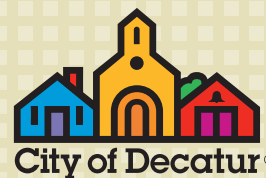


# City of Decatur FOCUS



OCTOBER 2020  
Volume 31 • Number 3

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE CITY OF DECATUR, GEORGIA



## BACK TO SCHOOL

The first day of school looked a little different this year. Decatur students made an adjustment by kicking off with virtual learning, which for the Monaco family started off great. Third grader Willem Monaco is all smiles during his first day with his new classmates at F.A.V.E and teacher Ms. Cartys.

# Better Together Welcoming Business Award

## Nominate a Business Today

The Better Together Advisory Board announces the second annual Welcoming Business Award. The purpose of the award is to:

- Reward and publicly recognize leadership actions that create a welcoming and inclusive business environment in the city of Decatur;
- Encourage businesses to prioritize inclusivity as a “best practice”; and
- Publicize and share “best practices” among local businesses.

### Award criteria:

- Increasing accessibility for people with disabilities;
- Creating a welcoming environment for people who are historically marginalized based on race, gender, class, ethnicity, sexual orientation, age;
- Recruiting and hiring practices aimed at creating a diverse staff;
- Training of staff to be aware of diversity and offer welcome to all patrons;
- Creating an overall welcoming and inclusive environment while supporting public health in the city of Decatur by implementing necessary protocols during the COVID-19 pandemic;
- Anything else that creates a welcoming and inclusive environment.

The deadline to submit nominations is Oct. 23. Nomination forms can be found at [decaturga.com/better-together-resources](http://decaturga.com/better-together-resources). You can return the form via email to Linda Harris, [linda.harris@decaturga.com](mailto:linda.harris@decaturga.com), or mail it to her attention at City of Decatur, PO Box 220, Decatur, GA 30031.

The Better Together Advisory Board was established as a result of the Better Together Community Action Plan for Equity, Inclusion and Engagement. Focus Area 4 of the Community Action Plan is to “Cultivate a welcoming and inclusive retail environment for serving a diverse clientele.” The Advisory Board created the Welcoming and Inclusive Business Award to highlight businesses that make equity and inclusion a priority.

For more information contact Linda Harris, [linda.harris@decaturga.com](mailto:linda.harris@decaturga.com), or Renae Madison, [renae.madison@decaturga.com](mailto:renae.madison@decaturga.com).



Decatur's inaugural Welcoming Businesses, recognized in January, are Maculele Decatur and Little Shop of Stories.



# 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  
George Dusenbury..... Commissioner  
Lesa Mayer..... Commissioner  
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Development Authority**

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Tony Leung • Conor McNally  
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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).





## Halloween Decoration Season Is Here

Entries due by October 23 • Vote until October 25

It's time to pull out your best Halloween decorations, dress up your home or business in the colors and traditions of the season, and enter the Halloween Decorating Contest. Submit a photo of your best decor talents to Jackie Moore at [jacqueline.moore@decaturga.com](mailto:jacqueline.moore@decaturga.com) by Friday, Oct. 23, and be sure to include your name and address in the email.

To vote for your favorite entry, visit [decaturga.com/decoratedecatur](http://decaturga.com/decoratedecatur), by Sunday, Oct. 25. Winners will be posted on the Decatur Minute blog and the Decorate Decatur Facebook page. Special yard signs will be posted in the yards of winners to display for Halloween.

The winner of the Commissioners Cauldron will be announced at the City Commission meeting on Monday, Nov. 2. Email [jacqueline.moore@decaturga.com](mailto:jacqueline.moore@decaturga.com) for more information.



## Decatur Ornament Unveiling Nov. 5

Decatur will hold its annual Holiday Ornament Unveiling from the store window of Wild Oats and Billy Goats, 112 E. Ponce de Leon Ave., on Thursday, Nov. 5, at 6 p.m. We will close off two parking spaces in front of Wild Oats so there will be room to remain socially distant safely. Ornaments will be on sale outside Wild Oats and those who feel comfortable may purchase them inside the store as well.

Watch [visitdecaturga.com](https://www.visitdecaturga.com) social media channels for more details or email [sherry.jackman@decaturga.com](mailto:sherry.jackman@decaturga.com).

## Your Input is Need!

The City of Decatur is seeking community input on its communications efforts. Visit [surveyMonkey.com/r/decaturgacommunitysvy](https://surveyMonkey.com/r/decaturgacommunitysvy) to provide your feedback. Contact Renae Madison, [renae.madison@decaturga.com](mailto:renae.madison@decaturga.com), with any questions.

## Looking Out for Our Neighbors During the Holidays

A Season of Giving/Christmas Decatur has long provided holiday gifts and necessities for Decatur's children and senior citizens whose families would not otherwise be able to afford them. Decatur residents and local organizations have stepped up each year to help.



To preserve the mission of A Season of Giving/Christmas Decatur while ensuring the health and safety of our volunteers, contributors and recipients, we are making changes to our process this year. Traditionally, donors have purchased gifts from a wish list specific to each child (through 8th grade) and senior citizen. This year, we are going (mostly) virtual, asking for monetary donations to purchase gift cards that parents can use to buy gifts for their children.

Monetary donations are also requested for senior citizens. Their gifts will be purchased by designated volunteers based on the seniors' wish lists. Those gifts will be sent directly to each senior citizen.

The average donation for each person has traditionally been about \$125, but a donation in any amount is greatly appreciated.

We look forward to a return, in future years, to our traditional giving process of donors directly purchasing gifts for children and senior citizens in need.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, there is an even greater opportunity to help our neighbors this holiday season. Please participate in A Season of Giving/Christmas Decatur 2020 with a donation. Support the spirit of neighbors helping neighbors by giving to local families this holiday season. Go to [legacydecatur.com/give](https://legacydecatur.com/give) and designate your donation to A Season of Giving/Christmas Decatur. Legacy Decatur is a 501(c)(3) registered charity.

If you are a parent or guardian in need of help this holiday season, look for information from your child's school.

Contact [aseasonofgiving@decaturga.com](mailto:aseasonofgiving@decaturga.com) or call 404-378-8069 with any questions.



# October Is National Women's Small Business Month

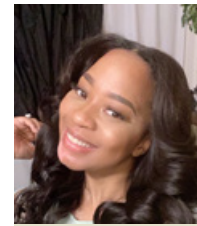
This month we celebrate the women who operate small businesses in Decatur. Help us show our appreciation by shopping local and supporting these shops and restaurants.



Pam Ledbetter  
**Wahoo! Grill**



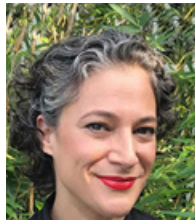
Katie McClellan  
**Café Lily**



Ty Jenkins  
**Olive Branch Wellness**



Weatherly Munroe  
**Wild Oats and Billy Goats**



Jessica Kane  
**Fabu Face Spa**



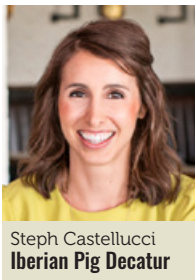
Talia Blanchard and Melissa Moore  
**Sq/Ft**



Darcel Stewart  
**The UPS Store**



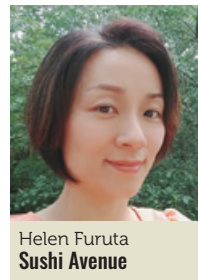
Marianne Simpson  
**Lenox Cupcakes**



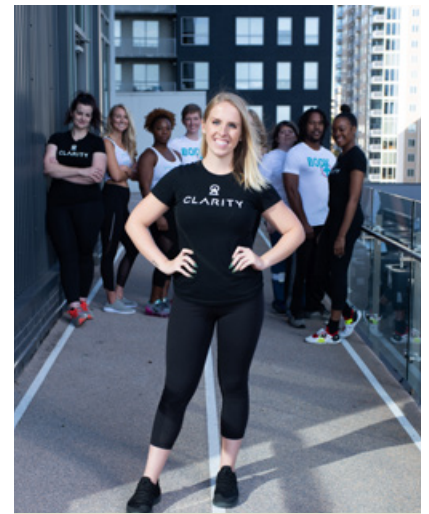
Steph Castellucci  
**Iberian Pig Decatur**



Lisa Bobb  
**Squash Blossom Boutique**



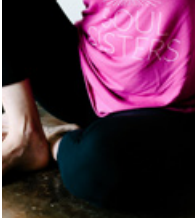
Helen Furuta  
**Sushi Avenue**



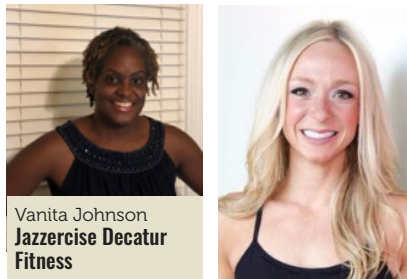
Abbey Griffith  
**Clarity Fitness**



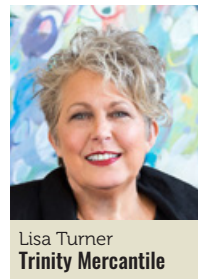
Shelly Williams  
**Adore Hair Studio**



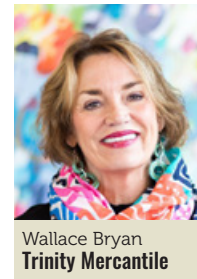
Mandy Roberts  
**FORM yoga**



Vanita Johnson  
**Jazzercise Decatur Fitness**



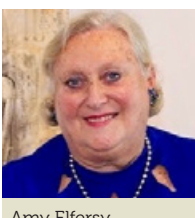
Lisa Turner  
**Trinity Mercantile**



Wallace Bryan  
**Trinity Mercantile**



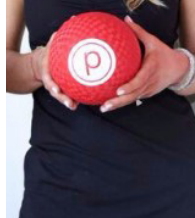
Tiffany Pateritsas  
**Wildheart Salon**



Amy Elfersy  
**Aimee Jewelry and Gallery**



Lori Ronca  
**HomeGrown Decatur**



Katy Bayless Gibson  
**Pure Barre Decatur**



Joan Wasser  
**Worthmore Jewelers**



Geri Botnick  
**Worthmore Jewelers**



Maria Moore Riggs  
**Revolution Doughnuts**

## Pay As You Throw Garbage Service

To meet state requirements to reduce landfill deposits, the City of Decatur instituted the “Pay-as-You-Throw” system in 1997 to complement the city’s existing recycling program.



Under the Pay-As-You-Throw system:

- Residents pay an annual fee for collection of garbage and trash, collection and disposal of yard trimmings, furniture, most appliances and recyclables, and for street sweeping.
- Residents purchase special plastic bags from local supermarkets, hardware stores and other local suppliers to use for disposing of garbage. The cost of disposal is included in the cost of the bag. Bags are available in 8-, 15- and 30-gallon sizes.
- Garbage and trash will only be collected if in the special bags. Typically, special bags are collected from the rear or side yard; however, due to the pandemic, all trash, recycling, and yard waste must be brought to the curb for collection until further notice.
- Yard trimmings, recyclables, furniture and appliances will continue to be collected from the curb. Reminder: a \$50 collection and disposal fee is charged to remove appliances using Freon.
- Business operators pay fees based on the size of their commercial container and the number of service visits each week.

Contact the Sanitation Department, 404-377-5571, or [denisal.mccalpine@decaturga.com](mailto:denisal.mccalpine@decaturga.com), with questions.

### PAYT Bag Cost

- 8 gallon (green) – \$4.07/10 pack
- 15 gallon (yellow) – \$6.96/10 pack
- 33 gallon (blue) – \$14.45 /10 pack

### Where To Purchase PAYT Bags

- Intown Ace Hardware, 1404 Scott Blvd.
- Kroger, 720 Commerce Dr.
- Kroger, 2875 N. Decatur Rd.
- Kroger City Center, 3479 Memorial Dr.
- Publix, 2155 N. Decatur Rd.
- Publix, 3870 N. Druid Hills Rd.
- Toco Hills Ace Hardware, 2983 N. Druid Hills Rd.
- Kelly’s Market, 308 E. Howard Ave.
- Hop N Shop, 710 East Lake Dr.
- Oakhurst Market, 650 East Lake Dr.

## Floodplain Information Available

The Decatur 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, and explains:

- If a property is in a special flood hazard area
- If a property is in a floodway
- Flood insurance rate map information
- Flood depth information
- If a FEMA elevation certificate for a property is available in city records.

An accurate street address or DeKalb County/Decatur Tax Parcel Identification number is needed to obtain this information. Contact 678-553-6529 or Jennings.bell@decaturga.com.

## Decatur Swag Available Online

Decatur logo apparel (including masks), key chains, coffee cups, tumblers, and more, are available at the Decatur Visitors Center online shop. Shipping is available, or you can pick up your items at the Visitors Center, 113 Clairmont Ave. Follow the link at [visitdecaturga.com](http://visitdecaturga.com).



## Decatur Walk & Roll Superstar

**Sadie Hills** is a 14-year-old athlete. She runs and walks, rocks Cross-Fit, plays travel softball, and lives in her body. Earlier this year the doctors recognized that she was experiencing lymphoma and recommended a course of chemotherapy.

The treatments really knocked her out. At the time of this interview, she had just finished her last treatment and was beginning to rebuild her strength and stamina. It is hard to go from athlete to couch potato and then back, but Sadie has resilience, determination, hope, and time on her side, in addition to a very supportive family and Decatur community.

She can already feel her walking distance improve. By the time this article is published, she may be walking to the square again to hang out with her friends, and be back in the gym and ball park.





## Better Together Advisory Board Celebrate LGBT History



October celebrates LGBT History Month and the gay rights movement. It has been a long fight for equal rights for LGBTQ people. Lesbian, gay and bisexual people are now allowed to serve openly in the military, and same-sex couples can now get married legally and adopt children in all 50 states.

Discrimination in employment remained legal on a Federal level until June of this year, when the Supreme Court ruled that the Civil Rights Act of 1964 protects gay and transgender people from workplace discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation. Until that decision, it was legal in more than half of the states to fire workers for being gay, bisexual or transgender.

In 2019 Decatur passed an Anti-Discrimination Ordinance to include the previously non-protected classes of sexual orientation and gender identity. The ordinance prohibits local businesses from discriminating based on those categories, as well as race, religion, color, sex, disability, national origin, ancestry, age or military status.

Discrimination is prohibited in the areas of employment, housing, and public accommodation in Decatur. The ordinance is enforced with clear steps starting with filing a complaint through resolution in the city's municipal court or the option of voluntary mediation. The initial penalty for violation is a civil penalty of \$500, and \$1,000 for any subsequent violations.

There is still much work to be done to achieve true equality for LGBTQ people. One place to start is in our families and our com-

munity, where we can honor all forms of love and identity. The book selections below will help spark conversation and help us imagine a world where children grappling with their identity or sexual orientation feel safe and supported at home, in their schools, and in our community.

We hope they will help teach our children that love is love, that each and every one of us is unique and special, and that children deserve to stay true to who they are. Please support our local, independent bookstores in Decatur.

### ***It Feels Good To Be Yourself***

by Theresa Thorn and Noah Grigni  
Local artist Noah Grigni illustrated this celebratory book about gender and gender identity. The book is perfect for beginning discussions about what gender means and providing answers and resources for kids asking questions about gender and gender identity. (Ages 4-8)

### ***It's Okay To Be Different***

by Todd Parr  
This book delivers the important messages of acceptance, understanding, and confidence in bold, bright colors and silly scenes. It inspires kids to celebrate their individuality through

acceptance of others and self-confidence. It lets kids know that it's okay to be a different color, come from a different place, be proud of yourself, and have different kinds of friends. The last page contains a message that all kids should hear, believe, and feel: "It's okay to be different. You are special and important just because of being who you are."

### ***Julián Is a Mermaid***

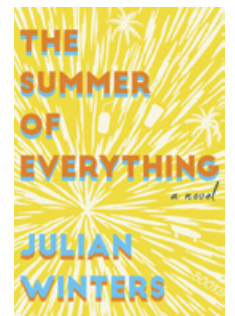
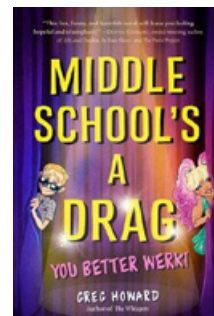
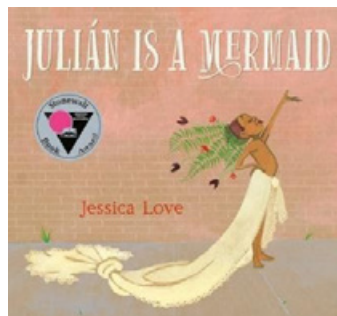
by Jessica Love  
This Stonewall Award-winning picture book stars Julián, a child coming to understand their gender nonconformity after an encounter with three women dressed as shimmering mermaids. Julián fantasizes about dressing up like a mermaid too, and wonders what his Abuela will make of it in this celebration of self-love and individuality. (Ages 4-8)

### ***Middle School's a Drag, You Better Werk!***

by Greg Howard  
A middle grade novel from the author of *The Whispers*, the book follows entrepreneurial 12-year-old Mikey Pruitt as he starts his own talent agency and represents clients in the lead-up to the big talent show. On his roster is eighth-grader Julian Vasquez – a drag queen name Coco Caliente – who helps Mikey see that he, too, can be openly gay at school. (Ages 10+)

### ***The Summer of Everything***

by Julian Winters – local author  
Wes Hudson pines for his best friend Nico, but doesn't know how to get anywhere with this secret crush. Meanwhile, his parents won't stop pestering him to find a college, and his dream job working at the local Indy bookstore is threatened by a coffee chain that wants to buy the property. What's Wes to do but get on with growing up and adulting? (Young Adult)



## Nominate Your Hometown Hero Now

# Who Is Your Decatur Hero?

**N**ominations are now being accepted for the Decatur Hometown Hero award. A Hometown Hero can be a friend, neighbor or co-worker – that person who works hard, often behind the scenes, to make our community a better place to live, work and play. There's no better way to let someone know how much they are appreciated than to have them receive a Hometown Hero award. Nominate that special person for recognition as a 2020 Hometown Hero by Oct. 30.

As we reflect on the changes and challenges of these last several months, please also think about including someone you know who learned how to make face masks; baked bread for their neighbors; picked up groceries for older neighbors; created artwork; or discovered other ways to face these difficult times with grace, strength, creativity and resilience.

Decatur began recognizing and celebrating Hometown Heroes in the summer of 1996 at the close of the Hometown to the World Festival held during the Olympics. It has since become an annual tradition to honor a new group of Hometown Heroes each year. This year, we will honor them with a virtual recognition of how important their efforts are to the city of Decatur. We will also acknowledge them again in person at a future date to be determined.

Applications are judged by a panel of national professionals who work with volunteers and who do not know the nominees. Nomination forms are available at [decaturga.com/hometownheroes](http://decaturga.com/hometownheroes). You may also write an essay describing your Hometown Hero and what they have contributed to the Decatur community.

Submit nominations by email to [leeann.harvey@decaturga.com](mailto:leeann.harvey@decaturga.com) or by mail to Hometown Hero, City of Decatur, 509 N. McDonough St., Decatur, GA 30030.

For more information call 770-652-8593 or email [leeann.harvey@decaturga.com](mailto:leeann.harvey@decaturga.com).

# Some Thoughts on Affordable Housing

Hello, friends and neighbors,

We as a city have sheltered in place, masked up, washed our hands, and done all that we can do as a community to flatten the COVID-19 curve. The city has continued to provide a high level of public services in spite of the challenges presented by the pandemic. At the same time, the pandemic has exacerbated problems that existed well before March 2020, including access to affordable housing within the city.

Like other municipalities, Decatur has struggled in defining what is affordable housing. We are fortunate to have the Decatur Housing Authority, which has developed and created both affordable housing and public housing and is a strong community partner. In November 2018, Decatur held a daylong housing summit. Participation was robust and represented a broad spectrum of our community. The biggest takeaway for the City Commission was the need to have actionable items to move forward.

In 2019, an open call for statements of interest went out to the community and the City Commission interviewed and charged an Affordable Housing Task force to study the issue. These 26 committed and diverse task force members included local activists, city planners, bankers, for-profit and nonprofit developers, housing consultants, concerned citizens, local housing leaders, religious leaders, bankers, realtors, and gerontologists who came together to gain a better understanding of what Decatur needed in order to tackle this universal challenge.

In February 2020, shortly before the pandemic swept through the United States, the task force delivered an in-depth report and recommendations to the City Commission. The report contained five key goals:

- Administration for the Decatur Affordable Housing Strategy
- Preserve Existing Affordable Units to Keep Existing Residents
- Increase Supply of Affordable Housing
- Funding for Affordable Housing
- Community Engagement and Education

The report included a statistic that only 4 percent of city residents both live and work in the city, which creates increased traffic as employees drive into Decatur to work. It also noted that in order to maintain and achieve some of the stated public goals, Decatur would need to add 160 affordable and workforce housing units per year over the next 10 years.

This is a difficult task considering that we have limited opportunities and relatively high land costs in our city. It is becoming increasingly difficult for Decatur to keep its inclusive, equitable, and diverse character. The city is experiencing shortages in both rental and for-sale housing needed by our teachers, hospitality workers, first responders and others. The windows of opportunity have not closed, but we must act as a community to address this issue. Access to affordable housing is an issue we must collectively tackle and we must continue to have open and honest dialogue in our community.

On behalf of the City Commission, I ask you to please be safe, maintain social distancing, wear your mask, and continue to create the best community for today and future generations.

– Mayor Pro Tem Tony Powers





It was so much fun we're doing it again!

## Fab Fridays Return Oct. 16 and Nov. 20, 4 to 9 pm

Reimagine your Friday night out . . . side! Our local retailers and restaurants are expanding outdoors to make these special Friday evenings "fab." Wear your mask and browse curbside storefronts, and an open-air tent market on the plaza. Visit your favorite dining spot for table service at extended patios, or take your take-out to pop-up seating on East Court Square. Look for "fab" deals as our retailers and restaurants partner up to support each other.

Masks are mandatory for all patrons except while eating. Hand sanitizing stations will be provided. Tents and tables will be appropriately socially distanced. Watch for details from Visit Decatur on social media and nextdoor.com, or check [visitdecaturgeorgia.com/fabfriday](http://visitdecaturgeorgia.com/fabfriday).



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## Solarize Decatur-DeKalb Teams Up with MLK Jr. Service Project

Solarize Decatur-DeKalb has been helping to make it easier and more affordable for the residents of Decatur and DeKalb County to put solar panels on their roofs and now they're giving back. Because of the outstanding level of participation from Decatur and DeKalb County residents, the coalition will install solar arrays for seniors qualified through the MLK Service Project. The solar energy systems will help reduce electricity bills, protect homeowners from future electric utility rate hikes, and enhance the MLK Jr. Service Project's mission of serving the community's most vulnerable citizens.

Solarize Decatur-DeKalb is a community-led initiative organized by a coalition of part-



ners including the Decatur Environmental Sustainability Board (ESB), the Georgia chapter of the Sierra Club, Environment Georgia, Georgia Interfaith Power and Light, Solar Crowdscore, and several individual local solar advocates.

This is the second such donation from Solarize Decatur-DeKalb. Each campaign seeks to donate one or more solar installations serving the wider community. Global Growers was the recipient of the first Solarize Decatur-DeKalb campaign in 2016. With this donation, Solarize Decatur-DeKalb aims to prioritize the needs of vulnerable and marginalized members of the community.

More than 400 Decatur and DeKalb County residents have signed up for the Solarize Decatur-DeKalb program so far, adding more than 500kW of new solar energy, and leading to the lowest-cost pricing since solarize programs came to Georgia in 2015. More information can be found at [solarizedecatur-dekalb.com](http://solarizedecatur-dekalb.com).

CLARITY FITNESS

SPECIAL OFFER ALERT

What's hot at Clarity Fitness this month?

Scan the QR code to find out!

CLARITY FITNESS

Real People, Training For Real Life

CLARITYFITNESSDECATUR.COM

TRINITY

HOME FURNISHINGS & DESIGN

We're open for business! Safety is our top priority. Visit [trinity-decatur.com](http://trinity-decatur.com) to learn more.

PROUD DESIGNERS OF THE 2020 ATLANTA SYMPHONY SHOWHOUSE

## Butter & Cream Special Flavor Honors John Lewis

To honor the life and legacy of American civil rights icon Congressman John Lewis, Butter & Cream has released a new specialty flavor, “Good Trouble,” with 100 percent of proceeds benefitting Fair Fight.



“Good Trouble” features Butter & Cream’s signature chocolate ice cream, with pieces of brown sugar cake, coconut pecan crunch and a salted caramel swirl. The limited-time flavor will run through the end of October to support Fair Fight’s campaign for free, fair, and secure elections in Georgia and across the country.

In addition to supporting Fair Fight’s movement, Butter & Cream will provide absentee ballot applications and voter registration forms for guests at both the Decatur and the BeltLine locations in advance of the Oct. 5 voter registration deadline.

For ordering and payment options, visit [butterandcreamatl.com](http://butterandcreamatl.com). Delivery is available via UberEats and DoorDash.

## Maxim Barbers Reopens for Business with Safeguards

Maxim Barbers, 218 E. Ponce de Leon Ave., reopened in August and is taking great care in the way they conduct business to safeguard the health and safety of their staff, clients and community. These are the safety measures in place:

- All services are by appointment only.
- Temperature checks and screening questions for all who enter.
- Everyone in the shop is required to wear a mask at all times and social distancing is observed, NO exceptions. In a close contact and tactile service like this masks are absolutely necessary to maintain a sanitary and safe environment for all in the shop.
- Barbers also wear disposable smocks, changing to a new smock for each client. Disposable capes are provided for each client.
- Each station has been measured to maintain the 6-ft. social distancing requirement, with safety barriers placed between each station to reduce airflow.

Maxim Barbers is excited to be back serving the community and looks forward to serving customers. Book online at [maximbarbershop.com](http://maximbarbershop.com) or call 404-378-7877.

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## John Lewis Memorial Scholarship

A John Lewis Memorial endowed scholarship has been established for students in the African American Male Initiative at Georgia State University by Decatur First United Methodist Church.

If you would like to contribute to enhance the endowment, financial donations can be made to the John Lewis Memorial Scholarship fund at [decaturfirst.org](http://decaturfirst.org).



## Local Church Helps Decatur Students Thrive During Virtual Learning



**W**hen City Schools of Decatur announced they would start the school year virtually, Decatur City Church sprang into action and organized a school supplies drive. The church quickly amassed a collection of educational and enrichment supplies for Decatur kids who might need them. Nearly 40 boxes of flash cards, crayons, markers, notebooks, coloring books, Lego sets, sidewalk chalk, bubbles, and even “slime” were delivered to the Decatur Education Foundation in late August. DEF volunteers then spent several hours sorting the supplies into 65 bags that were distributed to families through the Decatur Housing Authority.

DEF would also like to thank DEF Step Up Business Sponsor Heather Tell and her family for volunteering their time to organize and sort the supplies into bags. DEF connects people, resources and ideas to help solve the problems Decatur students face that keep them from learning and thriving. Visit [decatureducationfoundation.org](http://decatureducationfoundation.org) to plug in and make a difference.

## Music Together of Decatur Offers Fall Classes

Music Together of Decatur is offering outdoor music classes this fall for babies, toddlers, preschoolers, and the grownups who love them. Registration for the seven-week fall session is now open. Classes start Oct. 6. Visit [Musictogetherofdecatur.com](http://Musictogetherofdecatur.com) to learn more and register.

**Babies Classes (newborn-8 months)** are designed to support new parents and introduce them to interactive music activities. In addition to the singing, dancing, and bonding, music therapist Kenya Engram shares a variety of simple ideas for how music can help you get through your day. After each class, there’s time for a Virtual Mommy Meet-up.

**Mixed-Age Classes (0-5 years)** are designed to be an interactive music-making experience for young children and their grownups. The entire family is welcome (and encouraged) to participate.

**Rhythm Kids Classes (K-2nd grade)** offer opportunities for big kids to learn through play, release energy through drumming, singing, and dancing, and to socialize virtually with peers.

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## Beacon Hill Alliance Raising Artwork Funds



**B**eacon Hill Black Alliance for Human Rights is working to fund artworks that will tell the history of the Southeast from the perspectives of marginalized peoples. By providing local Indigenous and African American artists with a platform, the alliance will tell the stories of racial injustice in America and inform the community about how to contribute to anti-racist efforts. Now is the time to be vocal about social justice issues and to push boundaries through creativity. But we need your help. Money gathered from this fundraiser will go to the artists who contribute their talent to our cause. To donate, visit the group's Gofundme page at [gf.me/u/yriun7](https://gf.me/u/yriun7).

## Community Donation Drive, Sunday, Oct. 18



Two local nonprofits, Decatur Emergency Assistance Ministry (DEAM) and Decatur Cooperative Ministry (DCM), are helping to provide those in need with food, helping to prevent disconnection of utility services, providing clothes and life-sustaining prescriptions for qualified residents, and providing short-term shelter, resources, and skills training for long-term self-reliance.

If you would like to help your neighbors, Decatur First United Methodist is accepting drop-off financial, food, and supply donations for DEAM and DCM on Sunday, Oct. 18, 12:30-1:30 p.m. For the safety of donors, drivers will stay in their cars while volunteers with masks and gloves unload the food and supplies under the archway on Candler Street, coming north from Ponce De Leon Avenue.

For those who want to help who are at risk, financial donations can be made to the COVID-19 response fund at [decaturfirst.org](https://decaturfirst.org).





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## Young Champions Attend Virtual Camp

In July, 19 children, ages 2 to 5, attended the “Young Champions of Oneness Virtual Camp.” The interactive camp attracted children from 15 families in Decatur and metro Atlanta, and a few relatives and friends of participants joined from around the country.

The camp was based on the Baha’i quote, “So powerful is the light of unity that it can illuminate the whole earth,” and lasted 45 minutes each day. It included activities intended to teach the concept of the oneness of humanity, reading of picture books with diverse characters, and coloring. Bags of materials were available the weekend before the camp to ensure that everyone had access to certain materials, including watercolors, crayons and play-dough. Some materials



were found by the children, including sticks from the yard.

One day – to convey the importance of unity – campers saw how easy it was to break a single stick and how difficult it was to break a bundle. Another day, participants played

with and made shapes with Play-Doh. Each child was given two colors and discussed how you could make shapes with both, regardless of the color. Another day, everyone was asked to bring a flashlight and go into a dark room and turn the flashlight on. This activity was used to explain the central theme of the quote that the light of unity is powerful and that it can light up any space.

The camp was organized by 14-year-old Thomas Grant and his mom, Linda Ahdieh Grant. They are committed to hosting additional virtual camps during the school year. If you would like to register for the next camp or are interested to learn more, contact Thomas Grant or Linda Ahdieh Grant at lahdieh@gmail.com.

## New Sign Tells Story of Decatur’s African-American Community



Friends of Decatur Cemetery has placed a storyboard in the Old Section of the Cemetery that relates the history of Decatur’s African American Community and the burials in Section 6 and nearby areas.

The storyboard, created by Laurel Wilson, MPH, details the story of many citizens who trace their roots to Decatur’s Beacon Community. Using photos, maps and narrative, it also focuses on the lives of the thriving community that was a part of Decatur for almost 100 years.

The storyboard is located in the Old Section off Commerce Drive near the recently marked grave of Decatur pioneer Henry Oliver. There will be a dedication sometime in the fall as pandemic restrictions permit.

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## WeWork Opens Decatur Location

WeWork officially opened its new Decatur location at 120 West Trinity Place. The 33,000 square feet of office space provides room for 450 members ready to take advantage of all that Decatur has to offer.

“One of the primary goals of our ‘Open for Business’ campaign has been to spur economic growth by attracting new businesses to Downtown Decatur, so we are thrilled to celebrate the opening of WeWork,” said Chris Sciarrone, chair of the Decatur Downtown Development Authority. “At a time when COVID-19 has led many to reconsider what an office should look like, this will give forward-thinking businesses the opportunity to have a flexible, physical footprint in Decatur.”

Launched in 2010, WeWork has 600,000 members working at more than 800 buildings in more than 120 cities around the world. The new Decatur location is the 12th location in the metro Atlanta area. Anyone interested in becoming a WeWork member in Decatur can inquire for details by visiting [wework.com](http://wework.com) or calling 470-663-9426.



## Addressing Race in Decatur and at ASC

The Agnes Scott College Truth, Racial Healing and Transformation Planning Team will present its strategic action plan for the campus center and hear input from the community on Wednesday, Oct. 14, 2-3 p.m. To participate in this virtual presentation, register at [tinyurl.com/cgdiwebinar7](http://tinyurl.com/cgdiwebinar7).

While life is currently anything but simple, we are here for a conversation or a consultation around what we're seeing in the real estate market. > >



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