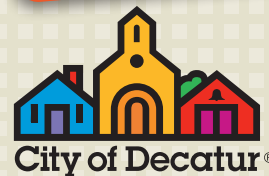


City of Decatur FOCUS

HELLO
NEW RESIDENT
GUIDE INSIDE



MARCH 2022
Volume 32 • Number 7

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE CITY OF DECATUR, GEORGIA

Decatur Mayor Patti Garrett Joins Atlanta Regional Commission Board

In January, the Atlanta Regional Commission swore in Decatur Mayor Patti Garrett as a new board member, along with eight other elected and citizen leaders, including Andre Dickens, mayor, City of Atlanta, Anthony Ford, mayor, City of Stockbridge, Alfred John, chairman, Forsyth County, Tangela Jones, Citizen District 14 (Portions of Cherokee and Cobb counties), Michelle Cooper Kelly, Citizen District 13 (Portion of Cobb County), Thomas (Tom) Meinhart, Citizen District 12 (Portions of Forsyth and Fulton counties), Amol Naik, Citizen District 4 (Portions of Atlanta and Fulton County), and Steve Stanil, Citizen District 15 (Portions of Cherokee and Fulton counties). The board oversees the agency's efforts to improve quality of life in metro Atlanta and plan for the region's successful future.

The 41-member ARC Board is the official planning agency for the 11-county Atlanta Region, including Cherokee, Clayton, Cobb, DeKalb, Douglas, Fayette, Fulton, Gwinnett, Henry and Rockdale counties as well as the city of Atlanta and 74 other cities. The board also includes 15 citizen members selected by the board's elected officials and a representative from the Georgia Department of Community Affairs. The ARC serves as a catalyst for regional progress by focusing leadership, attention and planning resources on key regional issues.



Gary Menard Earns Public Service Award



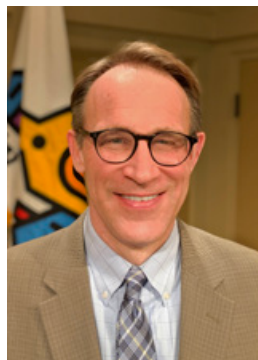
Fire Captain Gary Menard was recognized as the 2022 recipient of Decatur's Thomas O. Davis Award during Mayor Patti Garrett's January State of the City address (see page 9). Menard embodies the spirit of this award for his dedication to public service and his efforts to strengthen the bond between the city and the community. Further, his selflessness inspires everyone to be a better version of themselves. Menard often partners with community groups to assist in projects, including food/toiletry drives, vaccine awareness campaigns, and programs to support the health and wellness of our youth and senior citizens. Congratulations to Captain Menard, a champion for our community.

NEW! BEACON HILL CONCERTS

MARCH 27 AT BEACON
MUNICIPAL CENTER
SEE PAGE 3 FOR DETAILS

Commissioner Dusenbury Recognized Among 100 Most Influential Georgians

In January, *Georgia Trend* published its list of 100 Most Influential Georgians, and the City of Decatur was not surprised to learn that its own Commissioner Dusenbury is among them. An advocate for public parks and green spaces, Dusenbury has dedicated his career to protecting land and creating parks. While working with the late U.S. Rep. John Lewis, Dusenbury studied the equity, economic, and health implications of parks and outdoor access. And prior to heading up the Atlanta Parks and Recreation Department, Dusenbury led local non-profit organization Park Pride, promoting community engagement and the health, safety, and revitalization of Atlanta's parks. He brings this same passion and commitment to his work in Decatur.



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

Patti Garrett.....Mayor
Tony Powers.....Mayor Pro Tem
George Dusenbury.....Commissioner
Lesa Mayer.....Commissioner
Kelly Walsh.....Commissioner



**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



**SUSTAINABLE
FORESTRY
INITIATIVE**

Certified Sourcing

www.sfipprogram.org
SFI-00516

Take a Walk: Spring Tree Tour

Historic Decatur Cemetery • 299 Bell St. • Saturday, April 2, 1-1:30 p.m.

Arborists and Master Gardener volunteers will be stationed at different locations to identify and discuss our wonderful blooming trees, plants, and pollinator garden. Come and enjoy a stroll through spring in part of our urban forest in the historic Decatur Cemetery.

Part-time Position Opening

The Decatur Tourism Bureau is looking to expand their team. If you want to share your passion for the City of Decatur, email Sherry Jackman at sherry.jackman@decaturga.com and she will share more details about the part-time position.

Decorate Decatur Contest Winners

Congratulations to the Rodman family on Clairemont Avenue, whose holiday display was judged the 2021 Winner. They were nominated by their neighbors with the following verse:

The Japanese Maple has lights galore!
And the beautiful Sugar Maple has even more!

With over 6,000 Christmas lights,
This yard is really a sight

Branches covered from root to stem
This festive, fun holiday décor was sure to win!



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.

Mayor Emerita Elizabeth Wilson Presents:

BEACON HILL CONCERT SERIES

Featuring John Boy and Surround Sound

Sunday, March 27, 3-5 p.m. • Beacon Municipal Center Greenspace
West Trinity Place at Electric Avenue

Last September, the city unveiled the first installment of the Art for the People project with “What Sonia Said,” a sculpture by Ellex Swavoni, commissioned to provide representation of Black and Indigenous imagery in public art in Decatur. The opening ceremony took place in the greenspace at the Ebster Municipal Complex, where a string duet provided the perfect back drop for community members to socialize with elders who had grown up in the Beacon Hill neighborhood, the once-thriving Black community that spanned from the site of Decatur’s Community Bandstand on the square to near Thinking Man Tavern at the intersection of Howard and Atlanta avenues.

Mayor Emerita Elizabeth Wilson, Decatur’s first and only Black mayor, was so moved by the event that she urged me to plan a music concert in that same space, and to invite members of the Beacon Hill community to attend once again.

As a music lover and someone who is actively engaged in research about the Beacon Hill community and what ultimately led to its destruction, I was honored by her request. And as I recalled comments made by a few of the Beacon Elders during the installation ceremony, I came to understand the true importance of her idea. While some elders pointed out the former locations of places of prominence in their lives, including where their homes once stood, one former resident pulled me aside to say that she felt as though the people of Beacon Hill had been forgotten. Their perspectives gave the request and my objective a deeper purpose.

Based on Mayor Emerita Wilson’s request and feedback from Beacon Hill residents, the City of Decatur in partnership with the Beacon Hill Black Alliance for Human Rights is launching Mayor Emerita Elizabeth Wilson Presents: The Beacon Hill Concert Series. This quarterly series will take place on the tiered greenspace between the Ebster Gym, the Wilson Center, and the Decatur Police Department.

The concerts will activate this extraordinary outdoor space, amplifying music with its unique acoustics and helping Beacon Elders reclaim a part of their childhood community. Each show will open with a Beacon Elder sharing memories of Beacon Hill before introducing the band.

The concerts will feature live music by Black and Indigenous artists along with Black and Indigenous-owned food trucks onsite. Attendees are invited to bring food/beverages, experience food truck offerings, or dine out at one of Decatur’s local restaurants before the show. Blankets and lawn chairs are welcome, and guests are encouraged to enjoy the space and the Art for the People installment after the show.

The first concert on Sunday, March 27, will feature Atlanta’s own **John Boy & Surround Sound** (pictured). The thirteen-piece band is well known for its electrifying performances and has been a fan favorite at Oakhurst Porchfest over the years.

I am so incredibly excited about this concert series and the importance of its purpose. Join us as we celebrate the memory of the Beacon Hill community, by enjoying great music, eating good food, and gathering together as a community. — *Commissioner Lesa Mayer*



Homelessness in Decatur: Join the Conversation

Virtual Town Hall

Wednesday, March 16 • 6-7:30 p.m.

The City of Decatur is hosting a special ZOOM town hall to discuss homelessness in our community. Participants will have the opportunity to engage with experts who have lived experience with homelessness and homeless outreach. The intent is to learn about misconceptions surrounding homelessness, receive updates on the city’s current initiatives, and to provide direct feedback to city representatives.

Homelessness is a physical manifestation of multiple layers of crises. Decatur is partnering with community members and dedicated organizations to peel back the layers of these crises and to assist those in our community who are experiencing homelessness.

In 2020, the city expanded its cross-departmental in-house homelessness task team. The team continues to meet, discuss issues, and conduct research with a variety of people, including individuals experiencing homelessness, outreach organizations, and service providers.

Partnering with Frontline Response (formerly known as Atlanta Dream Center), the city continues to connect community members experiencing homelessness with consistent and trauma-informed case management. Since welcoming their new Director of Homelessness in August, Frontline Response has provided case management to 46 individuals and has placed 11 individuals in shelters and housing programs. Still, more work lies ahead as the city continues to take steps toward preventing and ending homelessness.

In addition to the virtual Town Hall, there will be an option to view the program live at City Hall, 509 N. McDonough St. To register and provide feedback in advance of the event, visit decaturga.com/homelessness.

CLEAN ENERGY DECATUR: MAKE YOUR VOICE HEARD

The community is invited to participate in an important planning charrette to help the City of Decatur transition to renewable energy.

In October, the city launched Clean Energy Decatur, an initiative to help protect the city and community against the negative impacts of climate change, by moving away from its reliance on fossil fuels and toward a resilient, renewable future. This 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.

While Georgia Power plans to add renewable energy to its portfolio in the years to come, their plan only increases renewables from 7 percent (in 2021) to 24 percent by 2035. This means that 76 percent of Decatur's energy will continue to come from non-renewable energy sources like coal, natural gas, and nuclear power.

During the Destination 2030 development process, Decatur residents expressed a commitment to accelerate the transition to clean energy. Toward this goal, the City of Decatur will host an integrated planning charrette with Southface Institute and Greenlink Analytics Planning Teams coordinating participants, as well as inputting opportunities and deliverables.

Join the discussion at two open house sessions and drop-in hours while the team is working. Stakeholders, city staff, and elected officials (as may be needed) will be available for scheduled meetings during the charrette.

- Learn about Clean Energy issues
- Interact with ACES: a tool to plan Clean Energy efforts and measure impacts
- View planning progress posted throughout the day
- Ask questions of team members and see your input shape Decatur's Clean Energy Plan.

TAKE THE SURVEY



Public Integrated Planning Charrette Decatur Recreation Center, 231 Sycamore St.

MARCH 8
7-10 A.M.

Opening public session:
Come and hear about
the Decatur Clean Energy
Plan's progress and
findings to date

11 A.M.-6:30 P.M.

Lobby open for walk-
ins for all community
members

MARCH 9
8 A.M.-3 P.M.

Lobby open for walk-
ins for all community
members

4-7 P.M.

Open House: Decatur
and its team members
will review the completed
plan elements

What is an Integrated Planning Charrette?

Charrettes are planning sessions where residents, planners, and others collaborate on a community vision. A successful charrette will encourage participation and ideas from various stakeholders and offer immediate feedback to the planners. More important, the charrette will allow everyone who participates to become a mutual author of the Clean Energy plan, by translating our community's vision into actionable policies and programs.

The city will implement the following safety precautions:

- Temperature checks and contact tracing sign-in required for entry
- Masks worn by all participants throughout the event
- Regular sanitizing of common surfaces and furniture.

Visit cleanenergydecatur.com to learn more and to view recordings of previous community Roundtables on clean energy and equity, the economy, and the built environment.

WALK & ROLL SUPERSTAR

This month's Walk and Roll Star is Lisa Borden!

As a lawyer and a military child, Lisa has experienced living in some great cities around the country and the world. Since moving to Decatur last year to work with a local nonprofit, Lisa has embraced living without a car. Lisa enjoys exploring our neighborhoods and walking to Decatur's restaurants and library. Outside of the practical walking that our city makes possible, Lisa sings the praises of our neighborhoods and the cemetery.



Apply Online for Property Tax Exemptions

Homeowners who qualify for a new exemption in 2022 may apply online. Links to all of Decatur's homestead exemptions are available at decaturga.com/homestead.

S-5 Exemption

Resident property owners who were age 65 to 69 as of January 1, 2022, with household federal adjusted gross income under \$53,000 are eligible to apply for the new S-5 school exemption.

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 online. 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 age 70 and older 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 age 70 and older 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 also will 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 online.

Other exemptions

Homeowners who already have all appropriate exemptions do not need to reapply. Ex-

emptions remain on homeowners' accounts as long as they continue to reside at the home with no changes in ownership. Owners who have turned 62, 65, 70, or 80 in the past year should review the exemptions listed at decaturga.com/homestead to see if they may qualify for an additional exemption. Decatur residents who have moved to a different home within town in the past year need to reapply for the basic homestead exemption (GH1).

Application procedures

Homeowners without internet access and homeowners who are not required to file income tax returns with the IRS due to income may call the city finance office at 404-370-4100 for application instructions.

The time period to apply for any new exemption has already begun and will end March 15, 2022, in order for the exemption to appear on first installment 2022 tax bills, which will be issued April 1, 2022. Links to the new application forms and further exemption information can be found at decaturga.com/homestead.

Back after 2 years!

touch a
truck



&
City of Decatur
touch a
budget
insights and input
on pending spending
marta

Saturday, March 19, 10-1pm
East Lake MARTA Station, North Lot

Touch-a-Truck

East Lake Marta Station (North Lot)
Saturday, March 19 • 10 a.m.-1 p.m.

Back after two years! This fun event gives children of all ages a chance to touch, explore, and see their favorite truck or equipment on wheels. The City of Decatur and DeKalb County fire trucks, dump trucks, tractors, police cars, motorcycles, bicycles and many other vehicles will be on display.



Touch-a-Budget

East Lake Marta Station (North Lot)
Saturday, March 19 • 10 a.m.-1 p.m.

Decatur's budget expo will join forces with Touch-a-Truck this year. This event offers insights and welcomes input on pending spending. For more information, visit decaturga.com/budget.

THE FACTS ON FLOODING IN DECATUR

Although the city is located at the top of the watershed, Decatur periodically experiences minor to moderate localized flooding. These conditions are a symptom of the fully developed nature of the city. Documented flooding problems have occurred along Peavine Creek at a condominium complex near Coventry Road. Along Peavine Creek Tributary, two houses on the south side of Garden Lane and two houses on the south side of Lamont Drive, are subject to occasional flooding. Five houses damaged by flooding at the end of Westchester Drive were purchased by the City of Decatur with help from FEMA and converted to green space.

Two isolated locations in the upper Peavine Creek Basin, Landsdowne Avenue at Hibernia Avenue, and an area along North Candler Street, have some problems with flood damage due to poor localized drainage. Occasional flooding on South Fork Peachtree Creek Tributary has been a continuing problem for property owners in the vicinity of Willow Lane just downstream of the Church Street crossing. In 1971, a flood on this tributary resulted in substantial personal property damage near Landover Drive and North Decatur Road. Potential for flood damage appears to be minimal in the southern half of the city, which is drained by Shoal Creek and Sugar Creek Tributary.

The lack of any significant history of flood damage to residences and other buildings along Shoal Creek and its tributaries is due to the absence of development on the floodplains in the southeastern section of the city. Because of extensive storm drainage improvements in the past, no recent flood damage problems have been experienced along Sugar Creek Tributary.

Although damage to buildings generally is limited, ponding behind drainage pipes and culverts and flooding of streets, driveways, parking lots, and yards are a recurring concern at some locations in Peavine Creek, Shoal Creek, and South Fork Peachtree Creek Tributary basins. For example, the Peavine Creek basin often

experiences flooding problems. Channel erosion and damage to drainage and bank stabilization structures are also a problem in some areas of these three basins. As a result of basin improvements, areas drained by Sugar Creek Tributary have been relatively free of ponding or erosion problems for many years.

City Flood Services

Decatur's Design, Environment, and Construction Division provides general and site-specific flood and flood-related information on property located within the city limits. To obtain site-specific responses, individuals making inquiries must provide a survey of the specific property and elevation data relating to existing structures and site topography. The Design, Environment, and Construction Division and the Decatur Public Library also have reference documents on flooding and flood protection available for review.

A map information service is available from the division for a \$10 fee. This service provides inquirers with the current Flood Insurance Rate Map information and identifies whether a property is in a Special Flood Hazard Area. An accurate street address or DeKalb County/Decatur Tax Parcel number is needed to obtain this information. If you would like more information, contact the Design, Environment, and Construction Division at 678-553-6529.

What You Can Do

Several of the city's efforts depend on your cooperation and assistance. Here is how you can help:

- Do not dump debris or throw anything into the ditches or streams. Depositing debris, trash, and other items in ditches and streams is a violation of the city's Solid Waste Ordinance Section 82-38. Even grass clippings and branches can accumulate and clog channels. A clogged channel cannot carry the necessary volume of water. When it rains the water has to go somewhere, usually flooding yards and streets, thus damaging property and endangering public safety. Every piece of trash contributes to flooding.
- Individual property owners are responsible for maintenance of the creeks and drainage ditches on their property. Please do your part and keep the banks clear of brush and debris. In addition to maintaining the public roadways and public drainage facilities, the city can help remove major blockages from the creeks, such as fallen trees.
- Please report the depositing of debris and trash into streams and storm drains and blockages to the Design, Environment, and Construction Division, 678-553-6529.
- Check with the division before you build on, alter, re-grade, or fill on your property. Such activities in floodplains are strictly regulated and permits may be needed.
- Report illegal construction activities to the Design, Environment, and Construction Division at 678-553-6529.

Floodproofing

There are several different ways to protect a building from flood damage. For example, you can re-grade your lot or build a small

floodwall or earthen berm. These methods work if your lot is large enough, if flooding is not too deep, and if your property is not in the designated floodway. Please note that permits are required prior to undertaking these and similar activities. Another approach is to waterproof your walls and place watertight closures over the doorways. This method is not recommended for houses with basements or if water will get more than two feet deep.

You can also consider raising the house above flood levels. You may drive by and check out the dwellings at 504 Westchester Dr. and 249 S. Columbia Dr. to see examples of elevated buildings. Many houses, even those not located in the floodplain, have sanitary sewers that back up into the basement during heavy rains. This may be due to stormwater infiltration into the sanitary sewer line. A plug or standpipe can stop this if the water doesn't get more than one or two feet deep. These can be purchased at a hardware store for under \$25. For deeper sewer backup flooding, talk to a plumber. The above measures are called floodproofing or retrofitting.

More information is available from the Decatur Design, Environment and Construction Division or the Decatur Public Library. Please note that re-grading or filling in the floodplain requires a permit. Also, any alteration to your building or land may require a permit from the Design, Environment and Construction Division.

If you know a major flood is coming, you should shut off the gas and electricity and move valuable contents upstairs or raise items off the floor. Fortunately, the flooding experienced in Decatur is localized and most floodwaters will recede within a matter of a few hours. However, it is unlikely that you will get much warning, so a detailed checklist prepared in advance will help ensure that you don't forget anything.

Flood Insurance

If you don't have flood insurance, talk to your insurance agent. Most homeowner's insurance policies do not cover damage from

floods. However, because the City of Decatur participates in the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) and implements activities that exceed the minimum NFIP standards, you can purchase a separate flood insurance policy at discounted premiums. This insurance is backed by the federal government and is available to everyone, even for properties that have been flooded in the past. There is a 30-day waiting period from the time the insurance is applied for until it becomes effective.

Some people have purchased flood insurance because the financial institution required it when they got a mortgage or home improvement loan. Usually these policies just cover the building's structure and not the contents. Property owners need to verify with their insurance agent what the extent of contents coverage is available. During a flood in 1990, the damage to the contents of a property near the South Fork Peachtree Creek Tributary exceeded the damage to the structure. At last count, there were 202 active flood insurance policies in the city of Decatur. If you are covered, check out the amount and make sure you have contents coverage. Remember: even if the last flood missed you or you have done some floodproofing, the next flood could be worse. Flood insurance covers all surface floods.

Flood Safety

Do not walk through flowing water. Drowning is the number one cause of flood deaths, mostly during flash floods. Currents can be deceptive; six inches of moving water can knock you off your feet. If you walk in standing water, use a pole or stick to ensure the ground is still there. Do not drive through a flooded area. More people drown in their cars than anywhere else. Do not drive around road barriers; the road or bridge may be washed out. Stay away from power lines and electrical wires.

The number two flood killer after drowning is electrocution. Electrical current can travel through water. Report downed power lines to the Georgia Power Company by dialing toll free 1-888-891-0938. If your

house or other structure is flooded, contact the power company to turn off the electricity. Some appliances, such as television sets, keep electrical charges even after they have been unplugged. Don't use appliances or motors that have gotten wet unless they have been taken apart, cleaned and dried by qualified personnel.

Look out for animals, especially snakes. Small animals that have been flooded out of their homes may seek shelter in yours. Use a pole or stick to poke and turn things over and scare away small animals. Look before you step. After a flood, the ground and floors are covered with debris including broken bottles and nails. Floors and stairs that have been covered with mud can be slippery. Be alert for gas leaks. Use a flashlight to inspect for damage. Don't smoke or use candles, lanterns, or open flames, unless you know the gas has been turned off and the area has been ventilated.

Inspections – Repair and Maintenance Activities

Staff from the Drainage Section of the Design, Environment, and Construction Division are available to conduct site visits to review flood, drainage, and storm sewer problems and determine if corrective repair or maintenance action is the responsibility of the city or the private property owner. For more information regarding this service or to request an inspection call 678-553-6579.

LEARN MORE

For more information call the Design, Environment, and Construction Division or visit decaturga.com and follow the links to the floodplain information at the bottom of the page. Copies of this document can be obtained at Decatur City Hall, 509 N. McDonough St., or the Leveritt Public Works Building, DEC office, 1st floor, 2635 Talley Street.

Decatur Launches Two New Programs for Housing Affordability



Decatur Land Trust is pleased to offer three new residences as part of Decatur's new Housing Affordability program. The properties are located within the Park 108

Residences (rendering above), a redevelopment project by Toll Brothers, located at the intersection of East Lake Drive and Park Place. The new Park 108 community will offer 33 modern condominiums within a historic 1930s Oakhurst building that features oversized windows, lofted ceilings, and wide-plank hardwood flooring. These new residences are zoned for City Schools of Decatur with convenient access to MARTA's East Lake station.

The three Park 108 residences for sale through the Decatur Land Trust will be offered to City Schools of Decatur, City of Decatur, and Decatur Housing Authority employees. Two residences are efficiency (studio), and one residence is a one-bedroom unit. Income restrictions will apply, and buyers must meet lending requirements.

For additional information and to express interest, sign up for the Decatur Land Trust email list on the website: decaturlandtrust.org.



Decatur Home ReHAB Accepting Applications

The Decatur Land Trust is now accepting statements of interest from Decatur homeowners who wish to apply for the new Decatur Home ReHAB program. Developed to help preserve existing homes for low-income and legacy residents, the program assists with deferred home maintenance projects. To submit a statement of interest online visit decaturlandtrust.org.

The Decatur Land Trust is a nonprofit organization that is dedicated to preserving the long-term affordability of Decatur's homes and neighborhoods.



Home Health Care Agency Marks Anniversary

Last month, siblings Alexandria Edwards and Jermaine Hawthorne welcomed clients and friends to their Decatur office (120 W. Trinity Pl.) to celebrate the first anniversary of their merged home health care agency, PSCProviders (Pediatric and Senior Care Providers). PSCProviders operates within the senior care community, assisting individuals aged 60-100 with day-to-day living.



Feds Offer Georgia Mortgage Assistance

The Homeowner Assistance Fund program, funded by the U.S. Treasury and administered by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs, is now accepting applications from homeowners who had a COVID-19 pandemic hardship that resulted in a significant financial hardship or that caused a need for mortgage or housing expense assistance.

To review the program information and apply online, visit georgiamortgageassistance.ga.gov or contact ehaf@dca.ga.gov with questions.





MEETING PREVIEW

Tuesday, March 22 • 5:30 pm

Location TBD

Visit decaturdba.com for updates.

EASTER EGG HUNT

**Decatur First Baptist Church, 308 Clairemont Ave.
Saturday, April 9 • 11 a.m. • FREE!**

Bring your basket and join the Easter Bunny in the hunt for candy eggs on the front lawn of Decatur First Baptist Church. Easter Bunny arrives at 10:30 a.m. Hunt by ages: 2 and under, preschool, kindergarten, 1st-5th grades. Sponsored by Decatur Business Association and local businesses, the event is free. Visit decaturdba.com for more information.

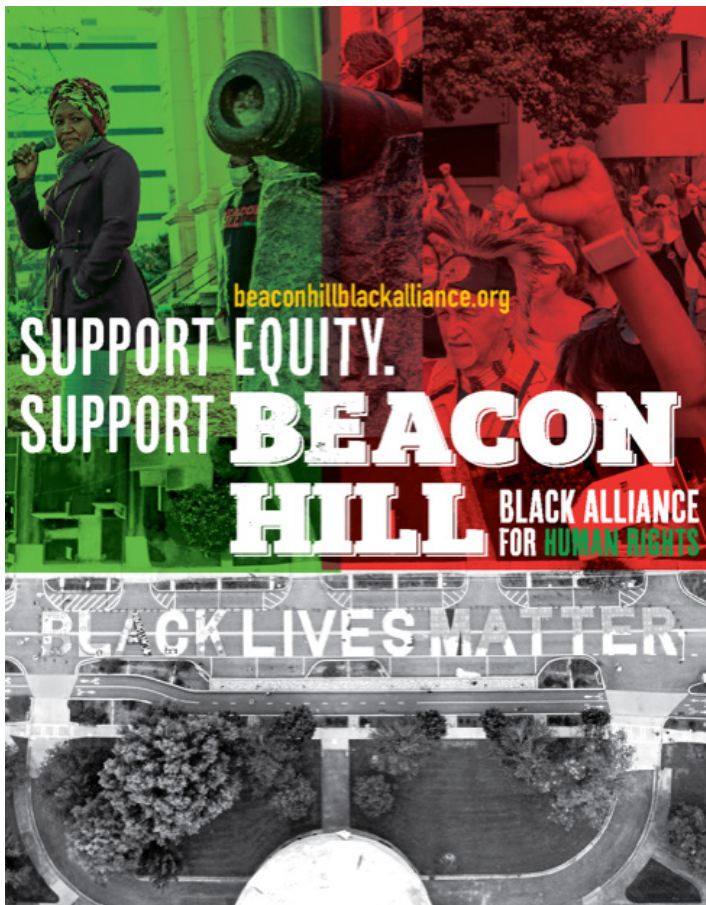
Mayor Garrett Delivers Virtual State of the City Address

During the annual State of the City address, Mayor Patti Garrett thanked city and community staff for their dedication through the pandemic. She also acknowledged several employees for achieving years of service, including Felix Floyd, Facilities Superintendent/Public Works (15 years), Robert Lindsey, Investigator/Police-Criminal Investigation (20 years), Ninetta Violante, Assistant Fire Chief and Marshal/Fire/Rescue (20 years), Dana Canipe, Police Lieutenant/Police Patrol (25 years), and Chief Jennifer Ross, Captain/Police Administration (25 years).

Mayor Garrett welcomed CSD School Board Chair Jana Johnson-Davis, who provided an update on the state of the City Schools of Decatur and highlighted some of the programs that the schools are implementing to support equity, including courageous conversations about racism (6th-12th grades), Asian mentorships at DHS, DEI Community workshops at the lower elementaries, and a Lunar New Year celebration at Legacy Park in January. For more information about these efforts and programs visit equity.csdecatur.net.

Mayor Garrett underscored the city's commitment to the Downtown Master Plan and noted some of the various construction and infrastructure projects that are underway, including the Commerce cycle track, and removal of the Howard Avenue planters as part of the Atlanta Avenue Crossing project.

If you missed it, check it out at decaturdba.com.



RETIREMENT PLANNING FOR YOUR PEACE OF MIND

How much can we spend in retirement?

Have we saved enough?

When should we begin taking Social Security?

Should our investments change once we retire?

**Fee-only fiduciary located in Decatur
with extensive experience with CDC,
Emory, and University System of GA**

Please contact us for a
complimentary consultation.



MINERVA
PLANNING GROUP

Decatur Office: 404 816 6688

Web: www.minervaplanninggroup.com

Host an International Exchange Student

The Decatur Rotary Club has opportunities for families to host an exchange student for the 2022/2023 school year. Exchange students will attend Decatur High School and stay with each family for about three months. Hosting a Rotary International high school exchange student offers a unique opportunity to experience new perspectives, explore new customs, and share American culture and your community with others. Many families build special friendships and connections that last a lifetime. Rotary has been successfully hosting exchange students since 1929. For more information, visit ryeflorida.org/host-a-student or e-mail jbennett@origintitle.com.

Decatur Cemetery News

Hooray for volunteers! Every Tuesday, weather permitting, a group of volunteers meets in the Old Section of the cemetery for "Gardening Among the Graves." Even on the chilliest of days, there are projects to keep them busy; cleaning up, planting, and preserving our treasured downtown greenspace. If you see them, give them a shout-out of thanks. To volunteer, contact Jim Rabb, jimrabb1884@gmail.com.



Decatur Education Foundation Tutoring and Mentoring Programs

Do you have time to share with a Decatur student? DEF has a variety of volunteer opportunities that could fit your schedule and provide a meaningful connection for both you and a student. Here are a few ways you can get involved:

Volunteer Tutor (1 hour per week)

When COVID shut down our schools almost two years ago, DEF established the Virtual Pals Tutoring Program that pairs 2nd-8th grade students with an upper high school or adult tutor for extra help one hour per week. The volunteer tutors provide basic homework help and learning support, as well as general time management, motivation, and a greater sense of connectivity.

Many students have fallen behind and need a little help catching up. To volunteer, visit decatureducationfoundation.org/mentoring.

Tutor Coordinator (1 hour per week, virtual)

With so many tutoring pairs, DEF needs a few volunteers to help coordinate and check in weekly with Pals' tutors. These positions require a one-hour-per-week time commitment and are conducted virtually. Email muslimo@decatureducationfoundation.org to help.

Mentoring Programs (2-4 hours per month)

DEF has two mentoring programs: AIM Scholars for students starting in third grade and REACH GA for 8th-12th grades. In just 2-4 hours per month, mentors help students discover their passions, pursue their interests, and develop life skills that help connect them socially and civically to the community. Mentoring pairs spend time doing homework, playing games, shooting hoops, and walking around the square. And as soon as it is safe to resume group activities, DEF will offer opportunities for the mentor cohorts.

DEF is currently in need of mentors for both programs, specifically adult male volunteers. If you would like to learn more or sign up, visit decatureducationfoundation.org/mentoring.

Helps you work with your dog to become confident & happy companions



**terri's
training**
FOR DOGS
AND PEOPLE

CLASSES

- Dog Obedience
- Dog Agility for Fun

Terri Kruzan
404-510-3113
tkruzan@bellsouth.net



Decatur Recreation Center
Register with Sara Holmes at 678-553-6559 or
sara.holmes@decaturga.com

DOPE
Coffee

**the
dope
box.**

WWW.REALDOPE.COFFEE



Music Together of Decatur – Spring Sessions

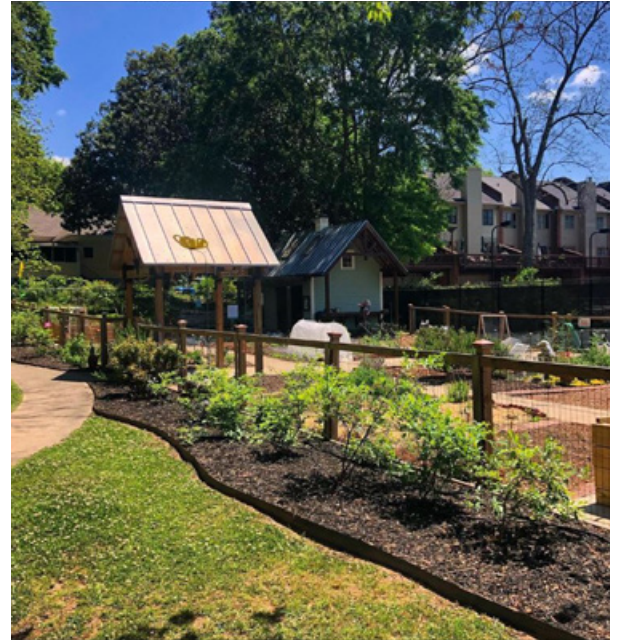
Music Together of Decatur offers playful, rich, and engaging programs that encourage children of all ages—babies, toddlers, preschoolers, and big kids—to discover their inner music-maker. The program will offer an eight-week Spring session, starting March 21. Learn more and reserve your spot today by visiting musictogetherofdecatur.com. Want to try a class before committing to the spring session? Schedule a preview class now. Email wendy@musictogetherofdecatur.com or call or text 678-466-0737.



Scott Park Community Garden Awarded Food Well Alliance Grant

Scott Park Community Garden is excited to have been selected for the Food Well Alliance 2022 Community Garden Grant. Decatur Active Living applied for the grant in November and will use the funds to fix and update their three-bin composting system.

Food Well Alliance helps to build thriving community gardens and urban farms across metro Atlanta by providing resources and support to local growers who in turn connect and build healthier communities. Visit foodwellalliance.org for more information or to support their efforts.



REAL ESTATE AND BUSINESS ATTORNEYS



DECATUR'S HOMETOWN LAW FIRM

WILLIAMS TEUSINK, LLC
THE HIGH HOUSE
309 SYCAMORE STREET
DECATUR, GEORGIA 30030

[WILLIAMSTEUSINK.COM](https://williamsteusink.com) | 404-373-9590

The new year brings new beginnings. Whether you're buying, selling or looking to make impactful updates to your home, let us help you find your fresh start. > >



< < < < < < < < < <

chrissie kallio > REAL ESTATE > simplified.

c. 404.295.2068 | o. 404.874.0300 | chrissiekallio@atlantafinehomes.com

Atlanta Fine Homes, LLC fully supports the principles of the Fair Housing Act and the Equal Opportunity Act. Each franchise is independently owned and operated.

Atlanta Fine Homes | Sotheby's
INTERNATIONAL REALTY

Agnes Scott College and Morehouse Partner for Pre-Med

In January, Agnes Scott College (ASC) and Morehouse School of Medicine (MSM) announced a new partnership to create an Early Commitment Program (ECP) and a Pre-Medical Linkage Program. The programs will offer qualified Agnes Scott undergraduate, post-baccalaureate and graduate students admission to Morehouse School of Medicine's MD program.

The Early Commitment Program is designed for third-year undergraduate students who aspire to attend Morehouse School of Medicine after completing their undergraduate degrees at Agnes Scott. The Linkage Program is designed for post-baccalaureate and graduate students who aspire to attend Morehouse School of Medicine immediately after completing their studies at Agnes Scott College.

Through these programs, ASC and MSM intend to expand opportunities for women in medical and science careers and cultivate the next generation of doctors whose diverse voices will impact underserved communities in Georgia and around the world.

MSM will start conducting interviews during the spring 2022 semester for selected juniors and post-baccalaureate students from Agnes Scott. For more information about the program, contact Rachel Renà Taylor, Agnes Scott's director of health professions advising and partnerships, at gradadmission@agnesscott.edu.

Task Force CEO to Retire

David A. Ross, ScD, CEO of the Decatur-based Task Force for Global Health, has announced plans to retire. He has been a member of the Task Force for more than 20 years, and has served as CEO and president since 2016. The organization focuses on supporting stronger health systems and increasing vaccination levels in low-income countries to eliminate diseases.

Prior to his current role, he served as director of the Task Force's Public Health Informatics Institute (PHII) and its predecessor, All Kids Count, spearheading efforts to use information to improve health outcomes.

Over the past 50 years, Dr. Ross has become a recognized leader in global health, pioneering methods for strengthening information capacity of public health systems in the US and other countries. He has held leadership, administrative and corporate consultant roles with the U.S. Public Health Service and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

DECATUR'S INDOOR PLANT SHOP

 **Lush Plant Co.**



Stop By & See Us:
317 W. Hill Street
(Rear of Building)

LUSHPLANTCO.COM

(917) 451-0737

@LUSH_PLANTCO

LOCALLY-OWNED BY WOMEN

**DEDICATED.
EXPERIENCED.
RESPECTED.**

Expert, uncompromising
legal representation
when you need it most.



CHAMBERS & AHOLT

— TRIAL ATTORNEYS —

• Personal Injury and Wrongful Death •

150 E. Ponce de Leon Ave., Suite 260 • Downtown Decatur
404-253-7860 • doug@carllp.com • www.carllp.com

Experience is not Expensive...It's Priceless!



**41 years of being your neighbor
and REALTOR® of choice!**

PAM HUGHES
REALTOR®

Cell: 404-626-3604

Office: 404-897-5558

Pam.Hughes@HarryNorman.com



Personalized Service and an Exceptional Experience



Amplify Decatur Music Festival Announces 2022 Line-up

Ben Harper, Old Crow Medicine Show, Son Volt, The War and Treaty, S.G. Goodman, and the Mike Killeen Band
Decatur Square • Saturday, April 23 • 2-11 p.m.

Amplify My Community has announced the line-up for this year's music festival, which will feature three-time Grammy Award winner Ben Harper, two-time Grammy Award winners Old Crow Medicine Show, Americana legends Son Volt, and acclaimed soul performers The War and Treaty. The festival also will feature S.G. Goodman and the Mike Killeen Band.

The event will kick off on Friday, April 22, with a series of events in and around downtown Decatur and will close with a show at Eddie's Attic on the evening of Sunday, April 24. Additional artists will be announced in the coming weeks.

All proceeds will be directed to Decatur Cooperative Ministry to aid their efforts to support those experiencing homelessness in Decatur and DeKalb County. Last year's festival raised more than \$50,000 and featured hometown favorites the Indigo Girls, John Paul White, Rodney Crowell, Blind Boys of Alabama, and Michelle Malone.

Amplify is working with the City of Decatur to develop a plan that will ensure public safety and a healthy environment. For more information and to purchase your tickets, visit amplifydecatur.org.



our goal: to be your trusted catering partner

inquire by scanning the QR code, or emailing us: caterina@whatsoeverausto.com

Estate Planning Wills & Trusts • Probate

As your family grows, or you prepare for retirement, it's important to have a plan.



 **Mackintosh**
LAW, LLC

246 Sycamore Street, Suite 150, Decatur, GA 30030
 (404) 793-2510 • Brooks@Mackintosh.law
www.mackintosh.law

Waman French Announces Retirement as Head of The Friends School of Atlanta

Waman French, founding Head of The Friends School of Atlanta (FSA), has announced that he will retire July 1, 2023.

Hired in 1991 by members of the Atlanta Friends Meeting, Waman French and founding teacher Pam Upchurch developed a vision that would bring together children from diverse races, ethnicities, religions, family structures, and socioeconomic backgrounds to create a learning environment that encourages students to engage with each other to become peacemakers and change agents in the world. More than 30 years later, The Friends School of Atlanta remains an important independent school, offering a PreK-8th grade program steeped in Quaker values of simplicity, peace, integrity, community, equality, and stewardship.

French has fostered a community united in validating the gifts of diverse students and challenging them to bring those gifts to

the world as engaged citizens. French has overseen multiple relocations and in 2008 spearheaded a successful capital campaign that moved the school to its current 5.85-acre campus on Columbia Drive in Decatur. Over the last decade, FSA has flourished and grown, deepening its focus on innovation, environmentalism, artistic expression, community service, social justice and other disciplines that prepare the students to navigate a challenging world.

The Friends School of Atlanta is one of 78 Friends schools throughout the country and remains the only Quaker school in Georgia. Grounded in the belief that every person has innate potential for goodness, Friends offers a transformational education for children throughout metro Atlanta. For more information about The Friends School of Atlanta and its admission process, visit friendsschoolatlanta.org.

CSD ART TEACHERS SPOTLIGHT STUDENT WORK

Solarium in Oakhurst • 321 W. Hill Street, Suite 1A • April 20-22 • 4-7 p.m.

The art teachers of City Schools of Decatur are pleased to present the inaugural CSD Art Exhibition, featuring student artwork from CSD schools K-12 for the 2021-2022 school year. With community support, this will become an annual event. For more information contact Kim Boswell at kboswell@csdecatur.net.



Chamberlain
FINANCIAL ADVISORS



Helping Decatur families reach their goals

GET STARTED TODAY
ChamberlainFA.com | 678-938-0372




life. lived.

404.377.3095 627 East College Ave. Decatur, GA

Tour deCatur Is Back!

Decatur High School • Saturday, March 12 • 8 a.m.-noon

This year's 20th Tour deCatur is scheduled for Saturday, March 12, with a new starting line at Decatur High School. To register for the 5K or the one-mile Fun Run, visit tourdecatur.com.

Proceeds from the race benefit DEF's initiatives, which support Decatur students, teachers, and their schools. To learn how DEF helps kids to learn and thrive, visit deca-tureducationfoundation.org.

DEF will continue to monitor the COVID situation and adjust the event as needed.



DHS Senior Named Finalist in Science Talent Search

DHS senior Max Bee-Lindgren has been named a finalist in this year's Regeneron Science Talent Search, the nation's oldest and most prestigious science and math competition for high school seniors, which is founded and produced by Society for Science.

This year, the 40 finalists hail from 37 schools in 19 states. They were chosen from a pool of more than 1,800 highly qualified applicants, all of whom completed an original research project and extensive application process. Max and his fellow finalists will participate in a week-long competition from March 9-16, and will undergo a rigorous judging process and compete for more than \$1.8 million in awards, including a top prize of \$250,000. The top 10 Regeneron Science Talent Search winners will be announced during a live-streamed awards ceremony on March 15.



FLOAT THERAPY / MASSAGE
Changing The Way You Heal Your Body And Mind
book online

Memberships Available
Float Atlanta.com
111 Clairemont Ave Decatur

WELLSPRING CHIROPRACTIC & WELLNESS

"I am a practicing Chiropractic Physician. For the past 20 years I've been passionate about healthy living.
The prevention of pain and chronic diseases are the focuses of my practice.
I manage these conditions through Chiropractic Care, Functional Medicine and Nutrition."

235 E. Ponce De Leon Ave.
Suite 109
Decatur, GA 30030
OFFICE - 404.377.7263
WELLSPRINGDECATUR@GMAIL.COM
WELLSPRINGINDECATUR.COM

Buying or selling, I'm here to help.

678-595-5427



2019, 2020 Top 25 Realtor -
DeKalb Association of Realtors





WORTHMORE jewelers

117 East Court Square . Decatur . 404/370-3979
500 L-3 Amsterdam Ave . Atlanta . 404/892-8294
www.worthmorejewelers.com



PRE-SORTED
STANDARD
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
Permit No. 199
Decatur, GA 30031



Decatur
Focus

P.O. Box 220
Decatur, GA 30031-220

Printed on Recycled Paper
DATED MATERIAL MARCH 2022

Atlanta Fine
Homes

Sotheby's
INTERNATIONAL REALTY

Giving You the Time and Attention You Deserve

LISA CRONIC, REALTOR®

Decatur resident since 1989



Lisa Cronic

c. 678.641.4325 o. 404.874.0300
lisacronic@atlantafinehomes.com
atlantafinehomes.com | sir.com

Atlanta Fine Homes, LLC fully supports the principles of the Fair Housing Act and the Equal Opportunity Act. Each franchise is independently owned and operated. Intown office: 1555 Peachtree Street NE, Suite 100, Atlanta, Georgia 30309.

JOIN US!



Decatur
Parents Network

WWW.DECATURPARENTS.NET



SCAN ME



THIS AD WAS GENEROUSLY FUNDED BY DECATUR PREVENTION INITIATIVE.