

The Bright Side™

Volume 33 No 2

SERVING ACWORTH, KENNESAW, MARIETTA SINCE 1992

FEB 2024



TEAM KENNESAW, HITS IT OUT OF THE PARK BY DEREK EASTERLING, CITY OF KENNESAW MAYOR

The growth and development we are experiencing in Kennesaw is driven by people who are attracted to the high quality of life, outstanding schools, low taxes, and plentiful employment opportunities established by a winning team. This team includes a multitude of businesses, your Chamber and its leadership, school boards and officials, local government offices and staff, all working toward a common goal – winning!

Scientifically, we know that it is difficult to find success if you cannot work as a team. In our current market economy, 70 percent of all jobs are service-related jobs which involve interacting with others. We need to work well with others to achieve success in terms of attaining growth and achieving financial success.

The challenges we face can lead to destruction or to success –As the leader of the team, I tell you, Team Kennesaw chooses success and we will lead the way to the future working together for the win!

FINANCES – STRATEGIC PLAN FROM 2016

When I was first elected Mayor, the Council and I adopted a five-year long-term strategic plan focusing on seven specific areas, including the Goal of Promoting economic vitality and positioning Kennesaw for the future – the strong financial health of the City is a direct reflection of the steps we outlined in 2016 – which included:

Work closely with City Council, Human Resources, Finance Department and staff to stabilize and enhance the long-range financial viability of the City defined benefit pension plan and medical benefits. Make recommendations for Mayor and Council to consider increasing revenue and building reserves. Develop processes to provide the critical data needed to better support budget decisions, organizational structure, and resources.

As a result of these efforts, I am proud to tell you that as we begin 2024, the City of Kennesaw has:

Healthy Reserves - Continued to build our reserve fund – from borrowing a \$4 million TAN in 2016 to approximately a \$21 million reserve by September 2023.

Balanced Operations – the City of Kennesaw received its second Moody's upgrade in two years from Aa1 to Aa2

Strong Budget Management - The City Manager's office has drafted two financial policies to maintain consistency and transparency of the City's budget process and management of cash and investments:

The Budget and Fund Balance Policy clearly defines our various funds and fund balance classifications. *The Cash & Investment Management Policy* describes our general objectives such as safety, liquidity, and yield. It also defines how the City addresses standards of care, safekeeping and custody, and our investment parameters.

We have done what we set out to do!



BECCA'S CLOSET AT NCHS

North Cobb High School's Becca's Closet is open to all students in middle or high school whether you attend North Cobb or not. While you may not be going to the prom there are several other party events a young lady may be attending. Eighth grade dance, a military ball, a Quinceanera, or any where formal wear is the dress of the evening. Even if you are a chaperone to one of these events - Becca's Closet has just the dress for you. The dresses are FREE. NCHS's prom is coming in March.

Visit <https://www.beccascloset.org/chapters/north-cobb-high-school/>, answer the questions on the screen and submit. Someone from the chapter will contact you.



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.



MIKE PLANT 2024 CHAIRMAN OF COBB CHAMBER

The Cobb Chamber celebrated its many accomplishments of 2023 at the 82nd Annual Dinner celebration, presented by Wellstar, on Jan. 27 at the Cobb Galleria Centre. Over 1,100 business and community leaders attended the black-tie optional dinner affair,

The evening included a robust program. Outgoing Chairman, Greg Teague of Croy Engineering, passed the leadership to 2024 Chairman Mike Plant of the Atlanta Braves.

During the evening, Teague presented several awards to honor individuals who have made significant contributions to enhance the quality of the Chamber's programming and the quality of life in Cobb



FREEDOM CHURCH NAMED ABA BUSINESS OF THE YEAR

Today at the Acworth Business Association's January luncheon, Mayor Allegood presented Freedom Church with the ABA Business of the Year award noting their dream of serving the Acworth community and thanking them for their years of service to the city and participation in City of Acworth events. Freedom Church and its congregation has been an active member of the City of Acworth community events. Freedom Church has supported the yearly Acworth Easter Egg hunt for over 10 years. The church has collected and distributed food for our underserved community, focusing on our children that need lunches during school breaks and summer. They made sure that everyone was fed during Covid. Pastor Todd Lollis is also an active member of the Acworth Business Association, having served as Chair of the Education Committee for several years - they work closely with our schools. Pastors Austin and Todd both serve on the ABA Board of Directors. Pictured above left - right are Pastor Austin Porter, Joni Lollis, Pastor Todd Lollis, Pastor J. R. Lee and Devin Lee.

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DEADLINE FOR MAR 2024 ISSUE
WEDNESDAY, FEB 28, 2024
PUBLISHED MAR 2, 2024

BE A BRIGHT SIDE REPORTER

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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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welcome too) Call 770-851-5469 for more
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THIS AND THAT

MARIETTA TREE KEEPERS FEBRUARY EVENT

Marietta Tree Keepers invites volunteers of all ages to help plant trees at the Marietta City Club Golf Course & Hilton Conference Center on Saturday, February 17th at 9:00am. Tools and refreshments provided. Dress for outdoor weather.

Please join us as we plant trees to reforest our community. Grab a friend or a family member and donate your Saturday morning to help Marietta Tree Keepers put more trees in the ground. Dress for the weather, which is expected to be cold. 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.

This event is open to the public of all ages and is free. The Marietta City Club Golf Course & Hilton Conference Center is located at 510 Powder Springs Street, Marietta, Georgia 30064.

Members of the Marietta Tree Keepers have been promoting the value of trees to the community since it was founded in 2002.

THE HEALING POWER OF RUNNING

BY JENNIFER BONN



In her book, *The Healing Power of Running*, Jennifer Bonn shows the reader the power that running has to heal us mentally, physically, and spiritually. The author describes how running has saved her in all three areas, and she has put together the stories of other runners as a testament to how running can heal you. Jennifer also wants readers to realize how accessible running is, and that everyone can adjust it to fit different goals and needs. Running can make you feel powerful, peaceful, and hopeful, all while the running community you will meet will make you feel accepted. Jennifer also wants people to see how social running can be. She tells stories about meeting her best friends through running. The book also includes how to start your healing journey.

The stories in the book describe the resilience of people faced with a challenge who use running to prove they are stronger than that challenge. The challenges include fighting cancer, addiction, M.S., self-esteem, and dealing with those difficult moments in life.

The Healing Power of Running is available on Amazon at <https://a.co/d/bap950M>. Mrs. Bonn is also the author of a self-help book called *101 Tips to Lighten Your Burden*, and a children's book called *What I Hope for You, A Grandmother's Wishes*. Both books are available on Amazon.

COBB GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY

General Meeting February 27 @ 7:00 - 8:15 pm at the First Presbyterian Church, 189 Church Street, Marietta, GA Topic: The Genealogy Roll-up: The Essential Shortcut Every Genealogist Needs Speaker: Jennifer Dondero Description: Every genealogist can aspire to do great genealogy. But how do you find the time for all those "things" you've been told you should be doing: planning, tracking, note-taking, analyzing, and reporting? There's one shortcut you need, and it's so easy to get started. For more information, visit our website, <https://cobbgagensoc.org/>

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STORIES, PHOTOS OR
QUESTIONS
TO: Brightnews@aol.com**

Ad rates start at \$75 a month

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.

FOR THE LOVE OF PICKLEBALL EVENT

Kennesaw Parks & Recreation will host the Second Annual "For the Love of Pickleball" event, an open house event for pickleball players in the community, on Wednesday, February 14, from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. at the Recreation Center at Adams Park. The event will feature nine indoor courts, a DJ and giveaway prizes. This is a FREE event. Stop by to show off your skills or learn a new one.

ANDREW BRAMLETT'S LOCAL HISTORY STORIES

During Acworth's long history, there have been a number of newspapers that have been published about local news, the Bright Side being the most recent. One of the oldest was the Acworth Post.



In 1888, fifteen-year-old C. M. Williams started the Mineral Post (sometimes referred to in early accounts as the Acworth Post). The paper was named after a well that once sat on Park Street. Though no copies of this paper under the name Mineral Post are known to exist, other North Georgia papers reprinted notices from it, so small new items can still be found. One of these examples was published in the Kennesaw Gazette, a railroad newspaper, in September 1888: "Grapes were never so fine around Acworth as they are this season." The paper was known for its quality across the state, and the last record of the Mineral Post name was in 1894. After that, it is referred to as both the Acworth Post and the Four County Post.

The Acworth Post would remain in publication for decades. According to the November 24, 1920 edition of the Cobb County Times, the paper was published weekly and had a subscription cost of \$1.50. There were occasional editorial "quarrels" between the Marietta Daily Journal and the Post, but overall, the paper seems to have been quite prosperous and respected. It closed for good around World War II. In the 1960s, the name was revived for an Acworth-focused publication of the Marietta Daily Journal, which was renamed the Acworth Neighbor in 1968.

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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 CITY of Acworth seniors and \$10.00 for non residents. 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

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KENNESAW’S TOUCH-A-TRUCK - MARCH 2ND

Touch-A-Truck is an exciting and educational annual community event hosted by the City of Kennesaw’s Parks & Recreation, Public Works and Police Departments. This year’s event is Saturday, March 2nd from 10 AM – 2 PM in Adams Park. Get up-close and personal with larger-than-life trucks, heavy construction and public safety equipment, cool cars and specialty vehicles. Meet vehicle owners and operators, and have a blast watching your kids touch, climb on and interact with this awesome exhibition of transportation. Lots of vehicles will be on display, along with a variety of other children’s activities. Admission is free. Food and beverages will be available for purchase. If you or your company has a unique vehicle that you’d like to bring out, please call (770) 422-9714 or visit our website, www.kennesawparksandrec.org to fill out the form.

KENNESAW PARKS & REC’S SUMMER CAMP EXPO

Kennesaw Parks & Rec’s Summer Camp Expo is happening in conjunction with Touch-A-Truck on March 2nd from 10 AM – 2 PM in Adams Park. The camp instructors will be on site so attendees can meet them and learn more about the camps offered. We have a variety of camps on site including representation from Camp Venture and Middle School Summer Program, Kennesaw Parks & Rec’s own camps. Those who register on site will be eligible to receive a 10% early bird discount on their registration.

SOLE KIDZ REGISTRATION

This program is a fun, flexible running program designed to get kids in the community active! The mission of Kennesaw Sole KIDZ is to promote a healthy, active lifestyle to the Kennesaw youth through a running based program. Meeting location is the at the picnic pavilions at Swift-Cantrell Park.

Registration includes all sessions, 2 - 5K registrations from the Kennesaw Grand Prix Series (MAY 11 and June 8) and a T-shirt.. Parent Meeting: Tuesday, March 12 from 6:30 - 7:30 PM at the Ben Robertson Community Center (2753 Watts Drive, Kennesaw, GA 30144) Pace night is March 14 and

Run Nights at Swift-Cantrell Park: March 19 - June 8 Tuesdays & Thursdays from 6:30 - 7:30 PM Required - Sole KIDZ Shirts and running shoes with socks and bring a water bottle.

Register online at <https://secure.rec1.com/GA/kennesaw-ga/catalog>, click on Youth-Sports and and scroll down to Sole KIDZ running program.



AND THE WINNER IS!

Our seniors were judges in North Cobb’s Senior Center’s version of the cooking contest, “Chopped”! This fierce competition among our center staff went down in three thrilling rounds, with each round testing the chefs’ culinary skills. Brandy Marchant, pictured above, was the overall winner, with Sandy and Cathy getting “chopped.”

The contestants had to make three items out of 12 ingredients listed. Brandi made zucchini dip, white chicken chili, and strawberry banana cake (pictured above).

A big thank you to Lisa from Dogwood Forest for sponsoring this fun activity - it was a delicious day for all involved!

If you are 55 or older, consider joining the folks at the North Cobb Senior Center. Its free to join and several events offered are free. Lectures, classes, off site activities are just some of the events offered. Visit CobbCounty.Org, select Directory, Alphabetical and scroll down to Senior Services for listings. Once there select Register On Line (under the photo) and then select North Cobb Senior Center. You can also call the center at 770-975-7740 for more information.

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COME LEARN A NEW SPORT

Imagine gliding across the water in a 40 ft boat with 20 other people. That is what happens on a dragon boat. If you are interested in learning a new sport then come out to our 1st meeting of the new season. Our planning meeting for the coming year of the Acworth-Cobb Dragon Boat crew. Saturday, February 10, 2024 12:30pm -2:00pm at the Acworth Community Center.

GOOD RASCAL DOG TRAINING

Certified Dog Trainer offers Private Dog Training in your home or other mutually convenient location. Positive, gentle methods make training fun for dog and owner. Licensed, Bonded and Insured. For details, see our Website: www.mygoodrascal.com To set up a consultation, Email: gary@mygoodrascal.com or call 770-401-7945.

BROOKWOOD CHRISTIAN SPRING TEA

Brookwood Christian School invites the community to mark their calendars for their Annual Spring Tea & Silent Auction, on April 25, 2024. Hosted at the picturesque Cedars Weddings & Events from 11:30 AM to 1:30 PM, this event not only promises an elegant affair but also aims to make a lasting impact on the lives of students facing language processing challenges. This event is a fundraiser for their school's reading programs, specifically tailored for students grappling with dyslexia and other language processing disorders.

Seating for the Annual Spring Tea is limited to 50 people, ensuring an intimate gathering where connections can flourish. Tickets are available at \$40 each, and interested attendees can secure their spots by texting TEA to 404-491-7724.

Brookwood Christian School is actively seeking auction items. Those interested in contributing can reach out directly to office@brookwoodchristian.com.

BECCA'S CLOSET

North Cobb High School's Becca's Closet is open to all students in middle or high school whether you attend North Cobb or not. While you may not be going to the prom there are several other party events a young lady may be attending. Eighth grade dance, a military ball, a Quinceanera, or any where formal wear is the dress of the evening. Even if you are a chaperone to one of these events - Becca's Closet has just the dress for you. The dresses are FREE. NCHS's prom is coming in March.

Visit <https://www.beccascloset.org/chapters/north-cobb-high-school/>, answer the questions on the screen and submit. Some one from the chapter will contact you.

GARDENSHOW

Join us for the Acworth Cultural Arts 2024 Garden Show and Symposium on February 24, 2024, from 8:30 am to 3:30 pm at Roberts School Community Center (4681 School Street, Acworth, GA 30101). Explore diverse gardening topics with expert speakers, covering horticulture, landscaping, and sustainable practices. Engage in Q&A sessions, connect with fellow enthusiasts, and enhance your gardening journey. Tickets are \$40, inclusive of registration and a delectable boxed lunch provided by 2Go! Really Good Food. Choose from Greek salad, pimento cheese on croissant, chicken salad on croissant, or turkey & provolone on a ciabatta bun. Doors open at 8:30 am. Don't miss this opportunity to cultivate your passion for gardening in the Acworth community! (tickets non-refundable). Tickets available at www.acworthculturalarts.org.

SCHOOL CHOICE NOTICE

Parents/guardians of a student zoned to attend a District school may apply for an HB 251 transfer in accordance with Georgia's Quality Basic Education Act and District Administrative Rule JBCD-R in order to pursue a transfer to another District school.

Available space at a school is based on permanent classroom space. In the event that the number of transfer requests exceeds the available capacity of a school, the District will conduct a random lottery.

The 2024-2025 school year application window is open from January 22, 2024, through February 16, 2024.

For more information about this program, including instructions on how to apply, please visit our School Choice Transfer page. <https://www.cobbk12.org/page/8755/school-choice-transfers>

DRAGON BOAT FESTIVAL

The Dragons are coming!! The 7th Annual Acworth-Cobb Dragon Boat Festival will take place on Saturday, May 4, 2024, 9 am - 4pm at Dallas Landing Park. There will be a meeting for all people interested in having a team at the event or being a sponsor on Saturday, February 10, 2024. The meeting will be at the Acworth Community Center, Cherokee St., Acworth, 10:30am- 12:00pm. Looking forward to seeing you.

RIBBON CUTTING

There will be a ribbon cutting for Vino Market on February 16th at 5pm. Vino Market is located in Historic Acworth 4823 S. Main St.

THIS AND THAT

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Call us at 770-851-5469 if you have more questions. Thanks.

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NORTH COBB ROTARY

North Cobb Rotary meets at Copelands New Orleans every Thursday morning at 7:30 a.m., feel free to stop by in the coming weeks for great food, great fellowship

PARKING ON THE SQUARE

The City of Marietta is pleased to announce that it has made it easier to locate both free and paid parking lots on and around the Marietta Square.

This parking map information will benefit everyone and make parking hassle-free. Please visit mariettaga.gov, type downtown parking in the search box as you head to the Square to find the best parking spot for your visit.

**SHARE YOUR GOOD NEWS.
EMAIL TO BRIGHTNEWS@AOL.COM.**

FREE PROGRAM ON FINDING AND USING
LOCAL SENIOR SERVICES

ACAP Cobb & Cherokee will offer its inaugural program on February 15, 2024, at Covenant Presbyterian Church, Kapperman-Williams Hall, 2881 Canton Road, Marietta, GA. The program will focus on “Finding and Using Senior Services in Your Local Community.” Finding appropriate agencies and professionals to address senior services and support can overwhelm adult children, their parents, and other family members. Knowing where to go and whom to contact before a crisis is essential in helping adult-children and other family caregivers feel more informed and less stressed. Participants will become more knowledgeable about the full array of senior services and resources available in the local community. The program begins at 6:30 p.m.

Speakers for the program are Kathy Lathem and Deanna (De) Gale. Lathem is Strategic Partnerships Liaison at Cobb County Senior Services. Gale is Resource Coordinator, Cherokee County Senior Services.

ACAP Cobb & Cherokee will meet on the third Thursday of each month at Covenant Presbyterian Church, Kapperman-Williams Hall, 2881 Canton Road, Marietta, GA. For more information, or to register for this and other upcoming free programs, visit www.acapcommunity.org/events, or contact Mr. Christian Kuswita, ACAP Cobb & Cherokee chapter co-coordinator, at cobbcherokee@acapcommunity.org.

ACAP Cobb & Cherokee is a chapter of ACAPcommunity.org, a 501(c)3 non-profit organization established in 2012. ACAP chapters are based in local communities and led by local professionals who understand the joys and challenges of the caregiving experience. ACAP Cobb & Cherokee will provide a variety of monthly programs that offer information, resources, support, and community for adult-children as they care for their aging parents and for themselves. There is no cost to attend monthly programs, and all who are caring for older adults are welcome.

ACWORTH ARTS ALLIANCE NEWS

You’re Invited to our Open House, Saturday, February 3, 4:00-7:00pm. featuring our All About Values Art Exhibit. Light refreshments will be available. All works are available for sale...they can go home with you that night if you wish!

All About Values Exhibit will run through Feb. 24. The Art House is located at 4425 Cherokee St. Acworth. Is open Tues-Sat 12-6.

SENIOR SERVICES’ 2024 EXPO & MARKETPLACE

Vendor registration is open for Senior Services’ 2024 Expo & Marketplace. This annual event is a great opportunity for businesses and non-profit organizations to showcase their products and services to adults in Cobb County. The 2024 Expo & Marketplace will be held on Wednesday, April 24. 10:00am-2:30 pm at the Cobb County Civic Center, 548 South Marietta Pkwy.

Vendor Fees are \$250 Business; \$100 Non-profit. To receive a vendor application, please send email to expo@cobbcounty.org . Application & payment must be received by Friday, March 1st.

3RD ANNUAL GEORGIA FOOD + WINE
FESTIVAL

PRESENTED BY GEORGIA GROWN
MARCH 22-24, 2024

The Georgia Food + Wine Festival, presented by Georgia Grown, will celebrate the best of Georgia and the South, from its culinary superstars and beverage experts, to farmers, artisans, live musicians and more.

The Georgia Food + Wine Festival is thrilled to partner with Georgia Grown in our third year. Georgia Grown will be featuring their members in a variety of ways, including: The Georgia Grown Member Village and The Georgia Grown Culinary Demo Stage

The variety of events for all taste buds include the legendary barbecue event, “Fired-Up” an all-inclusive food and drink tasting event. Saturday’s main event, “Savor” offers hundreds of beer, wine and spirits tastings, a Georgia Celebrity Chef Stage, VIP Lounge, artisans, shopping, and live music. “Sunday/Funday” is the budget friendly and family-friendly day, with free Kids Zone, VIP Lounge Oyster Roast, live music, Georgia’s Best Whiskey Cocktail Challenge, and more.

PLEASE NOTE: ALL EVENTS ARE FOR AGES 21 AND OLDER,
EXCEPT SUNDAY/FUNDAY (SEE BELOW)

Sunday, March 24 ~ 12:00 - 5:00pm “Sunday/Funday” Presented by Atlanta News First \$20 Winter Rate(Jan/Feb) | \$25 March/GateA Family Friendly fantastic festival finale with live music, shopping, a variety of delectable restaurants, food trucks, a Georgia Grown Member Village, with a variety of beverages for purchase. Also catch Georgia’s Best Whiskey Cocktail Challenge, with bartenders competing live for cash prizes. This event will also feature a silent auction with all proceeds benefitting SafePath Children’s Advocacy Center. This is a family friendly event with something for everybody, including a free Kid’s Zone. FAMILY FRIENDLY

Sunday, March 24 12:00 - 3:00pm “Oyster Roast, VIP Lounge” Spend the afternoon listening to live music, shopping, enjoying unlimited wine, beer and spirits tasting stations, Bloody Mary Bar and oysters. Each adult ticket includes \$10 in Culinary Credits. VIP Lounge tickets include admission to Sunday/Funday 12 - 5pm. FAMILY FRIENDLY

The Georgia Food and Wine Festival is held at Jim R. Miller Park, 2245 Callaway Road S.W., Marietta, Georgia 30008

Online advance discount tickets may be purchased by visiting our website at www.georgiafoodandwinefestival.com. Need more information: Please call (770) 423-1330 or visit <https://www.georgiafoodandwinefestival.com>.

JRM Management manages and produces fairs, festivals, and other special events throughout the southeast, including the Superior Plumbing presents North Georgia State Fair, Georgia Country Music Festival, numerous taste events, golf tournaments, and arts and crafts shows. The Georgia Food + Wine Festival has partnered with SafePath Children’s Advocacy Center, a Cobb County, Georgia based 501-(c)3 non-profit organization and will develop several fundraising opportunities to benefit them, including a silent auction.

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Acworth saw some chilly weather last month, but our love for our Acworth community will keep us warm all winter long! As February begins, we often start to think of the warmer days of spring to come. It's this time of the year that our City Team is working behind the scenes to plan all of the amazing community celebrations that we love to enjoy throughout the year, and also the time that our Power and Public Works Team works extra hard in some of our most bitter weather to keep our homes warm and safe. We are grateful for and applaud these hard-working servant leaders who get ready to go out while we're hunkering down in more comfortable conditions. From Power to Public Works and Sanitation to Stormwater, we appreciate you and are so grateful for all you do for our city!

Last month, the City of Acworth was excited to host the annual Principals and Legislators meeting at the Acworth Community Center. Our city leadership team works hard to facilitate this important meeting between our Acworth area educators and state representatives. This meeting allows a unique opportunity for discussions between our schools and elected officials. We thank State Senator Ed Setzler, State Representative Devan Seabaugh, and State Representative Lisa Campbell for listening to and supporting our educators and schools. Our community is grateful for the conversation and collaboration to keep our quality of life at such a great level in Acworth.

It's almost time for the Special Olympics Polar Plunge! This event is hosted annually at Cauble Park by the Law Enforcement Torch Run for Georgia. This year it will be held on Saturday, February 24. The Acworth Police Department will have their own team (The Right to Remain Frozen) plunging, and they have been working since last year to raise donations for Special Olympics Georgia! If you're able, please consider donating to this wonderful cause to help support free year-round sports training for SOGA's 17,429 amazing athletes. You can donate at <https://www.classy.org/team/542016>.

As always, for the latest information on any of our events and projects, you can visit www.acworth-ga.gov, 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

**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 laham@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.

WINTER BREAK ART EXPLOSION CAMP**FEBRUARY 19 – FEBRUARY 23**

It's time to get those creative juices flowing! Our Art Explosion Camp has a full week of non-stop art experiments and activities. Each day of camp will focus on a different art style like fabrics and dyes, watercolor, paint, clay and more! We will also go on a fun, art-themed field trip included in your costs! Prepare to roll up your sleeves and create your next masterpiece. Campers are encouraged to dress in clothing ready to get painted, stained and splattered!

ADULT SPRING FLAG FOOTBALL LEAGUE

The Acworth Parks, Recreation and Community Resource Department is happy to announce another season of the Acworth Adult Spring Flag Football League! Game play is 7 on 7 and teams may have a roster of up to 17 players. The league will be held on Tuesday nights and located at the football fields at the Acworth Sports Complex. Games will run with start times beginning between 6:30 PM and 9:30 PM. Games will begin on March 12 with a single elimination tournament being held on Tuesday, May 14 and Tuesday May 21. The fee for this league is \$575 per team for both City residents and non-residents. This program is open to anyone over the age of sixteen. The deadline to register for the Acworth Adult Spring Flag Football League is Wednesday, March 6. To register, or for more information, please visit acworthparksandrecreation.org.

The Bright Side Newspaper is online
WWW.BRIGHTSIDENEWS.COM/WEB.NC.PDF



LOUD SECURITY IMPLEMENTS VIDEO ANALYTICS TO REDUCE FALSE ALARMS

In a ground-breaking move to revolutionize the security industry, LOUD Security has successfully integrated advanced video analytics technology into its systems. This strategic initiative aims to significantly reduce false alarms, ultimately saving crucial time and resources for first responders.

Video analytics, a cutting-edge technology that leverages artificial intelligence, enables security systems to intelligently analyze video footage in real-time. By incorporating video analytics, their once traditional security systems are capable of recognizing whether an alarm is being caused by a genuine security threat, while disregarding the most common causes of a false alarms. LOUD Security’s adoption of this technology marks a significant milestone in the industry, emphasizing a commitment to enhancing security measures while optimizing emergency response procedures.

The implementation of video analytics is set to address a common challenge faced by security systems – false alarms. Traditional alarm systems often trigger alerts for non-threatening events, leading to unnecessary dispatches of first responders. This not only poses a strain on emergency services but also incurs avoidable costs. The advantages of this technology extend beyond improved accuracy. LOUD Security’s move is anticipated to streamline emergency response times in the future, as first responders will be able to focus on genuine security incidents. This increased efficiency is expected to result in notable cost savings for both the security provider and the emergency services involved.

Eric Widner, General Manager of LOUD Security, expressed enthusiasm about the implementation, stating, “Our commitment to providing Today’s Technology in our security solutions has driven us to embrace innovative technologies. The integration of video analytics in the future not only enhances the reliability of our systems, but also underscores our dedication to supporting client safety and the broader community by minimizing false alarms and optimizing emergency response efforts.”

Pictured above: LOUD Security celebrated National Security Technician Day! John Loud, along with Local Public Safety leaders spoke to the gathering, including Kennesaw Chief of Police Billy Westenberger and Mike Register, Director of Cobb Public Safety. We were happy to have several Industry leaders from around the county join us in recognizing our awesome team of technicians.

CHRISTMAS IS OVER

BUT YOU CAN STILL GIVE YOUR FAMILY A WONDERFUL GIFT

People often say “oh Brett, your job must be so sad.” And I always reply no, not really. Being blessed with two spiritual gifts (service and mercy) to be able to take a family by the hand and walk them through one of the most difficult weeks of their lives is a blessing to me.

There are two things however, that break my heart. When we sit at the conference table with a family the morning after a death and hearing “we have no idea what Pop wanted, he never told us” or, “we know exactly what mom wanted; we have no idea how we’re going to pay for it.”

For some people, the idea of their death is so uncomfortable for them, they find themselves unable to think about it or discuss it, let alone plan for it. Inevitably the responsibility (burden) is passed on to the children or other family members. But it’s our life, our legacy shouldn’t we have a say in how we’re remembered? I hear so often “I don’t want a service” or I don’t need a funeral.” My encouragement to you is to ask your spouse, your children, your siblings what they need and tell them it’s okay to do it. Funerals have always been for the living.

Preplanning isn’t complicated and doesn’t have to be expensive. Whether you choose cremation or traditional burial, Georgia Funeral Care is committed to providing affordable options. In fact, you’ll find us surprisingly affordable. Funding your arrangements, locks in today’s prices no matter how much longer you live. Preplanning is thoughtful, ensures your wishes are carried out and keeps your family from making decisions based on emotion. Above all, it shows your family how much you care. Call 678-574-3016 and ask for Brett. I’ll make it easy and comfortable for you.

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5&10K

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ANNUAL NOONDAY SHANTY 5&10K

Kick off your spring running season and enjoy the scenic views along Noonday Creek Trail while supporting future greenspace and trail projects in the Town Center area. This event features two USA Track & Field certified race lengths and a paved course on the trail and roadway. Runners, walkers, and families are all encouraged to participate. Make strides along the Noonday Creek Trail at the third annual Noonday Shanty 5 & 10k races.

Participants will experience scenic views, greenspaces, and attractions along Noonday Creek Trail and Town Center such as Noonday Creek, Aviation Park, Cobb International Airport, Fifth Third Bank Stadium, and wetlands and bird habitats including the Chimney Swift Tower.

Benefits of registrations: T-shirt included with Registration (pick up at packet pick-up); Team Registrations Available; Medals Awarded to Top Runners in Race Brackets; Supports Greenspace & Trail Projects in Town Center; Paved Course with Scenic Views; Two USA Track & Field Certified Courses; Peachtree Road Race Official Qualifying Event

5K Actual: \$30.00 til Mar 20; **10K Actual** \$35 til Mar 20: Runners, walkers, and families are all encouraged to participate. Walkers are encouraged to register for the 5k distance.

Virtual 5K 25.00 & 10K \$35: Not running on race day, but at your place of choice. Not eligible for awards. Includes shirt that can be picked up at packet pick-up location.

Ghost runner: Not running, but supporting. Not eligible for awards. Includes shirt that can be picked up at packet pick-up location. **Fee Ghost runner \$25.00** til Mar 21.

For more information and to register visit <https://www.towncentercid.com/noonday-shanty>.

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VENDOR INVITATION

Join us for the 2024 Cobb PARKS Spring Arts Festival on April 6, 2024, from 10 am to 2 pm at Jim R Miller Park and Events Center! This festival will feature retailers and artists and will showcase handmade goods, fine arts, performing arts, and more! Application deadline for vendors is March 6th, 2024! For an application email: parksspecialevents@cobbcounty.org.



NORTHWEST CLASSICAL ACADEMY

Student readers in 5th grade presented quotes from Dr. King that exemplify our school virtues of courage, courtesy, honesty, humility, perseverance, self-government, and service.

Our guest speaker was Mr. Leo Smith, president of Engaged Futures Group and member of the Atlanta Classical Academy board. Mr. Smith reminded students of the importance of having the courage to be bridge builders and shared stories from his childhood in the 1960s.

Pictured: Mr. Leo Smith

ATLANTA CLASSICAL ACADEMY

Our guest speaker was Ann Cramer, Senior Consultant with Coxe Curry & Associates. Mrs. Cramer encouraged our students to serve their community with their hands, hearts, and voices. She challenged them to practice service every day.

The upper school choir performed a beautiful rendition of "Lift Every Voice and Sing."

Our art department unveiled a unique artwork at the ceremony to honor Dr. King's legacy of service. "Many Hands in Service" is a school-wide, collaborative art installation that incorporates the handprint of every ACA student. Inspired by our school's virtue of service and "Homage to King" sculpture, which can be found in Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historical Park located just a few minutes down the road, each student from K-12 was able to paint their hand and make their mark on this piece. The artwork will now hang in a hallway at school as a daily reminder of Dr. King, his mission, and how "Everybody can be great

PASTOR JERRY BLACK

BY MARLON LONGACRE, ASSOCIATE PASTOR, PIEDMONT CHURCH

“Follow my example, as I follow the example of Christ. I praise you for remembering me in everything and for holding to the traditions just as I passed them on to you.” 1 Corinthians 11:1-2.

I can never thank God enough for the distinguished role models that He has placed in my life. I am so grateful for the investments that they have made in me. I thank God for all the teachers, coaches, mentors, that took the time to invest in me. I thank God each day for blessing me with Jim and Darlene Longacre as parents. They taught me how to live, how to give, how to serve, and even taught me how to exit this world into heaven.

Monday was a tough day for me. I attended the funeral of Pastor Jerry Black. He was a hero and a mentor to me. When I first started ministry, there were no Community Pastors to learn from. There were no conferences to attend, books to read, or classes taught on how to do community ministries.

One morning I was attending a meeting at a day-care in Acworth where the owner introduced me to Jerry. He was bringing food to the day-care for the children in need.

Jerry was older than me, but we had several things in common. We were both called later in life to full time ministry. Jerry was a successful businessperson but was called by God to start a church in one of the poorest locations. Jerry is the founding Pastor of Redemption Baptist Church that is located on New Hope Church Road in Bartow County.

Jerry had a food ministry where he would travel to grocery stores in counties such as Cobb, Bartow, Cherokee and Paulding where he would pick up bread, fruits, vegetables, dented cans, cookies, cakes that were about to expire and take them to food distribution centers, shelters, housing authorities, day care centers, on and on.

I went with him one day on his bus route to the stores. The bus was filled with food and when we went to the distribution center where they broke down all food for the families, he held a worship service. 22 people got saved that night. He did that for years until his health went bad.

Over the years, Jerry and I would partner together on so many community projects such as “Feed the Hungry Dinners,” Shop with A Hero, book bags for kids in need, on and on.

Jerry retired a few years back and Redemption Baptist Church is now named New Life Community Church. Yesterday, Libby, Matthew, and I took clothes and items to the Food and clothing shelter that is on their campus. Every Tuesday about 50 homeless families come to the shelter.

Tears filled my eyes as I said goodbye to him on Monday. I am so grateful to God for his example to follow. I am so grateful for his investment in me. I promised him that I would keep the traditions alive and pass them on to the next generation.

I pray that all of us take a 20 second timeout today and be grateful to God for those who He put in our path that stepped up and became examples to us and forever changed the trajectory of our lives for the good. I pray we honor their examples and traditions and pass it on to others.



JANUARY’S LOVE DOES NEWS

This past Wednesday was a big day for Love Does. What a joy it was taking detergent to CCYA. The look on the face of the students from KSU (Kennesaw State University) Cares as they backed their van up to the church to see all the soups and detergents that you brought for their food pantry was priceless. The Children’s Haven Shelter was so excited when Suzie Zampatti brought them a jeep filled with detergent bottles for their shelter. Those moments do not happen without you.

Thank you again for your support of Love Does. I just opened a box up here at the office with two more laundry detergent bottles in it. Yessir! Soups and laundry detergent are in great need at the shelters right now.

Thank you again for your financial support of Love Does. All financial support of Love Does goes for scholarships for our kids to go camp and for the sensory equipment for students with special needs at 5 local elementary schools.

SPECIAL NEEDS DANCE AT KMHS

February’s Love Does is all about Special Needs. I am looking forward to sharing with you all the amazing ways you are showing God’s love to the community.

One of the greatest acts of love in our community each year is the Special Needs Dance held at Kennesaw Mountain High School. Since 2001 the students at Kennesaw Mountain High School have raised funds to put on a dance for all the special needs students in Cobb County Schools. Kennesaw Mountain students for years have led the way for inclusion for the special needs community. Their commitment to inclusion led the way for Horizon Field in Acworth, Cobb County’s only all-inclusive special needs ballfield.

The Special Needs Dance this year will be held on March 5th. One of Piedmont’s Love Does projects for February is to help the students at Kennesaw Mountain High School raise funds to provide the buses for the dance. If you would like more information on how you can help with one of the greatest acts of love in our community just email Kennesaw Mountain’s Assistant Principal Billy Richardson at William.richardson@cobbk12.org.

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MARIETTA NEWS



SAINT JOSEPH PARISH DONATES CHRISTMAS GIFTS FOR 800+ CHILDREN IN NEED

BY CHARLIE MULLANEY

Generous donations from Saint Joseph Catholic Church parishioners have provided a host of gifts to make sure that over 800 needy youngsters in Cobb County had a visit from Santa this year.

Saint Joseph Knights of Columbus Council 4599 and Saint Vincent de Paul Society volunteers collected and distributed over 1500 gifts to 800+ needy Cobb County children during our Annual K of C / SVdP Children's Christmas Party.

Families visited Santa Claus and Santa's elves at the Knights of Columbus Council 4599 home.

The Knights and SVDP volunteers provided each child with hotdogs, chips, cookies and drinks and of course a bag full of gifts from Santa. Gifts were also delivered to Children's Health Care of Atlanta at Scottish Rite Hospital and Calvary Children's Home for a total of over 800 children.

"These children had merrier Christmas this year thanks to the generosity of Saint Joseph's parish."

MARIETTA ARTS COUNCIL APPOINTS NEW EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



The Marietta Arts Council is pleased to announce the appointment of Abby Smith as its new Executive Director. Smith succeeds Bonnie Buckner Reavis, who will transition to the role of Chairwoman of the Board of Directors.

Abby Smith brings a wealth of experience and passion for the arts to her new role as Executive Director. Having served as both Secretary and Board Chair for the organization, Smith has been instrumental in many of the organization's efforts. While continuing her role as Manager of Visit Marietta, Abby is poised to lead the Marietta Arts Council in advancing its mission to enrich the artistic and cultural landscape of the City of Marietta through advocacy, education, and public art.

Bonnie Buckner Reavis, outgoing Executive Director and newly appointed Chairwoman of the Board, expressed confidence in Abby's ability to lead the organization: "Abby brings a fresh perspective and a deep commitment to the arts. I am confident that under her leadership, the Marietta Arts Council will continue to thrive and bring even more artistic enrichment to our city."

Smith expressed her excitement about her new role, saying, "I am honored and grateful for the opportunity to lead the Marietta Arts Council. The arts have the power to transform communities, and I am committed to working collaboratively with our community members, artists, and partners to enhance the cultural fabric of Marietta. I look forward to building on the strong foundation and working towards a future filled with artistic vibrancy and inclusivity."

Bonnie Buckner Reavis will continue to provide strategic leadership and guidance to the Marietta Arts Council. The Marietta Arts Council expresses its gratitude to Reavis for her outstanding leadership and dedication during her tenure as Executive Director. Her contributions have been instrumental in advancing the council's mission and fostering a vibrant arts community in Marietta.

For more information about the Marietta Arts Council and its initiatives, please visit mariettaarts.com

MARIETTA HISTORY CENTER POP-IN EVENT TO CELEBRATE BLACK HISTORY

The Marietta History Center is delighted to announce its upcoming monthly Pop-In for Family Fun event, scheduled for Saturday, February 17th, from 10:00 am to 4:00 pm. As a recurring highlight on the Center's calendar, Pop-In events occur on the 3rd Saturday of every month, offering families a unique opportunity to engage with the museum through themed activities and crafts.

This February, in honor of Black History Month, the Marietta History Center invites families to join us for a day of crafts and activities centered around celebrating Black History. From memorable exhibits to hands-on crafting stations, visitors of all ages will have the chance to explore and learn about the rich contributions of African Americans to our nation's history and culture.

"We are thrilled to host our February Pop-In event dedicated to honoring Black History Month," said Amy Reed, Director at the Marietta History Center. "This is a wonderful opportunity for families to come together, engage with our museum, and celebrate the diverse tapestry of American history."

Pop-In for Family Fun is made possible through the generous sponsorship of Cauthorn, Nohr, and Sanders. Thanks to their support, this program is FREE for all to enjoy, ensuring that families in our community can participate in enriching cultural experiences. Marietta History Center, 1 Depot Street, Marietta, GA 30060.



VCSG OPENS NEW INDUSTRY-LEADING
CANCER CENTER IN CHATTANOOGA

In January, the Pullen Cancer Center opened its doors for a ribbon cutting and celebration. Despite winter rains, a steady and enthusiastic crowd enjoyed barbeque food trucks and an open-house tour with experts and veterinarians.

In the past, pet-owners would often drive hours for faraway cancer treatment for their dog or cat, with treatment sometimes lasting days or weeks.

Now, the Pullen Cancer Center – the new 27,000 square foot addition to Chattanooga’s Veterinary Care and Specialty Group 24/7 emergency and specialty hospital — offers world-class treatment for pets facing a cancer diagnosis along with an expanded physical rehabilitation department.

All in Chattanooga. There’s quite nothing like this, said Dr. Katelyn Marlowe, VCSG’s medical oncologist. We can provide comprehensive care – from radiation and medical oncology to imaging, surgical specialists and more – all under one roof.

Dr. Marlowe toured guests through the facility’s dazzlingly advanced radiation and rehab departments, with pet wheelchairs, underwater treadmills and laser therapy.

But the star of the show that afternoon? **The Varian Edge.** Located behind concrete walls eight feet thick, the Varian Edge is VCSG’s linear accelerator, the machine delivering radiation therapy. VCSG’s linear accelerator will be the most advanced -- for pets -- in the region. It is rare in the world of veterinary medicine.

So is the man standing next to it. Dr. Jason Strasberg, head of VCSG’s Radiation Oncology department, is one of only a few radiation oncologists nationwide.

Standing near the Varian Edge, Strasberg spoke to guests with optimistic hope, knowing that the Pullen Cancer Center can offer treatment in entirely new ways for pets in our region.

VCSG is one of the largest veterinary hospitals in the Southeast, offering extensive 24/7 emergency care and specialty services with a team of more than 100 vets, specialists and technicians. For more info, visit vcsgvets.com



“FREE TREES” EVENT

In an effort to promote awareness of Arbor Day, Marietta Tree Keepers will give away “Free Trees” on Saturday, February 10, 2024 from 9am-12noon or until we run out of free tree bareroot seedlings. The variety of trees are Swamp Chestnut Oak, Redbud, Tulip Poplar, Persimmon & Bald Cypress. Free literature will also be available on selecting trees, caring for trees and maintaining trees. Radio show host, Ashley Frasca, of Green & Growing, will be there to answer gardening questions. This event is free to the public.

Members of the Marietta Tree Keepers have been promoting the value of trees to the community since it was founded in 2002. MTK has over 150 members and has planted over 5000 trees around the city. The 501(C)3 non-profit organization works closely with the City of Marietta to plant trees along public right-of-ways. Those wishing to become a member or make a donation can learn more by visiting MTK’s website at www.mariettaga.gov/committees/treekeepers. For more information, please call 770.424.4664.

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BUTCH PRICE

BY JAMES ALBRIGHT, ACWORTH CITY MANAGER

One of my favorite things to write about is the people that make our community great. The leaders who selflessly invest their time, talents, and treasures into making our city a special place to live, work, and play. This week is one of those opportunities for me.

Butch's commitment and service to our community began in 1964. Upon graduating college in Alabama, he and his wife Jo Carol were offered jobs at Acworth Elementary. The couple would raise their son and two daughters in the community. Mrs. Price lost her fight against cancer in 1991.

In 1996, Butch would make two big decisions in his life. He would retire from the Cobb County School System as the Principal of Acworth Elementary after 32 years of service and run for public office as Alderman. Butch was successfully elected to his first of seven terms that year.

He was my principal in first, second, and third grade. I've had the privilege of working with him for my entire professional career for the last 23 years.

Now that you know the history, let me tell you more about the person. Here are five leadership lessons I have learned from watching him serve our community:

Listen Well

In the countless meetings that I have had with him over the years, I can honestly say he has never interrupted me. He listens determined to understand what you are attempting to communicate. His body language, his eyes, and his head nods always provide affirmation that he is connected to what you are saying.

Listening is a lost art. It is a craft that requires genuineness and authenticity. Listening requires making the person in front of you feel like they are the most important person in the world in that moment. *Great leaders listen well.*

Be Impactful with Words

Butch is a quiet man. When he does talk...people listen. Why? Because he doesn't waste words. When he speaks, it is impactful. Words of wisdom are on their way.

Leaders can succumb to the pressure of the position and are misled to believe that more words equal a greater impact. Sometimes, less is simply more. Too often people can talk to hear themselves talk, mitigating the impact of their words. When we speak less, we naturally listen more. We become educated and informed, then our spoken words are more impactful. Great leaders are impactful with their words.

Treat People Well

One of his quotes from his principal days is, "Children will not remember what you taught them, but they will always remember how you treated them." He carries that philosophy into every other aspect of his life as well.

I have watched him treat the people at the lowest levels of our organization with care and kindness. He is known to be the caretaker of many of his friends and neighbors. I have never witnessed him be harsh or rude to another human being. Ever.

People are everything in leadership. They are guided and inspired by how we treat them. The way we treat people has a lasting impact. It also significantly impacts the trajectory of our own leadership. Putting it simply, leaders will be remembered for one of two things... treating people poorly or treating people well. *Great leaders treat people well.*

Stay Active

Butch is 83 years young. He plays golf two days a week, walks every day, goes to the gym, and attends church on a regular basis. During the fall you will find him at the North Cobb High School Football games and during the winter watching the basketball team. He stays active.

Rick Warren says, "Anytime you are coasting, you are going downhill." Activity leads to forward progress and builds momentum. Coasting leads to complacency. Complacency kills.

Life and leadership can be tough. Both have their fair set of challenges. Whatever the circumstance, we must continue to put one foot in front of the other and keep walking. *Great leaders stay active.*

Laugh

If you have never met Butch, picture President Abraham Lincolnish. A tall, thin, stoic figure. When you are in elementary school, principals are scary enough. He was extra scary! I made it a point to stay out of trouble.

Years later, I have come to know that stoic, scary figure, as a humorous person. A great storyteller, a joker, and someone who genuinely likes to laugh.

As previously mentioned, life and leadership are tough. Often, leaders are expected to put on a serious, professional face. We are supposed to appear to have it all together. Laughter breaks the ice, it lessens the gravity of the situation, and it relieves the pressure from the burdens. Sometimes we just need a good laugh in life. *Great leaders laugh.*

CONCLUSION

In the book 41, President George W. Bush writes about his father, President George H.W. Bush. The younger Bush said that his father used to say, "Preach the gospel at all times and use words if necessary." When I hear this quote, I think of Butch.

Remember that I said he is quiet? That means that each of these lessons I learned from him was by watching him. Whether it is being a good listener, being impactful with his words, treating people well, staying active, or laughing...he preached it and rarely had to use words.

I am extremely grateful to have had the opportunity to serve our community with him. He is a decent, solid human being. Butch Price is the epitome of a community leader.



IN MEMORY OF JERRY BLACK

Jerry Black, age 76, loving husband, father and grandfather, passed away in the early afternoon on January 9, 2024.

Jerry was born on July 17, 1947 in Atlanta, Georgia and grew up in Kennesaw surrounded by a large and loving family. He was one of five children and had numerous aunts, uncles, nieces, nephews and cousins.

Jerry was strongly influenced by his family to be caring and compassionate, always giving his time to others and incorporated his kind heartedness into building a lifetime ministry of helping others.

Jerry was a gifted communicator and a humble, servant, leader leaving behind a legacy of sharing the word of God and the love of Christ. His ministry included the founding of Redemption Baptist Church and its many community outreach programs where he served as senior pastor for over 25 years.

Above all, Jerry treasured his role as a husband, father and grandfather. Jerry met his wife, Diane, in their senior year of high school in 1965. They married in 1967 and expanded their family in 1974 with the birth of their daughter, Kristy. Diane supported Jerry in all of his many life endeavors and lovely supported him physically during their last days together.

Jerry leaves to cherish his memory his wife of 56 years, Diane, daughter and son-in-law, Kristy and Rob Whitehurst, three grandchildren, Lauren, Kate and Robert Whitehurst, brothers, Lenis and Jim Black, sisters, Judy Steffes and Ann Black, sister and brother-in-law, Gayle and Barry Foy, and an extended family of nieces, nephews and cousins. In lieu of flowers, the family kindly requests memorial donations in Rev. Black's memory to be made to , American Humane Society @ <https://www.americanhumane.org/>

IN MEMORY OF VIRGIL GEORGE PRATHER



Virgil George Prather (V.G.), 89, of Acworth, Georgia, died peacefully on January 10th, 2024, after a life lived to completeness and without wants or regrets. Born in Acworth to Virgil Ray and Ethel (Baker) Prather on March 15, 1934, V.G. (which stood for "Very Good" if you asked him), was a 4th generation Prather and 5th generation from the Baker family in Acworth/Kennesaw. V.G. spent his school-age years in Rome, where he met and fell in love with Lillie Mae Price. V.G. and Lil were married the 22nd of June, 1956. After marriage and four years in the Army (during which time they lived in Washington, D.C.), V.G. and Lil returned to his home to raise their family in Kennesaw. V.G. followed in the footsteps of the men in his family and went to work for the L&N Railroad where he worked for 33 years as an engineer, retiring from CSX Railroad.

V.G. was active in the Acworth and Kennesaw community, coaching baseball in Kennesaw at Adams Park for over a decade and positively influencing the lives of many boys and young men from the area. In addition to coaching, he played in several adult baseball leagues at Adams Park and the surrounding area. V.G.'s free time was spent pursuing his passion of upland game hunting as well as breeding and training hunting dogs.

V.G. was preceded in death by his mom, Ethel Baker Prather, father Virgil Ray Prather, step-mom Hazel Prather and his wife, Lillie Mae Prather. He is survived by his sister Shirley Burns, brother Jim Prather, and his 3 children, Delisa Bouldin (David), Steve Prather (Lori), Beth Watkins (Doug), as well as 8 grandchildren: Jennifer Giannetta (Tony), Chaz McEntire (Mac Young), Drew Prather, Marina Prather, Cera Rose Prather, Jamey Watkins, Jake Watkins, Julia Watkins.

V.G.'s Celebration of Life was held at 2:00 pm on Sunday, January 14th at Winkenhofers Pine Ridge Funeral Home, with visitation from Noon to 2 pm. He was laid to rest next to his wife, Lil, at Hickory Grove Baptist Cemetery in Acworth

Ed. Note: We can't forget that, as an engineer for the railroad, Virgil was the man that drove the General back to Kennesaw, when TN was ordered to turn it over to its rightful owner - the State of Georgia

BUSINESS ASSOCIATIONS DECEMBER CALENDARS KENNESAW BUSINESS ASSOCIATION

TUES FEB 6 KBA MONTHLY LUNCHEON - 11:00 Join us for our program: Preston Poore, Connecting Matters – Only One Thing Stands Between You & Success at The KSU Professional Education Building at 3333 George Busbee Dr. Kennesaw. Caterer: Catered Southern Events. Sponsor Window World. RSVP at kennesawbusiness.org.

TUES FEB 20 KBA AA5 at the HORNE OWL, 2765 S. Main St., Kennesaw. 5:30-7:30 pm. Members FREE, GUESTS \$5.00. RSVP at kennesawbusiness.org.

ACWORTH BUSINESS ASSOCIATION

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

THU FEB 8 ABA ALIVE AFTER 5 Hosted by Portal Pinball, 3335 Cobb Parkway, Suite 800, Acworth. The fun begins at 5:30. Members Free, Guests \$5.00. RSVP acworthbusiness.org.

THU FEB 22 ABA WOMEN'S LUNCHEON. Hosted by Center Street Taven, 4381

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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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

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March/Gate: \$139

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