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Volume 33 No 1

SERVING ACWORTH, KENNESAW, MARIETTA SINCE 1992

JAN 2024



CONGRATULATIONS JAY CUNNINGHAM

Cobb Community Foundation(CCF) presented Superior Plumbing's Jay Cunningham with the 2023 James L. Rhoden, Jr. Award for Visionary Philanthropy at the Marquee Monday event hosted by the Cobb Chamber of Commerce on December 11, 2023

CCF Board President Kim Gresh was the presenting speaker and praised Cunningham for the many ways that he makes Cobb County better. The father of seven children and a grandfather, it is understood that family is in the forefront of everything he does. Said Gresh, "His business's logo is hard to miss and can be found all over this county in football stadiums, at the North GA State Fair, the Big Shanty Festival, the Taste of Kennesaw. He serves on the board of trustees for the Wellstar Health System, The Strand Theatre, Must Ministries and many others. He is a Tommy Nobis Center Community Champion and serves on way too many Cobb civic organizations to name.



TRAINS, TRAINS, TRAINS! RETURNS TO THE **SOUTHERN MUSEUM**

The Southern Museum of Civil War and Locomotive History is excited to announce the return of its biggest, most popular event of the year—Trains, Trains, Trains!— on Saturday, January 27 and Sunday, January 28, 2024. The 2024 event will feature the Museum's biggest model train display to date along with train-themed activities and historic trains.

The model train layouts will come in all sizes and feature a variety of themes, many of which have interactive buttons to delight young visitors. Railroad artifacts will be on display for visitors to hold, touch and discover how they were used.

For those looking to take something home, the General Emporium, the Museum's gift shop, will more than double in size for the event with a variety of train-themed items, from clothing and collectibles to toys and model trains, perfect for train enthusiasts, kids and fans

"Trains, Trains, Trains! is the premier family and child-oriented model railroading event in metropolitan Atlanta," says Dr. Richard Banz, Executive Director of the Museum. "Children and adults alike will be amazed by all of the wonderful train layouts, several of which are interactive. This is definitely an experience that the entire family will enjoy and remember for years to come.'

Museum operating hours for the event are from 9:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Regular admission is \$10 for adults, \$8 for seniors (ages 65+), and \$5 for children (ages 3 to 17), active-duty military (with ID) and university students (with ID). Tickets are available online. Admission for Museum members is always free!

Parking will be available at Swift-Cantrell Park, located at 3140 Old 41 Hwy NW, with a free shuttle service.

Sponsors for the event include LGE Community Credit Union, Watson Injury Law, JLunsford CPA, Kennesaw Museum Foundation, Kennesaw Business Association and the City of Kennesaw. The Southern Museum is located at 2829 Cherokee Street in Downtown Kennesaw (exit 273 on Interstate 75). For more information, visit www.southernmuseum. org or call 770-427-2117.



PFC HOOD E COLE

AMERICAN HERO HOME AT

LAST PFC. HOOD E. COLE ARTICLE RESEARCHED & WRITTEN BY MARY LOU CAGLE, DEC. 30, 2023 DOCUMENTS FURNISHED BY HOOD COLE'S GREAT NEPHEW, RUSTY MIDKIFF.

This is the story about a young man, Hood E. Cole, who was a Private First Class (PFC) in the U. S. Army, World War II.

Hood E. Cole, known by his family as "Hoodie", was born in Atlanta, Georgia on October 3, 1925. Hood enlisted in the U.S.Army, Ft. McPherson Army Base, Atlanta, Georgia on January 15, 1944, and was killed on January 14, 1945, in the "Battle of the Bulge" near Baerenthal, France, one day before his one-year anniversary of enlistment. PFC Cole's body was not

recovered due to heavy fighting and troop movement and was considered missing until 1951, when it was declared unrecoverable. However, now, 80 years after he enlisted, PFC Hood Cole will be buried on January 15, 2024, at 10 a.m. in the Georgia National Cemetery, Canton, Georgia, with Military Honors.

Georgia Funeral Care, in Acworth, Georgia, is honored to have been selected to serve this family while honoring the memory of a national treasure - PFC Hood E. Cole. Georgia Funeral Care will lead the procession of family members to Georgia National Cemetery in Canton, leaving at 8 a.m. from Acworth. Anyone interested in participating and honoring this American hero is invited to join the procession or meet at the cemetery.

This story is one shared by many families of World War II veterans and we would like to let you know a little more about this American Hero, Hood E. Cole.

Hood was the son of Hood C. Cole and Vera M. Cole. He was the youngest of four children. He had two older sisters, Grace and Francis Cole and one brother Wyley "Buddy" Cole. When Hood was five years old his mother died in June 1931 and six months later his father died on Christmas day, December 25, 1931. He was raised by his oldest sister, Grace Cole Garman. Times were very hard for this family as they lived during the Great Depression.

Hood enlisted - he was not drafted - in the U. S. Army, Ft. McPherson Army Base, Atlanta, Georgia, January 15, 1944; he was 18 years old. Hood was a handsome young man tall and weighed 131 pounds. He was assigned to L Company, 3rd Battalion, 276th Infantry Regiment, 70th Infantry Division. After a short training period in Florida, he and his battalion were deployed to France. His battalion was part of the many other U. S. military personnel who fought in the great Battle of the Bulge.

Based on accounts in the L company 276 history written by the late Gene Burtner, Cole was assigned to the Heavy Weapons Platoon of the company. Luther Shaffer who was assigned to the same platoon recalls that on or about January 10, 1945, an attack was launched on the hills near Baerenthal. Troops advanced against heavy resistance in the afternoon. Hood E. Cole and Luther Shaffer were detailed to escort POWs to Battalion. It was after dark when they arrived at the POW holding area and the officer in charge said he had too many guards and sent Cole back to the front.

The next morning Shaffer returned to the company and was informed that Cole became lost on his way back to the Company and walked into enemy lines and was injured. Another soldier, Arvel Whitt had crawled over to where Cole was injured and pulled him back to the American lines. He was given first aid treatment, but Cole died during the night. During this time American troops were under heavy artillery fire while in this forest. The 276th Infantry Regiment had received orders to move forward and attack. They were relieved in place by the 130th Infantry Division. It was during this troop movement, it is now believed, that Cole's body, along with the body of a fellow soldier, was left behind.

Beginning in 1947 the American Graves Registration, the organization that searched for and recovered fallen American personnel in The European Theater, searched the area regarding the

disposition of Cole's remains. PFC Cole was declared non-recoverable on May 11, 1951.

Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency (DPAA) historians have been conducting ongoing research into Soldiers missing from combat around Baerenthal, France. They found that two bodies were buried in Ardennes American Cemetery, an American Battle Monuments Commission site in Neupre', Belgium. This could be associated with Cole. The two bodies were disinterred in April 2018 and transferred to the DPAALaboratory at Offutt Air Force Base, Nebraska, for Analysis. To identify Cole's remains, scientists from DPAA used anthropological and dental analysis. Cole's niece, Betty Midkiff (Grace's daughter), was contacted by the U. S. Army for DNA samples and, as a result, his body was identified at last.

Cole's name is recorded on the Walls of the Missing at Epinal American Cemetery in

Dinoze', France along with others still missing from World War II. A rosette will be placed next to his name to indicate he has been accounted for and we will be able to honor PFC Hood E. Cole locally on January 15, 2024, as he is buried at Georgia National Cemetery. A family who has grieved for so long will be able to lay their loved one to rest.

Editors Note Mary Cagle advises that when PFC COLE was killed there were only 48 stars on our flag. See portion of flag at top of article

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DEADLINE FOR FEB 2024 ISSUE WEDNESDAY, JAN 24, 2024 PUBLISHED JAN 31, 2024

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It's easy to be a Bright Side Reporter if you have a positive, upbeat story about your family, your neighborhood, your civic group, school, church activities, community events, happening in Kennesaw or Acworth

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THIS AND THAT

CONGRATULATIONS BRENT RITTERSDORF



KBA MEMBER OF THE YEAR - BRENT **RITTERSDORF**

The Kennesaw Business Association is proud to announce Brent Rittersdorf as our 2023 winner of Business of the Year. Brent has been active with the KBA for over 10 years and has been a member of the KBA board for the past two years. He is the Chairperson for Wake Up KBA and has grown that segment to new levels of success. He is the Managing Broker for High Caliber Realty and Past President of the Marietta Business Association. Photo by Pierre R. Michael, Head Shots and Beyond (hsbatl.com).

COBB GENEALOGICAL **SOCIETY**

On Tuesday January 23, at 7 PM, the Cobb County Genealogical Society (CCGS) will be holding its next program. The speaker is Andrew J. Bramlett, a local historian from Kennesaw and a student at Kennesaw State University. He will be speaking about Georgia's former state parks. The program will be held downstairs in First Presbyterian Church of Marietta, 189 Church Street, Marietta, 30060. For more information, visit our website, https://cobbgagensoc.org/

EMAIL YOUR STORIES,

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COBB SENIOR **SERVICES** REGISTRATION

Cobb County Senior Services is gearing up for a winter quarter bursting with exciting possibilities, and we want YOU to join us! We have something for everyone. Exercise? Art? Dance? We have you covered.

Winter registration opens Monday, January 8th, at 9 am. Mark your calendars! There are two ways to get started: 1. Register online at https://secure.rec1.com/GA/cobbcounty-ga/catalog or 2. Visit any of our senior centers. Find locations and program details at cobbseniors.org

Spots fill up quickly so make sure to join us January 8 to secure you space.

IN LOVING MEMORY



JAMES PATRICK SIMONS

James Patrick Simons, age 53, of Acworth, GA, passed away after a short illness November 28, 2023. He was born In Cleveland, OH, to the late Patricia Gibson Thompson. Survivors include his father, James Simons of Cleveland, Ohio, brothers Paul D. Simons of Ramseur, NC; Richard D. Simons of Acworth, GA. and sisters Brandi L. Moore (Brad) of Fort Mill, SC; Kelli Hager (Jay) of Cleveland, OH. Patrick had 5 nieces and 3 nephews and several cousins. Per his wishes, his remains were cremated and the family will hold a celebration of life at the 2024 Gibson family reunion.

KENNESAW PROGRAMS

SENIOR LUNCHEON SERIES

Kennesaw Parks & Recreation will be hosting a spring Senior Luncheon Series at the Ben Robertson Community Center from March to May on the first Wednesday of each month for adults 50+. The programming will include a social hour, plated lunch, a brief discussion topic and conclude with Bingo and prizes. The cost is \$5 per lunch or \$12 for the series. Pre-registration is required. Registration is available online at www. kennesawparksandrec.org

BRIGHT SIDE PAGE 2

ANDREW BRAMLETT'S **LOCAL HISTORY STORIES**

At 5 AM on December 3, 1962, a train derailed near the bridge where Cobb Parkway crosses over the railroad tracks in Kennesaw. Twentyfour railcars were wrecked, and the accident was spread



over 300 yards. Some of the railcars had fallen off a twenty-foot embankment.

The rails were also damaged and were described as snapping "like toothpicks." Over \$1 million in damage was caused by the accident. To add to the chaos, two cars were carrying "various materials" of the Atomic Energy Commission (AEC).

The spokesman for the AEC said that the

materials were not damaged and there was no danger of radioactivity. What the materials were was not specified, as it was "classified information." As a precaution, the area was evacuated.

According to that day's edition of the Marietta Daily Journal, "spokesmen at the two military bases near Marietta... said they could not recall any accidents here involving nuclear weapons in recent years.'

KICK IT UP A NOTCH

The Cobb County Genealogical Society is inviting anyone interested in their family tree to "Kick It Up A Notch" with this year's educational series. The event, which will be held via Zoom on January 27, February 3, and February 10, will cover a variety of topics from cemeteries to DNA to court records. The event is \$50, but members of the society get a \$10 discount. More information about registration can be found online at CobbGaGenSoc.org/ education.

THIS N THAT ADS \$25 FOR up to 50 WORDS. \$35 FOR 51-100 WORDS. Email: Brightnews@aol.com

ACWORTH'S SENIOR LUNCHEON

Join us every third Wednesday of the month for lunch and bingo at the City of Acworth's Senior Luncheon This program is FREE to all seniors but you must RSVP to attend. Reservations will be accepted the week prior to the event. The event is the 3rd Wednesday of the Month at the Acworth Community Center (4361 Cherokee Street Acworth, Ga 30101) RSVP: (770) 917-1234

PHOTOS OR QUESTIONS

Ad rates start at \$75 a month



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COBB CHAMBER 2023 KENNESAW CITIZEN OF THE YEAR ALLISON GIDDENS, CO-PRESIDENT OF WIN-TECH

Allison Giddens is the Co-President for Win-Tech, an aerospace precision machine shop. She is actively involved in local workforce development and industry groups, including Chattahoochee Technical College Foundation Board, Leadership Cobb Alumni Association, LiveSafe Resources, Women in Manufacturing, National Tooling & Machining Association, and the Georgia Manufacturing Alliance.

As the Founder and Executive Director of the Dave Krache Foundation, she and her board of directors have helped hundreds of kids in the Kennesaw community be able to participate in sports activities by helping to cover of the costs of registration fees and equipment costs. She has volunteered with the City of Kennesaw's Grand Prix 5K race series as both a race director and Grand Prix Series Director helping non-profits raise money for their various causes.

Giddens has received several awards and recognitions including the Cobb Executive Women's Woman of Distinction Award, the Atlanta Braves Community Hero, the LiveSafe Resources' Woman of Achievement award, and Woman of Excellence, Giddens continually invests in her community with unwavering servitude, a hard work ethic, and a giving spirit.



VALENTINE'S DANCE PARTY

Spend the evening with your knights, princes and princesses experiencing all the sights and sounds of a storybook castle. Join Kennesaw Parks & Recreation for the "Storybook Soiree" Valentine's Dance Party on Saturday, February 3, 2024!

Dress your best or dress up in your best fairytale-themed outfits! Guests will be in awe as the Ben Robertson Community Center's Banquet Hall

is transformed into a storybook castle complete with beautiful decorations and maybe even a dragon or two.

Feast, play and dance the night away to all your favorite tunes spun by a professional DJ. This family-friendly event will feature an "all-you-can-eat" dinner and dessert bar, as well as plenty of memorable photo opportunities.

All adults must be accompanied by a child and all children must be accompanied by an adult. Seating will be reserved; you can list all members of your party in your registration. Tickets are \$15 per person and can be purchased at the Ben Robertson Community Center. Advance purchase is required. Tickets are non-refundable after January 27.

For more information, visit https://www.kennesaw-ga.gov/valentinesdanceparty/ or call Kennesaw Parks & Recreation at (770) 422-9714.

SENIOR LUNCHEON SERIES

Kennesaw Parks & Recreation will be hosting a spring Senior Luncheon Series at the Ben Robertson Community Center from March to May on the first Wednesday of each month for adults 50+. The programming will include a social hour, plated lunch, a brief discussion topic and conclude with Bingo and prizes. The cost is \$5 per lunch or \$12 for the series. Pre-registration is required. Registration is available online at www. kennesawparksandrec.org



BOOK SWAP

Kennesaw Parks & Recreation will host its annual Book Swap event at the Ben Robertson Community Center on Saturday, January 20, from 8 to 11 a.m.

Area residents interested in participating can drop off gently used hardcover or paperback books, music CDs, DVD movies and vinyl records January 18 and January 19, from noon to 8 p.m. and receive a ticket redeemable for the same number of items during "open swap" time on January 20. Books must have their front and back covers intact and be in good condition. CDs, DVDs and vinyl records must be in their original cases and fully operable. Magazines, software, VHS or cassette tapes, adult content, unauthorized or illegal material will not be accepted.

Volunteers are needed. For additional information, please visit https://www.kennesawga.gov/bookswap/.

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BY KRISTEN WIGGINGTON

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To schedule a tour, learn more about our scholarship opportunities, and witness firsthand our commitment to serving unique learners, please contact them directly: Call them at 678-401-5855 email them at office@ brookwoodchristian.com. Visit their website at www.brookwoodchristian.com.

Brookwood Christian School is located at 4728 Wood Street, Acworth, GA 30101

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THIS AND THAT

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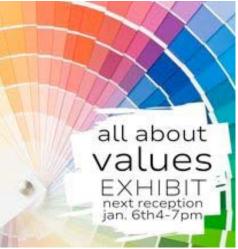
We accept short paragraphs (up to 50 words) for a fee of \$15.00. The ads (with check) may be mailed to PO Box 935, Kennesaw, 30156. Email is acceptable if a check is mailed. We do take Mastercard and Visa.

PS Home-based business ads are accepted only if they do not conflict with our display advertisers. House sales accepted only by owner.

Call us at 770-851-5469 if you have more

questions. Thanks.

ACWORTH ARTS ALLIANCE



See what our artists have come up with at our next reception on Jan. 6th from 4-7pm. We will have light refreshments and a beautiful gallery to view! More information on our Facebook page.

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COBB COUNTY **SENIOR SERVICES** REGISTRATION

Cobb County Senior Services is gearing up for a winter quarter bursting with exciting possibilities, and we want YOU to join us! We have something for everyone. Exercise? Art? Dance? We have you covered.

Winter registration opens Monday, January 8th, at 9 am. Mark your calendars! There are two ways to get started:

Register online at https://secure.rec1.

com/GA/cobb-county-ga/catalog OR
Visit any of our senior centers. Find

locations and program details at cobbseniors. org. Spots fill up quickly so make sure to join us January 8 to secure you space. We can't wait to welcome you!

LOCAL CENTERS Marietta Senior Center (770) 528-2516 **North Cobb Senior Center** (770) 975-7740 Senior Wellness Center (770)528-5355 West Cobb Senior Center (770)528-8200

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ACWORTH ADULT WINTER BASKETBALL **LEAGUE**

The Acworth Parks, Recreation and Community Resource Department is happy to announce another season of the Acworth Adult Winter Basketball League! The Recreation Division will be held in the Acworth Community Center on Mondays with start times beginning between 6:30 PM and 9:30 PM. The league will begin on Monday, February 12. The Competitive Division will be held in the Acworth Community Center on Wednesdays with start times beginning between 6:30 PM and 9:30 PM. The league will begin on Wednesday, February 14. Both will have a single elimination tournament starting the week of April 8 and Championship Night on Wednesday, April 17. The fee for this league is \$500 per team for both City residents and nonresidents. If you do not have a team, come out and participate in our Free Agent Day on Wednesday, January 17 at the Acworth Community Center at 8:00 PM. Free Agent registration is \$65 for both City residents and non-residents. The deadline to register is Wednesday, February 7. To register, or for more information, please visit acworthparksandrecreation.org.

SHARE YOUR GOOD NEWS. EMAIL TO BRIGHTNEWS@aol.com.



SHOP WITH A MUSTANG THE ORIGINAL CELEBRATES TWENTY YEARS:

On December 16th, 2023, Kennesaw Mountain High School marked its twentieth year of spreading Christmas cheer by embarking on a heartwarming mission: taking economically challenged students on a festive shopping spree. This milestone celebration radiated pure magic as the entire Mustang Nation united in a joyous effort to support the future Mustangs. The collaboration of Mane Link (Student Government), PTSA, dedicated teachers, enthusiastic students, proud alumni, and supportive business partners transformed this event into an extraordinary success.

Under the leadership of Ms. Brooker, the PTSA played a pivotal role, alongside alums spanning various years and a team of committed teachers. Together, they whipped up breakfasts of over 100 pounds of pancakes, fueling the excitement for seven hundred-plus participants and guests alike. As Mane Link students led our little Mustangs on a merry shopping adventure, the PTSA, teachers, and Mane Link orchestrated a seamless transition of the café into a festive hub.

The cafeteria was magically transformed to host Lunch with Santa, a wrapping station for gifts, and Santa's workshop—an enchanting space where our young Mustangs could select thoughtful presents for their family members. The spirit of generosity and community collaboration shone brightly, making this year's Christmas celebration an unforgettable and heartwarming experience for all involved. Gratitude abounds for the dedication and enthusiasm of everyone who contributed to making this event a resounding success!

Numbers: 186 out of 202 guests invited went Christmas Shopping; 433 Student mentors assisted our little Mustangs Shop; 80-plus support staff (many thanks); 30 plus Secret Santa gifts to KMHS Students; 26 Mane Link students worked tirelessly after school and on weekends to make this a magical event.

Thank you to Eric and Laura Hart with their Cheesey Truck - they fed 540 folks during Shop with a Mustang



CONGRATULATIONS 2023 MARIETTA CITIZEN OF THE YEAR BONNIE BUCKNER REAVIS

A self-described serial entrepreneur, Bonnie Buckner Reavis is the owner of The Brickyard, a special event venue on the Marietta Square that launched in 2010. Reavis is also the founder of the marketing and advertising firm Zenith Design Group, named one of Atlanta's Top Ten Fastest Growing Woman-Owned Firms, a Top 25 Small Business of the Year by the Cobb Chamber and The Atlanta Journal-Constitution, and a two-time recipient of the Business Community Service Award by Georgia Trend. In 2018, Reavis opened The Loft, a fine art gallery and event space on the Marietta Square.

Reavis serves as Executive Director of the Marietta Arts Council, a nonprofit group working to enrich the artistic and cultural landscape of the City of Marietta through advocacy, education, and public art. A graduate of Berry College, Reavis has been inducted into the Academy of Women Leaders, and is a graduate of Leadership Cobb Class of 2010, and cochaired the Class of 2015. She was honored with the Ernest Barrett Award during her class year in Leadership Cobb. The Ernest Barrett Award is selected at the conclusion of each class year by the co-chairs for personal extra effort and commitment to excellence as a participant in the program.

Through her vision, determination and perseverance, the arts are celebrated in the city of Marietta. The Marietta Arts Council has progressed from a small, loosely organized group to a sound, stable, and growing organization that facilitates exposure to a variety of arts in the Marietta community. Throughout her 30 years in Cobb, Reavis has continuously contributed to the wellbeing of the Marietta community through her servitude and dedication.

Marietta community. Throughout her 30 years in Cobb, Reavis has continuously contributed to the wellbeing of the Marietta community through her servitude and dedication.

Pictured above: (I to r) Betsy Madrerohon, Capital City Bank, Ron King, Capital City Bank, Sharon Mason, Cobb Chamber, Bonnie Buckner Reavis, 2023 Marietta Citizen of the Year, Mayor Steve Tumlin, City of Marietta, Greg Teague, 2023 Cobb Chamber Chairman, and Andy Gaines, The Earl and Rachel Smith Strand Theatre.

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24 JAN NC

BRIGHT SIDE PAGE 6

THE ACWORTH'S MAYOR'S DESK Happy New Year Acworth! We are excited for a wonderful 2024. With so many blessings in our city last year, we look forward to embracing all the good things to come as our community

prospers with growth in our leadership and city projects as we continue working together making Acworth the best place to call home.

This is a pretty special New Year for Acworth as after twenty-eight and sixteen years of service respectively, Butch Price and Gene Pugliese have retired from the Acworth Board of Aldermen. We will forever be grateful for their hard work and steadfast dedication to helping create a quality of life worth celebrating here in Acworth. Their contributions to our community through their time serving on the city council have helped to forge a legacy of projects that we all can appreciate. This month, we'll welcome two new members, Alderman Steve Prather and Alderman Toby Carmichael, to the Acworth Board



of Aldermen, and we're looking forward to working together to keep up all the great work to maintain our wonderful quality of life.

Join us as we celebrate Martin Luther King Jr. Day with our Acworth community! On Monday, January 15, the Acworth Achievers will host the annual Martin Luther King Jr. Day of Service Celebration in the Parkside District of Acworth. The event begins with a reception breakfast at 8:30 a.m. at the Roberts School followed by a unity walk to the Acworth Community Center. The unity walk brings us together as we walk arm in arm to show our love and respect for every member of our community. We look forward to this annual tradition celebrating the legacy of Martin Luther King Jr. After the unity walk, a program will take place at the Acworth Community Center with a service project to follow. We encourage you to turn this day off into a day on by celebrating with us! For more information on how to get involved, please visit www.acworthparksandrec.org.

As always, for the latest information on any of our events and projects, you can visit www.acworth.org, sign up for our e-news blasts on our home page, "like" City of Acworth on Facebook, or follow us on Instagram at @cityofacworthga. May God Bless You and Your Families, Tommy

MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. DAY OF **SERVICE**

The Acworth MLK Celebration and Day of Service will be held Monday, January 15, 2024. The community is welcome to join us for a light welcome breakfast at 8:30 a.m. at the Roberts School Community and Education Center. Following the welcome breakfast, the Unity Walk will begin at 9:15 a.m. and leave from the Roberts School and finish at the Acworth Community Center. Our program honoring the legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. will take place at 10:00 a.m. in the Tanyard Creek Overlook of the Acworth Community

After the program concludes, we will begin our service project helping an organization in our community. MLK Day of Service merchandise will be for sale at the Acworth Community Center leading up to and on the day of the event. All proceeds will go towards the Acworth Expanding Horizons and Acworth Achievers programs. For more information on the Acworth Expanding Horizons and Acworth Achievers programs, please visit www.acworthexpandinghorizons.

HAPPINESS IS FOUND IN THE **SIMPLEST OF THINGS!**

SPECIAL OLYMPICS **POLAR PLUNGE**

The Special Olympics Polar Plunge, hosted by the Law Enforcement Torch Run For Georgia, will take place again at Acworth Beach at Cauble Park will return on Saturday, February 24, 2024.

The purpose behind the Polar Plunge is to support and spread awareness for the 27,115 Special Olympics Georgia athletes. The Polar Plunge is the largest fundraising effort benefiting Special Olympics. Many states across the nation participate in this annual event through the efforts of their Law Enforcement Torch Run program. The Polar Plunge is an official Law Enforcement Torch Run event.

Anyone with a little guts and a warm heart wanting to support the athletes of Special Olympics Georgia is welcome to participate! Participants collect pledges from friends and family in exchange for the opportunity to jump into icy waters in the middle of winter. All proceeds collected by plungers will benefit the athletes of Special Olympics Georgia. Prizes will be awarded in several categories, including best costume, highest individual fundraiser, highest team fundraiser, and many more.

Visit www.specialolympicsga.org for more information on Special Olympics Georgia.

HORIZON ABILITY GALA

The Special Needs Development Group is in the process of planning the 2024 Horizon Ability Gala, and we would love for you to join us. The Gala will be held on Friday, March 1, 2024, at the Tanyard Creek Overlook (Acworth Community Center) and includes a unique fine dining experience, silent auction, live auction, and jazz ensemble. Proceeds from the Gala go directly to the Horizon League and will help us continue to keep registration costs down and offer quality programs. Within the last several years, businesses and residents of Acworth have donated over \$300,000 to this cause. Since 2007, the Special Needs Development Group has provided children and adults with physical, social, and cognitive disabilities the opportunity to participate in athletic, social, and cultural programs. Throughout the years, we've served more than 500 participants and continue to grow.

For more information or to buy tickets visit www.horizonabilitygala.org or call Lauren

Ham at 770-917-1234 or lham@acworth.org. The Horizon Ability Gala not only raises funds to advance its mission (to strive for a better quality of life for children and adults with special needs) but also raises awareness for our cause. On behalf of the athletes, parents, and the Special Needs Development Group, we would like to thank the community for helping improve the quality of life for our children and adults with special needs.

LINE DANCING

Learn how to line dance with knowledge, technique, and style all while staying fit! Join Leslie in a fun and friendly atmosphere where no experience is needed and all you need is a smile and your own two feet. Intermediate, beginner, and evening classes meet on Tuesdays in monthly sessions. Additional information and registration are available at www.acworthparksandrecreation.org. Click on Active Adults 55+, Scroll down to Fitness Class and open to register.

2023 ACWORTH CITIZEN OF THE YEAR

BERTHA NELSON, PRINCIPAL OF ACWORTH ELEMENTARY SCHOOL Bertha Nelson, the Principal of Acworth Elementary School, has been passionate about



serving students and families in the City of Acworth for nearly a decade. Dedicated to student success and business and community partnerships, Nelson works tirelessly to ensure all Acworth students have the opportunity to succeed. She works closely with the Acworth Elementary math team and advanced content classes to promote critical and creative thinking, advanced research skills, and accelerated academics.

Amember of the Acworth Business Association, Cobb

County Principal Advisory Committee, and a Cobb County School District Collaborative Team Leader, Nelson has created a school environment that is focused on student success and supported by strong parent and community relationships. She works closely with local businesses, churches, and members of the community to provide opportunities and experiences for Acworth students that foster positive relationships that benefit the school and the surrounding

Nelson's vision for Acworth Elementary is to continue the tradition of excellence in the community. Under Nelson's leadership, the school was named 2023 Title I Reward School, became STEM and Learning Commons certified, increased attendance by 97 percent from 2019 to 2023, and increased students scoring at the proficient and distinguished levels on the Georgia Milestones Assessment in Math and ELA. She understands the importance of prioritizing education and works every day to ensure Acworth continues to be a great place to live, work and play.

Pictured above 1-r Chamber Chairman Greg Teague, Bertha Nelson, Mayor Tommy Allegood.



BOB BROOKS NAMED ACWORTH BUSINESS ASSOCIATION'S PERSON OF THE YEAR

BY KELLY NAGEL, 2023 ABA PRESIDENT

The Acworth Business Association (ABA) is pleased to announce that Bob Brooks has been selected as the Person of the Year for his outstanding contributions to the Acworth

Bob Brooks, almost single-handedly, initiated the ABA Outreach program, providing a vital avenue for both the ABA and the Acworth community to engage in meaningful acts of service. Under Bob's leadership, the Outreach program has become a beacon of hope, offering support and assistance to those in need.

One of Bob's remarkable achievements through the outreach program was the facilitation of the cleanup and repair of a family's home, providing solace to a family coping with the tragic loss of a child to suicide. His compassion and dedication have made a lasting impact on the lives of those facing adversity.

Bob's commitment to community service extends beyond the ABA Outreach program. As a volunteer, coach, and buddy, he actively participates in fundraising for Horizon special needs sports teams, embodying the spirit of inclusivity and support for everyone in the community.

In addition, Bob has played a pivotal role in the ongoing restoration efforts of Bethal AME Church, a historic landmark in downtown Acworth. His dedication to preserving the heritage of the community showcases his passion for maintaining the cultural richness of Acworth.

Currently, Bob is spearheading the ABA Outreach adoption efforts for Christmas, ensuring that families in need receive support and joy during the holiday season.

Notably, Bob organizes, leads, schedules programming, and facilitates a free weekly networking group that promotes collaboration over competition. His efforts have created a space where businesses and community members come together to support each other's success.

Despite his many accomplishments, Bob remains humble and selfless in his service to others. He is a true light in the Acworth community, embodying the values of compassion, generosity, and community spirit.

We are thrilled to recognize Bob Brooks as the Acworth Business Association's Person of the Year. His tireless dedication to community service has had a profound impact on the lives of many in Acworth. Bob exemplifies the spirit of giving and collaboration that we value within the ABA," said Kelly Nagel, 2023 President of the Acworth Business Association.

Bob Brooks, though not seeking recognition, truly deserves all the accolades we can give him for his unwavering commitment to making Acworth a better place for everyone.

For more information about the Acworth Business Association, please visit worthBusiness.org.

Pictured above with Bob Brooks (he is the tallest in the photo), is l-r Brother Jeff Brooks, mom Rosemary Brooks, son Griffin Brooks, Bob, girlfriend Michele Thomas, daughter Ashley







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International School of Skin, Nail care & Massage Therapy introduces Cosmetology program. Graduates will be qualified to sit for the Georgia State Board Cosmetology exams with the goal of also creating SALON READY graduates. Come prepared to be trained as a Master Cosmetologist in this exciting industry.

MASSAGE THERAPY

The study of massage therapy involves the science of anatomy and physiology, massage modalities and techniques, safety procedures, and business practices. The massage therapy school provides the



marketable skills and knowledge needed to be a successful massage therapist along with training needed to be eligible to take the Massage and Bodywork Licensing Examination (MBLEx)



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BRIGHT SIDE PAGE 8

YOU AREN'T A LOST CAUSE

BY MARLON LONGACRE, ASSOCIATE PASTOR, PIEDMONT CHURCH

So Jacob was left alone, and a man wrestled with him till daybreak. When the man saw he could not overpower him, he touched the socket of Jacob's hip so that his hip was wrenched

as he wrestled with the man." Gen. 32:24-25

"I'm a lost cause, baby don't waste your time on me. I'm so damaged beyond repair. Life has shattered my hopes and dreams." I was driving back home from the gym this morning and I heard those lyrics on the radio by Jelly Roll.

The truth is I have said those words so many times in my 25 years of ministry. So many people feel that way that there a lost cause. They feel they can never be used by God because of the hurt and damage that they have caused by poor decisions. They feel that this is their lot and in life and they continue to believe that lie and waste their life.

Genesis 32 is the story of Jacob's wrestling match with God. Jacob lived life on the run. He cheated his brother out of his birth right. He cheated on his father-in-law in business. This passage gives us the four phases that God takes us through to change us.

So many when we set New Year's resolutions or what to change our life we tend to focus on the outside while God wants to focus on our inside. There are 4 phases that God takes us through to change us. Genesis 32

PHASE ONE IS A CRISIS.

I know that the point of wrestling is to pin a guy down until he cries "Uncle! I give up!" Have you ever felt like that? Have you ever struggled with something until you're in despair, till you realize you're in a no-win situation? Notice it says he struggled until daybreak. This is a long fight. It lasted all night. It's a no-win situation.

What are you wrestling with this week? What is the problem in your life that you're struggling with and you're getting tired? Have you ever considered the fact that it is God behind those circumstances? Maybe God is behind that problem, crisis, difficulty, irritation. The point is this: God often uses a crisis to get our attention **PHASE TWO IS COMMITMENT.**

v. 26 "Then the man said, 'Let me go, for it is daybreak.' But Jacob replied, 'I will not let you go unless you bless me." Jacob's attitude is persistence. He's basically saying to God, "I'm sticking with this struggle until I benefit from it! I want something good out of all of this. I've made an effort. I've put a lot of energy into this. I've made an investment of time and energy in this struggle and I'm not going to give The fact is, God does use a crisis to get our attention, but even after He's gotten our attention, He doesn't solve the problem immediately. He waits for a while. Why? God often waits to resolve a problem in our lives because He wants to see if we really mean business. Am I serious about change or is this some passing whim?

PHASE THREE IS CONFESSION.

v. 27 "The man asked him, `What is your name?' `Jacob', he answered." Why did God ask his name? Because God wanted him to admit who he was.

The lesson is that I will never be able to change my weaknesses until I admit them. To who? First to yourself. Then to God. Then to at least one other significant person in your life. That's difficult. But the fact is, God won't work in my problem until I admit that I have one **PHASE 4 IS COOPERATION**

We've got to cooperate with what God wants to do in our lives. vs. 28-39 "Then the man said, 'Your name will no longer be Jacob, but Israel, because you have struggled with God and with men and have overcome. Then he blessed him there. So Jacob called the place Peniel, saying, 'It is because I saw God face to face'" The moment Jacob began admitting what he was and began to cooperate with God, He began to change.

When God wants to change you, He starts with the way you see yourself. Because that

affects everything.

The lesson of Jacob is You don't have to stay the same! You can change. You are not a lost cause. It is never too late for God to do something new in your life. If God can change Jacob, He can change anybody. One of my favorite verses in the Bible is in Romans, "Jacob have I loved..." If God could love Jacob with all of his hang-ups, I figure He can love us with all our hang-ups. God named a nation after this guy. It is called Israel.



JANUARY'S LOVE DOES PROJECTS.

January's Love Does is all about the Souper Bowl of Giving. Two things are needed this month for our local shelters. Soups and laundry detergent. All soups brought in this month will go to restock Storehouse Ministries. All laundry detergent brought in will go to front-line charities such as Special Needs Cobb, Cobb Center for Young Adults, and Children's Haven.

All financial donations given this month to Love Does will be split between scholarships for students to go to camp this summer and to help with sensory rooms for the four elementary schools that Piedmont will be partnering with in February. A truck filled with Love Does Bags - ready for delivery!

COSMETOLOGY PROGRAM ADDED TO INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL OF SKIN, NAIL CARE AND MASSAGE THERAPY

The Bright Side welcomes Pam Jones and her new Cosmetology Program available for all interested students who wish to learn Cosmetology. The school is just a short drive to Sandy Springs and offers, Day, and Evening schedules. The school is Accredited and Licensed. Financial Aid is available for those that qualify. For more information about the school call 404-843-1005 EXT-113 or visit their website at www.issnmtschool.com.

The International School of Skin Care, Nail Care and Massage Therapy Educators and Students are honored to offer spa services to the general public. The ISSNMT Spa services are performed by students with instructorsupervision. The goal is to provide you with a pleasant experience for both your body and your wallet. Students appreciate the opportunity to pamper you while they have the opportunity to practice their skills.

MARIETTA NEWS



"LEARN TREE MAINTENANCE'

"Tree Maintenance" on January 13, 2024 at Elizabeth Porter Park, 370 Montgomery St. Marietta, 30060. 9:30am Sign-in and refreshments; 10:00am-12pm Workshop to Maintain Trees. This will be an instructional training event for volunteers over 18. The volunteers will be mulching and doing structural pruning. Start time is 9:30am. Please call 770-424-4664 to pre-register: please leave your name, phone number and age please. Tools and refreshments provided. Dress for outdoor weather.

Please join us as we do an instructional training for volunteers and prune trees. Adults over 18 must call to pre-register with name, phone number and age. Dress for the weather. Tools and gloves included. Donuts, hot chocolate and hot coffee provided. In case of bad weather please call 770-424-4664 for weather updates and rescheduled date.

POP-IN FOR FAMILY FUN BOARD GAMES & PUZZLES

The Marietta History Center will be hosting its monthly Pop-In event on Saturday, January 20th from 10am-4pm. This is a monthly event that takes place on the 3rd Saturday of every month. Pop-In's provide children and their families the opportunity to interact with the museum through themed activities and crafts. Join us in, January for crafts and activities geared towards Board Games & Puzzles. Pop-In for Family Fun is generously sponsored by Cauthorn, Nohr, and Sanders. This sponsorship allows this program to be FREE for all to enjoy.

Marietta History Center, 1 Depot

Street, Marietta, GÅ 30060









GEORGIA PHOTOGRAPHY JURIED EXHIBITION AN EXHIBITION OF GEORGIA PHOTOGRAPHERS JURIED BY MCMA

JANUARY 6 - MARCH 17, 2024

The Marietta Cobb Museum of Art presents our first MCMA- juried exhibition of photography. Focusing solely on photographers within the state of Georgia, this exhibition presents a selection of fine-art photography from over 400 submissions. Including portrait, landscape, still life, abstract, and street photography, this exhibition divulges Georgia photographers' wide breadth of skill and subject matter.

Opening Reception from 6:00 to 8:00 PM on Saturday January 6, 2024. Free for MCMA

members and \$10 for guests—admission paid upon entry. Hors d'oeuvres served and cash/ credit card bar. Membership can be purchased at the event. Featuring photography from over 60 photographers.







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ALLATOONA GIRLS WRESTLING

The COBB Invitational was

BRIGHT SIDE PAGE 10

held at Allatoona High School on December 16. Seventeen teams from around the county participated. Two Allatoona Girls won their weight class, while one placed 3rd. Allatoona girls picture l-r Chloe Wyatt Champion 140LB Brooke French champion 120LB Iris Ritchie 3rd place 130LB Congratulations ladies.

Wrestling coach is Jacob Longacre

MEDICARE. WHAT'S IT ALL ABOUT?

SUBMITTED BY J. BOBBY HAWKINS, HAWKINS INSURANCE AGENCY

Who can get Medicare? U.S. citizens and legal residents can qualify for medicare. (Legal residents must live in the U.S. for at least 5 years.)

To qualify you must be: 65 or older, younger than 65 must have qualifying disability, and any age if diagnosed with end stage renal disease or ALS.

NOW LETS GET TO THE MEAT AND POTATOES OF MEDICARE.

If you're turning 65 you have a decision to make. Should I stay with original Medicare or look at an Advantage plan? Or If I am still working and on an employer plan, can I put off making a decision until I retire?

Let's assume you have retired and want to get coverage thru medicare. If you receive Social Security or Railroad retirement benefits you will be automatically enrolled in Medicare Parts A and B. otherwise you will need to enroll your self directly with Social Security. If you or your spouse has at least a total of 40 quarters (10 years) paid into the Medicare system you and for most people depending on income Part A of Medicare is FREE. Part B however is not FREE. Part B has a premium. 2024 Medicare Part B premium will be for most people \$174.70. You must be entitled to Part A and or enrolled in Part B to enroll in a Part C- Advantage plan or a Medicare supplement plan.

Now, here is where it can get a little confusing. Medicare parts A and B only cover about 80% of your medical cost. You will be responsible for the balance of 20%. How will

Medicare has given us two options to cover the GAP (as we call it) in what Parts A and B covers and what our cost are. One option is to get a Medicare supplement plan (Medigap). The other option is a Part C- Advantage plan.

These two options are not the same. Simply put, but certainly not all you need to know. Medicare supplement plans come with a premium. Advantage plans usually have 0 premium options. (Pay as you go) copays, coinsurance, deductibles

The one you choose will depend on your budget and the way you want to receive your

A local licensed agent can help you to make the choice that works for you.

This article only covers a small part of what you need to discuss with the agent you

If you want to learn more: Visit medicare.gov, ssa.gov and shiphelp.org (State Health Insurance Asst Program (SHIP).

To learn more about Medicare insurance and which plan is right for you contact J. Bobby Hawkins at 770-367-4600. His office is available all year to help clients cut thought all the noise and find the right supplement or advantage plan for their needs. We will explain all options and let the client decide which is best for them. We know this decision can be a tough one, but we will make it CLEARER...

HOW TO MAKE YOUR RESOLUTIONS STICK BY DR. AISHA REDMOND, MD, KAISER PERMANENTE OF GEORGIA SET REALISTIC AND ACHIEVABLE GOALS

Ambitious objectives and resolutions often become overwhelming and make it difficult to identify a clear path forward, but manageable, concrete goals provide the clarity needed to

assess progress and stay committed. A few ways to set realistic goals include:
1. Identifying priorities: When you identify what matters most, it narrows your focus to strive for one goal, greatly increasing the opportunity for success.

2. Being specific: Defining your goal with tangible milestones and measurable outcomes makes tracking progress less overwhelming and provides encouragement every step of the

3. Setting manageable targets: Divide your main goal into smaller, more manageable tasks and remember to celebrate along the way. Recognizing small victories boosts confidence and motivation, making it easier to tackle challenges and achieve the goal.

By incorporating these elements into your goal-setting process, you can create a comprehensive and sustainable approach to achieve resolutions and increase the likelihood of success.

DEVELOP A PLAN

To maximize success, consider crafting a detailed plan outlining steps required to reach desired outcomes. This level of preparation provides direction and a sense of

While all plans look different, they are often comprised of a few achievable steps. For instance, when trying to eat healthier, your plan could include finding healthier alternatives, creating colorful meals, adding healthier food into your diet and more.

PRACTICE PATIENCE AND POSITIVITY

The habits you want changed took years to develop, so it's important to practice patience when working toward a drastic lifestyle adjustment, especially when it comes to your health. Patience will give you the grace needed to stay committed, even when you may not see immediate results. A positive mind-set is also key to staying motivated and enthusiastic about your resolutions.

SEEK ACCOUNTABILITY AND ASSISTANCE

As humans, we often dislike the process of asking for help. As you change your lifestyle and behavior, it is important to reach out to friends or family members. They are a great support system and serve as a reminder about why we chose to change in the first place.



THE FEEL GOOD FARM MCKENNA VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

BY FRANCOISE J. DEMANANCHE

So, late in life I discovered I loved horses, and they became my passion (after cats, of course). I had moved to a new city and searched for somewhere to volunteer, when this opportunity came up to assist special needs children with horse riding/involvement, also known as Hippotherapy. As soon as I volunteered there twice, I just loved the place, the people, and also got to know some of the kids pretty well.

In the next two moves, (Texas, then Georgia) I was able to find more opportunities to help with the same theme, whether it was Hippotherapy or Equine Therapy, which focuses on addressing mental health, with patients caring for the horse. Either way, I was and am delighted; my current volunteering opportunity here in Georgia is McKenna Farms Therapy

I find it's my happy place; I have fun in the sun, have made great friendships, and also threw in the unplanned fitness! I have had the opportunity to take on roles as a Feeder to the horses, a Sidewalker, a Leader, help with fundraising, and more.

Mckenna Farms Volunteers provide the support for the therapists and instructors to help the kids achieve their goals and have a better life. It is so rewarding to see an otherwise non-verbal child come out of their shell while on a horse ride. Their little eyes open wide

and the motion of the body leaning forward facilitates their verbal communication. At the same time, the constant natural balancing of the body in the saddle works their core.

Also, the constant rhythm of the horse's walk helps some of our little clients relax and gather their thoughts better. We take them on a trail ride through our forest and they get to look up and all around them, at their outdoor classroom. The horses are super calm, their fur soft, their bodies warm. The kids exclaim and wonder at the size of the horse's eyes. At the end of a session, it's actually a treat to give the horses treats, which could be intimidating, but a sense of triumph and accomplishment is achieved altogether. What a great day!

McKenna Farms is always looking for volunteers; we have 16 horses, service 700 children a week and would love to fill every vacant spot to give the children the opportunity to continue to grow and bloom in whatever situation they're in.

Come find your Happy Place- this is not a desk job; it's not even a job, it's an epic adventure! And I just want to bring one horse home with me. Just one!



BUSINESS ASSOCIATIONS DECEMBER CALENDARS KENNESAW BUSINESS ASSOCIATION

TUES JAN 9 KBA MONTHLY LUNCHEON - 11:00 Join us for our program KENNESAW STATE OF THE CITY presented by Mayor Derek Easterling at The KSU Professional Education Building at 3333 George Busbee Dr. Kennesaw. Caterer: Copelands. Sponsor Loud Security.RSVP at kennesawbusiness.org. **TUES JAN 16 KBA AA5** at the GOVERNOR'S GUN CLUB, 1005 Cobb Place Blvd.

Kennesaw.sponsored in part by Taylor Chastain, Up, Up, and Away Junk Hauling. 5:30-7:30 pm. Members FREE, GUESTS \$5.00. RSVP at kennesawbusiness.org.

ACWORTH BUSINESS ASSOCIATION

THU JAN 11 ABAALIVE AFTER 5 Hosted by Center Street Tavern, 4381 Center Street, Acworth. The fun begins at 5:30. Members Free, Guests \$5.00. RSVP acworthbusiness.

THURS FEB 1 ABA MONTHLY LUNCHEON - 11:30 Join us for our program featuring ACWORTH'S STATE OF THE CITY presented by Mayor Tommy Allegood at Acworth Community Center. RSVP acworthbusiness.org. Catered by ADRIENNE'S DELECTABLES.

BRIGHT SIDE CALENDAR OF EVENTS

The Bright Side Newspaper maintains a calendar of events online in their Digital Newspaper at www.brightsidenewspapernews.com. Check this site out - many stories and a great way to keep up with our local events

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Celebrate the best culinary superstars and beverage experts, farmers, artisans, live musicians and more from Georgia and the South. Experience a variety of events including: Cobb Life Magazine's "Best of Cobb", "Fired-Up" an all-inclusive, food and drink tasting event, "Savor" featuring unlimited beer, wine and spirits tastings, a Georgia Celebrity Chef Stage, VIP Lounge, artisans, and live music and finally, "Sunday/Funday" with a Kids Zone, VIP Lounge Oyster Roast, live music and more!









Food, drink, music & more! Buy Early & Save!

FRIDAY, MARCH 22 FIRED-UP

Winter (Jan/Feb): \$75 March/Gate: \$85

SATURDAY, MARCH 23 SAVOR

Winter (Jan/Feb): \$79 March/Gate: \$99

SATURDAY, MARCH 23 VIP LOUNGE AT SAVOR

Winter (Jan/Feb): \$150 March/Gate: \$165

SUNDAY, MARCH 24 FAMILY DAY

Winter (Jan/Feb): \$20 March/Gate: \$25

SUNDAY, MARCH 24 OYSTER ROAST VIP LOUNGE

Winter (Jan/Feb): \$119 March/Gate: \$139

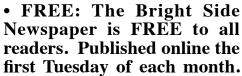
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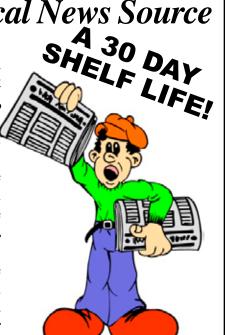
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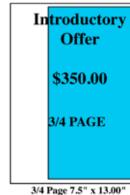


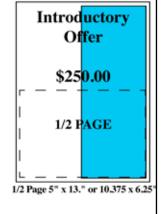
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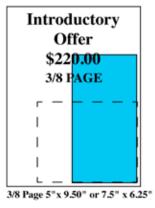
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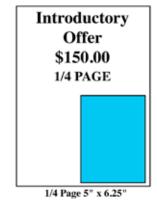
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