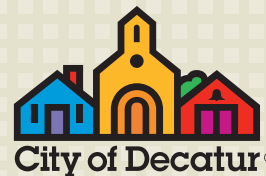


# City of Decatur FOCUS

INSIDE:  
DECATUR  
PLAYBOOK



JANUARY-FEBRUARY 2023  
Volume 33 • Number 6

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE CITY OF DECATUR, GEORGIA

## DECATUR SALUTES 2022 HOMETOWN HEROES



Commissioner Kelly Walsh, Mayor Patti Garrett, Jenn Ballentine, Ed Lee, Maria Alvarez, Cody Jackson, Mayor Pro Tem Tony Powers, Commissioner Lesa Mayer.

The Decatur City Commission awarded five Hometown Hero awards at the DBA Holiday party on December 6. Hometown Heroes are people who volunteer their time to make our city a better place to live. Often working behind the scenes, these selfless heroes are invaluable to our community.

Decatur began the Hometown Hero program at the close of the Hometown to the World Festival during the 1996

Olympics. The 14-day festival was a success because of the hundreds of volunteers who helped. Since the first ceremony in 1996, the City Commission has presented the awards annually and with the 2022 presentation, Decatur now has more than 400 Hometown Heroes who are featured along the "Hero Wall" in Decatur City Hall. Descriptions of the Heroes along with who nominated them can be found on the City website at [decaturga.com/hometownheroes](https://decaturga.com/hometownheroes).



Beth Ann Clanin receives her award from Mayor Garrett

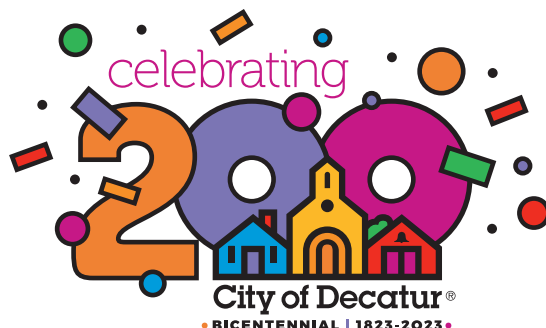
# Become a Part of Decatur's Bicentennial Year

On December, 10, 1823, the City of Decatur was awarded its charter by the Georgia General Assembly and became the seat of what was then the recently-established county of DeKalb.

Today, two centuries later, the City marks the launch of its bicentennial year with a variety of initiatives and events to commemorate and honor 200 years of community. Together with the City, Decatur residents and neighbors can build momentum towards a collective community celebration later this year and leave a lasting legacy for the next century.

## Celebratory Events

Each month in 2023, the City will incorporate the bicentennial theme into a variety of events and activities. Coming up in January and February, look for the Decatur Lunar New Year Festival and Black History Month. Detailed information can be found in the events section of this issue.



## \$200K in 200 Days

Legacy Decatur – a city-affiliated 501(c)3 — has launched the Decatur Bicentennial Fund with the ambitious goal of raising \$200,000 in 200 days to endow a series of legacy-oriented projects in support of the Decatur community. Your generous, tax-deductible gift will be matched, dollar-for-dollar by the City and will help:

**Plant 200 Trees:** In partnership with Trees Atlanta, the City aims to plant 200 trees around the City by providing front yard shade trees for local homeowners and planting memorial and celebration trees in City parks. All trees will be identified with Bicentennial Tree markers and indicated on a digital map. Visit [treesatlanta.org/yardtree](https://treesatlanta.org/yardtree) to get your free tree today.

**Collect and Tell 200 Stories:** Modeled after the Story Corps project, the City will record and archive 200 stories from a diverse cross-section of Decatur residents, collectively shaping a shared vision for the City's future. All stories will be recorded and some will be used to create a visual record through film or animation to be shared at our community celebration event later this year. Look for information on how you can participate on page 8.

**Fund Housing for Those Who Need it Most:** The City is cultivating a working capital fund in support of the Decatur Land Trust's long-term land acquisition and affordable housing efforts throughout Decatur.

Be a part of our celebrations! Make your tax-deductible donation today at [legacydecatur.org](https://legacydecatur.org), then join in celebrating all year long. Your investment in Decatur's next 100 years, matched dollar-for-dollar by the City, will make a tangible and positive contribution to the lives of our residents, today and into the future.

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



## DECATUR CITY COMMISSION

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



## BOARD

Conor McNally, Chair  
Noah Peeters, Vice Chair  
Tony Leung, Treasurer/Secretary  
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Jill Joplin.....President  
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Maria Alvarez.....Treasurer  
Daryl Funn.....Past President

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# Decatur Working Toward Child-Friendly City Status

The City of Decatur is one of six local governments in the United States partnering with UNICEF to achieve recognition as a Child Friendly City. The distinction is reserved for communities that elevate the needs of children in the following areas; safety and inclusion, children's participation, equitable social services, safe living environments, and play and leisure. In partnership with the Decatur Housing Authority, Decatur Education Foundation, City Schools of Decatur, the Decatur Youth Council, com-



munity members, and children and youth, City of Decatur wants to invite all stakeholders to contribute to the effort.

The City's Child Friendly Cities Initiative (CFCI) Teen Leadership Team is composed of 28 teens, all students at Decatur High School, who are passionate about mak-

ing Decatur a great place for children and youth. The group meets monthly and will develop a local action plan to help City of Decatur become more child-friendly.

Later this year, the City will submit its application to UNICEF to become an official candidate city. Following implementation of the local action plan, the City will submit its application to become a Child Friendly City. For more information on the initiative visit [childfriendlycities.org](http://childfriendlycities.org). To connect with the City's CFCI project, visit [decaturga.com/cfci](http://decaturga.com/cfci).



Decatur's Child Friendly Cities Initiative Teen Leadership Team

## Holiday Solid Waste and Recycling Services Schedule

### Martin Luther King Jr. Day, Monday, Jan. 16

Regular service for Monday will be Tuesday, Jan. 17  
Regular service for Tuesday will be Wednesday, Jan. 18

### Presidents Day, Monday, Feb. 20

Regular service for Monday will be Tuesday, Feb. 21  
Regular service for Tuesday will be Wednesday, Feb. 22

## Don't Take Chances with Downed Trees and Powerlines

Decatur enjoys a thriving tree canopy, and with their beauty also comes the potential for trees and limbs to fall. When this occurs, do not approach the area. Often, large trees and limbs may be unstable, resting on smaller limbs that can snap without notice, causing the tree to shift or fall further than expected. Occasionally, a tree brings down or comes into contact with a power line, which can make the surrounding area capable of conducting electricity. Live wires don't always spark, so it is best to assume that any wire on the ground is live and dangerous.

City of Decatur Fire Rescue always acts with safety in mind, so if an area is taped off or a road is closed, please take it seriously, keep children and pets away from the area, and don't drive over downed wires.



# 2022 Welcoming Businesses Named

**T**he Better Together Advisory Board in partnership with the Decatur City Commission presented the third annual Welcoming Business Awards to Brave + Kind Bookshop and Raging Burrito at the DBA Holiday Party in December.

Better Together established the Welcoming Business Award to reward and publicly recognize leadership actions that create a welcoming and inclusive business environment in Decatur and to encourage businesses to prioritize inclusivity as a “best practice.”



## Brave + Kind Bookshop

Bunnie Hilliard, owner

Bunnie partnered with Cox Auto on their Creating Inclusion Book Club. The foundational approach is that education plays a pivotal role in the pursuit of a more diverse and inclusive workplace, and books can be a very effective and instrumental way to learn more about groups that are seemingly different from your own. The book club is making a difference, and Bunnie's partnership and support is critical. Brave + Kind offers a variety of events regularly that are meant to engage the community. For more information, visit [braveandkindbooks.com](http://braveandkindbooks.com).

## Raging Burrito

Scott Herman & Parham Savadkoohi, owners

Raging Burrito is an independent, locally owned, full-service restaurant and bar, specializing in West-coast style burritos, tacos and a variety of internationally inspired entrees. For guests with special dietary needs, they offer more than 40 meat and veggie options so customers can build meal creations to their own liking. Both entrances are handicap accessible – the front door opens directly into the dining room and the back door has a ramp. Their diverse staff is welcoming to customers of all ages and ethnic-



From left: Sean Crotty, Christa Sobon, Bunnie Hilliard, Ed Lee



From left: Ed Lee, Linda Harris, Parham Savadkoohi, Sean Crotty

ties and Raging Burrito regularly contributes to the community in a variety of ways – from donating “Burrito Bucks” to non-profits to participating in city-wide promotions. Visit [ragingburrito.com](http://ragingburrito.com).

If you have experienced a welcoming business deserving of this award, nominate them in 2023. For information about Better Together visit [decaturga.com/welcoming-business](http://decaturga.com/welcoming-business).



## Decatur Town Center Plan 2.0

Downtown Decatur is the heart of our community and where many friends and neighbors come together for events, services, shopping, or to enjoy a night out. The City is excited to introduce the Decatur Town Center Plan 2.0 process, the first comprehensive look at downtown since the 1982 Town Center Plan. This fresh look at downtown will help guide growth and establish priorities for years to come. Whether you live, learn, work, or visit downtown, the City welcomes your involvement in this process. By connecting with residents and stakeholders, the planning team can set priorities and craft a vision that will become the blueprint for a future

downtown that reflects Decatur's humanity, warmth, and vibrancy.

On Wednesday, November 30, more than 150 community members attended the community kickoff meeting at Decatur Recreation Center to participate in activities and discussions and to identify downtown Decatur's assets, issues, and opportunities. If you missed the first meeting, there are more opportunities to get involved. Visit the Decatur Town Center Plan 2.0 website at [decaturtowncenterplan.com](http://decaturtowncenterplan.com) to review meeting presentations, participate in interactive activities, and answer an online survey. The next community meeting will be held in

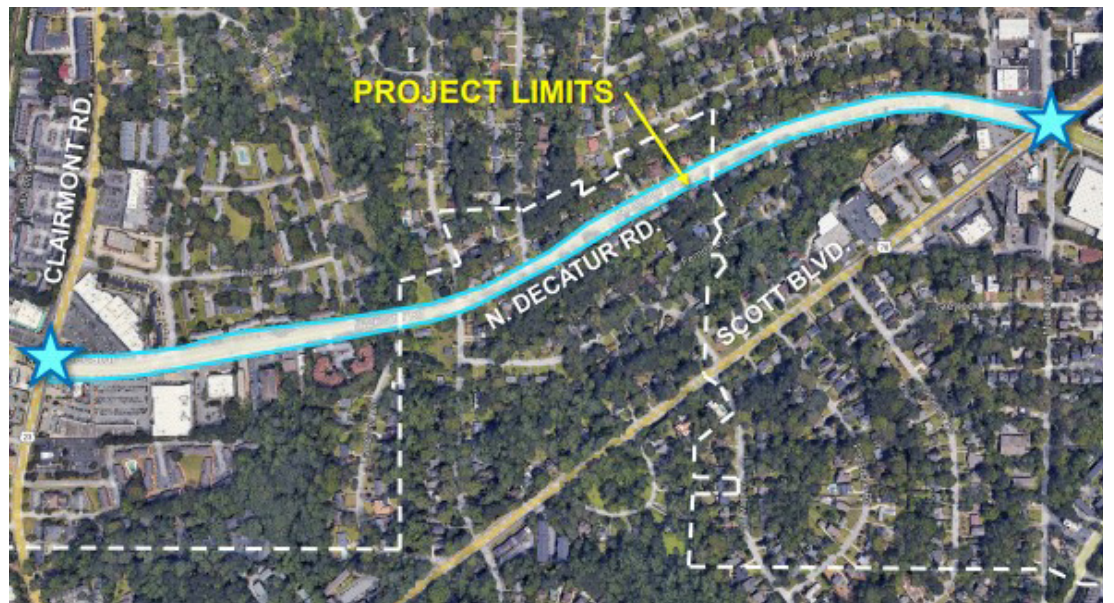


February; stay tuned for more details on the website and on City of Decatur's social media channels.

## Street Smarts: Decatur's Effort to Improve Safety at North Decatur Road and Superior Avenue

Last month, Decatur kicked off the first public workshop to solicit community feedback on the North Decatur Road initiative. The workshop focused on the corridor as it exists today, with emphasis on safety and livability issues. It also provided a forum for the community to share ideas and aspirations for the North Decatur Road and Superior Avenue intersection. If you missed the meeting, please fill out the survey by visiting [surveymonkey.com/r/Decaturroad](https://surveymonkey.com/r/Decaturroad). The survey will close Wednesday, February 15.

The North Decatur Road Initiative is one of several safety prioritization projects that came out of the 2018 Community Transportation Plan. While the entire North Decatur Road corridor will be part of the broader plan, the City-owned portion of the corridor is 0.3 mile inclusive of the intersection with Superior Avenue. The goal is to make the entire corridor safer for pedestrians, cyclists, users with disabilities, motorists, as well as adjacent property owners. A truly meaningful solution will require comprehensive



improvements with a collaborative effort between the City of Decatur and DeKalb County, as well as input from MARTA, Emory University, and Georgia Department of Transportation.

Additional public workshops will be held on dates and times to be determined.

- Public Workshop #2 will review community input from the initial meeting and survey, present proposed solutions,

answer questions, and collect additional resident feedback.

- Public Workshop #3 will present finalized recommendations and gather input on the finer details to assist the consultant team as they move from conceptual design into formal schematics.

Stay informed at [decaturnext.com/2022/11/17/n-decatur-road-kickoff](http://decaturnext.com/2022/11/17/n-decatur-road-kickoff).

## Cold Weather Safety Tips from Decatur Fire

Falling temperatures can lead to an increased risk of accidental fires. DFD offers tips to help keep you safe during the cold winter weather.

- **NEVER plug a space heater into an extension cord or power strip.** The heater cord is designed to handle the current going through it. Other cords can easily overheat and catch on fire. If a cord is frayed or worn, discard the heater immediately.
- **NEVER place a space heater within three feet of anything combustible,** within reach of children, or on an uneven surface. Curtains, blankets, furniture, and other household items can ignite from the heat radiating from space heaters.
- **NEVER leave a burning candle unattended.** If left burning the glass housing can crack and ignite surrounding items. Pets and children also pose a risk by knocking over candles and causing injury from hot wax or placing combustibles in the flame. Realistic battery-powered candles offer a safer alternative.
- **ALWAYS use a fireplace screen.** Fireplaces can provide a cozy environment on low temperature days and nights, but stray embers can ignite carpets, furniture, or burn people, so use a screen to shield kids, pets, and combustible materials.
- **Make sure your chimney is cleaned** and inspected regularly. Chimneys can accumulate unburned products if not cleaned regularly, resulting in fire that can spread to the structure.
- **NEVER leave hot items on the stove unattended.** Hot beverages are popular on a chilly day, but children can experience severe burn injuries if the handles of boiling pots are accessible. Teach children to stay away from the stove and turn all handles inward. Also, mugs of hot coffee, tea, or cocoa can scald a child if left within reach on tables or countertops.

For more information, visit [NFPA.org](http://NFPA.org) or email Captain Gary Menard, [gary.menard@decaturga.com](mailto:gary.menard@decaturga.com).

## Decatur Fire Deputy Chief Morrison Shares Her Survival Story

At the Georgia Association of Women in Public Safety Symposium last month, Deputy Chief Vera Morrison delivered an emotional presentation in which she shared her

personal story of diagnosis, treatment, and her long road to recovery from two different types of cancer. Many firefighters are diagnosed

with cancer due to their frequent exposure to carcinogenic materials while on the job. Chief Morrison's story is one of hope and survival that helps to illustrate the dedication of these brave public servants.



## DFD Wins Georgia NFPA Prevention Month Photo Contest

The State Office of Commissioner of Insurance and Fire Safety congratulates and commends Decatur Fire for making Fire Prevention a priority. This year's theme "Fire won't wait, plan your escape!" emphasizes the rapid spread of fire in modern homes and the need to have a practiced plan in place for all family members to get out safely. To create your home escape plan, visit the fire department or contact Captain Gary Menard, [gary.menard@decaturga.com](mailto:gary.menard@decaturga.com).



## Valentine's Day Rose Give-Away

**Tuesday, February 14, 5-9 p.m.,  
Decatur square**

Join us for a special Valentine's Day pop-up rose give-away on the square. Enjoy music, a fun photo op, a rose, and a sweet treat! This event is sponsored by the Decatur Tourism Bureau, reminding you to "love local!" For more information on this and other events, go to [visitdecaturgeorgia.com](http://visitdecaturgeorgia.com).



## Save the Date for Decatur's Inaugural International Festival

The City of Decatur, in partnership with several Decatur businesses, will host the first International Festival on March 18, 2023.

## THE FARRELL/O'KEEFES KICK OFF 2023 AS WALK AND ROLL SUPERSTARS!

Anne Farrell, Tim O'Keefe, and their children Quinn (18), Brennan (16), and Katie (14) have integrated alternative transportation into their daily routine. Anne and Tim bike to work at Georgia State University and have appropriate cold weather gear to get them through the wintertime. Brennan and Katie ride their bikes to Decatur High School and Beacon Hill Middle School, and Georgia Tech freshman Quinn uses his bike to traverse campus and to make the 40-minute trip to Decatur when he visits home. The family appreciates that exercise is built into their regular schedules and is an integral part of their daily lives.

When Anne and Tim moved to Atlanta in 2003, they chose Decatur in large part because the built environment lends itself to walking and biking. Tim recalled his own father's long commute to work and decided it was not something he wanted to replicate. Fortunately, their Oakhurst home has proven to be an ideal location to accommodate his biking commute. In addition to relying on their bikes as the primary source of transportation, the family enjoys biking for recreation as well. Anne and Tim explore local breweries by bike in the summer, and together the family enjoys the BeltLine and the Rockdale river trails. A few years ago, Tim, Quinn, and Brennan completed a century (100-mile) ride along the Silver Comet Trail in Georgia and more recently the Chief Ladiga

Trail in Alabama (Anne rode 50 miles on the trail then got the car to transport everyone back home). This family of dedicated cyclists is an inspiration to the rest of us.



## Decatur Honored for Excellence in Financial Reporting

**G**overnment Finance Officers Association of the United States and Canada (GFOA) has awarded the Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting to City of Decatur for its annual comprehensive financial report for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2021. The report was judged by an impartial panel to meet the high standards of the program, which includes demonstrating a constructive “spirit of full disclosure” to clearly communicate its financial story and motivate potential users and user groups to read the report. The Certificate of Achievement is the highest form of recognition in governmental accounting and financial reporting, and its attainment represents a significant accomplishment by a government and its management.

## Decatur Launches 200 Stories Project in 2023

To celebrate Decatur’s 200th birthday, the City will launch the 200 Stories Project, a community story vault, to preserve and document the history of those who are and have been part of the Decatur community. Through the power of storytelling, participants will help shape a shared vision for the future of Decatur.

Whether you are new to Decatur or have been around for a while, the City invites you to contribute to this historical moment by sharing your experiences. There is no script – simply volunteer to sit down and talk with an interviewer.

Interested in connecting with other community members? There is an opportunity to volunteer as an interviewer. To participate, email [200stories@decaturga.com](mailto:200stories@decaturga.com), or call Aileen de la Torre at 678-553-6596 or Renae Jackson at 678-553-6561.

## Homestead Exemptions Reduce Taxes

If you live at the property you own, you may qualify for one or more homestead exemptions or assistance programs for city taxes in 2023.

- **General homestead exemption:** This exemption reduced property taxes for resident homeowners by \$274 in 2022.
- **GS-1 exemption:** The GS-1 saved most eligible homeowners \$1,599 in 2022. You qualify to apply if you’re at least 62 as of Jan. 1, and your total household income does not exceed \$25,000.
- **S-1 exemption:** The S-1 saved most eligible homeowners \$210 in 2022. You qualify to apply if you are 62 or older as of Jan. 1 and the household income of you and your spouse does not exceed \$10,000 excluding retirement income. Pensions and Social Security income do not count toward income for this exemption, but income such as salary, wages, rental income, dividends, and interest are included.
- **GH-2 exemption:** Regardless of income, owners who are 65 as of Jan. 1 are

eligible to apply for the GH-2. The GH-2 saves homeowners about \$110 a year.

- **S-2 exemption:** The S-2 exempts owners over the age of 80 who live in their home from school taxes if household income is less than \$40,000. This includes any type of income. This exemption may also qualify the owner for an offset of sanitation and storm-water fees.
- **S-3/S-6 exemptions:** Owners who are 70 may file for the S-3/S-6 regardless of income. Taxpayers may save up to \$1,050 from the S-3 and \$4,200 from the S-6. The S-6 will expire Dec. 31, 2023, subject to renewal or change through legislation and a referendum. The S-3 will remain on eligible homeowners’ accounts.
- **S-5 exemption:** Resident homeowners between the ages of 65 and 69 with household federal adjusted income under \$53,000 may apply. The S-5 exempts \$200,000 in assessed value from school taxes with annual savings up to \$4,200. This exemption will expire Dec. 31, 2023, subject to renewal or change through legislation and a referendum.

- **Disabled veterans** can qualify for an exemption saving up to \$3,477 if they reside at the property and have a 100 percent disability per the Department of Veterans Affairs.

Potential tax savings for each exemption will vary in 2023 depending on millage rates.

If you’ve already applied for an exemption, you do not need to re-apply. But you’ll need to apply

- if you qualify for a new exemption based on age, income, or you are a new owner.
- if you have moved within town.
- if you have only applied with the county, you must also apply with the city.

The City can accept homestead exemption applications for 2023 anytime between now and April 3, 2023. However, homeowners are asked to apply for any new exemptions by March 15, 2023, in order for exemptions to appear on your 1st installment 2023 property tax bill.

For details on how homestead exemptions are calculated or to apply for exemptions online, visit [decaturga.com/homestead](http://decaturga.com/homestead).



## DBA ELECTS 2023 OFFICERS



The Decatur Business Association elected its 2023 officers at the December Holiday Party. Pictured from left are Maria Alvarez, Treasurer; Sean Crotty, President Elect; Jill Joplin, President; and Daryl Funn, Past President.

## Decatur Business Association is Strategically Planning Its Future

The DBA will be kicking off a strategic planning process in early 2023 to inform how they can continue to support the Decatur business community. They have partnered with Purpose Possible, who will be reaching out to different stakeholders for input. Join today to help identify goals to be implemented over the next five years. Community members are welcome to join too.



**DBA**  
Decatur Business  
Association

**State of  
the City**  
**Tuesday, January 24**  
**5:30 p.m.**

**The Chapel on Sycamore**  
318 Sycamore St.

Join the DBA for the State of the City address presented by Mayor Patti Garrett. The meeting will also include the State of the City Schools address, delivered by CSD Board Chair Jana Johnson-Davis.

## Mayor Emerita Elizabeth Wilson presents DBA BLACK HISTORY MONTH PROGRAM It's a Homecoming!

**Tuesday, February 28, 5:15 p.m.**

Homecomings — whether a family reunion, community event, school, or church gathering — have been a staple of the black community for a long time. The annual celebrations connect past and present, encourage reconnection to community and space, and allow for deeper connections and relationships between generations.

Join as we celebrate the spirit of Homecoming with music, dance, a panel discussion, and a drumline. The event is free and open to the community. Participants are encouraged to represent their schools, place of worship, fraternity, sorority, community, etc. Check for updates at [decaturdba.com](http://decaturdba.com).



## Opo in the Depot

**C**offee in downtown Decatur comes full circle as Opo Coffee opened its doors in the Old Depot District in December. The space, which formerly housed a pizza restaurant, is built out to accommodate a coffee shop, roaster, and training lab that will offer Specialty Coffee Association certifications for baristas, as well as coffee classes for home enthusiasts.

The word “opo” is Filipino for “yes” (with respect). The name is a nod to owner Jonathan Pascual’s ethnic heritage and also encapsulates the company’s values of positivity, respect, and honor. Opo’s holistic approach to roasting, retail, and education was a bean planted many years ago when Jonathan started his coffee career as a barista at a national chain in downtown Decatur. He continued to build upon his experience and passion with the success of his first shop, Taproom Coffee in Kirkwood, however Jonathan had a vision to do more with his brand and his love for coffee. His dream for Opo is to elevate the coffee experience at every level, from education and roasting to drinking and communing. Opo offers a beverage selection for everyone including drip coffee, espresso-based drinks, tea, and more. A food program will include baked goods, quiches, and other light bites. Opo will be open Monday-Saturday 6:30 a.m.-8 p.m. Learn more at [opocoffee.com](http://opocoffee.com).



## Winter Music Classes

Join the Music Together of Decatur community this winter where moms, dads, nannies, grandparents, babies, toddlers, and pre-schoolers come together for some serious musical fun. Music Together of Decatur is the perfect indoor activity for you and your little one (infant-4 years old) to enjoy making music with other families. Sing, dance, jam, and play for 45 minutes every week — and take home materials so you can keep the music going all week long. Classes are currently in session and run through February 24. If you miss a class, simply make it up anytime during the semester.

Check out a complete schedule of music classes at [musictogetherofdecatur.com](http://musictogetherofdecatur.com). Register today using coupon code New Year, New Music! for \$30 off tuition. Please Note: proof of vaccination is required for all caregivers. For more information, email [wendy@musictogetherofdecatur.com](mailto:wendy@musictogetherofdecatur.com) or call/text 678-466-0737.





## Decatur Scouts Achieve Top Honor



Eagle Scouts, left to right: Daniel Stadler, Ben Jensen, Conor Burby, Griffin Knabe, Thomas Chiu, Evan Stach, and Louis Messonnier.

In October, seven Scouts from Decatur's Troop 134 earned the Eagle Scout Award, the highest rank advancement presented in Boy Scouting. To earn the rank of Eagle, each Scout must attain 21 merit badges, demonstrate leadership within the troop, and successfully plan and complete a community service project. Only six percent of all Scouts achieve the esteemed Eagle rank and Decatur's own Conor Burby, Thomas Chiu, Ben Jensen, Griffin Knabe,

Louis Messonnier, Evan Stach, and Daniel Stadler are now among the select few.

During their tenure as Scouts, these seven young men collectively led 1,076 service hours to beneficiaries in the Decatur community as part of their Eagle projects, completed over 270 service hours on other projects, camped for 314 nights, and hiked 861 miles.

- **Conor Burby** cleaned up Wadell Park in the Great Lakes Neighborhood.

- **Thomas Chiu** built and/or refurbished 15 planting tables and two soil bins at Woodlands Garden.
- **Ben Jensen** built a kiosk to hold garden tools, seeds, and to display information at Wylde Center.
- **Griffin Knabe** who plays baseball for DHS replaced the dugout roofs on the field at McKoy Park.
- **Louis Messonnier** built a kiosk and planted native plants at Hawk Hollow in Oakhurst.
- **Evan Stach** collected used computer parts and built 28 new computers for Solid Foundation Christian Academy in Stone Mountain.
- **Daniel Stadler** installed six pull-up bars for the Boys and Girls Club in Oakhurst.

At a Court of Honor held at the troop's charter First Baptist Church of Decatur, each Eagle Scout gave a short speech highlighting their most memorable Scouting moments, reflecting on the life skills learned along the way, and thanking the many dedicated leaders and family members who mentored them throughout the journey. It was well attended by friends, family, and the Scouting community.

## Decatur Fire Recognizes Eagle Scouts

DFD presented each Eagle Scout with a challenge coin to keep in their pocket to remind them to continue to be focused on community service and advised that if they catch each other without the coin in their pocket they can demand twenty push-ups!



## A Holistic Take on Health

**T**he start of the year is a popular time for people to kick-start their health, however research indicates that two-thirds of people abandon

New Year's resolutions within one month. Decatur resident Holly Peyer, a certified health coach and functional nutrition counselor offers some tips for a more holistic approach to help make resolutions more effective and to build lifelong, sustainable habits.



**Here's to Healthy**  
WELLNESS • NUTRITION COACHING

### Think About Wellness Multi-dimensionally

Wellness focuses on eight interconnected areas: physical, spiritual, social, intellectual, emotional/mental, occupational, environmental and financial. Each area needs a little attention for someone to truly flourish.

### Create a Health & Wellness Vision

Writing a health and wellness plan is an encouraging method for envisioning the big picture and setting goals. Start with a statement that describes one's "best self," what

it looks and feels like, how it impacts everyday life, and why that matters.

### Set SMART Goals

While vision is the destination, SMART goals are the roadmap. New, healthier habits take time to establish; start slowly, breaking the vision down into specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-bound goals.

### Find an Accountability Partner

Staying on track can be challenging; consider asking a workout buddy, family member, or coach for support. Tracking progress and accountability with an app, fitness tracker, or wellness journal can boost success.

### Listen to Your Body

Wellness is a personal journey; there is no "one-size-fits-all" approach. Everyone has a unique story, health history, environment, genetics, and belief system. Through curiosity, determination, and an open mind, one can discover the approach that works best and honors their personal goals.

Here's to Healthy is a Decatur-based health and nutrition coaching practice, offer-



ing 1-on-1 coaching and guiding clients to discover lifestyle and nutrition fundamentals that work best for their bodies. Particularly passionate about gut health, Holly specializes in helping women who suffer from digestive issues reduce their symptoms and regain energy so they can enjoy life again. To learn more, visit [herestohealthyco.com](https://herestohealthyco.com) or follow @heres\_to\_healthy\_co.

## Migraine Study Focuses on Children & Adolescents

The World Health Organization classifies migraine as one of the 10 most disabling medical illnesses, which can occur in elementary school-aged children and high school-aged adolescents. Migraine can be debilitating in younger individuals and often goes undiagnosed. Symptoms such as head pain, nausea and vomiting, and sensitivity to light and sound may be indicators that your child is suffering from migraine.

With limited treatment options available for children and adolescents, iResearch is seeking participants for a new clinical research study evaluating the safety and effectiveness of an investigational migraine treatment. This multicenter, placebo controlled, Phase 3 clinical trial is studying rimegepant as a potential acute treatment to help stop a migraine attack when it occurs.

To enroll in the study, participants must be between 6 and 17 years of age, have at least one migraine per month, and have at least a six-month history of migraine. For more information about participating, call 404-537-1281 or visit [pediatricmigrainestudy.com](https://pediatricmigrainestudy.com). iResearch is located in Decatur at 250 East Ponce de Leon Ave., Suite 800.





## Decatur Cemetery Celebrates Fruitful Relationship with Food Well Alliance

The Decatur Cemetery is the most recent recipient of Food Well Alliance's Orchard Project. Following a competitive application process, Decatur Cemetery was selected and the orchard was installed this past November. The planting was led by Fred Conrad of Food Well Alliance and volunteers from Ernst & Young helped make the project a success.

Since 2010, the Food Well Alliance Orchard Project has installed more than 100 orchards across metro Atlanta, planting fruit-bearing trees, bushes, and vines —improving the region's landscape and providing direct access to local food. Food Well Alliance and its partners collaborate to ensure each orchard receives the proper care and maintenance to thrive. Fred Conrad noted that this is the organization's first orchard to be planted in a cemetery, and the team looks forward to seeing the project bloom.



Cemetery Specialist Zack Ray leads the orchard stewardship team

## Alair Decatur Wins Two Awards

At the 30th annual NARI Atlanta (National Association of the Remodeling Industry) banquet, Alair Decatur won a first-place Contractor of the Year Award for residential detached structure. The project team designed and built a functional combination pool house, garage and multi-purpose room for homeowners in Atlanta's Morningside neighborhood. To accommodate lot-size restraints, the structure uses a split-level design so the kitchenette and full bath can flow seamlessly to the porch and pool, while the multipurpose room offers additional spaces upstairs, and a two-car garage on the main level provides protection and storage. The exterior features beautiful wood work, copper gutters, mitered corners and exquisite stone and the interior showcases a wall of custom millwork for storage, bed space, and lounging.

In addition, Decatur resident David Michelson, an Alair regional partner who serves as the NARI Atlanta president and chairman of the board, was honored with the Brad Cruickshank Leadership Award for his service to the chapter. Visit [alairhomes.com/decatur](http://alairhomes.com/decatur) for more information.





## Decatur Businesses Among Atlanta Magazine's "Best of" Issue

In December, *Atlanta Magazine* released its annual "Best of" issue and 16 Decatur businesses made the list in three categories; Eat, Drink, and Readers' Choice. For the full list, visit [atlanta-magazine.com/best-of-atlanta](http://atlanta-magazine.com/best-of-atlanta).

**EAT**  
**BoHo115:**  
Best Fish (in Tins)



**DRINK**  
**Tortuga y Chango:**  
Best Place to Drink  
Mescal



**Chai Pani:** Indian

### READERS' CHOICE

**AYA Medical Spa:** Med Spa  
**Dancing Goats:** Coffee Shop  
**Fur Side:** Pet Groomer  
**Iberian Pig:** First Date  
**Kimball House:** Cocktails  
**Natural Body Spa & Shop:** Spa  
**Piece of Cake:** Cake Shop  
**Revolution Doughnuts & Coffee:**  
Doughnut Shop  
**Taqueria del Sol:** Tacos  
**Trinity Home & Design:** Interior  
Designer  
**Victory Sandwich Bar:** Affordable  
Restaurant  
**Village Vets:** Veterinary Practice  
**Worthmore:** Jewelry Store

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### The Pope Family (268 Forkner Drive)

The wreaths are hung on the windows with care,  
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There is Rudolf with his nose so bright,  
and A Santa "Stop Here" Sign to help find this magical sight  
Decorated with dancing icicles and a candy canes walkway,  
The Pope Family wishes you Joy and Peace during the holidays!

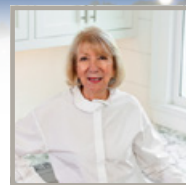


## DeKalb History Center Lunch & Learn A.S. Turner & Sons

**Tuesday, January 24, 12-1 p.m., Historic DeKalb  
Courthouse, 2nd floor, 101 E. Court Square • FREE**

January's Lunch & Learn will be presented by Cy Hume, president and general manager of A.S. Turner & Sons Funeral Home and Crematory. Hume will speak on the 120-year history of A.S. Turner, as well as funerary practices and history. Bring your own lunch.

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## **SANTACON** SATURDAY, DEC. 10



## Did You See **Santa** on Small Business Saturday?



Many Decatur shoppers and their families visited the square on the Saturday after Thanksgiving to visit with Santa and Mrs. Claus and enjoy sweet refreshments to celebrate Small Business Saturday, an initiative created by American Express that serves to counter the big-box consumer madness that is commonly known as Black Friday.

Decatur shoppers were encouraged to enjoy the sunny weather and to begin their holiday shopping with local retailers, to to enjoy free gift-wrapping services and participate in a Decatur Tourism Bureau shopping promotion: those who spent \$200 in local shops during the holiday season could present their receipts in return for a \$20 gift card redeemable at local restaurants.





**BONFIRE &  
MARSHMALLOW  
ROAST**  
THURSDAY, DEC. 8





## EVENTS CALENDAR

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)

### JANUARY

**17 City Commission Meeting**, 7:30 p.m.

**24 DBA State of the City**, 5:30 p.m.,  
The Chapel on Sycamore,  
318 Sycamore St. Page 9.

**24 Lunch & Learn**, 12-1 p.m.,  
Historic DeKalb Courthouse, 2nd floor,  
101 E. Court Square. Page 14.

**28 Lunar New Year Festival**, 1-5 p.m.,  
Legacy Park, 500 S. Columbia Dr.  
Page 18.

**28 Run With the Dogs 5K**,  
Beacon Hill Middle School. Page 18.

### FEBRUARY

**3 CSD Community Celebration of Black Joy**, 6 p.m., DHS Performing Arts Center.  
Page 20.

**4-5 Decatur City Dance Winter Contemporary Concert**, 7 p.m. and, 2 p.m.,  
Drew Charter School Performing Arts  
Theater, 300 Eva Davis Way, SE, Atlanta.  
Page 19.

**6 City Commission Meeting**, 7:30 p.m.

**9 15th Annual Black History Month Celebration**, 11 a.m.-1 p.m.,  
Historic DeKalb Courthouse, Second Floor,  
101 E. Court Square. Page 20.

**14 Valentine's Day Rose Giveaway**,  
5-9 p.m., Decatur square. Page 7.

**21 City Commission Meeting**, 7:30 p.m.

**25 8th Annual Love Run 5K**, 8:30 a.m.,  
Decatur Square, 101 E. Court St. Page 21.

**28 Mayor Emerita Elizabeth Wilson presents DBA Black History Month Program**,  
5:15 p.m. kickoff, 6 p.m. program. Page 9.

### SAVE THE DATE

**March 11 Tour DeCatur**. Page 22.

**March 18 Decatur's Inaugural International Festival**. Page 7.



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## Decatur Lunar New Year Festival

**Saturday, January 28, 1-5 p.m., Legacy Park,  
500 S. Columbia Drive**

Come and kick off the City of Decatur's 2023 Bicentennial celebrations at the Decatur Lunar New Year Festival. As Atlanta's only Pan-Asian New Year celebration, participants can experience diverse customs from several different Asian countries, including Vietnam, South Korea, China, and the Philippines.

Lunar New Year centers on spending time with loved ones and engaging in traditions that bring good luck and health. While 2023 is the Year of the Rabbit for many Asian cultures, Vietnam celebrates the Year of the Cat. To honor the unique diversity of our community, Decatur has created its own Lunar New Year spirit animal — the cabbit. Young residents who wish to illustrate the most auspicious cabbit can enter their drawings to be featured at the festival. Visit [linktr.ee/decaturlny](https://linktr.ee/decaturlny) to submit your artwork.

The event will offer craft booths where kids of all ages can indulge their creativity. And a variety of food vendors will have tasty treats, many of which are considered good luck for the new year. The highlight of the festival will be the lion dance, brought to you by Sang Anh Đường dance troupe at 3 p.m.

Founded by Asian American families who have made their home in the City of Decatur, the festival presents the opportunity to honor diverse heritage and cultures and to celebrate the New Year with the greater Decatur Community, while promoting inclusivity and education in a safe environment. All proceeds go to Asian American Voices for Education, an Atlanta-based non-profit that advocates for the inclusion of Asian American history in school curriculums. Learn more about AAVEd at [aaved.org](https://aaved.org).

Follow these social media channels for news and updates: Instagram: [@decaturlny](https://www.instagram.com/decaturlny) and Facebook: [facebook.com/DecaturLNY](https://www.facebook.com/DecaturLNY).

## Register TODAY for Run With the Dogs 5K

**Saturday, January 28, Beacon Hill Middle School**

Celebrating its 19th year, the annual Run With the Dogs (RWTD) 5K and Pup Trot is a Decatur tradition. Returning to Beacon Hill Middle School this year, the race is now an official qualifying event for the Peachtree Road Race. As a fundraiser for the Decatur Bulldog Boosters, RWTD 5K supports the athletic programs at Decatur High School and Beacon Hill Middle School. Register before January 15 to receive a long-sleeved T-shirt, featuring a one-of-a-kind design by Decatur artist and DHS lacrosse coach Adam Pinsley. Students, City Schools of Decatur employees, and City of Decatur employees receive \$5 off registration. To register, visit [rwtd5k.com](https://rwtd5k.com).



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## DECATUR CITY DANCE PRESENTS WINTER CONTEMPORARY CONCERT

**Saturday, February 4, 7 p.m. and Sunday, February 5, 2 p.m.**  
**Drew Charter School Performing Arts Theater**  
**300 Eva Davis Way, SE, Atlanta, GA 30317**

"Relative Motion" is the second of three performances, marking the 69th season of Decatur City Dance. Presented by AboutFace and Nexus Contemporary with performances by the Nexus Premiere and the Nexus Apprentice Ensembles, and a guest performance by members of Kit Modus, an Atlanta-based contemporary dance company, directed by Jillian Mitchell, the show will feature new contemporary works by Toya Willingham, Meg Gourley, Andre Lumpkin, Jacob Attaway, Christina Dupree, as well as a work for Nexus Contemporary called "Home Spaces." Guest choreographer Emma Morris delves into our personal spaces, examines how we change and share space with strangers, and how the places we call home inform the way we inhabit other spaces. Toya Willingham will revive her upbeat work "Just Sit" for Nexus Premiere, which examines the thought of rest in a high-paced, hectic world. Tickets are \$20 adults, \$10 students (18 and under) and go on sale Monday, January 9. For more information and to buy tickets, visit [decaturcitydance.org](http://decaturcitydance.org).



Photo: Otis Salid

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## 15th Annual Black History Month Celebration

Thursday, Feb. 9, 11 a.m.-1 p.m., Historic DeKalb Courthouse, Second Floor, 101 E. Court Square

The DeKalb History Center will host a handclapping, soul-stirring, Black church music extravaganza, featuring gospel singer Crissy Collins and resurrecting the voices of the most powerful spiritual and gospel legends. In addition, Mrs. Velma Fann (author and historian at New South Associates) and Dr. Marva Carter (professor of music history and literature at GSU's School of Music) will present talks about the role Black church music has played in Georgia's social and political arenas. Tickets are \$40 for members and \$50 for non-members at [dekalb-history-center.square.site/](http://dekalb-history-center.square.site/). Lunch is included.



## CSD Community Celebrates Black Joy

Friday, February 3, 6 p.m., Decatur High School Performing Arts Center  
City Schools of Decatur, in partnership with Georgia Public Broadcasting, will present this special event with host Henry Louis Gates, Jr.



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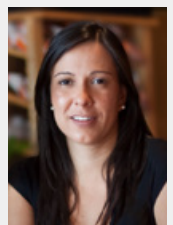
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## 8TH ANNUAL LOVE RUN 5K

**Saturday, February 25, 8:30 a.m.**  
**Decatur Square, 101 E. Court St.**

Join DeKalb County District Attorney Sherry Boston for the 8th Annual Love Run 5K, a family-friendly race that is open to runners and walkers and follows a fast-paced course through historic downtown Decatur. As a Peachtree Road Race qualifier, participants will be electronically chip-timed. All registered participants will receive a signature long sleeve shirt, race medal, and a \$10 off coupon to Big Peach.



The Love Run raises awareness of teen dating violence. Data from the CDC's Youth Risk Behavior Survey in 2019 indicates that about 1 in 12 U.S. high school students experienced physical dating violence and/or sexual dating violence. Proceeds from the run also benefit the important work of the Women's Resource Center to End Domestic Violence (WRC). Since its inception, the Love Run has raised more than \$60,000 for WRC.

In-person packet pickup will take place on Friday, February 24, 12-4 p.m. at Big Peach Decatur and before the event on race day in Downtown Decatur. A 10 percent discount is available for groups with 10 or more race participants. Register at [bit.ly/2XyeWst](http://bit.ly/2XyeWst).



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## Register Now for the 21st Annual Tour deCatur

Mark your calendars for DEF's 21st Annual Tour deCatur 5K on Saturday, March 11. Registration for both the 5K and one-mile fun run is open at [tourdecatur.com](http://tourdecatur.com), with early-bird pricing before February 25.

All K-2 elementary schools in the district will participate in the iRun program as part of their P.E. curriculum starting in January. This multi-week program is designed to teach students the fundamentals of fitness skills that make running, jogging, and walking enjoyable and safe, and prepare them to run the one-mile fun run.

Tour deCatur is an important fundraiser for DEF whose mission is to solve problems and create possibilities so that every Decatur student can learn and thrive. Mathnasium of Decatur is the presenting sponsor and will be offering math games and giveaways for kids at the event.

Your family's participation in this community event helps promote a healthy lifestyle and supports DEF in addressing various issues facing our kids, including racial and economic inequity, behavioral health, and food insecurity. For more information about DEF's initiatives and how you can help support the next generation of kids, visit [decatureducationfoundation.org](http://decatureducationfoundation.org).



## F.AVE PTO OFFERS SUMMER CAMP RESOURCE

In December, the F.Ave PTO held the first-ever Summer Camp Exposition. The free event was



open to all Decatur families to learn about summer camps offered from vendors in the Decatur area, including options for kids from Pre-K through 12th Grade.

For many parents, summer camp planning can be a stressful process that involves hours of research, pulling camp details from various websites, and creating complicated spreadsheets. To help make the process easier, the F.Ave PTO put together a planning guide to organize and sort camp details. To access the guide, visit [favepto.org/camp-directory](http://favepto.org/camp-directory).

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## Wanda Nesbitt Named District Teacher of the Year

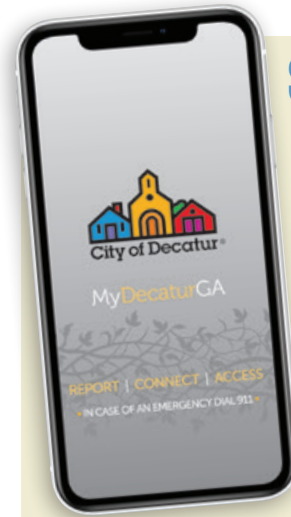
At the Board of Education meeting in November, City Schools of Decatur announced that Westchester Elementary Teacher of the Year Wanda Nesbitt was also named District Teacher of the Year. The selection committee, made up of district staff, chose Nesbitt based on her application and other supporting references. Superintendent Maggie Fehrman lauded Nesbitt for providing quality learning experiences for students and representing the best of CSD's commitment to district priorities, advancing racial equity, accelerating student learning, and building a positive culture and climate. Nesbitt will



now compete in the State Teacher of the Year competition.

Each CSD school nominated and selected their own Teacher of the Year. In addition to Nesbitt, Decatur's Teachers of the Year are:

- Anne Collins, College Heights ECLC
- Katie Green, Clairemont Elementary School
- Marnie Kaplan, Glennwood Elementary School
- Yolanda Carmichael-Kemp, Oakhurst Elementary School
- Monica Blackmon, Winona Park Elementary School
- Charee Waugh, Fifth Avenue Upper Elementary School
- Jillian Farley, Talley Street Upper Elementary School
- Beverly Beyer, Beacon Hill Middle School
- Maura Burke, Decatur High School



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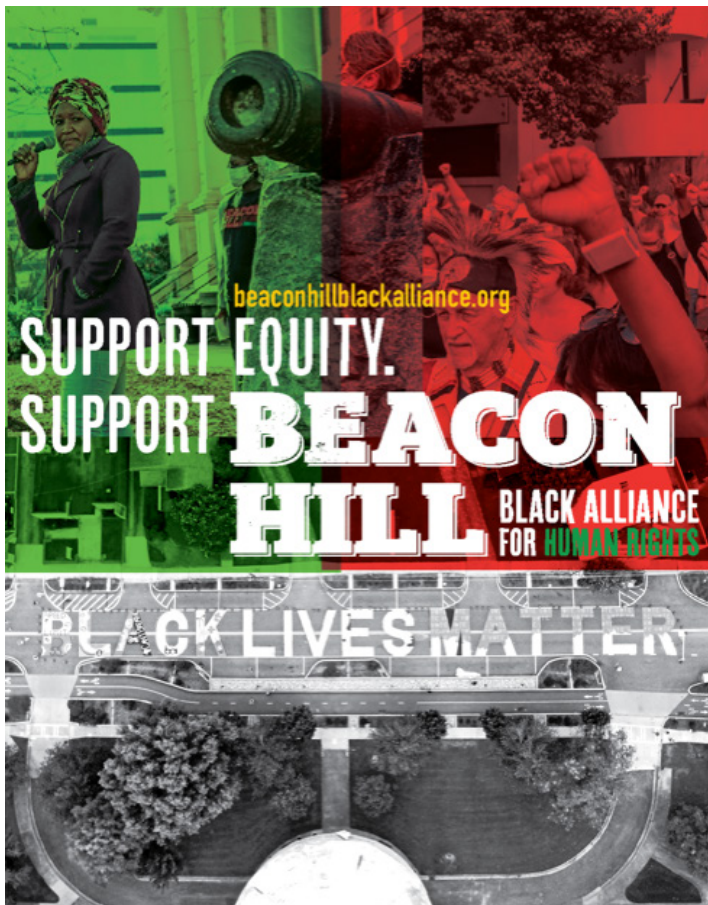
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