



INTUCKER

FEBRUARY 2025 | VOLUME 9 | ISSUE 2



MOVERS AND SHAKERS CITY OF TUCKER'S LEGISLATIVE DELEGATION

ELECTED OFFICIALS

Frank Auman
Mayor

Roger W. Orlando
District 1 - Post 1

Cara Schroeder
District 2 - Post 1

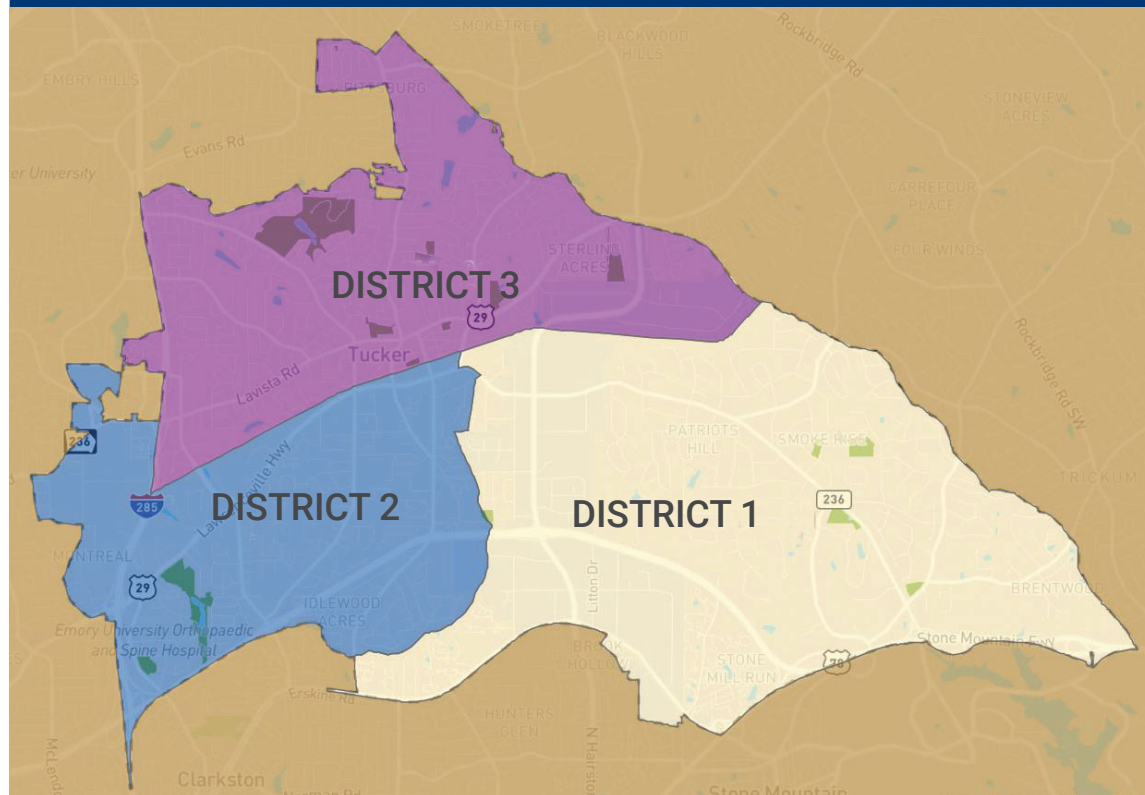
Alexis Weaver
District 3 - Post 1

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



Tucker Restaurant Week is BACK! I can't believe this is the fifth year. Originally started as a response to the pandemic and an effort to get people back into restaurants, Tucker Restaurant Week has become a community staple igniting culinary creativity in our local food spots.

This project is one of my favorites that we have created and much of that is due to the community collaboration and our partnership with our Convention Visitor's Bureau (CVB), Discover DeKalb. In exchange for a percentage of our Hotel Motel Tax, Discover DeKalb is tasked with marketing Tucker and drawing people to our events, hotels and restaurants. You may have seen billboards across the metro Atlanta area promoting Tucker area events like Tucker Restaurant Week or Tucker

Day and Juneteenth. Every year we sit down together and plan out how we can add value to our City and show our community in the best light.

Tucker Restaurant Week is the epitome of all that our Tucker is. It illustrates the symbiotic relationship between our small businesses and our community. Ever helpful and ever supportive. It is core Tucker Way.

We hope you join us February 25 – March 2 and try a new-to-you restaurant. There are MANY to choose from and some really great deals to draw you into becoming a repeat customer. Stay up to date on our socials, and the Tucker Restaurant Week website and IG account.

- [Facebook.com/cityoftucker](https://www.facebook.com/cityoftucker)
- [Instagram.com/cityoftucker](https://www.instagram.com/cityoftucker)
- [Tuckerrestaurantweek.com](https://www.tuckerrestaurantweek.com)
- [Instagram.com/tuckerrestaurantweek](https://www.instagram.com/tuckerrestaurantweek)



CITY SOCIALS



nextdoor

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Robin Stevens

FROM THE MAYOR

FRANK AUMAN



People I talk to around town sometimes wonder who the real decision makers are in the City of Tucker. Is it the Mayor? The Mayor in consultation with members of the City Council? Is it our staff subject matter experts who provide professional guidance to us? Maybe it is our City Manager or department heads? Or is it the appointed members of our various boards and commissions? The truth is, all these have input into our decision-making, through very prescribed processes that include input from the public. In the end, all policy decisions are finalized by a vote of the Mayor and City Council, working with the benefit of all that input. In that sense your elected officials are the decision-makers for Tucker. But in a real sense, that's not where the power to decide begins or ends.

All of what we decide is not only book-ended by the will of the voters, but they (you) are part of the process throughout. Not only do you vote your elected officials in or out of office, but you have opportunity at every turn to influence our decision-making. No, we don't take a poll on every issue, or decide them based on how many people turn out to a meeting or sign a petition – there's a constant tension of whether the law, the data, our finances, and what's best for the city as a whole, align with the preferences of the loudest voices we hear from. But it all goes into the mix.

This is an election year in Tucker, which is your greatest opportunity to influence decision-making. Not only will a relative handful of voters decide who serves in these roles next, but those voters' choices will be limited to the very few willing to put their name on the ballot and endure the slings and arrows of not only running for office, but also then serving you.

Tucker's City Charter limits council members to two four-year terms and the mayor to three four-year terms, which means we regularly must replace the Mayor and/or members of council. Just last month the current Council and I approved the qualifying fees for those who want seek office later this year. The deadline to decide will be in August but those who are thinking about it should consider going ahead and filing a Declaration of Intent form now, so they can legally start raising and spending money for their campaigns. That information can be found on our website at tuckerga.gov/elections.

If you are at all considering running for office, I urge you to learn how our government works. Contact your current or former elected officials to get a real idea of what's involved and why it's so important we have quality candidates. Also, the City hosts an in-depth course that covers the functions and operations of most departments and operations called University of Government Affairs Tucker. It runs from September through March, meets monthly, and you are welcome to attend any or all of their sessions. See our city calendar at tuckerga.gov/calendar Another option is to volunteer for an appointed position on one of our boards or commissions. You can find the form to express interest in serving on tuckerga.gov/boards-and-commissions.

Most importantly, as Tucker voters, I implore you stay involved, and make yourselves knowledgeable about how elected officials affect quality of life in our community. Attend our council meetings or watch them online, read our magazine, explore our website, and ask us questions. Each of the council members are listed on the website and we all welcome your feedback.

DATES TO KNOW

- **FEBRUARY 5**
Municipal Court
- **FEBRUARY 7, 6 P.M.**
Winter Concert Series -
The Cazanovas at
Tucker Rec. Center
- **FEBRUARY 10**
City Council Meeting
- **FEBRUARY 12**
Municipal Court
- **FEBRUARY 14, 12 P.M.**
Seniors Valentine's Day
Lunch @ Tucker Rec.
Center
- **FEBRUARY 17**
City Buildings Closed in
Observance of Presidents
Day
- **FEBRUARY 19**
Municipal Court
- **FEBRUARY 20**
Planning Commission
- **FEBRUARY 24**
City Council Meeting



FEATURE STORY

CITY OF TUCKER'S LEGISLATIVE DELEGATION UNDER THE GOLD DOME



Representative Imani Barnes is a lifetime DeKalb County resident and proud mother to the “world’s most handsome 12-year-old son.”

Imani Barnes is a public health doctoral candidate, biomedical research scientist, youth development coach, and parent and community advocate. Serving District 86, Representative Barnes recognizes the need for inclusion at the Capitol that reflects the interests of the diverse families, businesses, and underserved populations in the district. We deserve leadership that can relate to the needs of our growing community and will articulate those concerns to obtain quantifiable results.

During the legislative session and the rest of the year, Representative Barnes has been constantly aware of her responsibility as the Representative for HD 86. She works tirelessly on issues to improve and protect public schools and students to better prepare young people for modern life.

“My favorite thing about Tucker is...the small town feel. I love the small town feel of Tucker even though it’s in the middle of a major metropolis.”

Contact info: 507-B Coverdell Legislative Office Bldg., Atlanta, GA 30334
Office: (404) 656-0202 | Email: imani.barnes@house.ga.gov



Representative Viola Davis was sworn into office as a member of the Georgia House of Representatives in 2019 and she represents the citizens of House District 87. She serves on the House Defense & Veterans Affairs, Health, Insurance, Natural Resources & Environment, and Urban Affairs committees. For constituents interested in learning more about Rep. Davis’ work and priorities, enter the following Flip Book Link: <https://online.fliphtml5.com/aiiab/wjtl/#p=1>.

A former officer in the U.S. Army, Viola Davis started her career of community service as an actual plaintiff in the Brown vs. Board of Education filed by the late Charles Scott Sr., mentor to her mother, Ruby Davis.

Rep. Davis is an honor graduate of the Medical College of Georgia with a Bachelor of Science degree in nursing with over 23 years’ experience as a critical care nurse, administrator and instructor.

“My favorite thing about Tucker is ... the people and the down-home culture. The people in Tucker are open, engaged, lively, and welcoming. One need only to walk down Main Street or participate in festivals such as Tucker Day to know what I mean. I take pride in serving Tucker and look forward to working for you.”

Contact info: 404-D Coverdell Legislative Office Bldg., Atlanta, GA 30334
Office: (404) 656-0109 | Email: viola.davis@house.ga.gov



Representative Karla Drenner has served in the Georgia House of Representatives since 2001. Rep. Drenner represents House District 85 and sits on six legislative committees, including the Rules, Public Health, Natural Resources & Environment, Energy, Utilities & Telecommunications, Small Business Development, and Urban Affairs committees. An educator who holds two PhDs, she also serves as the chair of the DeKalb County House of Representatives legislative delegation.

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Office: (404) 656-0202 | Email: karla.drenner@house.ga.gov



Representative Scott Holcomb represents District 101 in the Georgia House of Representatives and serves on the following committees: Rules, Appropriations, Judiciary, Ways & Means, Public Safety and Homeland Security, Defense & Veterans Affairs, Higher Education, Juvenile Justice, and Technology & Infrastructure Innovation.

In the legislature, Rep. Holcomb has been a passionate advocate for reforming the state's laws and policies concerning sexual assault. He also championed legislation that allows victims of domestic violence to break their leases without an early termination penalty. This legislation has helped to make it economically possible for victims of domestic violence to move away from dangerous situations.

Following his military service in both the Air National Guard and as an officer in the U.S. Army JAG Corps, Rep. Holcomb founded a law firm Holcomb + Ward, LLP, a diverse practice that includes securities arbitrations, regulatory matters, and complex litigation.

"My favorite thing about Tucker is ... that it's an easy place to make friends."

Contact info: 511-I Coverdell Legislative Office Building, Atlanta, GA 30334

Office: (404) 656-6372 | Email: scott.holcomb@house.ga.gov



Representative Billy Mitchell serves in House District 88, and he has the distinction of sponsoring the legislation to create the City of Tucker. Rep. Mitchell sits on the House Appropriations, Banks & Banking, Health, Regulated Industries, and Urban Affairs committees.

Rising from his service as a city councilmember and mayor pro tem in the historic City of Stone Mountain, Rep. Mitchell was elected to be the President of the National Black Caucus of State Legislators and was also elected to serve as House Minority Caucus Chair. He has received numerous accolades in his 20-plus years in the General Assembly including being awarded the Georgia Municipal Association's "Champion for Georgia Cities" legislative service award, the Association of County Commissioners of Georgia "Outstanding Legislative Service Award" and the DeKalb NAACP "Pat Jones Community Service Award".

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(CONTINUED FROM PREVIOUS PAGE)

UNDER THE GOLD DOME



Senator Sally Harrell was first elected to the Georgia Senate in 2018 to serve the 40th Senate District. She serves on the Senate Government Oversight, Health and Human Services, Higher Education, and State Institutions and Property committees. A champion of women and family issues, she currently serves as the Senate Co-Chair of the Georgia Women’s Legislative Caucus and Vice Chair of both the Dekalb Delegation and the Working Families Caucus. Recent legislative accomplishments include reducing the cost of higher education in Georgia, expanding the number of Georgians with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (IDD) who receive Medicaid waivers for Home & Community-Based services, and mandating Provider Rate Study Reviews for IDD service providers every four years.

Sen. Harrell was a member of the Georgia House of Representatives from 1999 to 2005, and prior to serving in the Legislature, Sen. Harrell was the Executive Director of the Healthy Mothers, Healthy Babies Coalition of Georgia.

“My favorite thing about Tucker is..... Main Street, where my kids took art classes at the Main Street School of Art, and where we frequently gather for a fun meal at the Village Burger.”

Contact info: 110-D State Capitol Atlanta, GA 30334
Office: (404) 463-2260 | Email: sally.harrell@senate.ga.gov



Senator Kim Jackson serves Georgia State Senate District 41, representing Tucker. Kim works every day to build a safer, fairer, and more prosperous Georgia, and bring the diverse voices of her district to the Capitol: immigrants, refugees, the unhoused, and people living on the margins.

In her years in office, Kim has served as co-chair of the Mental Health Caucus and chair of the DeKalb County Delegation and currently serves as Whip for the Senate Democratic Caucus. Most recently, Kim passed legislation to create an Address Confidentiality Program for survivors of domestic violence, stalking violence, and human trafficking.

After graduating from Furman University, Kim volunteered as an EMT before receiving her Master’s of Divinity at Emory’s Candler School of Theology. Over the past 10 years of ministry, she has served as a college chaplain, a nationally renowned consultant and preacher, and Vicar for the Episcopal Church of the Common Ground.

She, her wife, and two boys live on an urban farm in Stone Mountain with a menagerie of goats, ducks, honeybees, rabbits, and chickens.

“My favorite thing about Tucker is the diverse restaurant scene, brought to us by our incredible immigrant and refugee community!”

Contact info: 321-B CLOB, Atlanta, GA 30334
Office: (404) 656-6882 | Email: kim.jackson@senate.ga.gov



Senator Randal Mangham was sworn in to the Senate on January 13, 2025, and was appointed to serve on the Senate Banking and Financial Institutions, Health and Human Services, Interstate Cooperation, Retirement, State and Local Governmental Operations, and Metropolitan Atlanta Rapid Transit Overview Committee (MARTOC) committees.

Senator Mangham is no stranger to the legislative process, having first served in the Georgia House of Representatives from 2000 until 2010, representing the 94th House District which included South DeKalb and Rockdale counties.

Randal is a lawyer, entrepreneur, family man, and an ordained minister. He has been an active member of the greater Tucker community. He is the principal in the law firm of Randal Alonzo Mangham, LLC.

“My favorite thing about Tucker is ... the people and the way it is exemplified on Tucker Day.”

Contact info: 320-A CLOB, Atlanta, GA 30334
Office: (404) 657-4640 | Email: randall.mangham@senate.ga.gov

NEWS FROM CITY HALL

A NEW TURN LANE COMES TO TUCKER

FELLOWSHIP ROAD TRAFFIC UPDATE

The long awaited and needed dedicated left turn lane and signal have been installed! One of the most requested traffic improvements throughout the years has been to improve the left turn onto Lavista Road from Fellowship Road when heading north.

The City started the process over a year ago by re-aligning the traffic heading south across Lawrenceville Highway as that was a great safety risk. Earlier this year, the length of road between Lavista Road and Lawrenceville Highway was restriped and median added to create a dedicated left turn lane onto Lavista. Medians were also added to prevent left turns across traffic onto Second Ave.



PUBLIC WORKS UPDATE

Since adding Public Works to city services in July of 2023, the department has completed 1,930 work orders with only 247 currently outstanding. Important work improving the daily lives, and commutes, of residents was the goal and it is a promise kept.

An added service that the South isn't quite used to as it isn't often needed; was the proactive approach and quick response during the two snow storms of January. Prior to the first fall of a snowflake the Public Works crews were out brining the roads in preparation and once there was accumulation, they went out to plow and salt to stave off freezing roads.



BUSINESS OF THE MONTH

ATLANTA SCHOOL OF GYMNASTICS

Tumbling, cartwheels and front rolls are childhood milestones that are imperative to the development of human brains. As parents do their best to provide environments with healthy yet safe options, most look to outside help to aid in the growth and development of their children. A common and smart option is gymnastics. Here in Tucker, the logical choice is the Atlanta School of Gymnastics.

The Atlanta School of Gymnastics was started in 1976 by Tom and Bunny Cook. As the first gymnastics facility in the state of Georgia, ASG has trained countless standout gymnasts and has served as a resource in the Tucker community and to those near and far.

“It is about community,” ASG owner Stacy Cook said. “Community building and team building is what we do. We teach kids good values to become good role models and teach them to be good students/athletes.”

One prominent figure that came out of ASG is USA Olympian Kathy Johnson. Johnson was trained by Tom at ASG. It is where she developed her skills to be on the 1980 and 1984 USA Olympic teams. She became a two-time Olympic medalist, winning silver and bronze in the 1984 Olympics. Kristie Phillips is also on the Wall of Fame at ASG. Phillips served as an alternate for Team USA in the 1988 Games. Phillips earned several medals competing in the Pan American Games.

Tom passed away in 2009 leaving his wife Stacy to run the facility. Shortly before his passing, Tom was inducted to the Region VII Gymnastics Hall of Fame. The work he started at ASG continues in the coaches and staff that share his passion for molding gymnasts to be competitors both on and off the mat.

The Atlanta School of Gymnastics has positively impacted many people, including one of their students turned coach. Christopher Taylor trained at ASG and moved on to the University of Iowa Gymnastics team as a walk-on. After working as an engineer, Taylor came home to ASG. He and the rest of the staff care about their athletes, and it shows when they interact with them.

“I do know for sure our coaching staff is very big with connecting with our kids,” Taylor said. “We love the gymnastics but we also love the connection part.”

Ginger Parauka is one of the coaches at ASG who brings 17 years of experience to ASG. Parauka loves the joy that coaching gymnastics brings to her.

“When a kid is struggling and they finally hit that skill and they are jumping up and down and the whole team swarms them there is so much energy,” Parauka said. “There are so many great moments.”

Owner Stacy has experienced special moments throughout her years at the school, as well. One of her fondest memories is with her sister. With an 18 year difference in their ages, Stacy started to go to ASG to support her and watched her grow her talent to the collegiate level, winning a seat on the gymnastics team at the Air Force Academy,

“It was a dream to see my sister thrive like that and see all of the girls that got scholarships,” Stacy said.



The Atlanta School of Gymnastics is located at
3345 Montreal Station, Tucker, GA 30084
and can be found online at atlantaschoolofgymnastics.net



CITIZEN OF THE MONTH

SCOTT BRADY

American Legion Post 207 is proud to announce that its Commander, Scott Brady, has been selected to receive the prestigious “Hometown Hero Award” by the Home Depot Foundation.

The award was presented during halftime of the Peach Bowl, the college football playoff game between Texas and Arizona State, on January 1, 2025. The “Hometown Hero Award” recognizes a veteran who has made significant and measurable contributions to improve their community.

Scott Brady, a former Marine veteran, exemplifies this spirit of service and dedication. In November 2022, when American Legion Post 207 faced the threat of closure due to financial constraints, Scott led a capital campaign to raise \$216,000 in just three months.

Since being elected as Commander, Scott created a new mission for the Post dedicated to preventing veteran suicide. The Post’s new motto is Rescue, Restore, and Repay:

- Rescue: Veterans in Need
- Restore: Mind, Body, and Spirit
- Repay: Community with Unwavering Support

Under Scott’s leadership, the Post has organized numerous successful events, including Memorial Day barbecues, Veterans Day 5K walk/runs, and the establishment



of a scholarship at Tucker High School for students demonstrating exceptional community leadership.

In collaboration with the Home Depot Foundation, Scott recently coordinated the 2024 Veterans Day Community Volunteer Day, where 250 Home Depot corporate employees improved the Post’s exterior with landscaping and a new community garden. In a generous gesture, the Home Depot Foundation also surprised the Post with a \$25,000 grant to assist with the remaining \$200,000 needed for its capital campaign to rebuild the Post.

Post #207 has faced tremendous challenges since tragically burning down in 2019, including new ordinances, insurance issues, and COVID-related construction delays. Thanks to Scott’s leadership and the support of the community, the Post is on the path to recovery but still need additional funds to complete the rebuilding of the Post. For more information, please contact American Legion Post 207 at tuckerlegion207@gmail.com

Nominated by City of Tucker staff, content provided from the Legion press release.

TKR RESTAURANT WEEK 2025

Feb. 25-Mar. 2 | TuckerRestaurantWeek.com

WHAT HAPPENED AT THE COUNCIL MEETING? CITY COUNCIL UPDATE



The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Coach Lakita Ford, City of Tucker Athletics Manager and King Murphy of the Tucker Express Basketball League.

The Tucker Mayor and Council met for their first meeting of 2025 on January 13 with a full quorum in attendance.

Due to only a single meeting in December, the meeting had two presentations concerning parking in downtown and the possibility of enforcing a time limit for public parking. There was also an initial presentation on House Bill 581 that was approved by Georgia voters in November of 2024. The City will need to decide to either opt-in or opt-out by March 1, 2025 and are holding three public hearing meetings to discuss and receive feedback from the community. The meetings are scheduled for February 10 during the 7 p.m. regular scheduled meeting, February 24 at 10 a.m. and again at 6 p.m. with a vote of Council to follow.

Following the November 2024 interim financial report, the Mayor and Council heard and approved the second read of an ordinance to add film permitting to the Tucker Code. The City is still working with the

DeKalb Entertainment Commission to vet all paperwork and issue the permits at this time.

Two first reads followed: a rezoning to allow for commercial use at 5950 Hugh Howell Road, and to amend Chapter 10 of the Tucker code with small changes to bring the code up to date and editing errors. The Mayor and Council then approved the Resolution to Adopt Findings of Blight at 4971 Lavista Road, and to approve a revised agreement with Jacobs Project Management for engineering services.

The City of Tucker meets every second and fourth Monday of each month, unless otherwise advertised, at City Hall located at 1975 Lakeside Parkway, Suite 350b, Tucker, GA 30084.

All meeting agendas and recordings can be found online at tuckerga.gov.

UPCOMING EVENTS IN TUCKER

City of Tucker

FEB. 7
THE
CAZANOVAS

Winter Concert Series

A black silhouette of a man in a hat playing a saxophone is centered on a purple background. The silhouette is framed by a decorative border and sits atop a piano keyboard graphic. The text 'City of Tucker' is in the top left, 'FEB. 7 THE CAZANOVAS' is in the top right, and 'Winter Concert Series' is at the bottom.

TUCKER PARKS AND REC

7th ANNUAL
SENIORS
VALENTINE'S
Day

CELEBRATION

CATERED LUNCH & MUSIC

FRIDAY FEBRUARY 14, 2025
NOON-2:30 P.M.
\$10 PER TICKET

PURCHASE ONLINE or @ TUCKER REC

A red and yellow poster with a decorative border. At the top, it says 'TUCKER PARKS AND REC'. The main title is '7th ANNUAL SENIORS VALENTINE'S Day' with 'Day' in a script font. Below that, it says 'CELEBRATION' and 'CATERED LUNCH & MUSIC'. The date and time are 'FRIDAY FEBRUARY 14, 2025 NOON-2:30 P.M.' and the price is '\$10 PER TICKET'. At the bottom, it says 'PURCHASE ONLINE or @ TUCKER REC'. There are two cherub figures on either side of the 'CELEBRATION' text.

City of Tucker

FEB. 21
EMERALD
EMPIRE

Winter Concert Series

A black silhouette of a man in a hat playing a saxophone is centered on a green background. The silhouette is framed by a decorative border and sits atop a piano keyboard graphic. The text 'City of Tucker' is in the top left, 'FEB. 21 EMERALD EMPIRE' is in the top right, and 'Winter Concert Series' is at the bottom.

TKR

2025 FIT WEEK

SAVE THE FIRST
WEEK OF MARCH
FOR THE RETURN
OF TKR FIT WEEK!

The poster features the letters 'TKR' in large, bold, black font. Below the letters are colorful silhouettes of people performing various exercises: a person on a stationary bike, a person with a kettlebell, a person with a barbell, a person with a dumbbell, a person with a medicine ball, and a person with a resistance band. Below this is the text '2025 FIT WEEK' in large, colorful, bold letters. At the bottom, it says 'SAVE THE FIRST WEEK OF MARCH FOR THE RETURN OF TKR FIT WEEK!' in bold black text.



TUCKER Community Corner



2/5 – Tucker Lifelong Community Committee Meeting

7 p.m. Zoom

The TLC Committee is committed to fostering a lifelong livable community in Tucker. Zoom link can be found at tuckercivic.org

2/13 – Community Food Experience

10 a.m.

Embry Hills United Methodist Church
3304 Henderson Mill Road

Better understand the challenges of food insecurity through this event presented by the Atlanta Community Food Bank in partnership with NETWorks Cooperative Ministry. Register and find more info: networkscoop.org/lynay

2/26 – All Ages Open Mic

Tucker-Reid H. Cofer Library
5234 Lavista Road

Share your performance with your neighbors or come support your community. Experience music, poetry, dance, comedy and more. Registration begins two weeks prior to date. Sign up or watch over Zoom by emailing beyerj@dekalblibrary.org