

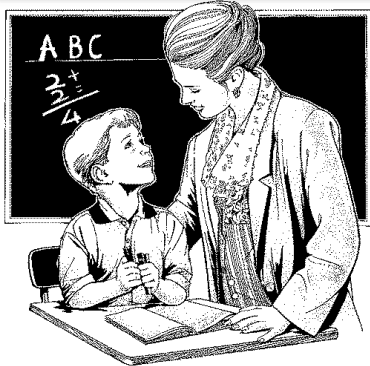
SMOKE SIGNAL

VOLUME 57, ISSUE 5

Serving the Smoke Rise Community since 1968

August, 2025

www.smokesignalnews.com



The Staff of the Smoke Signal wishes all of our neighborhood students, teachers, and school staff a safe, successful, and rewarding school year!

Smoke Rise Country Club Makes Bold Move

Susan Gilbert, Staff Writer

On June 24th at the well-attended Membership Meeting, Board Chairman Art Wood enthusiastically announced that, effective August 1, 2025, the Club will discontinue public golf play and revert to its original status as a fully private golf course and country club. With its primary kitchen back in full service, the ever-popular tennis program in full swing with a recent ALTA city championship, the five-pool complex in high demand, and the golf course in great condition, the Club's board decided to discontinue allowing daily-pay golf access through such outlets as GolfNow. Going forward, only Members, their guests, and those participating in tournaments will have use of the scenic 195-acre 18-hole course.

According to Wood, "This new direction creates an exciting time for the Club. The entire membership is behind this bold move that will enhance Smoke Rise home values while reinforcing the value of being a Member of the SRCC country club community." He further explained the transition plan, which will enable the Club to build its membership to a target number and then establish a waitlist. Initiation fees, which presently are quite affordable, will increase as membership numbers grow. Members and their referrals both receive a substantial first-year discount as an incentive for friends and neighbors to join, and as a special incentive to come see the Club, initiation fees are cut in half until September 13th.

Like most private country clubs, Smoke Rise will continue to be available for hosting outside events, including weddings, holiday parties, and other special events.

For more information, contact Sydney Hurst at 770-908-2582 Extension 4, or email her at SHurst@Smokerisec.com.



WOW! 50+ WONDERFUL YEARS IN SMOKE RISE

By Betsy Allen, Smoke Rise neighbor/Lovingly transcribed by June Allen

When our little house in Decatur began to bulge with our growing family (2 sons, then 2 daughters), my dear husband said he needed some extra space to study for his medical boards, so we found a house being built on Gunstock Drive. Our sons Paul and Mark thought it was so exciting to see the progress each time we went there as it was being built.

I remember the exact date we moved in because Rebecca was having her 4th birthday on September 15, 1972, and the neighborhood welcome wagon graciously had treats for the children. Our little "bambina" Sue was only 6 months old, and we were so glad she had her own room now after being in a bassinet in our bedroom which she was about to outgrow! But Lee and I grew up with the teaching from the scriptures that God tells us "To be fruitful and multiply." The same phrase even applied to our new residence, as Lee loved seeing fruits and vegetables growing. We actually had over 100 peaches one year and we had enough muscadines to make into preserves for gifts.

Needless to say, I will greatly miss being here with marvelous neighbors on all sides. The McLendons and Nickersons had sons and daughters the exact ages of ours, so our friendships have lasted throughout the years and continued in spite of many of us moving in different directions.

I want to thank our *Smoke Signal* staff for their labor of love as the newspaper has kept us informed on activities, as well as adding a spirit of camaraderie to unite us in family values and a sense of caring that bonds folks together.

Our final estate sale will be August 8th and 9th and then I will be living near my son and his wife farther east in Stone Mountain.

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2025 ANNUAL TKR SUMMER OF FUN

Shrek Movies on the Green

Thursday, August 21
7:00 pm - 9:00 pm
A classic movie for all ages!



The public is welcome to set-up beginning at 5:30 p.m. with a scheduled 7 p.m. start time for the event. Blankets and chairs, visiting with friends and enjoying a picnic meal are all encouraged, however glass, tables and pets are not permitted. A food truck will be on site for each concert.

Church Street Greenspace
4316 Church St., Tucker, GA 30084

The Heart Breakers – First Friday Concert

Friday, September 5
7:00 pm - 9:00 pm

This tribute to Heart band brings not only Heart's greatest chart-topping hits but also a taste of Led Zeppelin for fans of all ages.



The public is welcome to set-up beginning at 5:30 p.m. with a scheduled 7 p.m. start time for the event. Blankets and chairs, visiting with friends and enjoying a picnic meal are all encouraged, however glass, tables and pets are not permitted. A food truck will be on site for each concert.

Church Street Greenspace
4316 Church St., Tucker, GA 30084

[Tucker.GA.gov/summer](https://tucker.ga.gov/summer)

Correction

In the *Smoke Signal's* July article "American Legion Post #207 Rises Out of the Ashes of 2019," we mistakenly provided an incorrect web site address. The correct web site is AmericanLegionPost207.org. The *Smoke Signal* apologizes for the error.



Smoke Signal

P.O. Box 1038, Tucker, GA 30085

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AUGUST 13


Please e-mail articles to:
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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.

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EXTRA COPIES OF THE SMOKE SIGNAL ARE NOW AVAILABLE AT THE COMMUNITY GARDEN

Look for the wooden box labeled *Smoke Signal*.

Smoke Rise Baptist Church

5901 Hugh Howell Road
Senior Pastor: Dr. Chris George, cgeorge@smokerisebaptist.org
Phone: 770-469-5856 SmokeRiseBaptist.org

SUNDAY
9:45 a.m. - Attend Sunday School through Zoom or In-Person
11:00 a.m. - Attend Worship via Live Stream or In-Person

WEDNESDAY
5:00 p.m. - Attend our Wednesday Dinner
6:00 p.m. - Followed by activities and Bible Study for all ages

Eastminster Presbyterian Church

5801 Hugh Howell Road
Rev. Jeanine Fulton, Pastor
Phone: 770-469-4881 Website: Eastminster.us

SUNDAY
9:15 a.m. Adult & Children’s Sunday School
10:30 a.m. In-Person and Live streaming of Worship service

First Moravian Church

Pastor: Reverend Elroy Christopher
(770) 491-7250
Website: Gamoravian.org

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

Mountain West Church

4818 Hugh Howell Road
Pastor: Mo Huggins
770-491-0228 Mwchurch.com

SUNDAY 9:00 a.m., 10:30 a.m., and 11:55 a.m. Worship
MONDAY 7:00 p.m.

In-person and streaming online on Facebook and mwchurch.com

Is your neighbor known for being an avid cyclist, a holiday decorations fanatic, an author, or the fastest dog-walker on the block? The *Smoke Signal* encourages folks in Smoke Rise to submit stories about how neighbors became friends. Submissions should be 300-500 words.

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Enchanted Masquerade & Silent Auction
Annual Fundraiser
Saturday, August 23, 2025
6:30 - 10:00 pm

Join us for an evening of merriment and revelry at the Enchanted Masquerade. This year's party will feature mouth-watering food from seven preferred caterers, an open bar with themed cocktails, and of course your chance to bid and win extraordinary treasures. We will be holding a Best Dressed contest, so slip on a mask of your choice, dust off your fairy wings, ivy crowns, or elegant attire, and go head to head with the most fashionable denizens in the land. Tickets will go on sale July 21, 2025.

Silent Auction

A portion of the evening will be dedicated to the silent auction fundraiser to benefit the History Center and we need your help collecting items! Items can include event tickets, golf packages, dinner certificates, art, jewelry, hotel stays, special tours, books, professional services, and more. Please consider joining other generous restaurants, artists, hotels, and merchants while you support DeKalb's only countywide History Center.

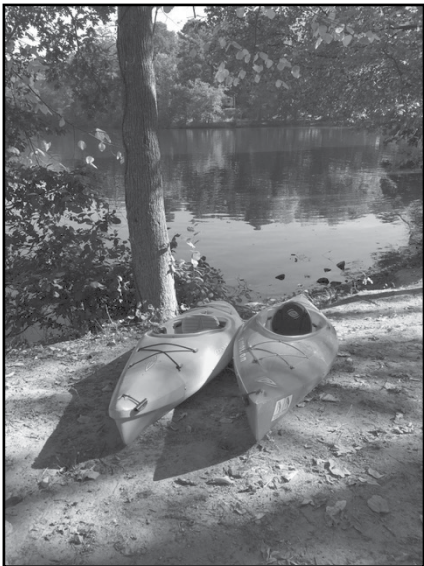


Digital copies of the *Smoke Signal* Digital copies can be requested at Staff@smokesignalnews.com.

You can also visit our Facebook page at www.facebook.com/SmokeSignalNews to view postings of newsletter pictures and stories throughout the month.

STONE MOUNTAIN PARK ... HAS A ZIPLINE??!!
By Cheri Schneider, Staff Writer

Did you know Stone Mountain Park has a Zipline? I didn't either. Because we live so close to the mountain, I am there often and have a yearly parking pass. During a recent walk, I noticed a sign with an arrow to the Lakeside Zip Line at Adventure Outpost near the waterfront. Their website says the course has seven zip lines with runs up to 400 feet. After meeting weight and age restrictions, the course 'tops trees' and sends you out over the lake twice. They also have kayaks, stand up paddleboards, something called a 'hydro bike' and pedal driven kayaks. These do cost something but look fun to try. I have missed the 'steamboat' cruise for years so was excited to see that the Adventure Course now offers a cruise on a pontoon boat on the big lake. The captain of the boat fills you in on the history of the park and lake.

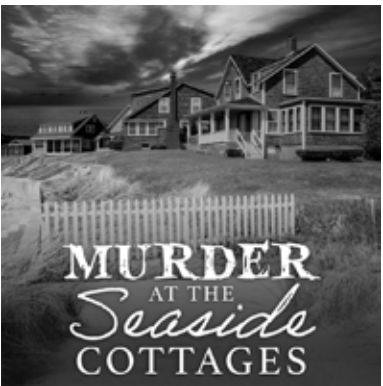


Also, as you know, you can take your own kayak or standing paddleboard out on the lake. Entry to the lake is at the marina near the Evergreen. You can also fish (with a license). As the weather gets cooler, I hope to try out some of these new outdoor options and I am so glad they are nearby!



A Murder Mystery
Written by Camille Mahdi
Directed by D Norris

The new owner of Seaside Cottages sunk everything she had into bringing the dilapidated cottages on coastal Maine back to life. When the reservations didn't pour in as she expected, the situation became desperate. As a last resort, she offered cottages at an extremely discounted rate on Groupon. Through the magic that only theater can conjure, classic TV characters from the 1800s through the 1980s purchased Groupons for grand opening weekend. They were hoping for a romantic getaway. Instead, they got a web of lies and murder. Main Street Theatre and local favorite Fresca Trattoria come together to bring you a murder mystery dinner! Dine on a delectable three-course meal and be entertained as an evening of intrigue, comedy, and suspense unfolds.



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<https://app.arts-people.com/index.php?show=288785>

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Sunday, August 17 at 5:00 pm
Thursday, August 21 at 7:00 pm
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True Life Stories (a Moth-inspired event) is a story-telling event for people who have stories to tell and for other people who want to listen to them. Guests are invited to throw their name in the hat for the chance to tell a 5-minute story on the theme of "FIT."



- Do you have a story about:
- Trying to fit in? Or being a misfit?
 - A space that was a tight fit?
 - A time where you felt unfit?
 - A memorable outfit?
 - A conception fit?
 - Physical Fitness?

All we ask is your attention, your enthusiastic support for our storytellers, and your support of the bar (alcohol, soda, juice, water.) Storytelling Code: R-E-S-P-E-C-T. (Aretha gets it.) Please practice civility and respect. Don't include racism, homophobia, misogyny, or any form of hate speech. Please tell true stories from your own experiences (no proselytizing or standup please) and don't appropriate other people's experiences, stories, or cultures. Ages 16+. This is a FREE event, but space MUST be reserved in advance.

Monday, August 4 • 7:30 PM - 9:30 PM
ART Station Theatre
5384 Manor Drive Stone Mountain, GA 30083
info@artstation.org • (770) 469-1105

Nurturing Hearts and Voices This Fall at Eastminster

By Christina Wetzel Sizemore, Office Coordinator, Eastminster Presbyterian Church

As summer winds down, Eastminster Presbyterian Church is excited to welcome families into a new season of growth and connection through two of our children’s ministries: the Eastminster School Age Program (ESAP) and the Eastminster Children’s Community Choir for children and youth. Whether through creative play or joyful music, these programs are grounded in faith, friendship, and spiritual development.

The Eastminster School Age Program (ESAP) is an outreach ministry of Eastminster Presbyterian Church for children ages three through 5th grade. This program supports families by providing a safe, Christ-centered environment where children can grow academically, socially, and spiritually, while offering parents peace of mind. ESAP’s after-school hours of operation are 1:00 p.m. - 6:30 p.m. We also offer full day childcare on school holidays and DLD (Digital Learning) days. For more information and to register, visit eastminster.us/afterschool or schedule a tour with us at 770.469.9489.

The Eastminster Children’s Community choir is an inclusive, Christ-centered ministry welcoming children and youth, regardless of previous musical experience. We blend high-quality musical education with spiritual formation, and through inspiring worship songs, joyful performances, and meaningful relationships. We aim to plant seeds of love, faith, and connection in all who participate and all who listen. We are accepting children and youth through 12th grade for the fall session. Choir practice will begin on August 21 and meet weekly on Thursdays from 4:30 p.m. – 6:00 p.m. For more information visit our website at eastminster.us/communitychoir.

Tucker-Northlake CID Initiates Public Safety Assessment and Feasibility Study

By Matthew Lee, Tucker-Northlake CID

In January 2025 the Tucker-Northlake Community Improvement District (CID) entered into an agreement with the Georgia Association of Chiefs of Police (GACP) to conduct a public safety assessment on current conditions and a feasibility study on the potential creation of a city police department. The goal of the study is to explore all available options for reducing crime and improving response times, and to examine the longstanding question: Would Tucker benefit from having its own police department?

Since incorporating in 2016, the City of Tucker has gradually expanded its municipal services. Zoning, code enforcement, and parks and recreation were selected by voters as the initial services. In 2023, public works was added. Police services, however, continue to be provided by DeKalb County.

In 2019, DeKalb County commissioned the Carl Vinson Institute of Government at the University of Georgia to study the fiscal impact of new city formations and municipal service expansion. The study reviewed several scenarios, including the possibility of Tucker assuming responsibility for police services.

That report, released in February 2020, concluded that Tucker could afford a municipal police department without requiring a tax increase (Analysis of Fiscal Impact on DeKalb County from Potential Municipal Incorporations and Service Displacement). However, the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic just weeks later halted all related discussions. What the 2020 study did not address was what level of service a Tucker Police Department could realistically provide. Not all police departments operate at the same level, and service quality can vary significantly.

In 2025, the Tucker-Northlake CID is picking up where the earlier study left off. The GACP study will examine five key areas:

- Current Law Enforcement Coverage
- Crime Statistics
- Calls for Service
- Population and Economic Analysis
- Legal and Regulatory Requirements for Creating a Police Department

The CID is not taking a position for or against the formation of a city police department at this time. Rather, its goal is to ensure that all potential public safety improvements are thoroughly evaluated.

Public safety remains a top concern region-wide. According to the last three surveys by the Atlanta Regional Commission (Metro Atlanta Speaks Survey - ARC), crime and the economy consistently rank as the top two issues across the 11-county metro area.

“We keep a close watch on public safety, locally and regionally,” said Matthew Lee, Executive Director of the Tucker-Northlake CID. “We know other communities are working to improve, and we need to do the same. This study is simply the next step in our ongoing efforts.”

The CID has a track record of public safety investment. Since 2018, it has funded off-duty DeKalb County Police officers to patrol the district. In 2019, the CID began installing license plate readers (LPRs) to help law enforcement identify suspects. In 2023, the CID expanded its LPR network and successfully encouraged the City of Tucker to install ten additional cameras. In 2024, the CID Board allocated \$100,000 to further expand police coverage in the district.

Discussions with the GACP began in fall 2024. “We fully support the work of the DeKalb County Police Department,” said Lee. “Our message has been consistent: we need more officers. CEO Lorraine Cochran-Johnson and Commissioner Robert Patrick have both listened to our concerns, and we appreciate their continued support.”

...Continued on page 10

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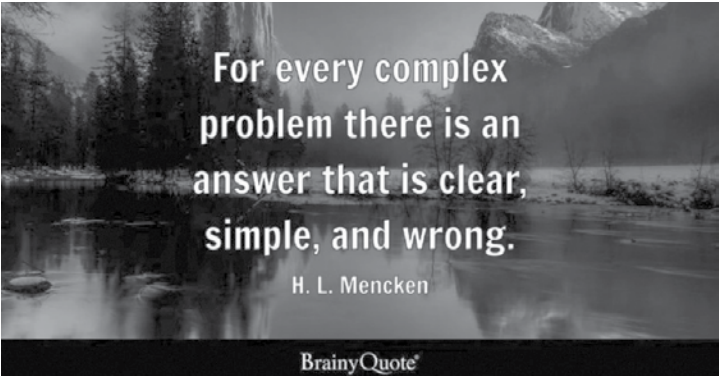
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It's Complicated

By Joel Gilbert, Staff Writer

There seems to be a convergence of thought in the last few months about life being complex with the overarching thought that subjects we once thought were easy are complicated. For instance, take this snippet from Brian McLaren in his Essentials of Engaged Contemplation course. Brian McLaren explores the value of our inherited faith traditions, inviting students to both honor and wrestle with them: When we begin exploring the contemplative life, we discover a rich heritage, an ancient Tradition. For millennia, scholars, mystics, theologians, our ancestors, and people of faith in general have been blazing the trail we are now walking. We don't have to figure out everything on our own. But being part of a tradition brings both blessings and challenges. For example, our tradition can be the ground on which we build, or it can be the ceiling above which we aren't allowed to grow. It can be a greenhouse that protects us from certain dangers ... but that also deprives us of needed challenges.

Modern life seems to increasingly frustrate those of us who like nice, neat, simple answers to complex questions. Frank Bruni from the New York Times editorial staff offers wonderful advice for all of us from his opening remarks to his students each semester:

I'm going to repeat one phrase more often than any other: "It's complicated." They'll become familiar with that. They may even become bored with it. I'll sometimes say it when we're discussing the roots and branches of a social ill, the motivations of public (and private) actors and a whole lot else, and that's because I'm standing before them not as an ambassador of certainty or a font of unassailable verities but as an emissary of doubt. I want to give them intelligent questions, not final answers. I want to teach them how much they have to learn — and how much they will always have to learn.

We have all been bombarded by a simple message: we must reduce/eliminate carbon dioxide emissions ... and therefore our use of fossil fuels. We have villainized natural gas, coal, and oil as demons to the planet wellbeing ... and indeed the wasteful and/or irresponsible use of these is wrong.

I am now seeing clear signs that the media is picking up on the "rest of the story" that goes far beyond carbon dioxide. The link below offers a more inclusive perspective ... it is a nice start to a dialogue about what we should be doing in response to the fullness of the issues.

The problem of course is that anything as complex as this doesn't lend itself to an easy political fix. It is messy and

...Continued on page 10



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Living with Arthritis in the Shoulders

Linda Karr, Staff Writer

Written in collaboration with Blake Hampton, PT, DPT

Owner/Clinic Director Team Rehabilitation Stone Mountain

This is the fourth article in the series on living with arthritis. Our shoulders allow us to perform many of our daily activities, such as picking up something off the floor or reaching overhead to grab something. These are things we typically do without thinking about. If you've been diagnosed with arthritis of the shoulder, there are things you can do to help.

Joints tend to get stiff with arthritic changes and managing this is key to maintaining function. Shoulder pulleys, which can be bought online for less than \$15, can be helpful. Using a cane or golf club to do range of motion exercises can also be beneficial. You can find videos online to help guide you with this, for example, you can search for "active assisted range of motion with cane" exercises for arms.

Maintain strong rotator cuff muscles - think about the shoulder as a golf ball sitting on a golf tee, where the ball of the joint is a good bit larger than the socket it sits on. The rotator cuff muscles ensure that the ball stays centered on the socket when you move your arm. An online search for rotator cuff exercises is a straightforward way to come up with exercises you can do. You can also consult with a physical therapist to get a home program to help you with this.

Posture is a crucial component to shoulder health. I am sure everyone knows someone with the dreaded hunchback posture from years of working on the computer or driving long commutes. When we have this forward flexed posture with the shoulders rounded forward, it makes it difficult to move our shoulders, even without arthritis. Practice exercises that strengthen your back to improve your posture. An online search for posture exercises can help. If you are still working or just enjoy doing things on the computer as a hobby, you want to make sure your workspace is set up optimally to promote good posture. You can find many good tips and tricks online for how to do this.

Using over-the-counter Voltaren Gel or Bengay can help to manage the pain, as these products are topical anti-inflammatories which are less toxic to your system than taking Advil or Aleve orally. TENS units are small devices that use electrical impulses to help manage pain. These can be purchased for less than \$40 online. Using heat for 10-15 minutes before activity and ice for 15-20 minutes afterwards can help manage active inflammation and loosen up muscles as well as manage symptoms. Finally, NSAIDS can be the last line of defense for managing flare-ups that don't respond to the above strategies.

Depending on the position you prefer to sleep on, search on the internet for how to use pillows to position your body and arms to avoid excess stress on the joints while you sleep. Generally sleeping on your back with your arms supported by pillows by your side is best, but there are other workable strategies to use if you sleep on your side or stomach.

In a future edition, we'll explore arthritis in the hips. Stay tuned!

Do you know of other tools that help you manage your arthritis? If so, please share with me (lskarr50@gmail.com) and I will add them into another article.

We Need You!

Smoke Rise - this is YOUR paper! The Smoke Signal began more than 50 years ago and remains, to this day, a community newspaper created, written and produced by volunteer, Smoke Rise neighbors for the entire neighborhood.

PLEASE consider becoming a contributor, editor or joining our staff. It's a rewarding way to give back to your Smoke Rise community! Contact us today. staff@smokesignalnews.com

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techtalk

By Susan Gilbert

PHENOMENAL Ceramic Pots & Pans

Calling a set of pots and pans “phenomenal” may seem a stretch, but it was the strongest adjective I could find to describe how remarkable these pans are. We found them when we decided to let our 30-year-old set of dinged-up pans go and began researching what the market had to offer. We specifically wanted ones that would stack easily for efficient storage, work on an induction or gas cooktop, and include the kinds of pans we use most: several frying pans, a couple of saucepans, and a large stockpot.

Our research uncovered various options ranging from 10 to 21 pieces with price tags between \$68 to \$150. Seeing all five-star ratings for several brands of ceramic pan sets, we felt confident in ordering a set from Carote that included all the essential pieces we wanted, as well as a few extras that we didn’t need but have come in handy. We settled on the 16 pieces for \$70, which includes 8 pans and several lids. As a bonus, we received an attractive set of soft, rubber, wooden-handled utensils, as metal can scratch the non-stick coating. Like many items we order on the internet, the package arrived the next day.

Unpacking them, we were surprised at how incredibly lightweight the pans were. They looked and felt like they were made of stone, but they sure didn’t weigh like stone. The description says they are made with a blend of granite and ceramic for added durability and longevity. The bottoms are heavy-gauge metal, which is required for induction cooking, but even that didn’t make them feel heavy.

Our first experience using them amazed us. First, just getting them out is a joy because they are so lightweight. Not at all like getting out our heavy, black iron skillet that takes both hands and some strength to lift. And they don’t make loud clanking sounds you can hear all over the house like our retired ones did. These softly click like you would hear touching two small stones together. Maybe that is because they contain granite.



We use gas for cooking, but we prefer induction pans because their heavy metal bottoms heat up quickly and help food cook evenly. We were not prepared for how differently these pans cook compared to our other pans, which had hot spots that made it hard to cook some dishes evenly.

Another advantage of these pans is that they fit compactly into our precious cabinet space. Because they all nest beautifully, we have only two stacks of pans that don’t take up much shelf space. You could cut that in half by stacking them in a single column, but then you would have to unstack them when you needed a pan. Or you may be tempted, as we are, to leave them on the stove because they are beautiful.

I saved the best part for last: The non-stick coating makes clean-up a snap! Once we removed what we were cooking, you couldn’t tell the pan had been used. We did a double-take trying to figure out how the pan got clean. Looking closely, there were a few crumbs on the side that we wiped away with a paper towel. The instructions recommend rinsing them with water or wiping them out with a paper towel. Furthermore, the non-stick coating is so good that you can use less cooking oil.

After using them for six months, the only negatives we have found are that you must be sure to use the soft utensils, the pans are not designed for extremely high heat, they can’t be used in the oven and have a shorter lifespan than heavier metal pans. All in all, we consider these phenomenal pans a cooking game-changer.



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MEDITATION MANTRA

Victoria R. Crosby

As you breathe in the freshness of a newly born day
breathe out your troubles and feel them slip away.
Drop the burden from your shoulders
release the ache from your heart
let your problems dissolve and anxieties depart.

A you relax in the arms of waters crystal clear
feel all your worldly hardships disappear.
Drop the burden from your shoulders
release the ache from your heart
let your problems dissolve and anxieties depart.

As the warmth of the sun melts the ice in your soul
feel the healing power of your own mind control.
Drop the burden from your shoulders
release the ache from your heart
let your problems dissolve and anxieties depart.

As you breathe in the freshness of a newly born day
breathe out your troubles and feel them slip away.
Drop the burden from your shoulders
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Stone Mountain Woman’s Club Summer Projects

By Barbara Luton, GFWC Stone Mountain Woman’s Club

The annual Fourth of July Pancake Breakfast sponsored by the Stone Mountain Historic Society was held at the Stone Mountain Woman’s Club, with members of both groups attending to enjoy pancakes and sausages. The clubs joined together to donate school supplies to be given to Net Works of Tucker and the Stone Mountain Food Coop in the village. Many local churches are now collecting school supplies if you are interested in donating to this cause.

The Stone Mountain Woman’s Club has partnered with the Historic Society to collect and document the many records that the Woman’s Club has collected throughout the years from 1929 when it was founded. Mary Beth Reed of New South Associates and the Historic Society is helping to organize and digitize the



minutes of the club, newspaper articles and other items concerning the history of Stone Mountain Village, of DeKalb County and of Georgia.

The Woman’s Club continues to collect and recycle clear plastic to be given to TREX, a company that makes items out of recycled plastic. The club has collect-



ed and donated 2000 lbs. and received 2 benches from the company. One bench was donated to Art Station for their St. Patrick’s Day


auction, and the second is for the community garden in Stone Mountain. Collections are now underway to get a third bench to donate.

Although summer is vacation time, our local clubs continue their work helping the community and their neighbors.



The beloved children’s classic, *Charlotte’s Web*, was performed in July at the Main Street Theatre in Tucker. The play featured WILBER played by Noel Head and CHARLOTTE played by Bonnie Parker, pictured here.

Photo by Smoke Rise neighbor Cheri Schneider





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HEALTH NOTES:

Taking Care in HOTLANTA

By Cheri Schneider, M.D. staff writer

Atlanta ain't known as HOTLANTA for no reason! August is sure to be a burner of a month. While the internet and news are full of articles about preventing heat exhaustion and heat stroke, I thought I would throw in my two cents worth on the topic. Here are some simple rules to STAY KOOL:

S: Shade. Make sure you identify a shady (or indoor) location if you plan to be outdoors for several hours. Get in the shade as much as you can or plan your outdoor work around where the sun is not. Shade areas can be 5 or more degrees cooler than sunny spots.

T: Take FIVE: Be sure to rest if you are working outside. Preferably in the shade. If you feel dizzy, faint-ish or hot like a radiator, drink lots of fluids and go inside - especially if there is air-conditioning inside. If this is not possible, find shade and drink iced liquids. Do not go back into the sun until you feel normal.

A: Always Check: Check the back seat of your car or vehicle before you go inside. You would be surprised how many children or pets are accidentally left in a hot car. This is often deadly. The interior of a car can heat up to 120 degrees in 20 minutes on a 90-degree day. It can go to 100 in the shade, so parking in the shade is not enough! The temperature of seats and dashboards reaches higher levels.

Y: Yell for help or call 911 when you see a pet or child left in a car, OR when you see someone who might be approaching heat exhaustion or stroke. Remember, you can break a window and you can move someone into the shade.

K: Know the signs of heat exhaustion and heat stroke:

HEAT EXHAUSTION = dizzy, faint, excessive sweating, nausea, vomiting, weak pulse and muscle cramps.

HEAT STROKE = Includes headache, confusion, nausea, vomiting, red, hot skin, and a rapid pulse. There may be loss of consciousness. Don't try to figure out which one it is, as both situations need prompt action. Move the person into shade or air-conditioning. If they are conscious, rehydrate them with cold water. Call 911 if mental changes occur. Pack that person in an ice bath if possible.

O: Oral Rehydration. Drink water and other liquids - lemonade, Gatorade, tea, ice pops and other iced liquids. Don't forget to bring these with you and don't forget to drink. Alcohol can backfire on you if this is all you drink. It can lead to dehydration and hasten ill effects of the sun. If you drink too much you may have more difficulty with temperature regulation.

O: Opt out of situations you know you cannot handle - or limit your time in them. You do not have to stay for the whole picnic or outdoor event. OR you can come to the event when the sun is going down. Judgment is key.

L: Look out for the vulnerable people. The very young (especially those under age 2) and the elderly (over 60) regulate body temperature poorly. You may not know they are in trouble until they are in trouble. They need extra observation and shade. Go inside early. Do not push the limits of outdoor activities. If they feel dizzy or super tired, go inside and call it a day.

Enjoy the rest of the summer.... Safely!



By Susan Gilbert, Staff Writer

July's paper shared the origins of the month's name, tracing it back to the Roman Senate honoring Julius Caesar with a month named after him. Similarly, August owes its name to the Senate in 8 BCE, honoring him as Augustus Caesar, the first Roman emperor. They chose this as the eighth

month because several important events happened during that month in his rise to power. The month was originally called Sextilis and had only 29 days. The Senate added two, making Augustus's namesake month equal in status to Julius Caesar's with 31 days.

For many in the Smoke Rise community, August marks the last month of summer, giving it a sense of transition — a time for final trips to the pool, wrapping up vacations, and preparing for the upcoming school year, which for Dekalb County begins Monday, August 4th.

August is a month of "firsts" and "lasts." College students pack up for dorm life, teachers begin decorating their classrooms and back-to-school shopping comes to a close. August brings the last days of unstructured play and the move back to morning alarm clocks and schoolhouse bells. That blend of nostalgia and anticipation lends August a reflective tone, making it an ideal month to establish new habits and routines.

When my son was in elementary school, we would often make after-school trips to Stone Mountain Park to enjoy the magnificent and frequently overlooked offerings. One day, we'd take out a two-person paddle boat at the Riverboat dock; another afternoon, we'd play 18-holes of mini-golf by the train station and another day, we'd ride the scenic train around the mountain. Sometimes we hiked the trail to the top and other times, we'd take the sky lift and hike down. A favorite of ours was hiking the secluded, well-marked 5-mile nature trail encircling the mountain, mostly deep in the woods between the mountain and the road. Walking it, you must remind yourself you are not in the North Georgia mountains or on the Appalachian Trail. Then there is the more thrilling SkyHike® requiring a harness to walk through the treetops on swinging bridges. For more family-friendly activities, I see they have added a new Zip Line, Dinotorium and Geyser Splash area.

The Quarry exhibit is an amazing history lesson and fascinating to wander through. Stone Mountain was quarried for 133 years, from 1845 through 1978. Over the years, 7.6 million cubic feet of granite were removed from the mountain. This is equal to one-foot-long paving stones stretching from the North Pole to the South Pole, a distance of 12,000 miles. It makes you wonder if we'd have any mountain left at all if they hadn't halted mining the site. Granite was shipped worldwide, and virtually every state in the U.S. has a building that uses Stone Mountain granite. Combine the Quarry exhibit with a tour of the Historic Square, a collection of original buildings from around the State of Georgia, built between 1793 and 1875. Each structure was moved from its original site and reconstructed here.

Here in Smoke Rise, August is a celebration of summer's end and time for creating new beginnings. We are fortunate to have so much to enjoy right here in our own backyard. Make a point of getting out there and enjoying all that our area has to offer.

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The Bells of Cortona - A Trip Back in Time

By Beth Henson, Staff Writer

Little did I know when I decided to tag along on my daughter’s study abroad teaching excursion that I would be transported through centuries of Italian history.

The program was located in Cortona, one of the oldest towns in Tuscany, with roots dating back to the 600s B.C. Originally an Etruscan city known as Curtun, it later became a Roman colony called Corito. After several transitions, it was sold to the Medici family in 1411. Eventually, following the Italian Wars of Independence, Cortona and the greater Tuscany region became part of the Kingdom of Italy.

Walking down the steep cobblestone streets felt like stepping into another world. The blend of medieval and Renaissance architecture perched high on a hillside at 2,000 feet stirred my imagination. I often wondered how people in distant times lived and felt in such a place. And the views, especially at sunset, were absolutely breathtaking.



A visit to the nearby monastery, Convento delle Celle, nestled in the shadow of Mount Sant’Egidio, was a deeply moving experience. Built by St. Francis of Assisi in 1211, it was the first hermitage site of its kind. The monks’ dwellings, carved into the hillside, created a setting that invited silence and reflection. The natural beauty of the surroundings seemed to echo the peacefulness within.

High above Cortona stands the Fortress of Girifalco. Originally used by Gothic garrisons in the 13th century and likely by Etruscans before that, it was later renovated in 1556 by Cosimo I de’ Medici. In subsequent years, it served a more civic role, acting as an early form of urban police headquarters.

Perhaps the most striking feature of Cortona was its churches. Their bells marked the passage of each hour, grounding me in



the present while connecting me to the past. The most prominent was the Basilica of Santa Margherita, originally built in the 11th century by Camaldolese monks and rebuilt in 1288 after a siege. I chose not to approach the front of the church, where the relics of Saint Margaret, including her body, are displayed!

We also had the opportunity to explore beyond Cortona, taking excursions to Rome, Arezzo, Florence, and Venice. Each place added another layer to this journey through Italy’s vibrant past.

As I left Cortona, I realized that history is not something locked in books or museums. In this ancient hilltop town, it lives and breathes in every stone, every bell, and every sunset. The experience didn’t just teach me about Italy’s past, it also deepened my sense of wonder for the timeless beauty that connects us all.

NEWS YOU CAN USE

BY AVIVA HOFFMANN, STAFF WRITER

That’s Not Your Loved One Calling: It’s an AI Scam!

Technology can be a wonderful tool for so many things – including staying connected, managing your finances, and even helping the young ones with homework. But there is a new danger on the rise - and it’s something many of us aren’t prepared for: scammers using artificial intelligence (AI) to steal your money and personal information.



I recently came across a national news story about a frightening fraud that shows how advanced these tactics have become. A mother received a phone call from someone claiming to be a lawyer representing her daughter. The “lawyer” said her daughter had been in a car accident, had hit a pregnant woman, and was now in jail. He told the mother she needed to pay \$15,000 immediately to get her daughter out on bail.

Another voice also joined the call. She sounded exactly like her daughter - crying, scared, and asking for help. It turned out the daughter was never in an accident! Instead, scammers had used AI to clone the daughter’s voice from videos found online, making the mother believe she was truly speaking to her child.

I also saw a local news story about a person who was scammed during a terrible time of grief. Apparently, these crooks are combing through obituaries, looking for their next target. In this case, someone impersonated a funeral home director and called a grieving loved one, claiming additional fees were needed for the funeral and burial service. The family, already overwhelmed by loss, nearly sent the payment before realizing it was a scam. Now, the funeral home is warning all new clients to be on guard against this cruel scheme.

Stories like this are becoming more common. AI can now mimic voices with frightening accuracy, copy writing styles to send emails that sound like a friend, and even generate fake videos. These new scams go beyond the typical robocalls or suspicious emails we’ve learned to ignore. They play on fear, urgency, and the love you have for your family.

What you can do:

- Pause before you act. Scammers pressure you to act quickly. If you get a call like this, hang up and call your family member directly on their known number. If they don’t answer, call another family member to verify their safety.
- Be careful with what you share online. Scammers can use social media to find your family members’ voices, photos, and personal details to create convincing scams. Check your privacy settings, and think twice before posting videos and personal details publicly.
- Verify before sending money. No legitimate lawyer, police officer, or government agency will demand immediate payment by phone, especially via gift cards, wire transfers, or payment apps.
- Talk with your family about these scams. Establish a family “code word” to use in emergencies to confirm identities over the phone. (My family has done this.)

AI is a powerful tool, but it can be used for harm if it falls into the wrong hands. Staying informed and cautious is your best defense against these emerging scams.

If you believe you have been targeted by a scam, report it to your local police department and the Federal Trade Commission at reportfraud.ftc.gov. The more we share and learn about these cons, the better we can protect ourselves and our community.



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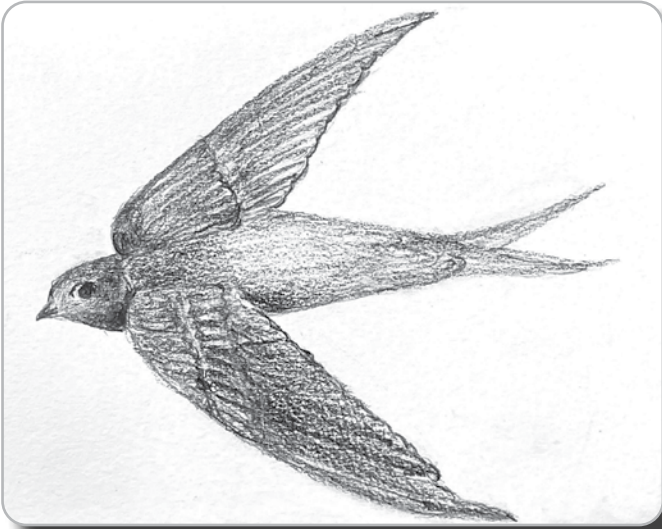
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Out the Window *Article and illustration by Beth Henson, Staff Writer*

Swifts

Glancing out the bedroom window, I could hardly believe the breath-taking golden mountain views, highlighted by the ever-present flock of swifts continually circling in the air above our upper terrace. Thanks to my daughter's family traveling in Italy for the summer, I was able to tag along and fulfill one of my life's dreams: to see the Italian countryside and visit the cities where my favorite painters once lived.



The beautiful waves of swifts stayed with us through the summer, until they began their long journey back to Africa after a season of breeding and raising their young. Amazingly, these powerful birds spend most of their lives in flight, eating, bathing, and even sleeping on the wing. They rarely touch the ground. These aerial wonders can reach speeds of up to 69 miles per hour, the fastest birds in level flight, and migrate 3,400 miles twice each year.

There was something deeply comforting in their rhythm and purpose as I watched their striking silhouettes in the fading evening light. Long after they had vanished from the sky, I would always remember their endurance and beauty, quietly echoed in my own lovely summer adventure in Italy.

It's Complicated...continued from page 7

requires educated political agents and voting public, both of which we sorely need.

Whenever I try to engage in this conversation I am confronted by blank stares ... with no fundamental knowledge of the fullness of the supply and demand process of keeping us comfortable and safe in our homes and our transportation methods.

Yes, there are those who want to go back to sailing to move goods around the world, but those are the same tokenisms that recycling advocates want us to believe are part of the future.

No, we need to go back to the basics and question why we are doing things in the first place. We are irresponsibly extracting non-replaceable resources with no hope of sustainability over time.

In like manner, we need to rethink the way we explain our faith and beliefs so they make more sense to a modern critical thinking audience.

Let's hit the restart button on the conversation and begin with some solid education rather than resting on superficially appealing notions.

Resources:

- Look for more at [geektheology.net](#).
- Search the internet for: *What If Carbon Emissions Are Not the Real Problem?*
By Lorand Pottino.

Tucker-Northlake CID...continued from page 4

The study is a collaborative effort. In addition to the Tucker-Northlake CID, partners include the Tucker Civic Association, Tucker Business Association, Tucker Main Street Alliance, Smoke Rise Civic Association, Northlake Condominiums, and the Tucker Summit CID.

"Expanding the tent was the right call," Lee said. "We appreciate the support of our partners, and we look forward to more conversations when the study is completed this summer."

Hello, Goodbye!

By Cheri Schneider, staff writer

Out popped her little head upon the little leaf.
She opened up her little mouth and cried out every grief.
(No mother waited at her side)

She ate and ate and walked and walked
on miles of stem-like paths.
She changed her clothes more often than
she even needed baths.

One day she threw her anchor down upon her sea of green
And made herself a pearly ship all lined with silky skeins.

She slept the sleep of growing up, until the time was right.
And then began to dig a hole to let in streams of light.

She worked and worked so very hard... it felt so very tight.
She knew she needed to break free!
She pushed with all her might.

She stretched her arms and then her legs
and when the task was done,
She lay upon her little leaf and warmed up in the sun.




"I'll stretch!" she thought. "This feels so good!"
"If I could only fly."
A ruffle, then a rippled breeze, and then she said "Goodbye!"

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Smoke Rise Garden Club Picks Buckets of Blueberries

On June 27, 2025, the Smoke Rise Garden Club made their annual trek to 5 Sons Farm to pick blueberries! This was my first year attending, and I've got to say it was a really fun time! My aunts were visiting from Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, and we were so happy that they could join us! At the farm they told us to walk through the rows and rows of bushes and taste the berries before picking to ensure we liked the taste. The blueberries were plentiful, and it was a real treat to taste as we picked. In fact, the blueberries were so good and abundant that myriads of Green June bugs were also at the farm, just tasting away. Thankfully, they don't bite and are large enough to dodge!

My group had 7 members, and we walked away with four buckets of blueberries. Luckily my cousin is a master baker and made not only an out-

of-this-world blueberry pie but also multiple tins of blueberry muffins. We even brought some to the neighborhood potluck and they were a hit! Next summer be sure to make your way to 5 Sons Farm in Jasper, Georgia for some of the best blueberry picking around!



'Cruisin' With Daisy'
Standard Flower Show
September 12-13

By Quill Duncan, Smoke Rise Morning Glories

We are pleased to announce that the 52nd Redbud Standard Flower Show 'Cruisin' with Daisy' will be held this year in Tucker, GA at the Tucker Methodist Activity Center 4315 Church Street on September 12-13, 2025. This is a National Garden Club Standard Flower Show and has earned many awards over the years for the excellent presentations.

You are all invited to attend the free juried show that features beautiful floral designs and over 500 horticulture entries from garden club members across the Redbud District. The show opens at 1PM on September 12th.

All the Smoke Rise Garden Clubs- Smoke Rise, Mountain Mums and Morning Glories- participate in various ways to support the show by chairing committees or volunteering or entering horticulture or designs. If you have never attended a flower show, you will be astonished at the variety and beauty of the entries.

Free parking and easy access for our Smoke Rise community neighbors!

The Saturday September 13th show coincides with the Tucker Cruise In for the month of September. You can see the car show on Main Street and then stroll down to Church Street to see the flower show all on the same day!

Hope to see you all there! If you have questions or want to volunteer, please contact Quill Duncan at quillduncan@msn.com or 770 414-4766.

This Mountain Mum is the Queen of Compost

By Cheri Schneider, Mountain Mums Member

I am a proud Mountain Mum! In addition to getting back in the garden to clean up and weed over the summer, I am becoming the Queen of compost. (Though really, my Darling Husband (DH) has been given a new title of Compost King, and I just take the credit). He loves to collect rotten veggies and to fiddle with the contraption outside. And it is his muscles that move that darn heavy bin around.

Six months ago, we bought a bin type composter and set it up outside the garage with our trash bins. They look similar. The difference is the composter bin has a drawer you can pull out when that beautiful dirt appears. It also has a hose connected to the base to drain the 'compost tea' that collects. You can use both the tea and the compost to fertilize your garden.

All summer we have been adding voluminous masses of weeds, grass clippings, and kitchen vegetable waste. And in the fall, we will add leaves into the bin. In theory (and hopefully in reality), we will soon have wonderful rich dark dirt to spread on the garden and 'garden tea' to use to water our window boxes.

We got our first 'compost tea' a month or two ago and stored it in gallon containers. We diluted it and used it to fertilize our 16 deck window boxes. The huge bin has not yielded the beautiful dirt I thought would come from it, but I believe it is coming. I found out that the drawer is VERY HEAVY to pull out! That means I do not check it very often. The last time his Highness, the Compost King, looked, the dirt was muddy and a bit wet. "We will see..." I thought.

One day Darling Husband / AKA Compost King noticed the hose that drains the 'tea' from the bin was blocked up with fat squirming larvae. We panicked and wrung our hands. But DH, ever the man that he is, got his gloves on and cleared the larvae out and threw them back in the top of the bin. We thought they were maggots.

A week or so later, I was getting out of the car and noticed insects buzzing around the compost hose outlet. Smart me! I took a picture and googled: "What is this?" I found that our compost bin is doing its job! Those were harmless, very hard-working soldier flies.

The larvae of these good flies love to eat. And what do they eat? Garbage! And they keep housefly and fruit fly numbers down by eating those larvae too. They also go crazy for coffee grounds. This is probably why we have so many soldier flies! These chubby buddies eat, eat, eat for about two weeks and then crawl away (into the tea hose drain) and become adults. The adult fly is small with tan body, clear wings and looks somewhat like a tiny wasp. They do not sting, bite or bother. They just come back to the compost pile if it is an open compost pile, lay eggs and the cycle starts over again.

BY THE WAY: Chicken owners love the larvae, and their chickens do too. I also solved the question of all the wet soil in the drawer. The answer is that soldier fly larvae make moist soil, which is different than the drier soil worms make. We haven't figured out yet if the 'muddy soil' is all we get for our garden... we will see.

If you want to hear more incredible garden stories, join the Mountain Mums for their August 6 meeting. Call Mary Jacobson for information on 770-316-3225.





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ATTENTION ADVERTISERS: All ad submissions and advertising inquiries should be directed to:
Classified and Display ads: Staff@smokesignalnews.com
Flyers: Barbara Luton at barluton@aol.com.

All classified ads are limited to 20 words, with the *Smoke Signal* reserving the right to edit any copy. Ads are \$240 per year. Please submit a copy of ad to staff@smokesignalnews.com with your full name, address and phone number. Make checks out to *Smoke Signal* and mail to P.O. Box 1038, Tucker, GA 30085. We require full payment prior to ad placement.

For information on display (box) advertisements or flyer inserts, see contact information on page 2.

Classified Ads

WAGNON LANDSCAPE GROUP
Residential, commercial, design and installation. Year-round maintenance, light tree work and cleanups. Licensed/insured SR resident with SR references. 770-381-3697.

TOTAL HOME CARE - Deep cleaning, decluttering, windows, auto detailing, house/pet sitting, pressure washing, light yardwork, errands. Call Dana @ 706-228-0593

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Your local experts for wet or moldy crawlspaces. Call or text 678.920.8128 for a free inspection.

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The Smoke Signal currently has space available for more Classified Ads!
Contact staff@smokesignalnews.com to get your ad in next month’s paper!

The purpose of the Smoke Signal classifieds is to advertise goods and services to the community.



Smoke Rise Sharks Make Waves

The Smoke Rise Sharks summer swim team had another great season! After practice sessions at the Summit and Smoke Rise Country Club pools, we received third place overall for the regular swim meets with the Atlanta Swimming Association and attended the ASA Championships at Georgia Tech.

We are proud to note that our team brings together neighborhood kids ages 3-18 years old for fun ways to improve their swimming. Congratulations to all the swimmers for their improvements! And special thanks to all the coaches, board, sponsors, parents, pools and volunteers for making this season wonderful.



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Food & Home Fixin’s

By Joyce Ray, Staff Writer

The Humble Hotdog

Whether we call them franks, bangers, weenies, dogs or links, the National Hot Dog and Sausage Council is unanimous on one agreed upon fact: Hot dogs should be eaten by hand! In 2018, the Council estimated that between Memorial Day and Labor Day, Americans ate a billion hot dogs. On Independence Day that same year, we enjoyed approximately 150 million hot dogs, enough to stretch from D.C. to L.A. more than five times!



There are at least three popular ways to cook a hot dog: grilled, steamed or boiled. Gene likes to cut them up and mix them into baked beans, likely a throwback to his Boy Scout camping days. My favorite is charred on the grill, so I always choose the black ones! Americans average eating six (6!) hot dogs per month, but my current average is far below that.

Unfortunately, the word “hot dog” is not in the index of any of my favorite sources. Initially, I found a few unexciting casseroles online, then finally I settled on a method that involves pizza sauce and pepperoni for those family members who can’t agree between American and Italian fare. I am going to try this one. Maybe my average will go up!

Pizza Hot Dogs

- 4 hot dogs and 4 hot dog buns
- 1 cup pizza sauce
- ¼ cup pepperoni (regular or turkey)
- ¼ cup garlic butter, softened
- 1 cup Mozzarella cheese, shredded

Preheat oven to 375°. Lay open buns on a baking pan. Spread garlic butter on both sides of the insides of the bun. Top each half of the bun with pizza sauce. Place one cooked hot dog in each bun and top with mozzarella cheese. Bake for 5-10 minutes until the cheese is melted and the bun is toasted.

Buttermilk Pound Cake

Fresh fruits are in abundance this time of year at Farmer’s Markets, food stores or at “pick your own” farms. Serving fruit atop fresh pound cake is a classic, yielding a simple but decadent dessert. About an hour before serving, wash and cut up the fruit in a small bowl and add about 1 teaspoon sugar per cup of fruit. Mix well and store it in the refrigerator to allow the sugar to dissolve and create its own marinade. This is great with fresh peaches, which can sometimes be a bit tart.

This is an easy Buttermilk Pound Cake that holds up well when cooled and sliced.

- 2 1/2 cups sugar
- 2 sticks softened butter
- 4 eggs
- 3 cups sifted all-purpose flour
- 1 cup buttermilk
- ¼ tsp baking soda
- 2 tsp vanilla extract

Cream butter and sugar. Add eggs, one at a time and beat well after each. Sift flour, then measure 3 cups. Whisk ¼ tsp baking soda into flour. Measure 1 cup of buttermilk (I used whole fat buttermilk). Add vanilla extract to buttermilk. Alternate adding flour and buttermilk to cake batter, mixing well after each addition. Grease and flour bundt or tube pan. Add cake batter and place in 325° preheated oven. Bake for 45 minutes and check for doneness by inserting a toothpick. When it is done the top will be cracked and will have a nice crust. Allow it to cool for at least one hour before removing it from pan and cutting. Serve with marinated fruit and top with whipped cream.