

# INTUCKER

APRIL 2022 | VOLUME 6 | ISSUE 4



# CHANGING LANES

NEW TRAFFIC PATTERN AIMS TO BRING  
PEACE OF MIND TO BUSY TUCKER ROAD

# EDITOR'S NOTE



It's April in Tucker, meaning we are in the throes of a new season! As you sit down – perhaps outside on a park bench,

perhaps out at the soccer field waiting for your kid's TYSA game to start – to read this month's issue, I want you to know that it was a fun one to put together.

First, we are getting an initial look at the new Chamblee Tucker Road. Why "new"? You may remember our Mayor and City Council last year approving a lane diet and beautification of this entryway into north Tucker. It's a massive undertaking, one of the biggest transportation projects the City of Tucker has ever taken on. And it's going to take some getting used to! Flip through to see exactly what it will look like and how it will improve safety on your commute.

Next, contributor Robin Stevens got to go inside one of the most successful endeavors for Tucker youth, our school music programs. Remember your grade school music class? Man, those were the days! Robin talked with teachers and got the inside story on how elementary schools train up their youngsters to be ready for the middle and high school stage.

Then I had the pleasure of sitting down with Barry Schrenk of Taggart's Driving School. Our Business of the Month may not sound like anything unique, but imagine the stories you can tell when you've owned a Tucker business for nearly 50 years! That's where Barry's at and, if you've never met him, he's a real character. Read our interview on page 14.

We're really excited to be jumping into Spring, and we hope you'll enjoy this issue as much as we do!

**MATT HOLMES**  
INTUCKER EDITOR

# IN THIS ISSUE



### ON THE COVER

Big changes are coming to Chamblee Tucker Road. City leadership has decided to prioritize safety – of drivers and pedestrians – with a new construction project. Get the details on page 6.



### SWEET SOUNDS

There's so much talk in education circles about STEM learning. But in Tucker's schools, there's also a special emphasis on the arts. Learn more about Tucker's award-winning music programs on page 10.



### BUSINESS BOOM

A \$260 million investment? In Tucker? That's exactly what one corporate giant has pledged. Find out how many jobs that will bring to Tucker on page 12.



### CITIZEN OF THE MONTH

She's a longtime Tucker resident who is always finding ways to give back to her community. Get to know Terri Cole on page 9.



### ASK RIP

Looking for details on the City of Tucker's new summer event series? You've come to the right place! Rip has the story on page 14.



# INTUCKER

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# From the Mayor:



One of the most inspiring and optimistic times of the year is upon us: Springtime! Flowers and green back on the plants and trees, baseball back on the field, and sunshine all around. But everything old is new again too, and, if you've looked at a newspaper or filled up your gas

tank recently, you know that it can take effort to remain optimistic. So, as we spring forward into the season, I want to share with you some reasons to be optimistic here in Tucker.

First of all, the pandemic is at its lowest ebb since the beginning, which allows us to do lots of things we haven't done in a long while. Throughout the pandemic, we've been pressing forward in every way possible, and we've planned, un-planned and re-planned for the return of our favorite community gatherings. So, next month we'll gather on Main Street to celebrate Tucker Day. It will be our first May Tucker Day since 2019! Over the next couple months, we'll also gather in our parks for a new family-friendly concert series, and also for our annual Adult Field Day.

I'm optimistic because we are regaining a sense of normalcy - not just the return to public events, but about the things that really matter. There are no limitations on how often we can see and hold our grandchildren or grandparents. We can go to church again and worship without worrying about masks. We can eat in our favorite restaurants and break bread with neighbors. And, while we still have to care for those who can't get them, those of us who've gotten our shots can do all that with a high level of confidence that we will not get sick.

We can also go to our workplaces and our schools, taking with us all the lessons learned. We can restart the many community and volunteer activities that faded during the pandemic, and do so with renewed energy and a clear recognition of their importance to all of us who serve and are served by them.

Lastly, I'm optimistic about the state of our city. One of my responsibilities is to give an annual State of the City Address. It's a lot like the President's State of the Union, but with a lot less pomp and a lot more circumstance. It's

important for you to hear all the good that is happening in Tucker, and how that good work is setting the stage for you to prosper. I want you to hear how we are focused on the jobs you elected us to, and on staying in our lane. It's all leading to a community where you can make your own choices about how to Live, Work, Play and Pray for your whole life. It comes from an understanding that city government can't fix all the social ills around us, but we can work hard every day to make sure we have a safe, clean, friendly place to live, with all the amenities we want and need close to home. Because we worked harder than ever toward that end during the pandemic, Tucker is coming out of it in much better shape than many other municipalities. We are ready for and optimistic about the future, and I look forward to sharing that news next month.

Before I close, I want to extend my support to the people of Ukraine. Yes, we are facing rising food and gas prices, but they are literally losing their lives and livelihoods, and perhaps even losing sight of their reason for living. It's a terrible situation, and many of us are frustrated at not being able to do much for the people at the center of the storm. Here are a few things that can provide both immediate practical help, and just might help secure our future. First, pray. Pray for the people under attack, and for the leaders of Ukraine and Russia. Pray for all the nations, including ours, who have to make decisions about their role in the conflict. Second, bear witness to how bad it can be, recognize it can happen anywhere and commit yourself to holding your government accountable to its own limitations. And finally, consult your church or place of worship to see if they are helping in the war zone. A lot of brave faith leaders in Ukraine are getting significant support from churches here in America. You can also give to organizations like the Salvation Army and the Red Cross who have operations on the ground in Ukraine. There are many tangible ways you can participate in providing relief. There are better days ahead, and you can help bring them sooner.

A handwritten signature in dark blue ink, appearing to read 'Frank Auman'.

**FRANK AUMAN**  
MAYOR

# City Council Update

Tucker's Mayor and City Council met twice during the month of March. The first meeting, held on March 14, saw further discussion on a proposal to relocate the Tucker Station Chick-fil-A restaurant. Representatives for Chick-fil-A asked for a deferral on the project, as they seek to work different transportation options to alleviate concerns of neighbors in the area. Council voted 6-0 to grant the deferral, and the project will go back before the Planning Commission at its meeting later this month.

Council then held a public hearing on a special land use permit (SLUP) and concurrent variances for a proposed multi-family apartment development that would feature almost 500 units. The project, slated to be built at 2059 Northlake Parkway, is expected to get a final vote from Council at its meeting on April 11. Next was a pair of public hearings for city-initiated rezonings at 1220 and 1250 Richardson Street. Similarly, these came before Council on first reads, meaning no vote is anticipated until the April 11 meeting.

Those issues were followed by unanimous approval of a pair of contracts. The first was for Human Resources consulting services for the City. Council okayed a contract for \$30,000 with Mercer Group Associates. The second contract approved was for curb radius construction at four locations throughout the Tucker Summit Community Improvement District (CID). That contract was awarded to DAF Concrete for \$74,890.

At a special called meeting on March 28, Council approved an ordinance that would amend the City Code by strengthening a prohibition on parking illegally in handicapped spaces. That was followed by approval of an ordinance to amend the City Code chapter on alcoholic beverages. This will replace the current section of code to allow for retail wine, beer and distilled spirits establishments to have tastings with some restrictions.

The next meeting of the Mayor and City Council is scheduled for Monday April 11 at 7 p.m. at City Hall (1975 Lakeside Parkway, Suite 350B).

## DATES TO KNOW

**April 6**  
Traffic Court

**April 11**  
City Council

**April 13**  
Traffic Court

**April 21**  
Planning Commission

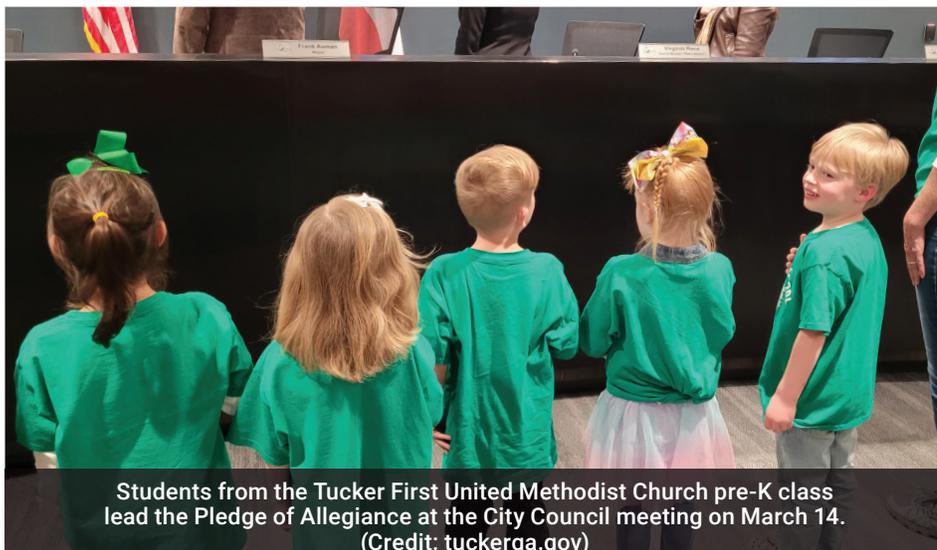
**April 25**  
City Council

**April 27**  
Environmental Court

## FOLLOW US ON SOCIAL MEDIA



nextdoor



Students from the Tucker First United Methodist Church pre-K class lead the Pledge of Allegiance at the City Council meeting on March 14. (Credit: tuckerga.gov)



# ON THE BEAT with Lt. Berg

*Lt. J.W. Berg is Tucker's liaison to the DeKalb County Police Department and can be contacted by email at [jwberg@dekalbcountyga.gov](mailto:jwberg@dekalbcountyga.gov) or by phone at (678) 597-9040.*

In the last few "On the Beat" articles, I spent a good amount of time talking about our department's incredible human resources. From our newer Tucker Precinct police officers, such as award-winning oboist Jumi Lee (November 2021), to our hard-working detectives and support personnel in the Tucker Precinct Criminal Investigative Division (January 2022), I come to work every day feeling lucky to toil along with such a great group of people.

I also feel very fortunate that our department has provided us with the best in modern technology. Just a few years ago, for example, we upgraded our Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) system. A CAD system is what most police departments nationwide use to dispatch and manage their public safety resources. Beginning with a 911 call, an incident is created in a CAD system then it is quickly sent to a police or fire department dispatcher. The dispatcher then locates the nearest available unit and assigns them the call.

Our current CAD system is state of the art and includes several features that help us more efficiently and effectively handle our calls. With embedded GPS tracking in every police vehicle, this enables the dispatchers and the front-line police supervisors to ensure the closest unit to a particular call is dispatched. The CAD system also allows the dispatchers and police supervisors to easily see the specific comments on every call, any subsequent updates to that call and the amount of time that a particular incident has been pending. All of this information allows us the ability to quickly reassess and reevaluate where our officers are most needed.

For the responding police officer, our CAD system also has a good number of features that help them be safer and smarter when responding to a 911 call. When dispatched, the officer can now see a history of the particular location by clicking on a hyperlink that shows them previous calls at the same address. This information can be invaluable, for example, when a call gets dispatched as a "burglary in progress", and previous calls at the location have shown the homeowner may be suffering from mental illness and has called in a "burglary" on numerous occasions. This historical information can also be valuable when responding to incidents of domestic violence where previous calls have shown an allegation of abuse or perhaps the use of a weapon. Obviously, how we respond to a call can be upgraded, or downgraded, based on this information.

Our CAD system also allows us to check individuals and vehicles quickly and easily in the databases of the National Crime Information Center (NCIC) and the Georgia Crime Information Center (GCIC). These two databases, managed by the FBI and GBI respectively, contain information on open arrest warrants, stolen vehicles, missing persons, sex offenders, and other important criminal justice information. Knowing a person has an outstanding warrant, for example, allows our officers to make better, more informed decisions when responding to a call involving our citizens. It is important to note, however, that this criminal justice information is highly regulated by both state and federal authorities. Any misuse of this information by an officer can be punishable by a fine and/or a criminal charge.

Interestingly, our advanced CAD system, one that covers all of DeKalb County, is based in right here in the City of Tucker at our police headquarters (1960 West Exchange Place). If you do have the need to call 911, the call taker you speak with will quickly collect the appropriate information, enter it into our system and help will soon be on the way. Our modern CAD system in DeKalb County is reliable, efficient and is indeed a valuable resource in helping us do our job.

## GEORGIA LAWS TO KNOW IN 2022

### O.C.G.A. 16-5-20 Simple Assault. The law reads in part:

"... Any person who uses a computer or computer network with knowledge that such use is without authority and with the intention of: (1) Deleting or in any way removing, either temporarily or permanently, any computer program or data from a computer or computer network; (2) Obstructing, interrupting, or in any way interfering with the use of a computer program or data; or (3) Altering, damaging, or in any way causing the malfunction of a computer, computer network, or computer program, regardless of how long the alteration, damage, or malfunction persists shall be guilty of the crime of computer trespass..."

NOTE: In this more modern law, the sections we see most often deal with computer "trespass" and "invasion of privacy", often where the victim's accounts such as Facebook or Instagram have been compromised, sometimes by a known suspect such as an ex-husband or ex-wife. While not an easy crime to investigate, when a suspect can be identified the penalties are harsh – up to 15 years in prison and a fine of \$50,000, if convicted.

# BREAKING THE CYCLE

## ONCE A HAVEN FOR SPEED DEMONS, CHAMBLEE TUCKER ROAD GETS A MAKEOVER



The definition of insanity is doing the same thing over and over again but expecting a different result. For years, Chamblee Tucker Road has been the site of excessive speeding, as well as some dangerous, and occasionally deadly, automobile accidents. But nothing was ever done to help curb those problems; the insanity just continued.

The City of Tucker in recent years prioritized Chamblee Tucker Road, looking at various safety measures and strategies that could be employed to change driver behavior. Leaders consulted transportation experts to do a deep dive on various strategies that could solve the problem.

“There is never any one-size-fits all approach to deal with the issues we were facing on a street like Chamblee Tucker,” said Tucker City Engineer Ken Hildebrandt. “We knew we needed to

think outside the box a bit to customize a solution that would make a difference on Chamblee Tucker.”

“Having driven the corridor for decades, there was no question that something had to be done,” explained Michelle Penkava, who served on Tucker’s City Council representing District Three from 2016 until leaving office at the end of 2021. “I represented that area, and I would hear from constituents all the time about speeding along Chamblee Tucker. My kids went to school at Livsey Elementary, so I saw it every day with my own eyes. It was dangerous at times, and we now have the quantitative data to prove it.”

The four-lane road, which runs from Tucker’s northernmost boundary at the intersection with Tucker Norcross Road all the way to the intersection with Lavista and Fellowship Roads by Tucker High School, is now about to get a massive facelift,

# TRANSPORTATION PROJECTS

UNDER CONTRACT SPRING 2022

• MARTA Bus Stops	\$60,815
• Church/Tucker Industrial Sidewalk	\$175,868
• Brockett/Montreal Sidewalk	\$277,760
• Chamblee Tucker Road Diet	\$2,243,251
• Resurfacing	\$3,145,027
• Full Depth Reclamation	\$547,492
• Segment 1A Trail	\$1,158,567
• Intersection Radii	\$77,000*
• Hugh Howell Road Trail	\$807,887*
• Cooledge Sidewalk	\$652,690*
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$9,146,358*</b>

\* estimated cost

which aims to solve some of those longstanding safety problems. Last year, Penkava and Anne Lerner, who is in her second term representing District Three on the City Council, backed a plan to reduce the number of lanes on Chamblee Tucker from four to three, essentially creating a road diet with the intent to create a safer route for all forms of transportation and pedestrians. Chamblee Tucker will have one lane travelling in each direction with a center turning lane. Flashing pedestrian beacons will be installed at seven locations, as well as raised islands for additional safety.

"Chamblee Tucker's current configuration has led to many accidents – a great number of them associated with impatient drivers trying to avoid slowing down or stopping for turning drivers," said Penkava. "The center turn lane with intermittent curbed islands will greatly reduce this key factor in accidents.

In fact, DeKalb County studied Chamblee Tucker well before Tucker became a city and came to a similar conclusion, but never implemented a plan."

The new traffic pattern and traffic features will take some getting used to, Hildebrandt acknowledged. To that end, the City's contractor will be putting out orange traffic barrels to mark off the new pattern giving drivers the chance to experience the changes before construction starts later this spring. The \$ 2.2 million project will include a repaving and restriping of the roadway and is expected to be completed later this year.

Change is hard, so the City asks for your patience as it provides improvements that the surrounding community has sought for many years. And that may just break the cycle of insanity on one of Tucker's busiest roads.

# TEAM TUCKER *Spotlight*

## BEVERLY RAGLAND, FINANCE DIRECTOR

**What is your background in municipal finance?**

I began my government finance career with the State of Georgia in 1995. I transitioned to municipal government finance in 2003.

**What kind of educational background does someone need to be a Finance Director?**

You need to have a concentration in Finance and Accounting.

**Tell us about your day-to-day job responsibilities...**

I spend my days monitoring expenditures and revenues, reviewing contracts, and reading ordinances and State law.

**What made you want to work here in Tucker?**

Tucker is a new city. I have loved my career in public service and I am excited about seeing how a city grows and how services are developed.

**What is the most challenging aspect of your job?**

Navigating software that is new to me is certainly a challenge.



## Off the Wall

**Are you an indoor person or outdoor person?**

I'm both. I prefer indoors during extreme temperatures or inclement conditions and outside when I can be at a beach, a lake, a river/stream or the Rocky Mountains.

**What is your favorite vacation memory?**

Visiting Puerto Rico and spending nights on both Vieques and Culebra. I've never seen water more beautiful!

**What's the last show you binged?**

I'm currently binging a show on Netflix called "Pieces of Her".

**What kind of car do you drive?**

I drive a Toyota Camry, but I'd love to drive a McLaren. Supercars are my favorite!

**What is your motto?**

I can, I will, I am.

## CITIZEN OF THE MONTH

# TERRY COLE

I have often said that the best thing to come out of Tucker's quest for cityhood is the lasting relationships fueled by passion for our community. One of my dearest life friends is Terry Cole, and I owe it all to Tucker.

A native of Georgia, Terry grew up in northeast Georgia and attended the University of Georgia. Her career in journalism and corporate communications took her all over the southeast, but she eventually settled in Tucker and worked to make this her home. I was first introduced to Terry when she reached out to Tucker 2014 to learn more about the community of Tucker becoming the City of Tucker. She offered to host us in her home to inform and educate her neighbors. She was welcoming and open-minded to learn. Once she realized all the benefits of self-government, Terry was all in and became one of the most vocal proponents in support of Tucker. She attended neighborhood meetings, worked into the wee hours to craft messaging for the email list and took time from her days to go down to the Capitol for Senate hearings, where she spoke persuasively to our local representatives in the hopes of securing a referendum.

Once the votes came in and Tucker was a city, Terry continued being Tucker's champion. She was a natural choice when the City Charter called for a citizen charter review after three years of incorporation. At this time, Tucker once again called upon Terry for her help. Terry's values and consistency in character drove the committee to success and we are still benefiting from their recommendations.

The cityhood movement brought out and brought together the very best of our community; the passionate, the committed and the loyal. Terry embodies what we like to call "The Tucker Way". Her natural enthusiasm lights up every room she walks into. She is a high character individual whose values are community driven. It is my utmost pleasure to nominate Terry Cole for Citizen of the Month.

*Nomination by Michelle Penkava*



# MUSIC MAKERS

## TUCKER'S CLUSTER SCHOOLS TRAINING THE NEXT GENERATION OF MUSICIANS



Across America, music in schools has something of a fraught history. The No Child Left Behind Act of 2002 emphasized core subjects such as math, science and reading - subjects that could be quantifiably measured through standardized testing. It would stand to reason that the budget cuts that followed the Great Recession tended to affect arts programs first. After all, critics would say, it is hard to justify the additional costs of art supplies or instruments in a school's budget when technology is improving by leaps and bounds, creating a strong need for STEM professionals. According to a survey by the Georgia Budget and Policy Institute, as many as 42 percent of Georgia school districts reduced or eliminated art and music programs in 2013.

However, studies have shown numerous benefits to children studying music that bubble over into other subjects. Music promotes memorization and language skills as well as pattern recognition. Learning an instrument improves hand-eye coordination. Regular practice and group learning develop work ethic and collaboration skills. These benefits are revealed clearly in standardized test scores. In a 2019 *Journal of Educational Psychology* study of over 100,000 Canadian students, those with a history of music experience scored higher than others in English, math, and science exams even when controlled for other factors such as socioeconomic background. Instrumentalists saw the strongest advantage;

members of high school band and orchestra were almost a year ahead of their classmates in their test scores on core subjects.

Americans are catching on to the importance of music and the other arts. In recent years, many educational movements have adopted a motto of "STEAM" rather than STEM alone. While STEM promotes science, technology, engineering and mathematics, STEAM adds the arts to the lineup.

What does all of this have to do with Tucker?

Tucker's cluster schools take the arts, particularly music, seriously. Starting with our elementary schools, music is a consistent part of the curriculum. Fourth graders learn the recorder in their music classes and, beginning in fifth grade, students have the option to take band in addition to their regular music classes. Smoke Rise and Midvale Elementary also offer chorus as an opportunity to learn, and Midvale incorporates the ukulele as part of its music classes as well.

Kaela Bitting, Midvale's music teacher, has seen the benefits of music education firsthand.

"For one, it's something all our students get to take," Ms. Bitting says, explaining how music helps her students relate to each other. She adds, "We moved music classes to the morning [and] we actually saw an increase in fixing student tardiness because students were excited for class."

Bitting admits that Midvale is an International Baccalaureate and STEM school, not a STEAM school. But, she says, “we’re designed [as if we were] a STEAM school. We’re cross-disciplinary. An engineer needs to have that art experience to design architecture. The STEAM concepts are important. We see the advances in technology, the advances in medicine... putting the A shows that developing the humanitarian side is so crucial. It’s a matter of balance.”

Once they reach Tucker Middle School, students may take band, chorus or orchestra. Otherwise, they will study music as part of their regular class rotation.

Tucker High School runs the gamut of musical options for students. Charles Conner teaches Band and Music Technology, Richard Davis teaches Orchestra and Music Appreciation, and Sun Min teaches Chorus and Piano.

“Music, as well as all other arts, requires a high level of critical thinking...which transfers over to all other subjects and areas,” Conner explains. “The performance of music requires a high level of discipline and focus which again enhances other areas of learning growth and development.”

In addition, he acknowledges that not only do students involved in music education show high graduation rates, but they also can earn scholarship money as musicians if they go to college.

While music education has been shown to have so many positive impacts both in other school subjects and beyond, the variety of opportunities offered to Tucker Cluster students makes it easy to take advantage. No doubt Tucker’s well-rounded graduates will be ready to take on the world. Full STEAM ahead, Tucker!



# TUCKER CLUSTER

## Updates & News

### IMPORTANT DATES

**APRIL 4-8**

Spring Break

**APRIL 18**

Board of Education Meeting

## BRAG SHEET

### BROCKETT ELEMENTARY

- Brockett was the recipient of a grant from the Wipro Foundation. The money was used to purchase books to help the school launch a third-grade book club. Wipro was so impressed with the book club that they offered a second grant to purchase additional books for the students.

### LIVSEY ELEMENTARY

- Livsey students performed the Snow White Variety Show to rave reviews on March 23 and 24 at Tucker Recreation Center.

### MIDVALE ELEMENTARY

- The Midvale community participated in huge numbers as the school’s PTO held a “Virtual” Annual Silent Auction from March 19-25 to raise money for projects and initiatives at the school.

- Principal Dr. Tara Dougherty held a virtual Coffee & Conversation on March 9 to connect with parents and discuss IB and STEM education programs at Midvale.

### SMOKE RISE ELEMENTARY

- The DeKalb County School District’s senior cabinet team conducted Smoke Rise’s Instructional Rounds. The Rounds are designed to give an understanding of what’s happening in classrooms, how schools produce those effects and how they can move closer to producing a well-rounded learner.

# BUSINESS BOOM



*by Jackie Moffo, Economic Development Manager*

On March 11, Governor Brian Kemp made an exciting announcement as PepsiCo

Beverages North America (PBNA), a

division of PepsiCo, shared plans to invest \$260 million into their City of Tucker manufacturing plant.

The PepsiCo plant, located at 1644 Rock Mountain Boulevard, has been in operation in the City for a number of years. As one of Tucker's major employers, the PepsiCo plant currently employs about 464 people. This expansion will create at least 136 full-time jobs, raising Pepsi's total workforce in DeKalb County to over 600 full-time jobs.

"This expansion will greatly increase PBNA's production serving nearby Atlanta and the wider Georgia region to continue the growth of our business and customers in the area," said Karen Jordan, Chief Supply Chain Officer for PBNA. "We are proud to increase our footprint locally as a supplier, producer and employer, bringing with us our gender equity and sustainability mission to create positive change."

PepsiCo's investment at the site will physically increase the plant's footprint by more than 260,000 square feet and expand production five-fold by 2025. Transforming the plant into an advanced manufacturing facility, this expansion will make the Tucker plant one of the largest manufacturing facilities in Pepsi's portfolio.

"The competitive landscape for economic development projects extends far and wide in Georgia," said DeKalb County CEO Michael Thurmond. "We are delighted that PBNA has decided to deepen the roots they have planted here in DeKalb County. We are proud to

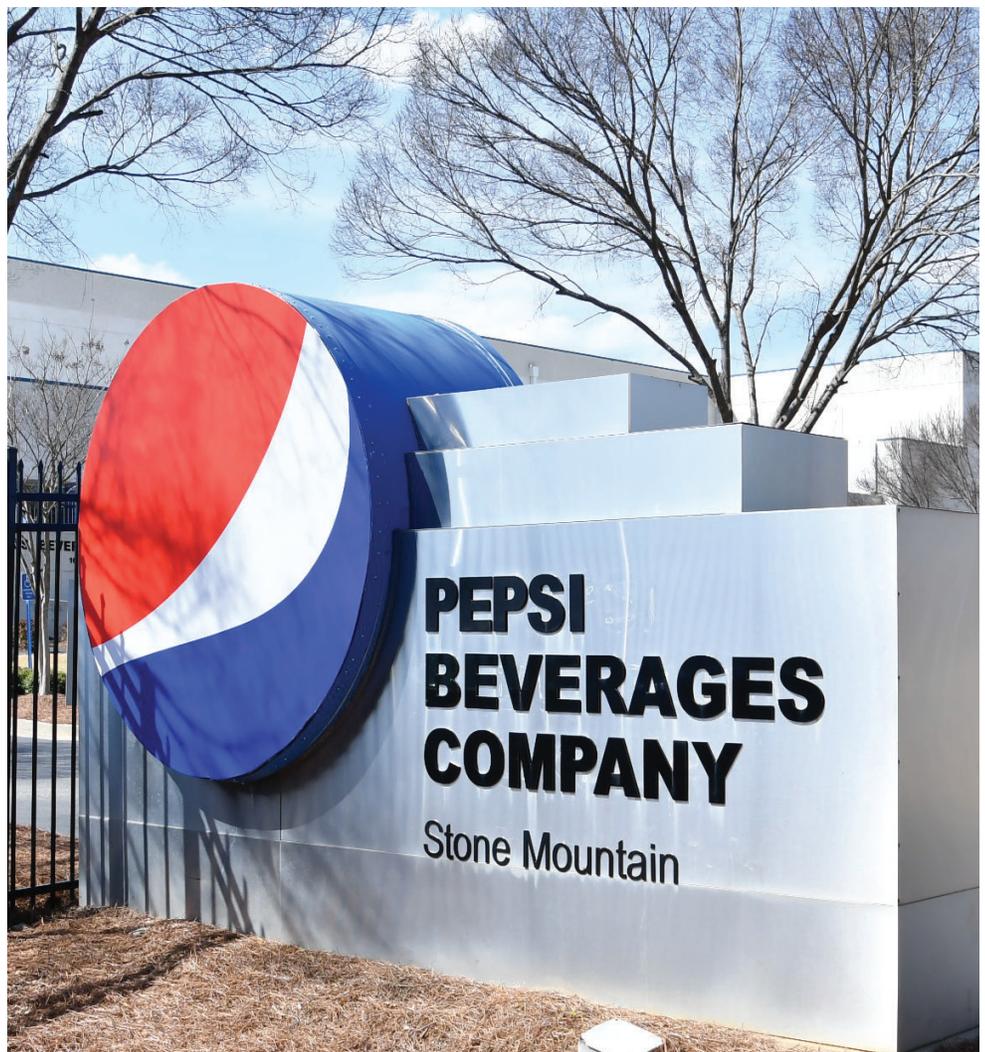
be a part of this exciting public/private partnership that will spur job creation and economic growth."

"This is great news for Tucker and for DeKalb County. The magnitude of the investment PBNA is making and the quality of jobs they are creating will have a significant and ongoing impact here in Tucker for years to come," Mayor Frank Auman added. "We work hard to attract new business to Tucker, but it's even more important to retain our existing businesses. When a leader like PBNA doubles down here with an investment of this scale, it speaks highly of Tucker's

efforts, and we're proud to support them in every way we can."

As Economic Development Manager for the City, I worked closely with Decide DeKalb Development Authority and the State of Georgia's Department of Economic Development (GDECD), along with partners including the Metro Atlanta Chamber, Georgia Quick Start, and Georgia Power to help win this competitive project.

This City of Tucker thanks the PBNA Economic Development team and all of PepsiCo for choosing to expand in our community!



## BUSINESS OF THE MONTH

# TAGGART'S DRIVING SCHOOL

One of the longest running businesses in Tucker is one you've likely driven by thousands of times. In fact, it may be where you learned to drive in the first place.

The unmistakable, big yellow sign for Taggart's Driving School sits along the property's frontage on Lawrenceville Highway, the site that Taggart's has occupied since 1973. It was just a year later that a young Barry Schrenk moved from New Jersey to Georgia and began operating Taggart's, then a national brand.

"Tucker made sense," Schrenk recalls. "They looked at 285...Where do you park the cars? Where is someplace easy to get for the population? In Tucker, we were able to acquire land for a driving range, and we had lower rents."

Now with locations in Tucker, East Cobb and Dunwoody, Schrenk has made Taggart's his life's work. He operates out of an office in the Tucker headquarters, overseeing 20 employees. The majority of the work for those employees, he says, involves working with young drivers.

"Parents are not driving teachers," Schrenk asserts. "Sometimes I wonder how parents do it. One of the mistakes parents make is they have no control of the car. All they can do is scream. We have two steering wheels, two brakes and two gas pedals in all of our cars."

In Georgia, drivers under 18 must take a driver's education program with 30 hours of classroom or online instruction and a minimum of six hours of in-car instruction. Taggart's does all of that and more, also offering adult driving lessons and defensive driving courses.

"Most of our students are teens in the Driver's Ed program," Schrenk explains. "Parents tell me they see such a difference in how their child handles the car after the kid has gone through our training program."

And as for why Taggart's has lasted a half-century here in Tucker? Schrenk says that is personal.

"I live in Tucker. I'm 1.3 miles from my house," he says with a laugh, adding, "I don't have any desire to move the business."

Taggart's Driving School is located at 3566 Lawrenceville Highway. They are online at [taggartsdrivingschool.com](http://taggartsdrivingschool.com).



# “ASK RIP”

by Rip Robertson, Parks and Recreation Director



Spring baseball is here! Opening day is Saturday April 16 at Fitzgerald Park. We are excited about our second season and have seen tremendous growth already. We hope you'll support the community's

kids by coming out and cheering while enjoying a Saturday in the sun. Our season will run through the first week of June with our Tee-Ball (5-6-year-olds), coach pitch (7-8-year-olds) and kid pitch (9-10 and 11-12-year-olds) teams. You can bring your young children (3-4-year-olds) out to Fitzgerald Park on Tuesday and Thursday evenings at five o'clock for learning and fun. Please make sure to call Tucker Recreation Center to register for these clinics. We will wrap up our season with All-Star play in June and host the state championships for our 10U age group.

Just before our Opening Day ceremonies, we will host our Annual Egg Hunt at Fitzgerald Park Fields One and Two. The hunt will begin for all ages at 9 a.m. and it goes quick. We have ordered double the eggs from last year and are excited to host this “mad dash” again in 2022.

We are currently registering for our eSports league. We are hosting a number of online sports and games that will begin in the next couple weeks, so hurry! This program is for ages eight and above and is divided into age-appropriate groups for most ages (there are some games for older ages only). You can go to [www.tuckerga.gov/parks](http://www.tuckerga.gov/parks) and hover over the “Tucker Rec” tab to access registration.

The City will once again be hosting a “Summer of Fun” series, but this year we are excited to add a “First Fridays Concert Series”. There will be live music at the new Church Street greenspace on the First Fridays from May to September (July's will be included with the Independence Day Celebration on Main Street). Our first band will be performing on May 6. It will be the Nathan Angelo Band all the way from Greenville, South Carolina. This band plays original music, as well as fun covers. Come on out and dance the evening away. We will follow on June 3 with a classic rock band, The Woodys from Alpharetta. They are sure to bring a fun evening to Tucker. In August, we'll be bringing the very energetic Mike Veal Band. They are a high energy dance band that will surely get everyone up and moving.



Our final concert will be on September 2. We are currently waiting on confirmation for this exciting finale.

Don't miss a night of fun in downtown Tucker this summer! Give us a call or check our website for the details on food trucks and greenspace concert policies.

Of course, it wouldn't be a “Summer of Fun” without our annual Independence Day Celebration. The fireworks will be incredible and we'll have live music, fun games and some exciting new additions for the kids. You'll certainly be hearing more on the details as we get closer to the day, so stay tuned!

Our first big event of the summer will be our annual Adult Field Day on May 14 from 5-8 p.m. We will be cooking hot dogs and hamburgers (with some vegetarian options) and we'll have some of our local partners providing refreshments and prizes. Check out the video on Facebook and begin preparing for the “big wheel” races! Go to our website to register.

To update you on progress in our parks, the Memorial Plaza project at Probst Park is well underway and should be completed by Memorial Day. We are installing new water and sewer lines at Fitzgerald Park and will have that completed for Baseball Opening Day later this month!

# TUCKER REWIND



March was a busy month in the City of Tucker! (clockwise from top left) On March 10, Tucker staff participated in a roadside cleanup on Crescent Center Parkway. On March 15, Mayor and Mrs. Auman wished a happy 100th birthday to Smoke Rise resident Edna Hardman Mann. On March 16, Mayor Auman and Georgia Agriculture Commissioner Gary Black toured several Tucker food manufacturing facilities. On March 17, Sherry's Produce opened for the 2022 season.





## TUCKER Community Corner



### 4/1 – First Friday at rek Gallery

**6-8 p.m.**  
**3383 Lawrenceville Highway**  
The rek Gallery invites the Tucker community for a monthly meet and greet of various artists every first Friday. Check rek.gallery for details.

### 4/7 – Tucker Farmers Market Season Kickoff

**4-7 p.m.**  
**4882 Lavista Road**  
The Tucker Farmers Market is back in person for 2022! Live music, food trucks, and fresh produce all available. Get details at [TFMOnlineStore.com](http://TFMOnlineStore.com).

### 4/23 – Earth Day e-Waste Recycling

**10 a.m.-1 p.m.**  
**1975 Lakeside Parkway**  
The City of Tucker is hosting an e-Waste Recycling event at City Hall. Check our website at [www.tuckerga.gov](http://www.tuckerga.gov) for acceptable items.

### 4/30 – ARTucker "Art in the Park"

**10 a.m.-4 p.m.**  
**1832 Clark Drive**  
ARTucker is back! Join us at Peters Park for the biggest showcase of artists and makers in the City of Tucker.