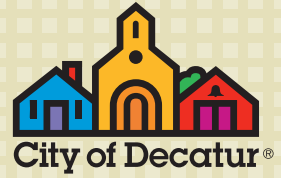


# City of Decatur FOCUS



JUNE 2019  
Volume 29 • Number 10

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE CITY OF DECATUR, GEORGIA

## Lunch & Learn

# African American Heritage of Decatur

Tuesday, June 11 • noon-1 p.m.  
Historic DeKalb Courthouse  
101 E. Court Square  
Second Floor

**T**he DeKalb History Center's June Lunch & Learn will be presented by Laurel Wilson, MHP. Much is still unknown about the early history of African Americans in Decatur. Although there have been many resources published about Decatur, many have only small sections devoted to the African American population. Laurel Wilson, MHP, has dedicated herself to unearthing and researching the lives of African Americans in Decatur and DeKalb County. Wilson has been working specifically with the Decatur Cemetery and "Section 6," which describes the few sections of the cemetery where African Americans are buried.



Sallie Thomas Durham, longtime Decatur resident, with family.

Through years of research, Laurel Wilson has documented the lives of countless people buried in the Decatur Cemetery and has used her findings to form a better picture of who was bur-

ied in Section 6 and what their lives were like in the earlier days of Decatur. The event is free and open to the community. Participants must bring their own lunch.

# Spread the Word: Decatur is the Place for Business

The Decatur Downtown Development Authority (DDA) is developing a campaign to attract companies to new and existing office space, drive already low office vacancy rates even lower, and build Decatur's tax base.

## Focus on Downtown Development

Decatur is well known as one of metro Atlanta's premier cities for housing, schools, shopping and dining, and festivals. While office development was the primary activity in downtown Decatur in the 1980s and 1990s, downtown investments in recent decades have centered on retail, restaurants and multi-family residential development. The DDA wants to focus attention on promoting the city as an employment center of choice for businesses seeking office space, to maintain a healthy balance of uses in the city's commercial districts.

With 2 million square feet of office space, Decatur wants to tout its competitive advantages as a walkable, transit-friendly community with a distinct local flare and access to a highly educated workforce. The city is looking to recruit a new generation of businesses that are drawn to Decatur's values and complement the city's purpose-inspired business leaders.

To assist the campaign, the DDA has hired a leading branding agency, Son and Sons, and a public relations firm specializing in commercial real estate, The Wilbert Group. The authority has also created a steering committee composed of local commercial real estate brokers and experts to provide insights and feedback on the campaign.

Although Decatur is home to a small fraction of metro Atlanta's 312 million square feet of office space, according to data from CoStar, the city boasts a low and healthy vacancy rate of 6 percent, compared to significantly higher vacancy rates in Midtown (10.5 percent) and Buckhead (13.7 percent). The city's average rental rate of \$23 per square foot also compares favorably to more than \$35 per square foot in those competing office markets.

The underlying message of the campaign is that downtown Decatur is a vibrant, viable and available location for companies with a heart. While downtown Decatur might not appeal to every business, it does provide a unique working environment that aligns with the culture of a specific type of business.

As metro Atlanta has changed in recent years, the region's center of gravity has shifted eastward and made Decatur a stronger market than ever. According to the Atlanta Regional Commission, more than 1.2 million people are within a 30-minute drive of Decatur during rush hour – and more than 500,000 of those are college-educated, putting Decatur on par with or better than other nearby employment centers. With three MARTA stations located within its city limits, Decatur offers one of the best examples of transit-oriented development in the region.

Decatur has the luxury of creating and launching an office marketing campaign when the Decatur market is strong and the economy is growing. The city has a strong, positive brand and amenities that give it a competitive advantage. This effort will assist the DDA in focusing investment interest back on commercial office development to continue to provide balanced growth and development in downtown and throughout the city's commercial districts.

The new marketing campaign is being finalized and will be rolled out this summer.

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## City of Decatur Focus

The Decatur Focus is a joint publication of the City of Decatur, the Decatur Downtown Development Authority and the Decatur Business Association. It is a newsletter intended to provide announcements and information related to events, activities, and businesses in the city of Decatur. The purpose of the newsletter is to promote the city and encourage the exchange of information among residents, business owners and the school system. Letters to the editor, editorials or other opinion pieces are not published. All press releases, announcements and other information received for publication are subject to editing. Information found in the Focus is also posted on Decatur's official website at [decaturga.com](http://decaturga.com). The deadline for submitting articles, announcements or advertising is the first day of the month preceding publication. Contact: Editor, Decatur Focus, P.O. Box 220, Decatur, GA 30031, 404-371-8386; fax 404-371-1593; email: [decaturfocus@decaturga.com](mailto:decaturfocus@decaturga.com).



### DECATUR CITY COMMISSION

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Tony Powers.....Mayor Pro Tem  
Scott Drake.....Commissioner  
Brian Smith.....Commissioner  
Kelly Walsh.....Commissioner



### DECATUR DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

#### Board

Chris Sciarone, Chair  
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Bill Floyd • Scott Kentner  
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### DECATUR BUSINESS ASSOCIATION

Susan Sparks.....President  
Daryl Funn.....President-Elect  
Jill Joplin.....Treasurer  
Emily Holden.....Secretary  
Kyle Williams.....Past President

Design and layout: [Lampe-Farley.com](http://Lampe-Farley.com)

Information for the FOCUS should be submitted by mail to Editor, Decatur Focus, P.O. Box 220, Decatur, GA 30031, or by email to [decaturfocus@decaturga.com](mailto:decaturfocus@decaturga.com).





## Fire Chief Washington Is a Woman Making a Mark

Decatur Fire Rescue Chief Toni Washington has been selected as one of Atlanta magazine's 2019 Women Making a Mark honorees. The WMM program identifies individuals doing extraordinary work in the Atlanta community. Each woman is profiled in Atlanta magazine's June issue and will be recognized at an awards luncheon.

Atlanta magazine's editors carefully selected each honoree, taking into consideration nominations from the public. After receiving the largest number of nominations to date, the magazine selected a diverse group of 13 women who exhibit strong leadership and impassioned goodwill. They lead major philanthropic organizations, blaze trails for women in media, spearhead revitalization efforts, manage important political initiatives, fight for inclusion – and put out fires.



## Beacon Hill Toppers

Special sign toppers have been installed on streets that were part of the Beacon Hill community. Beacon Hill was once the center of African-American life and commerce in the city. Many of the streets no longer exist but with the help of Mayor Emerita Elizabeth Wilson and a map of the area that is part of an exhibit in Ebster Recreation Center, key intersections of the old Beacon Hill neighborhood were identified and the Beacon Hill toppers were placed on them.

Decatur's Beacon Municipal Center, at W. Trinity Place and Electric Avenue, stands where the city's African-American public schools – Herring Street School, Beacon Elementary, and Trinity High – once stood. This site remains an important landmark for the city's African-American community. The doorway in the corner of the Ebster Recreation Center is the last vestige of Herring Street School. Aside from the memories and photographs, it is all that remains of Decatur's African-American Beacon Hill community.



## Focus Combines July/August Issues

The July and August issues of the Decatur Focus are combined and will be available mid-July. The combined issue also features the city's annual report. Send information for this issue by June 10 to [decaturfocus@decaturga.com](mailto:decaturfocus@decaturga.com) (as a Word document or in the body of the email only; please no PDFs) or to ATTN: Decatur Focus, PO Box 220, Decatur, GA 30031.

## Holiday Solid Waste and Recycling Services

**Independence Day  
Thursday, July 4**

Thursday and Friday trash and recycling will be picked up on Wednesday, July 3.

# Deep Forest Field School Demonstrates Invasive Species Removal in Legacy Park

Local nonprofit Deep Forest Field School recently demonstrated its unique “Machete Man” invasive species removal services in the conservation easement area of Legacy Park, the former United Methodist Children’s Home on Columbia Drive.

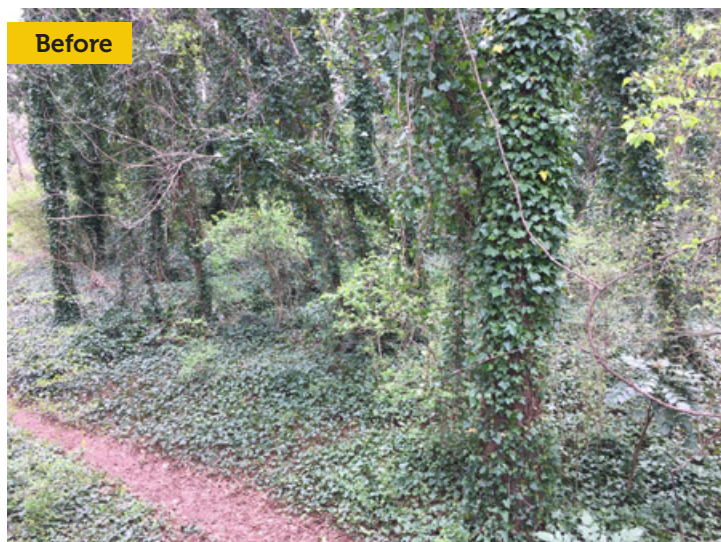
Currently, the Legacy Park forest is at great risk of being lost, due to a heavy infestation of non-native, invasive species smothering the old trees and the young trees that would replace them. Deep Forest Field School was recommended for its alternative approach to invasive species management, in which manual methods are used to remove

only the non-native species, leaving natives unharmed, growing in place. This makes the process of recovery into a mature, hardwood forest possible. Other removal services rely primarily on heavy herbicide usage or employing goats to graze the area, but these methods clear the forest floor of native species along with the non-natives, harming the forest’s structure.

In just one five-hour session, the Deep Forest Field School crew dispatched approximately 11,185 square feet of English ivy and cleared invasive vines from five seedling trees, 10 saplings, and 22 trees. Studies have shown mature hardwood forests can absorb

30,000 pounds of carbon dioxide per acre per year. Given the City of Decatur’s commitments to addressing climate change, consider how much carbon dioxide can be absorbed and how many trees will be saved when the 18 acres of forest are restored.

The demonstration was made possible by the Decatur Environmental Sustainability Board and a grant from Decatur First United Methodist Church, which Deep Forest Field School matched in services. Several city staff members – including David Junger, Hugh Saxon, Felix Floyd, Lyn Menne and Courtney Frisch – turned out for the before and after evaluations.



## FY 2019-20 Budget Schedule

Here are important dates in the budget schedule for the City of Decatur’s fiscal year 2019-2020 budget process, subject to City Commission approval. The public hearings will be held at Decatur City Hall, 509 N. McDonough St.

- **June 3, 7:30 p.m.** Public hearing on Proposed FY 2019-20 Budget and Revised 2018-19 Budget and 2019 Millage Rates.
- **June 10, 6 p.m.** Public hearing on 2019 Millage Rates (if necessary).
- **June 17, 7:30 p.m.** Public hearing and scheduled adoption of Proposed FY 2019-20 Budget and Revised 2018-19 Budget and adoption of final 2019 Millage Rates.

Copies of the FY 2019-20 Proposed Budget and FY 2018-19 Revised Budget are available at Decatur City Hall and at the Decatur Library, 215 Sycamore St. The budget is also available at [decaturga.com/budget](http://decaturga.com/budget). Following a formal presentation of the budget to the Decatur City Commission, the city will publish a legal advertisement with more detailed information about the budget amounts and again identify the public hearing dates and times.

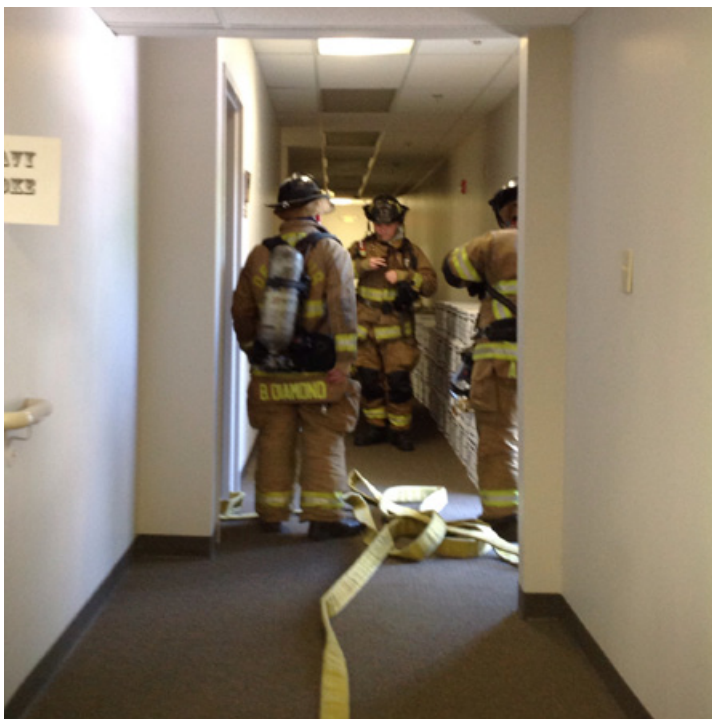
If you have questions or need additional information, contact City Clerk Meredith Roark, 404-370-4102, or [meredith.roark@decaturga.com](mailto:meredith.roark@decaturga.com). Check [decaturga.com/budget](http://decaturga.com/budget) for updates to the schedule and to view the online budget.



## Local Businesses Participate in Fire Drills

Have you recently noticed Decatur Fire personnel and fire trucks around your favorite Decatur businesses while employees are evacuating? Don't be alarmed (pun intended)! All businesses are required to perform regular fire drills to ensure the alarm system functions properly and all personnel can evacuate quickly.

Decatur Fire Rescue began conducting these drills to perform real-life training sessions that incorporate a search for any remaining employees, a simulated fire attack and an analysis of the best strategies and tactics to respond to emergencies at each individual business. Don't worry, the fire is simulated by signs stating "light smoke," "heavy smoke" and "fire" to lead the firefighters in the right direction, and water is never used within the building. Decatur firefighters are constantly working to make sure the community receives the best service when you need it most.



## Decatur Neighborhoods Meeting

**Wednesday, June 19 • 7 p.m.**

**Decatur Recreation Center, 231 Sycamore St.**

Neighborhoods large and small throughout Decatur are invited to attend this Decatur Neighborhood Alliance meeting. Whether you live in a house, condominium, townhome or apartment, please attend this neighborhood gathering. We will have a presentation from the Decatur Parents Network (DPN), a group of parents, educators, and caregivers who are working to educate parents about the changing world their children are experiencing and how we can give our children the skills to navigate it. Afterwards, we will ask for your thoughts on a new program we are considering launching called Neighborhood Ambassadors. We look forward to seeing you!

Contact Lee Ann Harvey, [leeann.harvey@decaturga.com](mailto:leeann.harvey@decaturga.com) or 678-553-6548, to confirm your attendance or to update your neighborhood's listing on the Neighborhood Groups page at [decaturga.com/residents/community-groups/neighborhood-groups](http://decaturga.com/residents/community-groups/neighborhood-groups).



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**mydecaturga**



# Celebrate Loving Day in Decatur

**L**oving Day – the largest multiracial celebration in the United States – is held on June 12, the anniversary of the 1967 Supreme Court case *Loving v. Virginia*. Vindicating the marriage of Mildred and Richard Loving, a black woman and white man, the Court struck down state laws banning interracial marriage across the country.

At the time Loving was decided, only three percent of couples in the country had intermarried. By 2015, 17 percent of newlyweds in the U.S. had a spouse from a different racial background. That same year, one in seven (or 14 percent) of infants in the U.S. were multiracial, up from 5 percent in 1980. The 2000 Census was the first that allowed individuals to identify with more than one race, and in the 2010 U.S. census, approximately 9 million individuals, or 2.9 percent of the population, self-identified as multiracial. The Census Bureau estimates that the number of people doing so will triple by 2060.

Like so many cities in the U.S., Decatur is home to many interracial couples and multiracial individuals and families who live at the intersection of different identities and cultures. The community is invited to join in the celebration of their rich and wonderful stories. In honor of Loving Day, the Better Together Advisory Board offers several

related book recommendations from Little Shop of Stories.

## ***Born a Crime***

by Trevor Noah  
Adults and teens

The title of comedian and late-night host Trevor Noah's memoir gets at the central conflict of his early life: in apartheid-era South Africa, his parents weren't allowed to marry, so his very existence was against the law. Just like his comedy, this book is sharp, funny, alarming and bracingly honest. What's fresh here is a personal side to Mr. Noah that is most apparent in his loving descriptions and tales of his mother. The book was originally published as an adult title, but its popularity has led to a young reader's edition particularly aimed at late-middle grade to early teen readers.

## ***Blended***

by Sharon Draper  
Middle grades

Rather than write about this book, I'd like to quote Paige, a customer, who explains why this is her favorite book: "Isabella, the main character, is biracial, just like me. Never have I ever read a book about a biracial girl before! Isabella's mom is white, and her dad is black, like mine. I connected with Isabella when she

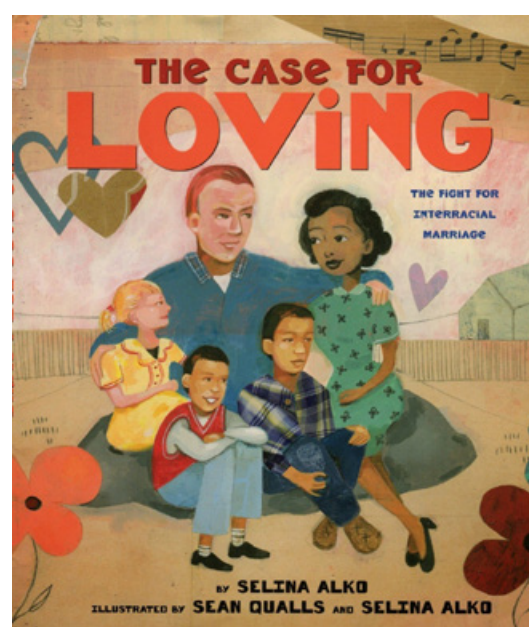
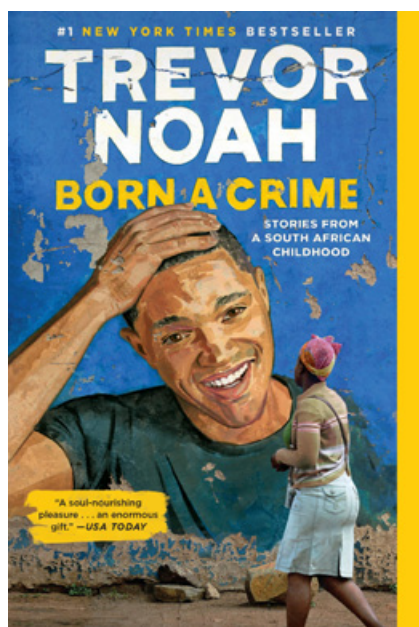
talked about the weird glances and ignorant remarks she would get just for being mixed.

I connected when she talked about her hair and how not every curl is the same! I connected when she talked about never feeling whole or accepted. 'When you're always looked at as half of this and half of that, how can you ever feel whole?' You feel alienated sometimes, like being called 'too white' or 'too black,' when you know you are both. Like having to circle the 'other' circle on standardized tests. I connected so deeply to Isabella in a way I have never connected before. I would love to hug and thank Ms. Draper for writing this incredible book."

## ***The Case for Loving***

by Selina Alko and Sean Qualls  
Picture book

This picture book about the marriage of Richard and Mildred Loving, is different from most nonfiction picture books. The writing is straightforward, even poetic in its plain-spoken phrasing, and the art does a wonderful job of conveying this world of conflict and legal wrangling in ways that suggest explanation and prompt discussion.





## Bike Dudes Named Champions of the Year

**B**ecause of their outstanding energy, creativity, love, and dedication, parent champions Kendall Hamilton, Steve Campbell and Michelle Stevens, aka the Bike Dudes, were named Safe Routes to School Metro Atlanta Champions of the Year for their work at Westchester Elementary.

They increased walking participation at the school, which is located along a state route that sees a lot of traffic. Parents in the past have been afraid to allow their children to walk or bike to school. In the past few years that they have been the school champions the Bike Dudes have come up with a route that takes students away from the state route and goes along a path behind the school.

On walk days, each child is greeted by the “team,” whose members are dressed for the occasion. One of them has a stuffed animal, a wolf, which is the school’s mascot, attached to her helmet. The others are also decked out. Each child who walks to school receives a marble that is then put into a clear cylinder. If the number of marbles reaches a certain line, the school receives 15 minutes of extra recess on Friday. On Georgia Walk & Roll Day and International Walk Day the school consistently has at least 60 percent participation.

Team members dress up and do skits at the community circles held on Friday mornings to encourage the students to participate. They are there to greet the students at the door not only on the “special” days, but also at each month’s walk-and-roll day. For the December holiday walk-and-roll, they had Santa and Mrs. Claus visit and be part of the skit at the community circle. The children were thrilled.



Bike Dudes, Metro Atlanta Champions, Safe Routes to School

## Pollinator Week Kicks Off with Mini Festival

**Saturday, June 15, 10 a.m.-1 p.m. • on the square in Decatur**

To celebrate National Pollinator Week, Bee City USA-Decatur, GA (“Beecatur”) will hold a mini festival on the square in Decatur. Visitors can learn about bees, butterflies and other beneficial pollinator species from vendors that include Beecatur, Southeast Beescapes, Beech Hollow Wildflower Farm, Woodlands Garden, Sierra Club of Georgia, Monarchs Across Georgia, Honey Next Door, Savannah Bee Company and others. There will be opportunities to taste local honey, learn about native plants and look at a honeybee colony up close, plus face painting and activities for kids.

As designated by Congress, National Pollinator Week is the third full week of June. Other National Pollinator Week events Beecatur will present include:

- “Marvel-ous Bees: Superheroes of the Natural World,” a fun, superhero-themed talk for kids;
- Film screenings of “Hometown Habitat: Stories of Bringing Nature Home” and DisneyNature’s “Wings of Life”; and
- “Planting for Pollinators,” an urban pollinator short course presented in partnership with the Xerces Society.



All National Pollinator Week events, including the mini festival, are free and open to the community. For a complete schedule of events, visit [beecaturga.com](http://beecaturga.com). Photo- Bee at home quadrant art



# Celebrate the Fourth of July in Decatur

**J**oin us on Thursday, July 4, for a day of parade, music and fireworks. Gather friends and family, ride your bike, walk or skate in the community's Pied Piper Parade. Neighborhoods and organizations are encouraged to pull out the red, white and blue, build floats or decorate vehicles, and join the fun.

Parade line-up is at 5:30 p.m. at the First Baptist Church of Decatur, 308 Clairemont Ave. Pedestrians will line-up on the front lawn, and motorized vehicles will be lined up by volunteers in the parking lot. The parade will step off at 6 p.m. The concert on the square will start at 7 p.m. in the Community Bandstand, featuring the Callanwolde Concert Band. Fireworks begin at dark (approximately 9 p.m.).

Anyone may participate in the parade, but those with motorized vehicles must register by visiting the event page at [visitdecaturgeorgia.com/july4](http://visitdecaturgeorgia.com/july4) to complete the Pied Piper Vehicle Registration form, or by emailing Shirley Baylis at [shirley.baylis@decaturga.com](mailto:shirley.baylis@decaturga.com).



## Floodplain Information

Decatur's Design, Environment and Construction Division provides general floodplain information on property located within the incorporated city limits. The Decatur Library also provides references on flooding and flood protection.

A map and information service is available for a \$10 fee. This service provides inquirers with flood insurance rate map information and identifies whether a property is in a special hazard area. An accurate street address or DeKalb County/Decatur Tax Parcel Identification number is needed to obtain this information. Call 678-553-6529 or email [jennings.bell@decaturga.com](mailto:jennings.bell@decaturga.com).

## Severe Weather Notifications

Because the sirens are not meant to be heard indoors, the city has another way to alert residents who are inside their homes and offices when severe weather is threatening. Residents and business owners can sign on at [smart911.com](http://smart911.com) to receive severe weather notifications for tornado, severe thunderstorm, and flash flood warnings.

If you already have a registered safety profile, just sign in and select or update the notifications you would like to receive. The alerts notify residents in the areas immediately affected and are triggered by NWS polygon technology.

We also suggest that you have a weather radio available to receive updates during a weather emergency.



## Changing Seasons at Decatur Cemetery



Spring has given way to the warm, hazy days of early summer at Decatur Cemetery. It's time for another visit, to enjoy being outdoors in the middle of Decatur's downtown greenspace. Sit in the gazebo and take in the sights, sounds and smells of the new season. Bring a picnic lunch and spread out near the pond over one of the picnic tables provided by Friends of Decatur Cemetery (just don't forget to clean up after your repast).

Second Sunday Strolls through the cemetery are presented each month during the warm seasons. This is a perfect way to "walk off" your lunch. After your meal, bring your water bottle, sunscreen and walking shoes and meet a member of FODC at 2:30 p.m. by the gazebo near the Commerce Drive entrance for a fact-filled stroll through Decatur's past. Tours are given the second Sunday of each month through October. Or grab a self-guided walking tour at the office at the Bell street entrance to the cemetery. For more information, contact [friendsofdecaturcemetery@gmail.com](mailto:friendsofdecaturcemetery@gmail.com).

## Summer Peaches and More at Decatur Farmers Market

**Wednesdays • 4-7 p.m. | Saturdays • 9-1 p.m.**  
**308 Clairemont Ave.**

Nothing says summer like a ripe, locally grown peach, brought fresh from the farm to the market. Summer is the best farmer's market season, featuring all the fresh fruit you could want alongside varieties of tomatoes, peppers, and more. Summer brings the end of strawberry season, so be sure to stock up on strawberries while they are still available.

Educational chefs will be at market to show you how to cook seasonally. They'll cook up samples and answer any questions you may have about recipes or how to cook special produce.



Photo: Community Farmers Markets

## Trees at Woodlands to Celebrate 90th Birthday and Life of a Friend

**A corrected reprint of the article previously published in May**

The Morse family gave Woodlands Garden to the community. Now the community can give back to Woodlands, as a way to celebrate loved ones and mark major life events through the garden's newly launched Tribute Tree Program. By donating to plant a Tribute Tree at Woodlands, individuals or groups can celebrate a milestone birthday, remember a beloved friend, or commemorate any of life's moments.

As Andy Plankenhorn's family prepared for his 90th birthday they searched for an appropriate way to honor their remarkable father and were delighted to learn about

this new program. He instilled in his family a love for nature and they learned from Andy that time spent in nature is never time wasted. Just as Andy, a loyal Woodlands volunteer, has enriched and improved his family and community for the past 90 years, Andy's Tree will do the same for many years to come.

On another occasion, 14 individuals made a collective donation to Woodlands in memory of Janice Butt, their storyteller friend. Some of her personal stories had elements of the mountains where she grew up and her friends know Janice would be thrilled at the

prospect of a tree being planted in her memory. Though Janice has passed, her memory will live on as friends visit the Tribute Tree planted in her honor and share stories of how this commemorative tree enhances the city's canopy through the changing seasons and time.

The 10 Tribute Trees sponsored thus far will be planted during Woodlands' construction project alongside native shrubs and pollinator-friendly perennial plantings. To learn more about Tribute Trees, visit [woodlandsgarden.org/tribute-tree-program/](http://woodlandsgarden.org/tribute-tree-program/).



## Atlanta's Charis Books Opens Store on Agnes Scott Campus

On Independent Bookstore Day, Charis Books and More celebrated its grand reopening on the campus of Agnes Scott College, 184 S. Candler St. Charis, the South's oldest independent feminist bookstore, and Charis Circle, the nonprofit programming partner of the bookstore, celebrated their new home in conjunction with Agnes Scott College's alumnae weekend and the inauguration celebration of college president Lee Zak.

The bookstore and nonprofit will continue operating as they have for much of their previous 44 years in Little Five Points, with the addition of a new Agnes Scott school store element that includes spirit wear, snacks and drinks, school supplies and convenience items.

The celebration included food from Tiff's Takeout and a ribbon-cutting ceremony led by Charis Circle Executive Director E.R. Anderson. Linda Bryant and Edie Cofrin cut the first ribbon, celebrating the nearly 50-year friendship that helped found Charis and helps sustain it to this day. Charis Circle Board Chair Susana Morris, Agnes Scott College Board Chair Beth Holder, and Agnes Scott Professor Beth Hackett cut the second ribbon, symbolizing the community partnerships that helped bring Charis to the Decatur campus. Susana Morris introduced Charis Books and More co-owners Sara Luce Look and Angela and E.R. Anderson to cut the third ribbon honoring the Charis leadership team. Charis Circle also announced the hiring of Assistant Director Dartricia Rollins.

The afternoon continued with signings by local children's author Breanna McDaniel (*Hands Up!*) and Independent Bookstore Day 2019 Ambassador Tayari Jones (*American Marriage*) and ended with King of Pops popsicles on the front porch.

Charis invites the Decatur community to stop by Monday-Saturday, 10 a.m.-7 p.m., and Sunday, noon-6 p.m. Check out the full calendar of events at [charisbooksandmore.com](http://charisbooksandmore.com).



Charis Founder Linda Bryant, left, cuts ribbon with original donor and friend Edie Cofrin



Authors Breanna McDaniel (*Hands Up!*) and Tayari Jones (*An American Marriage*)



Dartricia Rollins and Alex Dileo



# Amplify Decatur Concert Series Raises \$45,000 for DCM



The 2019 Amplify Decatur Concert Series raised \$45,000 for Decatur Cooperative Ministry (DCM), a Decatur-based nonprofit organization that works to prevent and alleviate poverty and homelessness in Decatur and DeKalb County. Amplify Decatur has raised and donated \$235,000 to DCM since 2011. This year's \$45,000 gift is the most an Amplify Concert Series has generated to date. The concert series was presented by Lenz, a Decatur-based marketing agency, and produced in partnership with Eddie's Attic, the Southeast's premier music listening room.

Thousands gathered on the downtown Decatur Square for the Amplify Decatur Musical Festival, the centerpiece of the series. Rock & Roll Hall of Famer Mavis Staples and two-time Grammy award winner Jeff Tweedy of Wilco topped a lineup

that also featured acclaimed singer-guitarist Julien Baker, Kevn Kinney of Drivin N Cryin, and Atlanta-based, jam-rock band The Bitterroots. Christine Mahin served as festival director for the third consecutive year.

A Saturday afternoon Q&A with actor Jon Hamm (*Mad Men*, *Baby Driver*) at Eddie's Attic helped highlight the weekend. Amplify Decatur also featured a three-night stand at Eddie's Attic with performances by David Lowery of *Cracker*, Var, Mike Killeen, Liz Vice, Zoser, Charlie Mars, Tom Mackell, and a Pearl Jam vs. Nirvana tribute night starring an array of local and regional acts.

Platinum sponsors included Leafmore Group, Natalie Gregory Sold, Oakhurst Realty Partners, Iris and Bruce Feinberg, WABE 90.1, Decatur Package Store, Creature Comforts Brewing Co., Three

Taverns, and Savannah Distributing Company. Gold sponsors included Georgia Urology, Hall Booth Smith, Entercom, and ATL PBS.

The mission of Decatur Cooperative Ministry is to help families facing homelessness settle into safe, stable homes, and build healthy lives filled with peace, hope, and opportunity. A member of the Decatur community for 50 years, DCM provides families in crisis with 90 days of emergency shelter for women and children, six months of transitional housing for homeless families, permanent supportive housing for homeless families with disabilities, financial assistance for families facing eviction/utility disconnection, and emergency assistance for low-income veteran households. More information is available at [DecaturCooperativeMinistry.org](http://DecaturCooperativeMinistry.org).



## Decatur Businesses Gather for Seminar

More than 30 Decatur business owners, along with business owners from Avondale Estates, gathered to hear Larisa Ortiz of Ortiz Associates from New York. Larisa shared ideas on the importance of the right signage, welcoming storefronts, the psychology of shoppers, and more.



## Women's Clinic of Atlanta Celebrates Grand Opening

In May, the Women's Clinic of Atlanta (WCOA) celebrated the opening of its new location at 125 Clairemont Ave., in downtown Decatur. The medically accredited clinic provides free pregnancy verification, limited ultrasounds for qualifying patients, options education and affordable STD testing and treatment.

Decatur Mayor Patti Garrett, WCOA Executive Director Talli Moelling and WCOA Decatur Site Director Suzy Brister commemorated the celebration with a ribbon cutting, followed by a self-guided tour of the new facility and lunch for the guests.

The WCOA opened in Decatur in 2006, and has grown its services and increased the number of patients receiving care in the last 13 years. For more information and clinic hours, visit [womensclinicofatlanta.com](http://womensclinicofatlanta.com).





## Interested in Hosting a Teacher from Germany?

USA Global Education Services (GES) is looking for Decatur residents interested in hosting a teacher from Germany, Oct. 12-15. A group of eight teachers, participating in the “Experience America” program with the Checkpoint Charlie Foundation in Berlin, will spend a two-week-period with Decatur host-families. All of the teachers are German nationals who teach English at the high school level. Host families will be responsible for providing breakfast and dinner, a safe, welcoming home environment, exposure to

some typical U.S. and family activities on free days, and transportation mainly to a common pickup location in downtown Decatur. Families will also be invited to attend a farewell dinner.

USA GES will provide 4-5 excursions each week, including school and university visits, businesses, historical sites, lectures, and other opportunities to learn about life in Georgia. Most activities will occur from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. The purpose of the program is to give the visitors insight into U.S. school

routine, allow them to experience “school life” in various educational settings, and to get to know teachers, students, and administrators. They will learn about American history and culture with an emphasis on Georgia. At the same time, they can improve their English.

For more information or to sign up, contact Dr. John Wilson at [jmwilson1@bellsouth.net](mailto:jmwilson1@bellsouth.net), 706-271-7100, or Ms. JJ Liew at [info@usa-ges.com](mailto:info@usa-ges.com), 678-862-3399.

## Decatur Musicians End Year on a High Note

**V**iolinist Harriet Skowronek (left), cellist Aria Posner (center) and violinist Ava Posner (right) finished their school year on a high note in the Franklin Pond Chamber Music Concert at Woodruff Arts Center in May. These next-gen musicians performed in Franklin Pond's Spring Concert in partnership with the ASYO at Woodruff Arts Center. Harriet

and Ava have played together for three consecutive years in the Franklin Pond program in a Brahms Piano Quintet and a final time as one of 13 finalists in the Franklin Pond Chamber Music Competition at Spivey Hall.

Harriet will attend Oberlin Conservatory in the fall to study with David Bowlin. Aria, a Franklin Pond alumni and senior at Decatur High School, is pursuing a degree

in cello performance and will attend the Cleveland Institute of Music in the fall. Ava, a junior at Decatur High School, has been a part of the Franklin Pond program for four years and plans to continue her year-round study in their Fall into Spring program. Aria and Ava are also members of the Atlanta Symphony Youth Orchestra.



Photo: Rand Lines

# Decatur Beach Party

Friday, June 21 • 5-11 p.m.

Kick off summer "Decatur style" at the Decatur Beach Party. The event will include 80 tons of sand on Ponce de Leon Avenue, kids' activities lining the boardwalk area, and entertainment by Old 4th Ward Boogie Band and DJ Quasi Mandisco.

The food court will include food trucks, boardwalk fare, and a selection of local beers. Wine, soft drinks and water will also be available for purchase. All of the restaurants will be open for business.

Thanks to generous sponsors, this is no longer a gated event, admission is free to the community, and the event has been expanded. There will be small fees for souvenirs and activities for older kids (rock-climbing wall, dunk tank and more). All proceeds will go to the Decatur Business Association to help keep this event, May and September concerts, the holiday bonfire, and many others throughout the year free to the community.

For more information, visit [decaturdba.com](http://decaturdba.com), or, facebook.com/decbeachparty.



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**ON THE SQUARE**  
**5pm-11pm**



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## Salsa on the Square Kicked off DBA Concerts in May

The typical Saturday evening Concert on the Square didn't happen on May 4. Instead, Music 2 My Ears Entertainment, in conjunction with DBA, presented Salsa on the Square. The family-friendly event featured salsa lessons provided by Latin dance legend Mambo Mario Diaz, and music by DJ Jeremy Lane, and a throng of smiling, twirling Decatur residents and visitors (including some youngsters on their way to their prom).



**DBA**  
Decatur Business  
Association

### Meeting Reminder **JUNE 25**

Location and sponsors  
to be announced.

**5:15 p.m.** Networking Reception

**6 p.m.** Program

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## Wylde Center Beer Garden and Silent Auction Fundraiser

June 22 • 5:30-8:30 p.m.



**T**he Wylde Center's annual Beer Garden and Silent Auction Fundraiser combines local brews, food, and music for a casual evening outdoors at Oakhurst Garden, 435 Oakview Rd. A VIP Happy Hour begins at 4:30 p.m. The main event is 5:30-8:30 p.m.

Tickets are \$40 for members and \$50 for nonmembers. VIP tickets are \$250 per pair and include additional benefits such as admission to the VIP party with signature cocktails, hors d'oeuvres and special desserts, and access to a sponsor/patron lounge, patio, and indoor restrooms. Tickets are available for purchase at [wyldecenter-beergarden.squarespace.com/](http://wyldecenter-beergarden.squarespace.com/). The event will be held rain or shine and all attendees must be at least 21 years old.

Silent auction items will include vacation getaways, restaurant gift certificates, spa packages, and other enticing items and experiences. Each guest will receive a free souvenir Wylde Center pint glass so they can sample brews from local favorite breweries, including Terrapin Beer Company, Three Taverns Craft Brewery, Treehorn Cider, Sceptre Brewing Arts, Wild Heaven Beer, and more. The food menu will include tastings from a number of local restaurants and live music will be provided by The Benders.

The event is presented by Chip Wallace of Keller Knapp Realty, [ChipWallaceRealEstate.com](http://ChipWallaceRealEstate.com), and sponsored by Classic Tents & Events, In Bloom Landscaping, Russell Herrera Law, Private Bank of Decatur, Bleakly Advisory Group, Decatur CoWorks, Honey Next Door, MixIt Marketing, Red Level Renovations, Sherwood Chiropractic Center, Stability Engineering, and Watt-Man LED Lighting.

The Wylde Center's mission is to cultivate vibrant green spaces for everyone to enjoy and to inspire communities of environmental stewards. Visit [wyldecenter.org](http://wyldecenter.org) for more information.

## Decatur Streets Alive Car-Free Streets to Walk, Roll and Play

**Connecting to the first-ever cross-city  
Atlanta Streets Alive  
Sunday, June 9, 2-8 p.m.**

West Howard Street closure: June 9, 12:30 to 9 p.m.

Decatur joins the Atlanta Bicycle Coalition in sponsoring the Streets Alive Bicycle Event, which features a 10-mile route. The city will close W. Howard Avenue from N. McDonough Street to the city limits near the East Lake MARTA Station.

For more information visit [decaturstreetsalive.com](http://decaturstreetsalive.com) or email [cheryl.burnette@decaturga.com](mailto:cheryl.burnette@decaturga.com).



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**SUNDAY JUNE 9 2-8 PM**

**West Howard Avenue from the  
East Lake MARTA Station to  
North McDonough Street**



## Annual Climb Out of the Darkness

June 15, 10 a.m. • Mason Mill Park, 1340 McConnell Dr.

Local licensed Marriage and Family therapist Jaime Filler invites the Decatur community to participate in Climb Out of the Darkness, an event that raises awareness of pregnancy and postpartum mental health disorders. Women and men who are survivors of postpartum depression, anxiety, OCD, bipolar disorder, and psychosis from all over the world will walk, stroll or climb together at a local park or hiking trail to symbolize their collective rise out of the darkness as well as to raise funds for Postpartum Support International (PSI), a nonprofit organization and online

community of support resources for women around the world.

The events include people who have suffered from a mental health complication and doctors, therapists, hospital administrators, researchers and other professionals. This is the sixth annual Climb Out of the Darkness, held to shine light on perinatal mental illness.

Participants must register prior to the event at Team Decatur. Sponsorships from local businesses are also being accepted. Contact local Climb Leader Jaime Filler, 770-954-5476, or [jaime@jaimefillercounseling.com](mailto:jaime@jaimefillercounseling.com), for more information on sponsorships

that help support the Climb.

Money raised by the Climb will support the PSI goals to provide funds to local groups and organizations, provide low-cost training in perinatal mood disorders for providers in underserved areas, train law enforcement and legal experts, mentor peer supporters and group leaders, and train primary health-care providers.

To learn more about Climb Out of the Darkness, visit [postpartum.net/joinus/climbout/](http://postpartum.net/joinus/climbout/) or contact the local Climb leader, Jaime Filler, 770-954-5476, or [jaime@jaimefillercounseling.com](mailto:jaime@jaimefillercounseling.com).



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Artist Michael Weinbrecht discusses his work "Useless Pieces" at Last Call, the closing reception of the Decatur Arts Festival's fine arts exhibition.

## Decatur ARTS Festival 2019 Last Call

Join the Decatur Arts Alliance as it wraps up the 2019 Decatur Arts Festival on Sunday, June 16, 4-6 p.m., at the "Last Call" closing reception for the Fine Arts Exhibition at Agnes Scott College's Dalton Gallery in the Dana Fine Arts Building. Meet the artists and enjoy refreshments. Free parking can be found in the Agnes Scott Parking deck (entrance on South McDonough Street).

Visit [decaturartsfestival.com](http://decaturartsfestival.com) for more information and to see all of the artworks selected for the exhibition.

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## DEF Celebrates Decatur Students and Teachers

**A**s another school year came to a close, Decatur Education Foundation (DEF) celebrated some of Decatur High School's hardest working seniors at their annual Celebration of Excellence event in May at Agnes Scott College. Twenty-six high school seniors received scholarships to help bolster their post-secondary educational endeavors.

This year's scholarship recipients are:

**Chris Rosselot** – Harry Edwards Class of 1960 Memorial Scholarship  
**Sulaiman Rashid** – Blue & Gold Alumni Scholarship  
**Andi Kezh** – Mary Elizabeth Brown Wilson Scholarship  
**Martize Smith** – Trinity High School Class of 1965 Scholarship  
**Sam Amick** – Bailey Family Scholarship for outstanding athletes  
**Sifan Tolosa** – Beatrice A. Pask Memorial Scholarship  
**Antonio Kilgore** – Bill Meador Jr. Memorial Scholarship  
**Mia Rodriguez** – Carl and Mae Renfroe Memorial Scholarship  
**Mason Gogstad** – Carl and Mae Renfroe Memorial Scholarship  
**Mario Bemby** – Coye Foundation Scholarship  
**Kenya Oliver** – Equity in Action Scholarship  
**Haley Russell** – Madison Lewis Memorial Scholarship  
**Kristina Jones** – Gladding Family Scholarship  
**Rebekah Rawle** – Han C. Choi Memorial Scholarship  
**Barrett Howard** – Thomas Hauk Memorial Scholarship  
**Kheyal Roy-Meighoo** – Imani Thompson Twine Memorial Scholarship  
**Mikayla Cordell** – Shykia Ward-Reese Memorial Scholarship  
**Dayana Paz** – Jeanne Bellville Taffs Memorial Scholarship

**Sonali Master** – Moore Family Scholarship  
**Zach Tellez** – Moore Family Scholarship  
**Isis Amusa** – Sarah Lynn Woolf Memorial Scholarship  
**Aleesha Patrick** – DEF Strive for Excellence Scholarship  
**Jared Dyche** – DEF Strive for Excellence Scholarship  
**Kelly Gordon** – Lawrence and Gertrude Paxton Scholarship  
**Fardosa Hassan** – Patrick Family Foundation Scholarship  
**Mikayla Cordell** – Rotary Club of Decatur Foundation Scholarship  
**Keyona Wade** – Kennedy Seagar Memorial Scholarship

Also honored at the event were several exemplary City Schools of Decatur (CSD) teachers and staff, who received the Clarence Strickland Make a Difference Award for going above and beyond to provide extra care to a student. The CSD employees honored were:

**Kirk Setzer**, Winnona Park Elementary  
**Laura Pitts**, Winnona Park Elementary  
**Cheryl Nahmias**, Decatur High School  
**Gloria Ann Alexander**, Clairemont Elementary  
**Sergeant Phyllis Primas**, Decatur High School

In addition, Decatur High School math teacher David Custer received the Carriere Family Scholarship for Teachers to earn an advanced degree in education. Congratulations to all of the students and CSD staff.

Not pictured in the photo: Mario Bemby, Kristina Jones, Kenya Oliver, and Keyona Wade



## Commencement 2019 at Agnes Scott College

Alumna Jordan Casteel '11 and senior (now alumna) Mallika Balakrishnan '19 delivered commencement addresses at Agnes Scott College in May. Casteel gave a funny, heartfelt, and inspirational address. Balakrishnan, the first student commencement speaker in the college's 130-year history, celebrated the success of her class, the first cohort of Agnes Scott students to complete the SUMMIT experience.





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## Renfroe White Wins Championship

**T**he Renfroe White baseball team dominated the middle division this spring. They did so despite being an all-6th-grade team playing against teams with mostly 7th and 8th graders. The team finished with an 11-2 record and outscored their opponents 151-65. The team had a batting average of .290 and won the championship beating Lakeside 17-7 in five innings. They also defeated Inman White in the semifinal 12-1.

The 2019 Renfroe White championship baseball team members are:

### Players

John Benjamson  
Sam Corso  
Luke Dibble  
Connor Evans  
Lawson Ivey  
Kaegan Lucas  
Hayden McArthur

### Martin Shelar

Brian Tibbetts  
Alec Vajda  
James Waltemath-  
Lewicki  
Sam Ziesenitz

### Bat Boy

Jacob Evans

### Coaches:

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CJ Evans

### Head Coach

Mike Evans



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## Beat the Street for Little Feet

Oakhurst Cooperative Preschool wraps up annual fundraising 5K

In April Harmony Park saw the start of the 12th annual Beat the Street for Little Feet 5K race, hosted by Oakhurst Cooperative Preschool. The 5K race featured a diverse field of 120 entrants, including runners, walkers and even a few stroller joggers. Cool conditions helped produce some fast times, with first place overall going to local Decatur runner Jason Parks in 16:25. Kathryn O'Day, also from Decatur, was the first-place female, with a time of 22:54.

Following the 5K race was the one-mile Fun Run and the Tot Trot. Then it was time to enjoy the music, indulge in treats from local businesses (including Revolution Doughnuts) and activities. Face-painting and bracelet-making proved to be big hits with the young ones, as did the book reading by Bunnie Hilliard, owner of Brave + Kind Bookshop.

With the support of presenting sponsors Stivers Subaru and Thesis, all participants received a T-shirt featuring original art by New York Times bestselling author James Dean, creator of Pete the Cat. All funds raised are used to support Oakhurst Cooperative Preschool.




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*Aimee Jewelry and Fine Art Gallery will be having a diverse Group Art Exhibition, from May 29 throughout the Summer!*

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## Zak Installed as Agnes Scott President



In April, Leocadia "Lee" I. Zak was installed as Agnes Scott College's ninth president. More than 100 delegates and 1,200 guests were in attendance, including all of the college's other presidents emerita. Inauguration highlights included several student, faculty and staff events designed to showcase stories from and about the campus community – with emphasis on innovation, creativity and how the college will continue to lead with President Zak at the helm.

#welcometodecatur #agnesscott #scottiepride

## New in Blue



Congratulations to officers Naomi Lubin, Juan Velez and Sydney Fedrick on their graduation from the police academy.

#welcometodecatur #newinblue

## "River" Rolls through 911 Center



Marnie Grodzin with Gathered and Grounded brought her soon-to-be trained therapy pup "River" to visit the 911 Center for National Public Safety Telecommunicators Week.

#therapypup #telecommunicatorsweek #decaturpublicsafety



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- Film screenings of "Hometown Habitat: Stories of Bringing Nature Home" and DisneyNature's "Wings of Life"
- "Planting for Pollinators," an urban pollinator short course (presented in partnership with the Xerces Society)

**Dates, Times & Locations:**  
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