

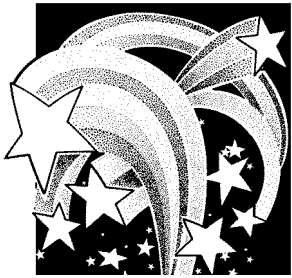
SMOKE SIGNAL

VOLUME 50, ISSUE 10

Serving the Smoke Rise Community Since 1968

January, 2018

www.smokesignalnews.com



HAPPY NEW YEAR and Best Wishes for a Healthy and Prosperous 2018 from the Staff of the Smoke Signal!

Excerpts from a Speech to the Council for Quality Growth Given by Tucker Mayor Frank Auman

My vision for Tucker is that it will remain a place where a person can live their whole life. That phrase has a double meaning for us, because it not only refers to being able to live in a place for the whole length of your life, if you choose, but for the whole breadth of your life as well. I summarize it with the phrase, "Live, work, play and pray". That means we want a person to have the option to live and work in the same community, and also to participate in civic life through recreation, sports, dining, shopping and volunteering, as well as to be a part of a faith community in the community where they live.

We have so far in 2017 licensed 275 NEW businesses within the city. We currently have almost 1800 businesses operating in the city, reporting more than 20,000 employees in our city of 35,000 people.

We have seen a 22% increase in land use applications over last year. We have two residential developments that had stalled during the recession, now gearing up again – they consist of a total of 298 townhomes, and we have newly approved an application for another 66 townhomes. We have a new development of 20 single family detached homes. We have approved a senior independent living facility that will break ground next year on 90 units. We have approved 210 new apartment units beginning construction next year on Northlake Parkway adjacent to the new Meridian shopping and dining development. Tucker is not only open for business and development, we have open arms, and you will not find a city that is more intentional about supporting its local businesses and the developers who want to help us build a great place to call home.

I think that Tucker is the place to be working in DeKalb County. Did you know we are the home of DeKalb's CEO and the School Superintendent? Did you know we are the headquarters of the County's Police, Fire, Parks and Watershed Management departments, the DeKalb County School System, and of Discover DeKalb, our convention and visitor's bureau? We are centrally located and strategically placed relative to the highways and the two most important airports in the state. I would say to you that Tucker is arguably DeKalb's center of gravity.

Did you know Tucker is measurably the most active volunteer community in the metro area? It's not even close really - The ARC did a poll that showed something like 75% of Tucker residents are satisfied with volunteer opportunities, whereas the average is something like 15%. It's in our DNA, and it shows up in the real world – we have an amazing set of Friends of the Parks who get

...continued on page 3

The Sears Property Closed!

On November 30, 2017, at 5:08 p.m., the property that has long been known as the Sears property closed. DeKalb County Schools bought approximately 12 acres for the new site where Smoke Rise Elementary School will be built, and the balance sold to the developer. Closing is a significant milestone toward change and the future of the property.

The first thing many began to notice on the day of closing was a change in signage on the property offering pad sites for lease and or sale. While there is a change in ownership, it will likely take a while until we see changes take place. The schools will select a builder/developer by the end of 2018 and start construction most likely in early 2019 with completion anticipated for the opening of the 2020-2021 school year.

The developer will need to acquire permits to take down most likely the old NTB building and the building with a row of docks before anything else can happen. Development that is currently allowed without going for any changes falls under light industrial zoning where over 100 uses are available. Recent conversations and information show a slower process to initially develop the corner and the pad sites along Hugh Howell and Mountain Industrial with other development following later. Whether or not the developer will go back to council for a zoning change to allow either residential or larger retail remains to be seen. Hang on, the future is that there will be a change from abandoned buildings, but it is not fully defined at this time.

Look inside for...

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DeKalb's New Animal Shelter	pg. 9
Greenspace Galore!	pg. 10



7th Annual Walk to Remember

Happy New Year neighbors and friends from the Mountain Mums Garden Club! We are once again having our special WALK TO REMEMBER (WTR) on Saturday, January 20, at 9:30 a.m. As always we will meet at Smoke Rise Baptist Church parking lot next to Hugh Howell Rd. The WTR is an easy stroll through our beautiful neighborhoods and green spaces while honoring our Memorial Triangle.

The triangle was planted in 2007 to honor seven young lives that were lost too soon in car accidents. We remember them always..... Julian Carter, Brandon Hubbard, Ben Lories, Mandi Smith, Brandon Stovall, Matt Taylor, and Charlie Wellman.

Because of your support we were able to offer two Taggart's Driving school scholarships - CONGRATULATIONS to Julia White and Keenan Williams. We will also be able to replace our "NO TEXTING" signs that were damaged. Boy Scout Troop 876 will be our escort, Kroger will be providing our drinks and snacks, and as always we appreciate our faithful sponsors! Come join us and just "hang out" if you don't care to walk. We do welcome friendly four legged walkers too. If the weather doesn't cooperate, we will be rescheduling!

Hope to see MANY of you and thank you AGAIN!

REMINDER.....

SRCA 2018 Dues are now due

It's time to pay membership dues for the Smoke Rise Community Association.

The dues are \$35.00 for the year and can be paid online at <http://www.smokerise.org/membership.html>

If you want to pay them by mail, send your check to:
Smoke Rise Community Association
P.O. Box 870793
Smoke Rise, GA 30087



Smoke Signal

P.O. Box 763, Tucker, GA 30085
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Views and/or opinions expressed in articles, stories or letters published in this newspaper are not necessarily those of the Smoke Signal or its staff. The information contained in it is believed to be accurate, but not warranted in any way. It is the policy of the Smoke Signal to publish signed letters to the Editor. We will not publish unsigned letters, but will withhold the writer's name upon request. All content may be edited.

January Calendar of Events

- 1 HAPPY NEW YEAR!!!
- 8 Mountain Shadow Garden Club meeting
Eastminster Presbyterian Church, 7:30 p.m.
- 9 Mountain Mums Garden Club meeting
at the home of Cheri Schneider, 9:45 a.m.
- 10 National Take the Stairs Day
- 15 MLK Day
- 18 Tucker Arts Guild, 7:00 p.m., First Baptist Church
of Tucker, Building B, Church Street entrance
- 20 Walk to Remember, 9:30 a.m.
Smoke Rise Baptist Church parking lot

Save these February dates:

- 2 & 3 Smoke Rise Academy of Arts
presentation of Disney's Peter Pan, Jr.
Smoke Rise Baptist Church Fellowship Hall, 7:00 p.m.

Smoke Signal Deadlines

JANUARY 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 box at
5365 Smoke Rise Drive

Deadline for classified ads is JANUARY 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.

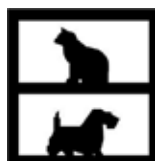
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Bring One for the Chipper

Every year, Keep DeKalb Beautiful sponsors "Bring One for the Chipper" as part of a Statewide effort to recycle Christmas trees. This annual event continues the tradition of recycling live Christmas trees. Citizens have the option to submit used trees to designated drop-off points in DeKalb County. Residents who are currently serviced by DeKalb County Sanitation Division may also leave their trees for curbside pick-up. The Christmas trees are recycled by chipping them into mulch for use in landscaping, or by using them as fish and wildlife habitats. Bring One for the Chipper

Last year, more than 200,000 trees were recycled in the State of Georgia. Over 10,000 of those trees were from DeKalb citizens. The program produces tangible environmental benefits while helping our county comply with State regulations that prohibit the disposal of yard trimmings in lined municipal landfills.



FREE NEIGHBORHOOD PET LOST AND FOUND

Call Kay McKenzie at 770-491-6784 with information if you have lost or found a pet.

BRING A BOOK - TAKE A BOOK

Don't forget to check out the Little Libraries



that have popped up near the swim clubs.

Smoke Rise Baptist Church

Dr. Chris George, Senior Pastor
 Bart McNiel, Associate Pastor
 Tim Adcox, Minister of Missions
 Kathy Dobbins, Minister of Spiritual Formation
 Danny Vancil, Minister of Music & Worship
 Becky Caswell-Speight, Minister to Families with Children
 Jeremy Colliver, Minister to Families with Youth
 Amanda Coe Burton, Director of Nursery Ministries
 Valerie Coe Lowder, Director of the Weekday School
 Telephone: (770) 469-5856
SmokeRiseBaptist.org

Sundays:
 9:00 a.m. Worship in the Chapel
 9:45 a.m. Sunday school
 11:00 a.m. Worship in the Sanctuary

Communion: Second Sunday of each month
 1st Tuesdays: 11:30 a.m. Prime Time

Wednesdays:
 5:00-5:45 Fellowship Dinner
 6:00-7:00 Programs for children, youth and adults
 7:00-8:30 Sanctuary choir
 Nursery provided

Eastminster Presbyterian Church

Pastor: Rev. J. Caleb Clarke III
 Pastor of Senior Adult Ministries: Rev. Jeanne Simpson
 Director of Mission & Youth: Mark Sauls
 Director of Music Ministries: Andrew Meade
 Director of Preschool: Stacey Moura
 Director of School Age Program: Celeste Sears
 Director of Respite Care Program: Helen Wilborn
 Director of Communications: Joy Summerville-Johnson
 Telephone (770) 469-4881
www.eastminster.us

Respite Care Center Hours: 10 a.m.-3 p.m. Wednesday

Sundays:
 9:15 a.m. Sunday School for all ages
 10:30 a.m. Worship in the Sanctuary - nursery provided
 5:00 p.m. Youth Fellowship

Communion: First Sunday of each month

Wednesdays:
 5:45 p.m. Join us for dinner! - \$5 per adult
 6:30 p.m. Program
 7:30 p.m. Chancel Choir

Mount Carmel Christian Church

Senior Minister: Art Stansberry
 Worship Leader: Leslie Riley
 Coordinator of Kids Ministry - Jim Barber
 Director of Student Ministries: Will Tyler
 Telephone (770) 279-8437
www.mountcarmelcc.org

Sundays:
 8:30 a.m. Coffee/ Doughnuts/ Fellowship
 9:30 a.m. Bible School Classes - Adults & Children
 10:30 a.m. Worship

Wednesdays beginning August 10:
 5:30 p.m. Dinner
 6:30 p.m. Bible Studies/Electives for All Ages

First Moravian Church

Pastor: Dr. Stephen Weisz
 Congregational Acolyte: Bill Hitz
 Telephone (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 Monrovia Church
 4950 Hugh Howell Rd., Stone Mountain, GA 30087

Mountain West Church

Pastor: Michael Shreve
 Worship Arts Pastor: Gary Robinson
 Telephone (770) 491-0228
www.mwchurch.com
 4818 Hugh Howell Rd., Stone Mountain
 Service Times 8:00 a.m., 9:30 a.m., 11:30 a.m.

The *Smoke Signal* is posted to www.smokesignalnews.com the first of each month. Go to the "Smoke Signal Digital" link. You'll also find the link posted to the *Smoke Signal* News Facebook page each month with posting of pictures and stories throughout the month. For questions, contact Pat Soltys at pat@smokeriseagents.com.

Mayor's Speech...continued from page 1

the work done every day. We have two CID's operating within the city: Tucker Northlake, led by Matthew Lee, and Stone Mountain, headed by Emory Morsberger. We have a business association, a citywide civic association, a Mainstreet Association, a historic society (also headed by Matthew Lee), and the full range of active PTA's, Parent Councils, homeowner's associations, a Rotary Club, an Optimist Club and a Lions Club. We have churches, Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, the biggest youth soccer league in the county, if not the metro, STEM and IB certified high school, middle school and elementary schools. We have a main street most cities would love to have, and, in fact, are trying to create, that hosts five major events every year, and guess what? They're ALL run by volunteers. And all these things existed before we were a city. I said it's in our DNA – they didn't happen because we became a city – we became a city because it was the next right thing to do to build on, protect and sustain the work of the literal generations who went before us.

Local Arts Students Contribute Talent and Helping Hands to Annual Food Drive

Students from Smoke Rise Academy of the Arts gathered to provide live entertainment outside the Kroger on Rockbridge Road in Stone Mountain on November 4, supporting Smoke Rise Baptist Church's annual Food Basket Drive. The group performed music and drama for customers doing their Saturday morning shopping, and collected over 400 food items and \$250 in gift cards. Students then met with church parishioners the following weekend to help sort the food and assemble the baskets. Because of the contributions of the Academy students, the Church was able to put together 150 food baskets this year, which will be distributed during the holidays to families through the Lilburn Coop and NETWorks Coop.



SRAA Director Denise Burcham with students collecting outside the Kroger.

**Dare to Pair
Gourmet Food & Fine Wine Adventures
by Doc Lawrence**

Combining over 50 years' experience in cooking, uncorking, consulting and entertaining, two high-profile professionals Virginia (Jenny) Hall and Doc Lawrence launch their highly anticipated program in early February, "Just in time for Valentine's Day," said Jenny. Dare to Pair is the name of this undertaking, a light-hearted but highly useful program all about the glory of the grape and the magical relationship it shares with gourmet delights from the kitchen.

Cookbook author, caterer, columnist, and home entertainer, Jenny Hall enjoys a solid reputation as a quick-witted, eloquent and established bright star in the gourmet world. A popular public personality in DeKalb and Gwinnett counties, she has written for the local paper, "The Smoke Signal" for 30 years, written four cookbooks, conducted cooking classes and prepared tea and luncheons at a popular Stone Mountain Bed & Breakfast, the Stillwell House.

Doc Lawrence is a veteran journalist, published author, TV producer and enthusiastic wine commentator. The late Jim Sanders, known as the "Father of Fine Wines in Atlanta," taught Doc in his legendary Buckhead wine classes and gave him his priceless wine course materials prior to his death. Doc's popular wine column in Atlanta's "Piedmont Review" magazine ran for 16 years and he writes, broadcasts and lectures regularly throughout the country about wine, food, restaurants and elevated lifestyles.

"Dare to Pair," says Jenny, "Is much more than a food and wine course. We'll have real food from my kitchen along with servings of Doc's wine choices, discuss what they are and why they are perfect to pair together" She added that practical suggestions, like where to buy affordable "but never cheap" wines are part of the package along with highly useful advice about crystal stemware and many other dinner suggestions.

Fun and friendship, according to Doc Lawrence, is the backbone of this program. "We begin with Valentine's Day, serving up some original and highly creative food for lovers with a surprise wine that says amour loud and clear. Who knows? Maybe we'll finish up with a 'Champagne jam.'"

Dare to Pair, also known as Dare2Pair, will soon be signing up program participants for the February 2018 debut. "We're keeping this intimate," says Jenny. "Twenty should

be a comfortable group." Plans are to have an occasional celebrity guest and a field trip to a Georgia winery. She pledged, "This is not a typical teacher-student type of course, but one of active participation, delightful food tastings and interesting wine pairings. The course is sure to be filled with laughter, new friends and the chance for some real enlightenment."

An exciting announcement is coming soon with the location and dates for Dare2Pair. Feel free to contact Virginia Hall (Jenny) at vhallmusic@bell-south.net.

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Mountain Creek Swim Club
2092 Mountain Creek Court
Stone Mountain GA 30087

MOUNTAIN CREEK - THE CLUB FOR ALL SEASONS

Snow came early this winter so we postponed our Luminaries until December 16. Setting out Luminaries in front of every house in Mountain Creek has been a tradition where we meet our neighbors while setting the mood for a lovely winter!



ARE YOU LOOKING FOR THE PERFECT GIFT THIS POST-HOLIDAY SEASON?

Due to the snow we are extending our Special Earlybird Gift Membership to Mountain Creek Swim Club

\$300 for full season if purchased by January 31, 2018

Enjoy the big, beautiful pool, diving area, baby pool!
Water aerobics – Special Events – Holiday Cookouts

Mountain Creek Swim Club is a family-oriented swim club located at 2092 Mountain Creek Court. Visit our Facebook page, our website at MountainCreekSwimClub.com, or call 678-824-2108.

JANUARY PROGRAMS AT THE TUCKER LIBRARY

Getting to Know your Android Smartphone

Come learn the basics of how to use your Android smartphone. This two-part class will be held January 10th and 17th, 2018, from 2-4 p.m. at the Tucker library. Bring your Android Smartphone and we'll walk you through some basics.

Part 1 on January 10 will cover tasks like making a phone call, setting up your voice mail, and taking a picture. Part 2 on January 17th will cover logging into a Wi-Fi network, downloading and installing apps from the Google Play store, and setting up contacts.

Call the Tucker Reid H. Cofer Branch at 770-270-8234 on or after January 2nd to register. Bring your phone, and let's start making the phone your friend.

Getting to Know your iPhone

Come learn the basics of how to use your iPhone. This two-part class will be held January 24th and 31st, 2018, from 2-4 p.m. at the Tucker library. Bring your iPhone and we'll walk you through some basics.

Part 1 on January 24th will cover tasks like making a phone call, setting up your voice mail, and taking a picture. Part 2 on January 31st will cover logging into a Wi-Fi network, downloading and installing apps from the Google Play store, and setting up contacts.

Call the Tucker Reid H. Cofer Branch at 770-270-8234 on or after January 15th to register. Bring your phone, and let's start making the phone your friend.

After School Movies for Teens

Ages 13 to 17 years

Titles of movies will be announced the day of screening.

Mondays, 4:00 p.m.-5:30 p.m.

January 22, 29 and February 5, 12, 19.

Open to first 35 participants

New Children's Programs at the Tucker Library

January 8: Eager Readers Book Club (ages 5 to 6): We are reading *Splat the Cat and the Duck with No Quack* by Rob Scotton. (Call to register and pick-up a copy)

January 9: Building Blocks storytimes (ages 0 to 2) every Tuesday @ 9:00 a.m.

January 10: Tales for 2s storytimes (2-year-olds) every Wednesday @ 9:30 a.m.

January 10: Read to a Pet Partner: Children can practice their read-aloud skills by reading to two excellent canine listeners. (Call to register)

January 17: Homeschool Family Get-togethers (1:00 p.m.--3:00 p.m.)

January 22 and 29: After School Movies for Teens (ages 13 to 17) 4:00 p.m. to 5:30 p.m.

January 29: Book Buddies Book Club (ages 6 to 9): We are reading *Frankie Pickle and the Closet of Doom* by Eric Wight. (Call to register and pick-up a copy)

There is also a program for Spanish-speaking families starting in January:

Prime Time is a 6-week program of storytelling and a humanities-based group discussion for Spanish-speaking families with children between the ages of 6-10. The entire family including younger siblings is encouraged to attend. Its primary purpose is to promote literacy and encourage parents to bond with their children around books. The dates for our next program will be on Tuesdays, January 16 through February 20 from 5:15 to 7:30 p.m. at the Tucker-Reid H. Cofer Library.

Call 770.270.8234 for more information.

**Smoke Rise Academy of the Arts Presents
DISNEY'S PETER PAN JR. as Winter Production
Shows presented free to community Feb. 2, 3**

The Smoke Rise Academy of the Arts (SRAA) drama department will present DISNEY'S PETER PAN JR. as its winter production Friday, February 2, 2018 and Saturday, February 3, 2018 in the Fellowship Hall of Smoke Rise Baptist Church. Members of the Smoke Rise and surrounding community are invited to attend this free performance.



Based on the Disney film and J.M. Barrie's enchanting play, DISNEY'S PETER PAN JR. is a modern version of the timeless tale about a boy who wouldn't grow up. The score includes new arrangements of classic Disney songs and a story featuring one rousing adventure after another.

Wendy Darling loves to tell stories to her brothers, Michael and John. But when her father announces she must move out of the nursery, Peter Pan comes to visit the children and whisks them away to Neverland. Their journey introduces them to the Lost Boys, Mermaids, Indians and even the infamous pirate, Captain Hook! It's Peter to the rescue when Wendy is taken captive by the dreaded captain, who has his own sinister plans in mind for our hero.

DISNEY'S PETER PAN JR. is a fun family show suitable for all ages. Shows begin at 7:00 p.m. on Friday and Saturday; each show will have live pre-show entertainment, concessions and videos (including out-takes).

Smoke Rise Academy of the Arts

The Smoke Rise Academy of Arts is housed in Smoke Rise Baptist Church at 5901 Hugh Howell Road in Stone Mountain. Classes are offered all year in music, dance, drama and art; pre-school classes begin September 6. Visit www.smokerisebaptist.org/arts for class information and registrations. You can also follow the organization on Facebook.

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Woman's Club Sponsors Shower for Wellspring Living participants



Members of the GFWC Stone Mountain Woman's Club Night Guild sponsored a kitchen shower for a recent graduate of the Wellspring Living program who moved into her own apartment. Wellspring Living serves survivors of childhood sexual abuse and exploitation.

Wellspring works to empower domestic sex trafficking victims. Through life-giving residential and community-based programs, girls and young women are provided the opportunity to live freely and become successful.

Wellspring Living owns and operates four upscale resale stores to help support the cost of the organization. Wellspring Treasures accepts donations of new or gently used women's and children's clothing, toys, furniture and home decor. The Toco Hills Treasures is located at 2899A North Druid Hills Rd, Atlanta 30329. Hours are 10-6 Monday to Saturday.

Members of the Stone Mountain Woman's Club have provided household and kitchen items, bedding, and birthday and holiday gifts for participants in the program. Members have also volunteered at the retail store.

Wellspring is a 501c3 organization. For more information go to wellspringliving.org.

If you are interested in volunteering and meeting new friends, please consider joining the GFWC Stone Mountain Woman's Club. The club is a member of the International Federation of Women's Clubs. Please contact a neighbor who may be a member or Kim Cumbie, president, 770-469-3399.

Rotary Club of Stone Mountain, Georgia Gifts Local Refugees with Dictionaries

Club's Project Will Help Recent Arrivals Learn English, Prepare for Citizenship

The Rotary Club of Stone Mountain, a member club of Rotary International, has leveraged a Rotary District grant to gift 1,200 dictionaries to members of the refugee community recently resettled in Clarkston, Georgia. The club hopes the dictionaries, designed for third-grade students who already speak English, will help the new arrivals develop their English language skills and prepare them for naturalization.

The club has for the past several years participated in the national "Dictionary Project," a program which distributes dictionaries to third-grade students across the nation, seeking to help them become good writers, active readers, creative thinkers, and resourceful learners. Sponsors, including civic groups like Rotary Clubs, purchase the dictionaries and then give them to students to use at school and at home for years to come. Educators see third grade as the dividing line between "learning to read and reading to learn," so sponsors are encouraged to give dictionaries each year to children in the third grade.

This year, the Stone Mountain Club decided to extend their program to refugees living in Clarkston, Georgia, and working with the city, distributed over 1,200 dictionaries through various community events.

"We are so grateful to the Stone Mountain Rotarians for their support of our refugee community," said Terry Sanders, special project coordinator for the city of Clarkston. "Our newest residents arrive here with little to no English language skills and are trying to learn a difficult language as adults. Many are also studying to become U.S. citizens. These dictionaries will be a vital tool in learning English and a lot about the U.S. that will help them more quickly settle into their communities."



The Center for Pan Asian Community Services distributed dictionaries to local students to share with their families.

The dictionary that was distributed this year was *A Student's Dictionary*, published by The Dictionary Project. It is 540 pages, with the definitions, pronunciations and parts of speech for 35,000 words. It also has 150 pages of supplemental information, including the U.S. Declaration of Independence, the U.S. Constitution, the biographies of U.S. presidents, world maps, information

on all 50 states, information on countries of the world, weights and measurements, the Periodic Table, and information on our solar system and the planets.

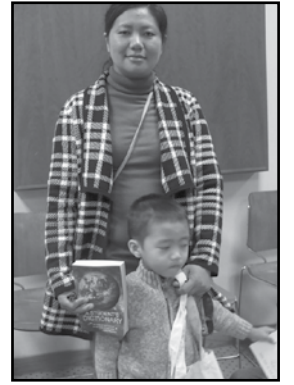
The club purchased 2,400 dictionaries with the help of a grant from Rotary District 6900. Half the dictionaries were distributed to third-graders in ten DeKalb County Schools, and half went into the Clarkston refugee community. Each dictionary had a sticker inside the front cover noting it was a gift from the Rotary Club of Stone Mountain.

"We are always happy to partner with our community schools on this project, but this year we had the added pleasure of helping our refugee neighbors," said Gillian Leggett, president of the Rotary Club of Stone Mountain. "Now many of these new families can learn English together and feel more comfortable in their new home."


About Rotary Club of Stone Mountain

Celebrating its 52th year of service, the Rotary Club of Stone Mountain is one of 34,000 member clubs of Rotary International. The Stone Mountain club raises and disburses funds for charitable, educational and medical research purposes. Monies are raised through social events and service projects organized by the club and donations offered to the club through members and supporters.

The Rotary Club of Stone Mountain meets every Tuesday for lunch at noon at Stone Mountain First United Methodist Church, 5312 West Mountain Street, Stone Mountain, Georgia 30083. Guests are always welcome. To learn more about the club and its upcoming programs, go to www.stonemountainrotary.org.



Burmese refugees Dim Nuam and her son Mung Khoul received dictionaries at the Clarkston Public Library.



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Of Note to the Community: Safety Alerts & Watches

by Cedric Ross

We have reviewed home security, with two topics remaining - personal and cyber/internet security. This month we will discuss internet security. The internet has a world of information and services; however, caution is the buzz word.

This is a definition of cyber security I found on the internet: Cyber security standards (also styled cyber security standards)[1] are techniques generally set forth in published materials that attempt to protect the cyber environment of a user or organization.[2] This environment includes users themselves, networks, devices, all software, processes, information in storage or transit, applications, services, and systems that can be connected directly or indirectly to networks. The principal objective is to reduce the risks, including prevention or mitigation of cyber-attacks. These published materials consist of collections of tools, policies, security concepts, security safeguards, guidelines, risk management approaches, actions, training, best practices, assurance and technologies (Wikipedia.org) Any device that is connected to the internet directly or indirectly can be compromised. Let's start with the understanding that we can reduce the likelihood of a virus on our devices but never eliminate the possibility. There is only one solution to stopping any virus or hacking - never power up the device and/or don't connect to the internet - period. The world is becoming more connected and therefore that may not be a viable option for many of us. Having said that we can we begin to reduce viruses and/or hacking of our devices.

If you have not requested a trusted file or link, DO NOT OPEN THE ATTACHED FILE OR CLICK ON THE LINK. Attached files or links can install software that may take control or even compromise your device.

I will keep my soap box statements to a minimum and here are some recommendations for added safety.

- Install trusted virus software
- Do not install any software that you do not trust
- Beware of links that are not trusted
- Don't provide details to an unsolicited caller asking for details about your device (for example a computer, router, IP address....)
- Password protect all devices and don't use the same password time and time again

Reference: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cyber_security_standards

Crime Reports

- 10/21/2017 A young man knocked on the door inquiring about my home for sale, which is not for sale. The police were called. The police stated it was a scam and would patrol the neighborhood.
- 11/26/2017 A couple was robbed at gun point near Silver Hill Rd. close to Seventh Day Adventist Church
- 11/27/2017 Beware of those knocking on your door offering unsolicited services.

We make an effort to list local crimes. If you have a crime or safety-related news, please email details that we may list in this column to cedric64@live.com

Did You Know?

You can sign up for DeKalb County's high-speed emergency notification system, CodeRED, which can quickly deliver time-sensitive messages via voice, email, and text to you during emergency situations.

To sign up for CodeRED, visit www.dekalbcountyga.gov and click the CodeRED icon on the bottom of the page.

Smoke Rise Preferred Contractor's List

If you are looking for reliable people to build decks, paint, do electrical, plumbing, interior design and many other services, then request a copy of this list as a potential starting point. We maintain a free listing of contractors and other service providers that your neighbors have used successfully. If you want a copy of this list, please email Jim Farmer at: jimfarmer@live.com or call him at (770) 939-8949. We also ask for your feedback. Tell us about a contractor or service provider that you have used with opinions about their work. This information will be useful for future revisions of the list.



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Another Successful Holiday in Smoke Rise Craft Fair

Susan Gilbert, Staff Writer


Holiday in Smoke Rise is a longstanding community shopping tradition. Now in its 37th year and attracting more than 100 artists, crafters, and holiday vendors, it is a great way of buying local, seeing your neighbors, and supporting the school. Proceeds from the event benefit the school through an endowment fund.

Among the many contributions to the school over the years are whiteboards, Smart Boards, paint, lab equipment, and laptops. Always held on the first Saturday of December, now is




a great time to mark your calendar for next year's event.

Pictured above, Smoke Rise resident and occasional guest writer for the *Smoke Signal*, Joel Gilbert, looks forward to the show each year for stocking his herb drawer with hard to find spices that are usually available at this event.




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Promises Promises...

by Joel Gilbert

Well, it's that time again. The time when we promise we are going to change our ways: lose weight, exercise, spend more time with family, the list goes on. This annual contemplative ritual seems appropriate after the hectic holiday pace, parties, and indulgences.

Yet very few of us live up to those promises. Why is that? Were the goals too lofty? No ... probably not. Were the changes in our behavior too hard to implement? Apparently, but as we think about them ... no ... they just seem hard to stick with day after day.

Perhaps the answer is right in front of us and observable in organizations like Weight Watchers where you have partners and weigh-ins. It is the sense of relationship and accountability that seems to make the difference.



On a personal note, I knew I needed to be walking more as rehabilitation from last year's hip surgery. I would start walking a day or two ... and then stop. My wife would chide me, and I would walk a day or so, but then I stopped. It was only when my neighbor

agreed to walk with me a few days a week that this moved from the "good idea" to becoming a reality in my life balance.

Accountability makes a huge difference. And, the side benefit has been a stream of conversations that has broadened my perceptions because my neighbor comes from a completely different culture and profession. The time walking seems to go quickly as we share perspectives and experiences.

I am now getting my steps in and expanding my knowledge of the world. Through getting to know my new-found friend and neighbor, I discovered he is a world-renowned, MIT-trained PhD chemist working on building critically needed infrastructure in developing countries around the globe, impacting the lives of millions of people.

So, the question we might all want to ponder before we make any promises this new year is: "Who will we be accountable to and for what?" Perhaps then, a discussion of the promise and a covenant to be accountable on it will emerge. It is certainly worth a try.

Bundle Up! Your Garden is Calling and the Squirrels Ate all the Birdseed!

by Rene' Boven



OK. It's January and we're about mid-way through the winter season. Do you already have the winter doldrums? Are you pining (like I am) for warmer temps and for being back in your garden? Well, bundle up and get thee to your gardens! I know...."it's cold outside". So, go buy some long underwear and put some heat packs in your gloves because there's work to be done. Winter is a great time to get your gardens ready for spring and without all of the sweat equity, and it's also a great time to enjoy the birds.

January is one of the best times to analyze your landscape/garden since you can see it better and thus, see what needs to be worked on. I like to think of my outdoor spaces as rooms. And, when bored – what do we do? Rearrange the furniture! So, let's start with a little decorating. For me, that's always fun! Surprisingly, winter (early winter) is a good time for transplanting as the temps are cooler and the watering requirements are less. As shrubs mature, the spacing shrinks. Adjust it by spreading them out or moving them to another area that needs a little fluffing out. Pick warmer days to do this so the ground is not so hard.

Next, get out your pruners and do some renovation. Prune any overgrown shrubs and trim back evergreens, and remove any dead branches from trees. DON'T prune azaleas or other early-spring bloomers though because you'll disrupt their blooming cycle. And, don't commit Crepe Murder – over pruning your crepe myrtles.

Also, if you haven't already done it, be sure to mulch – it's one of the most important things to do this season. Mulching keeps the moisture in the ground and around the roots which are always growing. Apply two to three inches of shredded pine bark or pine straw. Remember, mulching is not just for making your landscapes look good. Your plants will love you for it!

And, just because it's cold outside, don't forget to water! Your irrigation systems should be winterized and shut off. But, you need to consider your plants' water needs – especially evergreens. If a new plant (one that has been in the ground for less than 3 years) goes for more than two weeks without rain, its roots can dry out and it'll die. Watering with a hose might be necessary. Also, don't neglect your window boxes and other planters. Watering is best done on warmer days and before the temps start dropping towards the end of the day to avoid freezing.

Winter is also a good time for birding, and like with your gardens, you still have work to do. Birds need food, water and shelter during the cold months. Feeding is important as they don't have the resources available to them that the warmer months provide such as insects. They need energy to keep them warm so keep your feeders full and clean. A variety of food will provide you with a variety of birds so offer seed, thistle and suet! Water is still important too so keep your bird baths full. If you're worried about your baths/fountains freezing, there are heaters available and some bird baths even come with heaters. Shelter is another concern. Provide plenty of houses and be sure that they're clean.

You will see different birds during this season because of the migrants; they are our winter birds. They include tiny kinglets; yellow rumped and orange crowned warblers; yellow-bellied sapsuckers; hermit thrush, cedar waxwings and others. Have you seen any bright yellow feathered friends at your feeders? Those are Gold Finches and Pine Siskins, both migratory birds which seek out thistle. Be sure that your thistle stays fresh. Linda Karr of The Garden Enthusiast says "we're starting to see hummers during the winter" so, you might want to put out at least one hummingbird feeder. Keep an eye out for the "Rufus" hummingbird – the male glows like a new copper penny!

These winter birds along with our year round songbirds – cardinals, blue-birds and blue jays – bring joy to the dreary days and brighten up the winter months. So, banish the wintry blues by doing some gardening chores and by taking care of our seasonal feathered friends. The days will pass by more quickly and you'll appreciate Mother Nature's gift – free air conditioning while you labor! I have to agree with Josephine Nuese, author of "The Country Garden" that "anyone who thinks gardening begins in the spring and ends in the fall is missing the best part of the whole year; for gardening begins in January with the dream."

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Stone Mountain and Tucker Rotary Clubs

Rotary Clubs of Tucker and Stone Mountain Mark the Holidays with Celebrations and Community Service

November and December were months of community service and holiday celebrations for The Rotary Clubs of Tucker and Stone Mountain. Following a very successful Electronics Recycling Event earlier in November, members of the Tucker Rotary Club met at the Friends of Disabled Adults and Children (FODAC) warehouse in Stone Mountain Industrial Park to sort through the hundreds of electronic devices and accessories collected, separating what went to recycling vendors and what could be resold in FODAC's Thrift Store. Stone Mountain Rotary President Elect Scott McEvoy and Tucker Rotary President Ed Warner met with FODAC's Ruth Rust during the workday to present her with the over \$200 collected as cash donations during the Recycling Event. Stone Mountain Rotary partnered with Salvation Army's Metro Atlanta Area Command on two annual outreach programs for the holidays. The club stuffed forty stockings with everything from toiletries to toys and delivered them to the Salvation Army warehouse in Tucker; the stockings will be delivered to adults and children who are in need to spread holiday cheer. A volunteer team from Stone Mountain Rotary also spent a Saturday at Northlake Mall ringing the bell for the Salvation Army's iconic Red Kettle, raising over \$500 in cash donations. Both clubs took time out to mark a year of hard work with an evening of fellowship and celebration. Tucker Rotary hosted its member's party at the Druid Hills Country Club; Stone Mountain Rotary met at Petite Violette to enjoy a traditional French "Boar's Head Feast" with entertainment provided by The Capitol City Opera/Madrigal Singers.



Stone Mountain Rotary President-Elect Scott McEvoy and Smoke Rise resident (left) and member Suzanne Sykes (right) collecting a Salvation Army Red Kettle donation at Northlake Mall.



Stone Mountain President-Elect Scott McEvoy (left) and Tucker President Ed Warner (right) present donations collected at the Electronics Recycling Event to FODAC Home Modification Coordinator Ruth Rust.

The Stone Mountain club meets every Tuesday for noon lunch in the fellowship hall of Stone Mountain First United Methodist Church; the Tucker Club meets every Thursday at noon in the fellowship hall of First Christian Church of Atlanta in Tucker. Visitors and those interested in learning more about Rotary are welcome to attend as a guest of either club. To learn more about the clubs and their upcoming programs, go to stonemountainrotary.org or tuckerrotary.org, or follow the clubs on Facebook and Twitter.

-WANTED-

We welcome human interest stories from members of the Smoke Rise community. Do you know someone who quietly does good deeds or does something unusually interesting? We would love to publish these stories about our neighbors. Send your stories and photos to staff@smokesignalnews.com

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NEWS YOU CAN USE

By Aviva Hoffmann

DeKalb's New Animal Shelter

"The greatness of a nation and its moral progress can be judged by the way its animals are treated." Mahatma Gandhi

DeKalb County's Animal Services and Enforcement Department has two divisions: one enforces local and state laws regarding animals and the other manages the animal shelter and its associated services.

The Animal Services Division is managed by LifeLine Animal Project, a non-profit organization that promotes homeless pet adoption, provides low cost spay/neuter services, increases public awareness, and advocates for lifesaving public policy. Since taking over management of DeKalb County Animal Services (DCAS) and Fulton County Animal Services in 2013, LifeLine has dramatically decreased euthanasia rates, increased adoptions and improved the health of its shelter animals.

DeKalb's Animal Services Division has expanded its services and animal care – thanks to a brand new, \$12 million animal shelter that replaced the aging, run-down facility. There were several years of political debate and advocacy leading up to the spring of 2016, when construction began on the new 33,440 square-foot building near DeKalb-Peachtree Airport. The official grand opening of the new shelter took place in July 2017. The new animal shelter is approximately 50% larger than the old facility. That additional space includes a dog grooming area, exercise yard and fields, 12 adoption rooms, a surgery room, multipurpose room and more.



Photo by Leslie Agee, DeKalb County Public Relations Specialist

The shelter currently houses approximately 400 dogs and 175 cats. More than 100 additional dogs and cats are in foster care. The new shelter takes in an average of 25 to 30 new animals daily. There are usually another 25 to 30 court case animals at any given time which are housed separately from the adoption area. There are also isolation areas in the clinic to house sick animals.

LifeLine has staff at DCAS every day of the week, and the shelter is also open to the public, every day of the week, during specified hours. The new DeKalb County Animal Shelter is truly an inviting place and has many amazing design features that benefit the animals in unique ways. (You should visit the shelter in person to see for yourself!)

To find out more online about DeKalb's new animal shelter and its services, go to <http://www.dekalbanimalservices.com>.

If you are looking to adopt a dog, cat, puppy or kitten, be sure to visit the shelter to see many wonderful pets now available for adoption!

DeKalb County Animal Services
3280 Chamblee Dunwoody Rd

HEALTH NOTES:

by Cheri Schneider, M.D.

WINTER SKIN WOES

Now that winter is fully upon us, many people are starting to experience dry itchy skin. The following article may give you some common sense tips that may help eliminate this itchy experience.



Xerosis:

When the temperature begins to fall and the wind picks up, many people get 'chapped' red, crinkly, dry skin and dry splitting lips. If this is you, common sense measures such as covering your skin (gloves, face mask, scarf) and regular application of skin moisturizers and lip balm and may help. Many people solve the dry skin problem by bathing and shampooing less often and shaving their legs less often. This allows the natural oils to remain on your skin. If you must shower each day, shortening hot showers and baths and turning the water temperature down will decrease the drying effect of the hot water. Applying moisturizer to your body as soon as you get out of the shower helps your damp skin absorb the moisturizer better. By the way, hair conditioner is a great moisturizer and can be applied in the shower. Pat dry when you get out.

Good old petroleum jelly is one of the best skin protectors and lubricants, but can be a little messy. Apply Vaseline to your hands and feet and wear cotton gloves and socks over them to bed. You will have much softer skin in the morning!

Asteatotic Eczema:

This condition is the next level of Xerosis or dry skin. This is often seen in older people and those who already have naturally dry skin. It also occurs in those who have to wash their hands frequently or use drying chemicals in the work place. An example is overuse of hand sanitizers, which are very drying because they have isopropyl alcohol in them. Asteatotic Eczema gives the skin a crackled type appearance, and sometimes fissuring and cracking. The shins are the most common location for this in the elderly, but it can be seen anywhere on the skin, especially the trunk and hands. Intense itching and burning can accompany the dry, crackled appearance of the skin. This is due to micro fissures and fissures in the skin that stir symptoms up.

Worsening of Chronic Skin Conditions:

Many chronic skin conditions like seborrheic keratosis, eczema, atopic dermatitis, keratosis pilaris, dandruff and psoriasis worsen with dry skin conditions. Your doctor may adjust your skin regimen during the winter if you have these conditions.

General tips:

- Avoid overuse of washing in general, hot water and harsh chemicals. Mild, moisturizing soaps are best.
- When you choose a skin product: Gels are the most drying to skin, followed by lotions, creams and ointments. If you are using a prescription skin preparation - say for acne treatment - changing to a cream or ointment preparation in the winter may help.
- Some chronic skin conditions need an added steroid to control inflammation and flaking. Occluding, or wrapping the area with saran wrap or 'press and seal' can increase the absorption of your prescription skin product. Occasionally, cracked skin can get infected and an antibiotic ointment may be necessary. Ask your doctor about these things.
- A good moisturizer has an emollient, which softens and provides a protective barrier, and a humectant, which is a substance that retains water or moisture in the skin. Examples of emollients are Shea or cocoa butter, mineral oil, lanolin, silicon, petrolatum and beeswax. Glycerol is a common humectant, along with natural honey or sorbitol. Look for these ingredients in your moisturizer.
- You can also try to add more humidity to the air by using a humidifier in your home.

The list of skin products is ever increasing and can be very confusing. Using common sense techniques first will prevent many of your winter skin woes. The cost of the product has little to do with the ability of the product to moisturize your skin! Try several and stick with the ones that work for you.



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Greenspace Galore! Who Knew!?

by Susan Gilbert

Hearing all the buzz and argument about making “green space” a priority in the development of the Sears property made me curious. I read entire articles devoted to all the wildlife we have here in Smoke Rise due to our ample green space, which we need to not only preserve but grow to the degree possible. We do have plenty of deer, turkeys, raccoons, and more, which we love, and hate, depending on what they are doing at the time. While we love seeing the deer prance through our backyard, we aren’t so wild about them having our hostas for lunch. And green space is something almost impossible to get back once it has been developed.

Given all that, I am an avid supporter of keeping our green space and securing it for the future of our community. Here’s what surprised me: There are more than 175 acres of green, manicured, rolling hills beautifully maintained in an enormous plot of land between Hugh Howell Road and Rt. 78. This property was secured as green space about 20 years ago when the Cofer family and some visionary Smoke Rise residents worked together to make that a reality. You might know it as Smoke Rise Country Club, one of the most beautiful golf courses in the country, boasting views of Stone Mountain, ponds, a creek, bridges, and a magnificent club house and swim-tennis complex.

Last year, the club’s Board of Directors, on which I serve, brought on a leading golf club management company, Mosaic, to operate the club. With 11 months on the job, they have delivered on many promises, including increasing membership by close to 100 families, overseeing the installation of a new HVAC system, keeping the golf course in remarkable condition, delivering a great summer pool program and driving the tennis program to heights previously unimagined.

Being a “Dining/Social” member, I am most impressed with what they have done with the social programming. It now costs as little as \$95 per month for a social/dining membership that entitles families to use the club house, exercise facilities, Board Room, Tea Room, have private parties, and attend happy hour and other parties regularly conducted at the club. It’s a place where they say, “Everybody knows your name,” because one of the club’s goals is helping neighbors connect and get to know one another. And if you are thinking about collateral benefits from supporting the club and its green space, we have been told by appraisers and realtors that our homes’ values are significantly higher due to there being a 175 acre, 18-hole golf and country club in Smoke Rise. Something we can thank the visionary leaders who stepped up and made it all happen in years past and who keep it going today.

The downside of all this green space is it is expensive to own and maintain. The club has made it all these years through the dues, sales, golf rounds, and charitable contributions of our neighbors and supporters. To continue flourishing and remaining private and undisturbed, membership is critical, so if you have not been over to check it out, do come visit Heath McDaniel, Membership Director. He can be reached at 770-908-2582.

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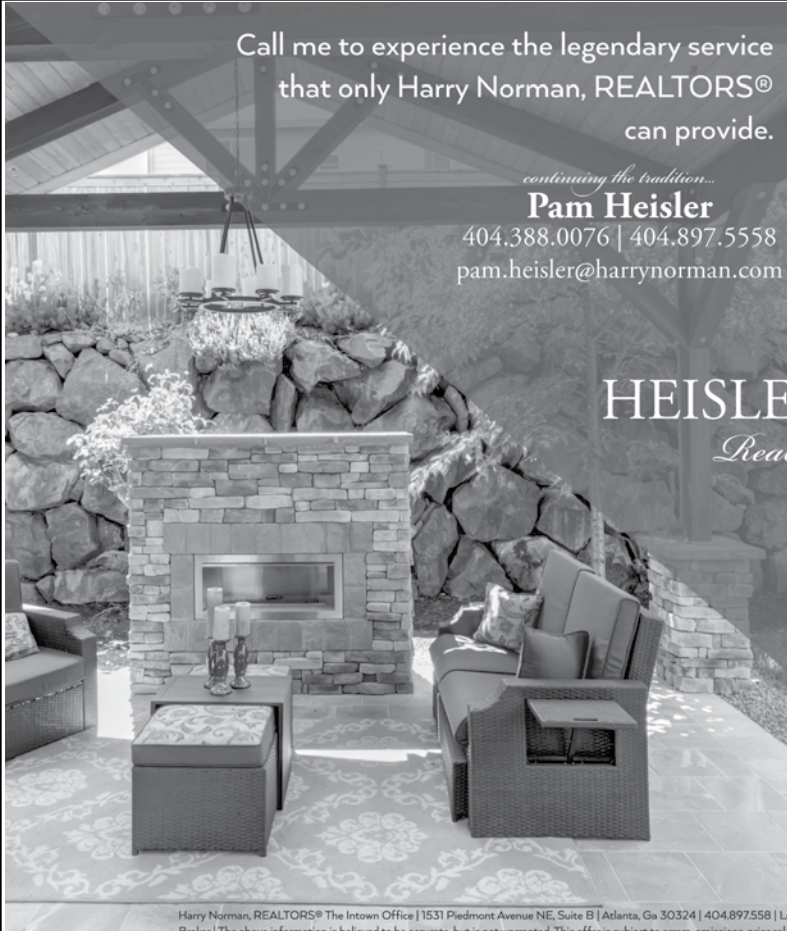
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WEDDING

Mr. Joseph and Debra Kowalewicz of Mountain Creek are pleased to announce the marriage of their son, Joey, to Tiffany Tanguay. The couple were married on Nov 24th in a beautiful outdoor ceremony overlooking the Gulf of Mexico at Sirata Beach Resort in St. Petersburg Beach, Florida. It was a wonderful experience and one they’ll cherish forever. The two have now made their home in Portland, Oregon, where Joey is a Special Effects Artist for an Animation Studio and Tiffany is a Production Assistant for an Animation Studio.



Working with Samaritan’s Purse

The International Outreach Program of the GFWC Stone Mountain Woman’s Club sponsors the filling of shoe boxes for Samaritan’s Purse each year. Members fill the boxes with items for children in the United States and around the world. This year five members and two guests worked at the warehouse where the boxes are checked, sealed and made ready for shipment. Former Smoke Rise resident, Barb Hess, is the leader of the project.

Samaritan’s Purse reports that the Atlanta centers processed 1.2 million plus boxes this year. On the morning that the Woman’s Club worked, 20,000 plus boxes were processed. The boxes that particular morning went to the Central African region and to Chad.

Thank you to all of the Smoke Residents who filled shoe boxes through churches, schools and other civic organizations. This is a charitable project with which many people help each year.



Pictured left to right-Sherrill Peoples, Elizabeth Wells, Marty Bryan, Andrea Redmond, Martha Decker, Dave Hess, Barb Hess

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Georgia Gold Medal Plant Winners Featured at Mountain Shadow Garden Club

The meeting of Mountain Shadow Garden Club (MSGC) on Monday evening, January 8, will feature a program on "Georgia Gold Medal Plants" by Tim Daly, Agricultural and Natural Resource Extension Agent in Gwinnett County.

From 1994 to 2016, the Georgia Plant Selections Committee, composed of plant professionals from across the state, selected certain plants as Georgia Gold Medal Winners. The goal was to promote the production, sale, and usage of ornamental plants with superior qualities. While the program ended in 2017, the 106 winners through the years include some selections that continue to be highly recommended.

Most of these plants have few problems with pests, have low maintenance requirements, are adaptable to the varying climates and soil types of the state, and have qualities that appeal to consumers, Mr. Daly explains. Plants were chosen from the following categories: annuals, perennials, deciduous shrubs, evergreen trees, and native plants.



Tim Daly

Mr. Daly is a graduate of the University of Georgia (UGA) with a B.S. degree in Horticulture and M.S. degree in Entomology. He had considerable work experience in other responsibilities before joining the UGA Extension Service, including DeKalb County Planning Development, as an Environmental Specialist with John Weiland Homes and Neighborhoods, as Horticulturist with Emory University Facilities Management Division, as a Landscape Supervisor with Duke-Weeks Corp., and Master Landscape Supervisor with Morrell Group.

Mountain Shadow Garden Club is open to men and women of all ages who enjoy learning about a diverse range of topics related to home landscapes, plants, and gardens. The meeting and program begin promptly at 7:30 p.m. in Founders Hall, Eastminster Presbyterian Church, 5801 Hugh Howell Road, Stone Mountain. Free. Refreshments and socializing follow.

For more information, contact MSGC president Jeff Raines at 404-641-8633.

Smoke Rise Garden Club Helps Beautify Community

Many thanks to Deb Christensen and Marilyn Oatway for planting pansies and ornamental cabbage and kale in the Tucker fire station planter.

Members of our club participated in the tour of Lilburn homes on December the 2nd. All the homes were number one on their list. McDaniel/Carroll/Flowers/Wilkerson Home/Music on Main Street-Scott & Alicia McCready: Antiques in Old Town and Loft Residence-Hugh and Rowann Wilkerson Residence: Carroll/Bramblett Home-Johnny and Anne Crist Residence: John and Catherine Calhoun Residence: Brad and Joann Rosselle Residence.

We wish all our members and neighbors happy and healthy holidays and a wonderful New Year.



Marilyn Oatway at Tucker Fire station

Santa Comes Early to Morning Glories Gathering

Let it Snow, Let it Snow, Let it Snow! What a thrilling way to celebrate Christmas with an early snowfall and an early visit from Santa Claus! The Pittard's version of the North Pole was the scene for our annual Christmas brunch, bedecked with trees, tinsel and all manner of holiday décor. Members arrived dressed in Christmas finery and bearing gifts. In this case, the gifts were unwrapped toys and presents for the local Battered Women's Shelter families. President Bonnie Pennington and Vice President Joyce Ray delivered the gifts later that afternoon to the shelter director for distribution to the residents of the shelter for the holidays. Santa Buddy charmed and delighted the crowd with a delightful game of "Holiday Name that Tune or Movie or Poem or Bible verse"! Surprisingly competitive, our members quickly worked through the clues with Joyce Ray winning the prize for the most correct responses.



Marsha and Santa Buddy Pittard and Susan Morrison celebrate the season.

The Morning Glories decorated the historic Wells-Brown House under the direction of Chairman Glendolyn Hallman in Stone Mountain in early December. Using greenery from our gardens and swags of garland, fruits and dried flowers, the group decorated the front door, the gate, the candleabra, the lamp post, the stairway, and balcony. One fun tradition of studding oranges with cloves was continued again this year for display on mantles with other fruits and in bowls to add a delightfully fresh aroma to the air. We added a new décor piece this time with a lemon tree based on a Williamsburg design of the Colonial era.

This month's raffle of a white sasanqua was won by MaryAnne Anderson, and Joy Zaidan won an amaryllis for her holiday décor.

The Christmas gathering was a wonderful way to see friends, share some laughs, sing and celebrate with members! Each attendee brought delicious food to savor and we all enjoyed the wide range of holiday specialties. Thanks again to Marsha and Buddy Pittard and our food coordinating hostess, Susan Morrison. Happy New Year to All!

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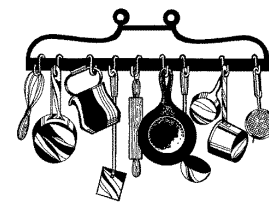
Mountain Mums Play Dirty

The Mountain Mums Garden Club had their annual Christmas luncheon at the Smoke Rise Country Club. The food, including the special desserts provided by Mary Lou Still, Cheri Schneider and Carol Wales, was excellent. The Mountain Mums had their twelfth annual 'Dirty Santa' gift exchange. Let's just say some of us were naughty and some were nice! This year the Mums donated gift cards to the Tucker Net Works Co-op Ministry.

The Mountain Mums wants to remind you to join us on January 20 at 9:30 a.m. in front of the Smoke Rise Baptist Church for the Walk to Remember. We will again plant winter bulbs and will be introducing the driving school scholarship recipients. Thanks again to all of our faithful sponsors!

The next club meeting will be at the home of Cheri Schneider on January 9th at 9:45 a.m. The program will feature Ken Gohring of the Georgia Native Plant Society. It is titled "Native Plant Rescue: Using Native Plants in Your Landscape". Call Debra Jones at 678-260-7806 for more information.





HODGE PODGE

By Jenny Hall

Well, the holidays are over and once again I found a few new recipes that I managed to become obsessive about, making them so often that I actually have the recipes memorized. This is pretty amazing since I can't actually recall my children's birthdays half the time, but I still know my telephone number from when I was 13. Nashville, Tennessee - 485-2600. Perhaps I'll remember these recipes for next year but chances are slim because I have the tendency to put recipes in a "safe place", meaning, of course, in a place so stupid that it won't be found until they tear my house apart and the recipes, old bank receipts, Valentine cards and a lost credit card will emerge from behind the flower pot with that dead fern in it that I put under the deck. However, back on topic, these recipes are great year-round and I tasted them often enough that you might assume that I'm a very serious cook, or just your run-of-the-mill glutton. Perhaps both.

Let's start with these brownies, made from a gingerbread mix. They were a big hit, so buy up those boxes of mix and just store them in the freezer until needed. Make a fancy dessert by whipping up a good cooked lemon pudding, cooling it and folding in about a cup or two of whipped cream. Yum.

White Chocolate Gingerbread Brownies

1 (14.5 ounce) box gingerbread mix, like Betty Crocker®
 1 stick of real butter, melted
 1/3 cup evaporated milk
 1 cup white chocolate chips
 Preheat oven to 350° and grease a 9x9 pan. To the melted butter, add the milk so it's not so warm and then add the dry mix. Stir by hand until completely combined, then add in the white chocolate chips. Spread in the pan and level. I use my fingers since this batter is pretty thick. Bake for 25 minutes, turn the pan around and bake another minute or two. Don't overbake.
 Remove from oven and immediately sprinkle the top with sifted powdered sugar. Cool completely and cut into 16 squares. Cut these in half for small rectangles or triangles. Fabulous.

OK, I made this and tested it about a dozen times and it's pretty wonderful. Not a real martini, but sorta a girly pink delicious drink that's like dessert but better. Perhaps my aforementioned inability to remember was related to my relentless pursuit of the perfect ratio of drink components. I'm trying to sound official and pretentious here so you think all this drinking was purely scientific and my purely noble desire to create a memorable libation. Keep thinking that.

Peppermint Martini

For two drinks:
 2 ounces peppermint schnapps
 2 ounces clear creme de cacao
 1 ounce grenadine syrup
 1 ounce half and half
 Splash of club soda, ginger ale, etc - optional
 Fill martini shaker 2/3 full of ice. Add all ingredients except soda and shake until your hand freezes to the side of the shaker since you didn't put a towel around it. That's about 15 seconds. Strain into two amusing cocktail glasses, add a splash of soda and garnish with a stick of peppermint. You could make this for Valentine's Day, a bridal shower, etc. Rim the glasses with red or pink sugar. And a good healthy squirt of chocolate syrup will nestle in the bottom of the glass and make a wonderful chocolate mint dessert drink. This is sorta like a grasshopper now that I think about it, so get busy experimenting and call me over any time. Don't add the soda at the beginning of the process because I can tell you that your hand will be frozen to the shaker while the soda simultaneously explodes in your kitchen. It took me three times to figure that out.

And because I always want a wonderful cookie but can't have most of my favorites, I found this recipe that is just heaven. They taste like European almond shortbread and are my new favorite gluten free cookie.

GF Almond Shortbread Bites

1 cup almond flour
 3 Tablespoons really soft butter
 3 Tablespoons powdered sugar
 Tiny pinch of salt
 1/4 teaspoon vanilla
 1/4 teaspoon almond extract
 Preheat oven to 350° and line a cookie sheet with parchment paper or a silpat mat. Mix ingredients by hand until it holds together. I did this in a large measuring cup. Pinch out 20 portions and roll each into a ball. Put on cookie sheet and flatten slightly with back of fork. Bake 10 minutes, until tops are just beginning to brown. An insulated cookie sheet might take a minute more, but rotate the sheet so they cook evenly. Cool for 5 minutes before removing, then cool on wire racks. You can also just flatten them a bit, make a tiny dent in the middle and add a dab of raspberry jam. Don't overfill, but that is an amazing taste. I ate a whole batch the first time I made these. Serious cook or glutton? You decide. Merry January!!

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