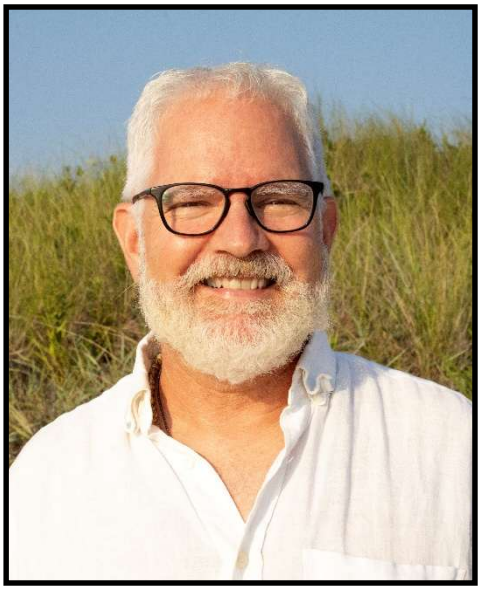
Jan 25

Thomas “TJ” Belasco



Thomas ‘T.J.’ Belasco taught English literature and composition for 34 years in Cape May County NJ. In 2020, he earned the Cape May County Teacher of the Year and finalist for State Teacher of the Year. He has published articles on finding peace in the classroom in the NJEA Review, as well as compiling a chapter in the book Classroom Toolkit. In addition to his teaching, T.J. also works with students and teachers as a certified mindfulness/meditation teacher (Brach/Kornfield). In his retirement, T.J founded The Mindful Classroom, an initiative designed to give teachers the tools they need to navigate student trauma and avoid burnout.

Beyond his work with educators, T.J. continues to mentor the next generation as a college application coach, helping students translate their unique experiences into compelling admissions narratives. He is currently working on his first book, a guide for teachers (and anyone else feeling the weight of a demanding career) to reclaim their purpose and peace. T.J. has called Beaufort home for the past two years. While in Beaufort , T.J. Serves on the board of The Pat Conroy Literary Center as well as leading tours. He also spends time driving a Second Helpings truck. His greatest role remains father to Matthew and Lila, as well as Pappy to Amelia and Stella.

Feb 1

Rabbi Robert Haas



Rabbi Robert Haas, a native of McAllen, Texas, became the 14th spiritual leader of Congregation Mickve Israel in Savannah, Georgia in 2012. He is also a sought-after comedian, lecturer, preacher, and interfaith leader, regularly speaking and performing for organizations, radio shows, colleges, theaters, houses of worships, and institutions. He is married to April, and they have a daughter named Amira and a son named Aryeh.

Feb 8



Janet Porter

Janet Porter is a hospital administrator, educator, consultant, and public health leader with 50 years of experience. She has served as COO of Nationwide Children's Hospital and Dana-Farber Cancer Institute, Associate Dean at UNC's School of Public Health, and Interim President of the Association of University Programs in Health Administration. She co-authored *Managing the Public Health Enterprise* and has taught at Harvard, the University of Minnesota, UNC Chapel Hill, and Ohio State. She has also served on the boards of AARP, Ohio State University, the National Center for Healthcare Leadership, and World of Children.

Porter has lived in Hilton Head, South Carolina, for 14 years with her husband, Jim O'Sullivan. Locally, she has served on the boards of Hilton Head Hospital, Hospice Care of the Lowcountry (including four years as Chair), Lowcountry Legal Volunteers, and the Women's Association of Hilton Head Island. She currently chairs the Beaufort County Libraries Board and is Vice Chair of the Novant Hospital Auxiliary Board; she also serves on the Women in Philanthropy grants committee and the South Carolina Nurse Retention Initiative board. An international speaker, she has given a TED Talk on end-of-life planning and taught patient engagement to leaders from more than 60 countries. She holds a BS and MHA from Ohio State and an MBA and PhD from the University of Minnesota.

Her awards include the Mershon Award (OSU Alumni Association), the Gaylord Anderson Award (University of Minnesota School of Public Health), and the Annalou Thomas Award (Hospice Care of the Lowcountry).

Feb 15

Bonnie Wade Mucia



Bonnie Wade Mucia, AG®, AGL™, is an Accredited Genealogist® and Accredited Genealogist Lecturer™ specializing in New England research, including colonial families, church records, military history, and historical evidence analysis. She owns Keeper of the Past Genealogy, LLC, and serves as Testing Secretary and Conference Chair for the International Commission for the Accreditation of Professional GenealogistsSM (ICAPGen).

For six years she directed the Mayflower Families Silver Books Project for the General Society of Mayflower Descendants, overseeing the research, writing, editing, and publication of studies on Mayflower passengers' descendants. She strengthened the project's documentation standards and consistency while leading a team of professional genealogists, historians, writers, editors, and indexers. She has also conducted military repatriation research for the U.S. Army and the Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency to help identify and return American service members missing from World War II.

An experienced lecturer and member of the Genealogical Speakers Guild, she speaks nationally on genealogy, historical research, military records, and research methods. She has presented at RootsTech, the National Genealogical Society Family History Conference, the New England Regional Genealogical Consortium, and other organizations. Her work has appeared in *The Mayflower Descendant*, *Rhode Island Roots*, *The Maine Genealogist*, *Vermont Genealogy*, *The Nova Scotia Genealogist*, and *Crossroads* (Utah Genealogical Association). She also writes the "Keeper of the Past" blog on genealogy, history, and research.

She volunteers as a docent at Beaufort National Cemetery and the Parris Island Museum. A native of Woonsocket, Rhode Island, she now lives in Bluffton, South Carolina.

Feb 22

Mollie Barnes



Mollie Barnes is Lawrence S. Rowland Endowed Professor and Associate Professor of English at the University of South Carolina Beaufort, Vice President of the Margaret Fuller Society, and Vice President of Organizational Matters for the Society for the Study of American Women Writers. She has published more than a dozen articles and book chapters on nineteenth-century women writers. Her book—Paper Heroines: Women Writers in Conversation and Community Across the Sea Islands, 1838–1902 (University of South Carolina Press, 2026)—studies the ways women documented their own and one another's lives in diaries and biographies, focusing especially on the intersection of gender and race. The National Endowment for the Humanities supported this research with a 2023 Summer Stipend. She is completing two new books: Laura Matilda Towne, Abolitionist: Penn School Diaries, 1862–1864 and Ednah Dow Littlehale Cheney and Nineteenth-Century Women's Lives: A Cultural Biography.

March 1

Theodore (Ted) Panayotoff



Ted is a retired naval officer with 8 years active service and 20 years of reserve duty in the fields of Surface Warfare and Aeronautical Engineering. He also worked over 20 years for the US Army as an armament research and development engineer before retiring from the Defense Department.

His interest in lighthouses, their engineering and construction, and in the lighthouse keepers that staffed them to keep mariners safe, goes back over 40 years. He belongs to organizations of lighthouse enthusiasts at the national and regional level. He has contributed his work and knowledge to restore and preserve lighthouses in New Jersey, Maine, New York, and now here in South Carolina at the Hunting Island Lighthouse. He has visited lighthouses all over the United States and in several foreign countries.

Ted is the author or co-author of four books on lighthouses. Most recent is the book "UP HERE"; which is the history of the Hunting Island Lighthouse.