



# INTUCKER

MARCH 2022 | VOLUME 6 | ISSUE 3



## TAKING PRIDE IN OUR RIDE

TUCKER'S ANNUAL ROAD RESURFACING CAMPAIGN  
LOOKS TO IMPROVE UPON CONDITIONS IN THE CITY

## EDITOR'S NOTE



The work that a city does is invaluable to the quality of life of its citizens. You may not think it's true, but imagine with me a scenario

where we had no city services. Our parks would be overrun with weeds, tall grass and garbage. Our neighborhoods would have homes that were dilapidated, abandoned and in total disrepair. Our businesses would have signage that could be generously described as "tacky".

And then there are our roads.

This month, our fifth annual City of Tucker road resurfacing campaign is scheduled to begin. This year we have a list of more than 60 roads that are due to be repaved; some of the absolute worst conditioned roads in the city limits. If there were no city, there would be no resurfacing. We would be back to dodging potholes like we did in the days before cityhood.

Now one of the most frequent questions we get at City Hall surrounds how the road resurfacings are prioritized. Just in the past year, we hired a company to come in and drive every mile of roadway in Tucker. They did an unbiased, hi-tech analysis of all public roadways and assigned them all scores. That is where the resurfacing order comes from; we do the worst roads first.

If you're like me and you think your neighborhood's road should be on that list, just remember that we're not playing favorites here. This is data, plain and simple. We can't get every single street, but we're getting more of them each year. You can read more about it in the feature story on page 6. In the meantime, enjoy the smooth ride around town; it's just another benefit provided to you by the City of Tucker.

**MATT HOLMES**  
INTUCKER EDITOR

## IN THIS ISSUE



### ON THE COVER

Potholes are more than a headache, they can put a hurtin' on your car, too. On page 6, find out how the City of Tucker is cracking down on potholes one street at a time.



### CITIZEN OF THE MONTH

Want to know how things get done in a city like Tucker? Look no further than our Citizen of the Month. How she's shaping our community's parks on page 9.



### SCHOOL SUPPORT

Statistics show that parent support dwindles as kids grow into the upper grades of school, but one group at Tucker High School is looking to buck that trend. Read about them on page 10.



### BUSINESS BOOM

March is Women's History Month and Tucker is awash in successful, women-owned businesses. Jackie Moffo introduces you to some of them on page 12.



### ASK RIP

The big leaguers may not be playing ball anytime soon, but our Tucker youth are ready to get out on the diamond. Get all the details in "Ask Rip" on page 15.



# INTUCKER

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Printed by  
AtlantaPrintandMail.com, Inc

### VOLUME 6 ISSUE 3

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# From the Mayor:



If you read *InTucker* with any regularity, you likely know that we have a lot of new faces on our City Council. One of the biggest challenges our whole Council faces is learning and understanding the land use process. It's complicated, and often contentious. It's also among the biggest parts of the job, and critically important that we get it right for everyone concerned. That's why our newest councilmembers just spent time in Athens last week with other newly elected officials from around the State of Georgia, learning about the laws and many other considerations in land use decisions.

So what is it, and how does it work? The foundational thing to remember is that property owners have property rights, which means that, within limits, they are free to make use of their property as they see fit. But since it just wouldn't do to have a nuclear reactor in our downtown, or a meatpacking plant in your neighborhood, cities like Tucker have certain authority to limit certain uses in certain places. And the process of making those decisions, and balancing the rights of property owners, residents and others, is what we mean when we talk about the land use process, or "zoning".

When we became a City, we adopted the zoning of every piece (or parcel) of property in the City as it was under DeKalb County. Since then, we've continued to refine and adapt that zoning to Tucker's needs and desires. Every property is zoned for certain kinds of allowed uses, and if a property owner wants to use his or her property for the zoned use, all they need are the proper building permits, etc. That's called a "by right" use, simply meaning they are using their property by right for the way it's zoned, without having to ask for any other kind of permission.

If they want to use their property in a way it's not zoned for, they can go through our land use process to ask for their proposed use to be allowed. The process is very well-defined and highly regulated. We've worked on and refined ours over the past several years to ensure property owners, residents and other stakeholders get plenty of input into any land use case. It is in our interest to make sure we're getting your feedback on any issue, but especially these cases that can have a major impact on our community, and our land use process is specifically designed to allow and encourage that input.

The process starts with the owner or developer discussing their proposed use with our staff, especially with regard to whether it would be allowed under their current zoning. If it is not, we require them first to hold a Public Participation Plan (PPP) meeting. At this meeting, developers talk directly with residents about their proposal, hear their input and then go back and make needed changes to their plans. This first step used to be a hearing before the Community Council, an appointed body of citizen volunteers. A couple of years ago, we decided to modify this step and have them meet directly with the community before they can even submit a formal application. This is the first opportunity for you to have input into the plan, and by far the easiest time to affect change.

After this PPP meeting, the next step is for the owner/developer to submit an application to the City, detailing their proposal. This application kicks off the formal part of the process, in two parts. One is our staff evaluating the proposal as to whether it would meet all the rest of our code and land use requirements. Staff will prepare a recommendation to Planning Commission and later

(continued on page 8)

# City Council Update

Tucker's Mayor and City Council met on February 15, casting a vote on the highly anticipated special land use permit (SLUP) for Chick-fil-A. The restaurant chain, which is seeking to move its Tucker Station location to the site of the old The Greater Good BBQ on Hugh Howell Road, asked for a deferral of their petition so that they could make major changes to the plans. Council voted 6-0 to grant a deferral to their meeting on February 28.

Council also cast several votes in the areas of transportation and Parks and Recreation. Those included:

- approval of a contract with Allied Paving Contractors for just over \$3 million for resurfacing work on 61 streets throughout the City.
- approval of a contract with Blount Construction for \$547,492.18 for full depth reclamation and resurfacing of the Ivey Oaks subdivision.

- approval of a task order with BM&K for \$119,980 for construction engineering and inspection services to oversee the quality of the resurfacing work.
- approval of a contract with Hasbun Construction for just over \$1.1 million for construction of a trail segment through downtown Tucker.
- approval of a contract with Helix Group for \$583,355.55 for improvements to the water and sewer system at Fitzgerald Park.
- approval of a task order with Barge Design Solutions for \$49,750 for design services on the Tucker Town Green project.

Council's final action of the night was to approve a holiday and meeting calendar for the remainder of 2022.

The Mayor and City Council will hold their next meeting on Monday March 14 at 7 p.m. at City Hall (1975 Lakeside Parkway, Suite 350B).

## DATES TO KNOW

**March 2**

Traffic Court

**March 7**

Downtown Development Authority

**March 9**

Traffic Court

**March 14**

City Council

**March 14**

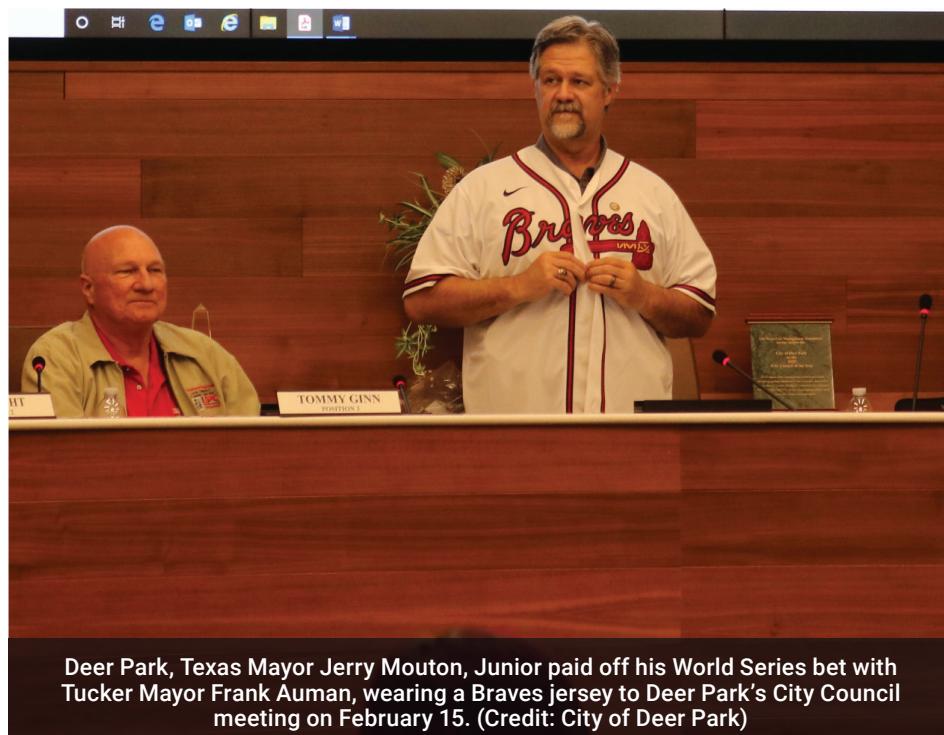
Planning Commission

**March 23**

Environmental Court

**March 28**

City Council



Deer Park, Texas Mayor Jerry Mouton, Junior paid off his World Series bet with Tucker Mayor Frank Auman, wearing a Braves jersey to Deer Park's City Council meeting on February 15. (Credit: City of Deer Park)

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# 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.*

Throughout their careers, those who work in law enforcement are often faced with difficult and disturbing situations. These incidents can range from responding to chaotic vehicle accidents involving multiple cars and injured drivers to mediating incidents of domestic violence (see February's "On the Beat" article for more on this topic). Although police officers are required to make tough decisions, we all know this when we take the job and understand the importance in making well-reasoned decisions during stressful times.

However, most of us in law enforcement also appreciate having opportunities to engage with people on a more informal – and less stressful – basis. Fortunately, I've met many City of Tucker residents over the years who have asked me how they can become more involved with our department both in direct, tangible ways or simply by gaining a better understanding of what we do every day.

For our younger residents, the DeKalb County Police Department has established programs that engage these emerging citizens in positive ways. We have a very strong chapter of the nationwide Police Athletic League ("PAL") Plus program. Working through an established 501(c)(3) non-profit organization ([www.dekalbcountypalplus.org](http://www.dekalbcountypalplus.org)), several of our most compassionate officers are dedicated to managing youth mentorship programs, summer camps, teen festivals and other events that help build bridges with the impressionable youth in our community. Many of the youth reached through these programs move on to join our Police Explorers program (ages 14-21) and, as they become young adults, these participants occasionally join us as recruits (age 20+) in our highly-regarded training academy based in Lithonia.

Just prior to the worldwide COVID crisis, we also had a blossoming Volunteers in Policing (VIP) program. After getting background checked and trained, these adult volunteers partnered with us in various areas throughout the Department. From working at our lobby screening desks to helping with special events such as the popular Beat the Badge 5K Road Race, our officers enjoyed working together with these enthusiastic citizens. In addition, through the years we also have held several popular "Citizen Academies", including a virtual academy in 2021. The attendees at this months-long training course are presented with a deep dive into various aspects of our Department, from how our detectives work to solve a crime to courses in self-defense and firearm safety.

While some of these programs have been put on hold because of the pandemic, one very important aspect of what we do continues: recruiting new officers. As I've mentioned before, police departments nationwide are overworked and short-staffed based on factors too numerous to list. Despite these challenges, we are constantly hiring dedicated individuals to join us. Among the qualifications to become a DeKalb County Police officer include the need be in good physical health, have no felony or domestic violence convictions, be a U.S. citizen, and possess a strong desire to help your fellow citizens. One interesting note is that, while the minimum age to be a law enforcement officer is 20, there is no upper age limit to join our academy. We have had several excellent recruits in their 40s and, yes, an occasional recruit in their 50s!

As we slowly but surely come out of this pandemic, the good news is that our department is working towards re-establishing many of these programs, including several in-person opportunities to work side by side with us. If any of the above programs are of interest to you, please reach out to our friendly Public Education Specialist at Tucker Precinct, Donna Mann at (678) 937-5339 or at [dsmann@dekalbcountyga.gov](mailto:dsmann@dekalbcountyga.gov).

I will warn you to be ready for Mrs. Mann to ask you one big question: "How about joining our department full-time?"

## GEORGIA LAWS TO KNOW IN 2022

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

"A person commits the offense of simple assault when he or she either (1) attempts to commit a violent injury to the person of another; or (2) commits an act which places another in reasonable apprehension of immediately receiving a violent injury..."

NOTE: This law differs from Simple Battery in that no actual physical contact with the victim is needed. What can be up for some interpretation is the definition of the words "reasonable apprehension" and "immediately". Regardless of the definition, I encourage you to contact law enforcement if you believe you have been assaulted, whether physically or otherwise.

# SMOOTHING OUR STREETS

## TUCKER PREPARES TO EMBARK UPON 2022 RESURFACING CAMPAIGN



Either this month or next – depending on whether Mother Nature is smiling on Tucker – the City will embark on its fifth annual road resurfacing campaign. Prior to 2018, the City did not repave any of its own streets; that responsibility fell to DeKalb County, unless it was a state route, then it was GDOT's responsibility.

But the passage of the 2017 SPLOST referendum changed everything. The extra penny sales tax approved overwhelmingly by voters gave cities in DeKalb the opportunity and the resources to assess and resurface their own roads. The amount of money received by each municipality varies each year based on revenues and local population, but in Tucker it has consistently come in the \$5-6 million range.

Not all of the money goes to road resurfacing. According to the terms of the referendum set out by the County, at least 20 percent of the funds must be spent on multi-modal transportation projects. That would include things like paths and sidewalks. Up to 15 percent can be spent on parks and public safety facilities. That leaves at least 65 percent to be allocated for roads and drainage.

Over the course of the past four years, Tucker has spent more than \$20 million on road resurfacings, most of that amount coming from SPLOST funding. In the year ahead, they plan to

spend around an additional \$4 million to pave as many as 66 streets across the City. The streets selected were determined by data; the City hired the firm Stantec in 2018 and again in 2021 to drive every mile of public road within the city limits. Their hi-tech van was able to capture conditions on the road's surface, as well as beneath the surface and report it back to Tucker City Engineer Ken Hildebrandt. The pavement condition index (PCI) scores were then ranked, giving the Mayor and City Council an easy way to determine road resurfacing priorities.

The difference made by these resurfacing projects has been unmistakable. Hundreds of roads have been resurfaced across Tucker's 20 square miles, meaning the overall conditions of the road system as a whole has improved. In Stantec's 2018 assessment, the overall PCI score was a 49.1 (on a 1 to 100 scale). As of the most recent assessment, the PCI score for the City has jumped to a 63.6. In layman's terms, the condition of Tucker's roads has gone from "poor" to "fair". And "good" is just around the corner.

The SPLOST will expire in two years, meaning it is expected to reappear as a ballot issue in November of 2023. Officials at the county level are already doing outreach and education to help the community understand how their extra pennies have been spent to this point. It will then be up to the voters to decide whether to extend the SPLOST or to let it sunset in 2024.



2018



2019



2020



2021

## ROAD RESURFACINGS: HOW WE PAY?

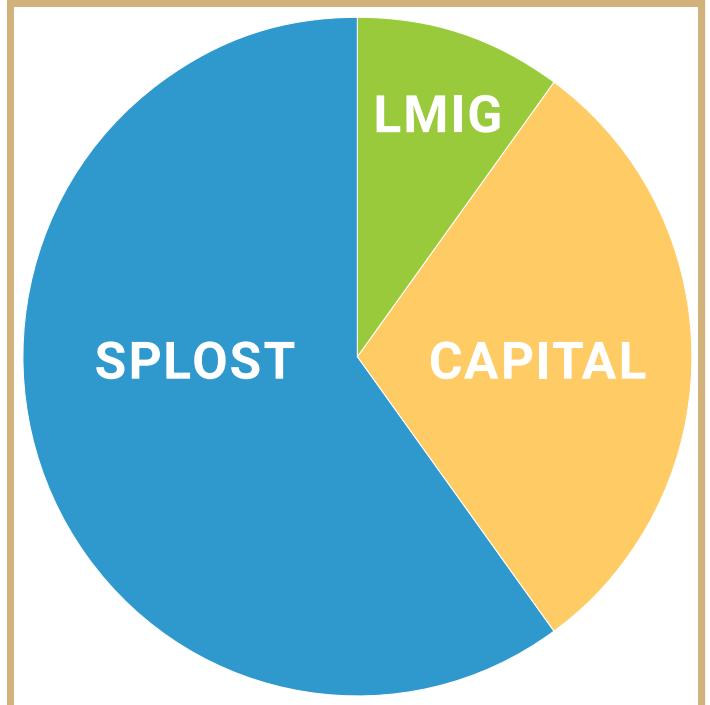
Road resurfacings are a multi-million dollar endeavor and require multiple funding sources. In addition to SPLOST, the City utilizes funds from the Local Maintenance Infrastructure Grant (LMIG), as well as capital funds from the City's annual budget. This chart demonstrates how Tucker funds \$4 million a year in road resurfacings (dollar values are approximate).

## ROAD RESURFACINGS: WHAT'S THE CRITERIA?

Assessments are performed and scores are issued based on a number of factors, including

- Alligator Cracking
- Bleeding
- Block Cracking
- Distortion
- Patching
- Raveling
- Rippling
- Rutting

**SPLOST \$2.4 MILLION  
CAPITAL \$1.2 MILLION  
LMIG \$400 THOUSAND**



# ROAD RESURFACINGS: WHO GETS PAVED?

ASPEN COURT  
BROOKSIDE MANOR COURT  
**CEDAR KNOLL DRIVE**  
Martha Jean Place  
**CEMETERY AVENUE**  
Lovely Lane  
**DARLENE WAY**  
Darlene Court  
Sterling Acres Drive  
Sterling Acres Court  
Pounds Court  
Summit Hills Lane  
Summit Hills Way  
Summit Hills Drive  
Northforke Court  
**E. EXCHANGE PLACE**  
FONTANA COURT

**HANNAH ROAD**  
Sturbridge Court  
**HENDERSON CHASE COURT**  
**HUGHES LEA**  
Saint George Court  
Warrington Close  
**INDIAN TRAIL DRIVE**  
**IVEY CREEK WAY**  
Ivey Oaks Place  
Old Ivey Walk  
Ivey Springs Trail  
Grain Meadow Lane  
**LAVISTA EXECUTIVE PARK**  
**LEWIS WAY**  
LEXINGTON ROAD  
**LIVSEY TRAIL**  
**LIVSEY WAY**

**MOUNTAIN GLEN**  
**MOUNTAIN WEST TRAIL**  
**MOUNTAIN WEST COURT**  
**NORTHLAKE PARKWAY**  
**NORWICH COURT**  
**NORWICH WAY**  
**OAKVALE PLACE**  
**OLD COOLEDGE ROAD**  
**RANCHWOOD DRIVE NE**  
**REGENCY DRIVE E**  
Regency Parkway  
Regency Drive W  
Emperor Way  
**SAMARIA TRAIL**  
Samaria Court  
Jericho Road  
Jericho Court

Galilee Court  
Mt. Sinai Court  
Jerusalem Court  
**SHADY LANE**  
**SHERIDAN STREET**  
**ST. LAWRENCE COVE**  
**STEEL DRIVE**  
**STOCKTON DRIVE**  
**THORNridge WAY**  
Livsey Court  
Thornbriar Road  
**TOWNSHIP LANE**  
**W. EXCHANGE PLACE**  
**WESTON LANE**

**NOTE:** Bolded streets denote super sections.

## FROM THE MAYOR

(continued from page 3)

the Mayor and Council relating to whether it fits with our comprehensive and other plans, and what modifications they would recommend to the proposal to make it comply. The other part that begins simultaneously, is a hearing for the applicant before the Planning Commission. The applicant will make a presentation before this appointed body, answer any questions they may have and also hear additional feedback from the community at that meeting. The Planning Commission then votes on a recommendation to Mayor and Council, including any conditions they think we should impose.

Usually within two weeks or so, the Mayor and City Council begin the final steps in the process. We hear these land use cases twice – in what we call a first read and a second read. The meetings are typically about a month apart in order to give the Council time to thoroughly analyze the project and hear from all parties, including the public. Each of these meetings features a public hearing where both sides have the opportunity to advocate for their position on the case. We also hear the recommendations from staff and from the Planning Commission. And the month in-between is specifically so we can hear from citizens about their questions and concerns. It's all arranged so that the public has many opportunities to speak into the project and express themselves to their representatives.

It's important to remember and understand that these are not arbitrary or personal decisions about who wants what.

We have some latitude in our decisions and the ability to modify proposals to make them better for the community, but we are also bound by certain laws and other limits that are there to protect everyone's interests. So showing up en masse or email campaigns may have some influence, but we may also be bound by laws that dictate what we can and cannot do.

Once we cast a vote, the public process is essentially complete; it's up to our staff and the developer to follow through on any conditions we may place on a development. It's a good process, but one that really relies on public involvement. As elected officials, we are required to come to these hearings with an open mind and a desire to hear from all sides. We often learn things over the course of the process from the public and others, and often form our opinion as we progress through it. So, make your opinions known, but also get informed about the issues at hand, and what will factor into our decision! Come speak at a meeting, or send us an email ahead of time (our emails are on the City website). Participate in the process and do your part to shape the City of Tucker for years to come.



FRANK AUMAN  
MAYOR

## CITIZEN OF THE MONTH

# PAMELA MCNALL

Pamela McNall is the driving force behind many volunteer initiatives in our area. Her work has not only resulted in the cleanup and development of numerous parks, waterways, bus stops, and other sites around Tucker, but she has also tirelessly worked to increase community awareness and citizen involvement. Through Pam's efforts, not only is Tucker a cleaner and safer place to live, but the community is more involved and the overall quality of life in Tucker has improved.

Pam began her community involvement in Tucker as the Chair of Tucker Civic Association's (TCA) Parks and Green Space Committee, where she organized and volunteered at numerous events including cleanups at elementary schools, athletic fields, MARTA stops and other sites around Tucker. One of her biggest successes with TCA has been her involvement with the Rivers Alive program. The cleanup events she organized have resulted in the removal of tens of thousands of pounds of trash from South Fork Peachtree Creek and led to TCA being named "Non-Profit Organization of the Year" by the State of Georgia's Environmental Protection Division. After many years, TCA's Rivers Alive initiative is still going strong and Pam continues to serve on the organizing committee.

When TCA decided to form the "Friends of Tucker Parks" group, Pam was the obvious choice to lead the organization and build it from the ground up. One of Pam's biggest strengths is bringing people together and motivating them to get involved. When Pam first took over the TCA Parks and Green Space Committee, only one person showed up for the first meeting. Thanks to the legacy of Pam's tireless recruiting and mobilizing efforts, Friends of Tucker Parks now has thousands of supporters, and as many as 200 volunteers show up for events in our parks. This kind of volunteer manpower has been critical to the huge success of these programs. Although Pam has stepped down as the head of Friends of Tucker Parks, she continues to serve as the Chair of Friends of Tucker Nature Preserve, and coordinates events such as the very popular Great American Cleanup each April. Pam also continues to represent Tucker on DeKalb County's Citizen Advisory Board for Parks and Recreation.

One of Pam's latest endeavors is RespectfulWays.com, an online curriculum program and educator support tool that she created. Respectful Ways is a digital (from home or school), trauma-informed, social emotional learning (SEL) program that helps school systems teach



emotional intelligence to students and offers Professional Development SEL training for educators. The program helps educators teach compassion, perseverance, respect, and responsibility, traits that Pam herself exhibits and inspires in those around her everyday.

According to the Atlanta Regional Commission, Tucker has the highest rate of volunteerism in metro Atlanta. I strongly believe that this accolade is a direct result of Pam McNall's leadership and infectious enthusiasm. She has inspired so many Tucker residents, including myself, to serve our community through volunteer activities. She is very deserving of the honor of Tucker's Citizen of the Month!

*Nomination by Beth Ganga*

# TUCKER HIGH FOUNDATION

## THSF RAISES MONEY TO SUPPORT STUDENTS, TEACHERS

There are many ways to support your local schools. Some of the most well-known include joining the parent-teacher association or volunteering for school events. However, most of these avenues assume that you are a parent with a child in the school system. How can you help as an alumnus, a parent of a former student, or even as a community member?

Enter the Tucker High School Foundation (THSF). School foundations are formed as a way to raise additional money and to give citizens another way to engage their local schools. The THSF fills this need for Tucker High School.

The Tucker High School Foundation was incorporated in 2011 when the Tucker Women's Club (TWC) voted to disband. The TWC donated \$75,000 to the THSF; \$20,000 went to a banquet honoring Tucker High School staff and teachers, while \$50,000 was invested for the dividends and interest to support THSF activities and the remaining \$5,000 went to the THSF general fund.

The THSF was founded for the purpose of supporting educational initiatives at Tucker High School. This means that the Foundation funds teachers' and staff's programs and projects, scholarships for Tucker High School students, and otherwise assists in financially supporting Tucker High School.

The THSF supports a wide variety of programs and projects at the high school. Some of these include perfect attendance awards to staff, comic books for English as a Second Language courses, and a water distiller for the science department.

"Anytime a teacher needs additional assistance with paying for a project, they can come and make a request," said Alecia Maclin, THSF Member at Large.

THSF also collaborates with the Giving Closet, run by school custodian Carolyn Collins and profiled in the February 2018 issue of *InTucker*, to help students in need.

"She will tell us things that she needs or she's running low on, and we've made those donations to her to help," Maclin said. "Someone from the Foundation gave her a washer and dryer, things like that to help out. There's always someone that needs something."

"[We want to do] anything that we can do to help promote Tucker within the community, help promote things that our students may need and help give the teachers and staff the support they need to help take care of our children. One of our pending projects that we'd like done is adding a type of banner/flagging to the Lavista street [frontage]. Some of the other local high schools in the surrounding county have put up large display banners with accomplishments... different things that you can highlight about your schools in a highly visible area."

In addition, THSF funds scholarships for graduating Tucker High School students. For the year of 2020-'21, they gave out three \$1,000 scholarships to students. This year, they're raising the bar: three \$2,000 scholarships are available. The scholarships require a minimum 3.0 GPA and a 500-1,000 word essay to apply. Current Tucker High School seniors are encouraged to apply.

As with so many walks of life, the COVID-19 pandemic brought new challenges for the THSF to overcome. When so many of their fundraisers were in-person events, how could they adapt to the spread of the virus?

"We just transitioned," Maclin said. "Since we couldn't have Casino Night in person last year, we made it the Tucker High School online auction."

The pandemic also brought more ways for the THSF to help the high school.

"Last year we bought the seniors water bottles," Maclin recounted. "One of the things that we wanted to make sure with COVID going around is that they didn't





have to drink from the water fountain.... They have those water fillers now, and so we've got water bottles for the seniors to use with the water fillers."

The THSF keeps up a membership of 20-25 members, and they are currently recruiting.

"We encourage parents from the middle school, from the elementary schools, and business leaders, community leaders, community volunteers," Maclin said. "I at one time had a high schooler at Tucker High, but I no longer do....I still volunteer just because I love it. You have to be an enthusiastic volunteer. It's so hard to reach people and so hard to get people to donate for things. I don't know if it's also because of the pandemic, but there are so many kids that need help."

From 2020-2021, THSF disbursed around \$9,000 through teachers' grants, scholarships and other student initiatives. They'll be able to fund future projects, in part, thanks to the annual THSF Golf Tournament coming up on March 20. Participation requires a \$120 donation per golfer, and there are both men's and women's flights. Hole sponsorships are also available; a \$250 donation is required to sponsor, and this may be made monetarily or through in-kind donations.

# Tucker Cluster

## Updates & News

### IMPORTANT DATES

- March 11**  
Teacher Workday
- March 14**  
Board of Education Meeting

## BRAG SHEET

### IDLEWOOD ELEMENTARY

- Idlewood's student body will get a closer look at real world applications of some of the lessons they're learning in class during STEAM Day on March 4.

### LIVSEY ELEMENTARY

- The 2022 DCSD Virtual Technology Fair took place on January 22. Team Livsey had four students place in the competition.
- Congratulations to Livsey's Girls Who Game for participating in the National Girls Who Game competition that was held on February 3.

### MIDVALE ELEMENTARY

- Congratulations to fifth-grade students Daniel Jamal, Jaiden Lovett and Norah Budd for their advancement to the Metro Regional Social Studies Fair!
- Midvale is proud to announce that fifth-grader Noah (Nicholas) Carney is an author! His book "The Magic Light" is a collection of four short stories.

### SMOKE RISE ELEMENTARY

- Smoke Rise hosted a virtual STEM Night on February 23, giving students and parents the chance to learn more about the subjects of Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics.

### TUCKER MIDDLE

- The Tiger Reading Bowl team placed third in this year's DeKalb County Helen Ruffin Reading Bowl competition. Congratulations to Coach Williams, Coach Dawson and the team!
- • Tucker students and the community at large donated more than 1,000 books to the African Library Project. Those books have arrived in Ghana and will be used to establish a library in a Ghanian junior high school.

### TUCKER HIGH

- Tucker's boys basketball team captured the region championship and began play in the state tournament.

# BUSINESS BOOM

by Jackie Moffo, Economic Development Manager



In honor of Women's History Month, the City of Tucker is proud to share and celebrate the stories of just a few of the women-owned businesses in our community.

According to the National Association of Women Business Owners (NAWBO), women-owned businesses account for 39 percent of all privately held firms, generate \$1.7 trillion in sales and employ nearly 9 million people across the United States. The number of women-owned businesses is growing across the country, and Georgia is proudly leading the charge as the number two state in growth for women-owned firms. Women-owned businesses are diverse in age, race, ethnicity and industry.

Beauty by Bowers Day Spa, owned by Jamecia Bowers, has been a spa, esthetics and beauty destination in Tucker since its inception in 2012. Jamecia got her start in Tucker by leveraging space that existed in her father's dental practice and has since grown her business into her beautiful location today, right in downtown Tucker. She had opportunities to move the business to other cities over the years, but shared that she stayed in Tucker because it felt like home. She adds that she hopes for the City and the community at large to continue to support and advocate for small businesses.

"Sometimes small businesses can get lost and just putting eyes and attention on smaller businesses in the area [is helpful]," she explained, adding that for other women-owned businesses or start-ups in Tucker, "keep going. In the beginning, especially, it is so super difficult....Get all the education you can, talk to people, shadow people and just give your all and don't quit. You're going to make mistakes and have things come up, but keep going!"

G2 Surfaces is a full-service floor covering company, which has been a part of the Tucker community since 2011. In fact, they just opened a brand-new facility in January 2020. Being a part of the community has always been important to owner Kristen

Kametches, who serves as Secretary of the Tucker Business Association.

"[Community involvement] gets you out of the office and out of your circle to meet new people and to learn new things," Kametches said. "It's the best!"

For start-ups and women-owned businesses, she gave these tips for success: "Stay organized [and] have your goals in mind. Don't let anything stand in your way. Don't define yourself or limit yourself. Know you are capable. Opportunity exists at every turn."

Mud Pie, the booming Georgia lifestyle, gift and celebration brand is a well-known and loved name in Tucker. Founded by CEO Marcia Miller in 1988, Mud Pie found its first location in Tucker in 1990 and has been



at its current location since 2013. Today, they have about 200 employees and continue to grow.

"It wasn't easy to build a business while raising two young kids, but those two children have grown and hold leadership roles at the company, making it all that much sweeter," Marcia shared.

She added that female entrepreneurs who are joining the community need to "find your talent, identify your superpowers and believe in yourself and your mission. Failure is not an option. Don't let the fear of failure rob your chances of success."

If you are a woman-owned business in Tucker, there are resources in the region that may be able to help you find networks, mentorship and success. Through the State of Georgia, you can find technical resources, finance, certification assistance, networking opportunities and more through the Department of Economic Development's Women-Owned Small Business portal. All Tucker small businesses can find additional support through the Small Business Development Center, which has its own DeKalb County location right outside of Tucker. You can also network and get connected through the Tucker Business Association and DeKalb Chamber of Commerce.

For more information about these businesses, and to learn about upcoming events and sales, you can head to their websites and social media pages – [beautybybowers.com](http://beautybybowers.com), [g2surfaces.com](http://g2surfaces.com) and [mudpie.com](http://mudpie.com).

# BUSINESS OF THE MONTH

# PUBLIX



Change is never easy. But sometimes change is necessary.

Such is the case with Publix Supermarkets. Publix has long been an institution in Tucker, with two stores within the city limits (Briarcliff Village and The Centre on Hugh Howell). Stores require upkeep, especially as they age, and leadership with Publix realized that their Hugh Howell location was a quarter-century old. They could renovate the store, as rival Kroger did several years ago with their Cofer Crossing location, but the company realized that it would simply be more cost effective in this case to build a brand new store.

Enter Hugh Howell Marketplace. The new shopping center on the old Sears site at the intersection of Hugh Howell Road and Mountain Industrial Boulevard is the newest, biggest redevelopment in the City of Tucker and it has attracted some

exciting new tenants from Antico Pizza and Buffalo Wild Wings to service-oriented businesses like The Joint Chiropractic. But no business will have a bigger footprint in the new development than Publix. The anchor tenant for Hugh Howell Marketplace, Publix opened to great fanfare on February 23, simultaneously shutting down their location about a half-mile to the west. Customers lined up outside for hours to be first in line for the 7 a.m. opening. What they found when they finally got inside was far from a disappointment: a brand new, clean, fully stocked store complete with Publix team members who were ready to assist them. Each shopper was greeted by the store manager, who gave them flowers as they walked through the doors.

Publix now boasts over 1,700 locations across the United States of America. The newest one? For the time being, it's right here in the City of Tucker.

# TEAM TUCKER

## Chris Satterfield

# Spotlight

**What are your job responsibilities at Tucker Recreation Center?**

I am a Recreational Assistant, helping with programs and other day-to-day operations at the Rec Center.

**How long have you worked at Tucker Rec?**

I've been with Tucker for approximately two-and-a-half years.

**What are your favorite aspects of the job?**

I enjoy working with kids through youth sports. I also enjoy the great coworkers here in Tucker.

**Tell us about your background in recreation...?**

I started coaching in 1995. I started with football first, then I began coaching basketball and baseball. Before I worked at the Tucker Parks and Recreation Department, I spent five years with Parks and Recreation in the City of Doraville.

## Off the Wall

**You must be a pretty big sports fan. Who are some of your favorite teams?**

My favorite college basketball team is the University of North Carolina Tarheels. In baseball, I pull for the World Champion Atlanta Braves. The Georgia Bulldogs and Atlanta Falcons are my teams in football. On the hardwood I am a huge Atlanta Hawks supporter.

**What is the best sporting event you've ever seen or been to?**

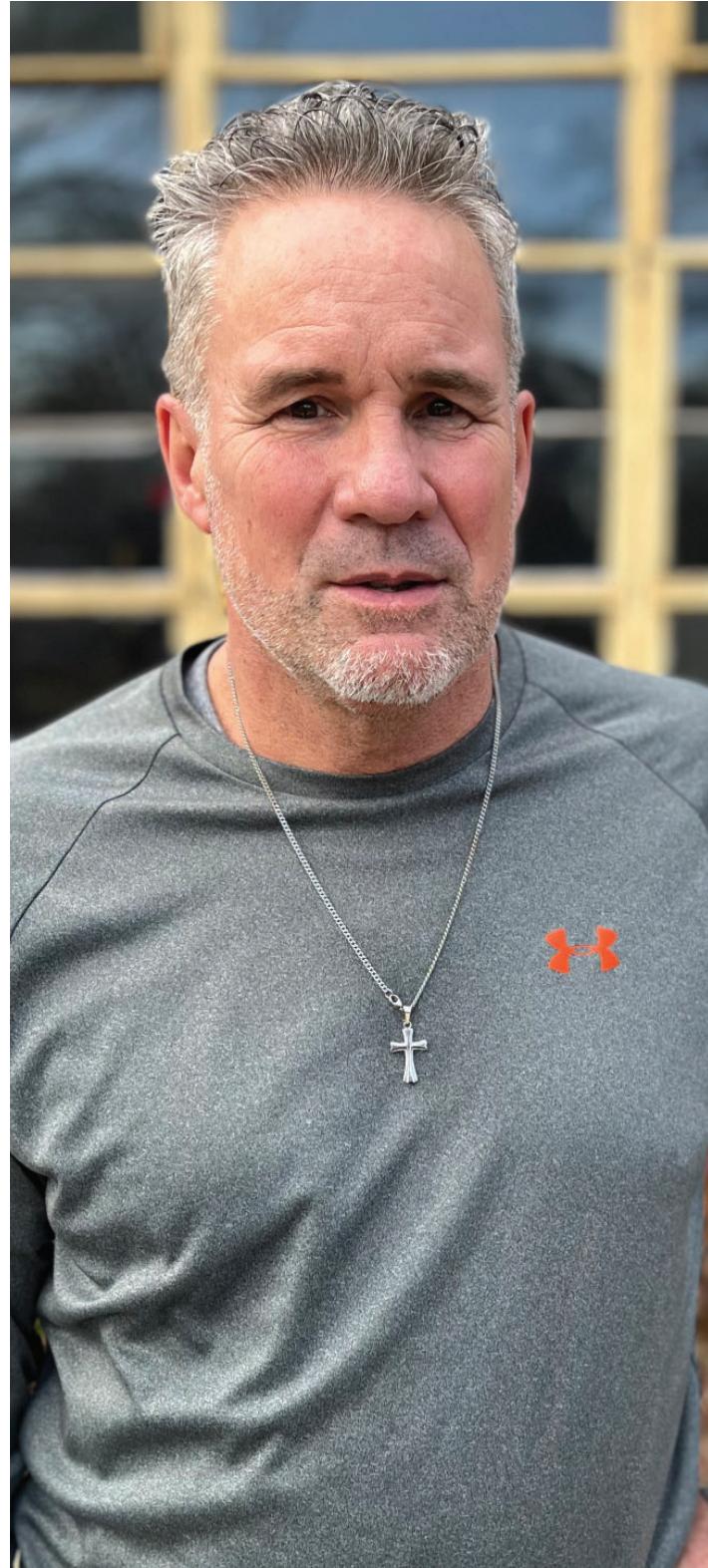
The best game I've ever been to was the Falcons' playoff game versus the 49ers during their first Super Bowl run.

**Aside from recreation, what are some of the things you like to do in your free time?**

Any free time I have, I spend with my grandkids. I have 11 grandkids in total.

**What is your proudest accomplishment in life?**

My proudest moments are the birth of my children and grandchildren. I am also proud of having served four years in the U.S. Army Military Police back in the 1980s.



# “ASK RIP”



*by Rip Robertson, Parks and Recreation Director*

Since we began to build our department in 2018, we have worked hard on developing our parks and facilities.

Along with those, we have really put our efforts over the last couple of years into community programs and events. We have had many successes and have seen our participation really take off. This is true from our monthly community activities and summer camp to youth and adult athletics.

We just wrapped up our second youth basketball season and will be hosting the 10 and Under Boys GRPA State Championships. We registered over 180 kids and partnered with Rehoboth Baptist Church to play a great regular season. We really want to thank our parents and kids for a great year.

Now on to spring and BASEBALL! Registration is still open for everyone and we hope to build on our inaugural 2021 season. There are a couple more weeks to register for the tee-ball (5- and 6-year-olds) and coach pitch (7- and 8-year-olds) divisions, as well as for our 9-10 and 11-12 age groups. We have added a pre-tee-ball program for three- and four-year-olds that will meet each Tuesday and Thursday at 5 p.m. through May 16. We will take registration for this group throughout the season.

Our tee-ball evaluation night and final registration will be Monday March 7 at 6 p.m. For our 7- and 8-year-olds, evaluation and final registration will be Tuesday March 8 at 6 p.m. Our 9-10 and 11-12 age divisions will have evaluations and final registration on Thursday March 10 at 6:30 and 7:30 p.m., respectively. We also have offered fast pitch softball for the 9-10 and 11-12 age groups for the



first time, with evaluations at the same time as the baseball groups. Our 2022 Baseball Opening Day is on Saturday April 16. As part of our opening day event, we will host our annual Egg Hunt at 9:00 a.m. at Fitzgerald Park. Make plans to be there!

We are also expanding our programs into the rapidly growing world of e-Sports. We have opened registration for a number of online sports and games to begin next month. This program is for ages eight and above and will be divided into age groups. You can go to [www.tuckerga.gov/parks](http://www.tuckerga.gov/parks) and under “Tucker Rec” click on “e-Sports League” for more information.

We currently have several adult sports including golf and pickleball with registration open. Registration is also open for co-ed softball, which we added this spring. Play will be on Thursday nights at Cofer and Fitzgerald Parks beginning in April. Visit us online at [www.tuckerga.gov/parks](http://www.tuckerga.gov/parks) to get full information and register your team.

Speaking of adult fun and games, don’t forget to register for our annual Adult Field Day on May 14 at Tucker Recreation Center. Fun, games, food and drink will be provided. This is another activity for

which you can register and get more information on our website.

I want to let you know that we are working on several park projects. At Probst Park, the Memorial Plaza is under construction and we hope to have that completed by late April. We are installing new water and sewer lines at Fitzgerald Park and will have that completed in time for Baseball Opening Day.

As the weather gets better and everyone gets out and about, you’ll notice some improvements happened during the winter months. We were able to complete a new boardwalk and bridge at Probst Park, new sports field lighting on Henderson Park field number six next to the tennis courts and a sidewalk allowing safe access from the Livsey Road entrance to the parking lot in Henderson Park. We were also able to complete some improvements at Rosenfeld Park with a new sidewalk and defined parking and access to the tennis courts, pool, and very soon to be installed playground. Our Fit Court at the new greenspace on Church Street is ready and waiting for those wanting to get into spring shape.

Follow us at [www.facebook.com/TuckerParksRec](https://www.facebook.com/TuckerParksRec) to get the most up-to-date department information.

# TUCKERGA.GOV

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678.597.9040



## TUCKER Community Corner



**3/4 – 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](http://rek.gallery) for details.

**3/10 – National Walk  
to School Day**  
**7-8:30 a.m., Tucker Cluster  
Schools**  
Always be alert on your morning commute, but especially on National Walk to School Day. Various Tucker Cluster schools will be participating, so slow down!

**3/14 – Pi Day Pie-K**  
**6:30 a.m. and 6:30 p.m.,  
4259 N. Park Drive**  
Join Tucker's Parks & Recreation team for a 3.14-kilometer run at the time and pace of your choosing. After the race, get rewarded with some pie!

**3/20 – Tucker High  
School Foundation  
Golf Fundraiser**  
**1-5 p.m., 1145 Stonewall  
Jackson Drive, Stone  
Mountain**  
The THSF Annual Golf Fundraiser still has spots open. For more details and to register visit [www.tuckerhighschoolfoundation.org](http://www.tuckerhighschoolfoundation.org).