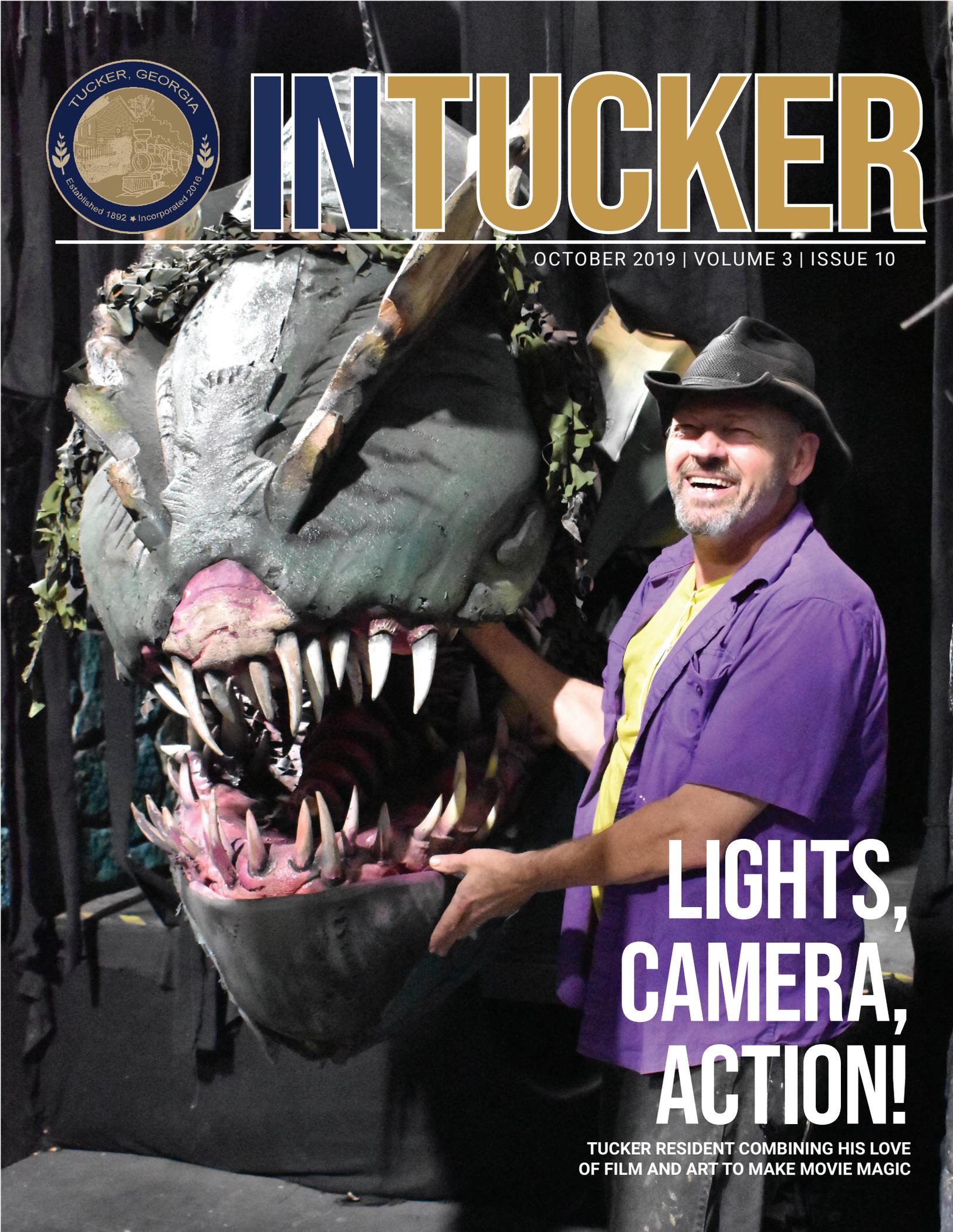




INTUCKER

OCTOBER 2019 | VOLUME 3 | ISSUE 10



LIGHTS,
CAMERA,
ACTION!

TUCKER RESIDENT COMBINING HIS LOVE
OF FILM AND ART TO MAKE MOVIE MAGIC

EDITOR'S NOTE



Last month, I was proud to represent the City of Tucker at the 3CMA National Conference in Denver, Colorado.

I was proud and also very excited, as Tucker took home the Silver Circle Award for our work on *InTucker* Magazine. It's a great national honor for our little publication.

Why did we win?

It really starts with our readers. We looked at the type of content you wanted to see. So, we added columns each month looking at law enforcement, parks and recreation, schools and economic development. We give you a chance to get to know our staff, outstanding citizens and local businesses.

More than anything, though, we're here to connect with you. Case in point: this month, you'll find a story explaining how the City's Code Enforcement team determines what is a right-of-way. This may be one of the more boring articles we've printed in the magazine, but it also may be one of the most important. This is our effort to answer a common question we get from residents and business owners every day; it is against code to place signage in rights-of-way, but how do we know where those are? Rather than you having to call in and ask or, worse, having signs you've put out along the road removed, we are hoping this article will help you understand what can and cannot be done according to code.

When we started *InTucker* in 2017, it was to create a tool to entertain you, but also to inform you. We're proud those efforts are being recognized and promise to carry this mission on into the future.

MATT HOLMES
INTUCKER EDITOR

IN THIS ISSUE



From the Cover

Tucker is full of creative people, but few are using their talents quite like Roy Wooley. On page 10, find out how he is taking full advantage of Georgia's film production boom.



Parent Participation

Students and teachers across Tucker are benefiting from the work of PTAs, PTOs and foundations. On page 6, learn some of the creative ways these groups are making a difference.



Business Boom

They make a good chicken sandwich, but it's Chick-fil-A's philanthropy that is resonating here in Tucker. Read more on 8 in John McHenry's Business Boom.



Business Boom

For 100 years, Cofer Bros. has been an iconic presence in downtown Tucker. As they prepare to celebrate their big anniversary, get to know some Cofer history on page 12.



Ask Rip

They say change is inevitable and in a building like Tucker Recreation Center, that's certainly true. On page 15, Rip outlines the plans for what's to come at the Rec Center's gymnasium.



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From the Mayor

As you look across the country, there are several cities that have a bad reputation when it comes to traffic. You hear about the freeway gridlock in Los Angeles. D.C.'s Capital Beltway is notorious for traffic jams. And yes, metro Atlanta consistently ranks at or near the top of just about any list for worst commute time in America. It's something that many have just come to accept, yet that's the last thing we can afford to do. Families factor in traffic when looking at where to relocate. Transit options are a major factor for companies like Amazon as they consider which cities to call home. Simply accepting bad traffic is not an option.

Last month, I was honored to be appointed by Governor Kemp to the board of the Georgia Regional Transportation Authority (GRTA). This

body is charged with addressing "air quality and mobility in metro Atlanta... as well as serving as the Governor's voice for strategic direction in transportation planning for Georgia's most populous region." We're essentially going to be looking at best practices and innovations in the transportation realm and seeing which can best be implemented to ease the traffic burden around metro Atlanta.

I got some exposure to this topic last year when I accompanied a delegation of elected officials and business leaders from DeKalb County on a trip to Minneapolis/St. Paul, Minnesota. The Twin Cities have been on the cutting edge of effectively incorporating concepts like light rail and bus rapid transit and the impact it's had on their traffic is impressive. I've also been engaged with a group

of mayors and transportation officials on the I-285 Express Lane projects. I would need a lot more space than what I have here to get into the minutia, but rest assured that these projects being overseen by GDOT will have a huge impact on Tucker and surrounding areas for decades to come.

Seeking transportation solutions is a must for any city, especially in metro Atlanta. We cannot afford to accept the status quo. The long-term impacts on our residents, our businesses and the ability of people to come and enjoy all Tucker has to offer is too important.


FRANK AUMAN
MAYOR OF TUCKER

City Council Update



Our Mayor and City Council held two work sessions and two meetings during the month of September, casting several important votes. The biggest vote happened at the meeting on September 9, as Council voted unanimously to adopt the City's Transportation Master Plan. The document, which includes several amendments to a previous draft version, was adopted as part of the City's Comprehensive Plan and will guide transportation decisions in the City for years to come.

At that September 9 meeting, the Council also voted unanimously to approve a contract with Southeastern Services and Equipment to install multi-purpose flooring in the gymnasium at Tucker Recreation Center. The materials and installation will come at a cost of \$98,598. (Learn more about this project in Ask Rip on page 15.)

The September 23 meeting saw a pair of issues on the agenda for public hearings. The first was for a rezoning and special land use permit (SLUP) to allow an Arby's restaurant with a drive-thru at 4260 and 4270 Lawrenceville Highway. A second read and final vote is expected in October. The other public hearing dealt with a rezoning and SLUP to allow a solid waste facility at 1374 Beverage Drive. The eight-acre site is home to Clean

Harbors, a company that bills itself as North America's largest environmental services company. They collect household and auto waste and store it in collection bins for up to 10 days, while waiting for trucks to take the waste to out-of-town facilities for final disposal. Both the rezoning and the SLUP were approved on 6-1 votes.

Earlier in the meeting, Council took action to start the City's Trail Master Plan, voting unanimously to approve a \$125,450 contract with Tucker-based KAIZEN Collaborative. This agreement will utilize SPLOST funds to pay for design, utility relocation and grading on the first leg of the City's trail system. That stretch of trail would run through existing alleyways in the downtown area.

Council also held a first read on a proposed prohibition on shareable e-scooters and e-bikes. The proposed ordinance comes in response to safety concerns about the devices. A second read and final vote is expected next month. The same is true of a first read held on an ordinance to prohibit consumption of alcoholic beverages or the transport of open containers in public areas.

The Mayor and City Council will hold a work session on October 7 at 7 p.m. at the City Hall Annex (4228 First Avenue).

DATES TO KNOW

October 7
Downtown Development Authority

October 9
Community Council

October 14
City Council

October 16
Municipal Court (Environmental)

October 23
Municipal Court (Offenses)

October 24
Planning Commission

October 28
City Council

TUCKER SOCIAL



 **Nextdoor**

ON THE BEAT with Lt. Schoeppner

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



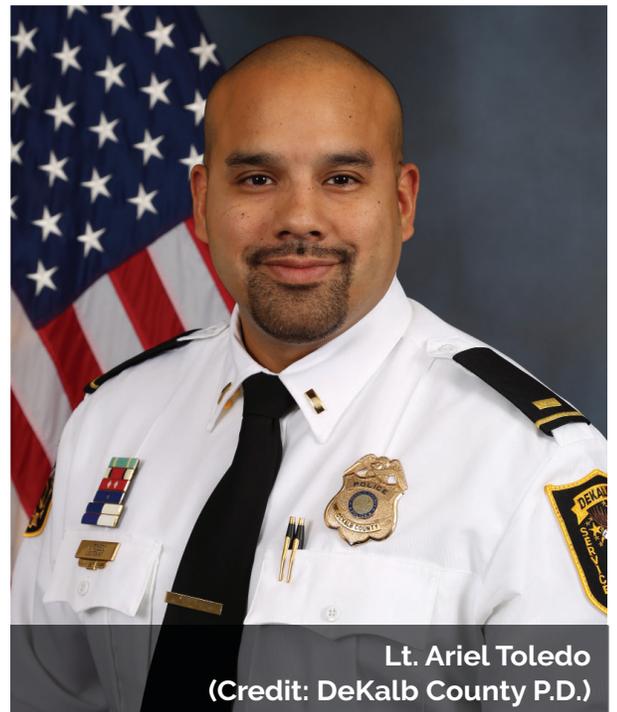
At the end of August, we bid happy retirement to Lt. Bernard Gales. He had been the watch commander over Tucker Precinct's evening watch since 2017. This month I am very happy to welcome Lt. Ariel Toledo back to Tucker Precinct to fill the role vacated by Lt. Gales.

Lt. Toledo started his career with the DeKalb County Police back in 1997 when he graduated from the 55th Police Academy. He was assigned to the uniform division and worked the road out of Center Precinct. After two years there, we opened Tucker Precinct and Officer Toledo was assigned there to continue working the road. While at Tucker Precinct, Lt. Toledo earned a spot on the precinct COPS unit, a specialized group of officers who did mostly proactive patrol and targeted mostly high crime and drug areas.

In 2002, Lt. Toledo took a detour from law enforcement, leaving the force to care for his mother. She was battling cancer and needed the type of help that he was not able to provide while working a police officer's schedule. Fortunately, things took a positive turn, as his mom made a recovery from her cancer and he was able to rejoin the force.

Upon returning to DeKalb, Lt. Toledo was assigned to North Precinct. While he was there, he earned his first detective assignment. He was a property crimes detective at North until he was selected to be DeKalb Police Public Information Officer in 2005.

After serving as the PIO, Lt. Toledo was promoted to Sergeant and assigned as a supervisor in the Gang Unit. This unit was primarily responsible for identifying gangs and their individual members. Then when these gang members committed



Lt. Ariel Toledo
(Credit: DeKalb County P.D.)

crimes, the gang units assisted with using this knowledge to help with the prosecution. After the gang unit, Sgt. Toledo spent time as a uniform supervisor at North Precinct.

In 2016, Lt. Toledo got promoted to his current rank and assigned to the Background and Recruiting Unit. There he was responsible for increasing the department's outreach to hire more officers. Under his watch the department was finally able to end the net yearly manpower loss that it had been experiencing for several years.

Lt. Toledo has accumulated a broad range of experience so far in his career with DeKalb Police. His assignments with the COPS unit, CID, the gang unit and even the background unit give him a wealth of knowledge to pass on to our younger officers. This will make us all better officers and is just one example of why I think Tucker is the best precinct in all of the DeKalb Police Department.

BUILDING A FOUNDATION

TUCKER CLUSTER SCHOOL PARENTS AND TEACHERS GOING THE EXTRA MILE FOR STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

Students in Mr. Minott’s ESOL class at Tucker High School have a unique way of learning. These students are picking up the English language, so traditional textbooks and novels aren’t always the best tools. Instead, these students are learning English through the universal appeal of comic books.

Comic books are not a school resource funded by DeKalb County or pretty much any other school district. But the students at Tucker High have them thanks to the hard work and generosity of the Tucker High School Foundation.

Founded in 2011, the Tucker High School Foundation was created to prepare the Centennial Celebration for the school. They raised funds from local businesses and alumni to host past graduating classes and the Tucker community in a weekend long celebration. Once that goal was achieved, the foundation was back at square one asking, ‘what next?’

Since then, they’ve regrouped and shifted their focus to supporting current learning efforts at the high school.

“The Tucker High School Foundation is dedicated to improving the lives of the teachers and students of Tucker High School,” says foundation president Joe Winterscheidt. “We sponsor regular teacher appreciation at events such as open house and curriculum night, provide teacher grants for classrooms, and award Senior and STEM scholarships to deserving students.”

The foundation is thriving because of a strong executive board and committees staffed by alumni, current teachers and community stakeholders. The foundation has held several fundraisers over the years including an annual golf tournament, spirit nights in partnership with local restaurants and, for the first time this year, a Casino Night.



"We are always looking for creative fundraising ideas that will bring together members of the community for an event slightly different than your ordinary everyday fundraiser," says Casino Night Chair Alicia Maclin. "Casino Nights are an interactive experience that brings the fun and excitement of Las Vegas to the Tucker community!"

Across the Tucker Cluster, schools have come up with their own ways to raise these types of additional funds. Some include the traditional Parent Teacher Association (PTA) model, while others have adopted a Parent Teacher Organization (PTO). Each option is effective, but a foundation allows for more autonomy in how it operates and how it spends money.

Regardless of the type of organization, each school in the Tucker Cluster has its own major fundraisers throughout the school year. Many of the schools host read-a-thon events, where friends and family members donate money to encourage students to read. Others organize fall carnivals, where people outside the school community can come and participate. At Livsey Elementary School, they think even further outside the box, hosting a Color Run each spring where runners navigate a five kilometer course while being sprayed with a variety of colors of liquid chalk.

"I love that our PTO gets so involved in creating these fun events," says Livsey Principal Shauna Pickett. "These volunteers put in months of hard work to create special memories and raise money. Ultimately, the kids are the ones who benefit."

It's important work, but it can be a lot for parents who often have full-time jobs or other children to take care of. So why put in all the effort? Joe Wintersheidt says the reason is simple.

"I want to leave the school in a better place than when our first child started here eight years ago."

With the work of parents across the Tucker Cluster and cooperation from school administrators, each of Tucker's schools can share in that same mission.

Tucker High School Casino Night



**Saturday
November 2
7-11 p.m.**

Tucker Rec. Center
4898 Lavista Road

Tickets on sale now at tuckerhighschoolfoundation.com

TUCKER CLUSTER

Updates & News

Important Dates

- **October 7** - Board of Education Meeting
- **October 10-11** - Schools closed for Fall Break
- **October 14** - Schools closed for Columbus Day

The Brag Sheet

Brockett Elementary

- Around 180 special guests showed up for lunch at Brockett's annual Grandparents Luncheon in September.

Livsey Elementary

- On September 16, Livsey held its second annual Think, Stretch, Grow Pep Rally. They discussed the importance of the Growth Targets and Goals for MAP testing, celebrated students who completed 50 percent or more of their summer packets, and students got to tell what "Growth Mindset" means to them in a video produced by two of Livsey's outstanding teachers.

Smoke Rise Elementary

- The Aeroponics Tower Garden is blooming with kale and bibb lettuce. STEM teacher Ms. Bernardette Cummings' vision is for the garden to sustain a salad bar for the Smoke Rise cafeteria. She would also like to donate agricultural products to local food banks. The garden is giving students the chance to learn about the engineering design process, as well as take part in community service projects.

Tucker High

- Tucker students held their annual homecoming parade down Main Street on September 27 before celebrating a homecoming victory on the gridiron over the Charles Drew Titans.

BUSINESS BOOM

by John McHenry, Community and Economic Development Director



We all know that cows can agree on one thing - eat more chicken! And that's been the case right here in Tucker for the last 30 years. On October 12, the Chick-fil-A located at 4340 Hugh Howell Road will celebrate 30 strong years of providing delicious

food and amazing customer service in the Tucker community. To celebrate this event, this Chick-fil-A location is partnering with NETWorks Cooperative Ministry to raise funds for those in need by selling cookies, the proceeds of which will be donated to help our neighbors. Prices for the original chicken biscuit and the original chicken sandwich will be rolled back to 1989 prices for the event and there will be face painting, touch-a-truck, cow appearances, and lots of fun and games including cake and ice cream.

Local businessman Brad Spratte, who operates both the Tucker Station and Northlake Festival restaurants, found that working with Chick-fil-A brought together two of his main interests – an energetic entrepreneurial spirit and a desire to give back to the community that raised him. Brad grew up in the Northlake area and sees both his stores as part of one large community.



“Cityhood has brought the community together and it’s inspiring to see how residents and businesses are working together to build a better tomorrow for Tucker,” he explains.

It’s not only through great food and healthy options that Chick-fil-A is making an impact, these two high performing stores are also employing over 200 people in the community. Brad is grateful for his team and how they serve the community.

“Our staff is the key to our success and having a talented labor pool right here in Tucker is a huge advantage,” he says.



Brad also plays a key local role as the Chairman of the Tucker-Northlake Community Improvement District (CID), an organization that uses commercial property owners’ voluntarily contributed tax dollars to improve the area.

“I have witnessed how the local commercial property owners can really make a difference by leveraging funds in order to create a safer, better looking and more accessible city,” says Matthew Lee, Executive Director of the Tucker-Northlake CID. Lee shared that he is continually impressed with Brad’s ability to keep these two stores, which are at either end of the CID, and still have the ability to put in the time and effort necessary to help improve the Tucker-Northlake corridor.

As for the charitable aspect, Chick-fil-A truly is making a difference in the Tucker community.

“Chick-fil-A has been a long-term partner,” explains NETWorks Executive Director David Fisher. “They provide financial support that helps feed hungry neighbors and prevent homelessness all year through financial assistance. In addition, through the Good Neighbor Shops program, their support has been critical in providing school supplies and Christmas presents for those who can’t afford them.”

Well, you don’t need a cow to know that’s another great reason to patronize and celebrate our local Chick-fil-A restaurants. See you all on the 12th!

KENNA SMITH

CITIZEN OF THE MONTH



"It is with much enthusiasm that I recommend Kenna Smith for Tucker's Citizen of the Month. She is a shining example of patience, kindness and dedication.

Kenna started her business in her house and it grew into something so much bigger. She ran into a number of roadblocks trying to open Custom Crafts by You into a larger store, but she persisted nonetheless.

Kenna and her husband Michael Smith moved to Tucker in 2012. They have been true staples within our community since and she was excited to also start her business within Tucker, the City they had grown to love.

Kenna is not a person you will see on the sideline. She is not only active within our community, but also in her children's lives. She is room mom every year on top of running a local business. She is the first to volunteer or help when others need it.

She took a small building just off Tucker's Main Street and turned into a beautiful farmhouse feel shop. She added touches everywhere to give it the overall ambience. Custom Crafts by You is such a unique business in that you can design personalized pieces of art that will truly hang beautifully in your home. Kenna's vision and dedication has added such uniqueness and fun to Tucker's Main Street businesses."

Nomination by Charla Halverson

READY FOR HIS CLOSEUP

TUCKER RESIDENT USING HIS TALENTS TO MAKE MOVIE MAGIC



Roy Wooley is an artist. Just like Matisse or Degas, Wooley's masterpieces are familiar to millions of people the world over. Unlike the works of those luminaries, his pieces don't include watercolors of a sunset on the horizon or beautiful women painted in oils. In fact, Wooley doesn't do his work on canvas at all.

"I've always loved monsters," he explains. "I was 17 years old and saw 'American Werewolf in London'. As I watched, I came to the realization that somebody gets paid to do that."

The "that" Wooley refers to is makeup art. Transforming an actor into a werewolf or a zombie or simply altering his appearance has been a part of movies as long as Hollywood has been around. Jimmy Stewart's bloody lip in "It's a Wonderful Life"? The work of a makeup artist. Oompa Loompas in "Willy Wonka & the Chocolate Factory"? Makeup artists. Spock's ears in any of the "Star Trek" films? The result of prosthetics created by, you guessed it, a makeup artist.

Makeup art is so critical to major motion pictures that in 1981, the Academy of Motion Pictures began handing out Oscars for Best Makeup. Because of this award, films like "Terminator 2: Judgement Day", "The Nutty Professor" and "How the Grinch

Stole Christmas" have all received Academy Awards. While they're not going to be confused with "Casablanca" in terms of quality, these movies would have gone nowhere at the box office if not for makeup art.

Now Wooley, an eight-year Tucker resident, is building upon that legacy. A makeup artist for nearly a quarter-century, he didn't catch his big break until 2012 when he made the cast of the Syfy reality show "Face Off".

"I get to create stuff. How many jobs can you have someone say, 'go make stuff'?"

"I made the semifinals of Season Three and then finished in the top three of Season Five," Wooley recalls. "[Three-time Oscar winner] Ve Neill was one of the judges. She's done 'Beetlejuice' and 'The Hunger Games'. She said, 'We're shooting "Mockingjay". Do you want to come to work?' Ever since then, it's taken off."

In recent years, Wooley has worked on blockbusters like “Black Panther” and “Avengers: Infinity War”, as well as doing television work in “Sleepy Hollow” and “Constantine”. The work is exciting, especially, Wooley explains, because you never know what’s coming next.

“Being a freelancer, you’re always chasing the next job,” he says. “It’s feast or famine. When things are really going, there’s more work than you can handle. Other times there’s nothing.”

During those slow times, Wooley can fall back on his permanent job as head of the makeup department at Netherworld in Gwinnett County. Not only is he responsible for overseeing a team of 20 artists who apply makeup to actors at the seasonal haunted house, he gets to engage in his passion of creating three-dimensional characters to scare the daylight out of those who are brave enough to trek through the facility.

“We’re working 365 days a year at Netherworld,” Wooley explains.

“You do it once and you’re either hooked for life or you hate it. For me, it’s fun to see someone totally terrified.”

Originally from Alabama, Wooley is able to live and work in the Tucker area because of Georgia’s thriving film industry. He says he’s noticed a shift over the years, with more and more professionals leaving Hollywood to open effects schools and special effects shops in metro Atlanta. It’s a trend, he says, that allows him to follow his passion and one he hopes will continue.

“I get to create stuff,” he says with a smile. “How many jobs can you have someone say, ‘go make stuff’? In my career, I pretty much have done everything I’ve wanted to do.”

Wooley sits back, thinks about it and adds, “A werewolf movie. I want to do a good werewolf movie one of these days.”

With film production going gangbusters across the area, it’s only a matter of time before Wooley gets to add that last piece to his artist’s portfolio.



FILM PRODUCTION IN TUCKER

In recent years, major studios have chosen Tucker as a shooting location for their film and television productions. Check out some of these movies and shows to see if you recognize any Tucker landmarks!

- Halt and Catch Fire (2014)
- Vacation (2015)
- Stranger Things (2016)
- I, Tonya (2017)
- Ozark (2017)
- Dumplin’ (2018)
- Tag (2018)
- The Outsider (2019)

BUSINESS OF THE MONTH

COFER BROTHERS



In 1919, Woodrow Wilson occupied the White House, Congress approved Prohibition and the Chicago White Sox famously threw the World Series. Those were the big national headlines. Here in Tucker, the talk of the town was a brand-new general store called Cofer Bros.

Brothers Kelley and Reid Cofer, whose names you'll see today on a Tucker park and library respectively, opened the business, offering locals a place to buy, trade or simply hang out. Over the years, the business has very successfully transitioned to hardware and building material sales, but has always stayed within the Cofer family. Today, Chip Cofer runs the operation

and is currently getting ready for the company's 100th birthday celebration.



"[We are] proud to be Tucker's oldest business," Cofer says. "In keeping with the dreams of my grandfather and father, Cofer Brothers will always

operate with a culture of integrity, respect and customer appreciation. Today, with fourth generation involvement, we are looking forward to the next 100 years."

Even after 100 years, the store remains a meeting place for locals; a home away from home complete with rocking chairs and swings on the front porch. It sits across the way from another longtime Main Street staple, Matthews Cafeteria.

"It's really unique to have the two businesses across the street from each other," says Tucker Historical Society President Matthew Lee. "When people think of Main Street and multigenerational family owned businesses, they often think of Matthews, but the Cofer family found their niche 35 years earlier."

Beyond the business side of things, Cofer Bros. is making an impact in the community, as well. Chip Cofer is instrumental in the Old Town Tucker Merchants Association (OTTMA). He and fellow business owners help put on events like Taste of Tucker, Holiday on Main and the monthly Tucker Cruise-In.

Cofer Bros. will hold its centennial celebration the week of October 14 and receive a special honor from the Mayor as part of the festivities. They are located at 2300 Main Street and online at www.coferbrothers.com.

TEAM TUCKER *Spotlight*

CHAD ROBERTS, ASSISTANT COURT CLERK

How long have you worked in municipal government?

I have worked in municipal government for about 16 years now. That includes time working in law enforcement and municipal court.

What exactly does an Assistant Court Clerk do?

To keep it simple, I basically handle and keep up with all the paperwork (citations, reports, dockets, attorney forms, suspensions, warrants, etc.) for the court. On a day-to-day basis I may be entering citations into the court system, resetting cases, mailing out notices, answering phone calls or chatting with people that walk into the office with questions concerning court related items. I try my best to go above and beyond to help those that call or walk in with all their questions, but I cannot give legal advice in any way. It is important that I maintain relationships with the police department, county courts, county jail, GBI, DDS and other municipal courts in our area just in case I need assistance about court related items or if I need to be of assistance to others in the field.

Are there other responsibilities you're currently handling for the City?

I am also working with the Code Enforcement Officers and the Finance Department by reaching out to new business owners concerning their new business license or already established businesses concerning their past due license. Another project I'm working on is with the Community Partnership Team to research ways to better assist the DeKalb County Police Department in keeping the City and its citizens safe.

What is your favorite thing about working as part of Team Tucker?

The people and learning about other things within the City other than just court.



Off the Wall

How tall are you?

6'5"

What sports do you like to play?

Well, playing would have to be softball and basketball. However, that no longer happens due to a couple of back surgeries.

What is one thing your co-workers don't know about you?

I unfortunately wear my heart on my sleeve or some would say I am an open book. Not much hidden here, I am sad to say.

What is your favorite type of food? Why?

That is a tough one. I would eat Chinese several times a week if I could, but to be honest I am not picky.

What brings you joy in life?

Family and quiet time. The older I get the more those things matter.

WHAT IS A RIGHT-OF-WAY?

One of the biggest responsibilities for Tucker's Code Enforcement team is removing signs that have been placed illegally in rights-of-way. These signs could vary from real estate to businesses or even a community yard sale. The signs themselves are oftentimes legal, but regardless of the type of sign, they cannot be posted in the right-of-way.

So how do you know if you're posting your sign where you're not supposed to? This Q&A ought to help anyone understand where they can and cannot place signs in the City of Tucker.

What is the right-of-way?

A right-of-way (ROW) is a public piece of land reserved for transportation purposes or for electrical transmission, oil or gas lines. Utilities or municipalities commonly use this land, often several feet of grass or sidewalk coming out from the shoulder of the road, if they need to make infrastructure improvements.

How do I know where the right-of-way is located?

Widths of rights-of-way vary, so the best rule of thumb for an approximate location is to use the power pole or telephone box as an indicator of where the private property line starts. Signs that conform to Tucker's sign code can be placed on one's own private property, but not in the right-of-way.

Why does Code Enforcement remove signs from rights-of-way?

Placing a sign in the right-of-way is a violation of Chapter 34 of Tucker's Code. The City reserves the right to remove and dispose of any sign placed in the dedicated right-of-way of any public road. As a policy, Tucker tries to hold onto any signs that are removed from rights-of-way in case the owner of the sign wants to retrieve it.



“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.

Over the course of the past several months, I have gotten numerous questions about the future of the gymnasium at Tucker Recreation Center. If you're not familiar, the gym sits by the building's back entrance and its claim to fame is as a training site for the Magnificent Seven, the gold medal winning 1996 United States women's gymnastics team.

While we honor that history, a building as old as our Rec Center needs a lot of rehab. This gymnasium is no exception. We used the Parks Master Plan process to identify which improvements needed to be made in all our facilities.

As we realized the level of upgrades the gym needed, we began to look at how best to use the space.

Currently, we have no indoor basketball courts anywhere in our parks system. The only option we can provide is the outdoor courts at Peters Park. On a cold winter day, that's not very enticing. We also heard repeatedly through the Master Plan process that there was a strong desire among the community to have access to pickleball and volleyball courts. As we work within the parameters of our budget, the Rec Center gymnasium proved to be our only option for meeting these recreation needs, as well as much needed space for our existing programs and summer camp.



Last month, we began clearing out the gym to allow our contractors to get to work on installing a new multiuse surface floor. Before we started the process, we met with all stakeholders who currently utilize the space to help them understand exactly what was happening and how it would impact their weekly schedules. Obviously, when there are longstanding activities that are being displaced or disrupted, there will be some disappointment. I can tell you that, for the most part, the news was well-received by those we spoke with.

By the end of the year, we hope to have a major set of improvements that will offer our residents new recreation options in our gymnasium. If you'll pardon our dust these next few months, I think you'll like the result.



Community Corner



10/3-10/6 - Kingdomwood International Film Festival

3-7 p.m.

4532 Lavista Road

This four-day event will include film screenings, workshops, panel discussions and a 49-hour film competition. The film festival is hosted by First Christian Church of Atlanta and highlights the work of the booming film industry in the metro Atlanta area. More information is available at www.kingdomwood.com.

10/5 - Taste of Tucker

1-6 p.m.

Main Street

For the 10th consecutive year, Main Street will be packed with delicious food samplings from over 25 of the best local restaurants. Come to enjoy the food, live music, craft/vendor market and a free kids zone. All proceeds will benefit local non-profits including NETWorks Cooperative Ministry, Camp Kudzu and Old Town Tucker Merchants Association.

10/5 - Native Plant and Wildlife Walk Workday

9 a.m. - 12 p.m.

2723 Henderson Road

Join volunteers at the Henderson Park Community Garden for a community workday. The goal is to remove invasive species to open space for native plants to be reintroduced. Long pants, long-sleeve shirts and sturdy closed toe shoes are recommended. Tools and water will be provided for those who need them.

10/8 - University of Government Affairs Tucker

7-9 p.m.

2723 Henderson Road

The City of Tucker is inviting all residents and other stakeholders to learn more about their City at a six-session education course. The October meeting will take participants inside the world of Code Enforcement and will be led by Tucker's Code Enforcement Manager Maricela Perdomo.

10/5 - 11th Annual Rivers Alive Cleanup Event

9 a.m. - 12 p.m.

4320 Cowan Road

The Tucker Civic Association is looking for volunteers to join their annual cleanup of the South Fork Peachtree Creek. While this is a family-oriented event, please note that all participants must be at least 10 years of age. Register your volunteer group before the day of the event at www.tuckercivic.org.

10/19 - Brockett Elementary School Fall Festival

1-5 p.m.

1855 Brockett Road

The community is invited to an afternoon of fun outdoor games, a bouncy house, arts and crafts, food, and a silent auction. All are welcome, as this event is a fundraiser for the Brockett PTA.