



# INTUCKER

NOVEMBER 2024 | VOLUME 8 | ISSUE 6



## SERVICE FROM THE HEART TUCKER RESIDENT LEADS THE VFW

# ELECTED OFFICIALS

**Frank Auman**  
Mayor

**Roger W. Orlando**  
District 1 - Post 1

**Cara Schroeder**  
District 2 - Post 1

**Alexis Weaver**  
District 3 - Post 1

**Virginia Rece**  
District 1 - Post 2

**Vinh Nguyen**  
District 2 - Post 2

**Amy Trocchi**  
District 3 - Post 2

## CITY SOCIALS



**nextdoor**

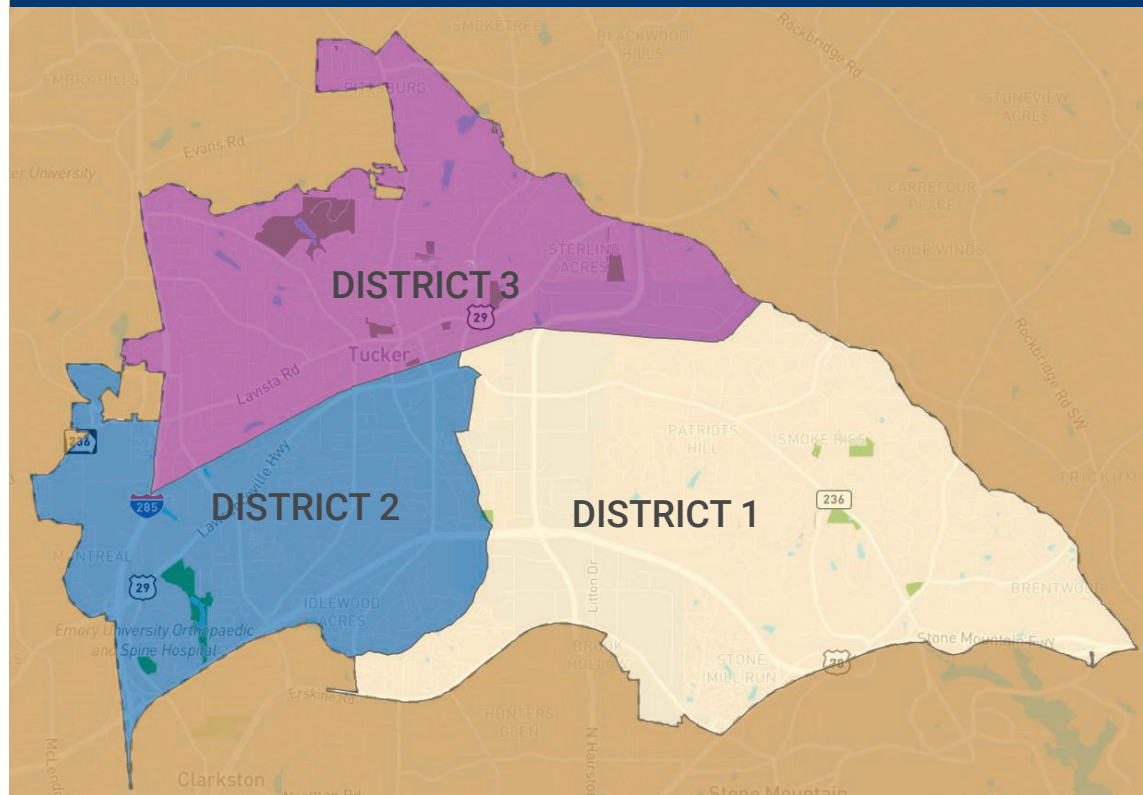
## INTUCKER STAFF

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**Contributors**  
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Robin Stevens

## DISTRICT MAP



## EDITOR'S NOTE

**SONJA SZUBSKI - COMMUNICATIONS DIRECTOR**



Thanksgiving is this month. As you prepare to connect with friends and family over the supper table do not forget this is also the month that we thank our veterans.

This issue of *InTucker* mentions two different organizations that support and celebrate our veterans, the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) and the local American Legion post here in Tucker.

Tucker's own Al Lipphardt has been named the Commander-In-Chief of the VFW and Tucker's American Legion Post 207 is hosting a 5K to benefit the rebuild of their building.

This month will also bring a sigh of relief as the election will be over in the first week. The months leading up to the November Presidential election as a swing state are a fairly new experience for Georgians. Our social feeds are overtaken with ads, it seems like it is the only topic in our news cycles, constant texts and overflowing mailboxes. Through the din, I encourage our voters to look at our local elections as well as the ordinances on the ballots.

Check out the City's website, [tuckerga.gov/elections](http://tuckerga.gov/elections) for ways to verify your voter registration, see your polling site and download a sample ballot. Watch on YouTube the candidate forum hosted by the Tucker Business Association and Tucker Civic Association. It is shared on the Tucker Business Association's Facebook page. Email your state representatives and senators and ask them their thoughts on the three ballot issues.

One of the positives of being a newly minted swing state is that it is hard to hide from the fact that there is an election and there are numerous ways to educate yourself and vote with confidence.

We are the electors...through our vote, decisions are made that affect us all.

**TUCKER**  
 **OTES**



# FROM THE MAYOR

FRANK AUMAN



Gratitude is one of the most powerful emotions in our lives, but it's not just an emotion. It's a daily decision, and even a way of life. When we embrace thankfulness in all our comings and goings, we grow the ability to see that most everything in life is something to be grateful for.

In this month of thanksgiving, I want you to know I'm grateful for many things, but especially in regard to Tucker.

I have had the privilege to serve as our City's first Mayor. I have felt the growing pains and seen the success of our carefully laid plans. And I am grateful.

I have worked with countless residents and determined volunteers who work selflessly on behalf of their neighbors. And I am grateful.

I have served with some amazingly dedicated fellow council members to make sure that our government leads responsibly in the Tucker Way. And I am grateful.

I have seen our budget and our services grow in a smart fiscal manner to provide improved and expanded services. And I am grateful.

I have seen our City staff push themselves and create innovative ways to engage, educate and serve our residents. And I am grateful.

My wife, Gaye, and our family have been supportive and made sacrifices in ways and to a degree no one will ever know except me. And I am grateful.

And for me, gratitude is not just to the universe or for my circumstances. I thank God, and I thank you for these opportunities to serve and to be witness to amazing people and amazing work, and all that it takes to make a city successful.

I hope you find more to be grateful for than you ever have before during this special time of year.



## DATES TO KNOW

- **NOVEMBER 4**  
Downtown Development Authority
- **NOVEMBER 5**  
Zoning Board of Appeals
- **NOVEMBER 7 - 7 P.M.**  
Community Meeting at Tucker Recreation Center regarding Pickleball Courts
- **NOVEMBER 11**  
City Buildings Closed in Observance of Veterans Day
- **NOVEMBER 12**  
City Council Meeting
- **NOVEMBER 13**  
Municipal Court
- **NOVEMBER 13, 5-8 P.M.**  
Campfire & Cocktails  
Kelley Cofer Peach Pit
- **NOVEMBER 20**  
Municipal Court
- **NOVEMBER 25**  
City Council Meeting
- **NOVEMBER 28 & 29**  
City Buildings Closed in Observance of Thanksgiving

## FEATURE STORY

# TUCKER RESIDENT AL LIPPHARDT NAMED VFW COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF

Alfred J. "Al" Lipphardt was elected Commander-in-Chief of the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the U.S. on Aug. 1, 2024, at the 125th VFW National Convention in Louisville, Kentucky.

The Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) was born out of a need to advocate for rights and benefits for veterans of the Spanish-American War and Philippine Insurrection in the late 1800s. In the 125 years since inception the VFW has advocated for countless measures including the establishment of the Veterans Administration, compensation for veterans of Vietnam and the Gulf War and the expansion of the GI Bill. Their Mission and Vision define their purpose and what they seek to accomplish through their advocacy and memorial efforts.



Photo courtesy of  
<https://www.facebook.com/VFWFans>

Al, a resident of Tucker, served in the United States Army from 1965 to 1979, earning his VFW eligibility by serving in Vietnam from 1967 to 1968, and from 1970 to 1971. In recognition of his heroic service in combat, he received the Combat Infantryman's Badge, Bronze Star with "V" device, Bronze Star Medal for Meritorious Service, Purple Heart Medal, Vietnam Campaign Medal with Silver Star and two Bronze Stars, Vietnam Service Medal, Vietnam Cross of Gallantry with Palm Medal, and the Vietnam Staff Service Medal First Class.

He joined the VFW in 2002 at Post 12002 in North Fulton, Georgia, as a Charter member and maintains his Gold Legacy Life membership in VFW Post 2667, Newnan, Georgia, along with his family members who are also VFW Department of Georgia Auxiliary Post 2667 Life members. He has served in elected and appointed positions at the Post, District and Department levels, culminating with his election as the VFW Department of Georgia Commander. Al is a Triple Crown All-American

## VETERANS OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

### OUR MISSION:

TO FOSTER CAMARADERIE AMONG UNITED STATES VETERANS OF OVERSEAS CONFLICTS. TO SERVE OUR VETERANS, THE MILITARY AND OUR COMMUNITIES. TO ADVOCATE ON BEHALF OF ALL VETERANS.

### OUR VISION:

ENSURE THAT VETERANS ARE RESPECTED FOR THEIR SERVICE, ALWAYS RECEIVE THEIR EARNED ENTITLEMENTS, AND ARE RECOGNIZED FOR THE SACRIFICES THEY AND THEIR LOVED ONES HAVE MADE ON BEHALF OF THIS GREAT COUNTRY.



Commander. On the national level, he has served as Vice Chairman of the National Legislative Committee, a member of the National Veterans Service Advisory Committee, a member of the National Security and Foreign Affairs Committee, National Council of Administration and numerous other critical National Committees.

Al received his Bachelor of Science degree in business administration from Pacific Western University in 1990. He is retired.

He is a member of the Rotary Club of Stone Mountain, Georgia. A Rotarian since 1984, his distinguished service has been recognized by Rotary International with the Service Above Self Award and the Rotary Foundation's Citation for Meritorious Service Award. He was elected and served as an officer of Rotary International as District 6900 Governor, from 1999 to 2000, and has chaired critical national and international committees.

Al's lifelong devotion to servant leadership is evidenced by his life membership in the Disabled American Veterans, Military Order of the Purple Heart, the VFW National Home, Military Order of the Cootie, the 196th Light Infantry Brigade Association, the American Division Veterans Association, and the United States Army Officer Candidate School Alumni Association (Hall of Fame inductee).

It is easy to see why Al was appointed as Commander-in-Chief of the Veterans of Foreign Wars. Through his lifelong dedication to his country and those that served alongside him, Al is a proven leader that Tucker can be proud of.

## WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE?

Veterans Day is intended to thank and honor all those who served honorably in the military – living and dead – whether in wartime or peace. In fact, Veterans Day is largely intended to thank living Veterans for their service, to acknowledge that their contributions to our national security are appreciated, and to underscore the fact that all those who serve have sacrificed and done their duty.

While Veterans Day is often confused with Memorial Day, the two observances serve different purposes and have different histories. Memorial Day, which has its roots in the post-Civil War effort to “memorialize” all those who died in that war, has become a modern holiday to remember those from all wars and conflicts who gave their lives in service to the country. In December 2000 the U.S. Congress passed and the President signed into law “The National Moment of Remembrance Act” to “encourage the people of the United States to give something back to their country, which provides them so much freedom and opportunity” by encouraging and coordinating commemorations of Memorial Day and the National Moment of Remembrance.

Veterans Day, however, was first known as Armistice Day as a celebration of the resolution of World War I, a peace recognized historically on the date and time of that event, November 11, 1918, at 11:00 a.m., and salutes surviving service members as well as those who have passed away since their service.

*-Content from the Veterans Day 2024 – Teachers Resource Guide*

# REBUILDING THE AMERICAN LEGION

The American Legion is a national organization with posts throughout the country to serve local veterans and provide resources and camaraderie. Tucker's Post 207 tragically burned to the ground a few years ago and they are in the midst of a capital drive to rebuild the post that has served both local and visiting veterans since 1957.

## VETERANS DAY 5K

Members, volunteers and supporters of Post 207 are hosting a fundraising 5K walk/run on November 9 at 8 a.m.

You can visit their website for more information and registration details, [americanlegionpost207.org](http://americanlegionpost207.org).



# CITY HALL UPDATE

## CITY COUNCIL UPDATE

The Mayor called the October 15 City Council Meeting to order with all seven City Council members present.

The Mayor celebrated the Tucker Parks & Recreation Department's four Georgia Recreation and Parks Association (GRPA) District Awards and commended the Public Works Department for their work leading up to and during Hurricane Helene.

Mayor Auman motioned to add item J.4 to the agenda regarding the City's contract for vehicle leasing and made a separate motion to remove item G.5, a resolution to submit a 2024-25 Land Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) pre-application, from the consent agenda for further consideration as item J.5. The approved consent agenda contained:

- September's meeting minutes
- A resolution to adopt the 2025 calendar
- A resolution to amend the Tucker Development Authority FY 25 budget
- A contract task order for stormwater maintenance at 2452 Spencers Way
- A contract amendment for the Tucker Town Green Design

Next, Candace Amos, Senior Health and Financial Wellness Consultant from the Government Municipal Association (GMA), presented the City's Wellness Committee with a 2024 Health Promotion and Wellbeing Grant for \$3,000 to support wellness activities. Tommy Hayes, MSI Benefits Group Benefits Consultant, introduced the City's 2025 Health Insurance Benefits Renewal.

Ordinances which saw their second read and public hearing include:

- A major modification to allow a place of worship at 6430 Lawrenceville Highway, passed unanimously
- A 12-month time extension for a previously approved special land use permit (SLUP) for multifamily housing at 2247 and 2251 Northlake Parkway, passed unanimously
- A Tucker Code amendment affecting the downtown special zoning districts to increase permitted multifamily density in DT-2 and DT-3 from 24 to 35 units per acre and allow a SLUP process to request higher density, allow a SLUP process by which property owners and developers may request one additional story of height, and other changes to townhome width and lot coverage, passed 5-2
- A Tucker Code amendment to create procedures that property owners can follow to request special districts for modifying streetlighting, passed unanimously
- A purchasing policy amendment to increase City Manager approval limit, increase the formal sealed bids threshold, clarify use of "on-call" contract and task orders and add a section for change orders and contract amendments, passed unanimously

The evening's proceedings also included the first read and public hearing of a SLUP to allow a multifamily use abutting a residential zoning district with a concurrent variance for exterior building materials at 4419 Cowan Road.

The Mayor and City Council unanimously approved a contract amendment and a contract award:

- An amendment for the Fitzgerald Park Phase 2 Improvements, bringing the initial \$4,341,298.78 approved to a total of \$4,434,212.81
- An award to North Georgia Concrete for the Johns Homestead Park and Dam Improvement Construction Project in the amount of \$3,817,263 with a 5% contingency, bringing the total to \$4,008,126.15 partially funded by a 2022 Georgia Outdoor Stewardship Program grant for \$2,521,787.65

The City also unanimously approved item J.4, a resolution regarding the City's supplemental vehicle leasing.

The final item on the agenda was a resolution to submit a 2024-25 Land Water Conservation Fund pre-application, for which Parks and Recreation Director Rip Robertson requested commitment to match the grant funds to begin the pre-application process. This LWCF grant would allow the City to build two bridges along the Yellow Trail at Henderson Park. The Mayor and City Council approved the resolution unanimously. The Mayor and City Council recessed to executive session and adjourned the meeting with no further action taken.

Tucker's mayor and Council meet on the second and fourth Mondays of every month at City Hall. All meetings are live-streamed and recorded on the website, [tuckerga.gov](http://tuckerga.gov). Due to publication deadlines, please check the website for recaps of the second meeting of the month.





NEWS FROM CITY HALL

TUCKER TOWN GREEN BREAKS GROUND

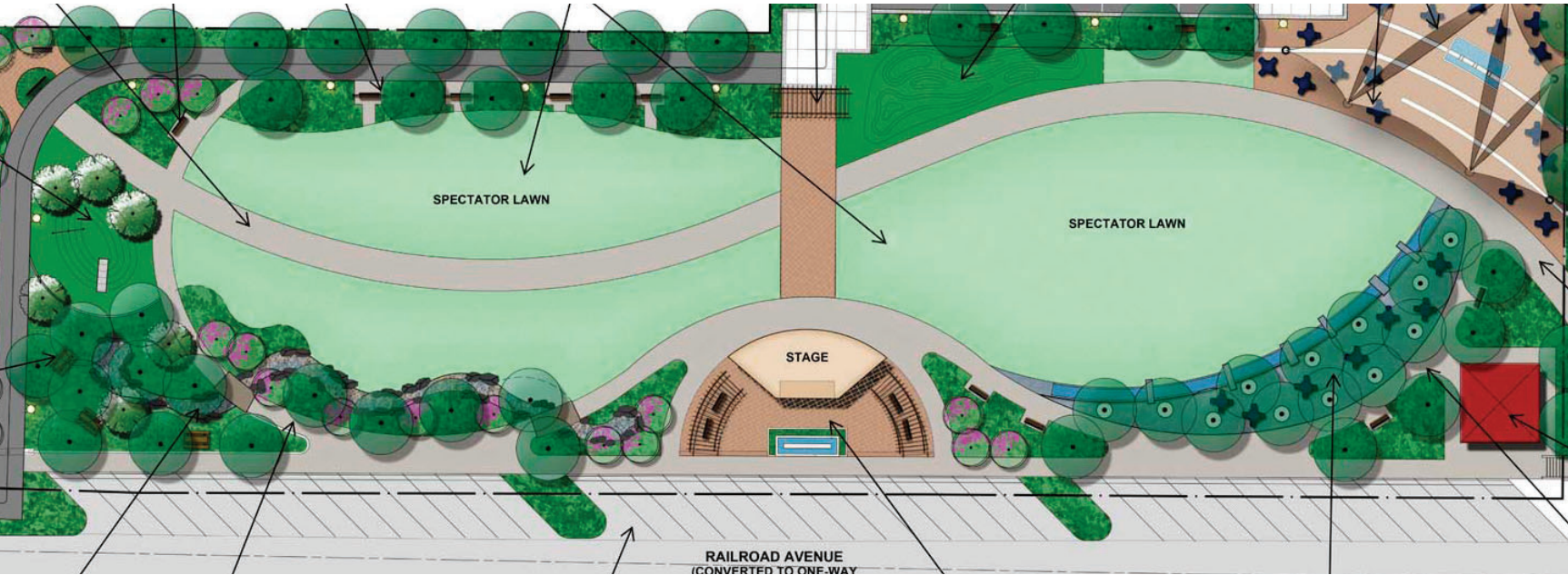
The big news out of City Hall this month is all about green space.

As the Mayor said in the groundbreaking of the Tucker Town Green, this is the beginning of the end for this project that has taken years to

get this point. Through partnership with local landowners in the sale of the property, with contracted partners like Barge Design, Hasbun Construction and our embedded staff with Lowe Engineering and Jacobs, we are excited to have broken ground and start construction

on one of the City's largest projects to date.

Railroad Avenue has been closed due to the construction from Second Avenue to the parking lot behind Local 7 and will be closed for the duration of the build.



Further news out of Parks and Recreation is a community meeting at Tucker Recreation Center on November 7 at 7 p.m. regarding the proposed pickleball courts and expanded

parking at TRC. This meeting bookends the discussion on the project from the first public input meeting in November of 2022.

Pickleball has been the fastest growing sport for almost a decade and the demand is ever increasing.



FOLLOW OUR PROGRESS: [TUCKERGA.GOV/PROJECTS](https://tuckerga.gov/projects)



## BUSINESS OF THE MONTH

# COMPLETE SPINE SOLUTIONS



One quick move in a high school wrestling match changed the course of Dr. David Shapiro's life, ignited a passion for a healthy lifestyle and helping others do the same. Now, Dr. Shapiro and his staff at Complete Spine Solutions (CSS) are celebrating 22 years of practice in Tucker.

Growing up, Shapiro was a highly competitive wrestler until he sustained a career-ending knee injury in his junior year of high school. Doctors told him that the only course of treatment would be surgery to repair the injury, which would result in Shapiro missing out on his senior year season. It was at that point that a close family friend encouraged him to seek therapy with a chiropractor. Shapiro learned his best chance to wrestle during his senior year would be to forgo surgery and commit to a chiropractic treatment protocol. Shapiro fully recovered and was able to compete. That season, he won his division and went on to wrestle throughout his college career.

Shapiro's injury was a life-changing event. During his treatment, he had an aha moment when he realized that the spine and the nervous system were what connected the whole human body and inspired him to study to become a chiropractor.

Complete Spine Solutions initially opened in Roswell but moved locations to Tucker in 2002. While the big draw to relocating to Tucker was the centralized location to all his Metro Atlanta clients, it is the community he serves that brings him joy daily.

"I look forward to coming to the office and helping people every day," Shapiro said.

Complete Spine Solutions attempts to be intentional about building a healthy community, in Tucker and beyond. The office offers free consultations for children 12 years old and under every Thursday and on Wednesdays they offer free workshops to the

community to education on ways to become healthier.

To further that goal, Shapiro pours into his staff to make sure they are fully trained and educated in all aspects of chiropractic therapy and healthy living,

"Every single person that works on our team are all inspired leaders," Shapiro said. "They help other people become leaders and empower them with their health."

Shapiro said the purpose of his facility is to help patients live their best lives. Doing so brings a smile to the former wrestler turned chiropractor.

"It's not work, it's fun!" Shapiro said. "It's fulfilling and it just makes you feel amazing."

Complete Spine Solutions is located at 2347 Brockett Road in Tucker and online at [completespinesolutions.com](https://completespinesolutions.com).



## CITIZEN OF THE MONTH

# DR. MICHAEL HUERKAMP

There seems to always be something great happening in Tucker! Whether it's a fun run, a street festival, community theatre, music in the park, Tucker High School sports, City Council meetings, or dining on Main Street. Tucker is indeed a great place to live and work. One of the greatest things about Tucker is its people. Tucker is no stranger to great people, creating amazing impacts for the greater good of our community.

Among the greatest people of Tucker is Dr. Michael Huerkamp. Dr. Huerkamp has been a proud resident of Tucker for years. He earned his veterinary doctoral degree from The Ohio State University (1984) and completed residency training at the University of Michigan in 1987. Upon completion of his residency training, Michael has since been employed by Emory University, first leading the veterinary clinical services program and then, since 2002, directing the entire Division of Animal Resources (DAR). He has recently retired from Emory and continues to actively engage in the Tucker community through volunteerism and servant leadership.

Michael eagerly serves and supports Tucker and he continues to do so consistently with humility, heart and purpose. This is one of the many reasons why Dr. Huerkamp is most worthy of being recognized as Tucker's Citizen of the Month. He has faithfully and successfully served Smoke Rise Community Association (SRCA) for 18 years. He has served as President for 12 years and continues in this role. During his leadership, the organization has been successful in achieving powerful impacts for the benefit of the Tucker community, including the following:

- SRCA's 501c3 status
- Annual fundraisers for our Tucker Schools
- Community Shred Day
- Neighborhood Gardens on Hugh Howell Road
- Little Libraries throughout our community – Bring a Book/Get a Book
- Beautification & maintenance around the Smoke Rise Chimneys within our neighborhoods

Michael understands the power of community and lending a helping hand. From yard signs to helping a family in need, we can always count on Michael's tireless and selfless support. He operates with integrity, respect and transparency. He is mentally tough, yet kind. He is comfortable engaging with people across all cultures, backgrounds, experiences and age groups. He has been quite resourceful in bringing his friends and neighbors together. For example, he has hosted meet-and-greets at his home, around his fire pit and pool, as an effective way to build relationships and engage directly with the people of Tucker. Dr. Michael Huerkamp is focused, fun and committed to the continued success of the Tucker Community. He consistently provides excellent work without concern for who gets the credit.

It is an honor to nominate him for this special recognition. Dr. Michael Huerkamp is a value add to our community and he is so worthy of Tucker's Citizen of the Month.

*Nomination by Anna Ogletree*





# THE BEST OF THE BEST

# THANK YOU!

Tucker is served by the DeKalb County School District with seven excellent schools in the Tucker cluster. Each school is helmed by talented and caring leaders that share their passion and dedication to the students of Tucker and are amazing examples to their staff and teachers.

Each year, the teachers and staff vote on their peers and recognize the Teacher of the Year and the Support Staff Member of the Year.

The City of Tucker would like to say thank you to ALL of our teachers, staff and leaders for nurturing and investing in Tucker's youngest residents.



#### **BROCKETT ELEMENTARY SCHOOL**

- Teacher of the Year - Maladee Sellers
- Support Staff - Jason Black



#### **IDLEWOOD ELEMENTARY SCHOOL**

- Teacher of the Year - Joahanne Webster
- Education Support Staff of the Year I - Sharon Evans
- Education Support Staff of the Year II - Karen Swartz



#### **LIVSEY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL**

- Teacher of the Year - Jessica Beauvais
- Education Support Staff of the Year I - Janet Knoel



#### **MIDVALE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL**

- Teacher of the Year - Donna Blair
- Education Support Staff of the Year - Karen Evans



#### **SMOKE RISE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL**

- Teacher of the Year - Latalia Robbins
- Education Support Staff of the Year I - Phoebe Thomas



#### **TUCKER MIDDLE SCHOOL**

- Teacher of the Year - Gabrielle Eggleston
- Education Support Staff of the Year - Cherran Prince
- Education Support Staff of the Year II - Lori Hanford



#### **TUCKER HIGH**

- Teacher of the Year - Erika Billups
- Education Support Staff of the Year I - Kelvin Woods
- Education Support Staff of the Year II - Margaret Redmond



AROUND TOWN

# UPCOMING EVENTS IN TUCKER

## KELLEY COFER PARK PEACH PIT

Join us for s'mores, and signature fall cocktails.

Bring your favorite chair and enjoy the fire while listening to live acoustic music.

**NOV. 16**  
**5-8 P.M.**

Sponsored by.



HOLIDAY CELEBRATION



**North Pole**  
**at Tucker**

Dec. 7

4-7 p.m.

**CHURCH STREET GREENSPACE**  
**4316 CHURCH STREET**





# TUCKER Community Corner



## **11/6 – Tucker Lifelong Community Committee Meeting**

**7 p.m.**

The TLC Committee is committed to fostering a lifelong livable community in Tucker. Zoom link can be found at [tuckercivic.org](https://tuckercivic.org)

## **11/9 – American Legion Post 207 Veteran's Day 5k**

**8 a.m. Race Start**

**[americanlegionpost207.org](https://americanlegionpost207.org)**

The Veteran's Day 5K serves as both a fundraising opportunity for the Post as well as an opportunity to interact with the local Tucker community, Veterans and non-Veterans alike.

## **10/12-12/6 Tucker Arts Alliance Gallery Show**

**Tucker-Reid H. Cofer Library**

**5234 Lavista Road**

Roam the stacks and feast your eyes on the Tucker Arts Alliance inaugural curated show of talented local artists. Exhibit hours follow those of the library. Visit [tuckerartsalliance.org](https://tuckerartsalliance.org) for more information.