

GASTON ALIVE

A man wearing a bright yellow suit and a matching fedora-style hat is smiling and holding a white baseball with red stitching. He is standing on a baseball field, with the green grass and brown dirt base paths visible in the background. The sky is blue with scattered white clouds. The magazine title 'GASTON ALIVE' is printed in large red letters at the top, with 'MAGAZINE' in smaller white letters to the right.

MAGAZINE

HOME | GARDEN | STYLE | FUN | FOOD | HAPPENINGS


The Master Showman

Jesse Cole p12

Summer Fun At The Pool!

Southampton Swim & Racquet Club p8

Exotic African Art At Daniel Stowe p6

A cartoon mascot of a brown bear wearing a yellow baseball cap and sunglasses, smiling and pointing towards the website address.
gastonalive.com



Jennifer Conrad

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FROM THE PUBLISHER

Recently I heard a speaker say "Coming back to where you started is not the same as never having left". A journey to a new place, either in your travels, vocationally, spiritually, or artistically, is enriching and often changes one's perspective as to what "home" looks like. Sometimes home seems smaller, or more provincial, but other times you come home with a new appreciation of the comforts and opportunities that home offers. So it is with my return to Gaston Alive.

Thanks to all of you who have been so supportive with emails, calls, and encouragement as we get this new version of GA off the ground- you are all sincerely appreciated. It is a joy to work on a project that is so much fun creatively, and GA seems to have found a place in the hearts and minds of Gaston County.

So welcome back to Gaston Alive-we hope you like the new look and size, with more new features, photos, and fun in store! Contact us if you have ideas, thoughts or questions-we love hearing from you!

All the best,
David
dhamrick@gastonalive.com

featured this month

06

EXOTIC SCULPTURE
AT DSBG

08

SUMMERTIME IS SWIM TIME!

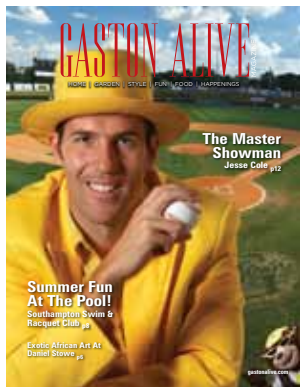
12

MEET JESSE COLE,
SHOWMAN



HOME | GARDEN | STYLE | FUN | FOOD | HAPPENINGS

on the cover



This month's cover was shot in studio and from the roof of Sims Legion Park by Rick Haithcox. Pictured is Jesse Cole, owner of the Gastonia Grizzlies. See related story page 10. Production assistance by Ben Dungan.

our staff

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We are very pleased to announce that Ben Dungan has joined our staff as an Account Executive. Many of you know Ben through his long association with WSGE radio, and also his community involvement through the NC Cooperative Extension office. Will Rogers famously said "I never met a man I didn't like", and we doubt anyone has ever met Ben Dungan and didn't immediately know that they had made a new friend. Welcome Ben-we are excited to have you as part of the GA team!

Questions about marketing your business or nonprofit?
Contact Ben at Ben@gastonalive.com or 704-287-1975



GA|06|15

To be part of our team, or to submit art, photo or story ideas, please email us at: info@gastonalive.com

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JUST A STONE'S THROW

Daniel Stowe Delivers a Bit of Zimbabwe to Gaston County with ZimSculpt



Undulating by Stuart Chapenga

Z*imSculpt*, the international exhibition of Shona sculpture that opened at Daniel Stowe Botanical Garden in April has enjoyed overwhelming success in its first month and is being held over until July 19. More than 100 sculptures are on exhibit, set against the backdrop of a spectacular tropical display. Not only do visitors to the exhibition have an opportunity to view the work, known as Shona sculpture, they can also purchase a piece for their own garden.

In addition, guests can visit a marketplace that will also include other African art and jewelry, and will feature two Zimbabwean artists-in-residence. Passmore Mupindiko, whose work mesmerized audiences last year is with the exhibition again this year. He is joined by Aron Kapembeza, who has become one of Zimbabwe's leading springstone sculptors. Curator Joseph Croisette and his wife Vivienne, who founded ZimSculpt more than a decade ago, will also be on hand, giving guided tours and helping guests understand the art movement that has become an international sensation. The couple represents 200 artisans in Zimbabwe and travels the country to select pieces for exhibition and sale worldwide. They have exhibited at the Chelsea Flower Show in the United Kingdom, Royal Botanical Gardens in Ontario and at Naples Botanical Garden in Florida. Bissell Corporation, the Charlotte real

estate developer behind the Ballantyne Corporate Park development and many other prominent projects, is the presenting sponsor for the 2015 exhibition. Pride Magazine is the media sponsor.

What is Shona Sculpture?

Translated from the Karanga dialect of the Shona language, Zimbabwe means "great house of stone." Though archeological evidence of stone work exists in southern Africa from the 13th century, its tradition would not be embraced until the early 1900s when it began to gain prominence in Europe. It would be 50 more years before Zimbabwe, then known as Southern Rhodesia, would establish a National Gallery under the Direction of the UK's Frank McEwen, whose inspiration and encouragement along with a wealth of natural materials helped the art flourish through the 1960s.

Today, sculpture created by both the Shona and Ndebele tribes, is an embraced tradition passed down from generation to generation. Its inspirations are embedded in nature, Zimbabwe's culture and its people. In the early sculpture movement in Zimbabwe many artists found their subjects from their totems or from the supernatural. Younger artists tend now to work in more abstract form. Many sculptors, however, are inspired by everyday life--depicting women caring for

children, bathing and collecting water. Other artists take inspiration from nature – organic forms, flowers and leaves and, of course, the animals that play an important part in everyday rural life.

Though there are different styles of stonework produced in Zimbabwe, the work of ZimSculpt artists is largely contemporary, produced from the geologic family of stone known as serpentine, crafted by hand, hammer, chisel and rasp and rarely from sketches. The hard stone is colorful and dense with fine grain.

Want to go?

The exhibition is free with garden admission. Members admitted free, \$12.95 adults, \$11.95 seniors 60+, and \$6.95 children 4-12. The Garden is open 9 a.m.-5 p.m., seven days a week. In addition it will be open Thursday **For more information call (704)825-4490 or visit www.DSBG.org.** ■



Detail of *Acrobats* by Dominic Benhura



ZimSculpt

ZimSculpt, the sensational international sculpture exhibit, is coming back to Daniel Stowe Botanical Garden by popular demand. ZimSculpt features the work of some of the world's best artists practicing the art of Shona sculpture. It features more than 100 sculptures on display, plus two of Zimbabwe's artists will make the Garden their home for this very special exhibition.



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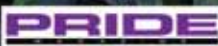
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GA: For those that haven't heard about the Southampton Club, let us know what you are all about:

Taylor: Southampton is a private Tennis and Swim Club in the heart of Southeast Gastonia that caters to active families looking for a safe and fun environment both for kids and parents alike. We have a robust tennis program (strongest by far in Gaston County) for both adult tennis and junior programs and our favorite time of year is always mid May through mid September when our Jr Olympic Pool opens for the summer. Our "Stingrays" Swim program is an awesome way for children to become strong swimmers and gain confidence in the water, a highlight every year that runs from now until mid July.

GA: If someone is interested in joining or has questions about membership what should they do.

Taylor: If anyone has interest in the Club or questions about membership the first step would be to call the clubhouse at 704-867-8081 and schedule a private tour. Tours are by appointment only, as I'm not always on site, but can make myself available most anytime.



GA: Whats this about \$0 initiation?

Taylor: Thats right!, we have about 30 remaining open membership spots as of print, and for those remaining spots we will be waiving the Club Initiation Fee, (normally \$600-\$1000) so this is the best time to take advantage of that. Once we fill those remaining spots we will be full and a waitlist will be created for interested families.

GA: How much does a membership cost?

Taylor: We are extremely affordable when compared to similar Country Club type set ups. A Full Membership is \$1375 annually or \$125 a month and a Swim Membership is only \$780 which gets access to the pool during the summer and gym year round. These are family rates, but we also offer individual and couple reduced rates as well.



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–The Van Meter Family

“Southampton ROCKS!!!!

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–The Chitu Family



“Over the years I have been able to establish many great friendships among our members while relaxing in a stress free environment, I love Southampton!”

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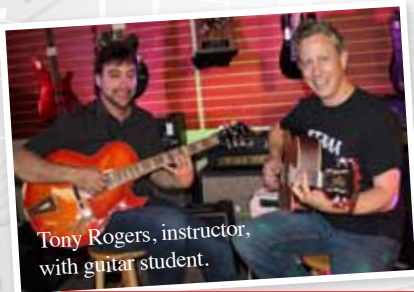
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What Does Retirement Mean?

By Todd Van Der Meid, MBA, CFP®

Over the years, retirement and how we define it has changed. Retirement as we think of it today is a fairly recent phenomenon. Until the mid-1800s, only the very rich voluntarily left the workforce. At that time, retirement meant not being physically able to continue working and relying on family for support. For most, this phase of life began when a person reached their early to mid 60s. Prior to 1940, half of Americans didn't reach age 65. Retirement was short and generally meant the final years of life.



Today, retirement is a process that develops in phases. For some, retirement can last for thirty or more years so living intentionally is important. Retirement should be thought of as a series of transitions more than an event. The first phase is pre-retirement and comes when a person approaches the retirement age that they have predetermined for themselves. This is usually when people enter their late 50s to mid-60s and is marked by envisioning what retirement might look like. When one of my clients comes to me with a retirement date, I often ask them this question, "Imagine it's the Tuesday after you retire. It's 11:30 in the morning. What are you doing?" People have the greatest success transitioning from their work life to retirement if they have a plan and an answer to this question.

Do you have the answer?

Continue reading this article on my blog at

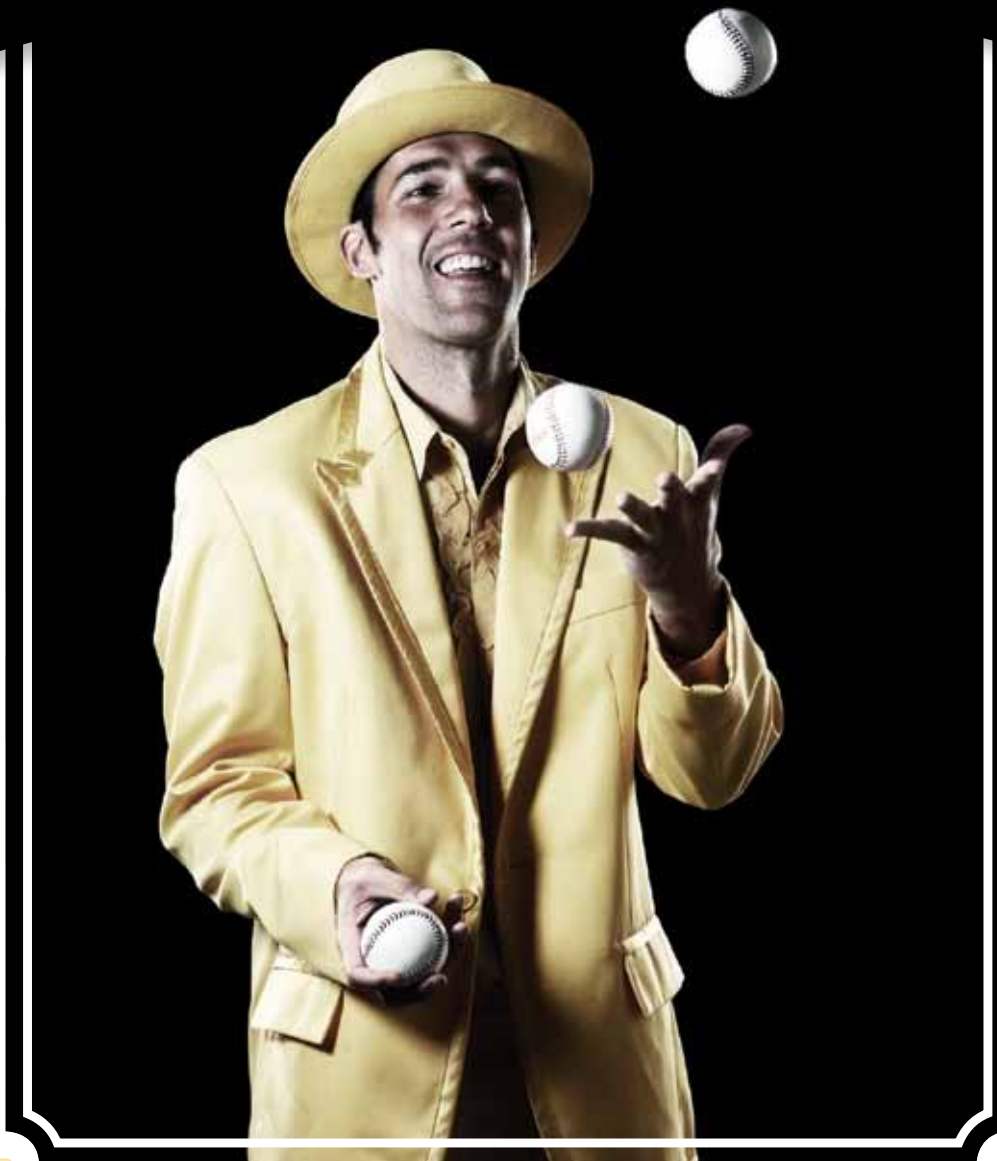
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For Jesse Cole It's Fans First, Entertain Always!



GA: We did a really cool feature on you in our June 2008 issue- a lot has happened since then!

Jesse: 2008 was my first season in Gastonia and running a baseball team was a completely new experience for me! I tried a lot of new things and learned a lot that first season. The amount of hours I spent at the ballpark that year was unbelievable but I just never wanted to leave. It showed me how much I love this industry and love the Gaston County community.

GA: Your dad has been a big part of your baseball journey...

Jesse: To say my Dad is my mentor and hero would be an understatement. My parents got divorced when I was 8 years old and my Dad took me full time and raised me. I remember the amount of hours he would put in at work, then he would rush home and take me to the baseball field to practice and then help me with my homework. He also bought the South Shore Baseball Club when I was 11 years old and coached all of my baseball teams. A couple of years ago he was diagnosed with two forms of Cancer and battled through extensive chemo treatments. He stayed positive every day and with the great support from my Step-Mother Diane and amazing Doctors, he is now cancer free and the happiest he's ever been.

GA: Not everyone gets engaged on a baseball diamond in front of thousands of adoring fans..

Jesse: After working together for three years at the ballpark, I had planned a special proposal at the last game of the 2014 season. With more than 4,000 fans at the game, at end of the 6th Inning I took the entire staff on the field to thank them for all their work during the season. I finished with my soon-to-be-fiancé and said "Last but not least our Director of Fun, Emily McDonald. Not many people know this but we met for the



first time right on this field. I've had the most amazing time of my life with you, so I have just one question?" I went to a knee and pulled out a baseball that I had cut open and had the ring inside. I then asked her to marry me. As she ran over to me to say Yes, I had a surprise Fireworks show go off at the ballpark! Neither of us will ever forget that night!

GA: You put your motto for the Grizzlies, "Fans first, entertain always", into practice.

Jesse: We believe in keeping it simple and for us there is nothing that is more important than "Fans First. Entertain Always." It's our mission statement and everyone that is a part of the Grizzlies, from interns to game day staff, knows it and lives by it. We will always do whatever we can to take care of our fans. We're constantly trying to make them feel special and keep them entertained - no matter what's happening!

GA: We hear whispers about a downtown Gastonia ballpark..

Jesse: We have been working hard with the City of Gastonia and local business leaders on the vision of the new ballpark. We meet monthly, have renderings and cost estimates of the Stadium. Now, we are working on the details and plans for fundraising. My belief is that it's not If, it's When!

GA: What has surprised you the most about the Grizzlies and Gaston County since coming here?

Jesse: I have been blown away by the support and this community embracing me and the Grizzlies. As a northerner who grew up in Massachusetts, I never knew how people would take to my crazy personality and style of management. I also never knew we would grow as fast as we have with not only attendance, but as an organization employing people in our community. In terms of Gaston County, it comes back to the people. I think the greatest asset of Gaston County, by far, are the people who live here. We have amazing people, who care so much about this community and who will lead us into the future. If Gaston County was a stock on the stock market right now, I would go all in on this community and that is because of the amazing people and great leadership! ■



Read the rest of our interview at gastonalive.com
For more info on the Gastonia Grizzlies visit
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