

SMOKE SIGNAL



True Love Never Ends

By Betsy Allen

It is difficult to compare human love to God’s Love because His love is far beyond ours, but Lee and I knew both of those types of love. The message of Christmas songs and love songs like “love and Marriage go together like a horse and carriage” and “when your hair has turned to silver, I will love you just the same” made me think of Lee.

I never had a boyfriend until I was in my fourth year of college. I was not interested in dating during high school because I enjoyed all my friends – boys and girls – and we did everything together in groups (the school band, 4-H Club, football games, music concerts and attending church on Sunday). Even in groups, we didn’t stay out late. We usually got home early, even the night our bus went from Manchester to Chattanooga and back for a ball game. We got home by 9 pm. So, there were very few “couples”-mostly just groups of kids who had a great time with life in general while still making good grades. In all my High School years, it seemed that friendship was free to everyone. And we loved our high school teachers and respected our parents’ rules. So, all in all, it was a very happy time... no need to date.

In college there was a different atmosphere with no compulsory chapel and the curfew for coming in was 11 p.m. For some reason I was never interested in dating any of the men with whom I occasionally attended a fraternity party. It was probably because I was not in a sorority. My financial budget required a regular job plus studies for nursing school. I was so thankful for my nursing scholarship from Emory that I was careful to keep my grades safely above average.

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Please take note:

WALK TO REMEMBER has been POSTPONED

The new date is MARCH 16

We hope you will join us then!



Did you know when inclement weather threatens, Tucker is ready. Our Public Works Department is prepared with plow attachments and a stockpile of salt to keep our roads open and safe.

As always, if there is an emergency please contact 911. For non-emergency road issues or blinking traffic lights, please contact the City via our website or call 678-597-9040. [tuckerga.gov/publicworks](http://tuckerga.gov/publicworks)

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Creative Ideas for Valentine’s Day

By Cheri Schneider

Have you ever been stuck trying to think of something special to do with your ‘honey’ on Valentine’s Day? How many of you can’t think of anything other than dinner out, or a card and chocolates? I came up with some different ideas for this year that may be fun for you to try. Keep in mind that you do not have to do something ON February 14 but can celebrate anytime. Try one of these:

- ♥ Fox Theater: “Hamilton” is playing in February.
- ♥ Movie on the big screen and popcorn: see Entertainment Weekly: movie release dates 2024. You can see what is coming out nearby.
- ♥ Dinner out: Try something new. Or, some of your favorite restaurants may have Valentine’s specials. Most will need reservations.

Classes:

- ♥ Art Class: Wine and Whimsy: wine and art- Main Street in Tucker. There are other similar classes all over Atlanta.
- ♥ Ceramics classes: Try one: you can hand build or learn to throw on the wheel... Or simpler still, go to a pottery glazing class where all you have to do is pick a pottery project and paint glaze on it. Some nearby places: Tucker Recreation or Mudfire studio and Gallery or Zen studio.
- ♥ Cooking class: [cozymeal.com/Atlanta](http://cozymeal.com/Atlanta) had some interesting ones. Some of the classes can be held in your house. Or get together with another couple and cook together.
- ♥ Scavenger hunt: see this website or google others: [blog.goosechase.com](http://blog.goosechase.com). Make your own by taking pictures in a museum or location and have your partner try to find them. (There is a Atlanta Scavenger hunt as well).
- ♥ Dinner theater: How about Main Street Tucker’s show MURDER AT THE BAKE OFF? It is showing in February.
- ♥ Atlanta Botanical Gardens: 75th Annual Camelia Show February 10, or the renowned Orchid Festival February 14 .
- ♥ A daytrip to the mountains, Callaway Gardens, a state park or hiking venue nearby. Bring a picnic lunch.
- ♥ Thrifting with \$20 bucks each. Try to buy a whole outfit.
- ♥ Explore an Antique or secondhand store: Try one of the Queen of Hearts stores. There are three. Pick out a small gift to remember your trip.
- ♥ Buford Highway -- try different types of foods: This special road is known for many Asian restaurants--dim sum, Korean, Vietnamese, and other ethnic restaurants. *Southern Living* wrote a great article about this in September 2023. See it here: <https://www.southernliving.com/travel/georgia/buford-highway>. Remember: this is a partial list, so go explore. My husband and I also love to stop in ethnic markets and look at kitchen gadgets.

...Continued on page 2





# 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.

Editorial Committee: \*Cheri Schneider.....staff@smokesignalnews.com  
AvivA Hoffmann...staff@smokesignalnews.com  
Gia Anderson.....staff@smokesignalnews.com  
\* This Issue’s Editor-in-Chief

Staff Secretary.....Barbara Luton ..... (770) 491-6711

Church News.....Susan Gilbert.....susan@waterfallhouse.net

Health News.....Cheri Schneider, MD, Pat Baumann, MD

Recipes and Home.....Joyce Ray ..... joyceray126@gmail.com

Social Media/E paper ..... Pat Soltys.....pat@smokeriseagents.com  
Rachel Caines ..... rachelcaines@gmail.com

News You Can Use.....AvivA Hoffmann ..staff@smokesignalnews.com

Tech Talk.....Susan Gilbert.....susan@waterfallhouse.net

Out the Window.....Beth Henson .....bevans426a@gmail.com

Staff Writers: .....Victoria Crosby ..... poeticvic@aol.com  
Joel Gilbert.....joel@waterfallhouse.net  
Linda Karr.....lskarr50@gmail.com  
Susan Gilbert.....susan@waterfallhouse.net  
Pat Soltys.....pat@smokeriseagents.com  
Joyce Ray .....joyceray126@gmail.com  
Pat Baumann.....pbauman@emory.edu  
Cheri Schneider.....staff@smokesignalnews.com  
Barbara Luton ..... (770) 491-6711

Distribution & Delivery.....Laura Smith..... (770) 934-7595

Advertisements & Classifieds: Amber Voss.....staff@smokesignalnews.com

Flyer Inserts.....Barbara Luton ..... (770) 491-6711

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## ATTENTION ADVERTISERS:

The *Smoke Signal* has reached its ad-space limit and we are now keeping a waiting list for future advertisements. Please send your ad requests to [staff@smokesignalnews.com](mailto: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

### FEBRUARY 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 FEBRUARY 10**

**SMOKE SIGNAL FLYER INSERT POLICY**

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

“Like” us on Facebook at  
**www.facebook.com/SmokeSignalNews**

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

Letter to the Editor:

Some neighbors you cannot just have a conversation with. All types of animals have surrounded my yard in the past year. We have coyotes, crows, baby birds, and an abundance of squirrels and Deer’s. Not one, but a lot. Neighbors with bird feed need to understand that they have created a central area for the birds to come and lay eggs everywhere. Today, I woke up to millions of black birds in the yard, including crows, and in the backyard.

Ok, so I’m venting because these birds and coyotes carry germs, and as an asthmatic person, it is hardly good anymore to go outside. I wish people would stop feeding these birds and throwing corn in the yard.

I am exhausted because there seems to be no help resolving this.

Thanks ~S

Side by Side Brain Injury Clubhouse

The Side by Side Brain Injury Clubhouse is a 501© (3)Non-profit organization. Their mission is to advance the long-term well-being of people with brain injury-related disabilities and their families through skills development support and advocacy. The facility in in downtown Stone Mountain village on the main street.

Side by Side is one facility that the GFWC Stone Mountain Woman’s Club has supported for many years. For several years, Smoke Rise resident Terry Ingwersen helped organize a basketball game between doctors and lawyers. All the money went to the facility for scholarships. Members recently baked cakes for an auction and fundraiser for the facility.

Each year, Woman’s Club members prepare food for the Christmas brunch for those attending the clubhouse. Through the years, the club has supported the clubhouse with a scholarship contribution. The scholarships help clients who need help paying tuition for the facility.

Side by Side is a hidden gem in our community. Hopefully, you and yours will never need this kind of help, but remember that Side by Side Clubhouse is there for help—and right in our own backyard.

Smoke Rise Baptist Church

Dr. Chris George: Senior Pastor  
Danny Vancil, Minister of Music & Worship  
Telephone: (770) 469-5856  
[SmokeRiseBaptist.org](http://SmokeRiseBaptist.org)

SUNDAY  
9:45 a.m. - Attend Sunday School through Zoom or In-Person  
Schedule Available at [smokerisebaptist.org/streamingatsmokerise/](http://smokerisebaptist.org/streamingatsmokerise/)  
11:00 a.m. - Attend Worship via Live Stream or In-Person  
Live Stream Available at [smokerisebaptist.org/streamingatsmokerise/](http://smokerisebaptist.org/streamingatsmokerise/)  
WEDNESDAY  
5:00 p.m. - Attend our Wednesday Dinner  
6:00 p.m. - Followed by activities and Bible Study for all ages  
Live Stream at [smokerisebaptist.org/wednesday-evening-activities/](http://smokerisebaptist.org/wednesday-evening-activities/)

Eastminster Presbyterian Church

Pastor ~ Rev. J. Caleb Clarke III: [cclarke@eastminster.us](mailto:cclarke@eastminster.us)  
Executive Director of Ministries ~ Jeanine Fulton: [jfulton@eastminster.us](mailto:jfulton@eastminster.us)  
Director of Family & Outreach Ministries ~ Mark Sauls: [msauls@eastminster.us](mailto:msauls@eastminster.us)  
Director of Weekday Ministries ~ Celeste Sears: [csears@eastminster.us](mailto:csears@eastminster.us)  
5801 Hugh Howell Road ~ Stone Mountain, GA 30087  
770-469-4881 ~ [www.eastminster.us](http://www.eastminster.us)

Sundays:  
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: Rev. Elroy Christopher  
Congregational Acolyte: Bill Hitz  
(770) 491-7250, (770) 755-8289  
[www.gamoravian.org](http://www.gamoravian.org)  
Sundays: 10:00 a.m. Sunday School–Adults & Children  
11:00 a.m. Worship  
12:00 p.m. Fellowship Time

Incarnate Word Lutheran Church

4950 Hugh Howell Rd., Stone Mountain, GA 30087  
Sundays: 8:45 a.m. Worship

Mountain West Church

Pastor: Mo Huggins  
(770) 491-0228 ~ [www.mwchurch.com](http://www.mwchurch.com)  
4818 Hugh Howell Rd., Stone Mountain  
Sundays: 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](http://mwchurch.com)

Digital copies of the *Smoke Signal* are posted to the archives at [www.smokesignalnews.com](http://www.smokesignalnews.com).

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

Creative Valentine’s Ideas... continued from page 1

- ♥ Watch your wedding video again and have dessert out.
  - ♥ Go to an Asian market and buy ingredients for a Korean dish, sushi rolls, etc. Ideas: H-Mart, Mega Mart, Nam de Mun, Hong Kong Supermarket. There are dozens of Asian markets in Atlanta. You can do the same thing with Mediterranean food or Indian food. I discovered pomegranate syrup in one of these stores and use it often to make a lemon salad vinaigrette.
  - ♥ ART Station: There is a rom-com entitled “I do, I do” in May. Get tickets now or buy tickets for the whole season..
  - ♥ Museums: High Museum of Art, or try lesser known museums like: Delta Flight Museum, APEX-the oldest black history museum, MODA a design museum, Atlanta Contemporary Arts, Tellus Science museum, Southwestern Railway Museum, Fernbank, the Waffle House Museum, Atlanta History Center, Original Selfie museum.
  - ♥ Lastly, take one of the online walking or driving tours of ATLANTA: there are architecture tours, street art tours or take the Peachtree trolley tour or the beltline tour..
- You get the idea! Try one or more of these, or come up with something new and creative on your own.





**February 29 - March 10**  
**Thursday & Friday at 8:00 p.m.**  
**Saturday & Sunday at 3:00 p.m.**  
**Wednesday at 10:30 a.m.**  
**Tickets \$21-30**

This comedy focuses on three women at crossroads in their lives. The feisty and fun-loving sister trio, Virginia, Fanny and Willa – along with their frustratingly quirky sister-in-law Johnnie Faye – has supported and cheered one another through life’s highs and lows through the years, including the early demise of two of their husbands and a house somewhere at the bottom of a Florida sinkhole. With equal doses of hilarity and heart, these extraordinary women come up with delightful and surprisingly unorthodox ways to clear the clutter from their lives, their homes and their relationships. This comedy is guaranteed to drive you wild with laughter!



**Box Office Hours:**  
**Tuesday-Friday 10 a.m. - 5 p.m.**  
**Saturday 1 p.m. - 5 p.m.**  
**ARTSTATION.org**  
**5384 Manor Drive, Stone Mountain, GA 30083**  
**(770) 469-1105**

**Smoke Rise Elementary School Staff Gives Back**

The holiday season sparked a very joyful spirit for the faculty and staff at Smoke Rise Elementary School. In December, the staff embarked on a service project to provide essential comfort to breast cancer patients at the Oncology Center at the Emory Breast Cancer Institute. Ms. Jennifer Jefferys, our wonderful second-grade teacher, thought of the idea! Ms. Jefferys and our incredible Pre-K teacher, Mrs. Latalia Robbins, made a special trip to the center to deliver the donated items, such as scarves, gloves, blankets, and hats. The staff at Emory Cancer Institute’s Oncology Department were deeply appreciative of the items.



*Ms. Jennifer Jefferys and Emory Cancer Institute Oncology Dept. Staff*



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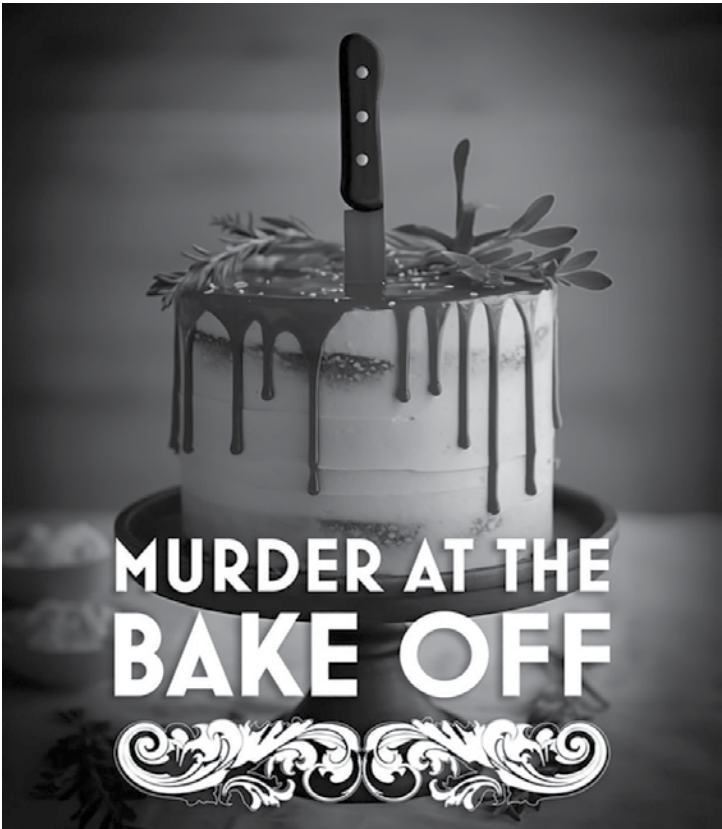
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Main Street Theatre presents...



Directed by Ken Dohse • Written by Carly Sharec

It’s the semi-finals of the Great Main Street Baking Competition, and the final four contestants are ready to vie for their spot in the finale during this special taping in front of a live studio audience. There are only three rounds of baking between them and the finale...if they can survive.

**February 15, 18, 22, 25**  
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Making Wishes Come True

The 2023 Christmas season was as merry and bright as ever! We continued the tradition of decorating our home with thousands of lights and spreading Christmas cheer.

Santa and Mrs. Claus were able to stop by this year to hear requests and pose for pictures in their sleigh. We are happy that they made time in their busy schedules to do this and are hoping to have them come again next year!

With the help of neighbors, friends, and Make-A-Wish volunteers, we collected \$12,756.24 for Make-A-Wish Georgia. One hundred percent of the collected amount was presented to organization representative, Sarah Borel, on Wednesday, January 10th by my wife Theo and me, and brings the grand total to \$87,421.97 since 2012. 100% of collected donations go directly to the charity. We are so grateful to everyone for their donations and for the generosity they have shown to this wonderful organization.

On average it costs \$10,000.00 to grant a wish, and we are thrilled that for the past two years we have been able to fully grant the wishes of local children! Once our Make-A-Wish child recipient for 2023 is revealed, we will be sure to share the details.

We also want to thank our wonderful Summit neighbors who tolerate the constant traffic on our street as well as all the individuals who dropped off their unwanted blow molds. We truly appreciate it!

We hope everyone had a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year! We are already working on our new addition for this Christmas!



True Love ...continued from page 1

Lee came all the way from his aeronautical engineering job in Texas to begin medical school at Emory. I was introduced to him while I was a secretary at AEDC in Tennessee during his two-week tour of duty in the Air Force prior to our being at Emory that fall of 1960. We met during his medical school when the students took a trip to Warm Springs to learn about President Roosevelt's polio treatment. A nursing school friend and I were invited to go, and you can guess the rest of the story – Lee and I had a sweet courtship which was all new to me. Lee was 28 and I was 20 that first year of our friendship. Because he was in medical school and I in nursing school, we basically studied while on dates during our first years of friendship.

Lee was so proper that he went to my father in Tennessee to ask for “my hand” in marriage. He presented me with a lovely engagement ring in November 1961 and we had a simple, but deeply meaningful wedding in June of 1962. We were delighted after my graduation that following year to have a precious son in October 1963.



I was not ready to say goodbye after 60 wonderful years, but I should have known it would be soon when he nearly died during surgery. Lee told me that he knew death was near, but he said, “I am not afraid”. His faith in Jesus and the promise of eternal life gave him this courage. We had another 10 months of life together, thanks to Dr. Mayer, and even celebrated Lee's 90th birthday before he finally went home.

Elvis' song “Are you lonely tonight?” never penetrated my thoughts throughout our busy and joyful years together until I awoke that morning, 60 years later, when Lee was taken to heaven. After going together a couple years on the Emory campus and our marriage at Glenn Memorial Methodist Church we made a life commitment to each other that lasted 60 years. The wedding band we wore represents eternal, never ending love. God is LOVE, so true Love is from God. His love is everlasting, permanent, unselfish, productive, profitable, and peaceable.

I miss Lee terribly; and yet now I get glimpses of my dear husband in each of our 2 sons and 2 daughters. Now my oneness with Lee is in each of our precious children. I love the way God designed us all to see from the past new Life in Jesus (John 14:1-3).

Club Woman of the Year

Kathy Gallo was chosen as “Club Woman of the Year” for 2023 by the GFWC Stone Mountain Woman's Club. Members voted Kathy the winner, and the award was announced at the Christmas luncheon held at the Lunsford home in Ivey Oaks.

Kathy has served the club in many capacities. She led the education committee for many years working with the Stone Mountain Elementary and Smoke Rise Elementary Schools. She has served as Vice President presiding over the board meetings, being the leader of the various club program chairmen and helping ready and write the district and state reports for the club.

Kathy and her husband, Vince, are long-time residents of the Forest subdivision.



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Scout Troop 876 Celebrates 50 Year Anniversary

Scout Troop 876 is a youth led troop based out of Eastminster Presbyterian Church on Hugh Howell Road. The troop was founded in January 1973, and this year they celebrated their 50-year anniversary with a special cake! One of their Scoutmasters, Pat Carr, a longtime Assistant Scoutmaster, has been involved for 21 of the 50 years and is still actively involved. Pat recently shared some of his memories:

“The troop has always been keen on high adventure trips. We have been to Philmont Scout Ranch for backpacking many times. Former Scoutmaster John Pelick used to lead the contingent from the Atlanta Area Council to Philmont each year. That contingent included scouts from troops that did not have enough scouts to form their own troop. John Pelick later received the Silver Beaver Award from BSA, one of the highest volunteer awards presented. Troop 876 has also traveled many times to Sea Base in Florida for sailing and fishing, and to Northern Tier in Minnesota and Canada for canoeing. The year my son went to Northern Tier where we took the very backwoods option, taking a float plane into the wilderness. Once we started canoeing, we saw only one other group of humans in ten days”.

The troop has been fortunate to have a strong group of Scoutmasters over the years. That would include George Patrick, John Pelick, Bill Kaduck, Robert Walker, Ty Weston, Brad Brechin, Jerry Young and now Jeremy Pullen. They have been supported by Committee members, Assistant Scoutmasters, Merit Badge Counselors, and others.

One of the strong points of Troop 876 is our outdoor program, with a trip planned every month. The troop has been canoeing in the Okefenokee Swamp, camping on Cumberland Island, backpacking the Appalachian Trail, snow skiing in West Virginia, white water rafting in Tennessee, deep sea fishing in the Gulf of Mexico, and even canoeing over 60 miles in the wilderness of Maine.

Another strong point is the troop’s community service. Whether it is helping with landscaping at our charter organization Eastminster Presbyterian, helping at Taste of Tucker or enhancing the community through Eagle Projects, we strive to “Help other people at all times”, a key point in the Scout Oath.

The troop has produced over 75 Eagle Scouts since 1988, more than 2 per year, which is an impressive number, and the troop is on track to exceed that number in 2024.

While the Troop’s primary focus is developing young leaders, the adults have just as much fun and adventure as the kids. Troop 876 is a place where adventure happens, and we hope you come join us every Monday night at 7:30 to see what all the fun is about! We’re even planning to start a separate girls troop this year, so if you’re interested please email [committeechair@bsatroop876.com](mailto:committeechair@bsatroop876.com).

From Friends of Johns Homestead on Facebook:

Thanks so much to the 127 dedicated volunteers who came out on this Day of Service to help pull ivy at John’s Homestead. We OBLITERATED the ivy in a huge area along the trail and had a lot of fun doing it! Thanks also to our wonderful sponsors, The Corner cup Coffee and Rehoboth Baptist Church as well as our new partners PEPSI and Tucker Brewing Company whose employees came out to volunteer with us today. We are so thankful for this wonderful support from the community!



Facebook picture of Homestead clean-up.

SENIOR EVENTS at  
TUCKER RECREATION CENTER  
4898 Lavista Rd. Tucker GA 30084

LUNCH and LEARN: YAHTZEE  
Friday, February 9 • 11:30-12:30 PM

Join us for our  
**6th annual Senior Valentine’s Day Lunch!**  
Enjoy a delicious meal and dessert from Bambinelli’s.  
Meal will include Salad and Dinner rolls,  
Spaghetti and Lasagna, Famous Cannoli and Coffee

Come play Valentine’s BINGO and win prizes  
Wednesday, February 14 • 12:00 PM - 2:30 PM

LUNCH AND LEARN: SKIP-BO  
Monday, March 18 • 11:30-12:30 PM

The Tucker Recreation Center also offers Bridge,  
Richard Simmons Silver Foxes exercise,  
and a wide variety of classes for all ages!

<https://Tucker.recdesk.com>



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Losing Our Best Friend *By Joel Gilbert*

My wife and I have never gotten a dog because it would have been so unfair given our heavy travel schedules. Even though we both grew up with dogs and loved them dearly, we just couldn't bear to do that. We both also remember the profound pain of their passing. As most will attest, dogs are perhaps the best living being examples of unconditional love. So, perhaps there is something even more meaningful to be learned when they die.

I am not sure this thought prompted the now famous church sign battles about "all dogs go to heaven." As you may know, this tit-for-tat battle between neighboring churches went on for weeks with escalating rhetorical remarks as shown here.

In case the text is hard to read:

Catholic Church: All Dogs Go to Heaven



Presbyterian Church: Only humans go to heaven, read the Bible



Catholic Church: Catholic Dogs Go To Heaven.  
Presbyterian Dogs Can Talk to Their Pastor



Presbyterian Church: Converting to Catholicism Does Not Magically Grant Your Dog a Soul



This Wall Street Journal link offers profound thoughts about what dogs teach us about love while they are alive, as well as in their death. For the digital version, visit [https://www.wsj.com/lifestyle/dog-owners-death-lessons-love-grief-53c77511?st=ogoiqjer6hergv9&reflink=desktopwebshare\\_permalink](https://www.wsj.com/lifestyle/dog-owners-death-lessons-love-grief-53c77511?st=ogoiqjer6hergv9&reflink=desktopwebshare_permalink)

For print copy, just Google the *Wall Street Journal* with "What Dogs can Teach us about Grief and God"

Losing a dog is indeed a unique brand of grief, according to Nancy Curotto, a licensed psychologist specializing in pet loss. The relationship a person has with their pet is "one of the most intense bonds one can have," Curotto said. "This relationship is unconditional" ... at least on the pet's part.

Most of you probably have experienced this loss, and my blog may indeed bring a tear to your eye ... and I am sorry for that ... except that there is the thought I wish you would consider. Why was this animal so dear to you? He or she never offered advice, bought you gifts, or told you how to live. They sat silent near you, often with their chin on your leg. They welcomed you home every day as if you had been gone for years. And they never tired or took for granted any time you spent walking or playing with them.

The pain of their loss should tell us about elements in our relationships that seem to matter most to people. Spend time, quietly, and play. It is OK to cry with them too as our Sunday School teacher reminds me telling a story of a boy who was late coming home from school. His mother asked why, and he said he had to stop and help his friend whose bike had broken. She said "You don't know anything about fixing a bike." He shrugged his shoulders and said: "Yeah, I know, but he needed somebody to cry with him."

Oh, and, by the way, DOG spelled backwards is GOD.

**Tucker February Events**  
**Sunday, February 11**  
**Big Game Watch Day - Teens**  
**at Tucker Rec 6:00-9:00 pm**  
**(Food/Games/Prizes)**

**TKR RESTAURANT WEEK 2024**

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- Bell Street Burritos
- Bite of Korea
- Blue Ribbon Grill
- Cococakes by Coco
- The Corner Cup
- El Taco Naco
- FarmED Kitchen & Bar
- Ford's BBQ
- Grecian Gyro
- Honey Joe Cafe

- Kaylee's Candy Boutique
- Las Colinas
- Local 7
- Magnolia Room
- Matthews Cafeteria
- Munster Cravings
- Pontoon Brewing
- Shorty's
- Tucker Brewing Company
- Tucker Meat Market
- VTasteCakes Vegan Bakery

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NEWS YOU CAN USE

By AvivA Hoffmann

Who’s Calling? Protect Yourself from Unwanted Sales Calls

Are you tired of receiving unsolicited sales calls? The National Do Not Call Registry offers a solution to reduce the number of telemarketing calls you receive.

The National Do Not Call Registry is a FREE service designed to halt unwanted sales calls from law-abiding companies. You can register your home or cell phone number at DoNotCall.gov or by calling 1- (888) 382-1222 from the phone you wish to register. Registration is straightforward and free. Alternatively, you can register your number online at DoNotCall.gov. You’ll get an email with a link to click on within 72 hours to complete your registration.

Once registered, your number is added to a list that informs telemarketers about the numbers they should not call. Your phone number should show up on the Registry the next day, but it can take up to 31 days for sales calls to stop. Also note, being on the Registry does not block calls, particularly from scammers engaging in illegal activities. To further protect yourself from unwanted calls, explore call-blocking and call-labeling services. Various options are available for cell phones, traditional landlines, and home phones using internet-based calling (VoIP). Visit ctia.org for a list of call-blocking apps for cell phones and the FCC’s Call Blocking Resources for landlines and internet-based phones.

While the Do Not Call Registry stops most unwanted sales calls, certain types of calls are still allowed under FTC rules. These include political calls, charitable calls, debt collection calls, purely informational calls, and surveys. However, these calls cannot include a sales pitch. Companies can call you if you’ve recently done business with them, or if you’ve given them written permission to call. If you ask them not to call you, they must stop. Be sure to write down the date you asked them to stop.

Robocalls that contain recorded messages with a sales pitch are against the law unless the company has written permission from you to call in that manner. If you receive an illegal robocall, hang up immediately. Don’t press buttons to be taken off a call list or to talk to a live person. It might lead to more unwanted calls. Report illegal robocalls to the FTC at ftc.gov/robocalls or through the streamlined reporting form at DoNotCall.gov. Reporting calls is crucial in the fight against illegal, annoying, activities.

If you are getting spam text messages, you can forward them to the number 7726 or “SPAM” to report them to your wireless provider. Providers use information reported by customers through 7726 to further calibrate spam filters and other sophisticated tools to protect consumers from spam messages.

If you’ve lost money to a phone scam, or if you have information about a company or scammer who called you, report it at ReportFraud.ftc.gov. Companies violating the National Do Not Call Registry can face fines of up to \$50,120 per call. Your reports help authorities identify and stop those responsible for illegal calls and scams.

I don’t know why you’d want to, but... if you wish to remove your number from the Registry, call 1-888-382-1222 from the registered phone. The removal process takes effect the next day, and businesses must update their telemarketing lists within 31 days. Even if they have permission to contact you, telemarketers must follow specific rules, such as not calling before 8:00 a.m. or after 9:00 p.m. And of course, they must be truthful and obtain your permission before charging your account for any transaction.

Empower yourself against unwanted calls by utilizing the National Do Not Call Registry and understanding the rules and resources available. By actively participating in reporting and staying informed, we all can contribute to creating a safer and more secure community.



Troubled Trees

By Susan Gilbert, Staff Writer

One of the most striking and attractive features of Smoke Rise is its abundance of trees. Their leafy branches provide cooling shade in summer and decorate our landscape with fall color. However, with so many so close to our homes, there may be avoidable trouble lurking in our yards. Knowing that, we had an arborist walk around our property to assess our trees and advise us if any had any problems. He gave us a clean bill of health saying our trees were fine.

Knowing that, we didn’t have to do anything, but there was a large tulip poplar at the back of our property that was leaning precariously toward the house that worried me. If it fell in a storm, it would split our house in half and cause enormous damage, so I decided to have it removed. Before starting work, the crew foreman that came to do the job pointed out that the enormous pine tree next to the poplar was more likely to fall and crush our home. They asked if they could get it out first because it was putting the house in imminent danger. It took 4 hours to get it down because they were working so close to the house. A man with a chainsaw climbed to the top and started removing branches, then sections of the trunk. It was fascinating and terrifying to watch him flip around in the air with a chain saw in one hand, the other managing the safety lines holding him in place as he flipped 4-foot sections of the trunk to the ground. Yikes.

When they had it down to ground level as just a stump, they showed me why they were so concerned about it. It only had a ~4-inch ring of live tree holding it up. Terrifying.



One brave crew member jumped down into the hole in the center of the stump to see how deep it was. He disappeared--establishing the hole was over 5-feet deep. People who cut down trees are an adventurous lot.

So now it was on to taking out the seemingly healthy tulip poplar, another 4-hour project. Upon completion, I was shocked to see it had the same condition as the pine, a hollow interior. Not as bad as the pine, but enough to make one wonder how it stayed erect during windstorms.

The experience taught us to not assume our trees are healthy and proved that even a professional arborist may not be able to tell which need to go. I encourage you to take a good look at your home and try to envision what damage would be done if one of your large trees toppled in its direction. And if you decide to have some removed, be aware that City of Tucker and Dekalb County have rules about their removal that you can find on their websites or using a search engine.

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HEALTH NOTES:

February is Heart Health Month

By Pat Baumann, MD

Everyone knows that heart health is important. Since everyone already knows this, I would like to focus on your knowledge, and to urge you (and me!) to start doing more about it. Doing more involves improving your understanding of what heart health means, and includes putting together a personal heart health plan, and better yet, putting your personal heart health plan into action.

Off the top of my head, you, and I both can think of ways to live a healthier life. Self-care can prevent so much serious heart disease! I consulted an exceptional cardiologist who is a colleague, dear friend, and a smart man, Dr. Walter Mashman. Walter trained at Emory, practices at Piedmont Heart Institute, and has over 28 years of expertise. I asked him to come up with ten of the most important heart health points, and he generously obliged. His list, as follows, is in order of importance:

- 1. No tobacco products
- 2. Exercise
- 3. Exercise
- 4. Exercise
- 5. Healthy diet
- 6. Maintain a healthy weight
- 7. Adequate refreshing sleep
- 8. Limit alcohol
- 9. Surround yourself with people who care about you
- 10. Exercise



You will notice “no tobacco products” is number one. That means no tobacco products. Quitting smoking reduces your risk of heart disease, cancer, lung disease, and other illnesses. Hopefully by now, no one will argue the validity of this. A lot of nice, otherwise intelligent people smoke. Talk to your doctor for ways to help you stop. There is no dose of cigarette smoke that is good for you.

Personally, I am deficient in 2, 3, 4, and 10. There is no way for me to rationalize this away, the studies are conclusive, exercise reduces the risk of premature death. Physical activity keeps the heart and circulatory system healthy and provides protection against numerous chronic diseases. It also strengthens those muscles that help reduce the risk of falls in older people. The best exercise is the one you enjoy the most. The American Heart Association recommends 150 minutes of moderate exercise per week, which you can achieve by walking a little over 20 minutes a day. Get out there and enjoy our beautiful neighborhood! Move more!

Healthy diet: Generally, this means eating in moderation, and eating more fruits and vegetables, fewer processed foods. The so-called Mediterranean diet prioritizes fresh produce in addition to whole grains, beans, nuts, fish, and olive oil. This diet has been shown to lower the risk of heart disease, cancer, diabetes, and dementia.

Healthy weight: A Body Mass Index (BMI) of between 18.5 and 24.9 suggests a healthy weight range. There are online tables where you can use your height and weight to look up if you are in the healthy range.

Adequate refreshing sleep: Sleep is sometimes overlooked but plays a major role in health. Research has found that consistently getting good quality sleep can add several years to a person’s life. Sleep seems especially important for brain health: people who sleep less than five hours a night have been found to have double the risk of dementia.

Limit alcohol: More than one drink per day for women and two for men raises the risk for heart disease and atrial fibrillation, liver disease, and seven types of cancer.

Surround yourself with people who care: Psychological health often takes a back seat to physical health, but it is just as important. Isolation and loneliness are as big a detriment of our health as smoking and puts us at a higher risk of dementia, heart disease, and stroke.

When we take care of our hearts as part of self-care, we not only benefit ourselves, but we also set an example for others. It is a new year, and February is Heart Health Month. Go do something!

Out the Window

Article and Illustration by Beth Henson

Hairy Woodpecker

Peek, peek, peek, peek! A loud, rather squeaky repeating bird call caught my attention as I passed the tall, French dining room windows that overlooked the barren winter backyard. The playful song strongly reminded me of the noisy, squeaky toy my daughter’s new puppy loved to chew. I quickly checked out the suet feeder on the bare-limbed dogwood in time to see Mr. Hairy Woodpecker skillfully sashaying down the trunk. His favorite tasty treat was there for the taking. I couldn’t help but chuckle, seeing the comical white wisps of stringy feathers adorning the ridge of his back, highlighted by a brilliant red patch at the top. He truly did look to be overdue for a trip to the salon. Enjoy your late lunch, my fuzzy friend. I’ll check if my stylist can work you in.



Yummy 3-Ingredient Hot Chocolate for Two

It is sooo cold outside! Here is a great 3-ingredient recipe for hot chocolate from the Frugal Girls. It is highly likely that you have all three ingredients in your pantry right now. When three’s a crowd.... this recipe makes just the right amount for you and your sweetie.

- 3 Tbsp Cocoa Powder
- 3 Tbsp Sugar
- 1/3 cup hot water
- 2 cups whole milk (or 2%)
- Optional: cinnamon sprinkle or 1/2 tsp real vanilla

Add cocoa, sugar and water into medium saucepan (with optional ingredients) stirring continually over medium-high heat until well combined and smooth. Pour in milk and decrease heat to medium, continuing to stir. You do NOT want the milk to boil, only to get hot. You can tell it is just right when a few bubbles form around the edges of the pan,

Pour cocoa into two mugs and top with any of the ingredients or a combination of them. ‘Add ons’: whipped cream and sprinkles, marshmallows, soft peppermint sticks or crushed peppermints, mini chocolate chips, Nutella, caramel sauce, toffee bits.





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Coffee with Your Honey? Or Your Hens or Friends?

By Cheri Schneider (coffee snob)

The recent opening of the new PERC coffeeshop and roasting company on Tucker’s Main Street got me thinking dreamily of some time with a ‘cuppa’ and some conversation with my honey. I have my own coffee connoisseur- my husband. He keeps me ‘grounded’ in this department. Usually with Starbucks. I outgrew flavored coffees some years ago. Did you know that Tucker/ Stone Mountain Village and Lilburn have their own little collection of coffee shops? If you are looking to escape the daily ‘grind’ and relax and enjoy a cup of coffee with a friend, here is my list. The list is not all inclusive (although the shops are).

Try these:

- 1. PERC (PANTHER’S EYE ROASTING COMPANY)



PERC Coffee is now open on Main Street

What they say about themselves:

We roasted our first batch in the spring of 2010 in Savannah, GA. It quickly became clear we needed a shorter name. Luckily, the acronym PERC worked great. It was me, a roaster, and some tunes cranked up real loud. I started slinging bags at the farmers’ market and brewing at events around town. After hooking up with a handful of accounts, I hired our first two employees, my parents.

As things kept rocking, we needed more capacity. So, we moved to a big warehouse with a larger roaster, a retail shop, and a cupping and training space. We also needed a team. So, I partnered with some fantastic humans, Alan Fischer, Amber Foreman, Taylor Kimball, and Andrew Kapral. We came together like Voltron to take things to the next level.

We started opening shops in my hometown of Atlanta. We wanted the spaces to be bright and fun with loads of good vibes. We wanted to challenge ourselves to provide our customers with the highest level of coffee and hospitality. We also added our Atlanta HQ with offices, training space, and an interpretive dance studio, OK, not that last part :)

We have big plans. But no matter what’s in store, we’ll always be down-to-earth coffee people excited to share good times and awesome coffee with everyone we meet.

Also: Check out the following:

- 2. Paramount Coffee Shop & Books, 2245 Idlewood Rd, Tucker, GA 30084, Mon - Closed, Tue -Thursday: 7:00 am... It looks really cozy and the space is filled with BOOKS! My husband is a librarian at heart and will love it!
- 3. Caribou coffee/ Einstein Bagels: 4324 Lavista Rd Ste D-103 Tucker, GA 30084. Who doesn’t like a Bagel with your coffee? I am not sure but remember: most Einstein Bagels stores close around 2 pm.
- 4. Corner Cup Coffee-Tucker: 2380 Main Street, Tucker. 770-674-1656. Store Hours Mon-Fri 6 am to 5 pm and Sat-Sun 7 am to 5 pm. They expanded Tucker’s love of coffee and conversation!
- 5. Alcove Coffee House: 4615 Stone Mountain Hwy, Lilburn, Georgia 30047 (Near Lake Lucern and the music lesson place) 770-979-3030. They operate Mon-Thurs 11 am to 5 pm; Fri- Sat 11 am to 4 pm. (alcovecoffeehouse.com).
- 6. Frontporchroast@gmail.com, 404-539-2456/1056 Sheppard Road-Stone Mountain, GA. I do not think they have a shop (not sure), but this is a family-owned business and if you are up for trying home roasted coffees by a very ‘artsy’ family... here is your chance. <https://www.frontporchroasters.com/>.

Chances are there are other places: Of course Dunkin’ Donuts, Chik-Fil-A; Refuge coffee in Clarkston, Maraki there as well; Mokhaport (across from Sam’s Club on Mountain Industrial). They have vegetarian food and Ethiopian/ Yemeni coffee drinks. Go explore!









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Food & Home Fixin’

by Joyce Ray

Caring for your Silver Ware

Sterling Silver flatware is very often a link to past generations. Many sets that are in use today were passed down through families and are lovingly brought out for use on holidays and special occasions. There may be conversations about the identity of the silver pattern which a beloved family member gifted.

Now that the holidays are over and you are cleaning and storing your treasured Sterling Silver, you will want to be sure that each piece is inspected and cleaned properly to preserve it for the next generation.

Many have already heard about a revolutionary method of cleaning your silver. Line a glass casserole dish with aluminum foil, shiny side up. Sprinkle on 1 Tablespoon baking soda and place the sterling pieces in one layer. Pour boiling water over, covering flatware. Allow it to soak for one minute. Remove, rinse well and dry with a soft cloth. Then polish with a silver cloth that has been treated with tarnish preventer. You can reuse this solution until the water begins to cool.

To remove candle wax, soak the piece in hot water to get the wax soft and remove it with your fingernail. Buff the area with a soft cloth. Don’t scratch the piece to get the wax off. If you use your silverware daily, can you wash it in the dishwasher? The dishwasher can be used but removes the protection of the polish cloth which will cause it to tarnish more quickly. Use only liquid dishwasher detergent with no bleach or lemon/citrus. The dishwasher can become salty from other foods and deposit that salt onto your flatware. Rinse thoroughly. Dry each piece thoroughly. Allow it to cool before storing. Do not put hollow handle pieces in the dishwasher.

The best way to treat your silver is to wash it immediately. Run warm water and dishwashing liquid (no citrus) in a plastic dishpan and add your silverware while you clean-up. Do not use this method for hollow handle pieces (usually knives and serving utensils).

Substances that will tarnish silver include eggs, mayonnaise, salad dressing, vinegar, acidic foods (fruit juice), salty foods, wool, felt, rubber bands and plastic. Humidity is the #1 cause of tarnish and plastic bags will trap any moisture that lingers.

Store silver in bags made of Pacific cloth which is infused with silver dust to prevent tarnish. Most silver chests are lined with Pacific cloth. Use a piece to cover your silver in the chest. Add some packets of silica gel to the top of the cloth. You can buy Silver Cloth by the yard in some fabric stores or order it online.

DO NOT WRAP YOUR SILVER IN NEWSPAPER. The ink can react with the silver and cause pitting. Wear cotton gloves to handle between cleanings to keep oil off the silver.

For your silver items that are displayed in cabinets, wipe them occasionally with a treated cloth when they get dull. I invested in some polishing gloves many years ago and still use them to occasionally wipe down all pieces of displayed silver.

Cinnamon Apple Dumplings

This time-tested recipe brought raves of compliments when I recently took it to the family of a sick friend.

- Mix ½ cup of sugar with 1 tablespoon cinnamon.
- Two 8 oz tubes Crescent Rolls
- 4 Medium/large cooking apples – I use Gala
- 1 stick melted butter.
- One 12 oz can Sprite
- ¾ cup sugar

Place butter in a flat bowl. Peel and quarter the apples so that you have 16 pieces. Separate rolls and dredge one side in the melted butter and sprinkle with the cinnamon/sugar. Place apple quarter on other side of roll and roll it from the wide side to the narrow side, completely covering the apple. Continue with each roll and place them in shallow baking dish. Sprinkle the other ¾ cup of sugar over the tops of rolls and then pour the Sprite over the tops of the rolls. Bake in 350-degree oven until brown and apples are soft – about 35 minutes. Serve warm with whipped cream or vanilla ice cream.

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