



# INTUCKER

SEPTEMBER 2022 | VOLUME 6 | ISSUE 9



# TUCKER THEN & NOW

CELEBRATING OUR PAST  
AS WE MOVE FORWARD

# EDITOR'S NOTE



History was never my strong subject in school. I did not understand the purpose of memorizing dates of long over wars when I could

deep dive into a book or experiment with chemical reactions. But as I have gathered some history myself by aging, I have learned to look to our past as a society of humans connected by memories, histories and shared interests.

Tucker used to be known as an aging town, a sleepy town, a town that was stuck in history. But there is a difference between being stuck in history and having an appreciation for our origin story.

In this issue, we take you on a tour of our past and how we are using modern technology to preserve it and tell a visual story of changes throughout the community. For a special treat we requested the Mayor give up his monthly space for a First Lady Take-Over. Gaye Auman is a true local to the Tucker area and has seen firsthand the positive impact the City's improvements have had in her lifetime. We had so much fun looking through her scrapbook and learning how she and I have had connections throughout my life since I was a toddler, through college years and to the present day! We also explore the neighborhood favorite of young parents with sleeping toddlers in the car, The Milk Jug. They have everything you could possibly want...to the point a friend used to play "Stump the Milk Jug" and The Milk Jug always won.

Tucker's history is long, rich with joy and historical significance. It is my sincerest hope that as we continue to grow in community, business and government, that we hold onto the memories, learn from them and embrace them even though they are flawed. Just as we should with each other...then, now and coming.

**SONJA SZUBSKI**  
INTUCKER EDITOR

# IN THIS ISSUE



### ON THE COVER

The City's GIS department harnesses past and current data to paint a picture of just how far we have come over the years. Check out our three specialized maps on page 6.



### CITIZEN OF THE MONTH

We would not be true to Tucker if the Tucker Historical Society was not mentioned in an issue dedicated to our past. Turn the pages to read the value of all that the Society pours in to Tucker on page 12.



### AFRICAN LIBRARY PROJECT

Read about a large scale and successful project from our Tucker Middle School students on page 10 and learn how they have reached across the globe to aid in literacy.



### COMMUNITY CORNER

Our back cover is always the place to check for upcoming fun in the community and to catch a beauty shot of a recent event. Submit your upcoming events at [tuckerga.gov/calendar](http://tuckerga.gov/calendar).



# INTUCKER

Sonja Szubski- Editor-in-Chief  
Dede Musser- Design  
Robin Stevens- Contributor

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# From the First Lady:

“Live, work, play, and pray, for the length and breadth of one’s life.” That has been the motto of Frank’s term as mayor of Tucker.

Here’s a little about how that has played out in my life both then and now.

I grew up in and around Tucker as my family lived on Henderson Mill Road. My father was a state senator representing Tucker in the 1970s and 80s, and my mom was a professional singer, retired educator, and school and community volunteer. My sister and I attended Henderson Mill Elementary and Henderson High School which was opened to relieve overcrowding at Tucker High School. I danced and twirled baton at Dan and Company studio located on Main Street. I was proud to represent Tucker as Georgia’s Miss National Teenager, sponsored by Tucker Savings and Loan. I also participated in several Tucker Day parades and was even a judge for the Little Miss Tucker competition.

My first and second jobs were at Northlake Mall working at the key shop for Sears and waitressing at Farrell’s during high school and college breaks. Most of my friends had jobs at the Mall and met after work to see a movie or grab a bite to eat.

Henderson High School didn’t have a Young Life group, so I went with friends to Tucker High School’s club. As a family, Frank and I were once part of a church plant that met where Local 7, Trio Nails, and Hot Betty’s are currently.

While Tucker has changed over the years, some things have remained constant: community, proximity, active citizens, and a desire to be here!

Matthews Cafeteria was a favorite as a child and still is today. Cofer Brothers was a place my family shopped then as a department store and now for building supplies.



Ice cream was then at Fountain Drugs & Farrell’s and is now at Village Burger on Main Street with grandchildren. Henderson Park was a favorite then for family picnics and now for hikes and playing on the playground. Tucker Rec Center was a location for gymnastics and now not only has gymnastics but also camps, sports and activities for all ages. Young Life is active today not only at the High School but also at Tucker Middle School.

I’ve seen the benefits of cityhood in the parks, walkability, code enforcement, economic development, and careful growth. For example, Northlake Mall opened as a signature Mall in the southeast and a destination for shopping. Through the years, the Mall aged and deteriorated, retail changed and there was a void. I am excited to see Emory Healthcare revitalize the area with 1800 employees. That means a population who need to eat, shop, play, and live nearby. Sidewalks and trails allow safe and fun ways for the community to get outside and connect. Thirty-two miles of trails are planned to span and connect all ends of the City. Lighting going beyond Main Street allows people to safely get to restaurants and festivals but also “stretches” Tucker’s Main Street beyond just one corridor. The two new green spaces adjacent to either side of downtown have cleaned up abandoned properties, making the area safer and one you want to spend time in with family and friends. Traveling through Tucker, one may not notice the cleaner streets and new pavement, but when you travel just outside the City limits it’s easy to see and appreciate the improvements.

Frank and I joke about what we will talk about when his term as mayor ends. We constantly walk and tour all ends of Tucker, dream and plan. It has been rewarding to be involved in so many changes. You see, I don’t think our discussions will change.

Tucker is in my blood. It is a place where one can live, work, play and pray for the length and breadth of one’s life. I am just one example. Tucker is home!

**GAYE AUMAN**  
FIRST LADY

# City Council Update



## DATES TO KNOW

**September 5**  
Labor Day - City Hall Closed

**September 6**  
Downtown Development Authority

**September 7**  
• Traffic Court  
• Zoning Board of Appeals

**September 12**  
City Council Meeting

**September 14**  
Traffic Court

**September 15**  
Planning Commission

**September 12**  
Environmental Court

**September 26**  
City Council Work Session

Tucker City Council met for the first time in August on the first day of school for the DeKalb County School District. School Board Member Allyson Gevertz was the first up during Public Comment with a message from Tucker High School Principal, Dr. Eric Parker, that the day went very well!

August is the second month of utilizing a consent agenda, where council will bundle a few items for a single vote to conserve time during regular meetings. This consent agenda consisted of three items:

- Regular Meeting Minutes – July 11, 2022
- Resolution R2022-08-28 to adopt employee position classification and pay plan
- Resolution R2022-08-27 to ratify appointment of City Attorney as prosecuting officer

The consent agenda was approved unanimously followed by staff report of July financials of operating and capital budgets activity presented by Finance Director Beverly Ragland. Council was then presented with a second read and public hearing for a text amendment to the Tucker Code Chapter 10 regarding the denial and revocation process of Occupational Tax Certificates.

A variety of text amendments were then presented for First Reads and Public Hearings including:

- A text amendment to the Tucker Code Chapter 10 Businesses relating to coin operated amusement devices, promotions, and lotteries
- A text amendment to the Tucker Code Chapter 10 Businesses to provide for the mandatory use of video surveillance systems at convenience stores and for other purposes
- A text amendment for the purpose of amending the Tucker Code Chapter 26 Municipal Court Section 26-102 to provide an effective date for the term of the prosecuting attorney

Council then approved two contracts for Tucker's first economic development strategic plan and to purchase two 15 passenger vans through the state procurement contract. The Mayor then appointed and the Council confirmed Anne Lerner as a director of the Downtown Development Authority.

Executive session was held, the council returned with no action and adjourned.

All City Council meetings are held at City Hall, 1975 Lakeside Parkway, Suite 350B, Tucker, GA 30084.

## FOLLOW US ON SOCIAL MEDIA



**nextdoor**



# ON THE BEAT *with Lt. Berg*

*Lt. J.W. Berg is Tucker's liaison to the DeKalb County Police Department and can be contacted by email at [jwberg@dekalbcountyga.gov](mailto:jwberg@dekalbcountyga.gov) or by phone at (678) 597-9040.*

Earlier this year, Governor Brian Kemp signed SB 319 into law. Otherwise known as the "Constitutional Carry" law, this legislation gave most residents of Georgia the ability to carry a firearm concealed on their person - without having to obtain a permit. Even with this new law on the books, however, it is still illegal for convicted felons, minors, and those persons who have been treated recently for mental health or substance abuse to carry or possess a firearm. It is also still illegal to carry a firearm inside secured areas of airports and government buildings. While I certainly do not want to wade into a debate about the merits of this new law, or gun control in general, the fact is that this new legislation is something we will all have to learn to live with.

If you possess a firearm, whether you carry it on your person or store it in your home or business, I would like to encourage you to learn to handle it safely. To me, this means traveling to a firearms range on a regular basis and practicing handling and firing your weapon. Most law enforcement officers (including those with DKPD) are required to have several weeks of firearms training prior to becoming certified. Once they begin their careers, police officers in Georgia are also required to "re-qualify" with their firearm at least twice a year. In DeKalb County, we are very fortunate that our Department provides a bi-weekly allocation of practice ammunition to utilize in maintaining our firearm proficiency.

There are many great private firearm ranges in the Atlanta metropolitan area. Many of these ranges offer classes in gun safety and have leagues or clubs where like-minded persons can gather to learn how to more effectively - and safely - handle their firearms. Over the years, I've met many of the employees at these ranges, several of whom are law enforcement retirees, who are dedicated to providing their customers information and training to ensure the safety of everyone, both on and off the range.

I want to take a moment to ask all gun owners one favor. As I mentioned in my December 2021 article, the most common crime that our officers deal with on a daily basis are Entering Automobiles, also known as car

"break-ins". This crime is extremely difficult to predict and prevent given the thousands of vehicles parked around our city on a daily basis. Sadly, a frequently stolen item from these automobiles is - you guessed it- firearms.

I can vividly remember one report I reviewed a few years ago where six high-powered rifles were taken from a vehicle that had been parked overnight at a local hotel. The only way to have prevented the theft of these firearms that night was to not store them in the vehicle. So, my one request is this: I would like to kindly ask all firearm owners to limit the amount of time you store your firearm inside your vehicle. Again, with SB 319, your firearm can now be stored on your person, preferably in an approved holster.

One final point I'd like to make regarding firearms and law enforcement: at most police departments across the United States, police officers are required to be armed at all times. This means that in every encounter we have with our citizenry, there is at least one gun present - ours. Now with the newer laws around the country and in Georgia, more of our citizenry will have the right to also "carry" a firearm. I am not debating the merits of these laws or whether this makes us safer overall. My only point is that there will now be more encounters with law enforcement where both parties are armed.

If you do happen to encounter a law enforcement officer while armed, and if the circumstances allow, I ask that you inform him or her of your armed status. We don't want there to be any surprises or misunderstandings about who you are or why you are armed. Just as importantly, there is no need to reach for your firearm or pick up your firearm unless directed to do so by the officer.

Most of us in law enforcement understand that some of our citizens will be armed just as we are. However, it is still vital that we be allowed to complete our jobs in a safe and secure way. We want everyone we encounter to lead protected and productive lives. Indeed, that is our mission - to make the world better and safer for everyone, including ourselves.

# GIS MAPS EXPLORE TUCKER HISTORY

## USING MODERN TECHNOLOGY TO SPOTLIGHT THE PAST

The City of Tucker has weathered a multitude of changes throughout its lifespan. Its community has a long and storied history stretching back from at least two centuries to its present in 2022, and lifelong residents can speak to the evolution the area has endured. Many of its changes have come recently as the privileges of cityhood make it easier to undertake ventures to improve traffic, support local business, and maintain our parks and greenspaces. With so much recent growth, it is vital that the City has a way to keep track not only through articles and written records, but also visually.

The City of Tucker Geographical Information Systems, or GIS, Department is responsible for the creation and upkeep of the official City of Tucker map and other online applications. These include programs showing the hours and services of restaurants around the City, identifying local recreation centers and parks, and locating bus stops and other important infrastructure in Tucker. These applications make it simple for residents to stay up-to-date with what relevant changes have occurred as well as what those changes look like.

GIS's influence does not end with these conveniences. A few specialized map applications have been created not only to show the City as it is now, but also to relate the Tucker of the distant past.

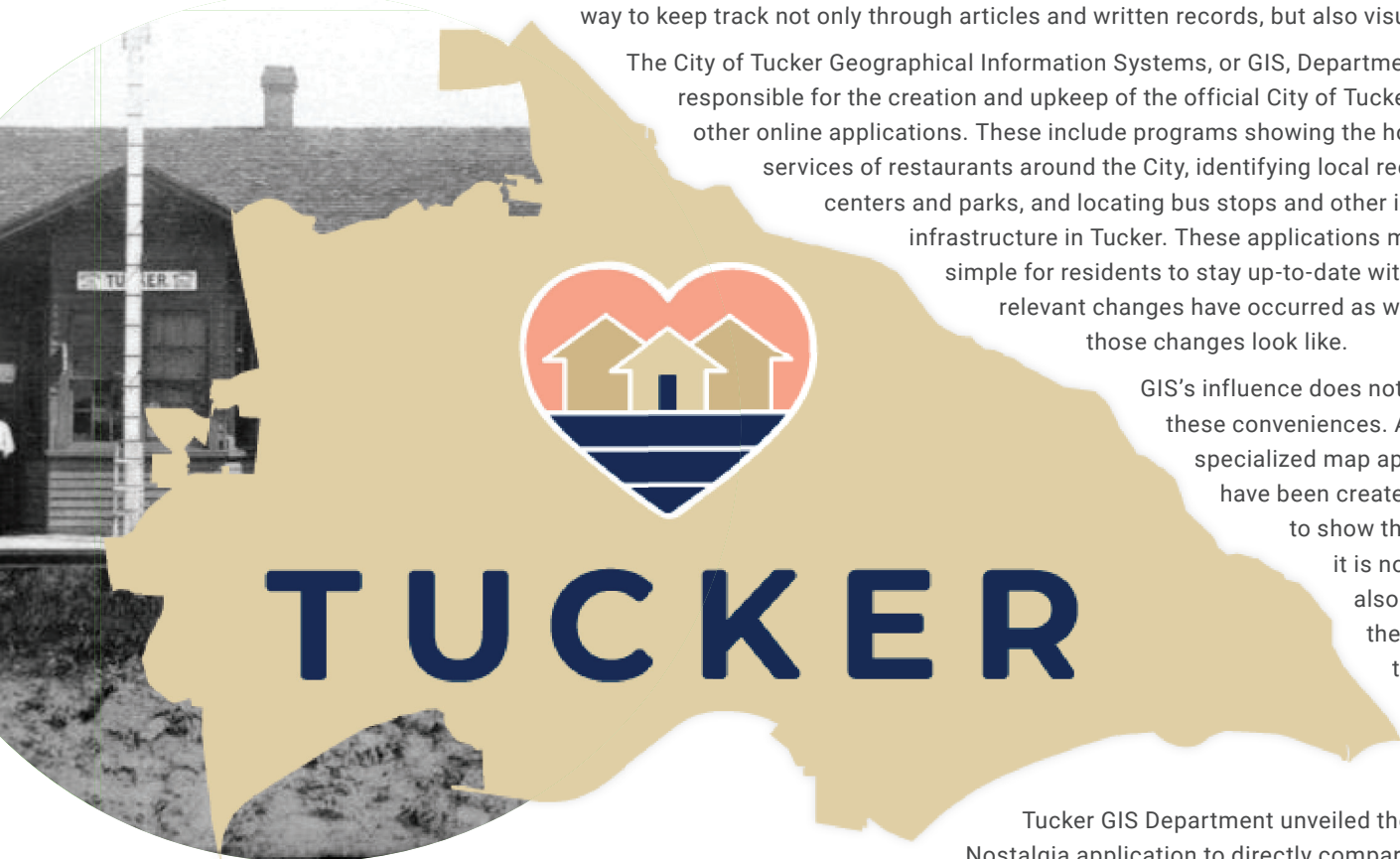
In 2017 the City of Tucker GIS Department unveiled the Tucker Nostalgia application to directly compare modern Tucker to the Tucker times gone by. The app utilizes a

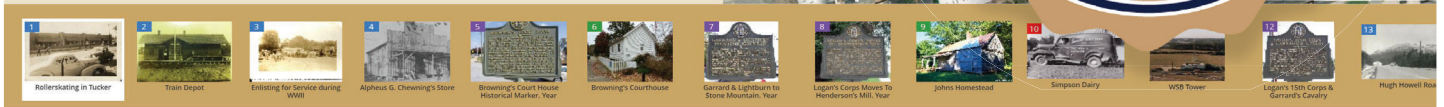
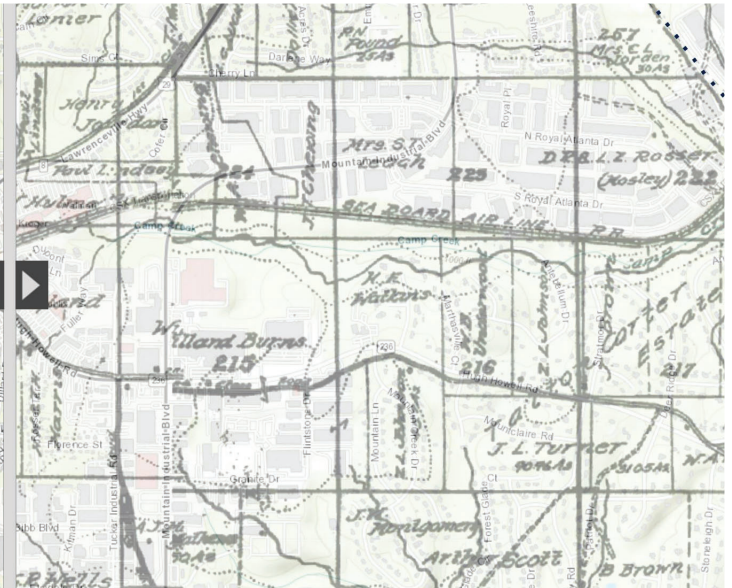
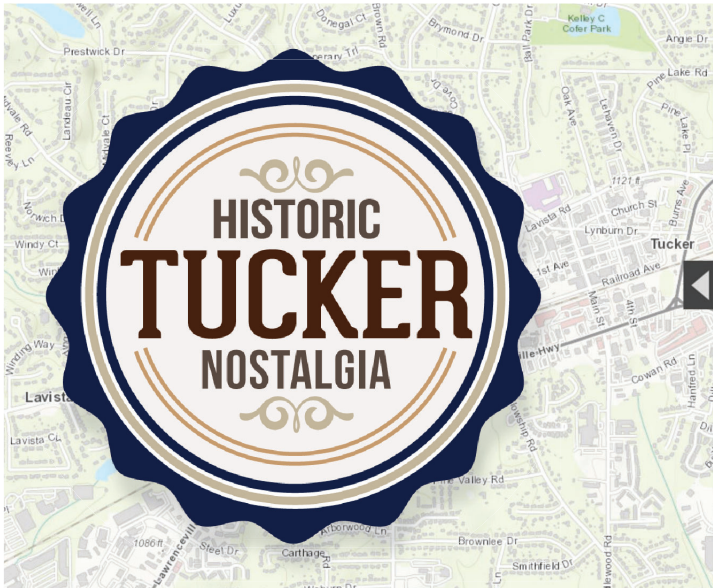
draggable bar with the newer City features on the left and a 1915 DeKalb County map overlaid on the right. Provided by the Tucker Historical Society, the map shows the railroads, power lines, and other prominent features of 1915 Tucker. Users may move the bar to see where these historical features would be located today.

In 2018 came the creation of Timeless Tucker, another GIS-made app featuring photographs offering a glimpse back into 126 years of Tucker history. Locations are marked on a modern-day map of the City and clicking on them shows photographs taken in the past in that very same location. In addition to supplying the photographs themselves, the Tucker Historical Society has included short descriptions detailing the context in which they were taken.

Now, in 2022, GIS has created a map showing more recent developments in downtown Tucker. Using the same draggable bar as in the Tucker Nostalgia app, users may compare 2017 downtown on the left to its current configuration on the right in the Downtown Tucker Streetscape web app. From the demolition of the old library to the in-progress creation of the Trail segment, a lot of progress has been made in a comparatively short amount of time.

Using maps like these helps us to remember Tucker's past as well as plan for its future. As projects are taken to improve the City, keeping historical context in mind helps to ensure that Tucker keeps the classic parts that make the community what it is today. In looking at these relics of the past, the City also looks forward to the years to come.





# BUSINESS OF THE MONTH

## MILK JUG



Tucker has a rich business history. From the Cofer Bros. to Matthew's Cafeteria, many local businesses have been founded and remained in Tucker for decades. These familiar locations invoke nostalgia often aided by the black-and-white photographs that line their walls. When such establishments are essential to daily life, it's no surprise that many a Tuckerite has multiple stories detailing moments that have stuck with them. In such stories, these companies may serve as important backdrops or even as main characters themselves.

At the corner of Fellowship Road and Lawrenceville Highway is a shopping center housing a variety of stores. Their inventories differ so widely that one can find almost anything. If the shopping center is found lacking, however, then it is very likely that the Milk Jug Drive-Through Convenience Store in the middle of the parking lot will have the answer to your woes.

Open until 10:30 or 11 p.m. depending on the night, the Milk Jug is a constant for those times when you have finished grocery shopping, realized you forgot to buy something important, and cannot muster the strength to exit your vehicle and wait in another long line of everyone who has decided that they need to shop at the same time. From shampoo to the store's namesake jug of milk, you would be hard-pressed to find an item that the store does not carry. This makes it the perfect stop for whatever household necessity you require.

It is a convenience store to beat all convenience stores: a store so convenient you can stay in your car through your whole visit. First-time visitors are often confused by the existence of a drive-through window right next to a doorway, but regulars know to stop at the door during the day and at the window once the sun has set. An additional walk-up window is available

at the shop's front before a few parking spaces if a visitor prefers to stretch their legs as they purchase a candy bar or lottery ticket.

Perhaps it is the ease of the Milk Jug's sale system that has led to its unwavering presence at that busy street corner and its survival of the worst of the COVID-19 pandemic. The store has operated for decades, and it has run under its current ownership for over 30 years. It employs a small cast of familiar faces who recognize many of their customers on sight, and it is not uncommon for staff to ask after regular patrons who have gone an unusual amount of time without visiting.

From the simplicity of staying in one's car throughout your stop to the delight of seeing a familiar face who recognizes you in turn, the Milk Jug is the epitome of comfort and Tucker nostalgia.



# BUSINESS BOOM

by Angela Brooks, Business Outreach Coordinator



Hispanic Heritage Month began in 1968 as a week-long celebration in the U.S. In 1988, President

Regan extended it to a full 31 days – Sept. 15 through Oct. 15 which coincides with the National Independence Days of Guatemala, Honduras, El Salvador, Nicaragua, and Costa Rica. Mexico celebrates on the 16th, Chile on the 18th and Belize on the 21st. Tucker is home to many Hispanic and Latin-owned businesses that range from food to transportation services to wholesaler—all bringing jobs and commerce to the area. In this issue, we shine a spotlight on two business owners who have replanted their roots here in Tucker.

As a kid, Cleunice Bretas was sure she was going to be a doctor in her native Brazil. But medical school is expensive, and her family was poor. However, she wasn't going to let that dash her dream. She heard from relatives that America was a land of plenty, so she came here to save every dime possible and go back to Brazil to study.

"I had no intentions of staying," she says. "I came here with a very decisive goal... to save enough money to maintain me [through] medical school."

Fast forward 16 years, and it was mission accomplished and time to go back. Just as she was preparing to leave for Brazil, her then-employer convinced her to remain in the U.S. by sponsoring her work visa, making her stay legal.

"Once I got my visa, I made a deal with myself. If I'm going to stay, I'm going to live my full self – not just make money and put it aside," she says. "I started to invest in me."



During her years at that company, Cleunice had become a very valuable asset and worked her way through the ranks to food management. Despite her loyalty and stellar performance, she found that she had hit the infamous glass ceiling. "I felt suffocated," she says. Still, she wasn't going to let it deter her ambition.

"In the back of my mind, I always thought about having my own business, but I didn't spend a lot of time thinking about it," Cleunice says. This desire grew as she found herself in situations where she disagreed with management decisions, and she soon exited the company.

"Don't give up. You have to understand the core of what you want and ignore the noise around," she adds.

After taking a year to recharge, she took the plunge, purchased BreadWorks International, and hasn't looked back. "I put every single dollar I had into it, and we went from \$133,000 in sales to 1.5 million in three years. We're still growing."

Cleunice has around 30 employees in her unassuming 15,000 SF facility where she produces a variety of tasty handmade bread and rolls for commercial clients.

As a teenager, Lizardo Galvez came from Guatemala to the United States for a vacation. He so liked what he saw and experienced that he decided to make this his new home. With a background in architecture, he started working with a local company doing measurements for construction jobs. After working his way up to Shift Manager and learning how to program the latest machinery, he decided that he was ready start his own company, UCS Granite. He began in Conyers in 2020 and in 2021, when he needed more space, he moved his operations to Tucker.

"It's a not a bad drive from where I live in Lawrenceville, and Tucker proved to be a convenient location for the labor force that I need to pull from," Lizardo says. "Conyers was too far outside the perimeter, and people weren't willing to drive that far to work."

Obviously, having granite in the company name is somewhat of a tip-off as to its areas of specialization and expertise. "We are a leading company in this area for the stone industry," Lizardo says. "Granite is one of the most popular stones for kitchen and bathroom countertops, which is a good portion of our business, but we also work with marble, quartzite, and quartz."

They also do custom cabinetry, and with both residential and commercial customers they supply everything from the selection of materials to installation.

Lizardo is primed to grow the company already. "I am looking to hire right now," he said. He currently has five employees and expects 2022 revenues to come in between \$400-500K.

Go to [ucsgranite.com](http://ucsgranite.com) for more information about the company's products and services.

# TUCKER STUDENTS MAKING A DIFFERENCE



This time last year, the students of Damanko-Baduli Junior High School in Ghana did not have a library. Now, thanks to the efforts of Tucker Middle School students and the African Library Project on the other side of the globe, they do.

The African Library Project works with volunteers to organize book drives in the United States and ship those books overseas to countries in Africa. Once there, the books are used to start libraries in English-speaking communities struggling with literacy. It takes about 1,000 books to start a library, and the project focuses on collecting new and gently used children's books to fight illiteracy in the long-term.

Last year, Teacher-Librarian Sheila Bell of Tucker Middle School stumbled upon the African Library Project while looking for community service ideas in honor of National Book Lovers Day. She then made a goal for Tucker Middle School: participate in the African Library Project and collect books to start a library in Ghana.

To accomplish this, students separated into teams in a competition. They gathered books in boxes that they would then turn in to Ms. Bell. Each day, she would announce which team collected the most books, spurring the students to engage. Overall, Tucker Middle School students amassed 1,000 books—enough to stock a whole new library.

For Tucker Middle School's International Baccalaureate Coordinator Deborah Mau, there was an obvious IB connection to the African Library Project. Students involved in the IB program are required to gain community service hours and write a reflection based on those experiences. In the past, students have earned their hours through canned food drives, helping out at nursing homes, and similar undertakings. Dr. Mau decided to count the African Library Project for IB credit.

"We're trying to promote action and community service," Dr. Mau says, "so I was like, 'Oh, this sounds great! Let me help!'" By offering IB-accepted community service hours as a reward for donating, sorting, and helping package books, students were further encouraged to participate.

However, collecting books is only part of the project. Fundraising is also a significant part of these book drives due to the high cost of international shipping. The African Library Project estimates that about 650 dollars are required to ship 1,000 books to a new library. Tucker Middle School held a Spirit Night at a local restaurant where ten percent of proceeds were donated. They also relied on revenue from concession stands which students helped staff. Through these events as well as community donations, they raised the money to ship all 1,000 books.

This year participating students received a bonus when Damanko-Baduli Junior High School sent photographs of its own students enjoying their new library.

"Last year I really wanted to convey that we are so blessed," Ms. Bell says. "We have over 10,000 books in our library. The fact is that there are students who don't have access to a library."

"That's a message that we want to convey this year as well," Dr. Mau adds. "We have the Tucker News Network. I want to show these photos on there and say 'Look! Look how these children appreciate getting some books because they didn't have any!'" She hopes that seeing the impact of their efforts will encourage students to work just as hard as they did last year.

This year, TMS has a new goal: collect 500 books to start a library at a junior high school in Botswana. Until September 26, donations of gently used books will be accepted. If you would like to get involved but do not have books to donate, Tucker Middle School accepts monetary donations as well as purchases from the Amazon wish list linked on their IB website.

"It's important that we are always giving," Ms. Bell says. "Hopefully students understand that and appreciate what we have."



# TUCKER CLUSTER

## Updates & News

### IMPORTANT DATES

- September 5**  
Schools closed for Labor Day
- September 12**  
Board of Education Meeting

## BRAG SHEET

### LIVSEY ELEMENTARY

- Livsey will hold their annual Family Picnic & Livsey Tailgate on September 23. Families will meet at the school to picnic on the playground and then caravan to the Tucker High School football game at Adams Stadium.

### MIDVALE ELEMENTARY

- Midvale Elementary was reevaluated on its International Baccalaureate and STEM programs in May and has since been reauthorized as an IB school and received STEM recertification.

### SMOKE RISE ELEMENTARY

- Smoke Rise Elementary hosted the City of Tucker's National Night Out 2022 on August 2. Participants enjoyed festive music, food, games, and the opportunity to get to know local law enforcement.



## CITIZEN OF THE MONTH

# TUCKER HISTORICAL SOCIETY

This month we'd like to feature the Tucker Historical Society as our Citizen of the Month. It is through their hard work at preservation and their long familial history that the story of Tucker will be remembered. As the guardians of Tucker's history, they are of utmost importance for the community's future as well and as humans we learn from our past and adjust to advancements in technology and science. There is a well-known quote from philosopher George Santayana, "Those that cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it." It is Tucker Historical Society's mission to never forget.

The Tucker Historical Society started as an ad-hoc committee of Tucker Civic Association in 2001 and eventually reorganized as its own non-profit organization in 2004. As a body they are dedicated to learning, understanding and sharing Tucker's history. They raise community historical awareness through the preservation of Tucker's history and sharing resources.

Throughout the years they have hosted several community-wide events to raise money for the preservation of Browning Courthouse and helped to raise money for Johns Homestead. They host an annual Plant Swap & Share, the Tucker Historical Society's Garden Tour, and Browning Courthouse Day. The Society recognizes the anniversary of the Tucker community as June 25, 1892 when the US Postal Service appointed the community's first Postmaster, Alpheus Chewning. In celebration of the 125th Anniversary of Alpheus's installation, the Tucker Historical Society, in partnership with the Friends of Tucker Parks, hosted a great celebration at the Tucker Recreation Center, current placement of Browning Courthouse, that included local artists, music and a hotdog eating contest!

Tucker Historical Society's board and volunteers dedicate their spare time and love to the community and preservation of Tucker. We are thankful for their commitment to our past in the hopes for our future.



# TEAM TUCKER *Spotlight*

## MARVIN HINES, FIELD SUPERINTENDENT

### What does a Field Superintendent do?

Field Superintendents do their best to make sure the City is operating as smoothly as possible. One of the biggest concerns I would say would be safety, we want to hold our contractors accountable and making sure they abide by GDOT policies and procedures. Field Superintendents also receive different requests from citizens and make field observations that have to be relayed to the correct departments to be addressed. When we have certain projects that we want to implement, we go out and gather specific details and quantities allowing us to put a scope of work together that is then presented to Council.

### What has been your career journey to Tucker?

I started out as a maintenance worker 17 years ago, then a heavy equipment operator, crew supervisor and now as a field superintendent. My journey has been one of many blessings that came with lots of ups and downs that definitely shaped me for my role here in Tucker.

### How much of your time is spent out in the field versus in the office?

I'm an outdoors man so fortunately for me this job allows me to be out in the field about 85% of the time.

### What is the best part of your job?

Believe it or not interacting with the citizens in this line of work you have to be a good listener.

### What is the one thing people need to know about road safety, in your opinion?

Just being vigilant of the road, if we can observe what's going on around us then we will know how to react and adjust.



## Off the Wall

### Where would we find you in your free time?

You guys will definitely find me on my boat, I love fishing.

### What were your best and worst subjects in school?

My best subject was Physical ED and my worst was math.

### What's your favorite flavor of ice cream?

I love chocolate.

### Top bucket list travel spot?

Israel/Italy

**SEPTEMBER 24**

**3-5 p.m.**

**SIP-N-STROLL 2022**

Tucker Nature Preserve

Tucker Parks & Rec

Tucker Parks & Recreation invites you to join us for a special afternoon. Enjoy local art while strolling through one of Tucker's beautiful parks with a complimentary glass of wine or non-alcoholic beverage.

**Tucker Nature Preserve**  
**Saturday September 24, 3-5 p.m.**

free event - reservations required - [tuckerga.gov/parks](http://tuckerga.gov/parks)

**TASTE OF TUCKER 2022**

**SATURDAY OCTOBER 1**  
**1-6 P.M.**  
**MAIN STREET**

**WHO YA GONNA CALL?**

**HENDERSON PARK**

**HAUNTED TRAIL**

**OCT. 28 4-7 P.M.**

PARANORMAL DIVISION PARKS AND RECREATION  
 CITY OF TUCKER GEORGIA

# “ASK RIP”

*by Rip Robertson, Parks and Recreation Director*



The City of Tucker and the Parks and Recreation Department

has several major projects in progress

for the upcoming year. As we move into the fall, you will see work at several parks including Johns Homestead, Fitzgerald, Lord, and our new downtown park. All of these projects were previously discussed at public meetings earlier in the year, and we received great community feedback that we have taken into consideration.

The dam replacement/repair and overall renovation of Johns Homestead Park will be our biggest project. This historic park has flooding and severe erosion problems that it is well past time to address. This project will include the complete overhaul of the dams for both lakes, addressing the side channel erosion problems and overall stormwater control. The renovation portion of the project will include improvements with new access points, bridges, boardwalks, and expanded trails. There will also be some additional parking, improvements to the lower lake with fishing access with a dock/pier, and improved environmental habitat with the removal of invasive plants and replacement with native plantings in and around the lakes. The stream flow improvements will assist with downstream flooding issues and restoring some natural areas. All these renovations are listed in our Departments Parks and Recreation Master Plan. Although this project will not address the historic homesite, we are working to begin the process. We have already completed a stabilization of the home and outbuildings to help slow any further deterioration. We will work on a plan and documentation to help restore the



homesite and aid in our efforts to include this area on the historic registry and funding opportunities.

Another big project for this coming year is the Fitzgerald Park improvement. The most important update will be to the water/sewer system. The city signed a contract with Helix Group to complete this vital project and we hope to restore full service to the park by the end of the year. We will also be upgrading the field turf, lighting, and facilities to help our youth athletics programs continue to grow. These improvements will ensure the city's sports complex will provide a safe playing environment for our participants. We received feedback from the Fitzgerald Park community meeting to add walking trails and better pedestrian access which will be included in our final plans.

After signing a design contract with Barge Design, the Department began the planning process for a new downtown park by presenting information at the Council work session in June. That was followed by visits to other downtown

parks and gathering feedback from our officials. The next step was to host a community meeting to gather feedback from the community and businesses to help develop this exciting new amenity in our downtown. The park will include many new features and will be the focal point of events and activities in the downtown area. We are excited to move to our next step with a presentation to Mayor and Council in September with the first renderings of the possibilities. You can get the schedule for this presentation on our website.

Also coming up are some much-needed improvements to our tennis facility at Rosenfeld Park. These courts have a runoff issue that affects the courts and creates cracks and bubbles in the playing surface. We are working on solutions to this and will host a community meeting for this park soon. We have worked hard to create a fun and exciting park in this community and hope to get further feedback as we continue to add and upgrade this area.



## TUCKER Community Corner



### **9/1 – Volunteerism Expo**

**10a.m.-Noon**

**4532 Lavista Road**

Join the Tucker Community Action Team to learn about local volunteer groups like the Rotary Club of Tucker, Tucker Civic Association, Tucker Lifelong Community, and other ways to get involved and make the City of Tucker a better place.

### **9/2 – First Friday Concert Series**

**6:30 p.m.**

**4316 Church Street**

The last concert in our First Friday Concert Series features A1A The Official Jimmy Buffett Tribute Band. Parrotheads meet at the Church Street Greenspace starting at 5 p.m. to grab a bite from the food trucks and set up your chairs before the music starts at 6:30.

### **9/9 – Veterans HME Repair Clinic**

**9 a.m.-3 p.m.**

**4900 Lewis Road**

Friends of Disabled Adults and Children's repair clinic will waive registration and repair fees for HME for veterans. Repairs may include anything from tires and wheels to electrical parts. Appointments are strongly encouraged.

### **9/10 – Day of Rehab Benefit Concert**

**Noon-4 p.m.**

**3983 Lavista Road, Suite 128**

Love music and want to support stroke and brain injury survivors? Rehab and Beyond is hosting a concert to benefit Georgia survivors. Bring your own chair and donate to a good cause!