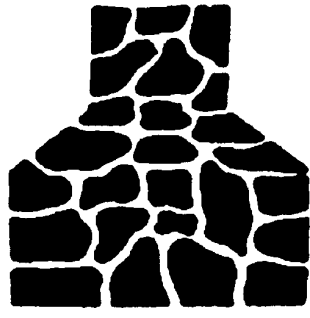


# SMOKE SIGNAL



VOLUME 52, ISSUE 5

*Serving the Smoke Rise Community since 1968*

August, 2019

www.smokesignalnews.com



**It's Back-to-School Time!**  
Please watch for students getting on and off school buses and walking along the roads.

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## SRCA Report *by Michael Huerkamp*

Things have been relatively quiet of late with SRCA. Over Memorial Day weekend, the association planted a commemorative Kousa dogwood at the home of the Bruce family in some small measure to provide comfort to them in light of the invasion of their home and slaying of their beloved dog, Toby. Understandably, the Bruce family has elected to leave Smoke Rise, but will take the dogwood with them in enduring memory of our gesture of kindness and solace.

On June 30, there was a City District 1 Parks Sip and Stroll fundraiser hosted in the gardens of Pat Soltys. The SRCA board has been continuously engaged with the plans and developments with our three parks, as well as the city's Path Initiative.



*The Soltys Garden*

The community garden has been roaring along, but there has also been some pilfering to the dismay of our gardeners. The SRCA has expanded landscaping management to the Deer Ridge stacks and we are evaluating whether to take on even more with the seasonal plantings this autumn. Lastly, we bid farewell to board member Moira Waldron who moved to Kansas City.



*Debra Branch with Giant Lily*

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## Tucker Adopts Millage Rate for Parks

*by Matt Holmes, Communications Director*

### Millage Rate Yields Property Tax Reduction

At the June 26 City Council meeting, Tucker leaders voted unanimously to approve the City's first millage rate. While some may be quick to call out a tax increase in the fiscally responsible new city, the reality is property owners are going to see their tax rate go down.

"We are taking over taxing authority for the parks from DeKalb County and we're doing it for less than DeKalb County was charging for," Mayor Frank Auman explained.

Tucker's millage rate will be 0.9 mils, with that money going to fund Parks and Recreation in the City. For 2019, DeKalb County will be taxing at a rate of 1.458 mils. That figure will now go to zero on Tucker tax bills.

"It's a big step for us in the development of the City," Auman said. "Up to now, the City's had no property tax, no ad valorem tax, no taxes of its own. That was true and that was part of the plan. This step takes us into a place where we're collecting our own taxes to, in this case, fund our park operations."

Since assuming responsibility for its parks from DeKalb County in 2018, Tucker's Parks and Recreation Department has been quick to repair and upgrade parks amenities that needed attention. This is evident in new playgrounds at Henderson, Kelley Cofer and Montreal Parks, as well as at the Tucker Recreation Center. They have also worked to make significant cosmetic and infrastructure improvements to the aging Rec Center including new HVAC units, fresh coats of paint and security cameras. Kelley Cofer pool has seen upgrades, including a new splash pad installed this year through a partnership with DeKalb County.

In the coming months, more improvements are on the way including lights on the tennis courts at Henderson Park, repairing and expanding the dock at Lake Erin, renovating the kitchen and bathrooms at the Rec Center and installing parking spaces at Smoke Rise Park.

## City Council Wrap Up *by Matt Holmes*

Tucker's Mayor and City Council met June 26 to close out their business for the month of June. The meeting was highlighted by a unanimous vote to approve the City's millage rate at 0.9 mils, revenue that will be used for maintenance and improvements in Parks and Recreation. Since its incorporation, Tucker has maintained a zero-millage rate, but this millage actually represents a tax decrease from the 1.458 mil rate imposed by DeKalb County.

The meeting began with a presentation by the PATH Foundation on recommendations for the first project stemming from Tucker's Trail Master Plan. The recommendation was for the first phase of a two-phase project through Kelley Cofer Park. The proposal, which saw no formal action by the Council, would come with a \$1.21 million price tag. The adopted Trail Master Plan calls for a citywide network of trails spanning 32 miles.

Council also heard discussion on a pair of issues impacting transportation in the City. First, was an update from consultants working with DeKalb County on the County's Transit Master Plan. The presentation focused on innovative transportation solutions, like Bus Rapid Transit, that could be funded through additional tax revenue. The second issue dealt with proposed moratoriums on electronic scooters. Council voted 6-1 to approve the moratorium, which will last for 120 days. Council and City staff will use that time to research and formulate a best practices policy. Because of the same concerns, they also passed a 120-day moratorium on electronic scooters with seats.

Council also okayed amendments to the City's zoning code and official zoning map. The changes were brought about by the Overlay Rewrite project overseen by consultants from TSW.

The lone land use case of the evening was a special land use permit (SLUP) petition to allow for a tattoo establishment at 2316 Main Street, on the back side of the building that houses Local 7. This was a first read and public hearing, meaning there was no vote. A second read and anticipated vote are set for July 22.

As part of the continuing improvements to Tucker's parks, Council voted unanimously to approve a \$19,353 expenditure for replacement of a retaining wall in a parking lot at Kelley Cofer Park. The contract for construction will be awarded to contractor F.H. Paschen. Council also voted unanimously to accept a final draft of a Historic Resource Report. The Report is the result of the City in 2018 hiring consultant New South Associates, and it will help to inform Tucker's development and land use decisions in the years ahead.



*Looking for a way to give back to your community?*

**THE SMOKE SIGNAL**  
is looking for a few more writers or people with a passion for storytelling.  
Contact: [staff@smokesignalnews.com](mailto:staff@smokesignalnews.com)



## Smoke Signal

P.O. Box 763, Tucker, GA 30085  
 A non-profit service organization devoted to furthering neighborhood cooperation with the aid of good neighborhood communication.

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### August Calendar of Events

- 2 Movie on Main, Main Street, Tucker
- 6 National Night Out
- 6 Hops at the History Center (See article on this page)
- 8 National Sneak Some Zucchini onto Your Neighbor's Porch Day (see page 7)
- 10 Golf Tournament to Benefit Lilburn Co-op Stone Mountain Golf Club (see page 5)
- 12 Mountain Shadow Garden Club  
 Eastminster Presbyterian Church, 7:30 p.m.

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

## Smoke Signal Deadlines

### AUGUST 13

Please e-mail articles to:

[staff@smokesignalnews.com](mailto:staff@smokesignalnews.com)

(Word documents or text file attachments preferred)  
 PLEASE DO NOT SEND CLASSIFIED ADS  
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Extra copies may be picked up at  
 The Smoke Rise Community Garden on Hugh Howell Rd.

Deadline for classified ads is AUGUST 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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## Hops at the History Center: Druid Hills Book Discussion

Originally built up by the wealth and influence of businessmen, Druid Hills, one of Atlanta's beloved historic neighborhoods, has quite the story to tell. Designed by famed landscape architect Frederick Law Olmstead Sr., Druid Hills was conceived as Atlanta's first suburbs. With plenty of shady trees and a park at the center of the neighborhood, Olmstead had a vision of the perfect escape from city life and his ideas can be seen in action today.

Businessmen Joel Hurt and Asa Griggs Candler are also credited with the upbringing of Druid Hills. Joel Hurt, an entrepreneur responsible for developing Inman Park, purchased the land that is now Druid Hills and sold it to the Druid Hills Corporation headed up by Asa Griggs Candler, owner of the Coca-Cola Corporation.

Jennifer J. Richardson and Sue Sullivan's *Druid Hills* tells the captivating story of how one of Atlanta's first suburbs came to be and those who nurtured it into the neighborhood we all know in the present. The event is sponsored by Eagle Eye Book Store.

**Tuesday, August 6, 2019**  
**Doors open at 5:30 pm.**  
**6:00 – 7:00 pm**

Book available to purchase.  
 Member tickets \$5  
 Non-member tickets \$10 (Includes one drink ticket)  
 Historic DeKalb Courthouse, 2nd floor.  
 101 E. Court Square,  
 Decatur GA 30030  
 Contact Marissa Howard  
 404-373-1088 ext 20  
[howard@dekalbhistory.org](mailto:howard@dekalbhistory.org)

### BRING A BOOK

### TAKE A BOOK

Don't forget to check out the Little Libraries that have popped up near the swim clubs.



## Smoke Rise Baptist Church

Dr. Chris George: Senior Pastor  
 Bart McNeil: Associate Pastor  
 Becky Caswell-Speight:  
 Minister of Families, Faith Formation & Connections  
 Jeremy Colliver: Minister of Communications, Missions & Youth  
 Danny Vancil: Minister of Music & Worship  
 Amanda Coe Burton: Director of Nursery & Preschool Ministries  
 Harrison Litzell: Co-Director of the Weekday School  
 Stacey McNeil: Co-Director of the Weekday School  
 Telephone: (770) 469-5856  
[SmokeRiseBaptist.org](http://SmokeRiseBaptist.org)

Sundays:  
 9:00 a.m. Worship in the Chapel  
 9:45 a.m. Sunday school  
 11:00 a.m. Worship in the Sanctuary  
 Communion: Second Sunday of each month  
 Wednesdays:  
 5:00-5:45 Fellowship Dinner  
 6:00-7:00 Programs for children, youth and adults  
 7:00-8:30 Sanctuary choir  
 Nursery provided

## Eastminster Presbyterian Church

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

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

Sundays:  
 9:15 a.m. Sunday School for all ages  
 10:30 a.m. Worship in the Sanctuary - nursery provided  
 5:00 p.m. Youth Fellowship  
 Communion: First Sunday of each month  
 Wednesdays:  
 5:45 p.m. Join us for dinner! - \$5 per adult  
 6:30 p.m. Program  
 7:30 p.m. Chancel Choir

## MC3 Church

Senior Minister: Art Stansberry  
 Worship Minister: Leslie Riley  
 Student Minister: Will Tyler  
 Coordinator of Kids Ministry - Jim Barber  
 Telephone 770-783-1035  
[www.mc3.life](http://www.mc3.life)

Sunday Worship at Parkview High School Auditorium  
 9:30 a.m. -- Coffee and donuts; adult and student c-groups; nursery and Sunday school for infants to 5th graders.

10:30 am. - Worship service

C-groups throughout the week at various homes -- check out our website for more 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: Dr. Stephen Weisz  
 Congregational Acolyte: Bill Hitz  
 Telephone (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

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

## Mountain West Church

Pastor: Michael Shreve  
 Worship Arts Pastor: Gary Robinson  
 Telephone (770) 491-0228  
[www.mwchurch.com](http://www.mwchurch.com)  
 4818 Hugh Howell Rd., Stone Mountain  
 Service Times: Sundays: 9:00am / 11:00am / 1:00pm

## Preferred Formats for Smoke Signal Submissions

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

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**Business Boom**

by John McHenry & Matt Holmes.

Lawrenceville Highway is a major regional thoroughfare. It's also one of the business corridors that drives Tucker's economy. From the eastern end of Lawrenceville Highway at the Perimeter to the Hugh Howell intersection, the City of Tucker is witnessing several exciting redevelopment projects.

At Lakeside Center, which hosts a range of Class A office space, a new tenant is on the move. PREP Atlanta, providing dedicated commercial kitchens to expanding restaurants, food producers, and food trucks, is moving into the former Le Cordon Bleu building. Doug Marranci, the COO of PREP Atlanta, says there were a number of reasons that he was interested in expanding into Tucker.

"We found an ideal space for us with a building that was made to order," Marranci explains. "The access to I-285 and US 78 is great, plus we're bullish on Tucker. We have seen the teamwork and dedication that was put in by everyone to assist new businesses and that is just so important when choosing a site."

Heading further east on Lawrenceville Highway, in what was previously the home to El Tapatio Mexican restaurant, there will be a new take on this popular cuisine with Bell Street Burritos. Owner Matt Hinton told the Atlanta Business Chronicle, "We are moving the operation to a new location – our first shop outside the Perimeter – in Tucker. If you have been paying attention, you know that Tucker, Georgia is killing it right now and Bell Street is very happy to begin a new thing there." Hinton said the new shop located at 4053 Lawrenceville Highway will have a soft opening shortly and eventually a grand opening.

Over at the intersection of Lawrenceville Highway and Hugh Howell Road, the former Jack's Package Store is being redeveloped into an 8,600-square-foot multi-level space. The owners of the property, which sat vacant for seven years, are set to welcome Peachtree Immediate Care as the first tenant in the newly constructed retail building. "Peachtree Immediate Care was attracted to the property due to the great demographics for patients seeking quality medical care in the surrounding Tucker community," says broker Brian Chambers. "This new project will be just one of many upgrades to Tucker Plaza as the owners look to complete additional upgrades and refreshes of the existing shopping center which currently includes Staples, Dollar General, and Camp Woof among many others." Tim Knight, a commercial real estate developer who built the adjacent Tucker Village Shopping Center – which includes Chipotle, Wingstop and AT&T – is also sold on Tucker. "Tucker is undergoing a renaissance," Knight says. "This location was an A-plus site to develop, lease and, ultimately, sell."

All of these developments entail significant capital investment and they speak to the fact that property owners, as well as large and small business owners, know that Tucker is a great location that supports its business community.


**NATIONAL NIGHT OUT – August 6, 2019**

National Night Out is a community-police awareness-raising event in the United States, held the first Tuesday of August. The event has been held annually since 1984, and is sponsored by the National Association of Town Watch in the United States and Canada. National Night Out began simply with neighbors turning on their porch lights and sitting in front of their homes. The first National Night Out involved 2.5 million residents across 400 communities in 23 states; National Night Out 2016 involved 38 million residents in 16,000 communities across the United States.

The event is meant to increase awareness about police programs, such as drug prevention, town watch, neighborhood watch, and other anti-crime efforts and are typically organized by block watches, nonprofit organizations, companies, and police departments.

*From Wikipedia*

**Smoke Rise Preferred Contractor's List is Now ONLINE Only!**



If you are looking for reliable people to build decks, paint, do electrical, plumbing, interior design and many other services, then request a copy of this list. We maintain a free listing of contractors and other service providers that your neighbors have used successfully. For a copy of this list, go to: <http://www.smokesignalnews.com/vendor-list.html>

You may also submit a new recommendation, comment on a service you used or brag on a contractor.

**Smoke Rise Agents Team is in the House - PalmerHouse**




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**LIBRARY NEWS**

Teen Program at the Tucker Library

Open Mic: 5:30 – 7:30 p.m., August 27  
Special Woodstock 50th Anniversary Edition!

Come sing, dance, rap, play an instrument, slam poetry or just hang out! Sign-up begins three weeks prior to date. Advanced sign-up is recommended in order to guarantee a spot to perform. Please call or visit branch and ask for Jason or email at [beyerj@dekalblibrary.org](mailto:beyerj@dekalblibrary.org). Open to the first 10 performers.

Sue Kellogg Library Remodel

The Sue Kellogg Library will be closed for remodeling until further notice. During the renovation period, patrons can visit these nearby branches:

- Tucker-Reid H. Cofer Library  
5234 LaVista Road, Tucker, GA 20084
- Hairston Crossing Library  
4911 Redan Road, Stone Mountain, GA 30088
- Clarkston Library  
951 N. Indian Creek Drive, Clarkston GA 30021

**Tucker's "Movie on Main" Event Rescheduled for August 2**

When Mother Nature interfered with the City of Tucker's popular Movie on Main event last month, a make-up date was quickly promised. After collaboration between vendors, sponsors and City leaders, the event has been rescheduled for Friday, August 2.

"We were so disappointed to have to move our movie night indoors," says City-Community Connector Sonja Szubski of the June 7 event. "But there's nothing quite like watching a movie under the stars on Main Street, so we knew we had to make it up to the community. We think August 2 is going to be a lot of fun and the perfect way to head into the back to school weekend." Moviegoers will be treated to free popcorn and a free drink from Village Burger. They can also test their skill in an inflatable batting cage set up in the middle of Main Street.



Movie on Main was supposed to be the kickoff to the beloved TKR Summer of Fun series. Thousands of people enjoyed the fireworks throughout downtown Tucker at the Celebration of Independence and Fireworks Spectacular. On August 6, hundreds more are expected at Brockett Elementary School for a free community cookout at National Night Out.

The TKR Summer of Fun series is sponsored by Jacobs Engineering, Discover DeKalb and the Old Town Tucker Merchants Association (OTTMA). Event sponsors for Movie on Main are Village Burger and Infinite Realities: Comics, Games and More.

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**Main Street Theatre, Tucker, GA**

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**Fall Classes in Visual and Performing Arts Begin August 12**

Fall classes for Smoke Rise Academy of Arts begin August 12, offering lessons in dance (ages 2 to adult), Musikgarten (ages 1 – 4), children's art and adult oil painting. In addition to group classes, individual music lessons are offered for all ages for piano, violin, flute, guitar, drums and voice. Fall drama classes for elementary and high-school students begin October 7, 2019.

The Smoke Rise Academy of Arts is housed in Smoke Rise Baptist Church at 5901 Hugh Howell Road in Stone Mountain. Visit [www.smokerisebaptist.org/arts](http://www.smokerisebaptist.org/arts) for class information and registration.

**Smoke Rise Academy of the Arts Stages DISNEY'S FROZEN JR.**

The Smoke Rise Academy of the Arts teen drama class will present its production August 23–25 followed by the elementary cast production September 13–15. Both productions will be in the Fellowship Hall of Smoke Rise Baptist Church. Members of the Smoke Rise and surrounding community are invited to attend this free performance.

DISNEY'S FROZEN JR. is based on the hit 2013 animated film and the 2018 Broadway musical, and brings Elsa, Anna, and the magical land of Arendelle to life onstage. The show features all of the memorable songs from the animated film, with music and lyrics by Kristen Anderson-Lopez and Robert Lopez, plus five new songs written for the Broadway production.

DISNEY'S FROZEN JR. is a family show suitable for all ages. Show times for both weekends are 7:00 p.m. on Friday, 3:00 p.m. and 7:00 p.m. on Saturday, and 2:00 p.m. on Sunday. Attendance is free – no tickets required; Concessions will be available for purchase during intermissions.



**2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Golf Tournament  
to Benefit the  
Lilburn Co-op**  
LILBURN COOPERATIVE MINISTRY, INC.

**Saturday, August 10, 2019**  
**Stone Mountain Golf Club, Lakemont Course**  
Registration opens 7:30, Shotgun start at 9:00

The Lilburn Co-op is a non-profit organization that helps meet the needs of families and individuals in areas of Gwinnett County including Lilburn, Stone Mountain, and Tucker, serving over 200 families per month. They also provide service to members of their supporting churches. Services provided by the Co-op include a food pantry, a clothes closet, school supplies, budget planning assistance, employment resources, and counseling.

**\$100 per player**  
4-Person scramble

Breakfast and lunch provided  
Team awards, golf clubs and or bags awarded for 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> place  
Unlimited driving range balls, park entrance, greens fee, and cart included  
Mulligans and more for sale on tournament day (cash only)  
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**For information or sponsorship email:**  
Jim Hauck ([jameshauck@comcast.net](mailto:jameshauck@comcast.net)) or  
Paul Lukasiewicz ([paulluke05@aol.com](mailto:paulluke05@aol.com))

**Accomplished Smoke Rise Neighbor**

by Joel Gilbert, P.E.

It never ceases to amaze me how many interesting people with remarkable accomplishments live right here in our community. Some are so humble, you may not know of them, but listen carefully, and you may find that within their profession, they are at the top of their field.



One of my neighbors recently mentioned to me that her next-door neighbor, Frans de Waal, had written the book she was reading about - his work studying primates at Emory. She shared a copy with me and I found it fascinating. Turns out, he has written many books about his research on chimpanzees studying humanism, politics, power, religion, and more. All of which piqued my interest.

I was impressed to learn that Frans was named one of Time magazine's 100 Most Influential People. The author of *Are We Smart Enough to Know How Smart Animals Are?* among many other works, he is the C. H. Candler Professor in Emory University's Psychology Department and director of the Living Links Center at the Yerkes National Primate Research Center.

I bought and read several of his books. One that caught my eye because of the title: *The Bonobo and the Atheist*. I know the use of the word Atheist can raise concerns for some but it's worth seeing beyond that. I can heartily recommend the book. And, for a scholarly book, it is entirely readable and enjoyable.


Frans argues that human morality is not imposed "from above" by some revelation from God, but instead comes from within. According to his research, moral behavior does not begin and end with religion but is in fact a product of evolution. But unlike the dogmatic neo-atheist impression of his book's title, de Waal does not scorn religion per se. Instead, he draws on the long tradition of humanism exemplified by the painter Hieronymus Bosch and asks reflective readers to consider these issues from a positive perspective: What role, if any, does religion play for a well-functioning society today? And where can believers and nonbelievers alike find the inspiration to lead a good life? Frankly, I had no idea what a bonobo was, but I learned they are a primate very similar to humans in both body proportions and overall stature. Interestingly, our DNA is also closest to these primates. The book also examines the ethical attitudes and subtle differences in behaviors of chimpanzees compared to bonobos.

One surprise to me in the book is the "inside look" at how primate research has changed in the past 100 years and why many of the early findings were dismissed or simply not allowed in the literature because of the strong feelings about the "implications of evolution" over millions of years. Dr. de Waal's explanations and personal observations over his career offer sobering insights into whether we truly are objective when we examine facts and figures. We all need to learn how to ask better questions when we hear research results.






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**American Women Rule**

Joel Gilbert, P.E.

Our company is a certified Woman Owned Business. I am married to the woman who inspired its foundation and who leads it today as CEO. So, I fully understand the phrase “women rule.” But, up until a few days ago, I had no idea how many unrecognized illustrations we have of this. Our U.S. Women’s Soccer Team just won the World Title for the fourth year in a row.

I thought this sort of phenomenon was reserved to recent times. I had no idea that a 17-year old woman pitcher had struck out Babe Ruth and Lou Gehrig, the two greatest baseball players of her day. But she did that in an “exhibition game,” so some might say it didn’t really count.

The woman who did that was Jackie Mitchell, who learned how to play baseball at a young age. As a teenager spotted striking out some of the best male hitters her age, a professional baseball team owner spotted her. That led to her being invited to pitch in the exhibition game.

In just four pitches, Mitchell was able to strike out Ruth, who many consider to be the greatest baseball player of all time. Ruth wasn’t too happy about being struck out by a teenage girl, and then Gehrig struck out right after him on just three pitches. The crowd was going wild of course.

Mitchell was extraordinarily talented at baseball, but her career as a professional wouldn’t last long. After a few days, Kennesaw Mountain Landis, the commissioner of Major League Baseball, voided her contract. He claimed that being a professional baseball player would be too strenuous for a woman. Ruth echoed those sentiments saying, “Because they are too delicate, it would kill them to play ball every day.” These guys needed to see our US women play soccer.

Even though Mitchell showed the potential to be a Major League Baseball player that day, she never got the chance. In 1952, teams were barred from signing female players. The rule lasted for 40 years, and it wouldn’t be until 1993 that a female was drafted.

We’re still waiting on our first female MLB player, and it’s only a matter of time before someone gets the chance to deliver that history lesson.

Meanwhile, I sit in awe of the largely female-staff at our own company that my wife leads and of the mostly female staff that has delivered this *Smoke Signal* newsletter every single month for more than 50 years. Now, that’s some powerful impact worthy of contemplation, appreciation, and praise.



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By L.A. Dison

In July, the Rotary Club of Stone Mountain installed its new president and board for the 2019-2022 Rotary year. The induction ceremony was held during the club’s weekly membership lunch on Tuesday, June 25, at Village Corner German Restaurant and Bakery in Stone Mountain Village; the oath of office was administered by RCSM Past President and Past District Governor (and Smoke Rise resident) Al Lipphardt, with District Governor Jim Squire and Assistant District Governor Jim Coyle attending.



Rotary Club of Stone Mountain Past President Scott McEvoy, a Smoke Rise resident, recognizes Eric Watson as the club’s Rotarian of the Year during the induction ceremony for the new board and officers.

Lizabeth A. Dison, senior vice president for public relations company Shiny, Inc., was installed as the club’s new president for the Rotary year that began on July 1; departing president was retired airline pilot and Smoke Rise resident Scott McEvoy.

Also appointed to the board were:

- Cynthia Edwards, president-elect and programming (retired, Vice President Community Outreach and Engagement, Georgia Piedmont Technical College)
- Irvine Weekes, secretary (Independent financial advisor)
- Margie Kersey, treasurer (owner, The Kersey Team)
- Hiram “Hikie” Allen, sergeant-at-arms (manager, support services, ISES Corporation)
- Zach Fisher, public relations chair (lead district executive, Boy Scouts of America)
- Al Lipphardt, membership and programming chair (member, National Council of Administration, Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States)
- Suzanne Sykes, RCSM Annual Giving Fund chair (president, Combined Services, Inc.)
- Bill Witcher, RCSM Endowment Fund Chair (partner, Witcher Law Firm)
- Eric Watson, service projects chair (owner, Express Employment Professionals)

Two members were honored by Past President McEvoy for their contributions to the club during the previous year. Eric Watson received the club’s “Rotarian of the Year” designation for his work managing community service projects over the past year, a role he will continue under President Dison. Public Relations Director Zach Fisher was honored as the club’s “Rookie of the Year;” he joined the club in April of this year.

“Rotary International’s theme for the year is ‘Rotary Connects the World,’” said Dison. “Stone Mountain and its adjacent community, Clarkston, represent one of the most ethnically diverse populations in metro Atlanta. As a club, we work hard to honor and serve that diversity, and implement many service projects that support our newest citizens, whether it be distributing dictionaries to elementary students, helping out with school programs, or making sure they know they are always welcome to visit our club. Our work in Stone Mountain connects the many worlds represented in our community.”

The Stone Mountain Club meets every Tuesday for noon lunch at the Village Corner German Restaurant and Bakery in Stone Mountain Village. Visitors are always welcome to attend as a guest of the club.

To learn more about the club and upcoming programs, go to [stonemountainrotary.org](http://stonemountainrotary.org) or follow the club on Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn and Twitter

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## Caught in the Act!

### LYNN MALONE

Lynn Malone, local Smoke Rise resident and big time garden enthusiast has put her love of plants to good use. Her love of nature started in her growing up years in Hamden, Connecticut-- where she spent hours roaming the woods admiring the plants. This interest in nature led her to get a Bachelors of Arts degree in Horticulture from the University of Connecticut. Later, she got a Masters Degree in Plant Pathology from UGA.



In Atlanta, Lynn and her husband Ray raised two children. During this time, she worked for 25 years as a medical researcher at Emory. This experience came in handy when she decided to volunteer at the Atlanta Botanical Gardens (ABG) in 2014. Soon ABG staffer Matt Richards saw the connection between her work at Emory in tissue culture and the need for help in the orchid propagation/tissue culture lab. Now she uses the very same skills creating and propagating new orchids that she used in medical research at Emory! She also volunteers time in 'plant records' in the orchid conservatory. Lynn loves volunteering so much that she is a member of the 200 Hour Club. This means she has volunteered over 200 hours a year to the ABG... not only once, but 4 years in a row! Lynn was celebrated as the ABG's March Volunteer of the Month. Congratulations, Lynn!

*If you know a Smoke Rise resident who volunteers or gives to others in need and would like to feature them in CAUGHT IN THE ACT, contact staff@smokesignalnews.com.*

## GRADUATES

CLAYTON MARCINAK graduated on May 19 from the Perelman School of Medicine at the University of Pennsylvania. He has begun his surgical residency at the University of Wisconsin Hospital in Madison. Clayton is the son of Claudia Marcinak of The Summit.



ALANA MITCHELL HOMA of Flintlock Drive graduated with highest honors from the Georgia Institute of Technology with a Bachelor of Science degree in Mechanical Engineering in May. She has lived with her family in Smoke Rise since 1998. Last summer she enjoyed completing an internship in Colorado at

the U.S. Department of Energy's National Renewable Energy Laboratory. She is continuing her studies at Georgia Tech and is pursuing a PhD while working as a graduate research assistant at the Georgia Tech Research Institute. In April she also was awarded the Richard K. Whitehead Jr. Memorial Award (established by The Georgia Scientific and Technical Research Foundation) in recognition of outstanding scholarship and service.

### GFWC Stone Mountain Woman's Club

Members of the GFWC Stone Mountain Woman's Club attended a meeting of the GFWC Covington Woman's Club. The Stone Mountain Club presented a donation to the Covington club. The Covington club meets in the historic Covington library which was a Carnegie- built library. A group of young women have recently joined the long-standing Covington club and are busily rejuvenating their building and their activities.



### August 8 is 'Sneak Some Zucchini Onto Your Neighbor's Porch Day!'

Experienced gardeners know that zucchini is one of the most prolific plants in all of the gardening world. A single plant produces a seemingly endless supply of zucchini. A small row of zucchini has the potential to end world hunger. By the time August arrives, gardeners are reaping far more zucchini than they can possibly use. Zucchini growers become desperate, as they try to give zucchini away to everyone they encounter. Desperate times calls for desperate measure. It's time to sneak over, under the cover of darkness, to your neighbor's porch, and unload some zucchini. August 8 is that day.

*From Holiday Insights.com*

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Members of the GFWC Stone Mountain Woman's Club spent a day helping the USO serve meals and snacks to the military personnel coming through Hartsfield Jackson airport.



Left to right--Joanne Cannarella, Jackie Cornett (Smoke Rise resident), Marty Bryan (Smoke Rise resident), Brenda Price, Betti English, Jolene Davis (Smoke Rise resident), Susan Ingram, Pat Horvath (USO)

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**Red, White & B(l)unco!!! Patriotic Bunco a Real Winner**  
 by René Boven

“Blunco”! Oops! Do you mean “Bunco”?!! Is this word confusion or mispronunciation? No, but it was a play on words (Blue + Bunco = Blunco) to suit the theme of a recently held night of Bunco at Smoke Rise Country Club for lady members and their guests. Thirty gals came out on Tuesday night, June 25, for some sizzling fun hosted by Rita Maloof and Rene’ Boven!



Uncle ‘Bunco’, a giant Uncle Sam inflatable with nothing less than patriotic dice, met everyone at the door and set the tone for the red, white and blue evening ahead. From the score cards to the door prizes, everything was patriotic – even the food matched the theme. A delicious dinner of chicken cordon bleu, watermelon salad, and blueberry/strawberry tarts was on the buffet.

A special drink was created by Rita and was served up to guests. It was also red, white and blue and featured pop rocks. So, the night was off to a rockin’ start! There were many newcomers to the game and the excitement was red hot. A game would barely start before someone was shouting “Blunco”...well, actually, “Bunco”!

Note: Bunco is a parlor game generally played with twelve or more players, divided into groups of four, trying to score points while taking turns rolling three dice. A “Bunco” is achieved when a person rolls three sixes.

After lots of rounds of playing and at the evening’s end, prizes were awarded to several players (Most Buncos, Last Bunco, Most Games, etc.). No one went home empty handed as the hostesses had special gift bags for all participants which included a box of sparklers and “Cracker Jacks”, and several other goodies.

Almost monthly, SRCC has a Bunco night hosted by two club members. It is a good way to meet new people and enjoy playing an “anybody can win” type of game. For more information on Bunco nights and/or other events at Smoke Rise, contact Heath McDaniel, hmcdaniel@smokerisecc.com.

As was evident at this event, fun was had by all. It was a great pre-Fourth of July activity.

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**HEALTH NOTES:**

by Cheri Schneider, M.D.

**BACK TO SCHOOL SKIN TIPS: ACNE**

Most teenagers know what they want to wear to school on the first day of class. New clothes, a modern haircut and healthy looking, clear skin! Unfortunately, most teens miss on one of these areas... especially when it comes to skin! Acne is definitely NOT on their list, but it often shows up anyway.

Unfortunately, acne is one of the most common skin diseases. Eighty-five percent of all people will have acne sometime in their life. Most of the time it shows up in the teenage years and early twenties. However, acne has been seen in almost every decade of life... even in people who are in their 50's and 60's.

Several things cause acne. Excess sebum (skin oil) sets the scene by clogging skin pores. This stage is the whitehead or blackhead stage or mild acne. Because oil production is increased with the onset of puberty, most acne begins at this age. Women may also have a worsening of acne with their monthly fluctuation in hormones or during menopause. Normal skin bacteria (called P. acnes) thrive in the dense oil. As the bacteria multiply, the pores become inflamed and begin to look red and swollen. This is the 'pimple' stage of acne or moderate acne. Sometimes, this stage becomes severe, reaching the deeper portions of the skin. This stage of acne is considered severe and is called cystic acne. Most of the time, cysts will result in scarring.

If you have acne, there are several simple things you can do to take care of your skin. First, try to leave your face alone. Do not pick or squeeze the spots. This only makes them more irritated and may cause them to become inflamed. Also, do not rub or touch your face a lot for the same reason. Be careful what hair products and makeup you use. Avoid greasy, oily hair products. Look for the words 'non-comedogenic' on makeup and moisturizers. Do not scrub your skin or use drying agents.

Lastly, diet does not affect acne so don't be worried about chocolate or sweets causing acne.

Over-the-counter products are the first step towards treating acne unless you already have moderate to severe acne. Start with a salicylic acid or benzoyl peroxide wash once a day and follow directions. Follow this with an oil free or 'non-comedogenic' moisturizer. Use an over-the-counter benzoyl peroxide cream at night to all areas affected by the acne, starting with a 2.5% to 5% cream first. Most people have a little irritation with this product, so use a moisturizer along with it. Don't give up! Often times, acne will worsen during the first two weeks of treatment and may take 6-8 weeks to clear. If it doesn't clear, move to a stronger benzoyl peroxide cream (it comes in 2.5%, 5% and 10%) or see a doctor for a prescription medication. There are so many more prescription options now!

In the modern world, virtually every stage of acne, at any age of life can be successfully treated. Most of the time, acne continues to be a problem because it is either ignored and left untreated, or because the treatment regimen is stopped before the acne fully clears. A visit to the doctor for stubborn or severe cases can result in clear, blemish free skin and prevent scarring. Clear skin can be one of the most beautiful things you wear back to school!

**Lessons from the Dog Days of Summer**

Joel Gilbert, P.E.

The dog days of summer are the hot, sultry days we are experiencing now. They were historically thought to be associated with the rising of the star system Sirius, the Dog Star, which Greek and Roman astrology connected with heat, drought, sudden thunderstorms, lethargy, fever, and bad luck.



It is funny how some phrases seem to persist. Maybe this one sticks because we see dogs panting to attempt to stay cool. Perhaps dogs remind us what to do: find a shady spot and just lie down and nap. We certainly shouldn't do strenuous work or stay in the sun too long. Dogs are smarter than that.

There are a lot of other things we should mimic from our furry friends. Dogs seem to have an uncanny way of knowing how their loved ones are feeling. They seem to know precisely how to comfort us when we are sad or hurt, play with us when we are happy, and greet us when we come home to let us know we were missed.

I had a cross between a German shepherd and a collie when I was a kid and he could pin me to the front door as he jumped up and put his paws on my shoulder and licked my face. I am not suggesting that we do that as we greet our loved ones, but it is certainly a humorous and clear sign of their affection.

It is sad that dogs don't live longer, especially the larger breeds. It is so painful to lose "your best friend" in such a short time. Maybe there is a lesson there as well. Perhaps we should count each of the days more carefully and make them meaningful memories for the times we no longer have them. And take a page out of their playbook when it comes to dealing with our dog days of summer: Find a cool place to sit, relax, and show some love and appreciation to our neighbors and fellow man.

On my way home from a Board Meeting at the Club in May, I stopped by to check in with Norm DeLong whose wife Barbara passed away just a couple of weeks ago. He was leaving his house with his granddaughter to go save a huge, stranded-in-the-road snapping turtle on Mtn. Shadow. I went with them to check it out,



Joel and Susan Gilbert saving the turtle

and yes indeed, there was the 1 1/2 foot, ~20 lb. snapping turtle trapped because he couldn't climb the curb. We grabbed a shovel and a rake and were able to get him lifted out of the street and onto the grass so he could crawl away. He was not happy about being lifted and he let us know by opening his huge mouth and snapping at us. Guess that was his way of saying thank you!

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NEWS YOU CAN USE

By Aviva Hoffmann

You Can't Always Believe Your Lying Eyes!

Many of us have heard the famous line from the early 1900s that was used in movies and articles, "Who you gonna believe, me or your lying eyes?". Ironically, this was said by someone who was caught lying and, instead of admitting it, says the evidence is wrong, as well as the person who's looking right at it.

There is humor in that clever phrase; however in current times, it can take on a more sinister meaning – especially when referring to "deepfakes." If you haven't heard of this digital contortion yet, you most certainly will. (Think of "JibJab" on steroids!) Deepfake is a technique used to create fake images and videos. The experts call it "human image synthesis" used to combine and superimpose existing images and videos onto source images or videos. It uses a machine learning technique (or artificial intelligence) known as "generative adversarial network." Yvette Clarke, Representative, New York's Ninth Congressional District, wrote on July 11, 2019 in the digital journalism platform, Quartz:

"False information on the internet is becoming increasingly sophisticated with deepfakes – videos that can take a single image and manipulate it into a video sequence using algorithms, i.e. artificial intelligence and machine learning that process huge amounts of data to make it appear as if a person is doing or saying something that they did not actually do."

Representative Clarke suggests deepfakes can be "hugely destructive to our societies," and "are a threat to the truth on which we base our democracy." She has proposed the DEEPFAKES Accountability Act, the first of its kind in the House, to "hold perpetrators accountable and protect victims of deepfake content."

It's believed the term "deepfake" was coined in 2017 from a Reddit user named "deepfake." According to Wikipedia, "... the deepfake phenomenon was first reported in December 2017 in the technical and scientific section of the magazine, Vice, leading to its widespread reporting in other media." In February 2018, deepfakes were banned by Reddit for sharing involuntary pornography, and other websites have followed suit.

Although it's a relatively new phenomenon, it's likely to be around for quite a while. You should know deepfakes are being used to create fake videos of all kinds – especially fabricated celebrity pornographic videos, revenge porn, fake news, fake politics, and just downright malicious hoaxes. A recent, well-published, occurrence targeted House Speaker Nancy Pelosi. A video was edited to make her appear as if she was slurring her words (or drunk) during a news conference. Millions of people saw it on social media.

There are arguably valid uses for this technology, such as academic research, satire, art, etc.; however, we need reliable ways to detect deep fake content. Also, we need to establish legal recourse for victims of deepfakes. This relatively new technology can have a negative impact on many aspects of our daily life, including economic manipulation, fraudulent surveillance videos, and certainly political misinformation. U.S. intelligence officials are issuing a warning about deepfakes ahead of the 2020 presidential election. The long-held belief that a "picture doesn't lie" may not be the full truth anymore. You have now been warned, don't believe everything you encounter on a screen!

techtalk *Bottled WATER? Really??*  
by Susan Gilbert

I remember in the early 70s hearing the outrage over horror stories of Nestle convincing third world mothers to use baby formula rather than breast feed their newborns. They were told it was better for the baby, and many believed it and tried to do it. Unfortunately, they did not have the means to purchase the formula and dilute it properly. They diluted it too much to extend it and in some cases used contaminated water further worsening the situation.

All the while, nutritionists were finding that breast milk contained antibodies, vitamins, protein, and fat that babies need to grow, all provided in a purified form more easily digested than infant formula.

Once the media picked up on it, the scandal was exposed, but not before many babies died of malnutrition and related causes. Nestle's formula for the dubious scheme was outlined by the New Internationalist as:

1. Create a need where none existed.
2. Convince consumers the products were indispensable.
3. Link products with the most desirable and unattainable concepts—then giving a sample.

Fast forward to a new century and wonder if it's "second verse, same as the first, a little bit larger and a whole lot worse?" Hearing that for the past two years bottled water sales have surpassed sales of carbonated sodas in the U.S. sounds like good news, but think again. Why are we bottling, transporting, refrigerating, and selling water in plastic bottles in the first place? Is it really better than what is purified, treated and piped to our homes and businesses? And are those billions of plastic bottles that are going into landfills really necessary? And there have to be health concerns to be exposed. I have seen pallets of plastic water bottles sitting in the blazing hot sun for days and wondered what happens to the plastic material when it is exposed to bright sun like that and heated to extremes? Are there chemicals breaking down in the plastic and ending up in that purified water we are paying to enjoy?

According to *Beverage Marketing*, bottled water consumption in this country already exceeds tap water. They spin this a being good news that the gradual switch to more water drinking means Americans have cut trillions of calories from their diets that used to come from sugary, carbonated drinks. In 2017, they estimated an individual saved an average of 25,000 calories over the previous year — when bottled water consumption reached an all-time high of 11.7 billion gallons — compared to 2000, when Americans consumed 4.7 billion gallons of bottled water.

Is anyone thinking about what we are doing? Bottling then hauling water from places like Fiji all the way around the world so we can drink water pumped from that island? Really? Let's just think about this. Water is composed of two hydrogen atoms and one oxygen atom to form the molecule H<sub>2</sub>O. Minerals from the ground may give water a certain flavor or taste, but those can be packaged and inexpensively shipped for addition to your tap water, just like we use Crystal Light to turn water into tea or lemonade. Shipping that water costs in petroleum to power the jets and gasoline to fuel the delivery trucks, then you have to buy it and transport it. Just so we can drink their H<sub>2</sub>O.

It's interesting that the beverage companies who have piled on board with the bottled water opportunity would just prefer selling sodas and juices according to *Beverage Marketing*. Apparently they have found that customers are not loyal to a brand of water like they are to their Coke or Pepsi and the margins on water sales are not as high as for their other products. Maybe we can help them get rid of some of that water selling business by becoming wise consumers.

Here are a couple of tips to help you get started:

- Carry a water bottle with you and fill it from a chilled water fountain when you pass one.
- Buy crystals or concentrated drops that flavor your water any way you like. There is about anything you can imagine in the juice isle from the most popular ice tea and lemonade to all sorts of berries and fruits.
- Purchase a filtering water pitcher and keep it handy in the refrigerator or where you most often go for refreshments.

We as consumers may have been duped by clever marketing, but it's not too late to make the healthy, environmentally friendly, energy saving, greener solution: Drink your own water.

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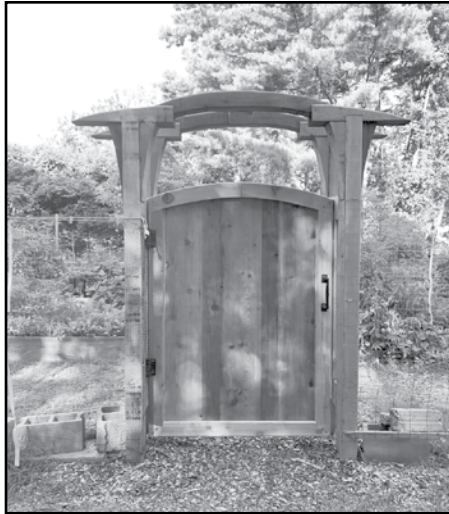
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**Smoke Rise Community Garden**

Summer months are some of the busiest at the Smoke Rise Community Garden. Our crops are flourishing and keep us on our toes with their constant need of attention. From garden insect pests to fungal enemies to the constant need to monitor water needs, we all do this for the love of that home grown 'mater! Take a stroll through the garden grounds and you will see tomatoes, okra, watermelons, squash and a wide variety of personal favorite crops growing in each garden plot. We are especially proud of the fact that to date over

FIFTY POUNDS of produce has been donated to supplement a Clarkston based refugee ministry food bank! We are also happy to have our gorgeous custom made garden entrance gate completed and installed. There is nothing comparable in any other



garden! Many thanks to Jim Sedlak for sharing his wood working skills and talents in this project!

It won't be too long until our next growing season begins as we prepare to plant some cool weather crops. Please contact Eileen Stone if you are interested in joining in for the fall season-404-583-3091 OR [esstone@bellsouth.net](mailto:esstone@bellsouth.net)

**Howdy Partner!**

The Redbud District Forty-eighth Standard Flower Show will be held at Stone Mountain Park on September 6-8, 2019.

It will be a Rootin' Tootin' good time for all as Daisy Saddles Up for some knee slappin' fun! Remember, entries will be accepted Thursday, Sept. 5th after 1:00 pm.

Daisy's western theme promises her Spurs Will Jingle Jangle as you tour the Wild, Wild West, from a Rodeo Roundup to a Hoedown and even a Square Dance! Daisy can always use another cowhand. Won't you 'pony up', 'get a wiggle on' and come along?

Information will be forthcoming from your cowgirl buddies--Diane Hunter, Susan Tuner, Joy Zaidan and Janet McGinnis. These Chairmen have agreed to serve:

**CLERKS CHAIRMAN:** Ann Purr

770-921-9070 (Mountain Mums) [a.purr@comcast.net](mailto:a.purr@comcast.net)

**HORTICULTURE CLASSIFICATION CHAIRMAN:** Sandy Reed

770-599-8422 (Shenandoah Rose GC) [sandyreed17@gmail.com](mailto:sandyreed17@gmail.com)

**HORTICULTURE PLACEMENT CHAIRMAN:** Quill Duncan

770-414-4766 (Smoke Rise Morning Glories GC) [quillduncan@msn.com](mailto:quillduncan@msn.com)

**HOSTESS CHAIRMAN:** Beth Wielage

404-294-5765 (Avondale Estates GC) [bwielage@bellsouth.net](mailto:bwielage@bellsouth.net)

**YOUTH ENTRIES CHAIRMAN/CONSULTANTS:** Susan Turner

770-922-4411 (Conyers GC) cell: 404-502-8147 [glencree@bellsouth.net](mailto:glencree@bellsouth.net)



**Mountain Shadow Garden Club August 12 Program: New and Interesting Products**

The meeting of Mountain Shadow Garden Club (MSGC) on August 12 will feature a program by Scott Scheivelhud of The Garden Enthusiast discussing "New and Interesting Products" related to home landscapes, bird feeding and watching, butterflies, and enhancing backyard environments.

The Garden Enthusiast—Backyard Nature Station has been a fixture on Main Street in Tucker since it was originated by Linda Karr in 2011. The store has always been recognized for its quality, expertise, and friendly service. Linda opened the business in 2008 after becoming a Master Gardener and recognizing the need for quality specialty tools.

When Linda decided in 2018 it was time to retire, her family agreed The Garden Enthusiast should continue. Grand-daughter Krysten Scheivelhud had been working in the tech industry in Austin, Texas, but decided to come back to Georgia as the new owner of the store. Her sister Brittany and their father, Scott, are also involved with the business and related community activities.

In 2019, The Garden Enthusiast is opening a new location in Lilburn. Their website, [www.backyardnaturestation.com](http://www.backyardnaturestation.com), is full of useful information and contains this statement: "Our mission is to contribute to a sustainable local community of active garden and nature enthusiasts and we are proud to support community and educational programs that build awareness and understanding of the natural world in which we live."

MSGC is open to men and women of all ages who enjoy learning about a diverse range of topics related to home landscapes, plants, and gardens. The meeting and program begin promptly at 7:30 p.m. in Founders Hall, Eastminster Presbyterian Church, 5801 Hugh Howell Road, Stone Mountain. Free. Refreshments and socializing follow. For more information and directions, contact club president Jeff Raines at 404-641-8633. [www.facebook.com/MtShadowGardenClub](http://www.facebook.com/MtShadowGardenClub)



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All classified ads are limited to 20 words, with the *Smoke Signal* reserving the right to edit any copy. Ads are \$15.00 per month, (\$75.00 per six months if prepaid). Please submit by email a copy of ad to [tigertaxstrack@att.net](mailto:tigertaxstrack@att.net). Deadline is the 10th of each month. ADS NEED TO BE PREPAID. Checks should be made out to *Smoke Signal* and mailed to P.O. Box 763, Tucker, GA 30085. When submitting classified ads, please include your full name, address, and phone number. This information is for our records only! For classified ads, contact Harry Strack [tigertaxstrack@att.net](mailto:tigertaxstrack@att.net).

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

## Classified Ads

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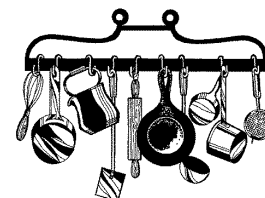
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### BUYING JUNK VEHICLES

Looking to purchase vehicles with mechanical problems or due to auto accident. Purchasing anything under \$5,000. If interested to sell Suki at 404-980-9521.

*Amen, Let's Eat!*

by Joyce Ray



## Fried Okra – Georgia Popcorn!

As with grits, some of our northern neighbors don't understand the Southern passion associated with okra. Originating in Africa and reported to have been enjoyed by Cleopatra, this hot weather vegetable has a history of being a staple in every kitchen garden below the Mason Dixon Line. The key to having a bumper crop that will bear until first frost is to cut it every day, as pods grow quickly, and bigger pods will become too tough to eat. Okra plants grow taller as the season extends and you might need a ladder to get to the top by the end of the September. Okra pods and leaves have tiny hairs that can irritate the skin so use gloves for cutting and during preparation. Or, you can purchase fresh okra at the farmer's market. Okra will wilt and begin to turn brown with age. Fresh okra will be firm and uniformly green. It should last in your refrigerator for several days.

Other uses for this nutritional vegetable include gumbo and pickled okra. It can be added to canned tomatoes as a basis for soups or stews. Dried pods from your garden can be used to gather seed for the next year or if you leave them to completely dry, they add unusual texture to dried floral arrangements for fall and last for many years.

**Favorite Methods for Cooking Okra:** The simplest method is to just cut in circles, bread with cornmeal, and fry in hot oil. I like to use cornmeal mix because it also contains flour which helps the coating to stick. Regardless of the method, most recipes are consistent in using approximately 4-inch length okra pods. Leave okra circles a little moist but not wet, add breading, pan fry in a cast iron skillet to golden brown and add salt after cooking. I have found that methods that use "batter" to coat the okra end up with more batter than okra. As with all methods of cooking your favorites, if your Mamma cooked okra and you loved it, use her recipe!!

### Fried Okra Tempura Appetizer:

Choose 4-inch or smaller pods of okra. Wash and cut off tip and stem end and soak in ice water for approximately 5 minutes. Cut pods lengthwise into sticks. Drain on paper towels. In mixing bowl, mix ½ cup all-purpose flour and ½ cup cornmeal mix. Measure 1 cup of ice water and add beaten egg to water. Add liquid to flour mixture and stir until smooth. Batter will be thin. In deep fryer or stovetop Dutch oven, heat oil for deep frying. Dip okra pieces into batter, drain off excess, and drop into hot oil. Do not crowd – just cook a few at a time because continuing to add the cold okra will cause the oil to cool. Pods will rise to the top. Turn once. Separate and cook until golden brown. Remove from oil and drain. Salt pieces while hot. Serve with favorite horseradish or rémoulade sauce, or along with burgers or steaks as an alternative to French fries.

A lot of patience is required to wait until the first tomatoes of the season begin to take on that beautiful blush and I am certain that fried green tomatoes were discovered by an impatient farmer for just that reason. Aren't we thankful that he did!

### Fried Green Tomatoes:

Hard green tomatoes will have a lot of acid so choose those that are just beginning to change color and are still firm. Cut off each end and cut slices approximately ½ inch thick. Using same method as for okra, coat tomato slices with dry mixture. Pan fry in cast iron skillet until brown. Turn and cook until both sides are golden brown. Note: I am told that the "Texas" method is to sprinkle fresh slices with a small amount of sugar after slicing and before breading.

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