

# SMOKE SIGNAL



VOLUME 54, ISSUE 7

*Serving the Smoke Rise Community since 1968*

October, 2021

www.smokesignalnews.com



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## NEWS YOU CAN USE by Aviva Hoffmann

### We've Been Down this Road Before

Smoke Risers – by now, you've likely experienced the inconvenience of traveling down Rosser Road between the Gwinnett County border and Hugh Howell Road. Contractors are doing a complete reclamation and resurfacing project. They should be wrapping up sometime in November; however, we can expect to see construction crews working on roads throughout Tucker for a while longer. For sure, this is a temporary nuisance, but hopefully, worth it in the long run.

Contractors officially kicked off the 2021 City of Tucker's road resurfacing campaign in late March, starting on Smithsonia Drive. The \$4 million project continues through the fall and will address 62 of the City's most poorly conditioned roads.

The majority of the resurfacing project in the City of Tucker is being funded through a Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax (or SPLOST). More than \$2.1 million will be generated by the penny tax, which was approved overwhelmingly by DeKalb County voters in 2017. The tax will remain in effect through 2024. An additional \$360,000 for the road resurfacings will come from the Georgia Department of Transportation, while the Mayor and City Council allocated \$1 million in general fund money.

The first of the city of Tucker's road resurfacing projects, funded by SPLOST, began in August 2018. At least 65% of SPLOST funds will address roads and drainage issues. Other SPLOST funding is designated for sidewalks, pathways, bikeways, fire facilities, safety equipment, and capital outlay projects for parks and recreation as well as public facilities.



### Rosser Road

Anyone who regularly drives Rosser Road is now well aware that there is some major work happening! At the beginning of construction, Tucker City Engineer Ken Hildebrandt provided me with details around the project. Due to "an inordinate amount of potholes" after Rosser's last major repair, and because of the sinking of the granite curb over the years, the road is undergoing a total makeover this fall.

The area between Rosser Place and Oxbow Road has it the worst. According to Ken, "Due to the inadequate base of the road under the asphalt, simply resurfacing is not a long-term solution." The long-term solution, he says, is considered "Full Depth Reclamation... In this section we'll grind up the underlying base, add a soil cement material, and pave on top of it." The rest of the road (to the Gwinnett County line in one direction, and to Hugh Howell Road in the other) will receive a "heavy mill and resurfacing." The sinking granite curb will be reinstalled and/or replaced where needed.

The whole project, coming in at just under one million dollars, is scheduled to be completed in mid-November. Though Rosser Road was not expected to completely close during the project, it is often inaccessible via Hugh Howell Road. Rosser will definitely be down to one lane at times, and that one lane might be extremely rough, uneven, and dusty, so expect traffic and/or find an alternate route. Hang in there neighbors, we'll soon be enjoying these big improvements!

– by Rachel Caines

### MC3 Church's Community Fall Festival for Children and Families

MC3 Church is excited to announce the return of Fall Fest, a free communitywide festival that will take place Saturday, October 23, from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. at J.B. Williams Park in Lilburn.

The event will feature trunk-or-treat stations, inflatables, sno-cones, popcorn and face-painting. We will also offer a sneak preview of the church's 2022 Vacation Bible School, MARKETPLACE—with storytelling and crafts to recreate village life from the time of Jesus. Again, all activities will be free.

Children and families are invited to wear their Halloween costumes. Registration is not required but would be greatly appreciated to help with planning for the event. You can preregister at this link: <https://forms.gle/CTGjkZ3KsP2bj5H7>.

J.B. Williams Park is located at 4935 Five Forks Trickum Rd SW, Lilburn, GA 30047.

### Fall Is Upon Us

by Joel Gilbert

One more year is about to end and we thought we would be through dealing with Covid. Who would have believed that we would still be impacted almost two years into the pandemic? This is wearing on everyone in our community. So much damage has been done. As we think about the season of Fall, some may become understandably depressed. Even remembering how to set our clocks back can create a negative connotation. Whereas in spring we set them forward, in fall we set them backward. Backward sounds negative...

Even the word Fall sounds pessimistic. The name comes from the fact that the leaves 'fall' from our trees. But maybe we need a new name for the season...maybe it should be 'windfall' since the winds pick up at this time of year. I don't have the answer here, but I do have an illustration for those of you who want to call things what they are.

Life insurance was originally called what it is... death insurance. But they couldn't sell it when they called it what it was. So, they switched the word and meaning on its head and called it what it wasn't but in fact what people wanted to buy...life insurance. Perhaps we need to market this season for what it truly is: wonderful! This is one of the prettiest times of the year here in Atlanta. The weather is once again mild, the mornings are crisp, and we still have flowers blooming. We can sit outside most days and enjoy the gentle weather and the first signs of the leaves turning beautiful colors. It is a glorious time of the year. Let's celebrate those things!

My Jewish roots remind me of the wise sayings I grew

...Continued on page 6



## Smoke Signal

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

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### Preferred Formats for Smoke Signal Submissions

When sending articles and photos to the *Smoke Signal*, it is helpful if articles could be sent in .doc or .docx format. Articles sent in .pdf format cannot be edited or changed in any way. Also photos sent in .jpg format can easily be opened and formatted to fit a particular space, so that is also a preferred method. Thanks for helping us make your neighborhood paper the best it can be!

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

### OCTOBER 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 TO THIS E-MAIL ADDRESS

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

Deadline for classified ads is OCTOBER 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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 Link to the digital version of the *Smoke Signal* at <http://eepurl.com/pjn4v>  
 or scan this QR Code with your smart phone!



## Women of Empowerment Scholarship

The GFWC Stone Mountain Woman's Club will be awarding a \$1000 scholarship this fall. It will go to a deserving woman who is currently enrolled in a college, technical school or training program to complete her education. If you are interested in applying or if you know of someone who would be interested, please request an application from the club at [info@stonemountainwomensclub.org](mailto:info@stonemountainwomensclub.org). The deadline for applying is Saturday, November 20, 2021.

### ATTENTION GRADUATES, NEWLYWEDS, AND HONOREES

Please send in your picture and a brief article for publication in the *Smoke Signal*. Email submissions to [staff@smokesignalnews.com](mailto:staff@smokesignalnews.com)



### DID YOUR PAPER GET WET?

EXTRA COPIES OF THE SMOKE SIGNAL ARE NOW AVAILBLE AT THE COMMUNITY GARDEN

Look for the wooden box labeled *Smoke Signal*.

(They are no longer available on Smoke Rise Drive.)



### 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-size requests to Frank Luton, [luton@mindspring.com](mailto:luton@mindspring.com), and your ads will be included as space becomes available, in the order requests are received.

## Smoke Rise Baptist Church

Connecting in New Ways During the COVID-19 Pandemic

Dr. Chris George: Senior Pastor  
 Bart McNeil: Associate Pastor of Administration, Ministry Support and Congregational Care  
 Becky Caswell-Speight: Minister of Families, Faith Formation and Connection  
 Jeremy Collier: Minister of Youth, Mission and Communication  
 Jim Smith: Pastoral Care Associate  
 Amanda Coe Burton: Ministry Director for Children and Families  
 Harrison Litzell: Co-Director of Weekday School  
 Stacey McNeil: Co-Director of Weekday School  
 Telephone: (770) 469-5856 • [SmokeRiseBaptist.org](http://SmokeRiseBaptist.org)

### SUNDAY

9:45 a.m. Attend Sunday School Online  
 Schedule Available at [SmokeRiseBaptist.org](http://SmokeRiseBaptist.org)  
 11:00 a.m. Attend Worship via Live Streaming  
 Live Stream Available at [SmokeRiseBaptist.org](http://SmokeRiseBaptist.org)  
 5:00 p.m. Outdoor Children and Youth Activities  
 (Activities are outside with social distancing and masks)

### MONDAY

5:00 p.m. Weekly Devotional Video Link at [SmokeRiseBaptist.org](http://SmokeRiseBaptist.org)

### WEDNESDAY

6:00 p.m. Journeys Spiritual Formation and Bible Study  
 Opportunities Online and In-Person  
 Schedule Available at [SmokeRiseBaptist.org](http://SmokeRiseBaptist.org)  
 (In-person events are outside with social distancing and masks)

## Eastminster Presbyterian Church

Pastor ~ Rev. J. Caleb Clarke III  
 Director of Spiritual Formation ~ Jeanine Fulton  
 Director of Family & Outreach ~ Mark Sauls  
 Interim Director of Music ~ Ben Holcomb  
 Organist ~ Carole Mitchell  
 Financial Coordinator ~ Jan Zabarac  
 Director of Weekday Ministries ~ Celeste Sears  
 Office Coordinator ~ Christina Wetzel-Sizemore

5801 Hugh Howell Road ~ Stone Mountain, GA 30087  
 770-469-4881 ~ [www.eastminster.us](http://www.eastminster.us)

### Sundays:

9:10 a.m. Adult Sunday School via Zoom and In-Person  
 10:30 a.m. In-Person and Live streaming of Worship service

No reservations necessary for worship and masks are required for non-vaccinated participants.

Our Sunday service information can be found on our website at <https://www.eastminster.us/sundays>.

## MC3 Church

Senior Minister: Art Stansberry  
 Worship Minister: Leslie Riley  
 Student Minister: Will Tyler  
 Children's Minister: Rae Tyler Caggiula  
 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: Rev. Elroy Christopher  
 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 Moravian Church sanctuary  
 4950 Hugh Howell Rd., Stone Mountain, GA 30087

## Mountain West Church

Pastor: Michael Shreve  
 Telephone (770) 491-0228  
[www.mwchurch.com](http://www.mwchurch.com)

4818 Hugh Howell Rd., Stone Mountain

### Sunday Services:

9:00 a.m. masks required  
 11:00 a.m. masks optional

In-person and streaming online on Facebook and [mwchurch.com](http://mwchurch.com)

**TUCKER REC: Announces New Times and Programs**

Joe Stewart of Parks & Rec is excited to announce some new amenities and memberships starting September 1, 2021! We heard you and have implemented a couple of new recreation options here at Tucker Recreation Center (TRC).

**OPEN GYM TIME:** for basketball, volleyball, and pickleball: These will be scheduled sessions for open play with no registration required. The gym schedules are posted here: [https://www.tuckerga.gov/departments/parks\\_and\\_recreation/index/gym\\_schedule.php](https://www.tuckerga.gov/departments/parks_and_recreation/index/gym_schedule.php) and here: <https://tucker.recdesk.com/Community/Program>

**THE FITNESS ROOM** is our newest feature at TRC. We have pulled together a variety of free weights and cardio equipment for use by our 18 and up members. No reservation is required and it is open during regular facility hours: Monday through Thursday 9 a.m. to 9 p.m., Friday 9 a.m. to 7 p.m., and Saturdays 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

**Memberships are now required for the usage of open gym play and the fitness room.** You may purchase memberships online at <https://tucker.recdesk.com/Community/Membership?type=6> or in person at TRC.

- Annual single open gym and fitness is \$75
- Annual Family open gym and fitness room is \$125
- Annual Open Gym membership is \$45
- Drop-in open gym session is \$3

If you have any questions, please feel free to reach out to Joe Stewart directly, [jstewart@tuckerga.gov](mailto:jstewart@tuckerga.gov). We look forward to seeing you here at Tucker Rec.

**Main Street Theater Tickets on Sale Now!**



Moving into your first home can be exciting and overwhelming and can inevitably lead to an exhausting but memorable day. Come watch as Olivia and Gabe experience first-hand all of the fun alongside the wisest folks they know — their parents. We're sure you will leave with a smile on your face and a funny memory of your first move-in.

We are taking all precautions to keep you safe. We are extending the show's run to 3 weekends and reducing the capacity for all shows by 50%. Get your tickets early! Masks are required for all patrons.



The cast and director of "Things My Mother Taught Me" pose after a rehearsal. L to R: Olivia Rocamora, Perry McWilliams, Carrie Harris, Angela Van Tassel, Rick T. Adams, Drew Crecente, David Andignac and Athena Jones.

October 8-23  
Tucker Recreation Center  
4898 Lavista Rd, Tucker 30084

Showtimes: Fridays and Saturdays @ 7:30 p.m.; Sundays @ 2:30 p.m. Ticket \$15 for adults, \$12 for seniors and students, and \$10 for children. \*\* NOTE: Parental Advisory! The play contains infrequent strong language.\*\*

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**Frank Auman**

It has been my honor, and a responsibility I have embraced wholeheartedly, to serve as Tucker's Mayor since the city was first incorporated in March 2016. Since then, I have kept my promise to do locally the things we can do best locally, and to cooperate with DeKalb County on the things we can do better together.



I am proud of the way we've governed, sticking to the mandate given us to improve quality of life for everyone, through smarter zoning and development, adding and improving parks all around town, passing and enforcing local ordinances that benefit everyone, and improving roads, sidewalks, trails, and other infrastructure in every corner of the city. We have improved public safety and added connectivity among people and places. Perhaps most importantly, we have done it in a way that respects every citizen and encourages public participation in our decisions.

Of course, the most common question for me as I seek re-election to a third and final term, is "Why run again?". The answer is threefold: People, Plans and Projects.

**People:** We have four vacancies on the City Council. That's four new council members who will need my experienced and consistent leadership. Leadership to help guide them through the many complex decisions and show them how to work together as Team Tucker.

**Plans:** Early on, we completed Master Plans for the City of Tucker. Tucker Together, our Comprehensive Plan, was followed by plans for Transportation, Parks, Trails, Downtown and more. These plans were completed with lots of public input. These plans guide our priorities, because they are your priorities, and they are the basis for all we do. All these plans are due for updates in the next four years. It's important to have the right leader guiding the city through that effort.

**Projects:** We have a number of transformative projects in progress, including Northlake, Fitzgerald Field, and two large new greenspace projects in downtown Tucker. All were begun under my watch, and I want to see them through, achieving all the potential we saw when they began.

If you would like to review my record as mayor, go to the following online sites: The city's website is [www.tuckerga.gov](http://www.tuckerga.gov), and there are official remarks from the Mayor at [www.tuckerga.gov/mayor](http://www.tuckerga.gov/mayor). My unofficial Facebook page is Frank Auman, Mayor Tucker, Georgia, where you'll find news and activities dating back to the time we first began advocating for cityhood back in 2013.

**Robin Biro**

Dear Neighbors,

First, thank you for the love and kindness that you have extended my family. A story ran in the *Smoke Signal* some time ago about how a family tragedy necessitated me adopting my half-brothers- then 7 and 11, and relocating them with me in Smoke Rise. They've adjusted famously well, and we appreciate the grace you have shown. I've taught them the importance of getting involved and giving back, so my bid for Mayor is an extension of that.

This is a nonpartisan election, however in full transparency just as our incumbent Mayor was Chairman of the DeKalb GOP before becoming Mayor of Tucker, I've held offices within the Democratic Party. I want to assure you that my ten years as an Army Ranger in the 75th Ranger Regiment gave me a keen ability to work with people from all political spectrums and walks of life to get things done.



The concerns I hear most often from fellow Smoke Rise neighbors are A) crime, B) traffic and speeding, and C) failing storm drains. Crime doesn't just endanger our families - it also has a direct impact on our home values. We've had a rash of crime in Smoke Rise, even home invasions - mostly originating from across US Highway 78. I'd like to work with our neighborhoods and the DeKalb Police Department to implement neighborhood watch programs, along with stepped up and continued police patrols. Regarding speeding and traffic - I'd advocate to procure and locate more radar-controlled signage in areas with known speeding issues, and advocate for commissioning feasibility studies to explore traffic circles. As far as storm drains are concerned - I am already hard at work holding feet to the fire to get these repaired. My goal is for DeKalb County to repair these before the city of Tucker gets stuck holding the bill.

In closing, I served in the military for ten years, and I've been a businessman for twenty. I love Tucker and find it's an amazing place to raise my kids. Like any parent though, I want my family to be safe. My broad set of experience, community service, and service to country can help increase the quality of life here in Tucker. For signs, and to share YOUR ideas for how we can work together to make Tucker even more beautiful, safer, and enjoyable, please email [robin@robinbiro.com](mailto:robin@robinbiro.com). You can also learn more at [www.robinfortucker.com](http://www.robinfortucker.com).

Respectfully,  
Robin Biro, Mayoral Candidate



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**Karen Peters Rivers**

(born August 21, 1965) is a Peters Community Park activist.

The Peters Park Community is one of the FIRST established African American communities in Tucker. I've gained a strong sense of pride for my community and am an advocate committed to making my community great; keeping the dream of my grandfather alive. I have served diligently in my community since the early 2000's, collaborating with the late commissioner Lou Walker for the betterment of our community. I now serve as the Secretary of the Peters Park Community. Serving in this capacity, we've obtained more resources in the past years to improve the living condition of our community. I served as a voting poll worker for 6 consecutive years. I am deeply rooted in the community and do not shy away from the challenge of hard work. I am ready and fully equipped to serve the Tucker community as a whole!



**Let's D.R.E.A.M:**

**DIVERSITY-** Bringing together voices of people of color to the forefront of the Tucker community and political system.

**REVITALIZE-** Bring a strong sense of pride and accountability back to our Tucker community.

**ENGAGE-** Involve all voices of our community and collaborate with them to meet the needs of their areas.

**ADVOCATE-** Support every category of persons represented within our community. BLM, LGBTQ+, People of Color, Homeless, Disabled, and Green Space etc.

**MOBILIZE-** Organize the Tucker community to be more unified and prepared to be the best city in Georgia.

**Virginia Rece**

I am Virginia Rece and I'm running for Tucker City Council District 1 Post 2 to finish my friend Bill Rosenfeld's term. Bill was a wonderful public servant, and I am committed to carrying on his work.

My husband Will and I have been married 27 years and have 2 children. We have lived in Smoke Rise 18 years and love the caring citizens and greenspace.

I've served on the Board of SRCA for about 10 years on many projects including: working to keep the cell phone tower off Smoke Rise Elementary property, working on crime prevention advocacy, Tucker city hood. I have organized candidate forums, and run Bill Rosenfeld's and Pat Soltys' campaigns, while raising my 2 children and running a small business. As you see, I enjoy giving back to my community!



I will serve District 1 with integrity and respect so that you KNOW that I truly care and I'm working to find the best solutions for our community issues. I believe we all share a common thread, though we may come from different economic backgrounds, race, color, or sexual orientation, we all want to be a part of a community where we can thrive, prosper, and enjoy a life filled with joy and opportunity.

I will work to keep our neighborhoods safe for our residents, by continuing to partner with Tucker Summit CID, and DeKalb County Tucker Police Precinct to address drag racing and other crime issues.

I will work to ensure everyone can thrive and prosper here, which means making Tucker a place people can enjoy for their lifetimes. We need more living spaces such as "Lock and Leave," low-maintenance housing options. I will also work to protect and increase housing options for every economic level. This will create and retain a strong work force by keeping that abundant employee pool RIGHT here in Tucker!

I will work to protect and grow our parks. I will work to bring more sidewalks and bike paths, encouraging connectivity to downtown and to each other.

I'll work hard on transportation issues to make our commutes safer and more efficient and infrastructure improvements including sinkholes and storm water issues.

I have worked in our community for many years. You can trust me to do what I say I will, because of the work I've already done in our community. I hope to earn your vote! Visit my campaign website: [www.virginiarece.com](http://www.virginiarece.com). And call me if you have questions or want to discuss!

**Roger Orlando**

Greetings, my name is Roger Orlando, and I am running for Tucker City Council, District 1, Post 1. Growing up in smaller town America, all young people had a sense of community and community pride. But in a major metropolitan area, the municipal lines often are blurred. When Tucker became a city in 2015/16, I observed boundaries formed and an outline of "community" surfaced. I've now lived in Tucker for nearly 20 years. I raised three wonderful children and they see Tucker as their hometown. Recently becoming a grandfather inspired me to run for Council in order to make my mark on their neighborhood's history and its future.



It is said that the best form of government is local government as the results are immediately apparent and visible. Tucker has evolved substantially since I first visited in 1980. It is my goal and desire to see a continued evolution and expansion of public safety, green space and new and interesting businesses and restaurants. I want to work to make Tucker not only a safe, affordable, and vibrant place to live, but to see Tucker also as a destination for visitors from other surrounding locations.

As a member of your City Council, public safety will be one of my primary concerns. I hope to work directly with local law enforcement agencies as well as our Community Improvement District (CID) leaders to craft solutions to increased crime as well as to implement viable and sensitive solutions to homelessness in our community. Without a feeling of safety and security, Tucker would not be able to attract families and visitors comfortably to Main Street and other Tucker sites and facilities. In addition, I want to see Tucker remain an increasingly diverse community where all can feel welcome and included.

I need your vote and I am very optimistic I will earn your trust and confidence when the election is over, and my service begins. To learn more or to join my efforts, please feel free to visit my campaign website [www.OrlandoforTucker.com](http://www.OrlandoforTucker.com)

**Shawn Woods**



Hello neighbors, I am Shawn Woods, and I am running for Tucker City Council District 1 Post 2. As of late, I am asked, "Why are you running for office? Quite honestly there is no singular reason. I am running because I am a natural problem-solver and innovator with realistic solutions for a safer, more inclusive, and productive city. My experience as an entrepreneur in the film industry and CEO of Lewoo Equity Partners, LLC constantly contributes to my

growth as a leader and has taught me how to listen to those who know what the issues are.

I believe that this seat needs someone responsible, responsive, relatable, and who can reinvigorate the communities of Tucker like our beloved Smoke Rise. During a normal fall Saturday, you can see my wife, kids, and I cheering on our beloved Georgia Bulldogs with my UGA flag proudly waving on the front porch, possibly doing some projects in our yard, or playing video games with my son. I am no different than any of you, I am running so that my family and our dogs Biko & Zuri, your family, and visitors can live in the best version of Tucker we can create.

I vividly remember moving away from Atlanta to Kentucky in the 1980s, during the time of the Atlanta Child Murders. I remember my family not feeling safe and the fear that existed in my neighborhood. When I think back now as an adult, I believe that stronger community policing and bike patrols could have had a positive impact on public safety during those times. I also have a goal of stimulating our economy by bringing new economic opportunities via the tech and film industries that will incentivize and provide services that promote entrepreneurs and local business owners in Tucker. In addition, building upon our parks and recreation to utilize the beauty that already exists in these spaces by evolving recreational facilities to include E-Gaming and E-Sports. This will allow for all ages, all genders, and those with diverse accessibility needs the opportunity to take full advantage of our municipal resources.

I'm presenting viable solutions that can be achieved in a reasonable time period. Smoke Rise Community help me achieve this win for us! For more information, please visit [www.shawnwoodsfortucker.com](http://www.shawnwoodsfortucker.com) or email me at [info@shawnwoodsfortucker.com](mailto:info@shawnwoodsfortucker.com). Most importantly, don't forget to vote on November 2, 2021.

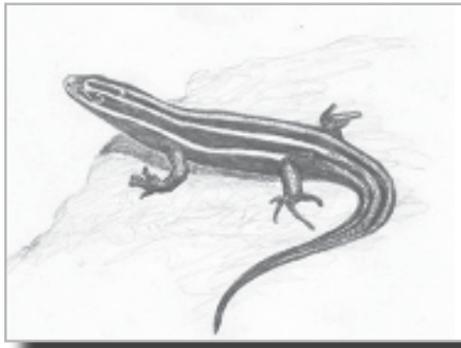
For more information or to join Team Woods, please visit <https://www.shawnwoodsfortucker.com>.

**Out the Window**

by Beth Henson

Indian summer had persisted and the hot daytime temperatures were still with us. Glancing out the dining room window I was pleased to see that the flowers of early summer were still in full show, their explosions of purple, orange and white dotting the garden. As my eye traveled to the normally cheery pot of Gerber daisies, I was dismayed to see a mass of wilted pale leaves and fading lack-luster flowers bowing to the ground! I quickly popped out the door and came to the rescue with a substantial douse using my trusty green watering can. Seeing that I may have been over zealous, I tipped the replenished pot on its side to let the excess liquid run free. To my surprise, Mr. Skink slid out onto the red brick pavers along with the excess water. I was once again impressed by the vibrance of his electric blue racing stripes and his sleek, scaled, shiny body. Instead of scampering off at record speed, he chose to warm himself on the hot red bricks and dry off, raising his reptilian body temperature for action! Unlike us humans, he controls his temperature by changing his environment. I have often seen him luxuriantly sunning himself on my brick wall or like today, hiding in the cool recesses of his make-shift jungle. He is also a great gardening buddy who munches on the grasshoppers and snails that love to decimate many of my favorite plants.

Sorry for the unexpected shower! I'll try to give you more privacy next time!



Skink by Beth Henson

**FALL...continued from page 1**

up with about how to think about our lives. I was taught not to complain to God about anything in my life. My rabbi said if you complain to God he will say: "Oh, you think that's bad? Let me show you what bad is!" I was told, by contrast, we should give thanks no matter how bad things were, because God would say: "Oh, you think that's good? Let me show you what good really is!" While this may be considered terrible theology, it does help. Or is it bad theology? My medical friends tell me that a positive attitude is essential to good health and that despite the best medical treatments a bad attitude can literally kill you. Then, I say we should have a thankful attitude, no matter what our circumstances are. But what does it take to do that?

I observe that we allow way too many things into our lives that simply do not help. I stopped watching TV years ago because I found most of it far from uplifting. I have chosen now to go back to those strange things that sit on our shelves and do not need a battery to operate ... books. Read a good book or two. Turn the TV off and read without any background noise. Let your mind and heart escape to the world described by that author. If you have a book you enjoyed in the past, read it again. You will find new insights and surprises upon another reading. Search your TV guide or search the internet for interesting biographies, programs about world travel, or programs that further your special interests. Spend more time with friends who are uplifting and positive. You know, the

ones who make you feel good every time you are around them.

Finally, I used to think I "wasted time" doing some things that just made me happy. Fishing does that to me more than almost anything else. It really doesn't matter whether I catch a fish or not. In most cases, I just love to watch the water and all the life in and around it. I know others who enjoy and are refreshed by the solitude of the forest, the mountains of Georgia, or a brisk walk in the park. Fall into some good habits and celebrate the season at hand with those you love.

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**HEALTH NOTES:**

By Guest Contributor Patricia Baumann MD

**The Covid 19 Booster Shot**

So in the "Time of COVID", it is that time to start thinking about booster shots. Hopefully most of you have received the vaccine, having made this decision after reviewing the scientific information, talking to trusted healthcare providers, as well as having heard horrific stories about the terrible effects of the disease. By now, most of us know someone who has died from Covid 19, and we're daily discovering more permanent effects this disease has on survivors. Fortunately, we are also daily discovering new information on how to effectively combat Covid 19. One of the most powerful weapons in the fight against Covid 19 is the vaccine! Most hospital ICU beds are currently being filled with unvaccinated Covid 19 patients. This is a terrible drain on our healthcare system and its workers. And, this has also caused a critical shortage of ICU beds for non-Covid patients with life threatening illness.

If you received the Covid 19 vaccine, you are protecting yourself, as well protecting others. This vaccine, like other vaccines, stimulates the production of the body's natural antibodies. These antibodies fight the Covid 19 virus, either preventing the disease or making it less severe.

The story behind development of Covid 19 vaccines is a dramatic story- a race against time during an accelerated race for more information. Once the genetic makeup of this unique virus was identified, laboratories all over the world rushed to find an effective vaccine against it, as well as effective methods to treat it. The vaccine labs were in private industry, as well as in government and academic labs. As you know, the vaccines that came out first were mRNA from Pfizer and Moderna, Janssen followed soon after with a DNA adenovirus vector vaccine. All labs looked at the effectiveness of the vaccine in producing antibodies, as well as gauging the amount of protection the antibodies provided. The initial data on all three vaccines looked good, and indicated that they did effectively provide protection. Protection ranged from 66% to 95% depending on the population studied. By comparison, the flu shot in any given year is only 20% to 60% effective! As people all over the world were dying from Covid 19, emergency vaccine approval was given by the FDA to combat this deadly virus. While studies did show the vaccines worked, we didn't have the final data as to how long the protection would last. This information is now becoming available.

We know that immunity from both mRNA vaccines starts to decline after 6 months. So, what are the booster guidelines? That's a very simple question with a convoluted answer.

The United States Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) announced a plan to offer booster shots in the fall. This was subject to independent evaluation of the safety and efficacy of a third shot for Pfizer and Moderna, the two mRNA vaccines. The CDC was to develop guidelines, then HHS was to prepare to offer booster shots by September 20, 2021. Booster shots were to be scheduled for eight months after the second dose. As of this writing, it has been announced that the Pfizer vaccine will be offered, but there will be a delay in the Moderna. Boosters are the same dose as the first two vaccines. Currently it is recommended that you get the same Pfizer or Moderna type that you received for the first two vaccines. However, some studies suggest an advantage to mixing vaccines.

My husband and I have both received our third mRNA vaccine, after getting our first two vaccines in February. The vaccine is now offered to persons who may have their immune systems compromised. Those qualified are generally over the age of 65, or having some chronic disease affecting immunity or are taking an immunosuppressive drug. When you ask for your Covid 19 booster shot, you will likely be offered a flu shot as well. In my opinion, this may not be a good idea because if you have a side effect, you will not know which vaccine caused it. Get them both, but not on the same day! The United States Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) announced a plan to offer booster shots in the fall. This was subject to independent evaluation of the safety and efficacy of a third shot for Pfizer and Moderna, the two mRNA vaccines. The CDC was to develop guidelines, then HHS was to prepare to offer booster shots by September 20, 2021. Booster shots were to be scheduled for eight months after the second dose. As of this writing, it has been announced that the Pfizer vaccine will be offered, but there will be a delay in the Moderna. Boosters are the same dose as the first two vaccines. Currently it is recommended that you get the same Pfizer or Moderna type that you received for the first two vaccines. However, some studies suggest an advantage to mixing vaccines.

Guidelines regarding everything Covid 19 change as new information comes in. Your best protection is to seek out a booster and get it as soon as possible.

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Handicap parking is available.

**Tucker Wins Awards!** *by Matt Holmes*

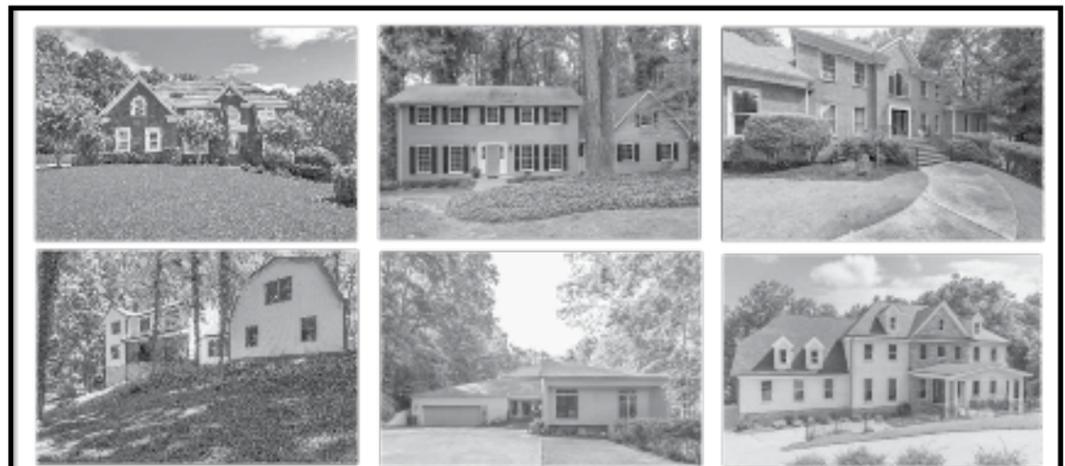
The City of Tucker captured five awards in September at the 3CMA Savvy Awards luncheon in St. Louis, Missouri. Tucker was honored for its work in organizing, promoting and marketing the inaugural Tucker Restaurant Week, as well as for the Tucker Dining Guide and the City's popular magazine, InTucker.

"These prestigious national awards place Tucker in some pretty elite company," said Matt Holmes, Tucker's Director of Communications and Administrative Services. "This is a testament to the hard work and innovative spirit of our staff, as well as the strong partnerships we've been able to leverage to make it all happen."

Tucker was awarded in the following categories:

- Most Innovative Communications – Tucker Restaurant Week
- Marketing Event – Tucker Restaurant Week
- Graphic Design – Tucker Restaurant Week
- Printed Publications (External Publications) – InTucker
- Printed Publications (Catalogs/Guides) – Tucker Dining Guide

The awards are given out annually by the nation's premier municipal communications organization, the City-County Communications & Marketing Association (3CMA).



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**Dudes on Food**

**Episode 8 - Once a Week Go Greek**

“Once a Week go Greek,” is precisely what the food dudes did. After taking a month off, we wanted to hit one of Tucker’s staples. In full disclosure, we do not go Greek once a week, but that may change. This down-to-earth, family-owned, authentic small Greek restaurant chain started with the first store opening in Hapeville in 1982. There are seven of these gems across Atlanta, with Tucker being home to the second location opening nearly 15 years ago. This place has got quite a bit of history.

We are guessing that many native Tuckerites (if that is actually a thing) have passed this locale hundreds of times thinking “Hey, we really need to try this place.” Let us break this down for you. A great authentic Gyro is hard to come by, and we’re not talking about the mall food court type, but the real deal. So, Nick Koulouris desired to bring the authentic flavors and freshness of Greek cooking to a quick serve setting in our town.

Now you know the back story, so on to the food. We kept it simple. To start, we ordered the Dolmades, also known as stuffed grape leaves. Then we moved on to a Gyro Wrap, Souvlaki Wrap and Grecian Potatoes. We left our desert options open for the time being. Our Mediterranean culinary adventure began with the Dolmades. They are green pods of “awesome,” filled with a flavor-packed mixture of seasoned rice and are served with a side of Nick’s famous secret sauces. “Often replicated but never duplicated”, we were told. Our Gyro wrap, a blend of seasoned lamb and beef, and the pork Souvlaki wrap were seasoned to perfection and partnered with red onions, tomatoes, more secret sauce, and were all tucked nicely into a wonderfully grilled, soft, thick wrap of pocket-less Pita bread. We also ordered a side of Grecian Potatoes. These crispy, super savory and herby wedges with Grecian seasonings were delicious all the way. While we were eating, we were already eyeballing a selection of dishes for our next visit, commencing with the Spanakopita and concluding with Baklava! Thank you, Grecian Gyro, for an excellent quick and uncomplicated dinner! Don’t take our word for it, but you really should, it’s a great choice for a fast and delicious, meal.

If you want some more background on Grecian Gyro, check out the website and read some of the reviews and articles they have amassed over the years. <https://www.grecian-gyro.com/> And let’s be honest, that tagline is awesome.

As we were contemplating dessert, we decided to hit another Tucker classic. Heading across the street to good ole DQ! For 30 years running, it has been hailed as one of the best Dairy Queens around. Smiles and consistency are a few reasons we love this place, and without carrying on, it had to be a Butterfinger Blizzard. We know everyone has their fav, but these two dudes will be hard-pressed to stray from this salty sweet peanut treat with a ground up candy bar and a long red spoon! It’s been rumored that it’s the #2 healthiest Blizzard on their menu.

Be sure to check these great Tucker standbys!  
 Grecian Gyro, 3989 Lawrenceville Highway  
 Dairy Queen, 4146 Lawrenceville Highway

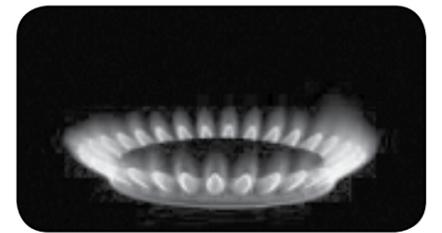
Let us know your thoughts. If you have an idea or a suggestion for the dudes, we would love to hear from you. Send comments to [staff@smokesignalnews.com](mailto:staff@smokesignalnews.com).

**techtalk**

by Susan Gilbert

*Time to Contract for Natural Gas Service: A gas company review*

October is the best month to contract for a fixed rate for your home’s natural gas service. That’s when the gas companies are making their commitments to buy the natural gas they will be providing over the coming months, and they typically offer the lowest fixed rates at this time. I recommend getting a fixed rate as opposed to going with a month-by-month variable rate because that exposes you to market price fluctuations. And while the price might look good in the summer or shoulder months, they rise in the fall and winter months when demand increases.



True Natural Gas has been serving customers here in Georgia for 19 years by offering good customer service and low rates. They are the only natural gas marketer with a “True Loyalty Program” for their residential customers. Loyal customers are key to keeping prices low, and True passes some savings along to encourage loyalty. Once eligibility is met, customers receive a monthly credit, and the longer you stay, the more you save. Stay long enough and your monthly customer service charge could be as low as \$3.45 a month versus \$5.95.

So, check what rate you are paying now and compare. If you are up for a renewal or on a variable rate, consider locking into a fixed rate plan. They are offering Smoke Rise residents who sign up by October 31st a 12-month fixed rate of \$0.499 per therm. Contact Janay at 678-423-5423 or [jmosley@truenaturalgas.com](mailto:jmosley@truenaturalgas.com).

According to Consumer Investigator Dale Cardwell, True is the first choice for natural gas in Georgia. You can read his review on his consumer advocacy site, [TrustDale.com](http://TrustDale.com).

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**The Birds of Smoke Rise: Part Two** *by Kathy Rhinehart*

The Ruby Throated Hummingbird is fascinating to watch. This jewel has a bright red throat, black chin and a mask that extends behind the eyes. The top of its head and back is an iridescent green. Its underparts are pale gray with a green wash on the sides of the belly. Females are much duller than males. The chin and throat are white with pale green streaks.

American Robins seem to always be on the lookout for a worm or a bug, as they are ground feeders. This beautiful thrush features a rusty brick red breast and a dark head and back. Both female and male are similar except the female appears paler.

The American Goldfinch is a ray of sunshine on a cloudy day. In the summer, males are a vivid yellow with a black cap and black wings. Females are a duller yellow and lack the black cap. In winter, both look the same and turn a pale brown/olive color.

House Sparrow males have gray crowns, black beards, white cheeks, and chestnut on either side of their faces and necks. Their backs are predominately brown with black streaks. Females are a gold brown color with streaks of black on their backs. House sparrows prefer feeding on the ground or on feeders that can accommodate both of their feet such as hopper feeders and tray feeders. They will feed from feeders with perches as well but do prefer a flat feeding space.

Mourning Doves are known for their low drawn-out calls sounding like someone in mourning, thus, the name. These doves are stocky with short legs. They are grayish in color and have little dark

spots on their backs. They pretty much hang out in pairs as they waddle under elevated bird feeders to swallow seeds and small gravel to help digest hard seeds. They are comfortable foraging on ground that is covered with shrubs.

Brown Thrashers are large birds, ten to twelve inches in length with long, curved bills and very long tails. They have two prominent white wing bars, rich brown color on its top side and creamy-white breasts heavily streaked with brown. Their faces are gray with yellow eyes. If you see a Brown Thrasher, it is a symbolic representation of stability, balance, and harmony. This bird reigns as Georgia's state bird.

Carolina Wrens are a common species residing in the eastern half of the United States. This shy bird can be hard to see, but it delivers an amazing number of decibels for its size. Follow its "tea kettle-tea kettle" or "Germany-Germany" and other piercing exclamations throughout your backyard. It has reddish brown upper parts with buffy underparts with a white throat and long white eyebrows. The wings and tails have bold darker barring, and the bill is long and thin.

House wrens are among the birds most likely to nest in a front door wreath. If a temporary wreath resident would not be welcome on your front door, be sure to relocate the wreath to a less conspicuous location before spring. This very small songbird is notable for its lack of field marks. The warm brown upper parts and tail are matched by a grayish breast. Males and females look alike, and both have the wren-like habit of cocking their

tails up when perched. The thin, slightly curved bill is ideal for capturing and eating insect prey.

Pileated Woodpeckers demand your attention by their size alone. It's the largest woodpecker in North America, ranging about 16 to 19 inches in length. Its massive excavations sometimes cause smaller trees to break in half. Many years ago, I saw one for the first time. It was destroying our deck. We had to have a lot of wood replaced as it continued showing up to proclaim its territory and attract a mate. We also had one that was roosting in one of our front yard trees about 15 years ago. It was amazing to see how large the cavity was in that tree. It was about the same size as the woodpecker's body. Sadly, that tree was struck

by lightning and had to come down.

Growing up in a small town in southwestern Mississippi with two older sisters was such a blessing. We are still super close and talk daily. When I grew up, I had the nickname 'bird legs'. I remember telling my Daddy that I was so tired of people calling me "bird legs". He said, "Baby Bumpin- one of these days you're going to take that as a compliment." Now I love my long lean bird legs and I also find I love watching



*White Breasted Nuthatch*

the long bird legs of my feathered friends.

Happy Birdwatching!

*Note: The owl photos in Part One were provided by Johnny Bankhead*

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**--The Smoke Signal Staff**



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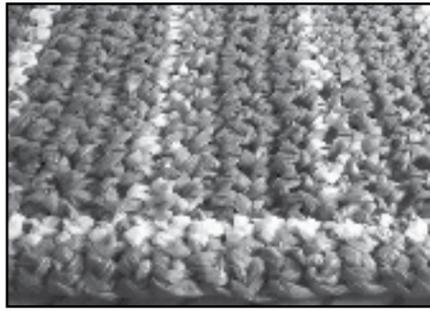
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**HOME SMART**

**Smoke Rise Morning Glories Project: Bags 2 Blankets**

by Vivian Nickelsen

Do you cringe when you see trash on our streets and highways? Are you upset by how wasteful our society is when it comes to packaging the items that we buy? Then, I have something that you can do to help our environment and help individuals who are less fortunate in our community at the same time. It is something simple that all of us can do. You can recycle all those plastic bags you get while out shopping. One of the commitments of the Smoke Rise Morning Glories Garden Club is to adopt environmentally friendly practices to make our community more aesthetically appealing to our neighbors. Last year our club started collecting plastic bags after hearing about a project called Bags 2 Blankets.



Bags to Blankets began about 5 years ago when a group of volunteers at a church in Saginaw Township, Michigan started collecting plastic grocery bags. The bags were then cut into strips, tied together to make Plarn (plastic yarn) then crocheted into bedding mats for the homeless. It takes about 700-800 bags, 30 hours, and a bit of patience to crochet a mat. During the Covid crises, a local woman, Janis Sims, was challenged by her sister in New Jersey to start a project that would be of help to her community. She happened upon the Bags 2 Blankets video on YouTube and decided that this could be her project.

At her volunteer job with NetWorks in Tucker she shared her idea with one of the directors. The director encouraged her to do it, stating she would love to be able to distribute the mats to some of Network's clients. After hearing about the idea, Tucker First United Methodist Church offered space that could be used for the project. Janis now leads a group who meet at the church the 4th Thursday of the month from 10-12 p.m. where bags are cut and knotted together to make Plarn. Others come with the mats they are crocheting and work on them while there. The completed mats are distributed through NetWorks and the Tucker Precinct Police Department, who often carry a mat in their patrol car to give out as needed. If you are interested in being a part of this project, please join one of Janis' meetings on the 4th Thursday at Tucker First United Methodist Church. If you would just like to collect the bags or make the Plarn, you can drop them off at the church office any time.

The Morning Glories Garden Club has been collecting plastic bags for the past year. Some ladies cut the bags into strips and knot them together to make the Plarn. The Morning Glories held their September meeting in person and participated in a Plarn workshop. Members who had not been involved were able to have hands on instruction. The Morning Glories hope you will do your part and will continue to help to our environment by eliminating landfill by recycling what is so prevalent in our community.

**Fall Armyworms: *Spodoptera frugiperda***

by Rachel Caines

A few weeks ago neighbors began noticing an influx of fall armyworms infiltrating their yards, turning green grassy lawns into dry fields seemingly overnight. Fall armyworm moths migrate to us via Florida every summer and while some years are better than others, this year has been particularly awful. Fall armyworms enjoy wreaking havoc on several common types of grass, such as Bermuda, Fescue, and Bluegrass; they don't care much for Zoysia. They also feast on fruits and vegetables like lettuce, corn, tomatoes, and blueberries.



The female armyworm moth lays hundreds and hundreds of eggs en masse which will hatch to become the larvae, a caterpillar of green, brown, or grey with an inverted "Y" on its head. They are small at first but can grow up to an inch and a half in length as they eat their way through your yard. In the younger stage, they simply eat the leaf tissue of the grass which in turn gives the grass a brown appearance. Since they are only eating the blade and not the root, your grass can recover from an infiltration. However, as the worms mature, their damage becomes more noticeable and severe. The smaller they are when you catch them, the better chance you have at preventing damage.

So how do you spot them? At the first sign of any dulling of your grass, you can do the "soap test" to determine their whereabouts as they tend to hide in the dirt. Simply mix an ounce of dishwashing soap with a gallon of water, soak a recently impacted area, and within a minute or so you'll start to see worms emerge from the ground.

Once you confirm an outbreak you'll want to consult with your local lawn care company immediately or attempt to tame them yourself as quickly as you can. The best options are more proactive, like spotting their egg masses earlier in the season, limiting outdoor lighting which attracts the moths, and strategically planting bird and insect-loving plants to help control the population of worms. Neem oil is a great natural option and it helps kill other harmful insects as well, like termites. If an insecticide is your only option, be sure to spray late in the evening when the worms are most active, and be mindful of your neighbors in the wind. But remember, the true key is in catching the outbreak early!

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## Amen, Let's Eat Figs!

by Joyce Ray

Covered Dish or "Potluck" meals are shared by many and give the opportunity for the cooks in your family, church, school, or clubs to share and become famous for their best recipes. No matter where it originated, the dish gets more credibility if it is called "Mama's Red Velvet Cake" or "Miss Louise's Chicken Casserole". I enjoy reading through my growing library of cookbooks generated as fundraisers for churches or schools and see some common versions of recipes and recall the person whose name is attached to it. One that piqued my interest was "Ethel's Funeral Cake." There is probably a story behind that! These recipes are the legacy of wonderful cooks and we are blessed that they shared them in print. Here are some of my favorites:

Using Ritz Cracker crumbs for almost any recipe gives a nice crunch and added buttery flavor. Just add 1/3 cup melted butter to 1 cup cracker crumbs and sprinkle on top of any vegetable casserole. This "secret," along with its competitor, "French fried onions" shows up on casseroles from squash, potato, broccoli to macaroni/cheese.

### Miss Helen's Broccoli Casserole

- 1 head fresh broccoli cut into bite size pieces
- 10 3/4 ounce can cream of mushroom soup
- 1 cup mayonnaise
- 1/2 cup medium chopped onion
- 2 cups grated cheddar cheese
- 2 eggs
- 1 full tube Ritz crackers
- 1/3 cup melted butter
- Salt/pepper to taste

Parboil or steam broccoli 3-5 minutes until still "crispy". Put in 9x13 baking dish. Mix mushroom soup, mayonnaise, onion, eggs, cheese, and seasonings and pour over broccoli. Mix cracker crumbs with softened butter. Sprinkle over top and bake at 350° for 40 minutes uncovered. By changing the soup, this sauce and topping can be used for many vegetables such as squash, asparagus, potatoes, green beans, or mixed variety. Add cooked chopped chicken and you have a quick main dish!

*This next recipe is very easy to put together and is presented in cookbooks with several names from "Chocolate Éclair Pie" to "Yum Yum Dessert." When you serve it, you get to name it!*

### Layered Chocolate Pudding Pie

- Crust: 1 stick melted butter  
1 1/2 cup all-purpose flour  
1 cup chopped pecans.
- Mix butter, flour and pecans thoroughly, press in bottom of 13x9x2" pan and bake for 25 minutes at 350°. Cool in pan.
- 1st layer: 8 oz cream cheese  
1 cup powdered sugar  
1 cup prepared whipped topping
- Mix until smooth and spread on cooled crust.
- 2nd layer: 1 small pkg vanilla instant pudding  
1 small pkg chocolate instant pudding  
3 cups milk

Add milk to mixes and stir until well blended. Add to top of Cream Cheese layer.

Topping: Spread with remaining whipped topping. Shave chilled Hershey bar into small pieces and sprinkle over top. Chill overnight. Cut in squares to serve.

*My mother-in-law was a wonderful cook and her specialty for reunions and church suppers was her recipe for Brunswick Stew. Between my husband and me, we have tried to replicate it and the following comes close. It cooks long and slow but is well worth the wait. I found to be a great recipe for my oversized crock pot but it could be cooked in roasting pan in oven at lower temp. It freezes well.*

### Ray Family Reunion Brunswick Stew

Cook one 3-4 lb broiler fryer chicken in crock pot on low overnight. Next morning, pull meat from bones and reserve 3 cups chicken for stew (the remainder makes great chicken salad).

Add 3 cups cooked chopped chicken to bottom of crock-pot. Brown 1 lb ground beef in skillet and add on top of chicken. Dice one large potato and one medium onion and add on top. Dice 1 cup of smoked sausage (about 1/2 package) for next layer. Pour on 2 (15 oz) cans of creamed corn and 3 (15 oz) cans crushed tomatoes, Add 1 cup barbeque sauce (we use Williams Bros. Original), 1/2 cup water, 2 teaspoons salt, 1 1/2 teaspoons black pepper and 1 teaspoon tabasco sauce. When mixture begins to boil - after about 1 hour - stir and continue to cook all day on low, stirring occasionally. It is ready to eat when potatoes are soft.

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