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Living



CONTACT US: Beth DeCarbo / Features editor / living@ajc.com / 404-526-5009

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Don't mention it

A couple of subjects were off-limits during an Atlanta appearance by Terry McMillan.

E2



Fayetteville doctor **Ferrol Sams'** coming-of-age novel will be in the spotlight once again.

Atlanta's 1st community read picked

By TERESA K. WEAVER / tweaver@ajc.com

An octogenarian country doctor who calls himself Sambo is the unlikely face of Atlanta's first community reading program.

Ferrol Sams' "Run With the Horsemen," a sweet-natured novel about growing up on a Georgia farm in the years between the two world wars, will be the focus of Atlanta Reads: One Book, One Community, Mayor Shirley Franklin announced Tuesday.

About 3,000 Atlanta readers cast ballots at bookstores, libraries and online last month, picking Sams' book from six finalists that included Alice Walker's novel "The Color Purple" and Jimmy Carter's memoir "An Hour Before Daylight."

Sams, dapper in a blue seersucker suit and white bucks, was at Atlanta City Hall on Tuesday morning when the mayor announced the voting results.

At 83, he is genial, self-deprecating and very quick. When asked if he's lived in Fayetteville his whole life, he answers, "Not yet!"

Sams still practices medicine every day at the Fayette Medical Clinic, along with his wife, Helen, whom he met in medical school, and two physician sons. A daughter helps run the office, and assorted other relatives work there, too.

"Run With the Horsemen" was Sams' first novel, written in longhand when he was a youthful 58 and published by Atlanta's Peachtree Publishers to critical acclaim and moderate sales. The paperback edition, published by Penguin, is widely available.

Drawing colorful characters, names and

► Please see **SAMS, E7**



Final four: **Elliott Yamin** (from left), **Taylor Hicks**, **Katharine McPhee**, **Chris Daughtry**.

On 'Idol,' losing isn't always bad

By RODNEY HO / rho@ajc.com

Paris Bennett may not have won "American Idol," but that hardly means a ticket straight to oblivion-ville.

Of the 42 former "Idol" contestants who didn't win the big title, a few have managed to carve out careers in TV, theater and music.

Here's what a sampling of some non-winners are doing:

TV TONIGHT **Justin Guarini** (runner-up, Season 1) — Known for his poofy do and R&B stylings, Guarini's career quickly fizzled. His album and film ("From Justin to Kelly") bombed, and by 2004, he had disappeared. Recently, the son of former Atlanta police chief Eldrin Bell has been popping up again on talk shows and even in the audience of "Idol." His latest jazz album is available at www.justinguarini.com.

Tamyra Gray (fourth, Season 1) — The former Norcross resident has done an album

► Please see **'IDOL,' E2**

SIZING UP FASHION



Why women can't find clothes that fit

By NEDRA RHONE / nrhone@ajc.com

Shopping for clothing can be an exercise in frustration.

For most female shoppers, pants that fit lengthwise are a size too big. Jeans that glide easily over wide hips are baggy at the waist.

Dresses cut for a plus-size physique look more like a muumuu than Miu Miu.

Tall or short, plus-size or pear-shaped, women often have the same complaint: It's hard to find fashionable clothes that fit. Without a tailor on speed-dial, getting a good fit is a matter of trial and error.

"I just wanted a pair of pants that fit and didn't look like my grandmother's," said Tricia Kordalski, who developed a quirky strategy for finding size 6 pants to fit her 5-foot-10-inch frame. She walked straight to the rack, tipped her head upside-down and eyeballed the lowest hanging trousers. When she finally tired of limited choices, Kordalski founded Long Elegant Legs, a catalog retailer that caters to women 5-foot-10 and up.

► Please see **SIZES, E8**

INSIDE

► High fashion is at low end of the size spectrum and won't be changing soon. **E8**

Myth vs. reality ...

The SizeUSA study found American women's figures have shifted from an hourglass shape to rectangular or pear-shaped. But U.S. manufacturers haven't caught up.

Industry standard vs. SizeUSA (size 8)

- **Bust:** 35 inches vs. 34 to 35 inches
- **Waist:** 27 inches vs. 29 inches
- **Hips:** 37.5 inches vs. 38.5 inches

Retailer takes action

Using SizeUSA data, J.C. Penney created a line of pants designed for the three most common body shapes: pear, apple and rectangle.

- **Marilyn cut:** Rests below the waist, appropriate for apple and pear shapes.
- **Audrey cut:** Falls at the natural waist, appropriate for apple and pear shapes.
- **Katherine cut:** Sits slightly above the waist, appropriate for a rectangular body shape.



Marilyn Audrey Katherine

CHARLOTTE TEAGLE / Staff

Pink ink sings praises, blessings of a singular mom



Alexandra Robinson smiles as her mother, **Brenda Twyner Robinson**, begins playing a favorite song at her Atlanta home.

CHARLOTTE B. TEAGLE / Staff

The moment she saw the envelope, Brenda Twyner Robinson knew it had to be from Alexandra.

Mother's Day was still a month away, but it was just like her daughter to be thinking of her.

Robinson drew the envelope from a stack of mail and immediately settled into an easy chair and began to read.

"Mommy, you did it," the note began. "Do you realize you have successfully raised a young woman all by yourself?"

Tears broke loose and rushed down Robinson's cheeks.

From the moment she arrived in the world, Alexandra was an old soul, a people



GRACIE BONDS STAPLES
gstaples@ajc.com
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person popular with her peers. She was independent, a self-starter who knew how to set priorities, knew that people were more important than things.

When she graduated from the Lovett

► Please see **THANKS, E3**