



UP
front

It's a snow day. As is tomorrow. Though, as of now, it hasn't snowed.

The school where I teach has suspended regular operations, closed campuses, and moved learning online – today (Tuesday) and tomorrow (Wednesday). My experience suggests virtual learning, particularly for a class like the one I teach, is a waste of time. So, we're effectively shut down for almost 10 percent of the semester, as we meet only Wednesdays, for a precious three-hour block each time.

This magazine's submission deadline has accelerated because of the maybe-storm. We go to press at 10 a.m. today (Tuesday), which bricks over the window of time I normally use to create this column.

My coffee shop is likely to close early today to avoid staff travel concerns.

Before they moved here, my parents lived in northern Vermont. My dad operated a package delivery business. He drove some of the routes himself. In that context, the idea of a snow day was very different from ours in South Georgia today.

Media is abuzz with warnings regarding the potentially ominous weather. It seems a bit silly and self-indulgent when compared to the ongoing ravaging Southern California Santa Ana winds. But the noise leads to opportunity as much as it stirs fear. If you find yourself with unexpected time off, use it well. In my Smells Like Sunday column, you'll find my recipe for a rich, hearty (and/or hardy) slow-simmering sauce. Consider using your snow day to make it and enjoy the smell that fills your home.

Speaking of satisfying home-cooking, the image on this issue's cover comes from *Together Is the Best Place to*

Be, written by Savannah native Donna Eicholz. In the author's words, the book is comprised of "recollections and recipes honoring Judy Byck (Donna's mother)." Donna refers to Judy as "Mimi" in text, and says to and of Mimi, "You live your life with grace and confidence." I like that chosen phrase; I know Judy well; and I agree.

Claire Barrett photographed the many images that account for the book's beauty, including the one on the front of the periodical you hold in your hands. Claire is talented and sweet and charming and came into my life through her close friendship with my wife.

Donna, Judy, Claire, Jenna, me, you – I love the way this place is both a city and an intricately connected small town.

The opening line of the introduction to Donna's book might be my favorite of all its passages. "Because I like to eat!" Mimi exclaimed when her great-granddaughter Camilla Larsen asked her how and why she learned to cook so well." I answer that question identically. Judy and I are similar in this and other ways. I think she'd agree with this claim.

Whether you cooked an all-day sauce or not, I hope you enjoyed your snow day(s). I wouldn't be surprised if you never saw a single flake. But if the storm came for real, I hope you remained safe.

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