

CELEBRATING OUR PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE

# INTUCKER

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## FROM THE MAYOR

If you've attended any of our City meetings, you know we're kind of like a band of gypsies; wandering from meeting space to meeting space, hauling with us tables and speakers and microphones. From Tucker Rec Center to Discover DeKalb and even the library, our staff has gone through the set-up and breakdown process dozens of times for meetings of our City Council and various appointed boards.

This month, we'll finally have a more permanent home.

We're calling it the City Hall Annex and it's essentially a couple of office suites we're renting inside the 4228 building on First Avenue. Tucker-based D.K. Lippy Construction is working to rehabilitate the space and make sure it's ADA compliant. They expect to have us in by our City Council meeting on Monday April 24.

A word of caution: if you're coming in expecting to find a gilded palace, complete with mahogany desks and state of the art technology, you're in for a letdown. This project is being done on a shoe-string budget. We could have put in all the bells and whistles, but your City Council is cognizant of how money is being spent and we don't want to spend a penny more than we have to.

With all that said, it wouldn't feel like a home without a proper housewarming. So I'd like you to circle May 12 on your calendar. From 1-3 p.m. we'll have an Open House where you can come, check out the new space and enjoy some light refreshments. I'll also be delivering our first State of the City Address that afternoon and would love to have you in attendance as we share some of the big things that will be happening in Tucker in the coming year.

This is a really big and very positive step toward taking Tucker into the next phase of cityhood. I hope you'll join us as we celebrate this milestone.

## DATES TO KNOW

**April 3-7**  
Spring Break for  
DeKalb Schools

**April 10**  
City Council

**April 11**  
Tucker Tomorrow  
Steering Committee

**April 12**  
Community Council

**April 15**  
Tucker Tomorrow  
Walking Tour

**April 18**  
Zoning Board of  
Appeals

**April 24**  
City Council

**April 27**  
Planning Commission



## CITY COUNCIL UPDATE

The big item before City Council in March was the City's hotel/motel tax. At a special called meeting on March 2, Council voted 5-2 to approve a resolution that supports restoring the rate in the City to eight percent.

Any change to a locality's hotel/motel tax must go through approval under the Gold Dome. Tucker was one of five DeKalb cities petitioning to change the tax to the eight percent rate that

is uniform across unincorporated DeKalb.

One estimate has the move generating an extra \$171,000 annually for projects in Tucker including renewal of the Tucker Recreation Center and installation of bathrooms at Tucker's parks.

Council held two other regular called meetings in March and will next meet on April 10th at Tucker Recreation Center.

## MAYOR AUMAN ADDRESSES CADETS



Mayor Auman served as the keynote speaker at Tucker High School's annual Air Force JROTC promotion ceremony held on March 9th.

## UPDATE: TUCKER TOMORROW ENTERS CRUCIAL MONTH

Tucker Tomorrow, the City's effort to develop a comprehensive plan, is entering the home stretch.

Consultants from The Collaborative will host a final Community Forum on May 18 to unveil the recommendations they will make to City Council on how Tucker should evolve over the next generation.

A major component of the comprehensive plan process has been feedback from the stakeholders; namely residents and business owners in the City of Tucker. Before they get to that final forum in May, The Collaborative is making one last push to gain more input from the community.



On April 15, there will be a walking tour (with some driving) of the Mountain Industrial area. The tour meets at 9:30 in the morning at the parking lot of the old Sears facility on Hugh Howell Road. As with previous tours of the Main Street, Northlake and Lawrenceville Highway corridors, this will be an opportunity for people to see the infrastructure in place and to re-imagine the best use of the area.

Beyond gaining input on that specific area, The Collaborative is still looking for more data from their online survey. The survey lays out each aspect of the City and allows you to examine the different areas and how they should change in the future. You can find that survey – and all aspects of the comprehensive plan process – at [tuckertomorrowplan.com](http://tuckertomorrowplan.com).

# ON THE BEAT WITH LT. SMITH

With the kids out of school for Spring Break, many families are packing their bags, saying "It's time for a vacation!"

Before you jump on the plane or cram into the car for your exotic destination, there are a couple of things you may want to keep in mind so that when you return you don't find that someone has broken into your home and made off with your valuables.

- Let your neighbors or friends know that you will be out of town so that they can keep an eye on your house.
- Let the Post Office know that you will be out of town and ask them to hold your mail OR let that friend/neighbor pick it up for you.
- Motion activated lights or lights on timers inside and outside your house can give the impression to burglars that someone is home.
- Be sure your alarm company has an updated contact person in the event your alarm is triggered during your hiatus.
- Make sure you close your curtains/blinds to keep those prying eyes away from your possessions.



Finally, we know you want to share every minute of your bliss with family and friends, but try to refrain from posting on social media while you're away. This lets everyone know your house is empty and can be an inviting target for criminals. This goes for the kids too. Yes, they may feel the world is ending without being on social media, but your peace of mind is worth it. Once you get back, everyone can share all of their memories with their Facebook friends.

Please be safe, don't forget the sunscreen and enjoy that much-needed Spring Break vacation!

## POLICE BLOTTER

**QUICK RESPONSE:** On March 2nd, officers responded to the 4000 block of Tree Mountain Parkway in reference to a residential burglary in progress call. The officers quickly arrived on the scene and observed three males flee from a rear window. Officer Correa gave chase on foot and observed one of the males continuously reach for his pants. After catching and apprehending the juvenile suspect without incident, a search of the suspect produced a loaded revolver in one of his pockets. He explained that he was simply trying to retrieve the weapon so that he could throw it away and didn't have any malicious intent. After speaking with detectives, he was transported to juvenile intake where he was charged with numerous complaints.

**VEHICLE PURSUIT:** On March 2nd, officers responded to a business armed robbery in progress call off of Lawrenceville Highway. While officers were still en route, radio updated the call indicating that the suspect was armed and had fled the location in a vehicle. An observant officer noticed the vehicle fleeing from the area and gave chase. The vehicle refused to stop, traveling for several miles with multiple officers in pursuit. The suspect vehicle finally crashed and the male driver jumped out and took off his jacket while running through a business. With the assistance of our aerial unit, he was apprehended in the rear of the store. The female passenger jumped out with her infant child and attempted to blend in at a bus stop. She was also apprehended. Both suspects were arrested and the child was placed in the custody of DFACS.

**WEAVING WHILE DRIVING:** While on routine patrol in the area of Juliette Road and East Ponce de Leon Avenue, Officer Woody noticed a vehicle speeding and crossing the double yellow line repeatedly. He initiated a traffic stop and immediately noticed the occupants begin moving around and appeared very nervous. With the assistance of additional units and after conducting a thorough investigation, it was discovered that two of the occupants had been involved in an armed robbery two nights before off of Juliette Road. Several narcotics were also located in the vehicle as well as a firearm. Four of the five occupants were arrested for various charges and at least one armed robbery in the area was cleared with some of the victims stolen property being recovered.



# COMMUNITY WINS AT INAUGURAL TUCKER HOOP SUMMIT

When Cliff Gates picked up the phone, he didn't know what to expect.

The head of Community Outreach and Pastoral Care for Mountain West Church in Tucker had been working for weeks to organize a 3-on-3 basketball tournament. The little bit of money he would raise would go to charity. But that's not what he really wanted out of the event.

Gates dreamt up a 3-on-3 tournament with a twist: each team would be paired up with a DeKalb County police officer. Boys and girls ages 11-18 would come for basketball, but leave with a personal connection to the law enforcement community. And vice versa.

With all that's been happening across America, Gates saw an opportunity to change things at the grassroots level.

"It's so important that we encourage interaction between kids and cops and strengthen that relationship," Gates said.

It's a noble idea, but would it, he wondered, gain any traction?

The phone call he received changed everything.

On the other end was the Community Relations team from the Atlanta Hawks. They wanted to support Gates' tournament in any way they could.

Need uniforms? We've got them. Games and entertainment? No problem. Tournament logo and signage? We can handle that. Oh, and we'll send the Hawks mascot and some cheerleaders while we're at it.

Gates was floored. His small idea to make a positive change in the community was now being fully embraced by an NBA franchise. Things just got real.

"I really felt like God was working in this circumstance," he recalled. "Knowing that DeKalb Police were so committed to having a space where officers could interact with the community, and then for the Hawks to offer to help in this way...it was the hand of God."

For their part, DeKalb Police have embraced the idea of a basketball tournament with open arms.

"These kids are the future leaders of our community," says Tucker's police liaison, Lt. R.S. Smith. "In some cases, they'll be our brothers and sisters on the police force. It's so important that we take opportunities like this tournament to connect with them and get to know them in a positive environment. Our officers are really grateful and looking forward to April 29."



*Professional videographer Marcel Williams shoots a promo for the Inaugural Tucker Hoop Summit. (Credit: tuckerga.gov)*

The tournament has a name ("Tucker Hoop Summit"), a date (April 29) and a location (Tucker High School). Not only are the Atlanta Hawks and DeKalb Police onboard, the Police Athletic League, Tucker Recreation Center and the City of Tucker are also stepping up to support the event.

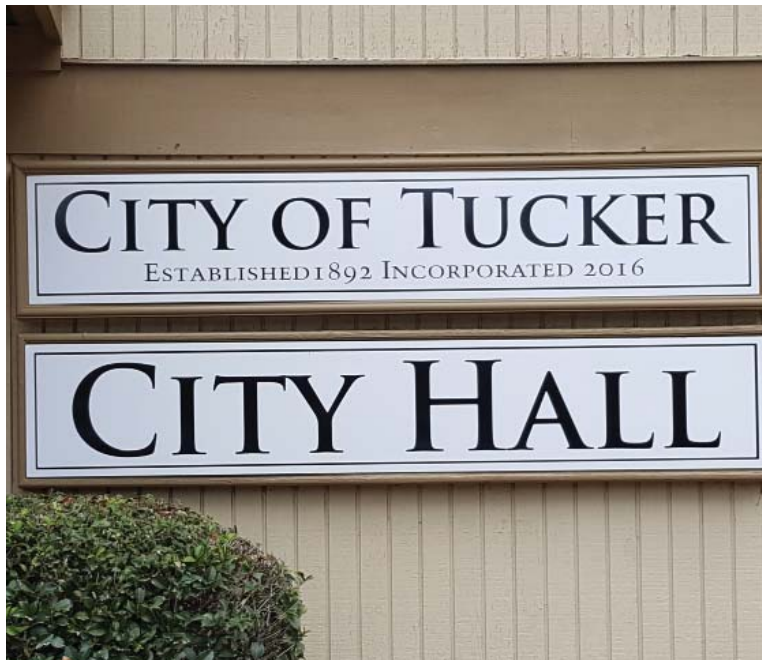
With less than a month until the tournament, Gates' dream is on the cusp of being a reality.

"Our partner agencies have come together in some ways that they haven't before," Gates said. "It's encouraging and inspiring to know that we live in a city where people are taking pride in the health and well-being of their community."

For more information on how to sign up for the inaugural Tucker Hoop Summit, either to participate or as a volunteer, visit the website [tuckerhoopsummit.com](http://tuckerhoopsummit.com).

# TEAM TUCKER SPOTLIGHT

**Karen Bottoms - Permit Technician**



## OFF THE WALL

**What's the TV show you never miss?** Jeopardy



**What's the one accomplishment you're most proud of?** Buying my own house.

**If you could have dinner with anyone, dead or alive, who would it be and why?** A group of people who would ask questions would be more interesting to me than a one-on-one conversation. I would love to listen to Jeff Bezos and Elon Musk talk about space flight.

**You're stranded on a deserted island and can only have three things ...** Food, Water and Shelter.

**What is your professional background?** I was an administrative assistant before I took my permit technician certification test.

**What are your job responsibilities?** I issue building permits and handle administrative duties in the Building and Permitting Department, as well as greeting visitors at the front desk of City Hall.

**What is your favorite thing about working in Tucker?** The people I work around. Lots of knowledge and experience.

**What's the best thing about working at City Hall?** It's a small city, so many people working here wear several hats. The Council is friendly and involved. There is lots of opportunity to experience the hopes and visions these folks have for Tucker.

## TEAM TUCKER TAMES THE SPARTAN

On March 18, members of the Tucker City Hall staff ran the Reebok Spartan Race as a team-building exercise. Communications Coordinator Matt Holmes, Accounting Manager Jennifer Davis and Community & Economic Development Director John McHenry completed the course, which featured 22 obstacles over 4.8 miles.



# TUCKER COMMUNITY SPOTLIGHT

Each month we solicit nominations from the community for outstanding residents who are making a difference in Tucker. Our panel reviews the nominations and selects one person to be featured in our "Citizen Spotlight". If you want to make a nomination for the May newsletter, email us at [info@tuckerga.gov](mailto:info@tuckerga.gov) and tell us in 250 words or less who you're nominating and how they are going above and beyond in Tucker!



## BUSINESS OF THE MONTH COOKIE CUTTERS

Between the scissors, the clippers and having to sit still, haircuts are no fun for young children. Bo Crawford and his team at Cookie Cutters (4316 Lawrenceville Highway) are hoping to change that.

Cookie Cutters, a franchise based out of Utah, is expanding across the United States and they chose the City of Tucker location for their very first store in Georgia.

With an indoor playground to keep kids occupied while they wait, and Netflix and video games to distract them during the haircut, Cookie Cutters is going all out to change the stigma of kids and haircuts.

Cookie Cutters celebrated their arrival in Tucker with a ribbon-cutting and a grand opening bash, both in the month of March.

## CITIZENS OF THE MONTH AMY & TYLER PARSONS

"[When] Amy and Tyler moved to Tucker in the summer of 2015, they immediately rolled up their sleeves and found ways to support their chosen community family. Amy is very involved with their neighborhood school through the PTO and was elected to serve on the School Council. Tyler can be found at various community meetings and enjoys learning about the zoning process. Both have joined up to help the Friends of Henderson Park group and have added a sense of excitement and fresh eyes to ongoing projects.

Amy and Tyler have two beautiful daughters and all four are regulars at Tucker Civic Association's monthly Give an Hour.

The City's community is lucky to have energetic and involved citizens like the Parsons."

*Nominated by Sonja Szubski*



# **BUILDER'S CORNER WITH**

## **STEVE HOLDER**

### **WARM WEATHER ENERGY SAVINGS**



The weather's been unpredictable so far in 2017. A warmer than normal January and February gave way to a brutal cold snap in mid-March. With all that volatility, one thing's for sure: warmer weather is coming. Spring, summer and the high temperatures they bring increase electrical loads. Keep cool and save energy costs by following these simple tips around the house.

#### **WARM WEATHER COOLING TIPS**

- Turn off unnecessary lights. Much of the energy from a light bulb is heat.
- Replace incandescent bulbs with CFL and LED bulbs.
- Make sure furniture or drapes do not block your registers for supply and return air.
- Wear thin, loosely fitting clothes and you may not have to keep room temperatures as cool.
- Close blinds, shades or curtains during the hottest part of the day.
- On mild days, open windows for natural ventilation and turn the air conditioning off.
- Use portable or ceiling fans. Run ceiling fans counterclockwise. Mild air movement of 1 MPH can make you feel 3 to 4 degrees cooler.
- Apply sun-control or other reflective films on south-facing windows.

#### **COOKING**

- Cook on your outdoor grill. The stove/oven can raise the kitchen temperature 5 to 10 degrees.
- Use a microwave instead of a conventional oven to save money and keep your kitchen cooler.
- Move a spare refrigerator out of the garage to a basement or spare room; the unit won't have to work as hard to keep food cold.

#### **HOUSEHOLD CHORES**

- Do heat- and moisture-producing jobs such as cooking, cleaning, ironing and laundry during the cooler early morning and evening hours.
- Air-dry dishes instead of using the dishwasher's heat drying cycle.
- Avoid unnecessary trips in and out of the house, especially on very hot days. Heat and humidity come in each time you open the door.



*Steve Holder is the Building Official for the City of Tucker. He has nearly two decades of experience in building inspection.*



# SIXTH ANNUAL TUCKER CHILI COOK-OFF



Thousands of chili enthusiasts packed Main Street on March 11 for the City's annual ode to seasoned meats and beans.



City Councilmember Noelle Monferdini and her kids prepared the City's entry into the Chili Cook-Off and claimed sixth place.



Team "Mosquito Authority White" was judged the overall winner. Matthews Cafeteria claimed top prize in the restaurant division.

**City of Tucker** Phone : 678-597-9040  
**4119 Adrian Street** Email : [info@tuckerga.gov](mailto:info@tuckerga.gov)  
**Tucker, GA 30084** Facebook : [facebook.com/cityoftucker](https://facebook.com/cityoftucker)

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