



# INTUCKER

JULY 2021 | VOLUME 5 | ISSUE 7



## STATE OF THE CITY

COMING OUT OF COVID, TUCKER IS POISED TO CONTINUE SMART GROWTH FOR THE FUTURE

# EDITOR'S NOTE



As a parent, there are few things more important than the schools in your community. Are they good? Are they safe?

Will they serve your children and prepare them for life and a career in the 21st century?

One of the perks of my job is getting to go into our seven Tucker Cluster schools and work hand-in-hand with the principals and faculty who are charged with teaching and protecting our kids. I get to know many of them, get to know their stories and what drives them to work in an industry where they can easily feel underpaid and underappreciated.

This month, *InTucker* is spotlighting two Tucker teachers who have been serving our community for almost the entirety of their professional careers. On page 10, you'll read about Kalisha Watts and Hope Hoge, both of whom have received grants and donations to better equip their classrooms and put their students in the best possible position to learn. You'll find that neither teacher complains about the challenges they face on the job, but they take time to revel in their work developing the young minds under their tutelage. They exhibit a love of their craft; and they're really good at it, too!

And they're just the tip of the iceberg! If you get involved with any of our Tucker Cluster schools, you'll find dozens more educators just like these women.

Schools are judged on a lot of different criteria, but more than test scores and sports scores, it's the people who work within those buildings that matter. They are leaders. They are role models for our children. And, whether or not you have a child in a Tucker school, they are deserving of our appreciation. A big thank you to all of them!

**MATT HOLMES**  
INTUCKER EDITOR

# IN THIS ISSUE



### ON THE COVER

The deck's been stacked against a lot of municipalities as a result of the pandemic. In our cover story, Mayor Auman discusses why Tucker is poised to thrive in a post-COVID world.



### WISH GRANTED

Tucker teachers are finding new and interesting ways to help their students achieve. On page 10, find out how they're taking advantage of competitive grants to give their kids a leg up.



### BUSINESS BOOM

One local business is honoring other local businesses for how they survived the pandemic. On page 8, John McHenry writes about how these recognitions will have a larger impact on the community.



### CITIZEN OF THE MONTH

She's a lover of history; Tucker history, to be exact. On page 14, get to know our Citizen of the Month, who is dedicating her free time to preserving our past.



### ASK RIP

It's National Parks and Recreation Month! On page 15, Rip takes the opportunity to look back – and look ahead – at what's changing in our parks.



# INTUCKER

VOLUME 5, ISSUE 7

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# From the Mayor:



*On July 1, Mayor Auman issued his 2021 State of the City Address on the City of Tucker's social media channels. Here are some excerpts from his remarks:*

Aviate, navigate, communicate.

Everyone who has learned to pilot a plane knows this axiom. They know it applies to "normal" flying conditions, and is even more important in times of crisis. It means first fly the plane. Secondly, know where you are and where you're going. Third, talk to everyone concerned about where you are and where they are. I don't fly planes, but I have found this advice helpful in all kinds of circumstances, and especially in leading the City of Tucker.

A city, like an airplane, is a complex piece of machinery. We have about 40 people working at City Hall everyday, a cadre of contractors we use for specific jobs like maintaining the parks, improving roads and safety conditions, working in our courts. We have about 30 men and women appointed by the Mayor to serve on our boards and commissions. We have our elected officials working diligently to set priorities, cast a vision and make policy decisions about the City's future. They have myriad responsibilities and duties day-to-day, and about 36,000 bosses in the form of voters. It's a complicated machine.

We have flown far and fast in this last year despite mountainous obstacles and strong headwinds.

I asked our various officials and department heads to put together a summary of accomplishments and initiatives from the last year so I could give you an overview of the year; that is, the aviating we've done.

I'll also give you a report on where we're heading; that is, the navigating we're doing. And, by the end, I hope I will have communicated what you need to know about our journey.

Let's begin with our three core services:

Our Parks and Recreation Team stays busy not only with year-round programming, but with constant improvements to all our locations and facilities, and always with an eye to adding more physical improvements and more quality programming to appeal to everyone who calls Tucker home. When COVID made its first appearance last year, they immediately assessed what would be needed to keep our parks and programs safe and operational. Of course, many things had to be curtailed either by health and safety considerations or by emergency orders, but they kept finding ways. From the very beginning, they arranged to have all the playground equipment cleaned and sanitized everyday, so our citizens could get outside for some safe

(continued on page 6)

# City Council Update

Tucker's Mayor and City Council met three times during the month of June, focusing primarily on issues of budget and taxation. At the meeting on June 14, they approved an approximately \$16 million budget for Fiscal Year 2022. The budget was approved on a unanimous vote following a public hearing on the subject.

They also voted unanimously to adopt a model ordinance from the Metropolitan North Georgia Water Planning District. The ordinance will put requirements on new or redeveloped commercial car washes in Tucker pertaining to the recycling of water. They then voted unanimously to approve a rezoning and concurrent variance that will allow an 80-townhome

development along Northlake Parkway directly behind the Tucker Meridian Shopping Center.

Other votes on June 14 included:

- approval of a resolution to make a small change to the mandatory distribution language for city employees' pension plans
- approval of an amendment to the contract with staffing and service provider Jacobs
- awarding a contract for capital project management consulting to Griffith Project Management

Council then met twice on June 28, holding two public hearings on the millage rate before eventually voting

unanimously to set the rate at 0.9 mills. The rate, which is allocated to Parks and Recreation, remains unchanged year over year but, because of changes in DeKalb County's tax digest, this unchanged millage rate would actually represent a small tax increase.

After a handful of smaller votes, Council ended their meeting and opened a work session to discuss a strategy to spend funds from the federal American Rescue Plan. Tucker is projected to receive around \$11 million from the federal government to be used between now and 2024.

The next meeting of the Mayor and City Council is scheduled for Monday July 12 at 7 p.m. at City Hall (1975 Lakeside Parkway, Suite 350B).

## DATES TO KNOW

**July 5**  
Independence Day observed  
(City Hall closed)

**July 7**  
Traffic Court

**July 12**  
City Council

**July 14**  
Traffic Court

**July 15**  
Planning Commission

**July 19**  
Downtown Development Authority

**July 20**  
Zoning Board of Appeals

**July 21**  
Municipal Court

**July 26**  
City Council



City Councilmember Anne Lerner presents a proclamation to longtime Tucker resident Norma Cowart in honor of her 96th birthday on June 20. (Credit: tuckerga.gov)

## FOLLOW US ON SOCIAL MEDIA



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](mailto:dgschoeppner@dekalbcountyga.gov)*



For a long time, fireworks were not legal in Georgia. Of course, this didn't stop folks from obtaining them. Every year people would cross the border into Alabama and South Carolina to get their fireworks. In 2016, the

legislature recognized this and made them legal

to purchase and use. Since then, there has been no end to the amount of confusion of how late and on what days they can be used. Since the 4th of July holiday is upon us, we are going to take some time to talk about fireworks and how to use them safely and legally.

State regulation O.C.G.A. 25-10-2 and Tucker Ordinance 16-67 govern the use of fireworks. Some of the highlights from these regulations are:

- It is unlawful to use fireworks indoors
- Fireworks can be legally discharged on normal days between 10 a.m. and 9 p.m. at most locations within the City
- They can be discharged from 10 a.m. until midnight anywhere on January 1, July 3, July 4, and December 31
- Fireworks cannot be set off within 100 yards of anywhere that sells gasoline

Now remember, just because you can use fireworks doesn't mean that you always should. If you do, safety should be your primary concern. Here are some safety measures you should consider:

- Children should not be allowed to use fireworks
- You shouldn't consume alcohol or drugs while handling fireworks
- Only set off one firework at a time
- Make sure you discharge your fireworks at a safe distance from other people and property
- Always follow the manufacturer's instructions when discharging fireworks
- Celebratory gunfire is never a substitute for fireworks. Shooting in the air is not only unsafe, but illegal

If everyone follows the rules, there is no reason why we can't all have an enjoyable holiday. If you happen to encounter a scenario where someone isn't following the rules, please call 911. We will respond and take whatever steps are necessary to correct the situation.

For anyone that decides that using fireworks isn't for them, the City will be holding its event on July 3. Even during the pandemic last year, Tucker's fireworks was a large and very popular event. I'm sure that this year's will be even better.



## FROM THE MAYOR (continued from page 6)

recreation with their children. Our park trails and walkways remained open with proper protocols so that, despite the lockdowns we all had to endure for a while, Tuckerites could enjoy some fresh air and exercise.

We re-opened the Rec Center back in November for all the programs we could safely conduct, including contactless basketball. Our 10 and under basketball all-star team even won their district championship and competed in the state tournament. We also carried on with adult pickleball and golf leagues for all levels of skill and tournaments for each.

Already this year we've hosted a 5,000-egg annual egg hunt, a dive-in movie, and an Adult Field Day with over 100 participants.



One particularly exciting development for me was to see a full youth baseball league in Tucker for the first time in 15 years! I literally stood with parents and grandparents of Tucker families seeing their kids and grandkids play where they played, and the happy memories were palpable. I had one parent tell me that an active youth baseball league is the hallmark of a healthy community and, as a lifelong fan, I couldn't agree more.

And, in perhaps the most significant event in our Parks Department since I last reported to you, a few weeks ago,

we renamed and dedicated the former Smoke Rise Bath and Racquet Club as Bill Rosenfeld Park. We lost Bill as a friend, a colleague, a leader, a founding member of our City Council, a neighbor and a leading businessman back in January, and this is our way of ensuring that his memory and his example lives on.

The other core service areas for your city government are Planning and Zoning and Code Enforcement, where they have also had almost no downtime during the pandemic. These departments are charged with planning our land use, keeping up with building permits and inspections, and with updating our code whenever we find weaknesses or lack of clarity. The Council passed six separate updates to our code this year, dealing with stormwater control, illegal discharge into our waterways, litter control, recycling water at car washes, side-corner lot regulations, and controlling urban camping, all researched and initiated by our professional planning staff.

We carefully, and in cooperation with property owners, began enforcing code to get rid of abandoned and dilapidated signage citywide; identified nuisance properties that required enforcement to make them safe and useful again; and continued to work hard to be in compliance with the Metropolitan North Georgia Water Planning District, through a rigorous audit process.

***“We have flown far and fast in this last year despite mountainous obstacles and strong headwinds.”***

In Community Development, this same department oversaw significant improvements to the Peters Park Community, over and above the park improvements, including gateway signage, street signage, landscaping rights-of-way, remediating dangerously dilapidated property, and installing an important new sidewalk on Elmdale to serve the area.

They led the effort on properties to be abated, such as the junk car lot next to the railroad in downtown. This was the source of one of the most dangerous fires in our time as a city, and our actions led to clearing that lot and returning it to a safe, useful purpose.

And all during the pandemic, they advised and supported our Planning Commission, Zoning Board of Appeals, Downtown Development Authority, Urban Redevelopment Authority, Public Facilities Authority, and more, providing training, administrative support, and assisting in presentations to community and professional groups.

Another area where your city is busy at work everyday is in traffic and road safety improvements. With money Tucker receives from SPLOST (the extra penny in sales tax voters approved in 2017), we rebuilt and/or repaved 16 more miles of the worst conditioned roads in Tucker last year.



In addition to our repaving program, we also completed some significant safety improvements, including urgently needed signalization projects at Brockett/Cooledge and US-78, and at Chamblee-Tucker and Livsey Rd. in front of Livsey School. At the new Smoke Rise Elementary School, we're completing an entirely new intersection with traffic lights, turn lanes and more to serve the school and other new development there with safety and traffic improvement to be in service for the beginning of the 2021-'22 school year.

In addition to the new sidewalk on Elmdale, we also added an important sidewalk down Cowan Road, connecting Idlewood with Hugh Howell.



And perhaps the most visible recently completed work is the new sidewalk and streetscape project downtown. This is actually Phase Two of a project that began with community volunteers almost 15 years ago and it includes all the new sidewalks you see along Lynburn, 1st Avenue, and 2nd and 4th Streets. The streetscaping includes the decorative streetlights, benches, trash cans, grassy areas and all the things that will create a downtown that is much bigger than just Main Street. It will catalyze investment in our downtown, and bring the kind of amenities we've all been hoping for like retail, restaurants and even residential into the downtown area.

All this work that I've mentioned so far, including our three core services and the other activities like road and safety improvements, all lead toward the overarching purpose of a city, which is what we call community and economic development. Economic development is not so much a service in and of itself, but more of the culmination of everything we do. It results in the visible, tangible improvements to the community and our quality of life. It's new employers, new businesses, new housing of all kinds, and all the things that cause people to want to come and stay in Tucker. It's what I mean when I talk about being a place where a person can live, work, play and pray for the length and breadth of their lives. It's the reason we fly the plane.

To see Mayor Auman's full State of the City speech, log onto [youtube.com/CityofTucker](https://www.youtube.com/CityofTucker).

**FRANK AUMAN**  
MAYOR

# BUSINESS BOOM

by John McHenry, Community and Economic Development Director



In April of this year, Tandem Bank sponsored a special contest that celebrated those establishments that started, adapted and supported others during a pandemic that was devastating to many in our business community. Founding Chairman & CEO Charles DeWitt shared, "In recognition of the challenges of the past year, and as a proud Tucker business, Tandem Bank has been inspired by the ingenuity and resiliency of our local businesses and are

especially proud of these winners and their impact on Tucker."

The winners ranged from some long-standing businesses to some newer additions, but they all shared in their love for the community and a heart for Tucker. The online contest, that was promoted via social media, awarded \$1,000 to each organization to give to the charity or cause of their choice. Thread Beauty Spa, located at 4426 Hugh Howell, was the winner in the "Giving Back" category. They opened their beauty spa in March 2019 and found it hard to believe that they were forced to close unexpectedly just a year later due to the pandemic. But, like almost every business owner around the country, the COVID-19 lockdown left

them no choice. A few weeks into the lockdown, owner Sanah Sayani shared, "I thought, 'what if I made some masks to give back?'" In a matter of months, they donated over 10,000 masks and, by the end of the 2020, had given more than 20,000 masks in total.

Now reopened, Sanah reflected that, "I will always be grateful to have been a part of giving back in that difficult year. Our community stepped up and helped with everything!"

Receiving an award for "Newly Launched" is the new addition to downtown that is jam packed for lunch and dinner, Ford's BBQ at 2337 Main Street. They were under construction when COVID hit last year. At times, the project stopped





completely and they had to adjust everything, from design to process to plans. Fortunately, the worry and the wait paid off because they were able to open their doors and have been received with a huge welcome. Owner James Maggard explained that it was not an easy go at all, but they kept the faith it would all work out.

“Our standards kept us going when COVID could’ve taken us out, and those same standards drive us to deliver amazing food to the community that’s supported us every step of the way,” he explained.

The winner in the “Most Adaptable” category was the local landmark, Matthews Cafeteria at 2299 Main Street. Open since 1955, they closed their doors voluntarily on April 2, 2020. It was an incredibly painful decision for owner Michael Greene, but he knew it was the wise thing to do for staff and customers. And he knew that if he wanted Matthews Cafeteria to come back, they would have to adapt to make it happen. So when they reopened on April 22, there was no dine-in option. Instead, they created a drive-thru in the front parking lot. At the height of the pandemic, the drive-thru accounted for 60 percent of their business.

Greene shared, “Because we were willing to rethink the way we did things and tap into the resources we had available, we did. Our team made this adaptation to make this last year of business possible.”

DeWitt says Tandem Bank encourages all Tucker residents to support our locally-owned businesses, as Tucker just would not be the special place it is without them.



# A HELPING HAND

## TEACHERS RECEIVING GRANTS, DONATIONS IS A WIN-WIN IN THE CLASSROOM

Teaching is one of the toughest professions around. Sure, there are perks. Having summers off is a nice reprieve. Being able to watch the growth and development of a young mind is a treat. But teachers don't get enough pay, in some corners they don't get enough respect, and they get to work all day with children, which can be both a blessing and a curse.

Fortunately, there are groups that understand all this and make it part of their mission to support teachers in the classroom. One such area of support is financial. Teachers often get a small annual stipend from their PTA or PTO to decorate their classrooms. Oftentimes, that stipend doesn't go far enough. Why does it matter? Think of walking into your kindergarten classroom and not seeing bright, vibrant colors and the letters of the alphabet on the walls. It's a lot more than feng shui; these decorations help students to learn and develop. If a teacher can't afford to adequately decorate their classroom, there is a definite and deleterious impact.

That's where these outside groups like the Meemic Foundation come into play. Haven't heard of them? Neither had Kalisha Watts. The fourth-grade teacher at Tucker's Smoke Rise Elementary

School found out about the classroom makeover grants that Meemic was offering and decided to give it a shot.

"When I applied it was just on a whim," Watts recalls. "I applied for it and I didn't think anything of it. Then I got a phone call from the actual director of the foundation and it was like, 'I called to congratulate you.' I was like, 'Well, for which grant? I applied for several.' And she said the \$10,000 grant and I was like, 'No, you're kidding.'"

*"When I applied it was just on a whim. I applied for it and I didn't think anything of it. Then I got a phone call...and it was like, 'I called to congratulate you.'"*

But it was no joke. Watts won the prize, giving her the opportunity to redecorate her classroom with flexible learning furniture including mobile desks and tables, colorful chairs, beanbag chairs, sofas, rugs, and mobile easels. She says it gave her students the opportunity to learn in a more conducive and collaborative environment.

While the kids loved it, the teacher wasn't done. Watts had a vision for getting her students reading in class, but couldn't fit it into the parameters of the grant she had won, so she found another avenue to make it happen.

"I wanted to really create like a book nook in my room," she recalls. "Some of the furniture I wasn't able to get with the \$10,000, so I did a DonorsChoose and I got a mobile book bin to complete my book nook for my class."

Watts isn't the only teacher receiving outside funding to enhance her classroom. At Midvale Elementary, second grade teacher Hope Hoge won a grant...and she didn't have to do a thing to get it.

"I got an email from Georgia Credit Union and I immediately texted [Midvale Principal] Dr. [Tara] Dougherty and





# Tucker Cluster

## Updates & News

**IMPORTANT DATES**  
**July 14**  
 Board of Education Meeting

## BRAG SHEET

said 'Is this a scam? What is this?'" Hoge remembers. "Apparently they advertised on social media for parents or co-workers to nominate teachers that they felt like deserved an award and I was nominated for DeKalb County."

Just like that, Hoge, who is heading into her seventh year at Midvale, was awarded a \$200 Amazon gift card, which she says she's spending on new books and other tools to encourage her students to develop a love of reading. That \$200 will go with donations she received from the DonorsChoose platform to complete the "reading corner" in her brand new classroom.

These grants and donations mean the students win and the teachers win, as many now have the resources to build a nurturing learning environment within their classrooms. That wouldn't have made much of a difference a year ago, but with full-time virtual learning soon to be a thing of the past and all students heading back

to school in the fall, teachers like Hoge are excited to get back to their craft.

"I'm really ready for August to roll around and not to be teaching from home with two children climbing all over me and just be able to do my job and do it well," she says, adding, "I'm so excited for kids to have some normalcy in their lives."

Watts agrees, saying they've wrestled through the difficulties of a virtual classroom, and now they are excited for that return to normal.

"Teaching virtually has been a challenge for both my students and I. We definitely tried to adapt to it and make the best of it, but I think us being back in the classroom socially, academically I think is going to be great for all of us."

With many of those teachers getting back into their natural environments, and with more tools at their disposal, student achievement will undoubtedly benefit, and that is a good thing for Tucker's cluster schools.

**LIVSEY ELEMENTARY**

- Livsey became a Cognia STEM certified school on May 19. The Livsey teachers and students immersed themselves in cross curricula science, technology, engineering and math experiences over several years to earn this distinction.

**MIDVALE ELEMENTARY**

- On May 26, the Midvale community held a drive thru retirement parade to honor Ms. Carter, Ms. McKenzie, Ms. Mullis, and Ms. Richards, four longtime faculty members who are closing their careers in education.

**TUCKER HIGH**

- THS was recently fully authorized to expand its IB program and offerings to add the career related program. Tucker becomes the only school in the District and one of the few in the State to have this unique and very prestigious program and will begin offering it to interested ninth grade students next year.



## BUSINESS OF THE MONTH

# BO PHILLIPS



One of the first things you realize when you set foot in the offices of Bo Phillips on Lawrenceville Highway is that there isn't actually anyone at the business named Bo Phillips.

"Bo Phillips was a gentleman from North Carolina who moved to Georgia and started a company in 1965," explained company President John Craig. "His name was on all the signage and equipment, so when my father bought the company in 1979, we just kept the name."

Since that transaction, the company has called Tucker home. It's a unique business in that it manufactures road signage and then rents out signs, barricades and other roadway safety equipment to general contractors. Business has been so strong, Craig and his team are now in expansion mode.

"Atlanta's been growing and we've just been lucky to grow with Atlanta," Craig said. "We've outgrown this facility and now we're expanding next door."

Craig says the expansion is not a luxury, but a necessity. He needs the space for a bigger showroom, more equipment and to better accommodate his customer base.

"Tucker used to be the suburbs, but Tucker is like metro Atlanta now. So we have customers coming from all over and we want to make the experience better for them," he shared.

At 85 years old, Craig's father, also named John Craig, still serves as the company's CEO. The younger Craig says it was his father's advice that kept Bo Phillips here in Tucker through its expansion, rather than seeing the business move elsewhere in the metro area.

"He told me, 'You don't want to move away because you're established and everybody knows where you are,'" Craig recalled.

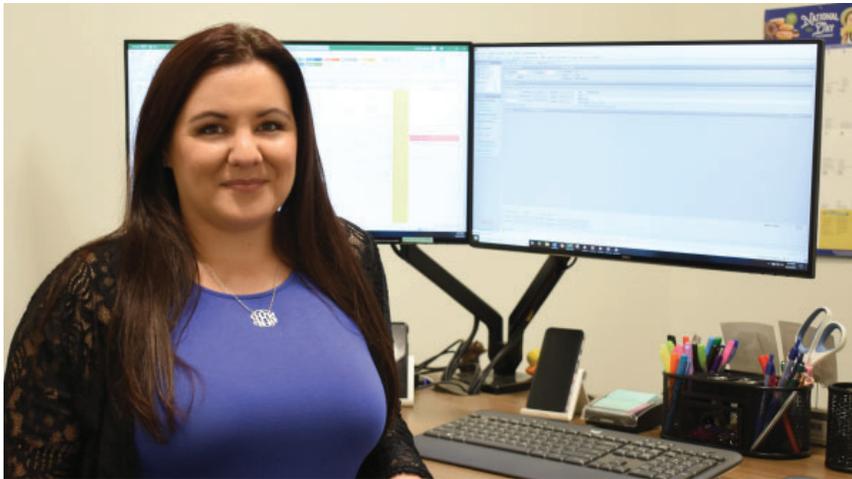
The advice of the elder Craig is certainly good news for the City of Tucker as it will be home to the soon-to-be expanded Bo Phillips for years to come.

Bo Phillips is located at 3440 Lawrenceville Highway and is on the web at [www.bophillips.com](http://www.bophillips.com).



# TEAM TUCKER *Spotlight*

## ANGELA BRANIGAN, SENIOR ACCOUNTANT



### **What is your professional background?**

Prior to my municipal government employment, I completed two internships with the federal government at the Internal Revenue Service in Washington, D.C. and the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center in Glynco, Ga.

My other background has been in retail, banking and restaurant management. I worked for a few new business startups and new location openings, which I always thought were very exciting. I liked being a part of building something, implementing procedures and training people.

### **How did you decide on a career in government finance?**

While attending KSU for my accounting degree, I took a Governmental Accounting class my last semester and thought it was very interesting. I think I liked it so much because it was a niche field, not everyone else around me was going into it. Right before I graduated, I was hired into a part-time position with a municipal government, which turned into a full-time opportunity upon my graduation, and the rest is history.

### **How do your job responsibilities change on a day-to-day basis?**

I wear many hats, so my job responsibilities change frequently. One minute I may be doing accounts receivable, the next minute processing payroll, reconciling accounts, attending budget meetings, and/or helping in Court and Business Licensing. There is never a dull moment! It keeps the job interesting!

### **What are some of the challenges associated with your job?**

As with everyone else, I'm sure, I'd say the biggest current challenge is adapting to the changing COVID-19 guidelines and rules. We must make sure we stay compliant and keep everyone safe to the best of our ability within Court and Business Licensing, as well as properly managing Coronavirus Relief Funding, and adjusting to performing routine daily activities.

### **What do you like best about your job?**

I love being involved with different departments as it gives me the opportunity to work with so many amazing, hardworking people.

## *Off the Wall*

### **What do you do for fun on the weekends?**

On the weekends, I love spending time with my husband riding our motorcycle around North Georgia. I also love taking our dogs, two Boxers – Kenzie and Rider – out with us any and everywhere we can! They are the BEST dogs ever!

### **Do you have a favorite type of music?**

I lived near the beach in Florida before I moved to Georgia, so I love reggae music. Bands like Rebelution, Pepper, and my all time favorite, Iration. We travel to see Iration perform, and my husband even proposed to me at one of their concerts.

### **What's the last show you watched on Netflix?**

The last show I watched on Netflix was Rotten. It is a very interesting look at the supply chain for certain foods like avocados, honey, garlic, and chocolate to name a few. Each episode has a different focus. Enlightening to say the least. Worth a watch!

### **Do you prefer watching sunrise or sunset?**

Sunset! I think any sunset over water is breathtaking. Also, I am a night owl so I rarely catch a sunrise.

### **What is your happiest childhood memory?**

When I was a child, I loved the weeklong breaks we got in school. My family would all pile into our van and drive from northern Virginia to Florida to visit my grandparents for the week. My three siblings and I sang songs and played road trip games the whole 10 hour drive there and back. At my grandparents, we would go to the beach, play in their neighborhood clubhouse, fish off their dock, and Grandma would always take us shopping. I always looked forward to those trips.

## CITIZEN OF THE MONTH

# TRISH ENGLAND

Trish England represents many who have come back to Tucker as adults. Multi-generational Tuckerites who feel the pull to come home, enjoy the remnants of what was, embrace all that is good today, and roll out the canvas a little wider for tomorrow. Trish is also one of the reasons Tucker feels like home to so many.

Growing up on a then two lane “LaVista” Road, from a young age Trish has enjoyed a panoramic view of the reality that one of the most consistent things in life is change. Capturing, preserving and sharing the right moments from the past is often the key ingredient in the consistency that binds us together.

For years, Trish has been a vital part of the Tucker Historical Society in various leadership roles. She has overseen Browning Courthouse Day, the Garden Tour, Plant Swap, supported studies of Downtown Tucker, contributed to the City’s Historic Resource Report, watched over cemeteries, shared historic photographs online, written articles on Tucker, and so much more.

Through all of it, rather than celebrating herself, Trish has succeeded in promoting the work of others. From business leaders to educators, she’s played a consistent role in turning the light to shine on others for all the right reasons. Trish understands the words of the songwriter who sings “my life is not a story about me.” Like the true auto racing fan she is, she knows that without a good pit crew the wheels fall off.

Decades of collecting, preserving, and sharing the stories of others may seem like loops around the track, yet it can help us see our own identity with more clarity. Embrace the path in front of us and drive with more confidence at each turn. As that path leads home to Tucker for thousands each year, either for the first time or the last, Trish’s name will not be in headlines, but the subtle results of her work remain front and center.

If Tucker feels like home to you, if it feels small and approachable, and if you feel a sense of deep loyalty to it, at times fierce and fiery loyalty, you’re catching some of the spark that Trish keeps alive. For those reasons and much more, let this July be a month of a little praise and thanksgiving for Trish England. A daughter of Tucker, a defender of tradition and a friend to many.

*Nomination by Matthew Lee*



# “ASK RIP”

*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.*



Welcome to National Parks and Recreation Month! This is Tucker Parks and Recreation’s third year and we are highlighting some of our wonderful accomplishments and some exciting things to come.

With the health crisis last year, we worked hard for our community to continue serving and giving everyone a way to engage and stay safe. We were able to keep our parks open, play continued after a short pause and our pools were open for the summer. The crisis helped us realize that we could reach the community in many different ways and we will be utilizing some of those even as we reopen.

We took the opportunity at the Recreation Center to add some safety features with a new UV filtration system and an active ionization process. This will help us throughout the year to keep the air cleaner and help keep our participants safe. We also were able to add a solar panel system to help save money on our electricity. This will also provide emergency electricity for city operations.

Since establishing our Department, we have been able to bring the community six new playgrounds, which also included the complete renovation of Peters Park, just completed this past winter. We have also upgraded and added numerous trails with

bridges/boardwalks, docks and overlooks as well as acquired new sports fields, a second municipal pool, four tennis courts and we completely renovated our gymnasium. We have added new athletic programs for our city including pickleball, golf, basketball, baseball and a tennis program.

A number of programs at the Tucker Recreation Center have either been expanded or added. We host dance, karate, pottery/ceramic and senior programs to include exercise and games for many ages. We have also added to our event schedule with exciting adventures and fun and games in our Parks and Rec Center. Our next event will be our annual Independence Day Cookout at Cofer Pool with a full day of fun. See our website for full details. In the fall, we have some exciting activities and hope to see everyone out and having fun.

Our pools are once again open and offering fun in the sun. Come out and join us for a dip or a run through our splash pad. There are two locations, one at Cofer Park (4259 N Park Dr.) and the newest addition at Rosenfeld Park (2088 Glacier Dr.). We have added a couple of new features with a water slide at Rosenfeld and an aqua swing at Cofer.

We are looking forward to a busy year with new fields, new lighting, new park signs coming, several new bridges and some exciting additions to our events. As always, stay connected through our website and Facebook page for the latest and greatest news and adventures.





## TUCKER Community Corner



### **7/3 – Celebration of Independence and Fireworks Spectacular** **6 p.m.-12 a.m., Main Street**

Join us on Main Street for our fourth annual fireworks show, part of the TKR Summer of Fun. Come and enjoy live music, food trucks, a t-shirt giveaway and, of course, fireworks.

### **7/4 – Tucker Parks & Rec Pool Party** **12-4 p.m., 4259 N Park Drive**

Join the Parks and Recreation team at Kelley Cofer Pool for its annual 4th of July Pool Party! This event will include music, free hot dogs, a watermelon-eating contest and a cannonball contest! Check [tuckerga.gov/parks](http://tuckerga.gov/parks) for admission rates!

### **7/10 – Tucker Cruise-In** **11 a.m.-2 p.m., Main Street**

The Cruise-In is back in full swing! Are you looking for antique cars? Street rods? Motorcycles? You'll see all of these and more each month as local auto enthusiasts gather to show off their prized possessions.

### **7/1, 7/8, 7/15, 7/22, 7/29 – Tucker Farmers Market** **4-7 p.m., 4882 Lavista Road**

The Tucker Farmers Market has the freshest of baked breads, the rarest of gourmet cheeses, the most authentic of global cuisine, and the most direct in locally grown produce every Thursday.