



# INTUCKER

AUGUST 2019 | VOLUME 3 | ISSUE 8



# FACEBOOK CITY

IT'S HOW WE STAY CONNECTED. BUT HOW DID TUCKER'S SOCIAL MEDIA OBSESSION BEGIN? AND WHY FACEBOOK?

## EDITOR'S NOTE



One of the things we love to do in *InTucker* is introduce you to neighbors you may not know. Perhaps

you've seen their face, maybe you recognize a name, but you've never really known their story.

In this month's education feature, you'll get to know former School Board member and education advocate Jim McMahan. Jim is someone whose name you might have seen on a campaign sign and you may even have voted for him. But if you never met him, you missed out on a one-of-a-kind person. Sadly, Jim lost his life last month in a tragic accident. He was young and he had so much more to give.

I first met Jim about four years ago and I was immediately struck with the thought that I had never met anyone quite like him before. He was warm, positive, energetic and a little bit goofy. Or maybe he was a lot goofy. Either way, I came to find out how passionate he was about education in DeKalb County and, as we worked together on the Tucker Cluster Council, how much he cared about the students in our Tucker Cluster schools. Although he truly loved the work he was doing to positively impact the schools, Jim's top priority was his family. Now that family is grieving and we grieve right along with them.

Jim is gone, but not forgotten. As his friends and colleagues reflect on his loss in this issue, I hope you'll read and get a sense of what a void he leaves behind.

**MATT HOLMES**  
INTUCKER EDITOR

# IN THIS ISSUE



### From the Cover

Thousands of Tucker residents stay connected through Facebook. On page 10, meet some of the people behind Tucker's most popular – and most talked about – Facebook groups.



### Business Boom

Tucker's not just a hot spot for businesses, but also for all-important business organizations. On page 8, John McHenry has a look at who's locating – and who's expanding – their organizations here in Tucker.



### Getting Fit

One of Tucker's newest businesses is looking to help residents change their lives by changing their habits. Find out about our Business of the Month, Profile by Sanford, on page 9.



### Ask Rip

It's been a scintillating summer in Tucker's parks. On page 13, Rip looks back at some of our most successful events



### Super Volunteers

For Anne and Rich Benevento, giving back is second nature. On page 14, get to know our Citizens of the Month and find out how they're getting others involved in volunteering.



# INTUCKER

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# From the Mayor

It's August, which in many of your households means Back to School. Whether you're a student, teacher, bus driver, volunteer or school support staff, I hope it will be a safe and very enlightening academic year in our Tucker Cluster schools.

I want to bring your attention to another educational opportunity starting this fall; one that won't require you to set an alarm clock in the morning. That's our University of Government Affairs, or as we affectionately call it "UGA Tucker". Last year, our City staff put on a six-class series, inviting the community to learn first-hand about different facets of how Tucker's government operations work. They covered topics like Code Enforcement, Planning and Zoning, Parks and Recreation, and many others. I have to admit, I was impressed by the presentations and by

the back and forth between students and teachers. It was civic engagement at its very best. But don't take my word for it!

"Knowledge gained through UGA Tucker will help people to understand 'Tucker things' and help all become more aware of our roles as active citizens of Tucker," explains City Councilman and UGA Tucker grad Matt Robbins. "I recommend this training very highly!"

You don't have to be interested in running for elected office in the City to benefit from this program. Residents are finding that UGA Tucker gives them answers to a lot of questions, as well as a better understanding of exactly how their city government functions.

"If you care enough about your city, then you should care enough to learn about your city," says UGA Tucker

grad Derik West. "Presenters were very engaging to me and seemed very prepared and presented the information on a level that was easily understood. I feel that UGA Tucker is very worthwhile because it provides knowledge and practical information about how the government works in the very city that you live in."

We gave out 23 diplomas to the first graduating class. Now it's time for a new class to enroll. Email our staff at [info@tuckerga.gov](mailto:info@tuckerga.gov) to sign up for UGA Tucker. I hope to see you at our first session on September 10.

**FRANK AUMAN**  
MAYOR OF TUCKER

# City Council Update



Tucker's Mayor and City Council held two meetings in the month of July, although one was a Work Session held on July 18 that was largely for planning purposes.

The other meeting took place on July 22 and saw the Council take up a pair of land use cases. The first was a petition for a special land use permit (SLUP) for a tattoo establishment on Main Street. Following a public hearing and discussion, Council voted 4-3 to deny the petition. They also held a first read and public hearing on a rezoning and SLUP to allow a restaurant with a drive-through at 4260 and 4270 Lawrenceville Highway. The issue will require a second read and public hearing and then be voted on at a date to be determined.

Council also held a first read and public hearing on a Comprehensive Plan amendment that seeks to adopt the Transportation Master Plan. The plan process, guided by consultants

from The Collaborative, Gresham, Smith and Partners, and VHB, began last fall and wrapped up this spring. It seeks to prioritize needs and create a comprehensive approach to ameliorate traffic concerns in Tucker for years to come. A second read, public hearing and anticipated vote is scheduled for the Council meeting on August 12.

Earlier in the meeting, Council voted unanimously to approve a \$294,577 agreement with contractor F.H. Paschen to perform pavement markings and signage improvements. The project will be funded through a combination of Tucker's SPLOST funds (\$124,577) and a supplemental LMIG grant (\$170,000). They then approved a list of five consultants for "on demand" park planning services.

The Mayor and City Council are scheduled to meet next on August 12 at 7 p.m. at the City Hall Annex (4228 First Avenue).

## DATES TO KNOW

**August 5**  
Downtown Development Authority

**August 7**  
Charter Commission

**August 12**  
City Council

**August 14**  
Community Council

**August 20**  
Zoning Board of Appeals

**August 21**  
Environmental Court

**August 22**  
Planning Commission

**August 26**  
City Council

**August 28**  
Offenses Court

## TUCKER SOCIAL



 **Nextdoor**

# ON THE BEAT with Lt. Schoeppner

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



In the day and age we live, it is becoming more and more uncommon to see someone spend an entire career in the same job. Even in law enforcement, the reduction or outright elimination of pension benefits means that officers have started to hop from job to job

looking for a better deal. Come the end of August, Tucker Precinct is going to bid farewell to one of a dying breed. Lieutenant B.A. Gales is retiring with 30 years of service with DeKalb County.

Lt. Gales served in the U.S. Navy and worked for a short time in corrections before he started with DeKalb County. In February 1991, he took a job with the Sheriff's Office as a detention officer. Three years later he entered the Police Academy and started with the DeKalb County Police Department. After graduating the Academy, Lt. Gales worked as a patrolman in Center Precinct. In those days, Center Precinct was in the Bobby Burgess Building on Memorial Drive and not the building that it currently occupies off of Northlake Parkway.

In 1999, Lt. Gales transferred to DeKalb's Special Victims Unit as a detective. There he investigated child abuse and sex crimes cases. A year later he moved over to the Major Felony Unit. Lt. Gales was a detective there when Sheriff-elect Derwin Brown was murdered. That investigation eventually resulted in the arrest of the previous Sheriff, Sydney Dorsey.

In 2005, Lt. Gales got promoted to the rank of Sergeant and was transferred to North Precinct. He was a supervisor on evening watch there until he transferred to South Precinct in 2010 to supervise the property crimes detectives. He served in this role until 2017, when he was promoted to Lieutenant and was made the day watch commander at South Precinct.



**Lieutenant B.A. Gales**  
(Credit: DeKalb County P.D.)

In June of 2017, Lt. Gales transferred to Tucker Precinct, where he has commanded our evening watch until the present day. I have known of Lt. Gales for years, but didn't get to personally work with him until we were Sergeants together at South Precinct CID. I then got the chance to work with him again at Tucker Precinct.

I'm a little sad to see all of those years of experience and wisdom leave the department. However, I am happy that my friend has done his time and is moving on to the next chapter of his life. I'm sure he'll be a success at whatever he chooses to do after retiring from the department; even if he chooses to just be retired.

# REMEMBERING JIM MCMAHAN

Longtime DeKalb County School Board member Jim McMahan died last month in an accident at the age of 53. The death of McMahan, who represented an area which includes the Tucker Cluster schools, made the news because of his position as a former elected official. But here in Tucker, his death had people talking because of the type of person he was and because of what he stood for: our students. Some of McMahan's closest friends and colleagues talked with *InTucker* about what they'll miss most.

*"I am deeply saddened by the loss of JimmyMac. He was a tireless advocate for the children in his community. He was my friend and colleague for several years on the Board of Education and the sudden loss of his voice weighs heavily upon me. My heart goes out to his family and friends at this time of profound and sudden loss."*

Stan Jester, District 1  
DeKalb County School Board

*"I first met Jim in early 2011—he and I were both attending a community meeting at the home of a Sagamore Hills resident. The topic was arguably the most controversial in public education: redistricting. I was struck by Jim's ability to handle such a contentious issue with grace, humor, and charm. (Who else can do that?!?) Little did we know that our life paths would dovetail for years to come...Not only did Jim say he would support me in running for the Board of Education, he outlined his vision of sustainable leadership which included his continued assistance if/when I was elected. Thankfully, his vision became reality. He*

*intentionally guided me every step of the way and was doing so as recently as last week. When we last texted, he was at the lake with his family. I told him I hadn't been as available for our regular discussions because I'd been spending time in Oklahoma with my father, who had been hospitalized. Not only did he completely understand my situation, he encouraged me to go make new memories with my dad. As usual, he offered his number one recommendation: family first. I'm taking his advice."*

Allyson Gevertz, District 4  
DeKalb County School Board



*"Jim's advocacy for the schools in DeKalb County reached far before his time serving on the Board of Education and would have continued long after he left his seat. He had big plans to further lift our school district by working with parents and stakeholders and I will miss our hour-long conversations about all the possibilities in our schools."*

*Jim did not like it when it was mentioned how the TCC got started by him chasing us after a meeting to encourage gathering a group of people to work on a stronger connection among the Tucker Cluster schools, but he was the inspiration and the drive."*

*His enthusiasm and motivation were impactful, and he leaves a legacy for all that knew him to leave our mark just as he did."*

Erin Kirn, Co-Founder of the  
Tucker Cluster Council



*"The loss of Jim McMahan has stunned us all. The broad reach of his life extended far beyond those that were lucky enough to know him and call him 'friend'.*

*Jim lifted up all of the children of DeKalb County through his work as a public servant and volunteer. But I will always remember Jim at Tucker High football games, sitting with Principal Jackson, cheering on our Tigers - loving football.*

*I will forever be grateful to Jim's beautiful family for sharing him and supporting his service to our community. I will keep them close in my heart now and forever. Thank you, Jim, my friend, for embracing all of our children. "*

Michelle Penkava, District 3  
Tucker City Council

# TUCKER CLUSTER

## Updates & News

### Important Dates

- **August 1-2** – Pre-planning Days
- **August 5** – First Day of School
- **August 12** – Board of Education Meeting

### The Brag Sheet

#### **Idlewood Elementary**

- DeKalb County Schools introduced Ms. Robin Elder as the new principal of Idlewood, replacing Mrs. Rosemary Malone.

#### **Livsey Elementary**

- Livsey received a paint facelift over the summer. The 2019 fifth grade class helped design and gifted a new fantasy themed mural for the Media Center and the PTO funded a teacher led positive affirmation mural in both the boys' and girls' bathrooms.

#### **Midvale Elementary**

- Midvale is wrapping up some much-needed renovations to the media center before the start of school. The renovations are being funded by money raised from the school's Read-a-thon.

#### **Tucker Middle**

- Students from TMS competed at the Technology Student Association's competition and brought home third in Mechanical Engineering.

#### **Tucker High**

- The Tiger football team officially kicks off the 2019 campaign in the Corky Kell Classic on August 23. Coach Bryan Lamar's squad will take on Archer High at Coolray Field at 5:30 p.m. The Tigers have their fall scrimmage a week earlier on the road at Marietta High.

# BUSINESS BOOM

by John McHenry, Community and Economic Development Director



There are several exciting and diverse associations right here in the City of Tucker

that serve a range of industries. One point they share is that they love being in Tucker and the location can't be beat.

The Georgia Chiropractic Association is located at 1926 Northlake Parkway. The group plays a vital role in representing chiropractors in Georgia and advocating for unrestricted access to chiropractic care for patients. Executive Director Valerie Smith tells us that it was a simple choice to locate here.

"Tucker is a charming small town with great local restaurants and, importantly, easy access to downtown when we need to go to the Capitol," she says. "An added bonus is none of our staff has to get on an interstate to get to the office!"

Heading further south, be prepared to see significant construction at the U.S. Poultry & Egg Association at 1530 Cooledge Road. They are building an expanded space that will accommodate both themselves and the U.S.A. Poultry and Egg Export Council. The U.S. Poultry & Egg Association has been in Tucker since 1991 with a mission to progressively serve the poultry and egg industries through research, education, communication and technical assistance. This is achieved through research grants totaling over \$32 million to universities and colleges across the nation to advance

modern poultry and egg production. The expansion will basically double their size, from roughly 12,000 square feet to about 24,000 square feet.

President John Starkey explains, "The Tucker advantage for us includes that this is a centralized, convenient location for most staff, and the ease of access to the Atlanta airport and the Georgia World Congress Center, where we have our annual trade show."

The DeKalb Association of REALTORS® can be found at 1414 Montreal Road. It provides education, training and advocacy for its members. In existence since 1957, they built their headquarters in 1985 after moving from Decatur. There are 1,670 DeKalb realtor members who sell in Tucker, DeKalb County and many more communities.

President Ed Patton explained their attachment, saying, "The proximity of Tucker for DeKalb Association of REALTORS® is all about location, location, location, because that's who we 'R'. Whenever the need arises for our membership to come together and galvanize in support of home ownership and private property rights with our local and state governments, we have found the City of Tucker to be a familiar meeting place that is easily accessible."

It comes back to that enviable central location, where you can access the region while being in a supportive and engaged community.

Lastly, there is the Tucker Business Association, which plays a critical role in

fostering local businesses and attracting new companies to make Tucker their home. Their success has not gone unnoticed, as they recently won an APEX Award from the DeKalb Chamber of Commerce.

President Honey Van De Kreke shared, "We just couldn't be more honored on being recognized for our hard work. We're terrifically excited about all our new businesses, as well as continuing to help existing firms grow, prosper and network in Tucker."





# BUSINESS OF THE MONTH

# PROFILE BY SANFORD

Will and Latonya Johnson chose to make some lifestyle changes in 2019. The husband and wife are eating better, exercising and making smarter decisions. It's led them as a couple to lose 60 pounds. Some people would take those kinds of strides and share their diet story with friends and neighbors. Instead, the Johnsons decided to make it their business.

"Profile by Sanford is a program that was designed by doctors," Latonya explains. "What it does is it creates a personalized plan for you to not only lose weight but to maintain it and sustain it for life."

After the success the Johnsons had with Profile by Sanford, they contacted the South Dakota-based company and inquired about franchising opportunities. With some market research and looking at real estate around the Metro Atlanta area, the couple chose to come to Tucker.

"One thing I like about Tucker is really the involvement of the community," Will said at the July 15 ribbon cutting for their location at Tucker Meridian Shopping Center. "As I started doing my research, I found that Tucker really fits our culture and what we're trying to accomplish."

According to the Johnsons, Profile by Sanford works primarily with adults, mostly female, but they also have programs for children and families who are battling obesity. They say it's not about dieting, but about making fundamental changes to your daily habits.

"The primary focus is for everybody to live a healthy life, make a lifestyle change and teach them about nutrition activity," Will explains, adding the end result is "to really have a long, successful life and be healthy."

Profile by Sanford is located at 4280 Lavista Road. You can find them online at [www.profileplan.com](http://www.profileplan.com).



# SOCIAL AND THE CITY

## WHAT'S BEHIND TUCKER'S FACEBOOK FIXATION?



Every city has some form of communication that ties its citizens together. For some it's the hyperlocal social media site NextDoor. Other areas rely on a good old-fashioned email list. In Tucker, the forum that disseminates the most information to the most people is Facebook. And that's true by a wide margin.

In anything, Facebook has its pluses and its minuses. For every story you hear about someone reconnecting with an old high school friend, there's one about cyberbullying. The sharing of fake news is rampant. People are signing off the site in record numbers.

But Tucker is an example of a place where Facebook, while not perfect, is doing a lot of good. It's building community, connecting neighbors and promoting important causes. To understand Tucker's Facebook fixation, you first have to learn how it all got started.

A decade ago, Tucker Civic Association was struggling. Membership numbers were stagnant, and the group was looking for ways to increase participation in its

many volunteer events. Anita Stoltzfus chaired the Membership Committee at the time and remembers looking for ways to get volunteers to sign up for the monthly Give an Hour outings.

"Initially, we needed a platform to get the word out," Stoltzfus recalls. "We wanted to get more new members and get more people to participate in TCA. At the time, the younger generation was utilizing Facebook. That was their thing. I saw it as a way to connect the younger generation with the older generation."

Facebook was a household name in 2010, but it hardly resembled the global behemoth that it is today, as it boasts over 2.3 billion users. The idea that this social media channel would grow involvement in a group like TCA wasn't exactly a forgone conclusion. But the more Stoltzfus thought about it, the more she started to look at the bigger picture of how this system of likes and shares could eventually connect the entire community.

Thus, was born Tucker Town Talk. As strangers became neighbors and neighbors became friends and friends recommended the group to other friends, Tucker Town Talk went from a small, civic-minded effort to one that was well-known and even influential

throughout the community. While that growth on the surface was a positive, for Stoltzfus it became taxing.

“I work half the time and volunteer half the time,” she explains, saying that being a Facebook administrator is like taking on a second full-time job. “It’s kept me up plenty of nights eating dinner at 11 o’clock at night because I’m putting out fires on Tucker Town Talk.”

The “fires” she refers to could be name calling between users, users slamming a local business or the talk getting a little too political. All are no-no’s on Tucker Town Talk and have been from Day One.

“People like to stir the pot,” Stoltzfus says. “If people can’t behave after you’ve told them two or three times, just remove them.”

While many Tucker Town Talk members are grateful for the positivity of the group’s posting guidelines, it left others looking for avenues to vent. And so, Tucker’s growing Facebook obsession got even bigger.

**M**eg Thomas can rattle off a half-dozen Tucker-related Facebook groups that she either started or currently oversees. For her, Facebook has been a way to connect with other moms, entrepreneurs and volunteers throughout the community.

“I have seen how helpful large community Facebook groups can be,” Thomas explains. “I have made honest and true friends and very, very dear ones at that, all because of my exposure on Facebook.”

The group Thomas started that has amassed the biggest following is TGGBU, which stands for Tucker: Genuine, Giving, Benevolent & Upstanding. The group is involved in promoting numerous charitable causes from the schools to the community at large. But for many of its members, its biggest appeal is as a place where you can say pretty much whatever you want.

“Politics was never permitted on other groups,” Thomas explains. “We do not turn anyone away. One basic rule is a common decency one: no threatening someone/someplace and no vulgar name calling.”

Anything else goes and it can get heated. Controversial issues happening in the City, problems in the schools and even issues of national politics draw hundreds of people to comment on a post, sometimes “shouting” in all caps.

While many get their fix on TGGBU, other groups have popped up to offer a similar free-form forum. Groups like Tucker Town Real

Talk and Tucker Talk, Anything Goes have smaller followings, but the conversation is just as unfettered and just as intense.

Interestingly, Stoltzfus, who is not a member of any of these groups, looks at their mission and can appreciate that they are filling a void.

“I don’t believe that complaining on social media is constructive. It’s complaining,” she says. “But it’s like having a smoking room in the airport. It’s good to have them so people can get it out if their system.”

**F**rom these large groups have come specialty groups; like-minded people who want to connect and enjoy shared interests with new friends. The Tucker Running

### Where Everybody Knows Your Name

Tucker is awash in Facebook groups, some exceeding the following of the official City of Tucker Facebook page. Here’s a count of which groups have the most members.



- Tucker Town Talk – 8,685**
- Tucker Online Yard Sale – 4,598**
- TGGBU – 3,835**
- City of Tucker - 3,749**
- Tucker Town Real Talk – 2,888**
- Smoke Rise, Georgia 30087 – 1,665**
- Moms of Tucker – 1,065**

Club group organizes outings several times a week for group runs throughout town. The Tucker Cluckers group, which Thomas also administers, gives chicken owners a place to ask questions about feed or cold weather care. Tucker Clicks! allows amateur shutterbugs to offer feedback on each other's photographs, while comparing notes on the latest camera equipment.

One Facebook group that is creating multi-generational friendships is Moms of Tucker. The moms connect in the group and their kids become close friends through playdates and outings. Leigh Ann Millican is a member of the group and offers a laundry list of reasons why she loves it.

"Because it's free therapy, because it's hand me downs, because it's moms supporting moms, because it's answers to 'when is school registration', 'what kid-friendly events are going on this weekend', and 'how does one remove slime from a car seat?'" Millican says. "The group empowers, educates and helps me make playdates. Most importantly, the group feels like a village where we can all contribute and take something away in our ongoing effort to raise healthy and happy children."

Several years ago, a Tucker Town Talk member made it known that she enjoyed theater and wondered if there was anyone else in the group who might be interested in starting a community theater. That inquiry led to what is today Tucker's wildly successful Main Street Theatre.

"I'm not sure Tucker becomes a city without Facebook," says Sonja Szubski.

Szubski, who works for the City now, was one of the leaders of Tucker's cityhood effort back in 2014 and 2015. She and the other organizers worked at the grassroots level to raise money and disseminate information about the benefits of cityhood, while fighting back against misinformation.

"Facebook was critical for us," Szubski recalls. "In a community of 35,000, these types of votes can swing on the ability to reach just a small handful of people. Thanks to Tucker Town Talk and other groups, we were able to make our case efficiently and to a wide audience."

"Facebook is a large means of communication in our City," Thomas adds. "Every business owner, school, PTA, church, and various volunteer organizations around here all know this and through groups I manage and others like my friend Anita's group, Tucker Town Talk, they are able to keep a finger on the pulse of the City."

Meanwhile, Stoltzfus looks at the future and says her very simple mission remains the same.

"If we could inspire one or two or three people," she says, "it would be worth it. Encourage and inspire others to get involved in our town, whatever their passion is. I want them to do that. Knitting, running, picking up trash, just connect with like-minded residents to start a group. Let's not talk about our differences, let's talk about what unites us. It's unity in community."

Mark Zuckerberg may have never heard of Tucker, Georgia, but it's a tight-knit community and his social media platform is a big reason for that.



# AUGUST 6

**Brockett Elementary**  
1855 Brockett Road  
**6 - 8 p.m.**  
Free dinner, games and fun!

# “ASK RIP” *Answers Your Park Questions*



*Rip Robertson is the Parks and Recreation Director for the City of Tucker. He brings to the job years of experience in Parks and Rec, as well as Public Works. Rip is a former Military Intelligence Analyst for the U.S. Army and is active with the Army Reserve.*

I hope everyone had an excellent summer. Here at the Tucker Recreation Center, we had a better summer than we ever could have anticipated.

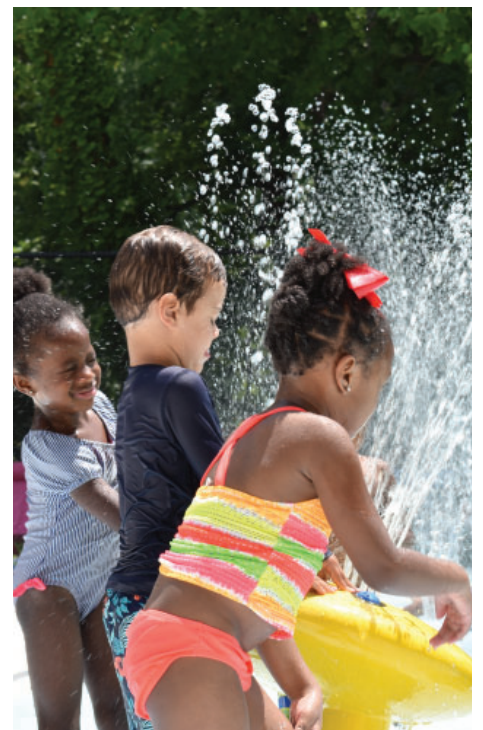
Our Summer Camp was booked out every week. While there are still some growing pains, this being only our second year, the feedback we got from parents and campers was overwhelmingly positive. I see it every day at the Rec Center: kids making new friends and thriving through the summer.

We had some really successful special events, as well. Our Adult Field Day was so well-attended that we, along with our partners at Friends of Tucker Recreation Center, were able to fund 20 scholarships for kids to attend Summer Camp. We held a July 4 Pool Party that was so well-attended we had to run to the store to buy more hot dogs

because we ran out. And, as I write this, we're preparing for a whole lot of people to pack Kelley Cofer Park Pool for our very first Dive-In Movie.

I've been in the Parks and Recreation game a long time; longer than I'd care to admit. But as I look back on this summer, I can honestly say it has been one of my most enjoyable experiences watching our staff work like crazy to make these events happen. They're doing it because they each recognize how beneficial a recreation program can be to a city. For children, for families, for anyone looking to get outdoors and make friends, these events are paramount to you getting the most out of where you live.

I've said it before, and I'll say it again: it is my privilege to lead a team that is so dedicated to making Tucker's Parks and Recreation Department the best around. If we're not at the top yet, we're daggone close. Here's looking forward to keeping that momentum going into the fall.



# ANNE AND RICH BENEVENTO

## CITIZENS OF THE MONTH

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“Anne and Rich Benevento love Tucker, and they show it every chance they get.

I first met these two nearly eight years ago as a shy mom who yearned to be more involved in the community that I was raising my child in. Anne welcomed me to join a committee she was chairing at the time, and my path was forever changed. For well over a decade, they have served on several committees in multiple organizations around the City of Tucker by spending their free time giving back to this community in too many ways to list.

To name a few, Anne took her passion for reading and put it to good use, spending countless hours volunteering at schools in the media center while hosting many book fairs along the way. Rich lends his skills as a graphic designer to countless city organizations by creating flyers or logos to working on major tasks like maintaining websites. I can guarantee that you’ve been witness to their volunteer work a time or two without even knowing it! These two ‘super volunteers’ lead by example. We’re all lucky to be their neighbors.”

*Nomination by Erin Kirn*



# TEAM TUCKER *Spotlight*

## TONI JO HOWARD, FINANCE DIRECTOR

### **What was your path to get to Tucker?**

I have worked in both the public and private sector. However, I have discovered that I feel most fulfilled working for local governments. The opportunity at Tucker allowed me a chance to be a part of a team helping to shape the future for the City.

### **How is this position unique from others you've taken in the past?**

I have served as a Finance Director for other local governments. However, Tucker is the only opportunity I have had to be the very first Finance Director.

### **What is your top priority for Tucker's Finance Department?**

My priority is to ensure that we have accurate and timely reporting to help the decision makers of the City.

### **What are some of the challenges you're facing here in Tucker?**

The City has implemented a wonderful financial software package. However, having only just implemented the software, additional work is needed to ensure we are fully utilizing the tools the software provides. Additionally, we need to further enhance our policies and procedures to streamline more processes.

### **Who has been the most influential person in your life?**

I think the most influential person in my life has been my husband. He has really helped to shape my personality. I am an introvert, but he is an extreme extrovert. As such, he is constantly pushing me out of my comfort zone to do things and interact with people more than I would otherwise. I think without him pushing me for so many years, I would not have had acquired the skills that have allowed me so many opportunities.



## *Off the Wall*

### **What was the best day of your life?**

That would be tied between the day my son and daughter were born.

### **What's the most adventurous thing you've ever done?**

I packed up my car and drove across country by myself to start a job in Seattle. My husband wasn't able to leave as quickly so it became a solo mission to get our life started there. I had never lived anywhere but Georgia so this was a huge change.

### **If you could choose to live in one decade, which would it be?**

I would choose to live in the 70s. I feel like there were so many movements that were so impactful to changes in our society that it would have been an exciting time to be involved.

### **What's your go-to movie genre?**

I would have to say crime thrillers. I love trying to figure out who did it and why. I would be Nancy Drew in another life.



## Community Corner



### **8/2 - Movie on Main** **Movie begins at sundown**

The TKR Summer of Fun continues with a free screening of *Captain Marvel* right in the heart of downtown. Enjoy the film on a giant inflatable screen, get free popcorn, a free drink courtesy of Village Burger and play before the movie in our inflatable batting cage.

### **8/10 - Tucker Cruise-In** **5:00–8:00 p.m., Main Street**

Tucker Cruise In is a non-profit, old-fashioned town meet and greet car show located on Main Street in Tucker. They have a wide variety of cars, ranging from antiques to street rods, motorcycles to imports. Car enthusiasts can come to check out the show or enter their own car for judging.

### **8/13 - Tucker Arm in Arm** **6:30-8:00 p.m.** **2380 Main Street**

One of Tucker's newest groups, Arm in Arm meets regularly to discuss issues of social justice. The August discussion, part of their series on Embracing Diversity, will take place at The Corner Cup and deal with Ableism and Ageism. All are invited to attend.

### **8/15 - Tucker Business Association Luncheon**

**11:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m.**  
**4450 Hugh Howell Rd., #10**  
TBA serves as the unofficial voice of Tucker's business community. Meetings are held every third Thursday at Magnolia Room. Attendees will hear from guest speakers and can take advantage of networking opportunities.