



INTUCKER

JUNE 2021 | VOLUME 5 | ISSUE 6



SAFETY FIRST

TUCKER'S INTERSECTIONS GET SOME MUCH
NEEDED IMPROVEMENTS AFTER ACCIDENTS,
CLOSE CALLS

EDITOR'S NOTE



Welcome to summer, Tucker! We've just about made it halfway through the year, and we're just a little bit further away from the height of the pandemic. That means it's time to throw on the sunglasses, fire up the grill and have some fun...Tucker style!

While we're all excited about our TKR Summer of Fun, I want to draw your attention to something that's become another of my favorite annual traditions: the recognition of the valedictorian and salutatorian at Tucker High School. Now, please understand I don't have a lot of direct experience in this area. As part of my high school's 2001 graduating class (how has it been 20 years!?), I worked super hard to pass those exams and complete those term papers as best I could. With all the late nights and cram sessions, I ended up ranked somewhere in the 30s out of a class of 400. Not bad, right? But that's a far cry from the top of the class. And, as hard as I tried, those kids competing for valedictorian seemed to be on a completely other level. My point is, there are a lot of brilliant Tiger minds who received their diplomas last month, but no one was as high-achieving in the classroom as this duo you're going to meet on page 10. I hope you'll flip through and get to know them.

They, and their classmates, are unquestionably the future leaders of our Tucker community. When you want to know who your doctor will be 20 years from now, look no further. Who's going to be Mayor of Tucker in 30 years? Could be one of these young people. And yes, there may even be a future President of the United States. Who knows? But it sure is fun to wonder.

MATT HOLMES
INTUCKER EDITOR

IN THIS ISSUE



ON THE COVER

Tucker finds itself at a crossroads at several problem intersections in the City. On page 6, see how city staff are tackling some of the most dangerous roadways.



HEAD OF THE CLASS

They're the next generation of Tucker leaders. On page 10, hear from the valedictorian and salutatorian of Tucker High School as they head into the real world.



BUSINESS BOOM

With companies across various industries desperate for workers, where are they to turn? On page 8, John McHenry looks at an effort here in Tucker to solve the workforce crisis.



CITIZEN OF THE MONTH

She's been a fixture in Tucker's parks for years. On page 14, get to know our Citizen of the Month for June, Claire Hayes.



ASK RIP

What's in the mailbag this month? Rip is answering your questions on tennis and summer swim season on page 15.



INTUCKER

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From the Mayor:



As we begin to emerge from well over a year in various degrees of isolation, the heavy toll taken on our social well-being is becoming clear. We have weathered the worst of this terrible storm physically, and our economy has not only been amazingly resilient, it is actually outpacing pre-COVID activity in many regards. But we are just now beginning to reckon with the social aspects of the pandemic. Have you been surprised at the awkwardness of meeting old friends and colleagues for the first time in person for over a year? Do we wear a mask, stand back, elbow bump, shake hands or give a big hug? Is it okay to ask whether they've been vaccinated, and is your answer to the question going to be okay with them?

Many of us lost loved ones during the pandemic, whether directly related to COVID or not. Some of us were infected by the virus, and some suffered greatly. Most of us didn't

suffer in those most extreme ways, but we've all suffered from separation – from elderly parents in assisted living, from relatives too far away to allow for travel, from work colleagues we've only seen in little digital boxes, from friends we used to work with in volunteer and community groups, even from our neighbors next door and down the street who we had to keep our distance from.

Our City of Tucker is unique in that it draws strength from togetherness. Friends, neighbors, families, organizations, churches; these are the lifeblood of Tucker (and I'm not just saying that; there are surveys and statistics that bear it out, but that's a column for another time). It is in our nature, inherent to who we are, to gather and thrive off of one another.

The desire to safely gather again is why I rolled up my sleeve and got vaccinated at my first opportunity. So did

(continued on page 9)

City Council Update



Tucker's Mayor and City Council met twice during the month of May, discussing and dealing with a number of issues of importance in the City.

At the meeting on May 10, Council voted 6-0 to award a nearly \$48,000 contract for assessing the condition of the City's streets to Stantec. Three years ago, Stantec performed the same service, traversing every mile of Tucker's public roadways to assess the conditions. The data was used to help city officials prioritize which roads would be resurfaced first in the past four SPLOST-funded road resurfacing campaigns. Roads will be re-prioritized moving forward based on this new data.

Council also held first reads and public hearings on a pair of issues. The first was an ordinance to amend the City Code, adopting a model ordinance from the Metropolitan North Georgia Water Planning District. This ordinance would impact water recycling from new car washes in the City. The second issue was a rezoning and concurrent variance to allow for 80 townhomes in Tucker's Northlake area. Neither of these issues was voted on and both are expected to come up again at the Council's meeting on June 14.

On May 24, the Mayor and Council held a work session followed by a special called meeting. During the work session,

Council heard a presentation from members of the Urban Land Institute leadership program on a study they performed on the Northlake Festival Shopping Center. The findings suggested Northlake Festival could someday be an ideal location for a performing arts center, walkable retail and mixed-use development. They also discussed ways to improve the intersection at Lavista Road where Fellowship Road crosses over onto Chamblee Tucker Road. City Engineer Ken Hildebrandt presented several possible solutions, including reversing traffic flow on Lynburn Drive and adding a northbound left turn lane from Fellowship onto Lavista.

The special called meeting gave Council the chance to solicit input on the Fiscal Year 2022 budget. There was a first read and public hearing on the roughly \$16 million budget. No formal action was taken, as there are still upcoming opportunities for residents to give feedback. Council then approved a contract amendment for the Outdoor Fitness Court to be installed on the old DeKalb County Library property on Church Street, as well as a contract for replacement of two bridges at Probst Park.

The next meeting of the Mayor and City Council will be Monday June 14 at 7 p.m. at City Hall (1975 Lakeside Parkway, Suite 350B).

DATES TO KNOW

June 2
Traffic Court

June 7
Downtown Development Authority

June 9
Traffic Court

June 14
City Council

June 15
Zoning Board of Appeals

June 16
Municipal Court

June 17
Planning Commission

June 28
City Council

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ON THE BEAT with Lt. Schoeppner



This month, I turn the column over to my colleague in public safety, Chief Larry Labbe of the DeKalb County Fire Marshal's Office. Our friends at DeKalb Fire have an important message they wanted to share that may just keep your family and your home a little bit safer.



Since the beginning of the "COVID work from home" environment, the fire service in general has seen an uptick in residential fires. Most of those fires have revolved around actions and/or inactions taken by the resident. DeKalb County Fire Rescue specific data from the National Fire Incident Reporting System (NFIRS) reveals a prominence in cooking related fires as the number one cause of fires in 2020. And, in the same time frame, there have been seven residential cooking related fires in the City of Tucker. In 2020 in the City of Tucker, 77 percent of all reported fires were related to cooking.

Overall, and prior to the pandemic, the City of Tucker had seen a decrease in fire incidents. From 2018 to 2019, the number of fire incidents decreased by 65 percent. From 2019 to 2020, the number of fires decreased by 60 percent. Looking at 2018 to 2020, fire incidents in Tucker decreased by almost 61 percent.

The fire totals are:

- 2018: 23 fire incidents
- 2019: 15 fire incidents
- 2020: 9 fire incidents

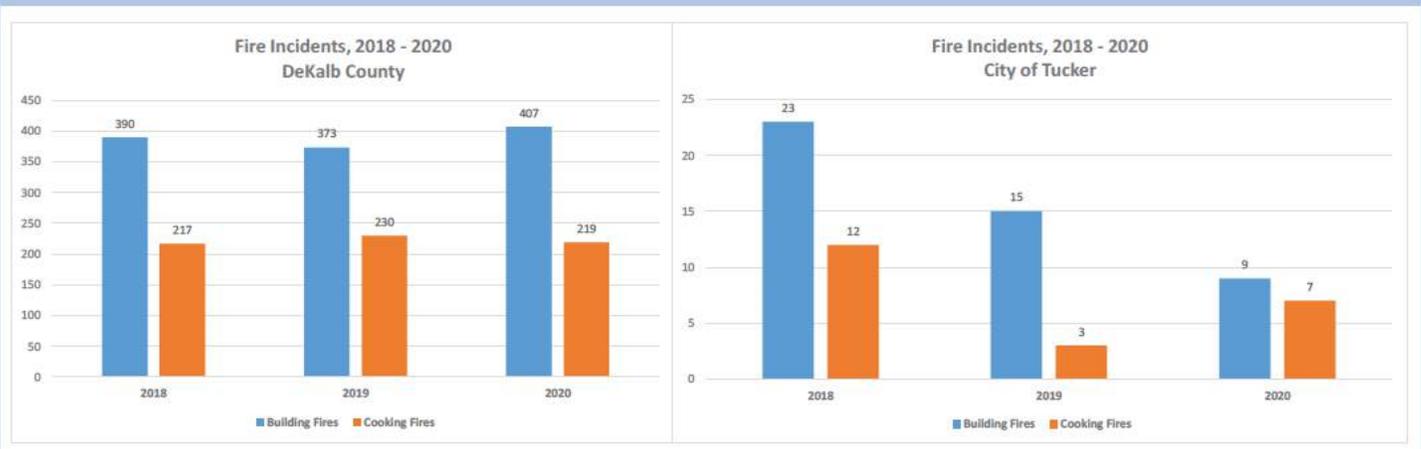
In order to continue the trend of reducing fire incidents in the City of Tucker, we turn our attention to fire prevention. The DeKalb County Fire Rescue Fire Marshal Division has a proactive Public Education Section that continues to provide programs both virtual and in person. While we do focus on preventing all accidental fires, here are some of our DCFR featured programs:

- SafeKids Car Seat Program
- Pedestrian Safety
- Youth Fire Setter
- Senior Safety Program

Staying present, alert and not impaired while cooking will significantly reduce the risk of cooking related fires in the home. Unattended cooking is the primary cause of cooking fires. One cooking related fire and life safety education initiative

is "Stop the Scald". This program specifically addresses protecting infants and toddlers from scald burns by simply turning the handle in to prevent pots or pans from being pulled down from the stove. Another way to keep toddlers safe is creating "safe zones" around cooking appliances and outdoor cooking equipment. The suggested safe area around stoves and ovens is a three-foot diameter. Finally, another cause of fires is burnt food on the stove. Setting timers, staying in the kitchen and being alert are the best ways to avoid burning food.

DeKalb County Fire Rescue has a Planning and Appraisal Division that constantly captures data and provides analytical support. This article and our ability to use data in fire prevention planning would not be possible without the assistance of our Planning and Appraisal Division. Thank you for taking the time to read this column; I hope it makes a difference in some small way.





INTERSECTION REFLECTION

TUCKER'S ENGINEERING TEAM TACKLING LONGSTANDING ROAD PROBLEMS WITH NEW SOLUTIONS

The discussion over transportation in metro Atlanta often leads back to one word: traffic. But, more important than getting drivers to their destinations quickly is getting them there safely. That's the opinion of traffic engineers like Tucker's Ken Hildebrandt, who spend their days toiling in front of a computer and in the field, searching for solutions to make roadways safer.

Hildebrandt and his team have long been focused on intersection safety. In Tucker's Transportation Master Plan, consultants examined the most accident-prone roadways and intersections. Recommendations were made to the Mayor and City Council and, over time, some of these intersections have been redesigned – or even reimagined – into safer, more common sense designs.

"It's not that Tucker's roads are any more dangerous than other municipalities," Hildebrandt explained. "It's just that we have opportunities to reduce accident rates on some of Tucker's roads. And that's exactly what we are doing."

Here is a look at some of the projects that have been completed, are in process, or are in the long-term planning stages here in Tucker.

LAWRENCEVILLE HIGHWAY AT FELLOWSHIP ROAD



The problem? Drivers for years had been cutting over in the middle of this intersection, trying to go straight from the dedicated turn lane. There were close calls, fender benders and full-on accidents with injury.

The solution? Converting a northbound through lane of Fellowship to a southbound left turn only lane. This allowed for three lanes southbound across the intersection, noticeably reducing the dangerous activity from drivers.

The outcome: Project completed in February 2019

Ken's take: "With the number of complaints and near accidents we saw at this intersection, we knew something needed to be done. This was one of the quicker fixes that I've been a part of, especially in that drivers adapted to the changes almost immediately."

HIGHWAY 78 AT BROCKETT AND COOLEGE ROADS

The problem? This has long been one of the most awkward and dangerous intersections in Tucker. It boils down to cars getting off US-78 coming in from the east not being able to turn safely onto Brockett Road. This resulted in some very risky driving behaviors that have led to injury crashes.

The solution? A new traffic signal was installed at the US-78 on/off ramp. It will take a lot of coordination with the signal at Coolegge Road, but now drivers can safely enter Tucker or Clarkston via 78 with a green light.

The outcome: Project completed in May 2021

Ken's take: "This was an intersection that, because of the way it was designed, there was no obvious fix. After a lot of design work, we are confident this additional signal will increase safety for the drivers on Brockett Road."



HIGHWAY 78 AT MOUNTAIN INDUSTRIAL BOULEVARD

The problem? This intersection has the highest number of accidents in the City of Tucker with almost 1,000 accidents, including 262 injuries, over a five-year period.

The solution? Realign the US-78 ramps, improve traffic signals and install a median at selected sections to reduce left turning movements.

The outcome: Engineering design will begin soon; construction is several years away.

Ken's take: "In partnership with the Georgia Department of Transportation and the Tucker Summit Community Improvement District, the City is leveraging almost \$6 million of state and federal transportation dollars to make these safety improvements."



CHAMBLEE TUCKER ROAD



The problem? Drivers have long turned this four-lane road into their own personal autobahn. While the speed limit signs say 40, it's not unusual to see drivers going well in excess, even in the school zone in front of Livsey Elementary School.

The solution? The Mayor and City Council have allocated money in their Fiscal Year 2022 budget (to be voted on later this month) to completely reimagine Chamblee Tucker as a "complete street". This would take the road from four lanes to three, with the extra surface area being devoted to bike lanes, turn lanes and a center median. It would potentially lower the speed limit and lead to installation of new flashing beacon pedestrian crosswalks.

The outcome: The project is under design and could be completed in 2022

Ken's take: "The goal of this project is to convert Chamblee Tucker Road from an arterial to a collector street by implementing a "road diet". The bike lanes, turn lanes, and pedestrian signals will greatly improve the safety of vehicles, pedestrians, and bicyclists."

LAVISTA ROAD AT FELLOWSHIP ROAD

The problem? This is the dreaded "triangle" intersection just to the west of Tucker High School. Cars can turn right or go straight from Lavista onto Chamblee Tucker, often causing accidents. Cars have no dedicated left turn arrow to go from Fellowship onto Lavista, often causing dangerous driving behaviors. It is, quite simply, an inefficient intersection.

The solution? None yet. City consultants have looked at multiple traffic models to determine the safest and most traffic-efficient improvements.

The outcome: The Mayor and City Council will review these alternatives and determine a path forward. Staff will likely seek federal funding for the improvements.

Ken's take: "This is another improvement that will reduce traffic congestion as well as enhance safety. Because the process to obtain federal funding for roadwork on a state route is quite lengthy, the improvements may be a few years away. But, we are excited to get the design started."



BUSINESS BOOM

by John McHenry, Community and Economic Development Director



Emory Morsberger, the Executive Director of the Tucker Summit Community Improvement

District, has never been

accused of being short on initiatives. When he sees a problem, he wants action. As we gratefully emerged from the pandemic, he heard a crescendo from his businesses – “we need workers!” Partnering with Decide DeKalb, City of Tucker and Georgia Piedmont Technical College on May 12, a Tucker Job Fair was held to great success.

Over 20 businesses including PepsiCo, Prime Meats, Clarian Place Childcare, RAM Tools, Tucker Brewing Company and others participated in the Job Fair at the Stone Ridge Event Center. Local sign company Image360 Tucker supplied all the collateral including flyers, interior and roadside signage, and social distancing decals.

“It’s a pleasure partnering with Tucker,” said Image360 Tucker President Earl Walker. “We recognize the need for qualified staff and want to see full employment in our community.”

The Stone Ridge Event Center, led by Laurie Wexel, was a gracious host and the perfect venue for this event. Georgia Piedmont Technical College facilitated the online registration for both the employers and applicants while WorkSource DeKalb/Decide DeKalb not only assisted in logistical planning but also worked with their network to recruit both the companies and job seekers. WorkSource DeKalb even had their Career Mobile Unit available to help the nearly 100 applicants with their resumes and interview skills before entering the venue.

“This is a textbook example of what can be accomplished when we all have a common goal of facilitating employment; a win we can all be proud of,” said Brandon Ona, Workforce Business Analyst with Decide DeKalb Development Authority. “One



Tucker Summit CID chief Emory Morsberger welcomes businesses and job seekers to the Tucker Job Fair on May 12. (Credit: tuckerga.gov)

applicant came to the Job Fair on his break and was offered a job on the spot for double his current pay!”

Communications firm communications 21 coordinated all the players to help schedule meetings, plan logistics, and did a hard media push securing national coverage that spanned 41 markets and several local interviews.

“Tucker’s response to the pandemic and our efforts to prioritize the health of businesses here has led to their being in a great position to run full speed ahead as the pandemic finally eases,” Tucker Mayor Frank Auman said. “Now we have the very good problem of a shortage of qualified, enthusiastic employees for these businesses. We’re grateful to all our partners in putting employers together with potential employees all over the City.”

Not to rest on their laurels, the coalition is looking to hold another event later this year.

“We’re connecting employers with job applicants,” exclaimed Morsberger. “It’s incredible!”

FROM THE MAYOR

(continued from page 3)

my wife. Our daughters did, too. As a result, I now get to see my grandkids. I can go and stay with my 87 year-old father. We get to spend time with my mother-in-law who, while young-at-heart, is certainly in a high-risk category because of age.

And, more and more around Tucker, we as a community are healing in just the same way.

Last month, the good folks and volunteers of the Tucker Cruise-In dipped their collective toe in the water, returning the event to Main Street. It was their first such gathering – and the first full-scale event on Main Street – since 2019. Friends, neighbors, families...the lifeblood of Tucker back together. A few days later, Nancy Qarmout and her team got the gang back together for an in-person Farmers Market. And both were filled with people who may have been less concerned with the event itself than in just being with people.

We can do this because we continue to follow the science, as we have throughout the entire pandemic.

There are more opportunities coming. This month we, as a city, kick off the 2021 TKR Summer of Fun. A couple hundred people will gather on June 4 for the Movie on Main. On July 3, we up the ante as a couple thousand people gather for our big fireworks show. We'll finish it off in August with another great city-wide event as we gather for National Night Out.



We can do this because we continue to follow the science, as we have throughout the entire pandemic. When the science conflicted with itself, changed rapidly, or was just poorly communicated, we had to work hard, think hard, and make hard decisions about how to keep going. Now, more people are getting vaccinated. Fewer people are getting infected. But we still have to be vigilant against the disease, and respectful of each other. Some will wear masks to these events, some will take steps to keep their distance from those who don't and some will choose to stay away. Some businesses will ask you to wear a mask or limit their occupancy. Our policies have been and will continue to be to allow as much freedom as the general welfare will allow, while respecting and leaving room for varying approaches and responses to the emergency.

I can see the light at the end of the tunnel – and now I can see it in the eyes and the smiles of so many of you. I hope you can, too. Please take care of yourself in the way most appropriate for you, and bear with your neighbors who are doing the same. And don't be surprised if I offer a big hug when I see you on Main Street!



FRANK AUMAN
MAYOR

SALUTING OUR SCHOLARS



TUCKER HIGH SCHOOL VALEDICTORIAN BENEN CHANCEY

GPA: 4.52

Future College: University of Georgia

Intended Major: Ecology



TUCKER HIGH SCHOOL SALUTATORIAN SOFIA KHEMANI

GPA: 4.515

Future College: Yale University

Intended Major: Computer Science and Psychology

How did you become valedictorian?

I had the highest GPA.

Seriously, though, I never had the goal of being valedictorian, so I'm not quite sure how it happened. I can say that I always worked hard, challenged myself, and tried my best. One thing I avoided was comparing myself to others. I think that it's easy to see yourself competing against your peers for a title or accomplishment, but it's healthier to follow the academic path best for you despite how it could possibly augment your GPA. At least, that's what I decided to do.

Advice for future graduates:

1. Communicate. Teachers are looking to support you, so reach out to them when needed and communicate promptly.
2. Organize. It can feel impossible to keep up with deadlines for multiple classes and dates for clubs and sports. Spend time organizing your materials, work and timeline.
3. Have fun and have perspective! School is important, but it isn't everything. Sometimes, assignments and tests seem more important than you'll remember them being. Give yourself time to rest and to take a break. Your mental health and wellbeing matter, and balance is key.

How did you become salutatorian?

I was in the International Baccalaureate program at my school, which allowed me to take a wide variety of IB classes throughout the last two years. I was also able to take several AP and Dual Enrollment classes, including two Dual Enrollment classes I took over the past summer. Finally, and most importantly, I was fortunate enough to have the support of my family, friends, and amazing teachers that I could turn to for any issue, big or small.

Advice for the Class of 2021:

I think the mindset that helped me the most over the past few years was one of growth. Over the past four years, we experienced a variety of life-changing events, especially considering the pandemic. The culmination of those experiences changed us from the scared 14-year-olds we were into young adults ready to go out into the world. But these moments were just the beginning of our lives. As we move on to the next chapter, it's important to keep learning and growing into better and more well-rounded people.



Tucker Cluster

Updates & News

IMPORTANT DATES

June 14
Board of Education Meeting

BRAG SHEET

IDLEWOOD ELEMENTARY

- Students were honored at the Virtual Awards Day Programs during the week of May 17. They finished out the week with Virtual Fun Day Activities on May 21.

LIVSEY ELEMENTARY

- Third-grade classes have been studying food insecurity in their STEM unit. As a result, during the month of May the third graders hosted a food drive, collecting canned goods, plastic peanut butter jars, crackers and more.

MIDVALE ELEMENTARY

- Midvale's fifth-grade students participated in the Eradicating Erosion Game Design Challenge, a Georgia Tech sponsored event for Georgia STEM Day. Two teams from Midvale brought home accolades, including Most Creative Pitch and Most Creative Game Design.

TUCKER MIDDLE

- Dr. Kathy Cunningham was bestowed one of the highest honors in the DeKalb County School District being named Region II Principal of the Year.

TUCKER HIGH

- The Tiger football team had an impressive run of spring practices and workouts under new head coach James Thomson. To get updates on the team, you can follow Coach Thomson on Twitter @COACH_THOMSON.



BUSINESS OF THE MONTH

MAIN MOON

In the nearly five-year history of *InTucker*, the magazine has recognized more than 50 companies as “Business of the Month”. Never before in all those issues has a business been recognized when it wasn’t actually open for business. But that, unfortunately, is the case this month.

On May 11, a kitchen accident took the life of one of the beloved owners of Tucker’s popular Main Moon Chinese restaurant. Mei Ying Chen’s death shook the Tucker community to its core, and left loyal customers asking what they could do to help her family. Instantly, those customers began donating to a GoFundMe account. They were soon joined by local business owners and others who wanted to step up and cover things like funeral expenses and kitchen renovation costs. In all, the effort raised more than \$30,000 to assist the family as they continue to grieve the loss of their loved one.

The tragedy is reminiscent of the 2016 death of Joey Aromsuk, proprietor of popular Tucker restaurant Mai Thai. In that instance, the community banded together to raise money to pay to have the restaurateur’s remains flown back to his native Thailand. Mai Thai never re-opened, and the community still has scars from the loss of a beloved member.

Because of all that’s happened, Main Moon remains closed. Without a critical staff member and with heavy damage to the kitchen, there is no way for the restaurant to serve its delicious Chinese delicacies to the community. But, with a fervent customer base clamoring for the restaurant to come back, there is little doubt Main Moon will be open again soon. It is even more certain that Mei Ying Chen’s memory will live on with customers for a long time to come.

Main Moon is located at 4418 Hugh Howell Road. You can find them online at www.mainmoontucker.com.

TEAM TUCKER *Spotlight*

VANESSA SANTIAGO, SENIOR MUNICIPAL COURT CLERK

How did you get to Tucker?

I applied for the Senior Court Clerk position as an opportunity to expand my career. Prior to this position, I was working as a Police Records and Court Services Clerk. Although my degree isn't in Criminal Justice, I've been working in the criminal justice field for going on three years now.

What does an average day on the job look like?

Not every day is the same. We have a lot of paperwork and data entry that must be done daily. I also answer a lot of phone calls and emails from defendants, citizens and attorneys regarding court related questions.

In this job, you must pay very close attention to detail because we are dealing with individuals' livelihoods.

What are some of the advantages of working in Tucker?

The one thing that I would say is the best advantage is "Team Tucker." We have such a great team here, and it makes the job so much more enjoyable. The communication, the team player mentality, and the bonding is so incredible and makes it great to work in Tucker.

How does Tucker's court function?

Tucker Municipal Court has traffic court and environmental court. Traffic

court is held two Wednesdays a month, where we see defendants who have a misdemeanor traffic ticket and/or city ordinance violation. Environmental Court is only held one Wednesday a month, where citizens of Tucker have been cited with violating an environmental city ordinance. We also do non-jury trials once a quarter for those who want a bench trial on their charges.

You are certified trilingual. How does that help you in your job?

Being trilingual is a great asset to have with any job, but especially within the criminal justice system. This helps me in my daily job as I can communicate with and assist others effectively.

Off the Wall

What is your favorite thing to do on a sunny June day?

Personally, I am not a summer person, but I do enjoy cookouts and pool days with family and friends.

Have any favorite Tucker restaurants?

Oh, absolutely! My favorite restaurant in Tucker is Bell Street Burritos! I love their pulled chicken quesadilla with chips and queso. The food is always fresh and satisfying.

What is your favorite streaming service and what are you bingeing right now?

I would say right now that my two favorite streaming services would be Netflix and Disney+. I just finished "The Crown" on Netflix and "The Falcon and The Winter Soldier" on Disney+.



CITIZEN OF THE MONTH

CLAIRE HAYES



photo credit: Creation Stream Studios

Always the first to raise her hand to volunteer with Friends of Tucker Parks and Henderson Park, Claire Hayes' contagious community spirit and willingness to "dig in the dirt" truly embodies what it means to be the City of Tucker's Citizen of the Month.

I had the honor of seeing Claire spring into action when she joined the Friends of Tucker Parks almost 10 years ago back when the organization was in its infancy and operated by Park Pride. As a master gardener and former Executive Director of both the Dunwoody Nature Center and Woodland Gardens, Claire enthusiastically offered her time, expertise, and attention to serving as the special visionary partner to the Friends of Tucker Parks. Through that service, she drafted the organization's bylaws and organized events each year.

One of the most successful events in the history of the park was one she led called Hi-Henderson in 2018. Serving as the event chair, she worked to engage the community to come play in the park on a Sunday afternoon in September. With more than 400 people in attendance, the event included food trucks and a variety of activities for the whole family such as a hike around the park, a special birding hike, and a Bartlett

tree giveaway. Many other community groups also participated in this Henderson festival day thanks to her creative planning and successful volunteer coordination efforts.

When she is not busy volunteering her time for the Friends of the Parks groups and jumping into any volunteer workday or master gardener project at the Native Plant and Wildlife Walk, you can find her sharing her love of music by singing as a soloist and cantor in the Choir at Holy Cross Catholic Church. And when the theatre is back, she will be sitting in the front row to catch the next aspiring thespians take the stage for Main Street Tucker.

A friend to everyone she meets, Claire is committed to using her leadership talents to organizing special events for the neighborhood. Not only was she a founding member of the neighborhood book club, but she helped start the neighborhood garden.

It is for Claire's amazing community spirit, leadership and long-term volunteer service that I nominate her for the City of Tucker's Citizen of the Month.

Nomination by Cara Schroeder

“ASK RIP”

Rip Robertson is the Parks and Recreation Director for the City of Tucker. He brings to the job years of experience in Parks and Rec, as well as Public Works.



By the time you're reading this, school will be out, Memorial Day will be over and Summer Camp will be in full swing at Tucker Recreation Center. You might remember I wrote my column last month about Summer Camp, and how excited we were to welcome your sons and daughters to our newly revamped program. I'm happy to announce the word spread quickly and we are now at capacity for most weeks of camp.

In full transparency, staffing this year's camp was a struggle. It's been a hot topic on the news lately about restaurants and other industries that are dealing with worker shortages. We ran into the same problem with this year's Summer Camp. I can't explain it, but I do know that, despite the struggles, we ended up with an impressive crop of camp counselors. We have teachers, caregivers, others who have extensive experience in child development. This will be a great group of adults to work with a great group of campers.

Now onto your questions! We got one via email from Ellen Griffith asking "Any plans to increase the number of tennis courts available in the Tucker area?"

This is a great question because tennis – and pickleball – is something we've been focused on since we assumed responsibility for our parks several years ago. Since that time, the courts at Henderson Park have been completely refurbished and lighting has been added, while we also

acquired four new courts last year at Rosenfeld Park, which are scheduled for renovation in the Fiscal Year 2022 budget. This will add quality courts that can be better utilized. Do we have plans to add more? Not immediately. But as we look at our Parks Master Plan and weigh the popularity of both tennis and pickleball here in Tucker, that could change.

I'll also add a note about our new partnership with Agape Tennis Academy. They are offering youth tennis lessons and pickleball clinics for adults right here in the City of Tucker. This is sure to drive development of our young players, as well as create more activity on our courts. It's a real win-win for Tucker!

Onto a question I've been getting from every corner of the City: how can we sign up for season passes at the pool? It's simple. Pool passes are selling online at www.tuckerga.gov/parks. It's \$175 for a family, \$75 for an individual and \$50 if you are a senior 55 and over or a military veteran. Daily passes are on sale, too, but that season pass is a bargain if you plan on visiting either Kelley Cofer Pool or Rosenfeld Pool on a weekly basis.

We are so excited about summer swim season! A few years ago we debuted the splash pad at Cofer and this summer we debut an aqua swing. What's an aqua swing? Get your membership and come find out! Also, at Rosenfeld, we are putting in a brand new waterslide. These new amenities are going to really enhance the guest experience at our Tucker pools this summer. I hope that you will join us and dive into summer!



TUCKERGA.GOV

1975 LAKESIDE PARKWAY, SUITE 350, TUCKER, GA 30084
678.597.9040



TUCKER *Community Corner*



6/3, 6/10, 6/17, 6/24 – Tucker Farmers Market

4-7 p.m., 4882 Lavista Road
The Tucker Farmers Market is back in person! Come out every Thursday starting at 4 p.m. at St. Andrews Presbyterian Church.

6/4 – Movie on Main
7-11 p.m., Main Street

Movie on Main is the kickoff to the 2021 TKR Summer of Fun! We will be showing "Grease" so break out your leather jackets and your poodle skirts and join us on Main!

6/12 – Tucker Cruise In
11 a.m.-2 p.m., Main Street

The Cruise-In is back in full swing! CDC safety guidelines will be observed and masks are encouraged. A cool city packed with cool classic cars? It's an event you won't want to miss!

5/8 – Meet and Greet with Sean Underwood
6-8 p.m., 4341 Hugh Howell Road

Head to Camp Woof for a photo op with the Tucker native and Iditarod musher. Children and dogs are welcome.