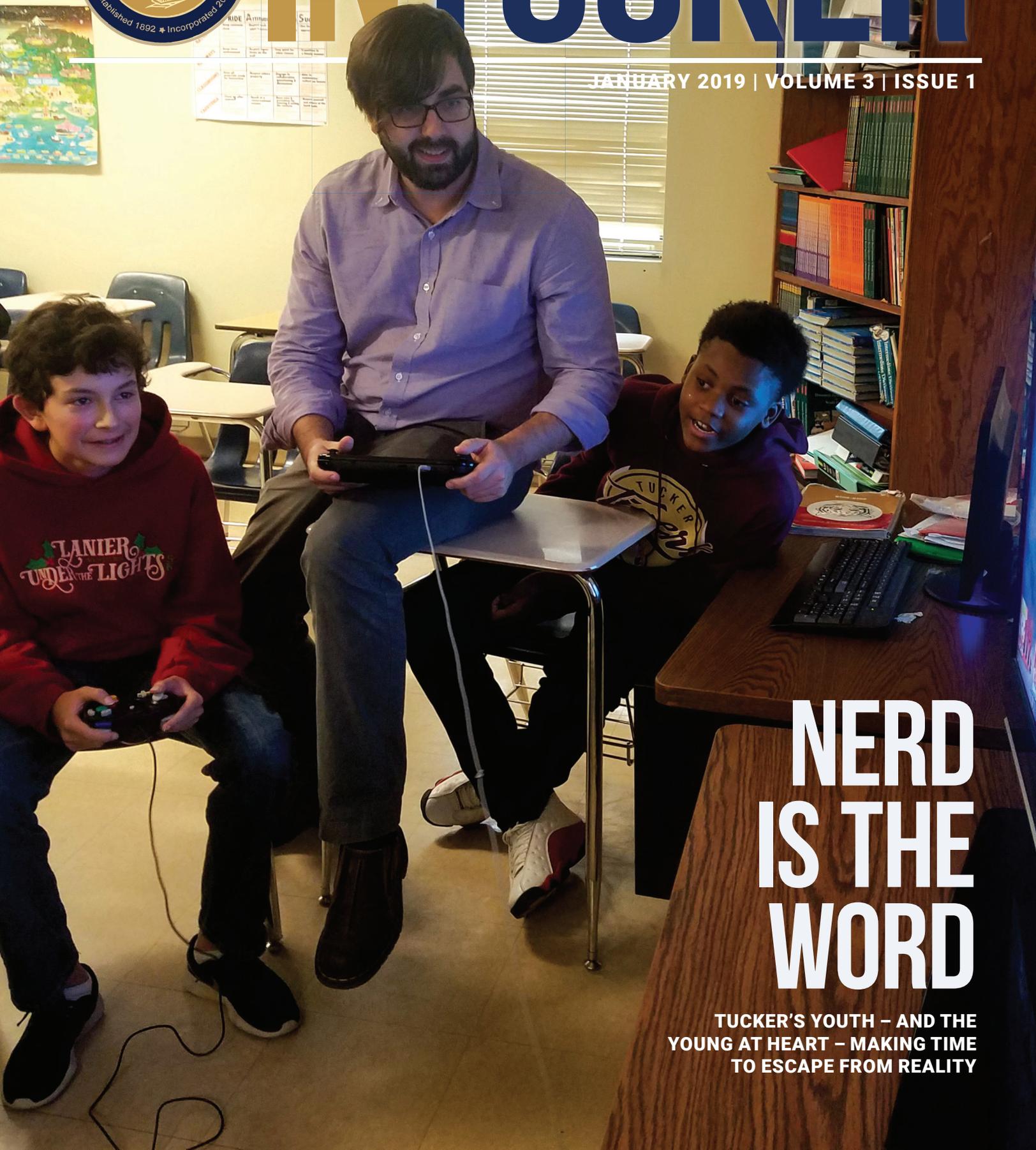




# INTUCKER

JANUARY 2019 | VOLUME 3 | ISSUE 1



# NERD IS THE WORD

TUCKER'S YOUTH – AND THE  
YOUNG AT HEART – MAKING TIME  
TO ESCAPE FROM REALITY

# EDITOR'S NOTE



Welcome to the newly redesigned InTucker! As we begin our third year of publication, we thought the time was

right for a bit of a facelift. And what a facelift it is! We've doubled the size of our newsletter, expanding from an eight-page layout to 16 pages. This magazine-style look will afford us the opportunity to offer more content, as well as more photos from our great Tucker events.

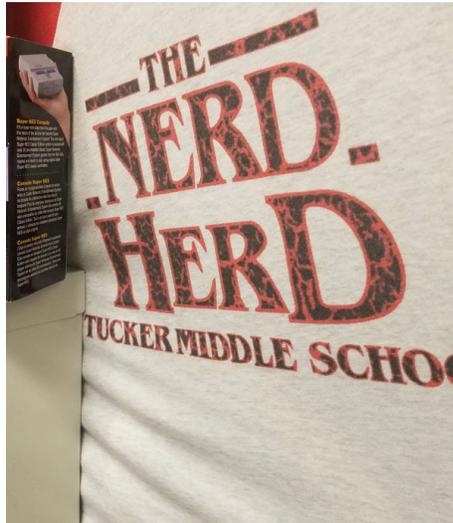
But most importantly, we are reinforcing our mission to keep you informed. We know that not everyone can make it to City Council meetings, so we offer the City Council Update. We understand that most people only come in contact with police during bad circumstances, so we keep you connected to our Tucker Precinct police liaison through his monthly column. We've also enlisted our Community and Economic Development Director to write a monthly column letting you know the trends in business and real estate here in Tucker.

We're proud to provide you with this resource and hope that, as you are getting better informed, you'll share some of this information with your friends and neighbors around Tucker. Make sure to let them know this is all available in an online format at [www.tuckerga.gov](http://www.tuckerga.gov) and they can also receive a paper copy each month, they just need to send their address to [info@tuckerga.gov](mailto:info@tuckerga.gov).

Happy reading,

**MATT HOLMES**  
INTUCKER EDITOR

# IN THIS ISSUE



### From the Cover

Students gather weekly for extracurricular fun at Tucker Middle School's after-school Nerd Herd. Flip to page 8 to find out how these kids and their teacher are using video games to form an unlikely bond.



### Plans & Studies Update - Page 12

A lot has been happening behind the scenes with Tucker's Plans and Studies. Get a refresh on the subjects and see what happens next.



### Business Boom - Page 10

In a new monthly column, John McHenry lets you know why regional power players see Tucker as a prime destination to do business.



### Citizens of the Month - Page 14

They're advocates for our schools, our city and "The Tucker Way". Get to know our Citizens of the Month, Joe and Jennifer Winterscheidt.



### Ask Rip - Page 15

Tucker's Parks and Recreation staff needs your help to curb the illegal trend of off-leash dogs in our parks.



# INTUCKER

**VOLUME 3, ISSUE 1**  
**MMXIX**

INTUCKER is a monthly publication of the City of Tucker, Georgia.  
All rights reserved.



Welcome to 2019! I hope everyone had a happy holiday season and is ready for a great new year. Here at City Hall, our staff is working hard on everything from SPLOST projects to park improvements. It really is an exciting time!

One other exciting thing is this new, expanded newsletter. When our Communications Department raised the idea of doubling the size of our newsletter, my immediate reaction was, "what's THAT going to cost?" I get positive feedback from all over the community all the time about InTucker and I happen to think it's award-worthy.

But as you flip through, I think you're going to see why they wanted to expand, and why it's worth the investment. I love that we're now going to have a monthly feature on economic development in the City. There's so much happening on that front and to be able to share it with you and everyone in our region on a regular basis is a real win.

There's also going to be a monthly feature on what's happening in our schools. There's nothing we can do that has a greater impact on the value of our property than to spread the good news about Tucker's schools. This month, you'll get to know a Tucker Middle School teacher who's mentoring his students in a very unique way (p. 8). One of the things about the seven Tucker Cluster schools is that when you go inside and get to know the students and faculty, you realize how truly blessed we are to have these schools. If you're not able to visit and see this for yourself,

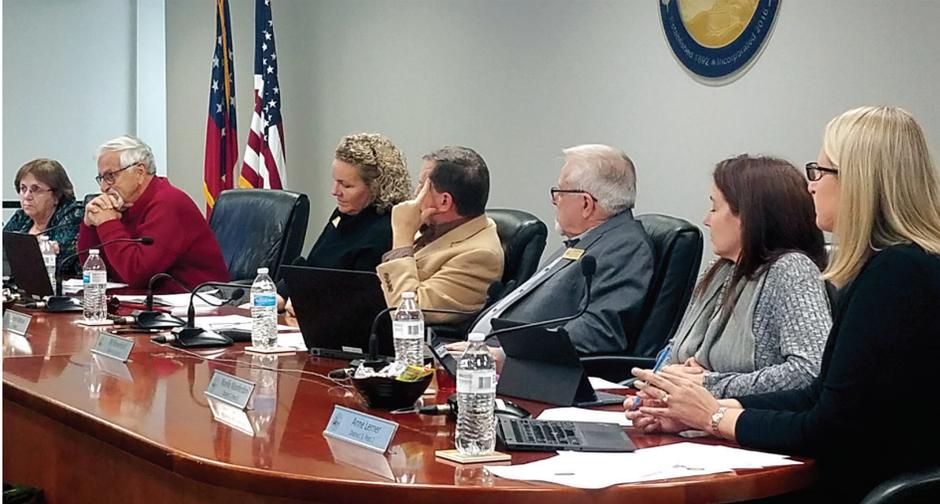
we're going to take you there in the pages of this newsletter each month. In addition, this feature will give us the opportunity to regularly remind everyone that Tucker is the ideal place to Live, Work, Play, Pray and LEARN.

For those who may be new to Tucker, schools in the City are governed and operated by the DeKalb County School District. We have a good working relationship with Region II Superintendent Trenton Arnold and with our new School Board member Allyson Gevertz. In fact, School Superintendent Dr. Stephen Green lives here in Tucker, and the District's headquarters is also located in the City. We are truly positioned to lead the way in education.

A couple of our very involved residents organized the Tucker Cluster Council (TCC) in 2017 to identify the interests of our schools as a group and to work directly with DeKalb School leadership for the betterment of the entire Cluster. This effort has been incredibly successful and incredibly inspiring; by getting parents, teachers and administrators from all around the cluster meeting and speaking together with a unified voice, the entire Cluster is being better served.

The whole point of this newsletter is to create a more informed and more engaged group of citizens in Tucker. I hope that you'll read some of these stories and feel compelled to share the good news about what's happening in our City.

**FRANK AUMAN**  
MAYOR OF TUCKER



# City Council Update

Tucker's Mayor and City Council met just once in December, a busy meeting which took place on December 10.

Council cast several votes at that meeting including approving:

- a pair of special land use permits (SLUPs) to allow for a church and private school on 43 acres at 6015 Old Stone Mountain Road.
- a moratorium on new ground level signage in the City. This moratorium coincides with the City's sign ordinance and overlay rewrite process. The moratorium will be lifted when a new sign code is adopted, likely in May.
- a deferral of a final vote on a Comprehensive Plan amendment and rezoning for a proposed townhome development on Fuller Way. The public hearing and expected vote on that issue are scheduled for January 14.

Three other issues were on the December 10 agenda as first reads and are now set for January 14 votes. One is a proposed text amendment to the City Zoning Ordinance, which would create a series of small changes to the Zoning Ordinance largely intended to bring it into accord with the City's Comprehensive Plan. Another was an ordinance to amend the Fiscal Year '19 budget. This is necessitated due in large part to unexpectedly high revenues. Finally, Council is considering an ordinance that would severely limit donation "dropboxes" in the City. The ordinance would seek to follow the trend of other jurisdictions who have banned or limited these receptacles, which often attract significant amounts of garbage.

There was also a presentation of recommendations from the Trails Master Plan. Read more about what was said on Page 12 and learn more about all the City's plans and studies at [www.tuckerga.gov/plans](http://www.tuckerga.gov/plans).

Tucker's City Council meets on January 14 and 28 at 7 p.m. at the City Hall Annex.

## DATES TO KNOW

**January 1**  
New Year's Day  
(City Hall closed)

**January 3**  
Downtown Development  
Authority

**January 9**  
Community Council

**January 14**  
City Council

**January 15**  
Zoning Board of Appeals

**January 17**  
Transportation Master Plan  
Public Meeting

**January 21**  
Martin Luther King, Jr. Day  
(City Hall closed)

**January 22**  
Sign Ordinance/Overlay  
Rewrite Public Meeting

**January 28**  
City Council

**January 29**  
Downtown Master Plan  
Visioning Workshop

Want to know what's  
happening at an upcoming  
City Council meeting?

Subscribe to our  
YouTube  
channel  
and catch  
City  
Council  
101!



# ON THE BEAT *with Lt. Schoeppner*

*Lt. D.G. Schoeppner is Tucker's liaison to the DeKalb Co. Police Department and can be followed at [facebook.com/schoeppner](https://www.facebook.com/schoeppner) or emailed at [dgschoeppner@dekalbcountyga.gov](mailto:dgschoeppner@dekalbcountyga.gov)*



In this day and age when you hear of a scam you probably think of getting an email from a Nigerian prince or some sort of fraud over the internet. But before the age of high technology, scammers would resort to more mundane methods.

On December 6, a Tucker citizen was the victim of a theft where the suspects knocked on her door and identified themselves as Dekalb Watershed employees. They told the victim that they were checking water pressure because freezing pipes were interfering with local pressure. Once the suspects were inside her house, one of them distracted her with "checking the water pressure" while the other roamed around the house and stole several items. At the end of the day, the suspects had stolen money, a bank card and jewelry. In cases like this, an ounce of prevention is truly worth a pound of cure. So, this month we will talk about a few things to watch out for to keep this type of thing from happening to you.

The first step in prevention starts when you get the knock at your door. There is nothing that says you have to open it. You can usually get an idea what someone wants by just speaking to them through the door. Even better is if you have a door chain or some other device that allows

you to open the door without it opening all of the way.

When strangers identify themselves as official workers, it is important to look at how they are dressed. In this particular case, county employees would wear some type of uniform. Even if the uniform isn't immediately obvious, they will always have some sort of identification. You can also look out for the vehicle in which they arrived. Usually county or utility vehicles will have clear markings on them. If you do not see a vehicle this can be a pretty good clue to be wary.

The suspects may also not always have the same story. In this case, they said they were county employees. I have also seen this same type of scam where the suspects said they were from the power company, telephone company or cable company. It's also common for suspects to be soliciting for roofing, landscaping or some other type of maintenance work. All door-to-door solicitors should have a permit issued by the county.

If you find yourself talking to someone who isn't wearing a uniform, doesn't have any identification/permit or doesn't have any obvious transportation, don't be afraid to call the police. If the person at your door really is some sort of county or utility worker, they will be willing to wait for the police to arrive and check them out. It is far better for the police to check out some suspicious person on the front end than have to come to your house later after you've been a victim.



## BUSINESS OF THE MONTH

# INFINITE REALITIES

---

**E**very business has a story. For some, they spring from years of planning and market research. Others are more about identifying and capitalizing on hot trends. But Downtown Tucker's newest business has its own unique story: it came about by accident.

"I was a stay-at-home dad...and I started selling comics on Facebook," Chris Brennaman recounts. "My soon-to-be partner Brandon Mealor thought I was in financial peril because 'why would Chris be selling his comic book collection?'"

After a good laugh, the two comic book enthusiasts discussed their mutual desire to open a comic book store. Three days later their minds were made up and Infinite Realities: Comics, Games & More was born.

The shop, located on the southside of the intersection of Lavista and Chamblee-Tucker Roads just across from Tucker High School, is awash in excitement. It houses thousands of new and classic comics, fantasy games and action figures. It also features dedicated space for kids and adults to browse, play and connect with other comic fans.

"We want you to find a warm, inviting place," Brennaman says. "We want you to find a place where you can discover new things...where your imagination, whether you're 40 or four, can just be exploded by the cool things that you're going to find here."

As for the location, the Infinite team is glad to be in the heart of Tucker's thriving downtown. Brennaman is just the latest new business owner to both live and work in Tucker.

"Tucker had never really been on my radar," Brennaman recalls. "When we looked at our house here it felt right. Tucker felt like home...The more we spent time in this community, the more it felt like a community and I knew that Tucker was where I wanted to open a business."

Infinite Realities: Comics, Games & More is located at 5007 Lavista Road. You can find them online at [www.infiniterealitiescomics.com](http://www.infiniterealitiescomics.com).

# REVENGE OF THE NERDS

## TUCKER MIDDLE SCHOOL CLUB MAKES IT COOL TO BE A NERD

Walk through the second-floor hallway of Tucker Middle School at 4:30 on any given Monday afternoon and you'll hear a buzz. As you get closer to Room A202, that buzz intensifies, growing to a roar. Inside the class, dozens of pre-teen boys are locked in fierce competition, trash talking one another and sweating it out as they vie for victory.

No, Room A202 is not the school's gymnasium. It's a Social Studies classroom and home to the Tucker Middle School "Nerd Herd". It's a gamer's paradise, complete with multiple screens, gaming systems and Dungeons and Dragons.

"My first year here, I was doing the Parents' Night," recalls Nerd Herd sponsor Chris Medeiros. "The parents didn't want to ask me about Social Studies or what I was teaching their kids. All they wanted to know was 'what is Magic the Gathering and why are our kids obsessed with it?'"

That was a lightbulb moment for Medeiros. A gaming enthusiast himself, he decided to invite his students to come after school to hang out and play. His students began inviting other students and the school soon had a new unofficial club.

"If I was in middle school, I would have loved to have something like this," Medeiros says. "Kids need just to have fun. They're in class all the time. Here, there are kids from different teams. They all get to come here and just hang out."

The club also was inspired by the premiere of the hit Netflix show *Stranger Things*, in which a group of middle schoolers form an after-school club where they play video and role-playing games. They say seeing this play out on television reinforced that embracing your inner-

nerd can actually be cool.

"When we started the club [school leadership] had an issue with using the word 'nerd' and the negative connotation that comes with it," Medeiros says. "This isn't the 1980s anymore. Times have changed. We're taking that perception of nerds and flipping it."

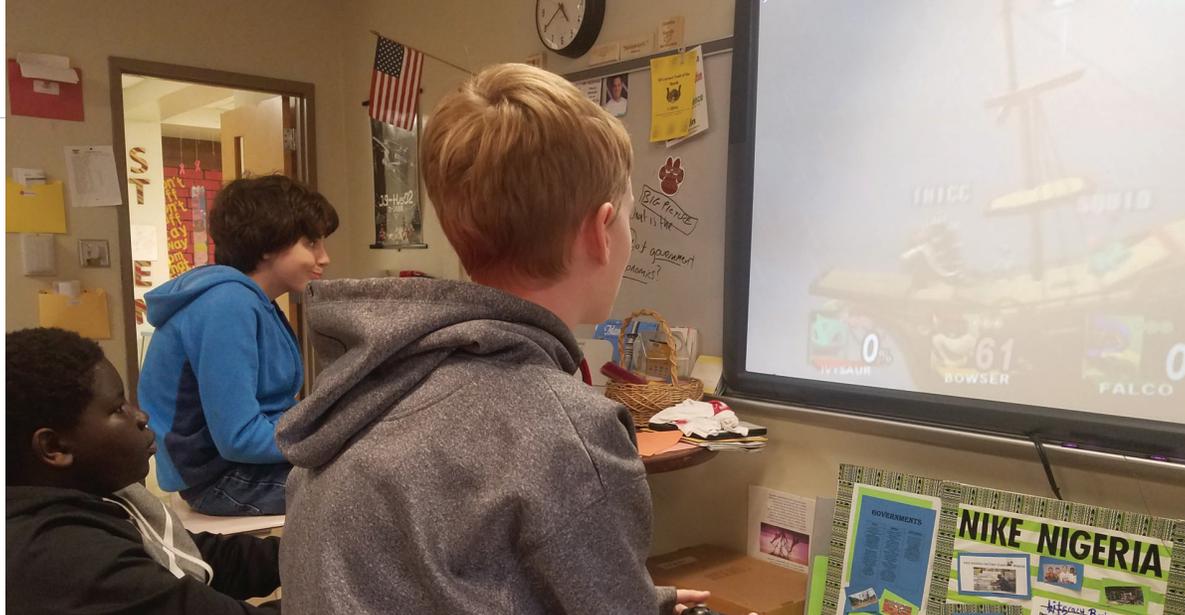
"It's perfect for us," says seventh grader Joseph Coleman. "We're nerds. We're fine with it. It's like a nerd pride club."

"It's a good way to interact with other people," adds sixth grader Alan Ramirez. "I don't have game consoles at home, so this is good."

As far as game consoles go, Medeiros has it covered. In addition to tablets and projector screens, he has multiple TVs, a Nintendo Wii, Nintendo Wii U and a Nintendo Switch. Thanks to an abundance of controllers, the group is able to engage in multi-player games like *Super Smash Bros.* as many as eight at a time.

Medeiros, a usually laid back and gregarious teacher, is noticeably more strict during Nerd Herd sessions. That's because all the gaming equipment the students are using belongs to him personally. Medeiros will not tolerate controllers being dropped or tablets hanging off the edge of a desk. Broken equipment comes at a personal cost.

That gets at a more important point in the story: unlike some coaches or after-school tutors, Medeiros doesn't make any additional money for running the Nerd Herd. No additional resources are given, nor any additional support, not that he asks for it. This entire club is being run by one teacher's desire to see his students connect with one another outside the academic setting.



Now in its third year, the Nerd Herd officially has alumni. Students like Tucker High School freshman Sam Penkava stop in periodically to game with the younger kids and, although it's not their intent, provide mentorship.

"Being a member of Nerd Herd with Mr. Medeiros when I was a middle school student gave me the opportunity to know him and my classmates beyond academics," Penkava explains. "Nerd Herd is fun, yet very competitive. When I am able, I still go back to catch up with Mr. Medeiros and the other excellent teachers that often participate in this amazing club."

While the Nerd Herd gives students an outlet for their energy and competitiveness, there's also an important life lesson being taught. That lesson is about humility.

"On occasion, I play Super Smash Bros. and put them in their place," Medeiros brags.

Seventh grader Jacob Dayoub says the teacher vs. student battles are something to behold.

"Sometimes Mr. Medeiros plays," Dayoub explains. "When he does, it's lots of sweaty palms and raging."

"He's pretty good," Coleman adds. "He's an '80s baby, so he's been playing a long time."

To say that the Nerd Herd is just about kids sitting around playing video games is really to miss the point. It's about a teacher going beyond the call of duty. It's about older teens providing mentorship to pre-teens. It's about the blossoming of friendships that will last for years to come.

And it's about taking a word, for decades used as pejorative and a means of bullying, and changing the perception. Call one of these kids a nerd? They take it as a compliment. That's because a seat in Room A202 with the Nerd Herd is too cool for school.

## TUCKER CLUSTER

### Updates & News

#### Important Dates

- January 1-4 – Schools closed for Winter Break
- January 7 – First Day of Second Semester
- January 21 – Schools closed for Martin Luther King, Jr. Day

#### The Brag Sheet

- Students from Livsey Elementary competed in the DeKalb County School District Academic Bowl on December 1.
- The Midvale Elementary community sponsored 28 children through their Giving Tree, providing clothing and other holiday gifts for disadvantaged students. The project is an outreach of the Kindergarten classes' Problem-Based Learning program.
- The Robotics Team from Tucker Middle won the TOP Award at the First Lego League Robotics Competition. They also won the Champions Award and Best Overall Team Award.
- The Tucker High School Foundation recognized two educators for 20 years of service at the school: AP World History teacher Natasha Derricks and Special Education paraprofessional Gail Ray.



# BUSINESS BOOM

*by John McHenry, Community and Economic Development Director*

Since the City of Tucker came into existence in 2016, we have experienced a dynamic and protracted business expansion. With Tucker’s enviable location at the edge of the metro region and easy access to the Perimeter and 78, the City continues to experience business growth amongst its diverse range of retail and industrial businesses. The City boasts a broad range of housing options within its 20 square miles and continues to attract new residents with a current population of 35,000.

Aside from location, I’d like to highlight four key components that are driving Tucker’s business boom.

## DOWNTOWN RESURGENCE



Downtown Tucker – with its mix of restaurants, stores and the popular Farmers Market – has seen a resurgence of activity with the opening of new offices and eateries. For the owners of Village Burger, locating in Tucker was an easy decision.

“Village Burger wants to be a restaurant where the people of a community come to see their friends and neighbors and enjoy a great meal,” shared Ricardo Gonzalez, one of the owners. “As Downtown Tucker continues to revitalize, locating in the heart of the City fits our business model perfectly. We just passed our one-year anniversary and we are thrilled with the community support.”

In addition, the City and the Tucker-Northlake Community Improvement District (CID) have contracted with a consultant to develop a blueprint for the future growth of the downtown with a combination of retail, restaurants and mixed-use developments. This Downtown Master Plan will be complete in late spring and will look at aspects of downtown that you might not have thought about: parking facilities, smart usage of alleyways and connectivity to the City’s soon-to-be burgeoning PATH system.

## BUSINESS PARTNERSHIPS



The City has a great partnership with its business community and works collaboratively with two major business groups, the Tucker-Northlake CID and the Tucker Summit CID. One of the aspects these business groups enjoy most about being in the City of Tucker is the seamless permitting process, which actually saves their member businesses money.

“I hear from business owners regularly who are pleased with the responsiveness and quick turnaround times provided by City staff,” says Tucker-Northlake CID Executive Director Matthew Lee. “The City of Tucker has been the best thing to happen to the Tucker-Northlake CID since we organized.”

In the Tucker Summit CID, there are many industrial properties that are now being retrofitted for biotech. Eurofins, a Belgian joint venture with Emory University, opened a 40,000 square foot laboratory facility in Tucker. According to Tucker Summit CID Executive Director Emory Morsberger, it was the City’s excellent transportation network and proximity to nearby universities that sealed the deal.



**TUCKER IS UNDOUBTEDLY ONE OF THE FASTEST-RISING BUSINESS DESTINATIONS IN THE METRO ATLANTA AREA. EACH MONTH, THE BUSINESS BOOM WILL SEEK TO SHOW DIFFERENT EXAMPLES OF HOW TUCKER'S BUSINESS SCENE IS FLOURISHING.**

## STRONG INDUSTRIAL SECTOR



In 2018, the City saw the building of a 200,000 square foot flex warehouse space off of Mountain Industrial Boulevard, as well as the nearby rezoning of a property for another equally large industrial building.

"The Stone Mountain industrial submarket, which encompasses nearly 26 million square feet, is experiencing strong fundamentals," said Brett Buckner, Ackerman & Co. senior vice president. "Vacancy rates now stand at 5.3 percent and current absorption, at 608,442 square feet, is on track to surpass last year's numbers."

Brett Irwin is a long-term owner of multi-tenant industrial buildings in the Tucker area. He says the partnership between the City and the CID are critical.

"The building of a symbiotic relationship between the City of Tucker and Tucker Summit CID is attracting new employers with higher-paying jobs who desire to locate in the area," Irwin explains. "With occupancy at close to 95 percent for the largest property owners and the ability to get higher rates, the increased economics of the area will provide for better parks, schools and safety."

## DIVERSE NORTHLAKE



The Northlake area continues to grow as a regional commercial center with its wide mix of office and retail opportunities and excellent access to the Perimeter. The Tucker Meridian shopping center, which includes Dick's Sporting Goods, DSW, Sprouts, Newk's and many other well-known names, is almost fully leased and a 90-unit senior housing center will open across Northlake Parkway in March.

Bob Smith of Beneficial Communities chose Tucker for the \$15 million senior development. After weighing all the factors related to a development of this scale, he says the decision to locate in Tucker was easy.

"The Tucker-Northlake area is already a 'lifelong community' destination for seniors and we wanted to add to that reality," Smith explains. "The vast quantity and quality of local amenities, the general walkability of the area and the proximity to world-class healthcare were all contributing factors to answer the question: 'Why Tucker?'"

# Tucker

## PLANS & STUDIES UPDATE

In the July 2018 issue of InTucker, we laid out a long list of plans and studies that were either ongoing or in the works. These processes were designed to facilitate research and bring some expertise and guidance to a range of issues with long-term impacts on the City. Now, six months later, it's time to update you on the progress of some of those processes.

### **TRAILS MASTER PLAN**

Consultants for the Trails Master Plan presented their findings before the Mayor and City Council at their meeting on December 10. This was the first plan to be presented because it inevitably will overlap with other plans including the Downtown Master Plan, Transportation Master Plan and Parks Master Plan.

The plan process was led by consultants from KAIZEN Collaborative and the PATH Foundation. They made recommendations on a network of paths spanning 32 miles, connecting to City parks, as well as to downtown Tucker. For reasons of cost, such a network would have to be a long-term project constructed over a period of several years. In the short-term, the consulting team has recommended a plan to start small, including a path that goes from downtown running north to Kelley Cofer Park.

The entire proposal can be viewed at [www.tuckerga.gov/parks](http://www.tuckerga.gov/parks).



### **PARKS MASTER PLAN**

The final public input meeting for the Parks Master Plan was held at Tucker Recreation Center on December 11. Consultants from Barge Design Solutions presented their preliminary recommendations for priorities going forward in Tucker's parks. After receiving additional resident input on things like programs, community needs and park ordinances, the consultants are going back to fine tune their plan. It is scheduled to be presented to the Mayor and City Council on January 28.

You can still provide input by emailing [rrobertson@tuckerga.gov](mailto:rrobertson@tuckerga.gov).

### **TRANSPORTATION MASTER PLAN**

This plan has had a robust citizen engagement element, which will continue with a public input meeting on January 17 at 7 p.m. To this point, consultants from VHB and The Collaborative have collected data on traffic patterns and habits, incorporated results of an intersection

safety analysis and begun to divide their recommendations into three tiers: short-term, mid-range and long-term improvements. The Mayor and City Council are tentatively scheduled to hear final recommendations on this project on March 25.

Residents and other stakeholders can still provide input through the online survey at [www.tuckertomorrowplan.com](http://www.tuckertomorrowplan.com).

### **DOWNTOWN MASTER PLAN**

Of all the plans and studies ongoing in the City of Tucker, this is the newest. Having kicked off in November, the Downtown Master Plan is a partnership between the City and the Tucker-Northlake CID. Consultants from TSW have gathered input from the community, but especially want to hear the voices of property owners in the downtown area.

Tucker's Downtown Development Authority (DDA) will have significant involvement in the plan before it is brought through the City's legislative process, going before the Community Council, the Planning Commission and, ultimately, the Mayor and City Council on May 28.

There are several more efforts ongoing, including the Historic Resource Report, Sign Ordinance/Overlay Rewrite and a Branding Campaign. You can find all available details at [www.tuckerga.gov/plans](http://www.tuckerga.gov/plans).

# TEAM TUCKER *Spotlight*

## JOSH ROTH, BUILDING OFFICIAL



**What does a Building Official do?** All the fun stuff like plan review, code interpretations, inspections and manage the Building Department.

**How did you get to this position?** I was in the private sector most of my life as a general contractor/developer. My dad had a construction company and put me to work every summer doing a different trade. So, it gives me some compassion for the situations that arise.

**How much of your time is spent in the office vs. out on inspections?** 70 percent in the office, 30 percent in the field.

**What is the best part of your job?** I enjoy raising awareness about building safety and the importance of current safety codes and the role of code officials in creating safe, sustainable structures that communities can rely on for generations to come.

**What is the one thing people need to know about Building and Permitting?** Building codes save lives and reduce recovery time when a disaster strikes.

### *Off the Wall*

**Where would we find you in your free time?** Fishing with my wife and boys.

**At what age did you begin to lose your hair?** Fifteen.

**What were your best and worst subjects in school?** Math was my best and all I can say is thank goodness for spellcheck.

**What's your favorite flavor of ice cream?** Chocolate.

**What is your spirit animal?** Don't have one.

# JENNIFER & JOE WINTERSCHIEDT

## CITIZENS OF THE MONTH

---

"I first got to know Jennifer and Joe Winterscheidt through our mutual commitment to Tucker. We were volunteering with Tucker 2014/2015 and Jennifer helped plan many great events. That seems like ages ago!

Throughout our journey to cityhood Jennifer and Joe were always so generous with their time and talents. As former teachers and the parents of two incredible sons, they are truly dedicated to the success of our Tucker students. Throughout their sons' school years, they've served as PTO board members at Livsey Elementary, Tucker Middle and Tucker High, plus volunteered with a variety of school clubs and activities. Joe is currently on the board of the Tucker High School Foundation and Jennifer was the 2018-2019 president of the Tucker Tigers Band Parent Association. They also helped revive the tradition of the Tucker Road Race on Tucker Day in support of the THS Band and Orchestra.

I'm thankful Jennifer has stayed involved with the City by serving on our Tucker Tomorrow Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee. She's also quite a talented singer, lending her wonderful voice to the newly established Tucker Community Singers. I'm sure I've forgotten to mention something here, as Joe and Jennifer exemplify what I like to call 'The Tucker Way'! It's about putting others before yourself and working together for the good of the entire community. It's about dedicating your time and talent and giving your all even when you think you have nothing left to give. That's what the Winterscheidts do every day!"

*Nomination by Anne Lerner*



# “ASK RIP” *Answers Your Park Questions*



*Rip Robertson is the Parks and Recreation Director for the City of Tucker. He brings to the job 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.*

Sometimes in this line of work there are problems that don't have easy solutions. Folks rightly want an issue addressed, but it either takes some time, a lot of money or both. I'd like to take this opportunity to explore one of those problems we're currently experiencing here in Tucker and to ask for your help.

This past month, we had a citizen contact us saying that she's had run-ins with off-leash dogs on the trails at Henderson Park. This wasn't one or two run-ins, this is several that she has captured on video. This person wrote to us asking what we plan to do about it. First and foremost, we DO NOT permit dogs to be off-leash in our Tucker parks.

That is consistent with the rules when these were DeKalb County parks and it's consistent with municipalities across much of Georgia. Your dog may be the most friendly, laid back pooch in all of Tucker; it does not give him the right to roam off-leash.

A few of the things we have done and plan to do to help with this problem are:

1. We have installed all new park signage that specifically states that ALL pets must be on a leash at all times.
2. We have informed our staff that, if they see any off-leash dogs in our parks, they are to make sure the owners know those dogs are to be on a leash.
3. We have informed our Friends groups in all the parks to make sure they are also helping us keep an eye out for possible problems.
4. We are working with our Communications Department to promote safe pet practices through social media and other means.



With all that said, you and I both know these steps are not going to solve the problem 100 percent. It's going to take buy-in from the community. That's where you come in.

If you are enjoying some of the nearly 300 acres of Tucker parks and you see someone with a dog off-leash, let us know about it. Where did it happen? When did it happen? What type of dog? These are the kinds of things that can help us pinpoint where the problems are. We ask that, for your safety, you don't confront other pet owners. If you choose to do so anyway, don't be nasty about it, just remind them that it's against the law and the City's trying to get this problem under control. You may, if necessary, contact DeKalb Co. Animal Control, as this is the agency that is responsible for enforcing leash laws in the County.

We need help on this one, folks. Expect to hear a lot more from myself and the Parks and Recreation team as we get toward springtime. We want you to use our Tucker parks and we want to make sure you are doing so safely.

# TUCKERGA.GOV

CITY OF TUCKER - 4119 ADRIAN STREET, TUCKER, GA 30084  
678.597.9040



## Community Corner



### **1/15 – Tucker Cluster Council**

**6 p.m., 1991 Silver Hill Road**

Teachers, administrators, parents and community partners gather every other month to discuss the priorities and needs of the seven Tucker Cluster schools. The meeting, which is attended by officials with the DeKalb County School District, is a way to present a unified voice to the District on what schools in Tucker need. Anyone with an interest in the schools is invited to come and take part.

### **1/16 – Tucker Lifelong**

### **Community Committee**

**7 p.m., 4358 Lynburn Drive**

The Lifelong Community Committee is made up of Tucker residents of all ages who have a vested interest in the community and its growth. Anyone can join, or if you do not want to join “another thing”, feel free to come to the community meetings or send an email to the Tucker Civic Association and share your ideas. Meetings are held at Hearthside Club.

### **1/21 – Martin Luther King, Jr.**

### **Day of Service**

### **Various Sites**

Tucker’s Friends of Parks’ groups will be organizing volunteers for service projects in the parks, Tucker Civic Association will have a community project and other events will also be happening around the community. Last year, hundreds dedicated their MLK Day to giving back in Tucker. For specific opportunities this year, visit our Community Calendar at [www.tuckerga.gov](http://www.tuckerga.gov).

## PLEASE DELIVER TO: