



CELEBRATING OUR PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE

INTUCKER

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FROM THE MAYOR

I've often said that my vision for Tucker is a community where individuals and families can 'live, work, play and pray', all in their own community, for their whole lives if they choose to. As we enter the holiday season, I thought it might be a good time to examine that last aspect: 'pray'.

When I mention that in speeches, it's not to endorse any particular religion or to push the institution of religion on anyone. Instead, it's to acknowledge what our faith community has meant to Tucker for generations, and to nurture it for the benefit of future generations.

In 1829, a group of Tucker-area residents founded Fellowship Baptist Church. That church served those families – and the Tucker community – for over 170 years. Tucker's First Baptist, which many of us pass everyday driving down Lavista Road, has been around since 1893. The Methodists started their church in Tucker in 1904. Tucker First Presbyterian, now on Fellowship Road, was founded near Embury Hills in 1894. Today, there are dozens of faith institutions working within our City limits.

It's not just that these faith groups have been around in our community for a long time, but it's impressive to consider how much good work they have done for the betterment of Tucker and its people. You'll read on Page 4 about NETWorks, which is supported by our entire faith community, and their ongoing efforts to provide food and job assistance to neighbors who are going through tough times. Several of the churches in Tucker offer after-school tutoring and mentoring to students who don't speak English as their first language. The comfort they have provided to the sick and the suffering, the practical help they have provided to those in need and in hardship, the joys they have multiplied through weddings, baptisms, homecomings and a million other celebrations; how could we ever calculate the value? And what would we do without them? Whatever our individual roles or relationships with these institutions of worship, we can all be grateful for their presence and for their service and sacrifice over these many years.

My prayer for you is that this holiday season is full of joy and blessed times with family and friends. And may we all remember this one unarguable truth: we can never go wrong by loving our neighbor as ourselves.

DATES TO KNOW

December 11
City Council

December 13
Community Council

December 22 & 25
Christmas - observed
(City Hall closed)

December 28
Planning Commission



Tucker staff & City Council wish you a happy and safe holiday season!



CITY COUNCIL UPDATE

Tucker's City Council met three times in the month of November, holding a pair of meetings, as well as a planning retreat.

The November 13 meeting came on the heels of the referendum vote approving EHOST/SPLOST across DeKalb County. City Manager Tami Hanlin presented an update on the SPLOST at that City Council meeting. According to her report, the additional penny tax will begin to be collected in April 2018, with the City receiving funds monthly beginning in May.

Council also held a first read on an annexation petition by a group of five commercial properties along East Ponce de Leon Avenue. This annexation is expected to pass on a final vote in December.

Toward the end of the meeting, Council went into executive session, where they decided that the City would notify DeKalb County of their intention to take over operations of Tucker Recreation Center on January 1, 2018.

At the November 27 meeting, Council granted a deferral on a proposed 19-unit residential development on Saren Court. STS Development Group asked for more time to redesign the site plan as it was determined that there was an intermittent stream on adjoining parcels. Council approved the deferral to the December 11 meeting, when there will be a public hearing and anticipated final vote.

Council also approved a pair of ordinances on unanimous votes. One ordinance will prescribe rules and regulations for collection of garbage and refuse, as well as the unlawful deposit of litter in the City. The second makes changes to the building regulations code that will help the City deal with property owners who are in violation and whose properties will need City abatement. This will apply to ongoing code enforcement citations involving cases such as overgrown properties that are not responding to environmental court.

The City Council has just one scheduled meeting remaining in 2017. It will be held on Monday December 11 at 7 p.m. at the City Hall Annex (4228 First Avenue).

SHERRY'S PRODUCE: BY THE NUMBERS

When you talk about family businesses, Sherry's Produce is as much a family business as there is in Tucker. Run by Sherry Harris and several of her kin, Sherry's sells a variety of fruits, vegetables and seasonal products from March through December.

One of the true signs of the holidays in Tucker comes the day after Thanksgiving each year, when Sherry's – which is located in Brockett Square at the intersection of Lawrenceville Highway and Brockett Road – is converted into a Christmas tree lot. We sat down recently with Sherry and her family, as they prepared for their first shipment of trees, to get a look at this Tucker institution by the numbers.



10 Sherry's Produce is closed during the coldest months of the year – January and February – meaning they try to stay open from the first blooms of spring until the last Christmas tree is dragged off the lot. That works out to roughly 10 months each year.

20 Sherry took over the business 20 years ago, although it had been in the family for years before that.

250 Each year Sherry's sells approximately 250 Christmas trees. These Fraser Firs are driven in from a tree farm just five hours up the way in Boone, North Carolina.

300 Halloween is another busy time at Sherry's. They estimate selling 300 pumpkins and assorted gourds each October. Unlike the trees, which are local to the region, the pumpkins are grown in Indiana and shipped to Tucker.

10 Each child who comes to Sherry's Produce is offered a free piece of fruit. Sherry estimates that on an average day her staff gives away 10 pieces of free fruit, although in the busy months they can give away as many as 40 pieces in a day.

ON THE BEAT WITH LT. SCHOEPPNER

Greetings Citizens of Tucker,

On October 21, I took over Tucker Liaison duty from Lieutenant R.S. Smith. He had been DeKalb P.D.'s representative to Tucker since it first became a City and, from what I'm told, he was well-liked by all. Having said that, I understand that I have some pretty big shoes to fill. My first step in filling those shoes is to tell you all a little about myself.



I'm originally from a small town in western Pennsylvania named Oil City. After graduating high school in 1992, I enlisted in the Army and then attended the University of Pittsburgh. In 1996, I had the opportunity to move to Atlanta. The first five years I lived in Atlanta, I worked in the IT field. In 2001, I was laid off from my tech job and figured I would try my hand at law enforcement.

The first five years I worked for DeKalb P.D. as a patrolman in Center Precinct. In 2006, I was selected to become a detective in the Major Felony Unit. Major Felony handled homicides, armed robberies and other felony crimes against persons. Toward the end of 2010, I had the opportunity to work in the Pawn Unit. This unit is important because criminals frequently try to use pawn shops to fence stolen items.

In 2011, I was promoted to Sergeant and assigned to North Precinct. I worked Evening Watch there for two years before going back to Major Felony, which had turned into a dedicated homicide unit. I spent two more years there as a supervisor before transferring to South Precinct, where I was able to supervise the property crimes detectives there.

This past June, I was promoted to Lieutenant and moved over from supervising the detectives at South Precinct to being in charge of its Morning Watch (third shift). That brings us to the present, when I had the opportunity to take the position of Tucker Liaison Officer.

As you can see, I have been able to hold a variety of positions within DeKalb P.D. This has given me a broad range of experience in investigating crimes from murders to thefts. This has also given me the chance to make contacts with many people within Dekalb County, as well as other law enforcement agencies. My hope is that I can put all of this to use to help DeKalb serve the citizens of Tucker to the best of its ability.



HELP SUPPORT 'SANTA COP'

DeKalb's Fraternal Order of Police will hold their annual 'Santa Cop' event on December 9. If you would like to donate to help children in need go shopping with police officers this holiday season, you can make donations online at dekalbfop.org.

POLICE BLOTTER

QUICK RESPONSE - On October 25, Officer Mealor was dispatched to a suspicious person call on Idlewood Road. While responding, the call was changed to a burglary in progress. An 11-year-old girl reported that an intruder had broken into her home. Upon arriving, Officer Mealor observed the suspect running from the juvenile's house. After a short chase, the suspect was taken into custody and was eventually charged with burglary.

VOICES CARRY - On November 9, the Tucker Precinct FIT Team received a tip of drug activity at the Rodeway Inn on Mountain Industrial Blvd. When officers went to the location to investigate, they overheard the suspects talking about their drug sales. Officer used this information to obtain search warrants for the suspects' room. During the execution of these warrants they located cocaine, crystal meth and a handgun.

NETWORKS ON A MISSION TO CHANGE LIVES IN TUCKER



Nestled away in Tucker's downtown, amid a row of churches and small businesses, is an operation that is changing and – in some cases – saving lives across our area. NETWorks Cooperative Ministry sits in a non-descript building on Fourth Street, sharing space with offices for Habitat for Humanity. The few staffers and volunteers they have work tirelessly to achieve a mission that most people take for granted: they want to feed families.

"There's a perception in the community that it's people who just want to lay about the house and get free food somewhere and that's not the case," says NETWorks' Executive Director David Fisher. "You never know who's going to come through the door."

Fisher, who came to NETWorks a year ago after a long career in the for-profit realm, talks of people who are working hard, but not getting enough hours at their job or adequate wages to cover rent, utilities and food. He talks of people who may need a little help writing a resumé or covering an electric bill. He talks of people who want nothing more than to escape the circumstances that led them to poverty.

Fisher says in NETWorks' 39-square-mile coverage area, which covers Northlake, Embury Hills and Tucker, there are nearly 18,000 people who are food insecure.

"Forty percent of them are working and 32 percent of them are children," Fisher estimates. "So nearly three-quarters of the people

looking for assistance are working families."

NETWorks, through cooperation with several local churches, stocks an emergency food pantry, as well as a grocery co-op, to help these families put food on their tables. They see an uptick in need each year during the holidays, as kids who would normally receive meals at school are off on break.

Understanding that the holidays are also supposed to be fun, NETWorks sponsors the Good Neighbor Christmas Gift Shop, where families can purchase donated toys at discounted prices. The shop, located at 2367 Main Street, is open from December 8-10.

Fisher and his team do all this keeping in mind the original mission of serving the community.

"NETWorks was formed by a variety of churches in our service area to respond to Jesus' command to love our neighbor," he recalls. "We work with them to escape poverty long-term."

While Fisher acknowledges there will always be someone in need of help, his team takes pride in seeing families break the cycle of poverty. Their success stories are easy to spot: people who no longer come to NETWorks needing food, but instead come back to donate and help others. And it's those success stories that are lifting up our community one small victory at a time.

COMMUNITY CORNER

12/1 - Annual Community Singalong

7 - 8:15 p.m., Lawrenceville Road United Methodist Church

Join guest organist Daniel Solberg, an instrumental ensemble, soloists, guest conductors and the largest community choir of friends and neighbors singing the choruses of "The Messiah" ever convened in Tucker! If you have a score, bring it. If not, scores will be provided. Refreshments to follow.

12/2 - Holiday in Smoke Rise

9 a.m. - 3 p.m., Smoke Rise Elementary School

Holiday in Smoke Rise, a longstanding community tradition, is a holiday craft and gift show. Over 100 artists, crafters and holiday vendors participate each year. Proceeds benefit Smoke Rise Elementary School through the Smoke Rise Elementary Jaguar Endowment Fund, their parent-supported fundraising organization.

TEAM TUCKER SPOTLIGHT

Bonnie Warne - City Clerk



OFF THE WALL

Tell us about your family... I've been happily married to Kevin for 35 years and have a daughter, a son and daughter-in-law and two granddaughters, ages five and eight.

What's your favorite sports team?

Pittsburgh Steelers

Where would we find Bonnie in her free time? Hanging out with my family, camping or traveling.

Do you have a favorite quote or saying? 'It isn't what we say or think that defines us, but what we do.' Jane Austen



What was your professional journey to becoming a City Clerk? I started working for local government in 2005 as a permit technician in Dawsonville and cross-trained in the other positions (planning & zoning, water & sewer, accounts receivable, meeting agenda and minutes). The Council offered the City Clerk position to me when it opened in 2010. I became proficient as a City Clerk through training and the knowledge from fellow City Clerks.

What are the job responsibilities for a City Clerk? I have to prepare for all City Council meetings, workshops and other special called meetings, prepare and maintain minutes for all City Council meetings and workshops, oversee bi-annual municipal elections, oversee the functions of Municipal Court, maintain all official records of the City, respond to open records requests and file elected officials' reports to State Ethics Commission.

What are some of the challenges of your job? I accepted this position knowing I had a commute of 45 - 90+ minutes each way from Dawsonville, with a plan to move closer to the area. My husband already worked and commuted to Tucker, so we adjusted our schedules to commute together. Every city is different, so I need to learn the ways of Tucker.

What do you like best about Tucker? Tucker has a quaint "little town" feeling in the hustle and bustle of the Atlanta area.



12/2 - Christmas on Main Celebration

5 - 8 p.m., Main Street Tucker

Children will enjoy bounce houses, writing letters to Santa and hot cocoa while you peruse food and craft vendors from the Tucker Farmers Market. Activities include two Main Street Theatre performances, an Ugly Sweater Contest and a special guest flying in from up north to light the tree at 6 p.m.!

12/16 - Saturday Food Pantry hosted by NETWorks Cooperative

10 a.m. - 1 p.m., 2380 4th Street

Families in need can find emergency pantry services for food, as well as personal care items. To check the service map and other criteria OR to volunteer at the Food Pantry, visit www.networkscoop.org.

TUCKER COMMUNITY SPOTLIGHT

BUSINESS OF THE MONTH VILLAGE BURGER

The concept at Village Burger is simple: hamburgers, hot dogs, seasoned fries. Yet that simple concept has quickly become the talk of the Tucker food scene. Since their opening on Main Street in October, General Manager Justin Beaudrot has seen a bustling lunch and dinner crowd.

"I think it's gotten such a huge response from the community because we've made it an effort primarily to become involved in and around Tucker," Beaudrot explains. "A number of our employees, including myself, were born and raised right here in Tucker. So, we're already a part of the community."

Already popular in Dunwoody and Johns Creek, Village Burger comes to Tucker as part of a wave of new and re-imagined restaurants to open this year on Main Street. Beaudrot and his staff are happy to share the secret of what's made their product a success in those other cities.

"We purchase and serve 100 percent certified Angus ground chuck beef hamburgers," he says. "Anybody can make a burger, but I think the real key to it is buying a good meat and that's what we do here."



As for the Tucker location, Village Burger is hoping its abundant outdoor seating will help the restaurant stand out from the competition.

"I really enjoy a busy day when people sit out front and enjoy the front patio. It brings the street to life," Beaudrot explains. He adds that the recently completed back patio will be heated to allow customers to dine al fresco even during the cold weather months.

You can find out more about Village Burger and view their menu at www.villageburger.com.

CITIZEN OF THE MONTH ANNE THOMAS

"Anne is an amazing person, who has dedicated countless hours, blood, sweat and tears (of joy!) volunteering at several DeKalb County public schools.

Livsey Elementary, Tucker Middle and the DeKalb School of the Arts have all greatly benefited from her service over the past decade or so. She is an intense, intelligent team player, heading up numerous committees at these schools where she contributes to everything from theatrical productions to communications to fundraisers. Her ideas have raised tens of thousands of dollars for these schools—monies that benefit the academic enrichment of students, support teachers and staff. These mini-grants fund equipment or professional development, boost morale of the staff and administration and encourage parents to become engaged and actively supportive.

Anne currently serves as Tucker Middle School's PTA Communications Chairperson, responsible for a weekly newsletter that gets emailed out to more than 1,400 parents, guardians and stakeholders EVERY Sunday. It shares information for functions that range from testing to athletics—details that translate to smoother day-to-day logistics. She also heads several committees and serves on School Council there.

She is currently working with a team of Council and District leaders to create a Cluster Forum where all seven Tucker schools can share information, find support and problem solve in a 'big picture' approach. Somehow Anne makes time to get this all done while being a devout wife, an amazing mother to her four children and heavily involved in her faith."



Nominated by Rich Benevento

“ASK RIP” ANSWERS YOUR PARKS QUESTIONS



Daric Morris - *I'm thrilled to see the long-term improvement plans for the Johns Homestead land. But how can we get a trash can(s) in there before that? There are none right now. As more people discover this beautiful spot, it's getting trashed.*

Daric, it doesn't matter how beautiful your park is or how many improvements you make, litter can really create a negative impression for visitors. With that in mind, I can tell you that trash cans are an issue in every one of our parks and they will be a priority once we assume responsibility for our parks in early 2018. As far as Johns Homestead is concerned, our great Friends group has been working with County Commissioner Greg Adams for immediate improvements that will include trash receptacles.

Brian Chambers - *I understand Tucker Rec is one of, if not the most, used recreation centers in all of DeKalb County. Is the City of Tucker planning to hold any type of community forums where groups and citizens currently using the Rec Center will have an opportunity to provide input on what is needed?*

Absolutely. Not only do I plan to hold a community meeting in the Rec Center, we are already meeting with the existing organizations that are using the Rec Center to get

input on what they're doing and how we can help them as they serve the community. The community meeting aspect will take place in 2018 and will be part of our Parks & Recreation Master Plan process.

Stephen Konigsberg - *What are we going to physically do with the Rec Center?*

We are looking at all our options and having the facility evaluated from top to bottom. That means looking at infrastructure like the electric wiring, HVAC system and plumbing. The information we glean from those inspections, combined with input from the community from our Parks & Rec Master Plan process, will educate our decision on how quickly and completely we can rehabilitate the building.

Jenny Borter - *I know there are some new things planned for Henderson Park, can you please tell us what those changes are? I wish there was a restroom facility by the playground/picnic area and a map of the trails for those who are unfamiliar with them.*

Jenny, we are keenly aware of the need for a restroom facility and that is something that is being discussed, and will continue to be discussed moving forward. The repair and maintenance of the playground and picnic pavilion will commence immediately upon our acquisition of the park. The trails have been upgraded with new bridges and boardwalks thanks to volunteer efforts by Friends of Henderson Park. Their work will continue along the other trails into the new year. A new map featuring their work is being produced and will be posted hopefully before the end of the year.



Rip Robertson is the first Parks and Recreation Director for the City of Tucker. He takes the job with 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.



Members of Tucker's City Council, City Manager Tami Hanlin and Tucker-Northlake CID Executive Director Matthew Lee attended the Atlanta Regional Commission State of the Region Breakfast on November 3 at the Georgia World Congress Center. Local leaders sat down to discuss cutting edge ideas and common goals for addressing population growth and transportation issues across the Metro Atlanta area.

TUCKERGA.GOV

City of Tucker

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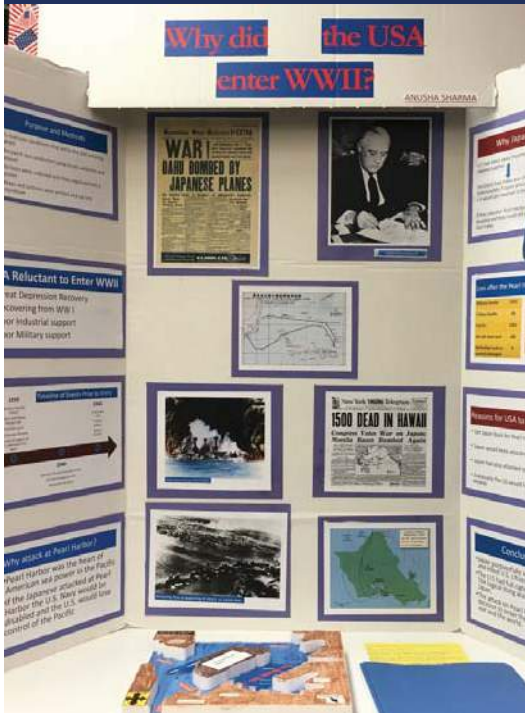
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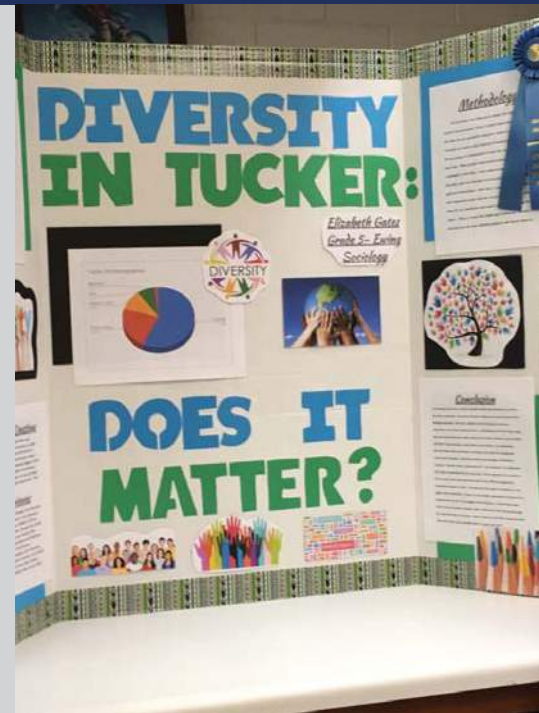
TUCKER STUDENTS LEARN FROM PAST, PREPARE FOR FUTURE



Fifth-grade students at Livsey Elementary School are given the option to participate in a Social Studies research project that can be entered into competitions. Students get to pick their own topic, research it and then create their presentation. The two winning projects this year at Livsey were 'Why Did the USA Enter World War II?' by Anusha Sharma and 'Diversity in Tucker; Does it Matter?' by Elizabeth Gates.

These two students will advance to the District level this month. We wish them luck and will be keeping track as they move forward in hopes of advancing to the National competition.

If you know of a local student doing exemplary work, please let us know. The City is proud and excited for our future to be forged by our youth!



On November 25, Old Town Tucker Merchants Association led a volunteer effort to decorate the Christmas Tree at Freemason's Square. The tree lighting will be the highlight of the Christmas on Main celebration on December 2.



PLEASE DELIVER TO:

