



# *Cynthia Hurd*

*Gone, but not before she bettered the world*

It's been a tough nine months for Malcolm Graham, the brother of Cynthia Hurd, the St. Andrews branch librarian who was slain last summer in the "Mother" Emanuel A.M.E. shooting.

Forgiveness is coming harder for Graham, a former state representative now running for U.S. Congress representing North Carolina, than it did for the families of the other victims who quickly and publicly forgave the alleged shooter, Dylan Storm Roof.

"I miss being able to talk to her," said Graham, of his older sister who doubled as a maternal figure in his life and helped hold together their extended family.

Graham said his sister taught him so much life. And in death, she is teaching the

world about tolerance, faith, and service.

A tireless worker for her community at area libraries and on area boards, Hurd's death contributed to the removal of a Confederate battle flag from S.C. Statehouse grounds, bound together wide swaths of South Carolina and the world, and led to the renaming of the St. Andrews branch library in her honor.

Two weeks ago, a bright and cheerful mural was painted on the outside of the John L. Dart Library branch downtown and will hopefully draw more people inside, where Hurd worked for years.

And in a way, this is the perfect analogy for Hurd's life: bright and cheerful on the outside, with great meaning and knowledge on the inside.



*Dr. Kathryn M. Hargrove*  
*Humans or animals, big or small,*  
*Dr. Hargrove is always on call*

Dr. Kathryn Hargrove lives in West Ashley and has delivered thousands of West Ashley citizens. Hargrove, who graduated from the Medical University of South Carolina College of Medicine in 1987 and is affiliated with Bon Secours St Francis Hospital, is also a practitioner Ob/Gyn physician so her

patients get personalized attention and she has sacrificed many an event to be present for a birth.

On a recent discussion on Facebook, women she has cared for described her as “caring, attentive, funny and a wonderful doctor.”

Not only does she take care of humans but as an

animal lover she has rescued and nursed baby birds and raccoons back to health. She can often be found searching West Ashley thrift shops for treasures but is always on alert for the call with news that another woman is going into labor and her services are needed.



# *Carmen Nash*

## *Reppin' the DuWap 'hood*

Hey, residents of the Wappoo-Dupont area (aka DuWap), Carmen Nash has got your back.

This former NOAA scientist is making sure that what happens in Avondale doesn't just stay in Avondale.

She's hitting public meetings, calling local officials, galvanizing opposition to a towed-car lot on the edge of her 'hood. She's even attended other neighborhood association meetings to expand her network

and planning sessions for other parts of town to get a better idea of how she can be more effective.

"There are so many moving parts, the main thing is to be aware of everything that's going on so whatever the outcome that does occur is the best for everyone involved," says Nash, who was front row and center during the joint county-city planning sessions for improving the DuWap neighborhood.

The neighbor who

nominated Nash praised her for her commitment to keeping everyone informed as to all the pertinent local meetings, making flyers to support the rebuilding of Stono Elementary, and organizing a weekly coffee at the Harris Teeter Starbucks that City Councilman Bill Moody and other officials attend.

More "creative solutions" need to be implemented for improving West Ashley.



# *Keith Waring*

## *Councilman for the entire city*

In some ways, City Councilman Keith Waring is just continuing the legacy of local public service laid down by his father, Louis.

Taking an “a rising tide floats all boats” posture, Waring has been quick to work for great projects in other councilmembers’ districts, like helping secure city funding for the West Ashley Senior Center and four waterfront parks, two of which have already opened.

“One is the loneliest number in the world, if you try to go it alone on Council,” is one of Waring’s most common refrains.

Waring joined with Councilman Bill Moody and former member Aubry Alexander to push and

advocate for West Ashley in Council meetings and within City Hall, in general.

Stopping short of forcing former Mayor Joe Riley’s hand in public, Waring helped guide it to focus more of the city’s attention on this side of the Ashley River.

Now, Waring said just getting West Ashley on the city’s agenda isn’t enough. Now, he wants to make sure money gets spent and actions get taken.

“It’s just not enough for the city to ‘say’ it’s investing in West Ashley, now they got to walk the walk,” said Waring, a professional investments counselor. Key to that is setting up a TIF district in West Ashley.

A “tax increment financing”

district is a complicated money maneuver that allows municipalities to dedicate tax revenues raised in a certain area to flow back into projects solely in that area. TIFs had been used all over the peninsula, but not in West Ashley, and that grated on Waring and Moody and Alexander.

Riley approved the use of TIFs in West Ashley before leaving office, and set staff to work on defining its makeup.

“But now I feel we’ve got a guy, our guy, Mayor (John) Tecklenburg in there and something is going to happen.”



# *The Drayton Family*

*Looking forward while honoring the past*

The Drayton Family, which owns and maintains Magnolia Plantation and Gardens in West Ashley, is one family that has helped move our region forward, while also making sure we don't forget our past.

The Draytons' connection to the community dates back to 1679. By 1685, Ann Fox Drayton directed the installation of "Flowerdale," which today affords Magnolia the distinction as America's oldest garden. In 1840, the Rev. John Grimké Drayton, who for 40 years was rector of St. Andrews Parish Church, expanded Magnolia. After the Civil War, he opened the gardens to the public to launch the community's first tourist attraction west of the Ashley.

Today's Magnolia, under the

direction of the Drayton Family, is not living on this impressive legacy alone. They have made Magnolia an educational venue for West Ashley with a campsite used by local youth, church, and scouting groups. More importantly, the Drayton family for 300 years has been dedicated stewards of this land where migratory birds and waterfowl nest yearly. Last year, the family stepped up those efforts to rejuvenate the Audubon Swamp Garden and a 120-acre impoundment on the property.

Magnolia's popularity is not derived solely from its reputation as one of the most visited plantation sites in West Ashley and a major employer in the community. Magnolia is a local leader because the Drayton

Family supports many agencies throughout the region, including the special needs program at West Ashley High School, the St. Andrews Parish Church, and West Ashley scouting and youth groups.

The Drayton family's spirit of giving is known in the West Ashley area just as widely as the gardens. As a result of contributions from the Magnolia Plantation Foundation, the Drayton family is considered a major supporter of animal rights and land conservation groups. The foundation also welcomes grant requests from non-profit groups in the West Ashley area.



# *Jimmy Bailey*

## *Go-to Uplifter of everyone*

It's hard figuring out whom Jimmy Bailey hasn't helped in his life. He's spearheaded YESCarolina!, a West Ashley-based organization dedicated to teaching youngsters entrepreneurial skills to rise above their current status, like he had to coming up.

Bailey's served in the U.S Armed Forces Reserves, as well as chair of the municipal Recreation Department, the Local Development Corporation, on the municipal Planning and Zoning Commission, and in the state House of Representatives.

Here's a couple you may not have heard about: Bailey had served as chair of the local United Negro College Fund, helped establish the 10,000 Tree Fund, and raised money for the fallen fireman's memorial on Savannah Highway.

Two more: He served on the state's

lottery commission, and on the review board for accidents.

"Busy people make time," said Bailey, who still works in commercial real estate management. "What drives me is helping young people lift themselves up."

Bailey's been busy since he was 11 years old, when he worked to buy his own clothes. And he said what excited him the most about winning a Westie was that after high school he worked for a year to save money for college.

Huh?

"I unloaded milk trucks at the old Coburg Dairy."

The real question about Bailey is this: How did we not give him a Westie (or two) already?



## *Debbie Carter*

*Going above and beyond the call of duty*

It takes a special person to inspire us to change our lives. Debbie Carter is that kind of person. A joyful inspiration and whirlwind of positive energy, Carter has been teaching people to take charge of their health since 2007.

She became certified and has literally spent thousands of hours leading classes teaching

Lowcountry residents with chronic illnesses the skills to manage and improve their health. Some of the programs she leads are: Living Well, Healthy Living for Diabetics, and Powerful Tools for Caregivers.

Carter volunteers for the Lowcountry Senior Center on James Island and has been a driving champion for the new West Ashley Senior

Center, assisting with the community information and planning sessions. She also volunteers on the surgical floor at Bon Secours St. Francis Hospital helping the staff, offering comfort and companionship, and tracking down special snacks or warm blankets for a patient. She has served more than 3,500 volunteer hours.



# *Mandi Herring*

*West Ashley's main (wo)man in planning*

“But I haven’t done anything yet! I haven’t been on the job long enough,” protests Mandi Herring when told she’s being given a Westie.

Former Mayor Joe Riley hired Herring just last year as a West Ashley-specific city project manager in the planning department.

Yeah, well, “Mandi” – remember when President Obama was awarded a Nobel Peace Prize only a few months into office? It was the world’s way of saying it had high expectations.

And this Westie is our way of saying: Don’t mess this up, Herring. We know people in Pittsburgh. People whose names end in v-o-w-e-l-s, if you catch our meaning?

So far, so good.

Since taking the job, Herring has been hard at work running planning sessions for the DuWap neighborhoods, researching where the city should start a farmer’s market in West Ashley, and leading the work on how to best market this part of town.

And she’s joining in on the

ongoing work to revitalize Citadel Mall, improve the Sam Rittenberg Boulevard commercial corridor, helping obtain parcels for future parks, and generally keeping an eye out for West Ashley.

A married mother, Herring has a quick laugh and a master’s in environmental policy. Her husband, Eddie Bello, is the former city architect who now works in private practice.



# Mayor John Tecklenburg

*Bringing focus to his home front — West Ashley*



Critics, and even some supporters worried last year that their man in the mayoral race, John Tecklenburg, lacked the vision and fire of his predecessor, Joe Riley.

Watching Tecklenburg two weeks ago announcing the looming arrival of Whole Foods Market, it became clear they needn't have worried.

Soft voices can carry far, as Tecklenburg's did that Wednesday, as he spoke confidently of the widespread support that coalesced on a city and county level to help land the desirable national grocery chain.

He gave representatives from the county a place at the microphone, but it was his words that mattered most. When Tecklenburg spoke of the need to foster "healthy, sustainable communities" throughout West Ashley and the city, it was evident that he'd consumed all of Riley's passion for New Urbanism.

Tecklenburg said that the improvements in the Avondale area should be used as a model for all of West Ashley, as well as the rest of the city. He envisioned a series of neighborhoods in the future where residents could work, live, and recreate without hitting the road.

Sure, the mayor made a series of promises during the campaign that he put on trading cards to make sure he lives up to them. Sure, a lot of those promises focused on West Ashley. And, sure, in a speech delivered not long after taking office Tecklenburg doubled-down on his commitment to West Ashley.

That's all great. But what's better is that this guy "gets it." And he wants what's best for West Ashley. And he's one of us.



# *Anthony DiBernardo*

## *Feeding the fire of community pride*

It's appropriate that Anthony DiBernardo should receive an award that is a golden cow, because every day DiBernardo puts his own golden touch on the cows (brisket), as well as the pigs, chickens, and turkeys at Swig & Swine, where he is co-owner and pitmaster. And while Swig & Swine is showing up on every top barbecue list these days, it's DiBernardo's work in the community that is truly noteworthy.

Since opening the doors to Swig & Swine, DiBernardo has made a point to give back to the community, which has supported him. As if running a popular restaurant isn't time-consuming enough, DiBernardo still finds time to do hours of volunteer work and donate thousands of dollars in food for various causes.

It's for these efforts that

the West Ashley-James Island Business Association (WAJIBA) awarded DiBernardo with its Community Award for his volunteer work in August. And it's the same reason he's receiving a Westie Award this year.

Also serving as the president of the Charleston Restaurant Association, DiBernardo leads by example, demonstrating to other restaurateurs in the area the importance of supporting the community that supports you. Last year he organized meals for the Charleston Ronald McDonald house for 47 days while the non-profit organization was under construction to add rooms and was without a kitchen.

DiBernardo has also provided food at fundraisers for Surfers Healing, Camp Happy Days, Toys For Tots, Ashley River

Creative Arts Elementary, St. Andrews School of Math & Science, and Charleston County School of the Arts (SOA). He helped raise more than \$10,000 for SOA so it could buy new instruments for its students.

"Nothing is ever free. If you don't reinvest in the community that supports you, how long do you think you will thrive? How do you gain the respect of those who support you without earning it?" asks DiBernardo. It's these questions and this attitude that pushes DiBernardo to not only build a successful barbecue restaurant, but to make it a valuable part of the West Ashley community.



## *Susan Irish*

### *Creating a masterpiece for West Ashley's art scene*

In 2015 local artist Susan Irish has brought visual art to West Ashley. She founded and opened Fabulon: An Art Center For Education in August of last year. But not only did Irish create a place for local artists to display and sell their work, Fabulon is also an educational center, offering classes in all skill levels and all mediums.

Irish dedicates herself fully educating new and emerging artists while also creating a space that offers attainable and approachable art.

From the movable walls to the vibrant interior design, Fabulon is quite the place of interest. With her warm and welcoming aura, Irish ensures that every guest leaves pleased.

Irish provides everyone with her undivided devotion and support which has lead Fabulon to become a "happy place" for many. "I truly admire Susan's perseverance and determination, as being a female involved in the business industry has never been an easy task," says Jirah

Perkins, who works with Susan at Fabulon. "Observing her handle it with great commitment really inspires and motivates me to reach my potential."

Perkins says that working at Fabulon has been the best experience she has ever had. "Susan is a great teacher, boss, and coach to me. She paves the way for myself and many others. I am more than excited to see her shape the art and education community!"



# *Faith Singleton*

## *Keeping the Faith for those who need it most*

Faith Singleton, a Bon Secours St. Francis Hospital wound care nurse lauded for guiding patients through the most challenging and embarrassing moments of their lives, was named the 2015 winner of the President's Humanitarian Award, the highest honor bestowed at Roper St. Francis.

Singleton is a wound and ostomy nurse who helps patients after they receive an artificial opening in an organ after an operation such as colostomy or gastrostomy. She helps them manage a new way of living during a time that can be awkward and humbling.

“A President's Humanitarian Award winner possesses a relentless determination at work and in everyday life to fulfill our mission of healing ALL people with compassion, faith and excellence,” said Roper St. Francis president and CEO David Dunlap. “This year's winner so embodies our mission that her first name is actually one of the most important words in our mission statement: ‘Faith.’”

Singleton is also being recognized for going above and beyond her job description by taking action to ensure ostomy patients who are discharged receive additional support. A couple years ago

she invited her counterparts at the two other Roper St. Francis hospitals to help develop a community support group.

“I enjoy what I do. I am passionate about what I do. But I do it with love,” said Singleton. “I enjoy my patients. I enjoy taking care of them and giving them hope.”

While she only gets a measly fake gold cow for her Westie, the President's Humanitarian Award came with a monetary award of \$5,000, which she said she will use to visit her home country of Jamaica this year on vacation with her husband, Tim, and son, Stone.