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Georgia Benjamin Smith... Hometown Hero

by SUSAN LARSON

Georgia Benjamin Smith is known worldwide for the tales she tells at the Uncle Remus Museum in Eatonton, home of author Joel Chandler Harris. She tells tales not only about Br'er Rabbit and all the other critters in the Briar Patch, but entertains visitors with stories of her own, like her hilarious account of her cotton pickin' days as a child. Well, actually it was only one day since the plantation owner wasn't too impressed with her performance. But she stretches that one day out into a full length story! And now she has an even greater story to tell and it needs no embellishment.

The Municipal Gas Authority, celebrating 30 years of serving customers in Georgia, just honored her as one of seven Hometown Heroes in the state. And it wasn't just for her ten years of volunteering at the

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August 2016
Vol. 30, No. 8

Taking Care

Enhance your ability to cope with changes and challenges... How to develop resilience as a family caregiver

by LISA M. PETSCHÉ

Although it has rewards, caring for a frail or ill older relative can be physically, psychologically and emotionally demanding.



Lisa Petsché

The caregiving journey is particularly challenging when it continues over a long period of time, and when the elder has a progressive disease, complex needs, a demanding personality or mental impairment.

Some caregivers seem to cope better than others with the ups and downs of providing care. The reasons can be varied, but one of them has to do with resilience.

The Merriam-Webster dictionary defines resilience as an ability to recover from or adjust easily to misfortune or change.

If you are a caregiver, read on to learn about strategies for fostering resilience. They can help you cope with the ongoing stress and periodic crises involved in caring for some-

one who has a chronic illness.

- Accept the reality of your relative's disease. Denial will prevent you from moving forward and getting your relative the help he or she needs.

- Learn as much as possible about the illness and its management, and educate family and friends to help them understand. Being informed is empowering.

- Hope for the best possible outcome but prepare for the worst-case scenario. Unanticipated situations can be the most difficult to handle.

- Pick your battles; do not make a major issue out of every concern.

- Use positive self-talk. Emphasize phrases such as I can, I will and I choose.

- Nurture your spirit. Do things that bring inner peace, such as meditating, reading, writing in a journal or listening to music.

- Create a relaxation room or corner in your home — a tranquil spot you can retreat to in order to rejuvenate.

- Develop a calming ritual to help you unwind at the end of the day. Avoid listening to or watching the news before going to bed.

- Look after your health: eat nutritious meals, get adequate rest, exercise and see your primary physician regularly.

- Stay connected to your friends and community groups to which you belong.

- Minimize contact with people who drain your energy or make you feel inadequate, those who are pessimistic, critical or self-focused, for example.

- Simplify your life. Set priorities and do not waste time or energy on unimportant things. If finances permit, hire a housecleaning service or a personal support worker or companion for your relative, to free up some of your time and energy.

- Be flexible about plans and expectations. Recognize that there will be good days and bad days, and therefore how you and your relative feel will fluctuate. Take things one day at a time.

- Give yourself permission to feel all emotions that surface, including resentment and frustration. Remind yourself that you are doing your best and are only human.

- Do not keep feelings and problems to yourself. Seek support from a family member, friend or counselor. Join a community caregiver support group (some offer concurrent care), or an Internet group if it is hard to get out.

- Seek help from your primary physician or a counselor if you are continually feeling sad, angry or overwhelmed. There is no need to suffer, because depression is treatable.

- Accept offers of help. Ask other family members to share the load and be specific about what is needed. Find out about community support services including respite care options and take full advantage of them. Information can be obtained from your local office on aging.

- Do not promise your relative you will never place him or her in a long-term care home. It is important to keep all options open because it is impossible to know what the future holds.

- Do something nice for someone who is going through a difficult time. It takes your mind off your own situation, boosts your self-esteem and strengthens the relationship. It may also help to be reminded that other people face challenges, too.

- Look for ways to include laughter and joy in each day. This will enhance your relationship with your relative, and others with whom you come in contact, and help foster a positive outlook.

Lisa M. Petsché is a social worker and a freelance writer specializing in boomer and senior health matters. She has personal and professional experience with elder care.

The Next Chapter

Publisher's Note:
Book Review columnist Anne Jones is on vacation at this time. Her column will continue in our September 2016 edition.

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Going to Bat for Hometown Hero

by SUSAN LARSON

While I was delighted to feature Georgia Benjamin Smith on this month's cover, I didn't want the other six recipients of the Municipal Gas Authority Georgia's Hometown Hero Award to go unnoticed.

Among those recognized are Sgt. Paul Turner and K-9 Crys with the Adel Police Department for protecting its citizens, the Franklin County Rotary Club for building more than 300 handicap ramps on houses, Eddie Willingham, who spearheaded several Habitat for Humanity homes in Trion, Caroline Gowam, founder and operator of "Loads of Love" which does laundry for the needy in Warner Robbins, and Anne Milledge, for donating new shoes to Albany school children.

If you counted those names, you'll notice there are only five. That's because the sixth honoree is in a class by himself. Those mentioned are honored for what they've done in the here and now. Ty Cobb, Royston's Hometown Hero, passed away over half a

century ago. And due to inaccurate reporting, based on rumors and hearsay, he took with him a horrible reputation. Thankfully, due to diligent research on the part of contemporary sports writers and historians, his record is on deck for being set straight. And as a writer – even though I'm not in the bigs, I'd like to go to bat for him, too.

I recently read Charles Leerhsen's "Ty Cobb: A Terrible Beauty," which must have taken years to compile. Leerhsen touches all bases in refuting all the negative stories that have been written about Cobb. Yes, he had his faults like everyone else, but he also has a heroic legacy that has been suppressed, or at best, overlooked.

Reputed to disregard his fans, letters in museums show how Cobb responded to children who wrote to him, sometimes with handwritten letters up to five pages long.

To dispel rumors about Cobb's alleged racism, Leerhsen quotes him as saying, "The Negro should be accepted wholeheartedly, and not grudgingly. The Negro

has the right to play professional baseball and whose [sic] to say he has not?"

In his hometown, Cobb established Cobb Memorial Hospital in his parents' name and set up a scholarship fund which to date has awarded over \$15 million to needy students. Hardly the Ty Cobb who has been pitched by the media for so many decades. I would like to commend

MGAG for shining their light on this Hometown Hero and giving him the honor he so deserves. And for doing their homework in finding people who deserve the title Hometown Hero, I'd say MGAG is batting a thousand!

Susan Larson is a writer from Lilburn. E-mail her at susanlarson79@gmail.com.

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Poets' Corner

Editor's Note: If you have written a "well-worked" poem which you would like considered for publication, please email it to seniornewsga@cox.net or mail it to Senior News, 214 Wilsons Creek Bend, Bonaire, GA 31005. Please include your name and address on your poem. We will publish selected poems (or excerpts) as space permits.

FINALLY FREE

by Kelly Baldwin

*I finally found my summit
at the top of the hill.
I planted my flag there
and it remains there still.*

*I conquered every demon
by standing my ground.
My will was not broken.
My soul knows no bounds.*

*I now live in freedom.
I'm no longer in chains.
I can now start the healing.
I'm no longer ashamed.*

*I'm now feeling alive
and I'm living with pride.
Gone is the torment
I kept hidden inside.*

*I can breathe now.
I can see now.*

*What used to be then
is no longer now.*

*I've cast aside all those
unpleasant thoughts,
and replaced them with
lots of positive talk.
I'm on the straight and narrow
and my arrow's pointing up
to the Greatest North Star
in the heavens above.*

*When you're seeking salvation,
you'll find peace and relaxation.
You'll see it all come together
and how you fit in the equation.*

*Jesus is the Healer.
He stays tried and true.
When you're ready to receive Him,
He'll be there waiting for you.*

THE BELL

by Dot A. Jones

*On a pole in my back yard I have
a big black bell, one hundred and
fifty plus years. It rings loudly
when a chain is pulled, as if a
message to tell.*

*The bell came from my grand-
parents' farm, where it was for*

*many years. It heralded the
beginning and ending of each
day, called the workers at dinner
time, and when needed, to sound
an alarm.*

*I am glad I was chosen to inherit
the bell, it has so many stories to
tell. Now, I will leave it to my
granddaughter to cherish as well.
We have shared many memories
of this old farm bell.*

*The bell rang when a new child
was born into the world.
Sometimes, a mischievous boy
or girl rang it in fun. This wasn't
encouraged, because neighbors
didn't know and left everything
to come.*

*At my house, it's a sound to enjoy
at special times. We ring in the
new year and the 4th of July.
The family finds joy in hearing
the loud chime. It is an oddity to
listen to in our modern times.*

*I say "Thank You" for the farm bell.
My grandparents knew I would
treasure it and be glad I could
ring it with joy to tell.*

*I am sure the sound reaches heaven
and God knows we are praising
His name, as we pull the chain
on an old farm bell.*

Why we suffer

by DANIEL W. GATLYN, USN Ret.
Minister/Journalist

I have been around for a while! To the extent that daffodils are totally mature, the pines are a hundred feet tall, and the elephant in now celebrating menopause! That has given me time, without undue effort, to observe humanity, and all their antics! I am persuaded that we are akin to the most untoward (and antiquated) reptiles when it comes to wisdom; for the plunder we ponder introduces liabilities at each turn, so much so that we spend a lifetime tending to aches, pain, injuries, and inconsistencies! We are insidiously the victim of our careless and wanton woes! Explain you say? To begin with, we have trashed all morals; and, dismissed the Godly foundations of our Nation!

From conception to deception, we insist on making beds that no one really desires for slumber! It is awful! It is wretched! Miserable! Uncouth! Unrealistic! Unbelievable! And,

Unjustified! Granted, wrath of the elements, enemies (and friends) bring circumstances warranting band aids and pills at, seemingly, every juncture! But a majority of ills are caused by us mocking the ostrich... head in the sand!

We eat too much, sleep too little, frown too often, drink too much (but never enough water), exercise minimally, talk too much... and listen far less, live and drive like there is no tomorrow (and for many it comes to pass), almost never rationalize, brag of our exploits (though they appear marginal), befriend only those who pat our back, curse the darkness, the habits, the convictions of others, agree to disagree on most everything, strain at a gnat, but easily digest a hippopotamus, find something, or somebody, or some cause, to bring on anger and indigestion at every sunrise, fault the eager, trounce the talented; and, have the audacity to label our foolishness as "super academic!" What do we really expect the outcome to be? It is no surprise that we arrive at the half way house crippled, torn, twisted, malnourished,

and systemically retarded! We shoot ourselves in the foot; then wonder why the shoes don't fit! We award stupidity with goods and gadgets; receiving their direction as law!

I speak specifically of crime, war, terrorism, disease, hatred, carelessness, unbelief, malice, error, (third leading cause of death is medical error), inattentiveness, accident (accidents don't happen, they are caused). Let's be truthful! Most miseries are of our own making!

Physical, emotional, spiritual, political, academic, psychological; and, the list goes on! Instead of work, we whine and whimper! Instead of safety, we challenge all possibilities! It is time to eat decent, drive carefully, turn on the lights, set the alarm, close the gate, lock the door, consult the Bible, observe the signs, know your destination, upgrade our manners, act right, stay sober, stay alert, and plan for irregularities... it's a jungle out there! Orlando's infamous stints of mayhem did not have to happen! A host were asleep on their watch! Common sense remains a virtue!

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Work completed on two historical buildings at the Elisha Winn Plantation

Submitted by Lee Schermerhorn
Chairman, Philadelphia Winn
Chapter, Publicity and Media

Photos submitted by
Co-President Betty Warbington

Lawrenceville, GA

The application of exterior wood sealer to the historic barn and school house at the Elisha Winn Plantation in Dacula, Georgia, has been completed. Funding for this project was made possible through the sponsorship of the Philadelphia Winn Chapter National Society Daughters of the American Revolution located in Lawrenceville, Georgia. The sealer will provide protection to the buildings for many years. Co-President Betty Warbington of the Gwinnett Historical Society said, "It's a small job that will make a big difference in the preservation of these historic buildings."

We at GHS appreciate the support of the Philadelphia Winn Daughters on this project."

The 38th annual fair will be held in October where the school house, barn and plantation house will be open for tours. GHS members will demonstrate period activities, and Philadelphia Winn Daughters will be on hand to com-

memorate a plaque that will be erected recognizing the contribution of the DAR to the GHS preservation efforts.

The Walnut Grove one-roomed school, circa 1875, was first located near the present Walnut Grove Baptist Church and across the street from the Methodist Campground on Braselton Hwy. in Lawrenceville. When a new school house was built in 1911, the little school became a grist mill and later on a carpenter's shop. The Hamilton Davis family owned the school and donated it to the GHS in the 1980s. The GHS had it moved to its present location on Dacula Road. The multi-stall barn dates to around 1915 and replaced the original barn on the plantation site. Neither the school house nor the barn has ever been painted or sealed!

The Gwinnett Historical Society's Grant application was sponsored by the Philadelphia Winn Chapter, and the National Society awarded the grant in the amount of \$766.00 on April 30, 2016. First Vice Regent Ann Story, who has worked tirelessly on the project, said, "DAR was founded upon patriotism, historic preservation, and education. We saw all of our core beliefs represented in this project! Throughout the school year, busloads of school children visit the

plantation, where learning history becomes fun and hands on."

The DAR grants program was started in 2010. Funding is awarded to support projects in local communities which promote the organization's mission areas.

The National Society Daughters of the American Revolution was founded in 1890 to promote patriotism, preserve American history, and support better education for our nation's children. Its members are descended from the patriots who won American independence during the Revolutionary War. With 178,000 members in approximately 3,000 chapters worldwide, DAR is one of the world's largest and most active service organizations. To learn more about the work of today's DAR, visit www.dar.org. For more about applying for a Special Projects Grant from DAR, visit www.dar.org/grants.

For more information regarding the Philadelphia Winn Chapter of the NSDAR and the Gwinnett Historical Society, please visit our websites at: PhiladelphiaWinn.georgiastatedar.org; Ed Williams, Sr., Project Manager & Treasurer GHS, Gwinnett Historical Society www.gwinnetths.org.



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SMITH

from cover page

Uncle Remus Museum.

Smith, age 75, has served as founder and president of Putnam County's Mothers Against Crime for 24 years, member and chairman of the Pre-K reading program of the Eatonton Kiwanis Club and honorary member of the Rotary Club. She has worked for the Putnam County Domestic Violence Task Force and Ocmulgee Judicial Circuit DVTF. An employee at Putnam General Hospital for more than 27 years and a receptionist at Dr. Rakeesh Kumar's office for six years, Smith proudly tells of how she served on the state organ donor board, helping to implement it for blacks in Putnam County. And this doesn't include all the ways she pitches in for

various festivals and civic events.

While her volunteer work takes her all over the county, she still lives on the same street she grew up on as an only child raised by her grandmother, Adele Bullard. And she still finds time to enjoy life with Rufus "Smitty" Smith, her husband of 56 years, her six children, 15 grandchildren and 12 great-grandchildren. In and among all her causes and concerns, she is also committed to her story telling every Friday and Saturday at the Uncle Remus Museum. And if you want to hear the rest of that cotton pickin' story, she'll be happy to tell you about it!

Susan Larson is a writer from Lilburn. E-mail her at susanlarson79@gmail.com.



Benjamin Smith is committed to story telling every Friday and Saturday at the Uncle Remus Museum in Eatonton, Georgia.

Sleepless Nights?

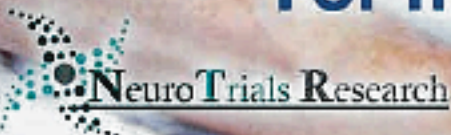
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What you should know before buying a used Smartphone... BBB warns consumers about the risk of losing money because of hidden problems

by **KELVIN COLLINS**
President/CEO, BBB of Central Georgia & the CSRA, Inc.

If your smartphone is on its last leg, the Better Business Bureau recommends you understand the risks associated with buying a used device. Analysts say many consumers are not as inclined to upgrade their smartphones as often as they did in the past, in part, because of the phasing out of multi-year contracts and the subsidization of new phones by carriers. When the older phones break down or their batteries don't hold a charge any more, many people look for a used device, instead of shelling out hundreds of dollars for the latest model. However, there will always be devotees who want the newest models as they come off the production line. That's why there continues to be many used smartphones on the market.

There are several potential problems when you buy a used device, including the chance the phone was stolen, has hidden problems or was rendered useless because it is "locked" to the carrier that originally sold it. If it is locked, it would prevent you from selecting an alternative, less expensive wireless provider of your choice.

Most used smartphone problems happen after private sales. If you buy from a friend and the phone's warranty has expired, it can strain your relationship if there is a problem with the product. If you purchase a used smartphone from a classified ad, it is a person-to-person transaction. Unless you pay with a credit card, you won't have any sort of recourse if there is a serious problem after the purchase.

It is not easy to tell what shape

the phone is in unless you see and test it. Like any electronic product, there may be hidden problems within an otherwise pristine-looking phone.

Sellers usually specify in ads or online auction sites whether a used phone was unlocked by its original carrier. In addition, recent models are impossible to activate unless their owners remove the smartphone's passwords.

Better Business Bureau offers these tips to help you avoid losing money on a tainted device:

Evaluate the seller – This is very difficult to do in a private sale. It is safer to buy from a local business, including smartphone repair kiosks at a shopping mall. Check out prospective sellers at bbb.org. Private sellers typically do not offer a guarantee, unlike a used phone dealer or carrier that sells refurbished devices.

Check if it was stolen before you buy – Get the seller to provide you with the phone's IMEI number, which is the device's unique identifier. Have them take a photo or screenshot of the phone's IMEI to ensure it is the identifier for the phone you are buying. You can use that number on websites such as www.imei.info, to check whether the used phone was reported lost or stolen.

Make a checklist – You can't see under the phone's hood so to speak, but you can check the device's battery life, see whether the camera works; check the Wi-Fi connection; make sure the screen works properly and that the headphone jack, power and volume switches are in good working order.

Request an original receipt – Ask the seller for the original bill of sale for the phone as well as a receipt for your purchase. You would also want some sort of written warranty to make sure the phone works for a couple of

weeks. Verify that the seller has had the phone unlocked by their carrier and removed any passwords that would interfere with your activation of the smartphone.

Get money for your old phones – Even if your old phones have serious problems, shops will still buy them for parts. Sometimes you can sell a used phone for as much as half of the original purchase price, or use it to negotiate the price of a used unit.

Remember that sales transactions between individuals lack the protection of buying from a business and that paying by credit card offers the most protection in case of a problem.

Read more consumer tips, research sellers, file complaints, and

report scams at bbb.org.

Kelvin Collins is president/CEO of the Better Business Bureau of Central Georgia & the CSRA, Inc., serving 41 counties in Central Georgia and the Central Savannah River Area (CSRA). This tips column is provided through the local BBB and the Council of Better Business Bureaus. Questions or complaints about a specific company or charity should be referred directly to the BBB at Phone: 1-800-763-4222, Web site: www.bbb.org or E-mail: info@centralgeorgia.bbb.org or info@csra.bbb.org. For more consumer tips that you can trust, visit bbb.org.

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Grandparent Scams still targeting seniors... Do you know the red flags?

by **KELVIN COLLINS**
President/CEO, BBB of Central
Georgia & the CSRA, Inc.

The Better Business Bureau is warning well-meaning seniors about "emergency" scams designed to fool them into thinking that their grandchild is hurt, has been arrested or is stranded, and in need of money.

According to recent FBI reports, the "Grandparent Scam" has been around since 2008, but there has been a surge in these scams over the last few years. Retirees are an attractive target for financial scammers since they may have more disposable income and they are less likely to report being scam victims. Emergency scams play off of people's emotions and strong desire to help others in need. Scammers impersonate their victims and make up an urgent situation – "I've been arrested," "I've been mugged," "I'm in the hospital" – and target friends and family with urgent pleas for help, and money.

One recent victim reported sending four transactions totaling \$4,400 over a two day period. She was duped after receiving calls alleging that her grandson had been arrested after being in an accident. The money was initially to cover fines and representation to get the grandson released. Soon, the caller needed money to cover the medical bills for a person injured in the accident. The victim claims that the scammer not only knew details about her grandson but also allowed her to briefly speak with someone that sounded like her grandson.

We also see this scam target families with loved ones deployed overseas, claiming to need the money to get back from a weekend pass. If you don't send the money, they face being arrested for being AWOL.

The BBB offers the following tips to avoid the Grandparent Scam:

- Communicate. Loved ones should share travel plans with family members before leaving the state or country. Also, discuss this scam with older family members so they are aware of how the scam works.
- Share information. Loved ones should provide the cell phone number and email address of a friend they are traveling with in the case of an emergency. Family members should remind students to be cautious when sharing details about travel plans on social media, this is

where a scammer usually gathers a lot of their information.

- Know the red flags. Typically, the grandparent receives a frantic phone call from a scammer posing as their grandchild or a so-called "officer of the court". The "grandchild" explains that he or she has gotten into trouble and needs help, perhaps caused a car accident or was arrested for DUI or drug possession. The "grandchild" pleads to the grandparents not to tell his or her parents and asks that they wire thousands of dollars for reasons of posting bail, repairing the car, covering lawyer's fees or even paying hospital bills for a person the grandchild injured in a car accident.

- Ask a personal question, but don't disclose too much information. If a grandparent receives a call from someone claiming to be their grandchild in distress, the BBB advises that the grandparent not disclose any information before confirming that it really is their grandchild. If a caller says "It's me, Grandma!" don't respond with a name, but instead let the caller explain who he or she is. One easy way to confirm their identity is to ask a simple question that the grandchild would know such as their middle name or what gift they gave the grandchild for Christmas.

- Discuss with family members. Even though the scammer will plead with you to keep this a secret from the parents, discuss the situation with someone and chances are you will find that your grandchild is safe and secure at home.

For anyone victimized by this type of distressed loved-one call, the BBB recommends reporting the incident immediately to your local police department. For more consumer tips you can trust or to report a scam, visit bbb.org.

Kelvin Collins is president/CEO of the Better Business Bureau of Central Georgia & the CSRA, Inc., serving 41 counties in Central Georgia and the Central Savannah River Area (CSRA). This tips column is provided through the local BBB and the Council of Better Business

Bureaus. Questions or complaints about a specific company or charity should be referred directly to the BBB at Phone: 1-800-763-4222, Web site: www.bbb.org or E-mail: info@centralgeorgia.bbb.org or info@csra.bbb.org. For more consumer tips that you can trust, visit bbb.org.

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New video highlights Georgia Commute Options Employer Benefits

"World's Best Boss" Highlights Clean Commute Programs for Employees

Special to Senior News

Recently Georgia Commute Options released "World's Best Boss," a light-hearted video highlighting the benefits of "clean commute" employer programs and incentives. Georgia Commute Options' workplace programs, currently utilized by over 2,000 metro Atlanta employers, include assistance in setting up telework and ride-matching programs, along with transit trip planning for employees and consultation for office moves. In addition, Georgia Commute Options provides guidance on the federal Commuter Choice tax benefit program, which allows employers to offer pre-tax financial incentives to employees who use alternative commute modes, as much as \$255 per month.

Clean commute programs have multiple benefits for employers and their employees, including reduced parking costs, reduced facility costs, and the ability to recruit and retain talent. Fewer cars at a workplace can save metro Atlanta employers \$360 to \$2,000 on parking per year (Source: TDM Encyclopedia). Workplaces that allow employees to telework can spend less on facilities costs – the average real estate savings

for full-time teleworkers is \$10,000 per employee per year. Telework is also useful in recruiting and retaining top talent: 46% of companies that allow telework report that it has reduced attrition (Source: Global Workplace Analytics).

"Metro Atlanta businesses are our biggest ally in promoting clean commuting across the region," said Phil Peavy, Georgia DOT Air Quality and Technical Resource Branch Chief. "When employers offer programs and benefits company-wide, they have the power to affect real behavior change among large groups of employees."

The "World's Best Boss" video features a humorous take on how an employer implements commute programs for his employees. View the video at GaCommuteOptions.com/BestBoss.

Employers interested in more information or signing up for any of Georgia Commute Options' 12 free services are encouraged to visit www.GaCommuteOptions.com.

About Georgia Commute Options

Georgia Commute Options, a program funded by the Georgia Department of Transportation, helps commuters, employers and property managers take advantage of alternatives to driving alone to and from work. Georgia Commute Options reports that every day in metro Atlanta, the use of commute alternatives

such as carpooling and transit results in 1.1 million vehicle miles not traveled and 550 tons of pollution kept out of the air. For more information, visit www.GaCommuteOptions.com.

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For additional information, contact Susan Rowe, Director of Christian Education, at 770-339-9801, ext. 26 or facilitators, Jay & Nancy Rowland, at 678-618-8735 or nancy.m.rowland@gmail.com.

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