Night*



Hilton Head Distillery cocktail classes

Shake up your summer with hands-on cocktail classes at Hilton Head Distillery. ***hiltonheaddistillery.com***

UPCOMING CLASSES (7:30-9:30 P.M.)
June 5 & 26: *The Art of Tiki*
June 12: *Bourbon & Beyond - Stir, Shake and Sip*

Voted Lowcountry's Best Live Theatre

9 To 5 the musical

Music and Lyrics by DOLLY PARTON
Book by PATRICIA RESNICK

SOUTHEASTERN Summer Theatre INSTITUTE
An award-winning, Lowcountry tradition for 18 years!

DOLLY PARTON'S
CULT CLASSIC MUSICAL ON STAGE!
June 20, 21, 27, 28 at 7:30pm
June 22 and 29 at 1:00pm
SSTI on the Campus of Hilton Head High School

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HHISummerMusicals.com

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-Sherry, First-Time Attendee, Summer '24

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2023 AWARD WINNER REGIONAL AWARDS
2022 WINNER! BEST BEST LIVE THEATRE
2023 WINNER! BEST BEST LIVE THEATRE

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IS BACK AT THE MARITIME CENTER

FREE PROGRAM

TUESDAYS AT 9:30 AM (JUNE-AUG)

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310 Okatie Highway, Okatie SC
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FISH Casual Coastal Seafood
Frosty Frog
Harbourside
Kind of Blue
Lincoln & South Brewing Company
Luther's Rare & Well Done
Quarterdeck
Ruby Lee's
Scott's Fish Market
Skull Creek Boathouse
The Boardroom
The Crazy Crab Jarvis Creek
The Jazz Corner
The Salty Dog Cafe
The Sandbar Beach Eats
The Studio
Tiki Hut

MORE GREAT SPOTS (SELECT NIGHTS)

A Lowcountry Backyard Restaurant (Mon-Fri)
Agave (Thurs-Sat)
Big Bamboo Cafe (Mon-Sat)
Black Marlin Bayside Grill & Hurricane Bar (Wed-Sat)
Bluffton Oyster Co. Family Seafood House (Fri-Sat)
Burnt Church Distillery (Thurs-Sat)
Calhoun Street Tavern (Thurs-Sun)
Captain Woody's Bluffton (Tues)
Carolina Crab Company (Sun)
Celeste (Fri-Sat)
Cheap Seats Tavern 2 (Fri)
Chophouse 119 (Fri)
CocoNutz Sports Bar (Fri)
Fishcamp on Broad Creek (Tues-Sun)
Hilton Head Brewing Co. (Mon, Wed, Fri)
Hilton Head Tavern (Mon-Tues)
Hop Dog (Fri)
Island Winery (Fri)
Local Pie (Fri-Sun)
Luther's Rare & Well Done (Thurs-Sat)
Melrose Oyster House & Beach Club (Thurs-Sun)
Nectar Farm Kitchen, Bluffton (Fri-Sun)
Okàn (Thurs & Sat)
Pomodori Too! (Thurs-Sat)
Red Fish (Tues-Sat)
Reilley's Grill & Bar (Wed-Fri)
Rollers Wine & Spirits (Tues & Thurs)
San Miguel's (Thurs-Sat)
Santa Fe Cafe (Tues-Sat)
Shellring Ale Works (Fri-Sun)
Sprout Momma (Wed & Fri)
Sundown Saloon (Sat)
The Clubhouse at Okatie Creek (Mon-Thurs)
The Dunes House (Mon-Fri)
The Rooftop Bar at Poseidon (Wed, Thurs & Sat)
The Westin Hilton Head Island Resort & Spa (third Fridays)
Tio's Latin American Kitchen, Bluffton (Fri & Sun)
Top Dog Tavern & Pizzeria (Wed)
UnCorked Wine, Bar, Food & Music (Tues-Sat)
Zunzibar (Mon-Thurs)



Music & Entertainment



Jazz in the Park

When: 7:30 p.m., June 24
Where: Lowcountry Celebration Park
Details: Enjoy a mellow evening under the stars with the Tuffus Zimbabwe Quartet. Free and open to all. ***hhso.org***



Hilton Head Chamber Music Institute

When: June 11-21 **Where:** SoundWaves
Details: Sixteen talented high school musicians from across the country join Hilton Head Symphony Orchestra for a week of rehearsals, chamber performances and public concerts. ***hhso.org***

Sunset Celebration

When: 7-10 p.m., Fridays starting June 13
Where: Shelter Cove Towne Centre
Details: Kick off the weekend with live bands and Lowcountry sunsets. ***sheltercovetowncentre.com***

JUNE LINEUP

June 13: *Deas-Guyz*
June 20: *Deas-Guyz*
June 27: *John Cranford & The Swampfire Allstars*





Summer Jams

When: 7-10 p.m., Tuesdays starting June 10
Where: Shelter Cove Community Park
Details: Live music, food, family fun and fireworks around 9 p.m. It's a classic Hilton Head summer night. ***sheltercovetownecentre.com***



Music Festival of the Lowcountry

When: 1-10 p.m., June 7
Where: Henry C. Chambers Waterfront Park, Beaufort
Details: A full day of live music featuring Tony Jackson and Who's Bad! Plus, enjoy food vendors, drinks and local crafts. ***musicfestivalofthelowcountry.com***



Street Music on Paris Avenue

When: 6 p.m., June 14
Where: Downtown Port Royal
Details: The final concert of the spring season features Kevin Burt & Big Medicine. Bring your lawn chairs and your dancing shoes. ***portroyal.org***

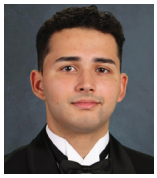


Swingin' Medallions concert

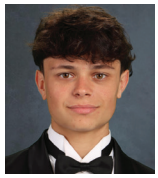
When: 7-10 p.m., June 13
Where: Jasper County Farmer's Market, Ridgeland
Details: The beach music legends are back for a night of feel-good tunes and dancing. ***southcarolinalowcountry.com***

congratulations

John Paul II Catholic School **Class of 2025**


Ian Acuna-Carranza
Christian Brothers Univ

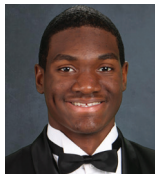

Dante Aiken
Univ of South Carolina

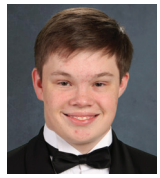

Cullen Amagliani
Georgia Southern Univ

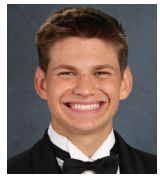

Nicholai Atkinson
United States Marines Corps


Joseline Barreda
College of Charleston


Haley Blackston
Flagler College


Kameron Braboy
Univ of South Carolina

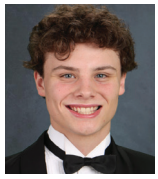

Nathan Bradford
Georgia Military College


Connor Brown
Clemson Univ


Gavin Byrne
Clemson Univ

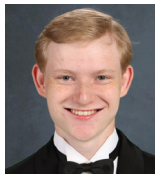

Lucero Cisca-Gomez
Univ of South Carolina (Beaufort)

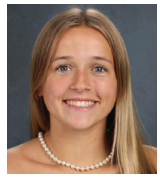

Emma Claesson
Univ of South Carolina (Beaufort)


Bennett Cobb
Loyola Marymount Univ


Cypress Daniel
University of Mississippi


Cristofer Escalante
Technical College of the Lowcountry


Dylan Folscroft
Univ of South Carolina (Beaufort)

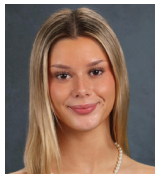

Caylin Gecy
Coker University


Andrew Gilmour
Clemson University


Mariana Gomez
United States Marine Corps


Yeneisy Gonzalez
Univ of South Carolina (Beaufort)

Golden Warriors


Petra Grimes
Florida Atlantic Univ


Alexandra Hahn
Clemson Univ


Johanna Hill
College of Charleston


Sullivan Homer
Savannah Aviation Flight School

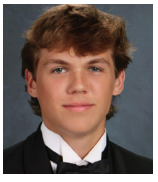

James Hook
Converse Univ


Carson Hurst
Citadel Military College of South Carolina

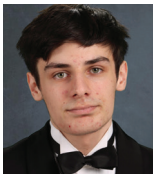

Manuel Hurtado
Undecided

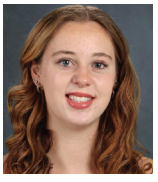

Ephrain Jimenez
United States Marines Corps


Stephanie Johnson
Univ of South Carolina


Bryant Jolley
Univ of South Carolina


Karsyn Kaminsky
Undecided


Chase Kelly
Technical College of the Lowcountry


Hannah Ketchledge
Univ of Colorado Boulder


Ayden Kollstedt
Jacksonville Univ

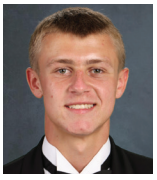

Trenton LaFountain
Baldwin Wallace Univ


Lilianna Lutheran
Auburn Univ


Trice McClure
Duke Univ


Camryn Michael
Auburn Univ


Christopher Morales
Undecided


Daniel Nester
College of Charleston

Bradley O'Neal
Clemson Univ

$8.43 MILLION

Scholarships Awarded

Aadi Patel
Boston Univ

SALUTATORIAN

Isabella Perez
Georgetown Univ

Karol Perez
Univ of South Carolina (Beaufort)

Matei Porcelli
Jacksonville Univ

VALEDICTORIAN

Karoline Rustad
Scripps College

Jude Ryan
Clemson Univ

Jackson Sanders
Florida Atlantic Univ

Sebastian Slusne
Clemson Univ

Daniel Snyder
New College of Florida

Savannah Trott
Clemson Univ

Lukas Yackley
Maryville College

Limited Space Available for 2025-2026 • Contact Admissions at anne.mcclure@johnpaul2school.org

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ARTS CENTER OF COASTAL CAROLINA

PROFESSIONAL THEATER IN THE HEART OF HILTON HEAD

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SUMMER

THE DONNA SUMMER MUSICAL

JUL 9 – AUG 17

THE ULTIMATE DISCO EXPERIENCE

A Boston girl with a voice from heaven, Donna Summer soared to the stars from her beginnings in her church gospel choir to the pinnacle of fame as a dance floor diva. The *Summer* score features more than twenty classic hits including "Love to Love You Baby," "White Boys," "Bad Girls," "She Works Hard for the Money," and "Hot Stuff," to name a few. An electric experience and a moving tribute to the Queen of Disco.

CAPTURING CREATIVITY AT THE ARTS CENTER!

ARTS CENTER OF COASTAL CAROLINA

2025 Summer Camps

Make a Splash!

JUN 9 – JUL 25

Summertime fun is ahead for ages 6+ with the Arts Center's creative, action-packed summer camps. Dive in and create your ultimate summer with themed crafts and meaningful skill-building projects!

THIS PROJECT IS SUPPORTED BY FUNDING PROVIDED TO THE SOUTH CAROLINA ARTS COMMISSION FROM A PARTNERSHIP WITH THE S.C. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION FROM AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOLS EMERGENCY RELIEF (ARP ESSER) FUNDS.

PAUL REISER

July 21 | 4 & 7:30 PM

Emmy-nominated comedian and actor Paul Reiser brings his hilarious stand-up to the Arts Center. Perfect for summertime entertainment!

ARTS CENTER OF COASTAL CAROLINA

14 SHELTER COVE LN • ARTSHHI.COM • 843 842 ARTS(2787)

Markets & Shopping







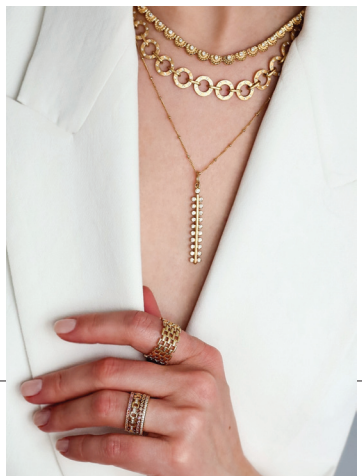
FARMERS AND ART MARKETS

Fresh produce, handmade goods and local flavor are always in season. Here's where to fill your tote and meet the makers.

Bluffton Farmers Market: *10 a.m.-2 p.m., Thursdays, 68 Boundary St.*
Hilton Head Island Farmers Market: *9 a.m.-1 p.m., Tuesdays, Coastal Discovery Museum*
Port Royal Farmers Market: *9 a.m.-noon, Saturdays, Naval Heritage Park*
Forsyth Farmers Market (Savannah): *9 a.m.-1 p.m., Saturdays, Forsyth Park*
Beaufort First Friday: *5-8 p.m., first Friday each month, Downtown Beaufort*
Hilton Head Community Market: *9:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m., Saturdays, Shelter Cove Community Park*
Habersham Farmers Market: *4-7 p.m., Fridays, Habersham Marketplace in Beaufort*
Farmers & Makers Market at Sea Pines: *10 a.m.-2 p.m., Tuesdays, The Shops at Sea Pines Center*

Sethi Couture styling event & trunk show

When: 10 a.m.-5 p.m., June 26 & 27
Where: Forsythe Jewelers
Details: Explore rare and refined diamond jewelry at this special two-day event. The Forsythe team will help you style, stack and shop the newest pieces from Sethi Couture.
forsythejewelers.biz





©CRACKERFARM

EVENTS

SAVANNAH EVENTS

June 7: *Vince Gill at Johnny Mercer Theatre*
June 12 & 26: *Farmers & Fisherman Sunset Market at Savannah Harbor*
June 12: *Luke Bryan at Enmarket Arena*
June 14: *Mahaloween Block Party at Two Tides Brewing Company*
June 19: *Emporium Wine Dinner: Travel to Chile at Emporium Kitchen & Wine Market*
June 21: *Hogs 'n' Dogs Grilling Competition at Harley Davidson Savannah*
June 21: *2 Chainz at Johnny Mercer Theatre*
June 27: *Lunch & Learn: The Moss Mystique at the Jepson Center*
June 28: *Sips on Stiles Beer Festival at Enmarket Arena*
June 29: *Heritage Fire Tour Savannah at The Club at Savannah Harbor*
June 29: *Ledisi at Johnny Mercer Theatre*

GET TICKETS NOW

August 1: *Brad Paisley at Enmarket Arena*
August 22-24: *Braderie South at Jekyll Island Club*
September 13: *The Avett Brothers at Enmarket Arena*

SAVE THE DATE

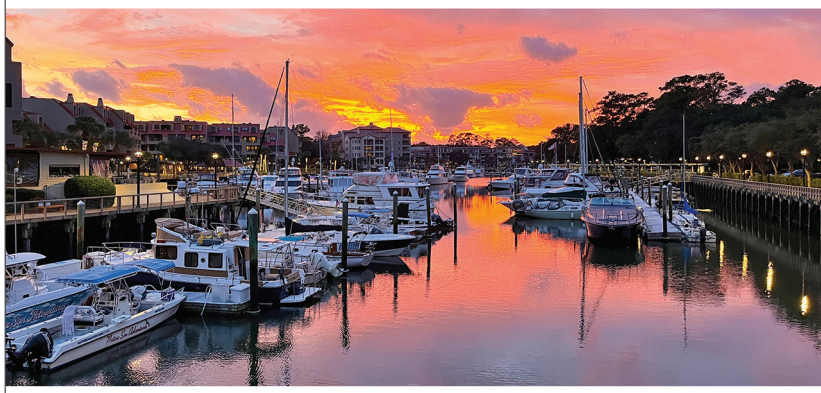
July 2: *Bluffton Independence Day 5K at Oyster Factory Park*
July 2: *Mayor's Cup 5K and Concert at Oyster Factory Park*
July 3: *Independence Day Pre-Party & Fireworks at Martin Family Park*
July 3: *Spring Awakening opening night at May River Theatre*
July 4: *USA 5K at Coligny Beach Park*
July 4: *Hilton Head Firecracker 5000 at Honey Horn*
July 4: *Fourth of July Parade, Gregg Russell Concert & Fireworks at The Sea Pines Resort*
July 4: *Savannah's Waterfront Independence Day Celebration*
July 4: *Beaufort First Friday*

WANT TO SHOWCASE AN EVENT?

You may be able to post your event for free in our Happenings section. *Visit* ***LocalLifeSC.com****, click "Contact Us," and be sure to include the event title, date, time, location, a brief description, a link to the event webpage, and photos if available. We'd love to help spread the word!*

SHELTER COVE HARBOUR & MARINA

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the island's largest marina







APPAREL / JEWELRY / GIFTS / ART
A Coastal Christmas • Pure Salt Studios • Neptune's Niche
Nash Gallery • Southern Tide Signature Store • Ship's Store
Tradewinds Trinkets & Treasures • Treasure Island

DINING / TREATS
Bistro 17 • Daily Café • ELA'S On The Water
Scott's Fish Market • Hilton Head Social Bakery
Frosty's Ice Cream • San Miguel's
Top Dawg Tavern & Pizzeria
LIVE ENTERTAINMENT AT PARTICIPATING RESTAURANTS

SERVICES
Harbourmaster's Office/Ship's Store • Pure Salt Studios
Memory Lane Portraits • Salon Shelter Cove

BOATS / MARINE
Harbourside Yacht Sales • Ship's Store/Marina Office

REAL ESTATE / VILLA RENTALS
Palmetto Dunes/Shelter Cove Villa Rentals
Harbourside III • Trident Villa Rentals • Dunes Real Estate

TOURS, FISHING & WATER SPORTS
Marina Charters & Water Sports Kiosk
Outside Hilton Head

@ShelterCoveHarbourMarina

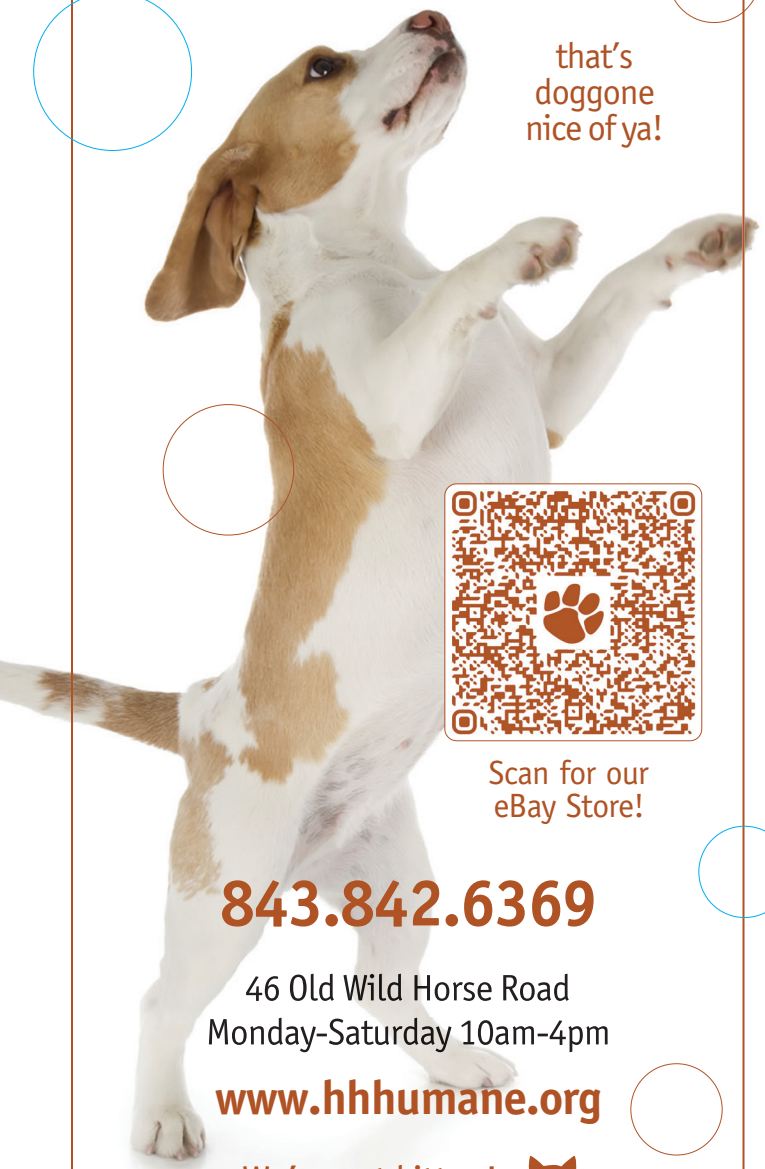
Located mid-island, mile marker 8, across from Palmetto Dunes,
13 Harbourside Ln. ShelterCoveHiltonHead.com

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goods for people • great for animals
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We're not kitten!

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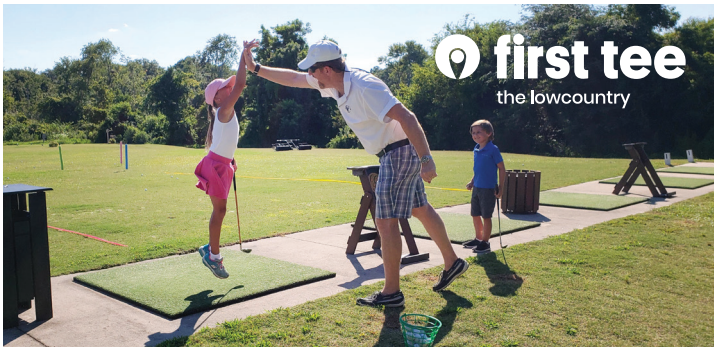
TOOMERS' BLUFFTON SEAFOOD HOUSE Hosting a crowd? Nothing says Lowcountry like a boil, available for parties of 10 or more. The Toomer family has harvested Lowcountry waters since 1913 and serves high-quality, locally sourced seafood. **LOCAL Life insider tip:** It's blue crab season! Enjoy them at Toomer's Bluffton Seafood House, or order them fresh while they last from Bluffton Oyster House.

63 Wharf St, Bluffton • 843-757-4010 • 27 Mellichamp Dr, Bluffton, 843-757-0380



30TH ANNUAL GULLAH CELEBRATION This family-friendly festival features unforgettable gospel performances, curated art exhibits, interactive culinary experiences and more. This celebration brings together those who cherish history, creativity and community. **LOCAL Life insider tip:** Save the date: February 1-28, 2026. Sign up now for early access to tickets and exclusive anniversary events.

539 William Hilton Parkway, Hilton Head • 843-255-7303 • gullahcelebration.org



FIRST TEE — THE LOWCOUNTRY Experience golf on the Island with the only par-3 course — perfect for instruction, children and senior play. Driving range and putting green are open to everyone. $10 donation for adults, $5 donation for kids — all you can play. **LOCAL Life insider tip:** You don't need to bring clubs — the pros at First Tee will lend you a set at no charge.

151 Gumtree Road, HHI • firstteelowcountry.org/about/facility/

Whether you're a foodie looking to explore new culinary delights or a family seeking fun and engaging activities, these carefully curated selections of restaurants and activities have something for everyone.



THAI SMILE CUISINE is Hilton Head's go-to spot for authentic Thai flavors, featuring classics like Pad Thai, drunken noodles and massaman curry. Owned by Chef Kanlaya and her husband Sawat, their dishes bring the essence of Thailand to life with fresh herbs and traditional recipes passed down through generations. **LOCAL Life insider tip:** Inspired by family recipes, bringing Thailand's flavors from kitchen to table.

11 Palmetto Bay Road, HHI · 843-715-3492 · ThaiSmileCuisine.com



OMBRA CUCINA ITALIANA Ombra is dedicated to bringing to you the finest and freshest fish and seafood from local markets. It prides itself on homemade pastas and the finest selection of meat dishes such as veal chops and filet mignon cooked to your perfect temp. They also offer an amazing array of Italian and California wines. **LOCAL Life insider tip:** Ombra hosts special events to entice and engage foodies.

1000 William Hilton Pkwy, Hilton Head · 843-842-5505 · ombrahhi.com



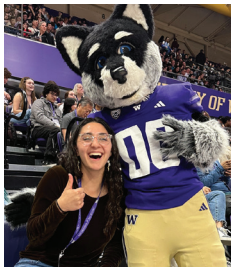
THE SPICE & TEA EXCHANGE OF HILTON HEAD ISLAND We pride ourselves on the quality of our products and premium ingredients. Our spices are freshly mixed in small batches, underscoring the emphasis we place on freshness. Our tea leaves are carefully prepared to maintain their flavor and nutrients, ensuring each cup is a testament to excellence. **LOCAL Life insider tip:** Try Blue Hawaiian, Peach Blossom and Mint Mojito.

Coligny Plaza, #A7, HHI · 843-715-3770 · spiceandtea.com / hiltonhead

EMPOWERING SCHOLARS

Buy your ticket now at HiltonHeadRotary.com


Tania Ramirez


Susana Mogil


Harper Krimm

GRAND PRIZE: $10,000 IN CASH
SECOND PRIZE: VIP VACATION
TOTAL PRIZES VALUE OVER $30,000



Lupita Gomez



Whitney McGuire


Maria Ibarra

Every ticket you purchase helps support local educational programs and scholarships.

Only 800 Tickets to be sold. Draw date in June 2025.

Rotary Hilton Head Island | THE MAGIC OF ROTARY

Check Us Out | Get Involved | Come to a Meeting | Participate

Meetings are held on Thursday at 12:30 pm. at USCB Campus
1 Sand Shark Drive, Hilton Head Island

843.686.4100 HILTONHEADROTARY.ORG

Angels among us



Merritt Field, Marine Corps Air Station Beaufort

The roar of jet engines and flashes of blue and gold electrified the skies over MCAS Beaufort in April. The legendary U.S. Navy Blue Angels unleashed an impressive display of precision, power and pure adrenaline for the biennial MCAS Beaufort Airshow. Captured here by Bluffton photographer Sophia Schade, two F/A-18 Super Hornets locked into the iconic Fortus maneuver — with one jet soaring inverted just 18 inches above the other at a blistering 450 mph. For a few breathtaking seconds, they carved a near-perfect reflection in the sky.

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.



WELCOME HOME

TO THE DISTINCTIVE DINING WINNER

Congratulations to the Dye Clubhouse at Colleton River Club for receiving the prestigious 2025 Golden Fork designation. This esteemed international event featured numerous outstanding submissions, and our selection highlights the exceptional quality of our new dining venue.

The annual award recognizes the finest new or renovated food and beverage establishments in both private and public resorts and clubs. The judging criteria considered several factors, including concept, planning, aesthetics, and overall look and feel.

This remarkable achievement exemplifies our unwavering commitment to enhancing Member satisfaction and experiences.

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ColletonRiverClub.com | 843.836.4466 | info@ColletonRiverClub.com


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COUTURE
Sethi Couture Trunk Show
June 26 & 27 | 10am to 5pm
Thursday & Friday
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