

EDUCATING  
FOR LIFE

FAMILY  
TRADITION

LIVING ORGAN  
DONATION

# we are Henry

Education Issue

M A G A Z I N E

March – April 2013





 better

 **Piedmont**  
HENRY

It's time to get better.

[piedmonthenry.org](http://piedmonthenry.org)

# we are Henry

MAGAZINE

## FEATURES

### Education For Life

46 Superintendent Of Henry County Schools Remains Committed To The Children And Families Of Our Community

### Living Organ Donation

50 McDonough Men Star In Kidney Transplant Broadcast Live On Social Media

### Family Tradition

52 The Clay Family Shares The Importance Of Spending Time Together

## DEPARTMENTS

### profiles

- 10 In Search of Perfection
- 12 Nerd's Rule
- 13 Shaping your Life
- 14 LEGO's, Love and Lots of Reading
- 15 Role Models + Hard Work = Success
- 16 The Pyke Brothers
- 18 Presidential Scholar, Abigail Jenkins

### education

- 22 Creativity CANNED  
Local Students Recycling Trash Into Art
- 24 Living Life Through Dance
- 25 Woodland Robotics  
Team Engineering Their Way To The Top

### community

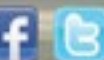
- 27 Fern's Country Store  
From Pastures To Post Office
- 28 Life is Like Riding a Bike  
The Journey Of A Survivor

### columns

- Spiritual Guidance
- 32 A Life of Joy and Purpose  
Tighten Your Sails And Give A Nod To Some Changes In Your Life
- Non-Profit
- 36 The Gift of Reading  
The Ferst Foundation
- 37 McDonough Arts  
Fostering a Love of the Arts in Our
- History
- 40 Shingleroof Campground  
A Landmark That Represents History, Religion and Social Interaction
- Fashion
- 62 Making It Local

# WE TREAT MORE KIDS WITH BROKEN BONES THAN ANYONE IN GEORGIA.

Childhood is a non-stop adventure. So when accidents happen, trust the doctors with the expertise to treat growing bones and growth plates the right way. [choa.org/fracture](http://choa.org/fracture).



CHILDREN'S AT HUDSON BRIDGE — 1510 HUDSON BRIDGE ROAD, STOCKBRIDGE

# A Note About The Cover



Young students take pride in presenting their teacher with the shiniest, reddest apple as a token of their admiration. And teachers smile as they receive an endless assortment of 'apple' clad gifts to reward their teaching skills. *So why the partnership between the two? Apples and Education?*

Some possible connections include: that tasty fruit Eve plucked from the Tree Of Knowledge that fateful day... or the many varieties of apples representing the uniqueness of each child...or that learning is delicious and only comes to us bite by juicy bite. We also hear stories of long ago when apples and other foods were used as payment to teachers in times of economic hardship. Whatever the root of the relation, it gives me pause to reflect on my apple of early learning.

Being of a creative mind, I see myself as the raw 'apple' and my teachers and mentors as those who were given the task of stirring up my abilities and talents into a well pleasing, fully developed person (the apple pie!). They were expert in trimming away the things that were not suitable, adding their own spices, and combining the old and new to bring about a successful result.

Many different ingredients are needed to make an apple pie; the same is true to educate a child. Whether the child attends public, private or homeschool...the educators of today are all challenged to work together to develop the highest and best potential of each child.

We have the privilege of meeting some amazing youngsters and we look forward to sharing many more of their stories. We are working together to stir up the kids of this community.

We are....striving for the apple pie!

Jodi Hitt  
Editorial Director, Production Manager



Publisher / Photographer	Michie Turpin
Production Manager/ Editorial Director	Jodi Hitt
Editor	J.M. Wright
Layout/Design	Oliver Imprints Graphic Design Studio
Contributing Writers	Amanda Bartlett Fernando Del Valle Brandy Beavers Marla Goncalves J.D. Hardin Ethan Hildreth John Shiffert Dondra Tolerson Beverly Williams Debbie Withers



We Are Henry Magazine looks forward to hearing from you!  
Please send all correspondence to [info@wearehenry.com](mailto:info@wearehenry.com).

We Are Henry Magazine is published bi-monthly. All contents are copyrighted by We Are Henry, LLC. Reproduction, in whole or part, without permission is prohibited. We Are Henry, LLC. reserves liability in error to a printed correction.

Cover credits Special Thanks to:  
The Hildreth Center for the classroom setting and Rebecca Anderson for the pie plate and the Apple pie! Visit her shop at [www.newrelic.etsy.com](http://www.newrelic.etsy.com).

We Want To Hear From You,  
Call or Click Today !  
**770.634.9213**  
**info@wearehenry.com**



Visit [wearehenry.com](http://wearehenry.com) to:

**DOWNLOAD THIS ISSUE**

**SUBSCRIBE**

**CONTRIBUTE**

**Get Featured or Be a Subject Matter Expert**

Do you have a positive and unique story to share with the people of Henry County? Write to [info@wearehenry.com](mailto:info@wearehenry.com). We'll contact you for more information if your story fits with one of our editorial themes.

**Advertise in We Are Henry**

Give your business the power to reach over 30,000 potential customers and promote its strengths. Email Michie Turpin at [michieturpin@wearehenry.com](mailto:michieturpin@wearehenry.com).

**Socialize with We Are Henry**

**Follow us on:**



[facebook.com/wearehenry](https://facebook.com/wearehenry)

# Profiling we are



*Learning isn't easy. That's why it's so fun.*



Some things are certain

PK-12 College Park PK-6 Johns Creek 404.765.4001 woodward.edu

**At Woodward, your student can explore**

virtually any interest: from hundreds of courses in traditional and innovative subjects to more clubs, arts opportunities, and winning athletic teams than he could ever exhaust. And that means he discovers **his own greatest strengths.**



**Main Campus Open House**

PK-12, College Park  
Sunday, February 10  
2:00 to 5:00 p.m.

**WOODWARD ACADEMY**

*fostering excellence, character, and opportunity since 1900*



“*The mind is not a vessel to be filled,  
but a fire to be kindled.*”

— Plutarch

# *In Search of Perfection*

## *Amazing Young Golfer*

### *- Steven Fisk*

By Fernando Del Valle

In the summer of 2002, Steven Fisk was like any other 5 year old; he played with toys, took naps and discovered new things every day. His Mom and Dad had just opened the Rum Creek Golf Course, where for the next ten years he would spend almost every waking moment. Chris Fisk, Steven's Dad, enjoyed the game of golf but opening Rum Creek was a business venture in an area of town that could use the distraction. He had no idea or dreamed of Steven becoming a golfer.

Steven wanted to spend time with his Dad, so he would tag along to the golf course. Before long, Steven was hitting balls and enjoying it. As he progressed, Steven became competitive. By the age of 10, Dad could no longer beat him. He had his first hole-in-one when he was 7 years old. Since then he has recorded five more; four at Rum Creek and another at the US Kids World Championships in Pinehurst, North Carolina. His goal is to have a hole-in-one at every hole of his family's course.

Education is also very important to Steven. "I put in the time after school to get A's and B's. No coach would have to worry about me getting good grades," he says. "I played other sports, like Upward Basketball for about three seasons when I was 7, but golf was what I wanted to do and even though my friends played other things, golf was it for me."

Thousands of practice swings later, Steven put together an amazing year which culminated in being named Southeastern Junior Golf Tour's Player of the Year for 2012. At year's end, he was ranked 25th in the country and #2 for the State of Georgia for players graduating in 2015. He won 6 out of the 11 tournaments he played in 2012. He is most proud of his two wins on the University of Georgia Golf Course. He also won the inaugural SJGT Junior Invitational at Druid Hills Golf Club, where on day two he shot a 66 for a come from behind victory. An amazing record, yet, Steven is not satisfied.

"I try to be perfect every time, no matter if I am practicing or playing in a tournament, and although I know it's impossible to be perfect, my desire for being the best is always there," says Steven. "Golf is a game of adjustment, of knowing what you want to do next and how the particular hole is better played."

Steven has been adjusting and learning how to hit every single possible shot for many years. "My muscle memory started from such a young age, my body remembers what works for me." As we talked about this game he loves, time and time again, he would tell me what the ball was going to do after impact with the club. Almost every time, he was right on target and the ball would do exactly what he said. Left to right, right to left, low off the club, etc. It was an amazing demonstration of skill. Yet, even more striking, is Steven's laser-like focus. At the tender age of 15 and a sophomore in high school, Steven knows what he wants to accomplish and how he plans to accomplish it. Dedication is at the top of the agenda. "I want to play golf at a Division I school in college and the PGA. There is no other option."



By Brandy Beavers

# NERDS RULE

*Mechanics and Materials... Differential Equations... Thermodynamics... Engineering Mechanics Dynamics.* Civil Engineering student Josh Ekstedt's class schedule may sound harder than "trying to put socks on a rooster," but I am sure this self-proclaimed nerd feels otherwise. Acing these classes will just be par for the course for this young academic powerhouse whose achievements are vast and whose goals reach the sky.

Already a junior at Georgia Southern University, he is completing his 3rd semester. Twenty year old Josh is way ahead of the game thanks to the AP credits he earned in high school while attending Eagles Landing Christian Academy (ELCA). During his freshman year, while maintaining a 4.0 GPA, he was awarded "The Most Outstanding Engineering Sophomore Scholar." "Math, science and academics come easy..." says Josh. He even has a job as a math and physics tutor that he really loves. Josh says, "it tests whether you really understand...I enjoy it!"

I asked Josh if he felt that learning comes naturally to him, or if he really has to apply himself. He answered, "both: I do understand and I'm good at it, but I have to put in the work to do well." Secrets to his success

include: excellent teachers, an excellent high school, and his AP credit courses.

During his free time, Josh enjoys biking, hanging with his roommates to watch movies and having friends over. He played intramural flag football, too. "I enjoyed it, but I am a nerd!" He also likes reading the Star Wars books. Who would have guessed?

Josh considers his father his top mentor. "When I have questions on how to live or conduct myself, I usually go to my dad." I asked Josh what motivates him to do all that he does. He said, "philosophically, I live this life to please God; but my parents paid for private school and I want to make it worth while for them." Josh has been motivated to do well in school by the encouragement he has received from both his parents and his teachers at ELCA.

Josh participates in the Regional Engineering Transfer Program (RETP). After next semester he will transfer to Georgia Tech, as long as he keeps up his grades. He plans on staying in school after graduation to earn his master's degree. When finished with school, Josh hopes to be working in the field of civil engineering.

His dream job would be to work over-seas for extended periods building gigantic bridges and buildings like the ones you see in places like Dubai on the National Geographic channel. Achievements and dreams like this make nerds the new cool. May the force be with you, Josh!



Sabrina's future looked bleak when she became a mother at the age of seventeen. Although she had been accepted into Georgia Tech, balancing motherhood with her studies seemed too overwhelming at the time. Instead, she began working a series of jobs that barely paid enough to support her and her family. She found herself having to rely on government assistance for a brief time, just to make ends meet.

"I knew my life did not have to be like that", said Sabrina, so at the age of twenty-one she decided it was time to take charge of her future. She wanted to build a career for herself and enrolled in Atlanta Technical College, earning her Dental Assisting diploma. Even though her work in the dental field was gratifying, she had another vision that stemmed from her desire to help people in the field of human resources.

The transition did not appear like an intuitive career path. But Sabrina was diligent to stay the course. She enrolled in the Henry County branch of Mercer University. This met her needs because they catered to working adults with families. The added appeal of allowing her to live, work and attend school in Henry County was a bonus. Sabrina is currently completing her final senior semester in the Human Resources program.

As an active student member of the Greater Henry County Society for Resource Management (GHSHRM), Sabrina was hired by a professional member who is a human resources manager at Henry County's Carlisle Transportation Products. She holds the honor of being the recipient of the very first official internship developed as a result of collaboration between the GHSHRM and Mercer. Upon completion of her internship, Sabrina was offered a position with another Henry County company. Professional memberships and networking have opened doors for her and others. She will continue to serve as a volunteer director for the GHSHRM College Relations Core Leadership Area (CLA). She will be the liaison between the chapter and local area colleges. Her desire to help people in her chosen field has come to fruition.

Kim Meredith, Assistant Director of the Office of Career Management at the Mercer University Atlanta area office in McDonough said of Sabrina, "[she is] the poster child for an effective, successful career changer." Sabrina has inspired many others and encouraged them to dream big and not be afraid of life's challenges. Sabrina's next goal is to find a full time opportunity in her chosen field of human resources after graduation. She is optimistic saying, "I have laid the ground work and I don't take my education for granted. I know that the job for me is out there."

## Shaping Your Life

By Dondra "Dot" Tolerson

*"Every decision you make plays a part in shaping your life," says Sabrina Gardner. Sabrina's mantra was coined and put into action on her journey from a teenage mother to where she is today. As a wife and mother of four, Sabrina works as a dental assistant and also attends college full-time pursuing a Bachelor's degree from Mercer University. She serves as a community volunteer and enjoys doing what she can to help and inspire others.*

# LEGO's, Love and Lots of Reading

By Jodi Hitt

IT ALL LEADS BACK TO LEGO'S. THERE SEEMS TO BE a valid connection between that childhood toy and mathematical success. Mathew Halvorson lends validity to my theory. Of course, in Mathew's case it could just be hard work, discipline, involved parents, exposure to music and lots and lots of reading that landed him in Auburn University.

Growing up in a military family and experiencing many different forms of schooling, aided the development of this well rounded young man. Mathew's elementary school days were spent in public school, followed by four years of homeschooling for his upper grades. In 2012, he graduated, with honors, from the New Creation Christian Academy. Knowing that Math was his strong suit, Mathew considered his many options for college which, fortunately, included many scholarship offers. After deciding to pursue a degree in engineering, Mathew chose Auburn University.

During his recent college break, I asked Mathew what he liked most about his new life on campus. "Freedom," he replied.



When Mathew takes a break from his studies, he enjoys music, theater and movies. His all time favorite movie is *The Princess Bride* (indisputably the best movie ever) followed by *The King and I* and *It's A Wonderful Life*. Authors that rank with this brainiac include J.R.R. Tolken and C.S. Lewis. Regardless of his new found freedom and pleasant pastimes, Mathew's main focus remains is his education. He was recently awarded the National Scholars Presidential School and Honors College Selectee honor.

Staying well-rounded for Mathew includes accomplishments outside the classroom. He has earned his 3rd degree black belt in American Karate and obtained Eagle Scout through the Boy Scouts of America. Just when I thought there might not be anything he couldn't do, Mathew admitted to not being a good speller. I guess if that's your only kryptonite, you are still pretty awesome.

All of the above achievements take a back seat to Mathew's ultimate goal of entering the ministry. He has served on mission trips and various mission teams with his church, Wesley Way UMC. With that revelation, I caught a glimpse of Mathew's heart. I can only imagine that his parents are beaming with pride, not only for all of his academic achievements, but what reaches beyond the books. Perhaps there is a correlation between involved parents and well-rounded children that I should consider after LEGO's.



## Role Models + Hard Work = Success

### The Jessie Welch Story

By Fernando Del Valle

**"SCHOOL, PRACTICE, SCHOOL, PRACTICE AND** throw in some time to sleep, that's my routine," says Jessie Welch, a senior at Strong Rock Christian Academy. Jessie keeps a very busy schedule balancing a 4.37 GPA with cross-country running, baseball and basketball. Just minutes after we spoke, he was heading out of town for a two day basketball tournament. Yet, not everything is about Jessie's school and sports activities. Community matters immensely to him.

Along with spending time with family and friends, he also helps others at a homeless shelter in Forest Park, GA, in a ministry founded by his grandfather. Every other Wednesday, 250-300 people are served meals and enjoy an uplifting program. Jessie feels that he receives the greater blessing by helping the thankful people. "The food we provide them is fine... but showing them love is more important," declares Jessie. On top of school, ball, and community service - Jessie also helps out at home with his four younger sisters and says he would not have it any other way.

Jessie was home schooled by his Mom, Micki, from kindergarten through seventh grade. Since attending Strong Rock, it has been his goal to make the most of his education while excelling every step of the way. This dedication has paid off. Jessie has been selected by Mercer University for the Presidential Scholarship and is also a finalist for their Stamp Leadership Scholarship. If selected, he will receive a full scholarship...not to mention the prestige of earning the award.

Jessie plans to become an engineer. It is rare to see a 17 year old young man be so clearly focused on his goals for the future. Yet, he is unsure where he wants to attend school. Mercer is his Mom's Alma Mater and they are offering him a unique opportunity; however, Georgia Tech is where his Dad became an engineer and he has always dreamed of going there. All the same, Jessie is committed to do his very best wherever he decides to attend college. Location will not lessen his desire to excel and be successful.

Success is very important for Jessie. But his view of success is seen through a wide lens. He attributes his role models in life for his achievements and his outlook on life. "Success is more than money, it's what you do for your family and the community. Success is happiness and not the amount of things you have," explains Jessie. In a time when many teens look up to athletes and pop culture celebrities, Jessie looks to his mother and his father: Micki and Stacey. "Dad has always been a hard worker. I want to be that way and provide for my own family like he has for us," says Jessie. He credits his Mom with being his very best teacher and the inspiration for his academic achievements. Jessie also praises Mr. David Mann, President of Strong Rock, as someone he wants to emulate. "Mr. Mann never has a frown on his face and is always available to everyone in school. He is genuine, loving, and has a servant heart." That is how Jessie wants to be remembered, also.

Jessie is determined to be successful and continue helping others. Our community is better off and our future is in good hands because of young men and women like him.



# The Pyke Brothers

State Champs, Scholars & Southern Gentlemen

By Marla Goncalves

*Chad and Chandler Pyke are great ambassadors for Henry County in their daily lives as students at Woodward Academy. They are State Champions in their chosen sport of wrestling along with being scholars and southern gentlemen.*

The brothers live in McDonough and train year-round at The Compound Wrestling Center, a local gym. Last year, they achieved something very special when they both took home State Championship titles in their respective weight categories, becoming the first brothers in Woodward Academy's history to win wrestling championships in the same year. At press-time, they were headed back to the State Championships with hopes for a repeat.

Chad and Chandler are the sons of Lane and Charles Pyke, of McDonough. Both are Woodward alumni. (Charles graduated in 1983; Lane in 1985). Today, Lane teaches second grade at Woodward's Primary School. Charles is an attorney specializing in estate planning and the founder of Pyke & Associates, P.C., a Stockbridge-based law firm.

The Pyke brothers learned wrestling at their father's knee, so to speak. Charles Pyke was a proficient wrestler in high school when he attended Woodward. He wrestled with Coach Pete Fritts Jr., who now coaches Chad and Chandler at the Academy.

As brothers, Chad and Chandler can be competitive with each other. But their bond also gives them reassurance when they need it. "Our team depends on me and Chad," said Chandler. "I can depend on Chad to get points when we need it, and that helps to deal with the pressure." Coach Fritts had this to say about the Pyke brothers: "They both are great examples of the fact that hard work gets you to the top, and even more hard work will help you stay on top. They are not afraid to lose or to test themselves."

Growing up in Henry County, Chad and Chandler have enjoyed golfing, fishing, and hunting with their father, as well as trips to the Grand Caymans to scuba dive. As Woodward students since pre-kindergarten, they have learned discipline and how to balance their lives. From wrestling, they've learned self-determination. "It teaches accountability. When it gets hard, you can't just stop. You can't depend on someone else. You're the only one who controls your fate," said Chandler.

Chad, who is a senior, plans to enroll at North Carolina State next year with a wrestling scholarship. Chandler, a junior, hopes to wrestle in college as well. Both are thinking of returning to Atlanta's south side when they are older. "Henry County is a great community, very peaceful," said Chad. "I definitely plan on staying close to my roots."

PROFILE



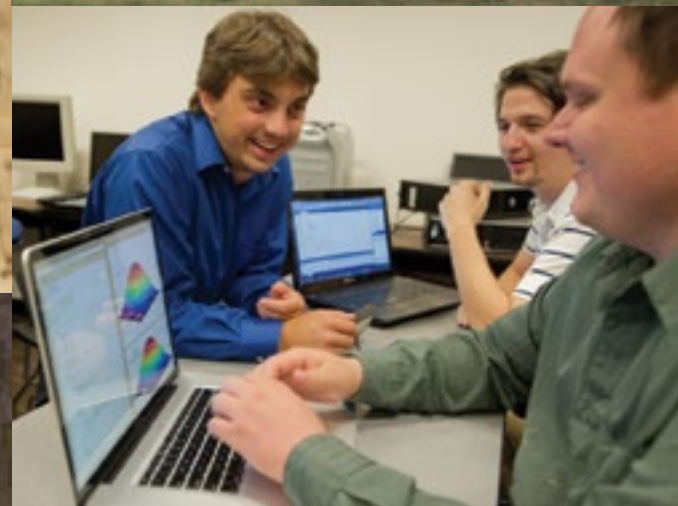
# Presidential Scholar, Abigail Jenkins

*Personal Experiences Brought Her to Clayton State University*

By John Shiffert



- 40 undergraduate majors
- 8 graduate degree programs
- Expanded housing options
- State-of-the-art Student Activities Center
- Home of world-renowned Spivey Hall
- NCAA Division II National Champions – Women’s Basketball 2011



**WOODLAND HIGH SCHOOL 2012 HONORS GRADUATE,** Abigail Jenkins, began her college career at Clayton State University in August 2012. However, the Clayton State experience is anything but a new one for the Stockbridge resident, who is one of the newest Presidential Scholars to attend the University. As the saying goes, she’s been here before.

“I was initially attracted to Clayton State because, over the course of my entire life, I have always heard wonderful things about the student and faculty community,” she says. “I have also known many alumni, in and outside of my family. I have also participated in various workshops and summer camps held at Clayton State. My previous personal experiences made a very positive impact on my decision to attend Clayton State!”

Clayton State’s Presidential Scholars are, by definition, exceptional. The Clayton State Presidential Scholars program consists of six, four-year presidential scholarships that continue annually. The program started in the fall of 2010. Jenkins is one of the members of the third “class” of Presidential Scholars. Her academic interests are an unusual combination of the scientific and creative, something that sets her apart, even in a program that targets the best of the best. Jenkins is planning on double-majoring in Mathematics with Teacher Certification and Music; and that’s not all she plans to do at the University.

“My dream for college is to broaden my skills and knowledge, and graduate with a degree that I can be proud of and (to) make a successful career,” she says. “I look forward to being involved in many campus clubs, societies, and events. Overall, my dream is to achieve even bigger and greater things than I ever have and make meaningful memories in the process!”

Jenkins’ college plans are actually an extension of her activities at Woodland High School, where she participated as keyboardist and pianist in the Woodland marching band, wind symphony and jazz band. She followed her other area of expertise by serving as a math tutor, and was also a member of the Beta Club.

As Presidential Scholars for the 2012-2013 Academic Year (encompassing the fall and spring semesters), Jenkins and her fellow scholars will receive a \$3,000 University Grant, a Housing Grant, and a \$250 Bookstore Award, for an annual award of just under \$9,000. These scholarship awards are in addition to any HOPE Scholarship funds for which the Presidential scholars would be eligible.

Jenkins is not the only Clayton State Presidential Scholar from Henry County. The second group of Presidential Scholars, who matriculated in August 2011, included Jonathan Blake Anderson, a Stockbridge High School graduate, and Jacob Caldwell, another Woodland High School graduate.

[www.clayton.edu](http://www.clayton.edu)

DREAMS . MADE REAL .

Integrate  
**Henry**<sup>we are</sup>  
into your  
**MARKETING STRATEGY**  
**NOW!**

Because our advertising rates are the lowest in the Southern Crescent, our reach is far beyond Henry County, and we offer FREE pdf downloads with every issue.

*We Are Henry Magazine* is establishing itself as one of South Metro Atlanta's leading community publications. Described as "extremely engaging," due to the quality of our editorial content and outstanding visual images created through our graphic design and original photography.

For advertisers, the reach goes so far beyond print with our compelling, interactive website that offers readers a full download of each publication, free of charge, which is unprecedented in the publishing world.

**Call today!**  
**678.770.0731**



# Education we are



“Education is simply the soul of society as it passes from one generation to another.”

— Aristotle

# Creativity CANNED

by J.D. Hardin

*One man's trash is another man's treasure.  
The oft-repeated idiom aptly applies to a  
group of talented students and their teacher  
at Henry County Middle School.*



**I**N MELISSA WOOD'S ART CLASS, NOTHING GOES TO WASTE. Some of the most interesting pieces are composed of items once discarded as something to be picked up on the weekly garbage route. Egg cartons, pizza and cereal boxes, soda cans, scrap lumber, old textbooks – you name it and it is probably being used by students in the class in a creative way.

This all started as a way to save money in light of the many cutbacks education has experienced across the state. What resulted is highly impressionable, eye-pleasing art. Some of the more notable works have drawn the attention of lawmakers all the way in Washington, D.C., and led to grants totaling more than \$5,000 to provide more resources for further creative excellence.

One cannot help but notice the largest fruits of the student's and teacher's labor. The can and cereal box collages capture your attention like rain when the sun is shining; you didn't know something like that was possible. Hours and hours of can carving and box cutting produced these appetizing works of art. For example:

- Presidential portraits may get a makeover soon. Who knew

President Barak Obama would be so fashionable in Coke, Diet Coke, and Coke Zero cans?

A Hispanic Heritage-themed courtyard? That's easy! A collection of approximately 20 varieties of soda cans were crafted to depict a guitarist and interested listener in a picturesque setting.

One can safely assume tribal artists never thought about making a meaningful image out of Pepsi product cans and old bike tires. Amazing fails on the largest scale to fully describe the intricacy of the work and the highly thoughtful planning and crafting required by students and Wood to complete such awe-inspiring art.

In middle school, art is a required course. If a student does not possess an inner Picasso, you would not be able to tell. One look around the room that is adorned in every nook and cranny with student artwork and it is easy to see everyone has some artistic ability, even if it is housed in the tip of their little finger.

Wood estimates that approximately 3,500 students have participated since the beginning of her recycled art projects. This year alone, 700 students in 6th through 8th grades have worked on the various recycled projects.



A teacher at Henry County Middle School for 11 years, Melissa Wood has been in charge of directing the art room since 2007. "The most rewarding part about my job is when students beg to be in my advanced class where we brainstorm and create most of our projects," said Wood. And her students confirm their enthusiasm for more challenges in the advanced class.

"I learned stuff I never even thought I would learn," shared student Leonard Key. "Advanced art is amazing, and I believe that being here is such a privilege." Keith Pittard, another student, shared, "The ideas we come up with are not easy, and we always put our full effort into our art. Never have we given up or done half work with Ms. Wood on our side."

A to-do list of other projects is on the table for the semesters ahead, but the can collages remain a constant. "I will always continue doing the can collages, because they are so beautiful and popular among the community," shared Wood.

Getting middle school kids to focus on any task is a challenge in and of itself. With so many distractions at that age, it is easy to assume that even the most enthused artist in middle school might not always be up to the task at hand. Principal Dr. Kimberly Anderson is quick to point out that in her school's art program, focus and great work are easy to recognize. "Students genuinely love the class," said Anderson. "There are never any problems with students misbehaving."

With so much to share, the walls of the school display some of

the art pieces, and the county office absorbs others. Each one is the culmination of hours and hours of meticulous work and artistic vision. The city of McDonough was so captivated by the outcome of each project that they built large, sturdy easels to showcase the heavy displays.

Ms. Wood knows that each student has individual artistic abilities that can be displayed through a variety of mediums. It's not all about drawing and painting in this class. It's about pushing the creative limits to design eye-catching art; conversation pieces if you will. Anything has the potential to be art; it's all about the vision, the product, and an audience.

One of the greatest lessons and accomplishments for the students comes from an imparting of knowledge by Ms. Wood regarding how to share their work with an audience. It is one thing to create art, but to get to display it in a gallery is even more exciting for the students.

"We were never given this guidance growing up or in school," said Wood. "It is so important to teach these students about displaying and marketing their work, and that is why we have established a studio in Henry County to do just that."

As long as there are objects that no one has an interest in using, Ms. Wood and her students have the creative abilities to repurpose the "trash" and turn it into beautiful "treasure."



# Living Life Through Dance

by Brandy Beavers

**Would you like to be transported to New York, Russia or almost any city in the world? Jeanne Palpant, the director of Upstage Dance Studio in Ellenwood and McDonough, can take you there if you choose to join her in the magical world of dance. Who knew that behind the very unassuming facade of this studio would be a woman so full of character, talent and life lessons.**

Jeanne started dance at the age of nine. Her mother wanted her to start music. But Jeanne says, "I did not want to sit down for the music lessons but instead I wanted to dance while everyone else played the music." She went to a cousin's dance recital and when the curtain opened, she thought,

"Wow, I think I could do this forever." After begging her mother all summer for dance lessons, Jeanne finally found a dance studio and knew this was home.

Jeanne studied with several dance studios throughout Atlanta, then started teaching dance at age sixteen to help pay for lessons. At the age of twenty-eight, Jeanne was touring with the USA/USSR Friendship Team and performed throughout Russia that summer.

In 1985, Jeanne opened Upstage Dance Studio. She loves the teaching part of dance. "I can teach anybody to move as long as they come with the desire." She confides that it is frustrating to lose a lot of talented dancers to things like soccer and other sports. "People just don't understand that they could get a scholarship in dance." She has seen this happen many times. Also, these talented students miss out on opportunities to be chosen for summer dance tours.

Paulina Lightsey has been dancing at Upstage Dance since she was seven years old. I asked her what Jeanne has taught her over the years. "Jeanne has been my teacher, mentor, second mother, boss and friend," said Paulina. "Jeanne is a tough teacher. She expects you to bring your personal best and she helps you find out what that is. She has taught me so much about dance and about life through dance." Paulina uses these lessons on a daily basis. "She brought the world of dance to our studio in Ellenwood. She brought the Atlanta Ballet to us and she has brought a world of opportunities to us."

Jeanne explains to me that she likes to teach the business side of dance to her students. She gives passionate high school students who have been with the studio since elementary school the opportunity to teacher assist for one year. They can then become a paid assistant the second year. She likes to see her students grow up, go to college for dance and then teach.

Jeanne believes that "taking a simple dance class once a week is an escape, just like any art, like writing or painting." She explains that "dance touches every part of us. It touches our soul because of the music and the rhythm, and our mind because you have to put yourself all-in when dancing."

If you want to explore life through the world of dance with Jeanne Palpant and Upstage Dance Studio, you can find out more on her website at [upstagedance.com](http://upstagedance.com).



## WOODLAND Robotics Team

By J. D. Hardin

**CAN YOU RECALL THE FIRST LEGO OR ELABORATE** erector set you or your sibling spent time piecing together, breaking down, and then piecing together again? How elaborate could it be? What special functions could it be given? Can it withstand the faintest of brushes with a careless observer? Say, the family pet?

For some, tinkering was a hobby - a fun way to stay out of the Georgia summer heat. For others, tinkering ended where serious engineering vision began, endearing an ever evolving field to those seeking to make everyday operations and processes simpler for future generations.

Engineering is nothing new to students in Henry County Schools, and specifically the Woodland High School students. High-level robotics engineering and competition, however, are developing with each new

functioning piece and programming code. And the Woodland Robotics Team has the hardware to prove their efforts successful.

In a little over three years, the program is already matching engineering wits against the world's best. That would be like starting your own college football team and three years later you are playing in a bowl game against a Southeastern Conference heavyweight - and you hold your own.

What is the key to their success? They would tell you teamwork. This is not an individual sport. Every person brings a skill set to the table, but they have to be able to recognize each other's strengths and work together to build a championship-caliber robot.

"It's great and rewarding to see how well we work together, and what we are able to accomplish," shared team member Kyle Haney. "The highlight is seeing all these spare pieces come together to build something from nothing that in the end can do many different processes."

Haney, a junior team member, is new on this year's robotics team. Some of the program's groundbreakers graduated last year after blazing a trail for others to follow. Their path is littered with trophies and accolades from their brief yet accomplished stint. Like most kids, Kyle remembers playing with the popular Legos growing up, but it did not end there with a faded interest.

"I grew up around machinery, and I always liked to figure out how things worked," said Haney. After dismantling remote controlled toys and an assortment of other items, Haney said it was a natural interest to create new combinations of machines and see what they could do. "Just being able to put things together, see them run, and the success as a product of my labor was really a start for me in the engineering and robotics field."

Each team member could share a somewhat similar story based on their first foray into the world of machine creation or re-creation. Building elaborate machinery is just what they do, and they are good at it.

The goal in the short term for the school's team is to get enough participants to form multiple teams. As the saying goes, practice makes perfect, and being able to practice against other teams will help all who aspire to hoist trophies in competition.

Robotics competitions are like any athletic event. You face opposition in the form of another robotics team. The goal of each competition is usually centered on accomplishing one task while keeping your opponents from being able to accomplish that same task at the same time. When it comes to international competition, the stakes are higher and the competition is fierce. Since the team is younger this year, their sites are set on modest tournament participation in hopes of gaining experience for higher competition and success in the next year. It is a rebuilding year you could say, no pun intended.

Many students may recall their own childhood memories of tinkering with machinery and think this is for them. After talking to team members, interested individuals should know that for this team, the commitment is real, the hours are long, and cooperation a must. It is all about building towards common goals - championship robots and a strong team bond. But understand that the rewards are real, the lessons are long-lasting, and having fun goes without question.

# Community



“When you know better, you do better.”

— Maya Angelou



**F**ERN PEARSON OPENED HER COUNTRY store as a salvage store 34 years ago. From paintings to jewelry - odd parts to toothpaste; Fern has carried it all. She remembers her highest traffic and most profitable time as the 'beanie baby' craze. Fern added her own signature touch of making baskets for the 'babies' and delivering them to many people reading this article! Just as the people have come and gone, the merchandise in her store has evolved according to changing trends.

When Fern started her business, there was nothing around but pastures. She quotes Cliff Belamy as saying, "Fern, you will never make it." But once she set her mind to success, there wasn't anything that could hold her back. "I worked really hard and put in a lot of hours," says Fern.

The day I visited Fern's store there was a steady flow of people coming in and out. She knew every person by name. Fern could spend a day telling information about the people and history of the area where she lives and works. She has seen her share of changes in Ellenwood and, no doubt, is a historian of sorts for Henry County.

Chris Crocker grew up in Ellenwood and remembers Fern with fondness. "She is a real sweetheart," says Chris,

"a true socialite." What sets her apart from a typical store owner is her heart of compassion for her customers. If there is a way she can help, you better believe she will. Crocker told of a time when Mrs. Pearson spearheaded a fundraising event for a local family in need. This gesture of kindness is typical of Fern. Even though people move on, it's comforting to still see Fern and her country store surviving.

Now, with this temperamental economy, Fern has trimmed back her merchandise and relies mainly on the post office inside her store. And more changes are on the way. When they widen the road in front of her store, it will take away much of her parking. As she contemplates the future of her store, Fern can't imagine leaving the people behind. She spoke of land in northeast Georgia that she and her husband, Ron, own. She said there would be no close-by neighbors...no one would "hear you if you hollered."

Moving and retiring to the mountains may sound great for some, but I think Fern would burst. Whatever comes her way, her love for people will steady her and be her firm foundation.



# Life is Like Riding a Bike

By Dondra "Dot" Tolerson

**T**hose who know Robert Paul Martin, affectionately call him "Mr. Robert." Mr. Robert grew up near a large pasture in Morrow, GA in the 1950's & '60's. That pasture is now Southlake Mall. He says it was by God's grace he was given a job in the facilities department at Creekside Christian Academy in McDonough in July, 1987. He has a great fondness for Creekside with a special gratitude for the headmaster, Rodney Knox, whom he calls a

*jewel.* "God slowly remodeled me here. This is the best place for my spirit to grow," he says.

Robert is the oldest son of five sisters and two brothers. His childhood was very uneventful until April 5, 1971. That spring day Robert was at work cleaning a machine. Because the machine had not been turned off properly, it struck him in the head. He was transported to the hospital and rushed into the operating room. At one point, he was pronounced dead. But God had more for Mr. Robert to do before calling him home.

After spending nine days in a coma, Mr. Robert's accident left him with brain damage and hemiparesis of his left hand (the inability to move muscles in his left hand due to right sided brain damage to the motor area). He had extensive rehab therapy to repair some of his cognitive deficit and to teach him how to walk and talk again. For most people, there would be feelings of sorrow after sustaining such a permanently debilitating injury, but Mr. Robert is consistently optimistic saying, "I am special because Jesus loves me."

Not only did Mr. Robert not succumb to his circumstances, he took the opportunity to rise to the occasion. In 1991, he met Margaret Jeffrey who introduced him to the world of cycling. He quickly developed a zeal for the sport and participated in races all over Georgia and the Southeast. Ordinarily, he would be entered in the handicap cycling category. But Robert refused to take on that label, and did not share his physical challenges when registering for races.

During his cycling career, he has completed 400 centuries, which are 100 mile bike rides. His first was the Old Griffin Century. His final was the Wilson 100 held on August 28, 2011 in Senoia, GA. (His fastest century time was 5 hours and 5 minutes.) He has met and raced against many famous professional cyclists. Robert keeps binders filled with pictures, anecdotal journaling, and keepsakes chronicling his cycling career and milestones.

He says that "cycling amuses my flesh, but it does not fulfill my soul." That fulfillment in his soul comes from his relationship with Jesus, whom he credits for all of the wonders in his life. And there isn't a person who knows him that can deny that Mr. Robert's life has been a wonder.

In recent years, Mr. Robert has limited himself to 40-50 mile bike rides. He competes less in races because he has found a new passion. He now dedicates his Saturdays to spending time with his eleven year old nephew. "[He] likes to spend time with me. Between him and cycling, he is the bigger blessing in my world."



Dr. Crowe has been my chiropractor for many years. With his knowledge and skills, I am proof that a healthy and aligned spine both limits pain and the need for medications.  
— Judy Neal

## GUIDING FAMILIES to HEALTH

for over  
**60**  
years

Call

DR. KEITH H. CROWE  
770-507-5226

Go to our website for more information and special discount!

**DRCROWE.COM**



Providing **IN HOME CARE** for assistance with special needs child care, recuperative care, chronic illness and issues related to the aging process.

- Personal Care
- Companionship/Sitter Care
- Light housekeeping, laundry, linen changes
- Medication Monitoring
- Meal Preparation
- Personal Care
- Transportation
- Individual Care Plans
- Much More

A few hours to 24/7, we make life easier!

Long-Term Care Insurance and CCSP Medicaid Approved

Licensed, Dependable, affordable, and locally owned by Mary Poore, LCSW

119 Rock Quarry Rd.  
Stockbridge, GA 30281

To take advantage of these services and a free in home consultation, Please give us a call at

**678-565-8700**

Do you need **affordable** Health Insurance and Benefits Options?



We can help find a solution.

Specializing in Group and Individual plans.

Your solutions expert is a click or phone call away.

**Chris J Todd**  
678-428-1682

cjtodd@TheBIS-Group.com  
www.TheBIS-Group.com






**WOMEN'S HEALTH SPECIALISTS**

**Now Open In Locust Grove**

Women's Health Specialists is the sole all-female ob/gyn practice in Henry County. We are a four physician and two midwife full service obstetrics and gynecology practice. We provide state of the art, in office procedures including: ultrasonography, permanent sterilization, urinary incontinence evaluations and procedures to correct abnormal uterine bleeding.

115 Eagle Spring Drive  
Stockbridge, Georgia 30281  
[www.girldocs.com](http://www.girldocs.com)  
Phone: 770-474-0064 | Fax: 770-474-2998 | After Hours: (770) 474-0064



**Celebrate Life!**

We all have someone to **celebrate!** You can continue to celebrate a **life well-lived.** Sacred Journey Hospice can help you **continue that celebration.** Call us today to find out what Hospice can mean to you and your loved ones.

**Sacred Journey HOSPICE**  
State License 075-176-H  
138 Peach Drive, McDonough, Ga 30253  
678.583.0717  
[SacredJourneyHospice.com](http://SacredJourneyHospice.com)

*Living life's journey with comfort, care and compassion*

**Friends.  
Family.  
Community.**



We're all in this together. State Farm® has a long tradition of being there. That's one reason why I'm proud to support We Are Henry.

**Get to a better State.®**

Brian M Andrews, Agent  
1748 Highway 81 E  
McDonough, GA 30252  
Bus: 770-288-4900  
[brian.andrews.uyjm@statefarm.com](mailto:brian.andrews.uyjm@statefarm.com)



1211009 State Farm, Bloomington, IL

# we are Spiritual Growth



“Education without values, as useful as it is, seems rather to make men a more clever devil.”

— C.S. Lewis





reach. love. imitate. duplicate.



## *A Life of Joy and Purpose*

By Paul Leslie



### **LIFE HAS A WAY OF TAKING THE WIND**

out of our sails. You may be dealing with an aging parent, a struggling child, an uncertain economy, or some unexplainable tragedy. Regardless of your situation, we can all agree, life is unpredictable!

There are seasons in life when we find ourselves paralyzed. David Sharp, a friend of mine, went to Murray State University on a bull riding scholarship. He told me one day that riding a bull is easy. Knowing this was an incredibly dangerous sport, I gave him my inquisitive look. David confidently stated, “hand in the rope, head in the middle, leg on each side, and nod.” The nod signals for the gate to open as the rider anticipates and hopes for an eight second ride. He went on to explain that many new riders make it all the way up to the nod and freeze up. Nothing happens until the rider nods.

What has you sitting still, unable to nod, move, or navigate a plan to escape your challenging position? Abraham Lincoln stated, “I have been driven many times

upon my knees by the overwhelming conviction that I had nowhere else to go. My own wisdom, and that of all about me, seemed insufficient for the day.” When our hearts are full of sorrow, when we are afraid or confused, our strength is gone and we feel insufficient...where do we turn?

Education is certainly a piece of the puzzle, but even the most educated people face storms and seasons of uncertainty. John Adams, one of our Founding Fathers and our second President, said, “there are two educations. One should teach us how to make a living and the other how to live.” These are profound words.

Our society continues to ask why and where is God? Jesus said, “. . . In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world.” (John 16: 33b NIV) Gathering with His disciples in the upper room, a room full of close friends whose hearts were troubled, Jesus spoke those words of comfort and hope.

Often we ask God to remove the obstacles of our pain and the hurdles we face. However, the Lord, in His infinite wisdom, transforms our situation when we trust in His Word and believe His promises. A mother wants the pain of giving birth to go away - but not the life, hope and potential of the baby causing the discomfort. In time, joy replaces pain... like the baby that caused the pain brings joy.

To experience a life of joy, trust God in every situation. As we yield ourselves to God, He enables us to be overcomers in the trials of life. We are more than conquerors, in Christ. So, tighten the sail ... give a nod ... and allow God to transform your life to a life of joy and purpose!

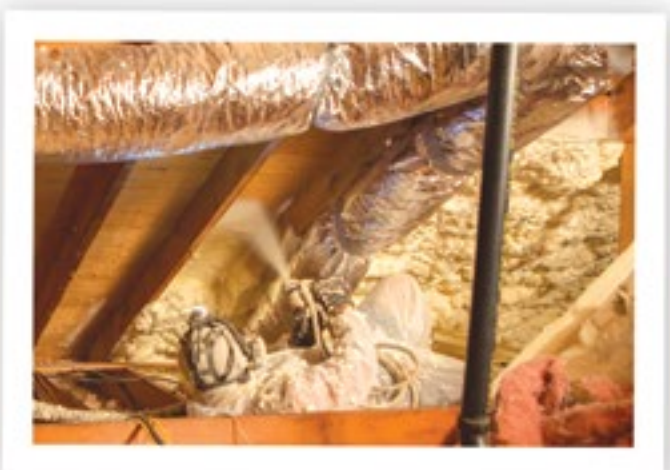
Your whole family will breathe easier with  
**SPRAY FOAM** *Insulation*



Your old fiberglass insulation is full of dust and pollutants that are affecting the quality of air inside your home every day. This can lead to irritation of the nose and throat, headaches, fatigue, dizziness, and chronic conditions like asthma, hypersensitivity pneumonitis, and humidifier fever.



Let us remove your old, degraded insulation, along with the allergens, pollutants and pests buried inside,



and replace it with **SPRAY FOAM**, a permanent, energy-efficient solution that will provide you with cleaner air throughout your home and 30-40% lower utility bills every month



**...so you can breathe easier.**

VISIT US ONLINE AT [WWW.1SPRAYFOAM.COM](http://WWW.1SPRAYFOAM.COM) or call (404) WE-SPRAY  
 USE PROMO CODE "HENRY" FOR FREE INSTALLATION & \$100 OFF THROUGH 3/31/13

# NonProfit

we are



“Whatever the cost of our libraries, the price is cheap compared to that of an ignorant nation.”

—Walter Cronkite



**KAREN C. DRESCHER, CPA**

Professional accounting services covering the state of Georgia.



**We Are Committed to You!**

**A Full Service Accounting Firm**

Accounting/bookkeeping Service

Payroll Service

Tax Prep for Individual, Corp and Partnership

returns for Multi-States.

IRS/State Representation

Other services are also available!

**1945 Highway 42, McDonough, GA**

(770) 474-0464

www.karencdreshercpa.com  
info@karencdreshercpa.com



## The Gift of Reading

By Debbie Withers

**P**atti Brown fondly remembers reading with her daughter as a toddler eighteen years ago, in a home filled with great children's books. Now serving as chair of the Ferst Foundation of Henry County, Brown says she has learned just how much impact early exposure to good books has on a young person's success in school... and in life.

She references a study showing dropout rates are four times higher for children who are not reading on grade level by third grade. "Children who can't read don't learn, don't graduate, and are more likely to turn to a life of crime to survive," says Brown.

"Getting kids excited about reading is half the battle," she says. "One of the biggest obstacles to reading enjoyment is not having access to good age appropriate books in the home." The Ferst Foundation of Henry County addresses that challenge by mailing high quality children's books to preschoolers. If registered at birth, the child will receive 60 different new books by the time they enter Kindergarten.

More than 900 children in Henry

County receive the free books every month, at an annual cost of \$36 per child. Donations from individuals and corporations help Ferst Foundation promote childhood literacy. "All the money we raise stays right here in Henry County," says Brown. "We are an all-volunteer organization with no overhead costs, so all the money you give goes directly to buying and mailing books to preschool children."

Henry Ferst Foundation hosts three annual fundraisers: a Ladies' Tea in the Spring (table decorations are themed to popular children's books); an elementary school fundraiser in the Fall (teachers and children donate money by performing an array of fun activities), and the annual "Henry Has Talent Show" in November.

"We have delivered over 77,000 books to children in Henry County. Statewide, Ferst has delivered over 245,000 books," says Brown. "The Ferst Foundation and the businesses who sponsor its work are making a big difference in the lives of Georgia's children." To learn more visit [www.henryferst.org](http://www.henryferst.org).



**NON-PROFIT**

## McDonough Arts Fostering a Love of the Arts in Our Community

By Debbie Withers



Do you enjoy music? Performing arts? Photography? Painting or drawing? Sculpture or pottery? Culinary arts? Literature? Whether you are a person with creative skill and imagination or simply one who enjoys these things, you are a patron of the arts and you should know about McDonough Arts.

McDonough Arts is a non-profit, all-volunteer group that fosters a love of the arts in our community. Art events are scheduled throughout the year including outdoor arts festivals, gallery events, and a cemetery tour. Events incorporate visual arts, performing arts, and culinary arts, providing opportunities for all kinds of artists to market their work.

Although events are based in McDonough, membership is open to anyone regardless of geographic location. Events draw from all over metro Atlanta and beyond. Membership is open to the public, with sponsorship opportunities available to corporations and individuals.

## SAVE THE DATE

Sunday, April 21st (12:00 noon to 5:00 p.m.)

### Spring ArtFest

Artists' market, live music and "Tastiest Poundcake Contest" McDonough Historic Square

Saturday, October 26th (5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.)

and Sunday, October 27th (2:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.)

### Spirits of McDonough City Cemetery Tour

(Parking at Richard Craig Park)

Sunday, November 10th (12:00 noon to 5:00 p.m.)

### Holiday Festival of Arts

Artists' market, homemade goodies, and silent auction McDonough Historic Square  
Held in conjunction with Merchants Holiday Open House

Friday, September 13th (6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.)

### UGA Alumni Art Show

Winsor Gallery, 34 Macon Street, McDonough

To learn more visit [www.mcdonougharts.net](http://www.mcdonougharts.net)

Pool Renovations ~ Above Ground Pools ~ Pool Equipment & Service ~ Vinyl Liner Replacements

Jump Start Your Summer!



**0% Interest**  
for  
**12 Months**

Financing Available  
Limited Time Offer.  
Call for details.

Serving Henry County  
for 15 Years  
**Georgia**  
**POOL SUPPLY**

Stockbridge  
1924 Husdon Bridge Rd.  
770-507-2258

[www.ga-pool.com](http://www.ga-pool.com)

McDonough  
1355 McDonough Pkwy  
770-914-7070

# History we are



“

*Education is simply the soul of society as it passes from one generation to another.*”

—G.K. Chesterton

**PREPARING FOR COLLEGE MEANS  
TAKING THE TOUGH CLASSES NOW!**

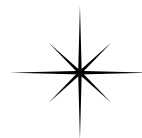
FIND OUT WHICH CLASSES  
YOUR STUDENT NEEDS TO TAKE AT  
[KnowHow2GO.org](http://KnowHow2GO.org)





## Where Can You Find a Landmark that Represents History, Religion and Social Interaction?

By Beverly Williams



**SHINGLEROOF CAMPGROUND** could be called a two hundred year living time capsule. The land we now know as Shingleroof Campground hosted camp meetings as far back as the 1830's. Purchased as a permanent campground in 1932, it is a reflection of a historic time in Henry County and America.

During the early nineteenth century when the Protestant Church membership rolls were decreasing and the general population was increasing by leaps and bounds, the camp meeting movement began. The pastors and churches could not sit behind closed doors in prayer, so they adopted the philosophy of: "If the people won't go to the Church, then the Church will go to the people". The results were tent towns that sprang up in mountains and fields alike. The requirements were simple: lots of open land to camp and congregate; a source of clean water

for drinking, bathing, baptizing; and plenty of shade.

The American camp meeting revival was a one or two week long event. It was usually held in August, during the lull between planting and harvesting. People brought their families and enough food, clothes and shelter for the week. Relationships were formed at camp meetings. Couples fell in love. Folks shared everything from Grandma's family recipe for peach cobbler to tying flies and fishing tips. Families bonded. Children grew up and brought their children. Many families have been attending Shingleroof for ten generations.

From the beginning, camp meeting was open to all. It was a chance to share and learn from other cultures. In fact, many of our songs and styles come from camp meeting: call & response, and shout & moan styles can be traced to African origins. Many Scotch-Irish and European melodies have woven themselves into the American music tapestry. Camp meeting was the conduit that carried this mixture of cultures and social values to the outside world. These early camp meetings may well have kept our country from becoming a godless frontier nation.

Shingleroof Campground carries on the tradition today. Their camp meetings embrace the same spirit of sharing, family and brotherhood - of man giving homage to the early pioneers who dared to break with church tradition by taking the message of salvation to the hills and valleys.

Camp meetings carried us through a pivotal time in America, and Shingleroof Campground is a daily reminder that we live in a region of America still known as "The Bible Belt." For more information visit [www.shingleroof.org](http://www.shingleroof.org).



# I LOST 215 POUNDS

Braxton  
Locust Grove, GA



## CAN WEIGHT LOSS SURGERY WORK FOR YOU? FIND OUT AT OUR FREE SEMINAR.

Weight loss surgery is a life changing decision which requires serious consideration, a thorough medical evaluation and physician guidance. Attending a free seminar is a great way to learn about the benefits of surgery, the various procedures and the risks involved. Take the first step, attend a seminar, what do you have to lose?

### SPECIAL PRICE FOR PATIENTS PAYING CASH

#### WHEN TO CONSIDER WEIGHT LOSS SURGERY

- Your Body Mass Index (BMI) is greater than 35
- You have a BMI greater than 30, and have other health problems like diabetes or high blood pressure



To register call now!

**770-897-SLIM**

[www.southernregional.org](http://www.southernregional.org)

Dr. Srinivasa Gorjala  
Bariatric Surgeon



Dr. Shaneeta Johnson  
Bariatric Surgeon

*inspired solutions for life's challenges*

- ASSURANCE SERVICES (INCLUDING COMPILATION, REVIEW & AUDIT)
- TAX PLANNING & RETURN PREPARATION (BUSINESS & INDIVIDUAL)
  - ACCOUNTING SOFTWARE INSTALLATION & TRAINING
- TAX CREDITS (INCLUDING GEORGIA FILM TAX CREDIT)
  - ESTATES & TRUSTS
- FORENSIC & FRAUD ACCOUNTING SERVICES
  - ADVISORY SERVICES



whaley hammonds tomasello, p.c.  
CERTIFIED PUBLIC ACCOUNTANTS + ADVISORS



McDONOUGH | STOCKBRIDGE | FOREST PARK | 770.914.1040 | WHTCPA.COM

# we are Features



“ *Intelligence plus character - that is the goal of true education.* ”

— Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

**Southern Crescent Breast Specialist, PC**  
Specializing In Advanced Breast Care

Southern Crescent Breast Specialists specializes in the diagnosis and treatment of breast cancer and breast related diseases. Dr. Davis Scott Timbert founded the practice in 2003, based on the belief that decreasing the time between detection and diagnosis is the best advantage in winning the fight against breast cancer.

Office hours  
7am to 7pm  
Telephone number  
770-507-5055  
Address  
7823 Spivey Station Blvd. Suite 200  
Jonesboro, Ga. 30236  
Web Address  
www.scbspc.com



# Educating for LIFE

by Ethan J. D. Hildreth, Ph.D.

*MY WIFE CRYSTAL AND I MOVED TO HENRY COUNTY in July 1991. That month, we walked into Eagle's Landing High School to prepare my classroom for the upcoming year and were promptly met by an assistant principal who politely but firmly informed us that students were not permitted in the building without escort. Our t-shirts, shorts, and twenty-something youthfulness confused the assistant principal who had not yet met us since this was only our second day at the school. After some explanations and laughs, we were able to proceed to my room and begin the exciting work of preparing for the new school year.*

Much has changed in the twenty-two years since that day. Crystal and I have added five more members to our family. Our oldest has graduated from Eagle's Landing High School and the second is a now a senior at Eagle's Landing. I could no longer pass for a high school student, although I am confident that Crystal could still pull that off. Many years have passed, and both our family and Henry County have grown significantly. One thing that has not changed, however, is our commitment to education and to the children and families of our community.



We grew up in north Georgia in families that encouraged and supported education. This was a benefit to us as we learned early in life the value of study and hard work. Our parents placed a premium not only on academic education but also on character development, habits of mind that promote learning and intellectual growth. We are very thankful to have had such positive role models from our earliest years. They not only taught us well but demonstrated thoroughly the virtues of a strong work ethic.

Blessed with dedicated teachers in our local public school system, we graduated together from Ringgold High School with a solid education that enabled us to succeed in college. After college, we moved to Henry County, excited to have jobs in the school system, Crystal teaching elementary school while I taught high school. We have greatly enjoyed the opportunity to work with dedicated teachers and with such a caring community in Henry County. The years have passed quickly.

When we arrived in Henry County, student enrollment in the school system was less than 14,000 students. The county population then began booming. During the next twenty years, the student population grew to over 40,000. This has been a dynamic time to live and work in Henry County! I have been fortunate to have various work opportunities with Henry County Schools, and although Crystal began staying home with our children after four years of teaching for Henry County, she keeps her hand in education through summer enrichment camps and tutoring students. Together, we strive to live the dictum that education is an atmosphere, a discipline, a lifestyle.

Work as a teacher, as a principal, and as school superintendent has provided countless opportunities to support student learning in diverse ways. One constant throughout these years, however, has been the conviction that lives are improved through education. Education frees the mind and spirit. I firmly believe that we can embark on no loftier purpose than to educate our citizens, and I echo Abraham Lincoln's conviction that education is "the most important subject which we as a people can be engaged in." I was reminded of this recently while reading a great book.

In recent weeks, many of us have enjoyed the film version of the musical, *Les Miserables*. This excellent story derives from Victor Hugo's 1862 novel of the same name. I recommend the book as a priceless reading experience. Early in the book, Hugo emphasizes the critical importance of education, stating that "society is guilty in not providing universal free education," for it is education that leads from the dark to the light, from the bondage of ignorance to the freedom of understanding.

*"The complete education gives one not only power of concentration, but worthy objectives upon which to concentrate"*

The 19th century educational philosopher and practitioner, Charlotte Mason, asserted that education is the handmaid to religion. Kemal Ataturk insisted that "in order to stave off covetousness, greed, and spite, citizens world over must be educated," and Thomas Jefferson said, "enlighten the people generally, and tyranny and oppressions of body and mind will vanish like evil spirits at the dawn of day." Each of these great thinkers holds the belief that education raises people above the sordid pursuit of mere existence and advances them to a higher state of living. As emphasized by Martin Luther King, the goal of true education is to develop intelligence plus character: "The complete education gives one not only power of concentration, but worthy objectives upon which to concentrate."

I believe there is no worthier objective than empowering children to become self-motivated, able learners who can think critically about right and wrong, solve problems, and express themselves in every mode available to them. In short, the true goal of learning is to free individuals from the necessity of formal education so that they become life-long learners. Isaac Asimov was hitting the mark when he stated that the only true education is self-education. As members of our community, we have that mission, that service, and that obligation, to educate our children and to help them become self-motivated, able learners. While this is the professional charge of educators, whether teaching through public, private, or homeschool, the obligation falls also on parents, pastors, business owners, and citizens in general.

We must reach out at every opportunity, either by professional calling or by personal commitment, to our children and our future. Let me encourage every teacher, every pastor, every employer, every parent, every sibling, friend, and family member to reach out. Let no child in our community walk upon a solitary path without the light of learning. If you want a purposeful mission in life immeasurable in its benefit, make a difference in the life of a child.

As public school teachers, we proudly work side-by-side with our counterparts in private and homeschool education. Every child deserves the best education possible, regardless of where they are taught. However, public school teachers are charged with a particular leadership in education, for we are responsible for the formal education of approximately 90% of our community's children. I am honored to work with many hundreds of dedicated teachers striving for the growth, well-being, and success of essentially one-fifth of our county's population who walk through our doors each day.



nisms, including project-based learning that helps students learn by doing rather than simply by studying. Work-based learning opportunities provide students on the job training, and numerous career-tech options. We understand, too, the reality that our children now live as digital natives in an increasingly technologically-oriented world. Given this understanding, we are expanding Bring Your Own Technology (BYOT) initiatives that leverage student-owned technology as well as increasing virtual school learning opportunities. In 2012, we began an innovative virtual program that permits students to take a full schedule of on-line classes while remaining enrolled in their

home school where they can participate in extracurricular activities, labs, and school events.

As we increase rigor and relevancy in learning, it is also important that we engage students, guiding them to their strengths and interests. This requires knowing them as individuals and building productive relationships with both them and their families. Many efforts are undertaken for this purpose, including mentoring

programs and steps to guide students to extracurricular activities. We count on members of our community to also engage students in school. The nineteenth century clergyman Basil King said, "Be bold and mighty forces will come to your aid." One of those mighty forces is our community, whose members rise up time and again to support and encourage our students.

Are you a business owner? A parent? A member of our faith community? A leader in our county? Reach out and encourage a child. Support student learning through mentoring and tutoring. Read to a child today. Help each young person in Henry County understand the value of education, and guide them to life-long, independent learning. Every child must develop sound habits of thought, inquiry, and kindness. Our schools, our churches, our businesses, our families, our government—all are important members in this effort, and together, we are Henry!

**AND  
TOGETHER,  
WE ARE  
HENRY!**

Together, we seek to increase the rigor of education for our students, to make learning relevant to their goals and dreams, and to build productive learning relationships that encourage success. Rigor, relevancy, and relationships—three additional "Rs" of education.

Through a more challenging curriculum, expanded options for earning college credit while still in high school, and numerous innovative methods, we continue to increase the rigor of learning for our students. One recent development that assists this effort is our Academy for Advance Studies [AAS], a charter school program that works in conjunction with several colleges and universities to provide students multiple avenues for dual enrollment. Through the AAS, students are able to earn up to two years of college credit while still in high school. Students have the option of entering colleges such as the University of Georgia, Georgia Tech, or similar prestigious schools with years of earned credit already under their belt, funded by the state through the HOPE scholarship program. At the AAS, students will also have access to programs such as engineering, logistics, and other career-oriented classes, many of which will allow earned college credit via course articulation with the technical college system of Georgia. These and other options help bridge learning from high school to college while increasing the rigor of coursework.

Relevancy in learning is built through a number of mecha-

# *Living Organ Donation*

McDonough Men Star In Kidney Transplant  
Broadcast Live On Social Media

By Amanda Bartlett



**W**  
 WHEN JOHN HEMBREE OF MCDONOUGH, GA. decided to donate a kidney to David Edwards, a man he barely knew, he had no idea his random act of kindness would reach more than a million people around the world and inspire dozens to follow his lead. His decision to give away his kidney started with a news segment about

living organ donations on National Public Radio. Hembree listened closely, becoming more fascinated by the minute with the idea that people can donate an organ or part of an organ to a loved one or friend and continue to live normally. "Why would God give us two kidneys, knowing we can live just the same with only one kidney, if we weren't supposed to give one away?" Hembree asked himself. Unable to find a suitable answer to that question, Hembree decided to become a living organ donor. Not long thereafter, his daughter became friends with Edwards' wife Pam. (Pam's husband was recently placed on a kidney transplant list.) Hembree learned that Edwards, a



fellow church member he had only met once, suffered from a genetic condition known as polycystic kidney disease.

The disease, which has affected the Edwards' family for generations, is characterized by the growth of cysts in the kidneys that cause a significant reduction in normal kidney function and leads to kidney failure over time. At the time Edwards was placed on the kidney transplant waiting list at Piedmont Atlanta Hospital, he had minimal kidney function as a result of the disease.

Knowing that he possessed a gift that could save Edwards' life if he was a match, Hembree went in secret to Piedmont Atlanta to begin evaluation to become a living donor. When tests confirmed Hembree's kidney was a match, he sent a handwritten letter to the Edwards family with a life-saving offer.

"The Hembree family went to Piedmont Hospital on December 14, 2012, near the transplant center and operating room. We were wondering if your family could join our family..." said Hembree in his letter to the Edwards family. "I wanted to be sure all the results were final before asking you this question: I have a 53-year-old kidney, would you like to have it?" With those simple words, a bond was made.



Edwards' upcoming surgeries, another family stepped forward. They shared their story of how they, too, are in search of a living kidney donor as the husband was just placed on a transplant waiting list as well.

On the morning of Friday, December 14, the Hembree and Edwards families gathered together in the waiting room at Piedmont Atlanta Hospital. Family members received minute-by-minute updates, photos and videos of their loved ones' surgeries from transplant surgeon Matthew Mulloy, M.D., via Piedmont's Instagram, Pinterest, Twitter, YouTube and Facebook pages. (The two men had previously agreed to broadcast their surgeries to the world via social media in an effort to raise awareness about living organ donation.)

Their family members weren't the only ones watching the state's first-ever "live tweet" of the robotic nephrectomy and living donor kidney transplantation at Piedmont Atlanta Hospital. Over one million Twitter users from across the United States and from as far away as Australia, received tweets from Dr. Mulloy as fellow surgeons Harrison Pollinger, D.O. and Miguel Tan, M.D. removed Hembree's kidney and transplanted it into Edwards. In total, Dr. Mulloy's tweets were retweeted over 3,000 times and several regional and national news stations tuned in to share Hembree and Edwards' story.

"Essentially, we took awareness of living organ donation to a new level by using the power of social media to share these men's stories and demonstrate the incredible impact a living donor can have on someone's life," said Dr. Pollinger, who performed Hembree's robotic nephrectomy (kidney removal). "With 90,000 people across the United States still waiting for a kidney to save their life, we needed to find new ways to reach people like John

This wasn't the first living organ donor found at Glen Haven Baptist Church and it may not be the last. Edwards' father, who also suffered from polycystic kidney disease, had a transplant years ago at Piedmont Atlanta and found his living donor through the very same church. When the church held a service and prayed over Hembree's and

Hembree who are willing to donate one."

Approximately half of all kidneys transplanted at Piedmont Atlanta come from living donors. Potential donors call **404-605-4605** and later participate in a screening phone interview that includes an overview of health information. Next, they screen for hypertension (high blood pressure) by taking six random readings and reporting those numbers to the living donor coordinator. If, for whatever reason, the living donor coordinator is concerned about the readings, an ambulatory blood pressure monitor is sent to the potential donor that records blood pressure 24 hours a day.

If all looks good, the potential donor will then be cross-matched with the intended recipient. Blood from the donor and blood from the recipient is drawn on the same day and compared. Results may take up to two weeks. If a negative result comes back, the potential donor is a match. If it is a positive result, the living donor coordinator talks to the potential donor about entering into a paired exchange – where the donor agrees to donate a kidney on behalf of the recipient to a complete stranger in turn for the recipient receiving a kidney from another stranger.

Regardless of whether the donor is a match for the intended recipient or decides to participate in a paired exchange, the next step is a urine test, followed by a two-day, outpatient evaluation in which the donor comes to Piedmont Atlanta Hospital for blood work and a number of other tests to be sure the donor has plenty of kidney function when the other one goes away. All the donor's testing and hospital fees are covered under the recipient's insurance. A selection committee will then meet one week after the donor's visit to decide whether the donor is a good candidate.

"It is important we make sure the potential donor is in good health not only for the benefit of the recipient but to be sure that once the person donates a kidney, he or she will be able to return to their usual routines and have optimal health," said Dr. Tan, who performed Edwards' transplant. "To function normally, you only need 30 percent kidney function. Living donors, after they have given away a kidney, have approximately 60 percent function."

For Hembree, once it was determined he was a match for Edwards, it was clear what he wanted to do but he didn't know how to break the life-saving news. And so, he sat down with his family and wrote a hand-written letter that forever changed the lives of the Edwards family and will remain in the hearts of everyone who read about his random act of kindness on social media. To read a transcript of the live tweet of Hembree's and Edwards' surgeries, check out: <http://storify.com/piedmonthhealth/living-donor-kidney-transplant>.

*Essentially, we took awareness of living organ donation to a new level by using the power of social media*



# TRADITIONS



## THE STRENGTH OF A **FAMILY**

BY FERNANDO DEL VALLE

I MET KEITH CLAY AND HIS FAMILY ONE morning in Locust Grove to talk about their passion for hunting, especially turkeys. I was a bit apprehensive as I approached the door, since I know very little about hunting ( I do all my hunting and fishing at the supermarket). Keith opened the door dressed in full camouflage. He smiled and invited me to join his family in the kitchen. One by one they introduced themselves and welcomed me with warm hospitality. I quickly felt transported into a gathering of my own family - laughing and sharing stories as we drank coffee. My concerns were gone in an instant. It was time to talk turkey.



Loyal Clay, the patriarch of the family, shares that “Keith was eight when we took him hunting for the first time. He would sit next to his mom on a log and be very still, watching and learning while we were out in the woods.” Keith also remembers that time very fondly.

Loyal is now eighty-one and moves a little slower but still loves hunting with his son. “We try to go every chance we get,” says Keith. Both men agree: they wouldn’t trade it for anything. Keith reminisces of the times his dad, Loyal, would carry most of the gear for them because he and his siblings were too little. Now it’s Keith’s turn. “I drive Dad to his spot and we set up his equipment. I then park the car and walk back to meet up with him. We make it work and it’s always a special time.

As we walked through the woods near their home, Loyal watched Keith interact with his own sons and grandson. He recalled when Keith got his first deer and the time when he, himself, killed his first turkey - a time when the son got to teach his father, because Loyal did not hunt turkeys. And Loyal will proudly tell you that Keith is still the best ‘caller’ of the family.

Like many hunters in Georgia, Keith is getting ready for turkey season which starts on March 22, 2013. Yet turkeys haven’t always been plentiful in Georgia. According to the National Wild Turkey Federation, during the early 1900’s the turkey population was almost non-existent here in the US. Georgia was no exception.

That changed when hunters and wildlife organizations and agencies worked together to restock the population in the mid-1970’s. Thanks to their efforts, Keith and his family will once again enjoy the thrill of making the ‘call’ this spring.

Keith is also passing his passion for hunting down to his sons, Travis and Brandon, and his five year old grandson Hunter. His oldest son, Travis, was barely four years old when Keith would tie a rope around his waist, secure him to his back and pull him up a tree to their deer stand. They would spend hours together, quietly waiting. Brandon was only nine when he went on his first hunting trip and both boys got their first turkey at the age of ten. They have very special memories of time spent hunting with their father.

“The harvesting is less important than the hunt,” says Keith. “The real importance is spending time with family, regardless of what you bring home.” Keith would talk to his boys about gun safety and respecting nature. He also taught them how to make ‘the call.’ He describes this as “a cat and mouse game where you make the male turkey (otherwise known as a *tom* or a *gobbler*), believe that he’s being called by a female turkey (or a *hen*).” The excitement in his voice grew as he continued, “Peaking the curiosity of the gobbler is paramount; the less you call the better. Sometimes after a few minutes of silence the tom will gobble to see if the hen will return his call. It’s like a dance.”



# FEATURE



Travis and Brandon have heard many stories from their father. They have bonded with him in ways that will influence their lives forever. Last year he and the boys took a 9 day hunting trip to Kansas. After the 15 hour drive back, Keith dropped his son Brandon off at this home. Moments later he received a text. It was Brandon. He knew how much his dad hated to 'text' ("it's an old school thing," says Keith) but Brandon had something to say. Keith then read to me, with an unsteady voice, the message he had saved in his phone. His son told him what a great time he had with his dad...that he loved him. He felt he didn't say it enough. We both got choked up.

As I listened to the Clay family stories, I was reminded of the importance of tradition - how it nurtures our morals and

“The real blessing that comes from the hunting trips is making strong connections with your loved ones”

influences our values. It is something passed on, like a torch, from generation to generation. Winston Churchill once said that “a love for tradition has never weakened a nation; indeed it has strengthened nations in their hour of peril.” Walking through the woods that day with their family, I saw that strength.

These men now have new memories to make with little Hunter. I can still picture the joy on his young face. Dressed in camouflage, holding his small rifle... he was like the men of his family. One day he will look back and recall these moments. He will reminisce of these significant times in his life shared with family. They will be part of his story; his traditions.

VISIT THE NEW SOUTH, **TOYOTA SOUTH**,  
TO MAKE YOUR CAR BUYING EXPERIENCE  
FAST, FUN AND EXCITING.



Jerry Gresham, Owner, Toyota South

Bruce, Toyota South service customer

Harley, welcomed friend and happy as can be

**TOYOTA SOUTH**

# **TOYOTA SOUTH SUPERSTORE**

6865 Jonesboro Road, Morrow, Georgia 30260  
(877)279-3409



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

Stop by and meet Jerry, owner  
of Toyota South...Bruce and Harley did.

“Many times you go into a car dealership and they just try to sell you something. At Toyota South we try to find out what’s important to you, what your price range is, and then try to help you match that with what you’re looking for”

Sales (877) 279-3409 • Service/Parts (877) 279-3409 • Collision (678) 783-2601

# Making It Local

by Jodi Hitt

*Always looking for unique items? Support your local, Henry County designers and craftsmen. Watch for them to be highlighted in each issue. Why shop globally - when you can buy locally?*



## BOOTS.

Every girl needs a pair of cowboy boots. Plain and simple. These were calling out to be paired up with this skirt. If you ever doubted whether or not you could pull off your own pair of cowboy kicks, let me reassure you that with the right ensemble, you can. HorseTown is bound to have the right boots for you! (and they didn't pay me to say that!) HORSETOWN, Locust Grove 770.898.6330. [www.horsetown.com](http://www.horsetown.com)

## ACCESSORY.

It's all in the details. Hand crafted original jewelry is a must. You can wear this five strand piece as a wrap bracelet or a necklace, after it turns too hot to wear your scarf. The serene color combinations chosen by Henry County jewelry designer, Kristy Rohm, are accented by tiny surprise details hidden within the layers. It's almost like wearing a jewelry kaleidoscope. A must have conversation piece. wrap boho bracelet \$30, [www.kikisjewels.etsy.com](http://www.kikisjewels.etsy.com)



## SKIRT.

In Love. This high waisted, linen pocket skirt is a perfect color choice for everyone. Classical style with a twist. Designer Heather Reichert, of KISS KISS Clothing, created this versatile piece to complement many different looks. Paired up with a simple white tank and light weight scarf for the spring (both found at KOHL'S), you could easily transition this skirt through every season in the south. [www.kisskissboutique.com](http://www.kisskissboutique.com), or KissKiss-Clothing on Etsy and FB.

educate  
glorify  
partner  
impact

Strong Rock opened its doors in 2007 and welcomed charter student Zach Moss. Graduating this year with a stellar 4.42 GPA, Zach is prepared to meet his future head on. This scholar athlete is academically, socially and spiritually ready to impact the world for Jesus Christ. **ENROLL TODAY** to experience the impact that Strong Rock can have on your family.



678-833-1200

4200 Strong Rock Parkway Locust Grove, GA 30248  
[www.strongrockchristianschool.com](http://www.strongrockchristianschool.com)







## Atlanta Heart Associates is committed to improving the quality of life in the community.

At Atlanta Heart Associates, we know how to talk to patients and their families in a way that helps put their mind at ease. That's one of the reasons Atlanta Heart Associates has become South Atlanta's premier provider of cardiovascular care. Our team of 14 expert physicians continually expand their knowledge, keeping up with the latest developments in heart disease and diagnostic testing, so we feel well equipped to help. With 8 convenient locations throughout the southern crescent, we provide the highest level of care close to home. Please call us at 770-692-4000 to schedule an appointment.

**Atlanta**  **Heart**  
*Associates, P.C.*

**770-692-4000**

[www.atlantaheartassociates.com](http://www.atlantaheartassociates.com)

STOCKBRIDGE RIVERDALE GRIFFIN EAST POINT LOCUST GROVE JACKSON FAYETTE CAMP CREEK