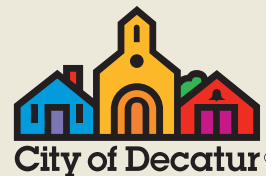


# City of Decatur FOCUS



DECEMBER 2023  
Volume 34 • Number 5

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE CITY OF DECATUR, GEORGIA



## Assistant City Manager **LINDA HARRIS RETIRES** After More Than 35 Years of Service

**L**inda Harris, the original editor of the Decatur Focus and current assistant city manager of Community and Economic Development, is retiring from the City of Decatur after more than 35 years of service. Linda has worn many hats throughout the years and has been instrumental in the creation of many key projects including the launching of Decatur's first website, establishing the city's tourism bureau, the creation of the Decatur Focus, and the co-creation of Decatur 101.

Linda grew up in Decatur and still calls the city home. She started working with Decatur as an employee of the Downtown Development Authority in 1988 after graduating from Agnes Scott College. She was previously a freelance reporter.

With the mentorship of Lyn Menne, Linda helped introduce communications to the City. She started by creating the *Decatur Focus*, the city's official newsletter, in June 1990 which combined *Around Decatur* (which was meant for residents) and *Central Focus* (which was geared towards business owners) to help both residents and business owners know what was happening in Decatur. Additionally, Linda bought the website domain for Decatur in 1995 so the city could start connecting with the community online. Overtime, Linda's responsibilities increased and she started coordinating special events in partnership with other organizations with the goal of fostering a sense of community and creating a safe, fun gathering space downtown. In addition, Linda also started helping with civic engagement and tourism initiatives.

Aside from work, Linda enjoys spending time with her family including her four grandsons. She also likes reading, jigsaw puzzles, watching movies, and writing. One little known fact about Linda is that she taught aerobics for 15 years.

Linda has been involved in many projects and been a mentor to many employees, but what she is most proud of is her creation of strong city branding, the Decatur Focus, the co-creation of the Decatur 101 program, and serving on the inaugural board of the Decatur Book Festival. When asked what she hopes her legacy will be upon her retirement, Linda says she wishes that City of Decatur will continue to have engagement and communications as an integral part of its culture. We wish Linda a happy retirement and are thankful for her contributions to Decatur.

**LINDA HARRIS** has been instrumental in

- ▶ The co-creation of **Decatur 101**
- ▶ Establishing the City's **tourism bureau**
- ▶ Launching Decatur's **first website**
- ▶ Creating the **Decatur Focus newsletter**



Linda with Lyn Menne at an early Decatur Arts Festival

## Have a Story to Share?

**T**he Decatur Focus is the official newsletter of the City of Decatur and publishes announcements and information about the city, including city services, downtown development, school news, business news, and news about individual residents and neighborhood associations. The purpose of the newsletter is to promote the city and encourage the exchange of information among residents, business owners, and the school system.

Contributions to the Focus can be submitted by using the online submission form on Decatur's official website [decaturga.com/focus](http://decaturga.com/focus). 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. The Decatur Focus also accepts advertising. For information about advertising rates call 404-371-8386.

The deadline for content/advertisements is the first day of the month preceding publication (i.e., the deadline for the December issue is November 1). The exception is the combined issues, January/February and July/August, for which the deadlines are December 10 and June 10, respectively.

The Decatur Focus is supported by the City of Decatur, the Decatur Business Association, and the Decatur Downtown Development Authority. It is published 10 times per year and mailed to every household, business, and professional license-holder in the city. An online version of the Focus is uploaded to the website the first week of each month, and additional paper copies can be picked up at City Hall, the Visitors Center, and at the city recreation centers (Decatur Rec, Ebster, and Oakhurst).

Contact: Editor, Decatur Focus, P.O. Box 220, Decatur, GA 30031; phone 404-371-8386; fax 404-371-1593; email [decaturfocus@decaturga.com](mailto:decaturfocus@decaturga.com).



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; email: [decaturfocus@decaturga.com](mailto:decaturfocus@decaturga.com).



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

## Focus Combined for January/February

City of Decatur will publish a combined January/February issue of the Focus, scheduled to arrive in mailboxes during the third week of January.

**Read the Decatur Focus online at [decaturga.com/focus](http://decaturga.com/focus).**

Limited copies also available at Decatur City Hall,  
Decatur Visitor's Center, and Decatur Recreation Center.

**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), or by using the submission form found at [decaturga.com/focus](http://decaturga.com/focus).

## Jack Kittle Wins GRPA Volunteer of the Year Award

Jack Kittle, a long-standing advocate for Decatur's Parks and Recreation Department, was recently named Georgia Recreation and Park Association's (GRPA) Volunteer of the Year. His commitment to the betterment of Decatur spans three decades and has made him an essential asset in the community.

One of Jack's significant contributions was the organization of "Bright at Night" and the "Sunday Strolls," events designed to educate the community about Decatur's parks, art, and pedestrian safety while encouraging them to explore the city on foot. Jack has also been present at "Touch-A-Truck" and "Touch-A-Budget" events to share his in-depth knowledge of the City and the Parks and Recreation Department.

He has also played a pivotal role in the recent Decatur Parks and Recreation Master Plan project, "Recreatur," attending numerous public input meetings and spreading the word to residents. For five years, Jack has been a dedicated member of the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board, serving as chair for the last two.

Beyond his involvement with the Parks and Recreation Department, Jack has actively contributed to several projects aimed at enhancing the city's well-being. He championed the transportation plan for the City of Decatur, advocating for safer biking and walking lanes. For a decade, he has been a vital member of the Bike and Pedestrian Committee, working on various projects to improve community mobility.

Jack's influence extends to projects like the East Lake Transit Development Plan and Comprehensive City Plan, further shaping Decatur's future.

In addition to his community work, Jack has served in various capacities at Decatur High School, including as the concessions chair and soccer scorekeeper. His dedication as a Georgia Department of Transportation stakeholder in several city projects has been invaluable. We are thankful for all that Jack does in the community.



From left: Parks and Recreation Facility and Operations Manager Kim Whatley; Annie Godfrey (Jack's wife) and Jack Kittle; and Assistant Parks and Recreation Director Sara Holmes,

## City of Decatur Scores 98 on Municipal Equality Index

Our city is constantly striving to ensure our LGBTQ+ community feels safe and respected. Every year, Human Rights Campaign releases a report on how inclusive laws, policies and services are across states. Take a look at our score at [hrc.org/MEI](http://hrc.org/MEI).

The MEI examines how inclusive municipal laws, policies, and services are of LGBTQ+ people who live and work there. Cities are rated based on non-discrimination laws, the municipality as an employer, municipal services, law enforcement and leadership on LGBTQ+ equality.



## THE DECATUR MLK JR. SERVICE PROJECT IS BACK FOR 2024

The MLK Jr. Service Project is fast approaching, scheduled for Jan. 13-15. This initiative, inspired by Martin Luther King Jr., is dedicated to assisting low-income seniors and veterans in Decatur. The project provides free home repairs, ensuring these individuals can continue to reside in the community. A dedicated team of volunteers, encompassing a range of skill levels, undertake tasks such as replacing siding, repairing windows, fixing doors, mending fences, constructing ramps, tidying yards, painting rooms, renovating kitchens, and preparing meals for volunteers. This collective effort has a profound impact on the lives of those in need. Consider joining as a volunteer or making a donation to support this cause. Know a senior neighbor or a veteran who requires assistance with their home in the City of Decatur? Email [info@mlkserviceproject.com](mailto:info@mlkserviceproject.com) to make a referral or visit [mlkserviceproject.com](http://mlkserviceproject.com) to learn more.



# Café Lily: A Decatur Staple

## Celebrating a Longstanding Local Business

**C**afé Lily, a restaurant that serves Mediterranean fare, has been a staple in Decatur for 24 years. It was founded by Anthony and his late father Angelo Pitillo in 1999, but what most customers don't know is that there are two additional owners: Katie McLellan and Sowmya Burugu.

While Anthony no longer spends much time at the restaurant, his recipes can still be enjoyed by customers. Katie McLellan, started working at Café Lily as a hostess in 2010 and was later trained as a bartender until eventually becoming a managing partner. She is originally from Florence, Alabama, but attended Agnes Scott College. Sowmya Burugu, Café Lily's newest co-owner, was born and raised in India and immigrated to the United States when she was 20. Sowmya works as an IT engineer full time while also helping run the restaurant. Sowmya fell in love with the restaurant as a customer and started working at Café Lily occasionally as

a busser and went on to help as a server and bartender. When the restaurant was on the verge of closing during the COVID-19 pandemic, Sowmya saw an opportunity to step in and become a partner.

Katie and Sowmya describe the food served at Café Lily as a collection of "eclectic" European cuisine. Often, people think of Mediterranean food as Middle Eastern or Greek cuisine, but their food is inspired by various countries that surround the Mediterranean Sea from Portugal or Italy all the way to Morocco. Their signature dish, pinchitos, is Spanish-inspired; chargrilled lamb tenderloin marinated in Spanish spices and accompanied by white sweet potatoes and green beans and topped off with salsa verde and manchego cheese. Another specialty offered at Café Lily is their salmon, which is filleted in-house.

When asked what has kept Café Lily open for so long, Katie and Sowmya credit their loyal customers and the strong personal relationships they have formed with them.



Sowmya Burugu and Katie McLellan



Angelo and Anthony Pitillo

The women behind Café Lily say they want to provide customers with an intimate dining experience that feels like they are having dinner at someone's home. What they love most about the Decatur community is that they are friendly, down-to-earth, and always supportive of businesses.

Visit Café Lily at 308 W. Ponce de Leon Avenue or go to [cafelily.com](http://cafelily.com) to learn more about their offerings.

## Holiday Sanitation Schedule Reminder

### Christmas

Monday, December 25

Observed Monday-Tuesday, Dec. 25-26

- Regular Monday service will be Wednesday, Dec. 27
- Regular Tuesday service will be Thursday, Dec. 28
- Regular Thursday and Friday service will be Friday, Dec. 29

### New Year's Day

Monday, January 1, 2024

- Regular Monday service will be Tuesday, Jan. 2
- Regular Tuesday service will be Wednesday, Jan. 3

### Martin Luther King Jr. Day

Monday, January 15,

- Regular Monday service will be Tuesday, Jan. 16
- Regular Tuesday service will be Wednesday, Jan. 17

The full holiday sanitation schedule for 2024 can be viewed at [decaturga.com/sanitation](http://decaturga.com/sanitation) and in the 2023 November Focus.

# WALK & ROLL SUPERSTARS

Meet **Debby Pollack**, the December Walk & Roll Superstar. Debby and her husband Mike are residents of the north side of town along with their dog Sawyer. Their young adult children Max, Kate, and Emily grew up in Decatur.

In 2022, Debby was looking for an environmentally friendly transportation option to get to and from work each day. DeKalb Pediatrics, where she works as a pediatrician, is just over two miles from her house, and Debby thought she would give biking a try. Her son Max, who regularly rode his bike to Decatur High School as a student, giggled and told her she would not make it five times. Debby figured she could certainly prove Max wrong, but she did not feel especially safe biking on the streets throughout town.

However, in 2023, a few things fell into place that changed everything. First, the Church Street "cycle track" was nearing completion. Second, the family took a trip to Germany and Switzerland, and seeing so many people riding around on bikes, often while hauling multiple children, was inspiring. Third, a fellow pediatrician (Decatur native Dr. Andrew Godfrey-Kittle) was commuting to work via bike each day. Finally, Debby had been eyeing electric bikes and went to check them out at REI. Known as e-bikes or electric assist bikes, they have an electric motor and battery to amplify the rider's power. Debby figured she could certainly make it to



work on an e-bike while using the city's new protected bike lanes, and her hunch was correct.

Debby has been commuting to work on her e-bike for the last several months and has found it to be a real joy. Debby likes seeing and greeting people on the street as she rides past. She feels much more connected to the life of the city as she interacts with her surroundings in a way that car travel does not allow. The new bike lanes are a big reason Debby's bike commute reboot has been successful. She still wears protective gear but feels so much safer on the dedicated bike lanes, which are removed from car traffic.

Finding bike racks can sometimes be a challenge, but Debby encourages others to try out the city's new bike lanes. Traveling on a bike offers the chance to see our town in a different way, and there is always more to discover and see. Debby's son, Max, says if his mom can become a bike commuter, anyone else can do it too.

Nominate a Walk & Roll Superstar by visiting [bit.ly/walk-and-roll-decatur](https://bit.ly/walk-and-roll-decatur).

## Over 65 and Still Behind the Wheel?

### Older Driver Safety Awareness Week

December 4-8 is Georgia Older Driver Safety Awareness Week, an initiative that encourages those 65 and up, their family members and caregivers to be proactive about discussing safe mobility planning for transportation alternatives for aging drivers.

The mission of Decatur's Lifelong Community Advisory Board is to ensure that older residents are connected, healthy, and engaged in the community. Transportation is one of the domains of the recently adopted Age-Friendly Community Action Plan and specifically aims to promote driver education support for older adults.

Decisions about the ability to drive should never be based on age alone. However, changes in vision, physical fitness, and reflexes may cause safety concerns. By accurately assessing age-related changes, driving habits can be adjusted, or other kinds of transportation can be utilized to stay connected and active in the community.

For more information visit the US Department of Transportation webpage: [bit.ly/seniordriversafety](https://bit.ly/seniordriversafety).

Another resource for older drivers is the AARP Smart Driver Course, the nation's first refresher course specifically designed for drivers 50 and older. This defensive driving course will help participants refresh their driving skills and knowledge of rules and hazards of the road. It may reduce chances of receiving a traffic violation or getting into an accident. There may also be a multi-year discount on auto insurance.

The course covers research-based safe driving strategies, information on the effects of medication on driving, preventive measures to reduce driver distraction, and other safer driving techniques and instruction. For more information, visit [aarpdriversafety.org](https://aarpdriversafety.org).

# City of Decatur Celebrates Crossing Guards



In November, City of Decatur hosted a lunch, catered by culinary students from the Decatur High Career Academy, to celebrate city crossing guards in conjunction with Crossing Guard Appreciation Week, Nov. 7-11. At the event, Decatur Police presented each guard with a certificate, a custom duffle bag embroidered with each of the guard's names, tickets to see a College Park Skyhawks game and drawstring bags created for Decatur's bicentennial to demonstrate Decatur's gratitude to these important community helpers. Decatur crossing guards are a vital component of Decatur's Safe Routes to School program, protecting students and pedestrians across our city despite rain, sleet, heat and freezing temperatures. Thank you to all the parents, businesses, and various Decatur departments that helped make this event special.

## Saluting Joyce Washington



During the Crossing Guard Appreciation Week gathering at Decatur Recreation Center, Joyce Washington was named Decatur's Crossing Guard of the Year for 2023. Joyce has been a crossing guard in Decatur for 18 years.



## Madison Avenue Derby 2023 Raises \$20K for Urban Recipe

The 12th annual Madison Avenue Derby raised \$20,000 for Urban Recipe, an organization that helps families in metro Atlanta realize food security. The contribution allows Urban Recipe to purchase approximately 125,000 pounds of food for their programs. This year, the Derby funds also supported the Kyle Pease Foundation with \$3,000 to purchase a new race chair for a local 6 year-old to participate in triathlons, and seed donations of \$100 each to the Down Syndrome Association of Atlanta, Remerge, and the Wylde Center to support their work in the community.

Eighty racers and 50 creatively themed Derby cars participated in this year's "soapbox derby" style race. Funds were raised from event sponsorships and donations, registrations, and bake sale and beverage purchases. Sign up for the Derby's mailing list at [madavederby.org/email-signup](http://madavederby.org/email-signup) or follow them on social media at @MadAveDerby to learn about next year's event.

## Summer Camp 2024 Playbook Will Be Available Online Soon

The 2024 Camp Playbook, featuring the City of Decatur's summer camp offerings, will be available online at [decaturga.com/playbook](http://decaturga.com/playbook) on Dec. 8. Camp registration for Summer 2024 opens on Jan. 6 at 9 a.m. at [register.communitypass.net/cityofdecatur](http://register.communitypass.net/cityofdecatur). To ensure a smooth registration process, set up a CommunityPass family profile before registration opens. To prepare for camp registration, please review the Camp Playbook to select the camps then visit Community Pass and complete the Information and Release Form and the Health History Form for each camper.

Go to [decaturga.com/parksrec](http://decaturga.com/parksrec) for other helpful documents like the At-A-Glance document with camps by week as a PDF and a Camp Planning Worksheet with next summer's dates to assist in planning first and second choices for registration day.

For those seeking financial assistance, please apply by Wednesday, Jan. 3, so staff can assist you with camp registration on Jan. 6. Find the application form on [decaturga.com/parksrec](http://decaturga.com/parksrec) on the Forms and Documents page.

Questions? Contact [registration@decaturga.com](mailto:registration@decaturga.com).

## DPI Receives Blue Ribbon Coalition Award

The Decatur Prevention Initiative (DPI) received a Blue Coalition Ribbon Award from the White House at the National Youth Substance Use Prevention Summit for their efforts to prevent youth substance use. DPI was one of 15 drug-free community

coalitions from across the country receiving the Blue Ribbon Coalition Award, which recognizes high-performing coalitions that do an exceptional job of creating a foundation for their work by updating and utilizing their coalition products. It is a two-year recognition that opens new doors for coalitions to share their work and become a role model in the prevention field. This is the second time the DPI has been recognized as a Blue Ribbon Coalition. The award was presented to Terrie Moore, DPI's executive director, and Susan Morley, an implementation specialist with DPI.





## Commissioners Cauldron Awarded for Halloween Decorating

Congratulations to the Baumgarten Family for winning the Commissioners Cauldron, the Halloween version of the friendly Decorate Decatur competition. Their Halloween decorations at 184 Mead Road were to die for.



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## AEDs and Bleeding Control Kits Available at Government Facilities and Parks

Did you know that all City of Decatur public buildings and parks have automated external defibrillators (AEDs) and bleeding control kits? AEDs are a vital component to CPR in the event of a cardiac arrest and can greatly enhance the chances for survival. Bleeding control kits contain a tourniquet, shears, compressed gauze, and trauma dressing. These kits are available for use with anyone who is experiencing life-threatening bleeding, since a person can bleed out in minutes. For information about a CPR or Stop the Bleed class, contact Decatur Fire at [gary.menard@decaturga.com](mailto:gary.menard@decaturga.com).



## Rebel Teahouse Staff Now CPR Certified

Rebel Teahouse became the first business in the city to have Decatur Fire certify all of their staff in CPR and First Aid. This training included adult, child, and infant CPR and AED use, choking, bleeding control, and several other topics totaling five hours of instruction and practical skills. In honor of this milestone, Rebel Teahouse was awarded a Decatur Fire Rescue challenge coin, which you can see displayed on the shelf at their location. Interested in training your staff in CPR and First Aid? Email [gary.menard@decaturga.com](mailto:gary.menard@decaturga.com) to learn more.



## Decatur Fire Offers Kitchen Fire Safety and Extinguisher Use Class

According to the National Fire Protection Association, cooking fires are the cause of approximately 44 percent of all home fires and resulted in 470 deaths and 4,150 injuries from 2017 to 2021.

Decatur Fire will be offering a class on kitchen fire safety and fire extinguisher training on Saturday, Dec. 16 at 3 p.m. at Fire Station No. 1, 220 E. Trinity Pl. The class will include a brief station tour and activity books and other giveaways for kids. Email [gary.menard@decaturga.com](mailto:gary.menard@decaturga.com) to sign up.



## Why Are Fire Inspections Important?

The ultimate goal of any fire inspection is to create a safer environment for all while preventing fire related incidents. The National Fire Protection Association Code 101 and the International Fire Code establish the guidelines, standards, and safety requirements of every structure. Buildings are inspected to identify fire hazards that may be present, and a common one is improper storage or clutter around exits. This could impede the occupants' ability to exit the building during an emergency. Stacking boxes too high in rooms with sprinklers can cause sprinkler heads to not distribute water effectively.

Fire inspections help identify and prevent fire hazards. They allow firefighters at all levels to become familiar with the layout of a structure and special considerations like heavy fire loads, hazardous chemical storage, and fire alarm and electrical panel locations they need to be aware of in an emergency.

Go to [decaturga.com/firemarshal](http://decaturga.com/firemarshal) for more information on fire inspections.



# Holiday Meeting

**Tuesday, December 5**

Join us as we salute Decatur's Hometown Heroes for 2023, recognize Welcoming Businesses, and elect DBA officers for 2024.

5 pm Check-in at the Conference Center  
5:30 pm Program  
6 pm Reception

Courtyard by Marriott  
Decatur Conference Center  
130 Clairemont Ave.

Park in the Conference Center parking deck.

Learn more at [decaturdba2021.com](http://decaturdba2021.com)

## Events Calendar

### DECEMBER

**1-2** Furnish with Love Holiday Pop-Up Sale, 9 a.m.-3 p.m. (page 13)

**2** SantaCon (adult event), 7 p.m.

**2** Decatur Civic Chorus concert, 3 p.m. (page 11)

**4** City Commission Meeting, 7:30 p.m., City Hall, 509 N. McDonough St.

**5** DBA Holiday Meeting, 5 p.m.

**7** Tree Lighting, 6 p.m.

**9-10** Decatur Bicentennial Celebration

**10** Menorah Lighting, 4:30 p.m.

**14** Bonfire/Marshmallow Roast, 6 p.m.

**15** Screen on the Square Movie Series

**17** Decatur Presbyterian Live Nativity, 5-7 p.m. (page 11)

**17** Christmas on Clairemont, 6 p.m. (page 12)

**18** City Commission Meeting, 7:30 p.m., City Hall, 509 N. McDonough St.

### JANUARY

**13-15** MLK Jr. Service Project (page 3)

**23** State of the City address/DBA Meeting

Go to [VisitDecaturGa.com](http://VisitDecaturGa.com) for community events. For a full list of board and commission meetings visit [decaturga.com/calendar](http://decaturga.com/calendar)

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## Recycling Tips for the Holiday Season

Decatur residents are encouraged to follow these tips for a more sustainable holiday season:

**Drop Christmas trees at Legacy Park** anytime from Dec. 27-Jan. 6 to be made into mulch for use in our city parks and greenspaces. Trees may also be placed at the curb for collection by the City's sanitation department, but these trees will be sent to the Dekalb County landfill and converted to mulch only as capacity allows.

**Wrapping paper** – both regular and glossy – can be recycled at the curb unless it has non-paper additives like metallic flakes, foil, glitter, or plastic. Paper with these additives should be disposed of with your household trash. Please ensure all ribbons, bows, and other non-paper items are removed from wrapping paper before placing it in your commingled bin.

## Decatur Presbyterian Presents a Live Nativity and Christmas Play

**Sunday, Dec. 17 • 205 Sycamore St.**

The Decatur Presbyterian Church will present a live nativity scene from 5-7 p.m. within its Terrace Garden on the corner of Church and Sycamore streets. A free Christmas play called "It Came Upon A Midnight Unclear" will follow and starts at 7:13 p.m. The entire community is welcome.

## Celebrate the Season with Music

Music Together of Decatur invites families to get in the holiday spirit by registering for its three-week holiday session that features a mix of seasonal favorites and joyous songs from around the world. Those who participate in the classes will also have the opportunity to help other families in Decatur join the musical fun. Half of all proceeds from the holiday music classes will be donated to Music Together of Decatur's scholarship fund to make it possible for more families to join them in the New Year. Go to [bit.ly/decaturmusictogether](http://bit.ly/decaturmusictogether) to sign up.



## Civic Chorus Presents Christmas Concert

Join the Decatur Civic Chorus for its annual Christmas concert on Saturday, Dec. 2 at 3 p.m. at First Baptist Church of Decatur located at 308 Clairemont Ave.



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## Christmas on Clairemont

Sunday, Dec. 17, 6 p.m.  
308 Clairemont Ave.

Christmas on Clairemont returns to First Baptist Church of Decatur. The 6th annual community benefit concert will feature a professional orchestra with the Decatur Avondale Children's Choir, Grammy award-winning tenor Victor Robertson, WABE's Chris Chandler, operatic soprano Tiffany Uzoiye, and a surprise performance by one of the leads at Shakespeare Tavern. This is a free community event, but offerings taken during the performance will benefit the church's humanitarian work in Macedonia through CBF Global Missions.



## Estate Planning Wills & Trusts • Probate

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



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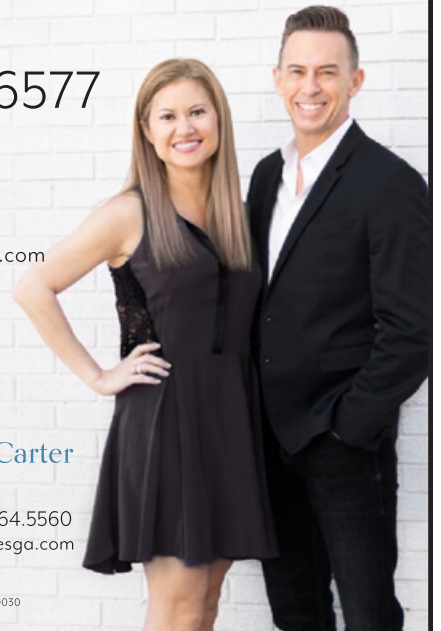
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## FURNISH WITH LOVE HOLIDAY POP-UP

Dec. 1-2 from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., 508 E. Howard Ave.

Join Furnish with Love Dec. 1-2 for its semi-annual fundraiser. Hundreds of gift items, works of art and home décor have been donated by designer show-rooms. Whether you're looking for holiday gifts or decor to spruce up your home, come shop for a good cause. Profits support their mission of helping families transition out of homelessness. Go to [furnishwithlove.org](http://furnishwithlove.org) for more information.



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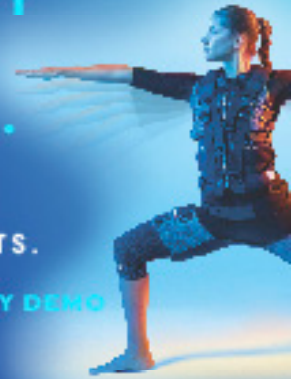
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## Saint Thomas More School Admission Event

Saint Thomas More (STM) Catholic School invites prospective parents to attend their Pre-K-4 and Kindergarten Questions and Answers session on Dec. 5 at 9:30 a.m. Participants will meet faculty, hear from students and parents, and learn how academic excellence, service, and faith are the heart of the school. Visit [stmga.org](http://stmga.org) to register or for more information.



## DEF Scholarships and College Counseling

While it may be winter, the Decatur Education Foundation (DEF) is already looking forward to spring. DEF annually awards 19 scholarships worth more than \$130,000 to DHS students at the Celebration of Excellence event each May. While most scholarships are teacher-nominated, four application-based scholarships for DHS seniors will open in March 2024.

Throughout the year, DEF's college counseling program empowers students to realize their dreams of higher education. Through a partnership with College Ave. Consulting, a local consulting company founded by Decatur resident Katy So, students receive personalized support through every step of the college application process, from research to application, acceptance to enrollment. There are currently eight Decatur High School seniors enrolled in the program with plans to add a cohort of juniors in January 2024.

Visit [decatureducationfoundation.org](http://decatureducationfoundation.org) to learn more about DEF and its mission.



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**DPI** THIS AD WAS CONSIDERED FINANCED BY DISTRICT EDUCATION INITIATIVE

## Alicia Reno Named CSD Teacher of the Year

**C**ongratulations to City Schools of Decatur teacher Alicia Reno for being named teacher of the year. Alicia is an educator at Talley Street Upper Elementary and has made an unforgettable impression on her school, the district, and the field of STEM education. She creates an engaging and energized learning environment for her students, fostering a love for discovery and problem-solving in the fields of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics. Alicia was the driving force behind the establishment of the STEM program in 3-5 schools CSD. She also mentors other STEM teachers in the district, sharing her enthusiasm and expertise and fostering a culture of continuous learning.



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# *The Nutcracker: Clara's Winter Dream*



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Sunday, December 17th, 2023 \* 2:00 pm & 4:30 pm  
Purchase Tickets at: [www.biglickets.com/events/dance-foundry/](http://www.biglickets.com/events/dance-foundry/)

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