

## Now & Then

# The major, the mansion, and the Mrs.

Anderson's most elegant home has a medical history of its own.

By John A. Miller, Jr.  
President Emeritus, AnMed Health

You may have often wondered about who built the majestic mansion adjacent to the Anderson University campus on Boulevard. You may also be surprised to learn of its connection to AnMed Health.

According to a 2016 Anderson Independent Mail news article, the house was constructed in 1930 on the then eastern rim of the city by Major and Mrs. Ralph John Ramer. Major Ramer served as an army officer in the Spanish-American War and World War I and practiced law between the wars in his native Missouri. After WWI, he and his wife became partners in the Coca-Cola franchise of Anderson, and the business did very well. Major Ramer entered politics, serving in the S.C. Legislature as well as several

governmental and military appointments. Ramer died in 1937 at the age of 61.

According to the newspaper article, one of his most enduring accomplishments was the Ramer Mansion, which today ranks among Anderson's landmark structures, and remains a well-preserved example of Tudor Revival architecture. The home was placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1992.

So what does the Ramer Mansion have to do with AnMed Health? Rose Ellis Ramer as a widow to Major Ramer engaged in several philanthropic activities personally as well as through her company. She was an early donor to the hospital building program going on during the early 40s, donating upwards of \$25,000 as well as several other gifts. Before construction was finished, she was diagnosed with



breast cancer and died in 1945. Before she died, she decided to leave a large portion of her estate to the hospital for the care of cancer patients and the building program. The gift from her estate, partly from the Boulevard mansion, amounted to one quarter of a million dollars, a significant

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# HealthImpacts

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE ANMED HEALTH FOUNDATION SUMMER 2017

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## SC child safety seat update:

# It's not just a good idea; it's the (new) state law.

**No parent willingly puts a child in danger.** But safety standards change, your child's needs change, and now, South Carolina's child passenger restraint law has changed, as well. As of May, the state adopted pediatricians' and child safety experts' recommendations, including age-based specifics on seat type, position and use. New practices mandated by the law include:

### Rear-Facing Car Seat

An infant under 2 must be secured in a rear-facing car seat in a rear seat of the vehicle until the child exceeds the height or weight limit allowed by the manufacturer of the car seat.

### Forward-Facing Car Seat

A child at least age 2 or under 2 who has outgrown the manufacturer's height or weight limits for a rear-facing car seat must be secured in a forward-facing car seat in a rear seat of the vehicle until the child exceeds the highest height

or weight requirements of the forward-facing car seat.

### Booster Seat

Children at least age 4 who have outgrown their forward-facing car seat must be secured by a booster seat in a rear seat of the vehicle until the child can meet the height and fit requirements for an adult safety seat belt. Lap and shoulder belts must be used.

### Seat Belt

A child at least age 8 or at least 57 inches tall may be restrained by an adult safety belt *if the child can be secured properly by an adult safety seat belt.*

Yes, the new rules are complicated. They are also vitally important. Nationwide, a child younger than 13 is involved in a vehicle crash every 33 seconds, and roughly 11 children die each week

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in traffic accidents. In South Carolina, a child a week dies in a preventable transportation-related incident.

But even those grim statistics don't tell the full story. According to The Journal of Pediatrics, 67% of child deaths occur on roads classified as rural by the Federal Highway Administration. Nearly 60% of Anderson County's public roads are classified as rural. Statewide, 74% of roads are rural. Our roadways are dangerous. In 2015, South Carolina had the highest traffic fatality rate in the nation, and more traffic fatalities have already occurred in 2017 than in all of 2016.

**That's why Safe Kids is gearing up to help parents, grandparents and caregivers understand and obey the new law.**

Jackie McCall, Safe Kids Coordinator and nationally certified Child Passenger Safety Technician and Instructor, calls it "a huge passion of mine." She's driven to increase awareness, explaining that child safety should be viewed "in terms of physics and facts, not as a parenting choice."

Her passion shows. She conducts monthly car seat inspections at fire departments, by request at businesses and events, or by individual appointment; teaches car seat classes at AnMed Health's Women's & Children's Hospital, District 4's Family Learning Center, and other community facilities; works through referral organizations such as DSS, WIC, SC Foster Parent Association, and Pediatric Therapy Works to ensure that all families are equipped with appropriate child restraint seats; tracks recalls; and maintains an informative Safe Kids Anderson County Facebook page.

To meet the new requirements, Jackie foresees a change in the seats she stocks for distribution. Even with Safe Kids' discounts, the purchase and shipping costs will increase to about \$65 per standard seat. For a child with special needs who must be fitted with an adaptive child restraint system, the cost can reach \$1,500.

Unintentional injury is the leading health risk for children, and the most common cause of unintentional injury is car accidents. To help keep Anderson-area kids safe, please consider making a designated gift to the AnMed Health Foundation for Safe Kids.

*All Safe Kids programs are funded by the AnMed Health Foundation.*

 [www.facebook.com/safekidsanderson/](http://www.facebook.com/safekidsanderson/)

# What motivates donors to give?

From wildly wealthy folks like Bill and Melinda Gates or Warren Buffet, who give more away than most of us will ever see, to philanthropy legends like Oseola McCarty, the Mississippi washerwoman who donated \$150,000 hard-earned dollars to the University of Southern Mississippi to fund scholarships for worthy but needy students, some people take great pleasure in sharing the fruits of their labor with others. But why? Are these generous givers a different breed?

I don't think so, and here's the reason.

I've been reading a lot lately about Oseola McCarty, and I've never been more impressed. Born poor in 1908, raised by her mother and grandmother in Hattiesburg, she dropped out of school in the sixth grade when her aunt needed homecare. For more than 75 years, she took in laundry to earn money, boiling clothes in a cast iron washpot, scrubbing them by hand on a rub board, and ironing and starching them to perfection. A tiny woman – just five feet tall – she worked hard and lived frugally, saving virtually everything she made from the age of eight onward. In 1995, she gave most of it away to a university she had never set foot on to help students she didn't know.

Her selfless generosity inspired more than six hundred other members of the local community to make donations of their own, more than tripling the value of her original grant and establishing the Oseola McCarty Endowed Scholarship. Within four years, its value reached nearly a quarter of a million, and by 2014, it exceeded \$700,000. In her honor, the university renamed its planned giving society the McCarty Legacy.

## It's easy to think, if I had more, I'd give more.

But like Miss McCarty, we all have something to give. She didn't give in search of recognition, although she became widely recognized and revered. She chose to give close to home, to make life better in the community where she had lived her life. As she put it, "I can't do everything. But I can do something to help somebody. And what I can do I will do."

In the Anderson area, we are fortunate to have many people with a similar generosity of heart and spirit. That's why the AnMed Health Foundation offers so many ways to give – from one-time gifts to annual gifts to memorials to endowments and planned giving – and welcomes donations in any amount.

You don't need vast sums to make a difference. Giving what you can, when you can and how you can is the best way to get the ball rolling. Once it starts, it can create a miracle.



Hughlyn H. Burgess  
Chairman, Board of Trustees  
AnMed Health Foundation

# Start with a plan.

It's human nature to wonder how we'll be remembered and to hope that our lives and legacies will have had a positive effect on our families, friends and communities. Most of us believe we were put here on earth for a reason, and it's comforting to know that it matters that we were here, while we're here and after we're gone.

- Will a sizable inheritance help or hurt our heirs?
- Will our heirs remember us fondly?
- Will we be respected in the community?
- Will friends and neighbors be proud to say they've known us?

Even for the most compassionate and caring among us, knowing how to give back can sometimes get in the way of building a legacy. Estate planning is complicated. You want to be sure your donations further your core values and support your objectives. At the same time, you want to protect the value of your assets. There are potential tax implications. What if circumstances change? It's important to ask all your questions, and to make sure you get thoughtful answers.

To help you make the best estate planning decisions for you and your family, the AnMed Health Foundation has established a relationship with Thompson & Associates, a third-party values-based estate planning firm headquartered in Brentwood, Tennessee, to offer a FREE estate consultation and personalized estate plan for our loyal donors. The service is completely unbiased, no-cost and confidential.

Thompson & Associates fields a team of 45+ professionals that includes planning attorneys, estate planners, former nonprofit executives and development officers. A Thompson & Associates representative can meet with you and/or your family at your convenience to walk you through a comprehensive planning process designed to help you create a unique plan that meets your unique needs and preferences.

The resulting plan is yours to keep at no-cost, regardless of any decisions you do or don't decide to implement. Thompson & Associates does not sell products, manage assets or draft documents, nor do they share any information with the AnMed Health Foundation or anyone else without your express permission.

**To learn more about how estate planning may benefit you, your heirs, and your community – contact the AnMed Health Foundation Executive Director Tim Self at 864.512.3477 or [tim.self@anmedhealth.org](mailto:tim.self@anmedhealth.org) to make an appointment with our Thompson & Associates representative. It's the first step toward building the legacy you choose.**



sum in 1945. About \$150,000 was used for the building and the remaining portion was used to establish a trust fund that was dedicated to the cancer clinic which was appropriately named The Rose Ramer Cancer Clinic.

The clinic was one of the first of its kind in the state. Dr. William Hunter, a prominent physician in the Anderson and Clemson area, recalled years later that Mrs. Ramer "was one of the great ladies to contribute to the hospital." He also shared that Dr. J. R. Young, another critical player in the medical history of Anderson, became the medical director of the clinic, followed by Dr. Vernon Merchant. The importance of Mrs. Ramer's contributions became very clear in 1954 when Dr. Young made his presidential address to the Southeastern Surgical Conference in Birmingham, Alabama entitled "The Value of a Cancer Clinic in a Community Hospital." He described the



Rose Marie Ellis Ramer

many patients who would have died had not the clinic been available. He also emphasized the value of the clinic's promotion of public awareness of cancer. While it was little known, the clinic also kept precise medical records and shared detailed clinical information with a network of cancer registries that helped other physicians better diagnose and treat the dreaded disease. Many Anderson

physicians, especially Dr. Merchant, kept the Rose Ramer Cancer Clinic legacy alive for many years by giving of their time to many needy cancer patients.

So, let's circle back to the mansion. After Mrs. Ramer's death, the mansion was purchased from her estate by the Stringer family, and remained in the family eventually passing to Mrs. Caroline Stringer Rainey and her husband, Dr. John Rainey, another prominent Anderson physician. The house was recently acquired by Anderson University and plans are underway to house the school's development office and to provide a convenient place to meet with donors. Rose Ramer's legacy of generous giving is now continuing in a new way through her home!

When you ride by the mansion on Boulevard and observe how impressive it is, just think of Rose Ellis Ramer and how her philanthropic legacy has helped countless numbers of people since 1945 during one of the most difficult times of their lives.



**The clinic Mrs. Ramer funded is now part of AnMed Health's Cancer Center.**