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To: Kester, Tonykester@aging.sc.gov
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Subject: Showcasing: Sumter County, Chapel Hill, Myrtle Beach, Hilton Head Island, Greensboro, New Bern

August 13, 2015

Below: Swan Lake (not the ballet); Telling time; Slow and Steady; A Rose is a Rose; Celebrate our Roots; Eat This Good Stuff; Gold Medal Biking; Play Golf, head Outside.

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Take a Road Trip to Sumter, SC

It's in the Middle of Everything

Lots of folks make their first trip to Sumter to visit Swan Lake Iris Gardens and it is one beautiful destination.

After you see the swans, and admire the blooms (depending on time of year), plan to stay for several days to see what else Sumter has to offer. Hint: think history, hospitality and the great outdoors.

[Learn more](#)

Where in the Carolina World Are You?

Look closely and you'll see the tip of one of the largest gnomons in the world – 36 feet in diameter, and 113 feet in circumference. The setting is lovely, surrounded with blooms in season, as it shares the world of time on a larger-than-life scale. The nearby planetarium offers another reason to make a visit.

Two comments at the base:

"Today is yesterday's tomorrow."

"It is always morning somewhere in the world."

Where are you?

Carolina Home Grown

Go Retro with These Beauties

Rose-of-Sharon or shrub althea (*Hibiscus syriacus*) is a frequent denizen of old gardens where it often grows 8 to 10 ft. high and 4 to 6 ft. wide. The toughness and durability of this old-fashioned was eloquently affirmed by Felder Rushing in his 11th book, *Tough Plants for Southern Gardens*: "A drunk driver once ran over my great-grandmother's old althea and it came right back with new flowering growth. That's one tough shrub if it can be pruned with a pickup truck!"

Rose-of-Sharon blooms in the torrid months of July, August, and into early September. Depending on the cultivar, flowers can be single or double in a range of colors that include white, pink, purple, blue and red. The flowers give rise to highly fertile seed pods, which can become a nuisance. I still remember a roadside rose-of-Sharon that I rescued more than a decade ago. I never realized that this

single shrub would thank me with bazillions of offspring. Fortunately, there are new, sterile to semi-sterile cultivars that have been selected for their compact nature (older cultivars are prone to legginess) and gorgeous flowers.

Despite the availability of new releases, I'm old-fashioned and like to go retro with these 1970s releases from the U. S. National Arboretum: 'Diana' (white), 'Aphrodite' (pink), 'Helene' (white), and 'Minerva' (lavender). These sterile cultivars named after Greek goddesses have compact growth habits, leathery dark green leaves, and produce little or no seeds. Site them and any Rose-of-Sharon in full sun. Since they produce flowers on current season's branches, prune these deciduous shrubs when they're dormant in late winter, preferably with bypass pruners or loppers – not your granddaddy's pickup.

Learn more about Carolina gardening from Dr. Polonski's new book, [Carolinas Month by Month Gardening](#). Available wherever books are sold.

A Feather in Their Cap.

Bring your Bike.

Hilton Head Island's devotion to cycling has paid off with a prestigious national designation. The League of American Bicyclists selected the island as a gold-level Bicycle Friendly Community.

That's a national recognition, at the highest level, of Hilton Head Island's devotion to making the world a more bike-friendly place, one path at a time. In fact, there are only 25 cycling communities across the country who are in this prestigious group and no others can be found in the Southeast.

Why should you take your wheels when you visit? Consider 60 miles of picturesque pathways, plus the island's Ambassador program, which sends helpful locals out along the pathways to offer directions and more. Informational kiosks and special events also help.

So what does the town's newly minted gold status mean? It means that Hilton Head Island has been recognized at one of the highest national levels by a program dedicated to, "revolutionizing the way communities evaluate their quality of life, sustainability and transportation networks, while allowing them to benchmark their progress toward improving their bicycle friendliness," according to the League of American Bicyclists. Good stuff, indeed.

Go Beyond the Porch

Carolinas are Made for Outdoor Living

OK, January and August aren't our favorite times to hang out on the porch or deck. However, we've all had late afternoons when the sun was right and the air just too appealing to sit inside. Most times, the Carolina lifestyle is perfect for our great outdoors – even from the deck, with beverage in hand.

I have to smile at new friends who move here and build a 10 x 10 porch or deck. They learn, soon enough, that outside living is what we do best. And let's all agree that a party for 30 is much easier when held outside.

Want to learn more about outdoor rooms, landscape connectors, pool areas, furnishings and pitfalls?

Head to our special feature, [Beyond the Porch](#) and pick up great tips as well as lovely images of those who've learned how to make outside another room in your Carolina home.

Photo courtesy Frederick + Frederick Architects | www.f-farchitects.com

CarolinaLiving/Home On The Course Fall Discovery Weekend

Carolina Colours New Bern, NC

**October 29 -
November 1**

Play golf, meet new friends and tour Carolina Colours, the beautifully designed coastal golf community in New Bern, NC. You'll get answers to all your questions about searching for a golf community, stay at a lovely waterfront hotel, tour local attractions, take a boat ride

on the Neuse River, enjoy gourmet meals and, of course, play golf.

Be here, now!

Hello Tony,

Vacation times are still with us as summer begins its inevitable march toward Fall. (A good thing for us Carolina transplants, as Autumn here is still very summery to the rest of the world.)

For an authentic southern getaway, we tempt you with Sumter County and

CarolinaLiving.com –

environs. And also, outdoor living, with the good times that make the Carolinas a spectacular home base.

Plan a trip! Soon, we predict, you'll be making a bigger Carolina decision.

Get the best for your next life-stage – a new career, starting a business (the Carolinas are incredibly pro-business), low costs and real estate bonanzas. Click to: [Retirement Living & Real Estate Tips](#).

Click the 370+ pages at [CarolinaLiving.com](#) as your resource for Carolina facts 'n fun that lead to stories 'n memories!

All the Best,

[Leyla & Patrick Mason](#)
Co-Founders

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Carolina Animals at Risk

Slow and Steady ... Bog Turtle

Note: Our ongoing feature shares information about Carolinas endangered animals. Some are cuddly, others – not so much. All are important and the Wildlife Federations of both Carolinas are working hard to raise awareness of these important creature assets. Enjoy!

Reaching only three-five inches long, the bog turtle (*Glyptemys muhlenbergii*) is the smallest turtle species in North America, and has distinguishable yellow or orange patches on either side of its head.

There are two populations separated by about 250 miles. The northern population occupies New York, Maryland, and Massachusetts while the southern population occupies

Home On The Course Discovery Weekend

\$350/couple

[Learn more](#) about the weekend and [New Bern](#)

The National Folk Festival

Make your plans now to attend *The National Folk Festival*—one of America's largest, most prestigious, and longest-running celebrations of arts, culture, and heritage.

The Festival will celebrate its 75th anniversary as it launches its first-ever residency in North Carolina in downtown Greensboro on September 11-13, 2015. It is free to the public and celebrates the roots, richness and variety of American culture.

It features over 300 of the nation's finest traditional musicians, dancers and craftspeople in performances, workshops and demonstrations, plus children's activities, savory Southern and ethnic cuisines and craft brews, non-stop participatory dancing, storytelling, parades and more.

With 30+ groups performing on seven stages, as well as the North Carolina Folklife Area, the Family Activities Area, the North Carolina Arts Marketplace, and the Festival Food Courts, the National Folk Festival offers a jubilant experience for all ages. Prepare to be wowed as both legendary masters and the next generation of dynamic, young artists celebrate America's musical soul and cultural roots.

[www.nationalfolkfestival.com](#)

Learn more about [Greensboro](#).

Carolina Cuisine

I have a cookbook devoted to nothing but shrimp and grits recipes. From what we've been seeing, the iconic dish is fast overtaking

Virginia, Tennessee, North and South Carolina and Georgia. The northern population of bog turtles has suffered significantly more habitat loss than the southern population.

Bog turtles like to live in wetlands, but the draining and filling of these wetlands for farming and development have had a significant impact on the populations. Bog turtles are also threatened by the pet trade. Some species of animals are illegal to collect in some states, making the collection of any turtle illegal in North Carolina.

However, a poacher can easily claim that a threatened northern turtle was collected from the 250-mile-away southern population due to the close similarities in appearance between the two. Therefore, the southern population has been listed as threatened as well.

[Support NCWF](#)

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Take a walk.

The Carolinas are perfect for seeing the sights by foot.

SC's Palmetto Trail, The Mountains-to-Sea Trail in NC and the iconic Appalachian Trail.

Unplug and put one foot in front of the other. Feels good out there. Please [share](#) your favorite walk with us on Facebook.

fried chicken as the food that represents the south, at least on the coast.

This iteration, from Duffy Street Seafood Shack in North Myrtle Beach and Cherry Grove Beach, SC, features a liberal addition of pork as well as creamed corn. The result earned a mention in *The New York Times* and won first place at the *Little River Shrimp & Jazz Festival*.

So give this [Shrimp & Grits](#) recipe a try – using wild-caught Carolina shrimp, of course.

Heading your way twice a month

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- Carolina Famous Faces
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The New Guide is here.

Updated town information, six fun new Carolina Adventures, and info about living "[Beyond the Porch](#)."

Order yours today. [Click here](#) for the official hold-in-your-hand Guide to Carolina lifestyle fun and adventure trips, plus real estate tips, tax & cost-of-living advantages, retirement opportunities and town profiles.

Just share your dream goals and we'll help lead you to smart Carolina life and times.

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