Your Community Magazine

POOLER MAGAZINE

HOME & GARDEN ISSUE



MICHELLE PENCE IS *"Pawfect" for Pooler!*

May/June 2022



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(located in the Highlands Area of Savannah)

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2. Jane Grismer is the owner of Brands that Flourish, a marketing agency that focuses on developing strategic brand vehicles infused with compelling content and engaging graphics. Jane was born and raised in Lynbrook, NY, and moved to this area in 1998.

3. Cindy Reid is a graduate of Mills College in Oakland, CA. She spent most of her career working with authors in the retail book business before becoming one herself. She has a daughter who lives in the state of Washington. A native of New York's Hudson Valley, Cindy now makes her home on St. Helena Island.

4. Emily Roscher is a lifestyle and real estate photographer, originally from Northern, VA. She found a love for photography as a hobby about 15 years ago, but started up her businesses in the last 4 years. When she isn't behind the camera, she enjoys finding local coffee shops, and exploring new places with her husband and 4 kids.

5. Claire Sandow is a freelance graphic design and marketing professional who lives in Savannah with her husband, daughter and two cats. She is a graduate of Georgia College & State University, where she received a degree in Mass Communication. In her spare time, she enjoys pursuing her many hobbies, including knitting, crocheting, quilting and running.

6. Walinda "Linda" West is an accomplished communications executive and freelance writer with more than three decades of experience to her credit. Linda and her husband, Norris, split their time between Pooler and their primary residence near Annapolis, Md.

7. Katrice Williams is a married mother of two. She graduated from Georgia Southern University with a Business Administration Degree. She later decided to pursue her writing interests. Katrice appreciates the Lord Jesus Christ and the many blessings He has bestowed upon her. She loves spending time with her family.

8. Laura Zielinski is a freelance graphic designer specializing in print design. With more than 16 years experience, Laura enjoys shaping stories through meaningful design. When she's not working, she loves spending time with her husband Keith and their three beautiful children, Alli, Matthew and Claire.

9. Mabel, morale officer, enjoys roaming the backyard at home, sitting for hours on the back porch and coming to the office to greet visitors and encourage the staff. Mabel loves getting treats and taking long naps in her mommy's office in the afternoons.


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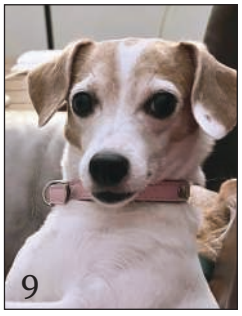

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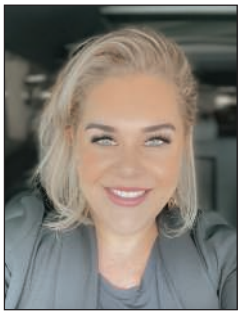

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WE WOULD LOVE TO HEAR FROM YOU! Please send your comments, questions and stories ideas to info@JDelSURMarketing.com.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR
Write to us and tell us what you think. *Pooler Magazine* welcomes all letters to the editor. Please send all letters via email to Jan Southern at Jan@JDelSURMarketing.com. Letters to the editor must have a phone number and name of contact. Phone numbers will not be published.

ARTICLE SUBMISSIONS
Pooler Magazine welcomes story ideas from our readers. If you have a story idea or photo essay you would like to share, please submit ideas and material by emailing Jan Southern at Jan@JDelSURMarketing.com.

Stories or ideas for stories must be submitted by email. Only feature stories and photo essays about people, places or things in the Pooler area will be considered.

CIRCULATION: *Pooler Magazine* is published bi-monthly and distributed to more than 250 locations throughout the area, as well as mailed to thousands of homes. The full magazine is available online at PoolerMagazine.com.

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HOME & GARDEN ISSUE


Jan Southern

Spring is here! And I plan to enjoy every minute of this South Georgia weather. This climate is perfect for gardening, boating, fishing and for me, training a brand new puppy named Jax!

Jax is filling a hole in my heart that was once occupied, full-time, by his older brother Carter—who passed away. It doesn't replace Carter but having a new puppy that reminds me of him gives me unexplainable joy. Jax is also a good companion for Mabel, my Jack Russell mix, although she doesn't know it yet!

As the weather gets warmer, the days get longer and the pollen begins to cover our windshields, I can't help but feel my mind becoming more positive. I am grateful for our community and the growth that we are experiencing.

It's almost every day that a new business is introducing themselves to us, knowing that the magazine is a great tool in helping their business become more visible. As always, we are so happy to embrace this new opportunity for them.

There's an abundance of connection here that is so extraordinary and I often take time to relish in the fact that we are stronger because of it. It's not just one of us—it's all of us. I am so grateful to be here, among all of you.

We also know it is truly Spring when the *Pooler Magazine* Annual Home & Garden issue comes out. In this issue there's lots of useful tips for remodeling, repurposing and enjoying the outdoors.

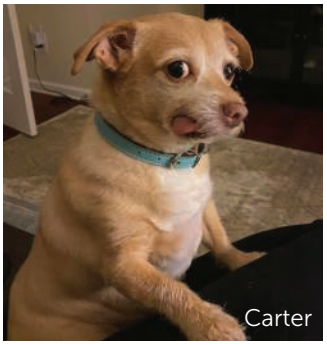
Warm weather, more outdoor activities, graduations, Mother's Day and more are just around the corner. There are so many events to attend this spring and summer. You can always find things to do on the community calendar at PoolerMagazine.com so check it out.

And I look forward to seeing you out and about...you may just see Jax and Mabel out there as well—and perhaps, by then, Mabel will enjoy being a big sister.

Enjoy the issue. Enjoy this weather!

Jan Southern

CEO/Publisher
Pooler Magazine


Carter


Mabel and Jax

Melissa McBride Stille
of Stille-DeWitt Health Brokerage, LLC

"I work for my clients, not the insurance company."



When it comes to her work, **Melissa McBride Stille** would rather talk about helping clients than herself. She has been an independent insurance agent for 4 years and has been in the health insurance industry for 14 years with specific expertise in Medicare. As a health insurance broker, she is passionate about matching her clients with the best health care options available. She says, "I love my job and I love helping people!"

It all started when she was working for a company and realized her position was essentially a dead end job. "I had two young children so when I had the opportunity to be Regional Broker Manager for Coventry Healthcare, I went for it," she said. Melissa got the job but had to get her Georgia Life and Health License. "I absolutely had to pass so I studied hard and passed with flying colors. Next, I had to learn the business." Her job was to recruit and train agents and keep them compliant within the many regulations.

"I was very successful, and I enjoyed my work. In 2017, I remarried and traveling for my work had become a challenge. Supervising agents spread across 23 counties in Georgia meant I was on the road a lot." When the opportunity became available to manage the health department at DeWitt Insurance, Melissa was excited for the new chapter.

Melissa made the decision to purchase the agency's health department in 2019 and she became the sole proprietor of Stille-DeWitt Health Brokerage in 2020.

"DeWitt Insurance Agency has been in business since 1956. People in the community know the name, so I incorporated it into my agency name to keep the continuity within the community. I was very fortunate to have DeWayne Ladner, the owner of the agency, mentor me as he had been mentored by Lenda DeWitt (Crosby), when he purchased the agency in 2002."

Customer Service

Customer service is a main focus for the agency. Melissa doesn't want her clients to feel as if they are just a number. "I care about each and every one of them and I do a review of everyone's health policies every year because there are so many changes annually," she says. She gives every client her cell number—it is even in all of her advertising so that every client, even future clients, can feel comfortable reaching out to her. She says, "I work for my clients, not the insurance company."

"Saving money is very important to most clients so I present multiple options enabling them to make educated decisions." As a specialist in Medicare, Melissa works with Medicare recipients over and under 65, including those who have Medicare through Social Security Disability and also with people utilizing Affordable Care Act Marketplace insurance, and some group insurances.

Client Daylon Barnard says, "Before working with Melissa, I was paying $1800-$2100 every 3 months for my insulin. Melissa took my medication list, shopped the available plans for me and found a plan that covered my insulin better. Now I pay less than $200 every 3 months."

If you have a question regarding Medicare or other health insurance options, give Melissa a call!

Stille-DeWitt Health Brokerage, LLC

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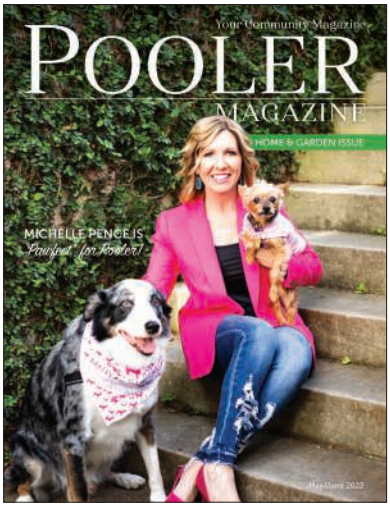
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As a franchise co-owner of Woof Gang Bakery and Grooming of Savannah, Michelle Pence's passion for animals—and her background in education—made a "pawfect" fit for loving on other people's pets and assisting them with pet care. Photo by Shannon Phillips.

We want to hear from you!
Please send your comments, questions and stories ideas to Jan@JDelSURMarketing.com.

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Sweet Home

Michelle Pence is *"Pawfect" for Pooler!*

Story by Cindy Reid | Photography by Shannon Phillips









From elementary classroom teacher to pet retailer entrepreneur, Michelle Pence has pursued a new career as a franchise co-owner of Woof Gang Bakery and Grooming of Savannah. Her passion for animals, and her experience in education, made a "pawfect" fit for loving on other people's pets and assisting them with pet care. Together with her husband David Pence, she has made it her mission to bring the very best products and healthful experiences to the cherished animals in our lives.

Because they are our faithful companions, our confidants, our best friends, our fur babies, it's only natural that we would want to treat them as well as possible—especially when it comes to their physical wellbeing. And because people want the very best that they can provide for their beloved animals the pet industry has become a huge and growing business.

Pets, pet products and pet care are all part of a $103.6 billion national industry; 40.5% of revenue is from food and treats alone. U.S. pet owners spend a collective $42.0 billion on pet food and treats annually. (Source: www.spots.com)

> "We believe Pooler offers a great opportunity for everyone and we love our Pooler store"

Woof!

"David and I had been looking for a small business to build together. We had already considered a few options, but none was the right fit," says Michelle.

Enter Woof Gang Bakery and Grooming. The first store of this franchise business opened in South Florida in 2007 and they are a leading specialty retailer of pet food, pet supplies, and professional pet grooming. They now have more than 150 locations open or under development across the country.

A little over a year ago, David (Allstate Insurance-Pence Family Agency Inc) was having lunch with his friend and Allstate customer, Greg Lard, who at the time owned five Woof Gang locations with plans underway to open a sixth. Greg mentioned he was thinking about selling the stores to pursue opportunities in franchise development with the corporate office.

Michelle says, "David—knowing that I'm the person who will be late because I stopped to play with a dog—thought this would be a perfect opportunity for us to be involved in the fast-growing pet industry. "

Business Success

David was right because about five months after purchasing the Savannah stores, Michelle and David also bought two more existing stores and a grooming salon in Florida. They now own a total of nine locations, six in Savannah/Pooler and three in Florida.

"I like the franchise model to connect with a business model that already has a track record of success. Previous and current owners have had trial and error opportunities that have developed best practices which lead and accelerates the likelihood of success," says Michelle.

"And we can't talk about Woof Gang Bakery and Grooming without giving credit to co-founders Paul and Cara Allen. It was their vision and desire to offer premium quality dog food and treats." She says the support CEO Paul Allen and his team offer is second to none and the franchise organization provides an exemplary model of success.

"I love being a woman business owner. I want women to know their value and worth. Set your goals, be bold, and just go for it! Running eight stores is no small feat but I have an amazing support system. I'm grateful for my husband, my parents, family, and friends who support me daily," Michelle says. "My efforts are rewarded based upon my creativity and ability to connect with customers. There will be hard days and challenges to face but with grit, passion, and determination, I've got this."

Pawfect for Pooler

"I love Pooler for its vibrancy," Michelle says. David is on the Pooler Chamber Executive Board, which works hand in hand with growing tourism





and the business community.

"The expansive growth and development show that many small and medium-size businesses like ours have moved here to thrive with the community."

Their Pooler store combines the best of small town life and big town product selection. It's the kind of place where the staff remembers your pet's name—and maybe even yours!

"We believe Pooler offers a great opportunity for everyone and we love our Pooler store," says Michelle.

Fun & Treats

Each Woof Gang Bakery location is a locally-owned neighborhood store that is geared toward the customer experience, organic healthy pet products and professional grooming services. They make it fun—walk inside and you'll find pink walls, chandeliers, massive treat tables, chew bars, and all things to celebrate special occasions.

> "David and I want to thank our customers. We are honored that you trust us to care for your four-legged family members"

Michelle and David, along with the Woof Gang teams, are involved in numerous community events. "We love celebrating at Woof Gang whether it's a birthday, happy gotcha day, or a special event supporting a non-profit agency in our community."

She says, "Our stores are a wonderful place to meet and greet other pet parents and socialize your dog. And receiving affection and treats in the stores before becoming a grooming customer helps the dog to have a positive experience."

David says, "If you ever come into the stores while Michelle is there, it is not hard to see her on the floor with a dog or two. She also has been known to carry a grooming dog around while they are waiting on the pet parent just to give it some extra love and affection."

Michelle says, "The most rewarding part of owning the Woof Gang business is



the endless supply of puppy kisses, dogs showing off their tricks, and the genuine joy that pet owners experience coming into our stores! “

Fur Family & Joy

Michelle grew up in Tennessee, where she received a master’s degree in early childhood education and taught elementary and middle school before obtaining a real estate license.

After meeting David, she moved to Savannah and joined Berkshire Hathaway Home Services–Cora Bett Thomas Realty Group. She fell in love with the beauty of the coastal area, the rich history and culture, and Savannah because “Savannah loves their fur babies!”

Michelle’s menagerie of previous pets includes dogs and cats, hamsters, guinea pigs, and a bunny named Cadbury. She is the proud pet parent to Lucy, an almost 15 year old Yorkie, and Flynn, an eight year old Australian Shepherd. The pups both love greeting customers at the stores, getting tummy rubs, and sneaking the occasional treat. When they’re not working, they love riding on the golf cart, taking walks, and going to their grandparent’s house.

When David and Michelle are not working in the stores, they love traveling, going to Disney World, kayaking, and riding their bikes. Everybody’s favorite place to end a busy day is hanging out at home together on their screened in patio.

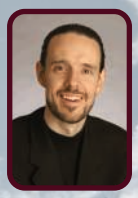
Gratitude

David says, “Michelle is a dynamic and extremely smart person. It is a joy being in business with her because she looks for new ways every day to improve our stores, our processes and to welcome those who choose to put their trust and confidence in us.”

“I feel lucky to have David as a business partner and my life partner,” says Michelle. “We have distinctly different strengths, but that ensures a better balance of skills in the management of the business.”

She adds: “David and I want to say thank you to our customers for supporting a small business that is locally and veteran owned. We are honored that you trust us to care for your special four-legged family members. A special thank you goes to Paul Allen and the corporate support staff. Lastly, we are so grateful to our talented groomers and retail team members.” ■

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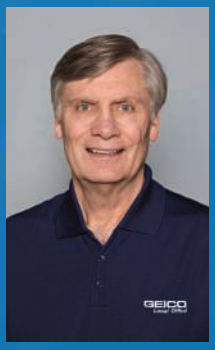
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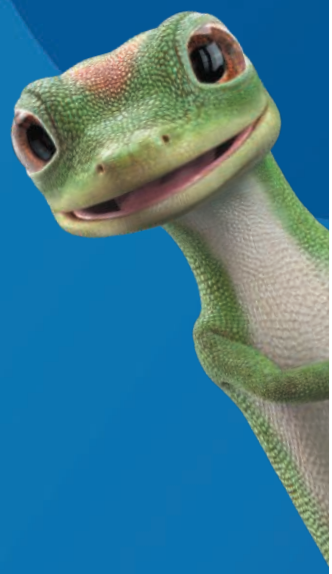
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WHY DIGESTION IS THE KEY TO GOOD HEALTH

By Kerri Dodson, MNT, MCHWC, Master Nutrition Therapist



Kerri Dodson, *Master Nutrition Therapist, Master Health and Wellness Coach*

Digestion is the gateway when dealing with all aspects of health. The gastrointestinal tract is connected to every system in the body. Without proper digestion, health cannot be optimized and thus, digestion is the most important healing priority for overall optimal health.

Why do so many of us have stomach/ gastrointestinal issues?

Unfortunately, the majority of people are fueling themselves with processed food (this includes restaurant dining) and fast food. Eating this way exposes us to chemicals and pesticides.

Also, our soil is depleted of minerals and we are now eating GMO foods, which damage the gastrointestinal lining.

Without the integrity of the digestive system, the body cannot support other foundations of health. It is important to remember that every aspect of what we eat literally becomes part of us in our cells. So proper nutrition AND proper digestion and absorption are vital.

Proper digestion begins in the mouth and then to the stomach. Most people think heartburn is a sign of too much hydrochloric acid (HCl) when in reality, most of the time it is because of too little HCl. HCl is vital to the proper break down of proteins in the stomach.

Next, food is passed to the intestines. Here, there are different types of bacteria (pathogens, normal bacterial flora, phyla microbiota, opportunistic bacteria, H. pylori, fungi/ yeast, parasites and worms). Your bacteria need to be in the appropriate ratios and there should not be the presence of fungi/yeast, parasites or worms. We coexist with our bacteria. They play a role in the extraction of nutrients and energy from the food we eat, help maintain gut barrier function, produce vitamins like biotin and Vitamin K, and protect against the colonization of potential pathogens. Our microbiota interacts with our immune system and it has anti-inflammatory and antioxidant activity. Also, digestive markers should be in the appropriate range.

What can we do?

As a Nutrition Therapist, I can help you test and not guess. Testing is the only true way to know if there is an imbalance or infection—be it parasitic, fungal or bacterial. It is also the best way to determine if there is a functional issue, meaning digestive capacity and ability to repair itself is impaired. Testing can also provide insight on inflammation and immune responses.

As a Nutrition Therapist, I can analyze this comprehensive panel and assist you in a proper protocol to balance/repair and alleviate any issues you may be having. We couple this with food sensitivity testing to ensure that while we are healing the gut, foods aren't still doing damage. This one two punch is the best way to deal with issues such as IBS, autoimmune disease, heartburn, constipation, gallbladder issues and inflammatory issues.

www.nutritioncoachkerri.com | 770-722-9580 | nutritioncoachkerri@gmail.com



Done in a Day
UPCYCLE & REPURPOSE

By Cindy Reid





Many people have observed that one common consequence of the Covid-19 pandemic is that everyone stayed in, looked around at their home and decided to make some changes. From freshening the paint to renovating the kitchen, a lot of people went all in for a home update.

But not everyone could—or even wanted to—make big expensive changes. Cleaning out the closets was enough for many and the thrift shops benefited from an unprecedented rise in donations. Today more than ever, thrift shops are filled with items that can easily be rehomed and utilized, especially after a little sprucing up. It's time to take advantage of this inexpensive bounty and bring something "new to you" home.

Most thrifted items need a little TLC, and a simple Google search will yield thousands of great upcycling and repurposing ideas. This article has gathered together a few of the more interesting, and easy, ones that could be done in a day. And if you are going to invest your time and money on a 'done in a day' project, it's helpful to check in with what's current.

Across the board decorators are saying the look of natural materials like wood and metal, as well as understated color palettes and design elements are 'in'. In addition to warm taupe and beige, chocolate browns, camels, and caramels are the colors to incorporate this year.

For those who prefer a pop of color, the 'hot' new bright hues are lovely against these warm woody colors. In fabric-upholstery, curtains and throw pillows-bright nostalgic floral patterns look swell against these muted background colors.

Simplicity and calm colors to enhance the minimalist style is what the decorating world is touting. Of course, your heart may be firmly in rustic farmhouse or upscale coastal, or family with kids and pets and design trends are slightly ridiculous! Use your best instincts to create something unique to you.

What is the difference between upcycling and repurposing?

Repurposing is similar to upcycling but not the same. To upcycle something is to make it better while it still performs the same purpose. Repurposing changes an object's function—or purpose—entirely. Here are a few ideas to illustrate the difference and get you started.

Repurpose Ideas

- Use foam pool noodles to baby-proof your home. Cut the tube to length and slip it onto edges and corners. They also make great boot shapers.
- Paint an old coffee table and use as a base for a dollhouse or Lego play.
- A solid old door, refinished and hung sideways, becomes a unique headboard for a bed. A strip of crown molding along the top edge offers a neat finish.
- Add very short legs to a large dresser drawer and it becomes a dog bed.
- A small dresser drawer can be mounted empty space out, pull on top, and become a shelf.
- Wooden cutting boards can be repurposed into a chalkboard. Use chalk paint, add a hook, and you have an instant way to make notes in the kitchen.
- A larger cutting board can become a functional serving tray by adding handles from the hardware store.
- Gift bags can be used as lunch bags, a place to gather magazines to be read later or first aid kits. Remove the handles and they can be used as wrapping paper, book covers or cut into origami squares.
- Large picture frames, filled with plywood and upholstered, can become a twin bed headboard.
- Small picture frames can be filled with wood and become a decorative tray.
- Linens, such as comforters and sheets can be used for many purposes. Cut up for soft cleaning cloths, fabric for crafts, dog beds, or simply cut a hole in the middle of the sheet and use it like a coverall/poncho while painting.







- China plates make interesting three-dimensional wall art. Get some plate hangers and try a mismatched assortment for an eclectic look, or go all white/ all red/all green etc.
- Spray paint the center of a large plate with chalkboard paint for a pretty place to write messages or a personalized centerpiece.
- Make your own three-tiered stand by gluing three plates and upturned cups or candlesticks together.
- Ceiling fan blades can be made into large dragonflies with paint and a skinny spindle. Paint old fan blades with a fun design like a snowman, welcome sign, or tropical leaf art.
- Rusty metal colanders make an easy outside planter.
- Wooden spoons can be painted and become plant markers or garden art.
- Old fence poles become garden peace poles with colorful paint, by using all the leftover bits from other projects. Their purpose is to spread the message "May Peace Prevail on Earth" and act as a constant reminder to visualize and pray for world peace.

Upcycle Ideas

Remember upcycling is when an object is altered or enhanced but still used for its original purpose. This is where an old chair gets a fresh look, and color trends can be especially helpful. For accent pieces the color trends of the moment are essentially all hues of pink / blue/ yellow, and neutral classic whites/sage/charcoal. The idea is to combine and contrast, think yellow base, and charcoal top for a side table or sage legs with pink drawers for a small dresser.

Wall paper is being used as a decorative feature, as the top of an end table under glass or affixed with a craft product such as Modpodge. Hardware is an easy update. Right now, industrial modern hardware, in flat black and stainless steel, is in vogue. Replace old brassy round pulls with sleek brushed metallic square bar pulls for a new look.

A few upcycle ideas:

- Reupholster and paint old chairs
- Add new hardware to dressers, cabinets, cupboards
- Paint and rewire (easy with a kit) old lamps. Buffet lamps, which are typically slender, tall, and more than 32 inches in height, are very trendy. Splurge on a new shade, in a metallic or dark color.
- End tables can be uplifted and used everywhere. Add a mirror on top to enhance the light in a room.
- Altered thrift store art is a huge trend. Take a classic (boring) scenic view and add in goofy monsters, historical figures, family photos. If you actually like the art as is, paint the mat and frame to freshen.
- Plastic Little Tikes kitchens, cars, playhouses can be transformed by new paint made especially for plastics. Add thrift store plates and pans for the kitchen. Turn the car into a Batmobile, or a John Deere "tractor" with paint and vinyl stickers.



Upcycling clothes

"Fast Fashion has been the catalyst for a problem which has been brewing for a long time in the textile industry. The apparel industry is second only to the oil industry when it comes to pollution, and this hasn't gone unnoticed by today's more environmentally conscious generation. Where once using old, hand-me-down, or second-hand clothes was considered "cheap", now it is seen as a dedication to sustainability." (Source: https://immago.com/upcycling-clothes)

One way in which people are being "greener" is by upcycling clothes, and it's becoming so popular, it's now an industry by itself. Eileen Fisher, RE/DONE, Urban Outfitters, ASOS are all doing it and you too can upcycle at home with your finds.

Materials

Take a look at any home improvement or craft store paint aisle and you will be amazed at the sheer number of paint products now easily available. Glossy, matte, clear finish, rust proof, acrylic, and any other kind such as chalk paint, glass paint, paint for marble and granite effects are available in a wide variety of colors. Acrylic spray paint works on a variety of surfaces including glass, wood, canvas, concrete, plastic, and metal and can sometimes be found in a half sized can for smaller projects. There are specialty items to create a patina or crackle effect. There is even Glow in the dark acrylic paint and Hologram Glitter spray paint!

Decorate hardware can be found at big box hardware stores but don't forget to look at thrift shop furniture that may have just the retro pulls you are seeking. Hairpin legs for any variety of tabletops are available pretty cheaply online and they can quickly elevate a table from blah to rah! ■



LOCAL THRIFT STORES

Although this is by no means an exhaustive list of local stores, this should get you started. Happy treasure hunting!

HABITAT FOR HUMANITY RESTORE
3605 Highway 21 S.
Rincon, GA

GOODWILL RETAIL STORE
115 Grand Central Blvd
Pooler, GA

HOSPICE SAVANNAH THRIFT SHOPPE
331 US-80 East
Pooler, GA

FLOWERS BAKERY THRIFT STORE
1285 US-80
Pooler GA

THE VOICE CONSIGNMENT BOUTIQUE
1059 US-80
Pooler, GA

RUMOR HAS IT
104a US-80
Pooler, GA

FINDERS KEEPERS FURNITURE, LLC
1024 US-80 #110
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WANDAS THRIFT STORE
1724 US-80
Bloomingdale, GA

BLESSINGDALES THRIFT & FURNITURE STORE
6 Television Cir
Savannah, GA

FRIENDLY MISSION THRIFT STORE
821 King George Blvd
Savannah, GA

KELLER'S FLEA MARKET
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IT'S TIME TO CELEBRATE! Pooler's First Juneteenth Celebration

Juneteenth symbolizes the end of slavery in United States. It is a day to honor those African American ancestors who survived the inhumane institution of bondage. It demonstrates the pride in the marvelous legacy of endurance and perseverance. It is an American holiday!

The Pooler Juneteenth Celebration Committee is primarily composed of Pooler citizens with a mission to educate the public of the importance of this day and what we have accomplished as a nation.

Mayor Pro Tem Tom Hutcherson, the first African American member of Pooler City Council, is chairing the events. He says, "We are excited to have the opportunity to educate and raise awareness to the Juneteenth American holiday. Our expectation is this will become an annual signature event for our city."

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Pooler's 1st Annual Juneteenth Celebration

FREEDOM DAY

JUNETEENTH | JUNE 19

LET'S CELEBRATE!

Sunday, June 19 | 12:00pm - 5:00pm

Free festival at the Tanger Outlets in Pooler, includes live music, food trucks, story tellers, vendors, fun & games. Rain date: June 20. www.poolerjuneteenth.org

LET'S RUN!

Saturday, June 11

1.9K & 6.19K races and health fair at the Pooler Stadium. For online registration and more information, visit www.savannahraces.com

Vendor and food truck spaces are available! Apply at www.poolerjuneteenth.org

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Presented by the Pooler Juneteenth Celebration Committee, Inc. For more information, call 912-642-2390 or email admin@poolerjuneteenth.org



FITNESS, FELLOWSHIP & FAITH (F3)

Building a Community and Making a Difference in Men's Lives

Story by Katrice Williams
Photography by Emily Roscher

Francois Hugon has been part of the "Fitness, Fellowship & Faith" (F3) Coastal Empire team for five years. It has been a tremendous asset to him with benefits that have transcended the realm of fitness into other facets of his life.

"It comes off as a workout group, and we do a lot of working out. At the end of the day, it's a leadership organization that works to build better community leaders out of men. It helps men identify their purpose a little more," Francois says.

As a husband and father of two, he strives to be a good leader in his family as well as his community, which is what F3 is largely all about.

The now international organization began in 2011 in Charlotte, NC. It was started by Tim "OBT" Whitmire and David "Dredd" Redding, a former U.S. Green Beret. The mission of the organization is "To plant, grow, and serve small workout groups for men for the invigoration of male community leadership." It was created to be more than just a fitness group.

At the time, Whitmire and Redding had no clue of the powerful impact their organization would have on fitness everywhere, as F3 fitness groups have spread all over the world.

"It's that small group and that community focus that brings men together, challenging them and making them better," Francois says.

F3 and the Coastal Empire

F3 found its way to Savannah in 2015, then Pooler in 2016; thereafter, groups expanded to Richmond Hill and parts of Effingham County, all making up the



F3 Coastal Empire Region. Now, men participate in any group in the Coastal Empire. It is totally free, which makes it convenient for nearly any man to participate.

As group members relocate, they are able to start new F3 groups in their new area. The concept has come to be known as the "Starfish Model"—as most groups exist because members have branched off to start their own groups.

"F3 is very community-focused, so we want to better our own communities. I want Pooler to be a great community to live in," Francois says.

What It's All About

That is the F3 way—bringing men together through workouts and fellowship, helping them become stronger role models in their homes and valuable leaders in their communities. The name says it all: fitness, fellowship & faith.

"The first 'F' for fitness brings guys out to participate; it's the magnet. The second 'F' for fellowship is the glue—it keeps guys coming out. Relationships are built through enduring the shared challenges of the workout. Then, there's the third 'F'—it's the dynamite—the faith in knowing we are doing it all for a much bigger purpose than just ourselves. The men in F3 live this by serving each other as well as their communities as much as possible," Francois says.

Discipline and commitment is needed to succeed in nearly any fitness program, and F3 is no different. The workouts are challenging. In fact, it is often boot camp-style conditioning, so all workouts are done outdoors, incorporating body weights and easily accessible materials for resistance needs (for example: cinder blocks and tires).

"I love it. It pushes me physically," Francois says.

Working Out and No Excuses

Francois' F3 group meets at 5:30 a.m., Monday-Friday, on the Pooler fields behind the West Chatham YMCA. A second F3 group meets in Pooler at 5 a.m. at the West Chatham Middle School bus loop. All workouts last about 45 minutes, and the early morning time frames allow for a great start to the day.

The Pooler F3 team maintains a philosophy of "no excuses." Whether it is conditioning in the rain, hiking with a rucksack in freezing temperatures or





> Leave no man behind, but leave no man where you find him.
>
> -F3 Credo







running while it is a scorcher out, the guys work out together each morning—absolutely no excuses.

"There's somewhat of a 'shared suffering' element that allows you to form bonds and rely on each other. Guys form those relationships in the shared suffering of working out in 32 degree weather," Francois says.

Teamwork and Commitment

The F3 Credo says: "Leave no man behind, but leave no man where you find him." The F3 team believes that real progress is made together, feeling that nearly any man of any fitness level can benefit.

"It's open to all men. You don't have to be in great shape to come for the first time," he notes.

No man should feel intimidated because the group helps, encourages and motivates each other every step of the way. No one does it alone.

"You won't be abandoned," Francois says. "We want to make sure you're growing, and we'll accelerate along with you. If someone is running or exercising and may be lagging behind, we'll go back and finish with them. We want to make sure we're doing it together."

There are no professionals in the group, which means that everyone can comfortably work at the level they are on as they continue to progress. In addition, each person has the opportunity to lead a workout.

"Every workout is different because it's led by one of us. There are no professionals. It gives everybody the opportunity to be a leader," he remarked.

Core Principles

There are a few core principles that are specific to the overall F3 organization which include that it is "free of charge, open to all men, held outdoors and peer-led (non-professionals); also, each workout ends in a 'Circle of Trust'"—this is the time following a workout that allows for sincere fellowship together in an honest and uninhibited manner.

On occasion, some groups offer prayer within the Circle of Trust. Men are able to get a host of things off their chests and just relate to each other, all in the absence of judgment, shame or fear. Whether offering sound advice, empathy or some constructive criticism, despite how trying a situation may seem, it can be shared and addressed together.

> "F3 is open to all men. You don't have to be in great shape to come for the first time"

"That's when bonds are really formed. A guy can relate more to another guy. As men, we can help each other. We can talk and have those bonds of trust. It's a really strong way for men to make that connection without forcing feelings—guys tend not to be really good at sharing. But, we can just be relatable—make stupid jokes with each other; it's just guys being guys," he says.

Though core F3 principles are always upheld by each F3 group, each one has its very own culture.

"We each have our own way that we do things," Francois says.

As a common element of male camaraderie, giving clever nicknames to each other has become a standard with F3. Francois teases that because he has become so accustomed to all the guys' nicknames, he barely knows their real ones.

He also jokes that he is quite proud of his own nickname: "Betty Crocker." Early on, the group found that the dutiful, fun-loving dad sometimes enjoyed taking part in cooking/kitchen activities with his little girl. And soon, "Betty Crocker" was born. Francois mentions that if that is why he was nicknamed "Betty Crocker," he is very honored.

Giving Back

F3 takes great pride in giving back to their community as much as possible. Whether serving in their local churches, participating in the Angel Tree Program during the Christmas Season or being a part of various food drives, the men persist to help promote the welfare of others.

For quite some time, the group has enjoyed assisting P.A.C.K. (People of Action Caring for Kids). P.A.C.K. is a nonprofit, volunteer-led organization that helps combat childhood hunger in the area by "packing and delivering bags of food each month to children in local schools and community centers," helping those kids that have little or no food over the weekends when school meals are inaccessible.

All in all, F3 is about helping to empower men to be the absolute best version of themselves in life—a tremendous asset to their families and their communities. And it is doing just that.

Anyone interested in finding out more about F3 Coastal Empire can visit the website at: F3CoastalEmpire.com. ■

Mmmmm! Carol's Fresh Shrimp & Crab Boil!

With Spring comes outdoor cooking! And, for the very best ***shrimp & crab boil*** *start the pot with Carol's special ingredients. But, you had better plan on a big batch ... cause everyone will want more! Add potatoes, corn still on the cob, sausage, and finish it up with fresh Georgia Shrimp and Crabs. Awesome! The full recipe is in this magazine. Check it out.*



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Total time: 30 minutes | Servings: 15 (cut recipe for fewer guests)

Ingredients:
5 pounds small red potatoes
1 (3.5 ounce) Salt Table's "Real Southern Shrimp & Crab Boil Seasoning" Kit
2 to 3 pounds kielbasa or hot smoked link sausage, cut into 1½-inch pieces
8 ears of corn, halved
5 pounds of whole crab—broken into pieces—or crab leg clusters
4 pounds large fresh Georgia shrimp, peeled and deveined

INSTRUCTIONS
Bring to boil 6 quarts of water in a large stockpot. Put the crab boil seasoning into the muslin cloth pouch and tie securely. Add pouch and the spice powder seasoning. Add potatoes, cook for 5 minutes. Next, add sausage, cook for 10 minutes. Next, add corn and crab. Cook for 5 minutes. Finally, add shrimp, cook for another 3/4 minutes, until pink. Drain water. Pour on table covered with craft paper or newspaper. Enjoy!

To purchase locally or online, go to www.SaltTable.com.









SoFit Gym Introduces "Women on Weights" Small Group Personal Training



WOW Instructor Noriko Tyler

New at **SoFit Gym**: a class called Women on Weights (WoW). This is a ladies small group personal training program held twice a week on Tuesday and Thursday mornings at 9:30AM.

WoW offers women's strength training with a focus on endurance, balance, power, and agility. The small group dynamic allows each participant to receive personalized instruction—tailored to her individual needs—while socializing in a group environment. The class involves functional exercises done with a variety of equipment, including TRX, free weights, BOSUs, balls, gliding discs, tubing, and so much more.

Prior to participating in WoW, each woman fills out a health history form and has a consult to discuss goals, concerns, and preferences. This ensures that all exercises are safely modified or intensified based on this acquired information.

WoW is an ongoing program with no start or finish. Members may join at any time and attend as many or as few sessions as desired. At the end of each month, participants commit to their preferred sessions for the following month. A waiting list is started once each session fills up.

So Fit Gym offers a 24 hour cancellation policy, which allows participants on the waiting list to be contacted should a member need to cancel.

This class is taught by Noriko Tyler. Noriko also teaches Yogalates on Monday's and Saturday's.

Sofitgympooler.com
912.348.2014
1212 US Highway 80 E, Pooler

SoFIT GYM



Tips for SPRING CLEANING

Spring is the perfect time to clear out unused items and give forgotten corners a good scrub. However, setting out to clean your entire house can be a challenging task that requires patience and organization.

To help you reach every nook and cranny, consider this handy checklist from the experts at Best Pick Reports.

Kitchen

The the kitchen builds up a lot of dirt and grime. If you cook regularly, your kitchen is ground zero for all sorts of messes. In addition to crumbs that could attract pests, you have to contend with bacteria that can cause illness and accumulated grease.

1. Service Major Appliances: Spring is a good time to have major appliances serviced. If your fridge makes excessive noise or your oven heats unevenly, it's important to have a home services professional provide an expert opinion that can save you money in the long run.

2. Clear Out Cabinets: Spring cleaning isn't just about washing – it's also the perfect time to get rid of things you don't need. In the case of your kitchen, that means taking a thorough inventory of the cabinets and pantry.

Be sure to check expiration dates on every package. While it may be OK to use some dry goods a short time past the printed "best by" date, you should get rid of anything that's more than a year expired.

Bathroom

Most people clean their bathrooms regularly, however an annual deep cleaning is the perfect time to address issues that aren't visible to the naked eye or have fallen by the wayside.

1. Clear Pipes: Plumbing professionals recommend you get your pipes checked regularly to prevent clogs. Spring cleaning is a great opportunity to hire an expert to tackle slow-moving drains and give your plumbing its annual checkup.

2. Eliminate Grime: If you have hard water, you may notice a buildup of lime or mineral deposits in your shower or sink. There are several grime-fighting products you can pick up at the store to make your metal fixtures shine once more. For tougher stains, such as those under the toilet bowl lip, you can use gel or scrub with a pumice stick.

Closets

For many people, the closet is a place to store items you don't quite know what to do with. In some cases, closet clutter can get so bad you may even forget things, only to be surprised when they resurface months or years later.

The spirit of spring cleaning may compel you to roll up your sleeves and start on projects you've been procrastinating tackling. Consider putting closet reorganization at the top of that list.

1. Sort Clothing: Before you can properly reorganize, you need to see what you have. Start by separating items into piles:

- Warm weather clothes and accessories
- Cold weather clothes and accessories
- Clothes and accessories you haven't worn for a year or more

To make room in your closet, donate items you no longer wear. If you have more clutter than you know what to do with, there are professional organizers who can help you sort items, designate storage areas and label containers. They're also skilled at nudging clients to be honest about whether it makes sense to keep a particular article of clothing or not.

2. Store Seasonal Items: When you've let go of possessions you aren't actually using, you're typically left with two piles. The first is items you can wear in current weather and the second is items appropriate for a different season.

You can store this season's items in your closet and store winter clothes somewhere out of the way, such as under the bed, on high closet shelves or in outdoor storage. If you have the right tools, you can also vacuum seal seasonal items for additional space.

Forgotten Spaces

Deep cleaning areas of your house you regularly use is great, but you also need to give some TLC to the spaces you rarely think about.

Assess the Attic: If you have an attic space, now is the time to go through any boxes and determine what you can part with. While you're up there, be on the lookout for any signs that pests have made your attic their home. Be sure to call in a professional if you find any sign of pests.

Now is the time to get your spring cleaning checked off so you can enjoy the beautiful weather.

Tips for Disinfecting Your House

With bacteria and viruses able to spread easily, it's essential to disinfect your home to help you and your family stay healthy. While these steps can become part of your everyday routine, be sure to put some elbow grease into it during spring cleaning.

Wipe Down Frequently Touched Surfaces

While there's no harm in sanitizing everything in your kitchen, the real threat is frequently touched surfaces. Make sure to give these common touch points a thorough wipe down:

- Light switches
- Doorknobs
- Faucet handles

Use Effective Products

Not all household cleaning products are formulated to kill germs. To eliminate threats of illness, make sure your cleaning supplies contain one of the following:

- 70% alcohol
- Bleach
- Hydrogen peroxide

Spring is a great time to clean and organize. Do you have a tip you'd like to share? Email info@JDelSURMarketing.com.

Sponsored by Best Pick Reports



Refresh WITH A BATHROOM UPDATE

Long among the most popular areas for homeowners to undertake improvement projects, bathrooms can be some of the easiest rooms in the house to renovate without spending a fortune.

If you're looking to update one of the most-used spaces in your home, consider these easy and cost-effective ways to give your bathroom a facelift.

Accessorize with Color

There are numerous ways to create a new look without lifting any tools. Replacing linens and other soft surfaces like rugs, window treatments and shower curtains can help brighten up your space. Adding a fresh coat of paint is another low-cost way to modify the look and feel of a space. With a variety of paint colors and finishes to choose from, you can add a splash of color as an accent or go all out to create depth and contrast.

Update Cabinetry and Light Fixtures

Keeping your existing vanity and other bathroom cabinetry, especially if they're in good condition, can be a cheaper option than replacing all the cabinets. To create an updated look, add a different coat of stain or paint, replace the hardware and add pullout shelving or drawer dividers.

Replacing old, out-of-date light fixtures with modern, efficient options – including the appropriate bulb selections for each fixture—is another cost-effective way to help the space look and feel brighter.

Install a Heated Towel Rack

Consider investing in a multi-purpose appliance to help refresh the look of your area. For example, a heated towel rack can save time and money while providing comfort and convenience. Companies like Amba Products offer a variety of styles and finishes to fit almost any decor that produce radiant heat to gently warm and dry towels, which can save time, water and energy by not having to do laundry as often. In addition, the racks can help eliminate moisture, resulting in less growth of mold and mildew. Some freestanding models come ready to use and take as little as 5 minutes to set up.

An option like the UL-certified Jeeves Wet-Rated Kit allows homeowners to install a high-quality, stainless steel heated towel rack inside moisture-rich environments like wet rooms, shower alcoves and walk-in showers or above bathtubs to make their bathrooms more functional while adding a touch of comfort.

Swap Out Decor and Accessories

A quick, inexpensive way to transform your bathroom is to update the decor and other design elements. Installing a new toilet seat, faucet or showerhead and adding matching accessories, such as a toilet paper holder, shower control knobs or a toothbrush holder, can make the space feel new and interesting. For even more impact, add artwork that matches the theme of the room, greenery or floating shelving.

Add Accent Tile

You can create a luxurious look with your backsplash, flooring or shower by adding a pop of colorful tile. Cheaper than purchasing an entire room's worth of tile, creating a chevron or herringbone pattern in one of these oft-seen areas of the bathroom can make a fresh statement.

Embracing the Good in Social Media

By Dr. Jan Southern,
J. DelSUR Marketing Group



Social media. We use it to stay in touch with family and friends and wasting too much time watching TikTok videos or scrolling through Facebook. We love it. We hate it. But regardless, we use it.

Why not use it for good?

While social media has reshaped society in negative ways, there are many good reasons to embrace it.

Almost all churches, civic organizations and other nonprofits use social media to engage with their followers, reach a wider audience and directly fund raise for their causes.

Here are 5 ways you can use social media to support a cause you believe in:

1 Share your passion

Let the needs of your organization and your passion for the cause shine through with compelling stories, images and video. As people read and watch the story of your cause, they may be inspired to join you on your journey.

2 Expand your network

Use social media to meet others in similar organizations with parallel causes. You never know when a great partnership can develop, and you can both benefit from the relationship.

3 Don't forget to share

Promote your events and other content. If you belong to a church, do you share the messages or sermons from church on social media? This is the best way to grow your following and bring more people to what you love.

4 Make it easy for your audience to give

Once you have established a following and have an engaged audience interested in your content, make it easy for them to give to the cause. Set up a form to gather their names and email addresses and put a donation link in your About section. Include the link in most of your posts as well.

5 Know your audience

In order to really maximize the time you spend on social media, get to know your audience. Look at the insights section on Facebook to understand who your most engaged followers are and post more of the messages that appeal to them. Don't assume your ideal person is on the social platform you use. Learn who your ideal "customer" is and choose the social media platforms where they spend the most time.

Social media is addictive and can be a major time waster. It can also be extremely useful if you look at it from a strategic point of view. It is here to stay so start using it to make the world a better place by sharing your cause for all to see.

Here are a few articles to help you with your nonprofit social media planning:

- *How to Build and Mobilize a Social Media Community for Your Nonprofit in 90 Days* (Available on Amazon)
- blog.hootsuite.com/social-media-for-nonprofits
- articles.bplans.com/a-nonprofits-ultimate-guide-to-social-media-marketing





POOLER *Garden Club*

by Cindy Reid

470-753-9635
/PoolerGardenClub

The Pooler Garden Club is an innovative, educational, and entertaining group that has been meeting for almost 90 years. The Pooler Garden Club was formed in 1933 by officers wives to brighten up and improve the city of Pooler. They have consistently met throughout the years except during WWII. Even during the Covid-19 lockdown, the club held meetings safely outside.

Louise Schindler, club Co-President with Barbara Rawlings, has been with the club for 10 years and says she enjoys the educational aspect and the camaraderie.

"For most new members, the first step is 'what to plant?' People move here and they want to learn what grows, when to plant, how to garden in our area." She says the club always has a learning session at their meetings, because there is always something new to learn even for the most experienced of gardeners.

Anyone is welcome to attend a meeting and they would love to have new members join. They also host public events and teas where you can come, meet the club, and learn "who we are and what we do." They occasionally meet at interesting outdoor local locations such as the Georgia Southern Botanical Garden, the Savannah Bee demonstration cottage on Wilmington Island and local plant nurseries.

The members enjoy teaching the younger generation about nature and contributing to their community. Past projects include helping plant shrubs and flowers for the three local Habitat for Humanity homes. Recently the club made and donated multiple flower arrangements for the senior living facility Wisteria Gardens. In April, the City of Pooler, Pooler Garden Club, and Greenery Inc. collaborated on the third annual Plant a Tree for Free event, where 340 trees were given out, free of charge, to Pooler residents.

Honoring Armed Forces

On May 11, the club will rededicate a Blue Star Memorial marker in honor of our nation's Armed Forces on I95 South. Several years ago, the existing sign was taken down, and the club has been instrumental in cleaning the sign and having it reposted.

The Blue Star Memorial Program began with the planting of 8,000 Dogwood trees by the New Jersey Council of Garden Clubs in 1944 as a living memorial to veterans of World War II. In 1945, the National Council of State Garden Clubs (now NGC, Inc.) adopted the program and began a Blue Star Highway system that covers thousands of miles across the Continental United States, Alaska, and Hawaii. Garden Clubs throughout the country maintain these patriotic memorials in their hometowns.

Louise says, "We appreciate the gift we've been given; we are proud of our country, and we love our flowers."

Savannah Botanical Gardens

The Pooler Garden Club also wants to spread the word on one of the area's loveliest attractions—the Savannah Botanical Gardens. The Savannah Area Council of Garden Clubs—of which the Pooler Garden Club is a member—owns and operates the botanical gardens located just outside the Savannah historic district.

The site was conceived and designed in the late 1980s as an all-volunteer effort. It includes both formal and naturalistic plantings as well as a two acre pond, amphitheater, nature trails, archaeological exhibit, and the historic Reinhard House. Both the garden and historic Reinhard House are available for weddings, meetings, or other special events.

Access to all public areas of the garden is free, however, a small fee may be required for groups of ten or more.

Upcoming events include the Annual Spring Plant Sale on May 7 and a Night of Opera al Fresco (making opera fun!) on August 29th.

Open to All

The Pooler Garden Club meets monthly on the second Wednesday of every month. They normally meet at 10:30am at the Community Room at Pooler City Hall but lately the club has been taking advantage of the beautiful spring weather and is meeting outside and at local historic homes. (To get the most current meeting information, follow the club on Facebook.) They are educational, community spirited, and welcoming. As they say, "Friendship is grown here!" ■

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Hosted by Dr. Jan Southern

The **It's ALL Marketing** Podcast is a locally-focused business podcast with interviews with local business owners from Pooler, Effingham and Savannah. Each episode offers inspiring conversations about entrepreneurship, family, success and tactics for marketing a business. Listen in to hear from local, successful business owners and learn from their experience!

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POOLER Happenings



FLAGS FOR THE FALLEN 2022 AT THE NATIONAL MUSEUM OF THE MIGHTY EIGHTH AIR FORCE

This tribute—running May 26 - Memorial Day—is located in the museum's Memorial Gardens. It honors the 26,000 Eighth Air Force airmen who made the ultimate sacrifice in World War II. 26,000 48-star American flags, the flag under which these men served, and many are buried, will fill the garden and give visitors a chance to walk through and remember those heroes who didn't return home.



Derek Horne of The Horne Law Firm spoke at a Pooler Chamber Lunch & Learn on April 14.



The 200 Club of the Coastal Empire's annual Pooler Run for Heroes (a one-mile run/walk fundraiser supporting families of fallen first responders) is Saturday, May 28!



Pooler Recreation kicked off the spring softball league!

IN THE WAKE OF TORNADOS AND HAIL, TRUST YOUR LOCAL, REPUTABLE CONTRACTOR

Three days of stormy weather at the beginning of April has caused millions of dollars in damages to businesses and homes throughout both Effingham and Bryan county.

The National Weather Service announced that the fatal tornado that struck Bryan County, Georgia, on April 5 has been upgraded to an EF - 4 intensity with winds of 185 mph. This surpasses the 170 mph tornado that occurred in Iowa in March, making it the strongest so far in 2022.The tornado began just west of the Bryan County Courthouse in Pembroke, where it damaged part of the roof, blew out windows, and snapped numerous trees. The tornado then continued northeast passing through Hendrix Park, the Park Place subdivision and over the Black Creek Golf Course, where it reached 185 mph with a width estimated to be approximately three-quarters of a mile wide.

The Ellebell area saw baseball-sized hail 2.75" destroy cars, roofs, siding and windows. Guyton, Rincon and Springfield had hail reports ranging in size from 1.5"– 2.75".

The aftermath from the high number of property's damaged have already begun.

Beware of "Storm-Chaser" Style Roofing and Construction Companies

In Effingham, the Sheriff made social media posts to alert homeowners. "Effingham County Sheriff's Office has been made aware of some unscrupulous people who are taking advantage of a tragic situation. Out of town roofers and construction workers are going door-to-door soliciting business and doing so without a permit. If anyone knocks on your door without a permit just know they have not been vetted through the Sheriff's Office and may not be representing a legitimate business or have reputable business practices. Please call the sheriffs office if this is happening to you, 912-754-3449".

Sargent L. Scholes of the Effingham Sheriff's office, will be in charge and is tasked with making sure contractors are properly vetted to approach homeowner's and that the county ordinances are all being followed. He said, "I have told my deputies that we will be aggressive in enforcing the county ordinances as it pertains to solicitation and to contractors performing home repairs."

According to Sargent Scholes, properly vetted contractors will have a permit, as well as an ID badge that they can show to anyone who asks. The county is working hard to get the documents into good contractor's hands and if a contractor has paid for the background check and submitted all the required documents, there will be a record on file that homeowner's can check out, until the ID's physically arrive.

A drive in one effected neighborhood off Rincon-Stillwell road saw several yard signs with out of state area codes. These types of contractors might not observe the regulations like a local roofer will do. According to Sgt. Scholes, there could be complaints in the future when "storm-chaser" styled companies move on, leaving behind shoddy work or incomplete projects.

Local Experts Represent Your Best Interests

Jeff Watters from **C&N Construction**, a Savannah full service contractor, is already busy due to the fact that his company not only replaces damaged roofing but also fixes siding, windows, gutters, decks, and more.

"Homeowner's should have a trusted local expert on-hand when their insurance company sends an adjuster out to assess the damage. An adjuster is not there for the homeowner's—they are there for the insurance company, smart homeowners get someone out to represent their best interests." Watters continued, "Hail can damage siding, windows, aluminum trim, gutters, fencing and decks. A professional inspection will document everything so that insurance will include the total repairs in a claim.

Dale Shoemaker is the Savannah Director for **C&N Construction**, "of course homeowner's are nervous after a storm-and rightly so. There is more work than there are reputable contractors, meaning folks might get burned by trusting their home to a here today-gone tomorrow roofer. We have an A+ rating with the BBB. Our company is also a GAF Master Elite contractor. Less than 1% of all roofers earn this accreditation." He continued, "it means we can offer a warranty like no other local roofer."

Shoemaker suggests checking to see if your roofer is local, "We have an office right on Mall road that is open to the public. Homeowner's love the idea that they can hire a local full service contractor to handle their entire claim, and get them more from their insurance settlement," he explained.

As the community begins the long recovery process, homeowners will want to keep an eye on hurricane season which begins in June. Damaged roofs cannot survive new wind storms. The Savannah area is 4th on the list of areas hit by named storms (hurricanes, tropical storms) averaging one every 26 months. It has been over 30 months since our last one!



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Summer. It's the time for kids to relax and enjoy some much-needed fun, especially after such a challenging year. But summer is also the ideal time to do something that will give them a huge advantage when school resumes in the fall: Accelerate their math skills with Mathnasium.

While most students experience math learning loss over a normal summer, disruptions due to the pandemic have caused many kids to fall behind even more. Mathnasium's personalized Learning Plans are proven to improve grades and help kids catch up and get ahead in math. With live face-to-face instruction, either in-center or online.

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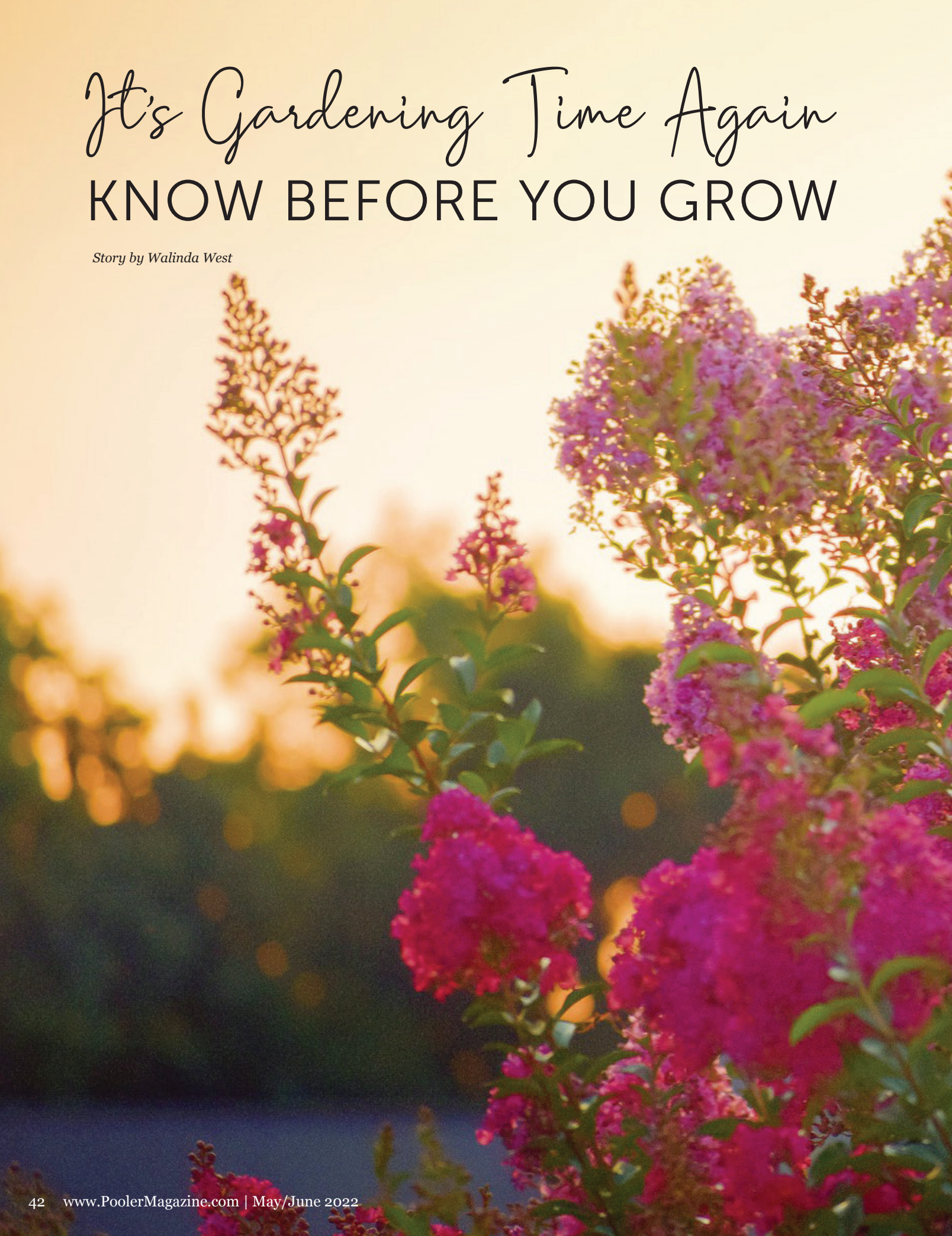
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It's Gardening Time Again
KNOW BEFORE YOU GROW

Story by Walinda West





Listen up, garden weekend warriors. We know you're ready to start digging up stuff to make a garden like the one you saw on television or in your favorite magazine. But before you go plopping down your hard-earned money to make your gardening dreams come true, the University of Georgia Cooperative Extension Office in Chatham County has a little advice for you: *know before you grow*. What you think might look good in your garden, may not work in your garden.

"Putting the right plants in the right place will save you money, time and headaches later," said Alana Edwards, agriculture and natural resources educator for the Chatham County extension office. "When making any selections for your landscape, it is important to consider the soil moisture and the sun exposure in each area of your yard."

Edwards recommends using plants native to coastal Georgia for the best gardening results because native plants have history and are well-adapted to the area's heat, humidity and other environmental stressors. For example, salt tolerance is a plus for gardeners along the coast or tidal rivers, while inland gardeners may be more concerned with drought tolerance.

Native Coastal Plants

Edwards' list of the top 25 plants native to the Lower Coastal Plain ecoregion based on ornamental value, commercial availability and performance in Chatham County's landscapes include:

- Pignut Hickory
- Swamp Chestnut Oak
- Eastern Red Cedar
- Bald Cypress
- Black Gum, Swamp Tupelo
- Sweetbay Magnolia
- American Fringe tree
- Red Buckeye
- Rusty Blackhaw
- Yaupon Holly
- Yellow Anise
- American Beautyberry
- Sweet Pepperbush
- Dwarf Palmettto
- Pink Muhly Grass
- Wrinkleleaf Goldenrod
- Eastern Bluestar
- Red Swamp Hibuscus
- Swamp Milkweed
- Georgia Savory
- White False Indigo
- Coral Honeysuckle
- Purple Passionflower
- Partridgeberry
- Southern Shield Fern

Local Planting is Not a One-Size-Fits-All Endeavor

Not all areas are created equally, and the success of plant growth in one city may yield different results in even one county or city over. For best results, garden experts recommend

homeowners talk to someone at a local garden center before beginning any gardening project to let them know your individual planting conditions.

Heather Harrison of Pooler Plant Pick-up Station and Olde Savannah Gardens said the two garden centers she owns with her husband, Ross, regularly see customers who want an instant, beautiful garden made up of plants that may or may not work for their home.

> “Putting the right plants in the right place will save you money, time and headaches later... consider the soil moisture and the sun exposure in each area of your yard.”

“Almost everyone who comes into our stores say the same thing. ‘I want a beautiful garden,’” Harrison said. “We have customers who come in after reading a magazine and want a specific kind of plant or garden, but our soil here has very little nutrients, and you have to learn how to plant here.”

Harrison likened Pooler and the surrounding area’s soil to gumbo.

“Even though we are technically coastal, plant selection may be different than what is grown on Wilmington or Tybee islands or Isle of Hope, for example,” she said. “The first question we ask customers is what part of town they live in? Our recommendation could will be different if they live in Savannah versus Pooler, Rincon or Guyton.”

Harrison said her role in the process is to help customers set realistic goals. Most gardens fail, she said, because of the selection of the wrong plants for the climate, planting in the wrong location, improper spacing or unrealistic expectations once a garden is planted which, she said, is compounded by the area’s less-than-ideal soil conditions.

Harrison recommends the following plants that thrive in our climate:

- Most Loropetalum varieties (with the exception of purple pixie)
- Ligustrum (wax leaf, Jack Frost, Sunshine, Howardii, Recurve)
- Agapanthus
- Most Liriope’s and Aztec Grass
- Daylilies
- Perennial Salvia
- Butterfly Bushes (Buddelia)
- Traditional Azalea varieties except the encore varieties
- Hydrangeas
- Camellias, both Japonica and Sasanquas
- Most Viburnums
- Podocarpus (Maki and the Dwarf Pringles varieties)
- Most Holly (with the exception of Savannah Holly, ironically)
- Crape Myrtles
- Vitex or Chaste
- Cold hardy Palms such as Sabal, Pindo, Mule.
- Most Miscanthis Grasses and Pink Muhly grass
- Elms, Red Maples and Live Oak
- Perennial Lantana
- Blue Plumbago

FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT LOCAL PLANTING, VISIT:

extension.uga.edu
www.coastalwildscapes.org
gacoast.uga.edu/outreach/resources-outreach/native-plant-search-engine
site.extension.uga.edu/georgiagreen
www.savannahbotanical.org



- Hawaiian Tie Plants
- Split leaf Philodendron
- Foxtail Fern
- Jasmine (most varieties)

Keeping Up with the Joneses

Blake Carter, agriculture and natural resources agent for University of Georgia's Cooperative Extension Office in Effingham County, chuckles when he thinks about the calls he gets from anxious gardeners wondering the right time to garden, why a plant is dying or what to plant in Effingham County's sandy soil, which he jokes is "sand rejected by Jekyll Island." Carter's favorite question, he said, is when a resident calls and wonders why their garden doesn't look like their neighbor's and they have identical plants.

"My advice is to keep up with your own stuff and don't worry about your neighbor down the street," Carter quipped. "It's hard to do, but you have to put blinders on and focus on what you have. Soil types can be different from house to house. My best advice is whether you are planting in a pot, in dirt or in a raised garden, just know your dirt." ■



Dos & Don'ts of Gardening

In its blog, the Savannah Botanical Gardens lists the top 10 mistakes would-be gardeners make and what to avoid:

1. **Putting Beds in Wrong Place:** Whether you place your bed in an overly shady area or in one that does not have good drainage, putting your bed in the wrong place can hurt your plants. Try to choose an area that has good drainage and gets at least six hours of sunlight. This will give your garden the best possible chance of survival.

2. **Not Preparing Soil:** Plants grow best when soil has the right pH. Simple soil testing kits can be bought at any home center. A pH of around 6 to 6.5 should work for most vegetable gardens, for example. Also, amend the soil with organic materials like compost to ensure that it has the nutrients it requires. Adding your favorite mulching option is vital to protect the precious soil underneath.

3. **Not Considering Weather and Climate:** If you plant at the wrong time or in the wrong area, your plants may not thrive. Different plants have different needs and will tolerate different things. You should not plant a plant with a long growing season too early or too late. Similarly, if your plants need a long growing season, they will likely not be happy in a place like Minnesota. Be sure to check guides online for what will grow best in your area.

4. **Over- or Under-watering:** It may seem simple enough that your plants need water. Not giving them enough water will cause them to wilt and die. Too much water can result in mold or rot. Water at regular intervals and look for signs of a problem. If leaves yellow or dry out, the plant is not getting enough water. If leaves become brown and stems are "mushy," your plant may be getting too much water.

5. **Neglecting Pruning:** Certain flowering and fruiting trees or shrubs need to be pruned each year to ensure they are at their best. Left to grow wild, too many branches will grow and sap the plant of the energy it could be putting into nourishing the select flowering or fruiting branches. Judicious pruning with proper technique will keep your yield strong

6. **Not Labeling Plants:** If you start seedlings and do not label them adequately, it can be easy to get them confused. You may be able to tell a tomato plant from a kale plant, but can you tell one type of tomato from the other? Make sure you keep your plants clearly labeled and then keep rows marked once planted in the garden.

7. **Planting Invasive Plants:** Mint is a wonderful herb. It smells nice and it's easy to grow. Unfortunately, left unchecked, it will take over. Do a little research before planting. If a plant is known to be invasive, do not plant it. Another option is to plant it in a pot to keep it under control.

8. **Not Following Instructions:** Seed packages come with instructions for a reason. Trust the experts – the company that produced the seeds – to know when to sow them and how to care for them. Chances are good if you read the directions and follow them, you will not be steered wrong.

9. **Using Too Much Pesticide:** Pesticides can keep unwanted insects out of your garden. Unfortunately, they can also scare away the useful insects that help your garden. Some insects, like bees, help to pollinate your garden. Instead of pesticides, investigate non-chemical ways to scare away pests, like planting marigolds or inviting other friendly insects. Ladybugs eat aphids who damage plants. Ducks and guinea birds also eat pests without destroying your garden.

10. **Growing Too Much Food:** This might seem like a problem everyone would love to have. If you harvest more vegetables than you can consume or can and give away, they will go to waste. Try starting off small and with vegetables that you know you like. You can always expand next year.



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Matt and Jamie Pratt are Rincon residents and love serving the Effingham County community as well as the surrounding areas from Tybee Island to Hilton Head.

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May 2022

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
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2	3	4	5	6	7	8
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June 2022

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
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POOLER EVENTS

5/10: Five for Fighting with String Quartet, Live in Concert
8:30pm | District Live at Plant Riverside District

5/13: Caitlyn Smith with Lulu the Giant, Live in Concert
8:00pm | District Live at Plant Riverside District

5/14: Gears & Grub 2022
9:00am - 3:00pm
Freedom Park

5/18: Yappy Hour Fun with Your Pooch
6:00pm | Starland Yard
Every 3rd Wednesday

5/27: Michigan Rattlers, Live in Concert (Rescheduled)
8:00p | District Live at Plant Riverside District

6/3: Still Standing: A Tribute to Elton John
7:00pm | Mars Theater

6/15:Yappy Hour Fun with Your Pooch
6:00pm | Starland Yard
Every 3rd Wednesday

6/24: TEDxSavannah 2022—Standard Deviation
9:30am - 5:00pm
Yamacraw Performing Arts Center

Find more events and happenings at **PoolerMagazine.com**.

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