

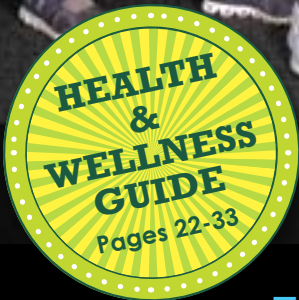
January 2024

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BODY20



East Cobb Treasure PAGE 8 | **Polar Bear Run** PAGE 17

Eastvalley ES Murals PAGE 18 | **Pet of the Month** PAGE 20

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NOTY & SHERWIN WILLIAMS



UPWARD
SW 6239
UPWARD WHITE



Pearly White
SW 7009
SHERRIN WILLIAMS

2024 Color Trends

Welcoming the Colors of 2024! The palette is all about rejuvenation, connection, and grounding. From serene blues to spirited reds, these shades will set the tone for design innovation and fresh aesthetics.

Persimmon - SW 6339 pulls from grounded, earthy origins to deliver a shade that feels both uplifting and refreshing.

Upward - SW 6239 is a breezy, blissful blue. The color found when we slow down, take a breath, and allow the mind to clear.

Pearly White - SW 7009 has Gray undertones that add a cool gentleness to this bright white. Elegant on its own or a lovely way to help darker hues stand out.

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FEATURED

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Don't Miss!
Pages 22-33

Health & Wellness Guide

Local health experts and resources are listed to help you shape up and lead a healthier lifestyle in 2024.

EAST COBBER

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Comments and stories are always welcome.

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PUBLISHER'S NOTE



Welcome, 2024! It's officially the start of a New Year, and for most of us, it means the start of a New Year's resolution list! This time of year sees many of us setting worthy goals for ourselves: eat less, exercise more, read more... self-improvement is always important. The Health & Wellness section, (pages 22-33) offers local resources and experts to help you achieve some of those New Year resolutions. One of the best parts about ringing in the New Year is the chance to reflect on our own lives over the past year and make goals to help us do things a little better. If living a long life is on your "to-do" list read about East Cobb's own 106-year-old Ms.

Lillian Skarsten Mortimer on page 8, maybe you can figure out her secret.

This issue also reminds us to also look beyond ourselves when making those goals for 2024. There are stories of volunteer quilters making a difference from the young to the young at heart, pages 11 & 34. You can also do good for animals; we've compiled a list of opportunities on page 21 and do good for the Earth by recycling –events on page 12.

One of my many New Year's resolutions is to serve my EAST COBBER readers better. There is so much information about East Cobb people, events, and issues, I can't possibly fit it all in this magazine. Social media allows the EAST COBBER more ways to share that info. In addition to print advertising, EAST COBBER is evolving into a media company that offers a variety of platforms—from blogs, e-newsletters, Facebook pages, and more special events—that promote the people, causes, and businesses in this great community! Find a way to stay in the know when we announce details about the 26th Annual EAST COBBER Parade & Festival in September

You can keep up with what is going on by

- > Liking us on Facebook: [Facebook.com/eastcobber](https://www.facebook.com/eastcobber)
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Happy New year,

Laren Brown, Publisher
laren@eastcobber.com



On the Cover

This month's cover features the owner, staff, and members of Body20.

Top row l-r; Megan Good, studio manager; Derek Cardinell, founding member; Traci House, lead coach; Middle row l-r; Mylia Broughton, sales associate; Gene Chayevsky, Owner and CEO; Dana Dzimwasha, founding member; Michelle Garforth Venter, founding member; Bottom Row l-r; Arkadia Johnson, founding member; Riley Dugan, sales associate; Patric Wade, fitness coach; Danny Desiderio, fitness coach.

Body20 is technology training for all fitness levels. Burn calories, reduce cellulite, tone up, and build lean muscle with BODY20, a boutique fitness studio that utilizes an FDA-Cleared electro-muscle stimulation suit. In just a 20-minute training session, your trainer will put you through a customized 1-on-1 program, giving your body over 150 times more muscle contractions than a conventional workout without any need to pick up a weight or use traditional gym equipment. You can read more about Body20 on pages 6&7. The studio is at 1100 Johnson Ferry Road, Unit 270, in Marietta/ East Cobb. For more information, stop by the Grand Opening on January 11, between 5-8 pm, check out the website www.body20.com, or call to set up your free demo at 770-450-6127.

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EXPERIENCE THE FUTURE OF FITNESS AT **BODY20'S NEW STUDIO**

By Marie Muir

**BODY20 Franchise Owner,
Gene Chayevsky, invites
East Cobbers to try
20-minute technology-
enhanced workouts**

Prioritizing fitness can feel impossible when time is a limited commodity and schedules are tight. As a husband and father of three, Gene Chayevsky understands the difficulty of maintaining a consistent and effective workout routine. Which is why he became a multi-unit franchisee of BODY20.

BODY20 provides time-condensed, technology-engineered workouts created to unleash your body's maximum potential. The company's patented fitness wearables activate the deepest layers of muscle for exponential whole-body fitness results through electro-muscle stimulation ("EMS"). Each training session, conducted by an EMS-certified coach, is personalized for a member's unique goals, with results-driven tracking through state-of-the-art body composition analysis provided weekly as part of the BODY20 membership.



Body20 Owner, Gene Chayevsky and staff.

BODY20 EAST COBB GRAND OPENING EVENT: YOU'RE INVITED!

BODY20 East Cobb is hosting a Grand Opening event from 5-8pm on Thursday, January 11. Enjoy delicious food and drinks, workout demos, music, and several exciting raffles. All are welcome to attend this celebration. Grand Opening activities continue through January 14, with more demos, refreshments, and pop-ups by local wellness businesses.

Experience the future of fitness by signing up for a free demo at BODY20 East Cobb's Grand Opening. Discounted memberships are available only through the Grand Opening weekend of January 13-14.

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With 36,000 muscle contractions in a single workout, versus 1,500 contractions in a regular 90-minute workout, a single 20-minute BODY20 session replaces hours in the gym. BODY20 workouts not only help build muscle and endurance and burn fat, they also correct muscle imbalances, relieve pain, and improve posture, all while saving massive amounts of time.

Gene opened his first of seven Atlanta-area BODY20 studios in November 2023. The newly renovated facility is located at the Woodlawn Point Shopping Center at 1100 Johnson Ferry Road, Suite 270. This Marietta location joins BODY20 studios in Buckhead, Brookhaven, and Decatur.

Gene is excited to share the powerful impact of the BODY20 workouts with local residents and business owners. He says East Cobbers have received BODY20's newest studio with warmth and excitement. "East Cobb residents and business owners are friendly, welcoming, and happy to have us in the community," says Gene.

MEET GENE CHAYEVSKY, BODY20'S BAGEL-LOVING COMMUNITY BUILDER

Gene moved to New York in 1979 as a refugee from the former Soviet Union. Today, he brings over 30 years of business experience as an investor, entrepreneur and CEO to the fitness scene.

"BODY20 is accessible, affordable, convenient, and did I mention, our studio is beautiful!" says Gene. "That's how people go from struggling to reach their fitness goals to finding a practical solution and no longer feeling hopeless."

Gene is all about building community. BODY20 is an active supporter of Walton Football and Lacrosse and is a member of several local business networking groups and the Cobb Chamber of Commerce. The Chayevsky family—Gene, his wife Lina, and their three kids, Kirk, Liv, and William—are not just wellness enthusiasts but also lovers of baseball and bagels from Bagelicious and Goldberg's.

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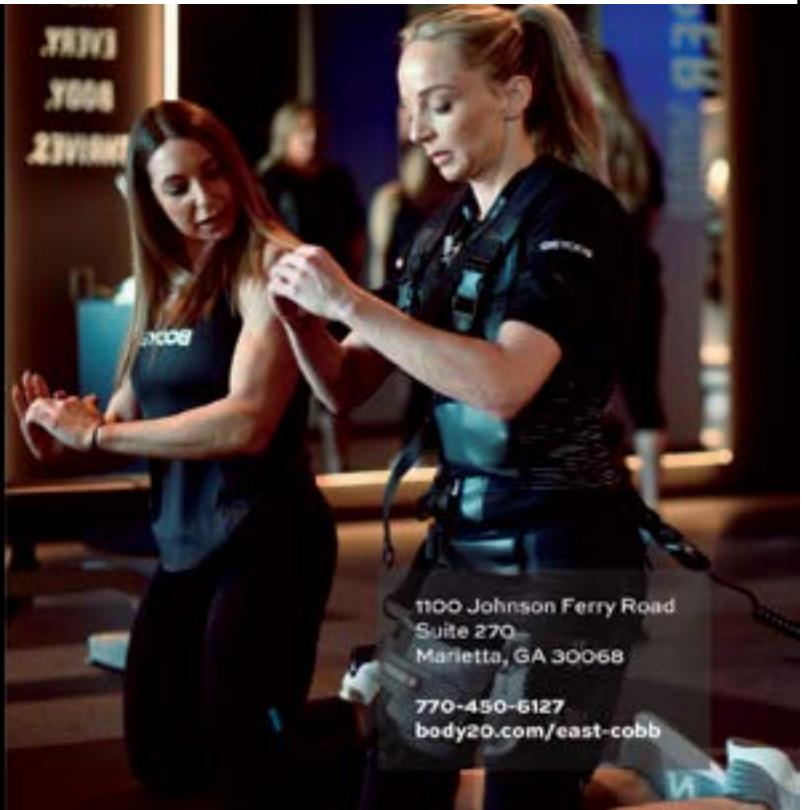
BODY20 is a fitness community that can help you make wellness a priority. Say goodbye to hours spent in traditional gyms, group fitness classes or personal trainers and hello to a more effective, efficient, and sustainable exercise program. Learn more by visiting body20.com/east-cobb or contacting Gene and the BODY20 team at 770-450-6127 or eastcobb@body20.com. Prepare to sweat, smile, and get back hours of time in your week!

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AN EAST COBB TREASURE

LILLIAN SKARSTEN MORTIMER

When one sits with Lillian Skarsten Mortimer, you are instantly struck by the twinkle in her bright blue eyes, her candid and open demeanor, and how her conversations are punctuated by a remarkable wit and intelligence. Learning Lillian is 106 years old takes your breath away.

With a life spanning more than a century, Lillian has a lot to share. When this East Cobb resident was born, Woodrow Wilson was president, the U.S. was entering WWI, the Spanish Flu was spreading and the Bolsheviks had just overthrown the Russian Czar.

Lillian is very keyed into those around her and appears decades younger than her years. When asked why she's been blessed with such incredible longevity, she exclaims with a bright smile, "I really don't know!"

EARLY LIFE

So, what lessons can we learn from Lillian about health, wellness, and navigating the twists and turns of life?

Lillian was born in New Jersey in February of 1917, the middle sibling of three children. Her parents emigrated to this country from Norway separately around 1912. Oline Larsen Andersen Lovignes and Andrew Skarsten were Norwegian immigrants, a part of the large population of Norwegians who came to work on the docks and shipyards in the New York City area in the early 1900s. Though the family spoke Norwegian at home, Lillian's parents were very keen to learn English and blend into their new home country.

STAYING ACTIVE AS A PART OF DAILY LIFE

Did something in her childhood contribute to Lillian's long life? Staying active was a part of a child's world back then Lillian explains, "Children were outdoors all the time. We played jacks, hopscotch, and games in the streets." She and her brothers, Olav and Albert, walked to school every day, she says "There were no school buses back then." Her favorite subjects were geography, math, reading and writing and she was always a member of her local library. She also spent much of her summer swimming in the local pool; a practice she continues to this day, swimming regularly.

DIET AND NUTRITION - SCARCITY DURING THE DEPRESSION

Was there a magic to Lillian's diet growing up that contributed to her long life? Lillian says they didn't have



Lillian Skarsten Mortimer, 2023, age 106.

much to eat when she was a child living in New Jersey and Brooklyn, NY during the Depression. What food they had was wholesome, she says — milk, cheese, potatoes, protein, and limited sweets. "Sometimes we each had a Hershey bar on Sundays, but besides that, we had no desserts."

Lillian grew up in a single-parent home for much of her youth and explains that resources were limited. One Christmas, there was not enough money to go around to purchase gifts for everyone. Lillian got a hairbrush, but her brothers got nothing. That said, she was proud that, with "no man's income" her mother had "kept them together," and they were not separated. That was something to be thankful for that Christmas.

Asked if she feels she's more resilient due to hardships in the early years, Lillian says, "I supposed I learned not to dwell on bad stuff or over analyze things. I just keep moving." She says there have been times she'd like things to be different, but instead, she chooses to focus on the positive.

CAREER/WORKING LIFE/MARRIAGE/MOTHERHOOD

Lillian has always kept her mind active. She graduated from high school in 1935 and her first job was at a department store on 5th Avenue in New York City. "I just walked off the subway and applied," she says. Later, Lillian worked at National Allied and Chemical Company in something called, "mechanical accounting." This was in the early 1940s and Lillian worked in a room filled with



Lillian Skarsten Mortimer, c. 1921, age 4.

huge machines, punch cards, and sorters. Today, we call them “computers.”

Once Lillian married and moved out of NYC, she began to establish life with her husband, Herbert Mortimer, and her daughter Lynn in New Jersey. She relates how Herbert’s commute — walking from house to bus, to a ferry, to cross to the river to NYC, then to the subway, and then walking blocks to his office took him 1 and 3/4 hours each day each way. What a contrast to those in 2023 working from their dining rooms!

ERA OF SELF-SUFFICIENCY

After she was widowed in the 1980s, Lillian learned she had the skills to live on her own. She could balance a checkbook, pay bills, and shovel snow. It was a different life, she says, but she cherished the independence and self-sufficiency she had found within her.

She also enjoys the independence she still has at her senior living community, “I’ve been able to set up my own life and do something every day. I play cards, participate in bible study, and art classes, read, walk, keep my regular hair appointment each week, and go to church on Sundays.” She also enjoys frequent visits from her extended family who live in the area: her daughter, Lynn, two granddaughters, and six great-grandchildren.

RESILIENCY AND A POSITIVE ATTITUDE

Lillian’s incredible life has spanned the major milestones of the 20th century. Living through the Great Depression, two world wars, and major developments in medicine, technology, and human behavior. She has weathered challenges — colon cancer at age 99 and even now is recovering from a fall while getting in her cherished twice-weekly swim.

But, her resiliency and curiosity about life shine in her blue eyes. Her incredibly long life could be due to many variables she thinks: genetics, her positive attitude, or even the scarcity of food and resources in her youth. Who knows? But, Lillian is curious enough to keep asking herself, “What is my purpose in still being here? There must be a reason.” She can’t answer that question, yet. But, lucky for us, until she does, we’ll all continue to enjoy this East Cobb treasure. 📍

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COMBATTING CHILD FOOD INSECURITY IN COBB COUNTY BEYOND THE HOLIDAYS

The holiday season sees a surge in donations to local food pantries, but it is crucial to maintain this momentum far beyond the festivities. In Cobb County, the Cobb County School District (CCSD) stands as the second-largest school system in the state and the 23rd largest in the nation. Here in Cobb, the need to address food insecurity among children remains pressing.

According to the Georgia Department of Education's November 2023 Free/Reduced Lunch data, a staggering 41.7% of students in Cobb County qualify for free or reduced-price lunches, and a large percentage of those students attend East Cobb Schools. This statistic underscores the significant number of families facing economic challenges, unable to provide their children with sufficient nutrition for an active and healthy life.

The FindHelp website provides valuable resources for those seeking information on food pantries and assis-

tance programs in Marietta, offering a convenient platform to connect donors with organizations that support the community's food insecure population (www.find-help.org/food/food-pantry--marietta-ga). Many of our East Cobb schools also maintain a food pantry that will service families not just from that school but their feeder schools as well. These schools often hold canned food drives to help stock their pantries and are the perfect way to donate locally.

The term "food insecurity" reflects the lack of consistent access to enough food for an active, healthy life, coupled with the uncertainty of obtaining nutritionally adequate foods. Shockingly, 1 in 8 children in Georgia experience food insecurity, as revealed by a 2023 report titled "Map the Meal Gap 2023" by Feeding America.

As a new year begins, it is imperative that our community remains mindful of the ongoing struggle faced by families in Cobb County. The spirit of giving should not be confined to the holiday season; rather, it should be a continuous commitment to helping the lives of those less fortunate. Our neighbors and friends in Cobb County can contribute to the fight against child food insecurity by continuing to donate to local food banks, participate in food drives, and support organizations dedicated to ending hunger. By maintaining these efforts, we can create a lasting impact on the lives of children in Cobb County, ensuring they have access to nutritious meals, thus giving them the opportunity to thrive academically and personally.

Additionally, spreading awareness about the continued surge of food insecurity and its impact on children can motivate more individuals and businesses in the community to join the cause. Collaborative efforts can lead to the development of solutions, such as community gardens, educational programs, and mentorship initiatives that address the root causes of food insecurity.

Finally, pledge to help us ensure that no child goes to bed hungry in Cobb County or anywhere else. 🙏



MCCLESKEY'S FOOD PANTRY
2023 - 2024 SY

LOCATION:
McCleskey Middle School
Drive Around to the Back of the school to park & gain access to the food pantry

SHOPPING DATES & TIMES
★Every 2nd Monday of the Month★
4:30pm - 5:30pm

November 13	February 12	May 13
December 18	March 11	
January 8	April 15	

SIGN UP
Deadline to sign up: Friday, October 27th

Scan the QR code to sign up or reach out to your counselor/school social worker for a paper copy.



Heather Rees
Secretary, East Cobb County Council of PTAs (ECCC PTA)
Parliamentarian, Addison ES PTA

EAST COBB QUILTERS' GUILD **EXCEEDS DONATION GOAL** TO LOCAL CHARITIES **BY ALMOST 200%**

East Cobb Quilters' Guild is proud of its long history of community service. Its members freely give their time and energy to create quilts, placemats, Beads of Courage bags, and pillowcases for donation to area charities. Often gathering in small groups to sew, members also benefit from the friendships that develop and deepen while these projects are created. This year they exceeded their original goal of 1,250 by almost 200% creating a total of 2,430 items.

"Our members use their love of quilting and sewing to share these items with others in our community. Even though we do not know them personally, we feel a connection to each of the recipients through our community partners outreach," commented Caroline Benefield, president of the East Cobb Quilters' Guild.


In 2023, the Guild donated a total of 2,430 items to local organizations, an almost 100% increase compared to 2022. Donated items included: 344 quilts for Cobb County DFCS, for children who have been taken into foster care; 737 pillowcases for Ryan's Case for Smiles, for children in hospitals in the Atlanta area and around the state of Georgia; and 524 placemats for Cobb County Meals on Wheels, for older adults and disabled individuals who receive home meal delivery. A new recipient this year is Children's Healthcare of Atlanta. The Guild has made and is donating 825 Beads of Courage bags to give to their patients who are coping with serious illnesses.

"Children's Healthcare of Atlanta has been incredibly blessed by the beautiful Beads of Courage bags made by the East Cobb Quilters' Guild. Members use their talents and favorite fabrics to create bags for the beads our cancer patients "earn" – whether the beads are from chemo treatments, blood draws, or other types of tests. Our precious patients hold tight to the beads and the bags. They give them strength, encouragement, and hope. That is what it is all about – HOPE! We are very grateful!" stated Pam Younker, community development officer, Children's Healthcare of Atlanta.



Guild Members Judy Weathers, Sharon Milam, and Jan Cunningham parade 112 newly donated quilts at the East Cobb Quilters' Guild meeting. The Guild meets monthly at Catholic Church of St. Ann in Marietta.

About East Cobb Quilters' Guild

Since its founding in 1982, the East Cobb Quilters' Guild has promoted and perpetuated the art of quilting and fostered community goodwill. There are more than 340 members from throughout the greater Atlanta metropolitan area and beyond. The guild meets monthly and sponsors lectures, workshops, and exhibits that educate members and the community about quilting and encourage the highest standards in design and techniques. Every two years they produce Georgia Celebrates Quilts® - the state's largest judged and juried quilt show – set for June 6 - 8, 2024 at the Cobb County Civic Center. In the months leading up to the show the guild will present "Quilts on Display" with quilt exhibits at four regional libraries, the main library, and three arts centers. Additionally, the guild contributes hundreds of quilts, placemats, Beads of Courage bags and pillowcases to nonprofit organizations. For additional information about the guild: www.ecqg.com; community service: ecqg.com/community-service; and the show: georgiacelebratesquilts.com. 

RECYCLE YOUR BROKEN HOLIDAY LIGHTS!



In a single year in the United States, over 20 million pounds of holiday lights are discarded. These lights typically contain materials like copper, glass, and plastic—all of which can be reclaimed through recycling processes. By recycling instead of landfilling holiday lights, you conserve valuable resources, avoid energy-intensive production of new materials, and prevent potentially harmful substances in the lights, such as lead and mercury, from leaching into our soil and water.

As with many other materials, you probably know recycling holiday lights is better than landfilling them but aren't sure how or where to recycle them. The most important guideline to follow is never to put string lights in your curbside bin. They get tangled in the sorting equipment at the recycling facility and have to be manually taken out. Instead, find a drop-off site or recycling center that will accept holiday lights and recycle them properly. Not sure where to go? We can help!

My Green Earth has partnered with the Space Shop Self Storage to provide a convenient drop-off location in East Cobb. Bring your lights to be recycled for free at the Space Shop of East Cobb 2925 W Frank Gordy Parkway, Marietta. The collection bin is outside by the office door, and drop-off is available until Saturday, January 6, 2024. For more information: email info@mygreenearth.org.

RECYCLING EVENT

Please join the Pope High School Band at our upcoming Community Recycling Event on Saturday, January 13th from 9am-2pm at the NE Cobb Family YMCA located at 3010 Johnson Ferry Road, Marietta, 30062. We accept metal, electronics, appliance, glass, paper shredding while you watch, and we have **REDUCED PRICES ON PAINT RECYCLING** this year!! For more information, visit: www.popeband.com/recycle. We also offer residential and business pick up, email us at popebandrecycling@gmail.com to get started.

Recycling Fundraiser





Saturday, January 13th
9:00am-2:00pm

NE Cobb YMCA: 3010 Johnson Ferry Road



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Shredding**



Paint



Glass



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& Appliances**

for details and fees please visit:
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ATLANTA BALLET'S U.S. PREMIERE OF **COCO CHANEL:** **THE LIFE OF A FASHION ICON**

Under the artistic direction of Gennadi Nedvigin, Atlanta Ballet is co-producing *Coco Chanel: The Life of a Fashion Icon* with Hong Kong Ballet and Queensland Ballet with the North American premiere slated for February 9-17, 2024.

Acclaimed Belgian-Colombian choreographer Annabelle Lopez Ochoa's tenth original full-length narrative ballet, *Coco Chanel: The Life of a Fashion Icon*, delves into the complex life of one of the 20th century's most intriguing iconoclasts. The woman who launched a global fashion empire and was credited in the post-World War I era with popularizing a sporty, casual chic as the feminine standard of style, Gabrielle Bonheur "Coco" Chanel, redefined the world of fashion; and more than a century later, her legacy continues. That legacy is defined in part by Chanel's brilliant designs, shrewd business acumen and glamorous lifestyle; and it is also defined by immorality and opportunism on her rise to the top.

Ochoa's original full-length narrative ballet chronicles Chanel's almost mythical rags-to-riches and often controversial story. Through Ochoa's wide range of dance training and acclaim for depicting modern narrative scenes in abstract and concise movements, she portrays Chanel's life and polarizing reputation through ballet.

"I am interested in telling stories about strong historical women," said Ochoa, who has also produced works about Eva Perón and Frida Kahlo. "Behind the surface of a strong woman, there is always a hidden emotional story full of hardships and flaws."

"Annabelle is a brilliant choreographer and thoughtful storyteller, and we are honored to premiere her work in the U.S. for Atlanta audiences," said Nedvigin. "The ballet portrays a historical figure with a past that was both inspiring and



Atlanta Ballet dancers Mikaela Santos as Coco and Fuki Takahashi as Shadow
(photo by Shoccara Marcus)




Dancers with the Atlanta Ballet rehearsing for *Coco Chanel*.
(photo by Kim Kenney)

problematic, so we want to go beyond the stage with meaningful partnerships and educational resources to help contextualize Chanel's story."

Atlanta Ballet, in conjunction with this production, is developing programming with SCAD FASH Museum of Fashion + Film and The William Berman Jewish Heritage Museum. Programming from SCAD will focus on the House of Chanel's immense influence on the fashion industry, and the Berman will explore the harmful impact of Coco Chanel's antisemitism and collaboration with the Nazis. Additional resources will provide education on recognizing and combating antisemitism today.

Coco Chanel: The Life of a Fashion Icon is a co-production of Hong Kong Ballet, Atlanta Ballet and Queensland Ballet. Hong Kong Ballet premiered the ballet in March, and after the ballet is performed by the Atlanta Ballet as its world premiere in the USA, the Queensland Ballet will present it in the fall of 2024.

About Atlanta Ballet:

Founded in 1929, Atlanta Ballet is one of the premier dance companies in the country and the official state Ballet of Georgia. Atlanta Ballet's eclectic repertoire spans ballet history, highlighted by beloved classics and inventive originals. After 94 seasons, Atlanta Ballet continues its commitment to share and educate audiences on the empowering joy of dance. In 1996, Atlanta Ballet opened the Centre for Dance Education and is dedicated to nurturing young dancers while providing an outlet for adults to express their creativity. The Centre serves more than 35,000 people in metro Atlanta each year. Atlanta Ballet's roots remain firmly grounded in the Atlanta community and continue to play a vital role in the city's cultural growth and revitalization. For more information, visit www.atlantaballet.com. 

2024 January COMMUNITY CALENDAR

EVERY SATURDAY

Marietta Square Farmers Market featuring products that are grown and produced in Georgia, including produce, plants, honey, breads, and cheese. Free. 9am-12pm (noon). Historic Marietta Square, 41 Mill Street, Marietta. More info: 770-499-9393 or www.mariettasquarefarmersmarket.com.

JANUARY 7

The Georgia Bridal Show. Meet face to face with wedding professionals and find everything you need to create the wedding of your dreams. 12-4pm. \$15/advance. Cobb Galleria Centre, 2 Galleria Parkway, Atlanta. More info/tickets: eliteevents.com.

STARLAB. Come learn about the night sky in winter. Learn all the winter constellations. 1pm & 1:30pm. Admission: \$15/Adults; \$9/Child (3-12); \$11/Senior 65+/Student (Ages 13-18); Free/Members & children 2 & under. Chattahoochee Nature Center, 9135 Willeo Road, Roswell. More info: 770-992-2055 or www.chattnaturecenter.org.

JANUARY 7 & FEBRUARY 4

Caffeine & Octane Car Show. Do you have a car enthusiast? Spend the morning at one of the largest monthly car shows. 9am-Noon. Free. Town Center Mall, 400 Ernest W Barrett Parkway, Kennesaw. More info: caffeineandoctane.com/about-caffeine-and-octane.

JANUARY 8

Teen Hangout: Gaming & Virtual Reality. Teens! hangout with your friends and explore the many worlds of Virtual Reality, play video game and board games. Improve your imagination power and increase interest in subjects like science. Intended for grades: 6th -12th. 1-4pm. Free, but reservation required, call 770-528-2379 to reserve. Switzer Library, 266 Roswell Street NE, Marietta. More info: www.cobbcat.org.

JANUARY 11

Screen Free Afternoons at the Library. Stop in for board games, puzzles, coloring, and more! This program is intended for children in grades K-5. 4-5pm. Free. Sewell Mill Library & Cultural Center, 2051 Lower Roswell Road, Marietta/East Cobb. More info: www.cobbcounty.org/events/screen-free-afternoon.

JANUARY 13

Recycling Day benefitting Pope High School Band. Metal, electronics, paint, glass, paper shredding - \$10 minimum donation for unlimited electronics and metal – additional fees for TV and monitors, paint, shredding and other items. Pick up available within 5 miles of Pope High School for additional fee. 9am-2pm. Prices vary by item. Northeast Cobb YMCA (next to Walmart), 3010 Johnson Ferry Road, Marietta/East Cobb. More info: www.popeband.com/recycle.html.

JANUARY 13

Winter Family Night Hike at the Chattahoochee Nature Center. Winter is one of the best times of year to explore nature at night. The winter world of CNC is one that deserves exploration in the dark. Listen for the sounds of winter in the woods and gaze up at the stars, while enjoying the crisp air of the season. A campfire, where you can roast a marshmallow. Advanced reservations required by the Thursday prior to the event. 7-9pm. \$15/non-members; \$12/members. Chattahoochee Nature Center, 9135 Willeo Road, Roswell. More info: www.chattnaturecenter.org.

JANUARY 15

Acworth MLK Celebration and Day of Service. Join for a light welcome breakfast at 8:30am at the Roberts School Community and Education Center. Following the welcome breakfast, the Unity Walk will begin at 9:15am and leave from the Roberts School and finish at the Acworth Community Center. A program honoring the legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. will take place at 10am in the Tanyard Creek Overlook of the Acworth Community Center. After the program concludes, there will be a service project to help an organization in the Acworth community. Service shirts will be for sale at the Acworth Community Center leading up to and on the day of the event. Free. 8:30-11am. Roberts School, 4681 School Street, Acworth. More info: acworthtourism.org/acworth-events.

JANUARY 16

Free Entrance Days in the National Parks. Experience the national parks! Check website for list of park sites that normally charge an entrance fee that will offer free admission. More info: www.nps.gov/playourvisit/fee-free-parks.htm.

JANUARY 20

Habitat Restoration at the Chattahoochee Nature Center. Come help restore woodlands and wetlands during this morning of service. You will be working to remove invasive plants to encourage native plant restoration. 8:30am-Noon. Ages 13-Adult; Registration required. Free. Chattahoochee Nature Center, 9135 Willeo Road, Roswell. More info: 770-992-2055 or www.chattnaturecenter.org.

Pop-In for Family Fun at the Marietta History Center.

Crafts and activities will be provided to create a fun learning environment that explores different topics of history with a local focus. This month's theme is Board Games & Puzzles. 10am-4pm. Free. Marietta History Center, 1 Depot Street, Marietta. More info: 770-794-5710 or www.mariettahistory.org.

JANUARY 20, 23, 26 & 28

La bohème presented by The Atlanta Opera. It captures the essence of love, loss, and life. This tragic story of four friends clinging to each other as harsh realities of life threaten to tear them apart has been told time and again – now, discover its origin as one of the greatest operas ever written. Tuesday: 7:30pm; Friday & Saturday: 8pm; Sunday: 3pm. \$48-\$187. Cobb Energy Performing Arts Centre, 2800 Cobb Galleria Parkway, Atlanta. More info/Tickets: www.atlantaopera.org.

JANUARY 24

2024 Walton High School STEM Expo & Science Fair.

Opportunity for young students interested in science to investigate science topics. There will be student displays and interactive activities. Something for everyone, so bring your family and friends. 5-7:30pm. Free. Walton High School, 1590 Bill Murdock Road, Marietta/East Cobb. More info: Tobie.Hendricks@cobbk12.org.

JANUARY 26-27

Special Olympics Georgia State Indoor Winter Games.

Special Olympics athletes from around the state head to Cobb County for the Indoor Winter Games. Over 2,000 athletes, coaches, and unified partners from across the state of Georgia will participate in artistic gymnastics, bowling, floor hockey, basketball, pickleball and powerlifting. Free. Opening ceremony Friday at 7pm. Various events at various locations. More info/volunteer info: liz.smith@specialolympicsga.org or www.specialolympicsga.org/become-an-athlete/competition-schedule/state-indoor-winter-games.



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ARE MADE OF

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Open Registration Begins January 15

CNC Chattahoochee
NATURE CENTER

9135 Willeo Road | Roswell, GA 30075
chattnaturecenter.org | 770.992.2055

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

JANUARY 26-28

Culture Collusion Trade Show. Culture Collision is an action packed show that's bringing cards, comics, collectables and sneakers all in one place! DJ, food, trade nights, celebrity appearance, half sized basketball court, panel discussions, live breaks, give aways, and more. \$20-\$150. Times vary by date, check the website. Cobb Galleria Centre, 2 Galleria Parkway, Atlanta. More info/tickets: www.culturecollisiontradeshow.com.

Jurassic Quest. The world's largest, most popular Dino event with unique and exciting experiences for the whole family. Observe the herd of life size dinosaurs including Apatosaurus, Spinosaurus, and an INCREDIBLE T. Rex! Friday: 12-8pm; Saturday: 9am-6pm; Sunday: 9am-7pm. \$22-\$36. Cobb Galleria Centre, 2 Galleria Parkway, Atlanta. More info/tickets: www.jurassicquest.com.

JANUARY 27

36th Annual Polar Bear Run. An official Peachtree Qualifier, this race is a road race featuring a flat course in East Cobb. The race will be held rain, snow or shine. 5K Race: 8:30am; Cub Runs: 9am; Cub Dash: 9:15am. 5K: \$30; Cub events (ages 2-5): \$25. Phantom racer: \$35 (no sweat-just T-shirt). Proceeds benefit JF High School Student Music Mission Trip Participants. Johnson Ferry Baptist Church, 955 Johnson Ferry Road, Marietta/East Cobb. More info/registration: www.polarbear-run.com.

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An Evening with Shawn Mullins. An Atlanta native and singer-songwriter who specializes in folk rock, instrumental rock, adult alternative, and Americana music. His 1998 single, Lullaby, hit number one on the Top 40 charts and was nominated for a Grammy Award. 8pm. \$30-\$90. Earl and Rachel Strand Theatre, 117 North Park Square, Marietta. More info/Tickets: earlsmithstrand.org.

Braves Fest 2024. Celebrate your 6-time National League East Champions. Spanning across Truist Park and The Battery Atlanta, Braves Fest gets you closer to your team than ever before. Braves Fest features a variety of exciting events such as unique interactive experiences, shopping, dining, and so much more. 10am-4pm. Free. The Battery Atlanta, 800 Battery Avenue SE, Atlanta. More info: www.mlb.com/braves/fans/braves-fest.

JANUARY 27-28

Trains, Trains, Trains. Model train layouts and related groups from throughout the region display their wares. 9:30am-5pm. Members: free; Non-members: \$10/Adults; \$5/Students, active military & children (3-17); \$8/Seniors (65+). Southern Museum of Civil War and Locomotive History, 2829 Cherokee Street, Kennesaw. More info: southernmuseum.org/event/trains-trains-trains-6.

FEBRUARY 5

Family Fun Day. Enjoy the Marietta Cobb Museum of Art with free admission on the 1st Sunday of the month. 1-4pm. Free. Marietta Cobb Museum of Art, 30 Atlanta Street, Marietta. More info: mariettabartmuseum.org.



SPSP Kids

Spring/Summer Sale

Friday, February 2nd
9:00 AM - 6:00 PM

Saturday, February 3rd
9:00 AM - NOON

The Episcopal Church of
St. Peter & St. Paul
1795 Johnson Ferry Rd
Marietta, GA 30062

www.spspkids.com

 [instagram.com/spspkids](https://www.instagram.com/spspkids)

 [facebook.com/spspkidssale](https://www.facebook.com/spspkidssale)

16 January 2024

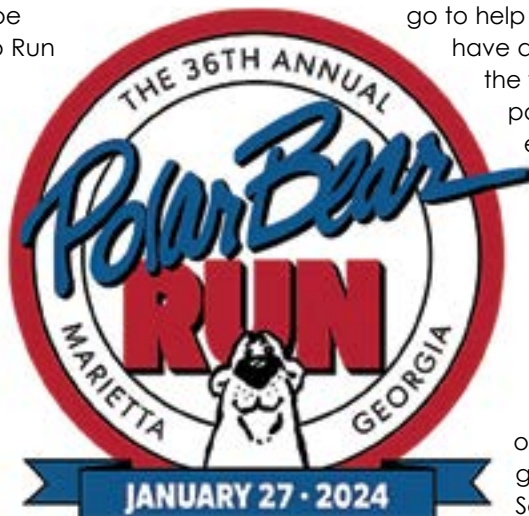
EAST COBBER

www.eastcobber.com

POLAR BEAR RUN IS THE COOLEST RACE IN EAST COBB

The 36th Annual Polar Bear Run will be January 27. The 5k, 2k Fun Run, Cub Run and Cub Dash all support the High School Choir Mission Tour of Johnson Ferry Baptist Church. Students have traveled to New York City, Los Angeles, Las Vegas, Poland, Dallas, Chicago, Birmingham and Washington, DC. The Polar Bear Run prides itself in being the coolest race in East Cobb with the miles outside and the party indoors. One of the longest running 5ks in the area, the Polar Bear Run has 2,000 participants. Polar Bear Run also boasts the favorite race shirt in Cobb County.

The Polar Bear Run is a popular East Cobb Race with hundreds of dedicated runners participating every year. "I have run in the Polar Bear 5K about 15 times and it is my favorite local 5K. It is well organized, has an easy fairly flat course, and the proceeds



go to help support our local high students who have an impact for God's kingdom around the world. I love seeing the students and parents along the course cheering and encouraging participants no matter how cold the temperatures are," says Lauren McCook.

"I just love the Polar Bear race! This will be my 9th year doing the race with my Team Sparkle! We love how friendly and well organized it is! The course makes it fun for everyone to bring their families! And getting the opportunity to support high schoolers going on mission is the best feeling ever! So, we can say that it is a WIN-WIN all the way around!" says Jacyntha Harb.

The race takes place at Johnson Ferry Baptist Church, 955 Johnson Ferry Road in Marietta/East Cobb. For more information and to register for the 35th Annual Polar Bear Run, visit polarbear-run.com.

CAMP RUACH!

CATERING TO AGES 14 MON. & WALKING - RISING KINDERGARTEN

ETZ CHAIM PRESCHOOL

JUNE 3RD - JULY 26TH

2024

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LAUREN@ETZCHAIM.NET
VISIT US AT: WWW.ETZCHAIM.NET/CAMPRUACH

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EASTVALLEY ELEMENTARY STUDENTS CREATE COMMUNITY MURALS

“Go right at the Big Chicken.” For decades, the Big Chicken has stood as an iconic landmark for Cobb County residents.

Like the Big Chicken, Eastvalley Elementary School has been part of the Cobb County community for more than 60 years.

Eastvalley students and staff moved into their new school home earlier this school year thanks to the community-supported ED-SPLOST. Marking the school's inaugural year in the new building, students are creating a collection of art to commemorate the school year and other iconic Cobb County landmarks. The mindful murals were designed as a tribute to the iconic Cobb landmark and as a symbol of what Eastvalley will be to the community.

Eastvalley Media Specialist Dr. Margo Fryling Swierenga shared, “We believe 38 Holt Road will become a landmark in our community, one that grows learners who do things to make the world a better place for years to come!” 🙌



Eastvalley student working on her part of the mural.



Eastvalley students present art pieces to the community mural.

Life Teammates & The Power To Deliver Hope



The Will To Live Foundation Presents: **John Trautwein**

- Co-founder of the Will to Live Foundation, Inc.
- Former Major League Baseball player
- International business executive and author

Date: January 15, 2024

Location: Marietta Performing Arts Center
1171 Whitlock Ave

Time: 7:00 p.m.

Free and open to the public, but registration is required!



John Trautwein today and in 1988 with the Boston Red Sox
Author of the critically acclaimed memoir, MY LIVING WILL



By telling the story about losing his teenage son, Will, to suicide in 2010, John Trautwein focuses on what he learned as a grieving parent who was unaware of the issues that faced his child and still burden millions of kids today.

John and his wife, Susie, have become a positive force for change through the Will To Live Foundation, a nonprofit they created after losing Will during his freshman year of high school. More than \$1 million has been raised through the organization to prevent teen suicide by raising awareness and "talking about it"

Since the creation of Will To Live, John, a successful, international business executive, based in Atlanta, GA gives hundreds of speeches and presentations each year in an effort to:

- **Raise The Awareness** (of teen suicide in our communities)
- **Increase Education** (around mental illness & it's stigma)
- **Deliver Hope** (to kids everywhere)

Drawing knowledge and strength from his career as a professional athlete, John's "Life Teammates" concept teaches kids and adults alike to recognize the love and hope they can find in each other - encouraging them to "talk about it" - something so dramatically missing in today's negative 24/7 world!

A positive and inspirational message of love and hope!

The Trautwein's efforts have garnered national media attention and accolades, and received President George H. W. Bush's Daily Point of Light Award for their work with Will To Live Foundation and turning tragedy into triumph.

Their story has also been shared through Trautwein's book, My Living Will—A Father's Story of Loss & Hope.

The Will To Live Foundation, is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization 5805 State Bridge Rd. #G212, Johns Creek, GA 30097 - www.will-to-live.org



PET OF THE MONTH: **DIXIE MAY**

Submitted by Nancy Zimmeman



Breed: Boston Terrier

Age/Gender: 5 year old girl

Favorite Food: Double cheeseburger

Favorite Person: Daddy....she is a true daddy's girl

Best Trick: Manipulating Daddy to do what she wants

Turn Ons: Walks, people, vacations, and dinner time

Turn Offs: Vet appointments and Daddy going to work

Favorite Toy: Stuffed animal "Lamb chop"

Last Seen: Lying on the back of the couch, looking out the window for squirrels.

What makes her special: Her sweet personality and loyalty to her Daddy

Should Your Pet Be Our Pet of the Month?

Fill out the information on your pet and send it to:

EAST COBBER, P.O. Box 680455, Marietta, GA 30068.

Please include a picture with your entry. Or email description and a jpg to: petomonth@eastcobber.com

Pet's Name: _____

Animal/Breed: _____

Age & Gender: _____

Favorite Food: _____

Favorite Person: _____

Best Trick: _____

Turn Ons: _____

Turn Offs: _____

Favorite Toy: _____

Last Seen: _____

What makes your pet so special: _____

Owner's Name: _____

This is a doggone great spot to advertise your business!

Call

EAST COBBER

770-640-7070



DO GOOD FOR DOGS, CATS AND OTHER ANIMALS

There are many opportunities to volunteer and work one-on-one with many animals in need. The EAST COBBER provides a list of local animal rescues and adoption groups looking for loving individuals interested in animal volunteer work. Not ready to participate in animal volunteer work? East Cobb residents may want to consider donating to any one of these non-profits so that they can recruit more volunteers and help the animals find homes.

ALL PAWS CONSIDERED

770-640-5550

Rescues neglected, abused and homeless animals and provides them with needed medical care and rehabilitation until their permanent home can be found. They have a small network of foster homes and try to help as many animals as they can, including those that are ill or have physical disabilities.

ANGELS AMONG US PET RESCUE (AAUPR)

P.O. Box 821 • Alpharetta, GA 30009

877-404-5874 • www.angelsrescue.org

info@angelsrescue.org

A non-profit that educates the public on the plight of animals in high kill shelters throughout Georgia and saves as many animals as they can.

ANIMALS DESERVE BETTER, INC.

P.O. Box 72016 • Marietta, GA 30007

770-402-0297 • www.animalsdeservebetter.com

Rescues lost, abandoned and neglected dogs- rehabilitate them and turn them into thriving highly trained service and therapy dogs, making a difference in the life of the dogs and the humans they will serve.

BASSET HOUND RESCUE OF GEORGIA

P.O. Box 680322 • Marietta, GA 30068

770-499-1164 • www.bhrg.org

A non-profit, volunteer effort to save abandoned and mistreated basset hounds for the love of the breed.

BEST FRIENDS ATLANTA

1692 Oak Street SE • Marietta, GA 30060

404-815-6680 • bestfriends.org/atlanta

Atlanta Pet Rescue & Adoption has joined Best Friends Animal Society as Best Friends in Atlanta. The center will serve as a lifesaving hub for animals and a base which can fill in gaps in local programming and build a coalition to help the metro-Atlanta area in its final push to no-kill.

COBB COUNTY ANIMAL CONTROL & SHELTER

1060 Al Bishop Drive • Marietta, GA 30008

770-499-4136 • www.cobbcounty.org

Jacob Arnold -Shelter Operations Manager

770-590-5614 • jacob.arnold@cobbcounty.org

GEORGIA HOUSE RABBIT SOCIETY

3114 Cherokee Street NW • Kennesaw, GA 30144

678-653-7175 • www.houserabbitga.org

The Georgia House Rabbit Society is committed to rescuing abused, abandoned and neglected domestic house rabbits, fostering them and finding them great homes.

GOOD MEWS ANIMAL FOUNDATION

3805 Robinson Road • Marietta, GA 30068

770-499-2287 • adopt@goodmews.org • www.goodmews.org

A non-profit organization that operates a no-kill, cage-free shelter for homeless, abused, and abandoned cats.

HAPPY TAILS PET THERAPY

Roswell, GA 30076

770-740-8211 • www.happytailspets.org

Members and pets brighten patients' days at local health care facilities, social agencies and special needs programs.

HUMANE SOCIETY OF COBB COUNTY

148 Fairground Street SE • Marietta, GA 30060

770-428-5678 or 770-428-9882 • www.humanecobb.com

A no-kill shelter serving Cobb County and the surrounding area. Services and programs include pet crisis counseling, guidance for pet owners in need, home-to-home placement, pet-assisted therapy, community education, pet sterilization programs, as well as lost and found, rescue, and adoption service.

MOSTLY MUTTS

3238 Cherokee Street, Kennesaw, GA 30144

770-325-PETS • www.mostlymutts.org

Contact: info@mostlymutts.org

Mostly Mutts has been working to reduce the number of animals euthanized at local shelters in metro Atlanta. They work closely with animal control officers to save adoptable dogs that are often moments away from being put to sleep.

MUTT MADD-NESS

P.O. Box 71821 • Marietta, GA 30007

404-406-6322 • www.muttmaddness.org

Contact: info@muttmaddness.org

Mutt Madd-ness is a no-kill rescue made up of community volunteers dedicated to saving dogs whose lives are in jeopardy. They run an upscale resale store to raise money for their organization. The store is Rescue Rescued Too! At 4665 Lower Roswell Road, Suite 104, Marietta, GA 30068.

OUR PAL'S PLACE

4508 Canton Highway • Marietta, GA 30066

678-795-0202 • www.ourpalsplace.org

helpanimals@ourpalsplace.org

Pet adoption facility and education center. Its goal is to bring about a time when all animals are treated with kindness and compassion. 🐾

HEALTH & WELLNESS

DENTISTS

Cheek Dental

2872 Johnson Ferry Road • Marietta 30062

770-993-3775 • www.cheekdental.com

Mon & Fri: 7am-1pm; Tues-Thurs: 8am-5pm

An all female dental team delivers compassionate, quality, comprehensive dentistry to adults and children with a focus on overall health. CAD/CAM same-day crowns, implant restorations, and beautiful cosmetic veneers, as well as Invisalign, Botox, and Fillers, are all done in a modern, high-tech office. Cheek Dental has been caring for their East Cobb friends and neighbors for over 20 years.

Hart Family Dentistry

3735 Canton Road • Marietta 30066

770-926-8371 • www.drhartsoffice.com

Hart Family Dentistry provides patient-centered, attentive care in a comfortable and enjoyable atmosphere.

We utilize cutting-edge technology and advanced procedures to offer a wide range of dental services, including preventative care, major restorative work, and cosmetic solutions tailored to your unique needs.

Waldron + Lee Dentistry

2419 Roswell Road • Marietta 30062

678-498-1992 • waldrondentistry.com

Waldron + Lee Dentistry is committed to providing caring dental services for you and your family. Their practice has been in operation for over thirty years in East Cobb.

DERMATOLOGISTS

Dermatology and Surgery Specialists of North Atlanta

4800 Olde Towne Parkway, Suite 250, Marietta 30068

770-971-3376 • www.DESSNA.com

Mon-Fri: 7am-4:30pm

Dermatology and Surgery Specialist of North Atlanta PC (DESSNA) is composed of a group of board-certified dermatologists, physician assistants and medical aestheticians. Our clinic has been proudly serving the East Cobb community for over 30 years.

MEDICAL SPA

Dermani Medspa

1205 Johnson Ferry Road, Suite 129

404-905-5099 • www.dermanimedspa.com/eastcobb

Mon-Fri: 9am-7pm; Sat 9am-5pm

Providing the best evidence-based aesthetic treatments at a great value with stellar customer service, specializing in laser hair removal, skin rejuvenation, and cosmetic injectables at a price that is appealing to everyone.

PEDIATRIC DENTISTRY

Nia Pediatric Dentistry

1111 Johnson Ferry Road, Suite 200 • Marietta 30068

770-479-9999 • www.NiaDentistry.com

Mon-Thurs: 8am-5pm; Fri: 8am-4pm; Sat: by appt. 9am-2pm

Nia Pediatric Dentistry focuses on preventative care using the latest technology and friendly environment that takes the typical child's fear of dentistry away.



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EAST COBBER



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770.423.0595

www.vascularsurgicalatlanta.com

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www.NiaDentistry.com
1111 Johnson Ferry Rd st 200 Marietta
770.479.9999



LIVING AT YOUR FINEST WELLNESS: A HOLISTIC HEALTHCARE HAVEN

How personalized care and patient advocacy unite in Dr. Dolapo Babalola's direct primary care practice

by Marie Muir



Dolapo Babalola, MD, FAAFP, DipABLM, DABOM

Dr. Dolapo Babalola, MD opened her holistic direct primary care practice, Living at Your Finest Wellness (LAYF Wellness), in the heart of East Cobb on July 5, 2023. Embarking on this adventure after 15 years of practicing clinical and academic medicine at Morehouse School of Medicine, she is turning the page to a new chapter of personalized patient advocacy. As the former Professor and Director of Undergraduate Medical Education and Family Medicine and Rural Health Clerkship at Morehouse, Dr. Babalola learned about the benefits of direct primary care.

"I wanted to do more for my patients," says Dr. Babs, a name the CEO is affectionately known by.

To mark the beginning of LAYF Wellness, an Open House and Ribbon Cutting Ceremony, facilitated by the Cobb Chamber of Commerce and

Marietta Business Association, was celebrated on August 22, 2023. Located in Marietta at 1230 Johnson Ferry Road in Suite A-20, LAYF Wellness feels less like a medical office and more like a welcoming home for wellness enthusiasts.

Picture this: comfortable green velvet couches, tranquil lighting, and soft music. Dr. Babalola's LAYF Wellness office has an ambiance that soothes the senses. Patients are not just visitors; they are guests in a space designed for their comfort and well-being. Wait for your appointment in peace, while sipping on coffee, water, or tea.

As a part of LAYF Wellness' direct primary care model, patients subscribe to a monthly fee for a plethora of comprehensive services. Dubbed "The Netflix of medicine" by Dr. Babalola, this holistic approach ensures patients

have access to office visits, preventive care, acute cases, women's health, obesity wellness, mental wellness, basic lab tests, and even minor procedures.

Dr. Babalola completed her medical training at the University of Guyana and her Family Medicine residency at Morehouse School of Medicine. Originally from Nigeria, Dr. Babalola moved to the United States in 2002. As a triple board-certified Family, Obesity, and Lifestyle Medicine Physician, the Founding CEO is excited to introduce East Cobbers to this alternative kind of healthcare.

LAYF Wellness is a haven where patients—from cradle to cane—experience a level of personalized care that transcends the traditional healthcare experience. No insurance required, no copays or deductibles—just immediate and timely care tailored to each individ-



LAYF Wellness Lounge Area

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ual needs. LAYF Wellness patients can access Dr. Babalola via phone, video, or text for appointments made the same or next day. Visits are not rushed and pricing is transparent.

“I’ve always wanted to spend more quality time with my patients,” shares Dr. Babalola, whose dream of a patient-centered practice has materialized. She strives to help families build and maintain healthy lifestyles. Her holistic approach focuses on preventing, treating, and in most cases, reversing lifestyle-related chronic diseases.

Dr. Babalola’s vision for LAYF Wellness was brought to life through the diverse contributions of numerous family members and friends. Her husband, Muiyiwa Babalola, and their three children—Mayowa, 18, Moyosola, 15, and Daraju, 12—have played the roles of cheerleaders, computer installers, carpenters, and interior designers, leaving their mark on the office walls with inspiring phrases.

Dr. Babalola’s commitment to empowering the community extends beyond the clinic doors. As a certified yoga instructor and published author, she plans to host group classes and book clubs in her spacious office. But Dr. Babalola’s influence doesn’t stop there. She’s a community builder, honored with numerous awards for her dedication to teaching and promoting primary care.

She shares her wealth of wellness knowledge through coaching programs, online courses, a YouTube Channel and Podcast Show, and speaking engagements. Whether you’re managing diabetes or seeking stress-relief techniques, Dr. Babalola is ready to walk beside you on your wellness journey.

In 2023, Dr. Babalola introduced Walk with a Doc to East Cobb—an international nonprofit organization inspiring communities through exercise and open conversations. Join this monthly event every second Saturday from 9-10 a.m. to walk, talk, and win prizes while enjoying the company of

healthcare professionals educating about health-related issues.

For Dr. Babalola, it’s about making a positive impact—one patient at a time. “I can make a difference in someone’s life by listening,” she says, embodying LAYF Wellness’ mission for patient-centered care.

Living at Your Finest Wellness is now accepting new patients. To learn more and schedule a free meet and greet, visit livingatyourfinest.com or reach out to Dr. Babalola at info@layfwellness.com or 678-403-2199. Your journey to optimal health begins here.



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MUSIC AND HEALTH

By Stephen Carrington, Stephen's Guitar Lessons of Marietta GA; © 2024

Studying, Performing, or Simply Listening to Music: People of All Ages Will Likely Experience Health Benefits Whenever Music is Involved


Many of us enjoy listening to music, but did you know that there are documented health benefits associated with most of the different kinds of interactions that people typically have with music? It's true! Whether you are actively studying music (including learning to play an instrument), or performing on an instrument that you already know how to play, or simply enjoying listening to music, numerous studies have shown that incorporating music into many situations can yield various health benefits, for people of any age.

While you must be careful about volume levels—particularly when using headphones or earbuds—listening to music can sharpen your thinking and improve your memory. It can even make you feel better, through physiological changes that occur in your brain when listening to music, which help to regulate your mood (and reduce stress and anxiety in the process).

Playing an instrument, and in particular the act of learning how to play an instrument, goes even further than merely listening. When children do so, they set themselves up for greater successes later in life; when older folks do so, they can actually help to prolong their life, and/or improve the quality of their life.

Music doesn't discriminate; it benefits everyone that interacts with it, but you can make the most of those

benefits by actively participating in music. Don't just listen to your favorite music; really focus on the details. Or better yet, learn to play those songs on a musical instrument! Your mind and body will thank you for it.

For a more information on this topic and others, please visit www.blog.stephensguitarlessons.com. 



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"I HATE THE DENTIST!"

Luckily I don't take it personally when I ask a new patient about their past dental experiences and they respond, "I hate the dentist!" Many people have phobias about dental visits. Perhaps this describes you? Maybe your fear is based on a previous bad experience...possibly you were not fully numb during a procedure or had pain afterwards, or you often heard other family members' complaints about dental treatments growing up, so you developed a fear before you even had a first dental visit of your own. Making visits painless, and even fun, is what we strive for at Cheek Dental and is why most of our patients never say "I hate the dentist!" Here are a few things we do to help make you comfortable.

LISTENING! When you feel heard and understood, you are naturally more comfortable and there is a greater level of trust, so we make sure we listen to your concerns and even request that you raise your hand during

treatment anytime you need us to pause to hear a comment or simply to request a break. And we ask questions to ensure we understand your expectations.

GOOD ANESTHESIA. We want to ensure you are fully numb when we are treating an area in your mouth, so we perform anesthesia checks before we start any treatment and ask along the way if you are feeling anything other than the sensation that we are in your mouth. We also make our injections as comfortable as possible by using topical anesthetics first.

N₂O. Nitrous Oxide, or laughing gas, is a great way to reduce anxiety and help you relax. When nerves are heightened, any discomfort that is experienced is greatly increased. N₂O works within just a few minutes, and its effects are gone within 5 minutes of breathing plain oxygen.

PREVENTION. The larger the infection or decay, the greater the likelihood

of pain; therefore, we encourage you to schedule regular recall visits to help maintain healthy teeth and gums and to be sure that any problems are caught early to prevent them from getting out of hand. A small cavity that can be repaired with a simple filling can turn within several months into a large cavity that needs a root canal and crown or may not even be salvageable.

HEADPHONES, BLANKETS, and SMILES. There are so many little touches that our wonderful team of professionals do to ensure you feel cared for that I can't fit them all in this article, but first is their genuine concern and compassion which shows on their smiling faces. They are also happy to provide you with a blanket, a bottle of water, a set of headphones with an ipod for listening to music, some lip balm, a warm wet wipe... they really dote on and pamper our patients as a natural part of their nurturing personalities.

At Cheek Dental we love doing what we do and especially enjoy the challenge of helping a fearful patient change their mindset about dental visits. And we love forming relationships with our patients who really become more like extensions of our families. We are welcoming new patients and would love to have you join the Cheek Dental family so we can show you how pleasant your dental visits can truly be!



Dr. Cristi Cheek is the owner of Cheek Dental here in East Cobb. You may contact her at 770-993-3775 or visit www.cheekdental.com.

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SPARKLE SUCCESS STORY

by Ginger Markert-Brusa

SAY HELLO TO EMILY SMITH OF ROSWELL

After spending years unhappy with how I looked and felt, I joined Sparkle Wellness in February 2019. I was a 45-year-old wife and mom of three who worked part-time as a real estate attorney. I was active since my late teens, a consistent exerciser and marathoner. I battled with weight and healthy eating. I ran twenty miles, then ate highly processed foods with heavy fat and sugar. I labeled myself “good” when I ate well and “bad” when I “fell off the wagon” daily. I was in a perpetual battle and remember telling Jacynta Harb, of Sparkle Wellness, I wanted to find peace.

I knew Jacynta from attending her weight loss classes at a major weight loss corporation and left inspired by her enthusiasm and encouragement. It was that positive leadership style that convinced me to attend Sparkle Wellness. At our first meeting, I looked around the Sparkle office for products or plans she would try selling. I was confused there were no packages or boxes to buy. Instead, I discovered Sparkle Wellness was changing negative mindsets, teaching new healthy habits, and focusing on eating real foods. I signed up for one-on-one coaching and group wellness classes.

I was hesitant to change. I loved my drive-thru coffees, a running-only exercise routine, and convenient boxed meals. I held onto those habits, trying to fit them into my new wellness routine. It did not work. Finally, sitting in a Sparkle Wellness meeting, the lightbulb went off: if I wanted to look different, I needed to BE different. I needed to be honest and make changes. I was encouraged to look at my habits and ask myself, “Is this serving me in my health and wellness goals?”

I transformed my diet, focused on increasing my protein to support muscle growth and eliminated sugars to reduce inflammation. I added vegetables to every meal—including breakfast! I participated in Sparkle Book Club, reading about beneficial nutrition. I understood whole health wellness and nutrition which taught me the value of micro and macro nutrients. I became accountable by journaling in My Fitness Pal. I do not restrict calorie consumption, but I document which foods helped me feel better, supported my workouts, and aided my recovery.

I changed my exercise routine, adding strength conditioning. Not only am I stronger and more agile, but added muscle has increased my metabolism! I love the confidence my new strength brought me and by March of 2021, I lost thirty pounds.




Emily Smith before and after her Sparkle success.

My journey includes the invaluable Sparkle community of encouragement and accountability. The resource of a hundred people, who are dedicated to learning, growing, and changing has been important. When I struggle, we brainstorm solutions. When I need a new challenge, friends invite me to create new goals. I ran a Ragnar and my first marathon in six years with a Sparkle friend! I learned successful meal prep and planning, healthy recipes and cooking methods, the best ways to store foods, and how to organize my pantry! I love how Sparkle is always up for an adventure with group walks, hikes, kayaking, pickleball, and workout parties. The positivity and willingness to try new things is contagious and inspiring.

MY HEALTHY TIPS ARE:

1. Read food labels. Eat foods with minimal ingredients. There are too many ingredients in processed foods which negatively affect our health.
2. Develop an exercise routine incorporating regular strength training and focus on challenging yourself to lift heavier weights.
3. Surround yourself with health-minded people who serve as accountability support.

For more information, visit www.sparkleanewyou.com, or call 404-242-5062. 

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INSPIRE AND EMPOWER STUDENTS TO BE POSITIVE STEWARDS OF THE ENVIRONMENT.

The average sized school in Cobb County sends nearly 9,000 pounds of recyclable waste to the landfills each school year. Let us help your school recycle this waste instead! Recycling saves energy, and an average school can save the equivalent of 3,000 gallons of gasoline by recycling in a single school year. From an environmental impact perspective, that is equivalent to removing 6 cars from the road for an entire year! The introduction of recycling practices in the classrooms not only demonstrates the school's commitment to environmental conservation but also equips their students with lifelong skills for responsible resource management.

OUR CLASSROOM PROGRAM INCLUDES:

1 Process Expertise



We will help your school define a process for getting the recycling from the classroom to the recycling dumpster, including all supplies needed.

2 Community Engagement Materials



We will provide a Social Media Toolkit, bin stickers, and more – all you need to get the school excited about recycling!

3 Impact Tracker (optional)



One of the most motivating components of a recycling program is being able to quantify tangible impact. Using our Impact Tracker, students can easily do just that.

52,000

Pounds of materials will be diverted from landfills each year by recycling in just 6 Cobb schools.

18,000

Gallons of gasoline saved each year if six Cobb schools begin recycling.



For qualified schools, My Green Earth will provide a Classroom Recycling Grant covering 100% of the costs for your recycling program. Funds are limited and are granted on a first-come basis.

GREATER SCHOOL IMPACT

Let us help your school make an impact towards a more sustainable community. Here are other ways we can help:



REUSE OR RECYCLE SUPPLIES



Throughout the school year, students and teachers go through a lot of supplies. When new supplies come in, be sure old supplies go somewhere other than the landfill: ask us about specialty recycling or reusing options, and sign up to be the recipient of gently used supplies from other schools!

EARN MONEY FOR RECYCLING

From holey socks to broken holiday lights, your school can earn money by hosting specialty recycling drives. Ask us for more information!



TRANSPORTATION

Improve the air quality around your school by designating "idle-free" zones to protect young lungs. Encourage bus ridership and discourage car riders. Using the bus reduces carbon dioxide emissions by 45%, and these programs can be connected to a free K-12 Air Quality curriculum.

SCHOOL COMPOSTING

Composting turns food waste into nutrient-filled soil, and can be done right in the school's outdoor space! Students love watching discarded food turn into soil for them to use in their garden.



GREEN TEAMS

Let students take the lead and decide how they want to make an impact! Plant a pollinator garden? Make awareness videos? Host low-waste swaps? Carton recycling? There are so many ways to make an impact!

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EAST COBB QUILTERS' GUILD PROVIDED **SPECIAL HOLIDAY GIFTS FOR VETERANS**



Cobb Veterans enjoying lunch provided by Cobb County Senior Services on the newly donated quilted placemats. Each placemat is handcrafted by a member of the East Cobb Quilters Guild. (Photos provided by Cobb County Senior Services)

East Cobb Quilters' Guild is proud of its long history of community service. Its members freely give their time and energy to create quilts, placemats, Beads of Courage bags, and pillowcases for donation to area charities. This year it was decided that some of the placemats with a patriotic theme would be used by Cobb County Senior Services as gifts at their annual Veteran's Christmas Luncheon.

"Our Veterans were so touched by having placemats that were specially made for them and loved being able to take them home as a keepsake. A heartfelt thanks from our Veterans and everyone at Cobb County Senior Services to the East Cobb Quilters' Guild for their generous gift," commented Andrea Rapowitz, Cobb County Senior Services Volunteer Services Manager. 🙏

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...with 100 volunteers. Today, the organization active volunteers, from ages 14-99 years, who more than 30 departments and have given an 47,800 hours of service to Northside in the #.

...year's luncheon, themed "Volunteers are the access," honored (and other very st... gnized the Auxili... eager to continu... in.

... Moore, of East C... of service to the... Moore volunteer... a patients and tra... nd cars. East Cobb... gnized of the ev... ct.

... in this year, we h... rovide compassio... a patients, familie... for special project... (Lisa Angel, Auxili... "I am humbled b... rs. It is a privilege... onscientious grou...

... presented Northside with a check for... raised from all of the Auxiliary's fundrais... in 2012-2013 including sales in the Gift... missions on baby photo sales and several

... The Auxiliary hosted 105 "volunteers" i... us areas of the hospital.

... Volunteers delivered 3,559 flower arr... ments and 2,728 pieces of mail to patients, an... ported 5,752 patients.

... Community Health Educ... 42 puppet shows f...

... (ppy) volunteers re... ts and their famil... cal-Surgery units.

... 55 items, including... t and scarves, for... Nursery and pall...

... Unteers visited wit... breast and other c... 423 follow-up c... cancer patients.

... Auxiliary has always... mponent to hospi... Quattrocchi, presic... al. "There are no l... our volunteers n... or patients, visitors and staff each and every c... greatly appreciate all that they do."

For more information about the Northside Hospital-Atlanta Auxiliary, call 404-851-8707 or

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It's such a basic question, but one that most businesses struggle to answer ... much less communicate clearly. But in today's age of endless marketing messages competing for a very short attention span, clearly communicating your "story" is an absolute imperative. Articulating and embracing your brand story is what makes it happen.



THE MUSIC STUDIO CELEBRATES GRAND OPENING



East Cobb parents who have been wanting meaningful, fun activities for their children (or themselves) will be delighted to know that The Music Studio Atlanta (TMSA) has opened their beautiful 5000 sq. ft. studio in October, providing its special brand of engaging music lessons that families love. An official grand opening and ribbon cutting celebration is scheduled for

November 2nd at 3pm and interested families are invited to attend the festivities, enjoy hourly raffles, tours, refreshments, and more.

TMSA has been teaching at their Vinings studio for over 10 years, so they come to East Cobb with an established, talented faculty and a professional service from top to bottom.

Founder/Director Cecilia Rowe says, "Here at TMSA, we're parents too. We appreciate businesses that provide the best service possible and go the extra mile for families and students, and that's what we do here."

East Cobb families will enjoy:

- Friendly and patient instructors with lessons in Piano, Voice, Guitar, Strings, Drums and more.
- Available lesson times 7 days/week with professional front desk staff
- Engaging music lessons, where students play the songs they want to play
- Exclusive, proprietary reward system to encourage student growth
- Low pressure performance opportunities that build confidence and performance experience

TMSA offers many performance opportunities including their unique Destination Series where students perform at famous music halls throughout the US. They recently performed at Graceland in Memphis and at the Fox Theatre and are soon announcing the next big Spring '23 Destination location!

TMSA students learn to focus, take risks, and persevere. They also gain confidence and improved self-esteem while developing a skill to be proud of. They are rewarded through TMSA's exclusive proprietary reward system, trophies, and recognition as incentives for recital efforts.

Mrs. Rowe says about the expansion: "We are thrilled to bring our award-winning music program to East Cobb and look forward to making great music with East Cobb families!"

The Music Studio East Cobb is located at Pavilions at Eastlake, 2100 Roswell Road, Suite 1128, Marietta, 30062. Further details can be found at www.TMSEastCobb.com or call/text 404-630-3885. You can also visit TMSA on Facebook or Instagram.

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