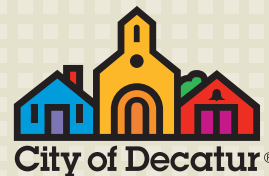


City of Decatur FOCUS

INSIDE:
NEW
RESIDENTS
GUIDE



MARCH 2023
Volume 33 • Number 7

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE CITY OF DECATUR, GEORGIA

Mayor Patti Garrett Delivers State of the City Address



During the annual State of the City address, Mayor Patti Garrett underscored the City's commitment to the Strategic Plan and highlighted how the city is moving forward to achieve its fundamental tenets; equity and racial justice, climate action, civic trust, affordable housing, mobility, and economic growth. She went on to mention several initiatives that are already underway, such as the parks and recreation master plan, the downtown master plan, the clean energy plan, and affordable housing projects.

Mayor Garrett also thanked several city employees for achieving years of service, including Gail Alonso, Communications Officer (15 years); Meredith Roark, City Clerk (15 years); Terria Brown, Communications Officer (20 years); Tammy Washington, Operations Analyst (20 years); William Woodruff, Police Captain (20 years); Andrea Arnold, City Manager (25 years); Tim Karolyi, Police Lieutenant (25 years);

See *State of the City* on page 3



Michael Gerald Receives Thomas O. Davis Award

Michael Gerald came to work for the City of Decatur in April 1993 as a sanitation equipment operator in the Public Works Department. This year, as he celebrates 30 years with the City and prepares to retire, it is fitting that he is recognized for his tremendous work in the Decatur community.

Michael embodies the spirit of Thomas O. Davis. He is a hands-on, hard-working leader who is always willing to step up and help out. He is the first one on the job and the last to leave.

See *Davis Award* on page 3



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

In the first meeting of each calendar year, the Decatur City Commission elects one of its members to serve as mayor, and one to serve as mayor pro tem. For 2023, the commission re-elected Patti Garrett mayor, and Tony Powers mayor pro tem. The city's commissioners are (clockwise, from top left) George Dusenbury, district 1; Kelly Walsh, district 1; Lesa Mayer, district 2; Tony Powers, mayor pro tem and at-large commissioner; and Patti Garrett, mayor, district 2.

Decatur Walk & Roll Superstars

Decatur's vibrant Walk & Roll to School program has been nurtured for years by dedicated community members and the City's Safe Routes to School initiative. Thanks to leaders like Westchester's Bike Dudes and Walk & Roll champions at schools across Decatur, students walking to and from school is a common sight in our town. In March, we can all be Walk & Roll superstars:

Wednesday, March 8 – Georgia Walk & Roll to School Day

Look out for groups of CSD students on the road, walking and biking to school. May they inspire the rest of us to walk and bike more often.

Saturday, March 18 – Walk & Roll Celebration

Join former and current Bike Dudes and Walk & Roll champions at Guild+Journeyman Bike Shop (115 Clairemont Avenue) from 10 a.m. to noon to celebrate our fantastic community of walkers and bikers. Enjoy coffee, hot chocolate, donuts, fun, and fellowship and show your support for walking and biking in Decatur.

Nominate a Walk & Roll Superstar by visiting bit.ly/Walk-and-Roll-Decatur.

Read the Decatur Focus online at 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, 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 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

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Tony Powers Mayor Pro Tem
George Dusenbury Commissioner
Lesla Mayer Commissioner
Kelly Walsh Commissioner



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City Communications Manager/PIO Selected to Serve as First Equity & Engagement Director

After an extensive recruitment process, the City of Decatur is pleased to announce the appointment of Renae Jackson as its first equity and engagement director. Ms. Jackson has worked for the City since 2007, most recently as the communications manager/public information officer. She has an undergraduate degree from Xavier University of Louisiana and a Master of Arts from Agnes Scott College.

Ms. Jackson serves as the co-chair of the City's Employee Equity and Inclusion team and is overseeing the development of an Equity Action Plan in partnership with the Common Good Agency. She has introduced city employees to racial equity training through the Racial Equity Institute and organized the anti-racist speaker series in 2020 and 2021. In her new role, Ms. Jackson will put into action the City's commitment to creating an inclusive, diverse and multicultural workplace and community by facilitating change throughout the organization.

The City's 2020 Strategic Plan identifies a number of goals related to equity and racial justice including a racial equity action plan, the establishment of a reparations task force, the documentation of Decatur's untold history and the addition of staff dedicated to advancing these equity goals.



Decatur Scores Perfect 100 on Municipal Equality Index (MEI)

Working with the Human Rights Campaign (HRC) and the MEI team, the City of Decatur raised its MEI score from 86 points in 2020 to 100 points in 2022 – a perfect score. The MEI examines how inclusive municipal laws, policies and services are of LG-BTQ+ people who live and work there. Cities are rated based on non-discrimination laws, the municipality as an employer, municipal services, law enforcement and the city leadership's public opinion on equality.

Decatur continues to demonstrate its commitment to equity, inclusion, and diversity. In 2019, the City passed a non-discrimination ordinance prohibiting businesses from discriminating based on sexual orientation or gender identity, as well as race, religion, color, sex, disability, national origin, ancestry, age or military status. Discrimination is prohibited in the areas of employment, housing, and public accommodation. No federal or Georgia state law expressly prohibits discrimination based on sexual orientation or identity.

Decatur also passed a resolution urging the State of Georgia to adopt a broad and comprehensive hate crimes act through prompt legislative action stating that "the mayor and commission believe that such a hate crimes act should protect the widest range of vulnerable persons."

For more information on HRC and the MEI, visit hrc.org or contact Linda Harris, linda.harris@decaturga.com, who serves as the mayor's LGBTQ+ liaison.

State of the City from page 1

Michael Nally, Fire Sergeant (25 years); Tylas Stephens, Motor Maintenance (25 years); and Hugh Saxon, Deputy City Manager (45 years). Additionally, Mayor Garrett gave special recognition to Assistant City Manager Linda Harris for achieving 35 years of service ahead of her retirement this year.

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 project at Legacy Park, renaming of Beacon Hill Middle School, crossing guard appreciation, charter contract renewal, student academic achievement, sustainability commitment, equity programs, counseling services, and the development of a five-year strategic plan.

Visit youtube.com/watch?v=RQ6I_DqIt_M to see a recording of the State of the City address.



Saluting City staff years-of-service milestones (from left): Linda Harris, William Woodruff, Mayor Pro Tem Tony Powers, Meredith Roark, Gail Alonso, Terria Brown, Tammy Washington, Andrea Arnold, Hugh Saxon, and Tylas Stephens

Davis Award from page 1

His ability to lead a team or to jump in and do the heavy-lifting makes him an asset to any project or event. He listens and assesses the needs of an event, and then manages the details, going above and beyond with a great attitude and a willing smile. Congratulations Michael and thank you for your dedication to Decatur!

Local Legislators Rep Decatur at the State Capitol

Five state legislators are looking out for the city of Decatur's interests at the Georgia State Capitol. Senator Elena Parent (D-Atlanta) has the entire city limits within her district. Sharing portions of the city are Representatives Karla Drenner (D-Avondale Estates), Becky Evans (D-Atlanta), Mary Margaret Oliver (D-Decatur), and newly-elected Representative Omari Crawford (D-Decatur). These members of the General Assembly play an active role in supporting the aspirations of the Decatur community.



Decatur Mayor Pro Tem Tony Powers, Commissioner Lesa Mayer, and Mayor Patti Garrett, with Representative Omari Crawford at his swearing-in ceremony



Elected in 2014, **Senator Elena Parent** serves as Decatur's sole senator and serves on the Appropriations, Education and Youth, Government Oversight and Judiciary committees. Senator Parent is chairwoman for the Senate Democratic Caucus, a member of the Senate DeKalb Delegation and a member of the Working Families Legislative Caucus. Senator Parent is an attorney and prior to her tenure in the Senate she served one term in the House before becoming the Executive Director of Georgia Watch, the state's leading consumer rights non-profit. Contact info: 121-A State Capitol, Atlanta, GA 30334. Office: 404-656-5109, Email: elena.parent@senate.ga.gov



New to the delegation is **Rep. Omari Crawford**, a DeKalb County native and practicing attorney. Elected in 2022, Rep. Crawford's passion is uplifting the youth of our community through involvement with various civic and non-profit organizations, and his background includes being a former scholarship-level track and field athlete who is "ready to take the baton and move DeKalb forward." Rep. Crawford serves on the Budget & Fiscal Affairs Oversight, Intragovernmental Coordination and Judiciary committees. Contact info: 611-F Coverdell Legislative Office Bldg., Atlanta, GA 30334. Office: 404-656-0314, Email: omari.crawford@house.ga.gov



Serving in the Georgia House of Representatives since 2001, **Rep. Karla Drenner** sits on six legislative committees, including the Rules; Public Health; Natural Resources & Environment; Energy, Utilities & Telecommunications; Small Business Development and Urban Affairs committees. An educator who holds two PhDs, she also serves as the chair of the DeKalb County House of Representatives legislative delegation. Contact info: 507-H Coverdell Legislative Office Building, Atlanta, GA 30334. Office: (404) 656-0202, Email: karla.drenner@house.ga.gov



Rep. Becky Evans graduated from Emory University with a political science degree and then worked as an educator and project manager with a healthcare technology company for 11 years. She serves on the Economic Development & Tourism, Education, Intragovernmental Coordination and Public Safety & Homeland Security committees. She has been active in Democratic politics and, with her husband David, raised three adult children in DeKalb County, all of whom attended Druid Hills High School. Contact info: 404-C Coverdell Legislative Office Bldg., Atlanta, GA 30334. Office: 404-656-0109, becky.evans@house.ga.gov



A DeKalb County native and practicing attorney in Decatur, **Rep. Mary Margaret Oliver** has been in public service for more than 25 years, both in the Georgia House and Senate, focusing on legislation to bolster mental health programs and protect children and consumers. She has the unique distinction of having chaired both the House and Senate Judiciary committees. Rep. Oliver currently serves on the Appropriations, Judiciary, Governmental Affairs, Metro Atlanta Transit Overview Committee and Juvenile Justice committees. Contact info: 604-G Coverdell Legislative Office Building, Atlanta, GA 30334. Office: 404-656-0265; 404-377-0485, mary.oliver@house.ga.gov

No Mow March

This month, City of Decatur and Bee City USA-Decatur (a.k.a. Beecatur) invite residents to participate in a nationwide effort to take a month off from mowing to help feed pollinators. By choosing to forgo mowing during March, Decatur residents can help sustain honey bees, mason bees, mining bees, bumblebees, and other early spring pollinator species. To help spread the word, residents participating in No Mow March can pick up a free yard sign at the City of Decatur Public Works building (2635 Talley Street) – limited to first 100 participants. For more information, visit beecaturga.com.



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Oak Cottage Courts Help Root Affordable Housing

The Oak Cottage Court development, under construction on Commerce Drive, is the first affordable/workforce housing partnership between the Decatur Downtown Development Authority (DDA) and the Atlanta Neighborhood Development Partnership (ANDP), with land that will transfer to the Decatur Land Trust (DLT) for permanent affordability. This exciting project, set to complete construction in summer 2023, will offer six new homes for sale to employees of City Schools of Decatur, the City of Decatur, and the Decatur Housing Authority.

Cottage Courts are an important part of the “missing middle” housing strategy, providing smaller homes, priced at the “workforce” level, as well as starter homes in our city. These homes offer an affordable option for those who work in Decatur to live closer to where they work, while supporting climate change by reducing commute times and emissions.

Additionally, the DLT is partnering to offer three condominiums for purchase at Park 108 near the East Lake MARTA Station by the fall of 2023. If you are interested in purchasing one of these homes, sign up for the DLT email list for information about the upcoming Community Information Sessions. Visit decaturlandtrust.org and click on “Apply to Purchase.” Attending an information session is a prerequisite for purchasing a DLT home.



KEEPING OUR KIDS SAFE



The Druid Hills Youth Sports organization held a refresher training for its volunteer baseball and softball coaches in January. Rapid response is a critical factor in the outcome for an injured or sick person, and responding quickly can mean the difference between life and death. Thanks to Decatur Fire Captain Gary Menard for sharing his expertise on CPR and AED just in time for the DHYS opening week!

THE FACTS ON FLOODING IN DECATUR

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

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

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

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

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

City Flood Services

Decatur's Department of 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. Public Works 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 the Department of Public Works, 678-553-6529.
- Check with the division before you build on, alter, re-grade, or fill on your property. Such activities in floodplains are strictly regulated and permits may be needed.
- Report illegal construction activities to the Department of Public Works at 678-553-6529.

Floodproofing

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

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

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

More information is available from the Decatur Department of Public Works or the Decatur Public Library. Please note that regrading or filling in the floodplain requires a permit. Also, any alteration to your building or land may require a permit from the 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 dialing toll free 1-888-891-0938. If your house or other structure is flooded, contact

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

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

Inspections – Repair and Maintenance Activities

Staff from the Drainage Section of the Department 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 the Department of 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.



Meeting Preview

Tuesday, March 28
5:30 p.m.

Sponsor, location, and meeting details TBD. Learn more and register at decatordba.com

Decatur Community Easter Egg Hunt

Saturday, April 8, 10 a.m.-noon
Decatur First Baptist Church, 308
Clairemont Ave.

Join the community on the front lawn of First Baptist Church for the annual Decatur Easter Egg Hunt, which offers egg hunts for all ages, a visit from the Easter Bunny, a pop-up market, crafts, activities, and more. The first hunt begins at 10:20. For more information, visit fbcdecatur.com.

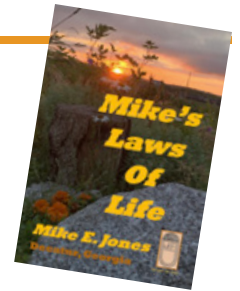


Volunteer with Woodlands this Spring

Spring is the perfect season to get outdoors and give back at Woodlands Garden. Located at the corner of Scott Boulevard and Clairemont Avenue, this thriving greenspace is free and open to the public daily. Volunteers support maintenance efforts to keep the garden flourishing such as trail maintenance, garden bed clean up, mulching paths, and general horticulture practices. Projects are held on weekdays and weekends and all instructions and tools are provided. Know a group looking to give back to the community in an outdoor, hands-on service project? Woodlands can coordinate with your school club, church group, or company's team-building day. Online sign up is required for upcoming volunteer projects. Details are available at woodlands-garden.org/come-volunteer.

Decatur Resident Marks 2023 with Book

Decatur resident Mike Jones has published *Mike's Laws of Life*, a collection of his "always" and "never" statements along with amusing time-proven guidelines for living your best life such as "call your mother." A native of Atlanta, Mike has lived in downtown Decatur since 2013. To commemorate the new year, the book includes exactly 2,023 tips and the price is listed at \$20.23. Get your copy today at amazon.com.



DECATUR CITY DANCE PRESENTS "LET'S TAP! 10TH ANNIVERSARY"

Sat.-Sun., March 25-26 Drew Charter High School Performing Arts Theater

Directed by Let's Tap! creator Kyme Hersi-Sallid, this 10th anniversary production will thrill audience members as current Rhythm Keepers and Junior Rhythm Keepers recreate select dances from past shows (2014-2022), with memorable cameo performances from company alumni. Guest performers the Rug Cutters (Decatur School of Ballet's Teen Swing dance company, directed by Eliza Reese and Danny Iktomi Bevins) will join the celebration with dances from previous Let's Tap! shows. For more information and to buy tickets, visit decaturcitydance.org (\$20 for adults and \$10 for students 18 and under).



Photo credit: Otis Sallid

Summer of Wonder with Paint Love

Paint Love believes that art empowers kids and strengthens community. The "Summer of Wonder" art camp for kids ages 7-11 is led by educators and artists, combining movement, community building, social-emotional skill-building, and lots of creative making. With three unique camps located at Legacy Park: Storytellers, Nature Explorers, and Movers + Makers, kids get messy, have fun, and make new friends, all while creating together. Aftercare and scholarships available by visiting paintlove.org/summer.

Spring Has Sprung!

Music Together of Decatur is budding with musical fun this spring. Pick any day of the week for 45 minutes of singing, dancing, and jamming together, with materials to take home so you can keep the music going all week long. Music



Together of Decatur offers a true family music class for the youngest infant to the oldest grandparent (or great-grandparent). Moms, dads, nannies, grandparents, babies, toddlers, preschoolers, and everyone in between experience the joy of learning through play. In addition to mixed-age music classes, Music Together Babies offers a class designed for first-time moms, dads, and babies who are not yet crawling to support your baby's development and help nurture a powerful bond through singing and dancing with your baby, while connecting with a community who understands the ups and downs of parenting a newborn. Register now for classes starting March 6 at musictogetherofdecatur.com. Email wendy@musictogetherofdecatur.com or call/text 678-466-0737.

Lenz, Inc., Names Mike Killeen President and CEO

Mike Killeen joined Lenz in 2002 and previously served as vice president of marketing. As part of the transition, Killeen also has become the sole owner of the company. He leads a talented veteran team, including Christine Mahin as vice president, Ricky Pattillo as engineering director, Rachel Cushing as media director, and Scott Sanders as associate creative director who together will help shape the company's vision for the future. Killeen has a Bachelor of Arts in Journalism from the University of Georgia and a Master's in Business Administration from Georgia College. He has taught healthcare marketing at Emory University's Rollins School of Public Health since 2016.



Founded in 1992, Lenz is a strategic marketing agency specializing in healthcare marketing. Richard J. Lenz, the founder of the company and president/CEO for the last 30 years, is stepping away from the daily operations of the company and will become a consultant to the business. John Lenz, who joined the company in 1992 and has served as a Vice President for more than 20 years, is departing the company to work with Viral Solutions, a Lenz client.



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Atlanta Science Festival Includes a Host of Events in Decatur

Friday, March 10-Saturday, March 25, various locations

Presented by Delta Air Lines, this two-week celebration of local science and technology presents more than 150 engaging events for all ages to explore the world of STEAM. These events range from nature walks to carnivorous plants to the science of ice cream and coffee. Learn more at atlantasciencefestival.org.

Decatur events include:

- **From Tears to the Sea**, Sat., March 11, 1-2:30 p.m., Little Shop of Stories (133A East Court Square)
- **Breaking Down the Bean: the Science Behind Home Coffee Brewing**, Tues., March 14, 10-11:30 a.m., Opo Coffee (314 E. Howard Ave.)
- **Come Closer: Carnivorous Plants**, Sun, March 19, 10:30 a.m.-noon, Lush Plant Co. (317 W. Hill St.)
- **Ice Cream Science**, Sun., March 19, 4-5 p.m., Decatur Square Bandstand (509 N. McDonough St.)
- **Garden Wonders**, Sun., March 19, 10-11:15 a.m., 11:30 a.m.-12:45 p.m., 1-2:15 p.m., Oakhurst Garden (435 Oakview Rd.)
- **Mathvenger Hunt**, Wed., March 22, 5-8 p.m., Agnes Scott College Bullock Science Center (100 E. Dougherty St.)
- **Science & Spirituality**, Thur., March 23, 7-8 p.m., First Christian Church of Decatur (601 W. Ponce De Leon Ave.)

DECATUR'S FIRST INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL

Saturday, March 18, 1-9 p.m. • Decatur square

Come and celebrate the diversity in Decatur by bringing the community together to celebrate 200 years! Attendees will enjoy a host of food and retail vendors as well as community resource tents, performances, and a mayoral kick-off.



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City of Decatur and DeKalb County vehicles will be on display – fire trucks, dump trucks, tractors, motorcycles, police cars, and more! Ride your bike to the event and have it registered by the Decatur Police Department.

Talk with staff from all departments to learn about what's included in this year's budget!

If you have a vehicle you would like to display, contact sara.holmes@decaturga.com

**Saturday, March 25, 10 am-1 pm
East Lake MARTA Station, North Lot**

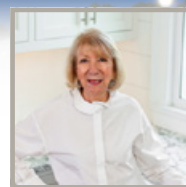
DeKalb History Center Lunch & Learn

FOX THEATRE INSTITUTE

Tuesday, March 7, 12-1 p.m., Historic DeKalb Courthouse, 2nd floor (101 E Court Sq.)

Director of the Fox Theatre Institute Leigh Burns will discuss historic theaters in DeKalb County, the Fox Theater Institute, and their grant to ART station. The program is free and attendees are encouraged to bring their lunch to enjoy during the program.

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Amplify Decatur Music Festival Returns to Decatur Square

Featuring St. Paul & The Broken Bones, Patty Griffin, James McMurtry, and The Suffers

**Decatur Square (Church St. at E. Ponce De Leon Ave)
Saturday, April 29, 2-11 p.m.**

Tickets are now on sale for the 2023 Amplify Decatur Music Festival, which also will include performances by Town Mountain, Jackson County Line, and The Sundogs. The event features a series of events in and around downtown Decatur Square on Friday, April 28, including Rolling Stones tribute band Tumbling Dice and an "Amplify Vs." show at Waller's Coffee Shop on the evening of Sunday, April 30. Amplify Decatur is presented by Lenz and produced in partnership with Eddie's Attic. Proceeds will be directed to Decatur Cooperative Ministry, Decatur Education Foundation, and Giving Kitchen to aid their vital missions. The 2022 festival weekend featured Ben Harper, Old Crow Medicine Show, Son Volt, and The War & Treaty, and raised \$50,000 for DCM. Fans can purchase tickets at amplifydecatur.org; \$75 for general admission, \$195 for VIP, and \$275 for premium VIP.

OAKHURST WINE CRAWL

Saturday, March 11, 4-7 p.m.

After a two-year hiatus, the Oakhurst Wine Crawl is returning and celebrating its 20th year. Join your friends and neighbors on a walk around the Oakhurst neighborhood while connecting with local businesses and tasting wines from all over the world. Proceeds support neighborhood community events such as Oakhurst Porchfest. Tickets are on sale now. Check out the Oakhurst Wine Crawl Facebook page for details.

WALKING TOUR OF DECATUR CEMETERY

Saturday, April 1, 1-4 p.m., Decatur Cemetery

The Decatur Cemetery is Decatur's largest downtown greenspace – covering nearly 60 acres. Listed on the National Register of Historic Places, a walk through the quiet park offers the chance to view historic headstones dating back to 1827. The Cemetery also features a diverse collection of mature trees and even a new fruit orchard. The tour provides a wonderful opportunity to learn about notable trees, Decatur history, cobblestone road recovery, monument restoration, and interesting plants. Tour guides will be from Women Arborists of the Southeast and Friends of Decatur Cemetery. Learn more at decaturga.com/publicworks/page/friends-decatur-cemetery.

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Decatur High School Inducts Class of 2023 Wall of Honor

In January, Christopher Hambie ('84 – soccer), Xavier Mann ('82 – football/basketball), and Carter Wilson ('72 – administrator) were inducted to the DHS Wall of Honor at an event held at Decatur High. The Wall of Honor was started in 2010 to recognize former Bulldogs for their success as student-athletes at Decatur High School and their accomplishments in sports after graduation. To nominate a former Decatur Bulldog to the Wall of Honor, contact Athletic Director Rodney Thomas, rthomas@csdecatur.net.



DYC AND TLT MEET WITH CSD SUPERINTENDENT

In January, the Decatur Youth Council (DYC) and the Teen Leadership Team (TLT) spent an afternoon meeting with City Manager Andrea Arnold and Superintendent Dr. Maggie Fehrman as part of a combined youth leadership initiative. For more information on the DYC, go to decaturga.com/bc-dyc. For more information on the TLT, visit decaturga.com/cys/page/child-friendly-cities-initiative-cfci.



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DHS Students Help Build Community Through Basketball

Decatur High School juniors Jake Eagle and Laolu Oguneeye created Hoop Legendz Basketball Camp in an effort to get out of the house during the pandemic while teaching kids how to play basketball.

Starting a basketball camp may sound like easy work, but the teens set aside hours of time during the weekends to plan, develop, advertise, and set everything into motion. Creating flyers, sending out emails, building a website, and doing the manual labor of putting the flyers up all around town are strenuous tasks, and Jake and Laolu learned many lessons about communication and the dedication of building a business. Through each step, the duo stayed focused on their shared values of helping others and giving back to the community.

Jake and Laolu recognize that summer camps can be expensive, so it was important to them to charge a rate that enables families



who may be struggling financially to participate. Located at the Winnona Park basketball court, the camp is geared for kids aged 7-14 years old and focuses on the fundamentals of basketball, as well as teaching important leadership, collaborative, and social skills, and building lasting friendships. While ensuring that campers are learning and having fun, safety has always been a top priority.

The court is reserved for campers only and signage helps to deter wandering strangers from playing on the court during camp hours. Additionally, the camp pays for a portable onsite restroom and when the weather gets too hot the campers have access to a tent for shade, extra water, and additional breaks. During inclement weather, the campers can relocate under a pavilion to continue playing.

Through drills, activities, and games, the camp strives to build confidence and self-esteem, and to encourage kids to collaborate and have fun in the outdoors. Hoop Legendz Basketball Camp has left a lasting impression on its founders and campers alike, training and mentoring more than 100 kids over the past two summers through a shared love for the game of basketball. To register for 2023 summer camps, visit hooplegendzbc.net.













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DECATUR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS LEARN FACTS ABOUT VAPING

In January, Decatur Prevention Initiative's Youth Action Team (DYAT) spent the afternoon during lunches at Decatur High School sharing facts about the dangers of vaping. Students who stopped by the table could read a fact out loud to a DYAT member, and in return, receive a Hershey Kiss for being "so sweet" to participate. DYAT also provided resources to support students that may want to stop vaping. And students were invited to take part in a survey to share what coping mechanisms they use to manage stress. The information collected will be helpful for future projects. For more information on this and other topics, visit decaturpi.org.

Make the Most of Summer at Agnes Scott

Over the summer, Agnes Scott opens its doors to those who want to continue to learn. From for-credit programs for undergraduate students, to hosting enrichment camps for middle and high schoolers, to enhancing athletic skills with our NCAA Division III coaches, summer is a great time to be at Agnes Scott.

- With a variety of courses offered during two different sessions, undergraduate students can advance academic goals by taking summer courses with prestigious

faculty at a nationally-ranked liberal arts college.

- The Women's Bridge to Business program for college students immerses participants in an intensive three-week educational experience designed to bring post-graduation opportunities into focus.
- Looking to engage and challenge your child to be more active this summer? Agnes Scott offers youth camps for gifted and dedicated middle and high school students to exercise their minds. Students can also enhance their athletic skills with fun lessons from our NCAA Division III coaches.

Agnes Scott College takes pride in its long history of running camps and providing a safe, welcoming environment for all campers. Visit agnesscott.edu to learn more about our offerings and to book space for summer 2023.



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DEF Helps Decatur Students Learn and Thrive

Decatur Education Foundation strives to provide creative solutions for the challenges facing our kids — racial and economic inequity, food insecurity, and behavioral health are some of the issues that DEF helps students navigate. Several of the programs that DEF offers rely on community resources and volunteers (read: opportunities for you to help!)

Lighten the Load – LTL offers supplemental food to students whose families are experiencing food insecurity. Working with school counselors to determine need, DEF maintains monthly Amazon wish lists to stock Beacon Hill Middle School's snack pantry and the Weekend Backpack program. LTL has also covered utility and rent expenses for families who are facing eviction or have a one-time need to remain in their home.

FOCUS Prep & Virtual Pals Tutoring – DEF operates two student-focused programs: Virtual Pals Tutoring for students

in 2nd-8th grade and FOCUS Prep for high schoolers. The FOCUS (Finding Opportunities to Create yoUr Success) Prep helps high school students research and plan for their post-secondary goals. Ninth through 12th graders are paired with a volunteer “coach” who helps them identify their options, plan their paths, and apply to colleges. DEF has partnered with College Avenue Consulting to provide resources and guidance to both coaches and students. Visit decatureducationfoundation.org/connect for volunteer and donation opportunities.

Teacher Innovation Grants – Over the past 20 years, DEF has awarded nearly \$2 million in grants, a portion of which are annual Teacher Innovation Grants. Every fall, DEF awards grants to teachers to enhance lessons, replace equipment and books, create special expeditions, and purchase new technology. This year DEF awarded approximately \$37,000 to 27 teachers in the district.

Decatur Student Centers – Through DEF's behavioral health initiative Joe's Fund, student centers have been established at the middle school and high school to accommodate students' nonacademic needs. These centers provide a space for students to take a break, meet with a counselor alone or with a group to discuss a particular issue. DEF also has hosted ASIST (Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training) sessions for CSD staff and community members. Now every school in the district has staff members who are trained to recognize a student at risk.

Scholarships – DEF has worked with community members to establish more than 20 annual scholarships totaling nearly \$50K that are awarded to Decatur High School seniors who demonstrate academic achievement as well kindness or commitment to volunteering or advocating for a cause. Consider supporting DEF by volunteering your time and expertise at decatureducationfoundation.org.

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