

# LAKE SIDE

Spring-Summer 2024

## *Natural Wildlife*

How to turn  
your yard into a  
habitat for birds  
and butterflies

Also inside:  
Upcoming events,  
a scavenger hunt,  
and how to draw  
the Lake Murray  
Towers

## Weddings in 2024

The brides. The  
venues. And  
tips for getting  
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THE GOOD LIFE IN LEXINGTON, NEWBERRY AND SALUDA



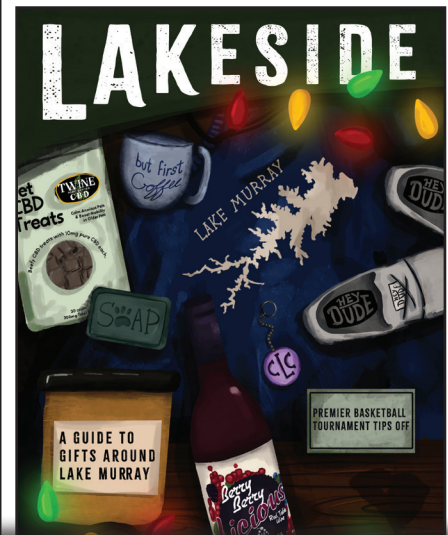
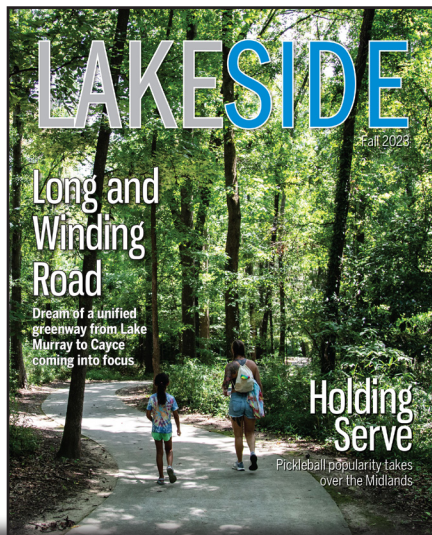
# about lakeside

Lakeside is a quarterly magazine distributed throughout Lexington County and around Lake Murray, including to all Lexington County Chronicle subscribers. To have your business included in the next edition of Lakeside, contact [advertising@lexingtonchronicle.com](mailto:advertising@lexingtonchronicle.com).

We hope this magazine helps you in celebrating and enjoying the Lake Murray area this spring.

# Thank you!

for engaging in our community.



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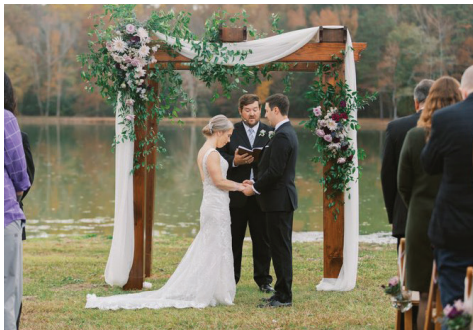
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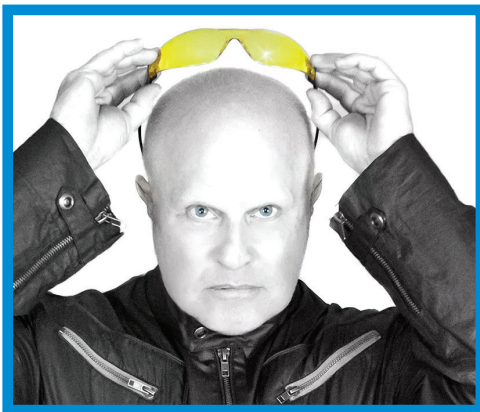
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# Stay here, play here

Lexington County events for May - July

May



## A FLOCK OF SEAGULLS (CONCERT)

May 3. Discover A Flock of Seagulls, the iconic new wave sensation known for their eccentric haircuts and timeless hit "I Ran (So Far Away)." Emerging from the synth-heavy new romantic movement, the band's sleek dance-pop garnered widespread acclaim. Harbison Theatre at Midlands Technical College, 7300 College St., Irmo. [harbisontheatre.org](http://harbisontheatre.org).

## PAUL THORN (CONCERT)

May 3. Paul Thorn has created an innovative and impressive career, pleasing crowds with his muscular brand of roots music – bluesy, rocking and thoroughly Southern American, yet also speaking universal truths. Now touring behind his new album, "Never Too Late To Call," this show promises to make a raucous, joyful noise. Newberry Opera House, 1201 McKibben St., Newberry. [newberryoperahouse.com](http://newberryoperahouse.com).

## CRAWL 5K

May 4. Join the SC Philharmonic Orchestra at 4:00 p.m. for their first ever SK run/walk. This event is perfect for the avid runner or the family looking for an afternoon stroll. After your run/walk, relax with food, beverages and live music. The evening will conclude with a Chamber Crawl concert by SC Phil musicians. Saluda Shoals Park, 5605 Bush River Rd., Columbia. [strictlyrunning.com](http://strictlyrunning.com).

## THE CLASSIC SOUL SONGBOOK (CONCERT)

May 4. Popular local jazz/R&B vocalist Beth Inabinett presents an evening of soulful classics delivered as only she can. Expect to hear hits and classics by The Spinners, Sade, Rufus, Brothers Johnson, Heatwave, Kin Floyd, Aretha Franklin, Freda Payne, Teena Marie, Parliament-Funkadelic, Midnight Star, Roberta Flack, and more as Inabinett and her band For The Funk of It Band take you down a funky memory lane. Dressy attire is required. Chayz Lounge, 607 Meeting St., West Columbia. [chayzlounge.com](http://chayzlounge.com).



## 2024 BASSMASTER ELITE SERIES

May 9. A group of elite anglers travel to South Carolina for a return visit to Lake Murray, a fishery that provided one of the more entertaining events on the 2023 schedule, with Florida pro Drew Benton catching 87 pounds for the victory. Dreher Island State Park, 3677 State Park Rd., Prosperity. [bassmaster.com](http://bassmaster.com).

## THE HITMEN (CONCERT)

May 9. Get ready to embark on a musical journey with The Hitmen Party Band. Their passion for music and the emotions it creates drives the variety band to pick the best possible set of classic hits from yesterday and popular hits of today. There will be food vendors, beer, soft drinks and water available for purchase. Icehouse Amphitheater, 107 W. Main St., Lexington. [icehouseamphitheater.com](http://icehouseamphitheater.com).

## RHYTHM ON THE RIVER (CONCERT)

May 11. Enjoy another edition of this popular summer concert series, set in the perfect outdoor locations. Performers TBA. West Columbia

Riverwalk Park & Amphitheater, 109 Alexander Rd., West Columbia. [westcolumbiasc.gov](http://westcolumbiasc.gov).



## STRAWBERRY PICK & PLAY

May 11. Bring the kids to this family friendly strawberry season event. Your \$15 ticket includes a wagon ride to the strawberry patch, plenty of time to pick your own berries, a visit with the farm animals, playgrounds, an obstacle course, Bubblemania, a jellybean maze and more. Clinton Sease Farm, 382 Olde Farm Rd., Lexington. [clintonseasefarm.com](http://clintonseasefarm.com).

## PEDAL STEEL GUITAR CONVENTION

May 19. Are you a pedal steel player or simply a fan of the instrument? This convention is the place for you. Meet the best players, builders and fans of the instrument around, all in one place. And get ready for some pedal steel jamming as well. Bill's Music Shop & Pickin' Parlor, 710 Meeting St., West Columbia. [billsmusicshop.com](http://billsmusicshop.com).

## MEMBERS NIGHT OUT

May 31. The first of three member appreciation evenings for Riverbanks members only. Stroll through the Zoo and spot some of your favorite animals before the sun goes down. Enjoy special members-only deals and activities for the whole family. Riverbanks Zoo & Garden, 500 Wildlife Pkwy., Columbia. [riverbanks.org](http://riverbanks.org).



# June



## DRIFT JAM (CONCERT)

June 1. The world's largest floating music festival takes place just off of Spence Island on Lake Murray. Thousands of boats and tens of thousands of guests attend annually. Music and further festival details TBA. Lake Murray, Lexington. [facebook.com/driftjamfestival](https://facebook.com/driftjamfestival).

## CHAMBER CRAWL

June 2. The SC Philharmonic's "Chamber Crawl" event makes a stop in Cayce for an afternoon of beautiful music, delicious homemade brews and food specials. Steel Hands Brewing, 2350 Foreman St., Cayce. [scphilharmonic.com](http://scphilharmonic.com).

## CONCERTOS & CUPCAKES (CONCERT)

June 9. The Lake Murray Symphony Orchestra is an all-volunteer community orchestra located in the Irmo/Lexington suburbs of Columbia, South Carolina. Dedicated to performing a varied repertoire of classical, light classical, and pops music, the LMSO provides quality live symphonic music to listeners of all ages and musical tastes. Their "Concertos and Cupcakes" program kicks off at 3:30 p.m. but be sure to stay for the cupcake reception after the concert. Harbison Theatre at Midlands Technical College, 7300 College St., Irmo. [harbisontheatre.org](http://harbisontheatre.org)



## INTERSTELLAR ECHOES (CONCERT)

June 14. Join one of the country's best and most popular Pink Floyd tribute acts, Interstellar Echoes, for an adventurous night of Floyd deep cuts and

fan favorites. Interstellar Echoes plays songs from the band's entire catalog, from "The Piper At The Gates Of Dawn" to "The Division Bell." Icehouse Amphitheater, 107 W. Main St., Lexington. [icehouseamphitheater.com](http://icehouseamphitheater.com).

## 615 AT THE FARM 1780: A NASHVILLE SONGWRITER'S NIGHT

June 15. Enjoy an unforgettable experience with Nashville singer/songwriters. Learn about the process of writing songwriting, hear never before shared stories of touring with other artists, and enjoy a wonderful evening of storytelling & music. All tickets include farm to table pig pickin and show. VIP experience includes access 1-hour early along with songwriter meet & greet, cocktail hour, dinner & show. VIPs will have an open bar (beer & wine) during the entire event along with premier seating and parking. Performing artists TBA. THE FARM 1780, 1127 Corley Mill Rd., Lexington. [thefarm1780.com](http://thefarm1780.com).



## RENT (PLAY)

June 27. The Newberry Community Players bring the hit musical, "Rent" to the stage. In the late 1980s and early 1990s, friends in Manhattan's East Village struggle to build the lives of their dreams. Pennilessness, drug abuse, HIV/AIDS, social tension, and political unrest, among other hardships, challenge the group physically and emotionally. Facing the problems head on, they make personal self-discoveries and find what really matters most in life. The Historic Ritz Theater, 1511 Main St., Newberry. [newberry-community-players.square.site](http://newberry-community-players.square.site).

## 4th OF JULY CELEBRATION

June 29. Celebrate the birth of our country a few days early with a weekend 4th of July celebration. Fireworks will launch at dark (roughly 9:30 p.m.) from two lake locations: Spence Island & Dreher Island, and the best viewing location is from a boat. Lake Murray, Lexington. [lakemurraycountry.com](http://lakemurraycountry.com).

# July

## ROCKIN' RED, WHITE & BLUE CELEBRATION

July 3. The Town of Blythewood's Annual Rockin' Red White & Blue celebration is back. Enjoy fireworks, live music, vendors, and more. Lineup and further celebration details TBA. Doko Meadows Park, 171 Langford Rd., Blythewood. [townofblythewoodsc.gov](http://townofblythewoodsc.gov).



## PEACH FESTIVAL

July 4. The famous Lexington County Peach Festival is back. This one-day family-friendly festival is like no other July 4th event. Enjoy live entertainment, fresh peach treats, arts and crafts, the peach parade, fireworks, beauty pageants, a classic car show and much more. Gilbert Community Park, 115 Rikard Cir., Gilbert. [lexingtoncountypeachfestival.com](http://lexingtoncountypeachfestival.com).



## ZOSO: THE ULTIMATE LED ZEPPELIN (CONCERT)

July 11. If you're a fan of those classic British hard rockers of the 1970's, Led Zeppelin, you'll enjoy this tribute show. ZOSO has been one of the most successful tribute bands around for years, and you'll see why when they pound out note-perfect versions of favorites like "Whole Lotta Love," "No Quarter," and many more. Icehouse Amphitheater, 107 W. Main St., Lexington. [icehouseamphitheater.com](http://icehouseamphitheater.com).





Local naturalist gives tips on creating a healthy habitat in your yard

# Natural Wildlife

Words and Illustrations by Kailee Kokes





# *“I love just going out to my pollinator gardens and seeing all the bumble bees and different pollinators flying around the flowers and feeding.”*

Naturalist Zach Steinhauser, who works at Wingard's Market located at 1403 North Lake Dr., spoke with enthusiasm to the Chronicle about what it takes to attract natural wildlife to your yard, the benefits of using native plants, what animals utilize native plants and more.

Steinhauser shared that when people hear the term “native plants,” they often think that means letting your yard become a jungle and letting everything native run wild. He emphasized that's not the case, mentioning that you can plant and grow native plants while still having a well manicured yard.

The naturalist claims that many people already have native plants in their yard, especially with larger trees including oaks and maples, tulip poplars and magnolias. He said that these native trees end up being a major benefit to local insects, specifically moths and butterflies.

Native moths like the Luna Moth and butterflies like the Admiral, Painted Lady, Red-spotted Purples and Tiger Swallowtail use these trees as host plants, which means they lay their eggs there, and when the eggs turn into caterpillars, they eat the leaves.

The life-cycle continues with the Carolina Chickadee, a native bird, who needs an average of 9,000 caterpillars to successfully raise a nest of chicks. Steinhauser shared that each nest can contain four to five baby birds who need the nutrients provided by the caterpillars in order to take off and leave the nest.

Birds and insects aren't the only animals that use these trees to survive. Squirrels, tree frogs, flying squirrels, and other animals make their home within these trees, whether it's just among the leaves or within the tree's cavities.

Outside of the benefit for local wildlife, there is also benefit to people living near native plants and trees.

“These are plants that are more adapted to our climate, so these plants have evolved in South Carolina long before people ever got here,” Steinhauser said, speaking to the better oxygen-producing capabilities of native plants. “They've been trained and adapted to withstand our conditions, so they're much easier to take care of.”

“They're used to and adapted to insect pests that we might run into that some of the non-native horticultural stuff that we use aren't adapted for,” he added, pointing to the non-native plants the market sells.

When it comes to plants that people may want for their yards, Steinhauser mentioned American Beautyberry, which has large purple clusters of berries; Fothergilla, which is one of the first flowering plants in the spring; varieties of Holly bushes; blueberries, which are a native fruit plant to the Carolinas; elderberry, which has multiple health benefits; the Carolina sweet shrub; and more.

Steinhauser said it's not hard to get started on attracting wildlife and having a yard of native plants, though he encourages people to start small.

He said that having a garden bed or a few native plants that attract pollinators is a good way to start, especially since you will be able to see the results by seeing bees and other pollinators using your plants.

“You're eventually just gonna get hooked to where you want to see more and more of that. You'll start seeing all the bees and the butterflies start coming around and then a hummingbird will be close by sipping on a flower that you planted,” Steinhauser said. “And then eventually you're just going to want to continue to grow that.”

For those who wish to dive deep into conserving native plants and

wildlife, they can get their yard labeled as a wildlife habitat. Steinhauser shared that the state Wildlife Federation and Audubon South Carolina run habitat programs where residents can apply to be a certified wildlife habitat where you'll receive a plaque and sign.

To become a wildlife habitat, there are some requirements your yard needs, including providing proper food sources, water sources, shelter and a place to raise young.

Steinhauser elaborated on these requirements, sharing that food and water sources can include plants, bird feeders, bird baths or a small pond. Multiple things can qualify as shelter and cover for wildlife, including shrubbery, trees, flowerbeds and more. To meet the requirements of places to raise young, birdhouses, trees and even log piles often qualify.

“To me, it's a dopamine kick where I just get a nice feeling just knowing that I'm supporting wildlife in some way, shape or form just in my little corner of the woods,” Steinhauser said. “Knowing that my yard is full of natives and that wildlife are somehow benefiting off of it, even if I can't see it.”

Even if you are not looking at becoming a wildlife habitat, you can still play a role in conservation. The naturalist shared that just planting native plants alone is an act of conservation.

Steinhauser told the Chronicle that the state has changed growing regions twice in the past 20 years, stating that changes in climate and the impact of altering different landscapes has caused South Carolina to become increasingly warmer.

He added that planting these native plants can help slow the process and rebuild what the state has lost in terms of growing regions and wildlife.

Lexington County has a very diverse set of plantlife, Steinhauser shared, stating that the county sits in two different regions, the Piedmont and Sandhill.

When it comes to the Piedmont region, the naturalist said that that is where all the red clay is and where residents will find more hardwood forests, like oak and cedar trees, along with the Carolina sweet shrubs and Fothergilla. The Sandhill region features more long-leaf pines, American Persimmons and firs, with the ground being more sandy with more acidic soil. Steinhauser added that this region benefits from controlled wildfires.

While these are the two main regions, Steinhauser said the types of soil and plants will also differ around the rivers and creeks.



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# LAKE SIDE

Lakeside is an award-winning lifestyle magazine that features people, events and trends that are near or appeal to those who live at or around the lakes of the Midlands.



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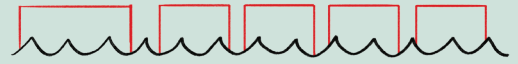
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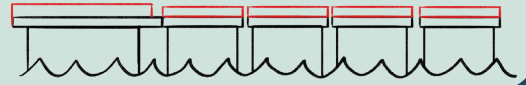
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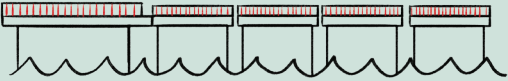
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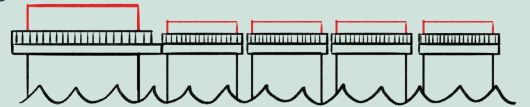
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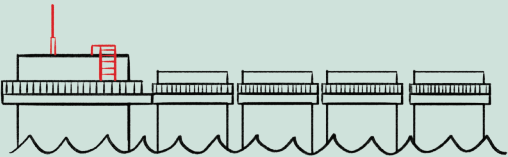
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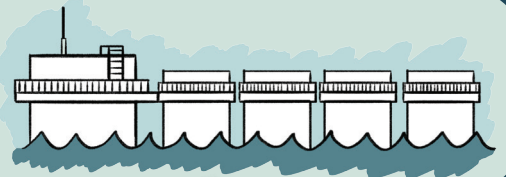
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# *A closer look into your wedding venue options*

Words by Kailee Kokes





Since COVID-19 the wedding venue market has exploded with new venues. The Chronicle reached out to some of the venues located in Lexington, Saluda and Newberry Counties to talk about their experiences, what they offer and the tips they offer couples.

One common theme between all venues was their busy months, with spring and early summer being the busiest and fall coming in at a close second.

## *Davis Pond Wedding Venue*

852 Willis St., Batesburg-Leesville, Lexington County

Owner Jeff Davis comes from generations of farmers still operating within the town of Batesburg-Leesville, though he has added a different approach to furthering business, a wedding venue.

According to Davis, the venue broke ground in January of 2019 and held a soft launch in November of 2022.

The venue sits between the Davis Pond and a vineyard. Upon walking in guests are greeted with a large, rectangular space with a balcony in the back that leads up to the bridal suits. As guests work their way to the back, there is a kitchen, bathrooms and a room designated for the grooms to tidy up and get ready in.

If you go up the stairs of the balcony, there is a small sitting area. Davis said that this is a space to hang out and get ready and provides a place where the bride and groom can get some alone time and watch the festivities from above.

"It's a moment where you just did the biggest thing in your lives and you're together solo for a little bit and then you get to look and kind of like see everybody talking like all your favorite people in one spot... you can kinda scope it out," Davis said. "Because once you get down there, it's a circus and you're the main attraction."

The sitting area sits right outside the two rooms that are designed as bridal suits. Each is adorned with closets, mirrors, and plenty of natural light to help the bride and bridesmaids get ready.

When describing the aesthetics of the venue, Davis said that it's got natural beauty due to its location, some industrial and rustic features with stained wood, metal beams and concrete floors.

The venue is a work in progress, according to Davis. He shared that this spring they will be focusing on landscaping the outside, adding stairs so that

the outside is easier for people to navigate, and just general improvements.

When it comes to the general upkeep of the venue and its grounds, Davis said it's a lot of work especially since it isn't his primary job. He said some of the general upkeep includes weeding the ground outside, landscaping and keeping the outside and inside amenities clean.

"You're in the business of appearances," he said, adding that people are investing in you and your place.

With only being truly open for about two years, Davis said that they have been steadily getting more business and more inquiries. Despite this, he said that it has also become more competitive since more and more venues are popping up.

"I think that it's healthy," Davis said. "I think it makes you a better business person, it makes you try harder, at least I think it does."

One of the main things that Davis wants incoming and touring couples to know is their general guest counts to help decide if his venue is the best fit. One thing that he requires is a "day of coordinator," which is someone who can be a communicator and help ensure everything is correct.

The coordinator can't be part of the bridal party or the guest list, ensuring that the bride, mother of the bride and everyone can enjoy all their hard work and not have to worry about delegating tasks.

Meanwhile, while guests are busy enjoying the day, Davis is at the venue tending to trash, keeping bathrooms refreshed, checking that the caterers are set and ensuring that everything is running smoothly.

"It's like a glimpse into somebody's personal life, like you can see the love that people have for each other," Davis said. "I'm talking from like the bride and groom and to their other family members...It's a lot of fun to say that because you get to witness it through all parts of the day."

## *West Creek Venue*

60 Plantation Ln., Batesburg-Leesville, Saluda County

A retired law enforcement officer, Jerry Smith was looking for something to keep himself busy. He had a piece of land in Saluda County that sat on about nine acres with a hill and a creek. So, he decided to create a wedding venue.

The venue itself opened in October 2022 and features a bridal suite, reception hall, covered outdoor space, and other outdoor spaces that work for picture opportunities.





According to Smith, the biggest challenge that he has with his venue is Mother Nature. As a venue owner, he wants everything to be perfect for his guests. He recalled a wedding where a thunderstorm hit about an hour and a half before the ceremony, leaving them scrambling with a leaf blower to get everything uncovered.

Outside of nature, getting his name out there is another challenge.

According to Smith, having a wedding coordinator is what sets the scene for a smooth wedding, sharing that having a coordinator helps ensure that timelines are followed and the day goes as it should.

Like Davis, Smith is hands-on and present during the wedding day. He ensures that everything is set up, opens all the doors, helps guests park, takes out the trash and stays close by in case he is needed.

Another sentiment that was shared from Davis was couples having an understanding of how many people will be attending their wedding. Smith also said that knowing the style of what you want is another thing that is good to have prepared.

Smith said that owning a venue is a lot of work, from the landscaping to the setup and take down. He enjoys the hands-on aspect of helping people.

"Meeting the different people of different walks of life with them and kind of helping them because everybody remembers their wedding day," Smith said. "So just being a part of that is kind of special."

## *Southwind Acres Venue*

1337 Bethel Church Rd., Prosperity, Newberry County

"Getting married is very, very important, but I also feel it doesn't have to break your bank."

That's what Southwind Acres Venue owner Kimberly Conness said about why providing a venue to residents was important to her.

Conness currently owns and operates her rustic yet elegant barn venue out of Prosperity. The land that the barn is on also has a chapel that can be utilized for weddings, with Conness emphasizing that they are a fully enclosed venue.

She told The Chronicle that her venue was built in 2018, with the idea of owning a venue starting because her two of her children became engaged the same month.

"We went around looking at venues and stuff, ... and we were just like, well, we can just build a venue," Conness said. "We'll just build one and we looked for property and found some property and built our venue."

One thing that Conness emphasized was that they are an all-inclusive

venue, with the exception of alcohol. This includes hundreds of available decorations, a large song list, their own caterer, table linens and runners among other items.

"We're kind of a one stop deal," she said.

While all these are offered, they are not a requirement for couples to use. If wanted, couples can bring in their own vendors and decor.

When couples come to the venue, there are certain questions that she asks, including style and whether they want an inside or outside wedding. Conness also provides a book for them to look through about what the venue offers and gives them a tour.

According to Conness, the wedding market within South Carolina has been pretty easy to navigate, though she added that there are a large number of venues. And while that is the case, Conness said that there are only really two other venues located near her.

This remoteness also leads to one of the venue's main challenges. Guests have limited options on where they are able to stay. Conness said that they have been able to find a lot of VRBO and Airbnb locations to house guests.

Another challenge that it faces is that there are a lot of people who are not familiar with or even know about Prosperity due to it being a small, more remote town.

When it comes to the wedding day itself, the venue owner said that she has two employees that will always be working the event, adding that there are parking attendants helping as well.

"Getting my couples to tell me at the end of the wedding 'Miss Kim. It was fabulous. I couldn't have done it without you' [is] all that I work for," is what Conness said is her favorite part of owning and operating a venue.

## *The Venue at Holland Farms*

637 Belfast Rd., Newberry, Newberry County

Like Southwind Acres, the tipping point for starting The Venue at Holland Farms was a child getting engaged. Following her daughter's engagement, April Holland turned their barn into a venue.

At the time, three horses were living in the barn. Once the horses were out of the barn and ultimately rehomed, Holland and her husband spent eight months renovating the barn, making it handicap accessible and fixing their previous parking issue.

"It's a family-oriented venue," Holland told The Chronicle. "My parents actually live on our farm and my father is the one that maintains the new grass... We are the only ones that are running this venue."



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Holland told The Chronicle that this venue was an adventure and at the time there was not really another wedding venue within Newberry, especially not a barn venue. She emphasized that with this endeavor they wanted to be a budget friendly option for couples.

The owner says that her venue has an elegant country feel, sitting on five acres and has a pond. Walking into the classic red barn, guests are greeted with a 60-foot runway, catering and bathrooms area and wagon wheel chandeliers hanging from the ceiling.

When it comes to the wedding market, Holland said that it has just taken off, saying that there have been other venues popping up.

"Personally, I feel like you know, it's community helping community," Holland said. "If my venue isn't the type of venue a bride wants, then we send them to someone else that might be a little bit different...so I feel like we're a community helping each other."

Holland said that when guests come to tour, she asks them what their

wedding style is, what decor they are looking for and just doing what she can to get to know the couple. Before guests arrive, they are aware of what the package they are interested in provides, the price and the amenities that are offered.

From her professional experience, Holland told Lakeside that when a wedding coordinator is present it helps set the scene for a smoother wedding. She said that this takes the pressure off the bride and her family.

Since Holland and her family live on site they use walkie talkies the day of the wedding in case they are needed by the coordinator or the couple. Holland also helps set up the wedding.

"I love meeting new people," Holland said in why she loves owning her venue. "I love helping people find a venue that they're happy with...I love being just there to help just to make their day a special day that they will always remember."



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# From the bridal suite

## THE EXPERIENCE OF WEDDING PLANNING

Words by Kailee Kokes

Wedding planning is not a simple task. It is often a stressful endeavor that leads to wonderful memories that last a lifetime. Lakeside spoke to two local brides-to-be on how their wedding planning is going in 2024.

### *Kayla Mishoe*

With a wedding date set for April 20th, Kayla Mishoe says that wedding prep has been a lot of planning.

Her wedding day will take place at sunrise in her parents' backyard, though this wasn't the only location she looked at. Mishoe also explored a mountain venue for their sunrise wedding and the possibility of a beach wedding.

The couple ultimately landed in her parents' backyard to save more money for their honeymoon.

"I'm more focused on the honeymoon. The wedding is important, but I also want to enjoy our honeymoon," she said.

When it comes to the decorations, they are renting the chairs for the

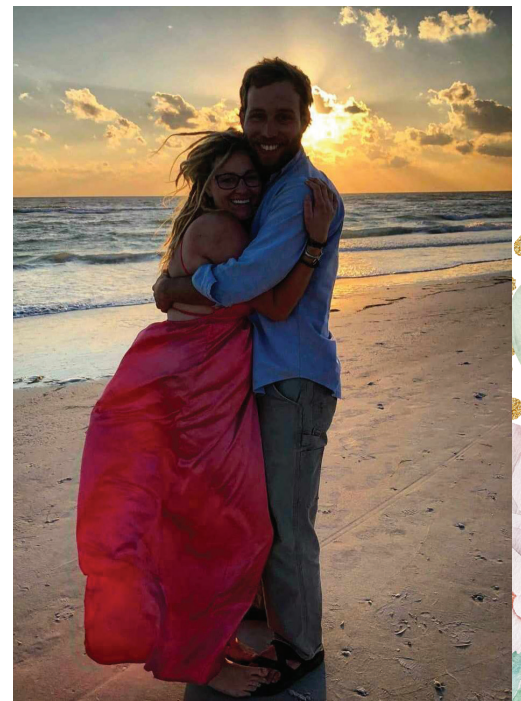
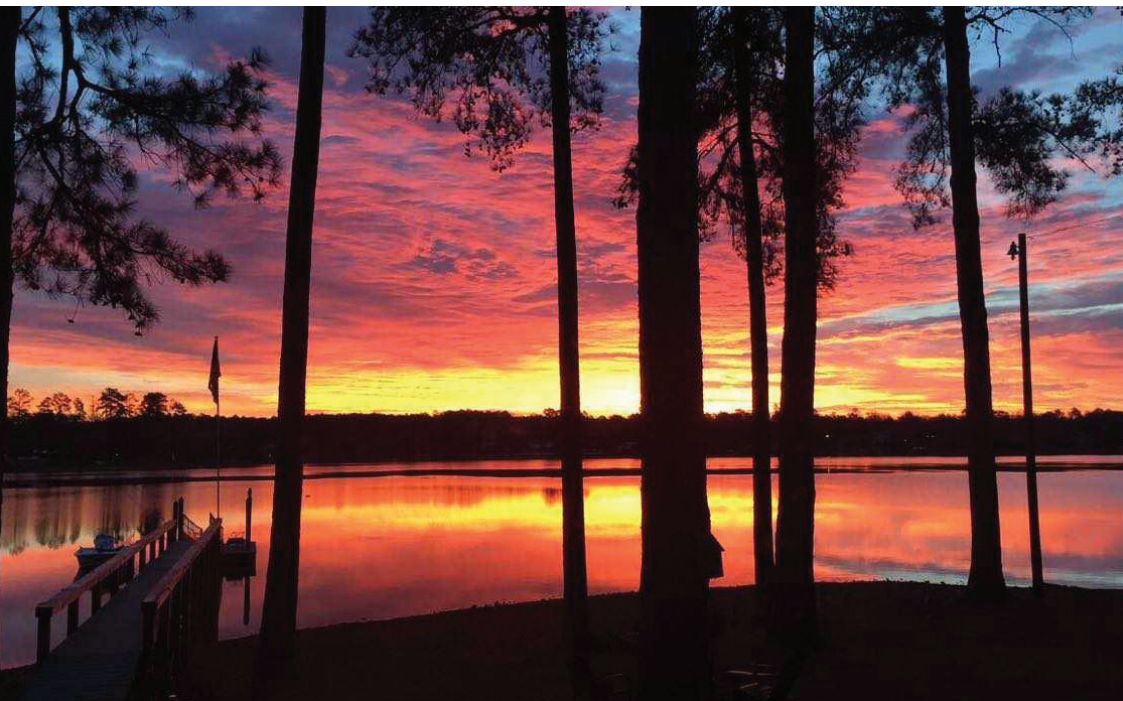
event and are doing a lot of do-it-yourself decor. When asked about the style and vibe of the decor, Mishoe said that it will include wildflowers and have a boho feel.

"It's really not a lot of challenges," Mishoe said in regards to wedding planning difficulties. "Just kind of getting it all set in stone."

She said that throughout the process, the family has been very open to giving their advice and helpful in the planning. She shared that she hasn't had to place boundaries for any unsolicited advice or opinions, emphasizing that she is a very laid back person.

Following the wedding the newlyweds will be heading off to Maui to enjoy their honeymoon.

When it comes to tips for other brides, Mishoe's main takeaway was to breathe and remember that this time is supposed to be fun and not stressful.





# Reese Shamey

For Reese Shamey, who got engaged last June, a wedding was not a set in stone plan.

Like Mishoe, Shamey has taken to do-it-yourself projects to help pull her wedding together, telling Lakeside that she has done her own wedding invitations, save the dates, signage, favors and more.

Her venue, The River Road and Jasmine Houses and Gardens, fits the vintage and whimsical style she has always favored. Shamey said that the flowers and trees along with the pastel colors and antique features is what she based her stationary off of.

One way that she really encompassed the feel was that she has made wedding favors out of wildflower seed packets that say 'Spread the Love'; Guests will be able to take these favors and grow the flowers.

When it comes to the process, Shamey said that her mom got her a book that broke down everything that she needed to do, including bridesmaid dress colors, groomsmen clothes, flowers, decor and more.

"I learned that it's about you and your partner for that day," Shamey said. "Not really about what everyone else thinks or everyone else's opinion. I like to care a lot about other people's opinions and I kind of learned that not everyone is going to like what you do or your style or the songs you pick or even the venue you pick."

"I had a lot of people my family saying, 'Oh, we think it's too small, but for me and my fiance, we're like 'this is exactly what we wanted.'"

Shamey told Lakeside that her mom and best friend played a large role in making sure she stuck to what she wanted for her wedding day.

Her main takeaway for advice includes trying to do as much as you can for your wedding on your own if you want to save money.

"Do the small things on your own, like the signs and any decor you can do," Shamey said. "At the end of the day, you're probably never going to use any of that stuff again."







Wedding certificate, passport, social security card and a healthcare card.

# You're married. **NOW WHAT?**

Words and Illustrations by Kailee Kokes

While wedding planning is stressful and exhausting, it's not the only thing couples need to prepare for. Following the ceremony couples must take a look at healthcare and other medical benefits, life insurance, emergency contacts and name changes.

Josh Donnelly, a life-insurance agent for Cornerstone Insurance Consulting, shared both professional and personal experiences with these changes.

Donnelly told The Chronicle that he and his wife married in October of 2022, saying that the process was a learning curve. He shared that he and his wife utilized a website that provided a checklist and walked them through the process of changing names, getting their marriage certificate, updating their social security cards,

drivers license, vehicle title and registration, passports and more.

"It's just kind of opening the eyes to the people," Donnelly said. "When you get married, there's things you need to do and not everybody's thinking about it because they just got married. They're thinking about the honeymoon."

The insurance agent stated that after getting married, couples often only have a 30-day window to update their health insurance policies, adding that if these changes are not made, couples will have to wait until the next open enrollment period.

"For some people that depends on when they get married, it could be another whole year later before they're able to add on to their health insurance," he said.

Donnelly said that missing the 30-day window

could potentially throw off a family's gameplan, especially if there are kids or future kids involved.

When it comes to life insurance, it is a little different. Donnelly told The Chronicle that life insurance beneficiaries can be updated at any time, though you must take a look at your policy beforehand.

While these are important changes, Donnelly also said it is a personal choice to join someone else's health insurance or to update either life insurance plan. He said that there are multiple factors, including employment, type of insurance, current premiums and more.

Since he has handled these life changes both professionally and personally, Donnelly said that couples should start as early as possible, especially since getting some aspects done



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before the wedding day will smooth out the process.

"When people are getting married and planning a wedding, a lot is involved and it might be something that gets overlooked easily," Donnelly shared. "It's something that you could kind of put in that plan."

Donnelly also added that some of the challenges in this process include getting in touch with the correct people, correct departments, ensuring you have the correct items among others.

Not every couple will have to make some of these changes. If neither spouse chooses to change names, then changes to their driver's license,

vehicle title, social security card and other changes requiring an updated name are not necessary.

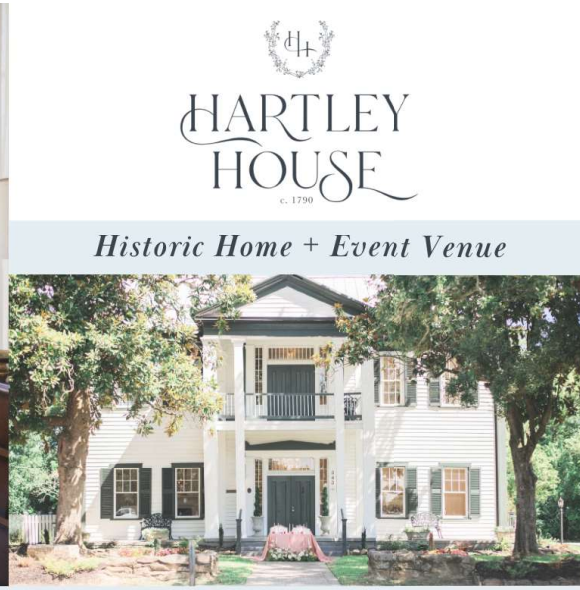
### HOW TO GET THINGS CHANGED:

According to The Knot, a website that provides tools for couples, changing your last name varies by state, adding that the four pieces of identification often started with are the marriage license, social security card, drivers license and passports or other travel documents.

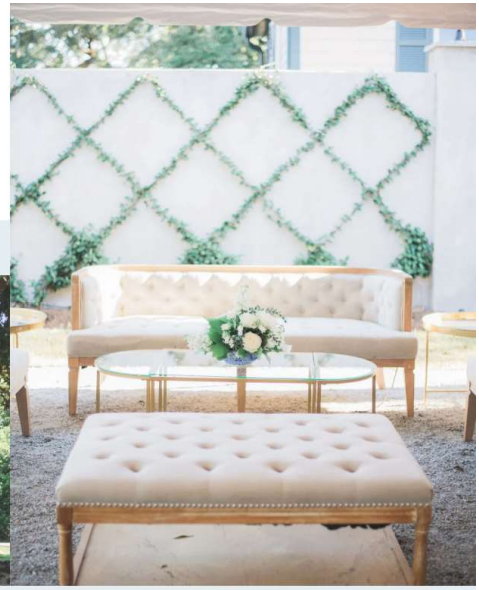
The website states that in order to change your social security cards, you'll need to fill out an application with the Social Security Administration. For this application, you'll need your current social security card, proof of name change (certified copy of marriage license), proof of citizenship and/or residency like a passport or birth certificate and a photo ID which could include passport, valid driver's license, valid state ID card or military ID.

To get your driver's license changes you'll need the following: your current driver's license, social security card, proof of name change, proof of address which would include a bank statement or mortgage papers and a photo ID.

If you have one, what you need to change your passport is your current passport, completed form DS-55404, proof of name change and a passport that meets these criteria.



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