

SMOKE SIGNAL



Tucker Day 2024!

By Bob Espy, Tucker Day Chairman

Another year, Another Tucker Day, and this year did not disappoint. Tucker Day 2024 promoted all our city’s Non-Profits. Even though the rain started us off, it cleared by 9:00 a.m., and the day was Awesome!

We sold out of vendor space and added more booths for the festival. We had a record crowd with around 6,500 attendees throughout the day. Troop 876 led the parade, carrying the American Flag with our Grand Marshal Matt Robbins close behind riding in a white Packard convertible. Many parade participants were local businesses, non-profits, and elected officials. The KidZone had an inflatable slide, Dart Art, and other fun activities. The bands were “Rock-In” on three different stages. As always, we had a variety of music for all to enjoy.

If you missed this year, wait till next year! Mark the date: May 3, 2025 for the next Tucker Day Celebration.

The Tucker Day committee wants to thank all our vendors, parade participants, and volunteers for everything they do to make Tucker Day a success!

Main Street Tucker Alliance is the non-profit hosting, Tucker Day. Proceeds from the event go toward improvements to Main Street and the downtown Tucker area. If you are interested in Tucker Day, please visit www.tuckerday.com.

See You Next Year!



Burn Ban Blues: Stay Safe and Compliant this Summer

The Georgia Department of Natural Resources has issued a ban on open burning, in effect every summer since 2005. This ban affects many counties in north and central Georgia, including DeKalb County.

From May 1 through September 30, citizens and businesses are prohibited from burning yard and land-clearing debris. This is in addition to the year-round, state-wide prohibition against burning household garbage. Recreational activities such as campfires and grilling are exempt from the open burning ban.

Open burning refers to any burning where smoke is released directly into the air

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Fireworks for the 4th

Happy 4th of July! Wishing you a day filled with fun, fireworks, and freedom as we celebrate the spirit of independence. Here are some dates and times for fireworks in the Smoke Rise area.

July 3: Tucker, 6:00 p.m. — Main Street
Fireworks after dark, plus food trucks.

July 3: Norcross, 5:00 p.m.–10:00 p.m.
“Red, White and Boom”
Lillian Webb Park, 5 College St.
Food, live music, face painting and more.



July 4: Stone Mountain Park, 9:30 p.m. – Fireworks

July 4: Avondale Estates
10:00 a.m. -- Parade Begins at the intersection of Berkeley Rd. and Clarendon Ave. and will travel on Clarendon Ave. to S. Avondale Rd.
Fireworks after dark. North of Town Green

July 4: Decatur, Fireworks at 9:00 p.m.
Will launch from top of DeKalb County parking deck/Commerce and West Trinity Place
Parade from First Baptist Church at 5:30 p.m.

July 4: Dunwoody
9:00 a.m. – Parade -- “Red, White and YOU”
Starts at Dunwoody Village, 1317 Dunwoody Village Parkway
If you can, stay for fireworks in the evening!

Road Detour in Effect for Sewer Line Replacement Project

A detour that began June 24 is in effect for Tucker Industrial Road through Monday, Sept. 9, as crews work to replace aging sewer lines.

Night work took place June 24-27 from 7:00 p.m. to 7:00 a.m. near the intersection of Tucker Industrial Road and Elmdale Drive. Day work resumed June 28, with normal construction hours from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, excluding major holidays.

Signs and flaggers are present in the area during the road closure to advise motorists of construction work and local traffic restrictions.

For more information, visit the DWM website at www.dekalbwatershed.com, call the DWM Project Information Line at 1-800-986-1108, or email projectinfo@dekalb-countyga.gov.



Smoke Signal

P.O. Box 1038, Tucker, GA 30085

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

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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

JULY 13

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

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

Deadline for classified ads is JULY 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
www.facebook.com/SmokeSignalNews

You can also visit our Facebook page to view postings of newsletter pictures and stories throughout the month.

BRING A BOOK — TAKE A BOOK

Don’t forget to check out the Little Libraries near the swim clubs.





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Please send in your picture and a brief article for publication in the **Smoke Signal**.

Email submissions to
staff@smokesignalnews.com

Smoke Rise Baptist Church

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

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

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

Eastminster Presbyterian Church

5801 Hugh Howell Road
Interim Pastor: Dr. Jim Simpson, jims@eastminster.us
Phone: 770-469-4881
Website: Eastminster.us

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

First Moravian Church

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

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

Incarnate Word Lutheran Church

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

SUNDAY 8:45 a.m. Worship

Mountain West Church


4818 Hugh Howell Road
Pastor: Mo Huggins
770-491-0228
Mwchurch.com

SUNDAY 8:30 a.m., 10:00 a.m., and 11:30 a.m. Worship
THURSDAY 10:00 a.m. Neighborhood Bible Study

In-person and streaming online on Facebook and mwchurch.com

Digital copies of the *Smoke Signal* are posted to the archives at www.smokesignalnews.com.

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



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City of Tucker Happenings

By Gaye Auman, First Lady, City of Tucker

It's summer here in Tucker! The pools are open, camps are in full swing at the Rec Center and your city is working hard.

Tucker has passed the Budget AND reduced the city's property tax rate! Lots of action on Main Street recently as the filming for an Amazon pilot "Band" wrapped up. Tucker is seeing lots of film action. You never know who you might run into!

July 1 marks the first anniversary of our city providing public works. Public works includes storm water and road maintenance: think potholes, road signs and signals, right of way maintenance and traffic signals, and striping. Look around, and you'll notice worn out street signs that have been replaced, rights of way cleared of overgrowth and potholes filled. These things not only make our city look better, they also make it safer. Citizens can

report needs directly to Tucker at Tuckerga.gov/publicworks.

Be sure to catch the fireworks on Main Street July 3 for Independence Day. Bring a chair and a picnic, or grab dinner from one of the restaurants and meet your neighbors for a fabulous celebration beginning at 6:00 p.m.

Please note that all city facilities, except pools, will be closed on July 4 in observance of the July 4th Holiday.

July 13 is the monthly Tucker Cruise In. Main Street will be closed 10:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. for the car show. Businesses remain open.

Bring the family to Church Street Greenspace, 4316 Church Street, on July 18 for the monthly Movie on the Green. "Wonka" will begin at 7:00 p.m., the park will open at 5:30 p.m.

First Friday concerts are also in Church Street Park. August 2 is "On the Border," a Eagles tribute band. September 6 is "The Return," a Beatles tribute band. Mark your calendar for these fun events. Arrive early to secure your spot on the grass.

July is Parks and Rec Month. Watch for announcements of special events in Tucker's parks on Instagram and Facebook and at www.Tuckerga.gov.



A Dog Story at ART Station in Stone Mountain

ART Station presents A Dog Story, written by Eric H. Weinberger Music & Lyrics by Gayla D. Morgan.

This charming new musical comedy is about Roland who thinks he must be married to get the law firm partnership he desperately wants. So, he gets a puppy named Cupid as a "chick magnet" for his Hamptons vacation. The plan works – he's thrilled when Cupid leads him to beautiful businesswoman Blair... not so thrilled when Cupid leads him to dog trainer Miranda, who is patient with puppies but not their owners. But, through first dates, angry tangos, and a sudden disappearance, Roland ends up discovering there's more to life when you "get a dog!" Sometimes, love has to lick you in the face.

This production stars Carlysle Garland, Nathan Grisham, Jenny Rizzo & Brandon Smith and is directed by David Craven. Music Direction by Patrick Hutchison.

Performances run July 25 - August 4.
Thursday & Friday at 8:00 p.m.
Saturday & Sunday at 3:00 p.m.
With one 10:30 a.m. matinee on Wednesday July 31.

All performances will be in the ART Station Theatre located at 5384 Manor Drive in the historic village of Stone Mountain. For more information, call (770) 469-1105 or visit artstation.org.

ART Station proudly partners with Lifeline Animal Project to offer in-person dog adoptions at select performances. You, too, can meet the next puppy love of your life and find yourself asking the question, "who rescued who?"



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A Swim & Tennis Note
from Lady Summitdown

Lady Summitdown - thesummitatsmokerise.com

Dear Readers,

It has come to my attention that The Summit Swim & Tennis facilities this year are in glorious bloom. I have been reliably informed that many couples, both married and cohabiting, have been spotted relaxing on a colorful selection of new and refurbished pool lounges, with enough tables and chairs to host a soiree worthy of royalty. What could be the source of such enjoyment, when no champagne was even present? Maybe it was the soothing effect of their saltwater pool, the bountiful source of nature surrounding the facilities, or even the recently redecorated pool house. Which brings me to protest that there was not even a whiff of gold leaf used, the shame! And the lifeguards they meaningfully employ, what eloquent notes come from their swan-like necks when they announce it's a period of adult swim time. One could not hope for more.

I do hope that readers will be encouraged to visit The Summit Swim & Tennis for membership options, some of the most affordable around in Tucker!

New Real Estate World

By Pat Soltys, Staff Writer

Most have heard that there was a settlement reached in a large class action lawsuit in March 2024. The settlement, now approved, goes into effect August 17, 2024, with all required form changes in effect July 1, 2024. There are large changes that will affect buyers, sellers and everyone in the real estate industry. Here are some of the significant changes you will want to be aware of. This is just the beginning.

- 1. All buyers must be under a buyer brokerage agreement to see houses unless they are representing themselves.
- 2. Compensation is still and always has been negotiable but there will be more definition of who is paying.
- 3. No co-broke compensation will be published in any Realtor® Association owned MLS. In MLS, we have two MLS services, one is Realtor® owned and one is not. We will see what happens with the second.
- 4. Prior to showing homes, Buyer's agents will need to obtain from the listing agent a form outlining any seller contributions to compensation but the limiting factor of what is paid is in the buyer brokerage agreement.

Sellers will need to make compensation decisions as well as any concessions they are willing to offer. Compensation and concessions may impact offers made. Buyers have, by practice, not paid for the buyer agents' services, except in rare cases. There will now be decisions that have to be made very early in the working relationship.

Prices are not likely to be affected overall, as prices are driven by the market. However, negotiations, including those related to compensation, are likely to be a part of the final sales price.

There is a lot more, and it will change a lot of the practices of the industry and most likely impact the number of real estate licensees. Hold on tight, this is a structural change to the industry, and it will not all be sorted out on day one.



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“This is our first year with PGA Jr. League at Smoke Rise Country Club, and it has given the club and the membership a jolt that it needed. On any given Tuesday or Thursday this spring, you can find 30 children of all ages learning the game of golf and making new friends! This is definitely the first of many seasons to come!”

—JOE SHIREY, PGA ASSOCIATE

JOE SHIREY, PGA ASSOCIATE
SMOKE RISE COUNTRY CLUB



PGA of America Golf Associates Joe Shirey and Travis Holmes experienced such a strong response to their first PGA Jr. League season, they've already expanded to offer more. Despite being a private club, Joe and Travis wisely opened up their PGA Jr. League registration to the public. More than one family has told them this offering has cut down their commute, and many are considering joining the club or upgrading their social memberships. As Bob Espy V explained, “The PGA Jr. program has allowed me to sharpen my golf skills against friendly yet competitive kids and along the way I have made new friends. I cannot wait till next season!”




Become an Influencer: Shape Tucker's Future!

As of June 21, selected residents of Tucker have been receiving text messages from FlashVote, a public survey research platform. The City of Tucker is collaborating with FlashVote to actively engage the community and gather valuable input from residents to inform city decisions. Residents who have received a text message invitation from FlashVote are encouraged to sign up and participate in these important surveys.

For those who haven't signed up yet, it's not too late. Interested residents can join now by visiting FlashVote's Tucker sign-up page or by calling (775) 235-2240 to participate via phone or text only.

The sign-up process takes less than a minute, and all input remains anonymous. FlashVote ensures personal or demographic information collected is never shared with the city or any other entity. Participants can choose how they receive surveys—by email, text, or phone call. Once registered, they will receive notifications whenever a new survey is available, and they will have 48 hours to respond before voting closes. After each survey period ends, all participants will automatically receive a summary of the overall results and see how their responses compare to the collective data.

Residents are encouraged to keep an eye out for ongoing survey notifications and to participate promptly. This initiative is a great opportunity for the community to have their voices heard and contribute to the decision-making process in Tucker. Don't miss out on the chance to shape the future of our city by providing your valuable input.





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Dan Doster, Owner

Smoke Rise Gardens on Tour

By Barbara Luton

Four Smoke Rise gardens were featured on the GFWC Stone Mountain Woman’s Club Art of Nature Garden Tour. Each garden was unique. All had swimming pools that featured stone work, landscaping and decks. The gardens, including one in Winding Woods in Tucker, elicited many positive comments from “being serene” to “all were different” to “great garden choices.” Thank you to Bonnie and Terry Herron, Tim Miller and Liam O’Marah, Chuck Ellis, and Jenna and Michael Greene for opening their



Bonnie and Terry Herron

Smoke Rise gardens for everyone to see. Look for another garden tour in 2025 with more chances to see gardens in Smoke Rise and Tucker. Thank you to all who supported the Woman’s Club by purchasing tickets and being sponsors. Thank you for being a part of the charities and projects that the club supports.



Jenna and Michael Greene



Chuck Ellis



Tim Ellis and Liam O'Marah



Chef and Co-owner Lisa Myers (center) with Dr. Dwight R. Weathers and Jean Weathers

Fresca Trattoria: Authentic Gourmet Italian
By Doc Lawrence, “Sentimental Gentleman from Georgia”

A measure of the quality of life in a community includes restaurants above and beyond fast food outlets. An epicurean treasure recently opened in the Stone Mountain area. Fresca Trattoria is Italian, and as the name trattoria suggests, it provides the flavors of Italy in a cozy setting. Fresca is a locally-owned, chef-driven restaurant. Co-owners Lisa Myers and Manny Guerrero bring more than 40 years of culinary experience, including stints by Chef Lisa at the Buckhead Life Restaurant Group and Chef Manny’s service as Catering Chef of Atlanta’s Rosendale Events, among other prestigious affiliations. Fresca is adjacent to Kroger and Mountain Park First Baptist Church on busy Rockbridge Road. The beautifully decorated spacious interior radiates comfort, and the noise level is low. Pasta is hand-made, and service is pleasant and friendly.

Fresca’s menu is a marvel, reflecting the professional backgrounds of the chef-owners with deference to the tradition of the Italian trattoria. Seafood like branzino, shrimp and mussels; lamb shank and prime rib are just a small part of the offerings. Sunday is the only day to enjoy Italian gravy, a powerhouse of meats and flavors blended into a tomato sauce that will soon become a favorite. Wood-fired pizzas, handmade pastas, freshly roasted and smoked meats, and whimsical desserts are popular menu features. True to the tradition of the Italian trattoria, Fresca provides a delightful dining experience with a focus on delectable cuisine and exceptional wines. Its welcoming ambiance encourages a relaxed and enjoyable meal, allowing guests to savor the flavors of Italy in a cozy setting, where good food and good company intersect.

fresca-trattoria.com, (470) 255-2996
1227 Rockbridge Rd., Stone Mountain, Ga.

Avondale Garden Tour



Smoke Rise residents John and Linda Karr, Quill and Steve Duncan and Michael Schneider were among a group of neighbors who visited the Avondale Garden Tour on June 3. The five gardens were beautiful!

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~ 5 ~

NEWS YOU CAN USE

By Aviva Hoffmann, Staff Writer

DeKalb County Welcomes New CEO

Although Smoke Rise residents live in the City of Tucker and have local representation through our City Council, which consists of a mayor and six council members, we also reside in DeKalb County and are represented by DeKalb County government, which includes seven commissioners and a Chief Executive Officer (CEO). On the city level, Smoke Rise is represented by the mayor and two council members. On the county level, we are represented by a district commissioner, a super district commissioner, and the CEO, who serves the entire county.

The DeKalb County CEO race required a runoff election, held on June 18, between former commissioners Lorraine Cochran-Johnson and Larry Johnson to determine who will succeed the outgoing CEO Michael Thurmond. No Republicans ran for the CEO position, meaning the winner of last month’s primary run-off will be the next CEO, succeeding the term-limited Michael Thurmond.

In the runoff election, Lorraine Cochran-Johnson emerged victorious, securing 60% of the vote compared to Larry Johnson’s 40%. This is a historic win, as Cochran-Johnson will be the first African American woman elected as DeKalb County CEO, and only the second woman to hold the position. She was first elected to the Super District 7 seat, which covers the eastern half of DeKalb County, in 2018.

Cochran-Johnson’s term as the newly elected DeKalb County CEO will begin in January 2025, when she takes the oath of office and assumes leadership of DeKalb County government from the outgoing CEO Thurmond. The wide-ranging responsibilities of the CEO include implementing and enforcing all ordinances, policies, rules and regulations of the county commission. Key tasks include adopting a balanced budget, ensuring accurate utility billing, addressing blight and infrastructure needs, offering youth employment programs, and fulfilling consent agreements with state and federal agencies.

As required by state law, the Super District 7 seat has been vacant since Cochran-Johnson resigned from the Board of Commissioners in March 2024 after qualifying to run for DeKalb County CEO. Also in March, the DeKalb County Board of Registration and Elections voted unanimously to hold a special election to fill the Super District 7 seat. The special election will take place November 5, 2024, which is the scheduled general election day in Georgia.

Four candidates - Demetrius McCoy, Jacqueline Adams, Kenneth Chung Royal, and Ladena Bolton- are vying to succeed Cochran-Johnson and represent Super District 7, which includes Smoke Rise and has more than 350,000 constituents overall. The winner of the November 5, 2024, special election for Super District 7 will serve out the remainder of Cochran-Johnson’s term through 2026.

As the special election/general election day approaches later this year, I’d like to remind you of the importance of civic engagement and participation in shaping the future of our community. Be sure to learn about all the candidates running for local, state, and federal offices and... exercise your right to vote!



Stay Cool This Summer:
Tips for Handling Extreme Heat

As temperatures soar this summer, be sure to keep your cool. Here are some tips to help you handle the heat.

Heat Exhaustion:

- Symptoms: Heavy sweating, weakness, dizziness, nausea, muscle cramps, headache.
- Response: Move to a cooler place, drink cool fluids, take a cool shower, and rest.

Heat Stroke:

- Symptoms: High body temperature (above 104°F), hot/red/dry skin, rapid pulse, headache, confusion, unconsciousness.
- Response: Call 911 immediately. Move to a cooler place, lower body temperature with cool cloths or a bath, and do not give fluids.

Preventive Measures:

1. Stay Hydrated: Drink plenty of water and avoid alcohol and caffeine.
2. Dress Appropriately: Wear lightweight, light-colored clothing and use hats and sunglasses.
3. Limit Outdoor Activities: Schedule activities for cooler times of the day and take frequent breaks.
4. Stay Cool Indoors: Use fans or air conditioning, and visit public places with A/C if needed.
5. Check on Vulnerable Individuals: Ensure elderly neighbors, young children, and pets stay cool and hydrated.

By following these suggestions, you can enjoy a safer, more comfortable summer. Stay cool and take care!

Burn Ban...continued from page 1

without passing through a chimney or stack. This includes burning in barrels, metal drums, or burning garbage and rubbish. Residents may light fires for cooking food, provided they use outdoor fireplaces, chimneys, fire bowls, or similar devices burning clean wood or logs. These fires must be at least 25 feet from any structure, occur between 10:00 a.m. and 10:30 p.m., and be attended by an adult with a water-charged hose, within 100 feet at all times.

Bonfires require pre-approval from the DeKalb County Fire Marshal. They can be no taller than two feet and no wider than three feet, must be set at least 50 feet from any structure and 100 feet from property lines, and have an adult present and a water-charged hose nearby.

Alternatives to burning vegetation include composting, chipping, or arranging debris pickup through DeKalb Sanitation or a private company. The Georgia Forestry Commission provides permits for land clearing and agricultural burning during the ban. Find out more at: <https://gatrees.org/about/county-contacts/>.

For more information on the summer burn ban, call the Georgia Environmental Protection Division District Office at (404) 362-2671. For specific permit questions, contact the DeKalb County Fire Marshal at (404) 371-2776.



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Music, a Lifetime Love Affair

By Beth Henson

Who would have known that many years ago I would be drawn into a lifelong love affair with music and the fabulous French horn! Growing up as a middle child, I tended to mimic everything my older sisters did, including joining the middle school band class. When introduced to the different instruments, I instantly knew I wanted to play the fancy one, the French horn. Even the name had a certain sophistication. Who wouldn't be attracted by the intricate tubing (over 21 feet!) and large, shiny 12 inches of brass bell. The tiny mouthpiece (17 mm) would be a challenge considering the full set of metal braces I had on my teeth. And the sound! Oh, the sound! It could transform you to a fox hunt in merry old England, or the far away deserts of Star Wars with their haunting melodies. I was thrilled to get my instrument wish, even though the disappointed boy next to me was bluntly told that his lips were too large. (Sadly, he would have to move to the tuba section).



Years passed with fun high school band trips, and later college football games. The schools I attended didn't have marching mellophones (lighter trumpet-like horns), and we were forced to prance onto the football field holding 10 pounds or more, high in the air. None of us minded, we were all madly in love with this melodic instrument. I later picked up my playing after marriage and raising a family which left me little time (or energy) to play my horn. I finally was able to return to my music, and joined our church orchestra, and a few smaller groups. Horn players are lucky because they are welcomed in brass ensembles and woodwind quintettes. With our far away tone and wide range of almost four octaves, we are loved everywhere!!

As the years have rapidly gone by, I have played with many community groups and actually now take lessons that require practicing an hour a day. It is surprising how much there is still to learn! I currently play with a county volunteer band with many players in their senior years. We mostly play for assisted living facilities and homes for the disabled. It's nice to bring smiles to the residents, and Christmas concerts are a real joy. I also hope to continue to make music for many years to come, like many of my fellow players. Maybe when this life passes, there will be a heavenly horn choir in the next to join!





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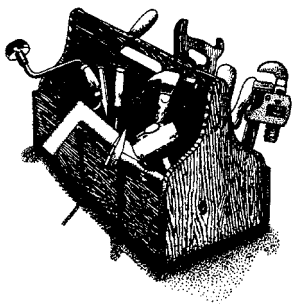
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Checklist for Hiring a Contractor

By Amber Voss



Vetting contractors and handymen can seem daunting, but it doesn't have to be. Here's a handy checklist to take out the guess work.

- Ask for recommendations and referrals. How many years in business?
- Request the contractor's license, business license, and certificate of liability insurance, including the declarations page.
- Get at least three quotes for comparison.
- Check with Secretary of State and the Better Business Bureau. Google reviews are also a great way to vet a contractor.
- Perform background check, if you have any minors in household. For example, you can run a simple check for \$11.99 on White Pages.
- Consider responsiveness, communication style, and professionalism during the quoting process. This is a great indicator of how they will execute the contract, if you hire them.
- Once you have chosen your contractor, the contract should state the following:
 - o Detailed scope of work
 - o Guarantees and warranties
 - o Length of project with a work schedule
 - o Payment terms along with schedule for payment draws
 - o Permits and inspections
 - o Utility marking, if digging is involved
 - o All names of subcontractors and licenses, if necessary
 - o Names of all suppliers/vendors
 - o Add a lien waiver to the contract to protect yourself
 - o Signatures of all parties involved
 - o Any changes to the contract should be in writing for all parties
- Keep a file of all documents, meeting notes, emails, receipts, invoices, and any other items that are relevant to the work.
- Document the project with photos and videos along the way.
- Do not pay final payment until all work is complete to the scope of work and is to your satisfaction.
- Don't be afraid to ask all the questions.
- Use your common sense and trust your intuition. If something feels off, it most likely is.

Here are a few red flags to consider before and/or during the process:

- Demanding cash payment or all money up front
- Pushing to use their preferred engineer or subcontractors only
- Encouraging you to use their lender for a HELOC or another loan
- Asking you to get the permits for the jobsite
- Pushing you to make decisions quickly without providing necessary information or allowing you time to consider the work change
- Becoming angry if you hire a second professional opinion

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An Inspiration for Today

By Susan Gilbert, Staff Writer

We are back in Mystic, Connecticut, this summer enjoying the cool weather and ocean breezes. Spending six months here last summer taught us we had only scratched the surface of all there is to do, see, and learn here. One of our favorite surprises was learning the uplifting story of Gerda III, a 40-foot wooden lighthouse-maintenance workboat. Given some 40 years ago by the Danish people to the Museum of Jewish Heritage in New York City, Gerda III was moved more than 20 years ago to the Mystic Seaport Museum Shipyard with plans to renovate her and share her remarkable history with visitors. Her story begins in April of 1940, seven months after the invasion of Poland and the start of World War II, when at 4:00 a.m., German tanks rumbled into Copenhagen, Denmark. Two hours later, the Danish government passively surrendered knowing resistance would take too many lives. In an impressively rapid and risky act of opposition, the Danes managed to blow up their entire fleet of battle ships before the Germans could take possession of them. But it was the rest of the story that makes this so unbelievable.

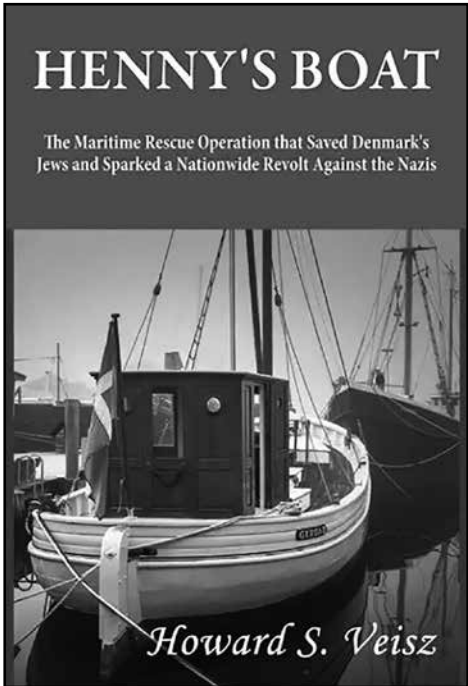
For 3½ years, the country was occupied. Citizens were allowed to do business as usual but under constant scrutiny by the Gestapo. That all changed in September 1943, when it was leaked that German troops planned on October 1 to round up the country’s ~8,000 Jewish citizens and deport them to death camps. Germans had raided the country’s Synagogues and had lists of where the Jews lived, so all they had to do was round them up.

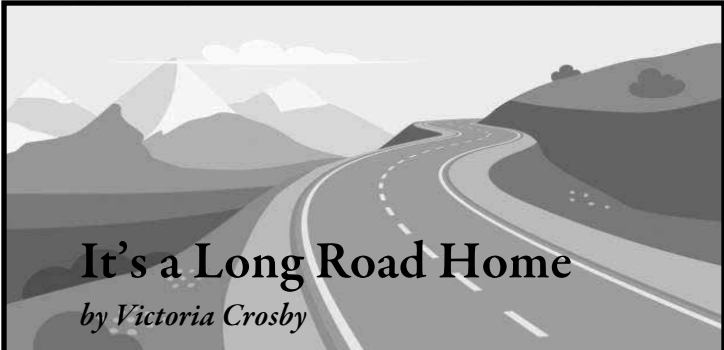
But unlike other countries where that was happening, the Danish people acted immediately in unison to rescue the people they saw only as their fellow citizens. In a country of four million people, the Jews were less than .2% of the population, and in 30 days, 7,700 Jews were hidden by clandestine groups of initially medical personnel who used ambulances to get them relocated to hospitals where they were put in hospital beds with falsified medical charts. From there, avoiding the ever-present Gestapo patrols, they were hidden in warehouses along the wharf until they could be snuck across the dock to boats where fishermen and workboat operators took them roughly 12 miles across the Øresund Strait to safety in Sweden.

It’s amazing to think that in just 30 days, an entire country worked together rescuing about 95% of their Jewish citizenry from certain death in concentration camps. Fewer than 100 of Denmark’s Jews died in the Holocaust — the lowest death toll in all Nazi-occupied Europe. It is hard to find situations in the modern world where a country’s citizenry acting in unity under their political leadership, rallies together to protect an almost insignificant element of their population... on principal... and most importantly not for personal gain, while taking on the risk of incarceration and certain death. Another inspiring aspect of the story is that about half of the Jews returned to Denmark and found their homes and businesses had been maintained by their neighbors during their exile.

The complete story of the Gerda III’s role in taking 300 Jews to freedom is told in the book Henny’s Boat. The author, Howard Veisz, is here in the museum most days giving a lecture on it. He lives here in Mystic and went to Denmark for several months to research the history and interview Henny’s children and relatives. What surprised him while there was their reaction to his writing a book about Henny. To a person, they humbly asked, “Why would anyone want to know about that?” The book is a love story filled with intrigue, danger, and tragedy. It’s something you can’t put down, once you begin reading.

It’s a story worth telling, knowing, and remembering as an exceptional manifestation of how ordinary people, determined to do the right thing, can do extraordinary things, even when confronted by the harshest adversity. In fact, the Danish October 1943 rescue stands out against the tragic history of the Holocaust as an inspiring account.





It's a Long Road Home

by Victoria Crosby

It's a long road home
as you strive to reach your goal,
an exciting expedition,
a journey of your soul.

There are so many detours
sometimes the signs confuse,
you do not always comprehend,
or know which path to choose.

There are no certain answers,
there is no wrong or right,
each roadway that you travel
reveals a different sight,
a novel experience,
an opportunity to learn,
an alternative adventure
no matter where you turn.

It's a long road home
to your heart's desire,
the voyage is exhausting,
it can weary, it can tire.

But wherever you are in life right now,
is where you are meant to be,
don't look back at where you've come from,
but look ahead, and you will see
the path that you are taking
can set your spirit free.

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Out the Window

Article and illustration by Beth Henson, Staff Writer

Passing by the living room window, a sweet and crystal-clear melody immediately caught my attention. I instantly recognized it as one of my plethora of cardinals that now filled every space of my yard. The year's abundant number of these beauties had thrilled me to no end. I knew of at least three nests located in the hedges surrounding my house that gave me a "bird's eye view" of their comings and goings. I always marveled at the brilliant scarlet plumage of Mr. Cardinal, and Mrs. Cardinal's striking red beak and red-tipped head. I knew their open cup-shaped nest, built of twigs, bark, and a grass lining would contain two to five off-white eggs with brown or gray speckles for camouflage. The nestlings would hatch quickly in two weeks, and the frantic feeding would begin. In a short nine to 13 days, the youngsters would be ready to leave.

Female cardinals are very vocal, and often sing on the nest to tell their mate when to bring food and when to stay away. Cardinal songs usually last around two to three seconds, and often sound like "cheer, cheer, cheer" or "birdie, birdie, birdie." Males sing even more than females, averaging 30 to 35 times an hour and have more than 23 songs! The "chip, chip, chip" call is often relaying a message that an intruder is near.

Thank you for making my yard such a melodious place of beauty my friends. Having you around truly makes my heart sing!



A Presentation by Astronomer Tom Crowley

By Victoria Crosby

I attend yoga classes at The Eastminster Presbyterian church in Smoke Rise, and our class had to be postponed recently as a parishioner of the church was giving a talk on astronomy. I was intrigued, so I attended the fascinating talk by retired engineer Tom Crowley. He and his wife, Lynn, now live in Stone Mountain in Park Springs Senior Life Plan Community. Tom grew up in New Jersey and met his wife at an IBM Systems Research Institute, SRI, in Atlanta where Lynn grew up. They met in a class of 100 men and five women.

Now a retired electrical engineer in his 80s, Jim was asked by James Sowell of Georgia Tech, an astronomer in the School of Physics, to put a telescope on the island of Maui in Hawaii, known as the Aloha Telescope Project. With a \$4,000.00 grant, Tom was asked to design a scientific camera.



Max Estrada, an eight-year-old friend of the Crowley's was in the audience with his mother, and Tom asked him to help him demonstrate with the computer. Tom showed slides of different planets showing the Big Bang, the formation of galaxies and the different types of galaxies. He talked about the contributions of scientists James Webb, Kip Thorn, Stephen Hawking, Edward Hubbel, Albert Einstein, and Carl Sagan.

"Astronomers hate the moon" he said. "It's a bright light which deters them from seeing planets."

The night sky in Maui doesn't have the problem of light pollution the way big cities do. "M13 is a cluster of stars that look like a diamond necklace and is a favorite of my wife's," Tom told the audience. He also said that as he is of Irish descent, he likes to tell humorous stories.

When asked about climate change, he said global warming started hundreds of years ago with melting glaciers, and now the world is overpopulated and is using up resources and creating too much heat.

The nearest star to Earth is 31 trillion miles away, Tom told the group. But, he thinks we'll find life at some point.

"There is so much we don't understand, but that is the beauty of it." It was a fascinating presentation that Tom Crowley usually gives to school children, but the older audience was very appreciative of the education.

HEALTH NOTES:

Barefoot Boy or Blue Suede Shoes?

By Cheri Schneider, M.D.

A recent visit to the Podiatrist for foot pain inspired me to write this article. During my visit, the Podiatrist remarked that “bare foot” walking was the worst idea. I wondered why he thought this, so I decided to research the topic. I soon noted that videos on YouTube and social media were numerous, very divided and quite opinionated on the barefoot walking versus shoe walking. Some of them were sponsored by shoe companies.

Running shoes became very popular in the 1970s, with the advent of aerobic exercise as a way of decreasing risk of heart disease and increasing overall health. Dr. Kenneth Cooper and others introduced this concept to describe the beneficial effect that regular exercise has on the body. My university at that time required all students and staff to earn a certain number of “aerobics points” each week. I found running was one of the fastest ways to reach my aerobic goal. Cushioned “running” shoes by popular brands began to saturate the market. Since then, specialty shoes have become accepted as necessary for walking, running, hiking and even “cross training.” These shoes come with arch supports, heel cushions, and many shoes are marketed for various foot strike positions or arch height.

Barefoot or “minimalist” shoes (think Vibrams toe shoes) became popular in the early 2000s, largely due to a movie called “Born to Run” highlighting a “hidden” bare-foot running Indian tribe in Mexico. Vibram deviated from their usual product, which was a rugged outsole that could be put on any shoe. This outsole gave great traction and protection and lasted a long time. The new barefoot project advertised thin flexible soled shoes as a way of strengthening your feet. In 2012, barefoot shoes had 15% of the market. In the same year, a class action lawsuit was filed over lack of scientific evidence backing Vibram’s health claims. The suit was settled, not because they were proven wrong, but because the studies had not been done to prove their claims. Despite the lawsuit, “minimalist” shoes have continued to be popular and have made a recent resurgence in the market.

What are the pros and cons of “minimalist” shoes versus cushioned shoes?

Habitual users of minimalist shoes have slightly stronger feet -- after six months of daily use, that is. Barefoot walkers tend to take shorter steps and land on the forefoot rather than the heel of the foot. They have a leaning forward gait. This means less jolt to the backbone and knees/hips, more to the tibialis or shin muscles. The downside is that they are thin-soled and wear out fast. They do not protect your feet from hard or rocky ground or from sharp objects. Stress fractures and foot and ankle injuries are more common. The front tibialis muscle is stressed more in this shoe. Few studies have substantiated health benefits, but the studies may not even have been done. There is very little information on how to transition into these shoes, if you choose to use them.

Cushioned shoes protect the feet better, especially on hard or sharp, uneven surfaces. There is a heel wedge or “foot drop” in most of these shoes. While running, the foot strike is more on the heel, and the posture is more upright. The calf muscle is used more in this shoe. These shoes can last longer and are somewhat custom for your foot. These shoes are helpful in those with certain foot conditions or neuropath.

Bottom line: there is not enough research on benefits versus limitations of barefoot walking or minimalist shoes. Note: research takes money! Much of what we know is based on low quality studies, or studies that just focused on biomechanics, not specific health benefits or injury rates during use.

I had been thinking of buying barefoot shoes to use in the house as house “slippers” but have now changed my mind. Our hardwood floors mean that standing in the kitchen cooking dinner would be better on a cushioned sandal or slipper and not on a thin-soled minimalist shoe.

Gardening and More...

By Linda Karr, Staff Writer

A Little Mite that Carries a Death Sentence

I have grown roses most of my adult life. I particularly like hybrid teas, floribundas, and grandifloras but have also grown shrub and climbing roses. I love their fragrance and the multitude of colors that have added so much to our garden. About three years ago, tiny eriophyid mites, that carry the Emaravirus virus that causes rose rosette disease, started their slow invasion of our roses. The wingless mite is carried by the wind and through contaminated clothing and gardening equipment. The mites feed on the roses and spread the virus through the vascular system of the plant. We once had more than 70 roses, and we are now down to 30. It has been disheartening to see our pretty roses becoming disfigured and knowing that we can’t save them and that most likely the mites have spread to more of our roses.

If you have roses, here is what to look for:

- Increased growth of red vegetative shoots
- Distorted or yellowing leaves
- More susceptible to frost
- Proliferation of large thorns on thick stems
- Flowers look deformed and grow in small tight clusters. These rosettes are also called “witches’ brooms.”
- New growth that does not turn red

If you have roses with these symptoms, here is what you should do:

- Remove any diseased roses. Cover the diseased rose with a plastic bag and cut it off at ground level. Carefully dig up all the roots so as not to spread the mites, put them in the bag and close it tightly. Clean your tools before using them on any other roses. I use Clorox wipes.
- DO NOT add a diseased rose to your compost or brush pile.
- Chemicals such as horticultural oil or miticides are generally ineffective.
- Do not replant roses in the same area for several seasons to make sure the mites have not spread to other roses or are in roots left in the soil.

What to consider if your roses are unaffected by the disease or you want to plant roses in your landscape:

- Buy healthy looking roses from a reputable dealer and inspect them for any signs of disease.
- If you have a multiflora rose consider digging it up and disposing of it. It is considered an invasive weed and a host for the virus. If you do plant other roses in the vicinity, plant them far from the multiflora rose.
- Plant roses far enough from each other that they have good air circulation and are not touching.
- Monitor your roses regularly for disease.
- Practice good sanitation including cleaning your tools between plants, keeping the debris picked up, and deadhead on a regular basis.
- Do not use leaf blowers around your roses.
- Prune your roses by about two-thirds in late winter to get rid of as many overwintering mites as possible.
- Plant other ornamentals around your roses. The virus is limited to roses so it will not harm your other plants.

Happy gardening!

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Smoke Rise Morning Glories
Celebrate a Legend

By Quill Duncan
Smoke Rise Morning Glories Recording Secretary

Our dear friend Joy Streater is a Charter Member of the Smoke Rise Morning Glories, and she was honored May 30 at the DeKalb Federation’s monthly meeting. Each year, the Federation honors members who are 90 years young, and it is a wonderful way to celebrate their many years of contributions to garden clubs in the county. We call our honored ladies “Legends,” and each lady who is honored receives a tribute at the May meeting. Joy was having her own celebration at the beach that week, so President Amie Walsh stood in for her at the gathering. Congratulations, Joy!

Summer is a wonderful time to spend outdoors sharing pass-along plants with friends and gardening and even attending a garden party or two! We hope everyone will enjoy a lovely Southern summer... with sunshine and some rain to cool us off!

The Morning Glories will be involved again this August with the Redbud District’s Standard Flower Show. The show will be held August 28, 1:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m. and August 29, 9:00 a.m.- 4:00 p.m. at Callanwolde Fine Arts Center at 980 Briarcliff Road Atlanta, Ga 30306. This show will feature floral design, horticulture and a new category entitled “Botanical Arts” which offers a unique and charming way to use floral material to create a dress, a purse, or a piece of jewelry, for example. This was a fun feature at the February 2024 Atlanta Botanical Garden Flower Show, and it is a popular way to add a fun flair to flower shows.

The Redbud Standard Flower Show event is free and open to the public. All of the Smoke Rise garden clubs participate either in creating designs, volunteering for the show or submitting horticulture. Gale Thomas and Joy Zaidan are the show chairman this year and many Morning Glories will be serving in multiple roles to create the vision that is Daisy! We hope you will make plans to attend this exciting event in late August. For more information, or if you want to submit horticulture for the show, please contact Quill Duncan at (770) 414-4766.

It Is THE DOG DAYS of Summer for the Mountain Mums

By Cheri Schneider

What is a gardener to do in the Dog Days of Summer? You know, the days when even the dog won’t move from under his shady spot. Well, here is what I and many of my fellow Mountain Mums may be doing:

- 1. Water your garden or lawn in the early hours or the late hours of the day. That way, it will soak into the ground instead of immediately evaporating.
- 2. Water daily: the containers, that is. Two of my favorite hanging baskets bit the dust because of a weekend away. Containers don’t have the benefit of cooler soil around the plant, so evaporation happens quickly. There are also simple watering systems you can take from container to container or put in each container (internet full of ideas). I bought an “aqua” pot for a small fig tree and only rarely refill the water in the bottom of it.
- 3. Water deeply: Lawns especially do best when watered deeply (one inch of moisture) once a week rather than daily for short periods of time.
- 4. Wear sunscreen and a hat when out in full sun. Skin damage can take decades to show up and it is cumulative.
- 5. Watch for snakes. Remember, not all snakes are venomous, so you do not need to kill every snake you see. Even “baby” snakes can have a toxic bite, so size is not as important as identifying the snake.
- 6. Watch for ticks: this is the season for Lyme disease, and several other tick-born illnesses. Pull a tick straight out with tweezers if you see one and monitor your skin for a “target” lesion or rash. Remember mosquitos carry diseases too.
- 7. Stay hydrated. Whether gardening, walking, hiking or just enjoying the outdoors, hydration rules! Not all of it should be water. If you drink other things, remember many have sugars. Alcohol in limited amounts please if you are on the water, driving or playing on toys like four wheelers, motorcycles and boats. Use something else to quench your thirst.
- 8. Notice your garden: which plants are survivors? Which wilt in our heat and humidity? Can they be moved? Are there weeds getting ready to put seeds on? If so, you should cut or pull them now to save yourself a headache next year. Do any hardscapes need maintenance or tweaking? Fall is a great time for this. Plan ahead in the shade.
- 9. If you did not plant veggies, consider planning for cool weather crops: greens, parsley, broccoli and more.
- 10. Watch which birds come to the feeders. Keep water sources clean for the birds and fresh food available.

Most of all: enjoy the world God has created. You can even do this from the inside comfort of your home!



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

Murphy’s Laws

- Murphy’s Laws, originally attributed to Captain Edward A. Murphy Jr., have become a popular collection of adages that capture the essence of life’s little frustrations. These additional laws continue in the spirit of Murphy’s original insights.
- Light travels faster than sound. That’s why some people appear bright until you hear them speak.
 - A fine is a tax for doing wrong. A tax is a fine for doing well.
 - He who laughs last thinks slowest.
 - A day without sunshine is like, well...night.
 - Change is inevitable, except from a vending machine.
 - Those that live by the sword get shot by those who don’t.
 - Nothing is foolproof to a sufficiently talented fool.
 - The things that come to those who wait, may be the things left by those who got there first.
 - Give a man a fish and he will eat for a day. Teach a man to fish and he will sit in a boat all day, drinking beer.
 - Flashlight: A case for holding dead batteries.
 - God gave you toes as a device for finding furniture in the dark.
 - When you go into court, you are putting yourself in the hands of twelve people who weren’t smart enough to get out of jury duty.

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Food & Home Fixin’

By Joyce Ray, Staff Writer

Summertime! What a great opportunity to take some time off and travel, rest or visit relatives. Family reunions for some large clans have evolved into more days of vacationing as families use that opportunity to come from far and wide, go to the beach or converge on a mountain house. You’ll have to feed them, and that makes a great excuse to bring out the time-tested family favorites. This Twice Baked Potato Casserole is a good way to deliver a twist on serving the whole spud, and you can put them in the oven and go for a swim while they are baking.

It’s best to use Russet potatoes but you can substitute Idaho or Yukon Gold. Add any other variation you like such as pimento, bell pepper, Pepper- Jack cheese or use milk in place of the cream if desired. It’s an easy recipe to increase if needed – just add more potatoes and adjust for more of the other ingredients.

Twice-Baked Potato Casserole

3 lbs. Russet potatoes, scrubbed (about 8 medium potatoes)
1 TBSP. Olive Oil
2 ½ tsp kosher salt, divided.
¾ tsp. Black Pepper, divided
½ cup butter, cut into small pieces and softened
1 cup heavy whipping cream
½ cup sour cream
8 bacon slices, cooked and crumbled
½ cup thinly sliced green onions, divided
Cooking spray
½ lb. (about 1 cup). shredded sharp Cheddar cheese

Preheat oven to 400°. Rub potatoes with oil, sprinkle with ½ of the salt. Pierce all over with a fork, and place on an aluminum foil-lined baking sheet. Bake in preheated oven until tender, about 1 hour. Cool slightly – about 10 minutes.

Cut potatoes in half lengthwise, and carefully scoop out the pulp into a large bowl. Cut potato skins into small pieces. Spray with cooking spray or toss in olive oil and return to oven to get crisp. (about 10 minutes) Lightly salt them, when you take them out of the oven. You can use lightly crushed Potato Chips instead of this step, if you prefer.

To potatoes, add butter and mash with a potato masher. Add whipping cream and sour cream and stir well until mixture is mostly smooth. Add ½ half of bacon, ¼ cup green onions, and remaining salt and pepper. Spray baking pan with cooking spray and add potato mixture. Sprinkle top with cheese and remaining green onions. Bake in preheated oven for about 15 minutes, until cheese begins to melt. Remove from oven and Sprinkle remaining bacon, potato skins (or chips) on top. Return to oven until casserole is brown and bubbly. Serve hot.

July 4th Fruit Pie

The young budding chefs will love helping you make this. Let them be creative with the fruit!

Spread one sleeve of Pillsbury Sugar Cookie Dough in greased pizza pan, press to the edges of pan. Bake according to directions until done. Mix 8 oz softened cream cheese with ½ cup powdered sugar and spread on cooled cookie. Arrange any fruit: strawberries, blueberries, peaches, mango, etc. on top of pie. Make a glaze using 3 TBSP corn Starch, 1 cup sugar, 3 TBSP your favorite gelatin flavor or color. Mix together and add 1 cup water. Cook over medium heat until mixture is thickened. Pour over Cookie and fruit. Chill until set. Serve with whipping cream.

This week, I got distracted after putting some carrots in a pot of water to boil. Gene came in to find black smoke and a burned stainless-steel pot with charred carrots in it. I thought there would be no way I could get it cleaned. I had heard about the wonders of baking soda to clean off the burn, so I sprinkled a generous amount of it over the pan and added just enough water to make a paste. A few hours later some of the burn had begun to soften, and I was able to get a little of it off. I added baking soda again and let it set for about 24 hours. It took a little elbow grease and a copper scrubber, but the pan is good as new! It was new about 25 years ago, so I am glad I could give it a new life!

Missing Sugar... In the June issue I left out the amount of sugar in the Lemon Delight Dessert. The recipe calls for 1 cup. I once made it for people who were cutting back on sugar, and I added only ¾ cup sugar and used sugar free Jello instead of regular. It worked well.