

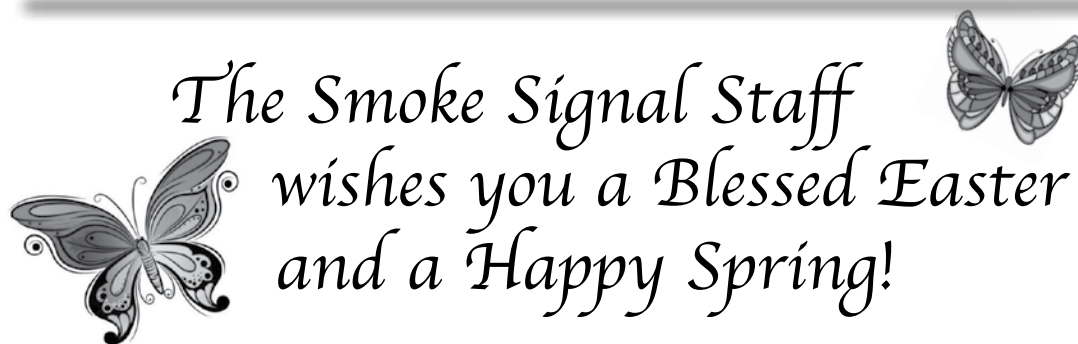
SMOKE SIGNAL

VOLUME 56, ISSUE 1

Serving the Smoke Rise Community since 1968

April, 2023

www.smokesignalnews.com



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Smoke Rise Trail System Ribbon Cutting

By Frank Auman, City of Tucker Mayor

On February 27, the City of Tucker officially cut the ribbon to open Segment 1A of our trail system, which runs parallel to Main Street from the Railroad to Tucker High School. Work on the system actually began in 2018, almost five years ago, with the inception of our Trails Master Plan. After months of research, engineering and community meetings, we adopted the plan in April 2019 that calls for 32 miles of trails throughout Tucker, connecting neighborhoods, public places like schools, parks and libraries, and of course, Main Street.

City Council specifically chose this first segment as a trail that would get a lot of use, but even more so, that would serve as inspiration to motivate our citizens to support building out the entire system as expeditiously as possible. Work on the trail itself took longer than three



years from design through completion. We had to acquire property or obtain easements from all the property owners along the way, move utilities, cross intersections, arrange the budgeting and financing, and, of course, deal with COVID throughout. Now that it's open, the vision is clear and beautiful. We'll soon have a new downtown park along the new trail, people can easily walk or ride a bike from many nearby areas on a well-lit, attractive walkway away from traffic. And we are already underway with other segments, including from Downtown Tucker to Northlake, from downtown along the South Fork of Peachtree Creek to Peters Park, and the one you've surely seen along Hugh Howell. The Tucker Trail not only connects people and communities, but will be a major economic development catalyst, as people learn how valuable it is to have a trail nearby their home or business. I hope to see you out there soon!

Northlake Goodwill® Grand Re-Opening

By Stevie Seay, Communications Manager, Goodwill of North Georgia

The Northlake Goodwill celebrated a grand re-opening last month, after undergoing internal renovations. The Goodwill team has been working to renovate many of its locations to revamp the shopping, donating, and working experience for everyone who supports the nonprofit.

The Northlake store and donation center, located at 3983 Lavista Road in Tucker, was established in 2007 and has been serving the community ever since. Residents of Tucker and the surrounding areas have had a place to shop and donate their gently used clothes, furniture, books, and technology for years now. The newly renovated store now features fresh paint colors, new wall graphics, flooring, and energy-saving LED lighting. There is also a "new goods" section dedicated to newly packaged goods such as snacks and drinks.



...Continued on page 6

City of Tucker Parks & Recreation Update

By Rip Robertson, Parks & Recreation Director

The Smoke Rise neighborhood is home to four City of Tucker parks: Lord, Probst, Rosenfeld, and Smoke Rise Crossing. There have been numerous improvements in the Probst and Smoke Rise Crossing parks over the last several years with new bridges throughout the scenic trails and an incredible overlook plaza as a memorial to Bill Probst. Rosenfeld Park has one of the city's pools with tennis courts, picnic pavilion, playground and a fenced dog park (opening soon). Lord Park is the largest park in the Smoke Rise community and will be developed with disc golf, trails, an overlook, playground, pavilions, restrooms, and parking.

The Lord Park renovation is a highly anticipated project for 2023. As with all projects, we started by referencing our Parks and Recreation Master Plan, adopted in 2019, which is our comprehensive plan created for the city as a guide to help make decisions and determine improvements, additions, and upgrades. It also helps guide the city in future acquisitions, programming, and priorities. There were two community meetings to receive direct feedback from community members that had vital support from Councilmembers Virginia Rece and Cara Schroeder. They were influential in ensuring the final plan reflected the community's requests with Councilmember Rece personally speaking with community members throughout the process. I met several times with them, and with their assistance, we successfully modified the preliminary plan to include changes and additions to create a final park plan that fully reflected the community's ideas. The project has been presented to the council and is presently in the early construction document phase for the Lord Park entrance parking and will move to bidding in the late spring/early summer this year, with construction starting as early as fall.

The Rosenfeld Park tennis court renovation is complex and will include engineering and grading to provide stormwater mitigation for proper drainage. Once all the complexities are worked through, then demolition and grading are needed before any reconstruction of the tennis courts can occur. There are also electrical requirements, restroom, fencing and access renovations to complete. All of this will take some time and may not get under construction until late fall this year.

Renderings are available on the City of Tucker website for both the Lord and Rosenfeld parks projects and are a great way to explore the renovations before construction even begins! The city is excited about the progress being made in our parks for the residents. Seeing locals playing and exercising on the improvements already accomplished is a joy to both staff and the city elected officials.

To stay in touch and updated, continue to check the City of Tucker website and social media pages for full information about current and upcoming programs, events, activities, and projects.

City of Tucker Website: <https://www.tuckerga.gov/>





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 (770) 717-9914
*AvivA Hoffmann.....helloaviva@hotmail.com
Gia Anderson.....andersongia35@gmail.com
* This Issue's Editor-in-Chief

Recording Secretary Susan Gilbert..... sgilbert@apogee.net
Corresponding Secretary ... Barbara Bruschi..... (770) 934-4644
Church News..... Susan Gilbert..... sgilbert@apogee.net
Health News..... Cheri Schneider, M.D..... (770) 717-9914
Flyer Inserts..... Barbara Luton..... (770) 491-6711
Recipes and Home..... Joyce Ray (770) 491-9015
Social Media Pat Soltys..... (770) 573-9715
News You Can Use AvivA Hoffmannhelloaviva@hotmail.com

Staff Writers: Pat Baumann, MD pbauman@emory.edu
Barbara Bruschi..... (770) 934-4644
Victoria Crosby poeticvic@aol.com
Joel Gilbert..... joel@apogee.net
Beth Henson
Linda Karr.....
Susan Gilbert..... (404) 312-8328
Joyce Ray (770) 491-9015
Pat Soltys..... (770) 573-9715

Distribution Laura Smith..... (770) 934-7595
Delivery..... Morgan Taylor and Charlie Smith

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

Smoke Signal Deadlines

APRIL 13

Please e-mail articles to:
staff@smokesignalnews.com
(Word documents or text file attachments preferred)

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

Deadline for classified ads is APRIL 10

SMOKE SIGNAL FLYER INSERT POLICY

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

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Preferred Formats for Smoke Signal Submissions

When sending articles and photos to the *Smoke Signal*, articles should be sent in .doc or .docx format. Articles sent in .pdf format cannot be edited or changed in any way. Ideally, photos and graphics should be submitted in .jpg or .pdf format. Thanks for helping us make your neighborhood paper the best it can be!

Smoke Signal Political Policy

It is the policy of the *Smoke Signal* to print one article on political candidates prior to each primary and/or general election. The candidate must submit the article to the paper by deadline, in order for it to appear in the following month's issue. No staff member will be responsible for any political articles on candidates, nor will the Smoke Signal solicit articles from candidates. Articles are to be submitted on a voluntary basis.

Political flyers – See below left for information. No political ads will be run in the classifieds.

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

SUNDAY

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

WEDNESDAY

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

Eastminster Presbyterian Church

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

April 10 - Palm Sunday
Adult & Children's Sunday School at 9:15 a.m.
Worship Service at 10:30 a.m.
April 14 - Maundy Thursday
Dinner at 5:30 p.m. (by RSVP only)
Contemporary Fireside Service 6:30 p.m.
April 15 - Good Friday - Virtual Only Service
April 17 - Easter Sunday
Family Program & Breakfast at 9:15 a.m.
Easter Celebration Service at 10:30 a.m.

MC3 Church

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

Sunday Schedule:

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

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

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

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

First Moravian Church

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

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

Incarnate Word Lutheran Church

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

Mountain West Church

Pastor: Mo Huggins
(770) 491-0228 ~ www.mwchurch.com
4818 Hugh Howell Rd., Stone Mountain
Sunday Services: 8:30 a.m., 10:00 a.m. and 11:30 a.m.
Thursday Neighborhood Bible Study with Pastor Mo: 10:00 a.m.
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ART Station presents The Savannah Sipping Society
by Jessie Jones, Nicholas Hope & Jamie Wooten

In this delightful, laugh-a-minute comedy, four unique Southern women are drawn together by fate—and an impromptu happy hour—and decide it's high time to reclaim the enthusiasm for life they've lost through the years. Over the course of six months, filled with laughter, hilarious misadventures, and the occasional liquid refreshment, these middle-aged women successfully bond and find the confidence to jumpstart their new lives. So, raise your glass to these strong women and their fierce embrace of life and say "Cheers" to this joyful and surprisingly touching comedy.

The Savannah Sipping Society features Aretta Baumgartner, Mary Kathryn Kaye, Suzzanne Roush & Karen Whitaker; Direction by David Thomas. Performances are April 6-23, Thursdays-Saturdays, at 8:00 p.m., and Sunday matinees at 3:00 p.m. Opening Night is Thursday, April 6. No show on Easter Sunday, April 9. All performances will be in the ART Station Theatre located at 5384 Manor Drive in in the historic village of Stone Mountain. For more information and ticket pricing, call (770) 469-1105 or visit the website at artstation.org. An additional matinee is scheduled for Wednesday, April 19, at 10:30 a.m. (reduced-priced tickets).



*Standing: Suzzanne Roush & Aretta Baumgartner
Seated: Karen Whitaker & Mary Kathryn Kaye
Photo by ART Station*

Smoke Rise Baptist Church Holy Week
By Ashley Litzell, Director of Communications and Media

You are invited to worship with us at Smoke Rise Baptist Church during Holy Week. With a theme of From Hosanna to Hallelujah and the Valley in Between, we will begin our journey through this special week on April 2, Palm Sunday, at 11:00 a.m., as we shout Hosanna with our children and youth leading us with a procession of palms to begin our worship service. On Maundy Thursday, April 6, at 7:00 p.m. in the sanctuary, we will commemorate the washing of feet and the Last Supper in a Tenebrae service which will feature scripture readings based on the last sayings of Christ. With each reading in this moving service, a candle is extinguished until we are immersed in total darkness. On Good Friday, April 7, from 8:30 a.m. to 8:00 p.m., our chapel will be open for you to reflect personally upon the life and death of Jesus Christ through the eyes of the 12 disciples as you move through guided stations. Finally, on Easter Sunday, April 9, we shout Hallelujah! as we celebrate the risen Christ during our 11:00 a.m. worship service. We hope you will join us as we traverse the hosannas, the hallelujahs and the valley in between.

Prior to the beginning of Holy Week, we will host a community Easter Party on Saturday, April 1, beginning at 10:00 a.m. This family event will feature face painting, a coffee truck, and more. <https://smokerisebaptist.org/>



DeKalb History Center Lecture Series
Fletcher Pearson Crown and Crown Camellia Gardens

This presentation, by Treadwell Rice Crown III, will explore how Fletcher Pearson Crown, arriving as a young mother in Decatur more than 100 years ago, created extensive gardens and a uniquely successful gardening instruction business in the early to mid-twentieth century. Crown's business offered educational classes, lectures, and demonstrations in a variety of media to reach homeowners interested in beautifying their landscapes. Launching forth from garden clubs to newspaper to department stores and radio, she continually sought out novel ways to reach people and engage them across the Southeast.

The presenter, Treadwell Rice Crown III, grew up in his Grandmother's home and gardens, ultimately putting down roots in Madison, Ga. The garden he and his husband have created over the last 38 years has both served as a base for their gardening business and as inspiration for Rick's newspaper columns, garden talks, magazine articles, and an HGTV episode. After the lecture, a limited number of Camellias, provided by the NGCA, will be available to take home.

This event is in partnership with the North Georgia Camellia Association (NGCS) and support from the Cherokee Garden Library at the Atlanta History Center. The NGCS, a nonprofit organization, is devoted to educating gardeners of varying abilities and interests about camellias.

Tuesday, April 18, 10:00 a.m.–11:00 a.m.
FREE to attend!
DeKalb History Center
(Historic DeKalb Courthouse), 2nd floor
101 E. Court Square, Decatur GA 30030

Poetry & Prosecco at the Smoke Rise Country Club

April is poetry month, so in celebration of Spring, and to celebrate the coronation of King Charles III, British born poet Victoria Crosby will once again entertain you with her humorous and inspirational poetry at the Tennis Center at Smoke Rise Country Club on Thursday, April 20 at 3:00 p.m. Delicious refreshments will be served in addition to wine and prosecco.

Feel free to dress up in your coronation attire, jewelry and tiaras encouraged, as participants toast the new King and Queen. Victoria Crosby's poetry has been published in the *Smoke Signal* and in *Our Town* and other magazines in New York and California.

Open to members and non-members of SRCC. RSVP required, as space is limited. Call (770) 908-2582.



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Smoke Rise Country Club Golf & Tennis

By Leslie Freeman Green

Smoke Rise Country Club is having great success this year with its golf and tennis programs. Joe Shirey, who has been the Head Pro since last year, has made positive changes and implemented new programs contributing to golf's success. The golf course consistently brings a crowd every weekend with member and public play. Saturday and Sundays, the Club hosts grill outs and plays great music to give the members and guests casual food to eat and a fun environment. The course is undergoing many upgrades to greens, tees and more than 500 trees were taken down on the course for better play.

Joe and the golf staff are proud to be the home to Greater Atlanta Christian School, Providence School, Decatur High School, and Parkview High golf teams this year. SRCC is also the home of the Emory golf teams. Travis Holmes, the Club teaching pro, is actively coaching and helping build the kid's program at SRCC. He teaches children as young as three years old and is coaching the golf camps this summer.

Jim Richards has been promoted to head tennis pro and is doing amazing things. The courts are full, and programs consistently sell out. SRCC has 12 adult teams from beginner all the way up to the most advanced, AA1. The Club now offers morning and evening 3 vs 3 tringles and Broccoli leagues - which are sold out.

Tringles is 3 against 3 with 2 players at the baseline and one at the net. Tringles is great for teaching angled volleys. Broccoli is where 3 net players are against 3 baseliners. Broccoli leagues are the best way and quickest way to get better at tennis, period.

SRCC also offers men's and ladies round robin doubles leagues as a way for new members and players graduating from tennis 101 to play tennis, meet other members, and to join beginner 8 teams.

SRCC is excited to join ALTA in offering its first pickleball league for play starting on Monday, July 10! Competition will last seven weeks until Aug 21, with the top teams from each playing level advancing to the playoffs and then to City Finals. Each team will need a minimum of six men and six women. Play will be men's doubles, women's doubles and two lines of mixed doubles. Registration will open on May 1. SRCC will also be offering team practices with certified pickle ball pros. <https://www.smokerisecc.com/>

Main Street Theatre Presents 'Steel Magnolias' April 21- May 6 at Tucker Recreation Center

By Gary Goettling

Angie Ward describes herself as an "eccentric" who will try pretty much anything once, "Twice, if it's fun!" she laughed.

The Smoke Rise resident tackles a new adventure when she plays the part of Truvy in Main Street Theatre's production of "Steel Magnolias" the weekends of April 21-23, 28-30 and May 5-6 at the Tucker Recreation Center, 4898 LaVista Road, Tucker.

The Arkansas native performed in burlesque shows with a local troupe in Little Rock when she was in her early 20's and also did improv comedy, but nothing she'd call "real" theatre work.

"So, I've never performed in community theatre, but it has always been my dream to do so," said Angie, whose day job as a senior IT engineer involves everything from data security to front-end development.

Angie's character is the owner of an in-home beauty salon located in the fictional small parish of Chinquapin, Louisiana. The salon is a regular gathering place for a colorful cast of gossipy southern women who share the events in their lives and support each other through bouts of love and loss. The two-act comedy-drama was written by Robert Harling and is based on a true story.

"I auditioned for 'Steel Magnolias,' because it is an iconic story that I watched over and over growing up, and every single character speaks to me," Angie said. "But also, I saw going to the audition as a way to challenge myself to try something new as part of my plan to re-enter the world after the pandemic and try to reconnect with life again.

"I especially love Truvy because she embodies this bubbly, wonderful woman who is all about smoothing out the rough places for other people," Angie added.

Veteran Main Street Theatre actor and director Jan Jensen directs a cast that includes Daphne Trevathan (Annelle), Merle Westbrook (Clairee), Christa Sfameni (M'Lynn), Brandi Kilgore (Shelby) and Katie Cossette (Ouiser).

The curtain rises for "Steel Magnolias" at 7:30 p.m. for Friday and Saturday performances, and Sunday shows begin at 2:30 p.m. Masks are optional, subject to CDC guidelines. Concessions will be available.

For tickets and more information, visit www.mainstreettheatre.org.



The "Steel Magnolias" cast, from left: Angie Ward (Truvy), Daphne Trevathan, seated (Annelle), Brandi Kilgore (Shelby), Merle Westbrook (Clairee), Katie Cossette (Ouiser) and Christa Sfameni, seated (M'Lynn).



The Mountain Creek Swim Club announces its 2023 Swim Season!

Memberships are now available, with discounts offered prior to May 1. For membership pricing and more details, visit the website at www.mountaincreekswimclub.com

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Letter to the Editor:

Tribute to the Smoke Signal

Dear *Smoke Signal* Staff,

I am new to the Smoke Rise community (5 months now) and I wanted to share how much my husband and I love the *Smoke Signal*. It is what I look forward to reading at the beginning of the month. Thank you to your amazing staff and volunteers for continuing to keep the community informed. We love living here and being a part of this vibrant community.

Warmly,
Amber & Aaron Voss



Cold Stone Creamery is coming to Hugh Howell Marketplace. Cold Stone joins Gusto as the two latest build outs in the new center.



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WEDDINGS

Double the Nuptials *By Mary Lou Still, Smoke Rise Resident*



Addison and Elizabeth

WOW-- We have had two weddings in the Still family in the past four months - WHEW! First, our son Addison Holmes Still married his longtime sweetheart Elizabeth Grace Jones on 10/22/22 in the Beautiful John Wesley Methodist Church on Saint Simons Island. Many of their Smoke Rise/Tucker/UGA friends traveled to be there for their momentous occasion. It was like a Tucker High School Reunion! Addison presently works in the Reinsurance business at Captive Resources and Elizabeth is a product manager at LexisNexis. They now reside in Chamblee with their two rescue puppies from PAWS!



Olivia and Jacob

The family then traveled to Cabo San Lucas, Mexico for our daughter Olivia Ann Still’s wedding-- she married her “Prince Charming” Auburn University boyfriend, Jacob Daniel Miller on 2/17/23. They had their family and friends travel from all over to be there for their Special day! Her brother, Addison performed the Wedding ceremony-- EXTRA Special! Olivia works for Spanx and Jacob for Snowflake. They recently moved to a home in Brookhaven with their precious rescue dog Roddy!





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Judi Crutchfield's 80th Birthday Celebration

By Connie Henry, Contributing Writer

Judi Wages Crutchfield, a well-loved resident of the Smoke Rise community since 1983, turned 80 years old on February 24, 2023. How can it be that our Judi C. is 80? Surely 80 must be the new 40! To celebrate this special milestone in Judi's life, her son, Keith, and good friends, Susan and Joel Gilbert, co-hosted a birthday celebration at the Gilbert's beautiful waterfall house in Kanawha on March 11.

Approximately 100 guests attended this momentous occasion including Tucker's Mayor Frank Auman and his lovely wife Gaye. The day was sunny and bright, and the waterfall really put on a fabulous show.

Many thanks to all the friends who dropped by or lingered between 4:00 p.m. and 8:00 p.m. at the party to wish Judi well. Delicious finger foods and drinks were served in abundance, and the beautiful, enormous birthday cake was delectable. Thanks also to Susan Shewbridge for the awesome entertainment. Wow, she can sing!

Judi grew up in the Eastlake neighborhood of Atlanta. How can it be possible that so many years have passed since she attended Murphy High School and then East Atlanta High School where

she was elected homecoming queen, co-captain of the varsity cheerleading team, and an officer of many other extracurricular organizations?

Judi went on to design school and operated her own successful business for more than 30 years, Judi's Interiors Limited. She also married the love of her life, Bob Crutchfield, and they were richly blessed with two sons, Bryan and Keith. In 2018, Judi became a grandmother to a beautiful baby girl. Judi is also an avid animal lover and dearly misses her sweet Penny, who crossed the rainbow bridge in 2022.

Judi and Bob lived, played, and worked in the Smoke Rise community for many years. In their free time, Judi and Bob loved to dance and they attended many memorable shag dancing events throughout the years. Bob was an esteemed CEO with Christian City. Unfortunately, after 54 wonderful years of marriage, in 2017 Judi lost her beloved Bob to ALS.

Judi is a member of Smoke Rise Baptist Church in Stone Mountain and the Smoke Rise Golf and Country Club. She is also a master gardener, and she is a member of the Mountain Mums and the Morning Glories Garden Club, where she served as past president.

An Irish proverb goes, "There are good ships and wood ships, ships that sail the sea, but the best ships are friendships, may they always be." Judi is a friend to all and has a beautiful soul. She is always cheerful, helpful, and kind, and she is full of class and grace.

Happy birthday dear, beautiful, friend. Keep on celebrating. We love you!



Keith and Judi Crutchfield with Susan Gilbert

Smoke Rise Yoga in Different Venue

Yoga classes continue to take place at a different venue, since the closing of the Smoke Rise Country Club clubhouse due to flooding. Until the reopening of the clubhouse, classes are temporarily being held at the Eastminster Presbyterian Church, 5801 Hugh Howell Road on Wednesday mornings at 9.30 a.m. Classes are open to members and non-members of all levels of ability.

For more information, contact Tracy Stroud at rstroud1@comcast.net or call (707) 853-3862.



Goodwill...continued from page 1

Goodwill's mission is to Put People to Work. When items are sold in stores or online, those profits are used to fund skills training programs and job placement services. Last year, Goodwill helped more than 16,000 North Georgians secure jobs, with plans to help even more people get a job, a better job, or a career this year. Goodwill of North Georgia serves a 45-county territory with 100+ stores and donation centers. The organization also operates 14 career centers to support job training and placement services offered free-of-charge to tens of thousands of North Georgia job seekers. Through career centers and training programs, Goodwill serves veterans, people with disabilities, youth, single parents, the under-employed, people with criminal backgrounds, and anyone else looking for work.

To learn more about Goodwill of North Georgia's career services and job training programs, visit www.goodwillng.org.



Earth Day, April 22

marks the anniversary of the birth of the modern environmental movement in 1970.

National Arbor Day

is April 29,

the 151st anniversary of the tree planter's holiday.

Georgia Arbor Day is celebrated on the third

Friday of February (during planting season).



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Weeping Cherry Tree

by Victoria Crosby

A child, like a tree,
grows with nurturing care,
kissed by the gentle rain
of praise and acceptance,
warmed by friendship,
like the rays of the sun,
fed by roots planted deep
in the earth of the community
to grow to maturity,
blossoming, spreading branches
reaching up to the sky.

Without caring, a child, like a tree,
will wither, growth stunted,
a broken spirit
like a bird too wounded to fly.
And so we planted a weeping cherry tree,
perfect, pink, perfumed petals,
which weep, but do not cry.

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HEALTH NOTES:

by Patricia Baumann, MD

Topical Analgesic Medication

Topical painkillers, or analgesics, are medications applied to external body surfaces for pain relief. They come in an amazing variety of drug types, including anti-inflammatories, local anesthetics, counter irritants, and herbal agents. Topical analgesics also come in a variety of application forms: creams, gels, sprays, and patches. Many are available over the counter (OTC), and the ones I will discuss are the ones that are typically found in the drug or grocery store aisle. It probably surprises no one that topical analgesics are often underappreciated, misunderstood, underused, and worst, misused! Instructions for all topicals should be read and followed carefully. Ask your pharmacist or doctor, if you do not understand.

Some of the confusion about OTC topical analgesics is because some have kept their trade names, yet changed their ingredients! For example, the original version of Aspercreme contained a compound called trolamine salicylate 10%. Trolamine salicylate is a pain-relieving compound closely related to aspirin, a nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drug (NSAID). Some Aspercreme products now only contain Lidocaine 4%, a numbing medication. Aspercreme also comes in a gel with the NSAID diclofenac 1% as the active ingredient. Aspercreme comes in a version which contains capsaicin 0.025%, a counter irritant, as the active ingredient. Take your glasses and be sure to read the label!

If you want to get the best results from topical analgesics, it helps to understand what the drugs do. Ideally, you should read the list of ingredients, and select what you buy based on the appropriate drug for your condition. Pain can come from inflammation, irritation, and strain, and can be generated by muscles, bones and nerves. Each drug acts in a unique way to relieve pain. Choosing the right drug for the condition will ensure that the drug works well.

Nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory topical analgesics are useful for musculoskeletal pain. The non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs) block the production of pain-signaling chemicals called prostaglandins. This treatment can be used for acute pain (sprains, strains, tendonitis, acute back pain, muscle pain) as well as chronic pain (osteoarthritis of hands, knees, and back). Topical NSAIDs reduce swelling, inflammation, and pain. Topical NSAIDs are absorbed through the skin to act on the underlying structures, with minimal systemic absorption. Topical application makes the NSAID safer to use, because it avoids the systemic side effects on the stomach and kidneys. When used as directed, the topical NSAID can be as effective as their oral forms. It is effective only on the area where it is applied. Diclofenac is the most frequently used NSAID in OTC topical analgesics. Topical diclofenac was once a very expensive prescription drug known as Voltaren gel, but in February 2020, it became available over the counter, and the price went down. Topical NSAIDs are available by brand name and less expensive generic store brands.

Counter irritants are found in several topical analgesic preparations. The irritation produced by these substances is most commonly a chemical stimulation of temperature receptors in the skin, they create a heating or cooling sensation. They can be used for acute or chronic pain. These drugs activate and desensitize pain fibers in the skin. Counter irritant products include menthol, methyl salicylate, camphor, and capsaicin. Menthol is found in mint oils, has a refreshing odor, and has cooling properties, and local anesthetic properties. OTC menthol has an excellent safety profile. It primarily activates cold receptors in the skin. It is used for the treatment of muscle pain and itching. It is often combined with medications like methyl salicylate and camphor. Methyl salicylate is produced by many varieties of plants, especially wintergreen. It causes a mild local reaction that provides relief at the area of pain. Methyl salicylate may relieve pain relief by dilating blood vessels, and increasing blood flow and temperature to the localized area of tissue. This is often experienced as a feeling of warmth. Camphor is a compound obtained from the wood and bark of the camphor tree, found in Taiwan and Southeast Asia. It has a long history of medicinal use. It relieves pain by producing a warm sensation. It excites and desensitizes pain fibers by activating heat sensitive receptors. It is used to treat osteoarthritis and relieves itching. Capsaicin is used for mild cases of muscle or joint pain. Capsaicin is also used for the treatment of post herpetic neuralgia. Capsaicin is made from an ingredient found in chili peppers. Some may not like the burning sensation that occurs when the pain fibers are activated prior to desensitization. Capsaicin works by causing the release of pain transmitter substance P, which then depletes the supply of pain transmitter, thereby blocking pain transmission. So, you get the burn, then you get pain relief.


Counter irritants activate and then desensitize pain fibers in the skin. They also dilate blood vessels in the skin. Upon contact, they create a warming or cooling sensation to dilate blood vessels, re-oxygenate the tissues, and relax muscles to ultimately stop the pain. Counter irritants should not be applied to broken skin and the area should not be bandaged. Care should be taken to avoid the eyes and mucus membranes, and hands should be washed after use. It should generally not be used more than three to four times a day. Remember to follow proper precautions with counter irritants. Some may not like the sensation that occurs when the pain fibers are activated prior to desensitization. Counter irritants are often found in combination products. Examples of counter irritant products include Biofreeze Gel (menthol 4%), Bengay Ultra Strength (menthol 10%, camphor 4%, methyl salicylate 30%), Icy Hot Original Cream (menthol 10% and methyl salicylate 30%).

One last topical analgesic we will discuss is the local anesthetics. These work by stopping nerves in the skin from sending pain signals. It causes a sensation of numbness or loss of feeling. These preparations typically contain the drug lidocaine. Topical lidocaine comes as a cream, an ointment, a spray, a patch, a jelly, or a solution for oral use. Generally, strength greater than 5% requires a prescription. Lidocaine skin patch is used to relieve pain of post-herpetic neuralgia, a burning, stabbing, aching pain that may last for months or years after shingles. Nonprescription OTC lidocaine is also available to relieve pain in shoulders, arms neck, and legs in adults and children 12-years of age and older. It can be used to relieve itching and minor burns. Prescription lidocaine patches come as a 5% and are expensive. Nonprescription patches come as a 4% patch to apply to the skin. It is applied up to three times a day for no more than

...Continued on page 12

Art Wood

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The Dark Side of Current EV Production

Part 4 of 4

As Electric Vehicles (EVs) are being touted as the answer to so many of our environmental woes, I wanted to share another perspective on their impact.

We are all being told that the environmentally sustainable future of the planet is solar, wind, and electric vehicle (EVs). These aspirational goals are being presented as nice, simple, realistic ideas that eventually help us reduce carbon dioxide emissions. However, for the next decade or two, the exact opposite is true. Building EV batteries, solar panels, and wind turbines today produces a full decade or more of carbon dioxide release. And, they are causing environmental devastation, health problems, and even the death of countless individuals in poor countries involved with mining the required rare-earth elements.



Once you consider the rest of the story, EVs are the blood diamonds of the energy industry. Hmmmm. Why aren't we being told that by the mainstream press? You can read all about it, if you google these ideas because the scientific community is in complete agreement that near term carbon dioxide levels will increase in the short run with our push for these ideas. Oh, and they also don't tell you that these emissions will remain in the environment a long time... a very long time.

There are two aspects to this reality. The first is that it takes a lot of energy to create an EV. Experts agree that a typical 200-mile range EV would have to be driven 100,000 miles before offsetting that "embedded" carbon in its creation. In eight years, I have put 55,000 miles on the car, so it may take another eight years before it has any net positive effect on carbon. Plus, that 100,000-mile estimate assumes that the charging of the car did not use electricity produced with coal or natural gas that in itself caused the release of carbon. So, the only place now where that would be true is in the Pacific Northwest, where most of the electricity is produced by hydro, water flowing over a dam.

Here in the southeast, EVs should be charged in the middle of the day when all that solar photovoltaic energy is being produced. But most utilities will tell customers to charge "off-peak" or overnight when the sun is not shining, and when in some cases the utility is burning coal.

So, we can quickly see that it is going to take a long time before our purchase of an EV is going to produce any carbon dioxide emission benefit, or if it ever will. Now, we get to the one that is actually quite disturbing, since the environmental and social ugliness of EV production is not evident here in the US. That is in the production of the batteries that rely on metals that have a terrible impact on the children and adults in the areas where they are mined and processed. You can google that as well, or if you want to see just how devastating this extractive mining is, watch Planet of the Humans, which is free on Amazon Prime.

This dark side sets the stage for many of the recent ideas you hear about such as producing the EVs and photovoltaics in the United States, so we can move away from these dirty and abusive foreign-country origins. Plus, you will hear a lot about the future of batteries from Elon Musk, since he is acutely aware of the current problems and can't get to the production-scale needed with these foreign-controlled rare earth elements. You will also begin to hear about the dark side of EVs as the EPA cracks down on reporting of company carbon footprints in the production of EVs. However, also read carefully about how these companies may "offset" their carbon footprint by planting trees somewhere or some other currently acceptable offset. Many in the scientific community are trying to crack down on this greenwashing.

All of this may not matter to you when you consider an EV. They are a blast to drive. But, if you are considering one to benefit the planet, be aware there is more to the story than what you are hearing in the mainstream press.

NEWS YOU CAN USE

by AvivA Hoffmann

Don't Believe Your Lying Ears!

Last month, I wrote about cybercrime. This month, I'm sharing information about a relatively new type of scam, using the latest Artificial Intelligence (AI) capabilities.

Many fraud attempts increase during tax time and during natural disasters and emergencies. Thieves conduct a gamut of schemes: from promises of a faster or bigger tax refund to the lure of instant aid, miracle products and cures. The government estimates scams cost us billions of dollars each year.

Now, some scammers are using AI to enhance family emergency type of schemes. Imagine getting a call from a panicked voice on the line that sounds just like your child, grandchild, or other family member. "Johnny" says he's in deep trouble of some kind – like he's been in a car crash and is now in jail. He tells you he needs help – "send money!" This particular scam is different. You're having a real-time conversation with him, AND, it sounds exactly like him. How could this be a scam? Well, it's called "voice cloning," and it's not all that hard to do.

AI is no longer a far-fetched idea from science fiction. It's here...now. A scammer can use AI to clone the voice of just about anyone who has a short clip of their voice on the world wide web. That's all the crook needs, along with a voice-cloning program or software (which is not hard to acquire). When the scammer calls you, he can carry on a conversation and sound just like your loved one.

So, how can you tell if it's really an emergency, or if it's a scammer using a cloned voice? Well, don't trust your first, panicked response. When your money is at risk, be skeptical! Keep in mind, scammers ask you to pay or send money in ways that are hard for you to track or get your money back. Requests for wiring money, cryptocurrency, or gift cards should all be red flags.

You can use a phone number you know that belongs to the family member who's contacting you. See if you can reach them from your end. If you can't, try to get in touch with them through another family member or one of their friends. Another way to avoid being taken by this scam is to set up a code word – or sentence – with your grandchildren (or other family members). Or, during the suspect call, you can ask them a question only they would know. When in doubt, hang up and try to contact other family members to confirm the situation is a true emergency – or a scam.

If you spot a scam, report it to the Federal Trade Commission at: [ReportFraud.ftc.gov](https://www.ftc.gov/report-fraud). Also, since it's tax month, be sure to check out [irs.gov](https://www.irs.gov) for current tax fraud information. And note, the IRS will never make initial contact, out of the blue, by phone, text or email and ask for money or personal identifying information. If you get a call from someone claiming to be from the IRS, hang up and originate the call on your terms to verify its legitimacy. (Then contact the authorities to report the call, after you confirm it is a scam attempt.)



Image from the Federal Trade Commission/Consumer Advice.

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Out the Window

by Beth Henson

Cardinal in Japanese Magnolia

Spring had come a full six weeks early. Even the May wisteria was profusely blooming along the roadsides. Punxsutawney Phil (up in Pennsylvania) must have gotten it wrong! Gazing out the living room window, I took in the sheer beauty of the long bushy fescue and profusion of blooming dogwoods and fruit trees. Tucked away in the far corner, my beautiful Japanese magnolia still held on to a few hot magenta blooms. It was hard to believe how much it had grown since my daughter had given it to me for Mother’s Day two short years ago.

Suddenly, a bright, fire-engine red male cardinal came swooping down from the upper hillside, landing directly next to a vibrant pink bloom. His soft brown mate soon joined him to balance the scene. The lovely couple stretched their graceful necks in unison and burst out a joyful song. Thanks my beauties for heralding our early Spring. And let’s face it, what does a silly northern groundhog know anyway?!



Lost Pet or Community Cat?

By Morriah McPhie

Secretary, Kanawha Community Association

As the Spring season is upon us, most people notice the flowers blooming and the layers of pollen on the ground. What I think of is that this is the beginning of kitten season! As a cat rescuer, I TNR (Trap, Neuter, Release) cats in coordination with LifeLine Animal Project. LifeLine is the largest TNR assistance program and a non-profit that manages the DeKalb and Fulton County Animal shelters. Its mission is to end the shelter euthanasia of healthy and treatable animals. Its Cat Program is dedicated to managing community cat colonies using TNR.

TNR is the only effective method to decrease the number of cats humanely and dramatically. Once a community cat is identified, they are trapped, neutered, vaccinated, ear-tipped (to identify them as neutered) and returned to where they were found as “Community Cats.” They provide these services at a discounted rate for members of the cat community who bring in free-roaming cats, who can sometimes be feral from lack of human interaction. Every animal that is brought to the shelter is also checked for a microchip, to determine if they are lost pets. Why is this important? Free-roaming cats, who are not spayed/neutered can become pregnant as young as six months old and can have a new litter of four to six kittens every six months. If left to nature, a cat or two can become a big issue for a neighborhood. Alternatively, sometimes a free-roaming cat ends up being a lost pet.

Recently, a stray showed up at my house in Kanawha, and I was able to trap her. Once at LifeLine, I was told that this cat had a microchip! Happy Day! They said that the microchip company would contact the registered owner and that they may or may not contact me. She was already spayed, so no surgeries were performed, but since they had sedated her, I took her home and kept her overnight hoping to hear from someone. The next morning, I received a call from Perlin who said that “Baby” had gone missing in 2018, five years ago! She had been temporarily staying at a relative’s home on Hugh Howell when Baby got out and never returned. When I told Perlin that Baby was safe at home in my bathroom, she cried! A reunion was set up for that evening and Baby went home! This story had a happy ending for everyone, especially Baby.



If you see a free-roaming cat in your yard, please first find out if it belongs to one of your neighbors. If not, then contact LifeLine and they can either, loan you a trap or send someone out like me to TNR for you. Unless of course, it is a lost pet, like Baby, and they will hopefully be returned to their owner! If you find a mother cat and kittens, the process will be the same except the kittens will not be returned. They will be transferred to area rescue groups or foster homes until they are old enough for adoption. LifeLine’s rescue group can be reached at (404) 294-2963 or rescue@dekalbanimalservices.com.



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In the Garden

By Linda Karr, Staff Writer

April brings with it many special days to observe – National Garden Month, Earth Day (April 22), and Arbor Day (April 28). What can you do this month to help celebrate? Plant a tree? Pick up litter? Plant a garden or rejuvenate one?

Have you seen a hummingbird yet? Hopefully, you’ve cleaned your feeders and they are out and ready! Watch for all the migrating birds and check out your nest boxes, too.

In another month, we should be able to tell what we lost from the December deep freeze. Our large rosemary bushes were so “fried” that we dug them up. Blooming in our garden now are Lenten roses, viburnum, azaleas, daffodils, trillium, clematis, anise, saucer magnolia, and tulips. So many other plants have popped out of the ground in the last couple of weeks - hosta, fern, lilies, May apple, Solomon’s seal, bear’s breeches, baptisia, columbine, salvia, heucherella, heuchera, brunnera, peony, astilbe, chives, parsley, coneflower, mint, and echinacea. The Japanese maples, indigo bush, sweetspire, weigelia, dutchman’s pipe, Grancy Greybeard, sweetshrub, and orange zest have started to leaf out as well as some of our other trees, giving us an early show of pollen. Our Temple of Bloom – Seven- Son Flower Tree, which we bought to replace the vitex we lost, has started to leaf out, too.

Opportunities in the garden for April:

- Plant bulbs such as elephant ear, dahlias, and caladiums now.
- Prune back your spring flowering shrubs after they have finished blooming as needed.
- Move your houseplants outside and start monthly fertilization.
- Plant your tomatoes and peppers in your garden. Make sure you mulch your tomatoes to decrease the chances of early blight fungus.
- Plant beans, beets, broccoli, cabbage, carrots, cauliflower, celery, corn, cucumber, kale, leek, melon, okra, onions, parsnip, peas, peppers, potatoes, radishes, spinach, squash, Swiss chard, turnip, and watermelon this month.
- Plant container grown perennials and annuals now. As you plant annuals, remove the flower buds, to encourage more root growth. Pinch off the growing tips to encourage a bushier plant.
- Keep sowing seeds of lettuces and other garden greens, to ensure a continual harvest. Sow in an area that gets afternoon shade.
- If you’ve had a problem with cutworms on your beans, squash, or other veggies, put collars around them made of recycled household items such as cans with the lids removed.
- Start cutting warm-season turf such as Bermuda, St. Augustine, and centipede removing only about the top third of the grass blades each cutting during the spring. Feed your fescue lawns and Zoysia and Bermuda grass, once they’ve greened up by at least 50%.
- Do some weeding. Weeds compete with or plants for water and nutrients, so before it gets too hot, try to rid the garden of them.
- As the flowers die back on your daffodils and tulips, remove them, and fertilize but let the foliage stay.
- If you’ve had a problem with azalea leaf bug in the past, spray the leaves with an insecticidal soap.
- Remove and replace or freshen (if there is no evidence of disease or insects) mulch to keep down the weeds and help keep in the moisture.
- Enjoy your garden!

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MAY GARDEN TOUR
Mark your Calendar!

The GFWC Stone Mountain Woman’s Club will present six gardens in the Smoke Rise/Tucker area at the “Art of Garden” Garden Tour. The tour will be on **Saturday, May 20, from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.** Three gardens are in Smoke Rise. Two are in the Winding Woods /Tucker area. Attendees will be able to stop by the Butterfly Garden at the Tucker Recreation Center, to see the pollinator garden and the rain garden being developed. Master gardeners will be at the Butterfly Garden, and club volunteers will be at the other gardens.

Two Japanese maples will be given away for a donation of \$5.00. Level3Jewelry will be for sale at one of the gardens. Tickets are \$25.00. They can be purchased at www.stonemountainwomansclub.org, at Wine and Wimsey, 2344 Main St., Tucker, from Wednesday to Sunday, and from any club member.



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Victoria Crosby Sworn in as President of SRGC

Victoria Crosby was sworn in recently as the president of the Smoke Rise Garden Club, along with board members Denise Finley 1st vice president, Deb Halley 2nd VP, Peggy Clegg treasurer, Paula Adeoba corresponding secretary and Amy Carubba, recording secretary. The meeting was held at the home of member Usha Ramakrishnan with a delicious meal prepared by co-hosts, Amy Caruba, Usha Ramakrishnar, Paula Adeoba and Pat Mitchel.

Denise Finley put together a slide show of highlights of the past five years of club activities, and lovely gift bags for all the board members, which each included a packet of seeds inspired by *The Language of Flowers* and was relevant to the duties of each board member.

SRGC is open to those who live in Smoke Rise and nearby communities. For more information, contact poeticvic@aol.com.

Georgia Iris Society

Meeting • Saturday, April 1 – 2:00 p.m.

Ken Duke, Georgia Iris Society member and Landscape Design Professional, will present "Preparing your Iris for the April, 2023 Show. Join the meeting for education, beautification and recreation. Meetings are free to the public, and all are welcome.

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Mountain Mums Lifetime Member Honored

The Mountain Mums celebrated Rita Maloof as a Lifetime Member honoree with the DeKalb Federation of Garden Clubs at Callanwolde.

A native of Atlanta and DeKalb County, Rita is the current co-president of the Mountain Mums Garden Club in Tucker, GA. She's been a member since 2018 and has served the club as Field Trip Director, Vice-President/Programs, and Co-President. Rita grew up in a garden club family with her mother, Dolores Maloof, a member of the Breckenridge Garden Arts Club for decades. Rita is an active tennis/pickleball player and is currently president of the ALTA Foundation, the charitable arm of the Atlanta Lawn Tennis Association, Inc.



*Gaye Auman, Ann Purr, Rita Maloof, Colette Riefkohl,
Mary Lou Still, and Lynn Malone.*

Smoke Rise Community Garden's History *By Maureen Fraser, Mountain Mums Member*

At the March Mountain Mums Garden Club gathering, Jean Weathers provided inspirations about the pleasures of spring and St. Patrick's Day as a segue into learning more about spring garden planting.

Speaker Doug Reynics, former chairman of the Smoke Rise Community Garden and owner of Douglas Fir Plants, enlightened members about how the community garden began and shared a few treasured memories from his time volunteering in the garden. One goal of the community garden was to enhance the sense of community and neighborliness in the area – and to compare growing secrets, too!

Doug attended numerous conferences across America to learn how to make Smoke Rise's community garden one of the best in the country. At one time, it was the largest community garden in the state of Georgia. At its peak, the community garden had 57 plots and provided 700 pounds of food to local food pantries. One of Doug's personal highlights was hosting Smoke Rise Prep School students to harvest sweet potatoes – using only their hands. They dug up 200 pounds of sweet potatoes in one hour! Although the students received some sweet basil as a reward that year, they were able to sweet talk Doug into allowing them to plant a bed for themselves, so the following year they could each take a sweet potato home.

Building the red work shed, funded through local grants, also brought back special memories for Doug. He shared that it was important for the shed to be seen from the street. All the beds are built with non-pressure treated lumber, and he and other volunteers worked very hard to make it accessible to plot owners as well as to keep deer and bugs out, to the degree possible. Co-President, Rita Maloof, presented Doug with a donation from the Club for the Smoke Rise Community Garden, in lieu of a speaker's fee.

Mountain Mums Out & About Town

The Mountain Mums were well represented at the National Garden Club Standard Flower Show presented by the American Daffodil Society and Redbud District of the GCG, Inc. Everyone was encouraged to attend the state annual convention honoring the theme: "Garden Magic on the Mountain," which will be hosted by the Dogwood District April 18-20, at the Evergreen Lakeside Conference Center.

Also last month, several members took a field trip to a reception and art exhibit at the State Botanical Garden of Georgia in Athens. "The Art of Birds," presented by Mountain Mums member Beth Henson, featured watercolor and oil paintings. Members also plan to visit the Atlanta Botanical Gardens to celebrate spring with Orchid Daze, the Garden's annual, indoor, plant exhibition featuring beautiful, inventive murals by three Southeastern artists. The show runs through April 9.

The club's next meeting is April 12, which includes touring a shade garden. For more information on the Mountain Mums Garden Club – contact Mary Jacobson, Membership Chair, at mjacob1010@gmail.com.

Morning Glories Give a Garden Assist to SRES *By Quill Duncan*

The December cold weather really wiped out the winter veggie crop at Smoke Rise Elementary School! Last November, the Morning Glories donated cool season plants to the new raised beds. The students added broccoli, cabbage and kale and violas for color to the beds and that cold zapped them.

Fortunately, one of our garden club members is a Gwinnett Master Gardener. She visited their greenhouses in late February and was rewarded with a flat of vegetable starts. Happily, this was a free donation to the school's STEM program. The new plants include lettuce, Swiss chard, chives and kale.

The school STEM teacher, Ms. Cummings, was happy to receive the new plants, and they will use them in several ways, both inside and outside. Some plants will go in their aeroponic tower, some will grow in the beds, and some will be used hydroponically for Ag Sci projects.

Member, Melodie Janin conducted the Morning Glories March meeting with a workshop. Melodie loves to use natural materials such as pine cones and make them into “flower” wreaths or other accents. She demonstrated her techniques and encouraged members to discover the beauty in everyday natural objects.

Conducted by Barbara Bourque, Past President of the Garden Club of Georgia, the DeKalb Federation of Garden Clubs installed a new slate of officers March 23. I am honored to be the new Morning Glories President and Bonnie Pennington is the new 2nd Vice President. We will serve a two-year term with fellow officers.

Our April 11 Morning Glories meeting will feature speaker Cyndi McGill, chair of the Dunwoody Community Garden, to discuss shade gardening and creative tips for challenging landscapes. For more info, please contact President Janet McGinnis (770) 939-8878. The DeKalb Federation presents its Awards Program April 27 at the Callanwolde Fine Arts Center with a ceremony and a catered luncheon to follow. Contact me, Quill Duncan, for details (770) 414-4766.



Melodie Janin with her pinecone creations.

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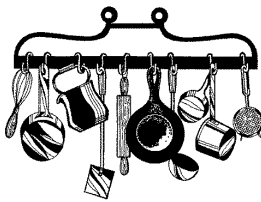
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Amen, Let's Eat!

by Joyce Ray



Spring is the ideal time to invite a few friends in for an easy brunch or luncheon to celebrate a birthday, graduation or other special occasion, or for no reason at all! Bring out your grandmother's china, cut some fresh flowers from your yard and enjoy the event. These delicious and economical recipes will be a hit with your friends. Be sure to print out some copies to pass around.

The first recipe was given to me by Barbara Luten, who served it to the Smoke Signal staff at our last meeting. It was a hit, and the bonus is that it is gluten free!

For Crust:
One 20 oz pkg refrigerated shredded hash browns, thawed
4 tbsp butter melted
1 T. Worcestershire sauce
½ teasp. salt and ¼ teaspoon black pepper

For Filling:
4 large eggs beaten
1 cup half & half
1 cup chopped or diced ham
1/2 cup thinly sliced green onions
1 cup shredded cheddar cheese

Put hash brown potatoes in a colander and allow to thaw. Use a paper towel to press out as much water as possible, and then transfer to thick layer of paper towels. Add more paper towels to top, and press until all the excess moisture is removed. Repeat if necessary. Add the dry potatoes to a mixing bowl with the melted butter. Season with salt and pepper and Worcestershire sauce. Toss everything to evenly coat. Transfer the buttered potatoes to a 9" pie plate. Press them evenly out over the bottom of the dish and up the side to create a crust. Bake the crust at 450° for 20-25 minutes, until the hash brown crust has turned golden brown and begun to crisp up. Lower the oven temperature to 350°.

To a large mixing bowl, add the remaining ingredients. Stir until evenly combined. Pour the egg mixture into the prepared hash brown crust. Put the quiche in the oven and bake for 30 minutes. It's done when the quiche is golden brown on top and puffed. If you want to be sure, insert a toothpick into the center - if it comes out clean, it's cooked/set through.

Wild Rice and Cranberry Salad

1 (6 oz.) pkg long-grain and wild rice mix
1 cup sweetened dried cranberries
1 cup fresh broccoli, chopped fine
4 chopped green or small red onions onion
3 celery ribs, chopped
1 (2 oz.) jar of diced pimento, drained
½ cup sweet and sour dressing (below)
1 cup dry roasted peanuts

Prepare rice mix according to pkg. directions, cool. Combine rice, cranberries, and next 4 ingredients, add dressing. Stir gently. Cover and chill at least two hours or overnight. Stir in peanuts, just before serving.

The following recipe has been around a long time. They are great as snacks or on a luncheon plate. Be sure to have extras for seconds. You can't just eat one!

Cheese Krispies

½ pound sharp cheddar cheese
2 sticks softened butter
2 cups self-rising flour
½ teaspoon red Cayenne Pepper
¼ tsp. of salt
2 cups Rice Krispies Cereal
approx. 2 cups raw pecan halves

Grate cheese. (fresh grated cheese works better than pre-shredded for this recipe). Add to mixer bowl with softened butter. Blend. Sift flour, salt and red pepper together and add to cheese mixture. Stir in Rice Krispies. Form into small balls about 1" diameter. Place on cookie sheet. Press with fork and add pecan half on top. Bake at 350° degrees about 25 minutes, until lightly browned. Cool in pan before removing. Makes about 50 Crispies.

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