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J MADISON COUNTY
JOURNAL

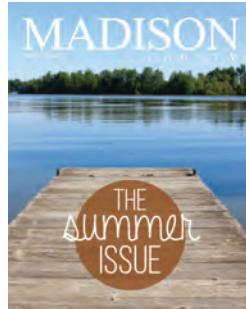
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On the Cover:

Madison County offers relaxing summer views of the Ross Barnett Reservoir.

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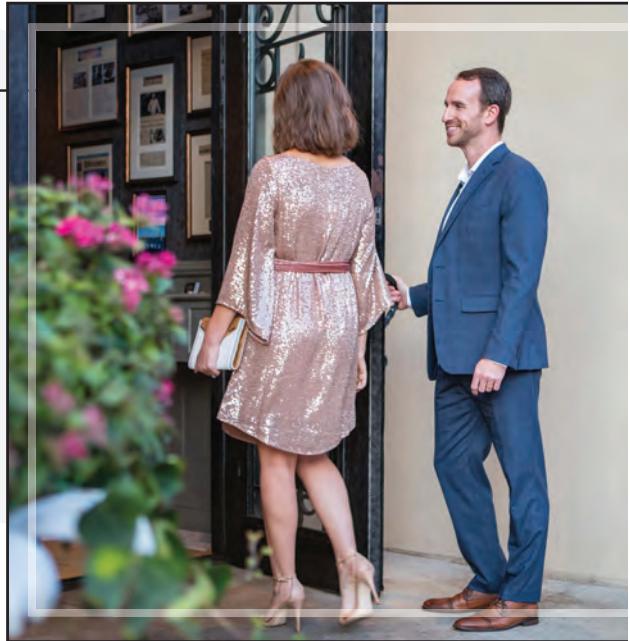


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SUMMER PUNCH

by Duncan Dent

The word “Punch” is a prime subject for numerology, if you believe in such things. It has five letters, P-U-N-C-H, and a batch of the stuff often calls for five ingredients remembered by the maxim: “One of sour, two of sweet, three of strong, four of weak.” This refers to traditional ingredients and their proper proportions.

In fact, I read somewhere and found the fact too juicy to verify further that the word derives from a Sanskrit or Hindi word for five.

The word first appears in English in 1632. It must have seemed like a strange witch’s brew upon first contact and it is not hard to see how easily sailors could fall under its spell. Punch was brought to the West from India by the English East India Company.

Punch was traditionally made with arrack, a liquor distilled on the subcontinent and throughout Southeast Asia using coconut flowers, sugar cane, grain and fruit and is not to be confused with Arak or Araq, the anise-flavored spirit from the Levant.

At this time punch made its way onto ships in time for the Golden Age of Piracy, roughly 1650 to the 1730s. A storied and violent time where ship-to-ship battles were presaged by a communal drinking of grog, a weak rum punch made with citrus fruit and spices, to loosen sailors up for battle. It was also issued in provisions to sailors both for their enjoyment and as a way to prevent scurvy from, the vitamins in the fruit juices incorporated. Similar to the circular nature of human violence throughout history, there is the need for potable water. Now a luxury long taken for granted, at least in most of the U.S., it was usually facilitated through the addition or consumption of sterile alcohol. It is believed that the lawless Wild West was soaked in alcohol with the average American drinking some 90 bottles of 80-proof liquor a year.

Perhaps if we were to return to our numerologist friend he would say the number five could represent

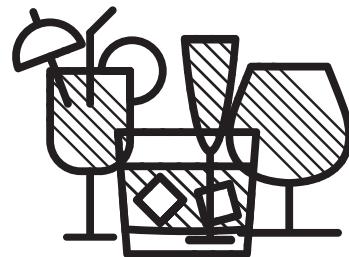
the five fingers required to make a fist, though pirates violent, rum-smoked reputation do sufficient work here to introduce a colorful punch, recorded in 1864 by Edward Abbott in *The English and Australian Cookery Book*, known as the Blow My Skull.

The Blow My Skull is known for its strong and fortified character that calls for a pint of rum, a pint of porter and a half-pint of brandy diluted in two pints of boiling water with lime, lemons and sugar to taste. Which sounds downright responsible compared to its progenitor, the Blow My Skull Off, made with such ingredients as rum, “spirits of wine”, water and cayenne pepper but the real kicker comes from the ingredients of Turkish opium and *Cocculus indicus*, a plant whose fruit is a known source of picrotoxin, a poisonous compound known to also act as a stimulant.

And speaking of blowing heads off and pirates, punch lore has it that arguably the most famous pirate, Edward Teach, known as Black Beard, was famously decapitated upon his capture. After a gruesome turn of events his skull, legend has it, was turned into a silver punch bowl or chalice. Rumors of it being broken out during high society rituals in the Carolinas persist. As recently as the 1930s a North Carolinian Judge claimed to have drunk from the storied vessel.

All this history and carnage is not to suggest a tradition to be repeated but a cycle modern libationeers can be thankful that they are free of. Summer is the perfect time to whip a bowl of the good stuff and share it with friends on a hot summer day.

Below is a recipe that will be sure to please guests and stir conversation, perhaps about history, but will allow you to keep your head and stay away from the exotic narcotics. You can even see the contours of the punch memory tool though the proportions are not exact. For example, the juices are the “weak” ingredient but likely contribute to the “sweet” and “sour” portions as well.



MAKE YOUR OWN

INGREDIENTS:

2 ½ cups of pineapple juice
2 ½ cups of orange juice
1 cup of 151 proof rum
½ cup of dark rum
¼ cup of coconut rum
¼ cup of fresh lime juice
3 tablespoons of grenadine syrup
orange, lemon and lime slices

DIRECTIONS:

Stir pineapple juice, orange juice, 151 proof rum, dark rum, coconut-flavored rum, lime juice, and grenadine syrup together in a punch bowl. Float orange slices, lime slices, and lemon slices in the punch. Freeze a bowl of water overnight and drop that in to cool the whole thing down.



WHAT LIES BENEATH?

JACKSON'S SUBTERRANEAN SECRET

By Duncan Dent

Next time you are at the Mississippi Coliseum for a college basketball game, concert or rodeo remember that a half-mile beneath your feet is the vent of a volcano that has lain dormant for, by best geological estimates, some 70 million years.

David Dockery, state geologist and director of Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality Office of Geology, says that we don't have much to worry about.

"It has been extinct for 70 million so the chance that it erupts is very slim," he said.

"Slim" will probably convey different levels of comfort to different people, but the point is, Jackson erupting does not top the state geologist's list of worries.

Research shows that some experts may have suspected a dormant volcano under Jackson in the early 1800s but we do know E.W. Hilgard

was the first to publish the theory while he was doing a geological mapping of the Jackson area in 1860. Dockery said that the next time anyone uncovered evidence of a volcano was in 1930 when oil drillers drilled into igneous rock, rock formed by cooling magma.

Dockery said other signs have been observed that indicate volcanic activity including a magnetic anomaly and gravity anomaly meaning you "weigh a little more in Jackson." Dockery said that this is no need to throw out your bathroom scale though because these anomalies are only detectable through sophisticated and sensitive devices.

"You probably wouldn't see anything on your scale at home but with a magnetometer, you could pick up some differences or some of the instruments on a plane flying over might be able to detect the anomalies," Dockery said.

Jackson does not have hot springs as a result of the vent, though, he said warm well water is

not hard to find.

Jackson's water is provided by an aquifer that usually comes out between 80 and 90 degrees Fahrenheit. He said that water has been drawn as hot as 102 degrees and that some deeper wells dug into the gas rock have contained 128-degree saltwater. For reference, a hot water heater maintains a temperature of about 120 degrees.

There are actually two vents under Jackson, according to Dockery. The one at the coliseum is the most prominent but Clinton residents beware, there is also one right under the Jackson-Clinton line.

He said these are part of a cluster of volcanic vents. Dockery says that much of Mississippi was part of a seaway that stretched northwest possibly reaching as far as Alaska. During the Cretaceous period (between 145 and 66 million years ago) this seaway was dotted with volcanic islands.



The Jackson Dome would have been one of them, likely inhabited first by flying dinosaurs or Pterosaurs known as Pteranodons. Dockery said it was probably about 420 square miles at its largest.

Dockery said it was likely part of a cluster or chain that includes four other volcanic vents in Washington and Humphreys counties and across the river near Monroe, Louisiana. The one in Humphreys is known as the Midnight Volcano named for the nearby town of Midnight, which recorded fewer than 200 residents in the 2010 census.

Dockery said the first time it hit the popular consciousness was in 1997 when some reports from the state and seismic information recorded by Exxon made it to the desk of Bruce Reid at the Clarion-Ledger. The Ledger printed a story by Reid on January 17, 1997, and Mar-

shal Ramsey drew a volcano-themed political cartoon in the next day's issue. Reid's story was reprinted several times throughout the state and would boil back to the top of the local news cycle in a number of television and radio reports in February and April of that year signaling the release of disaster blockbusters "Dante's Peak" and "Volcano," respectively.

In an article authored by Dockery and two of his colleagues at the Mississippi Office of Geology, John Marble and Jack Henderson, published that September offered a characteristically shaky assurance that the volcano would not erupt.

"The volcanoes of the northern Gulf Province have been silent for some 65 million years or more," they wrote. "There is no reason to believe that any of them will ever erupt again."

The following sentence starts with a "however" that feels like it should have been printed in all caps.

"HOWEVER (our emphasis), there is no more reason to believe they will not."

The article goes on to ensure Jackson about how special it is.

"No other capital city or major population center is situated above an extinct volcano," they wrote.

Various lists online place about 30 to 40 cities worldwide in close proximity to, but not on top of, volcanoes of various sizes and activity. In the United States, you have Honolulu, which is on an island formed by the nearby Diamond Head volcano. Portland and Bend, Oregon, are also close to volcanoes. Dockery says perhaps the closest similarity to Jackson is the extinct volcanoes Arthur's Seat and Castle Hill close to, but not under, Edinburgh, Scotland.



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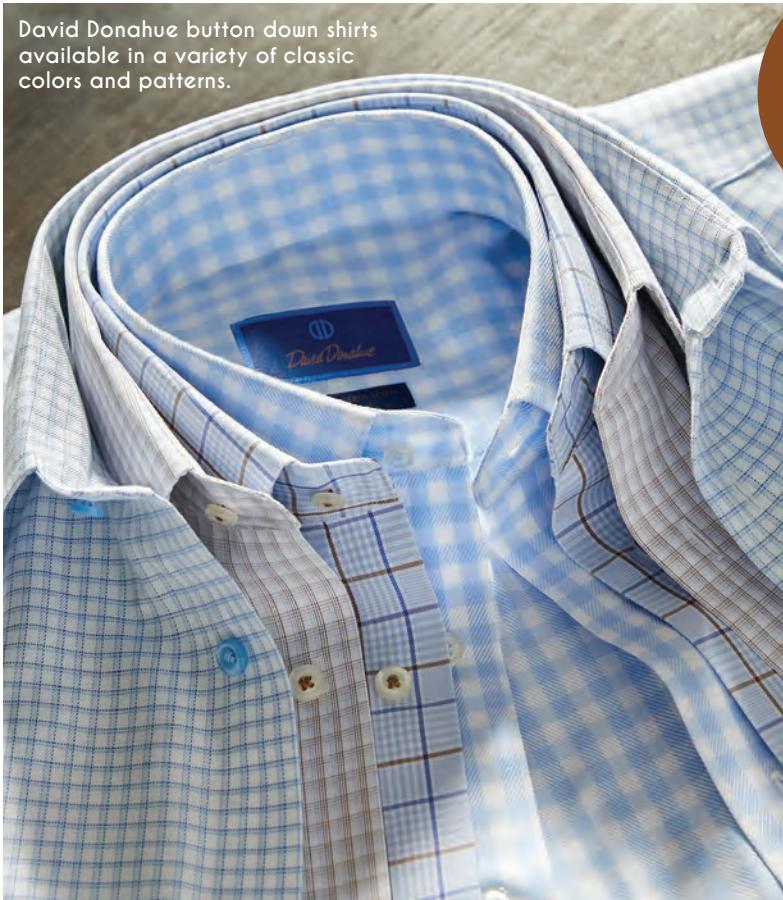
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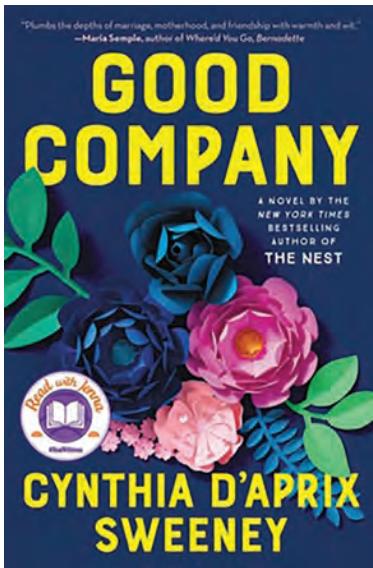
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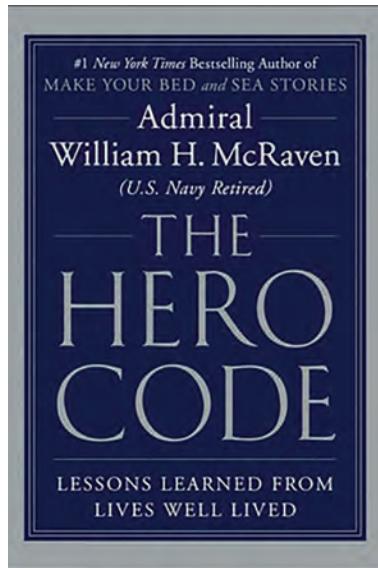
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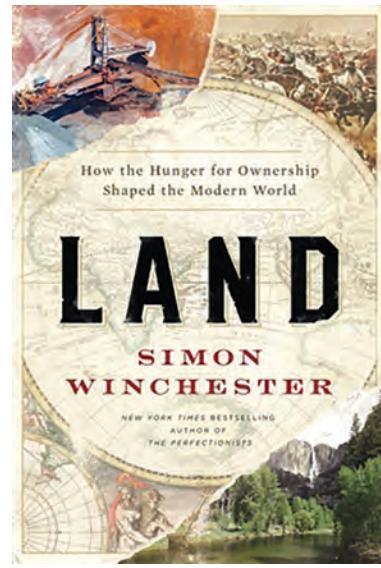
Cynthia D'Aprix Sweeney is the author of the instant New York Times bestseller The Nest. She lives in Los Angeles with her husband and children.



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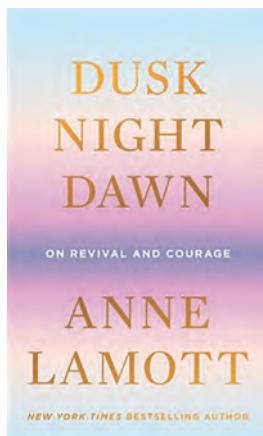
The Hero Code is Admiral McRaven's ringing tribute to the real, everyday heroes he's met over the years, from battlefields to hospitals to college campuses, who are doing their part to save the world.



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Simon Winchester is the acclaimed author of many books, including The Professor and the Madman, The Men Who United the States, The Map That Changed the World, The Man Who Loved China, A Crack in the Edge of the World, and Krakatoa, all of which were New York Times bestsellers and appeared on numerous best and notable lists. In 2006, Winchester was made an officer of the Order of the British Empire (OBE) by Her Majesty the Queen. He resides in western Massachusetts.



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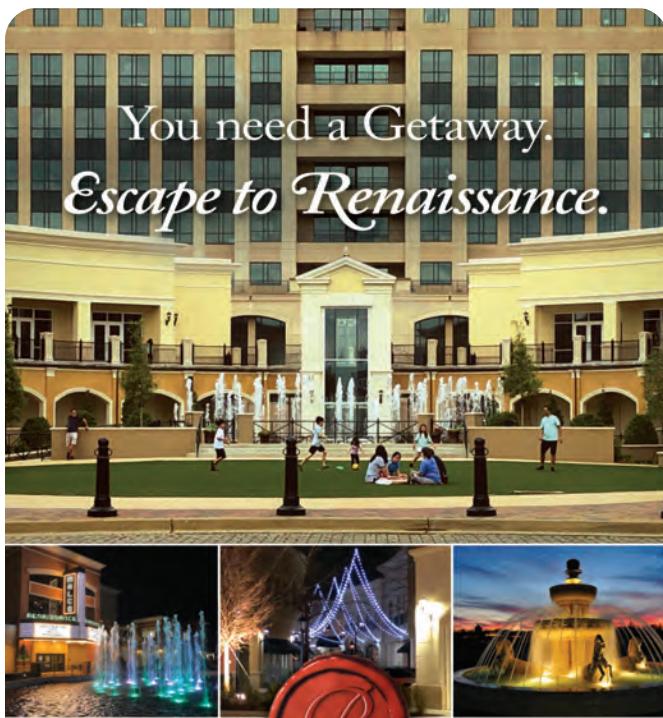
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→ FOOD

MADISON'S *Master Chef*

By Lyndy Berryhill



Madison residents might be surprised to learn the star chef next door earned his baking stripes before he learned long division.

Eleven-year-old Andrew Clark has been baking since he was 4 years old. He has already mastered many tedious French desserts such as chocolate eclairs and whipped mousse, but his creative and colorful macarons remain one of his more popular confections to purchase.

Macarons are brightly colored French sandwich cookies made from egg whites, sugar and almond powder and are usually filled with jam or ganache.

His secret to great macarons is that every batch starts with quality ingredients, patience and following the recipe.

"I don't wing it," Andrew said.

For ingredients, Andrew prefers Bob's Red Mill almond flour, brown eggs and Celebakes Food Color Gel.

"I use gel food coloring because liquid can ruin the consistency," he said.

It is also important everything is blended smoothly and each layer of the macaron is an even thickness and diameter.

He also likes to use a small fan to ensure the macarons dry evenly and on time.

Andrew is fearless when he experiments with flavors and colors, but the exacting chemistry required to bake macarons is nothing to play with.

It is tough for him to estimate how many batches of macarons he has baked to perfect his recipe, but he estimates he has made at least 500.

Andrew bakes out of his Madison home where he lives with his parents, Andy and Kristi Clark, and his little brother, Charlie Clark, 9. The Clarks also have a dog, a cat, and a bearded dragon. His father works in finance and Kristi is a stay-at-home mom.

Ever since he was a toddler, Andrew enjoyed watching the Food Network with his mother on Sundays while she looked for meal inspiration and wrote her weekly grocery list. When he was 4, he asked his mother if he could make a blueberry pie.

Kristi, who is a self-taught cook, was intimidated at first.

"I didn't even know about creaming butter and sugar together, so we really had to start from the beginning," Kristi said. "He really blossomed from there."

She enjoyed preparing simple, healthy meals during the week, but baking was a science. They started small.

"I tried to find simple things that would be easy, then he fell in love with it and started to get pretty advanced," Kristi said.

Kristi recognized his aptitude right away.



"I could just look at his face and tell he loved it," Kristi said.

To accompany Andrew's homeschooled education with some hands-on chemistry and economics, Andrew started baking and selling his confections at the Madison Farmer's Market.

Andrew's products immediately garnered raves. He routinely sold out.

"It kind of snowballed and took off," Kristi said.

Multiple people sent Krisi information about how Andrew could apply to be on a kid's cooking show. Out of thousands of applicants, Andrew was a finalist for one of his favorite shows. This past December, he was featured on the ninth season of Food Network's "Kids Baking Championship."

Although he did not win, Andrew came home to a successful side-business and a backlog of orders.

Now that he is back at home after weeks of filming in Los Angeles, Andrew's life is more predictable.

After the Clarks are finished with schoolwork, Kristi spends her afternoons catering to her two young children, taking them

to lacrosse meets and taekwondo practice. She also manages Andrew's growing number of baking orders.

One weekend in late March, Andrew was baking a large wedding cake. Cakes are his most popular orders, besides his macarons.

His best macaron customer, Kelly Olsh, buys his macarons at least once a month.

Olsh said she was shocked a child so young could make such high-quality macarons from scratch.

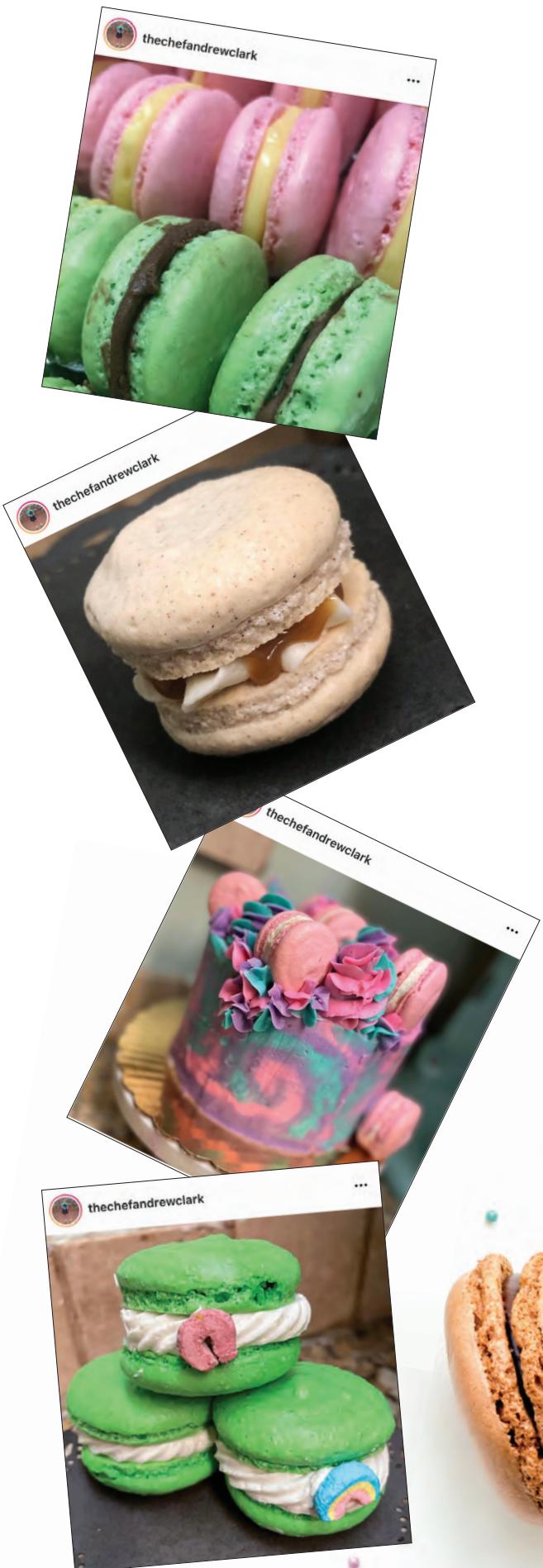
"They were so good," Olsh said. "Frankly, I wasn't expecting that (from an 11-year-old)."

Olsh is consistently impressed with each macaron's uniform quality and Andrew's creativity.

"(Andrew) puts care into each one... His passion for it is evident," Olsh said. "Not only do they taste good, but they look good."

Olsh said, above the macarons, she is always impressed by Andrew's youth and professionalism.

"I hope he continues to grow and I think we will see exceptional things from him," Olsh said.



Andrew's STRAWBERRY-LEMONADE MACARONS

MACARON SHELLS:

3 egg whites (room temperature)
 $\frac{1}{4}$ cup sugar
 1 tsp
 1 cup almond flour
 1 $\frac{3}{4}$ cup powdered sugar
 1 tsp salt
 3 Tbs dehydrated strawberries
 $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp vanilla
 Red Gel food coloring
 Yellow gel food coloring
 2 sticks of room temperature butter
 4 cups of powdered sugar
 Slash of heavy whipping cream
 Red gel food coloring
 Yellow food coloring
 1 tsp Lemon juice
 $\frac{1}{2}$ tbs of Lemon zest
 Powdered dehydrated Strawberries
 Thin banana slices

- Before you mix, clean the bowl you will use with a cut lemon and wipe out with a paper towel. Vinegar can also be used.
- With a hand mixer, whip egg whites and salt until white and foamy.
- Slowly add sugar in 3 batches while whipping as you add sugar
- Mix until stiff peaks form (do not over whip)
- In a food processor, combine almond flour, powdered sugar, strawberries, and salt and blend until soft and combined.
- Sift into a bowl.
- Separate the egg mixture into two bowls
- Add $\frac{1}{2}$ of the dry ingredients to each egg mixture
- Add yellow food color to one and red to the other
- Fold in the dry ingredients with a spatula in 3 batches being careful not to over mix
- Keep mixing until you can make a "figure 8" without breaking while it drips off the spatula
- Fill piping bags; one with yellow, one with red. Drop both piping bags in a large bag with the "Wilton Round" tip in it
- Pipe macarons onto a baking sheet lined with parchment paper, you can use a template or just pipe and hold for 2 counts
- Once all piped out; gently rotate while tapping trays 2-3 times to pop any air bubbles.
- Let pans of macarons sit until a "skin" forms; you will be able to gently rub your finger across the top of the shell
- Bake for 17 minutes in a 300 degree oven.
- Let macarons cool on the tray until they come off with ease.

BUTTERCREAM FILLING:

2 sticks of room temperature butter
 4 cups of powdered sugar
 Slash of heavy whipping cream
 Red gel food coloring
 Yellow food coloring
 1 tsp Lemon juice
 $\frac{1}{2}$ tbs Lemon zest
 Pulsed into powder dehydrated
 Strawberries
 Banana slices

- Cream the butter in a stand mixer until whiteish
- Add sugar
- Add a pinch of salt
- Add heavy cream
- Blend until white and creamy for at least 5 minutes.
- Take out half of the buttercream and put it in a separate bowl. Set aside.
- Add strawberry powder and a drop of red food coloring
- Mix until the desired color. Set aside.
- Add lemon juice, lemon zest and a drop of yellow gel to second buttercream mixture
- Mix until the desired color
- Put the buttercream in separate piping bags and then into one large bag with a Wilton 1M tip
- Pipe a circle around one side of a macaron shell leaving the center open
- Place a banana slice in the center of the shell
- Top with the second shell



THE Colorful World OF SANDERS MCNEAL

By Lyndy Berryhill



Photos by Chris Todd

A story is behind every canvas Sanders McNeal paints. Those stories are told one brushstroke at a time.

Each work of art is a memorable souvenir that her decades as a successful local artist cannot let her forget.

"Each one has such a connection," McNeal said.

A lifelong career artist, McNeal is a nationally recognized artist who is most known for her vivid landscapes, still lifes and portraits. She has earned countless awards and honors for her four-decade career.

In 2008, McNeal was named the Honored Artist by the National Museum of Women in the Arts. She was the Commissioned Artist for the USA International Ballet Competition in 2006. She was also awarded the Governor's Artist Achievement Award for Excellence in the Visual Arts in 1999, to name a few of her more notable honors.

But before she was one of the most celebrated and sought-after artists in the state, McNeal struggled to convince her elementary school teachers of her art's value.

McNeal spent her early years as a self-

professed Delta nomad where she learned to read. She was born in Greenwood, but primarily raised in Indianola.

Instead of writing out the words from the teacher's blackboard, McNeal opted to translate the words into pictures to make it easier to understand.

"I didn't really see the need to read and write because I could draw...you didn't need the written word to understand a picture," she said. "I think they thought I was a little slow because I chose not to learn to read. To me, that was the way to be creative."

Her teachers were perplexed, but her mother, Pat Adams Sanders, was understanding. Instead of chastising McNeal for not following the rules, she took her daughter aside and read to her every night.

They read the classics such as Edgar Allan Poe and Henry Wadsworth Longfellow.

"Words are like colors and they paint the picture," Pat told her daughter.

The budding artist caught on immediately, and the motherly guidance became her

artistic philosophy before she even knew it.

"I can still hear her read 'Annabel Lee' to me," McNeal said.

She still recites memorized stanzas from Longfellow's "Song of Hiawatha."

"On the shores of Gitche Gumee, Of the shining Big-Sea-Water," McNeal begins, then laughs.

Later, her family would buy her books about art and artists to keep her interest.

"Some kids want to play ball. I went to the arts," she said.

The love of poetry stuck.

"I really loved the cadence of everything and I wanted my art to reflect that," she said. "I wanted my paintings to have a cadence, a rhythm, a song, that they could give to the viewer."

After her father retired from the Mississippi National Guard, her mother got a job working as a nurse in Jackson. Her father got a sales position at the local Sears.

The family moved to the Belhaven neighborhood when McNeal was in ninth grade,



and McNeal later graduated from Murrah High School.

"I loved the teachers there," McNeal said. "The art teacher there helped point me in the right direction."

Her high school art teacher and her English teacher encouraged her to challenge herself. After graduation, McNeal later earned her bachelor's degree from Mississippi University for Women in 1976 in three years.

McNeal's art education has been a lifelong pursuit. She applied to study with a successful pastel artist, Daniel Greene, in upstate New York in the summer after graduation.

"He had this huge barn studio. It was an incredible place," McNeal said.

Greene, who helped McNeal master pastels and hone her portraiture technique, was a significant influence on her art.

"We got to be really close, and we just painted — it was marvelous," McNeal said.

From that point on, McNeal regularly preferred pastels for commissioned portraits.

"He just opened my eyes to pastels," McNeal said.

McNeal never let herself get too comfortable with one style or technique. She was always looking for a challenge.

She completed an intensive three-month figure study class in Argenton-les-Vallées, a small village in Western France.

Since she had spent all of her artistic time in a studio, McNeal jumped at the chance to study plein air (painting outdoors) in France.

She spent five weeks with a class of 30 other artists. She studied in plein air for an entire summer in Florence, Italy, with Marc Dalessio.

"He really gave me some great pointers for plein air work," McNeal said. "I give those ideas out today (to other artists) because they were so helpful."

In between painting, McNeal walked the halls of some of the most famous art museums in the world. The experience changed her life.

"I could see art that I had only seen in

art books. It was a spiritual experience," she said. "It was a really special summer."

In Jackson, McNeal moved to several private studios before she settled in above Hal and Mal's, where she worked for 10 years, taking commissions and designing on the side to make ends meet.

When she was not painting in her studio, she battled the elements to capture the landscapes of Mississippi with the same techniques she used to capture the ancient architecture in Italy.

Plein air is not always glamourous and relaxing because an artist must bring their own garbage bags and water to drink, and — depending on how rural the site will be — toilet paper.

"You're going out into the elements.... Studio versus plein air painting is a whole different ball game," she said. "Studio is a very controlled environment. Plein air is more volatile and tedious."

Besides being on the Sun's time, every brush and paint pot must be carted around with everything else.

"Be limited, limit what you can there," was the advice Dalessio gave her.

Since she paints in oil, the paints do not dry out as fast. She limits herself to very few brushes and paints, mixing primary shades when necessary.

"Most of the colors I can make with a limited palette," she said.

If McNeal does not have her easel with her when inspiration strikes, she has a camera.

Traveling through the Delta with her husband, John McNeal, she would often get him to pull aside for a quick shot to paint later.

Once, McNeal was on a trip in Utah with friends, Jan and Lawrence Farrington, when she suddenly asked to stop the car.

"All of a sudden she just screamed, 'Stop!'" Jan Farrington said.

The other passengers thought McNeal might be carsick. She actually leaped out of the car to photograph a red tractor against the wintery mountain backdrop.







“Some things you kind of just want to hold on to,” McNeal said of the scene. “It was just stunning, the contrast.”

After McNeal finished painting her image, she gifted the large canvas to the Farringtons, who fell in love with the memory it brought back from that winter trip.

“It turned out to be spectacular,” Jan Farrington said.

The painting remains a family treasure.

“That painting just brought us more close,” McNeal said.

The Farringtons first met McNeal and her husband through local charity events.

Jan Farrington said she introduced herself

to McNeal and asked her for a painting to auction to benefit the American Heart Association. The event later grew into the foundation’s largest fundraiser in the state.

“We loved her art from the very beginning,” Jan said. “She had so much talent and was always so generous with her time and effort.”

The couples became close friends through their shared love of art and philanthropy, becoming McNeal’s collectors as well.

McNeal credits her success to her faithful collectors, many of whom became introduced to her at charity auctions.

It comforts her to know where her paint-



ings end up, and why the collectors chose one of her paintings.

"They're like my children," McNeal said of her works. "It's an honor that somebody wants something that I created... That has always been my goal: I want people to look at something and say, 'I want to make that a part of my life.'"

McNeal moved her studio from Jackson to Flora in 2017 after she and her husband moved to a farm in Flora. She renovated a building at 4841B Main Street in downtown Flora for her art space named Studio on Main.

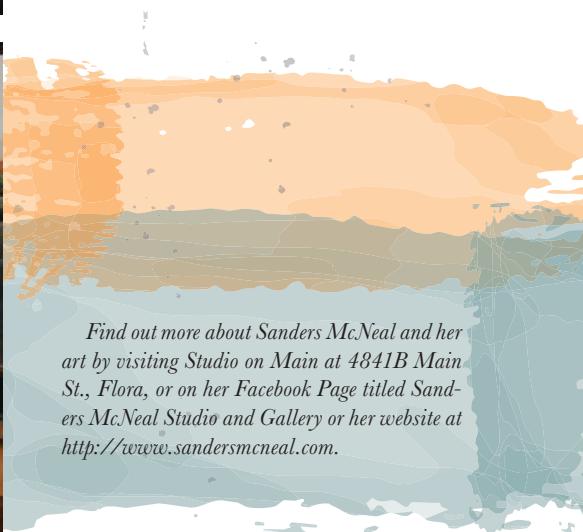
"It has got a very warm and welcoming feel on Main Street," she said.

McNeal said she likes the evening light and the storefront window that allows shoppers to see inside.

"I felt like this is where I needed to be," McNeal said.

The decades of McNeal's artistic career have sailed by too fast for her. She often wished she had journaled more to record the small moments.

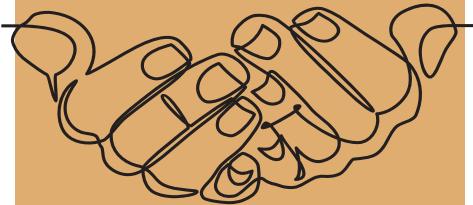
"It has been an incredible journey I've had," McNeal said. "I really feel blessed that I have been able to do this... to have someone else love what you do, is probably one of God's greatest gift."



Find out more about Sanders McNeal and her art by visiting Studio on Main at 4841B Main St., Flora, or on her Facebook Page titled Sanders McNeal Studio and Gallery or her website at <http://www.sandersmcneal.com>.

SECOND H A N D MADISON

By Emma Ellard



Colorful cardigans, charming ceramics, hand-carved furniture, your new favorite necklace; hidden gems stud the shelves at the antique and consignment stores.

Shopping in secondhand stores carries with it a special sort of magic: once you step through the doors, you become an archaeologist, a treasure hunter, brushing through troves of hidden gems to find a one-of-a-kind item (or five) to take home. When you leave, you can't help but feel like you've left a little richer.

The cherry on top? Shoppers can find unique, quality items at unparalleled prices.

Along the stretch from Ridgeland to Madison, Highway 51 is a second hand mecca, lined with enough antique and consignment stores to satisfy any shopaholic. Starting just off the highway -- at Antique Aly, across from the Ridgeland offices of the Madison County Magazine -- and winding all the way into the heart of Madison -- at Pette's Antiques -- let's take an "antique road show" down Highway 51 and experience all that the route has to offer.

ANTIQUE MALL OF THE SOUTH

367 Highway 51
Ridgeland, MS 39157

For the McGarrh ladies, the antique business runs in the family. Mother-daughter duo Donna and Aly McGarrh own and operate Antique Aly; just down the road, Bobbie McGarrh, mother-in-law to Donna and grandmother to Aly, manages the Antique Mall of the South.

The Antique Mall of the South is an impressively vast vendor mall, owned and operated by Joyce Clingan. The spacious warehouse, divided into vendor booths, is mostly plain and unadorned; the real attraction is the wide selection of vintage babbles, art, accessories, and furniture within its walls.

Bobbie McGarrh says much of the appeal of these items comes from their exceptional prices. Shoppers can find unique items at unmatched markdowns, and if they're still not happy with the price on the tag, they can work to strike a deal that makes every-

one happy. "We're going to call the vendor, and we're going to stick up for the customer," says McGarrh. "And we may have to bat it back and forth, because we want to sell, they want to sell, they want to buy, so let's make it a deal for all three. That's part, I think, of the attraction of some of it."

It's true that many avid antiquarians love the thrill of the chase. Searching for a steal keeps them on their toes, and it often profers pleasant surprises. For others, antique shopping is simply a way to unwind.

"We've got a lot of people come in and say it's just for mental therapy," says McGarrh. "They come in, it's wide, it's big enough, and it brings back a lot of memories, some of the things that are in here."

Whether shoppers are on a treasure hunt or a day trip, though, they're sure to find remarkable goods at great deals at the Antique Mall of the South.



PETTE'S ANTIQUES

984 Highway 51
Madison, MS 39110

Pette Montgomery and husband Jim have owned and operated Pette's Antiques for 30 years.

The store was converted into an antique shop from an old MEA clinic, so many of the pieces are tucked away into small rooms. Through each doorway, shoppers can find refined antique pieces: resplendent wood furniture abounds, and shoppers can spot classy accents like small gold sculptures or 18th century art. Pieces range in antiquity, from vintage finds a few decades old, to bona fide artifacts from the 17- or 1800s.

The Montgelomerys hand select their store's inventory, finding unique items from auctions, individual sellers, and international marketplaces.

"You never know what you're going to find," says Pette. "That's what's the great part about it."

Sometimes, even Pette and Jim run into a pleasant surprise when scouting for inventory. The pair delights in stumbling upon eclectic items for their store. "You can buy it, just because you want to!" exclaims Jim. "And then you hope you sell it! You know, it's fun to do." Pointing at a set of small cannons decorating the corner of the store, he remarks, "I mean, she wouldn't let me buy those and take them home. So, why not?"

It's clear from the store's quality and warmth that the Montgelomerys operate Pette's Antiques with genuine enjoyment. "After 30 years," says Pette, "we do it strictly because we love it."

ANTIQUE ALY

294 Commerce Park Dr,
Ridgeland, MS 39157

Upon walking through the doors of Antique Aly, shoppers are greeted with a collection of charming, bizarre curiosities: a display of waving skeletons, a faded mid-century jukebox, a full suit of armor beside the cash register.

Antique Aly is filled with items ranging from the nostalgic -- like vinyl records and vintage tea sets -- to the offbeat -- like cartoon clocks and ornate model ships.

The space is subdivided into booths, each filled with rare finds and vintage curios brought in by various vendors. "I think we have about 30-40 different vendors, so it's almost like 40 different storefronts under one roof," says Aly McGarrh. Aly owns and operates the eponymous Antique Aly with her mother, Donna.

Each piece in the booths has a rich heritage -- that's what makes the shopping experience in antique stores so special. "There's just stories with every piece that comes through here, and every piece reminds somebody of something from their childhood, or growing up, or a family member. I just love the stories that we get when people come in and shop."

Maybe it's the nostalgia, or maybe it's the warm and open environment fostered by the McGarrhs, but either way, stories are often swapped within the store. "We'll have vendors and customers that sit and hang out and tell stories," says Aly.

From Antique Aly's storied inventory to its welcoming air, it makes sense that Aly and Donna McGarrh love what they do -- and it certainly shows.

PALLADIAN CONSIGN & DESIGN

637 US-51
Ridgeland, MS 39157

"Come in, we're awesome," says the sign on the front door of Palladian Consign & Design. Through the doors is a refreshing space, illuminated with natural light and lined with charming furniture and decor.

"The main thing, I think, that sets us apart from other stores is that we set things in little vignettes," says owner and operator Kay Fagan. "You see the rug, you see the coffee table, you see how the coffee table is arranged, you see the chairs around it, the end tables, the lamps -- so you can kind

REPEAT STREET

242 Highway 51
Ridgeland, MS 39157

For such a spacious building, Repeat Street is impressively saturated with color. Kaleidoscopic statuettes greet you at the door; retro signs punctuate the store's interior; vinyl records dot the walls, climbing up to the rafters of the vast warehouse. Even all of the doors are painted with bright hues and patterns.

Owned and operated by Michele Austin, Repeat Street is perhaps the metro area's most popular consignment store, bringing in eclectic customers to take home even more eclectic treasures. The shop offers everything from plaid shirts to prom dresses, kitchen wares to kitten heels -- and its inventory is updated all the time.

Shoppers at Repeat Street can walk several feet over, too, to the Storehouse, an artisan mall that serves as an extension of Repeat Street. Storehouse manager James Briggs says, "We have a lot of talented people in the area; we're giving them an outlet to sell their merchandise."

In both stores, the troves of treasure to be found can feel endless. "Sometimes you have to come back twice, just to go through and walk it once, then go through again, just to see all the pieces," says Briggs. "It's not a big building, but we have a lot in this space."

Shoppers often find surprises on the shelves of Repeat Street and the Storehouse; they're sure to find a little adventure, too.



Each antique and consignment store along Highway 51 offers one-of-a-kind items. Perhaps even more extraordinary than the secondhand goods the shops sell, though, is the genuine friendship between their owners.

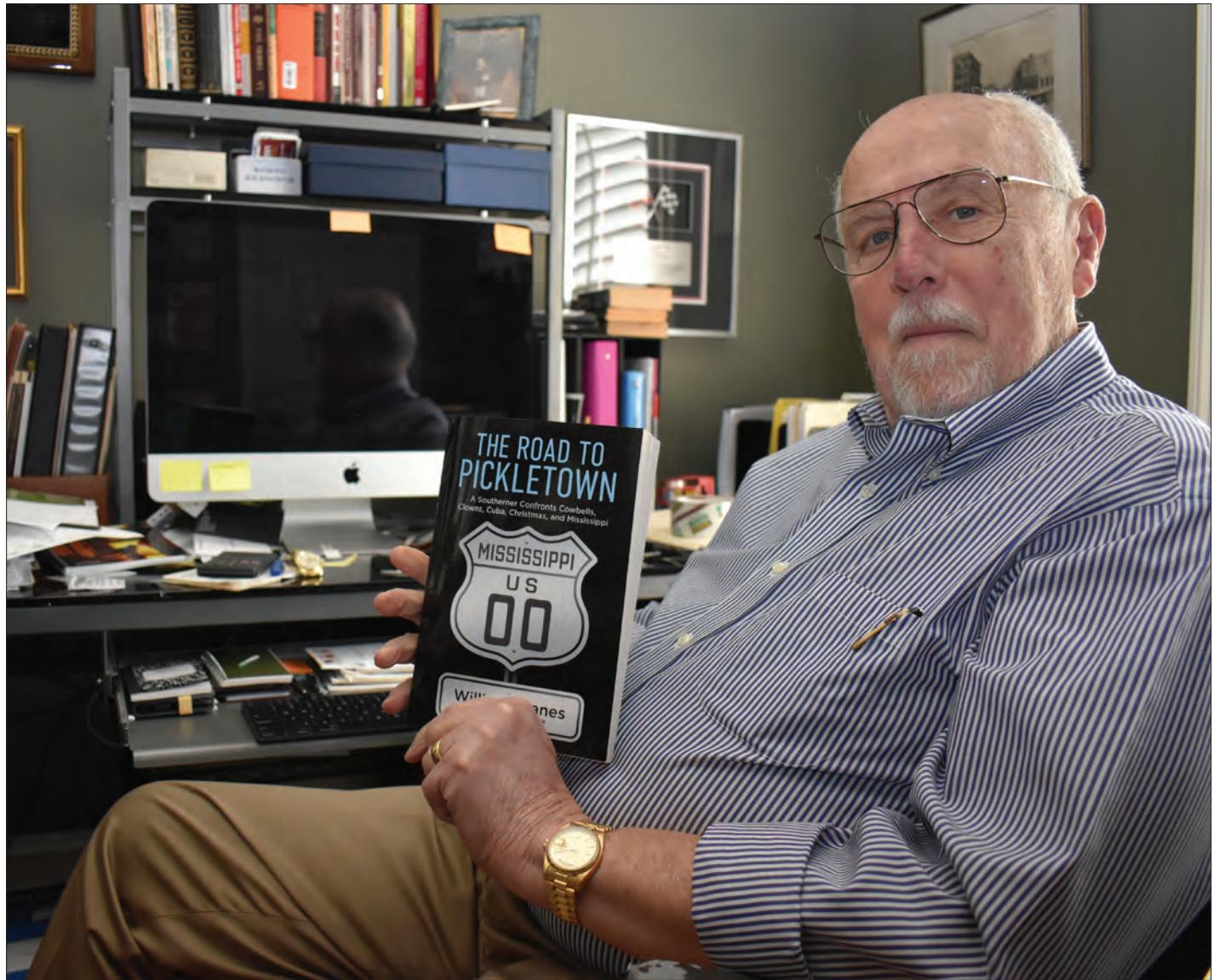
In every store, the owner will likely recommend other nearby antique stores to shoppers. They speak highly of each other, and they recount spending time with each other off the clock. "We don't feel like we compete," says Kay Fagan. "What's at Bloomingdales isn't here, and what's here isn't at [Antique] Aly's."

Customers at any of the stores are sure to encounter friendly faces, fascinating history, and a little adventure -- and, of course, a trove of secondhand treasures. And, if they pay attention, they might even see firsthand the love and community that make the secondhand scene along Highway 51 so special.

of imagine what it might look like in your house."

For more detail-oriented shoppers, Palladian's myriad assortment of baubles and art can spark the imagination, too.

"We have some Waterford glasses that are \$240 for 5 -- you know, little treasures like that that you can find," Fagan says. Palladian's intentional design goes a long way in making the shopping experience comfortable, accessible, and welcoming.



WILLIAM JEANES

sits at his work station holding a copy of his recently released book "The Road to Pickletown: A Southerner Confronts Cowbells, Clowns, Cuba, Christmas, and Mississippi."

'THE ROAD TO PICKLETOWN' IS A FUN RIDE WITH FORMER CAR AND DRIVER PUBLISHER, EDITOR WILLIAM JEANES

by Scott Hawkins

The Road to Pickletown: A Southerner Confronts Cowbells, Clowns, Cuba, Christmas, and Mississippi" is the alluring title of the new book by William Jeanes, a former Car and Driver, and Road & Track magazine publisher and editor, who now resides in Ridgeland with his wife, Susan, and their cat, Charles.

"At a minimum, you'll learn where Pickletown, Mississippi, is and how it earned its name," William writes in the introduction to his book.

Indeed, readers do learn the origin of Pickletown's name and that it had nothing to do with pickles of the brined and edible variety, but readers never learn exactly where the now-extinct Pickletown was located.

The precise location of Pickletown, however, is not as important as the road traveled to get to Pickletown.

Life is a journey, the saying goes, and the compilation of writings from Jeanes' storied career takes readers on a journey to the unknown destination of Pickletown that is as fun to travel as a barrel of monkeys.

Don't tell Jeanes that, though. The octogenarian wordsmith would likely tell you those old sayings are just a bunch of clichés that should be avoided "like the plague." That is Jeanes' advice to writers seeking the "inside dope on how to write good" in the book's entry titled "Familiarity Breeds Clichés."

The column, originally published in the Northside Sun, a Jackson weekly newspaper, in 2013 then goes on to shower readers with every cliché under the sun.

"The Road to Pickletown" was published March 24 and is a 280-page paperback compilation of writings from Jeanes' career, mostly consisting of columns that have appeared in the Northside Sun. The book also includes entries of works Jeanes has published in Sports Illustrated, The Saturday Evening Post, Playboy and other publications. The book is divided into sections including "Life in Mississippi," "History and "Nostalgia," "Commentary," "Travel and Leisure," "Entertainment," and "People."

The book is available on Amazon for \$14.99.

Jeanes' clichés column has since reached legendary status with writers and non-writers alike.

Political satirist and journalist P.J. O'Rourke, who alluded to the cliché column in his foreword to "The Road to Pickletown," said the "Familiarity Breeds Clichés" article is his favorite piece in the book, "If I had to pick an absolute favorite."

O'Rourke grew up in a family emersed in the automotive industry in Toledo, Ohio, and was an avid reader of Car and Driver and Road & Track when he was growing up.

"I have been aware of William as a writer for longer than I have been aware of him as a person," O'Rourke said. "I've always been a big fan. He is just a great storyteller. He's got that Southern thing going."

Jeanes was born Feb. 19, 1938, in Corinth to Doris and Harrell Jeanes, and in the book's section titled "Life in Mississippi," Jeanes includes writings that are about his time growing up in Corinth where he recalls his humiliating first-day of school and his childhood dog named "Dopey."

"Dopey knew two tricks," Jeanes writes. "One was chasing us for miles across the town of Corinth every time we loaded up the family car and went anywhere. The other was chasing us back home again."

Such entries lift the veil separating the past from the present and give readers a glimpse of a world that is disappearing.

"I just like the sense of place," O'Rourke said of the selection of writings featured in "The Road to Pickletown." "I think America is losing touch with its sense of place."

O'Rourke said Midwesterners and Southerners have much in common not only in that loss of sense of place but in other regards as well.

"I don't know what it is with Midwesterners but we've got a tremendous amount in common with Southerners except for two major Midwestern failings," O'Rourke said. "One is we can't tell a good story and the other is our cooking is terrible. Aside from that, the Midwest is the South-North."

Jeanes' parents moved from Corinth to Jackson when he was going into the seventh grade, and he attended Bailey Junior High School before going to Central High School where he graduated.

"The Road to Pickletown" includes a piece titled "A Genuine Giants Cap," originally published in Sports Illustrated on May 26, 1986. In that entry, Jeanes writes about an early experience after moving to Jackson where he was the only New York Giants fan. He writes that he became a Giants fan because of "John Bush Murdock's baseball cap."

Murdock was a recent high school graduate who was a spectator at a Corinth High School baseball game Jeanes attended. Murdock was wearing "a genuine New York Giants baseball cap — a black wool wonder with interlocking letters NY embroidered in orange on it," Jeanes writes in the entry titled "A Genuine Giants Cap." "The underside of the bill was green, with white plastic material separating the wool from the tan leather sweatband. This white separator was visible in all the color photos of big leaguers in Sport magazine and was a tip-off that John Bush's hat was no-fooling real."

Jeanes suffered for his Giants fandom even after the Giants moved to San Francisco. Later, a grown Jeanes was thrilled to find his own New York Giant's "no-fooling real" baseball cap, which he still has today.

After graduating from Central High School, Jeanes attended Millsaps where he played varsity baseball, was a member of the Millsaps Players and majored in both history and English before earning a bachelor's degree in English. He worked as a bartender at Grand Lake, Colorado, during summers in college.

After graduating from college, Jeanes went on to work for the family business, which was a Detroit Diesel Allison distributorship but soon decided to aim for the sky in his career. In the summer of 1960, he went to Officer Candidate School at the U.S. Navy's facility in New Port,

Rhode Island, where he graduated with Class 46 in June 1960, before serving as an escort officer at the Naval War College and then entering pre-flight training in Pensacola.

"Overcome by the magic of flying, he transferred to pilot training," Jeanes' autobiography handout states. "This turned out, on the one hand, to be a disaster. On the other, it was one of the best things that could have happened to him."

Jeanes chalks it up to what today would be called "ADD" and writes, "In retaliation for his having wasted so much of its time and money, the Navy assigned him to the aircraft carrier USS Intrepid (CVA-11), homeported in Norfolk, Virginia."

Jeanes was officer of the deck when the Intrepid picked up astronaut Scott Carpenter from the water after he became the second U.S. astronaut to orbit the Earth.

After 43 months of active duty, Jeanes was honorably discharged from the Navy and returned to Mississippi taking jobs with the family business and later jobs that took him to New York and Nassau, Bahamas, before returning to Mississippi where he married and took a purchasing agent's job with a major truck line.

Jeanes' career accelerated on his return to Mississippi when he co-founded and participated in racing with "America's Most Peculiar Racing Team" Bolus & Snopes that competed in Sports Car Club of America amateur racing.

"We had a press kit at a time when probably there were 10 or 12 teams in the country that had press kits, and they were all professionals," said Jeanes, on a recent spring afternoon while sitting on a white sofa while sipping iced water in a living room in the family home in the Dinsmore subdivision of Ridgeland that he said Charles the cat begrudgingly shares with Susan and him. "No amateur teams had one, and we took a humorous approach. We had a mule named Dick Johnson for our mascot and things like that and it caught on. I got job offers from both Motortrend and Car and Driver and was 34 years old. I was not a kid. I left the family business and went off to New York and never really looked back."

Jeanes recently completed writing "Bolus & Snopes: The Final History" to be included in the program for the 2021 Amelia Island Concours d'Elegance car show scheduled for May 20-23 at Amelia Island, Florida.

In the piece that spans several pages and includes pictures of team members with their Chevrolet Camaro and Ford Shelby GT350 Mustang race cars back in the day, Jeanes recounts some of the tales and accomplishments, embellished and hyped, of the legendary team.

"The racing team of Bolus & Snopes, 'America's Most Peculiar Racing Team,' never told the whole truth about much of anything. Unless you count its timeless motto, 'Anything worth doing is worth doing to excess,'" the final history begins.

Famous Bolus & Snopes team exploits detailed include such legendary stories as the



team's founding in Sam Scott's backyard in October 1970: "The pair drank two or three martinis (historians continue to quibble over the precise quantity) and they decided to field a club racing effort in 1971. ..."

With big decisions such as founding Bolus & Snopes, however, come big consequences.

"The decision to go racing — on a budget so small that they would have needed borrowed money to get into the poorhouse — proved fateful," Jeanes writes. "It can be argued that it led indirectly to two divorces, one each for Jeanes and Scott. ..."

Then, there was the announcement in the team's first newsletter that the team mascot, a sorrel mule named Dick Johnson, had been lost or stolen while in transit from Vaughn, Miss. — World Headquarters of the shadowy B&S empire — to Wentzville, Mo."

Never fear, Amelia Island Concours d'Elegance attendees who grab this year's program and read the "Bolus & Snopes: Final History" will learn how it all worked out for the legendary team and their mascot, Dick Johnson.

Jeanes' press kit materials for Bolus & Snopes in the early 1970s landed him the Feature Editor position at Car and Driver in New York, on the recommendation of famed automotive writer Brock Yates, who was a Bolus & Snopes fan.

O'Rourke said he first met Jeanes while hanging around the Car and Driver office in New York "as a form of relief" when O'Rourke worked at National Lampoon magazine.

"The work was actually a lot of fun to do," O'Rourke said of working for National Lampoon. "The office was a living hell. You get a whole bunch of humorists together and it is like a sack full of cats."

O'Rouke said the Car and Driver atmosphere was different.

"I used to go hang out at the Car and Driver office because it was an extremely pleasant place to hang out," O'Rourke said. "There were a lot of interesting people hanging around, Brock Yates and Bruce McCall was a columnist there at the time, and I don't remember who all else, but we would hang out there and then there was a little bar around the corner where everybody from Car and Driver went after work called Brews."

During his three and a half year stint as Feature Editor at Car and Driver, Jeanes also wrote for Autoweek and covered such events as the Daytona 500, the Monaco Grand Prix and Evel Knivel's failed Snake River Canyon jump.

Jeanes worked with and befriended not only O'Rourke and Yates but other famed auto writers and editors as well, including Leon Mandel and David E. Davis Jr., who later moved on to the advertising world as executive vice president and creative director of Campbell-Ewald in Detroit, which was Chevrolet's ad agency and included Goodyear and AC Delco among its clients.

Davis lured Jeanes to work for Campbell-Ewald in 1975, where he met Susan Smith, whom he married in 1983.

"I had read his work and then we worked together at the advertising agency," said Susan, who was initially attracted to Jeanes because of his humor. Susan is the only woman to have served as creative director at five automotive magazines and has a close working relationship with William.

"We worked together as freelancers and we also worked for Car and Driver and a number of car magazines, and I am always surprised when people say, 'Oh, I could never work with my husband or my wife,'" Susan said. "It just seems like, 'Well how can you be married to somebody that you couldn't work with?'"

Jeanes worked in the advertising world for nine years racking up awards, climbing the corporate ladder and traveling the world to service accounts, before leaving the advertising business to become a freelance writer.

In 1987, he as named editor in chief of Car and Driver.

"When they hired me, I said, 'I've got one thing I want to do,'" Jeanes said. "I want to

Top: The Bolus & Snopes entry in the legendary Cannonball. The team included a chef and crossed the U.S. In 45.6 hours (1974).

Bottom: Bob Mitchell, left, and William Jeanes celebrate the team's first win at a 1971 Road Atlanta SCCA race.



bring my wife in. Is that a problem?' And they said, 'No. In fact, you can make her the head of the nepotism committee.'"

Jeanes and Susan split their time while working in Michigan and New York by spending time in a condo they owned on the Mississippi Gulf Coast, a part of the world both of them said they love.

Jeanes said after a few years as editor and publisher of Road & Track and Car and Driver and as a Group Publisher for Hachette Filipacchi Magazines, he decided he was burned out and took the company's offer to create a classic car magazine, which he did for a few years before it was discontinued.

Jeanes' final automotive magazine venture was being the founding editor of AMI Auto World Weekly, backed by American Media Inc.

"My old boss at Hachette with a group of investors had bought American Media, which was National Enquirer and those hideous things, and they got into their head that they wanted to start a supermarket car tabloid," Jeanes said. "We did it in Pass Christian with a staff of about 20, and I like to say we were the only weekly that came out twice a month."

Steven Cole Smith, an automotive journalist who had served as executive editor of Car and Driver under Jeanes, worked on the project with Jeanes.

"I ended up leaving Car and Driver to move to Mississippi to work for the car magazine that he was putting together," Smith said. "The big mistake there was that we were using National Enquirer money and you get in bed with the National Enquirer and you kind of get what you deserve. That is what happened to me and William and the 22 other people that worked for us."

Jeanes said the magazine was doing well but the business model did not work.

"We were ramping it up and we were outselling the major car magazines on the newsstands," Jeanes said. "We wrote a magazine

that anybody could pick up and read and not get blasted by techno-talk."

Despite the newsstand sales and popularity of the magazine, it folded.

"They could not make the numbers work, because all it was was newsstand sales," Jeanes said. "We didn't have subscriptions or anything like that to fall back on. Basically, the business plan didn't work."

Jeanes and Susan had settled into a house on Scenic Drive in Pass Christian overlooking the Mississippi Sound and decided to stay home in Pass Christian as Hurricane Katrina approached.

The rising storm surge that surpassed all estimates at 27.8 feet forced the couple to their second floor where they hid until the floodwaters subsided.

William wrote a harrowing account of the experience that was later published in Car and Driver complete with pictures of the devastation.

"I know he wishes he hadn't had to write that because that house he had was beautiful," Smith said of the Jeaneses' Hurricane Katrina story. "...It just ended up like a movie set. There was the front of the house that looked fine but the back was just gone when it was over with."

Jeanes said he and Susan took a business partner up on his offer to let them live in his house in the Roses Bluff neighborhood between Madison and Ridgeland.

"He said, 'Just move in,' and we did," Jeanes said. "I felt bad about it so I bought the house from him."

Later, Jeanes and Susan moved into the Dinsmore subdivision where they live today and both said they love Ridgeland and Madison County.

"It's the old story of what's not to like?" Jeanes said. "We've even got a selection of restaurants. Having grown up in Jackson, it still seems almost bizarre."

Jeanes said she likes the people.

"We have great neighbors and we usually have a Christmas cocktail party sometime during the holidays and a bunch of the neighbors get together so it is really a friendly neighborhood," Susan said.

Jeanes said he has always loved Mississippi and has always kept at least one foot in the state.

"I was never one of those people who said, 'I never thought I would be living 15 minutes from where I went to high school and never intended to but the Hurricane changed that,'" Jeanes said.

In his spare time, Jeanes enjoys writing his Northside Sun columns and working with Susan to produce what one fan called Jeanes' greatest literary achievement, "The Loop," a bi-monthly newsletter for his Central High School classmates.

"The Loop" shares details about the comings and goings of classmates and one group in particular that Jeanes is a part of called The Rover Boys, who travel to various sites of interest in the state.

Top: Bill Brodrick, commander of the Graf Bolus, throttles the captain of the Goodrich Blimp.

Bottom: Bolus & Snopes founders William Jeanes, left, and Sam Scott spy the team's blimp, the Graf Bolus.



"We have been to just about everywhere within about a 100-mile radius of Jackson," Jeanes said of The Rover Boys. "We just go and see things, some we have been to before like the Windsor Ruins and Rodney down there."

Jeanes said lunch is always a highlight of The Rover Boys' trips and when they were in Port Gibson, one of the members went into the local bank to ask for recommendations on a lunch place.

"He goes in and he asks the lady at the bank, 'We're looking for a place to have lunch. Do you have any good restaurants in Port Gibson?'" Jeanes said. "And, the lady said, 'Yes. We have two. One is in Natchez and the other is in Vicksburg.' It just killed us. I wish I had thought of that one."

O'Rourke said Jeanes' talent in sharing such stories and humorous nature have endeared him to many people.

"The car world isn't as fraught with envy and rivalry and feuds and stuff as the humor world may be but nonetheless it is a highly competitive world with a lot of big egos in it and William spent however many years, nigh on to 50 in that world, and I never heard a word against him," O'Rourke said. "...To have somebody be in a prickly industry with a lot of big heads and so on and for me never to have a word heard said against him, either William is a damned good guy or I'm deaf."

Back to the question of the location of Pickletown that is not answered in Jeanes' book. The answer can be found in James F. Brieger's "Hometown Mississippi," referenced in Jeanes' entry titled "The Road to Pickletown."

The entry on Pickletown tells of the town's namesakes, Lewis and Frank Pickle, who settled there in 1836. Lewis was a potter by trade who made jugs, churns and crocks among other earthenware that he sold throughout the state of Mississippi.

Brieger includes an anecdote about a blind ox Lewis Pickles drove on his many trips. The ox got loose and was lost on one of his trips while crossing the Tombigbee River.

"When found, the animal was near West Point headed in a homeward direction," Brieger writes, and that homeward direction would be toward Pickletown, located 10 miles southeast of Kosciusko in Attala County.

Now, that's a story that would make Bolus & Snopes mascot, old Dick Johnson, proud.

William Jeanes and his wife, Susan, pose for a picture in their Dinsmor home in Ridgeland.



5 WAYS TO ENJOY A SUMMER DAY IN MADISON COUNTY



1. BICYCLING

With the Natchez Trace running through Madison County and Ridgeland in particular where the Trace winds along the northern banks of the Ross Barnett Reservoir it is no wonder Ridgeland dubs itself the Cycling Capital of Mississippi.

Bicyclists can embark on the Natchez Trace Parkway at a few different entry points throughout the city and can choose to ride along the Trace taking in the sites, including Overlook Park which overlooks the Ross Barnett Reservoir. Or, bicyclists can stop by the Choctaw Agency center to park and embark on either the Trace or a series of paved trails that run along the Trace through Madison County.

If mountain biking is more your style, check out the Ridgeland Trails at 521 Giles, Madison, which offer miles of mountain bike trails

that are well maintained by the Tri-County Mountain Bike Association.

Riders can venture out to any of those locations solo or in groups or they can sign up to participate in many organized rides throughout the year, including Cheers & Gears Ride held during Ridgeland's Art, Wine & Wheels Weekend in April. The Natchez Trace Century Ride with 25, 50, 62 or 100-mile distance options is held in May. The Heatwave Classic Triathlon with 27.5 miles of cycling is in June. In September, Ridgeland celebrates cycling in with an organized ride on the Natchez Trace Parkway for Bike Your Park Day. October brings the two-day Fat Tire Festival. The Ridgeland Cyclocross Series offers events in September, October and November. The Dead Man Gravel Grind with 14, 28, 42 or 56-mile distances is held in January.

Spring is in full bloom in Madison County, and the weather is not yet too hot to get out and enjoy the great outdoors.

While summer does not officially begin until June 20, the hot and humid weather associated with Mississippi summers usually arrives some weeks before the official beginning of summer.

That means we have a few weeks left to enjoy the balmy spring weather in Madison County.

To help you get the most out of those precious remaining weeks of late spring and early summer we have rounded up five ways to enjoy a summer day in Madison County.

2. DAY AT THE REZ

The Ross Barnett Reservoir's northern shores run through much of Ridgeland and Madison County offering many beautiful views and fishing spots that are easily accessible from the shore.

If you are fortunate enough to have a boat, or better yet to be friends with someone who has a boat, getting out on the water can be a great way to enjoy the day, whether for a leisurely boat ride or to fish in deeper water or to water ski or tube behind the boat.

If you do not own a boat or have a friend who would take you on their boat, you can check into the boat rentals available at Main Harbor Store or Friendship II Boats.

Also, plenty of fishing charters are available, led by experienced guides who know how to take you to where the fish are biting.





4. COUNTRY CRUISE

Another great way to enjoy a summer day is to put the top down, if you have a convertible, or take the doors off if you have a Jeep or just put the windows down if you have a coupe, and take a nice country cruise through any of the remote roads throughout Madison County, including the Natchez Trace Parkway.

One of our favorites, besides the Trace, is to drive along North Livingston Road to Lake Cavalier Road, then take a left at Joe Coker Road before heading north on Pocahontas Road to Railroad Avenue in Flora where you can make a right turn onto Mississippi 22 and head east to take 463 and make your way back to Madison.

Pick your own route but put on your favorite tunes and enjoy the ride.



5. DAY AT THE MUSEUMS

If you want to please the children, make a day of visiting many of the museums located in the Jackson Metropolitan area.

Start with a visit to the Mississippi Agriculture and Forestry Museum at 1150 Lakeland Dr, Jackson. There the children can enjoy the day in a mock city that features all the highlights of farm living, including a country store, blacksmithing and cotton ginning. Check out the website at www.msagmuseum.org for special events, schedules and pricing.

Next go to the Mississippi Children's Museum located nearby the Mississippi Agriculture and Forestry Museum at 2145 Museum Boulevard, Jackson, where children can

experience all kinds of educational and fun activities to keep them entertained.

Check out the museum's website at <https://mschildrensmuseum.org> for pricing, scheduling and events.

Also close by is the Mississippi Museum of Natural Science at 2148 Riverside Drive, Jackson, which also offers plenty of educational and fun things to do for people of all ages related to the natural world around us. Check out their website at <http://www.mdwfp.com/museum.aspx> for prices, scheduling and events.



3. PICNIC

Speaking of the Natchez Trace Parkway and the Ross Barnett Reservoir, both provide ample opportunities for picnicking.

Pack your favorite picnic meals and head out along the Natchez Trace to the Overlook Park or any of the other scenic sites along the Trace to spread out a blanket or set up a picnic on a park picnic table.

With so much rural area in Madison County, picnickers have plenty of other picnic site options available from which to choose,

including on the grounds of the Chapel of the Cross or in a wooded area in a remote part of Madison County overlooking one of Madison County's lakes, including Lake Cavalier, Lake Lorman. Other sites for possible picnics include the Petrified Forest in Flora or the Indian Mound near Pocahontas.

Just be sure to get permission before setting up on private property.

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SIMPLE LAMB BACON

- 1 lb Dark Brown Sugar
- 1 lb Kosher Salt
- 1 Tbsp Pink Salt #1
- 1 Tbsp Ground Black Pepper
- 2-3 Lamb Bellies, trimmed

Liberally coat both sides of the lamb belly with cure, making sure to work the rub into every nook and cranny. Place in a plastic container. Layer the bellies on top of one another when doing more than one. Cover and refrigerate overnight. The next day, remove the bellies and pour off any liquid that has accumulated. Check the bellies to spread out any pockets of the cure and add cure to any part that appears to have been missed. Place the bellies back in the container in reverse order so that the top belly is now on the bottom. Cover and refrigerate overnight. The next day, repeat the process and put back in the refrigerator for a third and final day of curing. On the third day, remove the lamb bellies and rinse them off in cold water and then pat dry. Place the bellies, fat side up, on the smoker racks and smoke at 200 degrees for around 3 hours. The internal temperature is less important than giving the belly time to get a nice smokey flavor. Remove the bellies and refrigerate overnight. The next day, cut them into 6-10 inch squares and slice on a meat slicer to get the classic sliced bacon look. Cook a little slower and lower than you would pork bacon but the same idea. Enjoy!!!

MUSCADINE BRAISED LAMB SHANKS

- 4 Lamb Shanks, tied
- Olive oil, Kosher Salt and Fresh Ground Pepper for coating
- 5 Garlic Cloves, peeled and smashed
- 1 cup Yellow Onion, chopped
- ½ cup Carrot, chopped
- ½ cup Celery, chopped
- 2 cups Red Muscadine Juice
- 4 springs Rosemary
- 2 Bay Leaf
- 4-6 cups Lamb Stock

Coat the shanks in olive oil and then the salt and pepper. In a heavy bottomed pot over medium high heat, sear all sides of the lamb shanks and set to the side. Reduce the heat to medium and add the remaining ingredients but only half of the stock. Simmer gently for 5-10 minutes and add the lamb shanks back in. Pour in the remaining stock but only as much as you need to cover the shanks. Cover and place in a 250-degree oven for 6 hours. When done, place the pan on the counter and allow to come to room temperature. Gently remove the shanks and reserve them on an aluminum foil covered baking sheet. Strain the cooking liquid into a saucepan and simmer until reduced by 2/3rds. Skim the surface and season the sauce with salt and pepper to taste. About 15 minutes before dinner, place the shanks in a 300 degree oven. When roasted and heated through, place one shank per person over your favorite side and finish with your lamb jus. A personal favorite side for me is creamy lemon grits.

SHEPHERD'S PIE FILLING

- 1 lb Ground Lamb
- 1 cup Yellow Onion, sliced
- 2 Garlic Cloves, minced
- 1 stick Unsalted Butter
- 4 ounces All Purpose Flour
- 1 quart Lamb Stock
- 1 cup English Peas
- Salt and Pepper to Taste

In a large saucepan, brown the lamb and season with salt and pepper. Pour into a bowl. In the same pan, add the butter, onions and garlic and gently sauté for 5 minutes. Add the flour and stir constantly until it has absorbed all of the liquid from the pot. Add the lamb stock gradually, while continuously stirring until it has all been incorporated. Return the lamb to the pot and simmer for 20 minutes. Add the peas and remove from the heat. Adjust the seasoning and allow the mixture to cool. Once cool, place a thick layer of filling in a small casserole and top with leftover mashed potatoes. Top that with shredded cheddar cheese and bake in the oven at 350 degrees. When it is bubbling and the cheese has melted and browned slightly,(about 20 minutes) remove from the oven and serve.



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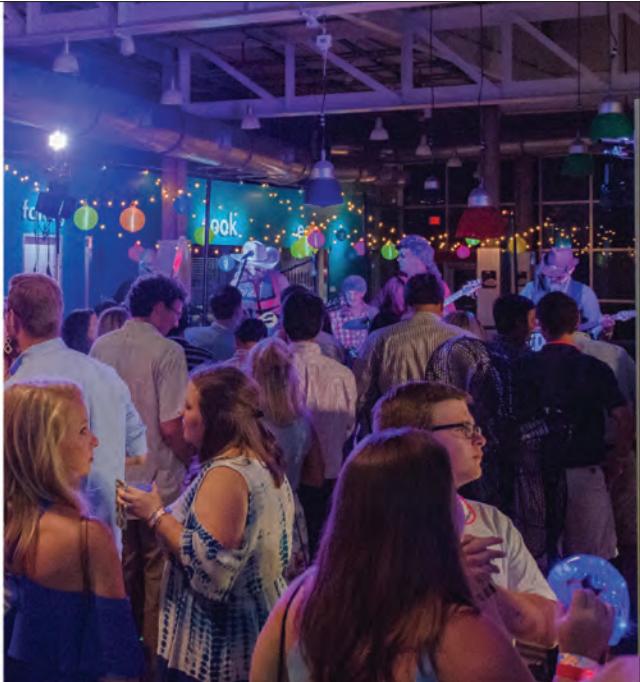
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