

# The Bright Side™

VOLUME 35 No 4

SERVING ACWORTH, KENNESAW, MARIETTA SINCE 1992

APRIL 2026



## 16TH ANNUAL SMOKE ON THE LAKE - MAY 8 & 9!

Join us for great music, and delicious barbecue, on Friday and Saturday, May 8 and 9! Smoke on the Lake BBQ Festival is an annual tradition enjoyed each Mother's Day Weekend at Logan Farm Park in Acworth, Georgia. Thousands attend to enjoy BBQ cooked by competitive backyard cook teams.

Cook Teams are subject to public judging on Chicken Wings Friday night and Pork on Saturday. Be sure to purchase Tasters Tickets to vote for your favorites. Friday night features a live music concert under the stars.

Rotary Club of North Cobb hosts this charity fundraiser event with 90% of net proceeds benefiting local charities and 10% benefitting charities outside of the United States.

### LORD OF THE WINGS FRIDAY, MAY 8, 2025 5:00 PM - 10:00 PM

The LORD OF THE WINGS contest pits the BBQ teams against each other so the attendees' judge "who's got the best wings"! Hungry patrons purchase "Taster Tickets from friendly North Cobb Rotarians and then test the cook teams wings and vote for the best wings. Additional food options are provided by 1885 Grill, Williamson Brothers BBQ, and food vendors. Two beer tents will feature Acworth's own Red Top Brewhouse and 1885 Grill.

### CONCERT UNDER THE STARS FRIDAY, MAY 8 2025 AT 8:00 PM

293 BAND will perform classic and contemporary dance, pop, and rock hits from 8:00 pm - 10 pm.. Named after the Georgia State Route, 293 is a group of seasoned professional musicians who have been playing together for many years in live venues around Atlanta and the East Coast. Many of these band members began playing together while attending NCHS. They have gone on to become a widely popular entertainment band.

Additional food options are provided by 1885 Grill, Williamson Brothers BBQ, and food vendors. Two beer tents will feature Acworth's own Red Top Brewhouse and 1885 Grill..

To better enjoy the concert, we recommend reserving a table for your group. Dinner tables are arranged with the narrow end facing the bandstand on the grassy lawn. There are six chairs at each table. Tablecloths are included. Fee for Dinner Table Reservation – Seating for Six: \$100 Per Table. Purchase tables at [www.smokeonthelake.org](http://www.smokeonthelake.org). Multiple table orders are common and staff will make every effort to group them conveniently.

### PEOPLES' CHOICE PORK SATURDAY 11:00 AM - 4:00 PM

Saturday features our PEOPLES' CHOICE PORK contest. Cook teams compete with their pulled pork and patrons vote with their gold tickets for their favorite pork. Patrons: purchase Taster Tickets from friendly North Cobb Rotarians. Cook teams also compete on chicken and ribs with judges from the Georgia Barbecue Association (GBA).

Judy & Reid will perform alt-country, blues, classic rock, and soul, with a focus on soulful harmonies from 11:00 AM–2:00 PM with a short break while Acworth Elementary School Chorus performs from 12:00-12:15 PM. Thank you City of Acworth, Georgia for your partnership, to JRM Event Management for a smooth weekend, the Georgia Barbecue Association (GBA) for the judging and to all of the smoking teams!

Visit <https://www.smokeonthelake.org> for more information, how to join the CornHole Tournament and read the list of non-profits this Rotary supports.



## SMITH GILBERT GARDENS CELEBRATES

Smith-Gilbert Gardens invites the public to celebrate the 10-year anniversary of its signature seasonal exhibit, A Garden with Wings, and the return of Pollinator Palooza on Saturday, May 30, from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

### GARDEN WITH WINGS

Smith-Gilbert Gardens A Garden with Wings Butterfly Exhibit, May 19-Aug. 15: This seasonal exhibit offers a close-up look at native butterflies and their full life cycles within a controlled environment. Visitors can explore the plants that support pollinators, including host and nectar species essential to butterfly survival. Timed-entry tickets are required for the Butterfly House, and advance purchase is recommended due to limited capacity.

### POLLINATOR PALOOZA

Pollinator Palooza offers visitors the opportunity to explore the exhibit without purchasing a separate butterfly house ticket. Garden admission is required, and entry is free for members.

This family friendly festival presents community partners and artists who will share information on their roles in pollinator conservation. Purchase artwork, listen to music, learn about what makes pollinators so important and meet your community leaders who help conserve our environment.

Partners include The Southern Museum, Kennesaw Mountain National Battlefield Park, Cobb County Public Library, Cobb Co Beekeepers Club, Kennesaw State University's Office of Sustainability, Wildlife Center of North GA, Georgia Native Plant Society, USDA-NRCS, Cultured AG, Xerces Society, Wild Nest Bird Rehab and more!

Food available for purchase from Huckadoo Pizza and Wild Eyed Southern Q BBQ Company. Get your tickets today at <https://smithgilbertgardens.com/tickets/>

## DO YOU HAVE A MINUTE???? MEMORIAL DAY – MAY 25, 2026 MARY LOU CAGLE, MARIETTA

This minute, 60 seconds, is an annual event that asks all Americans, wherever you are at 3:00 pm on MEMORIAL DAY, to pause and remember those who have died while serving in the United States Armed Forces. It is a period of silent contemplation, prayer, reflection, and respect. Memorial Day is NOT a day of celebration. MEMORIAL DAY is a day of Remembrance. It is a day to remember those men and women who died while on active duty



for the United States of America and died defending our country. It is The National Moment of Remembrance.

Memorial Day originated after the Civil War and became a national holiday in 1971. Including the Civil War – 1,236,450 men and women lost their lives defending our country. It is important that we remember the meaning of this day. One very good way to do this is to visit a National Cemetery. There are three in our area: The National Cemetery in Marietta, The Georgia National Cemetery in Canton, and The Confederate Cemetery in Marietta. You can place flowers on the graves or an American flag and show your appreciation for those who gave the ultimate gift of their lives so that our country can thrive. A wonderful lesson for us to teach our children

It is always important to thank our military members for their service – but on this day, MEMORIAL DAY, it is our day to remember those who died in service to the United States and share in The National Moment of Remembrance at 3:00 PM on Monday, May 25, 2026.

## ACWORTH'S MEMORIAL DAY CEREMONY

The ceremony to honor those who have given their lives in service to our country will be held on Saturday, May 23 at 10:00 a.m. in Cauble Park at Patriots Point. Veterans and current servicemen will pay tribute to brave men and women who have fought and died for our nation. Engraved pavers dedicated to those who have served in our armed forces that have been purchased since the previous Veterans Day will be presented at the event.

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Scroll down to CLICKHERE**

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## THIS AND THAT



### HAPPY HAPPY BIRTHDAY

Wishing Marlon Longacre happy birthday  
- he celebrated his on April 30 while his son,  
Mathew celebrated his 23rd birthday on May 2.  
Picture in the middle is Mom, Libby Longacre.

### SMITH GILBERT GARDENS INVITES YOU TO ADOPT A BUTTERFLY

Each butterfly in our Garden with Wings  
exhibit costs between \$10 and \$12. You can  
Adopt a Butterfly with a donation of \$10 or  
more, either online or in the Gardens Gift Shop.

Every donation helps offset exhibit costs  
and supports future improvements.

As a thank-you, donors who give \$10  
or more will receive a commemorative  
waterproof vinyl sticker celebrating the 10th  
anniversary of A Garden with Wings. Those  
who contribute \$20 or more will receive a  
limited-edition enamel pin featuring the 10th  
anniversary logo.

### CITY OF KENNESAW TO HOST FREE COUNTY- WIDE JOB FAIR FOR ADULTS AND YOUTH

The City of Kennesaw, in partnership with Cobb County and CobbWorks, will host the  
County-Wide Job Fair on Saturday, May 30, 2026, from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. at JIM MILLER  
PARK located at 2245 Callaway Rd. SW in Marietta.

This year's event expands to include both adult job seekers and youth employment  
opportunities, creating a broader platform for workforce connections. Employers will have  
the opportunity to engage with candidates at all stages, including younger residents entering  
the workforce for the first time.

The County-Wide Job Fair is free to attend, and no registration is required for job seekers.  
Employers can participate at no cost but must register in advance to reserve booth space.  
Now in its sixth year, the job fair continues to serve as a key connection point between local  
businesses and job seekers across the City of Kennesaw and Cobb County.

Businesses of all sizes are encouraged to take part and showcase available opportunities to  
a diverse and motivated talent pool. From entry-level positions to experienced roles, the event  
offers a valuable opportunity to build teams and strengthen the local workforce. Employers  
interested in participating can register online at: [https://secure.rec1.com/GA/kennesaw-ga/  
catalog](https://secure.rec1.com/GA/kennesaw-ga/catalog). Scroll down to Vendors category. For more information about the County-Wide Job  
Fair, please visit [www.kennesaw-ga.gov](http://www.kennesaw-ga.gov).

### JOIN THE SOUTHERN MUSEUM TO CELEBRATE JUNE 9TH

The Southern Museum of Civil War &  
Locomotive History 250 Years in Motion,  
June 6, 9:30 a.m.-5 p.m.: This special event  
commemorates the centennial of the 1926  
silent film "The General" with a full day  
of programming. Activities include live  
performances, a guest presentation, guided  
tours and multiple screenings of the film.  
The event is included with regular museum  
admission, and advance registration is required  
for select portions of the program.

### KENNESAW'S FARMERS MARKET IS OPEN

The market showcases fresh food,  
handcrafted goods, and the local farmers and  
makers behind them.

The market is open on Thursdays from  
3:00 – 7:00 PM, from now through August 27,  
2026, at Depot Park. The market is located in  
the parking lot on the Sardis Street side of the  
park, with additional booths extending into the  
adjacent trail area. Limited on-site parking will  
remain available near the Community House.

Shoppers can expect locally sourced fruits  
and vegetables, baked goods, pantry staples,  
and handcrafted items from area farmers,  
makers, and artisans.

The 2026 season marks a new partnership  
with the Cobb County Farm Bureau,  
strengthening support for local agriculture and  
providing resources for participating farmers  
and vendors.

Local farmers and makers interested in  
participating are encouraged to contact the  
Cobb County Farm Bureau directly at 770-943-  
3531 for vendor information and availability.  
Space is limited, and opportunities may vary  
throughout the season.

### AMERICA 250 DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE ANDREW J. BRAMLETT



On July 2,  
1776, the Second  
Continental  
Congress voted for  
independence, and  
the final wording  
of the Declaration  
of Independence  
was approved on  
July 4. Less than  
a month later, on  
August 2, 1776, the

official "engrossed" copy of the Declaration  
of Independence was signed. Three Georgians  
– Button Gwinnett, Lyman Hall, and George  
Walton – added their names to the document.

Of these three men, Button Gwinnett  
may be the most famous. He was born in  
England in 1735, and arrived in Savannah  
in 1765. He attempted to become a planter  
on the Georgia coast but was unsuccessful in  
his business ventures and turned to politics.  
In the 1770s he became known for his pro-  
American stances, and as such was elected  
to the Continental Congress. After signing  
the Declaration of Independence he returned  
to Georgia and became the state's second  
president (what we now would call governor).  
Gwinnett was rivals with militia commander  
Lachlan McIntosh, and this rivalry eventually  
led to a duel. On May 16, 1777, Gwinnett  
was mortally wounded by McIntosh, and he  
died three days later.

Lyman Hall was a physician born in  
Connecticut, and arrived in Georgia in  
1760. He quickly became active in politics  
and was elected to the Second Continental  
Congress in 1775. Hall was in Philadelphia  
longer than Gwinnett and left in February  
1777. Though his family was forced to flee  
Georgia because of the state's occupation by  
the British, the Halls returned to the state in  
the 1780s. Lyman Hall served as governor  
from 1783 to 1784 and notably played an  
important role in the University of Georgia's  
founding. He died in 1790.

The last of Georgia's signers was George  
Walton, the only one of the three men born  
in the South. He was born in Virginia in  
the 1740s, and arrived in Savannah in 1769  
as a lawyer. Walton was elected to the  
Continental Congress in 1775, and remained  
in Philadelphia until 1778. At that point,  
he received a colonel's commission in the  
Georgia militia. He briefly served as governor  
in 1779 before returning to congress, served  
as governor again from 1789 to 1790, and  
served in the US Senate from 1795 to 1796.  
George Walton died in Augusta in 1804. His  
house, named Meadow Garden, is today open  
as a museum.



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**ART BLOOMS FLOWER WALK**

Art Blooms Flower Walk, May 16, 10 a.m.-2 p.m.: This ticketed experience invites participants to visit businesses throughout downtown while collecting fresh flowers at each stop to build a custom bouquet. In addition to the Flower Walk, an artisan market will feature local vendors and handmade goods, creating a broader event experience for visitors spending the day in the area.

Members of the community may participate in the Art Blooms scavenger hunt. Participants can STILL pick up scavenger hunt cards at City Hall, Smith-Gilbert Gardens, the Southern Museum, and several participating locations throughout Downtown Kennesaw. Each location will stamp the card once.

Once the card is filled with stamps, participants should drop it off at City Hall, 2529 J.O. Stephenson Avenue, by Friday, May 29, by 4 p.m. for a chance to win prizes. Prizes, donated by local businesses, can be redeemed at Smith-Gilbert Gardens.

New for 2026, the City of Kennesaw is partnering with the Marietta Arts Council to present a Sculpture Tour, with an installation featured in Depot Park and various locations throughout the City of Marietta, expanding Art Blooms' regional impact.

This program is supported in part by Georgia Council for the Arts through the appropriations of the Georgia General Assembly. Georgia Council for the Arts also receives support from its partner agency – the National Endowment for the Arts.

Art Blooms is supported in part by the Town Center Community, Cobb County School Visual Arts Department, SA White Oil, and the Marietta Arts Council, with additional support provided by the City of Kennesaw, Smith-Gilbert Gardens Foundation, and Kennesaw State University.

**FIRST FRIDAY CONCERTS**

The Kennesaw Downtown Development Authority and the Kennesaw Downtown Merchants Association are bringing back the First Friday Concert Series for 2026, a community favorite now in its sixth year. From April through October, excluding July, Downtown Kennesaw comes alive on the first Friday of each month with live music, local brews and food from 7 to 9 p.m. Set against the backdrop of the Main Street Plaza, each concert offers a way to unwind, connect and kick off the weekend in the heart of the city.

**JUNE 5 – DOCK ROCK RADIO**

Dock Rock Radio brings audiences a nostalgic set inspired by the soft rock sounds of the 1970s and 1980s. The six-piece band performs polished renditions of artists such as Michael McDonald, Hall & Oates, Kenny Loggins and Steely Dan, combining smooth melodies and layered harmonies for a timeless concert experience.



**OUTDOOR MOVIE - MAY 16**

The City of Kennesaw's free Outdoor Movie Series continues Saturday, May 16, at Swift-Cantrell Park with a showing of Atlantis: The Lost Empire (PG), beginning at 8:15 p.m. on a giant inflatable screen. Swift-Cantrell Park is located at 3140 Old 41 Highway.

Attendees are encouraged to bring blankets or low-backed chairs for comfort. To ensure clear views for all, high-backed chairs, umbrellas, tents, pop-up canopies and similar items are not permitted. Food vendors and family-friendly activities will begin at 6 p.m.

A limited number of VIP tents are available to rent for \$50. Each VIP rental includes a 10-by-10-foot tent installed by Parks & Recreation staff, a 6-foot table and six chairs. Tents will be placed toward the rear of the viewing area to avoid obstructing others' views. VIP renters may check in beginning at 5 p.m., and tents will remain up through the end of the movie. Reservations can be made online at <https://secure.rec1.com/GA/kennesaw-ga/catalog>, scroll to Special Events to register for tent.

Before the movie, guests can enjoy free games in front of the screen, including hula-hoop contests, tug-of-war, relay races and sack races, with chances to win fun prizes.

The 2026 Outdoor Movie Series is presented by Cobb EMC and Wellstar Health System.

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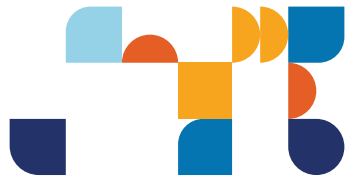
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**NORTH COBB ROTARY**

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. The meeting is held at Copeland's Restaurant 1142 Ernest W Barrett Pkwy NW, Kennesaw, GA 30144. Visit their website to learn more about this dynamic group. <https://northcobbrotary.org>.

**NEWCOMERS CLUB**

The Newcomers Club of Cobb County meets at 10:00 a.m. on the third Tuesday of most months and has other activities thought the month. [www.newcomersofcobbcounty.com](http://www.newcomersofcobbcounty.com) for the location of the next meeting or activity. Those NEW to Cobb or just looking for NEW friends and activities are invited to join us.

**COMPANIONS NEEDED**

Job is for 5 Days a Week – 5 Hours per Day – Salary is \$30 per Hour. clean record, good recommendations, mobile, with many skills for more details about the position. email me ([thomasnowak0147@gmail.com](mailto:thomasnowak0147@gmail.com)).

**MOTHER'S DAY PLANT SALE 2026**

**PRESENTED BY THE NORTH COBB HIGH SCHOOL GREENHOUSE GANG**  
We are excited for our 10th Anniversary Sale, Wednesday, May 6th, through Saturday, May 9th. Times: Wed -Fri 3:30-5:30; Saturday: 9:00 am - 2 pm. We will be in the front of North Cobb High School.

Featuring: flowers, vegetables, hanging baskets, succulents, orchids, wood products, ceramics, and delicious lemonade!

Please share, and we'll see you there!

**THE CRAZY BOOK LADY**

**INDEPENDENT BOOKSTORE**

The Crazy Book Lady buys, sells, and trades books and media. They offer a large selection of old and new books. They have been committed to servicing the Acworth, Cartersville, Kennesaw, and Marietta area since 2017.

In addition this bookstore hosts several book clubs, book signings, and RPG Groups. The store is located at 5058 Allatoona Gateway, Acworth, GA. Look for them on Facebook: <https://>

**TREE REMOVAL, STORM DEBRIS CLEAN UP, LAND CLEARING SERVICES.**

Stoneway Strategic LLC, a locally owned, family-operated land and site services company, specializes in tree removal, land clearing, storm debris cleanup, and landscaping services. For a FREE Estimate call or text us at 678-435-2035.

**VOLUNTEERS NEEDED**

The Southern Museum is in need of volunteers for our Railroad Rendezvous event on Saturday July 25, 2026. You must be over 18 years of age to volunteer. If you are interested, please contact Moirin Cody, Tour and Volunteer Coordinator. EMAIL Moirin at [mcody@kennesaw-ga.gov](mailto:mcody@kennesaw-ga.gov).

**ICE CREAM SOCIAL**

Cobb Veterans Memorial Foundation is excited to invite you to an Ice Cream Social at Jeni's Splendid Ice Creams at the Marietta Square!!

Come on over to Jeni's at 93 Church Street between 4:00 and 7:00 on May 14, to enjoy your favorite scoops while supporting CVMF.

**25% OF YOUR PURCHASE WILL BE GIVEN BACK TO COBB VETERANS MEMORIAL FOUNDATION.**

We hope to see you there!



**2026 THEY WILL SKATE AGAIN MAY 30**

10 years of adaptive athletes skating in Atlanta.

10 years of athletes getting on boards, building confidence, and pushing past what people thought was possible.

This day is about creating access and making sure all athletes have the opportunity to skate — supported, encouraged, and surrounded by a community that shows up.

That's what Atlanta has been about for the past decade.

If you've been part of it, you know what this day means. If you haven't, we hope you'll join us. Registration opens April 15 Visit [www.LifeRollsOn.org](http://www.LifeRollsOn.org) for more information

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## MEET CLARK HUNGERFORD

Candidate for County Commissioner for District 1.

Clark Hungerford is a longtime Cobb County businessman, banker, and community leader. Over the past 47 years, he has built his career in community banking, helping local businesses grow and supporting the economic strength of our community. He is proud to have helped organize Vinings Bank in 2007 where he retired in 2023 as its President and Chief Credit Officer.

For decades, Clark has worked to serve Cobb County through civic and economic leadership. Clark has served on the Development Authority of Cobb County since 1999 (25 years) and currently serves as its Chairman, helping guide responsible economic development and job growth for Cobb County.

His wife Cheryl and he live in Kennesaw and are proud parents and grandparents. Clark would be honored if you would vote for him as your Cobb County Commissioner for District 1.

(District One includes the area known as North Cobb (Acworth, Kennesaw) and West Cobb (Marietta))

Learn more about Clark Hungerford visit his campaign website at [www.clarkforcobb.com](http://www.clarkforcobb.com)

**THE SECRET TO A HAPPY LIFE IS TO FIND AS MUCH MAGIC IN AS MANY MOMENTS AS YOU CAN.**

## THE DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY OF COBB COUNTY

The Development Authority of Cobb County (DACC) was created March 13, 1973 to enrich local employment opportunities, improve the greater tax base and increase business opportunities within the entire County to support the future development strategies of Cobb County. The Authority is composed of seven members appointed by the Board of Commissioners.

Why do we have a Development Authority? Our quality of life and the services we desire are provided by the County primarily through property taxes. A healthy county has an adequate mix of residential and commercial property taxes so the entire burden is not placed solely on the backs of the residents. By having a Development Authority, quality investment in property and jobs are attracted to the County to support its operations.

Over the past 20 years the economic impact of the DACC has been to assist with bringing in 83 new projects with an increase in property investment of almost \$5 billion and the creation of over 21,000 jobs. This is why Cobb County remains a great place to live and work.

Clark Hungerford has served on the Development Authority of Cobb County since 1999 (25 years) and currently serves as its Chairman, helping guide responsible economic development and job growth for Cobb County.

*Elect*  
**Clark**  
**HUNGERFORD**  
**COBB COMMISSION**

**DISTRICT 1 WEST COBB**



**Republican Primary**  
**TUESDAY MAY 19**

## SOUTHERN SPIRITS JULY 3

### FRONT ROW SEAT FOR THE FIREWORKS

The Kennesaw Museum Foundation and the Southern Museum will host Southern Spirits on Friday, July 3, 2026, coinciding with the city of Kennesaw's Salute to America. The event will take place both indoors and outdoors from 7 to 9 p.m., and then all guests will head outside to the front lawn for one-of-a-kind views of Kennesaw's fireworks display until 10 p.m.

Tickets are \$30 for museum members and \$40 for non-members.

Admission price includes three beverages (beer, wine), food, admission to the museum, and lawn seating for the fireworks display. Chairs are provided.

Tickets can be purchased on Eventbrite or at the museum ticket counter. Tickets will be also be available on the day of the event. Attendees must be at least 21 years old.

Parking near the museum and the downtown area will be limited. Off-site parking at Andrews Arbors business park, 2959 Cherokee St. NW, Kennesaw, GA 30144, is available for Southern Spirits ticket holders on a first-come, first-served basis.

Music will be provided by the Mars Hill Porch Pickers.

Purchase your tickets on Eventbrite. <https://SouthernSpirits2026.eventbrite.com> For more information please visit our website: [kennesawmuseumfoundation.org](http://kennesawmuseumfoundation.org).

## FOOTLOOSE: THE MUSICAL SET TO IGNITE THE STRAND STAGE MAY 15 - JUNE 7, 2026

The Earl and Rachel Smith Strand Theatre will present Footloose: The Musical on stage from May 15 to June 7, 2026. Based on the classic film, Footloose features electrifying choreography and a score of iconic 1980s anthems, including hits like "Footloose," "Let's Hear It for the Boy," and "Almost Paradise."

Footloose follows Ren McCormack, a teenager who moves to a small town where dancing has been banned. As he challenges the community's restrictions, the town is forced to confront long-held beliefs and rediscover the value of connection, expression, and celebration.

"Footloose is the perfect musical for spring, full of life, energy, and a whole lot of guts. It's loud, tender, and much more honest than people remember," said Director Heather Schutz. "It's a story that reminds us joy isn't frivolous. Sometimes it's the bravest thing a community can choose. This cast has poured so much heart into every rehearsal, and I can't wait for audiences at The Strand to feel it too."

The cast of Footloose includes Russell Scott (Ren McCormack), Adam Sechelski (Reverend Shaw Moore), Meghan Gray (Ariel Moore), Rachel Miller (Vi Moore), Vivian Waye (Rusty), Joseph Sherer (Willard Hewitt), Jeanna Terry (Ethel McCormack), Josh Hudson (Chuck Cranston), Jalyn Bentley (Urleen), and Anna Wooley (Wendy Jo). The ensemble features Jordan Renee Ward (Swing), Lance McDougall (Swing), Maya Simmons (Dance Captain), Jude Hilton, Hugo Barbuto, Gina DeLise, and Joseph Evans II.

Tickets are priced from \$35 to \$54 and are available now at [strandmarietta.org](http://strandmarietta.org). For more information about Footloose or other upcoming shows at The Strand, visit [strandmarietta.org](http://strandmarietta.org) or contact The Strand box office at (770) 293-0080.

About The Earl and Rachel Smith Strand Theatre: Located in the heart of downtown Marietta Square, the Earl and Rachel Smith Strand Theatre is a historic venue dedicated to the performing arts and cultural events. The Strand's mission is to enrich and engage the regional community through diverse entertainment and memorable experiences for all. The theatre is governed by the Friends of The Strand, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. For more information and tickets, visit [strandmarietta.org](http://strandmarietta.org) or the box office at 117 North Park Square, Marietta, 30060. You can also connect with The Strand on Facebook and Instagram.

EARL AND RACHEL SMITH  
**STRAND THEATRE**  
PRESENTS

*Footloose* the musical

**MAY 15-JUNE 7, 2026**  
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# ACWORTH NEWS



## CONGRESSIONAL ART COMPETITION WINNERS

Rep. Barry Loudermilk (R-GA) issued the following statement to announce the winners of the 2026 Congressional Art Competition for Georgia's 11th Congressional District. Shelby Wheaton, who attends Mount Paran Christian School, won First Place for her entry entitled, One With the Trenches.

For this year's competition, a total of thirty-four entries were submitted from eleven schools across Georgia's 11th Congressional District; and I appreciate the students, teachers, and parents who came together to ensure this year's art competition was one to remember. I also appreciate the Downtown Gallery in Bartow County for allowing us to display our student's art pieces and hold our ceremony."

## FARMERS MARKET

The 2026 Historic Downtown Acworth Farmer's Market will take place on Friday mornings between April 10 and October 30, and will be open Saturday mornings starting May 16 and November 14 from 8:00 a.m. to noon. The market is located in the Logan Farm Park Expansion, located at 4405 Cherokee Street in Acworth. The Acworth Farmer's Market is proudly sponsored by the Acworth Downtown Development Authority.

## THREADS OF FREEDOM PARADE

In honor of America's 250th birthday, the City of Acworth is excited to announce the Threads of Freedom Parade to be held on Sunday, June 14th, 2026 at 2:00 p.m. We want you to participate. Scout Troops, Praise Choirs, Bands, let us all sing out.

The parade will run along Historic Main Street with a start at the First Baptist Church before finishing at the Holbrook. Residents, families, businesses, and organizations are invited to register to participate in the parade. Registered parties can use any street-legal vehicle they choose (PTV, truck/trailer, car, etc.). Happy Birthday, America!

If you are interested in participating with your vehicle or group in the parade, please register online here: [Secure.rec1.com/GA/acworth-parks-recreation/catalog](https://secure.rec1.com/GA/acworth-parks-recreation/catalog), scroll way down to events and select

## SPRING DOWNTOWN CLASSIC CAR CRUISE

On Saturday, May 30, Acworth will host a Classic Car Cruise in Downtown Acworth. The event will be held from 2:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. at Logan Farm Park (4405 Cherokee Street). The Lake City Cruisers partner with the City and the downtown Acworth merchants to hold these Classic Car Cruises.

The event is free to the public. A \$5 entry fee is requested for all vehicles in the cruise. All proceeds go to the Horizon Field, an all-inclusive special needs sports facility in Acworth.

## DADDY DAUGHTER DATE NIGHT™

This magical evening will be held on June 06, 2026 from 6:00 PM to 8:00 PM at Acworth Community Center 4361 Cherokee Street

The fee is \$40 R/ \$50 NR + \$10 per Additional Daughter. Register online at [Secure.rec1.com/GA/acworth-parks-recreation/catalog](https://secure.rec1.com/GA/acworth-parks-recreation/catalog), scroll down to events and select Daddy Daughter Date Night

Fathers and daughters, join us for a mythical evening where magic comes to life at the Daddy Daughter Events! This year's theme will be "A Night in the Mythical Garden". Step into a world of wonder filled with enchanting decor, mysterious adventures, music, dancing, and unforgettable moments. This special night is designed to create lasting memories as fathers and daughters share laughter, imagination, and a little bit of fairytale magic together. This event is for all ages.

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## ACWORTH VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY MAY 9

Looking for a great volunteer opportunity that will get you outside? The Acworth Community Garden is the perfect place! Join a workday and assist with anything from planting and harvesting to weeding and watering. It's a great way to get involved with the community for a great cause. The Acworth Community Garden presented by Bowling Law is a partnership between the City and volunteers with a vision to eliminate food insecurity for senior adults of Acworth while engaging the community in gardening activities.

The community garden is located at 4757 School Street, Acworth, GA 30101 The next volunteer day is Saturday May 9.

For possible weather cancelations, check their Facebook page: Acworth Community Garden

Interested in helping with delivery? Even if you are not interested in participating in the workdays but have 30 minutes available in the mornings (any particular date, day or days), please consider helping. The drop-off location is 7 minutes away from the Garden.

For more sponsorship information and volunteer opportunities, please email Lori Perkins at [acworthcommunitygarden@gmail.com](mailto:acworthcommunitygarden@gmail.com).



**NORTH COBB CHRISTIAN SCHOOL WELCOMES CARTER ROBISON AS MIDDLE SCHOOL DIRECTOR OF STUDENT LIFE**

North Cobb Christian School is excited to announce that Carter Robison will join NCCS as Middle School Director of Student Life for the 2026-27 school year. Carter brings a deep passion for student relationships, Christian discipleship, and the formative impact of the middle school years, along with a diverse background in education, coaching, and organizational leadership.

Carter holds a Bachelor of Social Work from Harding University, a foundation that has shaped his heart for relationship building and servant leadership throughout his career.

For Carter, the opportunity to serve in this role centers on what he values most about education: relationships and culture. "I'm excited for the opportunity to build relationships with the students and reinforce the intentionality of Christian identity that is already so strong at NCCS," he shared. "I can't wait to come alongside students to guide, serve, love, and direct them, not only to become more like Jesus, but to help them maximize their fullest potential."

**MAKING AN IMPACT**

Carter is especially drawn to the middle school years because of their lasting impact. "I don't think people understand just how significant these years are, not only for high school but for who students are going to become as adults. By the time high school hits, students are often behind on the habits they need to be building. These are such formative years, and that excites me." Carter will begin at NCCS on June 1 and is relocating with his wife of Jodi, and their two daughters, Rylee, who will be entering 6th grade, and Reese, a rising 1st grader.



**CELEBRATING THE SPIRIT OF GIVING AT COBB COMMUNITY FOUNDATION'S 2026 ACTIVATE GOOD EVENT**

Cobb came together on April 23, 2026, to celebrate a year of shared generosity, collaboration, and impact at the third annual Activate Good signature, invitation-only event, hosted by Cobb Community Foundation (CCF), with Platinum Sponsors Brassfield & Gorrie, Genuine Parts Company, and Steve Imler. The evening marked the release of the organization's 2025 Impact Report and recognized the powerful outcomes that result when neighbors, donors, nonprofits and businesses work side by side.

Held at The Foxglove in downtown Marietta, the event welcomed approximately 200 guests, including community leaders, fundholders, donors, nonprofit partners and other stakeholders. Together, they reflected on a year when individuals and organizations across Cobb County didn't just give—they activated good, united by a shared commitment to making life better for all.

"This wasn't just a celebration—it was a rallying cry," said Shari Martin, president and CEO of Cobb Community Foundation. "At CCF, we mobilize people, ideas and resources—but real impact happens only when the community is ready to be mobilized. And like it always does, in 2025, Cobb showed up."

Guests received the 2025 Impact Report and were encouraged to stay engaged—through fund creation, joining the Catalyst Society or Corporate Champion program, supporting existing projects, or simply sharing ideas.

To view the full Impact Report or learn how to activate good alongside Cobb Community Foundation, visit Our Impact on [cobbfoundation.org](http://cobbfoundation.org).

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Sat. - Atlanta Corn Hole

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Lord of the Wings Taster on Friday @ 6 PM  
BBQ Taster on Saturday @ Noon

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**Music - Kid's Zone - Food**  
**Georgia Grown Member Village**  
**Beer Garden - BBQ**

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Publix Friday - Publix VIP Lounge (additional fee)  
Saturday - Publix Chef Stage Demo (Free)

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**Logan Farm Park**

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**OUTSTANDING GRADUATES**

Congratulations to all of the 2026 KBA scholarship recipients. This incredible group of students have shown their desire to excel through their academics, community service, athletics, and many accolades they have received. They have a bright future ahead.

**MACKENZIE BLANCO  
THE CAROL THOMPSON  
JOURNALISM SCHOLARSHIP**



Mackenzie Blanco will be graduating from North Cobb High School's magnet program. At North Cobb, Mackenzie serves as the Editor in Chief of North Cobb's newspaper, The Chant. Her love for writing has earned her awards from the Georgia Scholastic Press Association and the Best of Student Newspapers Online platform, while simultaneously working with her staff to earn achievement badges for The Chant.

Mackenzie plans to attend the University of Georgia to major in journalism, aspiring to make an impact on the world with her writing.

**MEKHI HARDY  
THE DAVID GRANT ROTC  
SCHOLARSHIP**



Mekhi Hardy, a graduating senior at North Cobb High School, is a dedicated student and leader whose commitment to service, discipline, and excellence has made a lasting impact on his school community. Throughout his high school career, Mekhi has demonstrated exceptional leadership through his involvement in NJROTC, steadily rising from Squad Leader to Platoon Commander, and ultimately serving as Company Commander and Drill Team Commander during his senior year.

**ADYSON BERRYHILL  
THE SUE GUNDERMAN SERVANT  
LEADER SCHOLARSHIP**



Addyson Berryhill is an outstanding senior magnet student at Kennesaw Mountain High School who exemplifies leadership, service, and academic excellence. She serves as a Senior Leader on the Advisory Board and as Student Body Vice President in Mane Link, where she helps represent and support her peers while fostering a positive school environment.

Addyson's strengths in communication and organization are reflected in her role as staff editor for the school's yearbook and as communications lead for the Chick-fil-A Leadership Academy.

**JONATHAN SANDBERG  
THE MARLON LONGACRE HEART OF  
A CHAMPION SCHOLARSHIP**



Jonathan Sandberg is a Senior at Allatoona High School. He recently placed 3rd at the Georgia High School State Wrestling Championships, making him a two-time state placer, placing 5th at the 2025 State Tournament his junior year. Jonny completed his season with a record of 54 wins and only 5 losses. He was crowned Region Champion, Sectional Champion, and reached his 100-career win milestone.

Jonny has the heart of a champion. What most people don't know is that his sophomore year, he didn't even place Region. Jonny maintains a 4.4.25 GPA, is a member of the National Honor Society, and serves on the Allatoona Athletic Leadership Council. He plans to attend college and become an airplane pilot.

**JORDAN SIMPSON  
THE DEBBIE UNDERKOFFLER  
CULINARY ARTS SCHOLARSHIP**



Jordan Simpson of North Cobb High School is a driven and hardworking student who shows dedication, resilience, and. As a member of the school's basketball team, Jordan has developed discipline, teamwork, and perseverance—qualities that carry over into every aspect of his life.

After graduation, he plans to attend Johnson & Wales University, where he will major in Culinary Arts and Food & Beverage Entrepreneurship.

**SHAMARI ROUTTE  
THE RENE DOLLAR FUTURE  
BUSINESS LEADER SCHOLARSHIP**



Shamari Route, a senior at North Cobb High School, is one of the most involved and supportive students in the school community. Known by both students and staff for his positive spirit, Shamari consistently goes out of his way to uplift others—greeting peers with a hug or fist bump and always stepping in to help wherever he is needed.

Shamari's leadership is evident through his role as Vice President of SkillsUSA, where he contributes to fundraising efforts and community service initiatives. His dedication and professionalism have also earned him 3rd place in regional Job Interview competitions.

**KAIYA LUDD  
THE KEVIN JABBARI ATHLETIC  
SCHOLARSHIP**



Kaiya Ludd of Kell High School is a dedicated and accomplished student-athlete whose hard work and determination have earned her an athletics scholarship. Competing in volleyball, flag football, and cheerleading, Kaiya has proven herself to be a versatile and committed athlete, earning varsity letters in all three sports.

Academically, Kaiya maintains a strong 3.661 weighted GPA while challenging herself with advanced and honors courses in math, science, English, and social studies. Her ability to balance rigorous academics with the demands of athletics speaks to her discipline and perseverance.

**SOMMER COWEN  
THE JRM CHARACTER SCHOLARSHIP**



Sommer Cowen, a senior at Kennesaw Mountain High School, is a dedicated and service-oriented student who exemplifies growth, leadership, and commitment. Throughout her high school journey, Sommer has demonstrated a strong work ethic and a genuine desire to contribute to her school and community.

An active member of the marching band, Sommer serves in a leadership role managing band uniforms, a responsibility that requires organization, reliability, and attention to detail. Her contributions have not gone unnoticed, as she has earned the Outstanding Student Award twice and was recognized as the Most Improved Freshman in the brass section. Her honors reflect both her talent and her dedication to continuous improvement.

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**MAHIKA MAMIDIPALLI,  
THE DR. FRANK BOONE COMMUNITY  
SERVICE SCHOLARSHIP**



Mahika Mamidipalli, Kennesaw Mountain High School. She is the student body president of Mane Link, Kennesaw Mountain's student government, Mahika leads with vision and purpose. Beyond student government, she is a varsity tennis player, Vice President of Model United Nations, an executive board member of the Principal Advisory Board, and Club Supervisor for the Chick-fil-A Leadership Academy.

Mahika has over 1,000 community service hours, and has maintained a 4.683 weighted GPA while balancing her many responsibilities.

This fall, Mahika will attend Georgia Institute of Technology, Presented by Malid Jabbari

**TUMI ADEYINKA  
THE TERRY CHANDLER TAKING  
CARE OF BUSINESS SCHOLARSHIP**



Tumi Adeyinka, a senior at North Cobb High School, is an accomplished student-athlete and leader whose dedication to academics, service,

and athletics sets her apart. She is a member of the International Studies Magnet Program, Tumi is a standout volleyball player for North Cobb and competes at a national level with Tsunami Volleyball's Elite Team. As Senior Class President, she has played a key role in organizing homecoming, spirit week, pep rallies, and supporting school outreach efforts such as Open House events. Presented by Casey Miller.

**CADEN BILLINGSLEY  
KENNESAW MAYORAL  
SCHOLARSHIP**



Caden Billingsley is a STEM Magnet Senior at Kennesaw Mountain High School. Not content to simply check boxes, Caden

believes in showing up 110% all day, every day. Whether it's leading cadets in the Kennesaw Mountain NJROTC, building homes in Mexico with Three Taverns Church, or coding at Different.ly, he approaches every commitment with conviction and determination.

Caden not only excels outside the classroom, but inside as well. Caden has a 4.433 weighted GPA and multiple AP credits. Caden has developed first-hand experience in problem solving and technical skills through his role as an intern at Different.ly.

**KALEA WALKER  
THE OLLIE PATTERSON MUSIC  
EXCELLENCE SCHOLARSHIP**



Kalea Walker is a distinguished senior at North Cobb Christian School whose record of academic excellence and musical achievement sets

her apart. She maintains a 4.513 GPA and is a STAR Student for her class having earned the highest SAT score, along with AP Scholar recognition and numerous academic honors at school, state and national levels.

An accomplished violinist, Kalea has been selected for the Georgia All State Orchestra and serves as President of the North Cobb Christian School's Orchestra and Tri-M Music Honor Society.

**ABIGAIL AMOS  
THE RON SUMPTER TRAILBLAZER  
SCHOLARSHIP**



Harrison High School Senior Abigail Amos is an exceptional student with a 4.552 GPA and plans to pursue biomedical sciences in college as she works toward her long-term

goal of becoming an occupational therapist. A dedicated leader and servant to her community, she is an Eagle Scout and founding member of the all-female Scouting America Troop 5400.

At Harrison, she is deeply involved in school life as a mellophone section leader in the Harrison Marching Band, cymbal line section leader in the Indoor Percussion Ensemble, Vice President of Science National Honor Society, and Secretary of the National English Honor Society.

**JUSTINA STEWART  
THE RON COCHRAN SPIRIT  
SCHOLARSHIP**



Justina Stewart, a senior at North Cobb High School, is an exceptional student whose academic excellence

and commitment to service distinguished her as a leader both in and out of the classroom. Maintaining an impressive 4.5 GPA, Justina balances rigorous coursework with meaningful involvement across her school and community.

She serves as Co-President of Tribal Connections, and has held leadership roles in numerous organizations, including the College Prep Club, the Magnet Ambassador Program, and the Magnet Advisory Board. Justina's academic achievements are equally outstanding. She is a member of the National Honor Society and a recipient of the Georgia Certificate of Merit, placing her in the top 10% of students statewide. This fall, Justina plans to attend Carleton College. Stormi Kenney presenting.

**NICOLAS ZAMBORSKY  
THE WALLY ZIMMERMAN  
VOCATIONAL, ENGINEERING, AND  
COMPUTER SCIENCE SCHOLARSHIP**



Nicolas Zamborsky, a senior at Kennesaw Mountain High School, is a driven and entrepreneurial student who has built a strong foundation for success through hard work and hands-

on experience. While in high school, Nicolas took initiative by starting his own landscaping business, providing lawn care and outdoor services to residents in the Kennesaw and Acworth communities.

As the owner and operator, Nicolas manages every aspect of his business, including scheduling, pricing, and customer relationships.

Nicolas has a passion for skilled trades and plans to pursue a career in the HVAC field after graduation. Nicolas is a strong advocate for the value of trade careers and hopes to inspire others to recognize their importance.

**ELLA MAULDIN  
THE PAUL CHASTAIN CITIZEN  
SCHOLARSHIP**



Ella Mauldin is a graduating senior at North Cobb Christian School who has distinguished herself through academic excellence, servant

leadership, and a strong commitment to her faith. She has maintained a 4.25 GPA while completing the Academy of Exercise and Sports Science pathway and has earned honors including AP Scholar, Distinguished Scholar, and multiple Outstanding Student Awards.

Ella has consistently invested in others through mentoring, leadership roles such as Eagle Ambassador and National Honor Society member. Her heart for service has also taken her beyond the classroom through mission work both locally and internationally. She and her family love being a part of North Star Church!

This fall Ella plans to attend the University of Georgia.

**RITA STARKS  
THE OLIVIA SMATHERS  
PERFORMING ARTS SCHOLARSHIP**



Rita Starks, a graduating senior from Kennesaw Mountain High School, is a talented and dedicated student whose passion for the arts and service to others set her apart. With an impressive 4.37 GPA, Rita has balanced rigorous academics with an extraordinary level of involvement across her school community.

Rita's love for the arts is evident through her extensive participation in theater, where she serves as Co-President of the International Thespian Society, and as a member of KMCapella, the school's a cappella group. She is also actively involved in Mane Link student government, the Literary Team, soccer, Fellowship of Christian Athletes, Book Club, Tri-M Music Honor Society, and the school newspaper. Her achievements include earning a State Thespy Award and multiple literary honors, highlighting both her creativity and dedication.

Beyond school, Rita has demonstrated a deep commitment to service, completing over 500 community service hours. She volunteers with Horizon Baseball, supporting children with special needs, participates in Shop with a Mustang, and contributes to local community events and festivals.

With plans to pursue a career in music therapy, Rita is driven by a desire to use her talents to uplift and support others. Her leadership, creativity, and compassion make her a truly exceptional student and a positive force in her community.

**NISHAN PATEL  
THE MICHAEL EVERHART  
COMMUNICATIONS SCHOLARSHIP**



Nishan Patel, a senior at North Cobb High School, is an exceptional student whose academic excellence, leadership, and commitment to service distinguish him as a well-rounded and driven individual. With an outstanding 4.729 GPA and a rigorous course load that includes 20 AP courses, Nishan has demonstrated a deep dedication to learning and intellectual growth.

His academic achievements are complemented by numerous honors, including recognition as an AP Scholar with Honors, an AP Capstone Diploma recipient, and a Georgia Certificate of Merit honoree. Nishan has also excelled beyond the classroom, earning 3rd place in the state International Extemporaneous Speaking competition, showcasing his strong communication and critical thinking skills.

Nishan's passion for learning extends into real-world experiences. As a participant in the Georgia Institute of Technology REAL Internship, he worked alongside PhD students on advanced mechanical engineering research, gaining hands-on experience in modeling and problem-solving. He also explored the healthcare field through an internship with MyEyeDr., where he observed patient care and developed an understanding of clinical practices.

Nishan serves as a senior math tutor through multiple organizations. His leadership continues through his role as Youth Group Director at the Hindu Cultural Center of Cartersville. Through his achievements, leadership, and commitment to helping others succeed, Nishan exemplifies the qualities of a motivated and impactful student prepared for future success.

**EVERETT POUNDS  
THE SUE PICARDI MATH AND  
SCIENCE MAGNET SCHOLARSHIP**



Everett Pounds, a senior at Kennesaw Mountain High School, is an exceptional student whose academic excellence, leadership, and real-world experience distinguish him as a future leader in engineering. Graduating with an outstanding 4.774 GPA, Everett plans to attend Georgia Institute of Technology to pursue a degree in Aerospace Engineering.

At Kennesaw Mountain, Everett has demonstrated leadership both on and off the court. As captain of the varsity tennis team, he competes at the top level in line one singles while also leading practices and conditioning sessions. He has further contributed to his school through two years in Mane Link student government, and involved in the Engineering Club and Varsity Math Team, where he has competed at Georgia Tech.

Everett's academic achievements are remarkable. He is a National Merit Finalist, an AP Scholar with Distinction, and a recipient of the Georgia Certificate of Merit. He has also been recognized as an Outstanding Student in AP Statistics, AP Calculus AB, and Post-AP Materials Science and Engineering, reflecting both his talent and dedication to learning.

Beyond academics, Everett has completed over 200 hours of community service. His commitment to service is matched by his hands-on experience, including internships at Hanger Clinic Prosthetics and Orthotics and KRW Leipzig in Germany. At Hanger Clinic, Everett applied his skills by designing a custom prosthetic cover, directly impacting the comfort and functionality for a patient.

**R. J. LEWIS  
THE RJ PATEL INTERNATIONAL  
MAGNET STUDENT SCHOLARSHIP**



R. J. Lewis, a senior at North Cobb High School, is an accomplished student whose academic excellence and leadership within the International Studies Magnet Program set him apart. With a 4.519 GPA, Roderick has demonstrated a strong commitment to rigorous coursework and intellectual growth.

A dedicated leader, R. J. is a founding member and current secretary of the Bridge the Gap Club, an organization focused on fostering communication and understanding between diverse student groups. He also serves on the Magnet Student Advisory Council, works as a Magnet Tutor, and is an active member of the Beta Club. In addition, he plays a key role as secretary of the Magnet Open House Committee, where he helps welcome prospective families, advocate for student needs, and support the continued growth and success of the Magnet Program.

R. J.'s commitment to service is evident through his more than 55 hours of community involvement, contributing his time to Magnet Open House events, tutoring, and service organizations. His academic achievements are equally impressive, as he is an AP Scholar with Distinction and has earned the UGA Certificate of Merit, the AP Capstone Diploma, and the North Cobb High School Certificate of Merit for Academic Excellence in French.

Through his leadership, service, and dedication to academic excellence, R. J. exemplifies the qualities of a driven and impactful student leader.

# A GARDEN WITH WINGS RETURNS



**Smith-Gilbert Gardens' beloved butterfly exhibit returns for the 10th year!**

**Step inside the exhibit and experience native butterflies up close while learning how to support them.**

**Get tickets and learn more at [SmithGilbertGardens.com](http://SmithGilbertGardens.com) today!**

**A Garden With Wings is presented by Cobb EMC**



## MAY 19 - AUGUST 15



## MARIETTA NEWS



### GSO RECOGNIZED FOR 75 YEARS OF ARTISTRY

On March 4, the Georgia Symphony Orchestra was honored at the Georgia State Capitol with both House and Senate resolutions recognizing our impact and legacy in the community.

Senator Kay Kirkpatrick sponsored the Senate resolution and recognized the GSO from the floor during morning orders, highlighting our contributions to arts and education across the region.

In the House, a resolution sponsored by Representative Lisa Campbell was formally presented to GSO staff and board members by Representative Karen Lupton.

The day was made even more special thanks to Campbell's Chief of Staff—and GSO bassist—Moe Winograd, who hosted our group for a memorable visit at the Capitol.

We are deeply grateful for this recognition as we celebrate 75 years of exceptional artistry, 20 years of youth music education through GYSO, and a decade of visionary leadership under Music Director Timothy Verville. It was a meaningful moment to reflect on our history and the community that continues to support our work.

### FOURTH OF JULY PARADE ACCEPTING APPLICATIONS

This year's parade holds special significance as it coincides with the 250th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence.

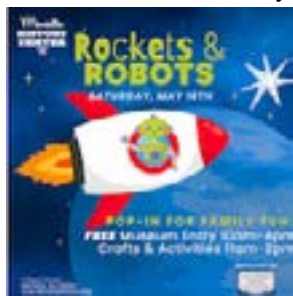
Local school bands, military units, civic organizations, scouting groups, pageant titleholders, area businesses, and other community organizations are encouraged to participate in this celebratory event. The Let Freedom Ring Parade is a longstanding Marietta tradition and a meaningful way to be part of this once-in-a-generation commemoration.

Community members and organizations are encouraged to register early and join Marietta in commemorating America's 250th anniversary. Be part of history—Let Freedom Ring in Marietta on July 4, 2026. All applications must be submitted by May 31, 2026, at 5:00 p.m. Visit [www.mariettaparks.com](http://www.mariettaparks.com) to register. Click on Parade graphic to connect.

### MAY POP-IN \ FAMILY FUN: ROCKETS & ROBOTS

Blast off into discovery at the Marietta History Center on Saturday, May 16th, for Rockets & Robots, a Pop-In for Family Fun event focused on science, technology, and imagination. Held on the 3rd Saturday of every month, Pop-Ins offer an exciting opportunity for children and their families to engage with the museum through themed activities and crafts.

Children and families will enjoy hands-on STEM-inspired crafts and activities that encourage innovation and exploration. Thanks to the generous sponsorship of Cauthorn, Sanders & Schmidt, Pop-In programming and museum admission are FREE all day. The museum is located at 1 Depot STREET, Marietta, 30060. Visit [www.mariettahistory.org](http://www.mariettahistory.org) for more info.



### TASTE OF WINE SCHEDULED DURING THE MAY 29 GLOVER PARK CONCERT SERIES

Make your plans to join Marietta for a night of wine, music, dancing, and meeting neighbors on the beautiful historic Square. The Glover Park Concert Series and the Taste of Wine are part of America's 250th Celebration in Marietta.

Whether you like indulging in your favorite premium wine or discovering selections not available in stores, we invite you to enjoy our thoughtfully curated wine list. Attendees are treated to a secure VIP area, three glasses of exceptional fine wines, featuring a few favorites such as Unshackled and Saldo by Prisoner (wines may vary) and engage in conversations with local experts and distributors. Tickets are required to attend the Taste of Wine event. Pre-purchased tickets are strongly recommended but onsite tickets will be available as space permits (discount ends May 21). Proceeds to benefit the Earl and Rachel Smith Strand Theatre.

The concert for May 29 A1A, the famous Jimmy Buffet Tribute band. The fun begins at 6:00 and the concert begins at 8:00 p.m. Wine Ticket price is \$35.00 and will increase to \$40.00 after May 21 & walk ups (as long as space is available). The concert is free to attend.

Purchase TICKETS at <https://www.simpletix.com/e/taste-of-wine-glover-park-marietta-georgia-tickets-263711#host>. Must be 21 to purchase tickets and valid ID is required at check-in.

The concert series is part of America's 250th Celebration in Marietta. Stop by their information table to learn about the many events and programs happening across the city in celebration of our nation's 250th anniversary.

All concerts begin at 8:00 on the last Friday of each month, April – September, at Glover Park on the Historic Marietta Square Free street parking, City Hall parking deck, 205 Lawrence St and the Care Here of Marietta parking lot, 268 Lawrence St. <https://www.marietta.gov/1462/Downtown-Parking>

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Deercreek Gun Shop is celebrating their first anniversary at their new location in Kennesaw!



## PUBLIC ARTS FESTIVAL M2R TRAILFEST RETURNS MAY 9TH

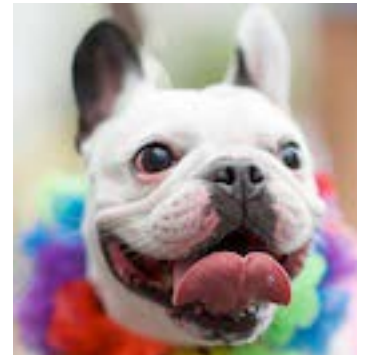
THE ARTS ALONG MARIETTA'S MOUNTAIN TO RIVER TRAIL

Immerse yourself in art and fun at this year's M2R TrailFest on Saturday, May 9th. This annual public arts festival on the Mountain to River Trail will feature the debut of numerous art installations, as well as performances that can only be enjoyed during the festival. Art performances, professional chalk art, live music and visual installations can be enjoyed along the trail, stretching from Lewis Park near Wellstar Kennestone Hospital, trackside along the Marietta Square, ending at the pedestrian bridge near Brown Park.

Sculptures along the trail debut during the festival, along with additions to the existing mural program and free art drops. The popular M2R Fence Art Gallery featuring photography and original artwork will stretch nearly a mile alongside the trail and will be on display for sixty days before embarking on a yearlong, countywide tour.



This year's festival will also include the fourth annual Fur Folly Pet Parade. Pets and their owners are encouraged to dress in costume and celebrate in their own artful way. The folly will travel along the M2R trail from Lewis Park Dog Park to Atherton Square in historic downtown Marietta (approximately one mile) in advance of the Opening Ceremonies at 11am. Staging begins at 9:30am with a parade start at 10am.



Opening Ceremonies will be held at 11am in Atherton Square (behind Cool Beans and the Marietta Welcome Center), the center point of TrailFest. Dancers, musicians and aerialists will perform in Atherton Square and along the trail. Festival goers can choose their path North or South along the trail, passing sculpture installations and vibrant murals along the way. Brightly colored lucite bridge installations, a tradition since 2020, will once again return to the pedestrian bridges over the North and South 120 Loops. This year, the bridges once again feature the design work of students from KSU's College of Architecture and Construction Management, fostering professional development for the creative placemakers of the future.

The 2026 M2R TrailFest is presented by S.A. White Oil Company. "M2R Trailfest is more than just an art event... It's Marietta's creative heartbeat on full display. It turns public spaces into platforms for artists of every level and shows how deeply the arts are woven into the fabric of this community," says S.A. White Oil Company President and CEO, Kim Gresh. Funds raised are used to produce M2R TrailFest and support the Marietta Art Council, whose mission is to enrich the artistic and cultural landscape of the City of Marietta through advocacy, education, and public art. For the full schedule and more information on the festival, visit [m2rtrailfest.com](http://m2rtrailfest.com). TrailFest is free to attend and open to people of all ages.

TrailFest is free to attend and open to people of all ages.

## MARIETTA SOCCER FEST '26



The City of Marietta is bringing the energy of the global game to the community with Marietta SoccerFest '26, a celebration of soccer in the city that is home to the game. This multi-day event will take place June 12-14, 2026, and will include officially licensed FIFA World Cup 26™ public viewing events.

The weekend kicks off on Friday, June 12 with an evening Watch Party on the Square for the USA FIFA World Cup 26™ match viewing in downtown Marietta. Watch Party on the Square will resume with a full day on Saturday, June 13, featuring additional tournament match viewings and family-friendly soccer activities. Attendees can enjoy the matches on large screens with plenty of space to bring a chair, gather with friends, and visit many of the Square's businesses for dining and shopping.

The weekend concludes on Sunday, June 14, with Marietta SoccerFest '26: Kids' Gateway to the Goal at the Franklin Gateway Sports Complex. This youth-focused event will feature interactive soccer activities, food trucks, and special soccer-related programming for kids of all ages.

### SCHEDULE:

- Friday, June 12, 2026 - Marietta SoccerFest '26: Watch Party on the Square, 8:00 PM to 11:00 PM on the Historic Marietta Square, 50 N Park Square
- Saturday, June 13, 2026 - Marietta SoccerFest '26: Watch Party on the Square, 2:00 PM to 11:00 PM on the Historic Marietta Square, 50 N Park Square
- Sunday, June 14, 2026 - Marietta SoccerFest '26: Kids' Gateway to the Goal, 3:00 PM - 7:00 PM at Franklin Gateway Sports Complex, 1034 Franklin Gateway SE



**SUMMER SUN RUN 5K, JUNE 6,**

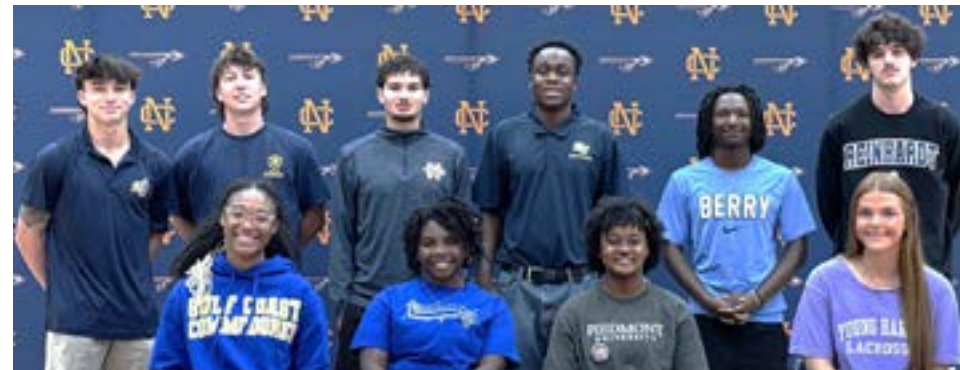
The City of Kennesaw continues the 2026 Kennesaw Grand Prix 5K series with this race through downtown and Swift-Cantrell Park on a mostly flat, fast, USATF-certified course. Designed for both competitive runners seeking a Peachtree Road Race qualifying time and beginners, walkers and families, the event combines a timed race experience with a festival-like atmosphere. Race day includes a one-mile fun run at 7:30 a.m., the 5K at 8 a.m. and a Tot Trot at 8:55 a.m., followed by awards at 9:15 a.m. All races begin at Kennesaw First Baptist Church on Main Street, with ample parking and event space. Registration is \$35 and includes a race T-shirt for those who register before the cutoff. All races are electronically timed, with awards presented across multiple age groups. Registration and full event details are available at [www.kennesawgrandprix.com](http://www.kennesawgrandprix.com).



**CONGRATULATIONS - GO WARRIORS**

North Cobb Boys Wrestling team finished 7th in the state in class 6A. Which is the highest in school history. Ronan A captured his 2nd state title with a Record of 22-0 in 215LB weight class. Madden Fredenburg finished 5th in state at 285 and Jacob Funes finished 5th at 157.

AND, for the first time in school history North Cobb had girl wrestlers place at state. Kate Martinez finished 4th 140 and Quinlan Bryant finished 5th at 145.



**NORTH COBB HIGH SCHOOL SENIORS SIGNED FOR COLLEGE**

So proud of these seniors who recently signed for college. In addition to studying they will be playing in their high school sport they excelled in. We wish them well.

Pictured in Front Row L-R: Khamya Colvin - Softball - Gulf Coast State College; Aniya Burns - Softball - Berea College; Kayden Williams - Lacrosse - Piedmont College; Keating Ball - Lacrosse - Young Harris College

Picture in the Back Row L - R: Trevor Baker - Baseball - Reinhardt University, Aaron Childress - Baseball - Truett McConnell University, Tristan West - Soccer Reinhardt University, Hamed Lemboye - Soccer - Reinhardt University, Khalil Fite - Lacrosse - Berry College, Kaleb Frick - Volleyball - Reinhardt University

[WWW.KENNESAWGRANDPRIX.COM](http://WWW.KENNESAWGRANDPRIX.COM)

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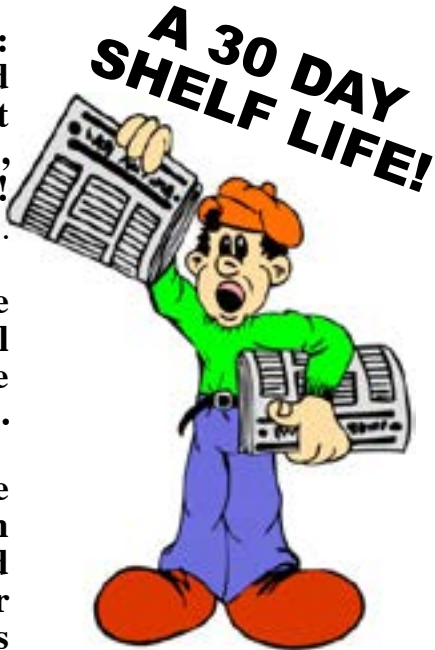
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**ACWORTH WELCOMES GOLDFISH SWIM SCHOOL**

Acworth is delighted to welcome Goldfish Swim School – Acworth to the city! On Friday, March 20, Mayor Allegood, Alderman Houston, Alderman North, the Acworth Business Association, and the City Team were honored to celebrate the occasion with Amy, Marty, John, and the Goldfish Swim School team with a ribbon cutting marking their grand opening.

Goldfish Swim School is located at 3513 Baker Road at the Publix shopping center. It offers swimming classes and lessons for swimmers of all skill levels in a fun, vibrant, and engaging atmosphere. The City of Acworth is grateful for their investment in the city. For more information visit <https://goldfishswimschool.com>



**RENASANT BANK AT MARIETTA HIGH SCHOOL**

Team members of Renasant Metro and Cobb County gave their expertise for Reality-U Financial Literacy at Marietta High School on March 31st. This program provides students with necessary financial literacy and adult-world scenarios, demonstrating the direct link between their present education and long-term financial goals. Approximately 200 students participated. Pictured from Renasant are Mitchell Smith (Treasury Solutions Sales Analyst, Buckhead), Mary O’Brien (Mortgage Banker, Alpharetta), Garrett Rowland (Branch Manager, Kennesaw), Senceria Levesque (Teller, Marietta), Andrea Rittenberry (Collector, Canton), Zac Carter (Universal Banker, Kennesaw), and Kevin Bamford (Branch Manager, Marietta).

**LEARNING KEEPS OUR LOCAL BUSINESSES STRONG**

by ALICIA TODISCO, PRESIDENT OF ABA

Acworth is a special place because of the people who live and work here. As a local business owner and the President of the Acworth Business Association (ABA), I see every day how much our community cares about supporting one another. To keep our town’s economy healthy, we have to make sure our small businesses never stop growing.



The best way to grow is to keep learning. This past month, the ABA had an amazing guest speaker who lives right here in downtown Acworth. He taught us about Artificial Intelligence (AI). You might think AI is only for giant tech companies, but our local expert showed us that it is becoming a necessary tool for everyone. AI is changing the world fast. If we want our small businesses to succeed, we have to understand how these new tools work so we don’t get left behind.

In business, if you quit learning, you quit growing. Because technology moves so quickly today, now is the time to be curious and ask questions. When we learn together, we make our whole community stronger. A great business isn’t just about selling a product; it starts with a strong connection to the people around you.

We want to help you and your business thrive! Please come join us at our next ABA meeting in May. It is a wonderful chance to meet neighbors, make new friends, and learn something new. Let’s keep building our legacy together right here in Acworth!

**ACWORTH BUSINESS ASSOCIATION**

**THUR MAY 7 ACWORTH ABA LUNCHEON** - 11:30-1:00 ACWORTH. COMMUNITY CENTER. Our monthly luncheon guest speaker is Dr. Tim Elmore SPONSORED by Northside Hospital, and Catered by Copelands. Please visit [acworth’s website](http://acworth.org) for more information and to RSVP [acworthbusiness.org](http://acworthbusiness.org)

**THUR MAY 14 ACWORTH ALIVE AFTER 5** Join the ABA for after hours food, fun and networking at 5:30-7:30 PM. May’s AA5 will be held at the Angry Crab Shack, located at 3150 Cobb Pkwy NW Suite 200 Kennesaw GA 30144. This event is free for ABA Members, \$5 for Guests For more information and to RSVP visit [www.acworthbusiness.org](http://www.acworthbusiness.org).

**THU MAY 21 11:30 WOMEN’S LUNCHEON.** Will be held at JD’S BBQ, 4424 S. Main St., Acworth. Please RSVP at [acworthbusiness.org](http://acworthbusiness.org). Member luncheon is \$20.00. Need to register by May 20.

**KENNESAW BUSINESS ASSOCIATION**

**TUES MAY 12 KBA LUNCHEON** - 11:00-1:00 GOVERNOR’S GUN CLUB, 1005 Cobb Place Blvd. PROGRAM: A panel discussion by Superior Court Judges discussing from Court Room to Community Sponsors: Beaumont Products (Citrus Magic); Caterer: Governor’s Gun Club. For more information and to RSVP visit [www.kennesawbusiness.org](http://www.kennesawbusiness.org).

**THUR MAY 19 ALIVE AFTER FIVE** 5:30-7:30 For more information and to RSVP visit [www.kennesawbusiness.org](http://www.kennesawbusiness.org).



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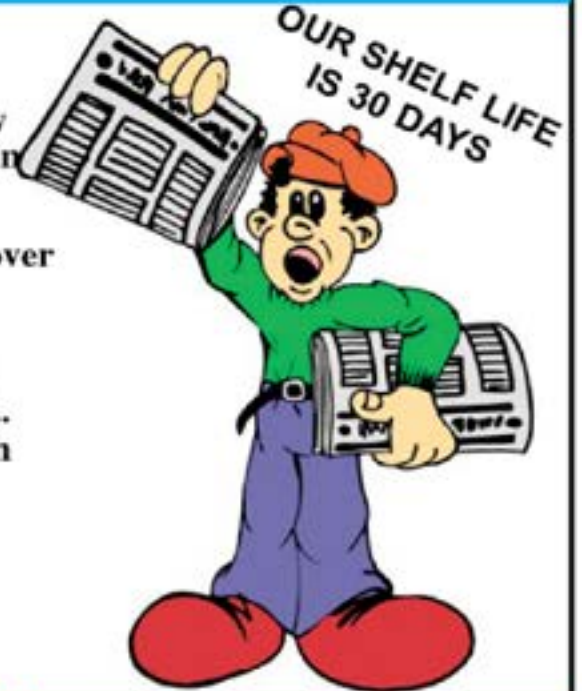
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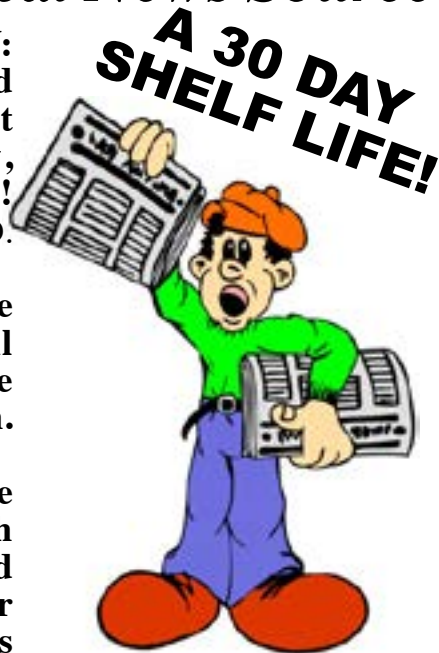
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