

CELEBRATING OUR PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE

INTUCKER

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FROM THE MAYOR

This is a truly special time of year. It's also a very busy time of year. While folks are rushing around to various holiday parties, shopping and preparing to travel or welcome guests, there's still plenty of important City business happening.

You see the list of meetings to the right of this space, but I'd like to highlight the December 10 City Council meeting, which is our only Council meeting this month. That means we'll have a lot of ground to cover, including potential votes on two land use cases, a first read of a budget amendment and a presentation of recommendations from our Trails Master Plan. It promises to be an eventful evening.

On the topic of Master Plans, I want to remind you that we will have a public meeting for our Parks Master Plan on December 11 at Tucker Recreation Center. This is significant because the consultants we're working with will present some preliminary findings based on survey feedback they've gotten from you. I'm really looking forward to seeing what they – and you – see for the future of our parks.

More important than all of that, let me offer you my best wishes for a happy holiday season. You've probably heard me talk about my vision for Tucker as a place where a person can live, work, play and pray their whole life. In that phrase, "pray" is just shorthand for having a rich spiritual life and access to groups and facilities that support it. My prayer for you during this season is that you'll find peace and joy, and a place where you'll connect with others seeking and sharing the same. It's part of our heritage and part of what makes Tucker both strong and special.

DATES TO KNOW

December 7
Downtown
Development
Authority

December 10
City Council

December 18
Zoning Board of
Appeals

December 24-25
Christmas observed
(City Hall closed)

STARTS DECEMBER 1ST



tuckerga.gov/parks



CITY COUNCIL UPDATE

The Mayor and City Council met twice in November, holding public hearings on a pair of land use petitions and casting votes that will have a significant impact for local businesses and parks.

At the meeting on November 13, Council voted unanimously to amend the City's alcohol ordinance, moving the start of Sunday alcohol sales from 12:30 p.m. to 11 a.m. at eateries and wineries. The move followed action in the state legislature and a referendum approved by Tucker voters during the November 6 election. They then voted to authorize the Mayor to sign an intergovernmental agreement (IGA) with DeKalb County on expanding and improving the Tucker Nature Preserve. Commissioners Nancy Jester and Gregory Adams each allocated, and the County Commission approved, \$50,000 to go toward the effort. Council then voted to spend \$15,800 of SPLOST funds to purchase and install three surveillance cameras near the soccer fields and Community Garden at Henderson Park.

The meeting on November 26 saw two land use cases brought forward: one asking for special land use permits (SLUPs) for a church and private school at 6015 Old Stone Mountain Road and the other requesting a Comprehensive Plan amendment and rezoning to allow a townhome development at 2301 Fuller Way. Both cases were brought on first reads, meaning they are scheduled for an additional public hearing and vote at the City Council meeting on December 10.



Mayor Auman presented a proclamation in honor of Small Business Saturday to Honey Van De Kreke of the Tucker Business Association at the Council meeting on November 13. Small Business Saturday is a national effort to encourage holiday shoppers to spend their money locally. It takes place annually on the Saturday after Thanksgiving.

2018 SPLOST RESURFACINGS ENTER HOME STRETCH



Residents and business owners all over Tucker are enjoying a smoother ride, as 22 of the worst-conditioned streets in the City have either been resurfaced or are in the process of being resurfaced with money from the taxpayer-funded SPLOST. The improvements haven't come easy. A rainier than normal fall has caused difficult conditions and, in some cases, project delays. Colder November temperatures have also delayed some progress, as crews cannot do resurfacing work when overnight lows drop to around the freezing mark.

Despite all that, the SPLOST program is on schedule and just two roads are left on the 2018 agenda: Old Norcross Road and Rock Mountain Boulevard. Both these projects "should" be complete by year's end. That, of course, is dependent on the weather.

Tucker's SPLOST team is already looking ahead to 2019, when roads including North Park Drive, Livsey Road and Mountain Shadow are all scheduled for resurfacing. Just as with the 2018 projects, the 2019 projects were determined by which roads were in the worst shape. You can find a projected list of resurfacings for 2019 all the way through 2023 on our website, www.tuckerga.gov/SPLOST.

ON THE BEAT WITH LT. SCHOEPPNER

This past October was my one year anniversary as your Tucker Liaison Officer. It's really hard to believe that so much time has passed. A large part of that is because the Tucker community has been so welcoming. This really made the transition into my new role easy.

The arrival of my anniversary also means that the end of the year is upon us. Traditionally, during the holiday season we see an increase in crime. The criminals know that the Christmas season means that folks will do more shopping, that they'll be keeping gifts in their cars and homes and that the businesses will have more cash in-house because of the increased sales. This means that along with enjoying the season, we also need to watch out for those people who may be looking to spoil our holiday.

In September's newsletter I wrote at length about the crime of entering autos and gave some tips on how to reduce your chance of having this happen to you. During this holiday shopping season it would definitely be worthwhile to take another look at that article. In summary, you want to avoid leaving items in your car at all. If you are shopping and that that is not possible, you want make sure not to leave those items out in public view. You also want to avoid letting others see when you are putting items in your trunk or hiding items in your passenger compartment. If a criminal knows that there is something they want inside your car, it exponentially increases that chance that they will break in to get it.

After you get your Christmas shopping done and get your presents home, you still can't let your guard down. Be mindful of blinds that are left open. If a criminal can see something they want inside your home, especially if it's in a place they can access quickly, they will likely try to go in and get it. Also make sure that you keep your doors locked, even when you are home. Some criminals are brazen enough to try and



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sneak into your home and steal items that are near the door while you are there. Don't just assume that you would be able to see or hear them.

Once the holiday is over, make sure you break down boxes from presents. If a criminal can see the box from your new 4K television on the curb, they know what they'll find if they break into your home.

My space is limited in this newsletter, so these are just a few of the tips I know to be helpful. There are literally hundreds of precautions you can take to avoid being a victim. But if you just give a little thought to how you can avoid being an easy mark, the chances are good that you will have a happy and crime-free holiday season.

COFFEE WITH A COP



Outreach is a huge component of maintaining a healthy relationship between the DeKalb Police Department and the community they serve. One of those opportunities for outreach was the Coffee with a Cop gathering at Panera Bread in Tucker's Briarcliff Village Shopping Center on November 14.

For information on future community engagement dates, follow the DeKalb Police Department's Tucker Precinct on Facebook!

GET YOUR BUILD ON!

TUCKER TEENS GIVING BACK THROUGH HABITAT



Over the years, Habitat for Humanity has become a familiar concept. A family in need applies for a home repair, renovation or brand-new construction. If they are accepted, they will stand shoulder-to-shoulder with volunteers working on their own home. They'll then take classes to learn how to manage money, how to pay their mortgage and how to do basic home upkeep. Best of all, they then pay it forward by volunteering on construction projects for future Habitat families.

The program has long had a face in former President Jimmy Carter. In his post-White House days, Mr. Carter made Habitat for Humanity his cause, volunteering on projects and becoming a global ambassador for the charity and its mission. But with the president now 94 years of age, Habitat is looking to new generations for both leadership and volunteers.

That's very apparent at Tucker High School, where one of the school's popular clubs is its Habitat for Humanity campus chapter. Dozens of students have signed up to be a part of projects in Tucker, around DeKalb County and across the state of Georgia.

"I have people that recommended it to me," says Tucker High senior Kate Kubik, who signed up for Habitat as a freshman. "I just got involved. I enjoyed it [and] I'm having fun."

Kubik and a group of classmates spent a Saturday this fall making repairs at a home on Montreal Road. It wasn't the "laying foundation and putting up drywall" that you might expect for a Habitat project, but most Habitat projects are not. Many of the jobs are simple home repairs, like this one, which saw the students join with Habitat contractors to apply a fresh coat of paint on the interior of the home and replace some doors and windows.

"The last time I came, we were making a sidewalk [working with] wood and concrete," Tucker student Khalid Adebayo described as he handled a paint roller. "I just think it's nice to help people. One day, you're going to need somebody to help you, too."

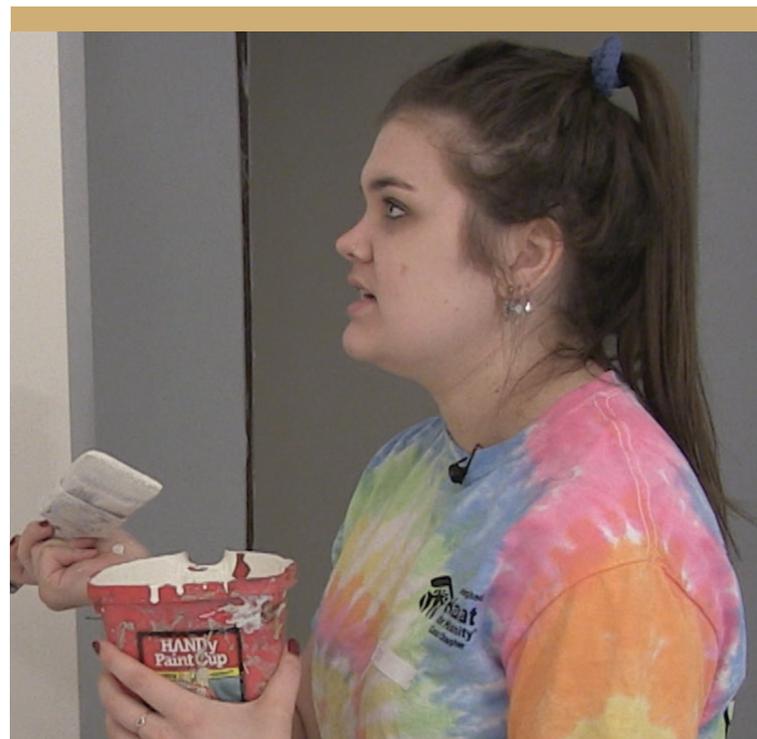
One of the mentors shepherding these youngsters into the Habitat program is Kay Stewart, the mother of a Tucker High graduate who actually helped start up the Tucker High campus chapter more than a decade ago. Stewart dons the same tie-dye Habitat t-shirt as her young charges and stands with them, paintbrush in hand, pushing the project along.

"Somehow, they have realized, seen and chosen how incredibly rewarding it is to serve one another," Stewart says. "That to me is so inspiring. We are essentially building homes, communities and hope, but also building servant leaders."

Stewart says the Tucker High campus chapter isn't short on volunteers, but they do covet community partners to help underwrite their many activities. For the kids, they're just enjoying the fruits of their labor.

"It's very rewarding," Kubik explains. "Not only do you get to see...the physical results of your work, you also get to meet a lot of cool people."

The Tucker High campus chapter is instilling a sense of selflessness in the school's students, a trait that could benefit the Tucker community for years to come. And it's creating that next generation who promise to take the torch from President Carter and keep Habitat for Humanity going well into the 21st century.



Tucker High Senior Kate Kubik does some interior painting on a Habitat project on Montreal Road in Tucker.

TUCKER COMMUNITY SPOTLIGHT

BUSINESS OF THE MONTH PHYSIO



Designated by the Atlanta Regional Commission as a lifelong community, wellness is incredibly important to the residents of Tucker. That's readily apparent inside the doors of Physio, a national leader in outpatient rehabilitation.

Less than a year ago, Physio moved their operations from just outside the City of Tucker to a brand-new facility on Montreal Road inside the City. With a variety of specialists on staff, Physio is helping people from all walks of life to regain mobility and functionality.

"It's not only for athletes or certain populations," explains Physio Center Manager Marc Herscher. "We're all in the same boat. We're all trying to find ways to stay active and mobile as we get older."

Herscher doesn't just manage Physio's Tucker location, he's also a longtime physical therapist. He says this state-of-the-art center has been a big change from their old site down Lawrenceville Highway.

"We love it. It's a great location, easy to get to, better parking. When we moved, not only was the building new, all the equipment inside the building was new. We love our space."

It's not just the space that Herscher and his staff are excited about. Many of them live in the Tucker area and are enjoying the perks of living and working in the same community.

"I'm one mile from here. It's fantastic for me," Herscher says, explaining that he left his home in Buckhead to move to Tucker. "I literally could walk home if I had to. I can be at work, stop home at lunch and let my dog out. [I] do my shopping here. I love the Tucker area."

Physio is located at 1460 Montreal Road East in Tucker.

CITIZEN OF THE MONTH VICTOR ECONOMY



"You know Christmas in Tucker is right-around-the-corner when Victor Economy turns on his house lights, yard lights and all his Christmas decorations. The neighborhood elves have been hard at work with the display having come to life at 6:15 PM on Thanksgiving night.

Vic first began to decorate his residence in 1993, using over 100,000 lights and 12 controllers. Using assistance from local Tucker schools, Victor keeps out-doing himself every year. Vic has consistently added more figures and animations each year. The collection now covers his front and side lawns in addition to the roof of his house. Victor has even invited Santa Claus to stop by on weekends in December for photo opportunities for children.

As in years past, donations will be collected for the Make-A-Wish Foundation from those who drive-by. Last year \$5, 171.28 was collected and over \$20,000 has been contributed to Make-A-Wish Georgia over the past 4 years. Victor Economy is our Tucker Citizen of the Month.

Vic is a local business man and has also been active as a board member of his local community association. He has also been instrumental in beautifying many sections of the Smoke Rise neighborhood with landscaping and stone work. He is a regular reader to classes at his local elementary school, Smoke Rise Elementary.

You'll want to make it a "must-do" for your family this Christmas season. The Economy house is located at 1833 Smoke Rise Summit, Stone Mountain, GA 30087."

Nomination by Frank Luton

TEAM TUCKER SPOTLIGHT

Billy Phillips - Business Outreach Coordinator



OFF THE WALL

Where did you go on your last vacation? Denver, Colorado

What is your favorite piece of clothing in your wardrobe? A Prince shirt I made for a concert of his: purple with a silver glitter Love symbol stencil.

Are you an iPhone person or an Android person? iPhone

Who's the most famous person you've ever met? Wow, a few. That would be a tie between Tori Amos and Allen Toussaint.

You can have tickets to one major sporting event. What would it be and why? Formula 1 Singapore Grand Prix because that would kill two birds with one stone: an F1 race and a trip to Asia.



What is your job as Business Outreach Coordinator? My job is to attract new businesses to Tucker and keep the existing ones happy. I'm more than just a pretty face, though. I keep businesses informed on policy changes that would affect them, such as the recent Brunch Bill. I also facilitate permitting where applicable and respond to other issues a business might have with the City.

How did you get to this position? This role is sort of a culmination of my experience as a commercial and residential real estate agent, as well as my education in historic preservation, urban planning and economic development planning. I've lived in the area for over a year now. After 15 years in New Orleans, it's nice to be back closer to home.

What is the most important factor in maintaining solid economic development? Tucker has a strong economic base, so the most

important factor right now to maintain that is to be responsive to businesses' needs while adding to the business mix,

How is the state of business in Tucker compared to other cities around Metro Atlanta? If I had to give a State of Business Address, I would say that business is booming in Tucker. We are varied as far as industry sectors are concerned. The recently approved Comprehensive Plan and the current planning studies will give the City a vision to grow into and I look forward to bringing in the goods and services providers that will help realize that vision.

You're relatively new. How do you like the job so far? So far, it's been a pleasant and valuable experience. I feel I've already made a positive impact.

JASON COLLINS RECOGNIZED BY GRPA



Our Tucker Parks and Recreation Operations Manager Jason Collins was named the Maintenance and Operations Outstanding Professional of the Year by the Georgia Recreation and Parks Association (GRPA). The award, given out each year at the GRPA's annual meeting in Jekyll Island, recognizes the work of one person as the best in the state of Georgia.

“ASK RIP” ANSWERS YOUR PARKS QUESTIONS

Tucker Recreation Center is going to be a very busy place this month. Why? Aside from the usual daily activities and rentals we accommodate, we have three significant things happening that I want you to know about.

First, is the Parks Master Plan Public Meeting on December 11. As Mayor Auman explained in his cover letter, this is a big opportunity for you to hear from our consulting team on some of their preliminary findings and to ask questions or make recommendations for them to consider. All your ideas and feedback will be factored into the process, which will culminate in a final set of recommendations to be presented to the City Council in the spring.

Second, our staff wanted to spread some kindness during the holiday season. So, Tucker Rec will be the headquarters of what they're calling their "Advent Acts of Kindness". This is going to be a combination of free special events for families at the Rec Center, as well as our staff performing kind acts and encouraging you to do the same. The most fun aspect is that we're going to do it as an advent-style calendar, meaning each morning a new activity will be revealed on our website tuckerga.gov/parks. I hope you'll stay tuned and help spread the word!

Finally, we've gone Hollywood. Tucker Rec is featured prominently in the new Netflix film *Dumplin'* starring Jennifer Aniston. I have to admit, some movies and shows have used our facility as a quick backdrop or maybe it's appeared briefly in a scene or two. In this film, some of the most important scenes in the movie happen right in our auditorium. The movie debuts December 7 on Netflix and in select theaters, so if you want to see a Tucker landmark on the big screen, go check it out!



Rip Robertson is the first Parks and Recreation Director for the City of Tucker. He takes the job with years of experience in Parks and Rec, as well as Public Works. Rip is a former Military Intelligence Analyst for the U.S. Army and is active with the Army Reserve.



PARKS AND REC HAPPENINGS



NOVEMBER 13 - Ray Rollins took over as Tucker's Recreation Center Manager. Rollins, who comes to Tucker with nearly a decade of experience in the City of Hapeville, replaces the retiring Tom McDermott.



NOVEMBER 17 - Tucker Orchard Guild held a workday to weed, mulch and winterize the courtyard at Tucker Recreation Center. Thanks to volunteers from Tucker High School's Earth Tomorrow Club, what could have been a six hour job was completed in just two.



NOVEMBER 16 - Parks & Rec staff took a group of seniors from Tucker Recreation Center on a trip to visit Atlanta staple Fox Bros. BBQ. The Center has a plethora of classes and activities for seniors. Field trips like this are a new effort by staff to further enrich the experience for Tucker's senior population.



NOVEMBER 20 - Volunteers from Friends of Johns Homestead were joined by City and County leaders, as well as representatives from Park Pride, in a ribbon cutting for the new boardwalk along the Johns Homestead hiking trail.

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COMMUNITY CORNER

12/1 – Holiday on Main Street

5 - 8 p.m., Downtown Tucker

The Old Town Tucker Merchants' Association, in conjunction with the Tucker Farmers Market, puts on this event to fill Main Street with holiday cheer. Check out the fine food and craft vendors, bounce houses, holiday tunes and even participate in the ugly sweater contest. Admission is free!



HOLIDAY ON MAIN STREET

12/8 – Home for the Holidays Home Tour

10 a.m. - 4 p.m., Various sites

The GFWC Stone Mountain Woman's Club has organized a tour of four exquisite homes in Tucker's Smoke Rise community, as well as Stone Mountain Village. All homes are decked out with Christmas decorations. Your \$25 ticket includes lunch at the Stone Mountain First United Methodist Church. More details at www.stonemountainwomansclub.org.

12/8-9 – Christmas at Tucker

Sat. at 6 p.m. and Sun. at 7 p.m., 5095 Lavista Road

With a powerful choir, soloists and orchestra, this production is an exciting and inspiring way to receive the Christmas message. Enjoy special musical numbers, as well as an appearance by the Georgia Boy Choir. This is a free event put on by Tucker First United Methodist Church, but it does require tickets for admission.

12/15 – Smoke Rise Academy of the Arts

Holiday Showcase

1 - 3 p.m., 5901 Hugh Howell Road

This annual holiday-themed program will include choreography from Academy dance students of all ages, scenes from elementary and high school drama students and instrumental performances by students and faculty. The program is free and open to the public.

TUCKER BUSINESS BOOM



Coming to *InTucker* in January, the 'Business Boom'. Economic Development Director John McHenry is the most plugged in person in Tucker and his new monthly column will help you to understand the important things happening on Tucker's business and commercial real estate scene.

PLEASE DELIVER TO:

