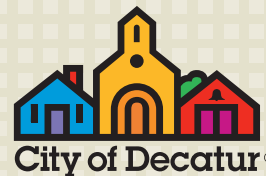


City of Decatur FOCUS



JANUARY-FEBRUARY 2022
Volume 32 • Number 6

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE CITY OF DECATUR, GEORGIA

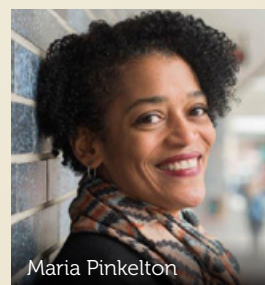
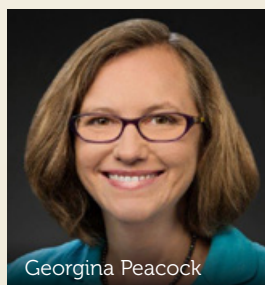
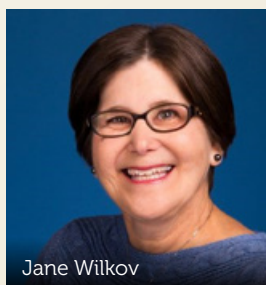
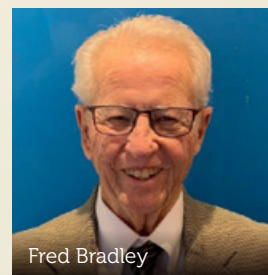
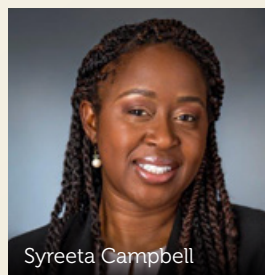
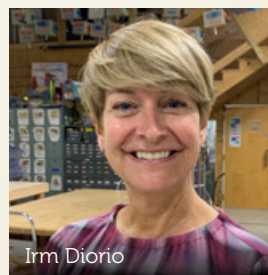
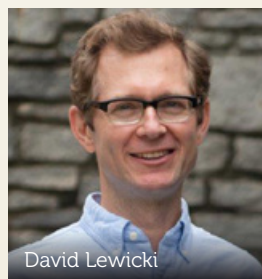
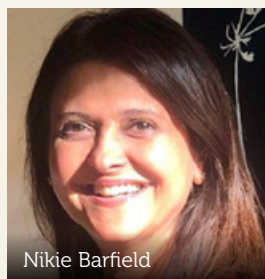
DECATUR SALUTES HOMETOWN HEROES

The Decatur City Commission gave out 13 individual Hometown Hero awards at the December DBA virtual Holiday party. The recipients were Nikie Barfield, Fred Bradley, Syreeta Campbell, Mai Cavalli, Paula Collins, Francisco Da Silva, Joe Davich, Irm Diorio, David Lewicki, Georgina Peacock, Maria Pinkelton, Diane Stubbs, and Jane Wilkov.

Hometown Heroes are people who volunteer their time and who often work behind the scenes to make our community a better place. They do not get paid for what they do, but they are invaluable to our community.

Decatur began the Hometown Hero program at the close of the Hometown to the World Festival during the 1996 Olympics. The 14-day festival was a success because of the hundreds of volunteers who helped.

Since the first ceremony in 1996, the City Commission has presented the awards annually and with the 2021 presentation, Decatur now has 398 Hometown Heroes. Descriptions of the Heroes along with who nominated them can be found on the city website. Photos of all of the Hometown Heroes are on the "Hero Wall" in Decatur City Hall.



Yard Waste Collection in Decatur

Yard waste is collected on your regularly scheduled sanitation day. Typically, yard waste is collected in a separate truck to be converted into mulch. At times, DeKalb County will request that the yard waste be collected with household waste due to mechanical or storage issues at the landfill.

Collection Requirements

- Yard trimmings must be placed into single-use yard waste bags or a container no larger than 32 gallons.
- Bundles of sticks, hedge clippings, and small brush must be securely tied and not exceed 4 feet in length or 50 pounds.

Special Pick Up

For a fee, tree branches and heavy brush, not from the work of private contractors, can be requested for pick up. Trimmings must be cut in lengths not exceeding 4 feet and stacked in a compact pile on the curb. To request a special pick up, contact the Public Works Department at 404-377-5571.

Composting

The City of Decatur currently does not offer curbside composting services; however, at-home composting or use of composting collection services is encouraged. For guidance on how to properly compost at home, refer to the University of Georgia Extension website, extension.uga.edu, and search for composting and mulching.

Reminder: Keep Leaves and Grass Clippings Out of the Street

Do not rake or blow your leaves or grass clippings into the street: that debris can clog storm drains and cause property damage. Instead, recycle leaves and other green waste material by placing them in compostable yard waste bags.



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. 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.



DECATUR CITY COMMISSION

George Dusenbury Commissioner
Patti Garrett Commissioner
Lesa Mayer Commissioner
Tony Powers Commissioner
Kelly Walsh Commissioner

The City Commission elected a mayor and mayor pro tem in early January, but that information was not available at press time.



Decatur Downtown
Development Authority®

BOARD

Conor McNally, Chair
Noah Peeters, Vice Chair
Tony Leung, Secretary/Treasurer
Darren Comer • Linda Curry
David Harry • Lisa Turner



Daryl Funn President
Jill Joplin President-Elect
Maria Alvarez Treasurer
Susan Sparks Past President

Design and layout: 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.



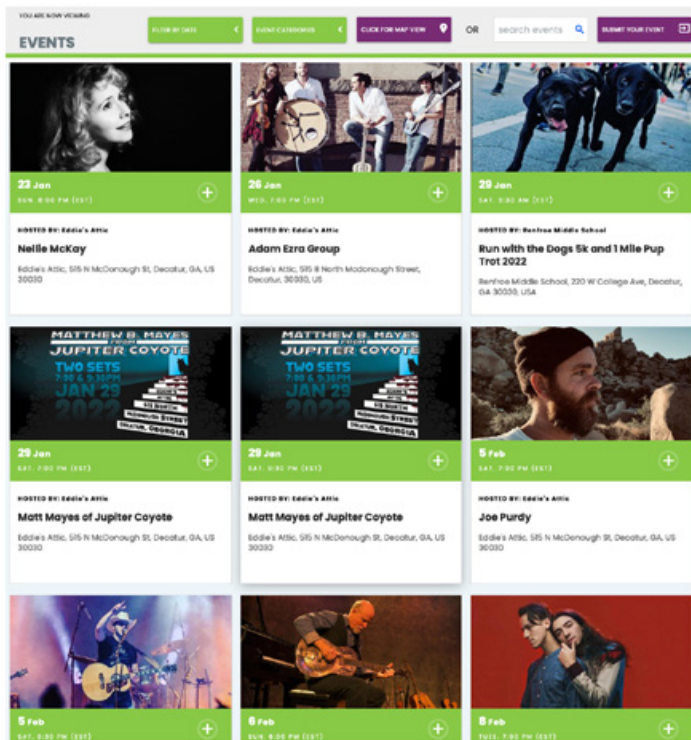
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Decatur Tourism Launches New Events Calendar

You can now see what's happening in Decatur and submit your events all on the same page. Go to visitdecaturga.com, click on "Events" at the top of the page, and you will see a listing of events that are taking place in Decatur. Submitted an event for the calendar? Event submissions will go live once approved. If you have any questions, email sherry.jackman@decaturga.com.



Paolino Italian Restaurant Receives Welcoming Business Award

The Better Together Advisory Board in partnership with the Decatur City Commission presented the third annual Welcoming Business Award to Paolino Italian Restaurant at the DBA virtual holiday party in December.

Better Together established the Welcoming Business Award to reward and publicly recognize leadership actions that create a welcoming and inclusive business environment in Decatur and encourage businesses to prioritize inclusivity as a "best practice." Paolino was recognized for its diverse staff and easy access to patio seating for those with disabilities.



City Commission Meeting Calendar 2022

City Commission meetings are held on the first and third Mondays of every month unless there is a Monday holiday. If unforeseen matters arise, the calendar may be modified and the City Commission may hold a called meeting, if needed.

Tuesday, Jan. 4	Monday, July 18
Tuesday, Jan. 18	Monday, Aug. 1
Monday, Feb. 7	Monday, Aug. 15
Monday, Feb. 22	Tuesday, Sept. 6
Monday, March 7	Monday, Sept. 26 (moved from Sept. 19)
Monday, March 21	Monday, Oct. 3
Monday, April 4	Monday, Oct. 17
Monday, April 18	Monday, Nov. 7
Monday, May 2	Monday, Nov. 21
Monday, May 16	Monday, Dec. 5
Monday, June 6	Monday, Dec. 19
Tuesday, June 21	

Holiday Solid Waste and Recycling Services Schedule

Martin Luther King Jr. Day, Monday, Jan. 17

Regular service for Monday will be Tuesday, Jan. 18
Regular service for Tuesday will be Wednesday, Jan. 19

Presidents Day, Monday, Feb. 15

Regular service for Monday will be Tuesday, Feb. 22
Regular service for Tuesday will be Wednesday, Feb. 23

Recycling Reminder

Styrofoam cannot be placed in your curbside bin. Save your Styrofoam for the city's biannual recycling events or take it to the Center for Hard to Recycle Materials, also known as CHaRM. Visit livethrive.org for information.

Boards and Commissions Monthly Meeting Schedule

Visit decaturga.com/citizenboards for meeting details.

Unless noted otherwise, meetings are held at Decatur City Hall, 509 N. McDonough St., in the City Commission Meeting room or the adjacent conference room.

City Commission

First and third Monday of each month • 7:30 p.m.
The City Commission meets in open session, with time for comments or questions included in each meeting agenda. Any issue relating to city government may be raised for discussion with the commission. The agenda is generally posted online and at City Hall on the Friday before the Monday meeting but no later than 24 hours before each meeting.

Better Together Advisory Board

First Tuesday of each month • 6:30 p.m.
The Decatur City Commission established the Better Together Advisory Board in 2016 to guide and advise the Commission and the community on issues of equity, inclusion and engagement. The board also serves as advocate and advisor in implementing the recommendations of the Better Together Community Action Plan for Equity, Inclusion and Engagement.

The plan contains specific action items for individuals, organizations, and local government to undertake to cultivate a just, welcoming, inclusive, equitable and compassionate city. For more information contact Linda Harris, 678-553-6512, linda.harris@decaturga.com, or Renae Madison, 678-553-6561, renae.madison@decaturga.com.

Planning Commission

Second Tuesday of each month • 7 p.m.
The Planning Commission, established by local ordinance, conducts public hearings on land use and zoning changes, proposed subdivisions of property and proposed planned unit developments, and recommends actions for consideration by the City Commissioners. It also reviews and recommends changes in zoning regulations and future land-use plans. The Planning Commission is staffed by Ryan Sellers, 404-371-8386, or email ryan.sellers@decaturga.com.

Zoning Board of Appeals

Second Monday of each month • 7:30 p.m.
The Zoning Board of Appeals, established by local ordinance, conducts public hearings on appeals from decisions of the zoning administrator and considers requests for variances from zoning requirements. The board is staffed by John Maximuk, 678-553-6570, john.maximuk@decaturga.com.

Historic Preservation Commission

Third Tuesday of each month • 6:30 p.m.
No meeting in July
The Historic Preservation Commission, established by local ordinance, ensures that renovations and new construction in Decatur's five Local Historic Districts are consistent with the character of the neighborhood. The five districts are the McDonough-Adams-King's Highway District, Ponce de Leon Court, Old Decatur, Parkwood, and the Clairemont Historic District.

The Commission must approve exterior projects to homes located within these districts by issuing a Certificate of Appropriateness before a building permit can be issued. Some projects may be administratively approved through the issuance of a Certificate of Exemption.

The Historic Preservation Commission is staffed by Aileen de la Torre, 404-371-8386, or Aileen.delatorre@decaturga.com

Decatur Development Authorities

Second Friday of each month • 8 a.m.
The Decatur Downtown Development Authority and the citywide Decatur Development Authority were established by special state legislation. They are independent authorities established for the purpose of planning, organizing, and financing projects that will revitalize and redevelop Decatur's commercial business districts.

The Downtown Development Authority focuses on the historic commercial downtown central business district and works to market a positive image for the city. The citywide Development Authority was established to build on the success of the Downtown Development Authority. It is empowered to work with neighborhood business districts and other commercial zoning districts in the city.

The Development Authorities are staffed by Angela Threadgill, 404-371-8386, or angela.threadgill@decaturga.com.

Decatur Youth Council

First Wednesday of every month • 4 p.m.
No meetings in June, July, and August
The Decatur Youth Council (DYC) is a city-sponsored, community-based leadership program for high school students who live within the city of Decatur and attend public, private, and home-based schools. Members of the DYC will develop into young leaders through structured monthly educational programs and team-building activities. For more information on the Decatur Youth Council, contact Meredith Roark, 404-370-4102, meredith.roark@decaturga.com.

Active Living Board

First Tuesday of each month • 8 a.m.
Decatur Recreation Center
231 Sycamore St.

Active Living Advisory Board members are appointed by the Decatur City Commission to serve as advocates and advisors to the Active Living Division on projects and programs that help citizens safely incorporate physical activity into their daily routines. For more information contact Sara Holmes, sara.holmes@decaturga.com, or Greg White, greg.white@decaturga.com.

Environmental Sustainability Board

Fourth Friday of each month • 9 a.m.
Decatur Recreation Center
231 Sycamore St.

The Environmental Sustainability Board was established to provide recommendations to the City Commission regarding the city's environmental regulations, plans, and initiatives as well as assisting with implementation of city projects that impact the natural environment to protect and improve the quality of life for citizens and property owners in the city of Decatur. This board assumed the duties of the Waste Management Advisory Board and the Greenspace Commission.

Participation on the committees is open to anyone who is interested. For more information contact David Nifong, david.nifong@decaturga.com.

Lifelong Community Advisory Board

Fourth Monday of each month
6:30 p.m.

The Decatur City Commission authorized the creation of a Lifelong Community Advisory Board in 2013 to assist with the expansion and implementation of the city's Lifelong Community initiatives, including those in the 2010 Strategic Plan. One component of a Lifelong Community is the ability to age in place. For more information contact Lee-Ann Harvey, 678-553-6548, leeann.harvey@decaturga.com.

Meaningful Housing Affordability Efforts for the 'Missing Middle' Continue

Thank you to the many dedicated residents who brought their questions, perspectives, and ideas to the 2021 Focused Conversations on housing affordability and how duplexes, triplexes and quadplexes can serve as tools for improving the economic diversity of our neighborhoods.

Based on the input received, including 240 responses to the online survey, Decatur has created a one-page resource summarizing the process thus far and laying out the various issues for consideration by residents and their neighbors.

The resource can be found at decaturga.com/affordable-housing under FAQs & Resources, where you will also find a hotline phone number and email address for further questions and to submit public comments.

City staff is currently working on the recommended policy to govern these historic housing types – often called Missing Middle housing – and expects to present recommendations to the Decatur community for further discussion in early 2022.



WALK & ROLL SUPERSTAR

Eileen Fishman moved to Decatur in 2016. She started walking daily around the city after COVID hit, to improve her health and minimize the "stuck in the house blues." Eileen began walking 10,000 steps a day, but within a few months was at 50 to 60 urban miles per week. She walks by herself or with other moms and would often break the walks into snippets, scheduling them around working and parenting. She is this month's Walk and Roll Star!



2021 Anti-Racism Speaker Series Recap

Last fall, the City of Decatur and Better Together Advisory Board hosted the second annual Anti-Racism Speaker series. The 2021 virtual series engaged community leaders, city officials, and activists to explore the trust deficit in our communities, how it impacts race relations, and how we can deepen collaborative relationships and trust throughout the city of Decatur.

The series featured conversations with Kimberly Jones and Gilly Segal, authors of *I'm Not Dying with You Tonight* and the forthcoming

Why We Fly, on how the trust deficit in the United States impacts race relations; Kayla Evans (Decatur High School student and member of the Student Coalition for Equity); Dr. Maggie Fehrman (superintendent, Decatur City Schools); Fonta High (co-chair, Beacon Hill Black Alliance for Human Rights); Captain Jennifer Ross (Decatur Police Department); and Koan Roy-Meighoo (Decatur High School Alumni and co-founder of the Student Coalition for Equity) about trust between citizens and public institutions; and Robin Rue Simmons on coalition building, community engagement, and establishing trusting relationships.

The Anti-Racism Speaker series was designed to generate awareness of equity concerns in the city and to hold the city and community accountable to achieve our aspiration of being an inclusive, equitable and just city. The past year has served as a poignant reminder of the importance and fragility of our communities.

To view videos of past webinars and to learn more about the Anti-Racism Speaker Series, visit decaturga.com/speakerseries.



School Property Tax Exemption Passes: What it Means for Seniors

A majority of electors voted for the two proposed senior exemptions for school property taxes in the Nov. 2 referendum. The election results have since been officially certified by DeKalb County and declared by the Decatur City Commission.

S-5 Exemption

The S-5 will provide an exemption on \$200,000 of assessed home value (\$400,000 of appraised value). Resident homeowners aged 65-69 with household federal adjusted gross income under \$53,000 will qualify to apply in 2022.

To receive the exemption, the city will need to see a copy of the first page of the homeowners' federal income tax return and the income tax return of any other resident family members who live at the home. On the federal tax form 1040, taxpayers should look for the line that says adjusted gross income. That is the amount that should be entered on an S-5 application. The number cannot exceed \$53,000 to qualify.

The income limit is based on income in 2021, and 2021 tax returns are preferred for verifying income. However, the city will accept 2020 tax returns for residents who do not have their 2021 income taxes completed in time for the deadline.

Homeowners who do not have an income tax filing requirement with the IRS will need to show the city documents such as a social security benefit statement showing total income.

S-6 Exemption

The new S-6 exemption is for homeowners aged 70 and above for a reduction of \$200,000 of assessed home value (\$400,000 of appraised value) without an income cap.

A separate S-3 partial school exemption for homeowners aged 70 and above has been in effect since 2002. The majority of senior homeowners already have the S-3 on their accounts. Homeowners with the S-3 will be granted the new S-6 exemption automatically because the eligibility requirements for these two exemptions are the same. Homeowners who applied for the S-3 during 2021 for tax year 2022 will also automatically receive the S-6 exemption. Owners who never had the S-3 or who just turned 70 in 2021 may apply for the S-3/S-6 exemptions beginning in January.

How to Apply

The city will make the S-5 exemption application available online sometime in January. For health and safety, eligible homeowners will be encouraged to apply online. A taxpayer without internet access may call to schedule an appointment at City Hall once the homeowner has the required income tax returns ready. The S-6 exemption application will also be available online.

The time period to apply for a new exemption will begin in January 2022 and end March 15, 2022, in order for the exemption to appear on first installment 2022 tax bills, which will be issued April 1, 2022. A link to the new application forms will be posted at decaturga.com/homestead.

Serve on the Decatur Arts Alliance Board

Interested in making a difference in the arts in Decatur? The Decatur Arts Alliance is expanding its Board of Directors and seeking new members with diverse perspectives and backgrounds to join the collaborative leadership team. Candidates for the Board of Directors should be strategic thinkers and community minded individuals with a passion for the arts. Applications are available at decaturartsalliance.org.



CLEAN ENERGY DECATUR: A PLAN FOR THE FUTURE

In October, the City of Decatur launched Clean Energy Decatur, an initiative to develop a plan for a clean energy future. As part of an ongoing effort to protect the city and community from the negative impacts of climate change, Decatur is creating a Clean Energy Plan to help us move away from reliance on fossil fuels and toward a resilient, renewable future.

The Clean Energy Plan is an element of Decatur's 2020 Strategic Plan, Destination 2030, which identifies climate action, racial equity, and enhanced mobility as top community priorities.

Supported by Southface Institute and Greenlink Analytics, the city is hosting a series of outreach and educational events to align the Clean Energy Plan with Decatur's values and priorities. While our electricity provider, Georgia Power, will add more renewable energy to its portfolio in the years to come, their current plans only have them increasing from their current 7 percent in 2021 up to 24 percent renewables by 2035. This would leave the remaining balance of 76 percent coming from nonrenewable energy sources like coal, natural gas, and nuclear power.

During the development process for Destination 2030, Decaturites firmly expressed that more action is needed and that Decatur needs to develop a Clean Energy Plan to accelerate a transition to a clean energy future. Community members are central to this effort and are invited to participate in upcoming roundtables, where residents, local experts, and other stakeholders can collaborate, discuss, and directly contribute to the

plan. The next virtual roundtable, focusing on clean energy and the economy, will be held on Jan. 19, 6-7:30 p.m.

A third roundtable will be held virtually on Feb. 24, 6-7:30 p.m., focusing on the built environment, as well as an in-person two-day charrette on March 8 and 9 at the Decatur Recreation Center.

The two-day event will allow all residents, business owners, and community stakeholders to drop by and discuss their thoughts, priorities and concerns surrounding the Clean Energy Plan, culminating in an open house on the evening of March 9 at the Recreation Center. As Decatur and its partners review and continue to receive community inputs throughout April and May, summaries of findings and initial plan drafts will be released for community feedback.

Throughout the first few months of engaging with the community, the City of Decatur has heard a range of feedback on potential clean energy priorities, such as prioritizing equity, creating opportunities for energy efficiency and renewable energy in affordable

housing to alleviate energy burdens, providing communitywide clean energy education, transitioning away from appliances such as stoves and heaters that are powered by natural gas, and providing youth workforce training opportunities, as well as increasing alternative transportation and mobility options.

Since Decatur wants its clean energy goal and target to be developed as an output of the community engagement process, we want to know what residents consider to be "clean" sources of energy, as well as establish a deadline by which to achieve a clean energy transition. As the plan development process moves forward, additional

priorities and potential actions for consideration will be identified and the consultants will continue to refine and iterate upon them before finalizing the plan. Be sure to visit cleanenergydecatgur.com to view the past community roundtable focused on community and equity, as well as an educational session on Decatur's MLK Jr. Weatherization Service Project.

If you would like to take a more active role in promoting Decatur's clean energy efforts, sign up on the website to receive updates and resources to share. To sign up for the upcoming roundtable, tune in to the upcoming educational sessions, take the survey, and learn more about Decatur's Clean Energy Plan, go to cleanenergydecatgur.com.

TAKE THE SURVEY



UPCOMING CLEAN ENERGY EVENTS *Find Zoom links at cleanenergydecatgur.com*

Virtual Roundtable 2

**Clean Energy
and Economy**

JAN. 19
6-7:30 P.M.

Virtual Roundtable 3

**The Built
Environment**

FEB. 24
6-7:30 P.M.

Public Integrated Planning Charrette

Decatur Recreation Center,
231 Sycamore St.

MARCH 8
7 A.M.-5 P.M.

Public Integrated Planning Charrette

Decatur Recreation Center,
231 Sycamore St.

MARCH 9
8 A.M.-7 P.M.

Decatur Busking Program – Revamped!

All Buskers Must Re-register For 2022

Are you a Decatur busker? The Decatur Arts Alliance has updated the program guidelines and is requiring all registered buskers to resubmit an application. Visit decaturartsalliance.org to read the updated program specifications and download the new document. You are also welcome to stop by the office at 113 Clairemont Ave. to fill out a form in person. It is still free to apply and participate. New badges will be provided to performers, so make sure to get your updated permit right away. Contact busking@decaturartsalliance.org with any questions or to submit your application. Thank you for sharing your talent with Decatur!



Invasive Plants Highlight: English Ivy

Ivy-covered walls and gardens make for pretty pictures, but when it comes to creating eco-friendly greenspaces, English Ivy (*Hedera Helix*) can cause more harm than good. Despite its abundance across the United States, this evergreen vine is not a native plant.

Introduced by European colonists nearly 300 years ago, ivy became popular as a “carefree” ground cover – particularly in shady areas. But, left to climb uncontrolled, it can weaken trees by blocking sunlight from reaching the host tree’s leaves (and make the trees easier to blow over in storms) and even break through the brick of chimneys and exterior walls of houses. On the ground, English Ivy can crowd out native plants, which can cause animals to lose food and habitat, reduce groundwater and make soil less fertile.

The best time to remove English Ivy is during cool or cold weather, as growth will be slower. According to Trees Atlanta (treesatlanta.org), removing climbing vines should be top priority. However, be

sure you’re cutting the right vine because not all climbing vines are invasive. (Despite the itchiness it can cause, poison ivy is a native plant and an important food source for birds and animals.) Depending on the age (and, thus, thickness) of the vine, use a hand pruner or pruning saw (being careful not to cut the tree!) at chest height and peel or pull the cut vine down past the base of the tree. (Watch this short video from the Fernbank Museum of Natural History for additional guidance: [youtube.com/watch?v=UcdhIUpfro&t=8s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UcdhIUpfro&t=8s).)

To prevent regrowth, apply a concentrated amount of herbicide directly to the surface of the vine stem within 10 minutes of cutting, being careful not to get the herbicide on any other plants, especially the tree. As an alternative to herbicides, several websites recommend thoroughly spraying the vine with a 20/80 mixture of white vinegar and water, being careful to avoid other plants. Wait a few days, remove any dead vines, and reapply as necessary.

For removal of ground cover, break up

large areas with a rake and then pull vines by hand, one at a time, to preserve the soil. Also shake off excess dirt. To maintain control of small infestations (particularly where herbicides cannot be used), the South East Exotic Pest Plant Council (se-eppc.org) recommends covering the area with several inches of mulch (such as wood chips, grass clippings or hay) for at least two growing seasons.

Regardless of which removal method you undertake, wear gloves. Long sleeves, long pants and closed shoes also are recommended as English Ivy can cause skin irritation. Most websites recommend disposing of English Ivy in the garbage to prevent regrowth. Composting generally is not recommended – unless the vines are completely dead – as even loose leaves and stems can sprout new growth. Some commercial composting facilities may take ivy in their collections because of the high temperatures achieved. Once your site is clear, consider planting a native look-alike, such as Heartleaf Ginger (*Hexastylis arifolia*).

Friends of Decatur Cemetery Thank Volunteers

The Friends of Decatur Cemetery were grateful for so many volunteers who placed flags on veterans' graves and helped out during this event – Scouts, Chamblee Interact, Baron DeKalb NSDAR and the American Legion Decatur Post and Auxiliary 66, along with assorted family members and friends. FODC also thanks Chick-Fil-A for donating biscuits for our volunteers.



Decatur Makers Seek New Executive Director

Irm Diorio, executive director of Decatur Makers, has announced her retirement, effective June 30, 2022. A search committee composed of members of the board of directors, members of the makerspace, and various external stakeholders will conduct a search and hiring process to find the right person to lead Decatur Makers into this new season of growth and transformation.



Irm Diorio



A collaborative and inclusive process will be used by Decatur Makers in bringing on board a visionary and committed leader to continue Irm's passion for creativity and excellence. Visit decaturmakers.org/director-search for updated information as it becomes available on the search for the next executive director of Decatur Makers.

Decatur Makers started in 2012 as a small group of people who envisioned a diverse community and welcoming place where people of all ages could work together. Now, 10 years later, this West Ponce nonprofit with a new Strategic Plan in place is poised for a new stage of innovation and impact.

For the last seven years, Irm Diorio has been a gentle force fueling the collective capacity of the members, volunteers, business partners, neighborhood collaboratives, schools, and a broad community of makers. Part of Irm's legacy is Decatur Makers' collective vision that empowers people to create and learn through hands-on experiences that positively impact their lives and communities.



MEETING PREVIEW

Tuesday, January 25

State of the City Address

Decatur Courtyard by Marriott,
130 Clairemont Ave..

Sponsored by Williams Teusink

5:30 p.m. • Decatur's mayor delivers the
annual State of the City Address.

Registration and proof of COVID-19
vaccination will be required to attend.

February 22

Mayor Emerita Elizabeth Wilson presents

Black History Month meeting

Visit decaturdba.com for details.

Better Living Together Nonprofit Seeking Board Members

Better Living Together (BLT) is a small non-profit organization founded by city of Decatur residents Tim and Beate Sass. BLT's goal is to create an inclusive cohousing community in the Decatur area. The neighborhood will be multigenerational and include people with and without developmental disabilities. It will also serve a range of income levels and offer affordable choices. BLT envisions a community that brings together individuals who want to be connected to one another.

BLT would like to expand and diversify its board and add individuals who have experience in communication, fundraising, real estate, and real estate law. If you are interested and wish to learn more, contact Beate Sass at beatesass@comcast.net. BLT's website is betterlivingtogether.org.



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Have we saved enough?

When should we begin taking Social Security?

Should our investments change once we retire?

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Web: www.minervaplanninggroup.com

Agnes Scott College Honors First Black Graduate Edna Lowe Swift '71

In November, Agnes Scott College honored Edna Lowe Swift '71, the college's first Black graduate, with a bench dedication ceremony and gospel concert. The year 2021 marked the 50th anniversary of Swift's graduation from Agnes Scott with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Spanish.

Several years ago, the college established the Edna Lowe Swift Trailblazer Award, which is given each year during the Mosaic Awards Banquet to a faculty or staff member in recognition of their contribution to creating a more inclusive community at Agnes Scott.

Swift also earned a Master of Arts in Spanish Language and Culture in 2001 from the University of Salamanca in Salamanca, Spain. She completed her ESL endorsement in 1991 and the Translation Certification Program in 1999 – both at Georgia State University. Her teaching career with Atlanta



Public Schools spanned 28 years. She retired in 2005 but continues to work part-time substitute teaching, tutoring, translating and interpreting. Swift serves on the executive

board of the Atlanta Alumnae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc., and continues to affiliate with Witkaze, Agnes Scott College's Black student association.



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Music Together of Decatur

In addition to their full schedule of outdoor classes this winter, Music Together of Decatur will offer a very limited number of indoor classes for fully vaccinated caregivers to attend with their babies, toddlers, and preschoolers. Find more information and register at musictogetherofdecatur.com.



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DEF Celebrates Its 20th Running of Tour deCatur

This year, the Decatur Education Foundation is celebrating its 20th anniversary and the 20th Tour deCatur 5K. In 2003, the event raised \$3,000 to support our kids. In 2019, the last in-person race before COVID, the event raised more than \$81,000.

This year's Tour deCatur is scheduled for Saturday, March 12, and registration is now open at tourdecatur.com. Early bird pricing and a guaranteed event t-shirt are available for those who register before Feb. 25. The tour also features a one-mile Fun Run and a Tot Trot for the four-and-under crowd. DEF will continue to monitor the COVID situation and make adjustments to the event as needed to ensure the safety of all participants.

Presenting sponsor Mathnasium Decatur will be at the event with math games and giveaways for kids. Thanks to Truth and Lending for sponsoring at the Platinum level this year.

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Decatur City Dance Presents 'Eclectic Journey'

Saturday, Feb. 5, 7 p.m. • Sunday, Feb. 6, 2 p.m.

Decatur City Dance will present "Eclectic Journey – An Evening of Dance" at the Drew Charter School Performing Arts Theater, 300 Eva Davis Way, SE, Atlanta, GA 30317. After a two-year COVID hiatus from live theater performance, the Nexus Premiere, Nexus Apprentice, and Nexus Contemporary companies of Decatur City Dance have prepared a unique assortment of dances for the annual winter concert.

Excerpts from the classical ballets "Paquita" and "Napoli," staged by recent Atlanta resident Angie Wells, will be presented alongside new contemporary works created by guest choreographers Otis Sallid, Bridget Roosa, and Xavier Lewis. Resident choreographers Walter Apps, Leslie Gourley, Meg Gourley, Kyme Hersi-Sallid, Jessica Reese, and Toya Willingham round out the evening with works of various styles and themes.

For more information call 404-378-3388 or visit decaturchitydance.org.



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RUN WITH THE DOGS 5K

The Decatur Bulldogs Boosters will host their annual Run with the Dogs 5K on Saturday, Jan. 29, at 9 a.m. This year's Pup Trot and 5K race, now in its 18th year, will start and finish at Renfro Middle School – and the 5K race features chip timing for the first time ever. The new 5K course is a scenic run through the MAK and Oakhurst neighborhoods.

Don't miss the chance to earn the coveted long-sleeved race t-shirt with original artwork by Adam Pinsley of the Face of the Race dog. Proceeds from the event provide support for team uniforms, equipment, transportation, and much more. Register early and bring friends and family, both two-legged and four-legged. To register, visit rwtd5K.com or look for Run with the Dogs 5K on Facebook and Instagram.



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In his 40-year career as a judge in DeKalb County, Clarence Seeliger advocated for equal rights, helped to support survivors of domestic abuse, and strived to treat all who entered his courtroom with fairness and respect.

The DeKalb History Center is honored to be the repository of the Judge Clarence Seeliger Collection, which contains archival materials spanning his decades of service. Grab your lunch and listen in as Judge Seeliger discusses his collection and experiences. The program will be moderated by Jennifer Blomqvist, archivist for the DeKalb History Center.



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The Michael C. Carlos Museum Presents:

And I Must Scream

The Michael C. Carlos Museum of Emory University presents the new exhibition *And I Must Scream*, developed by Dr. Amanda H. Hellman, the museum's curator of African art and a Decatur resident. The show features photographs, sculptures, paintings, drawings, and site-specific installations from 10 local, national and international contemporary artists.

Employing monstrous, grotesque, and humanoid figures and forms, the works engage five themes – corruption and human rights violations, displacement, environmental destruction, pandemics, and renewal. This exhibition acts as a call-to-action and shows these crises to be both urgent and interconnected. The accompanying programming will bring scholars and artists from around the world to teach classes, facilitate performances, and create new works of art.

The exhibition features work by the following artists: Laeila Adjovi (Benin/France), Anida Yoeu Ali (Cambodia), Steve Bandoma (DRC), Amie Esslinger (United States), Ganzeer (Egypt), Cannupa Hanska Luger (United States, Mandan, Hidatsa, Arikara, Lakota), Thameur Mejri (Tunisia), Kahn & Selesnick (US and UK), Yinka Shonibare (UK), and Fabrice Monteiro (Benin/Belgium). This exhibition closes on May 15.

Visit carlos.emory.edu/hours-and-admission to plan your Carlos experience.



Thameur Mejri (Tunisia), *Destroy the Source*, 2016, charcoal, pencil, pastel and acrylic on canvas

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