



INTUCKER

JANUARY 2025 | VOLUME 9 | ISSUE 1



**WHAT ARE
YOU DOING IN
2025?**



**CHECK OUT OUR JANUARY-APRIL
PARKS & REC ACTIVITY GUIDE**

ELECTED OFFICIALS

Frank Auman
Mayor

Roger W. Orlando
District 1 - Post 1

Cara Schroeder
District 2 - Post 1

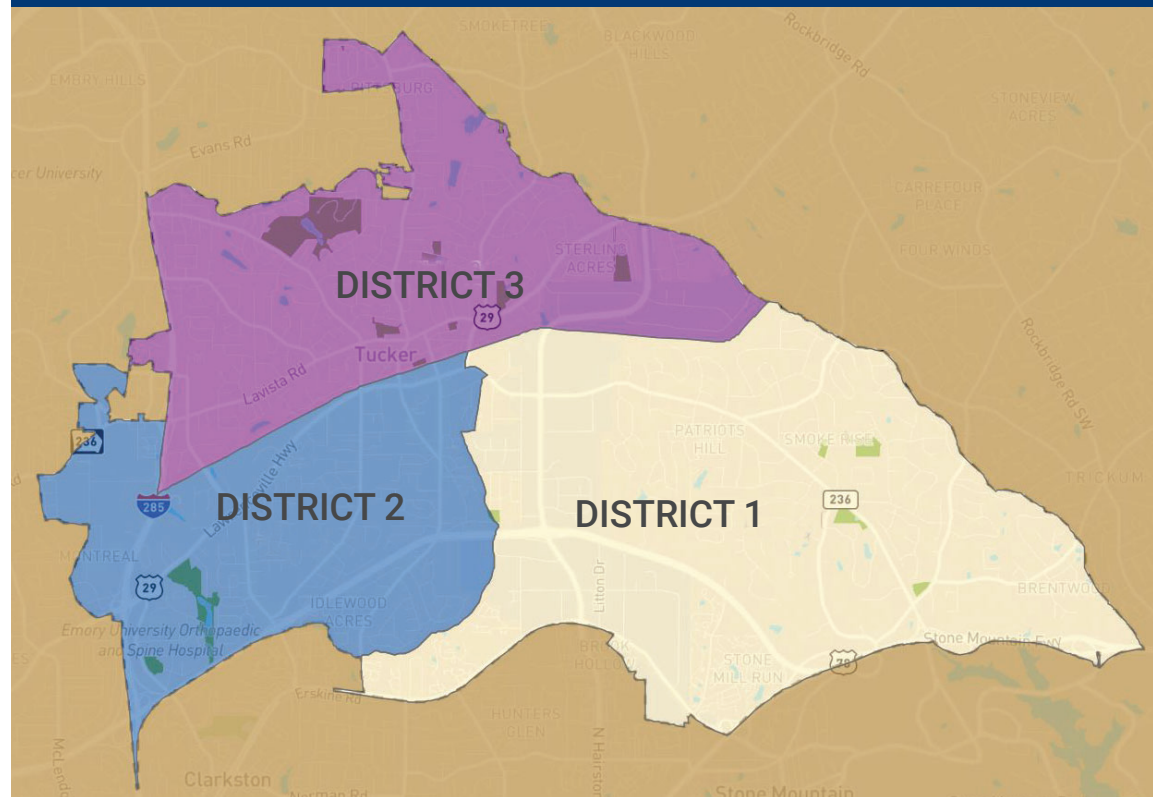
Alexis Weaver
District 3 - Post 1

Virginia Rece
District 1 - Post 2

Vinh Nguyen
District 2 - Post 2

Amy Trocchi
District 3 - Post 2

DISTRICT MAP



EDITOR'S NOTE

SONJA SZUBSKI - COMMUNICATIONS DIRECTOR



What are you doing in 2025, Tucker? In this edition of *InTucker* Magazine, we have included a pull-out of the Parks and Recreation Activity Guide for January through April. My hope is

to expand the content of this incredibly useful guide and distribute on a larger scale by using this space.

Our parks and all that we offer through various programming, athletics and all recreating is the heartbeat of the Tucker community. Our website boasts a microsite dedicated to our Parks and Recreation department, tuckerga.gov/parks where we house anything and everything you would ever need to know, register for and learn!

January is commonly known as the most crowded month for gyms but I challenge you to join me in opting for the outside and becoming more familiar with our parks and trails. I am not big into working anymore but I truly hope to add this positive habit back into my life and I would love for y'all to join me. Should we start with the Wild Walks? What

about Tucker Fit Week? Maybe even jumping right in and hiking with the Tucker Outdoors Club? Y'all know how to reach me...let me know where we can meet up!

This is one of my favorite months of the year. I try to take time to recuperate from the holiday hustle and bustle, set some goals and embrace the hope of the coming year.

Stay tuned, Tucker. It is going to be a great year together. See you on Main.



CITY SOCIALS



nextdoor

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FROM THE MAYOR

FRANK AUMAN



One of the prime goals of incorporating the City of Tucker back in 2013 through 2015 was to improve the quality of life for all of us. Usually when we think of that phrase, we think of safe streets and neighborhoods, new economic development, plenty of shops and restaurants, and beautiful parks, some full of activities, and others with peaceful places of respite. Our reasoning for cityhood rested on the idea that there

were many government responsibilities we could execute better for ourselves as a local government than could a larger, more distant government. We had a vision that harnessing a locally controlled Code Enforcement Department along with our own Planning and Zoning decisions and Parks and Rec could elevate quality of life here better than any other means.

But before you can do any of that, there are sometimes greater threats that have to be attended to as a top priority. It turns out two of the dams in our parks fall into that category.

When we assumed responsibility for our parks system from DeKalb County, we very intentionally left responsibility for the dams at Henderson's Lake Erin and John's Homestead's Twin Brothers Lake with the County. They and we had long been aware of urgent needs for repairs at both. Over the next few years, we learned just how great the need was: The Environmental Protection Division classified the Lake Erin dam in Henderson Park as Category 1 and several inspection reports cited numerous deficiencies including seepage through the dam, vegetation along it, an inadequate outlet control structure and an outdated emergency spillway. Eventually (in 2020) the EPD issued a Notice of Violation and rated the dam to be in poor condition, noting the potential for catastrophic failure and potential loss of life in such an event. Twin Brothers didn't pose that extent of danger, but it was certainly in jeopardy of failure that could result in millions of dollars of damage and was already damaging nearby property.

When the City took over responsibility for Public Works last year, we also took responsibility for repairing these dams. Immediately, we started the work to learn the full extent of need and negotiate with the County to share the cost since the maintenance had already been deferred for many years. The County ultimately pledged \$1.4 million of ARPA funds to aid in the rehabilitation of the Lake Erin dam. Although we were left to deal with Twin Brothers on our own, our Parks leadership was able to secure a \$2.5 million grant to cover a large portion of that cost.

Just a few weeks ago, the Council approved the construction contract for the rehabilitation of the Lake Erin dam. In addition to the money pledged by the county, the City budgeted \$1,171,450 in the FY25 capital fund. This project is big. One of the biggest we have ever done when it comes to level of importance to the life, health and safety of our residents, as

well as length of time and impact on our daily lives. Part of our largest and most visited park will be closed to the public for about eight months starting in late February or early March. The closure includes the playgrounds, pavilion and lower parking lot of the Livsey Road side of the park.

In order to restore the dam, lake and wetlands at

John's Homestead, we will also be closing parts of that park for an extended period, which is another huge undertaking. To learn more and keep up to date on the progress of the projects we will be hosting a Public Information Open House on January 16 at City Hall, and you are encouraged to attend. To stay up to date on all our capital projects, including these two, go to tuckerga.gov/projects.

On the bright side, this will be a great opportunity to explore parts of the trails in Henderson Park that may be new to you and, moreover, to take the opportunity to explore our other beautiful City Parks. To learn more about all of our parks visit tuckerga.gov/parks

See you out there!



CITY HALL UPDATE

JOHNS HOMESTEAD DAM PROJECT

Johns Homestead is a unique park in Tucker due to the fact that it is the site for one of the oldest homes still standing in DeKalb County, is a walking retreat for local birders and home to a popular fishing spot. Twin Brothers Lake has been in the hearts of many residents of Tucker for decades, but the dam is aging and in need of some major repairs.

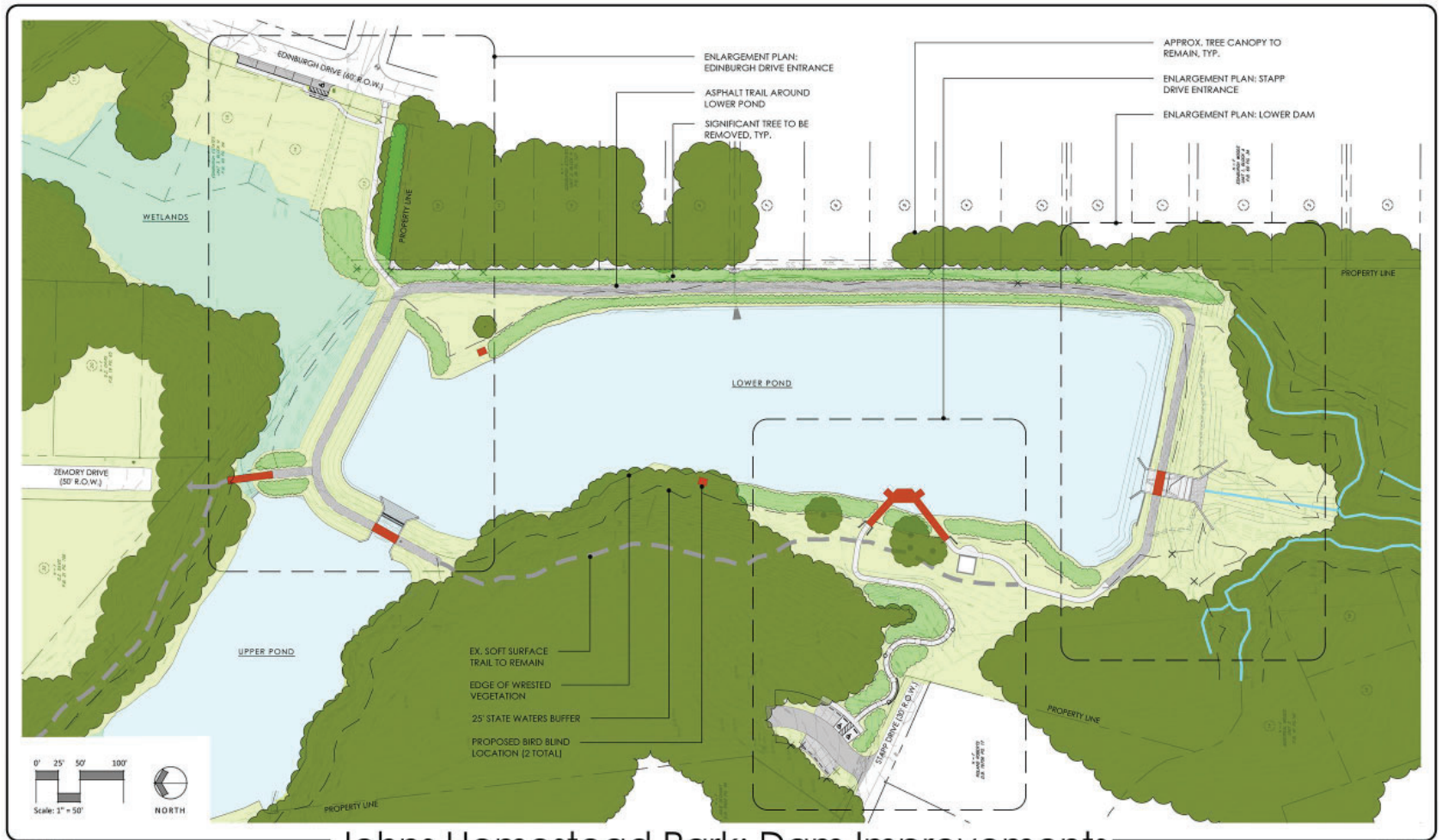
Dam repairs are costly and not something to rush. Starting in 2022, the City has been in the process of inspecting, evaluating and designing improvements to the structure that splits Twin Brothers Lake.

Funded in part by a \$2.5 million grant, the construction total awarded to North Georgia Concrete is \$4,008,126.15 and includes an observation deck, trail markers, new access points from the surrounding

neighborhoods and more in addition to repairing the safety needs of the dam structure.

As with any construction, it will be messy and ugly during the repairs and improvements, but the end result will be worth it for both safety and aesthetics. The project pages on the website will be kept up-to-date and the public is always welcome to reach out with any questions to info@tuckerga.gov.

There will be a Public Information Open House on January 16 from 6-7:30 p.m. at City Hall. This meeting will cover information on both the Lake Erin and the Twin Brothers dam projects.



PREPARED FOR:
City of Tucker Parks & Recreation
4898 Lavista Road
Tucker, GA 30084

Johns Homestead Park: Dam Improvements
Overall Site Plan
August, 2023

Disclaimer:
This master plan is for planning purposes only. Existing conditions information was derived from a survey provided by the client, as well as aerial photography from Google Earth and field observations by the landscape architect. This master plan does not constitute a site plan or other documents and shall not be used, in part or in whole, for any other project.

PREPARED BY:
ROOT DESIGN STUDIO
ARCHITECTS & PLANNERS
800-845-1833 www.rootdesign.com

tuckerga.gov/projects

TUCKER PARKS & RECREATION

JANUARY - APRIL 2025



TUCKERGA.GOV
4898 Lavista Road | 470-481-0205

CLASSES

Class fees vary. Visit tuckerga.gov/parks or call 470-481-0205 for details.

ART

ATLANTA WOODCARVERS

Thursday & Saturday 9 a.m.-1 p.m.

PETER & PAUL'S PLACE

Classes, days & times vary

POTTERY

Classes, days & times vary

WEST AFRICAN DRUMMING

Wednesday 7-8:30 p.m.

SENIOR *(Senior Outings and Lunch & Learns vary. Call for details.)*

BRIDGE

Friday 12-3 p.m.

MAHJONG

Thursday 1:30-3:30 p.m.

SILVER FOXES

Tuesday 10:30-11:30 a.m.

TUCKERCISE

Mon., Wed., & Fri. 10:30-11:30 a.m.

FITNESS

CAPOEIRA KARKARA

Mon. & Thu. Kids 6-7 p.m.
Adults 7-8 p.m.

CARDIO & CORE

Thursday 7:15-8:15 p.m.
Saturday 12-1 p.m.

CHAIR YOGA

Tue. & Thu. 12:30-1:30 p.m.

EVOLVE (DANCE FITNESS CLASS)

Monday & Wednesday 7:10-8:15 p.m.

JACKI SORENSON (AEROBICS)

Mon., Wed. & Thu. 9:15-10:15 a.m.

POP PILATES

Monday 5:30-6:30 p.m.

TAI CHI

Monday 6-7 p.m.

TUCKER BALLROOM DANCE

Wednesday 7:15-8:45 p.m.

CHAIR YOGA

Tue. & Thu. 12:30-1:30 p.m.

ZUMBA

Saturday 9:30-10:30 a.m.

YOUTH

CANDINEWS THEATRE

Saturday 1-2:30 p.m.

ECO-ADVENTURES

Saturdays (Dates TBD) 10 a.m.-1 p.m.

EIM DANCE

Classes, days and times vary.

KID-N-PLAY SENSORY FUN WORKSHOP

Tuesday 4:30-5:30 p.m.
Thursday 5:45-6:15 p.m.

GYMNASTICS

Saturdays Adaptive 12-12:45 p.m.
Preschool 9:15-11:45 p.m.

EDUCATIONAL

B.A.R.K.

Tue., Wed. & Fri. 9 a.m. - 1 p.m.

HYBRIDGE ACADEMY

Tue., Wed. Thu. 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

SAFETYPENN TRAINING

Classes, days & times vary

TEENS

MLK TEEN SERVICE & FUN DAY

Monday, January 20. Transportation Provided.

Additional teen events and volunteer opportunities to come in the spring! For more information, contact Joe Stewart - jstewart@tuckerga.gov

ATHLETICS

ADULT

SPRING PICKLEBALL LEAGUE

REGISTRATION: Opens Jan. 21 @ 8 a.m.
LEAGUE STARTS: March 3
LOCATION: Rosenfeld Park
CONTACT: Joe Stewart - jstewart@tuckerga.gov
FEES: \$100 per Doubles Team

SPRING GOLF LEAGUE

REGISTRATION: Opens Feb. 3 @ 8 a.m.
SIX-WEEK LEAGUE: Begins March 27
LOCATION: Heritage Golf Links
REGISTRATION: Joe Stewart - jstewart@tuckerga.gov
FEES: \$50 league fee plus \$25 weekly greens fee

YOUTH

BASEBALL/SOFTBALL

REGISTRATION: OPEN NOW
PRACTICE/GAMES: Begin March/April
LOCATION: Tucker Recreation Center
CONTACT: LaKita Ford - lford@tuckerga.gov
FEES: \$50-\$150

TUCKER FOOTBALL LEAGUE (TFL)

LOCATION: Fitzgerald Park
REGISTRATION: tuckerfootball@gmail.com
tuckerfootball.com
678-235-4667

LACROSSE

(Partners w/Druid Lakes Lacrosse Assoc.)
LOCATION: Tucker Recreation Center
CONTACT: LaKita Ford - lford@tuckerga.gov
FEES: \$100-\$150

TUCKER YOUTH SOCCER ASSOCIATION (TYSA)

LOCATION: Henderson Park
CONTACT: Terry Joyner, Club Administrator
404-984-7665, terry@tysa.com
REGISTRATION: tysa.com

OPEN GYM AVAILABLE FOR ADULT BASKETBALL, TEEN BASKETBALL, PICKLEBALL
DROP-IN FEE: \$3 per session - **MEMBERSHIP COST:** \$45-\$125 annually

OUTDOOR PROGRAMS

WILD WALKS

Mondays (once a month) 9 a.m.
Jan. 2, Feb. 10, Mar. 17, Apr. 21

TUCKER OUTDOORS CLUB

Organized monthly hikes and adventures. Club membership is free. Self-drive or transportation provided (nominal fee for transportation). Locations, dates and times vary.



INTRODUCING OUR NEW WINTER CONCERT SERIES

FRIDAY NIGHTS @ TUCKER REC

January 10 & 24
February 7 & 21

YOU ARE INVITED TO JOIN US FOR FUN NIGHTS FILLED WITH GREAT MUSIC!

Concerts are held in the auditorium at Tucker Recreation Center. All shows are free but due to limited seating, registration is required.



**LIMITED SEATING
FREE REGISTRATION REQUIRED**

TUCKER REC CENTER

4898 Lavista Road | 470-481-0205

MON.-THU.
9 a.m.-9 p.m.

FRI.
9 a.m.-5 p.m.

SAT.
9 a.m.-3 p.m.

SUN.
Closed

TUCKERGA.GOV/PARKS

UPCOMING EVENTS

JANUARY 20
MLK DAY

Join us in honoring
Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.
with a Day of Service
at Johns Homestead

TRAIL
MAINTENANCE

MAKE IT A DAY ON, NOT A DAY OFF

TUCKER PARKS AND REC

7th ANNUAL
SENIORS
VALENTINE'S
Day

CELEBRATION
CATERED LUNCH & MUSIC

FRIDAY FEBRUARY 14

PURCHASE ONLINE @ TUCKER REC

TUCKER REC CENTER - 4898 LAVISTA ROAD

3.14.25
6 P.M.

3.14K

**PI DAY
PIE-K**

REGISTER IN ADVANCE AT TUCKERGA.GOV/PARKS/EVENTS

Saturday
March 29

**Spring
Fling**

Church Street Greenspace

SIP-N-STROLL
APRIL 12 3-5 P.M.

ELECTRONICS & HME RECYCLING DAY

CITY OF TUCKER & FODAC

SATURDAY, APRIL 26

MEETING RECAP

CITY COUNCIL UPDATE

The City of Tucker Mayor and Council met for the sole meeting of the month and the last meeting of the year on December 9. The City's four municipal court bailiffs lead the pledge after being introduced by the City Attorney.

The Mayor took a moment during his comments to allow Councilmember Virginia Rece to speak about an agenda item regarding building bathrooms in William McKinley Peters Park. Rece expressed gratitude to DeKalb County Commissioners Steve Bradshaw and Robert Patrick for their help in funding both the design and construction of the bathrooms. Commissioner Bradshaw took a moment to say good-bye as his term has come to an end.



DeKalb County Commissioner Steve Bradshaw

Prior to approving the agenda for the evening, the Mayor requested to move the approval of the appointment of the Chief Judge to the first item and add a contract for Engineering staff. The Council then unanimously approved the amended agenda, the consent agenda and the appointment of Judge Nicholas to continue as Chief Judge for the City's municipal court.

Three presentations covered the creation of a commercial streetlight district, a PILOT wi-fi and safety measure program on the City's trail system, and the upcoming dam rehabilitation projects at Johns Homestead and Henderson Park.

In old business the Council held second reads and public hearings for a SLUP on 4419 Cowan Road to allow a multi-family use abutting a residential zone, and a rezoning to allow the parking of commercial vehicles and outdoor storage at 4850 Hammerhill Road. Both passed unanimously.

New business covered a first read to codify film permitting in the City and a resolution was passed to clarify language of the code regarding property acquisition. The Council and Mayor then approved three contracts:

- Design contract for Lawrenceville Highway Intersection Improvements
- Contract award for the 5-year update to the Transportation and Trail Master Plan
- Contract award for the Peters Park restrooms

Tucker's Mayor and Council then recessed to executive session but returned with no action except to adjourn the meeting.

DATES TO KNOW

- **JANUARY 1**
City Buildings Closed in Observance of New Years
- **JANUARY 6**
Downtown Development Authority
- **JANUARY 7**
Zoning Board of Appeals
- **JANUARY 8**
Municipal Court
- **JANUARY 10**
Winter Concert at Tucker Recreation Center
- BFG Band
- **JANUARY 13**
City Council Meeting
- **JANUARY 15**
Municipal Court
- **JANUARY 20**
City Buildings Closed in Observance of Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
- **JANUARY 20**
MLK Day of Service at Johns Homestead Park
- **JANUARY 20**
Teen Day of Service & Fun at Tucker Rec. Center
- **JANUARY 24**
Winter Concert at Tucker Recreation Center
- Stephen Lee
- **JANUARY 27**
City Council Meeting

BUSINESS OF THE MONTH

MONTERREY MEXICAN RESTAURANT

Celebrating 40 years of quality food and service, Monterrey Mexican Restaurant was once on the verge of closing its doors. With grit, ingenuity and community support, this Tucker staple has overcome much and earned its seat as one of the areas longest running restaurants.

Juan Alexandro Onate now manages the restaurant that his father, Juan Mannuel, opened and poured his life and passion into,

“We’re the originators,” Alexandro who helps manages the restaurant said. “We are the first [Mexican restaurant] in Tucker for sure. I would say that is what makes us stand out.”

Mannuel grew up in Mexico and at the age of nine he moved with his family to California. He made his way to Georgia in his late teens to join his wife’s uncle in the restaurant business. When he took a leap of faith and opened his own restaurant, he had his eyes set on Tucker. Mannuel initially opened his restaurant in Northlake Plaza in April of 1985. Alexandro shared that the location was desirable due to its location near the mall and several manufacturing businesses off Montreal Road, which his father figured would bring many patrons from near and far.

Monterrey struggled in the beginning, as many new restaurants do. Business was slow and Mannuel feared he would have to close the doors for good before the end of his first year. In a last-ditch effort, Mannuel bought advertising space to promote the restaurant and offer deeply discounted specials.

“My dad used the last money he had,” Alexandro said. “There was billboard truck going around town and he put a billboard up. He said all food is half off on Friday, Saturday and Sunday in early March. Come that Friday it snows and no result. This happened in 1986. Saturday rolls around supper busy and it’s packed. They called my aunts, my uncles and everybody to come help!”

The weekend of specials worked and got the word out about Monterrey. Slowly, business picked up and Mannuel was able to save the restaurant and even move to a stand-alone location where it still serves the community today.

“We have a very loyal following. We’ve seen generations of family come here,” Alexandro said. One couple have been regulars since they started dating in high school. Monterrey has remained a part of their family history. Alexandro said he loves that they can see families grow and be part of the Monterrey family. The staff at Monterrey know a lot of their customers by name and know some of their usual orders. Alexandro says that a lot of their customers keep coming back, even dignitaries.

In 2014, a United States Ambassador to the United Nations, Samantha Power, returned to Monterrey for a taste from her high school years,

“Out of everything she could have ordered she ordered the taco salad,” Alexandro said. “She comes up to pay and she looked at me and says hey you look familiar. She asks does Juan still works here. I told her that’s my dad, he still owns it but he is not here as much as he used to be. She said I remember this place so much when I was in high school... We would go to the movies and come eat here.”

Alexandro appreciates moments like that and the Tucker community for supporting his family’s business for 40 years. While he, his father and the Monterrey staff have done their part to secure the success of the restaurant, he also believes the Tucker community is what allowed Monterrey’s longevity,

“I always say good food brings customers in and good service brings customers in more frequently,” Alexandro said.

Monterrey Mexican Restaurant is located at 3865 Lavista Rd, Tucker, GA 30084 and can be found online at monterreyslavista.com



ANNUAL VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY RETURNS

TUCKER CELEBRATES 30 YEARS OF MLK DAY THROUGH SERVICE

MAKE IT A DAY ON, NOT A DAY OFF

Many Tucker residents will step up to serve as volunteers on the annual Martin Luther King, Jr. holiday to honor the life and legacy of Dr. King, improve their communities, and celebrate the 30th anniversary of the National Day of Service. Volunteers will work on trail maintenance at Johns Homestead Park, joining hundreds of thousands of Americans across the country in volunteer service.

For 30 years, the MLK Day of Service has grown, and its impact has increased as more Americans embrace the idea that citizenship involves taking an active role in improving the communities where we live, work, and play.

“Everybody can be great, because everybody can serve,” Dr. King said. “You don’t have to have a college degree to serve. You don’t have to make your subject and verb agree to serve. You only need a heart full of grace. A soul generated by love.”

The City of Tucker is hosting its eighth MLK, Jr. Day of Service this year with a focus on Johns Homestead Park. In preparation for the dam project, the day will be an opportunity to clear the trails and create a welcoming space during construction on the dam.

Join the City and Friends of Johns Homestead on January 20 from 9 a.m. to noon at Johns Homestead Park. Teens have a special opportunity to volunteer then head down to Ponce City Market and Eclipso Atlanta for some fun! Registration for the Teen Day of Service and Fun is on the website tuckerga.gov/parks





TUCKER *Community Corner*



The City of Tucker was excited to host some of our local delegation from the Capitol for a lunch and driving tour of the city. Pictured from left to right: Salik Sohani of US Senator Warnock's office, State Representative Karla Drenner, Councilmember Virginia Rece, Councilmember Cara Schroeder, Mayor Frank Auman, State Representative Viola Davis, State Senator-elect Randall Mangum, Councilmember Alexis Weaver, Councilmember Amy Trocchi, Jeannie Reiter of State Representative Imani Barnes's office and Matthew Lee of the Tucker Northlake CID.