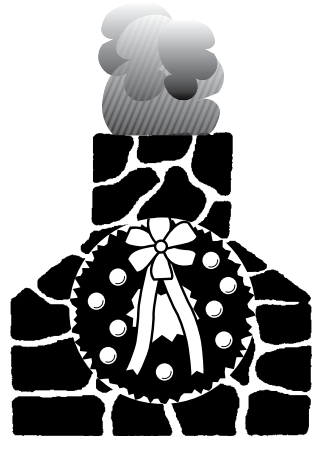


SMOKE SIGNAL



VOLUME 56, ISSUE 9

Serving the Smoke Rise Community since 1968

December, 2023

www.smokesignalnews.com



The Staff of the Smoke Signal
wishes our neighbors a
Joyous Holiday Season!

Look inside for...

Holiday Happenings	pg 3
Voters Approve SPLOST II and EHOST	pg 7
Do You Achoo?	pg 8
5 Ways to Reduce Holiday Stress	pg 10



Mountain Mums turn twenty and celebrate with former Mums and their sponsor club, Morning Glories.

The Mountain Mums Turn Twenty!

The Mountain Mums Garden Club celebrated their twenty-year birthday this past month! Many of you may not know that the Mountain Mums Garden Club was started by the Smoke Rise Morning Glories Garden Club in 2003. Joyce Ray, President at the time, Marsha Pittard and others started the club as a Morning Glories project for their daughters, and other young women in Smoke Rise who wanted to have their own garden club. On November 14, the two clubs and their spouses, as well as former members celebrated at the Gilbert's "waterfall house" in Kanawha. Many former Mums came. It was interesting to remember that many of the original Mums had four or more children at the time... one reason for the name Mountain 'Mums'. The 'waterfall house' was also at one time owned by previous Mum Ruby Schooler. We had several meetings there.



Rita Maloof models at Leading Lights

The Mums had several other activities in November: Their meeting at Maurine Fraser's was a 're-potting' tutorial where we all brought plants that needed re-potting. Lynne Malone gave us excellent tips and we all left with a smile and a 'like new' plant. Also in November, the Mountain Mums joined many other clubs for the Leading Lights Fashion show. Leading lights is a fundraiser for the DeKalb Federation of Garden Clubs. Our table of club

members sat with a club that has been in existence over 50 years! Later in November, the Mums will have a crafty Garden Therapy session with residents at Atria in Tucker.

The Mums also have an outdoor planting project for the Tucker Precinct in the works for the spring of 2024 and are considering 'planting' a new garden club in 2024.

The next Mum meeting will be their annual Christmas luncheon and Dirty Santa Swap. Location TBA. If you have any interest in being in a new garden club or visiting our club (we are close to full), call Mary Jacobsen 770-316-3225. We have a great, active, fun club!



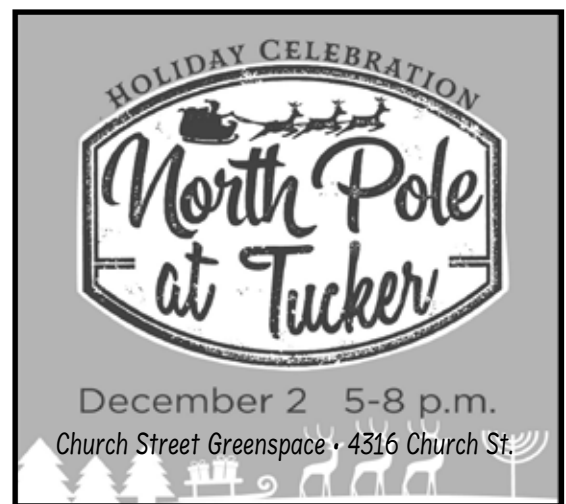
Mountain Mums enjoying Leading Lights Fashion Show

Don't miss these upcoming events!



"Holiday in Smoke Rise" Returns!

Saturday, December 2, 2023
at Smoke Rise Elementary School



Saturday, January 20, 2024, 9:30 a.m.
13th Annual

Tucker Walk to Remember

Smoke Rise Baptist (upper parking lot)

The event remembers seven lives lost too soon in our community due to driving accidents.

The walk is free. Donations are accepted to fund driving scholarships for deserving students in our area.

Check Facebook for possible weather issues

<https://www.facebook.com/TuckerWalkToRemember/>



Mountain Mums November hostesses Lynn Malone, Mary Jacobson, Anne Ballard, Maureen Fraser and Lucy White



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

DECEMBER 13

Please e-mail articles to:

staff@smokesignalnews.com

(Word documents or text file attachments preferred)

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

Deadline for classified ads is DECEMBER 10

SMOKE SIGNAL FLYER INSERT POLICY

Cost: \$150 by check to *Smoke Signal*

Deadline to Receive: 6:00 p.m. on 19th of month

Flyer inserts should be 8 1/2" x 11" (flat, not folded)

Please provide 2,300 copies

Reservation Required:

Contact Barbara Luton, (770) 491-6711 by 15th of month.

"Like" us on Facebook at

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or visit our website at www.smokesignalnews.com

Link to the digital version of the Smoke Signal at:

Archives (smokesignalnews.com)

Why and How to Recycle

Courtesy of *DeKalb County Georgia*

The average American creates 1,600 pounds of garbage a year. The typical DeKalb household that recycles saves 662 pounds of materials from going into the Landfill. If more residents recycle, it will help control rising sanitation costs, decrease the amount of solid waste sent to the Seminole Road Landfill, and create more green jobs in DeKalb County.

How to Recycle

The DeKalb County Sanitation Division offers a free, subscription-based, curbside residential single-stream recycling program. The single-stream feature allows for recyclable items to be commingled and loosely placed in a county-issued 40-gallon recycling bag, 18-gallon recycling bin, or 35- or 65-gallon recycling roll cart.

Glass Recycling

The County no longer accepts glass in curbside single-stream recycling. Recycled glass will only be accepted at county-operated glass recycling drop-off locations.

Acceptable Recyclable Items

- Newspapers, magazines, phone books and catalogs
- Cardboard boxes (flattened); no packing materials
- Cereal and pantry item paperboard boxes
- Paper, including copy and wrapping paper
- Frozen food containers (remove food liners and foil)
- Tissue and paper towel cylinder cores (no tissue or paper towels)
- Coated paper inserts
- Books, circulars, brochures, manila folders
- Envelopes, junk mail, shredded paper (bagged and tied)
- Plastics #1-7 that held food or beverage
- Aluminum cans

Unacceptable Items

- Styrofoam
- Paper towels, tissue, paper plates and cups
- Waxed paper, cellophane paper and plastic wrap
- Aluminum and tin foil
- Foam rubber material and packing material
- Plastic retail bags
- Dry cleaning bags; paper slips
- Cereal box liners, frozen food liners and foil
- Ceramic and aerosol containers
- Glass windows and mirrors
- Pesticides and herbicides
- Plastic and metal containers
- Petroleum and oil
- String, twine and strapping material

For more information visit www.dekalbcountyga.gov

Smoke Rise Baptist Church

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
 Jim Smith: Pastoral Care Associate
 Danny Vancil, Minister of Music & Worship
 Hannah Vassar: Minister of Youth and Congregational Connection
 Rashette Walker: Director of Weekday School
 Denise Burcham, Director of Academy of Arts
 Telephone: (770) 469-5856
 SmokeRiseBaptist.org

SUNDAY

9:45 a.m. - Attend Sunday School through Zoom or In-Person
 Schedule Available at smokerisebaptist.org/streamingatsmokerise/

11:00 a.m. - Attend Worship via Live Stream or In-Person
 Live Stream Available at smokerisebaptist.org/streamingatsmokerise/

WEDNESDAY

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

Eastminster Presbyterian Church

Pastor ~ Rev. J. Caleb Clarke III: cclarke@eastminster.us
 Executive Director of Ministries ~ Jeanine Fulton: jfulton@eastminster.us
 Director of Family & Outreach Ministries ~ Mark Sauls: msauls@eastminster.us
 Organist & Pianist ~ Carole Mitchell: cmitchell@eastminster.us
 Financial Coordinator ~ Jan Zabarac: jzabarac@eastminster.us
 Director of Weekday Ministries ~ Celeste Sears: csears@eastminster.us
 Office Coordinator ~ Christina Wetzel-Sizemore: csizemore@eastminster.us
 Music Intern ~ Jose Azurdia: jazurdia@eastminster.us
 Music Intern ~ Alessandra Roberson: aroberson@eastminster.us

5801 Hugh Howell Road ~ Stone Mountain, GA 30087
 770-469-4881 ~ www.eastminster.us

Sundays:

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

First Moravian Church

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

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

Incarnate Word Lutheran Church

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

Mountain West Church

Pastor: Mo Huggins
 (770) 491-0228 ~ www.mwchurch.com
 4818 Hugh Howell Rd., Stone Mountain
 Sunday Services: 8:30 a.m., 10:00 a.m. and 11:30 a.m.
 Thursday Neighborhood Bible Study with Pastor Mo: 10:00 a.m.
All Welcome!
 In-person and streaming online on Facebook and mwchurch.com

Smoke Signal Political Policy

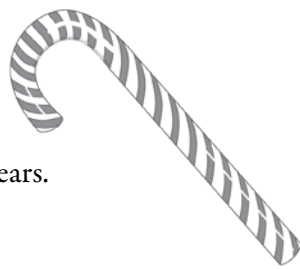
It is the policy of the *Smoke Signal* to print one article on political candidates prior to each primary and/or general election. The candidate must submit the article to the paper by deadline, in order for it to appear in the following month's issue. No staff member will be responsible for any political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

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

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!

Festive Season Events Lineup



Cookies with Santa at Zoo Atlanta

December 2 - 3
Individual ticket required for age 3 and up. Free for under 3 years.
For details go to www.zooatlanta.org

Poetry reading by Victoria R. Crosby

The Vibrary, 970 Main St, Stone Mountain
December 7 at 6 p.m.
Free event, all are welcome.

Illuminights: A Chinese Lantern Festival

Presented by Georgia Power, SouthState Bank and Kaiser Permanente
Runs till January 14, 2024. 5:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m., last entry at 8 p.m.
Advanced tickets required. Go to www.zooatlanta.org

Garden Lights, Holiday Nights at Atlanta Botanical Garden

Annual holiday extravaganza featuring millions of brilliantly colored LED lights and displays. Runs till January 14, 2024, 5:00 pm - 11:00 pm
Advance tickets required. Go to www.atlantabg.org

Holiday Model Trains

Atlanta Botanical Garden annual exhibition for kids and the kids-at-heart
Runs till January 14, 2024. 9 a.m. - 4 p.m and 5 p.m. - 11 p.m
Included in Garden Admission. Go to www.atlantabg.org

Holiday Ride-on Train at Atlanta Botanical Garden

All aboard the Botanical Express for a trip around the Great Lawn
Saturdays - Sundays, runs till January 7; 10 a.m. - 3 p.m.
Cost: \$3 - \$5. Go to www.atlantabg.org

Carols in the Garden at Atlanta Botanical Garden

Enjoy festive holiday music sung by Atlanta's premier carolers, the Tinseltones
Saturdays, December 2 - 16; 10:45 a.m. and 11:45 a.m.
For tickets go to www.atlantabg.org

Winter Wonderland Day Camps

Monday - Friday, December 18 - 22 & Tuesday, January 2, 9 a.m. - 4 p.m.
Ages 6 - 8. Advanced registration required. Deadline December 4.
Go to www.atlantabg.org

Stone Mountain Christmas

Summit Skyride, Scenic Railroad, festive music, millions of dazzling lights and more!
Runs till January 2, 2024
Go to www.stonemountainpark.com for daily schedules

The Paisley Sisters Christmas Special at ART Station

5384 Manor Drive, Stone Mountain
December 7 - 17, 8:00pm

Annual Christmas Festival, Parade, and Tree Lighting

Pictures with Santa & Mrs. Claus, kiddie train, face painting and many more.
922 Main Street - Municipal Parking Lot, Stone Mountain
Saturday, December 2 at 4 p.m. - 7 p.m.



Donations for Georgia Make-A-Wish Foundation

It's beginning to look a lot like Christmas, everywhere you go! That sentiment is definitely true at **1833 Smokerise Summit**. The Christmas season is in full swing, and the lights are shining brightly. As in years past, donations are being collected for the Georgia Make-A-Wish Foundation. Please note that 100% of collected donations go directly to this worthy charity. Help us exceed last year's total of \$13,380.75 and reach our new goal of \$15,000.00

To help achieve this goal we are asking individuals and local businesses to get involved and match donations or a portion of donations so that we can bring as much cheer as possible to local children through the Georgia Make-A-Wish Foundation. Since 2012, a total of \$74,665.73 has been collected for charity. For information on matching donations, please call Victor at 404-786-1330. Be sure to come by and enjoy the lights with your friends and family! Merry Christmas!

December 2023

City of Tucker Calendar

Unless otherwise noted, all meetings are held at
Tucker City Hall
1975 Lakeside Parkway, Suite 250B
Tucker, GA 30084

December 2, 5 p.m.

North Pole at Tucker
Church Street Greenspace, 4316 Church Street

December 4, 6:30 p.m.

Downtown Development Authority Meeting

December 5, 7 p.m.

Zoning Board of Appeals

December 11, 7 p.m.

City Council Meeting

December 25 & 26

City Hall is closed in observance of the Christmas Holiday
Visit tuckerga.gov for event details and meeting agendas

ADVENT EVENTS & SERVICES
EASTMINSTER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH



Sunday School - December 3rd - 24th @ 9:15 AM

Adults will have a 4-week study on *The Redemption of Scrooge* by Matt Rawls and based on Charles Dicken's *A Christmas Carol*. "We will learn about living with and for others in a world blessed by Jesus."

Children will use *Celebrating the Nativity Season* is a 5 lesson book beginning with Christ's coming and ending with the wise men bring gifts to Jesus. Each lesson includes Bible verses, fun activities and games.

Wednesdays

December 6 @ 6:15 PM - Hymn Sing: You name it and we will sing it! Come sing your favorite hymns.

December 13 @ 6:15 PM - Jeopardy Game Night: Challenge yourself with trivia in a fun atmosphere.

Sunday Worship

December 17 @ 10:30 AM

Lessons and Carols: Come experience our traditional worship service with nine lessons and carols.

December 24, Christmas Eve Morning @ 10:30 AM

This service will include a children's nativity play, music and homily.

December 24, Christmas Eve Night @ 5:30 PM

This traditional service will include communion, homily, and Silent Night by candlelight.

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THSF Hosts Third Annual Casino Night

The Board of Tucker High School Foundation (THSF), under the leadership of President Aerin Cole hosted their third annual Casino Night at the Tucker Recreation Center. This is one of the Board's largest fundraising events alongside the THSF Golf Tournament fundraiser hosted in the spring. 100% of the funds raised support Tucker High School. Attendees were treated to professional games of chance, including Blackjack, Craps, Roulette, and Texas Hold'em Poker, as well as a silent auction with some fantastic gift baskets and other prizes. Items in the silent auction were donated by THSF Board members, vendors, sponsors, and community supporters.



The THS Foundation Board

For the third year in a row, Alecia Jackson, THSF



Silent auction gift baskets and other prizes

Chair of the Casino Night Planning Committee, orchestrated an extraordinary evening of fun, food, fellowship, and community support. "I am so excited! This event continues to grow. We appreciate how everyone comes together to support the community and engage more volunteers. This enables us to better support teachers, students, and staff at Tucker High School. This year's event was our best one ever. If we play our cards right, we will be even better next year. Thank you to the entire Tucker Community for your support," said Jackson.



Mike Jones, Bart McNeil and Victoria Crosby

Authors Book Signing at Smoke Rise Baptist Church

Poet Victoria Crosby and author Mike Jones spoke recently at the Smoke Rise Baptist Church on Hugh Howell Road about their work. Associate Pastor Bart McNeil was the moderator.

Victoria Crosby spoke of her many poetry books with various themes, including inspirational, humorous, British, and political satire. She also spoke of her poetry that was included on her musical radio show Oasis that aired in New York for thirty years. At the request of the moderator, she read three of her inspirational poems, The Parable of the starfish, The Music of the Flowers, and The Broken Pieces. Mike Jones has written books which included One Minute Messages of the Reverend Dr. Chris George, taken from sermons given by the pastor at Smoke Rise Baptist Church over the past years. Mike's Laws of Life, Long on Education Shorter on Football, and Hey You Bum! Mike entertained the audience with his humorous quips.

It was a well-attended event by parishioners and guests who purchased books and had them signed by the authors. The event was part of the Wednesday night series, Journeys, which was also available livestreamed.

For further information visit www.smokerisebaptist.org

Smoke Rise Baptist Church Weekday School 50th Anniversary Celebrations in Pictures



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Shop local: grow our community!

By Angela Brooks

Even before the Halloween candy is on clearance, the marketing and advertising campaigns have hit the media, and retailers have put out the decorations for the next big sales rush. Yes, it's that time again. The holiday season is upon us.

November and December are the most lucrative times of the year for larger retailers and big-box stores. According to the National Retail Federation, these two months may be even more impactful for small businesses, since holiday sales can make up as much as 40 percent of their annual revenue.

First up is Black Friday which has become a staple in the American economy and a day of bargains galore for hardy shoppers who target big box stores, beginning at continually earlier pre-dawn hours the day after Thanksgiving.

Unlike Black Friday, shopping local and from small businesses probably requires more intentional thought for most of us, but it is exactly what our Tucker small business community needs to stay afloat.

According to the United States Small Business Administration (SBA), when shoppers spend \$100 at a small business, approximately \$48 of that stays within the community. Spend the same \$100 at a big box store or a national retailer and only \$14 stays local. Small businesses also bring new jobs and hire local talent.

"We want shoppers to support the small businesses we know and love that are the backbone of this community. It is important for businesses in Tucker and all around the country," said Tucker Mayor Frank Auman.

Last month, the mayor issued a formal Small Business Saturday Proclamation, at the November 13 City Council meeting, declaring November 25, 2023 a day where local residents made a concerted effort to come out and intentionally support Tucker's small business community.

Supporting local doesn't need to end on Small Business Saturday. Let's keep doing so throughout the holiday season and all year long. So, plan ahead and shop intentionally at our locally-owned small businesses!



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Principal Pamela McCloud and Assistant Principal Dr. Syreeta McTier (seated) are joined by veterans (standing) at Smoke Rise Elementary School.

Veterans Visit Smoke Rise Elementary School

By Barbara Luton

"Take a Veteran to School Day" was held at Smoke Rise Elementary School. This was the first year after Covid and school closings that this event returned. Mrs. Pamela McCloud, the principal, requested that it be brought back to the students.

Ten veterans participated: Frank Luton, Gerry Hutchinson, Joe Bruckner, Dennis Elson, Eileen Smith, Heidi Meraz, Rebecca Berry, Warren Hoffman, Christine Pareday and Greg Morrison. The Army, Navy, Marines, Air Force and Coast Guard were represented.



The veterans visited the classes and explained what Veteran's Day is, told about their experiences, why they joined the military and let the students ask questions. Several veterans brought pictures, hats and other items for show and tell for the youngsters. A good time was had by the veterans, and the group received positive feedback from the classes.

Refreshments were provided by the GFWC Stone Mountain Woman's Club. The Woman's Club started the "Take a Vet to School Day" several years ago. The club was pleased that Mrs. McCloud asked to bring this learning experience back to the school.

Bags for the Homeless



The GFWC Stone Mountain Woman's Club used "Blue Wrap", a sterile fabric used and discarded by hospitals, to make 15 tote bags, 3 sleeping bags and 4 large drawstring bags. A member constructed the bags, and others painted and decorated them. The items will go to the homeless and to those rescued from human trafficking.





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Scary Job! This skilled tree-removal person is about 70 feet above ground and cutting off 5 feet sections of this tree in Kanawha, that he flips over and lowers to the ground for grinding. When asked how he has the nerve to do that he says, "Because I am insane and that keeps me sane". If you ever think your job is challenging, remember the professionals who cut trees!



Smoke Rise Country Club Welcomes New Board Members

At the 2023 Annual Meeting on October 25th, Smoke Rise Country Club (SRCC) members elected two new Board Members, Michelle Hamilton, and Adam Anderson. Both Michelle and Adam bring much appreciated talents and expertise to the Board. Michelle lives on Kanawha Drive just outside the Club and enjoys spending time at the pool with her kids and socializing there with friends and meeting neighbors. She is a Certified Public Accountant and brings to the Board over 20 years of experience in both public accounting and private industry. She is currently the managing partner of a financial services business that provides accounting and financial advisory services to her clients. She formerly worked as the Director of Business Operations for The Westminster Schools for over 10 years where she was responsible for all the non-academic departments of the school including finance, legal, human resources, facilities, food service, campus store, and risk management. Prior to her role at Westminster, Michelle worked at KPMG specializing in audits in the insurance, airline, and not-for-profit industries. Michelle graduated Magna Cum Laude from the University of Georgia with both a Master of Accounting degree and a Bachelor of Business Administration. She is currently the Secretary of the Board of Providence Christian Academy.

Michelle is a native of Tucker and both of her parents graduated from Tucker High School. Michelle recently moved into the Kanawha neighborhood just outside the club entrance with her three children Ella (14), Vivy (11), and Price (7). Michelle's professional talent and experience, as well as her long-term commitment to the Tucker/Smoke Rise community, will make her an asset to the SRCC Board.

Adam Anderson, also a Kanawha resident, lives off Mountain Shadow along with his wife, Gia, and their five-year-old son, Sterling. When they moved here a few years ago, they were both eager to find ways of getting involved in the community and giving of their time and talent where they could be helpful. To that end, Gia became one of the volunteer Editors of our Smoke Signal, and Adam offered to serve on the Club's Board.



Adam Anderson is not just a strategist; he's a visionary leader with an unyielding commitment to social impact. Co-founder of a newly launched Denver-based business growth consulting firm, Adam ignited his journey in 2015 by developing a transformative nation-building framework for the Federation of Saint Kitts and Nevis government. This effort modernized governance in the Federation, fostering impactful public-private partnerships and setting a new standard for public service.

A tech-savvy innovator at heart, Adam has pioneered various digital platforms that have simplified and enhanced public service. Adam brings to the table years of experience in helping organizations thrive and will be leading the Club's strategic marketing, social media, and community outreach.



We look forward to seeing the impact these two accomplished professionals will bring to the Smoke Rise Country Club!

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NEWS YOU CAN USE

By Aviva Hoffmann



Voters Approve SPLOST II & EHOST

The Board of Registration and Elections (BRE) has officially certified the results of the November 7, 2023, general municipal/special election. More than 69,700 registered voters in DeKalb County exercised their right to vote. This turnout represents approximately 14% of the more than 506,000 registered voters in the county. In Tucker, we voted with a slightly higher percentage - with nearly 16% of registered voters participating. (Plenty of room for increased participation in future elections – in my opinion!)

Notably, almost 75% of DeKalb County votes cast in this election supported the second continuation of the Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax (SPLOST II). This is a significant victory for the county, as SPLOST II has the potential to generate up to \$850 million dedicated exclusively to capital improvement projects, including roads, buildings, vehicles, major equipment, and other long-term enhancements. It's worth noting that this one-cent sales tax, like its predecessor SPLOST I, does not apply to unprepared foods or medicine.

The success of SPLOST II follows the approval of SPLOST I in November 2017. It is expected to generate more than \$388 million countywide by its expiration in March 2024. The upcoming six-year SPLOST II, commencing after SPLOST I concludes, is anticipated to generate up to \$850 million for capital improvements countywide.

In addition to voting on candidates and the SPLOST II measure, DeKalb County voters also endorsed the Equalized Homestead Option Sales Tax (EHOST), a pivotal move to continue to alleviate the tax burden on eligible DeKalb County homeowners. Both EHOST and SPLOST II had to be approved for either one to go into effect. The recently approved EHOST, set to replace its 2017 counterpart, is projected to save qualifying DeKalb homeowners \$1 billion during its six-year duration.

In the City of Tucker, the utilization of SPLOST I funds has already made a substantial impact, with more than \$19 million allocated to resurfacing more than 90 miles of city streets, constructing five miles of sidewalks and trails, and enhancing intersections. Beyond road infrastructure, the Parks & Recreation department is also benefiting from the additional penny tax, undergoing significant upgrades.

The joint approval of SPLOST II and EHOST signifies a promising phase in DeKalb County and its municipalities' ongoing commitment to advancing strategic development and enhancing the quality of life for residents. Stay informed about the latest developments in SPLOST I & II projects by visiting the City of Tucker's website and accessing over-

all updates on DeKalb County's website:

<https://www.tuckerga.gov/>
<https://www.dekalbSPLOST.com>



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**Terror in the Daytona Cut:
A Boating Adventure (Part 3 of 3)**

a conclusion of the Pittard's memorable and terrifying experience on the Atlantic

By Kanawha Residents, Buddy & Marsha Pittard

Knowing Robert was the more seasoned captain, I tried to follow his lead. If he thought it was best to try to escape by heading out to sea, I would follow. If he turned back, I would turn too.

Marsha now had my shirt and some of my shoulder skin clutched in her right fist. I still couldn't take my eyes off the water. I had to try to dodge the waves, the jetty and the "Lady Di." I could not throttle back more, and I was still overtaking Robert.

Now, I was steering port of Robert and things were not improving. There was no possibility of radio contact. The violent tossing about was far too severe to even let go with one hand to use the mike.

The "Lady Di" began a turn to starboard. It was obvious she could not take any more of this. It appeared the diving and pounding waves were going to take us both down. Now we must turn. I must judge a confused and violent sea. I must find a hole in the waves. I crested, a huge wave crashed down the other side, and increased my throttles. Then I saw my hole... It was the time to make my move!

I did not reverse an engine. I throttled both up to 4,000 rpm and came about hard to port. She responded beautifully; turned on a dime. But a huge wave caught us in the stern driving the bow farther under than we had ever seen. Bless her heart, she came up again. We were now surfing the massive jumble of waves headed back toward the Cut and the safety of the ICW. I needed some room to avoid crashing into the jetty. Slowing the engines, I was able to maneuver behind Robert.

This was a new sensation. Although I was still mostly vertical to the waves the side push was one scary feeling! I quickly came around and back to perfectly vertical. Surely Robert could see I was way too close and would know to get out of my way. I uselessly yelled at him into the roar. "Speed up Robert! Hit those throttles!" Of course, he never heard me, but he must have glanced over his shoulder and saw me bearing down on him. He throttled up, I throttled down, and we cruised back into the Cut, my bow tailgating his stern but safely behind the jetty.

The seas immediately calmed, I throttled back to idle and looked around. Just like it had started in an instant, it ended in an instant. Marsha was not crying; she was in control, but clearly shaken. Our puppy, Zippy, was staring at me from the floor between my legs aghast that I could allow him such discomfort.

Looking back, I asked myself, what had happened? How had we let this get so out of hand? What were our mistakes? These are a few:

1. Listen to the weather report and believe it! 20 MPH winds are 20 MPH winds.
2. We should not have gone out on an unfamiliar Cut, even in a lesser wind.
3. We should have put our life vests on before entering rough seas. We didn't realize we would not have time later.
4. If there are two separate boats, the least experienced captain should hang back while the first boat tests the waters. Never go into a constricted area together.
5. Plan for the worst circumstance. We could not have imagined these. Our emergency plan did not include the fact that we may be hanging on and unable to perform anything beyond hanging on.

Without our turn, you would be reading about this incident as a tragedy at sea. Our main lesson was to have a respect for the Sea. We are only guests upon her. She has no fury against us, but her massive power and immensity means she can destroy us while merely rolling over in her sleep.

HEALTH NOTES:

Do You ACHOO??

By Cheri Schneider, M.D.



I come from a family of sneezers. And when I say this, I mean we sneeze loudly. I remember my grandfather sneezing so loudly, my grandmother would exclaim “Babies make noise!” I thought it was just a funny quirk or attention getting ploy. Strangely, my father also sneezed like this and a brother... and then there was me! I discovered my sneezes were not only loud, but I sneezed in salvos of 10. I just could not dampen the force of the sneeze or stop it, no matter what I did.

Another sneeze family secret is that we sneeze in bright sunlight. This is called the Photic Light Reflex or ACHOO syndrome (autosomal dominant compulsive helio-ophthalmic outbursts of sneezing). In ACHOO, these fits of explosive, uncontrollable sneezing are hereditary -with about 50% of children of “sneezers” inheriting the trait. Surprisingly, around 20-35% of people in the world have this trait. Most trait holders sneeze in sets or salvos of up to 40 sneezes at a time. My stop spot seems to be about 10. Other light sources that can cause photic sneezing include coming out of the dark into the light, shining a flashlight in the eyes or staring at a lightbulb.

What causes sneezing? Most researchers think the trigger is related to the trigeminal nerve. The trigeminal nerve comes out of the skull and traverses the side of the face near the ear, breaking into three branches. One branch goes to the forehead and eye. One to the side of the nose and nearby cheek and one to the jaw. The branch going to the side of the nose-also serves the sensitive interior of the nose- is the culprit. It seems that when the nose gets cold, or experiences a change in temperature, or dust in the air, the sensory part of the nerve is triggered and alerts the brain to take a sharp intake of air and then follow with a sharp exhalation of air. In some people, having a full stomach can cause a sneeze.

Some people think that in ACHOO, impulses from the optic and nasal branches of the trigeminal nerve get mixed up when the pupil constricts on sudden exposure to light.

Can sneezing be dangerous? Yes, it can. Most of the danger surrounds what you are doing when you sneeze. As you know, it is impossible to sneeze with your eyes open. If you sneeze while driving, or when you are operating machinery, you could be in or cause a wreck or be injured. When ACHOO happens to me, I try to pull off the road. My ten sneezes could be trouble if I am traveling on a freeway at 70 miles per hour!

Next time you see someone come outside into the sunlight and start to sneeze, don't assume they have a cold or virus. They may have the very annoying ACHOO. And if you are one of the lucky ones that can suppress a sneeze with a tiny achoo! Be thankful. There are about 30% of your friends who can't help but Achoo!

Out the Window

Busy Squirrel

Article and Illustration by Beth Henson



Glancing out the kitchen window, I couldn't help but notice that the beautiful crimson and gold fall foliage had transitioned to the bare landscape of early winter. Of course, there was always the exception of the stately large oak at the end of the driveway, that would continue to drop its crisp, brown leaves until spring arrived. Snuggly perched in the upper limbs, I spied Squeaky's large, raggedy squirrel nest, and not surprisingly below, there he sat on a gnarled root with a rather over-sized acorn in his mouth. I knew he would be soon furiously caching (burying) his prize to save for a later meal this winter.

In fact, Squeaky will use a complicated method called “spatial chunking” to sort out and bury all his gathered nuts by size, type, and taste. Most nuts he will locate near his cozy nest, but he can use up to a seven acre radius to hide his wares. Surprisingly, Squeaky also uses the method of “deceptive caching”, pretending to bury an imaginary nut to throw off other squirrels on his food locations. All winter he will forage for his buried treasure by memory and his keen sense of smell. He will have left himself more than enough provisions and 74 percent of his buried nuts will stay unfound! Amazingly, squirrels are almost solely responsible for our oak tree regeneration!

Thanks for helping our earth by planting lots of trees, Squeaky! Happy hunting!

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OUR TRIP TO THE GALAPAGOS (Part 1)

By Bob Espy, President, *The Smoke Signal*

Day 1 - Galapagos

Upon arrival in the Galapagos, by way of Quito and Gauyaquil, we passed through an airport inspection point where our luggage was inspected by dogs to ensure that no foreign plants or animals were introduced to the islands. Our TCT (Transit Control Card) and INGALA migratory card were checked and stamped. Our Galapagos National Park fee had been paid before arrival. Our family met our Knowmad Adventures guide and had to change into our swimsuits in the airport restroom, before we headed to the Itabaca Channel to explore its turquoise waters. While waiting for everyone to change, it was neat to have two- to three-foot-long iguanas walking around like squirrels. At the Itabaca Channel, we were able to snorkel and kayak. The Galapagos wildlife was unbelievable. We saw blue-footed boobies, sea lions, brown pelicans, a variety of herons, white-tipped reef sharks and one Hammerhead (as we snorkeled). The sharks were about 10 - 15 feet from us. After we finished, our boat glided through red mangrove forests and along lava rock cliffs on water so clear, you could see the sea life below in the shallows. Our family then headed up to the highlands to visit a Giant Tortoise reserve, explore a system of natural lava tunnels, and enjoy lunch at the reserve. This was fun to be able to eat only five feet from the Giant Tortoises in their natural surroundings.



Day 2 - Santa Cruz Island

We enjoyed a full day at leisure at Finch Bay and relaxed by the pool and beach. We then went to the town of Puerto Ayora that had a fish market where sea lions and pelicans await the fresh catch! While in town, we stopped by the Charles Darwin Research Station, and the "rearing in captivity" program for the giant tortoises was very educational. Seeing the efforts and results of all the fieldwork done in the name of science to protect this natural oasis did our hearts good. We then went to Las Grietas swimming hole where we snorkeled. This was neat, because it was a steep canyon filled with water, fish, eels, and crabs. We reached Las Grietas along a walkway and path from the hotel through a mangrove and opuntia cactus-filled landscape, passing by old salt mines and more iguanas.

Day 3 - Bartolomé Island

After an early morning breakfast, we left for the Itabaca Channel to board Finch Bay's Sea Lion Yacht and set sail for Bartolomé Island. Bartolomé's unique volcanic geography and colors covering its terrain did not fail to captivate the imagination. It took two-hours sailing to reach Bartolomé. We then took a mile walk along the wooden boardwalk and staircase of 366 steps where we stopped at lookout points along the way. At the top of the stairs, we had one of Galapagos' most famous panoramic views: the tilted pinnacle rock, the golden beach of Bartolomé and the impressive lava fields of Santiago Island. Descending back to shore, we hopped into a panga that took us on a refreshing coastal exploration of around 30 minutes ending at beautiful Sullivan Bay. After changing into our swimsuits, we headed out to explore the colossal Pinnacle Rock. As we snorkeled, we enjoyed close encounters with colorful schools of fish, sea lions, whitetip reef sharks, and Galapagos penguins. My son, Dad, and I were lucky enough to swim with the penguins inches from our face!

Be sure to check out the January issue of *Smoke Signal* for Part 2 of our exploration around Galapagos Islands!



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Mystic Seaport Museum (Part 2)

By Joel Gilbert, Staff Writer

We shot this picture early one morning from the back of our boat that we lived aboard last summer moored in the Mystic Seaport Museum Marina. The water was glass-smooth as no boats had yet disturbed it, and the three boats mirrored perfectly, including the clouds above.



Susan and I were fortunate to get a slip for most of the summer here at the Mystic Seaport Museum, the world's leading maritime museum. This was special because they only have about 20 slips total, and of those, only a handful can handle a boat the size of ours.

The word museum is misleading in the name of this place. Most think of a museum as a building or group of buildings. This is not a building, but rather 19 acres on the Mystic River including a recreated New England coastal village, a working shipyard, formal exhibit halls, a planetarium, classrooms for teaching everything from celestial navigation to rope making, and state-of-the-art, climate-controlled storage facility housing millions of maritime artifacts.



Smoke Signal Staff writer Joyce Ray and her husband, Gene, were guests on the Gilberts' boat, *Interactive*, this October at the Mystic Seaport Museum Marina.

In addition to all that, the Museum is best known for being home to more than 500 historic watercrafts, including a recovered Viking ship and four National Historic Landmark vessels, most notably the 1841 whaleship *Charles W. Morgan*, the only commercial whaling ship still in existence.

The other vessels pictured are to the left, the *Amistad* replica schooner built in the Mystic shipyard in 2019 for the movie by the same name. Much of that powerful movie was filmed here in the Mystic Museum using the historic ships and reconstructed village as backdrop.

The *Amistad* is flanked by the New York City Fire Fighter boat that was retired not long after it fought the 911

fires. Several volunteers from the NYC Fire department come up most every day to give tours and lovingly do maintenance work on the aging boat.

A stroll through the historic village lets visitors experience firsthand from staff historians, docents, interpreters, storytellers, musicians, and craftspeople just what life was like to earn one's living from the sea. In the Henry B. DuPont Preservation Shipyard, they can watch shipwrights keeping the skills and techniques of traditional shipbuilding alive as they restore and maintain the Museum's ship collection and historic ships that are brought here from all over the world to be restored.

What stunned me was how much of the history of the United States rested on sailing ships. Whaling in the early 1800's killed over 2 million whales, a business that accounted for about 20% of the total U.S. economy. Perhaps you can remember what whales produced besides oil for lubrication and lighting. The flexible whalebones were used for umbrellas, corsets, shirt collars, and frames for hooped skirts.

Most of us have forgotten all of this and are repelled by the whole idea of killing these incredible creatures, but 200 years ago, this was big business with over 2,000 ships in service. As you walk around the museum and see the scale of these ships and realize how much physical work this business entailed, you are struck with awe.

You are also struck by the fact that these vessels, along with some for fishing or carrying cargo or passengers were powered by wind and sailed for long periods of time. Whaling ships were often at sea for 3-5 years, not returning home until they had filled their barrels of whale oil. The "Widow Walks" atop most of the finer homes along the marina are testament to the worry and loss these people came to know as part of the business.

We have come to think of a visit to Mystic Seaport Museum like a Disney vacation only this one is immersive, educational, real, and awe inspiring. We hope everyone will keep Mystic in mind for a visit or vacation. Next month, more about the reconstructed maritime village and the kids summer camp programs for anyone so fortunate to get enrolled.

Five Ways to Reduce Stress During the Holiday Season

By Amber Voss

In a season where we should be slowing down to enjoy the holidays, oftentimes, we find overwhelm and stress instead. The holidays can be a time of great enjoyment and stress. More often than not, they are a blend of the two. We all live busy lives. How do we navigate the upcoming holidays with a little less stress?

Here are five tips to help you:

- 1) Say no. "NO" is a complete sentence. Let's face it - you can't be in three places at the same time. Inevitably, there will be multiple events happening at the same time on the same day. Choose the one that will bring you the most joy and say no to the others or to all. Let's normalize saying NO to a few or all of the things.
- 2) Plan ahead. Take time to plan a holiday schedule that works for you and yours. If you're hosting, be certain to stay organized. Prepare as much as you can before the day of and delegate to your family members for help. Also, don't wait to the last minute to fight the crowds for groceries or gifts.
- 3) Schedule your self-care daily. What does self-care look like for you? Healthy food, exercise, quality sleep, or something else? Daily exercise is a great way to reduce anxiety and improve your mood. Whether it's a walk, yoga, a workout, or riding your bike, prioritize your health and well-being daily. Additionally, be sure to prioritize your sleep by turning off your phone well before bed time and getting a solid 7-8 hours each night.
- 4) Take a break. Yes, take a break when you need one. Personally, I love nothing more than an afternoon nap. Or, picking up a good book can be just as restful. Perhaps taking 10 minutes to breathe and clear your mind helps. Consider taking a break from social media, your phone, the news, or email too. We all need to do this from time to time. It is okay to silence the notifications and put on "Do not disturb." The world can wait for you to take care of your needs first.
- 5) Be realistic. You are ONE person and while you may feel like a super hero on most days (and you are!), you don't have to do it all by yourself. Be realistic with how much you can and are willing to do this holiday season. Release any perfectionist tendencies, guilt, and shame. Do what's best for you!

Now go have fun, eat, drink and be merry. And don't forget to rest and relax too. Happy Holidays!

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Smoke Rise Garden Club Updates

Our November meeting was held at the home of Deb Halley with co-hostesses Victoria Crosby and Denise Finley providing the refreshments. This month the members of the club brought Christmas paper-wrapped shoe boxes and filled them with lots of toys, drawing/coloring books, puzzles and more. We filled over 50 boxes, and they will be taken to Children's Healthcare of Atlanta Hospital



Smoke Rise Garden Club members at the November meeting.

for the nurses to distribute to the young patients between Thanksgiving and Christmas. The Club has been doing this project for over 25 years now.

Deb Halley and Pat Mitchell planted pansies and snapdragons at the Tucker Fire Station No. 5 on Lawrenceville

Highway. On July 28 the City of Tucker and DeKalb County officials gathered to kick off demolition of a former Department of Public Health building at 4329 Cowan Road to make way for a new Fire Station No. 5. It should be complete by 2026.

On November 16 several members of the Club attended The DeKalb County Federation of Garden Clubs 19th annual Leading Lights luncheon and fashion show while celebrating its 75th anniversary at Callanwolde.



Christmas paper-wrapped shoe boxes filled with toys

We will be celebrating the holidays with a Christmas luncheon December 9 at The Commons restaurant at Stone Mountain Park.

Our club meets on the first Monday of the month September through May at 7:00 p.m. in a member's home. If you are interested in joining us for a meeting, please contact Gina Dilley at ginadilley@gmail.com.

Smoke Rise Garden Club Receives Top Marks

The Smoke Rise Garden club provided both the refreshments and the mini flower show at the recent Federation General meeting at Callanwolde. President Victoria Crosby, 1st Vice President Denise Finley, and members Pam Erdman and Dee Montgomery attended and prepared the delicious refreshments.



Dee Montgomery, Victoria Crosby and Denise Finley

SRGC member Gina Dilley prepared a design called, "In Celebration of my Backyard," all with leaves, twigs and pods from her garden. Member Janice Gummersall provided two ferns from her garden: Fluffy rightb6reddf5tuffles and Japanese tassel. Victoria Crosby provided a Gloriosa Dahlia from hers, and States Finley grew the five perfect key limes. All these received top marks from the judges.

At the Redbud District Garden Club of Georgia meeting the week prior, the President of the Smoke Rise Garden Club, Victoria R. Crosby, was presented with a certificate of Honorable Mention for community improvement work during 2022.



Victoria Crosby with Glennadelyn Hallman and Gale Thomas

Smoke Rise Garden Club is a member of the DeKalb Federation of Garden Clubs Redbud District, Garden Club of Georgia, and the National Garden Club. SRGC meets on the first Monday of the month at 7pm and welcomes new members. For further information contact membership chairman Gina Dilley at ginadilley@gmail.com

Winter Interest in the Garden by Linda Karr

Year-round interest in the garden takes some planning but is very rewarding. It's wonderful to look out during the cold winter months and see pops of color in our garden which is especially delightful on the few occasions we have snow when it stands out against the brilliant white. It can absolutely brighten your mood during the cold months. I challenge you to think beyond just blooms and look at plants that incorporate special touches in the landscape such as bark color, texture, ground covers, foliage, and grasses. Let's look at which plants can give you interest during the winter here in Stone Mountain.

Perennial options include Lenten rose, arborvitae fern, hardy cyclamen, snowdrop, Christmas fern, autumn fern, ginger, green and gold, crocus, partridgeberry, heuchera, and yucca. Annuals, very popular and reliable winter plants, include snapdragon, kale, mustard, pansy, viola (have a spreading effect), and cabbage.

And don't forget bulbs that bring color during late winter and early spring such as tulips, hyacinths (very fragrant), ornamental onions, and daffodils. Plant daffodils with differing flowering times in swaths to enjoy a longer flowering season.

Blooming winter shrubs include evergreen sasanqua and japonica camellias (white, pink, or red flowers) which can bloom from late fall to early spring; evergreen tea olives, evergreen hollies, pyracantha, edgeworthia (fragrant), some evergreen rhododendron, winter daphne odora (fragrant), American beautyberry (fruit), Indian Hawthorn (fruit), flowering quince (late winter), loropetalum (foliage for winter, late winter bloomer). For evergreen, bark, and foliage interest (no flowers): Florida anise, oakleaf hydrangea, and spirea.

Trees can provide brilliant colors with their stems and branches such as red twig dogwoods and coral bark Japanese maple. Some will flower in late winter such as the Okame Cherry (fragrant) and some magnolias.

Since it is the holiday season you can use all these resources from your garden to decorate. Evergreens can provide foliage filler in vases as well as being used for wreaths, mantles, and table decorations. Berried branches provide some color. Rosemary and anise can add fragrance. Grasses add height and texture and can be sprayed, if desired, for accent color.

While you're enjoying your winter garden, you're also providing either shelter or food for wildlife: something for you and something for them! No matter what month, our gardens can be a beautiful thing to behold!

Monarchs and Morning Glories

November's meeting featured Susan Myers, Master Naturalist and Coordinator of the Integrated Monarch Project in Georgia. Susan loves the monarch and her enthusiast presentation of the monarch's life cycle was fascinating. A self-described Monarch fanatic, Susan has traveled to Mexico fifteen times to experience the winter migration. From November to April each year millions of monarchs travel south from the United States to twelve locations in Mexico west of Mexico City. They roost in the same ornamental fir forest and even the same tree each year. Butterflies are tagged and their journey and life cycle can be analyzed. Susan urged gardeners to be sure to have host plants in our gardens to promote the life cycle of this species of butterfly and also the other butterflies in our state. There are four main kinds of butterfly weed

that serve as host plants. The *Asclepia tuberosa* is one of the varieties and can be found in certain nurseries in our area. For sourcing contact the GA Native Plant Society's website.

This meeting was also our club's opportunity to donate toys and books and other new items to the Wellroot organization. As pictured, our club has always greeted this with lots of enthusiasm! Who doesn't like toy shopping for such a wonderful cause? The Wellroot headquarters is located in Northlake and our Chairman Ruth Ann Hill and others delivered the items immediately after our meeting. In early December the organization hosts a gathering for the foster families to select donated gifts for their foster children to enjoy on Christmas.



The Morning Glories will also be celebrating by decorating the historic

Wells-Brown House in Stone Mountain Village on November 30th. This tradition began in 2013 and for the last ten years we have decorated the exterior with garland on the balcony, a wreath on the door and an arrangement on the gate. The interior is decorated with fresh greenery on the mantles and staircase garland and cloved oranges. Members use greenery from their gardens and add festive bows and simple natural décor.

Our December 12th meeting will be a fun event with brunch and waxing amaryllis for holiday décor in our homes. For information about the club, please contact Janet McGinnis at 770 939-8878.

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All classified ads are limited to 20 words, with the Smoke Signal reserving the right to edit any copy. Ads are \$240 per year. Please submit a copy of ad to staff@smokesignalnews.com with your full name, address and phone number. Make checks out to Smoke Signal and mail to P.O. Box 1038, Tucker, GA 30085. We require full payment prior to ad placement.

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

Classified Ads

BUYER LOOKING FOR SMOKE RISE HOME

Realtor representing couple looking for owner-financed home in Smoke Rise area with 50-75% cash down. Further details, contact Rick (828) 342-2979.

OLIVER'S PAINTING

I am an Interior painting specialist. Free estimates, 30 years' experience, Tucker resident. Call/Text Oliver Cunningham 770-598-7567

Heating and Air Conditioning; Water Heaters Installed; Gas Lines Installed; Commercial and Residential Professional Technicians: James Maceco; 770-365-4258

CENTRAL VACUUM SERVICES

Installation Repair Maintenance Licensed/Insured Residential/Commercial Over 20 years experience Call Steve at 770-630-1620

www.CentralVacuumServices.com

A KICKIN' & PICKIN' ESTATE SALES We stage, price and sell your treasures and offer liquidation and cleaning services. Contact Rick Kicklighter at 678-234-6956.

Need a professional pet sitter? Call Critter Sittin' Sisters at 404-409-3765. We make your pets smile!

NICK'S TOW & TRANSPORT

SR resident offering local & long-distance towing services in metro Atlanta. Flatbed truck, low car friendly. Nick 678-231-9547.

DOG BOARDING:

Loving dog care. Small, selective, safe, fun. Your dog will be glad you went on vacation! Call 770-510-8641 or visit www.theshepherdsglen.com

PLUMBER

Plumbing-Electrical-H.V.A.C Repairs-Replacement New Installation Family Owned and Operated 38 yrs Experience, Senior Discount Call Troy-770-256-8940

AFFORDABLE LAWN CARE

Mowing, edging, pruning, trimming, etc. Reasonable, dependable, insured. Call Mark at 404-697-7426.

Auto body shop local serving Tucker, Stone Mtn, Smoke Rise. Honest, reasonable, quality work. Providing home-to-shop transportation. Call Dave 770-609-8759.

COMPUTER AND NETWORK SALES AND SERVICES

Trusted Company working with local community since 1995. References available. 770-979-1800 www.theplink.com

HOUSEKEEPER - Reliable, experienced housekeeper for several years in Smoke Rise area. Hours are flexible. References available. Contact Sabina @ 770-634-0463

WAGNON LANDSCAPE GROUP

Residential, commercial, design and installation. Year-round maintenance, light tree work and cleanups. Licensed/insured SR resident with SR references. 770-381-3697.

PETS, PAPERS, & POSIES.

I'll take care of them while you're away. Smoke Rise resident 40+ years. Karen Bouchard. 404-472-7348. petspapersandposies@gmail.com

DOG GROOMING

Smoke Rise Resident Call/Text Lisa 404-444-7763 Loving Care for your Under 40lb Furbabies Professional Groomer since 2006

Greg Buys Vintage T-Shirts: I pay cash for clothes made before the year 2000. Call or text me at 470-879-4231

PIANO TUNING AND REPAIRS Over 40 years of professional experience. Contact Smoke Rise resident Steve Duncan at 770-414-4766 or lswd@att.net



Amen, Let's Eat!

by Joyce Ray

Appetizers and cocktails before dinner serve a welcome purpose for more than just giving your guests a chance to meet new people or get re-acquainted with old friends. For the hostess, it can be staged in an out of the kitchen place for guests to hang out while last minute touches are put on dinner. If you want to keep it simple, just varieties of cheese and crackers will be enjoyed by all. Well planned charcuterie boards are beautiful, offer a variety of foods, and can be a visual masterpiece if you have the time to put them together. Why not enlist your artistic friend to bring one, or ask some of your guests to bring their favorite appetizer? No matter what you choose, remember to enjoy your own party and your guests. They will feel welcome if you are not stressed.

The first recipe is for Mini Brie Phyllo Shells that are quick to make with frozen Phyllo shells.

- 3 oz light brie (skin removed cut into (15) 1/2-inch cubes)
- 4 tbsp raisins
- 4 tbsp chopped walnuts or pecans
- 2 tbsp honey
- 15 Mini Phyllo Shells (Athens)

Instructions: Preheat oven to 325°F.

Combine raisins, chopped nuts and honey in a bowl and mix well. Arrange mini shells on a baking sheet. Fill mini shells with cheese (each piece of cheese weighs about 0.2 oz). Top with sticky raisin/nut mixture and bake 5-7 minutes, or until the cheese melts. Serve immediately.

What's a party without Cheese? This Pistachio Crusted Goat Cheese Log can be made days ahead and sliced to spread on top of small toast rounds or crackers.

- 1 8oz. block cream Cheese
- 8 oz. log goat cheese, softened
- ½ cup finely chopped dried apricots
- 3 T. finely chopped green onions
- 2 teaspoons chopped fresh thyme
- ½ teaspoon sea salt
- ¼ teaspoon black pepper
- 1/3 cup roasted, salted pistachios, chopped

Beat cream cheese and goat cheese with an electric mixer until smooth. Beat in apricots and next 4 ingredients until well blended. Turn mixture out onto a large piece of plastic wrap and use plastic wrap to form into an 8x2 inch log. Wrap in plastic wrap and refrigerate until firm. To serve, unwrap cheese and roll in pistachios to coat. Chill until ready to serve.

Sometimes offering sweets in small bites is preferable, especially for the guests who just want to try a little bit of each dish. Mini pecan pies or cheesecakes are adaptable for this purpose. Just make your dessert by the recipe you always use and instead of making a big pie, divide it into muffin cups lined with pre-made pie crust, graham cracker crust or pre-made phyllo shells. Of course, you will want to watch closely so they don't get over baked. You can do this for a variety of desserts that can be used in many Holiday setting. Most custard pies freeze well so they can be made well in advance.

Bonnie's Bliss

Recipe by Bob Espy. Bob submitted this recipe that is named for his wife, Bonnie. He gave the option to add or reduce more Gin or Cranberry juice as desired. Guess which option Bob chooses?

- 2 – 1.5 oz shots Hendricks Neptunia or Hendricks Flora Adora Gin
- 2 – 1.5 oz shots Cranberry Juice (Northland)
- 1 – 1.0 oz shot St. Germaine
- 1 – 1.0 oz shot Lemon Juice
- 1 – Tablespoon Pure Maple Syrup

Chill an 8 oz. martini glass. Add all liquid items in a shaker with ice. Shake well and strain into martini glass. Must use a good quality gin, preferably one with a floral bouquet/content. Lemon Wheel for garnish. Serves 1

**You can reduce gin and add more cranberry or reduce cranberry and add more gin content to your desired amount. By adding more gin, you may not remember it in the morning!*

The purpose of the Smoke Signal classifieds is to advertise goods and services to the community.





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*See Advisor for details

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