

MADISON

JULY / AUGUST 2022

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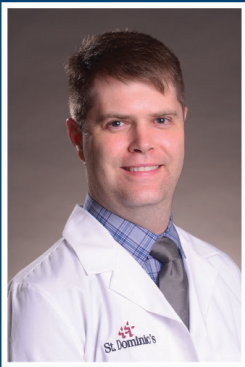
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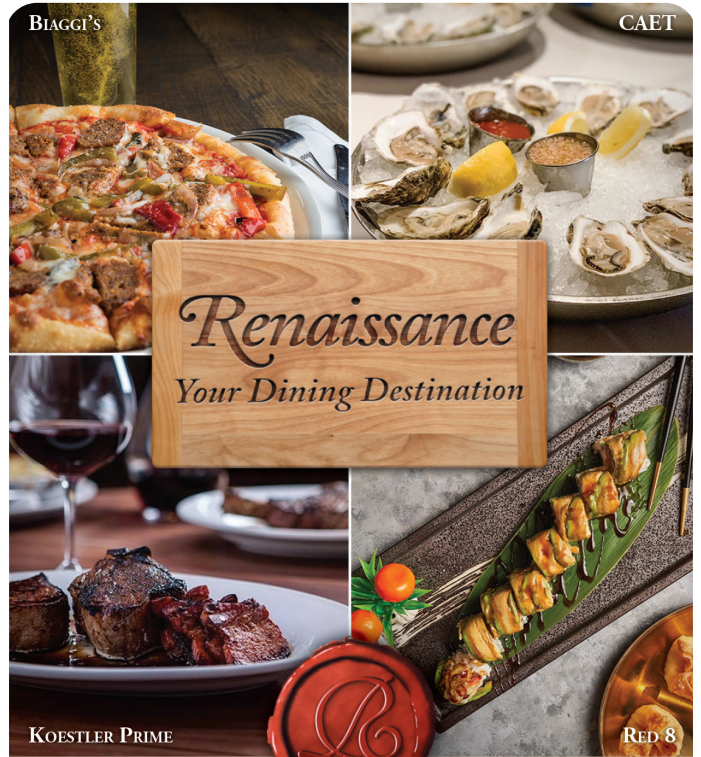
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MOJITOS

by Duncan Dent

I remember a Bacardi commercial from when I was in high school where a bartender muddles mint to the beat in a Miami club. He stops momentarily and the beat stops and the lights come on and patrons look around confused. Our strapping bartender smiles and the beat picks right back up as he drives his muddler back into the glass.

“Tonight,” an appropriately cool and soothing voice says, “do the mojito with the refreshingly cool taste of a Bacardi mojito.”

I think the mojito exists in most people’s minds this way, vague but refreshing.

Mojitos have an odd cultural cache. I am not sure what any given person’s touchstone for the drink may be but I would venture a guess that most people could tell you how the drink makes you feel if not what is actually in it. It might not be in your average Joe bartender’s repertoire but I bet most would know to start with white rum and fresh mint.

During the hot summer months, I recommend you familiarize yourself with what must be a contender for most refreshing drink on the planet.

All origins of the drink are pretty much tall tales. There is even debate if the name is of Spanish or African origin. The story that sounds right to me involves a bout of dysentery, as a shocking number of cocktail origin stories do.

In the 1580’s when famous Privateer Sir Francis Drake was running amok in the Caribbean, his crew became afflicted with dysentery off the coast of Cuba. A landing party found local medicinal herbs including mint as well as sugarcane and limes. They mixed what they found with a little aguardiente de cana, which roughly translates to “burning water” and is a very crude precursor to what we now know as the spirit rum. they called the concoction “El Draque.”

Legend has it the crew got better. It is not known if this concoction existed in Cuba previously or if it was invented on the ship but that is generally accepted the first time those particular ingredients were combined and given a name.

Another cultural touchstone for the drink that jumps out to me is Michael Mann’s 2006 Miami Vice Film starring Colin Ferrell and Jamie Foxx who played Detectives James “Sonny” Crockett and Ricardo “Rico” Tubbs, roles made famous by Don Johnson and Phillip Michael Thomas on the old TV show of the same name.

Crockett asks Isabella, played by Gong Li, if she would like to get a drink.

“What do you like to drink,” She says.

“Im a fiend for mojitos,” Crockett growls.

“I know a place,” she responds before they board a cigarette boat boat and motor off to Havana for “the best place for mojitos.”

I think you can be a fiend for mojitos too.



MAKE YOUR OWN

INGREDIENTS:

2 oz. white rum
3/4 oz. fresh lime juice
1/2 oz. Demerara syrup (2:1
Demerara sugar:water)
mint leaves
soda water

DIRECTIONS:

Grab 10 to 12 mint leaves clap them in your hand to wake them up and begin to express the oils of the leaves. Gently muddle the leaves in a Collins glass. Combine the rum, lime juice and Demerara syrup in a cocktail shaker and shake to combine the ingredients. Pour over ice into the Collins glass and top with soda water. Garnish with additional mint leaves.

A group of cyclists in red and black jerseys are riding on a paved road that curves through a green landscape. The sky is filled with large, grey clouds. The cyclists are in the foreground, slightly out of focus, with their shadows cast on the road. The road has a white dashed line on the right side.

OUT AND ABOUT ON TWO WHEELS

By Jana Hoops



This summer, the heat is on – and bicycling is hotter than ever.

It took the unlikely combination of soaring gas prices, a heightened awareness of environmental sustainability, and the lifestyle interruptions that COVID 19 unleashed on the planet to create an unexpectedly strong – and steady – new trend for bike riding.

Ever since 1817, when German Baron Karl von Drais designed what we now call the “first bicycle,” bikes have continued to capture the interest of children and adults around the globe.

His prototype was made almost entirely of wood, fitted with iron shod wheels, and weighed in at nearly 50 pounds. It would take almost until the end of the 19th century to successfully add features like foot pedals, a chain drive, coaster brakes, and a steerable front wheel, making it reasonably safe and practical.

These days, Madison County residents, along with the rest of the country, have taken a renewed interest in cycling. With ample riding trails, community organizations that encourage bike riding and safety, and a handful of local bicycle merchants, cycling has become a growing pursuit for riders seeking leisure, fitness, and racing as a pastime.

WHY THE TWO-WHEEL SURGE?

Operators at two of Madison County's specialty bike shops agree that the wave of interest in bike riding since 2020 can mostly be attributed to "the virus."

"During the lockdown with COVID the demand for bicycles exploded," said Jayce Powell, a managing partner of Bicycle Revolution in Gluckstadt. "People were at home and wanted to do something and this provided a great opportunity to get outdoors and exercise."

"Bicycles were selling as fast as we could get them in, as well as people bringing bikes in to be serviced. When the supply of bikes started drying up because of the demand as factories were shutting down, we would have people bringing in bikes that had been stored for years to get them serviced to ride again."

Brian Anderson, co-owner of The Bike Crossing in Ridgeland, said his shop experienced that same flood of business.

"The huge increase in demand for bicycles was mostly due to changes in lifestyle related to COVID," he said. "With schools closed, businesses closed, and areas for entertainment closed, people quickly got tired of being inside their homes. We saw increases in people buying bikes to ride with friends, and families coming in to buy bikes to ride together."

Powell and Anderson have also found that the interest in cycling has not diminished now that the virus has slowed, with demand now trending toward fitness and recreational and social riding.

TRENDS IN TRADITIONAL BIKE CATEGORIES

Along with the currently popular road, mountain, and fitness bikes, Madison cyclists have also followed the growing trend toward the more versatile gravel bikes, built with a drop-bar that allows the cyclist to ride over many surfaces. These bikes typically feature wider tires, lower gearing, and the possibility of slightly more weight, all to add more stability for rough terrains.

"There are now gravel group rides, online gravel groups, gravel endurance rides, and gravel races in our area that didn't exist five years ago," Anderson noted.

Powell said Bicycle Revolution has seen the same trend.

"Gravel riding has seen the biggest boom of late, combining some blacktop roads with the mostly gravel roads," he said. You don't have to deal with traffic as much and the vehicles are going at a slower pace than on blacktop. Gravel riding also works similarly to mountain biking in helping with your bike handling skills."

Road and mountain bikers are still plentiful in Madison County, Powell said, pointing out that the Ridgeland Mountain Bike trails, maintained by the Tri County Mountain Bike Association, are "some of the best mountain bike trails in the state to ride, and they are in our own backyard."

ADVANCES IN TRADITIONAL BIKE FEATURES

Updates have been plentiful on features like seats, handlebars, brakes, tires, tech options, and the frame itself, as technology and framework improvements continue to move forward.

Technical improvements that Powell and Anderson cited include the introduction of disc brakes to all bike categories

and the addition and affordability of electronic shifting.

Manufacturers continue to use a wide variety of materials for frames, including carbon, aluminum, steel, and titanium, as new design changes are increasing riding comfort and, ultimately, more speed for longer rides.

E-BIKE TRENDS

The newest and brightest "toy" among the many new innovations in bicycling is the e-bike, pushing the riding experience to a new level of innovation. What exactly is an electric bike?

"E-bikes will have some type of electric assist and incorporate a battery to create the power," Powell said. "E-bikes may use only 'pedal assist,' or some utilize a throttle, and you don't need to pedal. Of course, with the assist turned off, the bike works like a traditional bicycle."

The options for these two-wheelers are sizeable, with today's market offering customized options for terrain, speed, and power, along with framework, tech gadgets and accessories.

"Just about every style of bicycles are now available with e-bike variants," Anderson said. "E-bikes, now classified by the department of transportation based on speed ratings, are predominately pedal-assisted bikes that use an integrated battery and motor. The range of these bikes, depending on the terrain and settings, will vary from 30 miles up to more than 100 miles on a single charge."

WHAT'S NEW IN KIDS' BIKES?

More and more, young riders are now seeing bicycle innovations and even racing events once available only for adults trickling down to younger levels.

"Manufacturers are making kid equivalents of adult bikes now," Powell said, producing bicycles that are "a kid's version that is just as durable and functional as the adult version."

In fact, he said, "There is a high school mountain bike league called NICA (National Interscholastic Cycling Association) that has been growing in popularity across the United States. There is a local team called Mississippi Blues that races in Alabama. They are working on a league for Mississippi, and with the increase in kids' racing you are seeing professional grade bicycles for the younger kids."

In addition, Powell and Anderson both noted a "big increase" in balance bikes for children just learning to ride, thus forgoing the use of training wheels.

"Balance bikes are for kids 18 months to 30 months old," Anderson said. "They do not have pedals, and the child uses their feet to propel them instead. This starts them learning early how to balance a bike and coast, so they will never need to use training wheels as they progress to bigger bikes."

"Any of us who have taught our kids to ride using training wheels have experienced the emotional breakdown of our children when we try to remove the training wheels," he said. "These balance bikes help them learn to ride much quicker, which will make them better riders as they grow."



TIPS FOR FINDING THE RIGHT BIKE FOR YOU

Given all the options today's cyclists can find on the market, what are the most important elements buyers should consider when they are shopping for a new bike?

Powell explains the importance getting the right fit – and why it's important to “fit in” if you ride with fellow cyclists.

“Make sure to get a bicycle that fits you,” he said. “When you get a bicycle from a local bike shop, the bikes come in different frame sizes to accommodate anyone from a kid to someone who is 6'6,” he said.

“Also, if you are riding with friends, I would recommend getting a similar bike to what they are riding. If everyone else is on a road bike and you get a mountain bike, it will not be easy to maintain the same pace because of gear ratios, tire size, and aerodynamics. If everyone is riding a gravel bike on gravel and you get a road bike, it will not be as efficient as the gravel bike.”

Anderson emphasizes the importance of quality when choosing a new bike, and the gear a cyclist must add to the purchase price.

“Cheap bikes can become expensive,” he said, suggesting that buyers prioritize quality, proper assembly, and safety.

“The first question we usually ask new customers is what type of riding they plan to do, whether neighborhood roads, gravel roads, bikes paths, or single-track trails. The next question is what their priority is - fitness, comfort, or performance (speed)? From there we can usually get them onto a specific style of bike that best meets their needs. After that is about their budget and the features they want.”

He noted other expenses that must be added to ensure riding safety, such as helmets, lights, and water bottle cages. Other considerations are how to store and transport a bike; and if kickstands, bikes-stands, or car racks would be needed.

Lastly, new riders will need the right clothing and shoes, along with bike computers, bike pumps, storage bags and chain lubes, to name a few.

“The best advice is to spend some time thinking about what you want to get out of riding, and then spend some time asking questions of your salesperson,” Anderson said. “Most all employees of bicycle shops are passionate about cycling and are excited to help people who want to ride bikes.”

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What a breathtaking 5 bedroom/4.5 bath European home on 4.24 acres in Madison! This waterfront home is nestled in the back of the prestigious gated section of New Castle, in a serene and private setting. Some of the home's features include variable speed heating and cooling, gourmet kitchen, quartz countertops, white oak floors, open floor plan, a sitting room with fireplace, a large office with a separate entry door, a large tiled screened-in porch with panoramic views of the lake, a mudroom with built-ins, a big storage room, a huge bonus room and an oversized 4 car garage. Let's take a tour. Walk on the covered tiled entryway to the custom front door to enter this magnificent modern home! The living room is simply unforgettable with its modern, open feel, its unique fireplace, 2 huge sliding doors leading to the screened-in porch and a large bay window filling the room with natural light. To the right of the entryway is the kitchen and dining room. The kitchen is every chef's dream. It features a 48in black range, built-in Jenn-Air fridge, built-in Jenn-Air dishwasher, built-in wine cooler, microwave drawer, built-in coffee maker, built-in beverage center, custom cabinetry by Wood-Mode with pull out drawers and pull out butcher block, quartz countertops, and a large waterfall island with prep sink perfect for entertaining. The second part of the kitchen has a sink, pantry cabinets and glass cabinets. A beautiful breakfast nook with gorgeous views on the lake and woods are making this dream complete. The open floor plan makes this house perfect for hosting parties and guests. The dining room is next to the kitchen and has a recessed ceiling with a stunning modern chandelier, beautiful lake views and a huge sliding door leading out to the screened-in porch. Continuing to the right of the home, you will find the huge but cozy mudroom with several built-in shoe storage cabinets and benches. Next to the mudroom is the enormous 4 car garage with 2 extra storage places, a sink and a separate entrance towards the beautiful yard with built-in play area for the kids. In the garage there is a stairway leading to a huge bonus room and a big storage room. Next to the living room on the left is the beautiful half bath with a third entrance door facing the backyard. The hallway next to it leads to a multifunctional room with large windows, currently used as playroom and to a laundry room with features a laundry shoot, a movable island and plenty of drying racks. Walking further to the right is the master bedroom suite. It features large windows with captivating views. The master bathroom simply takes your breath away with its steam shower, sauna, sleek grey custom cabinets and soaking tub. The shower features 12 full body sprayers, overhead rain shower, radio, steam function and 2 hand held sprayers. The master closet is very spacious with customizable cabinetry. Walking back towards the front of the house is another hallway with a staircase, a bedroom and the office. The bedroom with wooden floors has his own bath and a huge closet with extra storage room. The office has lots of windows and a 4th entrance facing the front and the extra parking space. The upstairs features 3 bedrooms and 2 baths. The huge guest bedroom has a double closet and an ensuite bathroom. The other two bedrooms have a jack and Jill bathroom. From its private picturesque views outside to each thoughtful finishing touch on the inside, this house is stunning! Call your Realtor today for a personal showing.



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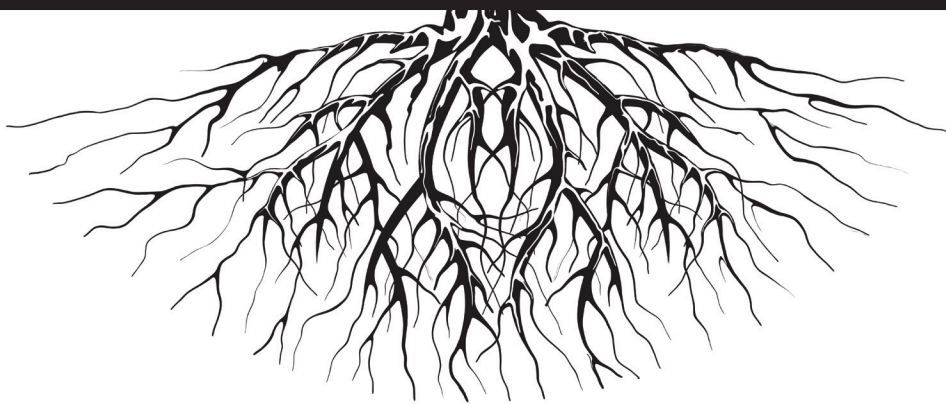
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MADISON SHOWS ITS ROOTS with historical markers

By John Lee



Most people may not know just how much history is behind the City of Madison, and that it started as nothing more than just a train stop. While some of Madison's historical landmarks date back to the early 1800s, the community of Madison was not established until 1856 following the arrival of the New Orleans, Jackson, and Great Northern Railroads.

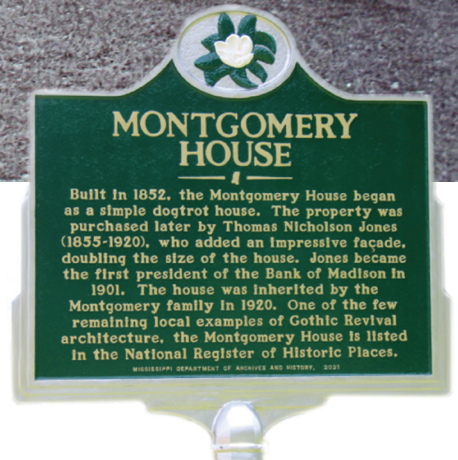
To celebrate Madison's abundance of history, city officials unveiled 10 different historic sign markers across the city in June and traveled to each sign in a horse carriage to symbolize the city's roots and how old it is.

These markers reflect more than 100 years of history, between 1840 and 1946.



The History of Madison (1856)

The History of Madison marker honors the founding of Madison in 1856. The city was originally known as Madison Station, named after President James Madison. In the late 1800s, Madison became known as the “Strawberry Capital of the World” due to how many strawberries were harvested and shipped north by train. Madison also gained recognition in 1950 as the first in Mississippi to elect women to the office of mayor, board of alderman, and town clerk.



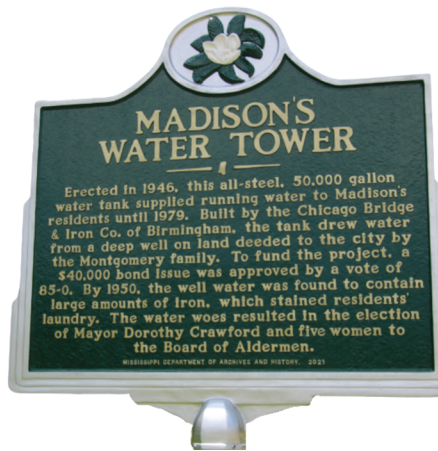
The Montgomery House (1852)

The Montgomery House, built in 1852, began as a simple dog trot house. The property was first purchased by Thomas Nicholson Jones (1855-1920), who added an impressive façade that doubled the size of the house. Jones went on to become the first president of the Bank of Madison in 1901.

The house was inherited by the Montgomery family in 1920. It stands as one of the few remaining local examples of Gothic Revival architecture and is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Most recently, the house grounds have become home to a beautiful botanic garden, funded by the city, America in Bloom, and the Canadian National Railroad. Over the past year, volunteers such as Alan Hoops, Gary Tolbert and Boy Scout Troop 15, master gardeners, local nursery suppliers, and more have assisted in planting flowers and keeping the garden beautiful to preserve the late Miriam Etheridge’s vision of turning the grounds into an expansive botanic garden.

Madison's Water Tower (1946)

This tower, erected in 1946, is an all-steel 50,000-gallon water tank that supplied running water to Madison's residents until 1979. It was built by the Chicago Bridge and Iron Co. of Birmingham. The tank drew water from a deep well on land deeded to the city by the Montgomery family. To fund the project, a \$40,000 bond issue was approved by a vote of 85-0. By 1950, the well water was found to contain a large amount of iron, which stained residents' laundry. These woes resulted in the election of Mayor Dorothy Crawford and five women to the board of alderman.



The John Curran House (1839)

This house predates even the founding of Madison. It is locally known as the Hoy House and was included in the Village of Lamarca. It is believed that Captain W.T. Hickle, Madison's first postmaster, built the house in 1839. It was most likely built when John Curran, an Irish immigrant and wagon maker, owned the property from 1839 to 1851. President of Madison Services, Inc. John Lange writes that the house got its current name from the Hoy Family who moved to Madison in 1916 when no more than 600 residents lived there.

When the house was built, there were just five rooms and two porches with a detached kitchen. Sometime in the late 1800s or early 1900s, the kitchen was joined with the main house, along with a bathroom added to the back of the house.

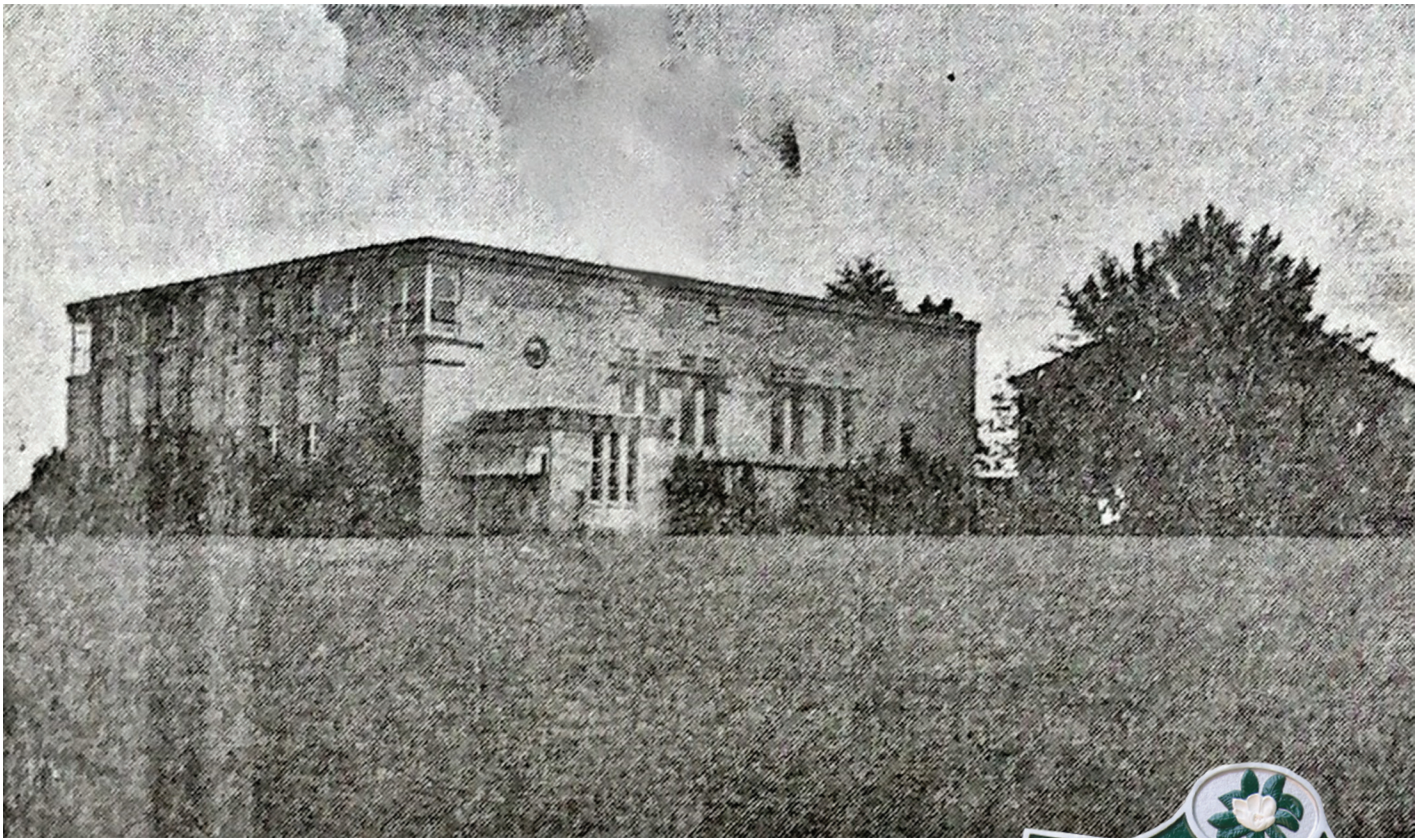
The kitchen, which had an old brick chimney, was rebuilt in the early 1900s after the original kitchen burned. Lange writes that he enjoys a fire in the brick fireplace in his office on cold mornings, as the house now serves as the headquarters for Madison Services, Inc.

The house serves as an excellent example of Greek Revival architecture as applied to a modest residential structure. It is also listed in the National Register of Historic Places, known as the Hoy House after longtime residents Tom and Maymie Hoy.



Farr Mercantile Company (1890)

This structure was built in 1890 by the Hesdorffer brothers of Canton and is the last 19th-century structure in Madison's downtown commercial district. It was the center of Madison's social and civic life throughout most of the 20th century and was used as the telephone exchange, for town meetings, and Thanksgiving potlucks. First owned by George Farr and followed by Joseph Harrell, the building was known as the R.B. Price Mercantile Company Building. It is also listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

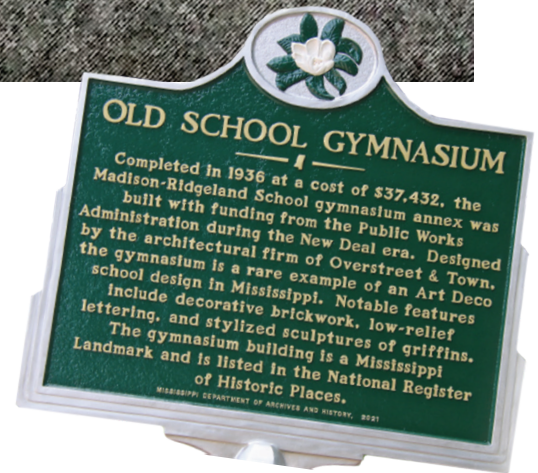


Madison-Ridgeland High School (1910)

The old Madison-Ridgeland School has an abundance of history. It was built sometime between 1910 and 1922, and at the time was the area's only high school. After housing students for many years, it became the home of the Madison Square Center for the Arts and is now being renovated into Madison's new City Hall. The center holds multiple different events, such as classes and performances throughout the year, along with weekly drama, art and dance lessons, ballets, plays, and musicals, a recent example being Disney's Newsies Jr., performed by the Center Players Community Theatre.

Old School Gymnasium (1936)

The gym, a Madison-Ridgeland School annex, was completed in 1936 at the cost of \$37,432. It was built with funding from the Public Works Administration during the New Deal Era. Designed by the architectural firm Overstreet & Town, the gymnasium is a rare example of an Art Deco school design in Mississippi. Notable features include decorative brickwork, low-relief lettering, and stylized sculptures of griffins. The gym building is listed on the National Register of Historic Places and is a Mississippi Landmark.





Bruce Campbell World War II Aircraft Hangars (1940)

In early 1940, General “Hap” Arnold, Commander of the Army Air Corps made a verbal agreement with Mr. Oliver L. Parks, President of Parks Air College, East St. Louis, Illinois, to build facilities and organize staff to train pilots in primary flying requirements. This agreement, later consummated with a thirty-day contract, with an escape clause for the Government, was an example of the trust Mr. Parks and many other civilian leaders had in General Arnold who desperately needed their help to fulfill President Roosevelt’s declaration to produce 50,000 airplanes a year to oppose the ever-threatening German Luftwaffe.

In June 1940 the Mississippi Institute of Aeronautics, Inc. (MIA) purchased from the Whaley, McMillan, and Cothorn families approximately 220 acres of land, primarily cotton fields south of Madison Station along what is now Old Canton Road to build an airfield and supporting facilities.

While the airport served a national need in support of World War II, it remains a significant and positive asset in the Madison community. Approximately twenty-five acres west of Old Canton Road were sold to The Old Men’s Home, Inc., in December 1946 to begin replacing the Jackson facility that had burned in January 1946. This worthy service is still in operation on the same property today known as The Home Place efficiently operated by Mrs. Lucille Nichols and her staff. A number of the former training facilities are still on the grounds.

The airport property was deeded to Madison in 1948 with the stipulation that it be used for public aviation. The three World War II hangars, which dominate the airfield, have been nominated for placement on the National Register of Historic Places. It is anticipated the hangars and the airport will continue to be integral participants in the vibrant development of Madison.



The Strawberry Patch House (1860)

This house was built in the 1860s and sits right off Old Canton Road right next to Strawberry Patch Park. It is a large two-story home with a porch squaring around the front. A double-door balcony sits above the front door, with a tiny place to stand. Shuttered long windows reach the floor of the porch across the front. It was built by Dr. John McKay with wooden pegs, dovetails, mortices, and lap joints.

The house is located next to Strawberry Patch Park, a seven-acre neighborhood park that includes an one-acre lake, a one-mile lighted walking trail, playground equipment, picnic tables, and benches throughout the park, Strawberry Patch Meeting Hall & Chapel, restroom facilities, and the Madison Children's Memorial Garden.



The Dorroh Street Historic District (1885-1905)

According to the National Register of Historic Places, these three houses that comprise this proposed district are significant because they are the best interpretation of the Queen Anne vernacular style of architecture in Madison. Taken as a cluster they represent the modest prosperity that came to the town at the turn of the century.

These three residences housed people who provided necessary services for local farmers. 103 Dorroh Street was the home of James F. Dorroh, a rural mail carrier in the early 20th century. He was also a poet of some prominence. In 1899, when he was 27 years old, his poems were published for the first time in the Christian Observer (Louisville, KY). Other magazines and newspapers published Dorroh's work down the road, and he also wrote a book of poetry.

According to the present owners of 105 Dorroh Street, Dorroh's brother lived at that address and was a physician. Joseph Harrell bought 115 Dorroh Street in 1907 and was the owner and manager of the Farr Mercantile Company. These people were able to make a living providing services for farmers because of the success of truck farming in the area. Their houses are physical evidence of this prosperous period in Madison's History.

All of these historic markers can be found across Madison on Main Street and Old Canton Road.

how sweet it is

THE TURQUOISE CHANDELIER CAKE COMPANY

By Jana Hoops



Within months of opening her popular new Flowood bakery in November 2021, Amy McNeill quickly realized there was a very sweet opportunity just waiting for her to share her talents in Madison County, as well.

It would be her loyal Madison County customers who had been making the drive to Flowood to enjoy her creative cakes and pastries who convinced her to make the expansion.

And with that, the Turquoise Chandelier Cake Company proudly doubled its storefront presence.

“I chose to come to Gluckstadt primarily because folks I’ve served in the Madison-Gluckstadt area wanted me to,” she said.

“They didn’t want to keep coming all the way to Flowood to enjoy the goods. We prepackage goods and case cakes from Flowood and have them prepared and ready to go. Catering to two different areas can be tricky, but this has been a ‘no brainer’ since its opening in May.”

As a self-taught baker, McNeill’s possibilities for imaginative cake designs and delicious treats seem to be unlimited.

“I like to learn from YouTube or by looking at pictures of design ideas and then customizing it to fit the art that mimics my own thoughts,” she said. “It usually turns into a fantastic work of art – in my mind, that is!”

Those fantastic “works of art” show up regularly at weddings, parties, and other

events throughout the area, and while McNeill loves creating and decorating exceptional wedding cakes, she encourages brides to have fun with the flavor, too.

“I have a specialty item in the shop called “bridal tasters,” for brides who want to experience different cake flavors before making a commitment, she said.

These very popular treats, also known as cake jars, are “layered cake in a jar with specialty filling and buttercream, and they are amazing,” she said. “My flavors are almond/wedding cake, chocolate on chocolate, Reese’s (peanut butter mousse and chocolate), tiramisu, tres leches, lemon, Biscoff, Italian creme, strawberry, Nutella, and several more. Typically, most jars are fully stocked, and others sell quickly and are restocked as soon as possible.”

As for the wedding cake design, McNeill says her brides’ preferences “are all so different. I may run into a bride who loves texture, art, and sass – while others love simplicity and clean layers. My heart loves texture of all kinds. Gold drips, on top of clean surfaces cakes. And texture, with style.”

In addition to customized cake orders, both shops offer freshly baked daily treats for sweet teeth with refined tastes.

“Of course, we have the ever-popular staples – chess squares, strawberry pop tarts, petit fours, iced cookies, impeccable bridal tasters, and more,” McNeill said. “We have a continuous shift in product to keep our customers happy.”

Keeping up with that continuous shift means continuous work.

“A typical work week for me varies,” she said. “Most all my scheduling is done on my phone and transferred pen to paper on the week of pickup. The number of custom cake orders for any given weekend can range from 15 to 25. I have one or two wedding cakes booked for every weekend until summer of ‘23.”

In addition to those custom cakes, McNeill said daily replenishment of each store’s display cases with cookies and other goodies means baking about 75 of each item, or around 400 separate pastries, that typically sell out each day.

While she is focused on keeping things running smoothly at her shops, McNeill wants customers and future customers to know how important it is to her to make people happy.

The mother of five who became a mom at a young age, she said she has always had a servant’s heart – a trait she hopes customers see in her work.

“You are humbled when hard things in life shake you,” she said. “Something in me drives me to want to make people happy. I



think being a servant to people is a need I have, to serve them and feel love for them. I don't focus on the monetary element of this business so much, although that is important, of course. It's about relationships. Something sparks in me, and I want to make them happy."

Another personal attribute she values for herself is taking the time to get the details right.

For instance, she noted, "Stacking cake layers in this summer heat and delivering them looking perfect is a challenge to me," she said. "For whatever reason, my soul just loves stress."

McNeill knew from the time she was a teenager that she had an artistic, imaginative bent.

"I find beauty in my work," she said.

Even the name of her business is unique, inspired by an inventive hobby.

"The name of my bakery, The Turquoise Chandelier Cake Company, came from my love for chandeliers and painting with chalk paint, and I love the color turquoise. Before I opened my bakery, I was refinishing or repainting furniture pieces with chalk paint and selling them as a hobby. That's when I created a social media account and named it 'The Turquoise Chandelier.' After some time, I transitioned to making cakes for sale. I started posting my cakes on my socials under that name, and it stuck. It just isn't your typical 'bakery name.' And that's why I love it!"

She is quick to recognize the contributions and talents of her staffs at both locations, emphasizing that "this operation would never be possible without their help," along with that of her family, whose adjustment to her new working hours, she says, "is a work in progress."

Her family, who now lives in Gluckstadt, includes husband Scott McNeill and children: Abbey, 24; Brandon, 20; Addison, 14; Creed, 10; and Crew, 2.

"My schedule is not your typical 8 to 5," she said. "Most every day, I leave at closing time, or try to. On weekends, 4:30 a.m. 'work mornings' are my norm. This was a huge 'con' on my list of pros and cons before opening a space. I wondered, 'How could I be a good enough mom, and be 'present' at the end of every workday?' I'm not sure that's possible. All we can do, as working mommas, is the very best that we can! I do have to have a lot of help to have a successful workday."

She credits her father, Randy McClellan, who passed away in February 2020 after a lengthy illness, for her strong work ethic.

"He is the one who motivated me to work so hard," she said. "Every day I feel like I'm dedicating my work and this business to him."





Keeping up with her hard work is worth it, she said, because the thing she's most proud of in her business is that "at the end of the day, I've gained lifelong friends. I'm thankful for our customers, vendors, and my family. Without their support, I couldn't be who I am."

What makes The Turquoise Chandelier unique?

"A lot of things," McNeill said. "Every baker's work is authentic to them. I have my

own artist's style. It's not just about the cake. At the end of the day, it's something from my heart that drives my goals and plans for the future. I think it runs much deeper than that."

And if you visit her shops, she adds, "I hope to have you leave better than you came in."

Information about store locations, hours of operation, and links to social media are below.

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HISTORY REIMAGINED AT THE CAPRI

by Duncan Dent



The renovated Capri theater on State Street in Jackson features 178 reclinable seats and theatergoers are able to order food from the restaurant and tiki bar next door through kiosks in the lobby before the movie starts — or from a QR code for each seat.

The trio of entertainment destinations that opened earlier this year have brought more than 100 jobs to the Fondren area of Northeast Jackson anchored by the Capri, dormant for more than 30 years.

Madison County's Charlotte McCoy Brown has fond memories of the Capri in its heyday since she and her would-be husband had their first date there.

"Bobby and I had our first date at the Capri Theatre in December of 1969," she wrote on Facebook. "We saw 'On Her Majesty's Secret Service,'

a James Bond movie." They sat in the third row because "I wouldn't put my glasses on. Loved this theatre!"

Hattiesburg restaurateur Robert St. John is one of the managing partners of the development that includes the Capri, The Pearl tiki bar and the Highball restaurant, bar and 10-lane bowling alley.

Jarred Patterson, another managing partner, said The Pearl features its own selections with a menu inspired by Chinese, Polynesian and other cuisines. He said the Capri menu would be derived from the selections available at the Highball with a few theater-specific selections like candy, popcorn and specialty fries and nachos.

"I would call it American with a fair amount of Cajun influence," Patterson said of the broader menu.





The Highball sits at the location of the former Seabrook paint store, and developers said they added an additional six or seven thousand square feet to the back for the bowling lanes and a wall-length mural showcasing pieces of the neighborhood's history.

The development has been at least 10 years in the making since developer David Pharr and his partner Jason Watkins acquired the theater. Pharr said they originally planned to run the theater and rent the other spaces to existing tenants, but as those spaces became available, they began to consider the expanded concept that is nearing reality.

"The theater has been such a central part of Fondren historically," Pharr said. "We hope this brings some life and vibrancy."

Watkins and Pharr actively helped with the process to get Fondren on the register of historical places, which has afforded them state and federal tax credits to make their project a reality.

"Historical buildings are often more expensive to renovate, and that helped offset the costs," Pharr said.

About four years ago, they brought St. John on to bring his expertise to the restaurant and bar aspects of the project. St. John said he was quickly interested in being a part of their project.

"It did not take a lot of convincing," St. John said.

What is now known as the Capri was opened as The Pix in 1940 and showed movies until 1957, when it shut down for a time. The building reopened in 1962 as the Capri and was shuttered by 1986, said Pharr, the unofficial historian of the group.

In those years, the theater went through ups and downs. It hosted the premiere of Alan Rudolph's 1972 hippie horror flick, "Premonition." At its height, the theater reportedly had about 500 seats. Separate



retail spaces in front of the theater also housed early iterations The Rogue, a staple for fine men's wear in Jackson, and the now-defunct Be-Bop Record Shop.

By the early '80s, management had switched to second-run films and infamously operated as a XXX theater for some time.

Fondren saw a notable decline through the '80s, and Pharr said was hit hard by the crack epidemic in the '90s. Chase, a business in Fondren that prints T-shirts and mugs, has a mug that reads "Fondren: not just for crack and hookers anymore."

Pharr said organizations such as St. Dominic Hospital and the Fondren Renaissance Foundation have invested in the community. Over the past decade, an explosion of restaurants has cemented Fondren as a center for Jackson nightlife and good food and drink.

"We are grateful for those who came before us, and we plan on being good neighbors," Pharr said.

St. John said business owners in Fondren tend to see themselves as "a part of a whole" and that he has already built great relationships with the ownership and staff of many of the neighboring restaurants.

"There is a real sense of community here," St. John said. "I think everyone around here knows that a rising tide lifts all ships."





IN THE KITCHEN (AND CELLAR)



With International Chef David Raines

The Flora Butcher & Dave's Triple B Restaurant

As the summer unfolds we're going to suggest some of our favorite food and wine pairings. In the coming months we'll help you take the mystery out of specific wines and how they will compliment certain dishes. This month we're preparing Blackened Catfish Over Grit Cakes With Lemon Beurre Blanc. The dish is a different take on a popular southern staple. I like to pair this entree with slightly floral chardonnay that I think has enough acidity to hold up to the richness of the beurre blanc. 2019 Magnolia Chardonnay. It is not a wine to break the bank and very well crafted. I also love the story of these Mississippi natives who raise these grapes in the Saint Lucia Highlands of Monterey, California. They then named the wine after the state flower of Mississippi to honor their southern roots.

BLACKENED CATFISH OVER GRIT CAKES

GRIT CAKES

I think all of the grit cakes on New Orleans menus were created out of necessity. Left-over grits from Saturday Night's dinner service were poured into a pan and then set in the refrigerator. The next day for brunch, we would turn them out on the counter, cut the desired shape and then they were breaded to be fried to order. Please take advantage of this concept if you do make grits and have leftovers. So good! If you make them just for making grit cakes, this recipe will give you a batch that is firm enough to use the same way.

FOR THE GRITS

(If you don't have Delta Grind grits then it will work with another brand. It just won't be as tasty)

- 1 Pound Delta Grind Grits
- 1 Quart Whole Milk
- 3 cups Water
- 4 Ounces Unsalted Butter
- 4 ounces Cream Cheese, room temp and cubed
- 8 ounces Sharp Cheddar, grated
- 1 Tablespoon Ground White Pepper
- 1 ½ Tablespoon Kosher salt

Bring the milk and water to a boil and add the grits. Turn the heat to low and stir often until the grits are tender. Stir in the remaining ingredients and continue to stir off the heat until they are incorporated and smooth. Pour into a greased casserole dish and allow them to cool and then place them in the refrigerator to get cold.

FOR THE GRIT CAKES

In a food processor, blitz up half of a loaf of poboy bread. You want relatively fine breadcrumbs. These "fresh" breadcrumbs will give you a lighter, fluffier crust. Put them in a bowl and season with salt and pepper

In another bowl, mix all-purpose flour with some salt and pepper

In a third bowl, whisk 5 or 6 eggs together with a splash of water.

Turn your cold grits out on the counter and cut any shape you like. I like to make them the size and shape of whatever is going on top. Line your bowls up like this: Flour-Egg wash-Breadcrumbs and then a cookie sheet lined with parchment paper. Gently coat your cakes, one at a time, in flour, shaking of

the excess. Then roll them in the egg wash to coat and then roll them in the breadcrumbs. Finally put the breaded grit cakes on the cookie sheet. After you're done, put them back in the refrigerator until it's time to fry them

LEMON BEURRE BLANC

- 1 large purple Spring Onion, sliced (2 Dog Farms has the best)
- 2 Lemons with the rind removed
- 1 Cup White Wine
- 2-3 shakes of Crystal Hot Sauce
- 2 Ounces Heavy Whipping Cream
- 5 Sprigs Fresh Thyme
- 1 ½ Pounds Unsalted Butter, cubed

Add everything put the milk and butter into a saucepan. On medium heat, cook out the moisture until it is almost a syrup. Use a whisk to crush the lemons as you reduce.

When it's ready, add your cream. Then start adding the butter, one piece at a time and whisk constantly until you have incorporated all of the butter. The trick here is to add it slow enough so that the sauce is still hot BUT to control the temperature so that the sauce doesn't come to a simmer. If it does, the sauce will separate and there's not much you can do besides start over. Keep it warm until you're ready to plate

BLACKENING SEASONING

- 2 Tablespoons Paprika
- 1 Tablespoon Kosher Salt
- 1 Teaspoon Fresh Ground Black Pepper
- 1 Teaspoon Ground White Pepper
- 1 Teaspoon Cayenne Pepper
- 1 Teaspoon Garlic Powder
- 1 Teaspoon Onion Powder
- ½ Teaspoon Dried Thyme
- ½ Teaspoon Dried Oregano

BLACKENED CATFISH

We use Simmon's Delacata cut catfish. It is a thicker piece than what you would fry so it is perfect for blackening.

Heat a cast iron skillet on high heat. While it is getting hot, coat your catfish fillets with blended oil or just vegetable oil. Sprinkle the blackening seasoning over the top, making sure to cover it evenly. I don't think I've ever said "too much blackening seasoning" so don't be scared.

Place your fish, seasoning side down in the pan and sear until the edges of the fish turn pale and the seasoning has turned "black" but not burnt. At this point, I like to flip them and turn the heat off to let them finish cooking through. If you poke the thickest part and it gives way, then you're ready.



TO PLATE!

Fry your grit cakes at 375 degrees in enough vegetable oil to completely submerge them. Cook them to a dark golden brown.

On a plate, put 2-3 ounces of your sauce down in the center and top with the grit cake, place your catfish on top of that. You can stop here and add some more sauce to the top or you can add some veggies to balance the dish out. I've even put a poached egg on top for brunch menus. I like to do our braised greens and then add the sauce over the top of it for a dinner main course

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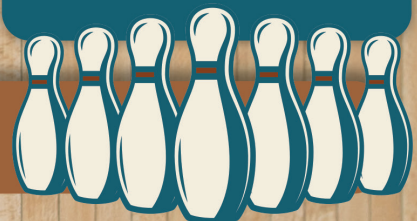


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SPIRALIZER SET

A spiralizer is a device that can turn raw vegetables into “noodles” that can be substituted for traditional pasta in many popular dishes. Sets will come with blades that can produce coils, ribbons or even shorter “juliennes” for various dishes.

COOKIE DOUGH SCOOP

If you like to bake, then a cookie dough scoop is a worthwhile investment. This helps ensure uniform sizing for even cooking.

PRESSURE COOKER

Interest in pressure cookers has risen exponentially thanks to the relatively recent release of the Instant Pot®. This device has even spurred an entire collection of recipes that are designed to be prepared in the cooker.

ELECTRIC BREAKFAST SANDWICH MAKER

Create restaurant breakfast and/or deli sandwiches quickly with an electric breakfast sandwich maker. Bacon, egg and cheese is easily created, and some of these gadgets even have spaces for English muffins or bagels to cook all ingredients at once. Because it is electric, this device can be handy in dorm rooms.

ADJUSTABLE ROLLING PIN

Rings on an adjustable rolling pin help guide the thickness, and measurement markings help bakers keep track of the diameter while rolling out favorite doughs.

SMART MEAT THERMOMETER

A wireless food thermometer can track the internal temperature of meats and poultry as well as the air temperature of an oven or grill. Those readings connect to a smartphone app so one can monitor doneness from any room in the house.

COLLAPSIBLE SILICONE COLANDER

Straining the water out of pastas and other foods requires the use of a colander. Having a collapsible version enables a person to flatten and store the colander in a cabinet or drawer.

MANDOLINE

A mandoline is used to produce slices of many different foods at various thicknesses and textures. Create crinkle-cut fries or thin slices of eggplant for frying.

FOOD PROCESSOR

Food processors come in a variety of styles, from free-standing units to ones that serve as blender attachments. Manual food choppers are often cranked by a handle or may have a push-down handle to engage the chopping action.

AIR FRYER

There are many incarnations of air fryers depending on the manufacturer. These gadgets work with convection (heated air) to simulate the crispiness of oil frying without all the oil.

STOCK YOUR KITCHEN WITH THESE MUST-GAVE GADGETS

While the simplest of recipes can be made without much equipment, for more complicated meals, it is likely worth investing in some high-quality cooking gadgets. The following are some items home chefs will want to add to their culinary arsenal. Outfitting a kitchen with the basics and then supplementing with some clever gadgets can make cooking meals at home that much easier.





THE FRECKLED FARMER

by Duncan Dent

Pickles are the easiest way to improve sandwiches or add a little crunch and flavor to any meal really. Next to a cold drink, there is nothing more satisfying than the snap and crunch of a juicy pickle spear fresh out of the fridge on a hot summer day. They are one of life's simplest joys and you can make them at home.

Nicole Kitchens, the horticulturist in charge of the high tunnel at the Mississippi Ag Museum, recounted a recent dinner at Cock of The Walk in Pocahtonas where they had catfish paired with pickled onions.

"they were so good they had this sweet and tart taste," Kitchens said.

Kitchens knows a thing or two about pickling. At the Ag Museums' Mississippi Pickle Fest she did a live demonstration on how to start pickling at home.

I have begun pickling onions since the start of the year. They are bright pink and explode with flavor and go on almost every plate if I have them in the fridge.

Deidre Whitton, the Freckled Farmer, lives on a nine-acre farm in Clinton with her husband and two daughters. She loves her day job but when she gets home she dives into another passion, developing value-added products from the raw vegetables and fruits they grow on their property. She sells these value-added products under the name the Freckled Farmer and last year started adding pickled vegetables to her rotation.

When she and her husband of 12 years, Brett, moved their family onto the small farm in Clinton six years ago they found a mature blueberry tree that awakened something inside her, Whitton said she had never been much for the outdoors.

"Growing up in Madison (She graduated from Madison Central in 2006) I did not like to be outside at all," Whitton said. "It really stirred up some country in me. My husband was startled."

They picked fresh berries off the tree until their bellies and fridge were full and soon realized they were going to have to find something to do with all these blueberries. That is when Deidre decided to look into making them into jam.

"That is where it all started," She said. "I did not want to let those blueberries go to waste."

In her time operating her small farm, Whitton has had to teach herself many of these skills. She has taken to the Internet to look for tips and directions and promotes her own products through social media. She said she feels like these homemade products are at an all-time high whether the person is starting a business or just making a few small batches for personal use.





“It is the biggest it has been since I paid attention,” Whitton said. “I love to share lessons of what I’ve learned.”

In her professional capacity at the Ag Museum, Kitchens said she has seen an explosion in interest in home gardening and that home canning and pickling quickly follow that. She cited a number of factors from people starting projects while they were locked up during COVID to recent inflation driving people to find ways to get every bit out of what they grow for their friends and family.

“We have seen a lot more people interested in doing stuff like this post COVID,” Kitchen said. “People are more interested in growing their own food and that means they are usually looking for ways to can, preserve or freeze what they have so they can put away healthy food for later.”

Kitchens is also self-taught. She said she has been canning and preserving food for almost thirty years. She started when she

was 21 shortly after she bought her first home and started a garden.

In her career, she has lived a number of places. She grew up in Jackson. She recently lived in Starkville before moving to a 23-acre Flora farm six years ago with her husband, Shan, and eight-year-old daughter Maggie May.

“Flora is the perfect fit for us,” Kitchens said. “It is a place with small-town values and a close-knit family atmosphere.”

For a while, she said she lived on a farm in Montana that was two hours from the closest grocery store. Preserving food was a necessity and she said she even learned to can meat and make jerky.

“I love to do it,” Kitchens said. “I am self-taught. I learned to process my own food because I didn’t want to waste any food. I have spent time hunting but growing is my passion. Having a garden is such a blessing.”

Blessings from Kitchens’ garden include pickles, salsa and tomato sauce. She loves

making a little extra to give to friends.

“It makes me feel good to share what I have grown with a lot of people,” Kitchens said.

Kitchens said pickling may be the easiest way for a home grower to get into the home preserving game.

“Pickles are so easy to make,” She said. “It really doesn’t take that many ingredients.”

A pickle brine can be as easy as vinegar, water and some salt. Whitton started pickling last year under her Freckled Farmer brand. She said it was a test run and she gave most of it away but that they were a success.

“I need more pickles,” was a common refrain from her friends and coworkers.

Whitton pickled jalapenos, cucumbers and okra. She said she gave away more than 30 pints and 15 to 20 quarts of pickles before her growing season was over. This year she hopes to double that output. She said she

has different brines for different vegetables. Her brines include ingredients like honey and sugar and garlic in addition to more traditional ingredients.

She has a few tips for beginners that she says she learned “the hard way.”

The first is to make sure cucumbers are picked and immediately refrigerated. Whitton said washing the pickles and putting them in the jar fresh out of the fridge preserves a crunchy texture.

She also recommended using pickle lime, which can be bought wherever canning supplies are sold. She said you don’t need very much but you will notice if you don’t have it.

Kitchens said her biggest tip mostly pertains to canning but is a good practice to develop: keep everything clean.

Once you understand the basics you can pickle almost anything you want and you can get creative with it. Try throwing in fresh herbs or seeds and see what they bring to the table. I usually put some peppercorns in with my onions.

A quick Google is not a bad place to get started and there are ready to go kits with everything you need but the pickles sold at the Ag Museum general store but here is a brine recipe from cooking YouTuber Joshua Weissman.

“This is something everyone should do at least once,” he says in the description of his how-to video. I know I haven’t regretted it.

The breakdown is 2/3 tablespoon of salt per cup of total liquid.

His example pickle liquid recipe is as follows:

- 2 cups white distilled vinegar
- 2 cups water
- 2.5 tablespoons of kosher salt

Load your jar with the vegetables you would like to pickle. Good starter veggies include cucumbers, carrots, onions, hard peaches or radishes. You can also include some fresh herbs in your jar for extra flavor.

Combine the other ingredients in a pot on a stovetop and bring the mixture up to a boil. Then pour the mixture into the jar over the vegetables and herbs. Let cool before sealing and stowing away in your freezer for your next snack or meal.

It really is that simple.

For more from Whitton visit her Feckled Farmer page on Facebook.



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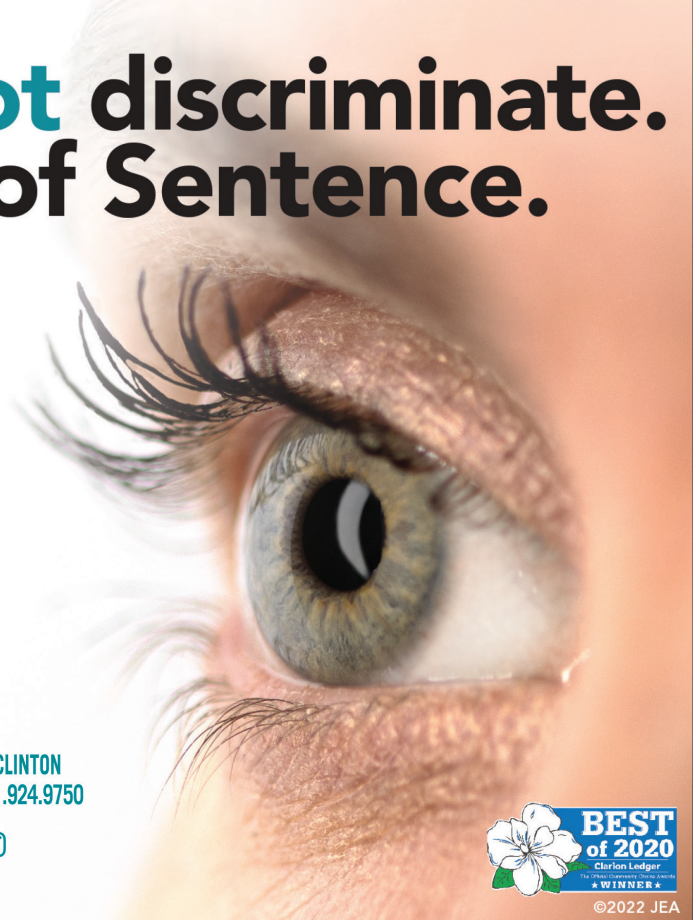


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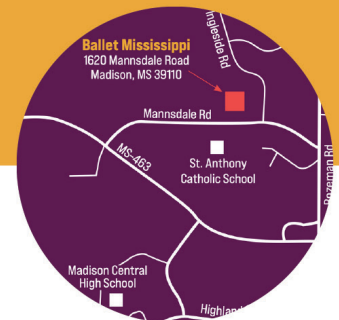
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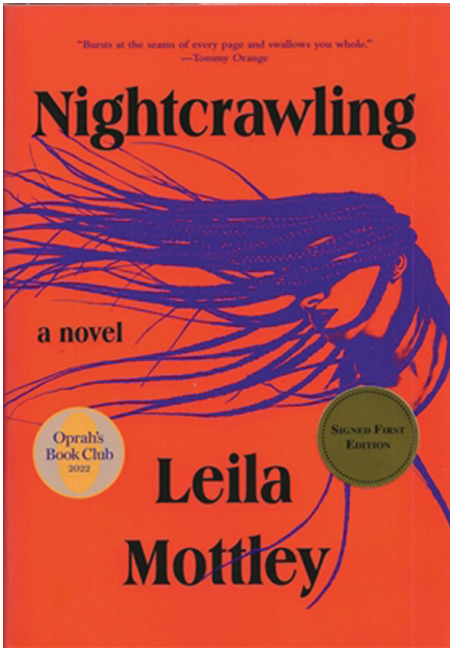
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BOOKS



NIGHTCRAWLING

A dazzling novel about a young Black woman who walks the streets of Oakland and stumbles headlong into the failure of its justice system—the debut of a blazingly original voice that “bursts at the seams of every page and swallows you whole” (Tommy Orange, best-selling author of *There There*)

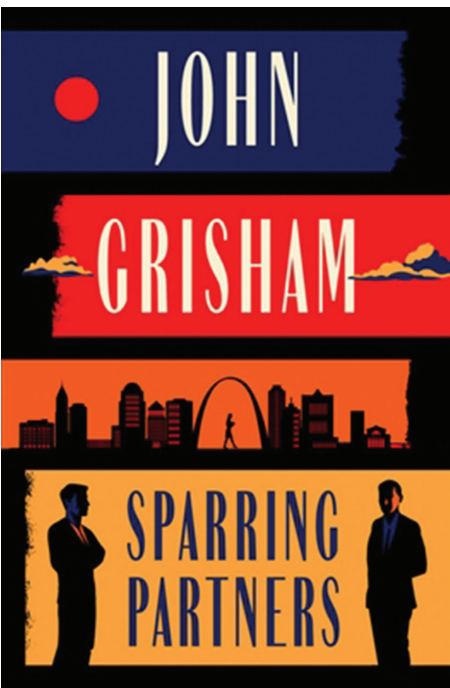
Kiara and her brother, Marcus, are scraping by in an East Oakland apartment complex optimistically called the Regal-Hi. Both have dropped out of high school, their family fractured by death and prison. But while Marcus clings to his dream of rap stardom, Kiara hunts for work to pay their rent—which has more than doubled—and to keep the nine-year-old boy next door, abandoned by his mother, safe and fed.

One night, what begins as a drunken misunderstanding with a stranger turns into the

job Kiara never imagined wanting but now desperately needs: nightcrawling. Her world breaks open even further when her name surfaces in an investigation that exposes her as a key witness in a massive scandal within the Oakland Police Department.

Rich with raw beauty, electrifying intensity, and piercing vulnerability, *Nightcrawling* marks the stunning arrival of a voice unlike any we have heard before.

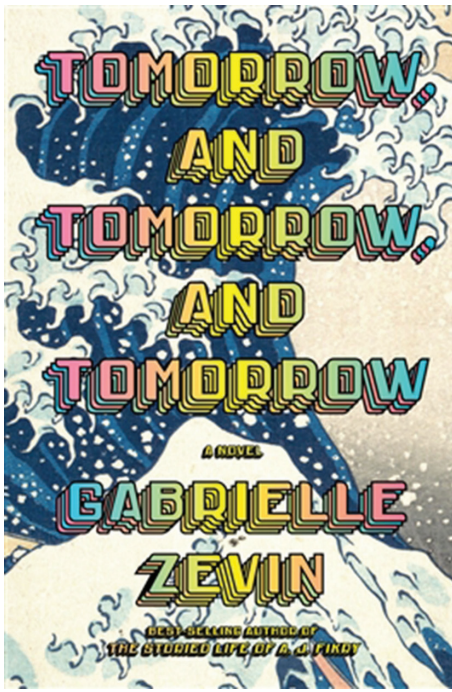
LEILA MOTTLEY is the 2018 Oakland Youth Poet Laureate. Her work has been featured in *The New York Times* and *Oprah Daily*. She was born and raised in Oakland, where she continues to live. *Nightcrawling* is her first novel.



SPARRING PARTNERS

Jake Brigance returns: a death row inmate makes an unusual final request; a dysfunctional legal family gets their day in court—but maybe not the way they envisioned it. These are just a few of the unforgettable characters you’ll encounter in *Sparring Partners*, three novellas that prove beyond a shadow of a doubt that John Grisham is truly America’s Favorite Storyteller.

JOHN GRISHAM is the author of thirty-eight novels, one work of nonfiction, a collection of stories, and seven novels for young readers.



TOMORROW AND TOMORROW AND TOMORROW

In this exhilarating novel by the best-selling author of *The Storied Life of A. J. Fikry* two friends—often in love, but never lovers—come together as creative partners in the world of video game design, where success brings them fame, joy, tragedy, duplicity, and, ultimately, a kind of immortality.

“This sweeping, gorgeously written novel ... charts the beauty, tenacity, and fragility of human love and creativity.... One of the best books I’ve ever read.” —John Green, best-selling author of *The Anthropocene Reviewed*

On a bitter-cold day, in the December of his junior year at Harvard, Sam Masur exits a subway car and sees, amid the hordes of people waiting on the platform, Sadie Green. He calls her name. For a moment, she pretends she hasn’t heard him, but then, she turns, and a game begins: a legendary collaboration that will launch them to stardom.

These friends, intimates since childhood, borrow money, beg favors, and, before even graduating college, they have created their first blockbuster, *Ichigo*. Overnight, the world is theirs. Not even twenty-five years old, Sam and Sadie are brilliant, successful, and rich, but these qualities won’t protect them from their own creative ambitions or the betrayals of their hearts.

Spanning thirty years, from Cambridge, Massachusetts, to Venice Beach, California, and lands in between and far beyond, Gabrielle Zevin’s *Tomorrow, and Tomorrow, and Tomorrow* is a dazzling and intricately imagined novel that examines the multifarious nature of identity, disability, failure, the redemptive possibilities in play, and above all, our need to connect: to be loved and to love. Yes, it is a love story, but it is not one you have read before.

GABRIELLE ZEVIN is the *New York Times* and internationally best-selling author of several critically acclaimed novels, including *The Storied Life of A.J. Fikry*, which won the Southern California Independent Booksellers Award and the Japan Booksellers’ Award among other honors, and *Young Jane Young*, which won the Southern Book Prize. Her novels have been translated into thirty-nine languages. She has also written books for young readers, including the award-winning *Elsewhere*. She lives in Los Angeles.



THE MATCH

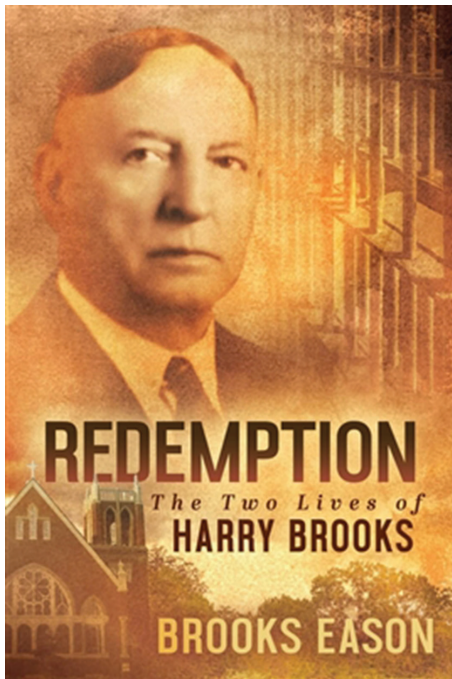
From the creator of the #1 hit Netflix series *Stay Close* comes a gripping new thriller in which Wilde follows a tip that may finally reveal the truth behind his abandonment—only to end up in the sights of a ruthless killer.

After months away, Wilde has returned to the Ramapo Mountains in the wake of a failed bid at domesticity that confirms what he’s known all along: He belongs on his own, free from the comforts and constraints of modern life.

Suddenly, a DNA match on an online ancestry database brings Wilde closer to his past than he’s ever dreamed, and finally gives Wilde the opening he needs to track down his father. But meeting the man brings up more questions than answers. So Wilde reaches out to his last, most desperate lead, a second cousin who disappears as quickly as he resurfaces, having experienced an epic fall from grace that can only be described as a waking nightmare.

Was his cousin’s downfall a long time coming? Or was he the victim of a conspiracy as cunning as it is complex? And how does it all connect to the man once known as *The Stranger*, a treacherous fugitive with a growing following whose mission and methods have only turned more dangerous with time?

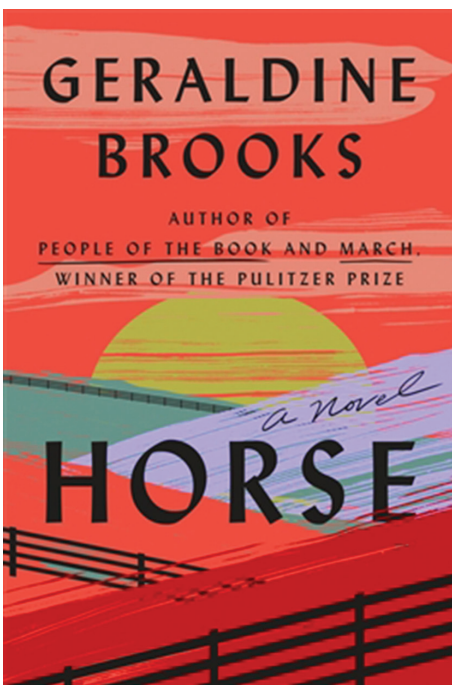
HARLAN COBEN is a #1 *New York Times* bestselling author and one of the world’s leading storytellers. His suspense novels are published in forty-five languages and have been number one bestsellers in more than a dozen countries, with seventy-five million books in print worldwide. His Myron Bolitar series has earned the Edgar, Shamus, and Anthony Awards, and five of his books have been developed into Netflix original series, including his adaptation of *The Stranger*, *The Innocent*, *Gone for Good*, *The Woods*, and *Stay Close*, which was released on December 31, 2021. He lives in New Jersey.



REDEMPTION THE TWO LIVES OF HARRY BROOKS

In the first half of Harry's life, he embezzled money from the Uniontown, PA, school district where he was the elected superintendent, left his wife for another woman, and sought to escape by booking passage on a Cunard liner to Liverpool. But his plan was foiled, Scotland Yard arrested him when the ship docked, and he was extradited, tried, convicted, and served three years in Western Penitentiary in Pittsburgh. In the second half of Harry's life, he came to the South, where he spent his last thirty-five years as a revered and successful Methodist minister and church official. He was a district superintendent overseeing a hundred congregations at the time of his death in 1942. In 1934, when President Roosevelt spoke to a crowd of 75,000 in North Mississippi, Harry was chosen to give the invocation. Nobody in the huge crowd knew the preacher at the lectern was an ex-con. *Redemption: The Two Lives of Harry Brooks* entertains readers with a fascinating story and uses Harry's life to illustrate important principles of theology, principally that all men are sinners but that even the worst of sinners are capable of redemption. It is unique and appealing because it's based on a true story of a man who could have given up when he lost everything, but instead he persevered. *Redemption: The Two Lives of Harry Brooks* appeals to audiences who are interested in an inspiring story of overcoming hardship.

BROOKS EASON is the author of *Travels with Bobby*, a travelogue about hiking trips with his best friend; *Fortunate Son*, a memoir about his adoption as an infant and discovery of his birth mother's identity when he was nearly fifty; and *Bedtime with Buster*, which consists entirely of conversations between him and his beloved mixed-breed dog. *Fortunate Son* was nominated for best nonfiction work by a Mississippi author in 2020. Eason is a mostly retired lawyer and has an undergraduate degree from the University of Mississippi and a law degree from Duke. He grew up in Tupelo, MS, and lives in Madison, MS, with his wife Carrie, their two dogs, and a cat. He has three children and five grandchildren.



HORSE

A discarded painting in a junk pile, a skeleton in an attic, and the greatest racehorse in American history: from these strands, a Pulitzer Prize winner braids a sweeping story of spirit, obsession, and injustice across American history.

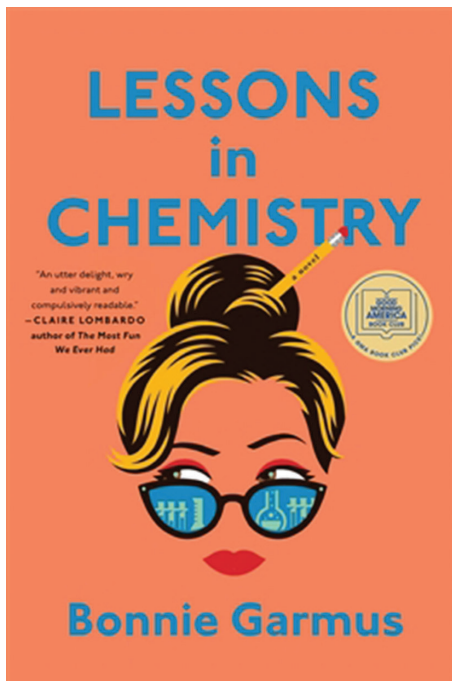
Kentucky, 1850. An enslaved groom named Jarret and a bay foal forge a bond of understanding that will carry the horse to record-setting victories across the South. When the nation erupts in civil war, an itinerant young artist who has made his name on paintings of the racehorse takes up arms for the Union. On a perilous night, he reunites with the stallion and his groom, very far from the glamor of any racetrack.

New York City, 1954. Martha Jackson, a gallery owner celebrated for taking risks on edgy contemporary painters, becomes obsessed with a nineteenth-century equestrian oil painting of mysterious provenance.

Washington, DC, 2019. Jess, a Smithsonian scientist from Australia, and Theo, a Nigeri-

an-American art historian, find themselves unexpectedly connected through their shared interest in the horse—one studying the stallion's bones for clues to his power and endurance, the other uncovering the lost history of the unsung Black horsemen who were critical to his racing success. Based on the remarkable true story of the record-breaking thoroughbred Lexington, *Horse* is a novel of art and science, love and obsession, and our unfinished reckoning with racism.

GERALDINE BROOKS is the author of the Pulitzer Prize-winning novel *March* and the international bestsellers *The Secret Chord*, *Caleb's Crossing*, *People of the Book*, and *Year of Wonders*. She has also written the acclaimed nonfiction works *Nine Parts of Desire* and *Foreign Correspondence*. Born and raised in Australia, Brooks lives in Massachusetts.



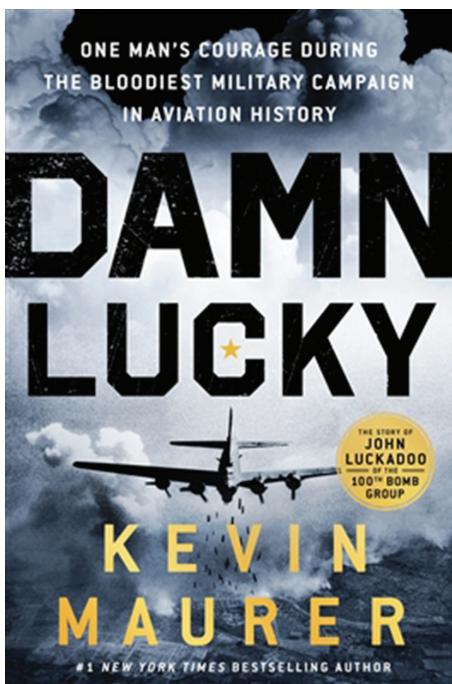
LESSONS IN CHEMISTRY

Chemist Elizabeth Zott is not your average woman. In fact, Elizabeth Zott would be the first to point out that there is no such thing as an average woman. But it's the early 1960s and her all-male team at Hastings Research Institute takes a very unscientific view of equality. Except for one: Calvin Evans; the lonely, brilliant, Nobel-prize nominated grudge-holder who falls in love with—of all things—her mind. True chemistry results.

But like science, life is unpredictable. Which is why a few years later Elizabeth Zott finds herself not only a single mother, but the reluctant star of America's most beloved cooking show *Supper at Six*. Elizabeth's unusual approach to cooking ("combine one tablespoon acetic acid with a pinch of sodium chloride") proves revolutionary. But as her following grows, not everyone is happy. Because as it turns out, Elizabeth Zott isn't just teaching women to cook. She's daring them to change the status quo.

Laugh-out-loud funny, shrewdly observant, and studded with a dazzling cast of supporting characters, *Lessons in Chemistry* is as original and vibrant as its protagonist.

BONNIE GARMUS is a copywriter and creative director who has worked widely in the fields of technology, medicine, and education. She's an open-water swimmer, a rower, and mother to two pretty amazing daughters. Born in California and most recently from Seattle, she currently lives in London with her husband and her dog, 99.



DAMN LUCKY

When Second Lieutenant John "Lucky" Luckadoo—a wide-eyed 21-year-old assigned to the Eighth Air Force's 100th Bomb Group—arrived in England, "Axis Sally," an American broadcaster employed by Nazi Germany to disseminate propaganda during World War II, welcomed his squadron by name.

"This isn't your war," she told them. "You don't have any business being here, but as long as you're here we're going to teach you a lesson." And they did.

Kevin Maurer's *Damn Lucky* tells the true story of "Lucky" Luckadoo who flew the deadliest missions of World War II during the bloodiest military campaign in aviation history. Lucky served with the 100th Bomber Group during the early days of the bombing of France and Germany from England. His story starts with his quest to join the Royal Air Force with his best friend before the war, through 25 missions in combat over Germany to the one mission—a raid over Bremen—where Luckadoo felt like his luck had run out.

The statistical chances for a heavy Bomber crew in Europe to be lost on a mission were 1-in-10. At a 25-mission tour of duty, statisti-

cally, once a flyer made it to 10 missions they were literally on borrowed time. Anyone who served a full tour and survived was remarkably lucky.

Drawn from Lucky's firsthand accounts, acclaimed war correspondent and bestselling author Kevin Maurer delves into this extraordinary tale, uncovering astonishing accounts of bravery during an epic clash in the skies over Nazi Germany.

KEVIN MAURER (he/him) is an award-winning journalist and three-time New York Times bestselling co-author of *No Easy Day*, *No Hero* and *American Radical* among others. For the last eleven years, Maurer has also worked as a freelance writer covering war, politics and general interest stories. His writing has been published in *Men's Journal*, *The Daily Beast*, *The Washington Post*, and numerous other publications.

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