



*Shoals*  
WOMAN

August 2017

Shoals  
Woman  
*of the*  
Year

Mercy  
Winters

Food

Farmers Markets  
*Locally grown,  
fresh produce*

Creative  
workspaces

Studio 23  
*Hub fostering many artists*

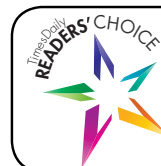
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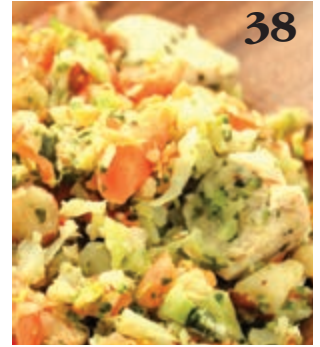
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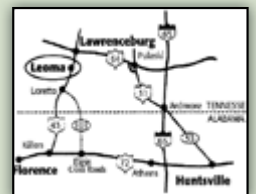
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# ON the COVER



Photograph by Heather Sherrill of Create Portraiture

*"If you can't feed a hundred people, then just feed one."* Mother Teresa

Mercedes Winters, Mercy to all who know her, lives up to her name. She is happy to feed one person, but she actually helps to feed hundreds each year and has helped to feed thousands through her work with the Salvation Army Auxiliary. If you've ever attended the Shoals Empty Bowl Luncheon, you, too have helped feed the hungry in our area. Mercy spearheaded the move to bring the luncheon to the Shoals to benefit the Salvation Army. In its 15-year history, it has raised more than half a million dollars. Mercy's passion for helping people shines through in everything she does. It is what drew us to her, and we are proud to name her the 2017 Shoals Woman of the Year.

She is among good company. Our finalists are from different segments of our community, working behind the scenes to enhance the lives of individuals or the lives of our community as a whole. We invite you to meet them within the pages of this magazine. If you missed our annual Shoals Woman of the Year luncheon, you missed a treat to see and hear these women talk about their passions. We hope to give you a glimpse of their work.

Also in this issue, we're offering an introduction to Studio 23, a wonderful venue in Florence that's the brainchild of three friends who offer an inviting place for artisans to showcase their work and test the waters when it comes to developing a business. Cultivating artists is part of the legacy in the Shoals, and Studio 23 is a welcoming environment that nurtures artists from a variety of genres.

Speaking of nurture, or should we say nature, we can't have an issue that doesn't give homage to food. This time, we turned our focus to the colorful display you can find every week at local farmers markets. There's just something about walking among tables and bins of fresh produce, grown locally, or near locally, that feeds the soul. The newest markets are in Killen and on College Street in Florence.

Don't forget that the Shoals encompass highways that take you beyond downtown districts. We visited From the Beacon Hill, a business that has rooms filled with apparel, jewelry and home accessories that's located 15 miles or so outside of Florence on Alabama 20. It was a treat to browse through the shelves and tables and racks of clothing. We think you'll want to see it for yourself after viewing the sneak peek we offer here.

The Shoals Woman of the Year issue is our favorite because it honors our most enjoyable asset: individuals who give back over and over again to make our community a better place. We hope you agree.

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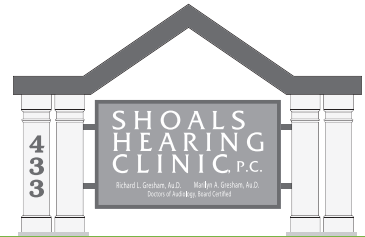
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## Shoals WOMAN

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# 2017 SHOALS WOMAN OF THE YEAR Mercy Winters

by SHERHONDA ALLEN  
Photos by HEATHER SHERRILL  
of CREATE PORTRAITURE

The shortened version of her name is used by family, friends and strangers alike – “Mercy.”

“My Mama called me Mercy all the time unless I was in trouble,” she said, laughing.

This year’s 2017 Shoals Woman of the Year isn’t content to write a check to a worthy cause and go about her life. She is hands on and heart involved with her work.

She and her husband Denny own Trinity Ceramic Supply East Inc. in the Florence-Lauderdale Industrial Park. And while she is shoulder-to-shoulder in helping the business succeed, it’s her volunteerism that keeps her active in the community.

A member of the Salvation Army Women’s Auxiliary for the past 15 years, she was instrumental in bringing the Empty Bowl Luncheon to the Shoals as a fundraiser for the Salvation Army.

She and her husband had business customers, potters, in Tupelo, Mississippi where the Empty Bowls Project was used as a fundraiser for its Salvation Army. Empty Bowls is not a Salvation Army project but is an autonomous nonprofit that is a grassroots effort to raise money and awareness in the fight to end hunger.

Mercy Winters stands in the kitchen of the renovated Salvation Army.

“Our potters in Mississippi contacted us years ago, probably 16 years ago, and said they were starting an Empty Bowls fundraiser and needed glazes and clay,” Winters recalled. “We would go over once a week and make bowls and things to sell at their silent auction.”

She soon had the idea that the Empty Bowls Project could help here. True to her highly organized skills, she developed a manual as a guide for the fundraiser.

“I wrote a 75-page manual on how to do this because no one here knew how to do it,” she said with a matter-of-factness that is also a trait that immediately puts people at ease when they meet her.

Her banking background came into play as she developed spreadsheets to keep track of each committee and what they needed to do, to track time sheets, sign-up sheets, even sample letters. It was a detailed manual that left room for adjustments to refine the process.



Winters prepares a bowl for glazing. She and her husband Denny, right, run a clay business.



“At the end of the year, they’d give me their suggestions or changes....I’d change it in my computer and it was ready for the next go round. We’ve got it pretty fine-tuned,” Winters said. “I’ve sent that manual to so many cities – I’ve even sent it to European countries.”

There also are spreadsheets on what’s raised each year and how it’s spent. That’s how she knows

the Empty Bowl Luncheon has raised approximately \$500,000 since its inception 15 years ago.

The first year it took place was at the Florence-Lauderdale Coliseum and was so successful, they immediately outgrew the facility. It has been held at the Marriott Conference Center since then.

Winters and her “clay mates” group meet at her business throughout the year to make the bowls that are featured at the luncheon.

And through her volunteer work with the Salvation Auxiliary, she works at the

Salvation center – hands-on as usual – where she has painted walls, hung artwork, helped to buy kitchen equipment and generally make the living quarters as welcoming as possible for individuals who must use them.

It’s the people she sees receiving the benevolence from the luncheon’s proceeds that move her the most. She works



Winters and her “clay mates” spend two days a week making bowls for the Empty Bowl Luncheon.

registration and distribution during the Christmas season and helps individuals sign up for assistance.

"You get to meet people and get their stories," she said. "People don't know how many people are poor here because they don't see it – they don't see anyone living under bridges or sleeping on sidewalks, so they think it's not here."

"We did a study ... eight or nine years ago. The area demographics were staggering – there were a staggering number – about 70 percent of kids in school here who were at the poverty level."

"We have kids living in their cars. We have grandparents who are raising grandkids because the parents are in jail or on drugs, and the grandparents have to make decisions like, do I buy medicine or food for the kids."

"It's heartbreaking."

She said the number of families that qualified for the Angel Tree program, which invites others to "adopt" an angel's name from a Christmas tree and provide that

child with gifts for Christmas, was "down" this year – 1,400. She said they have had as many as 1,800 to 1,900 a year for Christmas assistance.

"This year we've added some senior (adults) and teens – if they're living at home, we have things for them, too ... toiletries and maybe one thing that they want. They'll ask for something like a (University of) Alabama sweatshirt. Or a lamp for their room."

"I love it. I love the fact that we're helping so many people. It's incredible. We need this."

Her involvement extends beyond the Salvation Army. She has even gotten her neighborhood involved in giving back to the community. She and her husband organize a football party during the Iron Bowl. Living on a cul-de-sac makes it convenient to erect tents where each household on the street cooks enough to feed 10 or more guests who pay to go from tent to tent sampling food. A barbecue cook-off has been added where the winner

gets to select the local charity that will benefit from the profits of the night. It's gotten so big and so popular that they have to print tickets and wristbands to keep the crowd of about 500 people under control.

Winters sends a letter to the chosen charity with the donation.

"It's fun. We have a blast. What's nice is when we get a response letter back. We send the letter from the whole neighborhood ... then I copy the letter and put it in everybody's mailbox."

Everywhere she has lived, Winters has been involved in altruistic causes. Her focus has been on the Shoals community since moving here in 1994. As one individual put it in nominating her: "She is a one-woman Dynamo who can orchestrate large numbers of people to do great works in our community."

"Mercy represents everything (a) Shoals Woman of the Year should be."



Two of the clay mates who help make bowls with Winters.





# CONNIE BRADFORD

## continuing to help

by SHERHONDA ALLEN  
Photos by HEATHER SHERRILL  
of CREATE PORTRAITURE

### Connie Bradford: Age is no excuse to stop helping people.

When Connie Hancock Bradford retired from teaching, no one would have blamed her if she had taken it easy and had nothing else to do with education.

That didn't happen.

Bradford taught American History and speech for 31 years and developed the drama department at Colbert County High School.

The drama bug bit her when she was a high school student in Florida and had an opportunity to be involved in putting on a radio program based on Edgar Allan Poe's "Premature Burial," a horror short story where the narrator is consumed by his fear of being buried alive. When the story called for the narrator to



scream, it was Bradford who obliged.

"Back then I could really scream," she said.

Her parents moved from Florida to Alabama to run their dairy farm and she enrolled at what was then Montevallo Women's College, but when she learned the University of Alabama offered a major in radio, she transferred.

In her junior year, she was in Atlanta to interview for a job with a radio station. The station manager told her there was no place for a woman in radio. The year was 1945.

After she returned home, her father, too, warned her there was no place for a woman in radio at that time and encouraged her to go into education. Her enthusiasm for drama lay dormant, but didn't die, and she discovered something else about herself.

"I loved teaching," she said.

Her career as an educator provided an outlet for her love of drama.

Then, "I met this guy" from Leighton, she said.

It was a blind date arranged with the help of her roommate's brother. "This guy" was majoring in physical education at Florence State. Their romance survived the long distance and they were married after he graduated from college.

They settled in Selma for a time because her parents needed help with the dairy farm, and after her father died, her husband ran the business for five years – until he underwent an operation that ended his ability to do the heavy work the dairy required.

Their friend, C.T. Mann, offered her husband a job as assistant coach at Colbert County High School

"Well that was right down my husband's alley. He really wanted to be a coach."

Bradford had worked with the Philanthropic Education Organization, call PEO, while she was still teaching, and when she retired continued to work with the organization, which awards scholarships and grants to women who are continuing their education. Just last year, she helped a young woman get the funds she needed to attend the University of North Alabama.

She has lived in a lovely assistant living home for the past eight years and celebrated her 92nd birthday in July. Still, that's no reason to stop helping others, she said, sharing the mantra she lives by: "You're not dead 'til you're dead and it's no point in acting dead until you die."



# SANDY CROSS

## they deserve my best

by SHERHONDA ALLEN  
Photos by HEATHER SHERRILL  
of CREATE PORTRAITURE



### Sandy Cross: Helping patients navigate through a breast cancer diagnosis

There are a myriad of questions a woman has immediately after hearing she has breast cancer, and without someone to help them sort through the maze of information and options, the fight for survival can seem overwhelming.

Treatments and doctor visits consume the bulk of the focus, but what is sometimes pushed to “later” can cause as much stress as the diagnosis itself.

Sandy Cross sees both kinds of stress in her work with patients and became involved with the Breast Cancer Assistance Fund after a patient lost her job.

“One of my patients had complications from her breast cancer treatment and she was unable to go back to work, and she was let go,” Cross recalled. “She was a single female. Her family all lived in Mississippi, far away.

“She had used her 401K to make it the rest of her time. She had extensive treatment, so it was about a year and a half, almost two years. And so I thought to myself, I don’t want that to ever happen again.

“I thought: there’s got to be a way to fix this – I’m sort of a fixer.”

She wanted to raise money for the assistance fund to ensure there would be financial help to patients beyond what they were going through with treatments and doctor’s visits. The question was: how could she raise money?

“My passion is tennis and that’s (the only) way I could figure out a way to raise money, and so I thought, well, I’ll have a tennis tournament.”

Cross lives in Rogersville and is a registered nurse at Huntsville Hospital. She organized the first tennis tournament to benefit the fund in Florence with the theme, Raising a Racket for a Cure.

“The first year, we raised \$2,000 and I was happy with that, but it didn’t pay off a whole lot of bills, but it did help,” she said. “And then the next year it was \$6,000 and the next year it was \$10,000 (for two years) and then last year we raised \$12,000.”

She organized other events, like a Zumba-thon and a cook-off.

“The total money that has been raised has been around \$208,000. We spend quite a bit of that a year, so every year I want to do more and more events to try to replace the funds that we use.”

As a nurse, Cross is a breast cancer patient navigator, but rather than hand out pamphlets and material and calling it a day, she’s hands on and helps patients beyond the hospital.

“It’s a very, very confusing time, and it’s a quick process – you get diagnosed, you see surgeons, you see oncologists, you see radiation oncologists – it’s a world wind, you don’t have time to ... just gather information in just a short period of time. So I felt like I needed to be available for that.

“These women are so strong and they deserve my best.”

Cross said breast cancer is one of the most expensive cancers to treat.

“One of the reasons is that you see so many specialists, you’re seeing a doctor every week (or) every two weeks, and the treatment can be a year, year and a half to two years.”

The assistance fund helps these patients pay bills like electricity, and make car and house payments, even insurance payments in some cases.

Patients who nominated her for the Shoals Woman of the Year award say Cross helps beyond raising money for the assistance fund by creating a class for those whose treatments are over, called “Surviving and Thriving” so they can better transition from patient back to “real life.” Another patient wrote “I have observed Sandy spending endless hours after work helping someone that needed a car, a place to live, extra food, ... anything to help that ... person going through breast cancer have a few needs taken care of. I have met countless ladies that have been touched by her good deeds.”

Cross takes it in stride and is modest about the help.

“The main focus is for them to focus on getting well,” she said. “It’s such a rewarding experience ... you just see a big relief come over their faces.”





# EMILY RHODES

## supporting education

by SHERHONDA ALLEN  
Photos by HEATHER SHERRILL  
of CREATE PORTRAITURE

### Emily Rhodes: A 'dragon lady' in the best possible way.

For the past five years, dragons have been sighted on the Tennessee River.

Blame Emily Rhodes.

The huffing and puffing heard coming from these dragons have nothing to do with breathing fire and everything to do with supporting children's education.

Rhodes organized the first Dragon Boat Festival on the river, this year scheduled for Sept. 30. The festival raises funds for Kilby Laboratory School.

Rhodes said her search for a fundraiser for the school her children attend came from necessity.

"They were reevaluating a few things, and Kilby was

on the chopping block," she said.

She looked for not just a fundraiser for Kilby, but for an event that would be enjoyable for families and the community as a whole.

She found racing dragons. And while she was warned it would take a year or longer to organize a dragon boat race, Rhodes managed to do it in five months.

A dragon boat is a long, narrow watercraft paddled by a team of people whose skill can be advanced or novice, but who each play an important role in keeping the boat moving forward. Boats are usually painted in colorful hues with a dragon head and tail decorating each end of the boat.

The local festival has raised approximately \$40,000, with the proceeds buying computers, iPads and green screens for Kilby students.

Rhodes' involvement in community and education didn't stop with dragon boats. She's involved with the United Way and its Success by 6 program that works with the Dolly Parton Reading Train to supply books to pre-kindergarten children. Each month, children in the program receive a book that is age-appropriate.

Rhodes said it's one way to help families build a library of books their children may keep.

Rhodes said having the books encourages parents to read to their children.

"It focuses on early childhood literacy and school readiness," Rhodes said. "Literacy is so important, especially today."

She said the program is especially beneficial to children from lower-income families who struggle to buy books because they are not a necessity like food or shelter.

Rhodes' additional community work includes fundraising for early arts school and the Children's Museum of the Shoals and working with Room at the Inn, a homeless shelter/warming center, and volunteering with Pets are Worth Saving (PAWS) as a foster.



## JUDY HOOD

# preserving our local music

by SHERHONDA ALLEN

Photos by HEATHER SHERRILL of CREATE PORTRAITURE



### Judy Hood: A steward of the legendary sound.

The square little building sits modestly at 3614 Jackson Highway in Sheffield with the same façade it has worn for almost 50 years.

There was a time when traffic to and from the building was constant. There also was a time when no one came there anymore and it was abandoned.

But the music that originated from the heyday of Muscle Shoals Sound Studios from 1969 through 1978 still resonates and moves people to tears.

It's that reaction that still has the power to surprise Judy Hood, who is a docent for the heritage of music that put the Shoals on the world's map.

"The strongest reaction I get from visitors to the studio is tears – very often," she said. "It's not at all unusual – and I've taken thousands and thousands of people through here the past four years – for a grown man to break down and cry when they enter this room. I think there are a couple of reasons for that. I think nobody believes this tiny, humble little building became one of the most influential recording studios in the world, and four young men with nothing but a dream and a lot of talent and passion turned this little building into that.

"I also think you can't have that much talent in a room this small without some residual mojo, and I think people feel that."

Hood came out of semi-retirement and was a leading force in invigorating the local community and raising awareness to the legacy of music that originated from the Shoals and continues to bloom among artists.

That awareness has kept the Alabama Music Hall of Fame open and viable. It has reacquainted us to the appreciation that never waned from music lovers beyond our state borders.

Hood said she could see early on that "somebody needed to step up" and keep promoting Muscle Shoals music. She had 35 years in marketing and communications she could draw from to accomplish this, and a unique view from the inside.

Her husband of 30 years, David Hood, was one of the four session musicians from FAME Recording Studios who opened Muscle Shoals Sound in the spring of 1969. With Roger Hawkins, Jimmy Johnson and Barry Beckett, they were the Muscle Shoals Rhythm Section and the Swampers, and were the draw for artists that included Rolling Stones, Paul Simon, the Staple Singers, Rod Stewart, Willie Nelson, Traffic and Bob Seger who vied for their unique sound.

"The music that was recorded here was the

soundtrack of our lives," Hood said. "This is the music that moves us and this music has staying power. You're still hearing it on the radio today, what was recorded here.

"It's important to preserve and foster our local music because it is a legacy that we have here, and it really is our largest export. It's very important to the economy, but more important than the economy (is that) we have to preserve this for future generations to know what happened here."

She said 40 percent of the visitors to the museum and working studio, which is owned by the nonprofit Music Shoals Music Foundation, are not from the United States.

"It continues to amaze me that this little concrete building is the subject of international acclaim," she said.



# it's about saving their lives



Jessica Davenport's family – husband Kyle and children Kruze and Paizlee -- is often in the public eye. It goes beyond Facebook or Instagram posts of the cute things the children do day to day.

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## Shoals Woman of the Year luncheon keynote speaker: Jessica Davenport

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Jessica Davenport's family – husband Kyle and children Kruze and Paizlee -- is often in the public eye. It goes beyond Facebook or Instagram posts of the cute things the children do day to day.

It's about saving their lives, and the lives of other children born with Schimke Immuno-Osseous Dysplasia, or SIOD, a rare form of dwarfism that comes along with renal failure and a weakened immune system. The disease is fatal and has no cure.

Yet.

Davenport has used her love and passion as a mother to be an advocate to help find a cure for her children and others like them, who have been given a life expectancy of 9 to 11 years.

Her life morphed into running a foundation with the goal of raising \$6 million to fund research.

"It was a 1 in 3 million chance Kyle and I would both carry a mutated form of the SMARCAL1 gene and meet. Then another 25 percent chance that our child would receive both of our mutated copies to cause this disease to be active," she explains on the foundation's website. "Both of our children received both mutated copies. This makes the odds around a 1 in 80 million chance for both of our children to become affected with SIOD."

Her children are the first documented siblings in the U.S. with SIOD and are two of five known cases in the country with this rare genetic disease. There are less than 50 cases documented in the world.

Kruze was born July 16, 2013, by Cesarean Section, weighing 3

pounds 6 ounces and measuring 16 inches long. But he was not breathing and flat-lined. After he was revived, he was sent to a special NICU in Huntsville where he did well and came home on Aug. 6 that year.



"By all appearance, at that time, he was a normal, beautiful, healthy baby boy," Davenport explains in recounting her story on the foundation's website.

A year later, she and Kyle learned they were expecting Paizlee. She, too, was born by C-section.

"She was the most beautiful dark headed baby girl you have ever seen. She was perfect! Everything was perfect, except we started noticing that Kruze was extra

sensitive to light."

During the next two years, they took Kruze to 10 specialists for a battery of tests and finally came to the attention of a nephrologist at Children's Hospital in Birmingham. An ultrasound revealed he had one kidney and a urine test showed he had nephrotic syndrome, which is a kidney disorder that causes the kidneys to excrete too much protein into the urine. His T-cells were very low, which causes him to have an extremely low immune system. He was never on the growth curve.

The nephrologist realized the symptoms were not normal and did research before starting him on any drugs that could have made him worse.

In June 2016, genetic testing revealed the disease.

They had Paizlee tested, too, and didn't expect her to have the disease because she was not showing any symptoms. The news came back in August that Paizlee, too, had SIOD, likely the youngest person ever diagnosed.

"Devastation wasn't even the word we felt," Davenport said. "Both of our babies are two out of six cases of an extremely dangerous, rare disease right here in Muscle Shoals, Alabama."

She vowed to fight to help find a cure.

The Kruzin for a Kure Foundation was born ([kruznforakurefoundation.com](http://kruznforakurefoundation.com)) and in June this year announced on the foundation's Facebook page that more than \$400,000 has been raised – enough to "lock down" an account at Stanford for research.



# STUDIO 23 IS THE HUB THAT FOSTERS MANY ARTISTS

by SHERHONDA ALLEN  
Photos by ALLISON CARTER



The difficulty of artistic work can extend beyond the mental, creative process. Sometimes it requires a little heavy lifting.

That's what happened to Trina Ross, Donna Gray and April Howton, the three friends behind the success of Studio 23 in Florence

Their dream started with individual challenges – like how to get their works to craft fairs.

"I have always been artistic and wanted to have that outlet," Gray said. "I got into pottery maybe five years ago, kind of by accident. I (received a gift to) one of those (places) where you paint your own pottery. I had the best time and thought: I enjoyed painting it but I want to make it, so I just kind of jumped in, found an outlet, purchased the equipment and taught myself. I was determined. I just loved it."

Ross, too, grew her artistic talent from something she loved to do.

"I always did a little bit of photography. I loved taking pictures," she said.

Several years ago, a friend was decorating a dream home for the parade of homes "and she said, Trina I would love to have some local Florence photography. Well that was my little niche then, because I had done some kids photography, wedding photography ... and that was stressful to me because I'm an introvert.

But doing the local things like landscapes, that was a stress relief to me."

Her artistic eye has evolved from photography to painting to mixed media. She's now learning to oil paint, too.

"We just like to try something new and learn something new," she said.

Howton developed her art from a skill that came from necessity.

"We grew up poor and if I wanted a new cradle for my doll, we went out to the garage and daddy and I made it - that's just what I grew up doing," Howton said. "When I wanted bunk beds, daddy and I went and made them. When I needed a new chest of drawers, Daddy and I went and made it. Tools were very common and easy for me. It's just what I grew up around. If there was something you saw, you got the idea and you went and made it."

Her talent moved from building things for her use to repurposing furniture for others when she got involved in a charitable cause.

"I was training for a marathon and I did St. Jude -- I said I would be a Jude Hero where you have to raise money," she said, recalling that she was not good at just asking people for donations.

A friend put out a request on Facebook for anyone who could repair an old dresser with broken drawers



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▲ Donna Gray and her pottery at Studio 23. ▼ Trina Ross and her artwork at Studio 23.





and make it look like a pin she had found on Pinterest.

"I said, I can do that," Howton recalled. "So she brought it over. I did it for her and she said how much do I owe you, and I was like, if you would make a donation to my run that would be great.

"So then I thought: hey, I can paint people's furniture and that would pay for my donations."

Howton said she loves taking "something old and recycling it. She and Gray started doing shows together – Gray was doing jewelry and pottery.

"I had big furniture, so it was perfect," Howton said. "Her stuff looked good on mine.

"We were sitting at a show and it had been wonderful the day before...we had almost



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sold out, our booth looked awful – we were like, we’ve got to go make more stuff for tomorrow. And we were sitting there exhausted. Blessed but exhausted.”

“We were going to different places, loading up our furniture ... and pottery,” Gray said. “That is a lot of work. It’s hot. It’s heavy.”

They “half-jokingly” expressed the wish for their own place.

“I said I wish we had a studio where we could just have people come to us instead of us dragging all this stuff,” Howton said. “Six weeks later, we had the keys to our first studio.”

The studio was at the corner of Pine and Cypress streets in Florence. They outgrew the space in four months.

They then moved to a location at Seven Points. They outgrew that space in six months. When it was time to renew their lease, they learned the rent would increase, so they asked a friend who had just gotten into real estate to help them find yet another space.

Now located at 333 East College Street in Florence, they have room for their eclectic collection of artists who



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need somewhere sell and grow their craft. At last count, 39 artists are working from the studio.

The name of the studio comes from the Twenty-third Psalm.

“We wanted it to reflect our values but not be preachy or in your face or exclude anybody, but just represent us,” Gray said.

Howton said they want “anybody and everybody to walk in here” and feel supported. “Sometimes they need a venue ... someone to believe in them.

“We have people from all different walks of life, all different ages -- we all have this common thing because we like to create things. It’s like a family.”



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Studio 23 has a variety of locally made artisan items available for purchase.





Sippi Thigpen uses items found in the Tennessee River to make art for Studio 23.



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Food

# farmers markets



Collins Davis, of Bluewater Creek Farms, at the College Street Farmers Market.

# Plenty to choose from in selecting locally grown, fresh meats and produce.

*Photos by ALLISON CARTER*

At the College Street Farmers Market at Singin' River Live in Florence, there are baskets of tomatoes, bins of green, ruffled lettuce, cartons of fresh, brown eggs, okra, eggplant, green beans – there's even a massage chair if your shoulders tire from the weight of carrying your produce.

Farther down the highway, there's also the Killen Farmers Market, which opened May 20 and since then the number of shoppers has grown each weekend.

"They've got a pretty good selection (of vendors)," said Killen Councilwoman Mary Ann Rippey as she walked through the market one day in June. "They've got vegetables, coffee, honey, baked goods, fresh eggs, there's a little bit of everything. And people are coming, that's what is important."

The Shoals is in an enviable location. It is surrounded by farmers, both produce and livestock, who share their bounty.

They have plenty of venues from which to choose. In addition to the markets in Killen and on College Street, there are markets on Chisholm Road in Florence, South Raleigh Avenue in Sheffield, Green Avenue Southwest in Russellville, and Second Street West in Red Bay.



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A variety of vegetables are available at the College Street Farmers Market including green beans.



A variety of pickled vegetables are available at the College Street Farmers Market.



“Used to, everyone had a garden. That’s not necessarily the case anymore,” said Lauderdale County Commissioner Joe Hackworth. “A lot of people grew up on home-grown fruits and vegetables, but as society has changed, they don’t have the time or the space to garden anymore.”

The market in Killen was a dream of resident Barbara Yeilding.

“This gives the people in the eastern part of the county, who can’t get to Florence to the farmers market there, a chance to shop for fresh produce,” Yeilding said. “This gives people a chance to make a connection between farmers and their farm-fresh goods.”

Yeilding had been involved with opening a similar market in Franklin, Tennessee. She said her husband, Jack, encouraged her to start one in Killen.

“So, I did. We went riding around looking for a place and we saw the park and felt it would be ideal,” she said. “I went to the Town Council with the proposal.”

After receiving the council’s approval to use Killen Town Park off Lock Six Road, she started talking with local farmers.

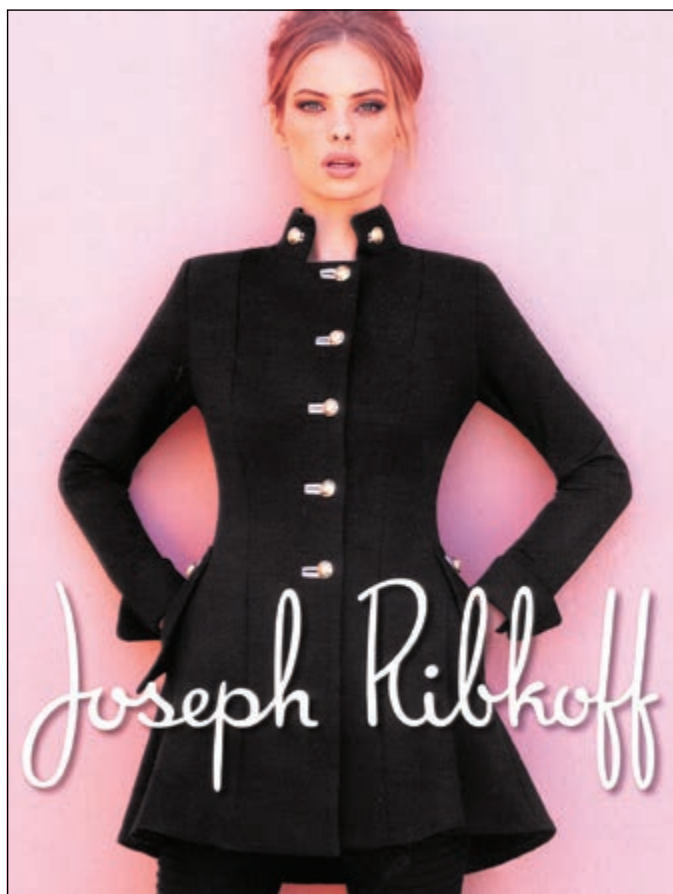


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Fresh eggs are available at the College Street Farmers Market.



Eggplants from Sonlit Meadows Farm are available at the College Street Farmers Market.



“They really helped, and they are still helping,” she said.

Yeilding said she learned a lot from working and talking with members of the Hines Family Farm, Bluewater Creek Farm, and Jordan Hamer of JPick Farms.

Some of the same farms, like Bluewater Creek Farm, sell at the College Street market, which is the newest market in the area, featuring farmers from within 25 miles of the Alabama state line. In addition to food, vendors include micro-businesses like Mama Cole’s Fried Pies, Hydrangea Soap Co., and Brandice Senecal Massage Therapist.

*Information in this article was first published in the TimesDaily by Senior Writer Tom Smith.*



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Sue Deaton, left, and Taylor Floyd, right set up Taylor's Tomatoes at the College Street Farmers Market.



Phillip Holcombe of Cottonwood Farm has meats available at the College Street Farmers Market.



Ellie Yielding at the Killen Farmers Market. Yielding is the manager of the farmers market.





Drew Benham  
of Utopia Farm  
at the College  
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# CHICKEN/VEGETABLE **rice**

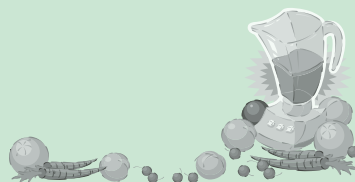


**The latest trend in vegetables appears to be to rice them and add seasonings and meat for a healthy, one-skillet meal.**

Broccoli and cauliflower are the favorite vegetables to rice and you can now find convenient bags in the frozen food section of most grocery stores. But while you're perusing the goods at the farmers market, why not pick up some vegetables and make it fresh? It's easy to do and you'll have the added value of knowing it's fresh and locally grown. Experiment with the basic recipe below by adding your favorite seasonings, even soy sauce for an Asian flair, if you can take the sodium content. Or bulk it up with fresh green peas and fresh chopped celery. Have fun with it.

**Here's an easy start that makes two heaping servings or four side servings:**

- 1 tablespoon olive oil or avocado oil
- 1 garlic clove, minced
- 1 cup sliced scallions OR 1 small onion, minced
- 1 carrot, peeled and roughly chopped
- 2 cups fresh cauliflower florets
- 2 cups fresh broccoli florets
- 1 cup cooked boneless, skinless chicken breast, diced
- 1/8 cup reduced sodium chicken broth OR homemade (better!) chicken stock
- Salt and pepper to taste



**DIRECTIONS:** Place cauliflower florets in food processor and pulse until rice, but not too finely riced. Do same for broccoli. Set aside.

In a nonstick, large skillet, heat the oil and sauté the onion and garlic until just fragrant. Add the carrots and cook until carrots are tender but still firm.

Add the riced broccoli and cauliflower. Stir and cook for two minutes.

Add diced chicken and chicken stock and stir, cooking until incorporated.

Add salt and pepper to taste.

Serve



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# From the Beacon Hill

Rooms of fashion make Beacon Hill worth the drive



by SHERHONDA ALLEN  
Photos by ALLISON CARTER

**If you believe beautiful fashion is only found in a downtown business district, drive to Beacon Hill on Savannah Highway in Lauderdale County.**

Sure, on your first drive there, you'll be convinced you're on your way to Tennessee (especially when you see signs pointing to the Natchez Trace Parkway). But keep going. Beacon Hill, at 15905 Savannah Highway (Alabama 20), is filled from room to room with beautiful apparel, jewelry and home accessories.

Here are a few ideas to make a beautiful transition from summer to fall.



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Details in this loose overlay from Et Lois, a brand that's made in the U.S.A. offers comfort and luxury but doesn't begin and end with the bold black accents.





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Call this two-piece from Et Lois just plain comfortable without looking dowdy. The crop pants are perfect for showing off a beautiful pair of sandals – with or without a high heel. The front-zipper top is convenient for taking off or keeping on, depending on Alabama's unpredictable autumn weather, and the tapered banded-wrist sleeve has enough give not to be annoying.



Topstitching and a slanted pocket on this lightweight top by Et Lois make it ideal for casual wear, yet perfect for adorning with jewelry and wearing over slacks for dressier occasions.

Sometimes the details of a lovely top are in its simplicity, like this slightly tapered tunic by Et. Lois. The symmetry of front buttons is all that's needed to keep everything simple, yet elegant.



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This sleeveless, open tunic by Et Lois is perfect for layering on those not-quite-cool nights.

The burst of applique flower is bold yet whimsical and a drawstring hem allows you to taper it in. The staff at Beacon Hill warns this particular tunic is extremely popular.



This top by Dunes is a cotton that's lightweight enough to layer on a cool night or wear alone over pants or crops on a warmer one. The block print will be a standout at an, ahem, University of Alabama football game.



# Book it

If you can't find one of these New York Times bestsellers on the shelf, ColdWater bookstore in Tuscumbia has an online presence that allows you to order from the depths of your own comfy armchair. But don't miss the opportunity to prowl the shelves of our hometown bookstore in person.





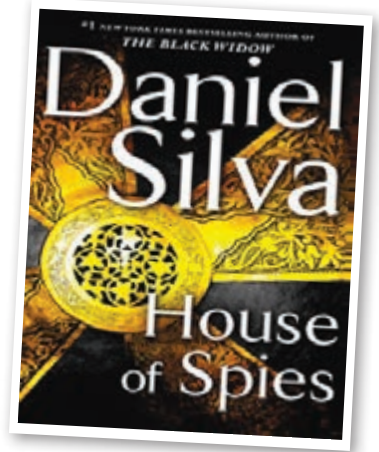
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## House of Spies

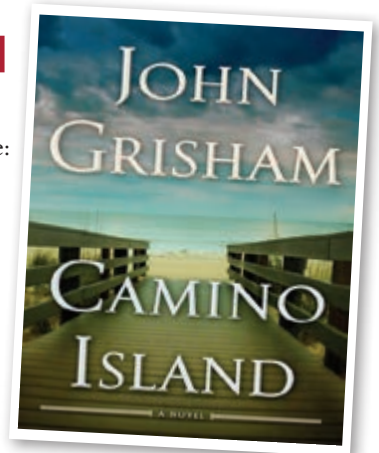
Author: Daniel Silva  
 From author's website: A heart-stopping tale of suspense, Daniel Silva's runaway bestseller, "The Black Widow," was one of 2016's biggest novels. Now, in "House of Spies," the legendary Gabriel Allon is back and out for revenge – determined to hunt down the world's most dangerous terrorist, a shadowy ISIS mastermind known only as Saladin.



Four months after the deadliest attack on the American homeland since 9/11, a terrorist plot leaves a trail of carnage through London's glittering West End. The attack is a brilliant feat of planning and secrecy, but with one loose thread. The thread leads Gabriel Allon and his team to the south of France and to the gilded doorstep of one of the richest men in the country, Jean-Luc Martel, and his companion, Olivia Watson. A beautiful former British fashion model, Olivia pretends not to know the true source of Martel's enormous wealth. And Martel, likewise, turns a blind eye to the fact he is doing business with a man whose objective is the very destruction of the West. Together, under Gabriel's skilled hand, they will become an unlikely pair of heroes in the global war on terrorism. Written in seductive and elegant prose, the story moves swiftly from the glamour of Saint-Tropez to the grit of Casablanca and, finally, to an electrifying climax that will leave readers breathless long after they turn the final page.

## Camino Island

Author: John Grisham  
 From the author's website: A gang of thieves stage a daring heist from a secure vault deep below Princeton University's Firestone Library. Their loot is priceless, but Princeton has insured it for \$25 million. Bruce Cable owns a popular bookstore in the sleepy resort town of Santa Rosa on Camino Island in Florida. He makes his real money, though, as a prominent dealer in rare books. Very few people know that he occasionally dabbles in the black market of stolen books and manuscripts. Mercer Mann is a young novelist with a severe case of writer's block who has recently been laid off from her teaching position. She is approached by an elegant, mysterious woman working for an even more mysterious company. A generous offer of money convinces Mercer to go undercover and infiltrate Bruce Cable's circle of literary friends, ideally getting close enough to him to learn his secrets. But eventually Mercer learns far too much, and there's trouble in paradise as only John Grisham can deliver it.



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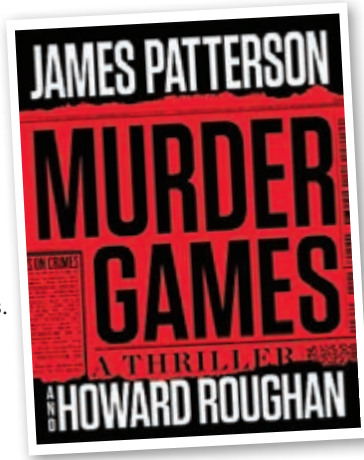
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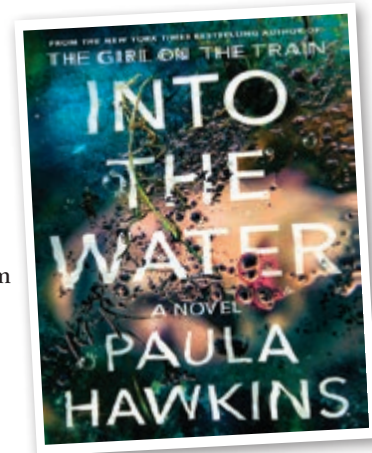
## Murder Games

Author: James Patterson  
 From the author's website: A serial killer is loose on the streets of Manhattan. His victims appear to be total strangers. The only clue that unites the crimes is the playing card left behind at each scene that hints at the next target. The killer, known in the tabloids as The Dealer, is baiting cops into a deadly and scandalous guessing game that has the city increasingly on edge. Elizabeth Needham, the gorgeous, tenacious cop in charge of the case turns to an unlikely ally—Dylan Reinhart, a handsome and brilliant professor whose book turned up in connection with the murders. As the tabloid frenzy over The Dealer reaches a fever pitch, Dylan and Elizabeth must connect the clues to discover what the victims have in common before The Dealer runs through his entire deck.



## Into the Water

Author: Paula Hawkins  
 From the author's website: A single mother turns up dead at the bottom of the river that runs through town. Earlier in the summer, a vulnerable teenage girl met the same fate. They are not the first women lost to these dark waters, but their deaths disturb the river and its history, dredging up secrets long submerged. Left behind is a lonely 15-year-old girl. Parentless and friendless, she now finds herself in the care of her mother's sister, a fearful stranger who has been dragged back to the place she deliberately ran from—a place to which she vowed she'd never return. With the same propulsive writing and acute understanding of human instincts that captivated millions of readers around the world in her explosive debut thriller, "The Girl on the Train," Paula Hawkins delivers an urgent, twisting, deeply satisfying read that hinges on the deceptiveness of emotion and memory, as well as the devastating ways that the past can reach a long arm into the present. Beware a calm surface—you never know what lies beneath.



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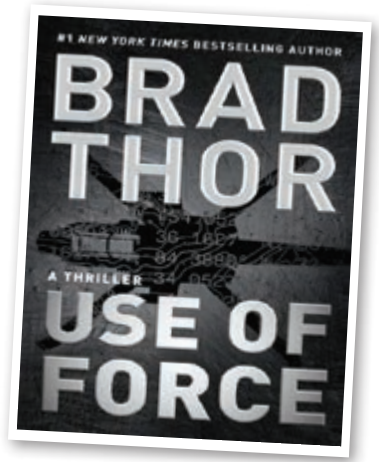


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## Use of Force

Author: Brad Thor  
From the publisher's page: As a storm rages across the Mediterranean Sea, a terrifying distress call is made to the Italian Coast Guard. Days later, a body washes ashore. Identified as a high value terrorism suspect (who had disappeared three years prior), his name sends panic through the Central

Intelligence Agency. Where was he headed? What was he planning? And could he be connected to the "spectacular attack" they have been fearing all summer? In a race against time, the CIA taps an unorthodox source to get answers: Navy SEAL turned covert counterterrorism operative, Scot Harvath. Hired on a black contract, Harvath will provide the deniability the United States needs, while he breaks every rule along the way. Packed with pulse-pounding action, fascinating characters, and electrifying intrigue, Brad Thor does it again and proves why he is known around-the-world as the "Master of Thrillers."

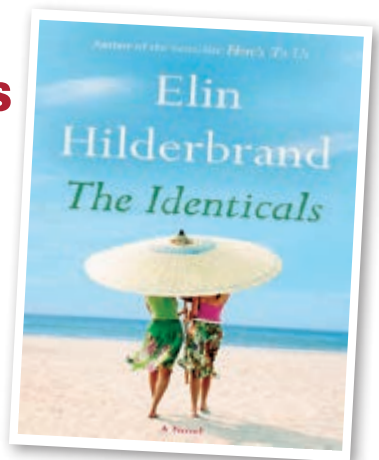


## The Identicals

Author: Elin Hilderbrand

From the author's website: Nantucket is only two and a half hours away from Martha's Vineyard by ferry. But the two islands might as well be worlds apart for a set of identical twin sisters who have been at odds for years. Just because twins look

exactly the same doesn't mean they're anything alike--and Tabitha and Harper Frost have spent their whole lives trying to prove this point. When a family crisis forces them to band together--or at least appear to--the twins come to realize that the special bond that they share is more important than the resentments that have driven them apart. A story of new loves, old battles, and a threat that gives a whole new meaning to the term sibling rivalry, "The Identicals" is Elin Hilderbrand at her page-turning best.



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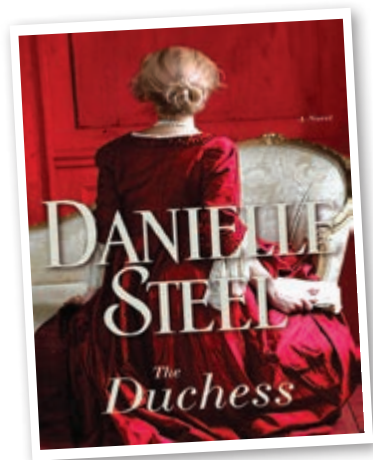
Dave Barry is a Pulitzer Prize winning columnist and author of over 30 books. Two of Barry's books were the basis of the CBS sitcom *Dave's World*.

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## The Duchess

Author: Danielle Steel

From the publisher's page: Angélique Latham has grown up at magnificent Belgrave Castle under the loving tutelage of her father, the Duke of Westerfield, after the death of her aristocratic French mother. At eighteen she is her father's closest, most trusted child, schooled in managing their grand estate. But when he dies, her half-brothers brutally turn her out, denying her very existence. Angélique has a keen mind, remarkable beauty, and an envelope of money her father pressed upon her. To survive, she will need all her resources—and one bold stroke of fortune. Unable to secure employment without references or connections, Angélique desperately makes her way to Paris, where she rescues a young woman fleeing an abusive madam—and suddenly sees a possibility: Open an elegant house of pleasure that will protect its women and serve only the best clients. With her upper-class breeding, her impeccable style, and her father's bequest, Angélique creates Le Boudoir, soon a sensational establishment where powerful men, secret desires, and beautiful, sophisticated women come together. But living on the edge of scandal, can she ever make a life of her own—or regain her rightful place in the world? From England to Paris to New York, Danielle Steel captures an age of upheaval and the struggles of women in a male-ruled society—and paints a captivating portrait of a woman of unquenchable spirit, who in houses great or humble is every ounce a duchess.



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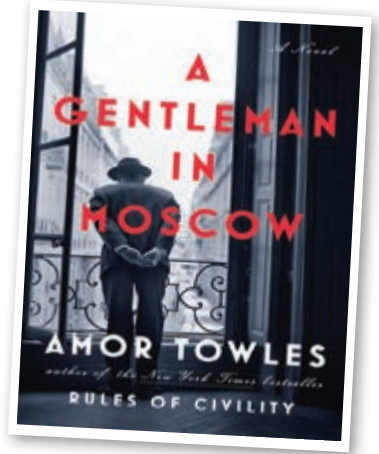


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## A Gentleman in Moscow

Author: Amor Towles  
From the author's website: "A Gentleman in Moscow" immerses us in another elegantly drawn era with the story of Count Alexander Rostov. When, in 1922, he is deemed an unrepentant aristocrat by a Bolshevik tribunal, the count is sentenced to house arrest in the Metropol, a grand hotel across the street from the Kremlin. Rostov, an indomitable man of erudition and wit, has never worked a day in his life, and must now live in an attic room while some of the most tumultuous decades in Russian history are unfolding outside the hotel's doors. Unexpectedly, his reduced circumstances provide him a doorway into a much larger world of emotional discovery. Brimming with humor, a glittering cast of characters, and one beautifully rendered scene after another, this singular novel casts a spell as it relates the count's endeavor to gain a deeper understanding of what it means to be a man of purpose.



## Two Nights

Author: Kathy Reichs  
From the publisher's webpage: A standalone thriller featuring a "tough-talking, scarred heroine" from the author of the Temperance Brennan series, the basis for the hit TV show "Bones."

Meet Sunday Night, a woman with physical and psychological scars, and a killer instinct. . . .

Sunnie has spent years running from her past, burying secrets and building a life in which she needs no one and feels nothing. But a girl has gone missing, lost in the chaos of a bomb explosion, and the family needs Sunnie's help. Is the girl dead? Did someone take her? If she is out there, why doesn't she want to be found? It's time for Sunnie to face her own demons—because they just might lead her to the truth about what really happened all those years ago.



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## Seven Stones to Stand or Fall

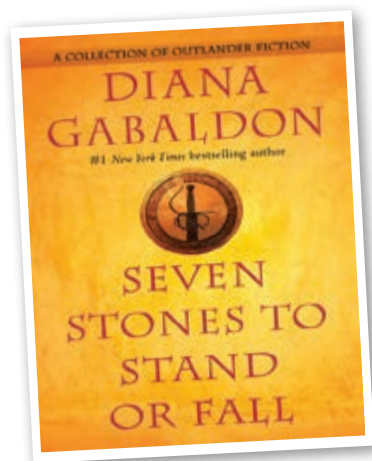
(A collection of Outlander fiction)

Author: Diana Gabaldon

From the publisher's webpage: A magnificent collection of Outlander short fiction—including two never-before-published novellas—featuring Jamie Fraser, Lord John Grey, Master Raymond, and many more, from Diana Gabaldon.

"The Custom of the Army" begins with Lord John Grey being shocked by an electric eel and ends at the Battle of Quebec. Then comes "The Space Between," where it is revealed that the Comte St. Germain is not dead, Master Raymond appears, and a widowed young wine dealer escorts a would-be novice to a convent in Paris. In "A Plague of Zombies," Lord John unexpectedly becomes military governor of Jamaica when the original governor is gnawed by what probably wasn't a giant rat. "A Leaf on the Wind of All Hallows" is the moving story of Roger MacKenzie's parents during World War II. In "Virgins," Jamie Fraser, aged nineteen, and Ian Murray, aged twenty, become mercenaries in France, no matter that neither has yet bedded a lass or killed a man. But they're trying. . . . "A Fugitive Green" is the story of Lord John's elder brother, Hal, and a seventeen-year-old rare book dealer with a sideline in theft, forgery, and blackmail. And finally, in "Besieged," Lord John learns that his mother is in Havana—and that the British Navy is on their way to lay siege to the city.

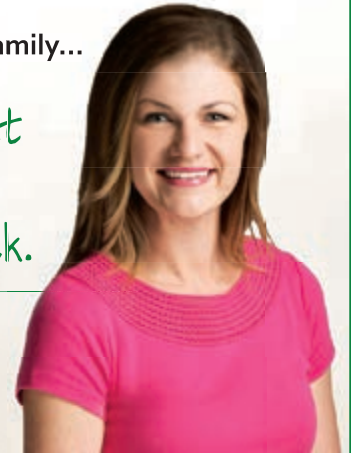
Filling in mesmerizing chapters in the lives of characters readers have followed over the course of thousands of pages, Gabaldon's genius is on full display throughout this must-have collection.



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Robert Adler and Vicki Langdon perform Flamenco dancing.



Leslie Helton displays her tie-dyed cloths.



Amelia Ackers creates a Henna tattoo.



Kerry Cai tosses a bean bag.



Louis and Augustin Gardner de Beville



Haley Burbank adjusts her creations on display.



Karly Holy shows Kaitlyn Ridgeway how to cast.



Emma Moothart and Emmaline Wassner

# out & about Reader Riot



Author Elizabeth Patterson passes out crayons and pages.



Evie Frith colors a page of a book.



Gentry Bilyeu draws on a book page.



Isabella Clement assists author Irene Latham.



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# out & about Frontier Days



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Pope's Tavern Museum curator Wayne Higgins.



Shelly Wellington, Ronald Proctor and Michael Wellington.



Michael Holt files a metal piece in the blacksmithing tent.



# out & about Helen Keller Festival



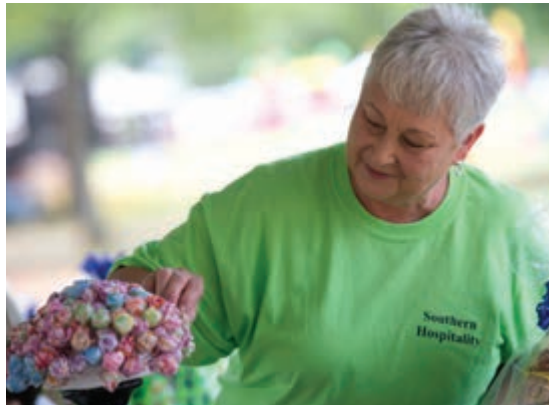
Leo Zhou blows bubbles.



Mayleigh Parrish shows off her glitter covered fingers.



Brooke and Cooper Humphrey



Charlotte Witt finishes up a lollipop bouquet.



Claire Vickery has her face painted.



Artist Kenneth Smith is reflected in his art.

# out & about North Alabama African Heritage Festival



Ninki Powell goes for the last taste of his icy drink.



Derric Underwood serving fish.



Daryl Byrd listens to the music performance.



Donna Carroll bursts out a song of praise with the band, A Family Affair.

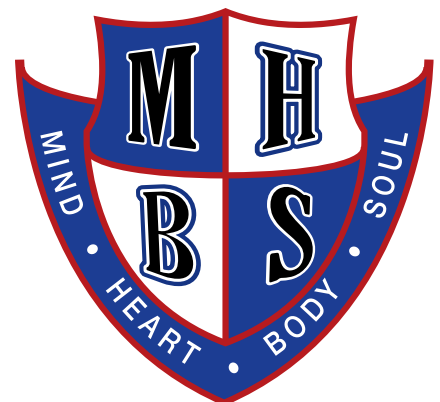


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# out & about Arts Alive



Beth Phillips creating her KuduzuMama lamps and creations.



Connie Walden and Debra Walden discuss some art on display.



Henry Hanson sips a lemonade.



People browse the artist's booths.



Molli Hood speaks with Marcy Whitten of Shoals Master Gardeners.



Cluckedup Metal Art creator David Hammock tends to his display.



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# PLANNING Companion

September 2 to December 9

## SEPTEMBER

### SEPT. 2

**ROGERSVILLE FIRST SATURDAYS**  
3-8 p.m. downtown  
Rogersville  
Free  
Details: 256-740-4141

### SEPT. 4

**COONDOG CEMETERY LABOR DAY CELEBRATION**  
4945 Coondog Cemetery Road, Cherokee  
10 a.m. to 4 p.m.  
Free  
Details: coondogcemetery.com or call 256-383-0783.

### SEPT. 4

**SHOALS AREA LABOR DAY FESTIVITIES**  
Spring Park, 1 Spring Park Road, Tuscumbia  
9 a.m. to 5 p.m.  
Free  
Details: 256-383-0783

### SEPT. 8

**FIRST FRIDAYS**  
Court Street, downtown Florence  
5-8 p.m.  
Free  
Details: 877-290-8880

### SEPT. 8-9

**OKA KAPASSA — RETURN TO COLD WATER**  
Spring Park, Tuscumbia  
9 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. Friday;  
10 a.m. to 9 p.m. Saturday  
Free  
Details: okakapassa.org or call 256-757-4438.

### SEPT. 16

**TRAIL OF TEARS COMMEMORATION AND MOTORCYCLE RIDE**  
Free  
Check website for details: trailoftears-rememberance.org.

### SEPT. 19-24

**NORTH ALABAMA STATE FAIR**  
Admission charges  
65 Sportsplex Drive, Muscle Shoals  
5 p.m. – midnight, Tuesday-Friday  
Noon to midnight Saturday and Sunday  
Details:  
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Trail of Tears ride.



Renaissance Faire in Florence.

## OCTOBER

### **OCT. 6**

#### **FIRST FRIDAYS**

Court Street, downtown  
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5-8 p.m.  
Free  
Details: 877-290-8880

### **OCT. 7**

#### **ROGERSVILLE FIRST SATURDAYS**

3-8 p.m. downtown  
Rogersville  
Free  
Details: 256-740-4141

### **OCT. 7-8**

#### **OKTOBERFEST**

St. Florian City Park  
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Details: 256-767-3690

### **OCT. 28-29**

#### **ALABAMA RENAISSANCE FAIRE**

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Wilson Park, downtown  
Florence  
Details: alarenfaire.org.

#### **OKTOBERFEST**

Date to be announced  
St. Florian  
Details: 256-767-3960 or  
Facebook page

## NOVEMBER

### **NOV. 3**

#### **FIRST FRIDAYS**

Court Street, downtown  
Florence  
5-8 p.m.  
Free  
Details: 877-290-8880

### **NOV. 4**

#### **ROGERSVILLE FIRST SATURDAYS**

3-8 p.m. downtown  
Rogersville  
Free  
Details: 256-740-4141

### **NOV. 16**

#### **W.C. HANDY BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION**

W.C. Handy Home,  
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Details: 256-760-6434



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## **DECEMBER**

### **DEC. 1 FIRST FRIDAYS**

Court Street, downtown  
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5-8 p.m.  
Free  
Details: 877-290-8880

### **DEC. 2 ROGERSVILLE FIRST SATURDAYS**

3-8 p.m. downtown  
Rogersville  
Free  
Details: 256-740-4141

### **DEC. 1-24 TREES OF CHRISTMAS**

Tennessee Valley Museum  
of Art, 511 N. Water St.,  
Tuscumbia  
1-3 p.m. Sunday; 9 a.m. to  
5 p.m. Monday-Friday; 10  
a.m. to 2 p.m. Dec. 24  
Admission charged  
Details: tvaa.net or  
256-383-0533

### **DEC. 3 PLANTATION CHRISTMAS**

Belle Mont Mansion, 1569  
Cook Lane, Tuscumbia  
1-5 p.m.  
Admission charged  
Details: 256-383-0783,  
or 256-637-8513 or  
colbertcountytourism.org

### **DEC. 9 CHRISTMAS AT IVY GREEN**

300 N. Commons W.,  
Tuscumbia  
8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m.  
Admission charged  
Details: 256-383-4066

### **DEC. 8 DICKENS CHRISTMAS FEAST**

Tuscumbia Depot  
Roundhouse  
7 p.m.  
Advanced ticket purchase  
necessary  
Details: 256-383-9797 or  
256-383-0783

### **DEC. 9 DICKENS CHRISTMAS Y'ALL**

Downtown Tuscumbia  
Various times  
Admission charged for  
some events  
Details: 256-383-0783 or  
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Oka Kapassa - Return to Cold Water - Native American Indian Festival in Tuscumbia.

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# NOMINEES

for the 2017 Shoals Woman of the Year

Robin Armstrong  
Corinne (Connie) Hancock  
Bradford  
Debbie Buffaloe  
Sandy Cross  
Any Gunderman  
Rachel Hackworth  
Neco Hamilton  
Sandra Harper  
Judy Hood  
Laquita Logan  
Faye Mann  
Debbie McFall

Barbara Moore  
Janice Rice Moran  
Nancy Muse  
JoHelene Patrick  
Jacqueline Parsons  
Rhoda Plain  
Emily Rhodes  
Katy Russell  
Kaytrina Simmons  
Stephanie R. Stutts  
Louis Tanner  
Jo Ann Smith Thomas  
Mercy Winters



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# past WINNERS



## 2005 | SHERRY FOWLER

Fowler was chosen for her work with the North Alabama Head Injury Foundation. Her daughter, Mary Darlene, sustained a debilitating head injury in 1986 when she was struck by an intoxicated driver. Fowler was advised to place her daughter in a nursing facility. She refused. She received the training necessary to care for her 19-year-old daughter at home. Fowler continued working with the foundation after her daughter's death in 2005.

## 2006 | NATALIE GORDON

Gordon was 24 years old when she battled cancer and underwent a life-saving surgery: the removal of her left arm and shoulder. She was mother to a 7-month-old and a 3-year-old and Gordon and said she was not prepared to lose parts of her body. More importantly, however, she said she was not prepared for her children to lose their mother. She said the surgery was traumatic and depressing, but Gordon adjusted and became an inspiration to others. She vowed not to let her loss stop her.



## 2007 | KAY PARKER

Parker and a friend, Sharon Scogin, developed the idea for The Healing Place after Parker saw a television report about a grief support center in Portland. She believed a similar center was greatly needed in the Shoals. The Healing Place became a haven where adults and children learn to work through their grief after a loved one's death. Parker's goal was to give people a place to be heard and to learn healing thoughts, including learning how to cherish memories and keep them from being debilitating.



## 2008 | BETTY BURDINE

Burdine has spent her life helping people, first as a nurse, then as coordinator of the Lifewise Seniors program for Eliza Coffee Memorial Hospital in Florence. She didn't stop there, but volunteered in several community endeavors. She helped raise money for the American Heart Association and was instrumental in procuring the monument for Lillian Diebert in Diebert Park in Florence. Burdine's caring nature extended to Lillian Diebert, who she would look in on before Diebert's death in 2011.



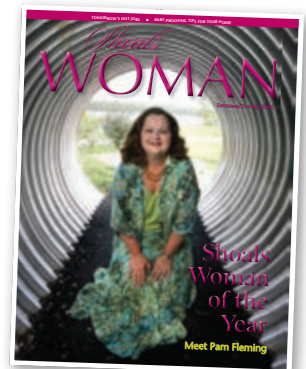
## 2009 | FELICE GREEN



Green retired from the University of North Alabama in 2003 but didn't sit still. She has a special love for children and will don costumes to read to children at various outlets across the Shoals. Green also expressed her love of art and dance and became a member of the Poza Dance Troupe while remaining active in Delta Sigma Theta sorority, which she helped charter at UNA. She is a known organizer of events during the W.C. Handy Music Festival including the ABCs of Blues & Jazz. She is a volunteer with the Salvation Army and St. Vincent De Paul Society at Our Lady of the Shoals Catholic Church in Tuscumbia.

## 2010 | PAM FLEMING

Fleming's outgoing personality helped her carry on a tradition she first learned from her parents: help people in need. She was honored for her work in helping to create the boundless playground at Riverfront Park in Sheffield. The playground is play-friendly to any child, regardless of his or her abilities, with a sandbox that wheelchair-bound children can roll up to and play in. Fleming also was instrumental in getting a new home for the Ealy family when their daughter, Shanteki, was diagnosed with leukemia and was told she could not return to her home because of its condition.



## 2011 | DEBBIE RAPPUHN



Rappuhn took her daughter to the Florence-Lauderdale Animal Shelter for a school project but soon returned to offer her services as a volunteer. She painted and scrubbed and initiated improvements that included a cat habitat room, a puppy room and a laundry room with a sink for bathing animals. She was appalled at the number of animals euthanized and dedicated countless days to finding homes for those unwanted pets – even if it meant sending them to other shelters and homes across the country.

## 2012 | ELBA BARNES

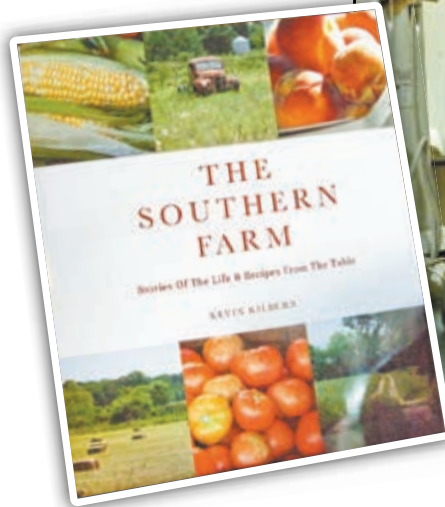
Barnes needed to care for her ailing parents and moved from Birmingham to Florence to be near them. She soon realized there was an important gap in available services in the area: there was no place where adults like her parents could go for social interaction, exercise and art activities. Such a place would also offer respite for caregivers. Barnes brought an idea for an adult day care to Westminster Presbyterian Church. In July 2009, Westminster Interfaith Caring Place opened, initially as a Sunday-only program. By November, it was offering a mid-week break so caregivers could go Christmas shopping. Eventually the nonprofit center would operate Monday through Friday.



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## 2013 | SARAH JENNIFER THOMPSON

After Thompson's sister, Sidney, died in January 2006, Thompson honored her sister's memory and founded Sidney's Safe! Foundation. It was a place where other women could learn how to stand strong against domestic abuse and how to seek recovery from addiction. The foundation has branched out to help children, too. It is an outreach that provides hundreds of bags of food a week to local schoolchildren who otherwise would go hungry.

## 2014 | SUSIE MARTIN

Susie Martin was only required to spend four hours a month with the girl who became her "little" at Big Brothers Big Sisters of the Shoals, but she and 13-year-old Sabrina Carles are together every weekend, all weekend. The program allows Sabrina to be Martin's Little until she is 15, but Martin jokes she will keep her until Sabrina gets married.



## 2015 | ANGIE HAMILTON

Angie Hamilton presented the idea for a one-stop center that could streamline help for victims of domestic violence, rape, sexual assault, child sexual abuse and physical abuse, and elder abuse – cases she saw regularly as an assistant district attorney in Lauderdale County. The idea was immediately well received, and One Place of the Shoals was born.

## 2016 | NINON PARKER

Ninon Parker grew up on the front lines of celebrating the history of the Shoals, including as a member of Ivy Green's first cast of "The Miracle Worker" – the stage play that celebrates the awakening of Helen Keller to the world around her. Parker's community involvement is one of historical preservation and business promotion that keeps the Shoals a vital place that recognizes its important past, as well as its exciting future.





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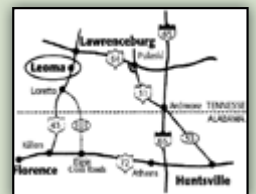


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