VOLUME 57, ISSUE 6

Serving the Smoke Rise Community since 1968

September, 2024

www.smokesignalnews.com



from the staff of the Smoke Signal!

Back to School Supplies Events

By Barbara Luton

Stone Mountain and Tucker both held events featuring free book bags and school supplies for preschool through high school.

The events are usually held at the beginning of August to be ready for school starting.

Members of the GFWC Stone Mountain Woman's Club filled 240 book bags with notebooks, theme books, pencils, pens, erasers, glue and pencil cases. (photo, bottom left). The supplies were provided by the city. There were



clear back packs, fabric backpacks and small packs for the younger children. The event took place at the pavilion and green space in downtown Stone Mountain.

The Tucker event was sponsored by the Omega Support Center (photo, top). The Center provided 567 backpacks filled with school supplies. The supplies were provided by the Center and by donations. Students from eleven schools within the Tucker community were given the free supplies. Along with the supplies, seven resource partners shared health, wellness and academic services. Fun art projects entertained the students throughout the day

(photo, bottom right).





Smoke Rise Community Association Report by Michael Huerkamp, President

Our membership renewal campaign continues in the optimism that those not yet donating act upon the appeal included as a flyer within the August edition of the Smoke Signal. Understanding the gravity of the continual decline of the Smoke Rise Community Association (SRCA) financial fortunes, the Smoke Signal staff graciously waived the distribution fee for the flyer. Followers of the SRCA know that we've run deficit budgets through the last four years. We continue to erode our assets, and thus may be forced into a corner to focus on flowers and landscaping to the detriment of shredding, supporting the school, and investments in community events and organizations. Halfway through our year and at the end of our spring renewal campaign, we had income at only 44% of budget requirements. Less abstract, we had cash assets at the end of June summing to \$22,845 and future expenditures that could approach \$24,000. We are counting on a strong financial finish and need and appreciate your support. The easiest way to donate is via the PayPal link at smokerise.org or by Zelle to smokerise.org. In other news, criminal activity at the community garden resulted in theft of a small refrigerator and gardening implements.

Look inside for...

From Frank Auman -Mayor, City of Tucker

Measure twice, cut once. This saying is an old saying not only because it's sound advice, but because it applies literally to carpentry and metaphorically to so many other aspects of life, including, and maybe especially, municipal governments. It cautions against being in too much of a hurry, or reacting with rash decisions instead of responding thoughtfully to the issues we face, or the community we want to build. It reminds us that being thoughtful in the beginning saves time, money, and hardship in the end. It also drives home the truth that when the planning is done, we also must act.

Our management of city business begins with planning. I have discussed before and at length all the plans and studies we have conducted over the past eight years. Most of these involve hiring a third party to provide professional advice, and to conduct public input activities like polls, surveys, public meetings, charettes, and so on. Then your elected officials add their knowledge and judgment about timing and priorities and urgency and importance. The resulting plans guide our decisions over a long period of time, freeing us from starting from scratch with each subsequent decision, and from making those decisions without understanding how they fit into a larger effort.

One of the biggest projects in our short history is the downtown green, and it's about to break ground. It has been a topic in this space before, but it truly is exciting and will have a huge impact on our Tucker community. From the first notion of acquiring the property, through arranging the finances, creating the plan for the space, issuing construction, and bid documents, and final approval, this has been a multi-year process. With final adoption last week, we will soon see shovels in the ground, and roughly a year from now, it will be in full use! This will not be your average park. Every detail from the flora to the building materials has been discussed, changed, adapted, and now approved to achieve maximum joy in its use. This will be a signature space designed to accommodate a variety of events and will be a game-changer in the way we use downtown.

To return to our metaphor, we've measured twice and then some. Now the cutting has begun, and we'll do it carefully and confidently, with the certainty of a beautiful, finished product that will serve us all for many, many years.

Can't wait to see you on the Green, Tucker!

Looking for a way to give back to your community? THE SMOKE SIGNAL

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



Smoke Signal

P.O. Box 1038, Tucker, GA 30085

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

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Recipes and Home......Joyce Ray

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Look for the wooden box labeled **Smoke Signal**.

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



staff@smokesignalnews.com and you will be contacted as space becomes available, in the order requests are received.

Classified ads and flyers are still available!

Smoke Signal Deadlines

SEPTEMBER 13

Please e-mail articles to: staff@smokesignalnews.com

Articles and photos should be sent in .doc or .docx format. Articles sent in .pdf format cannot be edited. Photos and graphics should be submitted in .jpg or .pdf format.

Deadline for classified ads is SEPTEMBER 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:

"Like" us on Facebook at

www.facebook.com/SmokeSignalNews

Contact Barbara Luton, (770) 491-6711 by 15th of month.

You can also visit our Facebook page to view postings of newsletter pictures and stories throughout the month.



TUCKER FARMERS MARKET

April through November THURSDAYS 4-7 p.m.

Over 30 vendors each week Buy local fruits, veggies, baked goods, and more Enjoy music, children's area and many dinner options

ATTENTION GRADUATES, NEWLYWEDS, and HONOREES:

Please send in your picture and a brief article for publication in the Smoke Signal.

Email submissions to staff@ smokesignalnews.com

BRING A BOOK TAKE A BOOK



Don't forget to check out the Little Libraries near the swim clubs.

Smoke Rise Baptist Church

SmokeRiseBaptist.org

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

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, 678-481-4052 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

Incarnate Word Lutheran Church

4950 Hugh Howell Road pastor@incword.org Phone: 404-936-0628 Website: Incword.org/

SUNDAY 8:45 a.m. Worship

Mountain West Church

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

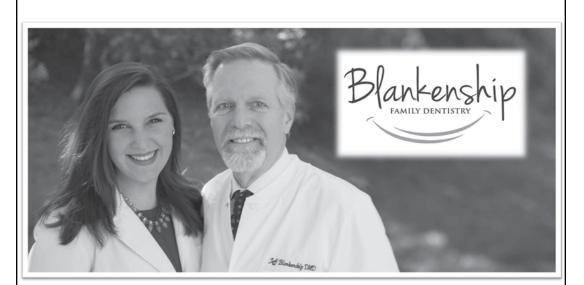
SUNDAY 8:30 a.m., 10:00 a.m., and 11:30 a.m. Worship

THURSDAY 10:00 a.m. Neighborhood Bible Study

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

Digital copies of the *Smoke Signal* are posted to the archives at www.smokesignalnews.com.

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



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September, 2024 let's go!

Enjoy Atlanta Fall Weather and Activities

Linda Karr, Staff Writer

September brings fall with cooler temperatures, less rain, and a burst of color from our fall gardens. It's a wonderful time to go out and explore, have fun, and visit some of the exciting things to do in and around Atlanta. It's a time to make memories! Here's a sampling of things to do:

- Cheer on our Atlanta Braves at a home game.
- Grant Park Past & Future Food Walk a fun walking tour highlighting the best of Atlanta's food and history. You'll taste eight modern and Southern foods from three outstanding locally owned food stops. The 2.5 hour guided experience includes a jaunt through Historic Oakland Cemetery.
- Experience Fernbank with Stellar Science: Friday, September 27th experience all the great indoor exhibit discoveries and outdoor nature explorations.
- Lynyrd Skynyrd and The Outlaws: September 5th at Ameris Bank Amphitheatre
- John Legend and Atlanta Symphony Orchestra: September 9th at Ameris Bank Amphitheatre
- Take a Day Trip to North Georgia: Apple and Pumpkin Picking & Sunflowers at Mercier Orchards, Faucett Farms, and Burt's Pumpkin Farm
- Learn about Dr. King's life and legacy on Martin Luther King, Jr. Atlanta History Tour
- Visit the Atlanta Botanical Garden for late-summer and early fall flowers as well as Alice's Wonderland Returns featuring thirty-eight larger-than-life sculptures in seven installations plus Shaggy Dog
- Experience the rooftop amusement park at Ponce City Market
- Haven't been to Zoo Atlanta lately check out the 1500+ animals.
- Take a journey under the sea at Georgia Aquarium
- Take a prohibition themed progressive dinner with a character guide from the 1920s! https://unexpectedatlanta.com/tours/prohibition-progressive-dinner-atlanta-cocktails/
- Picnic at Centennial Olympic Park in Downtown Atlanta
- Visit the World of Coca-Cola
- Yellow Daisy Festival, September 5th-8th: Annual arts and crafts festival at Stone Mount Park, with 400 artists and artisans, live music, festival food, craft demonstrations, beer garden, vintage market and more.
- Atlanta Home Show, September 6th-8th at the Cobb Galleria Centre.
- Lakewood Antiques Market, September 6th-8th
- Spider-Man: Across the Spider-Verse Live in Concert, September 11th: Film screening with live musical accompaniment at Atlanta Symphony Hall.
- The Princess Bride in Concert, September 13th-14th: Film screening with live orchestral accompaniment at Atlanta Symphony Hall.
- Atlanta Food & Wine Festival, September 13th-15th: Big annual food festival with a variety of events including tastings, chef talks, and more.
- West Ponce Music Stroll, September 14th: Free annual music festival along West Ponce de Leon Avenue, Decatur, with outdoor concerts, chalk art, 5K, fitness classes, makers market, and more.
- Sandy Springs Fall Arts and Craft Festival, September 14th-15th: Festival in downtown Sandy Springs with 100+ arts and crafts vendors, local musicians, art activities and more.
- North Georgia State Fair, September 19th-29th: Annual fair at Jim R Miller Park, Marietta, with carnival rides, animal shows, performances, rodeo, car events and more.
- Atlanta Greek Festival, September 20th-22nd: Annual festival of Greek food and heritage at Annunciation Greek Orthodox Cathedral, with traditional Greek foods and food demonstrations, cathedral tours, live music and dancing, performances and more.
- Little Shop of Horrors: An Art Farm at Serenbe and Matt Logan Production, September 20th-29th: Musical under the tent in the Wildflower Meadow at Serenbe, Chattahoochee
- Buckhead Arts Festival, September 21st-22nd: Annual outdoor fine arts festival in Buckhead, with 100+ artists working in a variety of media, art demonstrations and live music.
- JapanFest, September 21st-22nd: Annual festival of Japanese culture at the Gas South Convention Center, with Japanese food from local restaurants and food trucks, live performances, vendors and more.
- Peachtree Corners Festival, September 21st-22nd: Annual fall community festival at Peachtree Corners Town Green, with arts and crafts, classic car show, live music, food, and children's activities.
- Disney On Ice, September 26th-29th: Family ice-skating performance at the Gas South Arena.
- Aqua Vino, September 27th: Annual wine tasting event at the Georgia Aquarium to benefit its research and conservation initiatives, with unlimited wine samples, small bites and live entertainment amidst the sea life exhibits.
- Sweet Auburn Music Fest, September 27th-29th: Annual R&B and gospel music street festival in the Sweet Auburn district, with international food, art and other vendors, local businesses and more.
- Disney's The Lion King, October 2nd-20th: Musical at the Fox Theatre.
- Atlanta Horror Film Festival, October 4th-6th: Annual festival of horror film at Limelight Theater.
- Taste of Tucker, October 5th: Annual food festival along Main Street featuring food and drink from local restaurants and breweries, arts and crafts, music and more.

Enjoy all that our wonderful town has to offer!

Taste of Tucker 2024

The 15th Taste of Tucker event will be October 5, 2024, from 1-6 pm on Main Street in Tucker. Taste of Tucker is always a fun filled event with a lot of vendors with a wide variety of food offerings. Enjoy the bands, the food, the breweries, the crowds, the vendors and of course the children's area.

Art and Karen Wood started this event 15 years ago and it has grown to draw thousands of attendees. All proceeds from the event are donated to Networks Cooperative Ministry and Camp Kudzu. Last year (2023) proceeds totaled \$52,750. There is no cost to attend. Participants can buy tickets which are redeemed for food at the different food booths.

There are a lot of sponsors who provide financial support for the event as well vendors. For more information or to purchase food tickets in advance, go to www.tasteoftucker.com

Come out for a fun day that really is a community event.

City of Tucker

September Events Calendar

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- 2 City Buildings Closed in Observance of Labor Day
- 3 Downtown Development Authority, 6:30 p.m.
- 4 Zoning Board of Appeals, 7 p.m.
- 6 First Friday Concert Series, 7 p.m. The Return – Beatles Tribute Band
- 9 City Council Meeting, 7 p.m.
- 14 Tucker Cruise-In, 10 a.m. (Main Street is Closed)
- 19 Planning Commission, 7 p.m.
- 21 Adult Field Day, 5 p.m.
- 23 City Council Work Session, 7 p.m.

Tucker Brewing to Host Tucktoberfest

Tucker Brewing Company is gearing up for another incredible Tucktoberfest from September 21 – October 6! Celebrate the three-week festival with contests and games, live music, a custom-curated German menu, authentic German costumes and of course, refreshing Tucker Brewing beers! There's fun for the whole family! Check out the schedule of daily events on the Tucker Brewing website.

FODAC Golf Classic 2024 Mark your calendars for September 27!

It's time for the annual Friends of Disabled Adults & Children (FODAC) Golf Classic! The yearly fundraising event benefits FODAC's home medical equipment (HME) program, which helps provide wheelchairs, walkers, patient lifts and other mobility items to families in need.

Tournament participants can look forward to a great round of golf at the prestigious Smoke Rise Country Club along with breakfast, snacks and beverages throughout the day, a catered lunch, FODAC swag and sponsor giveaways.

For more information on event registration, how to donate or how to become a sponsor, please visit the FODAC website.



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Salute to Advertiser

Spreading Moore Kindness

Thele Moore lives her motto everyday through the many opportunities that she creates by giving back. Thele sees her community involvement as an extension of her work through her company, Thele Moore American Family Insurance Agency in Stone Mountain. She is

supported and applauded for these projects through her partnership with American Family Insurance. In both areas, she shows up when people are down. Much of the time she combines her lifetime passion of playing tennis with opportunities to give back.

Thele's "Atlanta Story" began when she moved to the area from her hometown of St. Louis, Mo. She has excelled in her business and achieved many awards, including the 2023 Georgia Agency Owner Honors and Recognition Program where she was recognized as AFLIC



All American New Life Quality Business American Star.

Thele and her husband, Darrel, met in Atlanta on the tennis court. Darrel also grew up in St. Louis, only six blocks from where Thele lived! They learned that they both had the same kindergarten teacher, were involved in some of the same tennis events, had numerous friends in common but never met until they both moved to Metro Atlanta. She and Darrel have worked together for many years as volunteer tennis coaches for inner city chil-



dren. They have played on numerous ALTA teams and, between the two of them, have won well over 30 ALTA plate awards.

As a member of many local service organizations Thele does not take a back seat, holding offices of leadership in order to

create strong and vital community involvement. She recently took part in a Habitat for Humanity Build organized by American Family in the Atlanta area. "The best part with Habitat was when the new homeowner came by and saw what we were doing to her house and how we transformed it in one day."

Thele and Darrel don't have children, but they see the time and energy they give to the many kids they have coached over the past 20+ years as a great blessing and enjoy every encounter they have with them throughout the years. "By the Grace of God, I have been blessed. I believe that I'm blessed to be a blessing to others."



Beauty With a Lurpose

Congratulations to Avalynn Morales-Prince who excelled in the National American Miss Pageant to achieve 1st place, gaining the title of National American Miss Georgia Jr. Pre-teen. As a result, she will compete in the National Competition in Orlando, FL in November, for the National American Miss Jr. Pre-teen title. Avalynn is the 10-year-old daughter of Carlos and Martene Morales-Prince, and the granddaughter of Charles Bell Jr, and Zylpha Pryor-Bell, long-time residents of the Smoke Rise Community. Avalynn



was escorted by her older brother, Dominic Morales-Prince.

National American Miss is dedicated to developing the success of young women across America with a program that is designed to be age appropriate and family oriented. Pageants are held in each state for girls aged four to twenty-four in six different age divisions. Make-up Is not allowed on contestants twelve and under.

Avalynn Morales-Prince is passionate about gymnastics, service projects and donations as well as church activities.

A Helping Hand: Silver Dawg Frank Luton

In 1917 when Georgia traveled up to South Bend, Indiana to play a football game with Notre Dame, many of the Georgia fans were impressed with

the welcoming and hospitality that folks, wearing blue blazers, welcomed and greeted them, answering questions, giving directions, etc. They came back to Athens and told the Athletic Director that "we" ought to repay the Notre Dame fans when the "Fighting Irish" came down to Athens in 2018. He said, "why just the Notre Dame game; let's do it for all the games". So, the Silver Dawgs were "born".

Smoke Rise's own Frank Luton decided that he ought to be one of the Silver Dawgs. The Silver Dawg group began with 40 "Dawgs", and now number over 100. They position themselves outside of Sanford Stadium and welcome fans, give



Smoke Rise resident and Silver Dawg Frank Luton and ex-Notre Dame football coach, Lou Holtz

directions, etc. On Fridays before the game on Saturday you will find them in the hotel lobbies around Athens, doing their Silver Dawgin'! Yes, fall is here and the football season is underway!



community

A Calling to Fulfill: Eastminster Welcomes New Pastor

Eastminster Presbyterian Church has called a new Pastor to lead their growing diverse community of believers. This is a monumental moment in the fifty-seven-year history of Eastminster Presbyterian church. Reverend C. Jeanine Fulton is the first female and the first African American to serve as pastor at the church.

While being a pastor may be new to Jeanine, serving in ministry is not.

From her youth, Jeanine has always actively served in the local church: ushering, singing in the choir, teaching Sunday school, and playing the piano at nursing homes and church



services. In 2017, Jeanine began studies at Columbia Theological Seminary. While working to complete her theology degree, she interned at Eastminster and soon she was a part-time director of spiritual formation. After earning a Master of Divinity degree from Columbia in May 2023, she accepted a full-time position at Eastminster as executive director of ministries

With a new pastor comes a new vision for the church, Building Together, the Body of Christ. "I have a strong passion for the spiritual development of all people, and especially young people. Our children, youth, teens, and young adults need spiritual formation now more than ever," says Jeanine.

Eastminster plans on hosting Faith Forums this fall. These are small group sessions designed for

youth and teens to ask questions about difficult, real-life topics such as death, illness, peer pressure, relationships, salvation, spirituality, and God.

"I'm excited about my new role and the new opportunities we will have to build innovative ministries, neighborly relationships, bridges, and hope," adds Jeanine.

This summer Eastminster held a free summer vacation Bible school (VBS) for children ages 3 to 12, for the first time in eleven years. Jeanine stated, "The children and volunteers had a blast, and we are looking forward to next year's VBS".

"For over fifty years Eastminster has been doing good works. My hope is to continue this legacy by preaching the gospel, preparing the way for new generations, and pushing for positive change in the world. With God's help, it is possible," says Jeanine.

Eastminster Presbyterian Church seeks to share the good news of Jesus Christ with people through proclamation, worship, and mission. Jeanine is married to Samuel Emengini, and they enjoy travel, sports, and movies.

Parking in Downtown Tucker

Parking has been a major topic of discussion in Tucker, particularly with the ongoing growth on Main Street and the increasing number of events. In response, the City's Mayor and Council took a significant step towards addressing this issue by approving a novel plan.

The plan focuses on expanding public parking options through an intergovernmental agreement (IGA) with the Public Facilities Board (PFA). This agreement allows the PFA to enter a contract with Main Street Church (formerly Tucker First Baptist Church).



The contract grants the City access to 101 shared parking spaces for a 5 ½ year term, with limited hours on 290 days of the year.

The City will take responsibility for paving, pothole repair, restriping, signage, and updating an interactive map of the designated shared parking spots (see below). These spots will be clearly marked with green striping to differentiate them from regular parking. Additionally, the City's Public Works Department will handle ongoing maintenance of the lots.

Hours: Monday through Saturday – 7 a.m. to 8 p.m.

Sundays – reserved for church use only

Closure for special events will be posted onsite.

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Tucker News Round Up

Courtesy of Tucker Summit Community Improvement District

The State of Commercial Real Estate in TSCID

The Tucker Summit CID Industrial Submarket continues to exhibit resilience, maintaining a vacancy rate of 4.0%. Tucker's vacancy remains below the overall Atlanta market average of 4.9%, driven by strong demand for infill industrial locations close to Atlanta's urban core and limited supply. Although year-over-year rent growth has reached 6.7%, it has slightly dipped below the submarket's 10-year average of approximately 7.5%.

In comparison, the amount of space that has been leased in the Atlanta Industrial Market year-to-date absorption has exceeded the total for all of 2023 by more than 260,000 square feet, with newly completed owner-user developments driving the highest occupancy levels this quarter. While the market appears to be in a stabilization period, Atlanta's fundamentals remain strong, evidenced by the year-to-date leasing.

Tucker Façade Grant Program

The Tucker Development Authority is awarding up to \$12,500 in matching grants to eligible businesses in Tucker to improve façades and exteriors for its Tucker Development Façade Grant program.

The reimbursement grant program will only be provided once the projects are approved. Funding will be awarded to approved business owners on a first-come, first-served basis until the funds are depleted or the fiscal year ends.

Learn more about the Tucker Development Façade Grant qualifications and application process on the City of Tucker's website.





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References Available

community

Welcome to Tucker!

The new Mint Coffeehouse has opened on Lawrenceville Highway, across from Handy Ace Hardware and Front Porch Townhomes. Husband and wife team, Ahmad & Marianna Alzoukani, along with their 18-month-old daughter, have revitalized an old building, with beautiful decor and fresh coffee drinks.

Coffee has played a unique role in the couple's lives. Coffee is an essential part of Ahmad's Syrian culture and Marianna has similarly found joy in sharing time and space with people over a cup of coffee. It was when Ahmad was managing a coffee shop and Marianna was searching for coffee-based study spots that their paths crossed. The early stages of their relationship involved countless hours working alongside each other at the coffee shop and helping each other



Mayor Frank Auman welcomes Ahmad and Marianna Alzoukani to Tucker.

with work. Eventually, Marianna even began working at the coffee shop herself and learning what goes into a coffee business.

> With coffee such an integral part of their story, it only made sense that when they decided to get married in 2019, the wedding would be at the same coffee shop where we met. They also knew as they looked to their future and how to best support their family that starting their own coffee business was the answer. As they continue to grow Mint Coffeehouse, they not only love what they do, but they love that they get to do it

"Coffee is our passion, and we hope to share

that passion with you through our catering! We look forward to meeting and serving you soon!" says Ahmad and Marianna. Meet a friend or neighbor and stop by to say hello.



Nicky's Undefeated opens on Main Street in Tucker offering cheesesteaks made with ribeye, chicken or Impossible meat



Schwartz Chiropractic and Wellness opens for business at 2310 Brockett Road

Making a Difference: Helping Prom Dreams Come True at Tucker High School

MINT COFFEEHOUSE

By Patricia Baumann, MD

High school proms are a rite of passage, an important part of life for teenage students and their parents. You may have fond memories of that magical time at your own prom, you may remember every detail of that special outfit, and the excitement of getting ready for prom.

These days, as the expense of prom has risen, students and their parents may face challenges preparing for this special occasion. At Tucker High School, there is help from a Prom Coordinator, Tamaiko R. Chappell. Her official title is Academic Coach Math, but she has graciously accepted the position of Prom Coordinator. She receives donations of dresses, formal attire, jewelry, and other accessories. She checks with counselors to assess need.

If you have something you would like to donate, Tamaiko Chappell can be reached at tamaiko_chappell @ dekalbschoolsga.org.

Book of Drone Photos of Local Construction Sites

Smoke Rise resident, Peter Essick, has recently released a photobook titled, Work in Progress. The book is a collection of his drone photos of construction sites in the Atlanta area. The drone provides a unique aerial perspective on the rapid development in region.

Essick writes in his artist statement in the book:



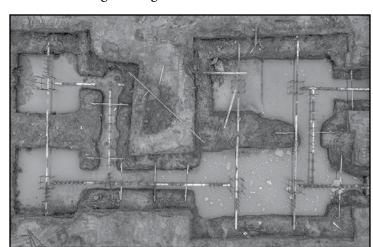
Peter Essick flying a drone

Photography has a his-

tory of documenting everyday life. In my neighborhood in Atlanta, construction activity is an everyday occurrence. It wasn't until I started flying a drone that I realized construction sites offered so many different visual perspectives. The textures and colors of human-altered landscapes are endlessly fascinating. Seeing and photographing this landscape from the air has opened for me new ways of creative expression.

Essick was featured on WABE City Lights in an interview about the book. An essay by acclaimed environmental writer, Dan Chapman titled Building Our Future in the *Urban South* accompanies the photographs.

The book is available from the publisher, FallLinePress. com and at Virginia Highland Books.



Drone Photo of a Construction Site in Tucker, GA





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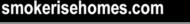
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Jim Shoults

Licensed in Georgia since 1994 678-592-1043 jimshoults@gmail.com

National Association of Realtors Georgia Association of Realtors DeKalb Association of Realtors



September, 2024 features



AT&T Fiber Now Available in Kanawha

Last month, we had our AT&T fiber installation completed and are loving the 1 Gig speed! Compared with my previous decades of bad experiences with phone and cable companies, this was the opposite. First, I found it unusual that they overcommunicated on the frontend and on the backend. I had at least five text messages updating or reminding me of their installation date and time. Then once it was done, the technician sent me several texts over a couple of days asking if I had any questions, which I did, so I especially appreciated that. What he couldn't answer, he had the correct phone number to call for that specific issue, which I found very useful. They are quite specialized and knowing which call center to contact saves time.

Their various plans are available on their website. However, try not to let the cost deter you. There are lots of savings to discover. For instance, new subscribers receive a \$50 to \$150 one-time payment for signing up, and there is \$50 referral payment if you recommend others. Plus, since we are AT&T mobile phone customers, we receive a 20% discount on our phone service and a 10% discount on the monthly Internet service. Finally, there is a monthly \$5 discount if you sign up for autopay. We have gone from \$95/ month Internet cost down to \$56 for far for more robust service. On our two phones, we are saving \$40/month for a total Internet and phone savings of \$96/month or \$1,252 annually.

About our install:

- They came two days after I requested service.
- Our technician carefully assessed our home configuration and the location of our various devices (TV, computers, work areas), then gave us several options for optimal modem placement. This is critically important to getting the most out of your new fiber service. The modem should be placed as close as possible to where you are using it, so think that through before the technician comes.
- He then drilled a hole in our exterior wall for the modem cable.
- Finally, he helped get a password established and showed us how to download the AT&T app for our phones.
- The following week, the AT&T cable people came back with a machine that drills a path under our driveway to connect our home to the box at the street.

Even without it being wired, we have fast Wi-Fi speed. We get ~500 Megabits per second upload and download speeds, which is 2-3 times higher than our other cable service. Service is not available everywhere in Smoke Rise, so check your street address on the AT&T website to find out.

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The Longitude Prize

By Joel Gilbert, Staff Writer

If any of you are or know people who love history and the sea you must read the book Longitude or at least watch the TV series with the same name, on Amazon Prime or YouTube. I am constantly talking about this as I offer interpretation at the Mystic Seaport Museum exhibit of nautical instruments, and just watched it again to refresh my memories. The challenge in the 1600s and 1700s aboard ships at sea was the determination of longitude ... the position East or West ... on long voyages. It is solved if you knew the time back at the port you left precisely because the math reduces to taking a measurement at noon each day when the sun peaks in the sky (local solar noon) and then reading that clock for the time in your home port. It is simple math since the earth spins 360 degrees on its axis once each day and locating where you are in that direction should be simple enough.

The British government was losing so many ships at sea because longitude wasn't known so they offered a large prize to anyone who could build a practical clock that kept accurate time ... defined as being off no more than about 1-2 minutes after several months at sea.

What hits you so clearly is that entrenched traditional and academic bias blinds people in positions of authority to reject innovation when it comes from unsuspecting places. John Harrison, a carpenter, became fascinated with the wooden clock in his church which he then repaired and adjusted to hold almost perfect time. He became obsessed with the longitude prize and over his lifetime built several clocks that achieved this accuracy.

The competing idea sponsored by the academics and Royal Observatory was to use the moon and its position relative to the sun and other stars. While elegant in theory, the reality of the math in practice was quite another story as I learned myself by taking a two-day course in these methods at the Mystic Seaport Museum. Even with a calculator, using the sextant to measure the angle between the moon and the sun or another star was the easy part, but converting that to the time back in Greenwich took several hours.

The clock aboard ship set to Greenwich time was obviously the best answer, but the elites on the Longitude Prize committee were not going to let this upstart Harrison win without dragging him through the mud of endless and changing requirements. The egos and arrogance of this committee is on full display in both the book and the movie.

What you can't help but see is how easy it is for the quest for the perfect to become the enemy of the good. It is so disgusting to see how arrogant leaders in power punish innovation and creativity if it threatens their long-held beliefs and ideas.

John Harrison and his son finally prevailed after about 40 years of perseverance, but few people would have the guts and gumption to do what they did. They are role models for anyone who "dreams the impossible dream" in any area of life and against all odds decides to keep trying no matter how many times they get knocked down. The book (and the movie) should be a required reading for every young person facing the next decade of challenges. If we want innovators, we need to show them how it is done in real life.

It is ironic that the navigation exhibit illustrates the answers to the basic question at sea: where am I and where are we going over time? Today's electronics coupled to satellites and atomic clocks makes this so easy and precise that we take it for granted. We simply look at our phones and can literally be guided to our destination without thinking.

That, coupled with so many other electronic aides have dulled our intuitive senses to the point we no longer really know where we are going or why. The Navy is now worried that their ships at sea and planes in the air would be blind if someone jammed the satellite communications, so they are once teaching celestial navigation as used in the past.

What are we teaching our youth, and would they be blind if their electronics no longer worked? In my opinion, we have been teaching to the tests for so long that we are no longer teaching our youth how to navigate our increasingly complex world.



HEALTH NOTES:

What Causes Urinary Tract Infections?

By Cheri Schneider, M.D.

A urinary tract infection (UTI) is an infection anywhere along the urinary tract which is: the kidneys, ureters, bladder or urethra. The urethra is the passageway between the bladder and the outside of the body.

These types of infection are common depending on the age of the individual. I often have patients ask me 'what causes a urinary tract infection'? This month's article will address this issue and may give you some ideas on ways to prevent them.

UTIs in babies and children are uncommon. In baby boys, any UTI should be 'worked up' to rule out developmental abnormalities of the urinary tract. Uncircumcised infants and children have higher rates of UTI. Wiping from back to front can spread intestinal bacteria to the urinary tract. Symptoms in children may include foul smelling urine, blood in the urine and fever. Symptoms can be subtle especially in babies. Acting lethargic, apathetic, less alert, and not feeding might be indications that something is wrong.

In adults, UTIs are more common in women, likely due to the shorter urethra. Use of the diaphragm for birth control and spermicidal agents or even sexual activity itself can increase the risk. Menopause increases risk in some adult women if they experience thinning of the tissue near the urethra.

Adults with any immune compromise: cancer, diabetes, chemotherapy, chronic use of some medications, immune system disorders, history of splenectomy or organ transplant are at increased risk of any infections, including UTIs. Symptoms can be minimal, so if no other cause is found when this patient is fatigued, aching, feeling sick or has low grade fever, consider a urine check.

Pregnancy can increase UTI risk and can be very serious. Any pregnant woman with urinary symptoms, flank pain or fever should be evaluated, and a urine sample obtained.

The elderly can have 'silent' urinary tract infections. If an older family member has a sudden decline in alertness, mental status or feels 'puny' without other symptoms, this should be your radar. Note that older adults often do not have a robust fever response to infections in general. Adults who have an indwelling catheter are at risk of UTI.

Kidney stones in any age patient can lead to urinary tract infections. Some of these can be very serious. Kidney stones can have crevices in which bacteria like to grow. Sometimes a kidney stone is left in the kidney when it is very large and does not block kidney function. These can be a hiding place for bacteria. A urologist will help decide if a stone should be left in place or removed..

Lastly, recurrent urethral infections with an STD can cause scarring of the urethra, inflammation and may make it more likely for bacterial infections to occur.

Is there anything you can do to prevent a urinary tract infection? Yes! Avoid sexually transmitted diseases that could lead to urethral scarring. Wipe front to back. Change Birth control method to avoid diaphragm and spermicide if you are having recurrent infections. Use topical estrogen if you are post-menopausal and have thinning of the vaginal skin. Sexual activity alone can increase UTI risk, so some recommend voiding before and after sex.

Several evidence-based studies have shown that Methenamine Hippurate and Mannose decrease numbers of UTI infections. These non-antibiotic methods are preferable to long term antibiotic prevention.

Other preventions have been studied, but the studies have mixed results or are inconclusive. Cranberry (all forms), Vitamin C, Hydration, Berberine and probiotics are on this list. Even though the evidence is not conclusive, none of the above are risky, so if you have recurrent UTIs you might start with Cranberry first it has the most studies.

More than three UTIs in one year needs evaluation by your doctor or a urologist.



A Tribute to Heroes

By Victoria R. Crosby

They didn't set out to be heroes they just did what had to be done. They are more than heroes, they are angels And we mourn the loss of each one. Some went to work that morning, some were travelling by plane, people from all walks of life who won't come home again. They left wives and husbands and children, and parents and siblings and friends, and extended family members in a circle that never ends. We all know someone who's lost someone, we all feel part of their pain, for part of us was lost that day, a part we can never regain. Our country was brutally ravaged by a heinous act of war, which brought about the best of behavior and shows what our country stands for. In times of great crisis great strength shines through and Americans do what they have to do. We remember all our heroes today and think of them in a special way.

For the thousands of first responders, and the many volunteers who have died over these past many years after breathing that toxic air, and for their families who took care of them in their suffering, we also shed our tears.*

For no-one sets out to be a hero they just do what has to be done, and here in the City of Tucker we honor each and every one.

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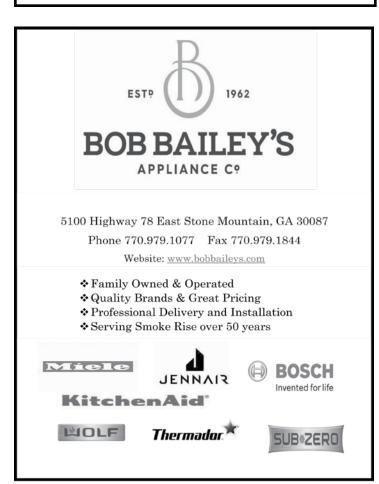
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Out the Window Article and illustration by Beth Henson, Staff Writer

Glancing out the living room window, I proudly admired the new planting that had matured over the summer in the front courtyard. The happy vinca and lacy pentas added a burst of vibrant pink, while the creeping jenny and furry lamb's ear made a soft carpet on the ground. Sadly, the usually gurgling wall fountain had gone silent in the summer's extreme heat. I would definitely take it apart as soon as the weather cooled down, and diagnose the issue.



As I slipped out the front door to further gaze at the pleasing garden, movement caught my eye in the shallow murky water of the fountain basin. Not again!!! A rather large school of tiny tadpoles had now made the front fountain their nursery. The same situation had happened last year when Mr. Tree Frog had decided to raise his family in the jar fountain on the back patio. I knew it would take at least 14 weeks and be well into fall before they matured and became adult froggies. Previously I had painstakingly retrieved every youngster with a small net and relocated them to a nearby boggy pond down the road, shortly before the first freeze.

Pack your bags, my little friends. Looks like another relocation road trip is definitely in our near future.

Smoke Rise Country Club: New Management Team for Tennis Program

By Susan Gilbert, Staff Writer

Smoke Rise Country Club (SRCC) is proud to announce that our tennis operations are to be managed by Atlanta-based Universal Tennis Management ["UTM"], a nationally recognized leader in tennis management, starting August of 2024.

Smoke Rise Country Club has a rich tennis history dating back to its opening in 1998, including winning the Peach State Tennis award in 2015 for the best private tennis facility in Georgia. The club has a wonderful reputation, and we are thrilled for UTM to continue the legacy. UTM prides Jim Richards, SRCC Tennis Pro, Kenyon Oliver, and pickleball in the metro Atlanta area, and Wood, Chairman of the SRCC Board they are excited to bring their expertise to the Smoke Rise membership.



itself on growing the great sports of tennis new Director of SRCC Racquet Sports; and Art

UTM Partner Kenyon Oliver will serve as the Director of Racquet Sports, and the most current Smoke Rise tennis pros will continue to serve the Club and our members as UTM

Excited about the future of Smoke Rise tennis, Kenyon says, "Smoke Rise is a beautiful facility with a great membership base. We hope to build the programs and customer satisfaction to even greater levels. We can't wait to meet the wonderful people of Smoke Rise!"

Current Director of Tennis, Jim Richards, who will remain at Smoke Rise, is excited about the opportunity that UTM presents Smoke Rise members and believes "it will elevate the member experience".

Universal Tennis Management exists to promote the growth of adult and junior tennis and pickleball. They promote these great racket sports through world-class instruction, comprehensive programming, quality customer service, and extensive knowledge of club management and operations. UTM is committed to instilling a positive impact on the community through ethical business practices, outreach activities, mentoring programs, and charitable endeavors. UTM Partners and Directors have over 290 years of tennis experience. They have



been professional players, country club directors, college coaches, and owners of an 11-court swim and tennis club and managers of both public and private facilities.

Formoreinformationabout the SRCC Raquet Program, email Kenyon Oliver at kenyon.generetteoliver@ gmail.com.

features _____ September, 2024

NEWS YOU CAN USE

By AvivA Hoffmann, Staff Writer

DeKalb County Property Owners to Receive \$162 Million in Tax Relief

DeKalb County property owners are set to benefit from significant tax relief as nearly 260,000 tax bills start showing up in our mailboxes. The county began mailing the bills last month. This year, DeKalb will distribute \$162 million in property tax cuts to homeowners through the Equalized Homestead Option Sales Tax (EHOST) credit.

Qualified homeowners receive an EHOST credit that reduces or offsets property tax liability. The amount of relief each homeowner receives depends on the assessed value of their property and the sales tax revenue generated by EHOST. On average, homeowners with properties valued at \$425,000 can expect a reduction of approximately \$1,500 on their tax bills.

"DeKalb County is the only county in Georgia with a local sales tax that is 100 percent dedicated to property tax relief," said DeKalb CEO Michael Thurmond. "Our EHOST property tax relief strategy will help lighten the financial burden of homeowners who are struggling with high prices fueled by inflation."

EHOST I, approved by DeKalb voters in 2017, has already provided \$738 million in property tax relief. In November 2023, more than 76 percent of county voters approved the renewal of EHOST for six more years, with a projected savings of \$1 billion for homeowners during this period.

The current-year EHOST tax relief is shown on property owners' 2024 DeKalb County Real Property Tax Statement, in the column titled "EHOST Credit." The EHOST credit is not applied against taxes levied by DeKalb municipalities, school districts or tax allocation districts.

While separate, EHOST and the homestead exemption work together to provide tax relief. A homestead exemption is an additional tax relief program available to homeowners who own and occupy their primary residence in DeKalb County. It provides a reduction in the taxable value of the property, resulting in lower property taxes. Various types of homestead exemptions are available, including basic homestead and special exemptions for seniors and disabled residents. Once your homestead exemption is approved, you'll automatically qualify for the EHOST credit. You don't need to submit a separate application for EHOST.

Applications for homestead exemptions in DeKalb County can be filed at any time but must be received before April 1 to be applied to the current tax year. You can contact the Tax Commissioner's office at (404) 298-4000 to apply for homestead exemptions.

Talkin' Trash: DeKalb County Sanitation Changes

By Susan Gilbert, Staff Writer

Last month, I noticed garbage we placed neatly beside our green garbage bin was not being taken away. Curious, I searched the DeKalb County Sanitation Department's website for an explanation. There I found a wealth of information about the department's policies and services that were new to me. So, I thought our readers might be interested in knowing these points.

- A few years ago, the county purchased new trucks equipped with an automatic side arm that extends from the truck, lifts the bins above the truck, and dumps their contents. This permits garbage collection to be done by one driver instead of needing a second person to jump off the truck and lift the bins or pick up any other garbage placed beside the bins.
- As a courtesy, many of the workers have been taking away the extra garbage stacked beside the bin, but that is being phased out to optimize the efficiency of the new vehicles.
- All garbage inside the bin must be put in durable, secured plastic bags. No loose bottles, cans, or trash is permitted.
- Additional roll carts are available if you routinely have more garbage. An increase in annual fees apply.
- Roll cart handles must face your home and lid openings must face the street.
- Carts should not be placed curbside prior to 7:00 p.m. the day prior to your collection day and must be available curbside by 7:00 a.m.
- Carts must be returned to residents' homes within 24 hours after servicing.
- Carts must not block mailboxes, driveways, sidewalks, or drainage systems.
- Up to 10 flattened cardboard boxes will be taken if stacked beside the bin. More than 10 boxes will incur a fee.
- Sometimes a house is missed. If that happens to you, call (404) 294-2900 to reschedule.
- Large, bulky items, like appliances, furniture, or building materials will be removed. Once placed curbside, residents must submit a bulky item collection request. The request form can be downloaded from the Sanitation Department's website.
- Yard trimmings must be in approved containers less than 40 gallons. Metal or plastic containers are acceptable as are biodegradable paper bags, but they must have two handles. Trimmings in plastic bags will not be taken.
- Twigs and branches up to four feet in length must be bundled, tied, and stacked neatly at the curb.
- Tree trunks up to 25 lbs. must be shorter than four feet in length, small enough in size that they can be hand-loaded to the collection vehicle.

Who pays for all this service? Sanitation assessment fees are billed on annual

property tax statements through the DeKalb Tax Commissioner's office. So, now you know the latest and greatest about our garbage collection. Do your part by following the guidelines and keeping the carts in their proper locations at the proper



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gardening September, 2024

an inspiration and prayer. Kate read a

poem linking flowers with the friend-

ships made through garden club activ-

ities and fellowship. Just as flowers require care and nurturing to bloom,

friendships thrive when nurtured

Committee reports were given

along with the monthly environmen-

tal tip by Pamela Schuyler. During

the hot summer season, watering in

the morning is preferable to the after-

noon because the sun is lower and

the wind is calmer, which reduces

evaporation and allows the plants and

grass to absorb the water to reach the

roots to get through a long, hot day.

Morning watering also gives plants

time to dry before the sun goes down,

which helps them withstand the heat

and other elements better. Watering

at night can cause water to pool on

with time, understanding, and care.

Mountain Mums Garden Club Updates

By Maureen Fraser

"FRIENDS ARE FLOWERS IN THE GARDEN OF LIFE"

President Sally Young kicked off the annual Meet & Greet reception at the home of Mary Jacobson by welcoming and introducing guests, after which Kate Graham provided



Fraser, Barbara Luton, Kate Graham and Connie Henry serving as co-hostesses (left to right)

The Mountain Mums Garden Club's August meeting was held at the home of Mary Jacobson (center) with Maureen

the leaves and foliage, which can lead to rot, fungal growth, and insects. Kathy Rhineheart reported that the Yard of the Month award was presented to Smoke

Rise Country Club – look for the sign as it's already in place! This was a departure from the norm as the award is usually presented to an individual(s) at their place of residence. Several Country Club members volunteer their time and resources regularly to ensure that specific areas on the grounds are enticing to members and visitors.

Manina Riggs, a member of the Ladybugs Garden Club of Lilburn and chairlady of the Trail Gardens, was the featured speaker. The Ladybugs maintains and beautifies 13 gardens along the Greenway Trail, which spans 4 miles from Killian Hill Road to Rockbridge Road. The gardens include a frog sculpture, turtle sculpture, pollinator garden, meditation garden and native plant gardens, among others. Manina is looking for volunteers to help with the maintenance - visit their Facebook page at Ladybugs Garden Club of Lilburn to view pictures of the gardens and ways to help.



Manina Riggs, featured speaker at the Mountain Mums Garden Club meeting and chairlady of the Trail Gardens in Lilburn.

WE ARE MOVING!!



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Morning Glories Garden Club's September Activities By Quill Duncan

On September 10th, the Morning Glories resume their garden club meetings for the fall season. We will meet at Park Springs, the home of members Geri Burns, Brenda Jones and

Anne Perry. At each meeting we have a program, and members give updates on their various activities and enjoy lunch

September's meeting will be presented by Rita Buehner, who is a Cobb County Master Gardener. Rita and a team of volunteers work at the Green Meadows Community Garden. Green Meadows



Giant Swallowtail butterfly (Photo by Joy Zaidan)

Preserve Community Garden (GMPCG) is located in the western part of Cobb County in a multi-use public park. The Master Gardener Volunteers of Cobb County, with the help of the Cobb Extension Office and the Cobb Parks, Recreation and Cultural Affairs Department, opened this community garden in April of 2012 with just 24 raised beds. By the spring of 2013 they had grown to 51 4'x8' raised beds available for lease, and 6 additional beds for use by special needs participants making a grand total of 57 raised beds.

A community garden can mean many things to folks including a place to reconnect with nature, a place to get exercise, or maybe just a place to garden in the company of friends and neighbors. At Green Meadows you can do all of that. The gardeners join together for regular workdays once a month to keep the garden looking its best. They spread mulch, pull weeds, fertilize, compost, sweep the shed, sift soil, maintain pollinator plants, and much more. Gardeners gather several times a year just to have fun and eat great food. The garden has grown into a wonderful space full of great gardeners and beautiful vegetables. This garden will nurture and cultivate a brighter, greener future and a love of gardening for this generation and the next.

We have a very similar garden space in the Village of Stone Mountain with the Stone Mountain Community Garden lead by Smoke Rise resident Columbus Brown. This summer has been very active for this group too and the fall harvest promises to be great!

If you are interested in visiting a garden club, we would enjoy having you join us. We meet the 2nd Tuesday of each month at 10AM. Contact President Amie Walsh at 404 729-4871 for details.





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Food & Home Fixin'

By Joyce Ray, Staff Writer

As the air gets crisp and cool and the leaves begin to change color, September reminds us to pause and anticipate the bounty of the harvest and the blessings that surround us. Now that children are back in school with schedules more firmly set, the shortened days encourage us to turn our thoughts and hearts toward home.

Along with other fall changes, our appetites also transition from quick summer pick-up meals to more hearty fare and we again, open our recipe files to find staple, hearty, tried and true family favorites.

This rich and comforting alfredo lasagna is made with layers of pasta, rotisserie chicken and easy cheesy sauce. Substitute about 5 cooked chicken breast halves if you prefer to cook and shred the chicken. Servings: 12

12 uncooked lasagna noodles

cooking spray

5 Tbsp unsalted butter

5 Tbsp all-purpose flour

4 Med. garlic cloves, chopped

4 cups (1qt) half-and-half

1/8 tsp ground nutmeg 1 ³/₄ tsp salt, divided

3 cups shredded rotisserie chicken

1 (14 oz) container Parmigiano-Reggiano cheese

1 ½ cups whole milk ricotta cheese

1 (10 oz) pkg frozen chopped spinach, thawed and squeezed dry

1 large egg

¼ tsp black pepper

12 oz shredded mozzarella cheese (about 3 cups divided) Chopped flat leaf parsley

Cook lasagna noodles in generously salted water according to pkg directions for about 10 minutes. Do not overcook. Coat large baking sheets with cooking spray. Drain noodles and place in an even layer on greased baking sheets. Spray tops with cooking spray. Set aside.

Note: This method will keep noodles soft and pliable and keep them from sticking together.

Melt butter in a saucepan over medium heat. Add flour and whisk constantly for 1 minute. Add garlic and whisk until flour has started to turn light brown – about 1 minute. Gradually whisk in half-and-half. Add nutmeg and 1 tsp of salt. Bring to a simmer, whisking occasionally over medium heat until thickened. Remove from heat and gradually whisk in cheese until smooth. Add chicken and spinach and stir to combine. Set aside. In a medium bowl, stir together ricotta, egg, pepper and remaining ¾ tsp salt. Set aside.

Preheat oven to 350° with rack in center position. Coat a 9x13 baking dish with cooking spray. Spread 1 cup of chicken mixture evenly in dish. Lay 3 cooked noodles over chicken mixture. Spread 1 cup chicken mixture over noodles. Dollop with ½ cup ricotta mixture and spread evenly over chicken layer. Sprinkle ¾ cup of mozzarella evenly over ricotta mixture. Repeat layers. Finish with remaining ¾ cup mozzarella. Cover with aluminum foil. Bake in preheated oven until cheese has melted – about 30 minutes. Remove foil and continue to bake for about 15 minutes until edges are slightly brown. Turn oven to broil and cook for about 5 minutes until golden brown. Let cool for 20 minutes before cutting into squares. Garnish with parsley before serving.

Some years ago, we celebrated an August anniversary with a cruise to Alaska. The food onboard was excellent and one evening we were served a delicious sweet potato soup. Since I could not convince anyone to give me the recipe, I came home determined to recreate it. My finished product was close, and the Ginger lime crème garnish was the perfect finishing touch! Let me know what you think if you make it.

Sweet Potato Anise Soup with Ginger Lime Créme

3 large, sweet potatoes, peeled and chopped – about 2 ½ pounds 1 medium yellow onion, chopped

2 teaspoons grated ginger...FYI...you will need another teaspoon of ginger for the garnish

1 qt (4 cups) chicken broth

2 teaspoons salt

2 teaspoons anise seed

1 pint half/half

4 tablespoons olive oil

In large Dutch oven, sauté the onion in the olive oil until onion is translucent. Add the grated ginger, anise seed and salt. Continue to cook for 2 minutes. Add chicken broth and potatoes. Cover and cook over medium heat until sweet potatoes are fork tender. Cool mixture to lukewarm.

Using blender or food processor, puree the potato mixture a little at a time and add about ½ cup of half and half to each new batch in the blender. Pour pureed mixture into the crock pot and add any remaining half/half. TASTE: If you prefer a more intense anise flavor, at this point you can add some crushed tarragon to taste (similar flavor). Set on low and allow to cook until bubbly, then turn to warm setting until you are ready to serve. Garnish with a dollop of ginger lime crème.

Ginger lime crème:

1 cup dairy sour cream or plain yogurt

1 teaspoon ground fresh ginger

2 tablespoons lime juice

½ tsp. salt