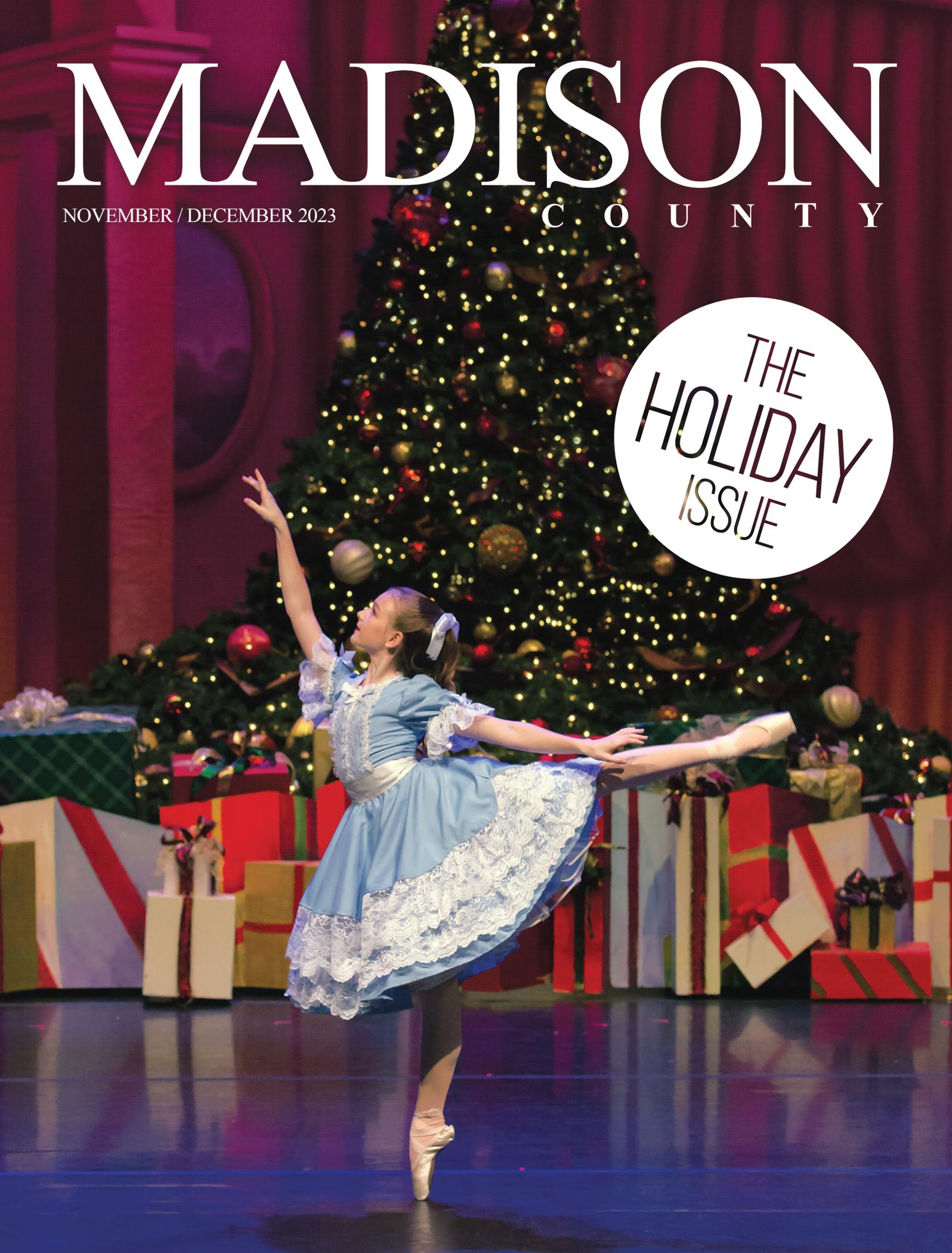


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NOVEMBER / DECEMBER 2023

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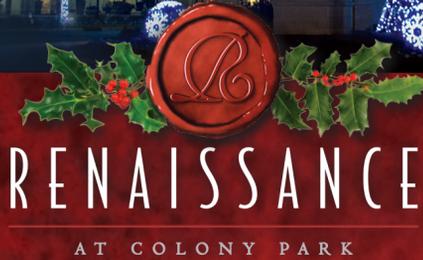


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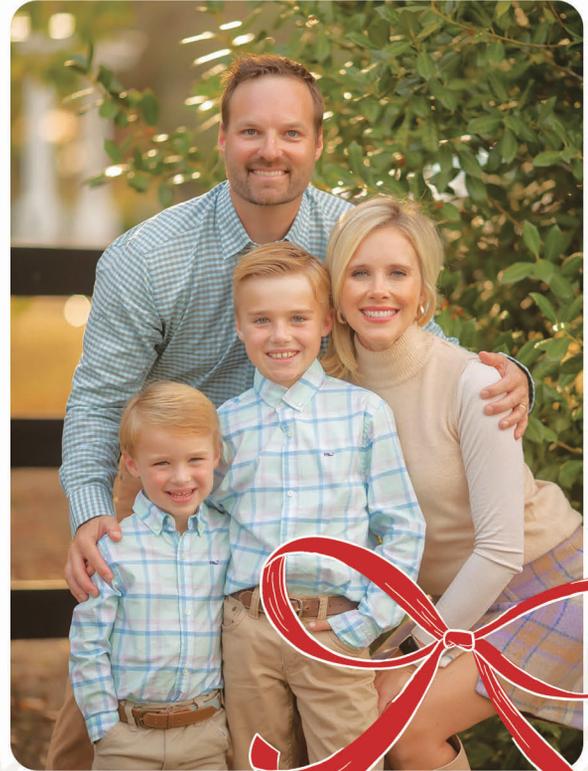
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WHITE RUSSIAN

by Duncan Dent

For all its faults, American consumer culture ushered in post-World War II made the promise that luxuries would be available to everyone. Cars raced off the lots and television sets virtually lept off the shelves but the unsung victory was won at the supermarket. Ingredients for a cake, something people had to scrape together for special occasions for generations prior, were readily available on fully stocked shelves in every supermarket and grocery store in the nation.

Even with recent inflation and consumers tightening their belts, it is still common to see packaged cookies and six-packs of beer tucked into people's shopping carts next to grocery essentials.

There are few simpler luxuries available to every man and woman than a cocktail made at home with two or three easy-to-obtain ingredients. The White Russian has two very mundane ingredients- vodka and cream- mixed in equal parts with one a little more exotic, coffee liqueur. The mixture is shaken to thicken the cream and poured over ice.

The "Russian" cocktail dates back to at least the early 1900s. Cocktail historian David Wondrich details a "Russian Cocktail" made in a New Orleans bar in 1911 made from vodka and black cherry liqueur. By 1949 we have records of a Black Russian- just the vodka and coffee-flavored spirit. Bartenders were likely adding cream

to that well before but according to the Oxford English Dictionary, the first time "White Russian" appeared in print was in November of 1965 in the Oakland Tribune.

The drink is probably best known today by those who have seen the Cohen Brother's 1998 classic "The Big Lebowski," in which the main character played by Jeff Bridges and is known in the movie as The Dude is introduced buying half and half for 69 cents with a check. He spends the rest of the movie bumbling around a mystery and looking for his next White Russian which he frequently calls a "Caucasian."

Perhaps the most memorable scene is when he is manhandled into a limo and yells at his assailant, "Careful, man, there's a beverage here." He does not spill a drop despite his rough handling.

There is an economic edge to this drink. You probably have most of the ingredients lying around the house, just make sure whatever you use for cream is not past its expiration date. Once you have mastered the basics, this cocktail has a number of variations. A splash of Coke makes Colorado Bulldog and a "Dirty Russian" adds chocolate syrup. I like to replace the cream with Appalachian Sippin' Cream from Sugarlands Distilling Company to add flavors such as banana pudding and to up the alcohol content a bit.



INGREDIENTS

vodka
coffee liqueur
cream

DIECTIONS

Mix equal parts coffee liqueur, vodka and cream in a cocktail shaker and shake vigorously. Pour over ice in a rocks glass.



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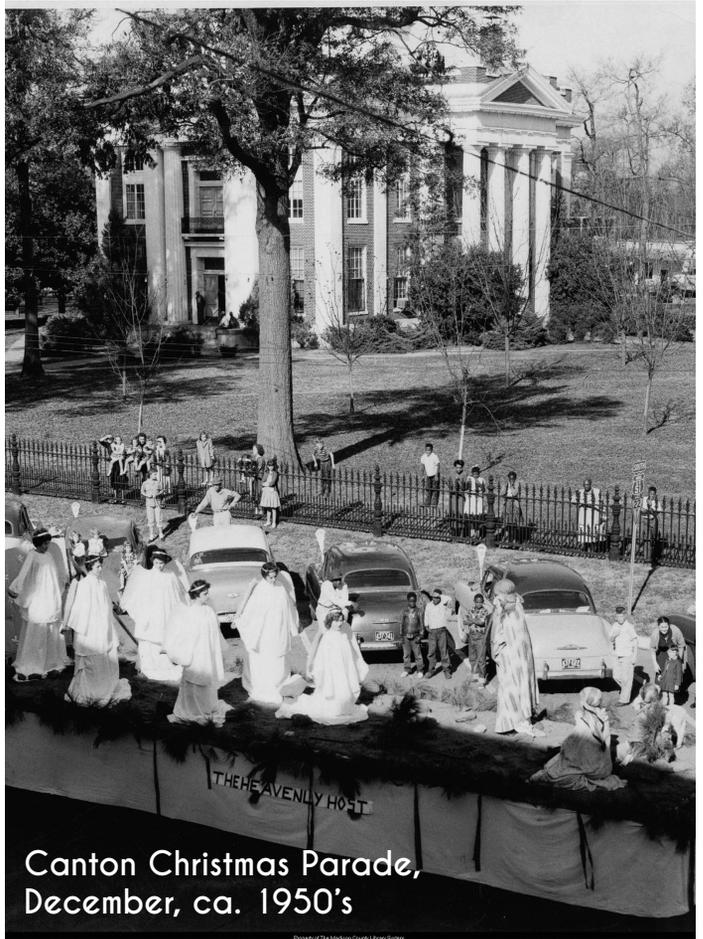
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CANTON CHRISTMAS PARADE

THROUGH THE YEARS

Each year elaborate decorations on the courthouse square transform Canton into the “City of Lights” and the town takes on an extra dose of holiday spirit. These pictures from the Madison County Library system’s collection feature another time-honored Christmas tradition, the Christmas parade. A series of photos from the 1950s shows a variety of people participating in the annual event. These pictures capture a moment in time but speak to an ongoing tradition celebrated by all those in the community.





Canton High School Band,
Christmas Parade, 1956



5



8

(1) Canton Christmas parade truck float, December 1955; (2) DAR entry in Christmas Parade 1955; (3) Canton Christmas parade spectators, December, 1955; (4) Canton Christmas parade tractor float, December 1955; (5) Canton High School Maid, Christmas Parade, 1956; (6) Miss Canton High School, Barbara Saab, 1956; (7) Canton High School Freshman Homecoming Maid, Christmas Parade, 1957; (8) Canton High School Sophomore Homecoming Maid, Christmas Parade, 1957; (9) Canton High School Junior Homecoming Maid, Christmas Parade, 1957; (10) Canton High School Senior Homecoming Maid, Christmas Parade, 1957; (11) Canton High School Homecoming Queen, Christmas Parade, 1957



9



6



10



7



11

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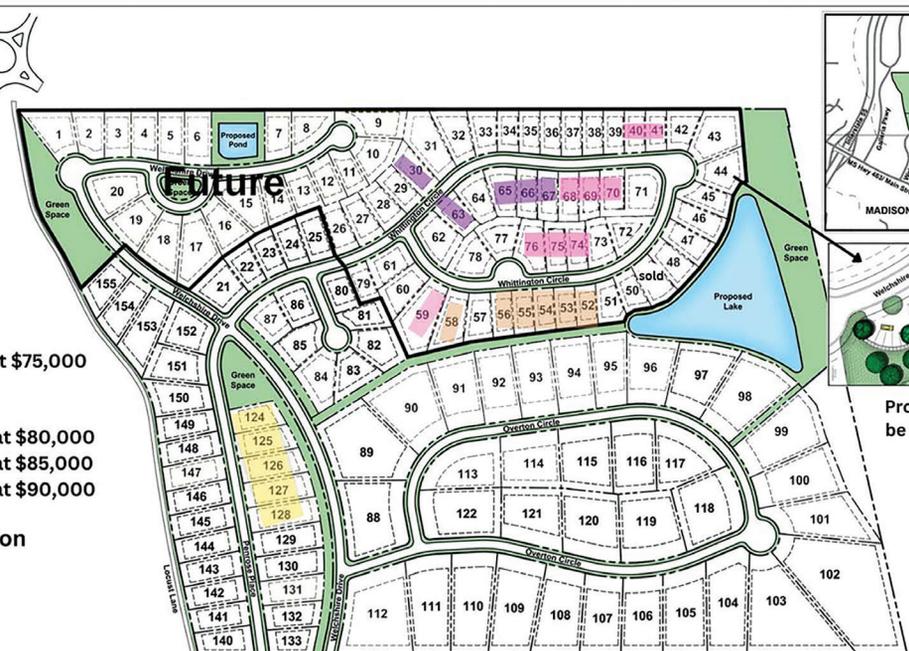


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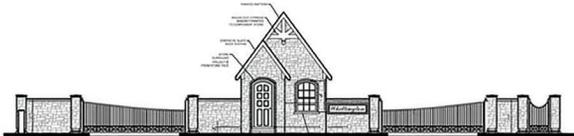
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WHITTINGTON
 MADISON, MS



Proposed pool to be built on lot 44.



Proposed Main Entrance & Guard House

SCALE: 1" = 200'

This plan has been prepared for the purpose of illustrating the general concept of the development. The Developer reserves the right to alter or revise the uses & locations illustrated on the plan without notice.



LAKE CAROLINE.....STARTING AT \$175,000
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NEW LOTS

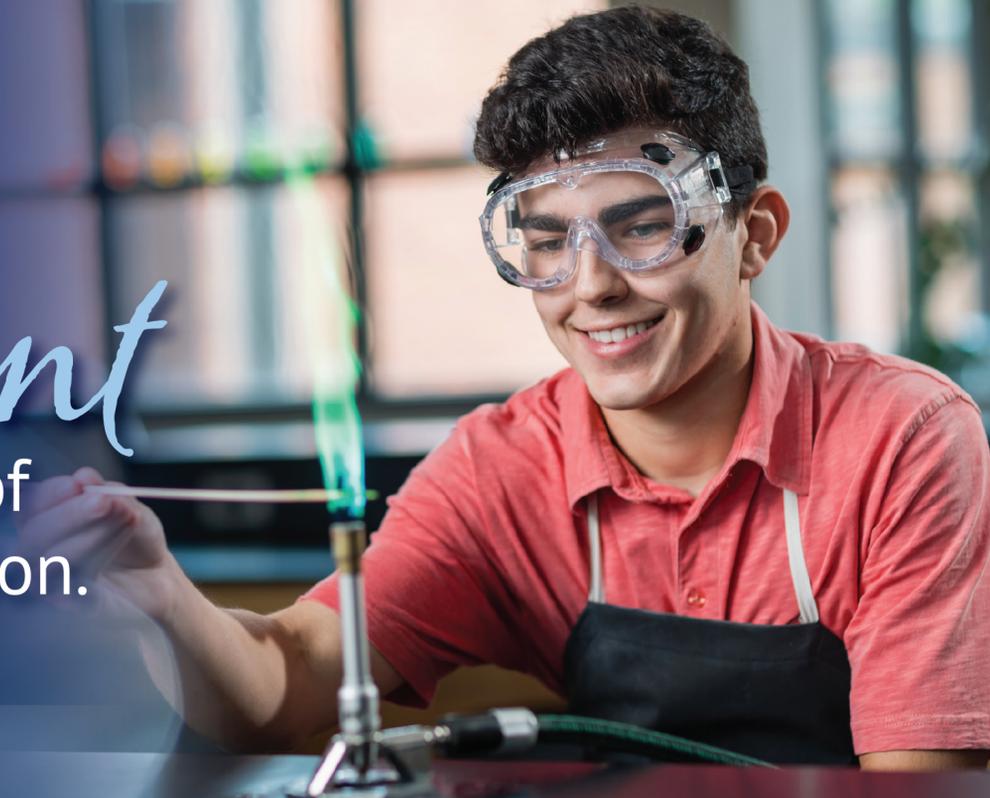
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A photograph of a man with short dark hair, wearing a teal t-shirt, holding a young child with curly brown hair wearing a white long-sleeved shirt. They are both smiling and looking at each other. The background is a soft-focus green and yellow bokeh, suggesting an outdoor setting with trees and sunlight.

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THIS SEASON

A holiday movie night makes for a fun, family-friendly evening when hosting overnight guests during this special time of year.



A family movie night makes for a great way for families to bond and enjoy some relaxing time together. Such nights are a tradition in households across the globe, and they can even become a fun way for extended families to celebrate the holiday days together. When hosting overnight guests this holiday season, hosts can plan a family movie night and line up any of these family-friendly holiday movies.

“A CHRISTMAS STORY” (1983)

This beloved classic based on the writings of author Jean Shepherd focuses on young Ralphie Parker and his humorous family. That family includes his father, played to much laughs by legendary actor Darren McGavin. All Ralphie wants for Christmas is a coveted Red Ryder air rifle, and generations of fans have enjoyed watching this film to see if Ralphie’s dream comes true.

“HOME ALONE” (1990)

Not unlike “A Christmas Story,” this instant classic devotes much of its story to a young boy. Eight-year-old Kevin McAllister (Macaulay Culkin) awakens to an empty house after his parents forgetfully leave him behind as they depart on a holiday trip to Paris with their extended family. That proves to be bad news for bungling burglars Harry (Joe Pesci) and Marv (Daniel Stern), who are outwitted by Kevin at every turn.

ELF (2003)

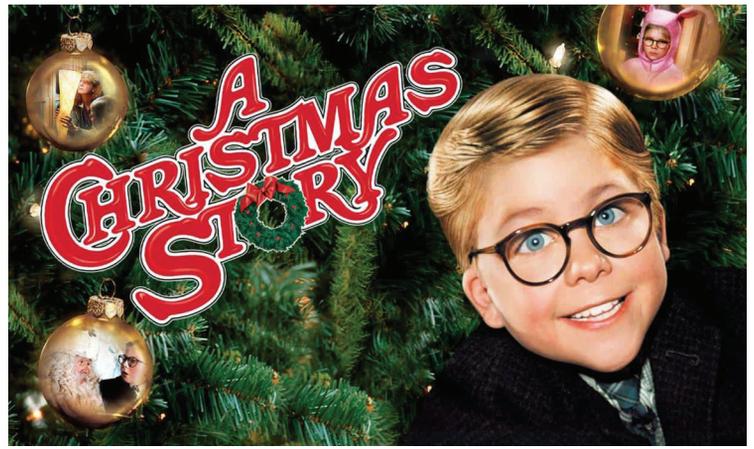
Middle-aged Buddy (Will Ferrell) grew up in the North Pole believing he is an elf, despite being significantly larger than the kind-hearted elves who raised him. Upon learning he is not an actual elf, Buddy is determined to reunite with the father (James Caan) he’s never known. Hilarity ensues as the innocent Buddy ends up in the big city in search of his father.

“IT’S A WONDERFUL LIFE” (1946):

Among the most beloved holiday movies ever made, this classic stars Jimmy Stewart as George Bailey, a devoted family man who set aside his own big-city dreams to save the family business and, ultimately, his small hometown of Bedford Falls. Lamenting some bad luck that leaves him on the cusp of financial ruin, George wishes he’d never been born, only to be shown by an especially kind and patient angel-in-training (Henry Travers) how much worse off Bedford Falls and its residents might have been had George Bailey never existed.

“JINGLE ALL THE WAY” (1996):

Featuring a future Governor of California in the lead role, this hijinks-filled holiday classic follows the efforts of Howard Langston (Arnold Schwarzenegger) as he tries to secure the must-have gift of the season for his son, Jamie (Jake Lloyd). Howard soon finds himself competing against a father (Sinbad) who’s equally devoted to find the coveted Turbo-Man action figure.



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THE MAGICAL JOURNEY OF THE MISSISSIPPI METROPOLITAN BALLET

Ballet in Central Mississippi: The Magical Journey of the Mississippi Metropolitan Ballet

The state of Mississippi has long been renowned for its cultural diversity and soulful rhythms. The artistic landscape in Mississippi is rich in the realms of music, literature, and visual arts. Names like B.B. King, Eudora Welty, and Walter Anderson have become synonymous with our state. As for the performing arts, and specifically dance, it is hard to compete with states like New York, who boast the Great White Way, the Metropolitan Opera, and two of the greatest ballet companies in the world: the New York City Ballet and American Ballet Theatre. But, Mississippi holds its own! The USAIBC (United States International Ballet Competition) is the most respected and renowned ballet competition in the world, and is held in Jackson every four years. Truly, the WORLD of ballet descends upon Mississippi every time the Competition rolls around. But what about the years in between the IBC? Luckily, central Mississippi has an abundance of local dance talent, and the Mississippi Metropolitan Ballet has been contributing to that portion of our artistic landscape for the past 30 years.

The early '90s marked a pivotal turning point for the world of dance in Mississippi. Ballet Mississippi, a professional company since its inception by Thalia Mara in the mid-1970's, ceased to operate as a professional company and left a void in the dance landscape of our state. Cherri Barnett, a former professional dancer with Ballet Mississippi, recognized the need to continue to bring quality dance performances to central Mississippi. Barnett and Mayor Mary Hawkins Butler established the Madison County Cultural Center on Main Street in 1992, and soon after Barnett founded the Madison Civic Ballet, which provided young dancers with opportunities to explore the enchanting world of dance through education and performance opportunities.

Another former professional dancer with Ballet Mississippi, Jennifer Beasley, took the helm of the young dance company in 1997. She inherited a small and dedicated dance school, but she also carried with her an unwavering commitment to the art of ballet. In 1997, the organization underwent a transformation when Beasley renamed the company as the Mississippi Metropolitan Ballet, and additionally established the affiliated dance school, the Mississippi Metropolitan Dance Academy.

Jennifer Beasley steered the Mississippi Metropolitan Ballet on a remarkable journey. Together with Artistic Associate Crystal Skelton, who joined MMB's staff in 2002, they have tirelessly worked to craft well-trained dancers and deliver high-quality dance performances to audiences of all ages. Their dedication, passion, and relentless pursuit of artistic excellence has laid the foundation for something truly magical.



THE TRADITION OF MMB'S "THE NUTCRACKER"

Mississippi Metropolitan Ballet has consistently presented productions that bring joy, emotion, and artistry to central Mississippi audiences. However, it is during the holiday season that MMB truly captivates hearts. Their annual presentation of "The Nutcracker" emerged as a beloved tradition, a symbol of the magic and enchantment of the season.

Originally a German tale, "The Nutcracker and the Mouse King", by E.T.A. Hoffman, the story follows the wondrous journey of Clara, who receives a Nutcracker as a gift at her family's Christmas Eve party. Later that night, her Nutcracker is magically revealed as a handsome Prince, who leads her through an enchanted forest and on to the Kingdom of

Sweets. This tale was later made into a full-length ballet, originally choreographed by Lev Ivanov and Marius Petipa, with the score arranged by the very famous Russian composer, Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky. The ballet's story, a timeless tale of holiday wonder, has continued to captivate audiences worldwide.

Before moving the performance to its current home at the Jackson Academy Performing Arts Center, MMB performed "The Nutcracker" at the Madison County Cultural Center for a number of years. However, as time passed, MMB had grown in size and the dancers required more space. The transition to Jackson Academy in 2010 has been a positive experience for the Mississippi Metropolitan-

tan Ballet. The partnership with JA has given MMB the space to grow and develop their rendition of “The Nutcracker” in order to make it an even more special event for metro area audiences.

“The Nutcracker is the perfect way to ring in the holiday season and to introduce audiences to the power and beauty of classical dance. At the heart of Mississippi Metropolitan Ballet’s mission is our quest to share the magic of dance with the people of our community, and to encourage a love of the arts in the hearts and minds of our audience members,” says Artistic Director Jennifer Beasley. “We are so proud to have presented our annual production of The Nutcracker to our community for the past thirty years; it is both our most important outreach tool, offering many in our community their first exposure to the ballet, but also a time-honored holiday tradition. It is just not the holiday season without The Nutcracker!”



EXPANDING THE TRADITION - THE LAND OF SWEETS

After years of offering a festive tea party following its matinee Nutcracker performances, MMB now offers an immersive post-performance experience, the “Land of Sweets,” to audiences. Following the two matinee performances, guests can step into Clara’s world and get up close and personal with costumes, sets, and the beloved characters from the ballet, including Clara herself, the Snow Queen, the Rose Queen, and the Sugar Plum Fairy. Attendees can capture these magical moments through character photo opportunities, ensuring lasting memories of their enchanting

journey. Additionally, they will receive a miniature Nutcracker as a cherished keepsake.

The “Land of Sweets” experience concludes with “Spanish” hot cocoa and light refreshments from Nothing Bundt Cakes. This delightful addition to the traditional Nutcracker experience is the perfect holiday activity, offering parents a chance to introduce their children to the arts in the most magical, festive way.

Join MMB for a spectacular journey into the world of ballet enchantment! “The Nutcracker” is at Jackson Academy Performing

Arts Center on December 2nd with performances at 2 pm and 7 pm, and the magic continues on December 3rd with performances at 2 pm and 6:30 pm. Step into Clara’s shoes and embark on a journey through the fantastical Land of Sweets following each matinee performance (tickets sold separately from performance tickets.)

For more information on ticket sales, please visit our website at msmetroballer.com or call 601-853-4508

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By Joe Dera





Madison County is without question one of the most desirable places to work and live in Central Mississippi. With that growing popularity has come an overwhelming amount of suburban sprawl. The rural serenity once a hallmark of Madison County is rapidly disappearing. That said, an increasing number of people are gravitating to the last small town in Madison County, the picturesque historic town of Flora.

The once sleepy little village has embraced the positive aspects of contemporary life while preserving the history and charm that sets it apart from the rest of Madison County. Flora began to redefine itself in the summer of 2016 with the opening of the old-world style Flora Butcher Shop. Add to this Salad Days, the hydroponic lettuce farm and Two Dog Farms a traditional truck farm with a recently opened farm stand in the center of town.

For many, Flora has become the unofficial farm-to-table capital of Madison County. While the pressures of contemporary change are great, Flora has been careful to maintain a balance between what was and what will be.

The unique aspects of small-town life have not been lost on other business owners. A recent welcomed addition to Flora's growing Main Street has been The Corner Pharmacy and Market, a joint business venture, between Thomas Coleman of Yazoo City and Dr. Robert M. Jordan of Clinton.

For many years, before the Corner Market opened, the 100-year-old location at 4835 Main St. served as a hardware store

and feed store. The philosophy of The Corner Pharmacy and Market has been to bring over-the-top service back to pharmacy. They want to treat every customer like family.

To this end, the pharmacy has always offered free delivery, Saturday hours, speedy prescription filling and unparalleled customer service. They take on the role of problem solver rather than putting it back on the doctor, or patient. Our grandparents and great grandparents enjoyed a time when the doctor would call in a prescription and the pharmacy would deliver it to your door in minutes. Why shouldn't patients enjoy the same convenience?

The Corner Pharmacy and Market is also not afraid of innovation and reinvestment. They have recently added a full-service coffee shop and milkshake bar. You can have everything from your favorite coffee drinks to a milkshake to a root beer float and everything in between.

Dr. Jordan is a pharmacist with over 32 years of experience in the pharmacy field. He grew up in metro. After getting married, Dr. Jordan moved to Arizona to pursue a career in pharmacy. He graduated from Midwestern University in Glendale, in 2005, with a Doctorate in Pharmacy and has managed pharmacies ever since. Missing the people and the lush green of his home state, he returned to Mississippi in 2005. His most recent job was at Webb's Pharmacy in Yazoo City, a pharmacy with over 100 years of continued operation. In 2022, Dr. Jordan left Webb's to open his own pharmacy, The Corner Pharmacy and Market in Flora, along with his business partner, Thomas Coleman.

In a nutshell, it is possible to have it all when it comes to your family's pharmacy. They have the technology and education to provide safe prescription filling all while making sure that the customer is satisfied in every way with their service.

The Flora renaissance continues, and this new pharmacy is just another step in story that continue to unfold in this tiny town.



MERRY MARKET RETURNS FOR YEAR TWO

by Mark H. Stowers

With just an idea and a why not attitude, Merry Market was a smash hit last year in downtown Madison. And the brains behind the inaugural event are out to put on the Second Annual Merry Market shopping event on Saturday, December 9 from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. With hundreds of vendors and plenty of shopping space, the event continues to grow. Amy Cummins, Director of Madison's Economic Development Department is looking for more space and special talent.

"Nobody in the area had a market and everybody kept requesting that Madison have a market. And we'll try anything once," Cummins said. "We had 127 vendors last year and we have been sold out for the past month with 140 vendors. I'm currently looking at another area to add more vendors. We have anywhere from 30-40 on a wait list. We just need more space."

There will be a kids zone added this year replete with face painting, kid vendors, and inflatables. There will also be food trucks on hand and picnic tables spread out in the downtown area for shoppers who'd like to expand their shopping day. The Art Center will be taken over by the Madison Junior Auxiliary who will host Santa Claus.

"They will have snacks and photos with Santa. Children can write letter to Santa and put them in a special mailbox. And they do get a response from Santa," she said. "They can get pictures with Santa and have snacks and cookies with him. There's also crafts. The pictures are \$8.00 per child and adults are free."

There will also be entertainment on hand and Cummins is looking for more folks to participate.

"We'll have music throughout the day. We're trying to get school choirs, church choirs and such to have music," she said. "We're looking forward to it and looking forward to a big crowd."

The music will be in 30 minute segments and Cummins needs plenty more volunteers to fill the day. The streets from the railroad track down to Highway 51 and Montgomery Street will be closed for the event. Shoppers can work through the vendors and the local stores to get all of their Christmas shopping done.

"We really didn't know what we were doing last year and it turned out better than we thought," Cummins said. "And they are asking for more so we are doing it again."

The vendors come from mostly around Madison County and will include a variety of items including boutiques, candles, jewelry, woodwork and plenty more.

The city's Christmas decorations will be out as well.

"We're just hoping for pretty weather," she said. "There will be something for everybody."

To learn more, check out, <https://www.madisonthecity.com/merry-market-dec-9-2023>.



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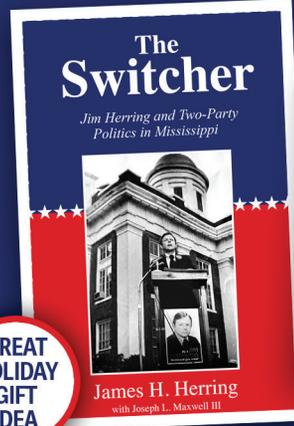
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MISSISSIPPI ANGELS DANCE TEAM WITH A MISSION



Dance and cheer teams are nothing new. The crisp, in sync performances to mashed up top hit music with pom poms and flashy outfits have energized schools and fan bases for decades. But there's one dance team that actually has a mission – the Mississippi Angels. The dozen plus girls and coaches came together when on a whim, Carissa Gardner had a humorous “what if” conversation with Madison Alderwoman Sandra Strain earlier this year.

“What if we had a competition dance team that was separate from a regular team and then my daughter added she'd like it to have a community service aspect,” Gardner said.

Gardner and her daughter, London had already been praying and looking for opportunities to serve the community.

“God was really working on us in our spirit through prayer and our experience to reach out to others with our skills and abilities,” she explained. “London has always helped others that were younger than her if they were trying out for a dance team or couldn't get down a dance routine. This was something that she could do because she'd already done it and she said, ‘It's in my heart.’ The minute we started talking to people, everyone was on board. It's so fulfilling to be part of this community ministry through dance.”

The mission of helping others to be part of a dance team combined with paying it forward by teaching dance, dealing with special needs persons and volunteering time



and talents as needed for different events. And the Mississippi Angels was born. The team consists of girls from ninth to twelfth grades from Madison Central, Madison Ridgeland, Ridgeland and Rosa Scott. They train in Gluckstadt outside of their other school and dance team priorities.

“They have to have a heart for this specific thing and the importance of the joy of dance both mental and physical into people's lives,” Gardner said. “I have these girls who are so busy and are still making time to be part of this team.”

The team members were each interviewed and selected for this special dance mission. The team has been busy practicing

for competition and busy spreading that dancing joy throughout the community.

“They represent so much more than just a dance team. They represent a movement,” she said. “They've been asked to sing the National Anthem at the Mayor's Breakfast in Gluckstadt. I've been asked to manage it and these girls are just blowing me away. Everything they do, they do to the next level.”

At the recent Scarecrow Fest, the Mississippi Angels Dance Team set up a booth to do face painting and the line was continually backed up until the festival ended.

“They were creating full face painting of Spiderman. They were pulling things up on Pinterest and going above and beyond.

Pictured, from left to right, are Mahogany Bennett, Maggie McKenzie, Londyn Gardner, Caitlin Conner, Lucy Ledford, Sarah Hart, Elyse Lemly, Coach Sarah Phillips, Owner Carissa Gardner, Audrey Justice, Emily Kay Kirk, Mary Clayton Stewart, Hannah Travis.

They aren't just doing this to get by or do a service, this is their heart and they are into this. They aren't getting anything back except knowing they are making people happy," Gardner said. "It's been a beautiful project so far. We're getting so many requests such as singing the National Anthem. We'll pick up trash in neighborhoods, we'll take food to folks in nursing homes but our main mission is special needs and we do that once or twice a month. We teach dance and programs with dance and exercise and they love it and we love it. It's fun to be part of that with them."

Head coach Sarah Phillips has two decades of dance experience and owner of Encore Dance Studio, described the team.

"They are more of a competitive dance team but they also dance with poms. The style is a lot different from regular dance teams," Coach Phillips said. "We have hip hop tom, we have a lot of technique classes with me and we focus a lot on jazz and do a little contemporary. We do a little bit of everything. They are going to perform in the community and in competition."

Coach Phillips understands how dance is beneficial.

"When I was in high school, this is a hard age for these girls. Dance was an escape for me – good mood or bad mood – dance was where I felt happiest and at home. Your dance friends were your best friends and I wanted to be that for these girls. They could come together and enjoy each other outside of school and do community things and be more like a family. A tight knit group of girls. And also learn how to get better at dance and their performance," Coach Phillips said.

The team practices twice a week for about four hours a week. And that's on top of the normal school and regular dance team commitments. And add in the community service aspect and the 11 girl team continues to bond and grow.

"The community has really gone crazy over having them out to different events," Gardner said. "The last event we did was a Buddy Walk with Special Needs where the girls dressed up as Disney characters. The Angels don't just have one thing, they are so much to so many and they think outside the box."

Dancer Hannah Travis from Rosa Scott High School discovered the team through her mom.

"I was nominated by someone and I was surprised to be on this team," Travis said. "I really like all of the community service and helping others. I'm getting better at dance and I'm really happy about that."

London Gardner, Madison Central junior, has been dancing for 12-plus years. Having a mission as a dance team member really stood out to her.

"I joined because my mom had the idea and sprung it onto me. I love dancing and expressing myself in any artistic way. When I had the opportunity to join this team, I jumped on it," London said. "I enjoy helping downs syndrome kids and special needs kids and this team has become like a family to me."

Madison Central junior Caitlin Conner got involved after her mom told her about it. "I struggled with it at first but I have an amazing coach and amazing people around

me that kept me going and I've learned a lot about myself being able to serve and with dance," Conner said.

MRA senior Elyse Lemly has been dancing for 15 years and has enjoyed being on a team with new dancers.

"I have enjoyed meeting the new girls because we wouldn't have met if I didn't join this team," Lemly said. "This team has been amazing and has helped grow not only as a dancer but as a person because I've gotten so used to the community service aspect. I'd encourage anyone interested to join."

Sophomore Lucy Ledford from Madison Central didn't know if she'd have time to be



on the team but found a way.

“This dance team has become a very big part of my life and I really love coming to class. There are no mean girls on this dance team. Everyone here is so nice and fun to talk to and we all vibe really well,” Ledford said.

Maggie McKenzie, sophomore at Madison Central thought the dance team was a cool idea. “It’s been great and I’ve really grown a lot. We painted faces at the Scarecrow festival and I had so much fun. I’ve really grown as a dancer,” McKenzie said.

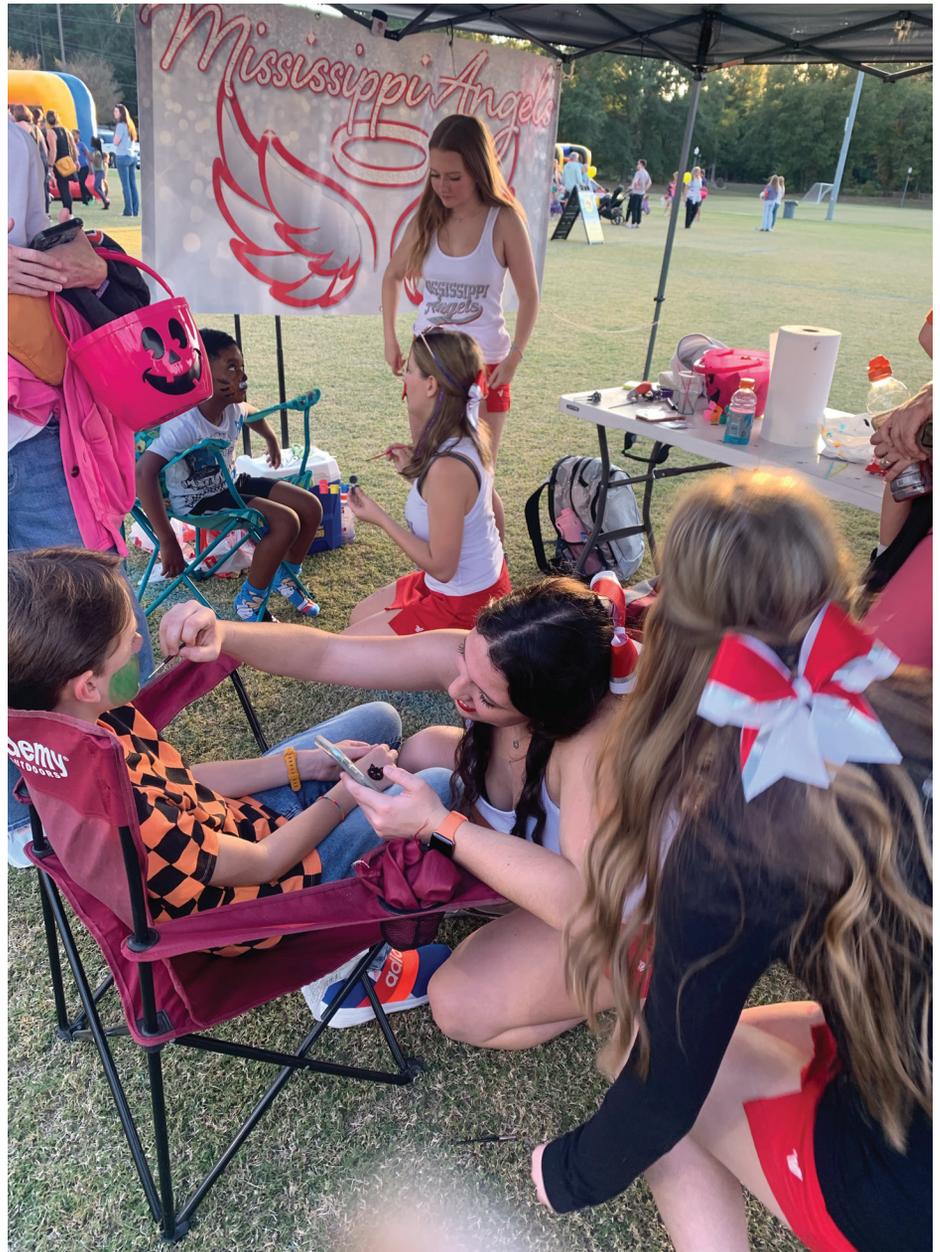
Sarah Hart, a junior at MRA, has been dancing since 7th grade and has been part of a cheer and dance team before joining the Mississippi Angels.

“I’ve been able to use the gift God has given me to leave someone or something better than it was before,” she said. “I’ve learned better dancing techniques and it’s just been amazing overall. I just love this team.”

Gardner noted that each team member has been growing as leaders through their experiences together. If anyone is interested in joining or learning more about the Mississippi Angels, check out their Instagram and Facebook pages, mississippiangelss. The team currently has 11 members but is looking to grow the team to 30 members and is looking for alternates to fill in for events. Potential members have to try out and have to have a letter of recommendation from someone outside of their own family.

“We don’t pressure anyone to do the service or to come to the dance classes until competition. They dance outside of this team already,” Gardner said. “These kids are going to be leaders in the community. They have to watch their social media. I’m not going to put the best dancer in here if her heart isn’t right. We can always teach dance but we can’t teach someone to be wholesome and good hearted.”

The Mississippi Angels, a dance team with a mission that continues to grow.



HOLIDAY MEALS

IN THE KITCHEN



With International Chef David Raines
The Flora Butcher & Dave's Triple B Restaurant

My father loved the Holidays but his favorite part was the food. I guess that rubbed off on me because it's my main focus as well. Planning meals out in my head months in advance and trying to figure out how I'm going to be able to pull off my elaborate plans. Then, getting the ingredients together for our mulled wine or eggnog and then pairing wines to go with the food. For me, getting ready for the big meals is almost as good as sitting down to enjoy them.

As I travelled the world, I took that passion with me. I have made a Thanksgiving feast in four other countries and introduced my coworkers to our traditions. At Christmas time it was the same but I was always able to learn something new from my foreign friends. Every country had holiday traditions that were new to me and it made it even more special to learn about them as we collaborated on meals together.

That being said, take advantage of the holidays to have big meals with family and friends. Search out new ideas for the menu. Collaborate with your fellow revelers on the food. It will spread out the workload, give others a chance to shine and possibly teach you a thing or two as you go. There's always something to learn.

ROASTED SUCKLING PIG

Brine your pig for 24-36 hours and then pat dry and allow to come to room temperature. Season the inside of the pig liberally with kosher salt and add the filing. Using about 5 or 6 long nails, pin the pig's belly together and then tie it off with butcher's twine to make the trussing easier.

Coat the outside of the pig very thoroughly with oil and sprinkle all over with kosher salt. Ball up some aluminum foil and place it in his mouth to keep it wide open during cooking so you can put an apple in it later for presentation. Make little foil tents to protect his ears and tail and to hold them in an upright position. Position the pig in a crouching position and use skewers to hold the legs in place. Use the twine to tie them off so that they hold the legs securely in place.

Place in a roasting pan with a rack at the bottom or a large sheet tray with a resting rack. Place the probe of your thermometer into the thickest part of the hip near the joint. Roast for 30 minutes at 450 degrees and then drop the temperature to 350 degrees for the rest of the cook. It should take about an hour and a half to bring the internal temperature up to 180 degrees but go by what your thermometer says as every oven is different. Turn the oven off when it is done and allow the pig so cool down slowly with the oven door ajar.

The glaze is optional and you will see that the skin will turn a golden brown without it. I still like to glaze for flavor and presentation though. I apply the glaze every ten minutes in the last 50 minutes. (5 times total) It gives the pig darker skin and a lacquered look. If you choose not to glaze, brush once with more oil after the first 15 minutes at 450 and then occasionally with chicken stock while it is at 350.



Photos by Chris Todd

SUCKLING PIG

If you've ever tried suckling pig, you will agree with two things. That it's delicious and that there is nothing else quite like it. It just doesn't taste like pork in the same way that veal doesn't taste like beef. I would see them offered in Europe and Asia, I have tried recipes for "Lechon" in other parts of the world like Cuba and South America but I haven't come across it since we moved to Mississippi. It makes for a spectacular centerpiece and I usually cook two so that one can stay on the table. I thought this would be fun for you to try and keeps with the tradition of having pork on the menu for the holiday season. The wild boar lurking in the forest was a symbol of evil and my Italian friends would always pull off some grand presentation as the pork represented the triumph of good over evil.

The perfect size is 12 lbs but they can vary. You'll need a large pot to brine the piggy and room in the refrigerator to let him sit in the brine for 24-36 hours. Butcher's twine, nails and skewers for trussing and aluminum foil for the mouth and ears. A large roasting pan or large cookie sheet for cooking. A meat thermometer or a digital thermometer with an oven safe probe. A pastry brush or ladle for basting.



SUCKLING PIG BRINE

(make enough batches until the pig is covered)

7 cups	Apple Cider	6	Bay Leaves
7 cups	Water	1	Cinnamon Stick
1 cup	Kosher salt	1	Yellow Onion, quartered and broken up
1 cup	Light Brown Sugar	8 large	Garlic Cloves, smashed
¼ cup	Black Peppercorns		

Stuffing – The late, great Julia Child felt that the suckling pigs just needed some flavor and moisture from their stuffing. It wasn't really meant to be eaten so she would sauté vegetables and place them inside the trussed pig. I agree, in a way. If I do one pig to be carved at the table, then she is right. If I do one for presentation and one to be carved in the kitchen, then I think it is a missed opportunity for some amazing

fillings. My favorite, and most decadent option, is to fill the cavity with our house made boudin. Maybe I just like boudin but I think the two go hand in hand. The collagen is one of the things that makes the young pig so succulent and what may have been lost during the cooking process is absorbed by the rice.

For today, we'll follow Julia's lead and keep it simple.

SUCKLING PIG FILING

1	stick Unsalted Butter	1	bunch Thyme Sprigs
1	large Yellow Onion, rough chopped	1	bunch Sage leaves
4	stalks Celery, rough chopped	2	Bay Leaves
	Garlic Cloves, smashed	1 tbsp	whole peppercorns
1	Red Apple, cut into 8th's	4	Allspice Berries

Melt the Butter in a pot over medium high heat and add the onion, celery, garlic and apple. Cook until onions are soft and you can smell the garlic and apple in the air. Remove from the heat and add the remaining ingredients. Mix well and allow to come to room temperature.

TARRAGON MAYO

This time of year, my tarragon has taken over the herb garden and is in bloom so I make a simple herbed mayonnaise to accompany my suckling pig. This goes well with any meat as it has a béarnaise sort of flavor but without the temperamental nature of that sauce.

I usually make too much so that I can use it in place of mayonnaise for making sandwiches with the different leftovers.

2 cups	Mayonnaise
2 tsp	Turmeric
2 tbsp	fresh Tarragon, rough chopped
	The juice from half a lemon
	Salt and Pepper to taste

Taste as you mix. My wife loves lemon and would add more than this recipe calls for. The tarragon flavor and color from the turmeric comes out more and more as it sits so make it that morning or the day before.

SUCKLING PIG GLAZE

(Optional)

¼ cup	Dry Mustard
½ cup	Soy Sauce
½ cup	Mississippi Honey
¼ cup	Mississippi Ribbon Cane Syrup
2 tbsp	Worcestershire
1-2 tbsp	water to thin out the mixture

Whisk all of the ingredients together very thoroughly in a bowl, cover and set to the side until needed.



TURDUCKEN PAUPIETTE

Growing up, turducken for the holidays was just as important as King Cake for Mardi Gras. The problem comes when you have to make one from scratch. This method uses the breasts from the turkey, duck and chicken instead of “sleeve boning” the whole birds. It will save you hours of preparation time and will give you a less gargantuan finished product. The legs, thighs and wings are reserved for the dressing and we usually save the carcass for gumbo later on.

- | | | | |
|---|------------------------------|---------|-------------------------------|
| 1 | whole boneless Turkey breast | 1 | whole boneless Chicken Breast |
| 1 | whole boneless Duck Breast | 1 to 1½ | quart Stuffing |

First, take your duck breast, brush it with a little oil and place it skin side down in a nonstick skillet on medium heat. The goal here is to render some of the fat from the skin so that you don't have a layer of flabby skin in your finished roast. Once you get a nice brown skin you can assemble your turducken but save the rendered duck fat.

Lay the turkey breast, skin side down on your cutting board. Season lightly with some kosher salt and black pepper. Use the stuffing to make a thin even layer on the turkey breast. Place the duck breast, skin side down on the stuffing and do the same only a slightly thicker layer of stuffing. Last, place the chicken breast skin side down, season and make a little ball of stuffing to go in the middle.

Trussing a paupiette takes a little practice but be patient. Fold all of the sides together and roll the turducken over so that the turkey breast is facing up. Act like you are shaping bread dough and slowly rotate it to get the paupiette to tighten up. Using butcher's twine, slide it under the paupiette until you reach the middle. Cross the strings and try to make an X on top of the turkey breast and go back under the paupiette. Keep the

twine tight and slowly roll it over and tie a knot underneath. Repeat the process with another piece of twine, making sure that lines look symmetrical on the top of the turkey breast. Brush with a little oil and season the skin with kosher salt.

Turducken aren't made to be assembled unless they are going to be cooked that day or frozen. The raw poultry and the stuffing are just too tempting for bacterial growth. Go ahead and have a roasting pan ready and your oven or smoker preheated to 350 degrees. Baste with melted butter or chicken stock occasionally to help get a darker skin. Insert a meat thermometer into the center and cook until you get a reading of 165 degrees internal temperature. Allow to rest at least 45 minutes before placing on your platter and cutting the strings. They should leave an appealing pattern across the top.

When carving, I like to cut it in half first to show off the layers and then work towards the outside. Your paupiette will not be perfectly round unless you are a master trusser so you should still be able to tell which end is the top of the breast. Cut across the breast instead of up the middle for presentation.

TURDUCKEN STUFFING

You can use any variety of stuffing but I usually use one that incorporates garlic, celery, onion, sausage, herbs and butter. Cornbread, sourdough, french bread, etc. all work but I only use sandwich bread if I am in a bind. If you use it, cube it up and allow it to dry out a little so that it doesn't turn to mush while mixing.

- 2 lbs of Andouille Sausage, pulsed in a food processor
- 4 oz of Unsalted Butter
- 1 large Yellow Onion, medium dice
- 2 stalks Celery, sliced thinly but not paper thin
- 1 Red Bell Pepper, medium dice
- 5 large cloves Garlic, minced
- 2 tbsp Fresh Thyme, chopped
- 2 tbsp Fresh Rosemary, minced
- 2 qts day old Cornbread, crumbled
- 1 tbsp Rubbed Sage
- 1-2 cups Chicken Stock
- 2 cups Green Onion, sliced
- Salt and pepper to taste
- 2 eggs, beaten

Melt the butter over medium high heat in a large pan and add the andouille and onions. Once the andouille begins to brown a little, reduce to medium heat add the garlic, celery, fresh thyme, rosemary and rubbed sage. Cook for another 5 minutes and then stir in the cornbread. Once it is well mixed add the stock. The stock doesn't all needed to be added at once. I would add half and then stir for a while to judge how wet the stuffing is. You can add more later if it seems dry once it cools

Stir in the green onions off of the heat and add salt and pepper to taste. Move into a bowl and refrigerate until cooled. Once cooled, stir in the eggs. If it seems too dry, add stock a little at a time until you get the desired texture.

LEGS AND WINGS

If you bought whole birds then you are left with the leg quarters and wings. I pack them in salt overnight(or 12 hours) and then rinse them and poach them in duck fat with thyme sprigs and garlic cloves. If you don't have enough fat, then you can use vegetable or olive oil to make up the rest. Cover the pan and bake in a 250 degree oven for about 3 hours and the meat is fork tender. Allow the meat to cool in the fat. Once cooled, you can roast them skin side up in the oven to crisp the skin or you can just shred all of the meat to add to your dressing, gravies etc.... Save the strained fat for your next round of confit or use it as a cooking oil when doing poultry dishes.



SWEET POTATO CHEESECAKE

1 cup	all-purpose flour
½ cup	butter, softened
¼ cup	granulated sugar
½ tsp	ground cinnamon
1	egg yolk
3 cups	of leftover Sweet Potato Mashed Potatoes
1 tsp	vanilla
1 lb	cream cheese, softened
1 cup	granulated sugar
4	eggs

Heat oven to 400°F. Stir 1 cup flour, ½ cup butter, ½ cup sugar, ½ teaspoon cinnamon and the egg yolk until mixture forms a ball. Pat about two-thirds of the dough on bottom only of 10-inch springform pan (with side removed) to make bottom crust ⅛ inch thick.

Bake 8 to 10 minutes or until crust just begins to brown around edge. Reduce oven temperature to 300°F. Attach side to pan. Pat remaining dough about 1 inch up inside of pan.

In a large bowl, beat cream cheese and 1 cup sugar on medium speed about 1 minute or until smooth. Beat in mashed sweet potato mixture on low speed about 1 minute or until blended. Beat in eggs, one at a time. Spoon batter into crust in pan. Place springform pan in larger pan on oven rack. Pour very hot water into larger pan to one-third the height of springform pan.

Bake cheesecake about 1 hour 30 minutes, adding very hot water to larger pan as needed, until center is set

PECAN TRIFLE

8 oz	Mascarpone Cheese, softened
1 ½ cups	Whipping Cream
1 ½ tsp	Vanilla Extract
1 (2-lb.)	Leftover Pecan Pie, cut into 1-inch cubes
⅓ cup	chocolate fudge topping
⅓ cup	caramel topping
½ cup	chopped pecans, toasted

Beat mascarpone cheese, whipping cream, and vanilla extract in a large bowl at medium speed with a heavy-duty electric stand mixer, using the whisk attachment, 2 to 3 minutes or until smooth and firm

Place half of pie cubes in bottom of a 4-qt. trifle dish or tall, clear 4-qt. glass bowl. Spread half of whipped cream mixture over pie cubes. Drizzle with half each of chocolate fudge topping and caramel topping. Sprinkle with half of chopped pecans. Repeat layers.



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Friends, after 30 years in ministry, I am known by most as Brother Royce. My given name, Royce R. Lott, Jr. is a bit formal, and I'm not a formal guy. As a bi-vocational pastor (FBC Sartartia, MS) I have returned to the real estate industry and would count it pure joy to begin a relationship of service to you. Whatever your real estate needs might be, please consider allowing me to get to know you and serve you.

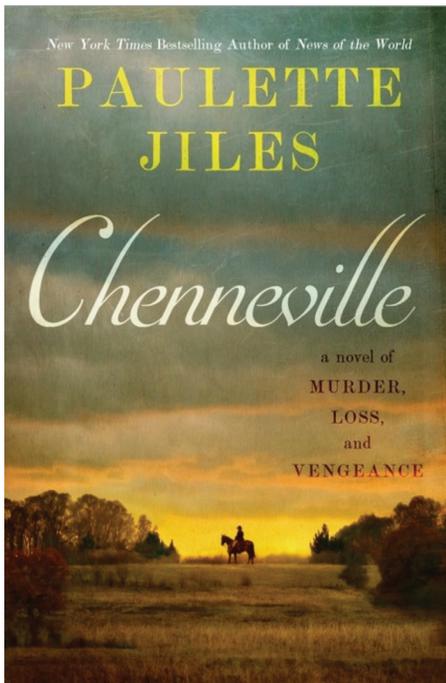


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BOOKS



CHENNEVILLE

Consumed with grief, driven by vengeance, a man undertakes an unrelenting odyssey across the lawless post-Civil War frontier seeking redemption in this fearless novel from the award-winning and New York Times bestselling author of *News of the World*.

Union soldier John Chenneville suffered a traumatic head wound in battle. His recovery took the better part of a year as he struggled to regain his senses and mobility. By the time he returned home, the Civil War was over, but tragedy awaited. John's beloved sister and her family had been brutally murdered.

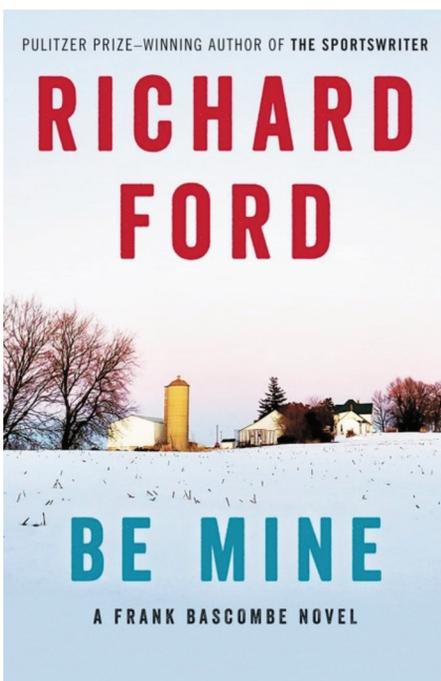
Their killer goes by many names. He fought for the North in the late unpleasantness, and wore a badge in the name of the law. But the man John knows as A. J. Dodd is little more than a rabid animal, slaughtering without reason or remorse, needing to be put down.

Traveling through the unforgiving landscape of a shattered nation in the midst of Reconstruction, John braves winter storms and con-

fronts desperate people in pursuit of his quarry. Untethered, single-minded in purpose, he will not be deterred. Not by the U.S. Marshal who threatens to arrest him for murder should he succeed. And not by Victoria Reavis, the telegraphist aiding him in his death-driven quest, yet hoping he'll choose to embrace a life with her instead.

And as he trails Dodd deep into Texas, John accepts that this final reckoning between them may cost him more than all he's already lost...

PAULETTE JILES is a novelist, poet, and memoirist. She is the author of *Cousins*, a memoir, and the novels *Enemy Women*, *Stormy Weather*, *The Color of Lightning*, *Lighthouse Island*, and *News of the World*, which was a finalist for the 2016 National Book Award. She lives on a ranch near San Antonio, Texas.



BE MINE

From Pulitzer Prize winner Richard Ford: the final novel in the world of Frank Bascombe, one of the most indelible characters in American literature

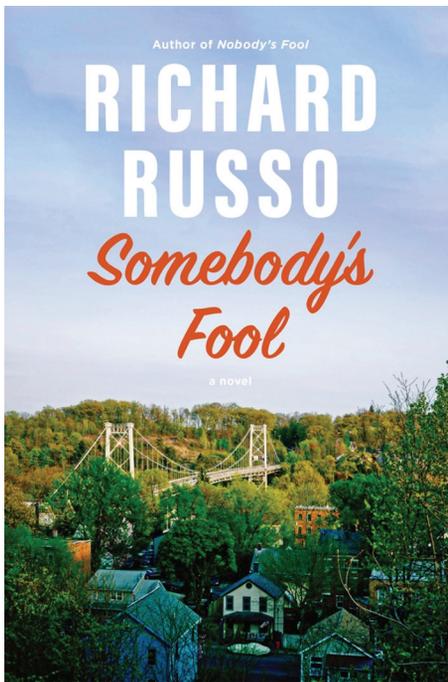
Over the course of four celebrated works of fiction and almost forty years, Richard Ford has crafted an ambitious, incisive, and singular view of American life as lived. Unconstrained, astute, provocative, often laugh-out-loud funny, Frank Bascombe is once more our guide to the great American midway.

Now in the twilight of life, a man who has occupied many colorful lives—sportswriter, father, husband, ex-husband, friend, real estate agent—Bascombe finds himself in the most sorrowing role of all: caregiver to his son, Paul, diagnosed with ALS. On a shared winter odyssey to Mount Rushmore, Frank, in typical Bascombe fashion, faces down the

mortality that is assured each of us, and in doing so confronts what happiness might signify at the end of days.

In this memorable novel, Richard Ford puts on displays the prose, wit, and intelligence that make him one of our most acclaimed living writers. *Be Mine* is a profound, funny, poignant love letter to our beleaguered world.

RICHARD FORD is the author of *The Sportswriter*; *Independence Day*, winner of the Pulitzer Prize and the PEN/Faulkner Award; *The Lay of the Land*; and the New York Times bestseller *Canada*. His short story collections include the bestseller *Let Me Be Frank with You*, *Sorry for Your Trouble*, *Rock Springs*, and *A Multitude of Sins*, which contain many widely anthologized stories. He lives in New Orleans with his wife, Kristina Ford.



SOMEBODY'S FOOL

The Pulitzer Prize–winning author of *Empire Falls* returns to North Bath, in upstate New York, and to the characters that captured the hearts and imaginations of millions of readers in his beloved best sellers *Nobody's Fool* and *Everybody's Fool*.

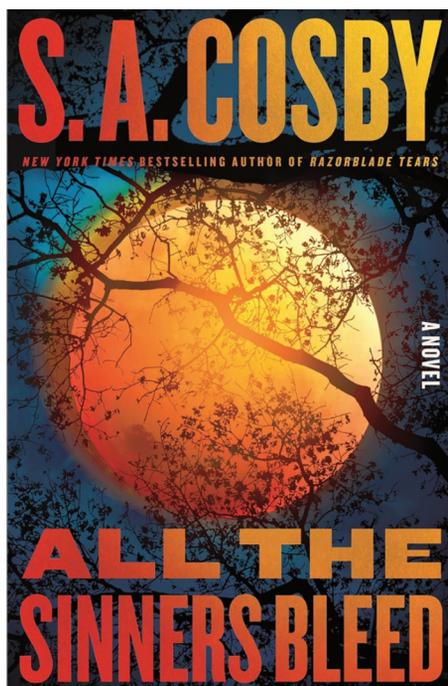
Ten years after the death of the magnetic Donald “Sully” Sullivan, the town of North Bath is going through a major transition as it is annexed by its much wealthier neighbor, Schuyler Springs. Peter, Sully’s son, is still grappling with his father’s tremendous legacy as well as his relationship to his own son, Thomas, wondering if he has been all that different a father than Sully was to him.

Meanwhile, the towns’ newly consolidated police department falls into the hands of Charice Bond, after the resignation of Doug Raymer, the former North Bath police chief and Charice’s ex-lover. When a decomposing body turns up in the abandoned hotel situated between the two towns, Charice and Raymer are drawn together again and forced to address their complicated attraction to one another.

Across town, Ruth, Sully’s married ex-lover, and her daughter Janey struggle to understand Janey’s daughter, Tina, and her growing obsession with Peter’s other son, Will.

Amidst the turmoil, the town’s residents speculate on the identity of the unidentified body, and wonder who among their number could have disappeared unnoticed. Infused with all the wry humor and shrewd observations that Russo is known for, *Somebody's Fool* is another classic from a modern master.

RICHARD RUSSO is the author of nine novels, most recently *Chances Are . . .*, *Everybody's Fool* and *That Old Cape Magic*; two collections of stories; and the memoir *Elsewhere*. In 2002 he received the Pulitzer Prize for *Empire Falls*, which, like *Nobody's Fool*, was adapted into a multiple-award-winning miniseries; in 2017, he received France’s Grand Prix de Littérature Américaine. He lives in Portland, Maine.



ALL THE SINNERS BLEED

New York Times bestselling and LA Times Book Prize–winning author S. A. Cosby is back with a new novel about the first Black sheriff in a small Southern town, and his hunt for a killer.

After years of working as an FBI agent, Titus Crown returns home to Charon County, land of moonshine and corn bread, fistfights and honeysuckle. Seeing his hometown struggling with a bigoted police force inspires Titus to run for sheriff. He wins and becomes the first Black sheriff in the history of the county.

Then, a year to the day after his election, a young Black man is fatally shot by Titus’s deputies.

Titus pledges to follow the truth wherever it leads. But no one expected he would unearth a serial killer who has been hiding in plain sight, haunting the dirt lanes and woodland clearings of Charon.

Now Titus must pull off the impossible: stay true to his instincts, prevent outright panic,

and investigate a shocking crime in a small town where everyone knows everyone yet secrets flourish—all while breaking up back-road bar fights and being forced to protect racist Confederate pride marchers.

For a Black man wearing a police uniform in the American South, that’s no easy feat. But Charon is Titus’s home and his heart, and he won’t let the darkness overtake it. Even as it threatens to consume him.

S. A. COSBY is an Anthony Award–winning writer from southeastern Virginia. He is the author of the New York Times bestseller *Razorblade Tears*, which won two ITW Thriller Awards and was named to more than thirty Best of the Year lists, and *Blacktop Wasteland*, which won the Los Angeles Times Book Prize, and was a New York Times Notable Book named a Best Book of the Year by NPR, *The Guardian*, and *Library Journal*, among others.

EVENTS



MOST INCREDIBLE CHRISTMAS

BALLET MAGNIFICAT!

Thalia Mara Hall

December 16 and 17, 2023

Internationally acclaimed Ballet Magnificat! returns to Thalia Mara Hall with its 38th annual Christmas presentation, Most Incredible Christmas on December 16 and 17, 2023.

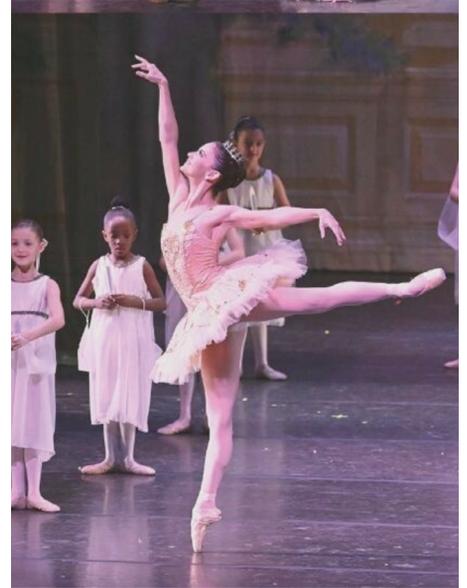
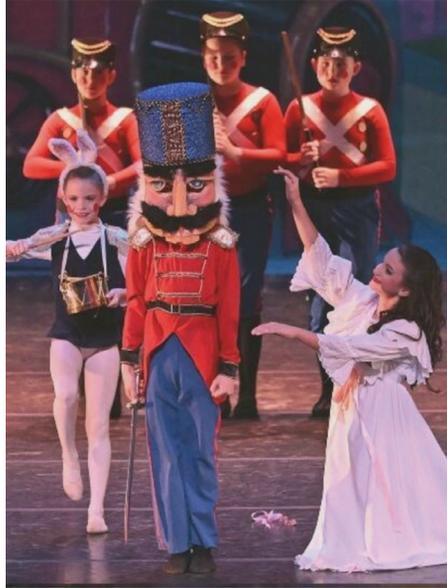
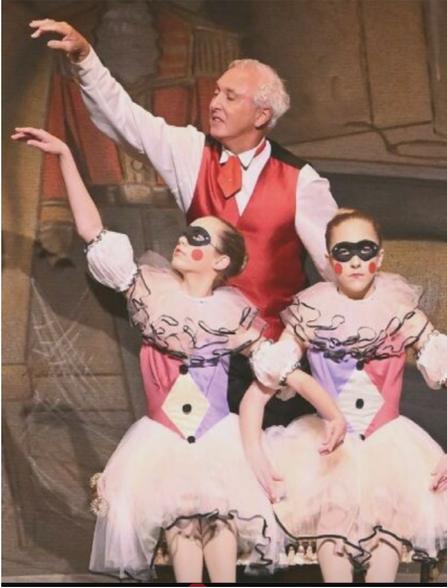
With over 100 dancers in the cast, Most Incredible Christmas is a Broadway-style contemporary ballet highlighting the most extraordinary and incredible thing about the Christmas season. Loveable traditions, songs that capture the spectacle of the season, and reflections on the first Christmas are set to heartwarming, familiar Christmas tunes from around the world with Jesus, the Messiah at the heart of it all.

“This show has something for young and old alike and it is truly a great way for the entire family to celebrate the Christmas season,” Keith Thibodeaux, Ballet Magnificat Executive Director said.

Ballet Magnificat!, the World’s Premier Christian Ballet Company, Founded in 1986 by Artistic Director Kathy Thibodeaux (Silver Medalist II USA International Ballet Competition) and husband Executive Director Keith Thibodeaux (musician and former child star “Little Ricky” from I Love Lucy show) is comprised an internationally acclaimed professional touring company which has per-

formed for audiences in over 40 nations on 5 continents. Ballet Magnificat!’s base in Jackson, Mississippi, is also home to a professional Trainee Program and School of the Arts. In 2017 the company expanded to found Ballet Magnificat! Brasil, a performing company and trainee program headquartered in Curitiba, Brazil.

Tickets are \$25-\$70 and can be purchased at balletmagnificat.com/christmas or by calling 601-977-1001.



THE NUTCRACKER

BALLET MISSISSIPPI

Thalia Mara Hall

December 1, 2023, at 7:30pm

December 2 and 3, 2023, at 3:00pm

Ballet Mississippi proudly announces its highly anticipated annual performance of the holiday classic, “The Nutcracker,” scheduled to enchant audiences at the historic Thalia Mara Hall in Jackson, Mississippi, from December 1-3. This year’s production marks a significant milestone as David Keary, Ballet Mississippi’s esteemed Artistic Director, celebrates his 30th year directing this beloved ballet in Jackson.

“The Nutcracker” has long been a cherished holiday tradition for families and ballet enthusiasts alike, and Ballet Mississippi’s rendition promises to captivate audiences with its magical storytelling, breathtaking choreography, and exquisite costumes. Thalia Mara Hall, with its rich history and enchanting ambiance, provides the perfect backdrop for this timeless performance.

David Keary, with his three decades of dedication and artistic vision, has continued to elevate Ballet Mississippi’s productions to new heights. His commitment to excellence and

passion for the art form shine through in every performance, making “The Nutcracker” a must-see event for the Jackson community and beyond.

This year Ballet Mississippi is excited to announce two exceptional guest artists, Murillo Miron and Larissa Luna. Murillo Miron, a Brazilian dancer who graduated from the prestigious Escola Municipal de São Paulo and the Miami City Ballet School, brings a wealth of talent and international experience to the stage. His grace and skill promise to captivate audiences and add a unique flair to this year’s performance. Larissa Luna, another Brazilian luminary in the world of dance, graduated from the Agripina Vaganova methodology at the Escola Técnica de Dança Adriana Assaf and holds an advanced foundation from the Royal Academy of London. Luna’s accolades include representing Brazil at the Beijing Dance Festival in China in 2008 and being a finalist in the USA International Ballet Competition in 2023. Currently, she serves

as the principal dancer of Cia Paulista de Dança under the direction of Adriana Assaf in São Paulo. These two talented dancers bring international experience and a dynamic presence that promises to enhance the magic of “The Nutcracker.”

“Having Murillo and Larissa join us as guest artists is a true honor,” says David Keary. “Their talent and energy will undoubtedly contribute to the enchantment of this special production, making it a memorable experience for our audience.”

Tickets for “The Nutcracker” can be purchased online at www.balletms.com/events or at the Thalia Mara Hall box office.

Ballet Mississippi invites the community to join in the celebration of this landmark year, as they continue to bring the magic of “The Nutcracker” to the heart of Jackson. For more information, please visit www.balletms.com or contact 601-960-1560

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The 35th annual Natchez Literary & Cinema Celebration will be held February 22-24, 2024 at the Natchez Convention Center.

Natchez Literary and Cinema Celebration
 February 22-24, 2024

UTES RITUALS AND RELIGION IN THE DEEP SOUTH

The Natchez Literary and Cinema Celebration takes pride in announcing plans for the 35th annual Celebration. Using the theme, "Rites, Rituals, and Religion in the Deep South," this humanities conference will explore life and death experiences in a series of presentations on religious traditions, burial rituals, cemetery history, mourning practices, and historic holidays which are all deeply embedded in the Southern Experience.

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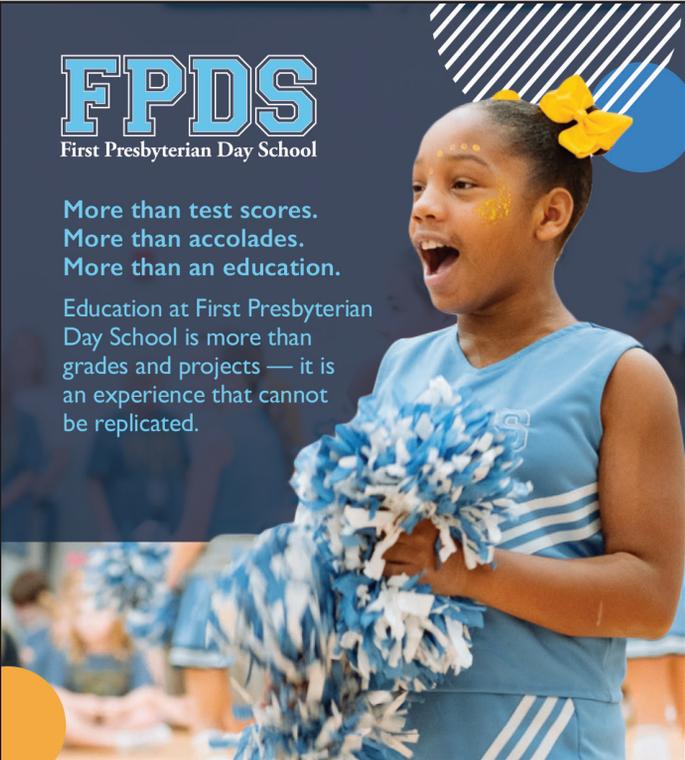
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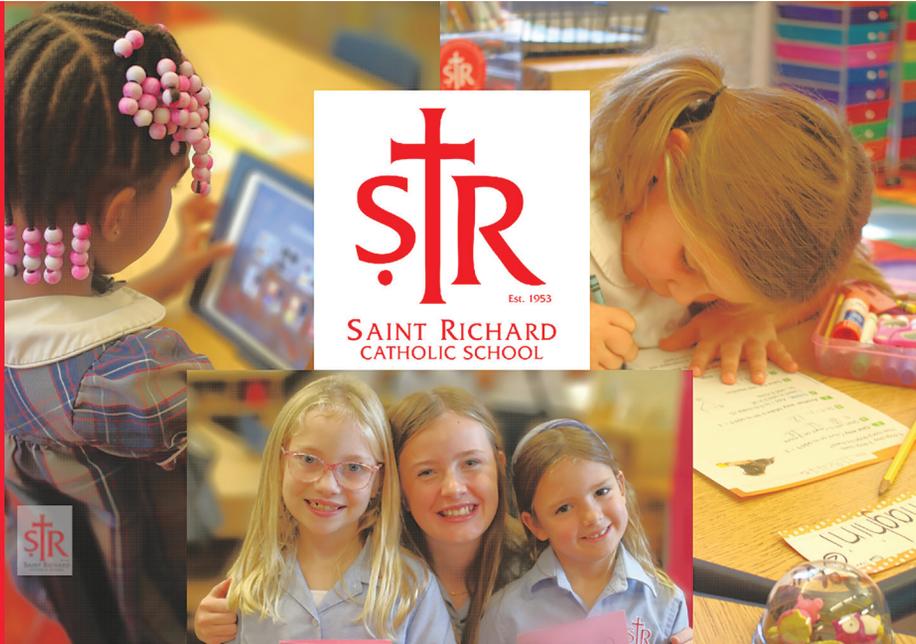
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