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about the cover



This month's cover photo was taken on location at the newly renovated Southampton Racquet & Swim Club in Gastonia. Pictured is swimmer Phoenix Moser. See related story page 10. Photo by Rick Haithcox, cover graphic design by David James.

On the Web

Be sure to check out business columnist Preston Wilson online this month at www.gastonalive.com

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16 Oak Grove St.
Mt. Holly, NC 28120
www.gastonalive.com
704-827-9101

Advertising Info: 704.650.8330
info@gastonalive.com

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our staff

PUBLISHER

DAVID HAMRICK

CONTRIBUTING PHOTOGRAPHERS

RICK HAITHCOX PHOTOGRAPHY
DAVID HAMRICK

FINANCE

LINDA HAMRICK

DESIGN

DAVID JAMES

PROJECT MANAGER

WENDY BURKETT

CONTRIBUTING WRITERS

BEN DUNGAN
GLENN SAWYER
GLENN STRYKER
NICOLE ROGERS

SALES

DAVID HAMRICK



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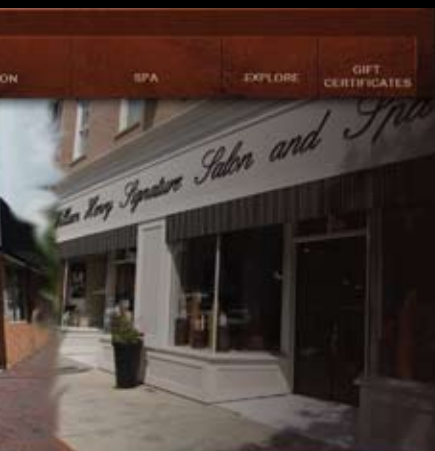
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New Owners, New Look

Southampton Racquet & Swim Club

By David Hamrick



We met recently with Taylor Smith, owner of Southampton Racquet & Swim Club to tour their newly updated facility.

GA!: Taylor, tell us a little about your family, and how you came to Gastonia-welcome by the way!

Taylor: Thank you, it's great to be here! Well, we have my better half Elke, me and our precious little girl Thalia. In a nutshell, we came to Gastonia to take a great club and turn it into something exceptional. We really fell in love with the local community and the people of the area, found some great schools and knew this was the place we had to be.



SOUTHAMPTON
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Club 704-867-8081
www.southamptonclub.com



GA!: The club is looking great! How did you end up at Southampton?

Taylor: We had been looking at several different clubs in different states but had focused on this particular club quite early on in that process. The unique physical layout of the grounds is what attracted us first. Most clubs have tennis courts lined up in a row, and this was the first we saw that staggered them out over a hillside, which makes for a beautiful setup. The pool was the icing on the cake.

GA!: I know you offer swimming and tennis programs-tell us about the swimming program...

Taylor: From Memorial Day to Labor Day the pool is the center of attention for Southampton, and the highlight for the kids is our "Seagulls Swim Team", which consists of private lessons, practices, meets and championships. It's a little bit of chaos, but for the kids it means everything to them and creates lasting memories. The pool really is a club unto itself. The camaraderie, friendships and sense of community the parents and children get really makes this their favorite time of year.

GA!: Do you have summer camps, and is it too late to sign up?

Taylor: We sure do, and it's not too late to sign up. Open to all members and non-members for an increased fee; the camps are a great way to keep your young ones fit and in top shape this summer. Camps are a week long Monday thru Thursday with Friday being rain make up days. The camps run from 9-12 in the morning and consist of 2 hours of quality tennis instruction and 1 hour of swim fitness. We promise they will be worn out by the end of the day! We also offer summer high school camps/clinics and 45 minute intro tennis camps for the tiny tots.



GA!: I know your wife Elke was a ranked tennis player, and the tennis programs are absolutely humming...

Taylor: No doubt about it, Elke is the heart and soul of the tennis side of the club. While her world rankings are impressive it's really her ability to connect with tennis players and pass along the excitement and enthusiasm for the game that is her greatest strength. In less than a year's time she's created a robust juniors program with private lessons, clinics and tournaments and is attracting some of the county's brightest young players. From first timers, to the most advanced players, young to the most experienced, she's got them all improving their game and playing better tennis, more often.



GA!: Memberships are still available, is that right?

Taylor: They sure are. Eventually memberships will be capped, so now is the best time to join. We have three different types of memberships, Full, Tennis Only and Pool Only. I would advise potential members to browse through our website www.southamptonclub.com to see all that we offer here. If it's something they might want to pursue then the next step would be to call the clubhouse and set up a private tour.



GA!: Regarding memberships, are there any specials right now?

Taylor: This spring we've been running a half off initiation special which really makes joining a private club much more accessible. This will be good through the end of spring as we fill out the memberships.

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COOKING



Chicken Filled Crepes

This is one of my favorite recipes that even my kids will eat. My original recipe was obscenely caloric, so I wanted to cut down on the calories but keep the flavor. As it turns out it wasn't that difficult. I will tell you that it is a little labor intensive. So if you want to decrease some of your labor, buy the crepes at the grocery store (Yes, you can find them here in our local stores).

Crepes

2 Eggs 1 Cup Flour
1 Cup Milk 2 Tbs Melted Butter
½ tsp Salt

In a blender beat the eggs, then beat in the milk, salt, flour and butter. Cover and let stand for at least 30 minutes. Heat a 7-inch skillet or crepe pan until moderately hot, then very lightly film the pan with butter (I always wipe the excess with a paper towel). If you want to be a little fancy throw in to the pan some chiffonade of sage (This will add flavor and eye appeal). Using a measuring cup, pour in several tablespoons of batter, and then quickly tilt the pan in a rotation so the batter spreads evenly to make the thinnest possible layer. Cook until the bottom is lightly browned and the edges lift easily from the pan. The crepe will loosely slide around the pan, flip it over and cook the other side until pockets of light brown appear. Stack on a plate and keep warm, for further assembly. This will make about 12 crepes.

Chicken Filling

Here you can use Chicken or Turkey Breast cut into small bite size pieces (about 1 – 1 ½ pounds)

Flour for Dredging	2 Cloves Garlic minced
Salt	1 Cup Dry White Wine (or Chicken Stock)
Pepper	1 Cup Heavy Cream
1 Tbs Fresh Rosemary, Finely Chopped	2 Tbs Chopped Basil
2 Tbs Butter	¼ Parmesan Cheese
2 Tbs Oil	Chopped Tomato (Garnish for top of crepe)
½ pound Mushrooms, sliced	

Dredge chicken in flour, salt, pepper and rosemary. Melt butter and oil together in a fry pan, add chicken and brown, add the mushrooms and brown, then add garlic, wine and heavy cream. Cook until thickened and add basil and cheese.

Place about 3 tablespoons of the filling in a crepe, place seam side down, sprinkle with chopped tomatoes. For this dinner I served with steamed asparagus and carrots.

Bon Appetite! Glenn and Glenn

WITH THE
GLENN'S



*Chicken Filled
Crepes*

FINDING LOCAL CONSIGNMENT TREASURES!

By Nicole Rogers



One thing I learned in college and having little money starting out as a young married couple, is to shop on a budget. Let's face it...women like to dress cute and keep up with fashion, but some of us can't afford or desire to buy from high end boutiques. Consigning and designer consignment boutiques are becoming a prevalent way to shop. Consignment and designer consignment shops



offer unique, one of a kind, and gently used clothing, jewelry, shoes, or furniture. It's like going in your best friend's home or closet and finding pieces she is "over," but could be the greatest "find" to you.

A new women's consignment store, that opened up in Belmont early Fall of last year, contains gently used designer labels, resulting in higher quality pieces that last longer. Some of the labels are Lilly Pulitzer,

MaxMara, BB Dakota, and Citizens of Humanity. Some of the handbags that are carried are The Sak, Nine West, and Vera Bradley. This particular consignment boutique requires the consignor to bring their current, gently used clothing pressed and on a hanger ensuring a quality shopping experience. I love the concept and in this economy, women can still look their best and are able to wear their favorite designer label for less than the suggested retail price. As women we are not only looking for great clothing on a budget for us, but for our children as well. One such consignment boutique in Belmont also carries gently used children's clothing from Strasburg, Janie & Jack, and Kelly's Kids to name a few.

An outfit at Strasburg will retail at \$59, but on consignment it is \$29.

I have been in Belmont around 4 and a half years. I have had the privilege of getting to know the owner of a consignment boutique right down the street from me. The first moment I walked into the store, I was greeted with a big smile by the owner, whom is now a friend. This particular consignment store is



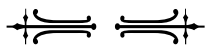
more trendy and most of her clientele are teens and young adult women. Some of the brands this store carries is Arden B, Express, American Eagle, Aeropostale, Vera Bradley, and Liz Clairborne. This consignment boutique also carries prom dress and other formal wear, men's and children's clothing. I can't tell you how many compliments I have received by wearing something I have gotten at this store.

One of the things that I love about Gaston County are all the little towns that make it up. In the lovely town of Cramerton, I have found a Designer Consignment shop that contains clothing, accessories, greeting cards, and stationary. The great thing about consignment shops, is that there is something for everyone, women, teens, and children alike. Whether you are shopping for a prom dress, a piece of furniture, a unique jewelry piece, or a dress for any occasion, most likely, you will find what you are looking for. The added bonus is, you will find it for a great deal.



The owners of the stores want to offer their shoppers a unique shopping experience, excellent finds on a budget, and a way to connect to women and girls in the community.

As I said before, I have been consigning since college, but more and more people are catching on to the idea and it is not as taboo as it may have once been...buying used clothing. It also gives the consignor (person donating their clothing) to make a little money off selling their clothes in a consignment shop. It's a win-win for everyone!



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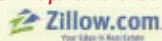
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In The GARDEN *With Cindy*

Thrillers, Spillers, and Fillers

Just when I think I can contain myself to just a few pots of plants on the deck, I fall in love again with spring, especially May. Currently I'm in a severe state of plant fever. As with gardeners, I've had to scale back my grandiose ideas as the years have gone by, but I view the changes I've had to make has made me a more deliberate and adaptive gardener.

One of the lessons I've learned is the value of container gardening. I grew up on a farm and I'll have to tell you that I really hated to hoe those long lines of vegetables. In a container garden you can control the soil and pH balance needed to help these plants make a successful display, another advantage is that you can move the containers to better sunlight or shade. Weeds are not so much of a problem since the plant grouping is tight within a few weeks of growing.

To plant a container garden that performs well throughout spring, summer and into fall you need to follow some key points. First, choose foliage that brings color throughout the season. I love sun coleus for that reason. It's impossible to describe the brilliant shade of reds, oranges, yellows, and shocking colors of greens available. I also like sweet potato vines in dark purple and neon green.



Another key element to a successful display is to follow the standard formula that all Master Gardeners know: you need thrillers, spillers, and fillers. Thrillers are the focus of the container design, they are tall, colorful, and can take the summers well. At my house, sun coleus are likely to make their dramatic appearance. Other thrillers could be an unusual color of evergreen, or the spikes with no foliage. This year I found a dusty burgundy spike for two of the pots at the Kings Mountain Art Center. Spillers are the plants that can cascade

over the edge of the pot, I had large red/burgundy pots and so wanted to play on the complimentary colors. I chose a bright green foliage plant with yellow-green edges. I could not find my usual choice, the bright green sweet potato vine. The fillers are not just something to stick in to fill the pot. Fillers are the bridge between the thrillers and spillers. I prefer flowers that, with good care, will bloom over the whole season. This year I'm trying to use wave petunias that will act both fillers and spillers; I also like the burgundy begonias and the blue hues of lobelias as fillers. I also have containers for herbs and vegetables—time and space keeps me relating my selections for these containers.

No matter your age or physical handicaps, with a little help from some friends, you can have container gardens in your life. These gardens do not only renew your senses but fill the soul.



BY CINDY HOVIS

If you have any gardening questions,
call the North Carolina Cooperative Extension Services
at 704.922.0301 to speak with a Master Gardener

Cindy Hovis
cindy@gastonalive.com

MUSIC

Tosco Music Parties, Inc.

A TRIBUTE TO THE THE BEATLES



In all of my years, I have never met anyone who has ever disliked the music of the Beatles. Now that doesn't mean that everyone loves The Beatles. But I'd like to think the Beatles' songbook is a lot like Santa's bag - there's a gift (or song) for everyone.



The Beatles churned out a lot of music in their short time together. They dabbled in all phases of rock n' roll from their early bubble-gum pop days to their latter-day experimental drug-induced creations.

That's the beauty of The Fab Four. In a short period of time, they churned out timeless music that still resonates with all generations today. And if you don't believe me, then I'll point you to John Tosco.



by Ben Dungan
bdungan@charter.net



Photo courtesy Monty Chandler.

John Tosco is the owner of the Tosco Music Studio and the president and founding member of Tosco Music Parties, Inc., a nonprofit corporation that produces quarterly music showcases, comprising both professional and amateur musicians.

These musical 'parties' initially started out in his living room, and as a result of their broad appeal, have grown to larger venues in the Charlotte area.

The music parties have been a staple for John Tosco, but the idea of throwing a music party set to the backdrop of all Beatles tunes became a reality in 2004. And now, seven years later, the Beatles Tribute Night is still rockin' on.

The venue may change from year to year, but the quality of the music stays the same. The event continues to grow in size and in scope. In the last seven years, the location has grown from the small-yet-intimate venue that is The Evening Muse, to the nearly 1200-seat Knight Theater, located in the N.C Blumenthal Performing Arts Center in Uptown Charlotte.



Photo courtesy Monty Chandler.

John Tosco loves the Beatles. They are his favorite band. But that's not the only reason he chooses to organize a night dedicated to John, Paul, George and Ringo. The Beatles were and still are one of the few musical acts that have the power to crossover many generations. People of all ages can find at least one song from their enormous catalog of music that they can agree on.

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I know John Lennon sang, "All You Need Is Love". And that may be true. But sometimes we need a little music too. You'll get just that, and more on June 18.

More information on the upcoming Beatles Tribute Night on Saturday, June 18 in Charlotte is available online at www.toscomusicparty.com.



Photo courtesy Monty Chandler.

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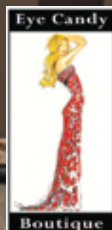
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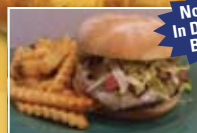
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