

SMOKE SIGNAL



VOLUME 55, ISSUE 9

Serving the Smoke Rise Community since 1968

December, 2022

www.smokesignalnews.com



**The Staff of the Smoke Signal
Wishes our Neighbors a
Very Merry Christmas
and a Joyous Holiday Season!**



12th Annual Tucker
WALK TO REMEMBER
Smoke Rise Baptist (upper parking lot)
Saturday, January 21, 2023
9:30 AM

Tucker Parks and Recreation Events
North Pole at Tucker – December 3
Empty Stocking Fund – December 8-10



**North Pole at Tucker:
Tree and menorah lighting,
free pics with Santa,
activities, more**

Tucker Parks and Recreation will host its third annual North Pole event and for the first year, include the City's Annual Holiday Celebration. This expanded family fun event will be hosted near downtown at the Church Street Greenspace, 4316 Church Street, on Saturday, December 3rd

from 5:00 – 8:00 pm. Santa will be there to take your children's gift ideas, photos and spread the holiday joy. We will officially light the City's tree and menorah, musical and artistic performances from some of our local groups as well as crafts, games, and food for the entire family. Come out, visit downtown with the new lighting and holiday experience for a family, fun-filled evening with Santa and the City as we kick off the holiday season. Check out all the details at our webpage at www.tuckerga.gov/parks.

Residents Overwhelmingly Approve Public Works for the City of Tucker

In 2016, the City of Tucker was established by its residents to provide local oversight of key day-to-day operations and public services. The residents of Tucker have spoken and have overwhelmingly acknowledged the need for change to its roadway maintenance and stormwater services delivery. Since the passage of the public works referendum on November 8, the City has already begun to execute on plans for implementation of improvements to the overall public works service delivery model, addressing the existing backlog and enhancing the customer experience, all in collaboration with DeKalb County to transition these important services by July 2023.

Mayor Frank Auman stated, "We are grateful to the Tucker community for affirming their confidence in us and overwhelmingly approving this referendum. The Council, staff and I are excited and ready to get to work providing our residents with safe roads, working infrastructure and the levels of responsiveness and service they deserve. We intend to deliver on our commitment and promise to be more responsive, more reliable, and more locally accountable."

Combined public works services will transition to the City July 1, 2023. "Within the first 365 days, our goal is to prioritize and work through deferred public works maintenance and address key repairs," said City Manager Tami Hanlin. "Now that the community has spoken, we can move forward and develop a service delivery model that will eliminate long-deferred needs, get us to a more normal level of meeting current maintenance needs, and ultimately take us on to focusing on preventive maintenance. We will reduce current repair and maintenance times by 50% by our second year of operations, while saving significant costs of operation."

Public Works services rendered under roads and maintenance will include asphalt patching, pothole repairs, right-of-way maintenance, sidewalk and curb repairs, traffic sign/signal maintenance, bridge maintenance, pavement marking maintenance and transportation engineering services. Stormwater services include stormwater infrastructure and catch basin repairs.

A Charles Dickens Christmas

by Victoria R. Crosby

The holiday season of Dickens' time evokes an image most sublime.
Like a Christmas card from long ago,
a scene of softy falling snow.
People dressed in velvet and lace,
wearing a happy smiling face
underneath top hat or hood,
fur muff and cape, which certainly would
keep away the winter chill.
If you close your eyes, you can see it still.
Horse drawn sleighs with jingle bells,
smoky, roasted chestnut smells.
Every year at Christmastide
there is a longing far and wide
to be in England in Charles Dickens' Day
and hear the carols the church bells play;
to relive The Christmas Carol story
of redemption and of glory.
It resonates within our hearts
with a timeless message which imparts
the knowledge that we really should
try to always see the good
in every person that we meet,
which makes our own life more complete.
That financial success or material things
by themselves seldom brings
happiness, for that is found
in helping others all around.
So make this the season you fulfill
the Christmas promise of goodwill.

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poeticvic@aol.com



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Smoke Signal

P.O. Box 763, Tucker, GA 30085

A non-profit service organization devoted to furthering neighborhood cooperation with the aid of good neighborhood communication.

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Preferred Formats for Smoke Signal Submissions

When sending articles and photos to the *Smoke Signal*, it is helpful if articles could be sent in .doc or .docx format. Articles sent in .pdf format cannot be edited or changed in any way. Also photos sent in .jpg format can easily be opened and formatted to fit a particular space, so that is also a preferred method. Thanks for helping us make your neighborhood paper the best it can be!

Digital copies of the *Smoke Signal* are posted to the archives at www.smokesignalnews.com. You can also visit our Facebook page at www.facebook.com/SmokeSignalNews to view postings of newsletter pictures and stories throughout the month.

Smoke Signal Deadlines

DECEMBER 13

Please e-mail articles to:

staff@smokesignalnews.com

(Word documents or text file attachments preferred)
 PLEASE DO NOT SEND CLASSIFIED ADS TO THIS E-MAIL ADDRESS

Extra copies may be picked up at
 The Smoke Rise Community Garden on Hugh Howell Rd.

Deadline for classified ads is DECEMBER 10

SMOKE SIGNAL FLYER INSERT POLICY

Cost: \$150 by check to *Smoke Signal*
 Deadline to Receive: 6:00 p.m. on 19th of month
 Flyer inserts should be 8 1/2" x 11" (flat, not folded)
 Please provide 2,300 copies
 Reservation Required:
 Contact Barbara Luton, (770) 491-6711 by 15th of month.

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 Link to the digital version of the Smoke Signal at:
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2022 Patrons of the Smoke Signal

The *Smoke Signal* volunteer editors and staff would like to thank our 2022 Patrons of the Paper. Your generosity is appreciated! These donations permit us to keep our advertising rates as low as possible and the quality of the paper high. If you would like to join our Patrons, we welcome that financial support. Checks should be made payable to Smoke Signal and in the For line: Patrons of the Paper.

If you would like to join your fellow neighbors as patrons, all you have to do is to send your contribution to the Smoke Signal, P.O. Box 763, Tucker, GA 30085. Your check should be made out to the Smoke Signal. The subject line should say, "Patron Contribution."

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- Adam and Gia Anderson
- Joel and Susan Gilbert
- Graham and Penny Stovall

Silver:

- Victor and Theodora Economy
- Bob and Barbara Bruschi

Bronze:

- Betsy and Lee Allen
- Stone Mtn Woman's Club
- Bill and Les Woulfin

Correction

(from the yoga article by Victoria Crosby in last month's issue)

Yoga instructor Tracy Stroud's correct email address is rstroud1@comcast.net



ATTENTION ADVERTISERS:

The Smoke Signal has reached its ad-space limit and we are now keeping a waiting list for future advertisements.

Please send your ad-size requests to Frank Luton, luton@mindspring.com, and your ads will be included as space becomes available, in the order requests are received.

Smoke Rise Baptist Church

Dr. Chris George: Senior Pastor
 Bart McNeil: Associate Pastor of Administration, Ministry Support and Congregational Care
 Becky Caswell-Speight: Minister of Families, Faith Formation and Connection
 Jim Smith: Pastoral Care Associate
 Danny Vancil, Minister of Music & Worship
 Hannah Vassar: Minister of Youth and Congregational Connection
 Rashette Walker: Director of Weekday School
 Denise Burcham, Director of Academy of Arts
 Telephone: (770) 469-5856
SmokeRiseBaptist.org

SUNDAY

9:45 a.m. - Attend Sunday School through Zoom or In-Person
 Schedule Available at smokerisebaptist.org/streamingatsmokerise/
 11:00 a.m. - Attend Worship via Live Stream or In-Person
 Live Stream Available at smokerisebaptist.org/streamingatsmokerise/

WEDNESDAY

5:00 p.m. - Attend our Wednesday Dinner
 6:00 p.m. - Followed by activities and Bible Study for all ages
 Live Stream at smokerisebaptist.org/wednesday-evening-activities/

Eastminster Presbyterian Church

Pastor ~ Rev. J. Caleb Clarke III
 Director of Spiritual Formation ~ Jeanine Fulton
 Director of Family & Outreach ~ Mark Sauls
 Interim Director of Music/Organist ~ Carole Mitchell
 Financial Coordinator ~ Jan Zabarac
 Director of Weekday Ministries ~ Celeste Sears
 Office Coordinator ~ Christina Wetzel-Sizemore
 Music Interns ~ Elizabeth Daly & Jose Azurdia
 5801 Hugh Howell Road ~ Stone Mountain, GA 30087
 770-469-4881 ~ www.eastminster.us

SUNDAYS

9:15 a.m. Adult and Children's Sunday school in person and via Zoom
 10:30 a.m. In-Person and Live streaming of Worship service
 Child care is available for young children during the Sunday school and worship times.

EPC Outreach Blood Drive is October 2nd, 8:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. in the LifeSouth Bloodmobile.

MC3 Church

Senior Minister: Art Stansberry
 Outreach and Family Life Minister: Gerardo Mancilla
 (770) 783-1035 ~ www.mc3.life
 4415 Stone Mountain Hwy., Lilburn, GA 30047

Sunday Schedule:

10:00 a.m. Coffee and donuts
 10:30 a.m. Worship service (in person and online)

Life groups throughout the week
 check out our website for times and addresses.

Business Address and Hours: 1316 Rockbridge Rd, Suite M
 Stone Mountain, GA 30087
 Monday through Friday, 9 a.m.-5 p.m.

Mailing Address: 1227 Rockbridge Rd., SW, STE 208-251
 Stone Mountain, GA 30087

First Moravian Church

Pastor: Rev. Elroy Christopher
 Congregational Acolyte: Bill Hitz
 (770) 491-7250, (770) 755-8289
www.gamoravian.org

Sundays: 10:00 a.m. Sunday School-Adults & Children
 11:00 a.m. Worship
 12:00 p.m. Fellowship Time

Incarnate Word Lutheran Church

Please join us for worship on Sundays at 8:45 a.m.
 at the First Moravian Church sanctuary
 4950 Hugh Howell Rd., Stone Mountain, GA 30087

Mountain West Church

Pastor: Mo Huggins
 (770) 491-0228 ~ www.mwchurch.com
 4818 Hugh Howell Rd., Stone Mountain
 Sunday Services: 8:30 a.m., 10:00 a.m. and 11:30 a.m.
 Thursday Neighborhood Bible Study with Pastor Mo: 10:00 a.m.
All Welcome!
 In-person and streaming online on Facebook and mwchurch.com

Looking for a way to give back to your community?

THE SMOKE SIGNAL is looking for a few more writers or people with a passion for storytelling.
 Contact: staff@smokesignalnews.com

A Whole Lot of Christmas

By Victor J. Economy

It's beginning to look a lot like Christmas everywhere you go! That sentiment is true at 1833 Smoke Rise Summit. The Christmas season is in full swing and the lights are shining brightly. As in years past, donations are being collected for the Georgia Make-A-Wish Foundation. Please note that 100% of collected donations go directly to this worthy charity. Help us exceed last year's total of \$13,124.95 and reach our new goal of \$15,000.00



To help achieve this goal we are asking individuals and local businesses to get involved and match donations or a portion of donations so that we can bring as much cheer as possible to local children through the Georgia Make-A-Wish Foundation. Since 2012, a total of \$61,284.95 has been collected for charity. For information on matching donations, please call Victor at 404.786.1330. Merry Christmas and be sure to come by and enjoy the lights with your friends and family!



**ART Station Presents
The Honky Tonk Angels
Holiday Spectacular**

From the creator of *Always...Patsy Cline*, comes the holiday jukebox musical, *The Honky Tonk Angels Holiday Spectacular*. The show features the escapades of three good ole country gals as they reunite for a Christmas show at "The Hillbilly Heaven Club" in Nashville. There are many surprising twists and turns in this musical comedy, including a gospel soul sister who also happens to be a psychic manicurist. Songs include a Motown Christmas medley, country classics like "Coat of Many Colors" by Dolly Parton, and comedy hits such as "Grandma Got Run Over by a Reindeer." This show sends messages of friendship, holiday spirit, living your dreams, and love.



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SMOKE RISE COUNTRY CLUB'S SOCIAL AND MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE IN PARTNERSHIP WITH SMOKE RISE PREP HOSTED A CHILI COOK-OFF FUND RAISER. WE HAD 14 CONTESTANTS AND THE CHILI WAS AWESOME ON A COLD AFTERNOON. A BIG THANK YOU TO BECCA HALES FOR ORGANIZING THIS EVENT. ALL TYPES OF CHILI WERE ENTERED AND THE FOLLOWING WERE THE WINNERS:

1ST PLACE – BRENDA ALEXANDER
2ND PLACE – KORKY & MIMI ULMSTEAD
3RD PLACE – PAM MAXON
BEST TABLE – KORKY & MIMI ULMSTEAD
BEST NAME – PAM MAXON
PEOPLE'S CHOICE – JEN CASYLEBERRY







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31st Annual Candlelight Vigil

By Barbara Luton

Smoke Rise neighbors and members of the GFWC Stone Mountain Woman's Club attended the 31st Annual Candlelight Vigil that is a ceremony dedicated to those victims of domestic violence who have lost their lives in the past year in the state of Georgia. 160 names were read by attendees before the crowd on the old court house yard in Decatur.



left to right Jackie Cornett, Linda Smith, Barbara Luton

Testimonials were heard from two ladies who had escaped domestic violence situations, one teenager who had experienced domestic violence and one lady whose sister was killed by her husband.

The vigil is sponsored by the Women's Resource Center to End Domestic Violence which is located in Decatur. The center offers a safe house program, legal advocacy, support groups, Camp Peace for children, supervised visitation and safe exchange of children, community education and a 24-hour hotline. Domestic violence crosses all boundaries of age, race, ethnicity, religion, economic background, physical ability and sexual orientation. Domestic violence is the establishment of control and fear in a relationship through physical, sexual, emotional, and/or financial abuse. If you suspect that someone you know is living in an abusive relationship, please let her know that you are concerned for her safety and encourage her to contact the Women's Resource Center at 404-370-7670 or their 24-hour hotline at 404-688-9436.*

*Information obtained from the Women's Resource Center brochure and office.

Smoke Rise Country Club's Social and Membership Committee hosted a Sip & Shop on November 13th. This event was opened to the community and the community came to support. I would like to thank Rosa Garcia for all her hard work putting this wonderful event together. We had 17 vendors and lots of shoppers. All the vendors loved the event and are looking forward to next year. If you missed your opportunity this year, lookout for communications for next year's Sip & Shop.

Submitted By,
Bob Espy

Two weeks after the King of Kings comes the birthday of the king who sings. On January 8 at 6pm we'll listen to some Elvis music then. Ever since August 16, 1977 Elvis has been King of Rock 'N Roll Heaven. Join us for the birthday tribute show there is more to Elvis than you know. With poems from The Book of Elvis: His life in Rhyme the music is his, the poetry is mine. Elvis trivia will make you smile and if you wish, dress in Elvis style With dinner and dancing to celebrate Elvis, who would have been eighty-eight. I'm your best Victoria Crosby, please be my guest for an event that's different from all the rest.

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ELVIS

January 8, 2023
6:00 p.m.

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We Made it to CITY FINALS!!

By Kathy Peters

It was a great winning fall season for the Smoke Rise Country Club ladies Tuesday ALTA tennis team. The “blended” team of women, the Babes, who have played Thursday tennis together for many years, along with the ladies who play Tuesday “senior” tennis made for a powerhouse of tennis titans!

Winning the C1 division awarded us with the coveted ALTA bag tag and a trip to the City Playoffs. On a beautiful Monday morning, our team won the playoff match and advanced to the City Finals. For those who might not know, City Finals is the premier tennis event in Atlanta. People from across metro Atlanta converge for one great tennis event to compete for the big plate. Unfortunately, the weather did not cooperate on Finals Day. Everyone came armed with leaf blowers and buckets of towels to mop the courts as we tried our best to dry the courts. The sun never did shine so the match was postponed until the following week.

To help us get ready on match day, Vongel, our newest coach traveled all the way to Fowler Park Recreation Center in Cumming to hit some tennis balls in a warmup session with our players. Then, they gave us some thrills and much to cheer about! With each team winning one point, the outcome came down to the third line of doubles players. Our ladies fought hard and made our opponents stay on the courts to play three sets. While we didn’t take home the biggest trophy, our team proudly finished second in the City Finals! Our tables can now be set with the ALTA City Finals “salad plate”!

12 years of walking, 12 years of honoring a “triangle of trees”

By Mary Lou Still

On Saturday, January 21, 2023, at 9:30 AM, neighbors will gather once again to take an easy 3-mile stroll from Smoke Rise Baptist parking lot and back. We will be exploring the beautiful greenspaces of our neighborhoods, while dropping daffodils along our merry way. What fun for a great cause especially if the weather is favorable!

A quick history for our new neighbors - the Memorial Triangle was created and planted on January 20, 2007, by the Mountain Mums Garden Club. In 2005, the garden club adopted the Hugh Howell Rd./ Hwy. 78 Triangle from the Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) - hoping to do our best to beautify it.



We had several great ideas, but the area was quite a challenge logistically. One night before our monthly meeting, I dreamt of us planting some beautiful flowering trees at the site. However, these would not be just any trees. They would be trees planted to honor young neighborhood drivers who had been killed in auto accidents, most of them on or near Exit 7. This would be a big project since sadly, there were six young neighbors who had been affected. Fortunately, our project had a lot of support! The families, Boy and Girl Scout troops, Smoke Rise Civic Association (SRCA), and many neighbors gathered their shovels, helped with cost and transport of the trees, and the project was completed. We added a seventh tree for hope- a hope that drivers would be careful and safe. What a day that was. There was not one dry eye!

Unfortunately, the Triangle was almost immediately a victim of theft. Four of the trees were stolen right out of the ground. It was heartbreaking! To deeply sadden the story further, when the Mountain Mums Garden Club purchased replacement trees and were in the process of getting them replanted, another young boy was killed on Hugh Howell Road riding his motorcycle. We planted a tree in his honor and there are now a total of eight trees. We still have the tree of hope. We have always kept the Carter, Hubbard, Lories, Smith, Stovall, Taylor, and Wellman families close to our hearts while maintaining their memorial trees and the gardens surrounding them. Thankfully, SRCA keeps the grass cut

and helps with maintenance. We have also placed signage for friendly reminders to not text while driving!

Cheers to 12 years of Taggart’s Scholarships being awarded to many students who wanted to improve their driving skills! This year Jackson Lee and Nicholas Hicks were awarded with 30 hours of class time and 6 hours of driving instruction. Mayor Frank Auman will be introducing them at the beginning of our next TWTR (Tucker Walk to Remember).

Hope to see you there!!!



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Proclamation in Honor of Mrs. Pamela McCloud

During the City of Tucker's November meeting, Mayor Frank Auman read into record a proclamation honoring Mrs. Pamela McCloud, Principal of Smoke Rise Elementary School for earning Principal of the Year for Region II. She has contributed to the DeKalb County School District since 1990 and accepted the role as Principal of Smoke Rise Elementary School in 2014.



Mayor Frank Auman and Mrs. Pamela McCloud

During her time, she has led the school to major improvements bringing student achievement above state standards to a score of 89.2 on the College Career Readiness Performance Index (CCRPI) in 2019. Under her guidance, the school was named a 2021 Elementary and Secondary Education Act Distinguished School and further achieved a 2021 Cognia STEM certification.

In 2022, Pamela McCloud received the honor of Principal of the Year for Region II of the DeKalb County School District.

Smoke Rise Civic Association News

By Michael Heurkamp, President of the Board



The Smoke Rise Civic Association (SRCA) Board wishes all our neighbors the best and happiest holiday season and looks forward to a 2023 not complicated or impeded by COVID-19.

Financially we remain in decline on a per annum basis operating around \$12,000 in the red since last year. While our annual membership renewal campaign will rev-up in the new calendar year, it is not too late to donate and have your generosity matched by our anonymous angel donor. Your tax-deductible contributions through the end of 2022 can be made by Paypal, Zelle, or check with instructions posted at smokerise.org.

Eileen Stone has been working in representation of SRCA with council members Rece, Orlando, Rip and others to refine the plans for the development of the Charlie and Ruth Lord Legacy Park and we are pleased to report that a greater proportion of lower ground by the creek and incorporating the iconic pachyderm pine are likely to be preserved for contemplation and wildlife viewing while still enabling wooded disc golf, picnicking and other outdoor activities on the upper ground.

We know several our neighbors benefit from the shredding service we have offered historically but have been confounded by our inability to find a suitable location since the school system, not the elementary school itself, elected to make it difficult to partner with us. We look forward to a 2023 of support to enrich our elementary school, community gardening, swim team and holiday home tour support, landscape maintenance, extension of the path, and other initiatives that promote the quality of life in Smoke Rise.

We are nothing without our benefactors. Please consider supporting us now and in response to our 2023 membership campaign.

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We'd Enjoy Connecting With Our Smoke Rise Neighbors.

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Centurion Advisory Group is an independent fee-only wealth management firm registered with the state of Georgia as an investment advisor.

Gardening Opportunities for December

By Linda Karr

We've worked on having a garden with year-round interest. Last month I talked about what was blooming in our garden. Since then, we've had our first freezing weather and I've been surprised how much is still green after the frost. Here's what's 'blooming' for us right now: abelia, coreopsis, butterfly bush, grasses, salvia, passion vine, Turk's cap, hydrangea, clematis, flame acanthus, pineapple sage, orange zest, aster, echinacea, chrysanthemum, rosemary, penstemon, veronica, camelia, roses, catmint, Russian sage, Carolina jasmine, pieris, anemone, Lenten rose, fatsia, tea olive, lantana, million bells, amsonia, and lavender!

It's that time of year when many of us put up a Christmas tree. To check for freshness if you're buying a live tree this year, gently grasp a branch and tug along its length. If the tree is fresh, very few needles will come off in your hand. You don't have to feel guilty about ruining forests when you buy a fresh tree. About 98% of all Christmas trees are grown on farms as sustainable crops. 80% of artificial trees worldwide are manufactured in China, according to the U.S. Commerce Department. (<https://realchristmastrees.org/>)

Opportunities in the garden for December:

- Remove faded Amaryllis blooms and stalks and water only when dry. Poinsettias need more water – check them daily. Keep all your holiday plants in a cool spot in your house to keep the flowers and leaves from dropping prematurely. Also, if you have potted plants with a foil wrapping around them, poke holes in the foil to allow them to drain so they don't get root rot.
- Fertilize your pansies and snapdragons with a 'nitrate nitrogen' (i.e., 15-2-20) every two weeks.
- If you have a fireplace instead of tossing the ashes, you can spread them over your lawn to provide potassium and phosphorous.
- Use cuttings from your evergreens, hollies, and magnolias for your decorations.
- When we have frost predicted, protect your plants by watering them thoroughly. You can also use sheets to cover plants but need to cover them all the way to the ground to trap in the heat. Insulate your outdoor faucets to keep them from freezing.
- Make sure piles of leaves are cleared off your lawn to prevent dead spots in your lawn next spring.
- Plant bare root trees and woody vines now.
- Browse the seed and plant catalogues that are arriving in your mailbox to help you plan your garden for 2023.

Enjoy your garden!

NEWS YOU CAN USE by AvivA Hoffmann

Be a Friend...to our Parks!

As 2022 nears an end, you may be thinking about the new year ahead. Consider becoming a "friend" to one of our public parks here in Smoke Rise and/or the Tucker area. Well-managed parks enhance our property values, offer opportunities to experience nature and recreation, and attract new residents and workers to our area.

In Smoke Rise, through the City of Tucker, we have "Friends of Tucker Parks" (FOTP) to help guide, build, and maintain our local park system. FOTP is an affiliate of Park Pride, which was founded in 1989. Park Pride is the only nonprofit organization that works with more than 60 Friends of the Parks groups to improve our parks in metro Atlanta. "Friends" groups allow a park to reach out and build greater support in the community. Often these groups end up serving as the park's community liaison and voice. You might think of a friends' group like a PTA for a local school.

If you're new to our community, volunteering with a local friends' group is a great way to meet your neighbors and to have an impact on the future of our parks and greenspaces. (This is also true if you're a long-time resident!)

The mission of Friends of Tucker Parks is "to preserve, protect, and improve all of the parks located within the City of Tucker, GA." FOTP assists with planning, coordinating volunteers, generating funding, and aiding in the formation of "Friends" groups for each park. The following are supported by the Friends of Tucker Parks:

- Bee Habitat at Tucker Nature Preserve
- Fitzgerald Park
- Henderson Park
- Johns Homestead Park
- Kelley Cofer Park
- Lord Park
- Montreal Park
- Probst Park
- Rosenfeld Park
- Smoke Rise Crossing Park
- Tucker Nature Preserve
- Tucker Recreation Center
- Tucker Parks Orchard Guild
- William McKinley Peters Park



So, sign up and pitch in! Or at least consider a tax-deductible donation to FOTP. Donations help pay for much-needed upgrades like shelter pavilions, special landscaping, outdoor classrooms, and playgrounds. There is a "Donate" button on the main website where you can send money via PayPal. You can also pay by check and mail it to Friends of Tucker Parks. (You can notate a specific Friends group in the memo line.)

Mail to: Friends of Tucker Parks, Inc.
c/o Suzanne Borchert
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You'll find more information about FOTP online at: <https://www.tuckerparks.org/>.

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HEALTH NOTES:

by Patricia Baumann, MD

Surge in Respiratory Viruses

You may have already read about a recent increase in the number of cases of respiratory virus infections, causing an increase in the number of patients showing up in emergency rooms and urgent care facilities. These infections have continued to intensify, especially among children, who are more at risk from respiratory viruses because of their more easily obstructed small airways. Adults may also be at risk for serious illness from respiratory viruses; especially the elderly, people with chronic heart and lung diseases, and immunocompromised patients.



This year's flu season has ramped up early. Hopefully you have also received your flu shot for this year. The most common complication of the flu is pneumonia, but it can also cause serious muscle and central nervous system complications.

Yet another respiratory virus out there is the respiratory syncytial virus, RSV. Although the mechanism of RSV airway disease is not completely understood, lung inflammation is thought to play a central role, with some people having an excessive inflammatory response. RSV is picked up from the infectious secretions in the environment, and then the virus spreads from cell to cell in the respiratory tract lining. The initial viral infection of the cells of the respiratory tract causes inflammation in the airways, and the initial respiratory symptoms. Once inside the airways, the virus is spread through a process that actually causes death of the airway lining cells. This causes a secondary illness, as these dead cells slough off into the airways and cause a significant secondary inflammation. This inflammation can cause spasm and closure of the airway. It can cause damage to the lung that may not be reversible. RSV can be somewhat scary if you think about it. We are getting close to a vaccine for RSV, one or more RSV vaccine may be available before next fall's season.

Obviously, COVID can cause serious illness. Fortunately, we now have a vaccine that provides protection from severe illness and death from COVID. You all know about the danger of COVID. You also need to know that the COVID virus continues to mutate, so it is important to stay on top of your vaccines and boosters. The people who are unvaccinated are the people who are in the ICUs and dying from this virus. Hopefully those of you vaccinated against COVID have also received the new bivalent booster to protect you from the Omicron variant

Other respiratory viruses include parainfluenza (croup) and rhinovirus (common cold). Protecting yourself against respiratory viruses is important. Protection includes getting the available vaccines. Other measures include hand washing, face masks, cough etiquette, and avoiding sick people. Please protect yourself and your family members!

Out the Window

by Beth Henson

My glorious, colorful front yard had departed from its recent scarlet and yellow fall splendor to the approaching winter's sea of brown. All was still and quiet except Chipper (our friendly house chipmunk), busily collecting his store of winter nuts and seeds that would sustain him underground during his hibernation months. As I wistfully glanced out the front windows at the cold, looming gray clouds, I already longed for the tiny jonquils and bright crocus a few months away.



Golden silk orb-weaver by Beth Henson

Suddenly a break in the gloomy heavens exposed a patch of cheery, blue sky that brightly lit up the sullen landscape. To my surprise, a lacy curtain consisting of delicate, sparkling, gold strands appeared just outside the window. Perched in the center was a long slender spider, known as a golden silk orb-weaver. Her asymmetrical, intricate web rivaled the most celebrated textiles of us humankind, glistening with a thousand points of lights.

Thank you for your, delightful, shimmering display and for brightening up my otherwise dreary winter day!

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What's in An Exhilarating Title?

PART 2

By Barbara Bruschi

Summer is not the only time to read a book just for pleasure. Now that temperatures are cooler and the fireplace is looking like a great place to curl up and read, you may want to see the rest of my book list published in the June Smoke Signal. I have been reviewing and recommending books for Smoke Signal readers for years. I always make sure my recommendations are wholesome in nature. If you missed Part 1 of this article, go to the June 2022 archive of Smokesignalnews.com.

Here is the second half of her reading list:

THE PARIS LIBRARY by Janet Skeslien Charles
A truth-based story of the heroic librarians at the American Library in Paris. Librarians helping, daringly, to rescue books and supply them to Jewish readers that were denied access to reading materials. Friendship, betrayal, and the power of literature, even in times of war are the basis of the novel.

THE JUDGED LIST by John Grisham
The long-time obsession of a young woman whose father was murdered, creates a team of two women who are in pursuit of a serial killer. The subject is a sitting judge who bears grudges against everybody that crosses his path the wrong way. Great thriller.

THE LAST FLIGHT by Julie Clark
An obsessive husband, a desperate wife, fleeing her home. A chance meeting at an airport that will change the life of two women forever. Both lived in bondage and have to adapt to being a different personality to emerge as new individuals.

WHAT HAPPENED TO THE BENNETTS
The Bennett family returns from their daughter's lacrosse game when they get car-jacked at gun point. Their daughter dies in the shooting event. A dangerous drug cartel tries to frame the family for murder. A series of events changes their lives forever. They live under witness protection while somebody in power is destroying their entire existence to hide past events.

ONE ITALIAN SUMMER by Rebecca Serle
Summer fantasy in Positano, Italy. A daughter is utterly distraught by her mother's death and takes a trip to the romantic town of Positano, Italy to relive her mother's trip, as a young woman of 30.

You may also like **TAFT** by Ann Pachett, **VIOLETA** by Isabella Allende, **CARNEGIE'S MAID** by Marie Benedict, **HONOR** by Thrity Umbrigar and **REMARKABLY BRIGHT CREATURES** by Shelby Van Pelt.

Enjoy your precious hours of reading. Remember, a good book is like a melody that lingers, bringing joy and hours of escape into another world.



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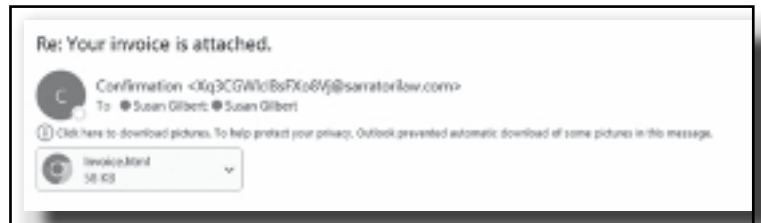
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techtalk by Susan Gilbert

Staying Safe in A Connected World (Part 3)

Two-factor authentication (2FA) is a security technique requiring users to provide two different factors to verify themselves. It provides a higher level of security and more protection for the user's credentials than simply having a password, which is known as single-factor authentication (SFA). Two-factor authentication requires a password and a second factor, usually a security code that is texted or emailed to you or a biometric factor like facial, voice identification or a fingerprint.

It's a good idea to enable 2FA when it is presented to you to get the additional layer of security. Say your passwords get hacked, you will be relieved to know that attackers can't access your online accounts with the password alone. Many financial institutions and retailers require 2FA, and while it is an extra step, taking it increases the security of your accounts. You have probably heard the term phishing. Sounds like fishing, but is far more treacherous. Phishing is when an attacker masquerades as a trusted party, tricking victims into opening an email, text, or instant message containing a link or attachment. When clicked or opened, malicious software known as malware is downloaded to your computer or phone allowing the attacker to watch your every online move.



Never click on an unsolicited or suspicious link. If you think your computer or phone might have been infected, take it to a professional to have it fixed. Signs of a malware attack include the computer or phone not seeming to run as normal, running sluggishly, or bombarding you with pop-up ads.

Here are some simple tips to avoid having your digital device infected by malware.

1. Look at the sender's email address. If it is someone you recognize, fine, but check carefully. Sometimes just a number or letter is changed, but more often, the entire address is something with a non-US ending, like this one I received from Japan `isk_kanribu@iskinc.co.jp`. Others impersonate companies you are doing business with, like your bank or Microsoft by using their real email address and changing it just slightly like this one: `update@onmicrosoft.com`. Others are just odd, like this one `Xq3CGWlCIBsFXo8Vj@sarratorilaw.com` that came to me with Subject: Invoice Attached. Yeah, right!
2. Attackers know what people are most likely to open, like this one saying my invoice is attached. Others use tricks like, "Click here to view your statement" or "See attached pictures from the event." Another common technique is appearing to be from Microsoft saying "Password expiring in 2 days, click here to reset." Phishing relies on people's human vulnerabilities, their hopes, dreams, and fears, and the criminals are skilled at finding those. They are also constantly refining their game as they learn what works best. So it's best to slow down, use 2FA and look suspiciously and carefully at every email you receive, and look even more carefully before opening an attachment or clicking on a link.

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MVP German Auto Specialist and Atlanta Corvette Center

Bill Barikos, owner of MVP German Auto Specialist and Atlanta Corvette Center, was born in Greece and came over with his parents when he was only seven. His mechanical career started when he was about twelve. He would pick up lawnmowers on the side of the road and take them home to repair. Bill said his father never had to buy a lawnmower after that. Bill had a love for fixing things that were broken, especially ones that had a motor.

Bill has been a Tucker resident for 25 years. His mother owned restaurants including Evelyn's Cafe' in Brockett Square. When his parents moved back to Greece, people there helped them as needed. Bill felt he should help people here in the way his parents were being helped by others in Greece. MVP has long been a supporter of the Tucker and Smoke Rise Community and beyond. It has given back to the community by giving to schools and organizations such as Tucker High School, Wounded Warriors, Children's Healthcare of Atlanta, and the Georgia Foundation of Women's Clubs and by offering discounts on labor for first responders, veterans, and teachers.

The family-owned business started in Sugar Hill, then moved to Oak Grove, Northlake, and finally found its forever 20,000 square foot home on Hugh Howell Road in Tucker. It provides foreign and muscle automotive care and is a one stop facility for service and repair. Caring for older Mercedes and Corvettes is a real niche. The younger generation is less interested in the older cars and so it is hard to find skilled technicians that enjoy their work.

Their commitment is "to provide timely and consistent automotive services with integrity, quality, and value ensuring that each customer experiences the highest standard of customer assistance and satisfaction." Long-term customers come from two hours away – Macon, Blue Ridge, Alabama - to have their vehicles serviced. The customers are treated like family and Bill goes out of his way to help them.

At the end of our conversation Bill shared a story about his bus named 'Old Guys Rule'. In Bill's many trips down Hugh Howell, he had noticed an old bus sitting in a yard. Bill had never done a restoration on a bus, but over time this intrigued him. He knew if someone was not going to fix it, that it would end up in a scrap yard. Eight or nine years ago he was driving with his son and finally stopped by to ask about it. Joan Rutherford was kind enough to speak with Bill and his son, Alan about the family's fun camping with the bus over the years. The bus, a 1976 Bluebird, Wander Lodge was built in Fort Valley, Georgia and had only 33,000 miles on it. Bill had a "Vision" What better way to keep history alive and honor the family at the same time. So, Bill and his sidekick Guy Leach, spent many hours repairing the mechanical and electrical systems, putting in hardwood floors, granite countertops, flat screen tv, AC, and repainting it. A few years ago, he was traveling back from Maggie Valley in the bus on the annual trip to get a Christmas tree. The car behind him started honking their horn at him. It was Mrs. Rutherford's daughter! What are the chances of that. She told Bill that her mom had passed, and they were selling the house on Hugh Howell. Bill told her that he would be bringing his parents from Greece back to their roots. Bill ended up buying the house for his parents. A real Tucker experience!



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'Tis the Season for Holiday Hostess Gifts and Wrapping Tips!

By Maureen Fraser

The Mountain Mums Garden Club met at the home of Pat Baumann for its monthly meeting led by Co-Presidents Gaye Auman and Rita Maloof, which was followed by a tasty luncheon of savory salad, seasonal soups and delectable desserts prepared by Lead co-hostess Jean Weathers and co-hosts, Lynn Malone, and Kelley Samaras.

Also unveiled was the "wine cork" wreath created by Kelly Samaras for the "Leading Lights Luncheon, Fashion Show and Raffle," sponsored by The DeKalb County Federation of Garden Clubs, Inc. on Nov. 17 at Callanwolde Fine Arts Center.

Karen Smith, a former Mountain Mums club member and featured speaker, shared stylish ideas for turning plain packages into beautifully wrapped gifts with some major flair. She proved that a creative and eye-catching presentation is just as fun as the present itself. Below are a few tips that will make your presents stand out under the tree and make you the gift-giver everyone will be talking about this year:

This list includes only a sample of creative ideas, some of which use everyday items that you're sure to already have in your home – happy wrapping!



Kelly Samaras displays the wine cork wreath she crafted.



Front row- Lynn Malone and Kelley Samaras. Back row- Jean Weathers, Karen Smith (speaker), and Pat Baumann

- Add jewels, buttons, old earrings, hair bows or holiday strand wraps in the middle of your bows for a more elegant look.
- Adorn wrapped boxes with snowmen made with cotton balls, attach small ornaments, or make googly-eye faces for children.
- Cut out a rectangle of black construction paper and add dotted white lines down the middle, then glue to rope of package; add a car or carriage on the "lane" for boys and girls.
- Put gift cards in unusual boxes (think cereal or granola bars); your recipient will be quite surprised – and delighted – to get more than what may appear at first sight.
- Use round Kleenex boxes or a tall glass covered with holiday socks or a seasonal tea towel to give as a hostess gift with flowers or other special gifts inside the box/glass.
- Place a bottle of wine on a small plastic plate, glue gemstones around the bottom of the bottle and wrap with net for a festive presentation.

If you are interested in joining or would like more information about the Mountain Mums Garden Club, contact Mary Jacobson, Membership Chair, at mjacob1010@gmail.com.



Ruth Ann Hill with gifts for Wellroot children

Morning Glories Make Wellroot Wishes Come True!

By Quill Duncan

The Morning Glories support many community projects, and none are more fun for the members than shopping for the children and families who are served by Wellroot. Wellroot is a ministry of the United Methodist Church in North Georgia. Wellroot's offices are in the Northlake area and their programs are designed to make an impact on children and families through faith-centered services. Each fall Ruth Ann Hill, our chairperson for this project, sends the club a list of needed items from Wellroot. Members of the club purchase items to bring to the November meeting. It's always a joyful experience to be able to shop for the toys, games, books, clothing, and craft projects for the kids. In December, adult family members served by Wellroot will shop the donated gifts and then take them home to present to their children or those in foster care on Christmas morning. The Morning Glories also make a monetary donation to Wellroot every year to support the ministry.

In December, the Morning Glories club will again decorate the historic Wells Brown House in Stone Mountain Village. Members use period-appropriate native greenery inside and outside the home. Drive by or come support the Stone Mountain Historic Society with their Open House planned for December 2, 2022.

Our November meeting at the Smoke Rise Country Club featured a presentation by Valerie Boss who works with Park Pride. Her focus is on removing old and new invasive species from three DeKalb County Parks. We are all familiar with English ivy, privet and kudzu but she reminded us that many newly-introduced species such as Japanese Chaff Flower and Japanese Knotweed are also very invasive. The most effective way to remove these non-natives is to pull them out or cut to the ground and paint with glyphosate. It is an on-going challenge. Our parks will benefit from their removal with the introduction of native plants.

Our next meeting will be December 13, 2022, at the Smoke Rise Country Club with a speaker on the GA Piedmont Land Trust, a project supported by The Garden Club of Georgia. If you are interested in attending or would like to join the club, please contact Janet McGinnis at 770 939-8878.





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Mountain Mums Attend Fundraiser



Thirteen ladies from the Mountain Mums Garden Club attended the Annual Leading Lights Luncheon and Fashion Show at Callanwolde. The DeKalb Federation of Garden Clubs hosts the annual event as a fundraiser to support local causes and scholarships.

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Amen, Let's Eat!

by Joyce Ray



A Christmas Cake "Yule" Love!

The tradition of the Yule Log was celebrated in England and France before it was imported to America in the late 1600's. Taken from a pagan tradition, the biggest log that could be cut was brought to the hearth and lit on Christmas Eve, then allowed to burn for twelve days, originally to commemorate the winter solstice. It was later adopted by Christians to hold a vigil for the coming of the Christ Child. It is a diminishing tradition that has lost some of its traditional meaning in modern homes.

The Yule Log cake, however, can still be a delicious way to commemorate that tradition and add a lovely centerpiece to your dessert table. This recipe is from "The Pioneer Woman".

Cake ingredients:

4 Tbsp melted salted butter
6 large eggs, separated
¼ tsp cream of tartar
¼ tsp salt
¾ cup granulated sugar
¾ cup all - purpose flour
¼ cup unsweetened cocoa powder
½ tsp baking powder
1 tsp vanilla extract
¼ cup strong brewed coffee - room temperature
¼ cup powdered sugar

Filling ingredients:

4 oz cream cheese at room temp.
½ cup sifted powdered sugar
1 cup heavy cream
1 tsp vanilla

Frosting Ingredients:

12 oz semisweet chocolate, chopped
¾ cup heavy cream
1 Tablespoon light corn syrup

Preheat oven to 350°. Butter a 12x17 inch rimmed cookie sheet. Line with parchment paper or wax paper, leaving an overhang on all sides. With a pastry brush, paint melted butter on parchment paper.

Beat egg whites, cream of tartar, and salt in a large bowl with a mixer on medium to high speed until frothy. Add ¼ cup granulated sugar and beat on high for 2 minutes until stiff, glossy peaks form.

Sift together flour, cocoa powder, and baking powder in a medium bowl. In a separate bowl, combine the egg yolks, remaining ½ cup sugar, and vanilla. Beat on high speed for 3-4 minutes until thick and creamy. Beat in the melted butter and coffee until combined. Add flour mixture to the egg yolk mixture and beat on low speed until well combined. Gently fold in the beaten egg whites a little at a time until combined. Transfer batter to the prepared pan, gently nudging the batter to fill to the corners. Shake lightly to even out batter. Bake for 10-12 minutes until the top just starts to spring back when gently pressed. Do not overbake, which will cause the cake to crack.

Place a large clean dish towel on a wire rack. Dust cloth with 2 tablespoons of powdered sugar. While the cake is still hot, loosen the edges from the pan, then flip the cake onto the towel. Carefully remove the parchment. Dust the top with the remaining 2 tablespoons of powdered sugar. While the cake is warm, start at one of the long sides, use the towel to tightly roll up the cake with the towel inside. Position the cake seam-side down and let it cool for about one hour.

For filling, beat the cream cheese in a large bowl with a mixer on low speed until just smooth. Add powdered sugar and beat for about 1 minute. Gradually beat in the heavy cream - ¼ cup at a time until mixture is smooth. Increase speed to medium high and beat until stiff peaks form 2-4 minutes. Add the vanilla and beat for a few more seconds to combine.

Carefully unroll the cooled cake and spread filling evenly, leaving 1/4 to ½ border on all sides. Re-roll the cake, using the towel to help hold in place. Cover cake roll with parchment paper and tightly wrap in plastic wrap. Chill for at least 2 hours.

For frosting, put the chocolate in a medium bowl, bring heavy cream and corn syrup to a simmer in a saucepan, then pour over the chocolate. Let sit for 5 minutes, then whisk until smooth. Let thicken at room temp about 2 hours until spreadable. Unwrap the cake on a cutting board. Cut off ¼ of the cake on a sharp diagonal for the branch. Position the branch against the remaining cake roll on a platter. Cover the cake with frosting using a thin spatula. Drag fork through the frosting to create a bark-like texture. Garnish with rosemary sprig and pomegranate seeds or cranberries.

Wishing you and your family a very blessed and Merry Christmas!



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