

SMOKE SIGNAL

VOLUME 57, ISSUE 3

Serving the Smoke Rise Community since 1968

June, 2025

www.smokesignalnews.com



Happy Father's Day
from the Staff of the
Smoke Signal!

The Joy of June

By Susan Gilbert, Staff Writer

As June arrives, Smoke Rise welcomes warmer temperatures, longer days, kids being out of school, and plenty of community events. June is many residents' favorite month because the heat of July and August has not yet arrived, making it a great time to garden, work around the house, hold neighborhood parties, and enjoy the outdoors. Let's reflect on June... its origins, meaning, and what is happening nearby to get us out enjoying it.

The name June has roots in ancient Rome. While there are several origin theories, it is believed to have been named after Juno, the Roman goddess of marriage, childbirth, and the well-being of women. As the wife of Jupiter, Juno was one of the most powerful figures in Roman mythology. Her connection to marriage made June an especially popular time for weddings, a tradition that continues today.

For Georgians, what makes June special is it's when summer truly arrives. School is finally out, local pools open, and we have an abundance of local parks, playgrounds, and community events. The sidewalks and trails around Stone Mountain Park are busy with hikers, bikers, and families enjoying the warm weather. The mountain itself becomes a gathering place, hosting concerts, laser shows, and fireworks that light up the night sky — some of the most beloved traditions in our community.

But there are also wider events and observances that make June stand out.

Juneteenth is celebrated on June 19, marking the day in 1865 when enslaved African Americans in Texas were finally informed of their freedom, two and a half years after the Emancipation Proclamation. Now recognized as a federal holiday, Juneteenth is both a celebration of African American freedom and a poignant reminder of the ongoing struggle for equality.

The Summer Solstice, marking the longest day of the year, happens around June 20 or 21. This astronomical event signals the official start of summer in the Northern Hemisphere and has been celebrated in cultures worldwide for centuries.

For car enthusiasts, the Tucker Cruise-In is on June 14 on Main Street from 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. The Tucker Cruise-In is a non-profit, old-fashioned town meet-and-greet car show held on Main Street. Cars range from antiques to street rods, and from motorcycles to imports. The Cruise-Ins are held on the 2nd Saturday of every month from April to October. There is a nominal \$5.00 registration fee to enter your vehicle. For more information, call 678-283-3842 or 404-310-5128.

Additionally, the City of Tucker offers these events for residents' enjoyment:



- The City of Tucker's First Friday Concert Series, scheduled for June 6 at the Church Street Greenspace, will feature live music by Chairman of the Board. Attendees are encouraged to bring blankets, chairs, and picnics. Set up begins at 6:00 p.m. with the concert starting at 7:00 p.m.
- The City of Tucker offers Movies on the Green. On June 26 from 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m., Wild Robot will be playing on the Church Street Greenspace. Again, blankets, chairs, and picnics are encouraged. People can set up from 6:00 p.m., with the movie starting at 7:00 p.m.

- On August 1, the city presents The Nick & the Knacks, known for the vast amount of 80's and 90's rock they can pack into a single show. Mark your calendars.
- With all that's going on in and around Smoke Rise, take time to enjoy one of our most beautiful months of the year.



Look inside for...

- Calling All Smoke Rise Animal Lovers pg. 5
- Celebrating Graduates pg. 7
- Anti-inflammatory Drugs pg. 8
- Recycling Rules Revamped pg. 9

Tucker Parks and Recreation News

Tucker Parks and Recreation announces Nature for All: Adaptive Youth Walks — a free, twice-monthly outdoor program created especially for youth with disabilities and their families!

This inclusive, welcoming experience invites children ages 4–12 and their caregivers to enjoy the beauty of Tucker's parks on relaxed, accessible walks through nature.



Program Details
Who Can Join:
Kids of all abilities, including those who use mobility devices or need extra support. Whether your child enjoys movement, sensory play, or simply soaking in the outdoors, this program is designed with your family in mind.

- What to Expect:
- Guided, slow-paced walks through local parks
 - Sensory-friendly nature exploration
 - A non-judgmental, supportive space
 - Time to connect with other families in the adaptive community

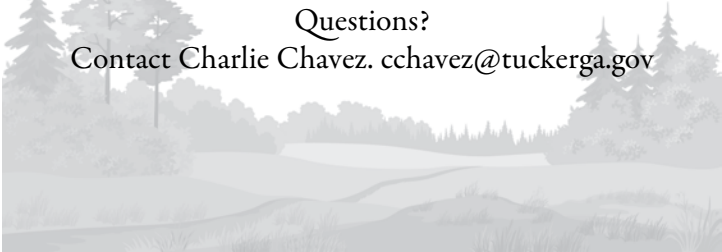
Caregivers must attend and are encouraged to participate!

Upcoming Schedule for June

- Wednesday, June 11 | 6:00–7:00 P.M.
Kelley Cofer Park – 4259 North Park Drive
Paved sidewalk loop (along neighborhood road)
- Wednesday, June 25 | 6:00–7:00 P.M.
Montreal Park – 1341 Montreal Park Road
Natural walking path

No registration required —
just show up at the designated park entrance!
City of Tucker staff will be there to greet and guide you.

Questions?
Contact Charlie Chavez. cchavez@tuckerga.gov



The *Smoke Signal* is enhancing some of its issues with COLOR! Find out how to become a Patron or sponsor a color edition at Staff@smokesignalnews.com.

Special Thanks to
Bob & Bonnie Espy
for sponsoring the color in our April issue!



Smoke Signal

P.O. Box 1038, Tucker, GA 30085

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

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ATTENTION ADVERTISERS:

The *Smoke Signal* has reached its ad-space limit and we are now keeping a waiting list for future advertisements. Please send your ad requests to staff@smokesignalnews.com and you will be contacted as space becomes available, in the order requests are received.

Classified ads and flyers are still available!



Smoke Signal Deadlines

JUNE 13

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

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

Deadline for classified ads is JUNE 10

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Looking for a way to give back to your community? The SMOKE SIGNAL is looking for a few more writers or people with a passion for storytelling.

SEND YOUR INQUIRY TO:
staff@smokesignalnews.com



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Smoke Rise Baptist Church

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

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

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

Eastminster Presbyterian Church

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

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

First Moravian Church

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

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

Incarnate Word Lutheran Church

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

SUNDAY 8:45 a.m. Worship

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Eastminster Presbyterian Church
Announces Exciting Summer Activities

By Christina Wetzel Sizemore, Office Coordinator, Eastminster Presbyterian Church

Eastminster Presbyterian Church is excited to offer a summer full of faith, fun, and family-friendly events, including Vacation Bible School, a themed summer camp, and a joyful Back-to-School Bash with a Blessing of the Backpacks.

Alongside our special summer events, Eastminster welcomes everyone to Sunday School each week at 9:15 a.m. Adults have the option to join a class in the Adult Center, where they'll explore a variety of book - and video-based Bible studies or participate in Simple Matters — a small group designed for young adults and parents looking for meaningful conversation and reflection in the midst of busy family life. Children and youth are invited to engaging Sunday School sessions filled with fun Bible stories and activities that help them discover God's love in a joyful, age-appropriate setting. Our worship service follows at 10:30 a.m.

From June 23 to 26, children ages 3 to 12 are invited to attend True North Vacation Bible School, a free program held daily from 9:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Centered around the theme "Trusting Jesus in a Wild World," this adventure-filled week includes exciting Bible stories, uplifting music, creative crafts, hands-on science experiments, and team-building games. Teens ages 13 to 18 are encouraged to participate as Teen Crew Leaders, gaining valuable leadership experience while helping guide younger children. Families can register at www.eastminster.us/vbs.

Eastminster's 2025 Summer Camp, themed The Greatest Gift, brings the heartwarming message of A Charlie Brown Christmas into the summer season. Campers will rediscover the true meaning of Christmas through the beloved Peanuts story, reflecting on joy, simplicity, and timeless lessons of faith inspired by Linus's iconic words: "That's what Christmas is all about, Charlie Brown." Learn more and register at www.eastminster.us/esap.

On Sunday, July 20, families are invited to join us for the Back-to-School Bash and Blessing of the Backpacks, beginning at 9:15 a.m. This joyful morning will feature a special blessing over students and their backpacks, followed by a food truck social. Children are encouraged to bring their backpacks to receive a prayer for the upcoming school year.

As part of its community outreach, Eastminster is also collecting donations to provide backpacks filled with school supplies for local elementary students in need. Everyone is invited to support this effort by contributing funds to help equip children for a successful school year.

Don't miss this vibrant season of faith, fellowship, and lasting memories at Eastminster Presbyterian Church!



Flowers in front of Fire Station #5 are maintained by the Smoke Rise Garden Club.

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

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

Mountain Creek Swim Club
By Nancy McKenzie, Mountain Creek Swim Club Board

All Aboard for the 3rd Annual Cardboard Boat Regatta!
Mountain Creek Swim Club
Saturday, June 21 • 3:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Set sail for adventure at the most boat-tastic event of the summer! Whether you're a seasoned shipwright or a cardboard captain-in-training, it's time to channel your inner buccaneer and build a vessel fit for the (chlorinated) high seas.

This event is open to the entire community — all hands on deck!

So hoist your sails, grab some duct tape, and start crafting your sea-worthy masterpiece. But beware... only the bold will survive the epic voyage across the Mountain Creek pool! Don't miss the boat — or you'll be left in the wake!

For full details, visit: www.mountaincreekswimclub.com



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TUCKER DAY 2025

By Bob Espy – Tucker Day Chairman

The rain could not stop us! We had an AWESOME Tucker Day. By 1:00 p.m., we had reached our record of last year with roughly 6,500 attendees. The rain rolled in around 1:30 p.m. and let up around 3:15 p.m. I believe if the rain had stayed away, we would have crushed last year’s record. Well, there is always next year!

Our theme this year was “This Crazy Quilt We Call Tucker.” We had more than 150 vendors. We started clearing the street on Friday May 2 and volunteers showed up at 5:30 a.m. on Saturday. Marsha Ashby did a great job coordinating all our vendors. They started arriving at 6:00 a.m. and Tucker Day began promptly at 9:00 a.m. with the Air Force Color Guard and National Anthem sung by Smoke Rise’s own Virginia Rece. She did an outstanding job! We had three stages; Railroad Avenue, First Avenue, and the Main Stage at LaVista. Music was played throughout the day after the parade. We continued the tradition of cars in the parade and exceeded last years count. I would like to thank Chip Cofer for organizing the cars for the parade. There were multiple groups this year in the parade. Albert and Mary Still were instrumental in arranging all that participated.

We changed our food vendor location and placed them around the First Avenue tent. A thank you goes out to Kristen Kemetches for managing these vendors. The food was delicious as always. All the food vendors are looking forward to coming back next year.

The logistics worked well this year from the shut down of Main Street, to the day of the event and re-opening of Main Street. Thanks goes to Bob Smith, Janice & Lou Brown, the DeKalb Police, Boy Scout Troop 876, and the City of Tucker (Rip and Ryan).

We could not do this without our sponsors and thank you to Johnathan Clark and Honey Van de Kreke for coordinating them. Please go to tuckerday.com to see all those that helped make Tucker Day a huge success.

The Kid Zone coordinated by Tom and Anne Edmondson was another success story of the day. It surpassed last year’s attendance, and all the kids seemed to have fun. There were games, face painting, and Dart Art just to name a few activities. The scavenger hunt was back and took kids all over Tucker Day.

Our information and merchandise booth was handled by Harriett Gess and Bonnie Espy. This year was extremely well organized, and customers appreciated the expediency of information and check out when purchasing items.

We are looking forward to making next year even better than this year. If you attended, Thank You!! If you missed Tucker Day, put it on your calendar for next May 2, 2026. More info to follow later this year.



Academy of Arts Update

By Denise Burcham, Smoke Rise Academy of Arts, Director

The Academy of Arts at Smoke Rise Baptist Church has just wrapped up an incredible spring season, filled with creativity, talent, and joy! Our recent productions of Once Upon a Mattress and Frozen, Jr. were nothing short of spectacular. With 23 students in the cast of Once Upon a Mattress and an impressive 73 kids in the cast of Frozen, Jr., both shows brought these fairytale stories to life with energy and heart.

Each show was the product of months of hard work, teamwork, and passion from our young performers, directors, and volunteers. Once Upon a Mattress delighted audiences with its humor, music, and whimsical charm, while Frozen, Jr. enchanted all with its beloved characters and unforgettable songs. From dazzling costumes and imaginative sets to outstanding singing and acting, every detail reflected the spirit and excellence that define our Academy of Arts program.

We are so proud of every child who participated whether on stage, behind the scenes, or by helping each other learn and grow throughout the rehearsal process. Watching these students shine reminds us why the arts matter: they build confidence, friendships, and a sense of community.

As we celebrate these successes, we are also eagerly looking ahead to our Music and Arts Camp, happening June 16-19! This fun-filled week will offer even more opportunities for children to explore their creativity through music, visual arts, drama, and dance. It’s the perfect next step for young artists to continue developing their gifts and for new faces to join the adventure!

Thank you to everyone who made this season a success — families, volunteers, and our amazing audience. We can’t wait to see what’s next as we keep growing together through the arts! Call Smoke Rise Baptist Church to learn more.

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Calling All Smoke Rise Animal Lovers

By Diane Freeman

Thinking you might want to help out the dogs at Lifeline Animal Project in DeKalb but not sure how? While adopting or fostering are great ways to contribute, there are many other ways you can support the shelter. The shelter is always in need of basic donations such as toys, blankets, sheets, leashes, and cardboard. You can find a full wish list at <https://lifelineanimal.org/wishlist/>, and of course tax-deductible cash donations are always appreciated.

If you're looking for more of a hands-on way to contribute, consider the "Dog for the Day" or the "Weekend Warrior" programs. These are a wonderful way to spend time with a dog while providing them a much-needed break from the shelter.

Dog for the Day: This program allows you to spend time with a dog, take them to a park, go for a hike, or just relax at home. It's a great way to give the dog a break while also helping them get noticed by potential adopters. Simply show up any day, and the staff will pair you with a dog that fits your preferences. After a fun day, you'll return the dog to the shelter, and they'll be content and tired after their outing.

Weekend Warrior: This is like a mini-vacation for a dog! You commit to spending at least three days with a lucky pooch, and, it doesn't have to be an actual weekend. While you're enjoying your time together, the dog will stay in your home, with a crate and food provided by the shelter. This gives the dog a much-needed break from the kennel and allows them to relax and adjust to a home environment. For more information on these programs, visit <https://lifelineanimal.org/foster-opportunities/>.

You might even find your ideal dog in the process, but whether or not you do, you'll be providing a dog with a valuable opportunity to leave the shelter and enjoy some quality time outside of the kennel. There are many other ways to support Lifeline's work with both dogs and cats, so check out the shelter's website to find the best way to contribute to this important DeKalb County facility.

Lifeline's DeKalb County Animal Services is located at 3280 Chamblee-Dunwoody Road in Chamblee and is open seven days a week.

For more details on hours, visit lifelineanimal.org.



Good to Know...

By Arin Mason

I have recently researched crime in our neighborhood, and the greater DeKalb County area. In doing so, I have come across some things worth noting about crime and crime prevention in Smoke Rise/DeKalb County. These are either new programs/initiatives by the police, or ways to engage and get involved, or even to seek out more germane information as it relates to your specific location in the neighborhood.

Most people are now using some kind of security system to safeguard their homes. You may have an old school security contract with ADT or EMC, and you may add on (or use alone) a newer closed circuit camera system, or a doorbell WiFi based camera security. The latter, such as Ring or Eufy, allows you to add additional security cameras, and security equipment as you see fit. You may not know these doorbell WiFi systems offer additional features such as 24/7 security monitoring, motion detectors, glass break sensors, data linked pet tags, and actual alarms.

Another usable feature of the WiFi based systems is the ability to socially interact and connect with your neighbors via the app you use to monitor your home. Within the app you'll find a social component that allows one to share with folks in proximal contact. This can be useful. Ring's Neighbor social feature, for example, allows one to see a realtime map of recent events in their area and offers ability to scroll through posts of local crimes. One can seamlessly share footage captured of porch pirates, etc., to the platform. Additionally, it is a great way to get information about lost/found pets to those in your immediate vicinity. The app Nextdoor also hits several of these buttons, but the Ring Neighbor app has less complaining/identifying snakes and is more focused on criminal activity. If you are curious about what crimes are happening in your neighborhood, this is an easy and free way to get linked in. The police are on board and readily use the aforementioned apps to both gather crime information and deliver community outreach news. They even provide crime prevention safety tips.

For example, did you know the police recommend instituting a nightly 9:00 p.m. routine checklist? The idea is to get in the habit of preventative maintenance to safeguard your home/

vehicle from theft. Nightly at 9:00, police suggested taking out all valuables including your phones, wallet and purses, and guns (even if not visible), and then locking all doors and windows to both your car and home. It can't hurt, right?

Also worth mentioning are the annual Community Safety fair, The Coffee with a Cop Program, The Citizen's Academy program, the Tucker PD booth at festivals like Tucker Day, as well as fun events like the kids summer program and the recent DIY rain barrel workshop hosted, in part, by DeKalb PD.

A couple more "good to knows:" there is now an anonymous crime reporting tip line you can call for, well, reporting crimes. To do so, you can dial 411, or text keyword DKPD to 847411, add a space, type in your tip, then hit send. Also, there is now a DeKalb County PD app you can download for free. Finally, as you may have seen reported in local news coverage, DeKalb PD recently announced a new county-wide drone program to help prevent crime. More information on the drones and flock cameras can be found on the Neighbor app, or by going to their social online channels: "It's in DeKalb" on FB, DeKalb City on Linked IN, and @dekalbcountyGA.



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Celebrating The Kentucky Derby in Style

By Susan Gilbert, Staff Writer

For a decade, the Smoke Rise Baptist Church Discovery Class has celebrated the Kentucky Derby in style with my husband Joel and me as hosts. Being from Lexington, Kentucky, I grew up with the tradition of my parents throwing a Derby Party for my father’s UK School of Engineering faculty and their spouses. Being mathematical, he wrote a computer program that computed the odds, and the betting was done like they do at the track where you pick a horse and bet win, place, or show.

All we can manage is having everyone draw a horse’s name from a basket and hope for the best. The winner of this year’s pool was Pat Baumann, pictured center rear row in black hat, who drew “Sovereignty.”

Watching the weather forecast that day, we feared the worst, but the rain stopped about the time guests arrived and didn’t return until late evening, permitting us to walk the botanical gardens surrounding the house.

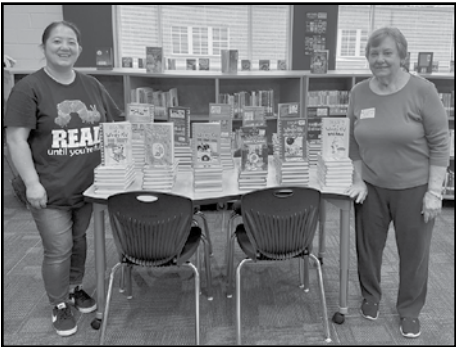


The GFWC Stone Mountain Woman’s Club collected snack items for Teacher Appreciation Week. The snacks were delivered to the teachers at Smoke Rise Elementary and Stone Mountain Elementary by Smoke Rise residents, Marty Bryan and Kathy Gallo.

Smoke Rise Elementary School’s Book Fair

By Tonna Jones, SRES Teacher

In May, Smoke Rise Elementary School proudly hosted a “Free Book” Fair, providing every student with the opportunity to select a book to take home and add to their personal library. This exciting event was made possible through generous grants and donations that supported our commitment to promoting literacy and a love of reading. Mrs. Yang, our dedicated school librarian, and Media Assistant Ms. Carmecia Askew worked diligently to organize and coordinate the fair, ensuring a student-centered experience filled with excitement and discovery. We extend our heartfelt thanks to the members of the Stone Mountain Woman’s Club for volunteering their time and helping students make thoughtful book choices. Their involvement helped make the event a memorable and meaningful celebration of reading for all.



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GRADUATES

It is with great pleasure that we announce the graduation of **Jackson David McGuckin**, Class of 2025, from St Francis High School. During his four years at St Francis, Jack has been recognized for his academics, swimming, tennis, and performance, including the lead in their current production of *You're a Good Man, Charlie Brown*.



Along with his parents, Corbett and Jason; siblings, Hunter and DeAnthony; and myriad grandparents, most proud of Jackson is his 2-year-old nephew, Owen, who always has a proud proclamation of "Jack!" whenever he sees his favorite uncle. Congratulations, Jack! Love from all your family.

Congratulations, Alexander Hoffmann!

Oliver and AvivA Hoffmann are proud to announce their son, Alexander, has graduated with honors from Tucker High School.



Alexander is a bright, talented, and funny young man whose curiosity and determination have always set him apart. The Hoffmanns are proud of all he has accomplished and look forward with great excitement to what his future holds. Congratulations, Alexander — we love you and wish you every success on the road ahead!

Chris and Amber Andrews of Smoke Rise are proud to announce the graduation of their son **Coleman Alan Andrews** from Andrews Academy, Class of 2025.



Coleman will continue his education in the arts and plans to pursue a career in voice-over acting while writing science fiction. May God bless, protect, and guide him in the pursuits of his heart and his service to others.

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Prayers for Janet Chadwick

By Victoria Crosby, Staff Writer

Janet Nelson Chadwick began teaching drama at the Academy of Arts at Smoke Rise Baptist Church in 1992 when the academy was first established. Sadly, she was recently diagnosed with brain cancer, glioblastoma, and had to step down from teaching.

According to Director of the Arts Academy, Denise Burcham, "Janet began with less than a dozen kids, and it's grown to more than 100 students each year. In addition to staging many musicals each year, she has taught many voice and piano students in her studio."

I have attended many performances by the students of the Academy of Arts, including "Phantom of the Opera," "Once Upon a Mattress," and most recently Disney's "Frozen Jr." The students range in age from elementary to high school, and the performances are always done on a professional level with wonderful singing, dancing, costumes and sets.

Janet's daughter Greyson had to take over working with the students to produce "Frozen," as Janet was undergoing treatment. The students were elementary and middle school aged. Greyson started working with them with only five weeks to put the show together. She basically had to start casting from scratch. Gladys Winter, a young student herself, helped Greyson to choreograph the show and assisted her in the production. "Gladys is one of our outstanding dancers," said Burcham.

Janet is a valued and beloved member of the staff as well as a talented teacher and producer of musicals. She had surgery in March, but her cancer is a stage four.

Burcham also reported to the families that, Janet's diagnosis came as a shock and everyone wants to support her as much as possible, as she takes time from the work she loves, to battle this nasty disease. Burcham asks that you keep Janet and her family in your prayers during this difficult time.

If you would like learn more, send an email to: artsacademy@smokerisebaptist.org.



L-R: Greyson Chadwick, Janet Chadwick and Gladys Winter

FODAC By Frank Luton, Staff Writer

Tucked in the heart of Tucker (4900 Lewis Road, Tucker, GA 30083) and just 10 minutes from Smoke Rise, Friends of Disabled Adults and Children (FODAC) is quietly transforming lives in Georgia and across the country—one piece of medical equipment at a time.

For more than 38 years, FODAC has provided free or low-cost home medical equipment (HME) to individuals living with disabilities or health challenges. From wheelchairs and walkers to hospital beds and pediatric mobility aids, these devices restore not just mobility—but dignity, independence, and quality of life.

"Many people are shocked to learn that insurance often won't cover essential items, or takes months to do so," says Chris Brand, FODAC's President & CEO. "That's where we step in."

FODAC is now the largest 501c3 nonprofit HME reuse provider in the US. Its 64,000-square-foot facility processes thousands of gently used medical items each year, keeping them out of landfills and placing them into the hands of people who need them.

The organization also responds to disasters nationwide, sending shipments to communities hit by fires, hurricanes, floods, and tornadoes. But its heart remains local.

Need help? If you or a loved one needs equipment, FODAC accepts requests at fodac.org or by calling (770) 491-9014. After a \$25.00, one-time registration charge, you may get everything you need.

Want to help? Donations of clean, gently used equipment—volunteers--or financial gifts—are always welcome. Local pickup is available for larger items. In the Smoke Rise community and beyond, FODAC is keeping people with disabilities moving.



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HEALTH NOTES:

Anti-inflammatory Drugs

By Patricia Baumann, M.D.

Anti-inflammatory refers to the property of a substance to reduce inflammation. Inflammation is our body’s natural protective response to injury or infection. Unfortunately, this protective process can cause undesirable effects in our bodies, including pain, loss of function and tissue destruction. Anti-inflammatory drugs block those protective responses, leading to reduced redness, swelling, and pain.

Anti-inflammatory drugs work by blocking the production of our body’s inflammatory chemicals. These chemicals include prostaglandins and leukotrienes. These chemicals, as well as other processes, are involved in the inflammatory process.

The two main types of anti-inflammatories available over-the-counter include nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs) and corticosteroids. These are available in a variety of dosage forms that can be taken by mouth, or applied topically. The best NSAID depends on a person’s health condition, symptoms, and medical history.

Acetaminophen (Tylenol) is commonly misunderstood to be an anti-inflammatory. It is not. It can, however, be used to reduce pain and fever. Acetaminophen is a different drug category from NSAIDs and is metabolized differently. NSAIDs can cause kidney and stomach damage, and can interfere with the blood’s ability to clot. Acetaminophen does not. It is generally considered safer than other pain relievers. Acetaminophen can be taken at the same time as NSAIDs, if needed. It can be taken in a dose of 1000 mg (two extra strength 500 mg Tylenol) three times a day, no more than six pills in a 24-hour period. Higher doses may lead to liver damage. Tylenol should be used instead of NSAIDs, when there is concern about stomach upset, ulcers, or bleeding. You should not take Tylenol, if you are allergic to it or have severe liver disease.

Several NSAIDs are available over the counter. These include aspirin, ibuprofen, and naproxen. They are available by many brand names and are also sold in combination with other drugs. These medications are widely used to relieve pain, reduce inflammation, and lower fever. They are available as pills, liquid, or topical preparations. Topical use avoids most of the systemic toxicity of oral preparations. NSAIDs can cause gastrointestinal problems (such as stomach ulcers), kidney damage, heart problems, blood clotting disorders, and allergic reactions. It is important to follow the directions for dosing and avoid taking them longer than necessary.

If you are unable to tolerate NSAIDs, some supplements have anti-inflammatory properties. These include omega-3 fatty acids (found in salmon), curcumin (turmeric), and magnesium.

Corticosteroids are another class of drug which are anti-inflammatory. There are no oral corticosteroids, like prednisone, available as an over-the-counter medicine. Topical preparations are available, however, and are useful to reduce skin inflammation and irritation. Hydrocortisone in 1% is widely available over-the-counter. Topical corticosteroids rarely have serious side effects. They should not be used on open wounds or infected skin and should not be used on the face for more than a few days.



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Living with Arthritis in the Hands

By Linda Karr, Staff Writer
Written with Blake Hampton, PT, DPT
Owner/Clinic Director Team Rehabilitation Stone Mountain

This is the second in the series on living with arthritis. Hands get stiff and ache. Painful nodules form. It makes it difficult to do tasks that involve dexterity and flexibility. So, what can you do to help with this and still enjoy the things you like (must) to do?

One way to help is through activity modification which includes tools and devices. For kitchen activities there are a variety of jar openers that can help with that task. There are also medicine bottle openers.

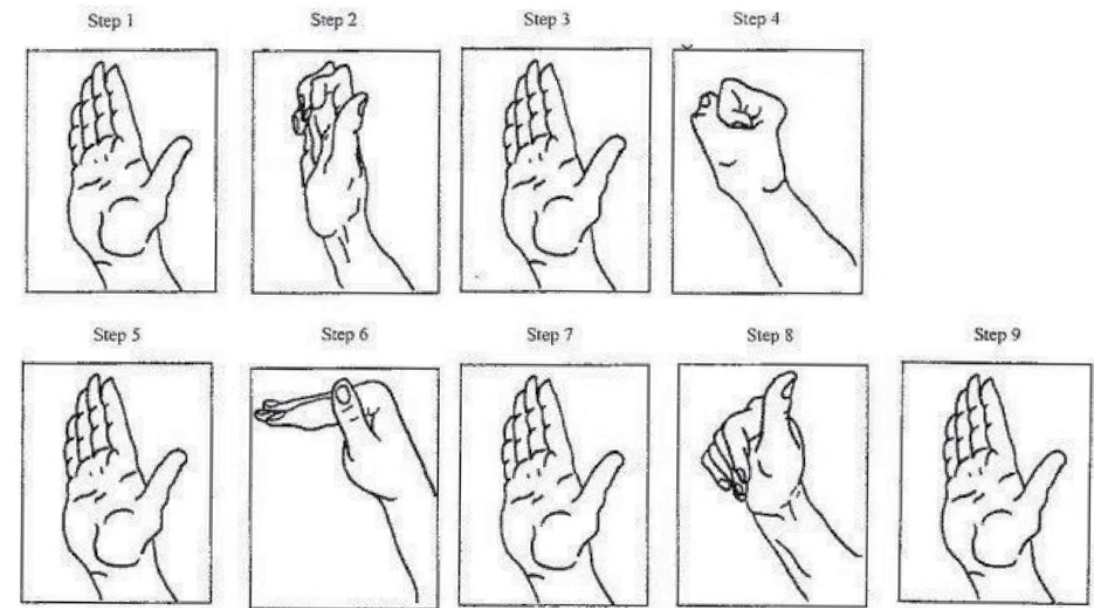
In the garden, my best tools are the lightweight and ergonomically designed Ironwood ratchet pruners and loppers. The pruners multiply your hand strength five to seven times making it easier to cut. There are other garden tools that are made specifically for those with arthritis. Varying your activities and pacing yourself so you are not doing repetitive actions for prolonged periods of time can help too.



For sewing, I use a needle threader for both my sewing machine and for sewing needles. Scissors are available with soft, cushioned handles that make them easier to use. There are also 360-degree fingernail/toenail clippers that make that chore easy. When I pressure wash, I place a tennis ball between the handle and the trigger to hold it in place. Chanel lock pliers are great to help with those press and twist containers.

Voltaren or other arthritis creams are helpful to ease the pain and discomfort caused by arthritis and to keep you moving.

Range of motion exercises - Tendon gliding exercises are perfect for arthritis of the hand. Try doing ten cycles, Step one through nine two times each day. <https://www.handtherapy.com.au/tendon-gliding-exercises/>



For grip strengthening, try exercise balls. Some now come with a cell phone app that can be used to show exercises that are beneficial for strengthening the muscles of the hand to help with arthritis.

Hot and cold therapies

Soothe sore hands with simple home treatments. For a paraffin wax bath, a crock pot can be used to heat the wax, or you can purchase a unit designed to heat the wax. You want the temperature to be between 118 - 126 °F. This is a great treatment to decrease pain, soften tight muscles, and improve blood flow. Dip your hand one to three times, let the wax set for a minute or two, then wrap in an oven mitt. Avoid if you have open wounds, poor sensation, or skin infections.

A contrast bath involves soaking hands in warm water for three to five minutes, then cold water for one to two minutes. (Use two large bowls – one with ice, if feeling bold.) Alternate three to five times, finishing with the temperature that feels best. Try a warm soak with Epsom salt or hydrogen tablets (available online). Soak hands for five to 10 minutes to help ease inflammation.

Warm soak with Epsom salt or hydrogen tablets - some initial research shows that hydrogen can help to reduce inflammation. Hydrogen tablets can be purchased online relatively cheap, and you just drop one to two of them in the water and let them dissolve, then soak your hands in the solution for five to 10 minutes.

Diet and Lifestyle

Maintaining an active lifestyle with the incorporation of routine exercise helps to decrease cortisol and increase dopamine both of which will help to reduce pain.

Anti-inflammatory diet - Avoid dairy, added sugars like high fructose corn syrup found in many sweet treats and sodas, carbohydrates (homemade bread is generally okay, but avoid store bought pastas and breads), fried foods, seed oils (canola, vegetable, soybean oils), processed foods (anything not in its natural form like potato chips), excessive consumption of alcohol (think five drinks a week or less).

Use of Omega 3 fish oil supplement may also be beneficial in helping decrease further degradation of the joints.

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

Next month we’ll explore arthritis in the knees. Stay tuned.

NEWS YOU CAN USE

BY AVIVA HOFFMANN, STAFF WRITER

Recycling Rules Revamped!

What You Need to Know

The DeKalb County Sanitation Division has made important updates to its **Residential Single-Stream Recycling Program**, and the county needs your help to keep our community clean and green by recycling right.

What’s Now Accepted in Your Blue Recycling Roll Cart?
Residents can still include a wide range of items in your blue, county-issued recycling roll carts:

- Cardboard
- Packing paper (non-waxed)
- Paper containers and cups
- Frozen food boxes
- Beer and soda cans
- Metal and aluminum food and beverage containers
- Food and beverage cartons (such as milk and soup cartons)
- Mixed paper (newspapers, magazines, copy paper, junk mail, and notebook paper)
- Plastics labeled with #1 or #2 (such as milk jugs, water bottles, juice containers, and laundry detergent bottles)

When recycling plastics, **only items marked with the #1 or #2 recycling code are accepted**—and they must be placed in the cart **loosely, not in bags**.

- What’s Not Accepted?**
Certain materials can contaminate the recycling stream and may result in the entire cart being treated as garbage and sent directly to our landfill. Please avoid placing the following items in your recycling cart:
- Plastics labeled with #3, 4, 5, 6, or 7
 - Shredded paper
 - Hazardous materials

Why It Matters
Contaminated recycling can cause an entire roll cart to be diverted to the landfill. By following the updated guidelines, you help ensure that more materials are properly recycled — supporting a cleaner, greener DeKalb County.

To learn more about the updated recycling program or to request a county-issued recycling cart, visit www.dekalb-sanitation.com.

Let’s all do our part to recycle smart and support a healthier environment in our neighborhoods.



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techtalk

By Susan Gilbert

If you read the May TechTalk column, you know about the Forever Chemicals (PFSA) found in some of Georgia’s municipal and county drinking water. Writing that prompted me to investigate various filtering options. But before filtering, I want to explain other factors affecting the safety, quality, and taste of filtered, bottled, and tap water.

An important consideration is the parts per million (PPM) of Total Dissolved Solids (TDS) in the water. Readings can indicate water quality, but the concentration doesn’t determine if the water is safe to drink. Safety depends on what the dissolved solids are. They can be healthy for you, like calcium, magnesium, and sodium, or unhealthy, like lead, pesticides, bacteria, viruses, and herbicides.

So, how do you know the PPM of your drinking water? It’s easy. Get a TDS water meter, turn it on, and place its probe into your glass or under your faucet. It reads instantly, typically reporting numbers from 0 to 500. These meters start around \$9.00 and are included with some water filtering pitchers.



I purchased a pitcher through a major online retailer called ZeroWater. Unlike the other filtering pitchers I have, this one is designed and certified to remove PFAS from drinking water, along with other contaminants like lead, chlorine, and dissolved solids. The pitcher was about \$30.00, the same as I paid for similar Brita and PUR pitchers, and it came with a TDS water meter. With the meter, I began testing various water sources. Our DeKalb County kitchen tap water registered at 64 PPM, while the water from the garden hose was over 500 PPM. Our refrigerator-filtered water was 66, and when I changed it to a new filter, the first water registered a whopping 520. After a gallon of water

passed through it, that number dropped to under 100. My Brita and PUR filters registered in the 120s, and the ZeroWater registered, well...0. The instructions that came with it said to replace it if it reaches 6 PPM.

Remember that PPM does not determine taste. Taste is affected by what minerals are dissolved in the water, so some people prefer water from a specific location. That said, I have never understood why we fly H2O from all around the world when it could be distilled, and just the minerals transported at far lower cost. That’s what they do with juices like orange juice. To lower transport costs, it is concentrated for delivery to remove water, which is added back when packaged for sale.

Making water more pure can be accomplished with reverse osmosis, but these machines are expensive, running from \$200.00 to \$500.00. And because they remove all the minerals from water, they can negatively affect the taste. One advantage ZeroWater and Reverse Osmosis share is that if you use them for your coffeemaker, you will never have to descale it.

From all this, I concluded that Brita and PUR water pitchers are designed to improve taste. ZeroWater is intended to remove all dissolved solids, including Forever Chemicals. Ultimately, the choice is a matter of personal preference. Come back next month for the results of our water taste-testing of the leading bottled waters (Member’s Mark, Smart Water, FUJI, etc.) compared with the various filtering methods (PUR, Brita, Refrigerator, and Zero Water), and yes...good old tap water, which may surprise you.

PPM Range Safety & Taste

| PPM Range | Safety | Taste |
|-----------|--------------------|---------------------------|
| 0-50 | Very safe | Flat/bland |
| 50-150 | Safe | Clean, mild flavor |
| 150-300 | Ideal | Good taste, balanced |
| 300-500 | Acceptable | May taste “hard” or salty |
| 500+ | Potentially unsafe | Poor taste |

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~ 9 ~



Gardeners Are.....

By Victoria R. Crosby

Gardeners are architects, they design their gardens with care to choose just the right combinations that show their creative flair. They know which plants work well together, which need more moisture to thrive, and which will tolerate drought in hot weather yet remain alive. Gardeners are environmentalists, they refuse to spray harmful chemicals that get in the way of natural pollinators, like insects and bees, that are necessary for the health of the flowers and the trees. Gardeners are artists, they create a pleasing work of art with flowering plants, shrubs, and trees that bring joy to the heart. A riot of color or one soft pastel shade, gardens bring pleasure until all the flowers fade. Gardeners are economists, they grow many plants from seeds. They swap and share their bounty with all their friends in need. They dig and divide their garden with pride, which is what some plants require. To walk in a beautiful, peaceful garden is to reach your heart's desire.

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This was a prize-winning poem at the Garden Clubs of Georgia 2025 Convention written by Smoke Rise Garden Club president.

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

Wren House

Glancing out the living room window, I took in the beautiful, breezy early summer morning. The two lovely, bending dogwoods were finally in full leaf. The larger of the two, on the lower hill, was filled with a variety of birds waiting their turn at the feeder. At the moment, a large red-bellied woodpecker was languidly taking his turn, while a nearby titmouse noisily complained with a rather loud chee, chee, chee. A brilliant cardinal pair perched patiently in the upper limbs, looking on with quiet dignity.

Higher on the grassy knoll, the smaller dogwood now held a charming wooden wren house (a wonderful recent birthday gift). It had taken less than a week for Mr. and Mrs. Wren to move in with their tiny nest of twigs. That nest likely cradled four to seven speckled eggs now, which Mrs. Wren would incubate for about 13 days. After the hatchlings arrive, both proud parents will feed their babies for two weeks, until they're ready to take on the world.

Thank you for starting your family with me Mr. and Mrs. Wren. Looks like my humble backyard is humming with life, love, and the tiniest chirps of new beginnings.



SOUTH AFRICAN SAFARI

By Patricia Baumann, MD

If you've ever considered a safari, I would strongly urge you to consider the country of South Africa. My recent experiences there were amazing!

I travelled with a friend and fellow medical colleague Dr. Darlene Mashman, who wanted a travel companion to South Africa. She was scheduled to speak at an international medical conference there. When she asked if I would like to go with her, I couldn't say yes fast enough! I knew there were lots of things to see and do in South Africa. Darlene was anxious to go on a safari during our trip. I had already been to safari trips in Kenya and Rwanda and wasn't sure if I wanted a repeat of that experience. Since my friend was determined, we booked a safari at Kapama Game Reserve, part of the Kruger reserve, in Hoedspruit, South Africa. I had no idea what an incredibly unique and wonderful life experience this would turn out to be!

The booking included four nights at Kapama. Our first two nights were spent in a small enclave of six cabins built up in the trees with wooden bridges connecting us to the main areas. We stayed in the Lion Cabin, complete with a thatched roof, a soaker tub, and wine and Coke Zero in the fridge. It was furnished in beautiful African décor, comfortable beds, and luxury linens. Vervet monkeys scampered in the trees, occasionally rushing in to grab a banana from the breakfast display. You could hear the elephants in the distance.

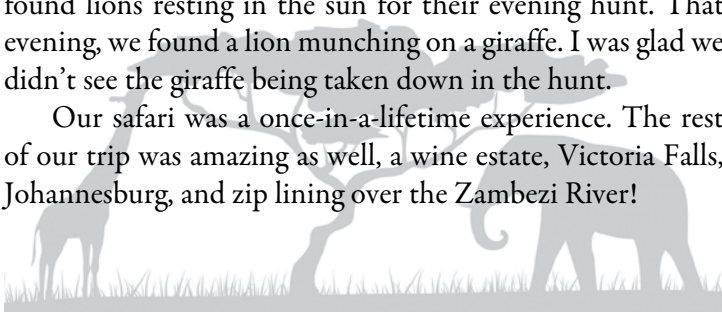
Every day, game runs were scheduled from 6:00 a.m. to 9:00 a.m., then you'd return for your gourmet breakfast and mimosa. We discovered a local dish called pap, a cross between polenta and grits. It is served with a spicy bell pepper and tomato relish called chakalaka. It went great with the cheese omelette and bacon. The cappuccino was always artfully prepared with a leaf design. You could then rest before the next excursion from 4:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.

We were assigned a tracker and ranger who would accompany us on game runs. There were five to six people on the open-air transport vehicle. Our tracker was named Jacob, and our ranger was Trust. They would track the animals and then maneuver as close as possible for viewing. We were lucky to see the big five our first day! The big five are the lion, leopard, elephant, water buffalo, and rhinoceros. They are the ones who are most dangerous to hunt on foot. Our guides provided refreshments and food on each game drive. They were careful to include sugar free and gluten free for me! They would pick a location, set up an elegant table, including tea, coffee and soft drinks to go with the food in the morning, and adult beverages at night. They included a South African cream liqueur called Amarula, made from the marula nut. Locally, it is called the elephant tree or marriage tree.

You could also take optional excursions. We chose the Cheetah Foundation trip, which helped support a local hospital rehab facility for animals, primarily the cheetah and rhinoceros. The rhinoceros is sought by the Chinese who use the horns for medicinal purposes. Unfortunately, poachers will sedate the animals, remove their horns, and leave them to bleed to death. If the rescuers find them in time, they can replace the skull defect with a metal plate, allow them to heal, and rehab them in preparation for rewilding. It is a difficult time for them, so the rhinos are provided with sheep or goat support animals to aid in their recovery.

We transferred to the Kapama River Lodge facility for the next two days. It is a larger accommodation, more modern, more people. There was also a larger gift shop! We were assigned a new ranger and tracker, Tervin and Thomas. These guides were experts at finding difficult-to-find animal experiences and maneuvering as close as possible to them! These gentlemen were able to locate a baby leopard and its mother for our viewing pleasure. During one of our day-runs, we found lions resting in the sun for their evening hunt. That evening, we found a lion munching on a giraffe. I was glad we didn't see the giraffe being taken down in the hunt.

Our safari was a once-in-a-lifetime experience. The rest of our trip was amazing as well, a wine estate, Victoria Falls, Johannesburg, and zip lining over the Zambezi River!





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Garden Week Proclamation

In honor of Garden Week in Georgia, Mayor Auman presented Sally Young, President of the Mountain Mums Garden Club, a proclamation. The proclamation recognizes the contributions



gardeners give by way of beauty, nutrition, exercise and fellowship. It also recognizes the service of Garden Clubs in Georgia, in giving back to the communities in which they live.

An African Safari Journey in Smoke Rise?

By Quill Duncan, Smoke Rise Morning Glories

The Smoke Rise Morning Glories were thrilled to experience a photographic safari with member Glenndolyn Hallman at our May meeting at Park Springs. Glenndolyn and her sister-in-law traveled last May to three safari camps in South Africa, Zimbabwe and Botswana. Happily, she was able to see the “Big Five” in the first safari camp they visited. For those who don’t know, the Big Five are Lion, Leopard, Rhino, Cape Buffalo and African Elephant. They had wonderful encounters observing dozens and dozens of animals in the wild and sometimes up close and personal! She showed us a short video made on her phone of two male lions with full manes walking down a dirt road right by their open top vehicle. Somehow, she kept that phone steady as she made the film! As her guide explained, the lions had full bellies so no worries! Her journey included a trip to Victoria Falls, Johannesburg and Cape Town.



Certainly, a trip of a lifetime and we were so happy she shared her adventures with the club. As a thank you gift, the club presented her with an “Out of Africa” coffee mug! President Amie Walsh congratulated the club on the many awards the club earned at the DeKalb Federation meeting in April, the Deep South convention in March and the Garden Club of Georgia convention in late April. The club’s small standard flower show was a very special winner and thanks to all the members of the club who participated.

Our next meeting will be September 9, and later that same week will be the Redbud District Standard Flower Show held at the Tucker United Methodist church campus. Details on “Cruisin’ with Daisy” will follow this summer as we hope all our Smoke Rise friends will come enjoy the free show featuring beautiful floral designs and hundreds of specimens of horticulture submitted by garden clubs across the Redbud District.

Happy Summer Gardening to all!

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Mountain Mums Update

The Mountain Mums met for their May meeting at Cheri Schneider’s home, beginning the gathering with a delightful brunch. Kelley Samaras served as the lead host, with help from co-hostesses Sally Young, Pamela Schuyler, and Debbie Jones. Following the social time, the members engaged in their business meeting, after which they welcomed Barbara Dorman, who shared her expertise on “Everything You Need to Know About Pruning Native and Invasive Plants.”

Randall Hudson and Stephen Harvey received the June “Garden of the Month” award, recognizing their stunning outdoor garden. The garden is a tranquil oasis, featuring 44 season statues, a glass sculpture called “Shumhuly,” and a diverse array of plants, including amaryllis, daffodils, gladiolus, azaleas, roses, flowering trees, hibiscus, lilies, gardenias, camellias, and Japanese maples. It also features a flourishing vegetable garden and a pond with more than 100 Koi.

Randall and Stephen are known for their hospitality, often hosting weddings, receptions, and large parties in their beautiful backyard. They welcomed the Mountain Mums Garden Club members to celebrate “Georgia National Garden Week.” The event was a remarkable success and enjoyed by all attendees.



Kelley Samaras, Lisa Armistead, Kathy Rhinehart and Colette Riefkohl assist ATRIA Park of Tucker residents with “Bird Totem Pole” activity

Recently, the Mountain Mums received a Garden Therapy Grant from the Garden Club of Georgia, Inc., which supports projects promoting the therapeutic benefits of hands-on gardening experiences for individuals in healthcare settings to enhance their well-being. This award recognizes the monthly arts and crafts projects that Mountain Mums members provide for residents of the ATRIA Park of Tucker assisted living facility, such as the recent “Bird Totem Poles” spring project that involved active participation from the residents.

Mountain Mums Garden Club shined at the Redbud District Awards! Members proudly brought home an impressive nine club awards, including a Certificate for Standard of Excellence, 100% Attendance, 3rd Place for the Tucker Garden Club Program, 2nd Place for Briarcliff Woods Garden Therapy, Smoke Rise Morning Glories Special Achievement, Garden Center Participation, Dunwoody Garden Club Newsletter Award, Valley Hill Garden Club Calyx Chapter Attendance, and a well-deserved 1st place for the Mary Jane Shearer Pull-A-Tab Award! Adding to the accolades, the Garden Center Director, Ann Purr, received a personal Certificate of Recognition for Outstanding Service to “The DeKalb County Federation of Garden Clubs” Garden Center.



Mountain Mum members (from left to right) Beth Henson, Colette Riefkohl, Maureen Fraser, Barbara Luton, Ann Purr, Connie Henry, Kathy Rhinehart, and Kate Graham proudly display their Redbud District Awards

The Mountain Mums Garden Club welcomes new members! If you are interested in visiting or joining, please contact Mary Jacobson, Membership Chair, at mjacob1010-gmail.com for more information. The next meeting will be a “Meet and Greet” for potential new members on August 13 at the home of Mary Jacobson.

Weathering the Rain for More Green
By Alex Helton

The Smoke Rise Garden Club held their annual plant sale on Sunday, May 3 and they made more green than last year. Despite cold, rain and the overlap with Tucker Day, plenty of people came by to grab up inexpensive plants. The free seeds and homemade treats didn’t hurt either. The volunteers had a great time too, getting to know new neighbors and each other.

The plants being sold all came from club members, so unlike those grown in nurseries, they’re right at home in Smoke Rise soil and more likely to thrive. Money raised will fund the beautification of the neighborhood (such as the new plantings on Deer Ridge) and elsewhere.

If you missed the sale, mark your calendar for next May. Or join us on an outing this summer. The next club meeting is the first Monday in September.

Email Marisa at marisa.fernandez0212@gmail.com, if you want information.

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Food & Home Fixin’s
By Joyce Ray, Staff Writer

Summer is Coming! Families across the country are preparing for that big family vacation at the beach or the mountains. Food planning is a #1 concern as unfamiliar kitchens and grocery brands might present a challenge. Simple casseroles and grilling take precedence in planning, and menus that can produce lots of leftovers are a welcome choice. This Crockpot Buffalo Chicken Mac & Cheese will become a beach favorite for its simplicity of just tossing everything in the crockpot before your day in the sun. Rotisserie chicken is quicker, but you can cook chicken pieces ahead, if preferred.

Cream cheese is a common ingredient in each of the recipes this month. It is versatile for a creamy sauce in savory dishes, thickens frostings for cupcakes or desserts, or provides a base for dips and spreads. It is almost always on my weekly grocery list.

Crockpot Buffalo Chicken Mac & Cheese

- Standard deboned and chopped rotisserie chicken
2 cups shredded sharp cheddar cheese
2 cup shredded pepper jack
1 cup shredded mozzarella cheese
¾ cup buffalo wing sauce (your favorite heat)
½ cup melted butter
2 cups milk
1 cup chicken broth
2 tsp dried thyme
3 cloves garlic, diced
1 T. Onion Powder
1 tsp chopped parsley
8 oz cream cheese, room temperature
½ cup ranch dressing
16 oz Elbow macaroni (or your favorite noodles)
Blue Cheese Crumbles

Add chicken, all cheeses, buffalo wing sauce, melted butter, milk and chicken broth to a slow cooker. Stir together. Stir in seasonings. Break apart cream cheese into small chunks and add to slow cooker. Set cooker to high and cook for 2 hours. Add noodles and continue to cook on high for 1 hour more, or until noodles are completely cooked, stirring occasionally. If Mac and cheese becomes dry, add another cup of milk or broth. Drizzle ranch dressing on top or serve on side with blue cheese crumbles and extra wing sauce. Serve with tortilla chips, seasonal fruit and your favorite sides.

Family Favorite Key Lime Pie

Key lime pie just belongs at the beach. This one has some surprises, such as the Granola Graham Cracker crust and the addition of cream cheese. Use fresh or bottled brand of key lime juice – not to be confused with regular lime juice. I use Nellie & Joe’s brand.

Crust Layer: Set oven at 350°
¾ cup granola cereal without raisins or dried fruit
¾ cup graham cracker crumbs (from 6 whole crackers)
¼ cup melted butter
3 T sugar.
Blend granola in a food processor or blender until coarsely ground. Transfer crumbs to mixing bowl and add cracker crumbs, butter and sugar. Press mixture into a 9” diameter pie plate. Bake for about 8 minutes until the crust is golden brown. Remove from the oven and let it cool.

Filling Layer: Turn down oven to 300°
One 14 oz can sweetened condensed milk
½ cup key lime juice
3 large egg yolks.
Whisk all ingredients to blend and pour into crust. Bake for about 22-25 minutes until mixture is set, then remove and cool to room temp.

Top Layer
One 8 oz pkg cream cheese softened to room temperature
¼ cup sweetened condensed milk
¼ cup key lime juice
1 tsp. vanilla extract
Beat all ingredients with an electric mixer until well blended. Pour over the cooled baked layer. Smooth out over top with spatula. Cover and refrigerate for 4 hours. Serve with sweetened whipped cream.

Cinnamon Cracklin’ Rolls – you can’t eat just one!

1 loaf thin sliced white bread, crusts removed
One 8 oz pkg cream cheese
½ cup confectioner’s sugar
1 cup granulated sugar
1 ½ tsp ground cinnamon
1 ½ sticks unsalted butter, melted
In medium-sized mixing bowl, combine the cream cheese and confectioner’s sugar. In separate bowl, combine granulated sugar and cinnamon. Lay trimmed bread slices on cutting board and lightly press with rolling pin to flatten. I do about 8 at a time. Leave them a little puffy – you don’t want it to look like a tortilla. Spread 1 T cream cheese mixture on each piece. Roll up the bread like a jelly roll. Brush with butter, or dip them into butter then roll in cinnamon sugar. Place on ungreased baking sheet. Bake 20 minutes or until golden brown. Serve warm or cold. Warm is best!!!



Stephen Harvey and Randall Hudson receive the “Garden of the Month” Award from the Mountain Mums Garden Club.



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