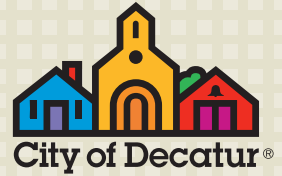


City of Decatur FOCUS

INSIDE:
NEW
RESIDENTS
GUIDE



MARCH 2024
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OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE CITY OF DECATUR, GEORGIA

Mayor Garrett Delivers State of the City Address

During the annual State of the City address, Mayor Patti Garrett emphasized the City's commitment to working on several goals outlined in the Strategic Plan including affordable housing, mobility, equity and racial justice, and economic growth. She discussed several initiatives that are underway including the passing of the Missing Middle Housing legislation to help make Decatur housing more affordable, the Parks and Recreation Master Plan, the expansion of pedestrian and biking infrastructure, the UNICEF Child Friendly Cities Local Action Plan for Youth, the AARP Age Friendly Action Plan, the Town Center Plan 2.0, and the introduction of a mobile vending cart program.

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Decatur City Commission Re-elects Mayor Patti Garrett and Mayor Pro Tem Tony Powers



In January, Patti Garrett was reappointed as mayor and Tony Powers was reappointed as mayor pro tem by the Decatur City Commission.

The City Commission meets on the first and third Mondays of each month in the City Commission meeting room at City Hall. In the event of a Monday holiday, the meeting is moved to the first or third Tuesday.

Patti Garrett – Mayor, District 2 Commissioner: First elected November 2009, current term expires 2025. patti.garrett@decaturga.com

Tony Powers – Mayor Pro Tem, Commissioner-at-large: Elected November 2015, current term expires 2027. tony.powers@decaturga.com

Kelly Walsh – District 1 Commissioner: Elected November 2017, current term expires 2025. kelly.walsh@decaturga.com

George Dusenbury – District 1 Commissioner: Elected November 2019, current term expires 2027. george.dusenbury@decaturga.com

Lesa Mayer – District 2 Commissioner: First elected November 2019, current term expires 2027. lesa.mayer@decaturga.com

Read the Decatur Focus online at decaturga.com/focus.

Limited copies also available at Decatur City Hall,
Decatur Visitors Center, and City of Decatur Recreation Centers.

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, or by using the submission form found at 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 and other information received for publication are subject to editing. Information found in the Focus is also posted on Decatur's official website at decaturga.com. The deadline for submitting articles, announcements or advertising is the first day of the month preceding publication. Contact: Editor, Decatur Focus, P.O. Box 220, Decatur, GA 30031, 404-371-8386; email: decaturfocus@decaturga.com.



DECATUR CITY COMMISSION

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



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Development Authority®**

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Sean Crotty.....President
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Carolyn Ficken.....Secretary
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Design and layout: Lampe-Farley.com

Inspector Kelvonte Byrd Voted First 'Firefighter of the Quarter'

Congratulations to Fire Inspector Kelvonte Byrd for being named "Firefighter of the Quarter." Decatur Fire launched the award this year to acknowledge firefighters who go above and beyond representing the department's mission, vision, and values. If you visit Fire Station One, you will see their "Firefighter of the Quarter" recognition board on their apparatus bay wall.



No Mow March

This March, City of Decatur and Bee City USA-Decatur, GA, a program of

Wylde Center, again invite residents to take a month off from mowing to help feed pollinators like honey bees, mason bees, mining bees, bumble bees, and other pollinator species. Peter Helfrich, chair of Decatur's Bee City USA committee, says that allowing early spring lawn flowers like dandelions, violets, dead nettle, and hen bit to grow unchecked at this time of year provides vital forage for pollinating insects when food is otherwise scarce. Pollinators are expected to begin emerging in Decatur in early March. Residents participating in No Mow March and wishing to raise awareness can pick up a free yard sign at the City of Decatur Public Works building at 2635 Talley St. Go to beecaturga.com/no-mow-march to learn more.



In Memoriam

Eric Truitt, the City's part-time records specialist, passed away on Oct. 20, 2023. Eric came to the City of Decatur in 2018 after serving as Sergeant in the Army Reserves and working for several legal offices. He had a heart for helping others and he never met a stranger. Eric's work in the records office was methodical, organized and orderly. He is missed by his colleagues and the community members who were fortunate enough to work with him.



Jazzmin Rullan-Munson Receives The 2023 Thomas O. Davis Award

Jazzmin Rullan-Munson has been a firefighter with Decatur Fire since 2021. She is described as a selfless, service-oriented firefighter that always goes above and beyond. Decatur Fire has received multiple comments on her professional, caring treatment of patients on emergency medical incidents and she has become an asset in the community.

Whether it is a call regarding an animal in distress, participating in community risk reduction programs, or helping parents make sure that their cars seats are correctly installed, Jazzmin is always ready to assist. Jazzmin is passionate about Decatur fire's child passenger safety seat program and ensures every parent who comes in for help leaves with the seat expertly installed and that they have all the information they will need to keep their child safe in a collision. She designed an information card for parents to take with them when they leave and has also requested to become an instructor for Child Passenger Safety Technicians. Once, when a child seat giveaway and installation event for Afghani refugees was scheduled on her day off, Jazzmin came in on her own time to assist and also taught them CPR. She has also helped mothers at the Women's Clinic of Atlanta learn about child seat safety.

Jazzmin also works to inspire her fellow firefighters and has created several bulletin boards around Fire Station One featuring Decatur firefighters, pictures of them at work and their accomplishments. She buys the materials for the boards with her own money and hired an artist to create a logo for her shift at her own expense. She is also constantly thinking of new ways to make station tours more interactive for kids and created a presentation that helps children realize that they too have the ability to be firefighters. The passion and commitment shown by Jazzmin is admirable and we are fortunate to have a firefighter like her on our team. Congratulations!



State of the City Address

continued from page 1

Mayor Garrett also thanked several city employees for achieving years of service, including Lori Bell, municipal court clerk (35), Greg White, director of parks and recreation (30), Sergeant Joshua Speed, Decatur Police (15), Toni Washington, Decatur Fire and Rescue (15).

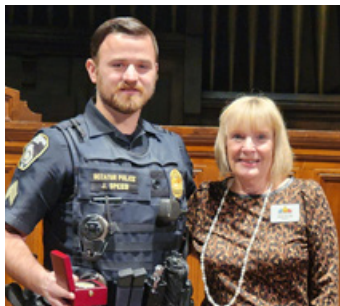
Following Mayor Garrett's address, CSD School Board Chair James Herndon provided an update on the state of the City Schools of Decatur and highlighted some of the accomplishments such as the track and field at Legacy Park that recently broke ground, the adoption of the district's strategic plan, the renewal of the district's charter, the hiring of new superintendent, Dr. Gyimah Whitaker, and a push to make teacher salaries more competitive.

Congratulations to the following employees who also received service awards but were not able to attend the ceremony:

- Craig Dubose, Fire Inspector, Fire and Rescue (20 years)
- Deratae Harris, Fire Apparatus Operator, Fire and Rescue (20 years)
- James Kelley, Crew – Building Maintenance, Public Works (20 years)
- Demetrius Whatley, Superintendent – Cemetery, Public Works (20 years)
- Kelvin Davi, Superintendent – Sanitation, Public Works (25 years)
- David Goode, Superintendent – Building Maintenance, Public Works (25 years)
- Eddie Swift, Crew – Streets and Drainage, Public Works (40 years)

Years of Service Milestones

Mayor Garrett recognized these long-serving Decatur employees at the State of the City Address.



Police Sgt. Joshua Speed



Municipal Court Clerk Lori Bell



Parks and Recreation
Director Greg White



Fire Chief Toni Washington

PARKER'S ON PONCE Decatur's Longest Standing Steakhouse

Parker's on Ponce is an upscale, independently-owned steakhouse that has been serving Decatur since 2008. It was founded by John Thomas "JT" Scott and his brother Christopher Scott. The restaurant was named after JT's daughter and was previously the home of Mick's, a longstanding restaurant that was well-known in the community.

JT grew up in South Dekalb just outside of Decatur city limits. He attended school in Decatur and his parents had offices in the city with his mother serving as a DeKalb County commissioner and his father serving as a tax commissioner for the same county.

The idea to bring a steakhouse to Decatur was born after the owners noticed there were no independent restaurants that specialized in steaks in the area. Parker's offers three types of beef: upper two thirds choice cuts that are aged for 21 days, dry-aged Kansas City steaks, and prime beef which is also aged for 21 days. Their signature steak is their dry-aged 16 oz Kansas City steak, which is described as taking a T-bone steak and cutting off the fillet side so that you are left with the bone of two sides of the steak.

Many might not know that Parker's on Ponce has been used as a filming location for shows like Drop Dead Diva and Black Lightning. Also, most of their artwork is by artist Freddie Styles.

When asked what has kept Parker's on Ponce open for so long, JT believes that allowing patrons to interact with familiar faces and offering consistent quality have played a major role. He treasures those who have hosted special celebrations like first dates, engagements, rehearsal dinners, anniversaries, and birthdays at Parker's because it makes him feel like part of the community. JT believes that the people of Decatur are what make the city so special.

Go to parkersonponce.com to learn more about their offerings.



JT Scott with Manager Sandra Waters

ESB Seeks Community Feedback On Farmers Markets

Decatur's Environmental Sustainability Board (ESB) invites the community to participate in a survey concerning farmers markets in the city. Through Decatur's 2012 Environmental Sustainability Plan, 2020 10-year Strategic Plan, and the Parks and Recreation Master Plan, residents have cited a farmers market as an important component of the community and the ESB recently began reviewing access to these markets and how they can best serve the city. Scan the QR code to take the survey, or go to bit.ly/farmersmarketsurveyesb.

If you have additional feedback about the farmers markets or about environmental sustainability in Decatur, reach out to the ESB at david.nifong@decaturga.com. Board meetings are open to the public with public comment coming at the end of the meetings. The ESB meets on the fourth Monday of every month, 4-6 p.m. at the Decatur Recreation Center (231 Sycamore St.).

Go to decaturga.com/environmental-sustainability-board for exact dates and agendas for the meetings.



DYC's Fair on the Square

Saturday, March 16 • 12-5 p.m.

The Decatur Youth Council (DYC) invites the community to the inaugural Fair on the Square, an event to help the city kick-off the spring season. There will be music, games, food, and fun for the entire family. For more information, check out decaturga.com/faironsquare.



What to Know about Elder Abuse

Detecting and addressing elder abuse is crucial to protect the safety and well-being of older adults. By raising awareness of the different forms of elder abuse, understanding the signs and risk factors, and utilizing the resources available in Decatur, we can protect our elderly population and provide a safer and more supportive environment for older adults.

What is elder abuse? Elder abuse encompasses various forms of mistreatment that can affect older adults physically, financially or emotionally. The most common types of elder abuse are:

- Caregiver neglect;
- Financial fraud and exploitation;
- Psychological abuse;
- Sexual abuse; and
- Physical abuse.

Signs and Risk Factors

Elder abuse can happen to anyone by anyone and occur in multiple settings, including the community and in long-term care facilities. Common signs of abuse or neglect include unexplained injuries, emotional withdrawal, sudden financial troubles, weight loss, changes in behavior, avoiding going to the doctor to see about his or her injuries and showing no interest in things the person used to enjoy.

The most common victim risk factors are:

- Chronic medical and mental health conditions;
- Cognitive impairment;
- Physical, financial and emotional dependence;
- A history of poor family relationships between older adult and caregivers;

- Social isolation; and
- Lack of access to support and resources.

Reporting Elder Abuse

If you suspect that an elderly person has been abused, neglected or exploited, you should report it to your local law enforcement, as well as one of the following agencies:

- Decatur Police Department, non-emergency number: 404-373-6551.
- For abuse occurring in a private residence, contact Adult Protective Services 1-866-55AGING (1-866-552-4464).
- For abuse occurring in a facility, such as a nursing home, personal care home or assisted living facility, contact Healthcare Facility Regulation at 1-800-878-6442.
- Elder abuse can also be reported online at aging.georgia.gov/report-elder-abuse.

THE FACTS ON FLOODING IN DECATUR

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

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

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

Although damage to buildings generally is limited, ponding behind drainage pipes and culverts and flooding of streets, driveways, parking lots, and yards are a recurring concern at some locations in Peavine Creek,

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

City Flood Services

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

A map information service is available from Public Works for a \$10 fee. This service provides inquirers with the current Flood Insurance Rate Map information and identifies whether a property is in a Special Flood Hazard Area. An accurate street address or DeKalb County/Decatur Tax Parcel number

is needed to obtain this information. If you would like more information, contact Public Works at 678-553-6529.

What You Can Do

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

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

Floodproofing

There are several different options to protect a building from flood damage. For example, you can re-grade your lot or build a small floodwall or earthen berm. These methods work if your lot is large enough, if flooding is not too deep, and if your property is not in the designated floodway. Please note that permits are required prior to undertaking these and similar activities. Another approach is to waterproof your walls and place watertight closures over the doorways. This method is not recommended for houses with basements or if water will get more than two feet deep.

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

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

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

Flood Insurance

If you don't have flood insurance, talk to your insurance agent. Most homeowner's

insurance policies do not cover damage from floods. However, because the City of Decatur participates in the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) and implements activities that exceed the minimum NFIP standards, you can purchase a separate flood insurance policy at discounted premiums. This insurance is backed by the federal government and is available to everyone, even for properties that have been flooded in the past. There is a 30-day waiting period from the time the insurance is applied for until it becomes effective.

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

Flood Safety

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

The number two flood killer after drowning is electrocution. Electrical current can travel through water. Report downed power lines to the Georgia Power Company by dial-

ing toll free 1-888-891-0938. If your house or other structure is flooded, contact the power company to turn off the electricity. Some appliances, such as television sets, keep electrical charges even after they have been unplugged. Don't use appliances or motors that have gotten wet unless they have been taken apart, cleaned and dried by qualified personnel.

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

Inspections – Repair and Maintenance Activities

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

LEARN MORE

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

Financial Sustainability Strategy

The Parks and Recreation Department is advancing through the financial sustainability process kicked off in fall 2023. A consultant from 110% Inc. met with staff members, the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board, the city manager and all the city commissioners in January. These stakeholder groups worked through the process of creating discrete service categories – types of services the Parks and Recreation Department provides that share a common purpose – and placing the categories on a continuum using a beneficiary of service model. The concept centers on the question of how many people benefit from a given type of activity – ranging from a “common good” public benefit such as city parks (benefiting everyone) through resale of goods (exclusively benefiting the individual who buys the items).

Examples of service categories include:

- **Education and enrichment activities** – defined as classes, clinics, workshops, and other led and/or instructed activities designed to develop and/or enhance life skills, gain a new physical skill, and promote socialization and self-sufficiency through education or experiential learning. Examples in this service category include after-school and camp programs, mini- and Lil sports activities, dog obedience classes, etc.
- **Advanced activities** – defined as activities that are instructor-led and/or require oversight by staff in which the primary intent is to further develop an established skill and/or participate in a competitive environment. Examples of advanced activities include summer swim team, cheerleading, adult and youth athletics, tennis leagues, etc.
- **Community events** – defined as large-scale events that appeal to a broad portion of the community regardless of age, ability/skill, family composition, etc. These events are highly intensive and typically occur on an annual basis. Examples include Biketober, Walktober, and Touch-a-Truck/Touch-a-Budget.

The data gathering and stakeholder input phases of the Parks and Recreation Department’s financial sustainability planning process are complete and the department’s fiscal year 2024-2025 budget proposal submitted in February to the city manager incorporates recommendations from this process. The department’s proposed FY24-25 fee schedule will be submitted to the city manager for review in mid-March and will be presented in a City Commission work session for review on April 15 with adoption slated for consideration June 17. Look for more details in the April Focus and on our website at decaturga.com/financialsustainability.



SENIOR OPPORTUNITIES

Mark your calendar for our upcoming celebrations, adventures, walks, and exercise programs at the Decatur Recreation Center.

St. Patrick’s Day Party: March 13, 11 a.m. RSVP by March 8.

Enjoy Irish music, dance, and surprises. Don your green attire and immerse yourself in the festive fun.

Spring Fling: April 10, 11 a.m. RSVP by April 5.

Experience our garden-themed celebration and enjoy the spring-inspired ambiance.

Senior Trip: Atlanta Botanical Gardens

Friday, April 12 (Register by April 5)

Join us for a visit to the Atlanta Botanical Garden, celebrating the return of spring with the Orchid Daze exhibition featuring mixed media works of Atlanta artist Lillian Blades.

Bingo at Decatur Recreation Center

Every 1st and 3rd Tuesday of the month at 10 a.m.

Wednesday Walk

Every Wednesday at 10 a.m., rain or shine, starting at Decatur Rec Center.

Aerobic Dance and Seated Functional Exercise Classes with Ms. Bobbie

Every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday.

Yoga and Tai Chi/Qigong Classes

Various options available to help strengthen physical and mental balance.

Scan the QR code to see the latest Playbook, and dozens of programs for active children, youth, adults, and seniors.





The McKoy Skate Park unveiled its revamped design, officially opening to the community in January. Special thanks to Commissioners Walsh and Dusenbury, Mayor Pro Tem Powers, and the youth members of the skating community who braved the chilly morning to cut the ribbon and inaugurate the renovated skate park.

EVENTS

Touch-a-Truck and Touch-a-Budget

Saturday, March 9 (rain date March 23)
10 a.m.-1 p.m.

East Lake MARTA Station (South Lot)

Join Decatur Parks and Recreation for the annual Touch-a-Truck and Touch-a-Budget event. This fun community event gives children of all ages an opportunity to touch, explore, and see their favorite trucks or equipment on wheels. The City of Decatur and DeKalb County dump trucks, fire trucks, tractors, police cars and motorcycles and many other types of vehicles will be on display.

Joining the fun is Decatur's budget expo, which offers insights and welcomes input on impending spending. For more information, visit decaturga.com/budget.

Georgia Walk & Roll to School Day – March 6

As part of the Safe Routes to School (SRTS) initiative, Decatur schools actively participate in Georgia Walk & Roll to School Day. Parents, school staff, and community members join students in walking and biking, promoting physical activity. SRTS aims to encourage walking, biking, or bus use, enhancing fitness, reducing traffic, and improving air quality. To volunteer or become a parent champion, contact Greg White at greg.white@decaturga.com or 678-553-6559.

Magical Mornings Return to DRC – March 20

Magical Mornings are back at the Decatur Recreation Center! The event features storytelling, music, and movement for toddlers aged 2-5 years. Parents/guardians, homeschool groups, and school groups are invited to attend. School groups with 10 or more participants need to contact Demetri Wheeler at demetri.wheeler@decaturga.com to secure your spot.



Introducing Adult Coed Kickball

Decatur Parks and Recreation is introducing adult coed kickball this spring. Registration for the Adult Coed Kickball League opens on March 25 and will continue until all slots are filled. Games will be held on Wednesday nights at McKoy Park, 1000 Adams St., starting May 22.

Lace up your sneakers, Decatur!

Join us for the upcoming Walk & Talk Decatur series presented by the City of Decatur in collaboration with Clarity Fitness. On March 21 at 6 p.m., individuals of all fitness levels can enjoy a stroll around Downtown Decatur Square.

Starting March 11, our **Couch to 5K** program is back, providing you with the support to turn your running dreams into reality. Every Monday and Wednesday at 6:30 p.m., conquer the Couch to 5K program and build confidence in your running abilities.

Additionally, the **Decatur Hiking Club** returns March 30 with a hike on the Powers Island Trail at 10 a.m. The group hikes to various parks around Georgia.

Tot Time at ORC

Tot time at ORC (Oakhurst Recreation Center) is tailored for toddlers aged 1-4 years. This program creates a safe space for them to play and explore age-appropriate games, toys, and activities with their caregivers. All are welcome, and feel free to bring your favorite toys! Tot Time is available on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m.



Meeting Previews

**Tuesday, March 26,
5:30 p.m.**

**Decatur Glassblowing,
250 Freeman St.**

Joint meeting with the Decatur Arts Alliance. Join us for food and drinks, glassblowing demos, updates, and the 2024 Arts Festival poster unveiling.



Music Class for Babies and New Parents

Music Together of Decatur's babies-only class allows babies to explore new sights and sounds while giving you dedicated time to play musically with your child. Weekly classes start March 16. Go to musictogetherofdecatur.com/baby-music-class.html to register and learn more.

Dermatology Consultants Opens New Decatur Office

Dermatology Consultants is now seeing patients in their new Decatur location at 200 E. Ponce de Leon Ave., Suite 275. Their board-certified dermatologists and physician as-



sistants offer complete dermatological and aesthetic care of skin, hair and nails. Treatments of skin conditions include skin cancer, acne, warts, rashes, psoriasis, rosacea, eczema, shingles, spider veins, hair loss, and other skin disorders. Call 404-351-7546 to schedule an appointment with their staff: Anna Paré, MD; Michelle Juneau, MD; Kate Kaufman, PA-C; or Amanda Palazzola, PA-C. Visit dermatologyconsultants.org to learn more.



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at (678) 595-5427.



JOIN DECATUR FIRST UMC FOR

Holy Week

PALM SUNDAY SERVICES

March 24 at 9 & 11am

HOLY WEEK SERVICES & LUNCH

March 25-27 from 12 - 1pm

MAUNDY THURSDAY SERVICE

March 28 at 7pm

GOOD FRIDAY SERVICE

March 29 at 7pm

Easter Sunday

March 31 at 9 & 11am



@decaturfirstumc
@decaturfirst
300 E. Ponce De Leon Ave
Decatur, Ga 30030



Hell Yeah Open for Business

Hell Yeah Gluten Free bakery is now open in Decatur. The shop is located at 308 W. Ponce De Leon Avenue, Suite G and offers gluten-free cakes and pastries. Mayor Patti Garrett, Mayor Pro Tem Tony Powers, DBA President Sean Crotty, former DBA President Jill Joplin, and Business Development Manager Shirley Baylis attended the ribbon-cutting ceremony in February.

New Chair for Friends of Decatur Cemetery

Rhonda Wildman has been named the new chair of the Friends of Decatur Cemetery. Rhonda joined the Friends group in May 2022, and brings more than 25 years of nonprofit administration experience. Rhonda replaces outgoing chair Cathy Vogel who is one of the founders of the group and served as chair from 2018 to 2023.

Friends of Decatur Cemetery is a volunteer group that works closely with Decatur and community groups to preserve, maintain, and improve the cemetery as a historic and cultural resource. The group was founded in 1993 and is credited with much work on the grounds and with the entire cemetery being added to the National Registry of Historic Places.



NACDD Moves to New Location in Decatur

The National Association of Chronic Disease Directors (NACDD) has left its office at 325 Swanton Way and moved to a new location in Decatur at 101 West Ponce de Leon Ave. to accommodate its growing staff. NACDD is a public health nonprofit professional association with 7,000 members that represent state and territorial health departments across the country. They were founded in 1988 and work to promote health and reduce the burden of chronic diseases like diabetes, lupus, cardiovascular health, cancer, and arthritis. The organization connects state, tribal, and territorial health officials with the CDC National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion and other traditional and nontraditional partners to help their communities become healthier. Go to chronicdisease.org to learn more about NACDD's work.



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Events Calendar

MARCH

- 1-24** Proximity Exhibition (page 13)
- 4** City Commission Meeting, 7:30 p.m., City Hall 509 N. McDonough St.
- 9** Touch-a-Truck and Touch-a-Budget, East Lake MARTA Station (page 9)
- 9** Oakhurst Wine Crawl (page 12)
- 16** Fair on the Square, 12-5 p.m.
- 18** City Commission Meeting, 7:30 p.m., City Hall 509 N. McDonough St.

APRIL

- 1** City Commission Meeting, 7:30 p.m., City Hall 509 N. McDonough St.
- 13** Amplify Decatur Music Festival, Decatur Square (page 14)
- 15** City Commission Meeting, 7:30 p.m., City Hall 509 N. McDonough St.
- 20** Earth Day Festival, 11 a.m.-2 p.m., Decatur Square

Birds of Kirkwood

with Michael Ayling

Michael Ayling, author of the Birds of Kirkwood Blog, will be hosting a free lecture that explores the history of ornithologist Robert Windsor Smith and the history of Kirkwood. The event takes place on Tuesday, March 19 from 6:30 to 7:30 p.m. at the DeKalb History Center located at 101 E. Court Square.

Oakhurst Wine Crawl

March 9, 4-7 p.m.

The annual Oakhurst Wine Crawl returns with more than 20 businesses in the Oakhurst neighborhood participating and more than 100 wines to sample from. Proceeds from the event support public art programs throughout Decatur, produced by the Decatur Arts Alliance. Tickets are \$60 per person on Freshtix.com. Day-of-event tickets (if available) will be \$70 per person, online or cash at the gate.

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Celebrate Earth Day



Woodlands Garden will host an Earth Day inspired celebration from Saturday, April 20 to Saturday, April 27 with many ways to get involved. Visit woodlandsgarden.org to learn more about signing up for volunteer projects, ways to learn during garden tours or hands-on workshops, and what to look for among the trails throughout this free public garden. All ages and abilities are welcome.

Proximity

a community exhibition

**Open daily 10 a.m.-4 p.m.
through March 24**
**Decatur Arts Alliance Gallery,
113 Clairemont Ave.**

The Decatur Arts Alliance invites the community to visit its first exhibition of the year until March 24. In an age of constant communication and increasing loneliness, when identity and ideas drive both conflict and connection, artists were encouraged to consider the pitfalls and possibilities of "Proximity." View more than 20 works of diverse mediums, all created by local and emerging artists in and around the Decatur community.



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Amplify Decatur Music Festival Returns with Grammy Winner Melissa Etheridge

Saturday, April 13, 3-11 p.m., Decatur Square

Tickets are now on sale for the Amplify Decatur Music Festival, featuring two-time Grammy Award winner Melissa Etheridge, folk rock band Dawes, and five-time Grammy Award winners Blind Boys of Alabama. All proceeds from the festival weekend will be directed to Decatur Cooperative Ministry and the Decatur Education Foundation.

Amplify Decatur will also feature a series of events in and around Decatur square on Friday, April 12 and a tribute to Bruce Springsteen at Eddie's Attic on the evening of Sunday, April 14. Artists will be announced in the coming weeks. The festival will also feature Run Katie Run and a performance by winners of a Decatur High School Battle of the Bands that was held in February at Eddie's Attic.

Tickets are \$75 for general admission, \$175 for VIP, and are \$275 for Premium VIP. Amplify Decatur is presented by Lenz and produced in partnership with Eddie's Attic. Go to amplifydecatur.org to purchase tickets or to learn more.



Register for the Tour deCatur

Saturday, March 16

The Decatur Education Foundation (DEF) invites you to register for their 22nd annual Tour deCatur 5K and One-Mile Fun Run. This community event will benefit Decatur students and help DEF further their mission in addressing issues such as racial and economic inequity, food insecurity, behavioral health, and learning differences.

Go to tourdecatur.com to register for the 5K, the one-mile fun run, and the tot trot. Mathnasium of Decatur is the presenting sponsor and will be offering math games and giveaways for kids at the event.

For more information about DEF's initiatives and how you can help support the next generation of kids, visit decatureducation-foundation.org.



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Waldorf School Offers Infant and Toddler Programs

Registration is underway for The Waldorf School of Atlanta's spring infant and toddler programs. Parents and their youngest ones participate in a small community of families with children of similar ages, guided by an experienced Waldorf early childhood educator that helps them achieve developmental milestones. Families participate one morning a week for 2 hours (1 hour for infants) over several weeks.

Parents/caregivers of toddlers will meet at a local park, and participate in a rhythmic morning of songs, movement, play, handwork, snack, and conversation. Classes with infants will take place in one of their classrooms on campus in Decatur. Visit waldorfatlanta.org for more information or contact Jolie Luba at jluba@waldorfatlanta.org.



STM School Pre-K4 Application Deadline Extended

The full day Pre-K4 program at Saint Thomas More (STM) Catholic School has extended its application deadline and invites you to apply. Their two classes of Pre-K4 "tiger cubs" enjoy an 8:1 student to teacher ratio, follow the same school schedule as the Kindergarten-8th graders, and participate in all special activities and traditions. Note: children must turn 4 before Sept. 1 to enroll.

The program uses play-based learning, Orton-Gillingham training, and the inspiration of the Catechesis of the Good Shepherd, to help with social emotional, language, cognitive and creative development. Email admissions@stmga.org or visit stmga.org to learn more.



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