



INTUCKER

APRIL 2025 | VOLUME 9 | ISSUE 4



SUNNY DAYS AHEAD

ELECTED OFFICIALS

Frank Auman
Mayor

Roger W. Orlando
District 1 - Post 1

Cara Schroeder
District 2 - Post 1

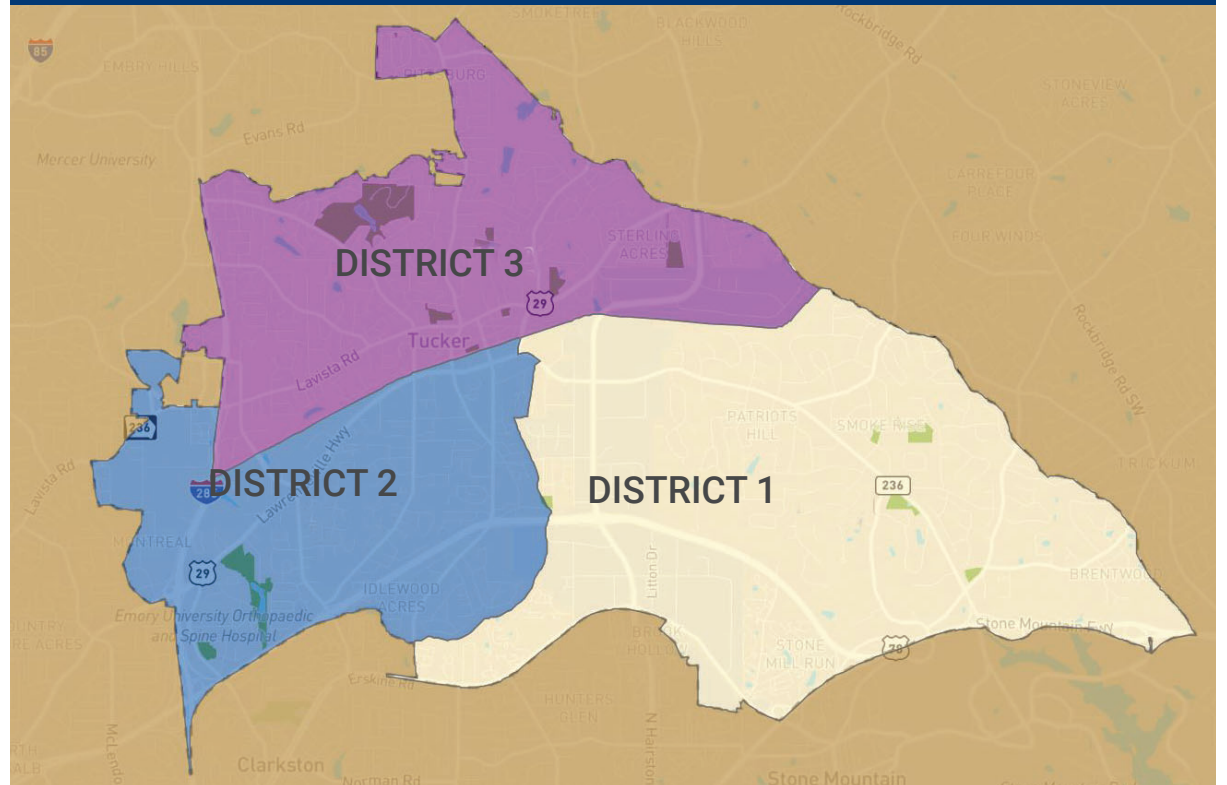
Alexis Weaver
District 3 - Post 1

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

CITY SOCIALS



nextdoor



Working for the City of Tucker has given me so many opportunities to have fun in our community. Volunteering and participating in our street festivals is right up there for me but creating the TKR Summer of Fun may be the highlight of my career with the City. From testing various launch sites in January 2018 to standing on the stage in front of thousands of my neighbors and counting down the first launch still gives me chills to think about it. It ALMOST rivals election night of 2015 when we approved incorporation.

Many of you know that in addition to being the Communications Director, I am a resident of Tucker as well as a parent to two in the Tucker cluster of schools. I have always volunteered my time with the schools, serving on PTO boards and chairing Principal Advisory Councils. In this issue you will read about my latest involvement on the Student Assignment Project. The task of the SAP is a heavy lift, but it is an honor to serve in this capacity.

As a quick update on the Tucker Town Green, it is on schedule and about to go vertical. Stop by to watch the transformation the next time you take advantage of our Entertainment District.

See you on Main!



INTUCKER STAFF

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FROM THE MAYOR

FRANK AUMAN



The main function of our Mayor and Council is to set policy for government operations that then guides our City Manager and staff on their daily work providing services for residents and businesses. That guidance starts with a budget and our City Charter requires ours to be a balanced, zero-base budget. The budget season starts about mid-way through the fiscal year. In February of each year, department heads are asked to project their annual operating needs, cost of proposed capital projects identified by the Comprehensive Plan or respective master plans, and any requests for additional staff positions. From there City Management weighs the needs of each department against the available estimated revenues and starts the creation of the budget.

Running concurrently with the operating budget is a discussion of the Capital Improvement Plan. The CIP is a multi-year budget planning tool that helps council, staff and the public to understand the funding needs, prioritization and scheduling of large scale projects. It is important to note that the CIP is not a guarantee of funding or project approval. It is a tool for staff and your elected officials to use in understanding how to best allocate funding each year.

Once all the data is available and departmental requests are in, the City Manager is required to submit a balanced budget for Council's consideration. Later this month, staff will publish that first draft of the proposed budget, including the capital projects for Fiscal Year 2026. The next steps involve public hearings and discussion of the proposals. Public comment will be a part of both public hearings, one in May, and one in June (of course, you are welcomed and encouraged to reach out to your representatives any time, not just at public hearings). We hope to approve a final budget after the second reading and public hearing in June.

One of the main motivators for our Tucker government is fiscal transparency. On our website we have all our past budgets available in addition to monthly reports of revenues and expenditures. I'm publishing this column on this subject now because it has historically been more the norm than the rule that the public tends to engage at the end of the process, once we are near a vote, and many decisions have been made. Now is the time to start taking a look at the parts of the budget that are of interest to you, and making your thoughts known to your elected representatives!

I'm grateful to our staff and to our Council for the effort and professionalism that has gone into our budgeting process for many years now. In fact, our annual audits and financial reporting have received The Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting granted by the GFOA every year consecutively since 2018 and for the FY25 Budget Book. We have operated on an extremely small budget through often uncertain times, and I'm proud of the diligence and care we have applied to this most fundamental responsibility.

We've accomplished a lot on limited resources, and that's how it should be. Your engagement and holding us accountable are vital parts of the process and of our success. As always, thanks for allowing me to serve.

DATES TO KNOW

- **APRIL 1**
Zoning Board of Appeals
- **APRIL 2**
Municipal Court
- **APRIL 7**
Downtown Development Authority
- **APRIL 9**
Municipal Court
- **APRIL 12, 3-5 P.M.**
Sip-N-Stroll
Tucker Nature Preserve
- **APRIL 14**
City Council Meeting
- **APRIL 16**
Municipal Court
- **APRIL 17**
Planning Commission
- **APRIL 19, 10 A.M.-4 P.M.**
ARTucker
Church Street Greenspace
- **APRIL 28**
City Council Meeting
- **MAY 2, 7 p.m.**
First Friday Concert Series Kickoff
The American Flyers
Church Street Greenspace
- **MAY 3, 9 a.m - 4 p.m.**
Tucker Day
Main Street

**TUCKER
CONNECTS**
Transportation And
Trails Master Plan

mpt.link/TuckerConnects



REVIVE L29
Lawrenceville Highway
Access Management and
Beautification Study

mpt.link/ReviveL29



TUCKER'S STORY OF SUMMER FUN

In the days of Tucker's past, neighbors would gather to help build each other's homesteads, make improvements within the shared/public infrastructure and to celebrate. As local governments, both state and county, grew in services, and work industries developed away from the land, the opportunities to gather became fewer but no less fun.

For decades Main Street has been periodically shut down to motorized traffic to make way for a variety of street festivals. The longest running is of course, Tucker Day. Originally organized to span multiple days, modern Tucker Day is the first Saturday of May and consists of arts and craft vendors, live music, local talent showcases and starts with the Tucker Day Parade.

The community found several reasons to gather on Main all throughout the year. The Tucker Chili Cook-Off, originally organized by the Old Towne Tucker Merchants Association, takes place in March and took a long hiatus post pandemic but returned this year and is now coordinated by Local 7 and Ford's BBQ. Juneteenth Jubilee was added in 2022 and is growing every year. Taste of Tucker attracts restaurant tastings from the greater Tucker area and jovial competition for Best Appetizer, Best Entrée and Best Dessert. Two events that were once extremely popular but have gone to the wayside are the Trunk or Treat on Main and Holiday on Main. Trunk or Treat provided for safe trick or treating to thousands of children every year and

Holiday on Main was the launch of the holiday spirit with a tree lighting, gift shopping and a visit with the jolly St. Nick himself!

With the incorporation of Tucker into an official city, there was some trepidation that the government would swoop in and take away the long-held tradition of Main Street festivals. As that has never been the intent, city staff set out to support the existing events but add to them as well.

The first ever larger scale event for the City of Tucker was the National Night Out event at Idlewood Elementary School in 2017. Hundreds of people attended, and staff was excited to add more events.

The TKR Summer of Fun was initiated the following year in 2018. Expanding on the National Night Out event, staff added a Movie on Main and the July 3rd Fireworks Celebration of Independence. Sadly there wasn't much funding in the City budget yet for events so the first few years of the TKR Summer of Fun were funded solely by sponsorships which limited the scope of events.

The Summer of Fun event series was a huge success that brought thousands to Main Street and connected the Tucker city government in partnership with DeKalb County School District and the DeKalb County Police Department. As the City grew in services, facilities and available budget, event organization was moved from Communications to Parks & Recreation and city staff was able to expand the Summer of Fun events to include the First Friday Concert series and expand Movie on Main to the monthly Movies on the Green series.

The TKR Summer of Fun for 2025 starts next month with the First Friday Concert on May 2 and the first Movies on the Green on May 29. The full schedule is included here and can also be found at tuckerga.gov/events



FIRST FRIDAY CONCERTS



CHURCH STREET GREENSPACE

Greenspace opens- 5:30 p.m.

Band plays from 7 - 9 p.m.

- **May 2**
The American Flyers
- **June 6**
Chairmen of the Board
- **August 1**
Nick & the Knacks
- **September 5**
Heart Breaker: Tribute to Heart

MOVIES ON THE GREEN



CHURCH STREET GREENSPACE

Greenspace opens- 5:30 p.m.

Movies begin at 7 p.m.

- **May 29** - Mufasa
- **June 26** - Wild Robot
- **July 17** - IF
- **August 21** - Shrek
- **September 26** - Wicked

JULY 3 CELEBRATION



MAIN STREET TUCKER

Independence Day Celebration & Fireworks Spectacular with food trucks and kids zone

- Fun begins at 6 p.m.
- Music starts at 7 p.m.
- Band: Eli Alger and the Faster Horses
- Fireworks start at approximately 9:30 p.m.



STUDENT ASSIGNMENT PROJECT



DeKalb County School District has launched an innovative new committee made up of parents, administrators, teachers and local stakeholders to address difficulties the district is facing to continue to serve all students to the best of their ability. The Student Assignment Project is the brainchild of DCSD's latest Superintendent, Dr. Horton. Dr. Horton took up leadership in the summer of 2023 and has been working diligently together with the schools to seek ways to shift and better the learning environment in DeKalb County.

The committee is charged with reviewing and reimagining "DCSD as it relates to programs, boundaries and buildings using more complete data analysis."

Applications to participate were accepted across the entire county. Over 150 stakeholders were chosen to participate and split into four geographic groups, North, Central, Southeast and Southwest for the project. Each SAP committee member committed to monthly meetings over the course of 18 months to dig into years of data, ask questions and ultimately agree on several recommendations to the DeKalb Board of Education to realign how DCSD serves our children.

The committee is charged with reviewing and reimagining "DCSD as it relates to programs, boundaries and buildings using more complete data

analysis," the District website states. SAP endeavors to assess current efforts and data for effectiveness and best usage.

In an effort to receive as much feedback as possible and keep all stakeholders advised of the process, DCSD has built a comprehensive webpage on their website tracking all of the shared data, videos of the monthly meetings and most importantly, the reminder that the SAP committee is only an advisory body and will not be the ones making final decisions. How the district operates, what programs are offered and how facilities are utilized is still under the purview of the DeKalb County School Board.

Once the committee has waded through all the data and information provided, there will be a series of community meetings to share the preliminary recommendations and receive feedback from the public before presenting the final findings to the School Board. All feedback will be received and weighed as all stakeholders have a voice in the process.

Going forward, DCSD will re-evaluate attendance boundaries every five years and undergo the SAP process every ten years as a best practice and to align with ESPOST projects. This is a much-needed adjustment to ensure the District does not once again find itself in its current state of underutilization of facilities, overcrowding and a School Choice program that cannot meet the current demand.

The SAP committee was created to ensure that extreme due diligence is performed by local stakeholders and several recommendations presented to the DCSD Board. Stay tuned and stay informed!

S.A.P. TIMELINE



CITIZEN OF THE MONTH

RITA MALOOF



It is said that a good citizen is one who makes a difference in the community to which one belongs. Volunteering in Tucker Cityhood, ALTA, and Mountain Mums Garden Club are just a few examples of how Rita Maloof is making a difference.

Rita Maloof grew up in a large DeKalb family, known for contributing to the County in various aspects. She is definitely continuing that family tradition.

Graduating from St Pius and the University of Georgia, Rita then worked in corporate management for over 20 years with Automatic Data Processing.

After retiring, Rita hasn't been still. She and Allen (whom she met playing tennis) run Inflatables for All Occasions and play tennis and pickle ball through the Tucker Rec League. They've lived in Tucker for 26 years.

Rita researched, and then volunteered, on the initial Cityhood campaign. She also has served on Tucker's Trail Committee.

As a genuine sports enthusiast, Rita currently serves as President of ALTA (Atlanta Lawn Tennis Association). ALTA is 90 years young and is the largest volunteer run recreational tennis and pickle ball organization in the world with over 60,000 members. Rita is the past First Vice President and past ALTA Foundation President. The ALTA Foundation supports racquet sports in underserved communities in metro Atlanta and expands programs for funding tennis teams in Title One schools. Partners Rita serves with include Shepherd Center, Blaze Sports, Special Pops & Special Olympics. Rita is the past ALTA Junior Leagues Vice President and serves on the ALTA Board of Directors & Executive Committee. All volunteer positions!

Not only active in tennis, Rita enjoys gardening and giving back to her community through the Mountain Mums garden club. As a Mum, Rita is the previous past club President. She currently serves as Awards Chair and is also past programs Director. She is an active participant in Garden Therapy, volunteering at a local Tucker Assisted Living. Rita helps with the annual Walk to Remember, raising awareness of safe driving, maintaining the Memorial Garden Triangle and raising money for drivers scholarships. Rita is also helping with the beautification project at the Tucker Police Precinct, cleaning and replanting beds around the building.

As a member of Smoke Rise Country Club, Rita serves on the Racquet Committee, and chairs the SR Design Committee. As a Ladies Golf Association Committee member, Rita chairs the annual "Ghost and Ghouls" golf tournament.

Even though Rita is very busy, she always has time for her friends. When I was unexpectedly hospitalized last year, Rita came to my home and organized furniture deliveries so that everything was in order for my recovery. She also was part of an amazing Meal Train!

Rita Maloof is definitely making a difference in the community to which she belongs. I am honored to be her friend, and to nominate her for the City of Tucker Citizen of the Month.

Nominated by Gaye Auman



YOU CAN JOIN TEAM TUCKER THIS SUMMER!

The City of Tucker needs your help making this the best summer ever! The Tucker Parks and Recreation Department is hiring for multiple openings. For full descriptions and applications visit tuckerga.gov/careers. The website is kept up-to-date so if you do not see a listing then the position has been filled.

SUMMER CAMP AND SPORTS CAMP:

- Program Assistant
- Program Counselor
- Assistant Program Director

ECO-ADVENTURES CAMP:

- Camp Counselor
- Camp Assistant Director

POOLS - ASSISTANT MANAGER



BUSINESS OF THE MONTH

DISABILITY LINK

DisABILITY LINK is a center that opens doors and opens minds to empower people with disabilities. By helping change the mindset of individuals, they help push their imposed and assumed limits and help them see their abilities. DisABILITY Link has been located in Tucker since 2014 and has made a positive impact on people's lives, even beyond the community of Tucker. Their main goal is to give individuals with disabilities the opportunity to see their gifts and abilities and the tools needed to succeed.

"It's supporting people in achieving their own life goals," Executive Director of disABILITY LINK Kim Gibson said. "So for me it's kind of satisfying they get the option to succeed or fail. We give them the tools. We provide all the training we can and if they choose not to use it or they choose to use it is left to them, so it feels empowering."

DisABILITY LINK provides training, teaches skills to live independently, aids in obtaining housing and grants, allows access to technology and offers rehabilitation services. Their specialized computer lab includes computers that have the software JAWS (Job Access With Speech). JAWS is a screen reader program that helps those with sight impairment by reading internet pages out loud. The lab has many other features as well and provides computer classes such as coding along with basic com-puter skill classes. DisABILITY LINK serves all of the Metro Atlanta area in multiple counties including Cherokee, Clayton,

Cobb, Coweta, Dekalb, Douglas, Fayette, Fulton, Gwinnett, Henry, Newton, Rockdale, Butts, Lamar, Meriwether, Pike, Spalding, and Upson.

DisABILITY LINK was founded in 1998 in Decatur, Georgia. After several years their needs grew and they required more space to continue providing their level of service. Their search brought them to Tucker with a larger facility and plenty of room to expand. Gibson said she felt the immediate support from the community of Tucker. Soon after their relocation to Tucker, she realized she would like a bus stop and a crosswalk light in front of their new facility. Gibson said that she reached out to Mayor Frank Auman to express her concern. Soon after their conversation, Gibson saw that both a stop and a crosswalk had been installed in front of their office. Gibson credits Mayor Auman with the improvement and the swiftness of the response.

Many individuals have benefited from the programs and disABILITY LINK has played a part in many success stories. Gibson shared a story of one family who had been told their son could not expect more from life than sitting in front of the TV playing video games and collecting social security. His mother brought him to disABILITY LINK looking for more for her son. With the guidance, support and opportunities afforded him at disABILITY LINK, he was able to attend a conference in Washington D.C. for the National Council of Independent Living.

Listening and learning from fellow disabled individuals motivated and inspired him to seek out opportunities of employment in an industry that interested him, and he became a full-time maintenance technician.

"Last year he wrote me an email saying I just want to thank you again Mrs. Kim because I am in my job that I love," Gibson said.

In addition to the services provided to their clients, disABILITY LINK offers volunteer opportunities to the Tucker community. Local companies donate time and goods as well as money to aid in fundraising efforts. All people are welcome to reach out to the office to sign up to help.

With the support of their client families and the surrounding business and resident communities, disABILITY LINK is able to aim for equity and equality and continues to change lives.

"It's really helping individuals with disabilities stand up for their rights but also educating others about peoples' rights because disability rights is only one piece of civil rights," Gibson said. "It just does not stop at disability rights. It's equal rights for all. For me it is making sure we are not forgotten."

DisABILITY LINK is located at 1901 Montreal Road, Suite #102, Tucker, GA 30084 and online at disabilitylink.org.



WHAT HAPPENED AT THE COUNCIL MEETING? CITY COUNCIL UPDATE

Tucker's Mayor and Council met for the first meeting of the month on March 10 with Councilmember Virginia Rece attending remotely. Local Scouts of America Pack 129 led the Pledge of Allegiance and Mayor Auman presented graduation certificates to the University of Government Affairs – Tucker. After 20 minutes of public comment the Council unanimously voted to approve the Consent Agenda for the evening:

- Meeting minutes for February 1, February 10, the 10 a.m. and 7 p.m. meetings on February 24, and a contract revision for CEI services with AECOM for the Lake Erin dam project.

Up for a second read and vote was an ordinance amending Tucker's Code Chapter 38 regarding the procedure relating to the acquisition of property valued at less than \$25,000. The amendment passed unanimously.

Three items involving zoning were presented for first reads and public hearings:

- Rezoning for parcels off Chamblee Tucker Road to move from R-100 to R-75 to allow for four single family homes.
- Rezoning from M-2 to M to align with the zoning of the surrounding parcels.

- A text amendment regarding use regulations in the use tables for the three special area zones: Downtown, Northlake and Lawrenceville Highway.

The last item for the evening was a contract to relocate the two playgrounds from the Lake Erin site to the Henderson Tennis Courts and the Church Street Greenspace.

The Mayor and Council of the City of Tucker meet the second and fourth Mondays of each month at City Hall, 1975 Lakeside Parkway, Suite 350B, Tucker, GA 30084. All meetings are streamed live and recordings are posted online at tuckerga.gov/agendas.



The City of Tucker hosted the DeKalb Delegation for lunch at the Capitol last month in gratitude for their service to the Tucker Community. Pictured from left to right: State Rep. Viola Davis, Councilmember Cara Schroeder, State Representative Billy Mitchell, Councilmember Alexis Weaver, State Senator Randal Mangham, Councilmember Amy Trocchi, Mayor Frank Auman and State Senator Kim Jackson.

UPCOMING EVENTS IN TUCKER

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



Just a Walk in the Park

- APRIL 2 – KELLEY COFER PARK (9-10 A.M.)
- APRIL 9 – MONTREAL PARK (6-7 P.M.)
- APRIL 16 – TUCKER NATURE PRESERVE (9-10 A.M.)
- APRIL 23 – PETERS PARK (6-7 P.M.)
- APRIL 30 – PROBST PARK (9-10 A.M.)



**SATURDAY
APRIL 26
9 A.M.-NOON**

**CHURCH STREET
GREENSPACE**



TEEN OUTING

GEORGIA RENAISSANCE FESTIVAL

April 13

Cost: \$30

(includes admission & transportation)

5 ANNUAL TKR 2025 SUMMER 20 FUN



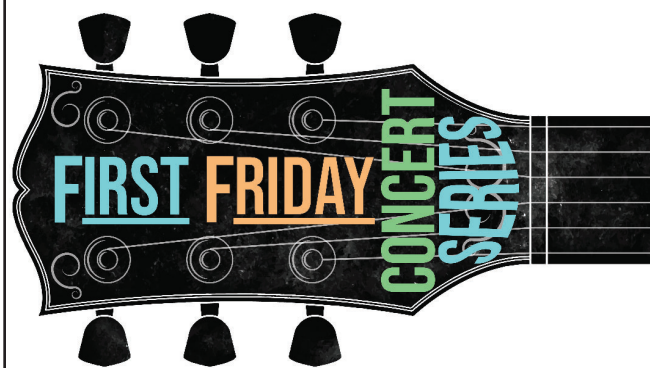
SERIES KICKOFF

MAY 2

THE AMERICAN FLYERS

CHURCH STREET GREENSPACE

TUCKERGA.GOV/SUMMER





TUCKER *Community Corner*

APRIL 12
TUCKER CRUISE-IN
10 a.m.-1 p.m.
Main Street



THE TUCKER CRUISE-IN IS BACK!

This free family fun event occurs every second Saturday of the month from April to October.

4/19 – ARTucker Festival
10 a.m.-4 p.m.

Church Street Greenspace

Formed in May 2015, ARTucker produces an art show with local artists in a friendly, affordable venue providing artists with opportunities to present their creations, and patrons the ability to support the artists as they continue following their passions.

4/24 – Tucker Farmers Market - Opening Day
4-7 p.m.

St. Andrews Presbyterian Church
4882 Lavista Road

Now in their 13th year, the TFM features over 35 local farmers, bakers, growers, and producers from around Tucker, the Atlanta metro, and the state of Georgia.

4/26 – Blue Jeans, BBQ & Blueprints Festival
12-5 p.m.

2380 4th Street

A day of excitement, community, and impact at Habitat for Humanity DeKalb's Annual Blue Jeans, BBQ & Blueprints Festival featuring the Playhouse Olympics! .

5/3 – Tucker Day
9 a.m. - 5 p.m.

Main Street

Tucker's longest running annual, family-friendly community celebration, hosted by the Mainstreet Tucker Alliance, features a human-powered parade, live music, food vendors, arts and crafts, and lots of kid-friendly activities.