



# The TCA Tribune

## December 2009

Tucker Civic Association

**"Partners in the Progress and Preservation of Tucker"**

### A very busy, productive autumn

*In addition to organizing our 2nd Annual "Rivers Alive" stream cleanup (see review, pages 2 and 3), TCA sponsored community gatherings that were well attended.*

#### Fall meeting highlighted disaster preparedness

At our membership meeting on Sept. 17, Tucker Civic Association hosted a discussion of disaster preparedness delivered by Capt. Beth Burgess, operations chief of DeKalb County's Emergency Management Agency. She reviewed the experience of families who survived tornadoes and Hurricane Katrina, explaining how lack of planning made it difficult for residents to secure lodging, food and water. She gave specific recommendations for organizing and maintaining a family emergency kit with enough water, clothing, flashlights and other supplies to endure at least a three-day ordeal.



Capt. Burgess shared stark facts.

#### Becky Burns named Tucker Citizen of the Year

At our September meeting, TCA presented its "Tucker Citizen of the Year" Award to Becky Burns, a long-time resident with a history of community service. A former president of the Parent-Teacher Organization at St. Andrews Presbyterian day care center and chaperon for youth mission trips at 1st United Methodist, Becky was also praised as a founder and current director of TIME, the Tucker Interfaith Mission Experience which 1st United Methodist organized in 2007. Using mostly high school students on summer vacation, TIME has replaced roofs on the homes of a dozen people who could not otherwise afford the repair. Becky was praised for modeling real Tucker community spirit.



Becky and TCA President Joe Scarpaci.

#### Public safety meeting introduced new director

At a community meeting on Sept. 24, organized by State Rep. Kevin Levitas and cosponsored by TCA and the Northlake Community Alliance (NCA), representatives of DeKalb County Police presented a review

of public safety issues and answered questions from the audience about specific crime and code enforcement issues. The meeting also introduced DeKalb's new Director of Public Safety, Wiz Miller, who was born and raised in this area.



TCA President Joe Scarpaci, Public Safety Director Wiz Miller, Rep. Kevin Levitas, NCA Chairman Tom Ulbricht.

### "Give An Hour" on MLK holiday

For its January "Give An Hour" project, TCA is sponsoring four volunteer efforts in honor of MLK Day, a national day of community service. Each of our district representatives will name a project that volunteers can complete in one or two hours, such as cleaning up the grounds at a local school, and the projects will be registered on the [www.mlkday.gov](http://www.mlkday.gov) website. The projects will be scheduled throughout the day, so volunteers can contribute to more than one event.

TCA began its "Give An Hour" program this year of monthly projects to encourage volunteer contributions of time for worthy causes. One day a month we ask Tucker residents to give an hour of community service.

In December, we joined in the annual luncheon to thank officers and staff at the Tucker police precinct. TCA donated a ham and a turkey, as well as goodies from individual members. We also presented a retirement gift to Sharen Dorcon, long-time precinct coordinator of Neighborhood Watch programs in Tucker.

For November, volunteers donated time to following up the October "Rivers Alive" stream cleanup with an effort to finish clearing trash from another stretch of the south fork of Old Peachtree Creek.



Volunteers in November pulled another load of trash from Peachtree Creek.

# Rivers Alive 2009:

Some 450 children and adults converged on a stream bed in Tucker on Saturday, Oct. 3, to participate in Tucker Civic Association's second "Rivers Alive" project to clean up the south fork of Old Peachtree Creek.



Sponsors' sign.

"Rivers Alive" is sponsored by the Georgia Department of Natural Resources each October as a state-wide effort to clean up rivers, creeks and streams, using volunteers from the local communities. The event is supported and promoted locally by



Registration.

Keep DeKalb Beautiful. Last year, TCA's initial effort to clean up a portion of the creek

drew about 180 volunteers. This year the event drew more than twice as many volunteers from 25 community organizations, including five Girl Scout troops, Boy Scout troops, many different church groups, businesses, apartment and condo associations, and subdivisions.

Background planning. The TCA Board of Directors began planning for this event in the spring, naming Anita Stoltzfus as event coordinator. Thereafter, Anita held a number of planning meetings. Her



The breakfast tent.

volunteers determined how to solicit community groups to participate, how to ask property owners to give permission for volunteers to work on their properties, how to approach local restaurants and merchants to donate food and supplies.



Scooters were retrieved.

Organizing efforts. Anita and her committee held meetings to educate the participating groups, so each would turn in forms identifying every participant and dealing with legal liability issues. Anita and her



Girl Scouts dug up plenty.

volunteers also contacted county offices to solicit support.

Final Plans. As the event date approached, Anita and her team surveyed the stretch of waterway, 1.5 miles of Old Peachtree Creek. They sprayed off patches of poison ivy so volunteers could work in the woods without fear, and they established work sites along the creek, so volunteer teams would know where to go and what to do.



Tires were abundant.

The event. The south fork of Old Peachtree Creek is best approached in Tucker off Cowan Road, and the Safehouse agreed to be the staging area. About 7:00 a.m. on Saturday,

Oct. 3, a number of pickup trucks pulled into the Safehouse parking lot, bearing canopies, flats of water bottles, and signage. Some volunteers raised the canopies, others put out signs along the road, some lifted flats of water bottles and flavored drinks, a few organized a supply of donated work gloves and trash bags, and a couple of TCA officers set up a micro-phone-and-speakers system. DeKalb police officers arrived to provide security.



Boy Scouts waded in.

Soon there was a canopy for breakfast, where volunteers could get a bagel or a muffin, plus another area of canopies where volunteer groups could register.

From 8:00 a.m. on, the line in front of the registration tables kept growing.



Grocery carts were rolled out.

Eventually all the groups registered and collected cleanup supplies, and Anita issued instructions. The groups then marched to their preassigned locations along the creek bed.

The south fork of Old Peachtree Creek runs between apartment complexes on one side and mostly commercial properties on the other side, with a generous buffer of dense trees and brush riddled with narrow paths. That morn-



GSU students participated.

# A Community Success

ing over 400 Tucker residents of all ages, races and backgrounds were scouring the woods and waterway. Girl Scout troops collected bottles and hubcaps. Boy Scouts and their leaders battled to raise a gigantic commercial tire from the creek bed. Church groups struggled to push abandoned grocery carts to the designated pickup points.



Happy to serve.

From 9 to noon, our volunteers worked and sweated, and got wet and dirty, hauling out 5.6 tons of trash and another half-ton of recyclables.



These two found a suitcase.

They pulled from the creek and woods 134 tires, about 80 grocery carts, most of a washing machine, and a complete motorcycle.

And while they headed back to the staging area, DeKalb sanitation crews loaded up the refuse and carted it away.

The party. Following the cleanup, volunteers enjoyed lunch provided from local restaurants and a raffle of gifts from area businesses. All preregistered groups received Rivers Alive 2009 t-shirts.



The variety of junk was amazing.

This year's project had 38 sponsors, including State Senator Steve Henson, State Representative Kevin Levitas, ARC Medical, Pilgrim Mat Services, Bradford Park Apartments, Pinnacle-Clearwire, Handy Ace

Hardware, Tucker Optimist Club, Matthews Cafeteria and Auto Service Depot. The event received in-kind donations of food and gift cards from 28 local businesses.

DeKalb County's Greenspace Environment Manager, Dave Butler, said, "This has got to be the largest and best organized 'River's Alive' project in the state. To see this many people working together to



Donations from local restaurants provided lunch for hundreds.

clean a local waterway is amazing." After her months of planning, Anita was elated by the turnout of volunteers and all that was accomplished with this event. "We're doing much more here than just spending one morning cleaning a creek," she said. "This is the type of project that brings people and organizations from across Tucker together to build our spirit of community."



Community spirit is alive and well in Tucker!

## One group's experience

### Boy Scout Troop 129 wallowed in the thrill of cleanup

(In the words of troop leader Jim Carey) "We had a fabulous time, both the boys and adults. We had eleven adults, eight Scouts and the sister of one of our boys. We were assigned two segments along the creek, so we split into two groups. My group went into the creek near the staging area. We found a huge tire, and we got it out of the water, but we couldn't get it up the high banks. I think TCA is going to get someone in there with a saw to cut it up, so they can haul it out. Later we joined our other group at Peters Park. We got a lot of work done, and everyone was soaking wet and filthy by the end of the day. We got back for lunch -- that was popular. Then there was the drawing for door prizes, and we got our t-shirts. Everybody felt really good about doing something for the community. We have too much divisiveness today in our country. It's so nice to see people of different economic classes, different races, coming from different churches and different schools, all working together in the same direction. This is how America should work, everybody joining together to do something good for the community."





Tucker Civic Association  
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 Hotline 770-270-1620  
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The Tucker Civic Association Board of Directors meets once a month, normally on the second Thursday at 7 p.m., in the administration building of St. Andrews Presbyterian Church, 4882 Lavista Road. If you are interested in joining TCA or want more information, leave a message on the TCA Hotline or visit our website.

### P&G plans for 2010

TCA's Parks & Greenspace Committee recently met and discussed plans for the new year, including park cleanups and another "Rivers Alive" project. There will be a "Rivers Alive" organizing meeting in February or March. Look for updates at [www.tuckercivic.org](http://www.tuckercivic.org).



Chair Bruce Nutter (left) led the committee discussion.

### Nominations are open for "Member of the Year" and for 2010 officers and representatives

At its December meeting, the Board of Directors will establish the Nominating Committee, responsible for securing candidates for 2010 for the offices of President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer and our four District Representatives. Anyone interested in serving in one of these positions, as well anyone who wants to suggest a possible candidate, will have an opportunity to submit a nomination. Check our website for further details.

Members will elect the 2010

officers and representatives at our annual meeting in late February. At that time, we will also present this year's Member of the Year. The award goes to a member (not currently on the Board of Directors) who has made a significant contribution to TCA. To nominate someone, just write a short essay explaining the nominee's service, and email it to [vicepresident@tuckercivic.org](mailto:vicepresident@tuckercivic.org), or mail a paper copy to MEMBER OF THE YEAR, Tucker Civic Association, P.O. Box 1916, Tucker GA 30085.

### News items: Visitors inform Board; new library to open

**Visitors address TCA Board meeting.** The TCA Board of Directors, at its recent monthly meeting, heard from two important speakers.

County Commissioner Connie Stokes explained the importance of the upcoming census. Many federal programs distribute money to counties based on population figures. The last census may have under-counted people in DeKalb



TCA President & Commissioner Stokes

County by tens of thousands. The county is preparing a campaign to ensure that all DeKalb residents are counted in 2010.

The other guest at the TCA Board meeting was Laurene Hamilton from Keep DeKalb Beautiful, who offered information on the Adopt A MARTA Bus Stop program. Tucker has a number



Hamilton displays promotional signage

of MARTA bus stops, and sometimes a garbage can overflows with refuse. TCA will be an umbrella sponsor, recruiting associations, businesses and organizations to commit to keep the bus stops well maintained. The details will appear in the coming months on our website.

**Library opens mid-January.** The Tucker branch of DeKalb Library System will open in its new location in mid-January, with 25,000 sq. ft. of space holding 82,000 volumes, a computer lab and a cafe.