

# Senior News

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## *Carol Leonard earning sick pay*

by SUSAN LARSON

**COVER: Carol Leonard, Standardized Patient at Philadelphia School of Osteopathic Medicine**

**C**arol Leonard had been retired for four years from the mortgage business when two friends who didn't know each other asked if she'd ever heard of a standardized patient or SP. They each suggested she might want to look into it.

She thought it might be nice to have some meaningful work and a little extra money to count on. After a little searching she discovered that the Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine had a Georgia campus just 25 minutes from her home in Lawrenceville and that she was a qualified candidate.

For two years now Leonard has been working as a standardized patient and giving a whole new meaning to the term "sick pay." SPs are trained to portray patients with specific symptoms in a realistic manner. They prep for each fictional patient they portray, including not only details of the medical condition, but family and social history as well. Then the standardized patients assess the medical students' clinical and history-taking skills and communicate with them about their interpersonal behavior, while being recorded on a digital camera. They are helping conscientious students become better doctors for patients in real need while just "playing sick."

Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine is employing individuals who will role-play medical issues and help evaluate clinical and interpersonal skills of medical students. Candidates must be willing to participate in a series of physical exams while in a hospital gown in a simulated clinical exam room. No invasive or painful procedures are performed.

These positions include paid training and offer \$15 per hour with no benefits and no weekends. The work is part time and Leonard said she works twice a week up to eight hours a day.

No prior experience is necessary. Medical or acting experience is helpful, but not essential.

Adults of all ages are needed, so this is ideal for retirees. And what could be more enticing than to spend one's golden years after decades of hard work and dedication to get paid to "play sick?"

For more information visit [pmoc.edu](http://pmoc.edu), call 678-225-7515, or e-mail [hr@pcom.edu](mailto:hr@pcom.edu)

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Susan Larson is a writer from Lilburn. E-mail her at [susan-larson79@gmail.com](mailto:susan-larson79@gmail.com).



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## Taking Care

# Flexibility is Key for Parkinson's Caregivers

by LISA M. PETSCHÉ

**P**arkinson disease (PD) is a progressive disorder involving damage to nerve cells in the brain that control muscle movement.



Lisa Petsché

According to the American Parkinson Disease Association, 164 Americans are diagnosed with PD every day. Incidence increases with age and the majority of cases develop after age 60.

The main symptoms of PD are shaking (known as tremors), slow movements, rigidity and balance problems. Other symptoms may include fatigue, excessive sweating, loss of coordination, loss of facial expression, difficulty initiating or continuing movement (freezing), stooped posture, a shuffling walk, difficulty with handwriting, decreased speech volume, swallowing problems, sleep problems and depression. Dementia may occur in the later stages.

Although symptoms and the rate of progression vary considerably among individuals, PD usually advances slowly and patients can lead active lives for some time. Disease progression tends to be more rapid in older adults.

Currently there is no cure for PD. Medications are available to alleviate certain symptoms, but their effectiveness can decrease over time. In cases where medication does not work, surgery may be considered. Lifestyle modifications are an important part of any treatment plan.

### Coping Strategies

If you have a loved one with PD, read on for a variety of tips for coping with caregiver stress, including uncertainty about what the future holds.

### Mental Well-Being

- Accept the reality of the illness and the need for ongoing adjustments. Let go of any bitterness resulting from unrealized plans and dreams, so you can channel your energy in constructive ways.

- Learn as much as possible about PD and its management and educate family and friends. The American Parkinson Disease Association at 1-800-223-2732 or [www.apdaparkinson.org](http://www.apdaparkinson.org) is a good resource.

- Accept that how your relative feels and what they can do may vary throughout the day, and from one day to the next. Be flexible about plans and expectations.

- Concentrate on what your relative can rather than can't do.

- Cultivate a focus on living in the moment and enjoying life's many simpler pleasures.

### Emotional Self-Care

- Stay connected to people who care.
- Allow yourself to experience all emotions that surface, including resentment and guilt. Do get help immediately if you feel an urge to harm your relative or yourself.

- Find an outlet for expressing your thoughts and feelings – talking with a friend, keeping a journal or attending a caregiver support group.

- Seek help from your primary physician or a counselor if you continually feel anxious, sad or angry. Depression is a legitimate medical condition and is treatable.

### Spiritual Well-Being

- Set aside quiet time each day, to nurture your spirituality and help keep you grounded. Do things that center you and bring inner peace, such as meditating or getting out in nature.

- Do things that provide you with meaning and purpose, such as writing a family history, getting a pet or helping someone less fortunate. Just be careful not to take on too much.

- If applicable, turn to your religious faith for comfort and strength.

### Practical Tips For Daily Living

Because PD is incurable, the goal, from a medical perspective, is to achieve the highest possible level of functioning and prevent or minimize complications. The following strategies can help:

- Find a neurologist with PD expert-

ise, whom you and your relative respect and trust.

- Help your relative follow the management plan prescribed by medical professionals, which might include medication, diet changes, exercise, rest, adaptive aids, lifestyle changes, stress management techniques and regular medical checkups. Let care providers know if a plan stops working.

- Encourage your relative to do as much as possible, to maintain their abilities and independence.

- If mobility issues prevent your relative from getting around in the community, help them obtain a suitable mobility device.

- Set up a record-keeping system to organize health information.

- Be prepared to advocate for your relative in the hospital and other care settings, to ensure they receive their Parkinson medication on time.

- Make home as safe as possible – for example, remove scatter mats and install handrails along stairs. If accessibility is an issue, renovate or develop a plan to move.

- Accept offers of help and ask for assistance as needed. Find out about services in your community that can help you and your relative now or in the future.

\*\*\*\*\*

*Lisa M. Petsché is a medical social worker and a freelance writer specializing in boomer and senior health matters. She has a parent with Parkinson's disease.*

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\*Amount of federal rent assistance varies. Must meet age and income qualifications set by the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). Assets are not considered income, but can be used to pay for supportive services. Call 404.751.2255 for details.



## The Next Chapter

### Book Recommendations by ANNE B. JONES, PhD

- *Building Great Sentences: Exploring the Writer's Craft* Professor Brooks Landon, The Great Courses, 2008
- *Analysis and Critique: How to Engage and Write about Anything*, Professor Dorsey Armstrong, The Great Courses, 2011
- *Writing Great Fiction: Storytelling Tips and Techniques*, Professor James Hynes, The Great Courses 2014
- *Writing Creative Non-Fiction*, Professor Tilar J. Mazzeo, The Great Courses, 2012
- *How To Publish Your Book*, Jane Friedman, The Great Courses, 2015

**D**o you want to make extra money selling magazine articles? Publish the next bestselling novel? I am constantly being asked to give help with writing, but the truth is, you can hone your skills without leaving home. After I became serious about my writing, my stepfather Hiram Barksdale, a

former UGA professor, turned me on to The Great Courses. As a Christmas present, he purchased my first, *Building Great Sentences: Exploring the Writer's Craft*. I was amazed at what I learned in the very first lecture. That experience led to my ordering *Writing Great Fiction*; *Writing Creative Non-fiction*; *Analysis and Critique*; and *How to Publish Your Book*. All of these are presented by esteemed lecturers who are experts in their field, and are available in CD; DVD; video download and audio download. I found it also important to order the hard copy transcript if not included.

*Building Great Sentences: Exploring the Writer's Craft* opened my eyes to the impact of word choice and rhythm, and how sentence structure can contribute to suspense. The lectures include numerous examples and explanations to help learners increase their skills. The presenter, Professor Brooks Landon, has taught at the University of Iowa for over thirty years.

*Analysis and Critique: How to Engage and Write about Anything* is presented by Professor Dorsey

Armstrong of Purdue University. In this series of lectures, Armstrong addresses writing's power as a tool of communication. Among the issues covered are effective writing and reading; how to shape your voice; writing first drafts; and editing.

*Writing Great Fiction: Storytelling Tips and Techniques* gives basic information related to building a setting; character development; plotting; and dialogue. One of the most interesting lectures relates to evocation. I found the course helped me grow as a writer and generated ideas. I found myself listening to parts of the course, stopping and going directly to my computer to add more details and layering in the book I working on. Its presenter, Professor James Hynes, is visiting professor at the University of Iowa's Writers' Workshop.

*Writing Creative Non-Fiction* includes lectures by Professor Tilar J. Mazzeo of Colby College and includes such topics as "Building Dramatic Sentences" and "Shaping Your Voice." Mazzeo addresses the use of "creative" in nonfiction and how sto-

rytelling can vary depending on perspective.

*How to Publish Your Book* is presented by publishing industry expert and educator Jane Friedman. Because "Just Writing a Good Book isn't enough," these lectures examine the publishing process from finalizing a manuscript to marketing. Among the critical topics are writing a pitch, query and book proposal.

A person can become extremely knowledgeable about writing and almost any subject by ordering from The Great Courses. They contain excellent information and are narrated by some of the most outstanding experts in the world. I can't say enough about this resource especially for high school and college bound students who'd like a heads-up on new classes. From info on child-raising to nutrition, they also make popular gifts.

\*\*\*\*\*

You may contact Anne at [annebjones@msn.com](mailto:annebjones@msn.com)... (*Tides of Fear, Gold Thunder, A Light on Peachtree, All Around the Track, Brave at Heart*).

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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.

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## **ALLEGIANCE**

by Henry N. Goldman

*No one asked, "why send me?"  
When they were sent across the sea,  
Our country to serve, to keep us free,  
With allegiance they did serve.  
Away from home many did go,  
And so quickly the young did grow,  
Into men, and into battles did flow -  
Never a moment from duty swerve.*

*Salesmen, college boys, fathers  
were sent,*

*Fighting and dying for freedom,  
they went,  
Stood their ground with bravery  
unbent -  
Knowing well the task they had.  
On foreign fields so many did fall,  
For God and country, they gave all,  
That tyrants and madmen they  
forestall -  
In a world seemingly gone mad.*

*Now our world is a much better  
place,  
Because these refused to turn their  
face,  
From duty and allegiance - did  
not disgrace -  
Yes to all these our glasses we raise.  
For all who fought in wars before,  
Protecting ideals from foreign foe,  
May we on them our gratitude  
bestow -  
To these we owe our eternal praise.*

\*\*\*\*\*

## **TO MY DAD**

by Michael Riles

*In 1987, the Lord took him away.  
A quiet man, with little to say.  
To Chicago he trekked,  
from the field's of Monroe.  
In the 1920's,  
Louisiana to Chicago.*

*A true raconteur,  
that was my dad.  
I heard all his stories,  
the surreal, the good and the bad.  
The Flappers, the strikes,  
labor riots and Al Capone.  
With his brother, my uncle,  
the two were never alone.*

*He was drafted into the Army,  
in 1942,  
My dad, like many others,  
to their nation true blue.*

*Dad survived Normandy,  
Bastogne and Ramagen  
liberated Dachau,  
in a war long since forgotten.*

*Dad arose at 430,  
every morning he'd go.  
to work so we'd be fed,  
come rain, heat or snow.*

*In 1960,  
on his shoulder's I'd see,  
a parade passed by,  
Ike Eisenhower waved to me,*

*Saw many dads,  
salute as he passed by,  
and on many of their faces,  
I saw grown vets cry.*

*That generation of dad's,  
they did what they did.  
Today dad's numbers have dwindled,  
resulting in so many lost and sad  
kids.*

*On this father's day,  
Dad, I'd like to say.  
Thanks for saving the world,  
and giving me the life I've loved,  
each and every day.*

Michael Riles is a baby boomer and the author of numerous books. He is a US Army vet who served as a Russian interpreter and analyst in what was West Berlin, Germany from 1977-1981. He has one son, a mechanical engineer, and is a retired TV advertising sales-representative living with his wife of 36 years in Stone Mountain, Georgia.

\*\*\*\*\*

## **HAPPY FATHER'S DAY**

by Ron Dennard

*I hope that you will have a great  
time today.  
Filled with God's blessings coming  
your way.  
You've been good to me through  
the years,  
You helped me conquer life's fears.*

*Have a happy day surrounded by  
those you love.  
You reared me and taught me the  
meaning of love.  
You are a strong man and gave  
me strength,  
Teaching me to straighten things  
that were out of shape and bent.*

*Happy Father's Day to a wonderful  
guy.  
You understood when I had the  
need to cry.  
I love you Dad and know you  
love me,  
Your hand was there leading me  
to victory.*

*This is a good time to let you  
know how I feel,  
I love you Dad, it's for real.  
Have a good day and may it be  
well spent,  
You are really a deserving gent.*

## Legal Matters for Life

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## Out & About

### Philadelphia Winn Chapter NSDAR Daughter Takes First Place

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

Photograph by Frank Marchese

**S**ara Rawlins, of Lawrenceville, has won First Place in the NSDAR National competition, as a DAR American Heritage Committee 2016 Contest Winner! Sara competed in the Crafts - Cloth Dolls category. The theme for this year's contest was "Celebrating the Arts from the Time of Our Founding Daughters to the Present." After reading *A Century of Service - The Story of the DAR*, by Ann Arnold Hunter, Sara found her inspiration for this project. She came up with the idea of the past meeting the future—one doll represents the

young DAR member of today, while the seated doll in 1890's fashions represents a founder of DAR. Sara titled her entry: "Looking Forward by Looking to the Past."

Sara enjoys working with fabrics, shaping and molding as she goes. She wants to thank Mary Ann Kaahanui and Bonnie B. Lewis for their doll patterns and Barbara Willis for clothing patterns for the dolls. Sara said, "I always credit the designer even if I'm the maker of the doll."

It makes me feel closer to that doll artist." Most of all, Sara hopes to spark the interest of others in the soft sculpture doll craft.

Sara won third place in 2013, and second place in 2014 and in 2015 for her entries in Crafts - Cloth Dolls in the American Heritage Contest in the National competition.



Sara Rawlins with dolls, "Looking Forward by Looking to the Past."

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# A Word's Worth

by SUSAN LARSON

A picture is worth a thousand words, so they say. I know that for a graduating senior, pictures can be worth a thousand dollars. Or at least they can cost that much. I'm not sure what they're really worth.

There are standard senior pictures going upwards from \$100. There are class pictures, activity pictures, homecoming and prom pictures. And you can't buy just one. You have to buy at least 20 at \$40 per set. Then these pictures can be purchased on key chains, buttons, etc. for even more money.

Yearbooks get bigger and costlier every year. Then there are the videos: yearbook videos, prom videos, any

activity your child participated in videos at \$20 each. And we mustn't forget the school logos mass-produced on T-shirts, bumper stickers, stadium cushions and Christmas ornaments, etc. And of course, if you don't buy it all, you're an unfit parent.

But at some high schools, including the one where I used to sub, there's something that goes way beyond pictures and money. This is the tradition of senior letters. Sometime in April posters start appearing in the halls with messages like, "There are two documents seniors need: diplomas and senior letters."

At a designated event like a catered breakfast or lunch, seniors are presented a folder full of hand-

written letters from friends, family, faculty members and other people whose lives they touched over the years — schmaltzy letters from best friends, sweet remembrances from former loves, perky notes from teachers they thought couldn't stand them, letters from alumni mailed to the school from college. Former athletes, musicians and thespians send letters to their former teammates and colleagues recalling good times in the past. Except for those faraway friends who have to buy stamps or prissy girls who need fancy stationery, colored markers and seals, these words don't cost even a cent! To many they mean even more than the four-figure amount some spend on the prom.

I can't help but think about a friend whose computer genius son was courted, coaxed and cajoled by every major university in American to enroll in their Ph.D. program. He had a foot high stack of laser cut letters, glossy computer generated brochures, discs, and videos trying to convince him with technology that their school was the one he wanted.

My friend said that after months of sorting through these stacks, something happened that made the final decision a no brainer. His son chose MIT.

"You know why?" he asked.

"Name recognition? A reputation

for being on the cutting edge?" I guessed.

"Nothing like that," he said. It was a handwritten note from the president of MIT that made up his mind in a heartbeat.

His son said, "Dad, get a bunch of guys like me together and in practically no time, with no thought, effort or feeling we can generate new technology in geometric proportions. That doesn't impress me. But a busy man who takes the time to expend the thought, effort and feeling to write a personal note asking me to be part of his school — now that impresses me."

So, a hand-written note is now the cutting edge?

The senior letter thing is over for this year, but if you're connected with your grandkids' school, you might want to keep it in mind for the future.

In the meantime, when you buy that special senior a \$10 laser cut greeting card with a computer chip that plays Pomp and Circumstance when you open it and has a pre-cut slot for new counterfeit-proof \$100 bill, take another step. Walk on the edge. Slip in a hand written note. The day may come when the hand written word is worth 1,000 pictures.

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Susan Larson is a writer from Lilburn. E-mail her at [susanlarson79@gmail.com](mailto:susanlarson79@gmail.com).

## Life Care Centers

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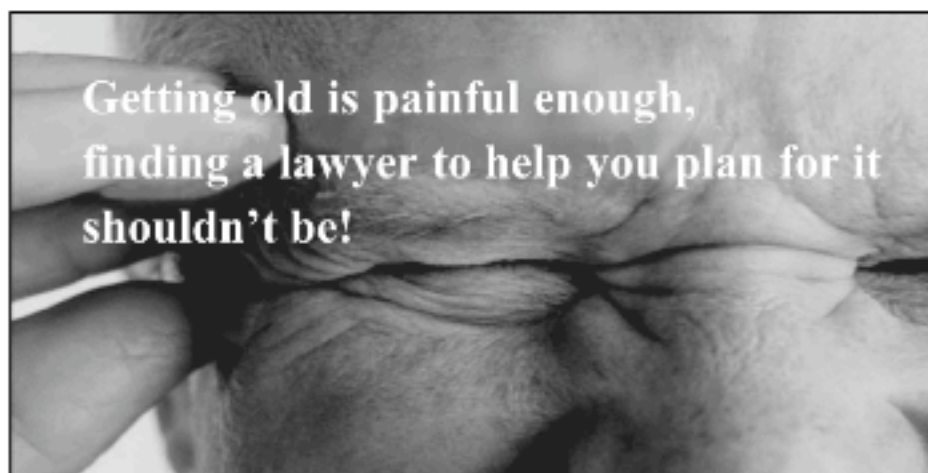
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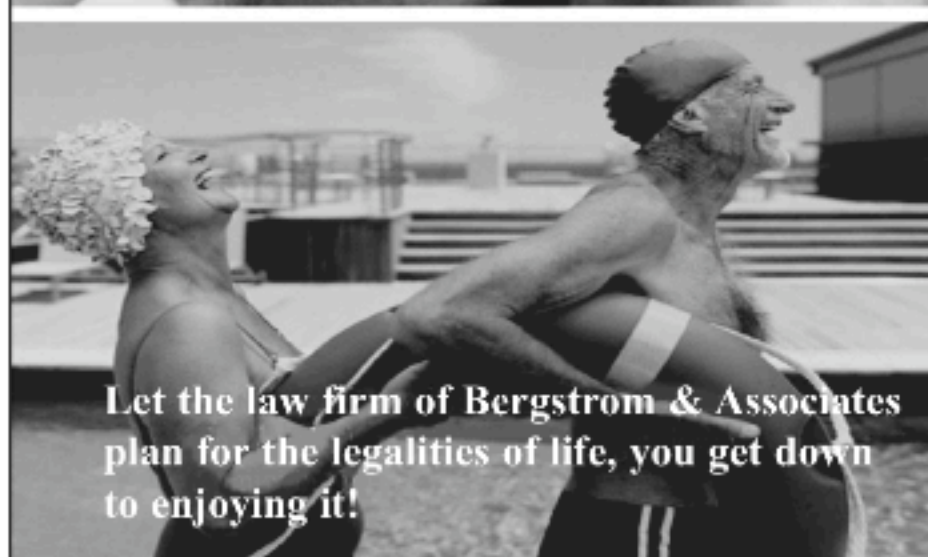
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Special to Senior News

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Registration will continue

through August 1, 2016. If you have competed in the Georgia event in previous years, you may register online (after May 1, 2016) from the website: [www.georgiagoldenolympics.org](http://www.georgiagoldenolympics.org)

If this is your first time to compete, you may print the form from the website and mail with your fees and age verification to Georgia Golden Olympics, PO box 958, Winder, GA.

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# Out & About

## Philadelphia Winn Daughters Participate in Veterans "Spring Fling"

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

Past Regent Peggy Freeman  
contributed this article.  
Photography by Frank Marchese

**M**ilitary veterans were honored with a Spring Fling at the Lawrenceville, GA, Riverside VA Clinic on Friday, May 20, 2016. Philadelphia Winn Chapter NSDAR and VA Voluntary Services, under the direction of Denise Holmes, co-hosted the event.

A catered lunch of chicken wings and salad was provided, and Philadelphia Winn Daughters added and served a

mix of desserts. Informational booths manned by VA Medical Center representatives dispensed valuable and much needed information to attendees.

Guest speakers, games and prizes kept the event energized and added to everyone's enjoyment.

The hostesses included Philadelphia Winn Daughters Second Vice Regent Ann Story, Past Regent Peggy Freeman, Nancy Vaughn, Anne Lockhart, Mary Ann Grube, Sara Rawlins and Vanessa Wynn. HODARS (husbands of DAR) were Jim Freeman, Frank Marchese, and Jeff Rawlins.



Left to right: Second Vice Regent Ann Story; Carlos Morgan (Singing Soldier); Denise Holmes, Voluntary Service Specialist for the U.S. Department of Veteran affairs, Atlanta VA Medical Center; Past Regent Peggy Freeman; and, Jim Freeman.



Left to right: Nancy Vaughn, Vanessa Wynn, Mary Ann Grube, Past Regent Peggy Freeman, Second Vice Regent Ann Story, Anne Lockhart, and Sara Rawlins.



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# Out & About

## South Fulton Senior Services 25th Annual Mayors' Open Golf Tournament Winners

Special to Senior News

The South Fulton Senior Services (SFSS) 25th Annual Mayors' Open Golf Tournament was held May 12, 2016 at the Orchard Hills Golf Course in Newnan, Georgia. South Fulton Senior Services has been the provider of services to seniors in South Fulton County for the past 25 years. The agency serves as the steward for four senior centers, certifies the infirm for in-home services, home delivered meals, offers case management, certifies for non-emergency medical transportation, and coordinates volunteer services to our clients.

This premier golf event serves to generate revenue to enhance and expand the SFSS' Meals-On-Wheels

Program, specifically providing Ensure-a nutritional supplement for persons with eating disorders, low weight and Cancer. Additionally, this golf tournament supports one of our community based initiatives-the Intergenerational Program. This program increases the interactions and exchange between children and seniors, bridging the communication gap between the generations while celebrating the richness of each.

Over the last twenty five years, this aging services provider has delivered in the South Fulton area over 1,000,000 meals to our home-bound elders and served over 400,000 meals to senior centers. SFSS offers a range of services, activities and opportunities, which assist seniors in remaining independent and in their own homes.

Premier sponsors for this year's



1st Place Winners: Blackhawk Construction Services, LLC

tournament were Tommy Hilfiger, Atlanta Beverage Company, United Way of Greater Atlanta, Outback Steakhouse, Pepsico, Chick-fil-A, and the Coca-Cola Company. Hole-In-One Sponsors included Gilman Insurance and SouthTowne.

The event began with the Shotgun Start at Noon. The 2016 winners of this event were: 1st Place: Blackhawk Construction Services, LLC; 2nd Place: Toyota of

Newnan; and 3rd Place: Parrott Funeral Home & Crematory/United Community Bank. The longest drive male was Danny Nungesser and the longest drive female was Carol Hutton. Male Close-Up winner was Vic Knight and the Female Close-Up winner was Lisa Smith.

For information about the services we provide or future events please contact C. Dianne Rutherford, Executive Director, at 404-559-0070.



2nd Place Winners: Toyota of Newnan



3rd Place Winners: Parrott Funeral Home & Crematory/United Community Bank

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- Tiffany Stained Glass Tour & Art in Theology Lecture
- Closing Ensemble Concert (6/19 at 2pm)

For more information, please contact Katharine Hamer at 404-228-7732 or visit [www.firstpresatl.org/artspark/](http://www.firstpresatl.org/artspark/)

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# Tip'n Toss Campaign to prevent spread of Zika in Georgia

ATLANTA –

Submitted by Nancy White  
Administrator, Macon-Bibb  
County Health Department

**T**he Georgia Department of Public Health (DPH) is urging residents to clean up around their homes, their yards and their communities and discard unnecessary items that can hold water. Tip 'n Toss after every rainfall to reduce the number of mosquitoes and prevent the spread of Zika virus in Georgia. As of this date, no locally transmitted Zika cases have been reported in the state, but cases have been reported in returning travelers.

Zika virus is transmitted primarily through the bite of infected *Aedes aegypti* and *Aedes albopictus* mosquitoes – both species are found in Georgia. *Aedes* mosquitoes typically bite during the day, especially in the early morning and late afternoon hours but some bite at night. They are called “container breeders” because they lay eggs in any type of container with water – even something as small as a bottle cap if it has water in it.

One of the most effective ways of preventing the spread of Zika virus is controlling the mosquito population by eliminating standing water around the home and in the yard.

Tip 'n Toss! After every rainfall, tip out water in flowerpots, planters, children's toys and wading pools, and buckets. If it holds water and you don't need it (old tires, bottles, cans), toss it out. Look for small bodies of water such as drainage ponds, tree stumps and tire ruts. Clean out gutters, remove piles of leaves and keep vegetation cut low to prevent landing sites for adult mosquitoes.

For containers without lids or that are too big to Tip 'N Toss (bird baths, garden pools), use larvicides such as mosquito dunks or mosquito torpedoes and follow the label instructions. Used properly, larvicides will not hurt birds or animals.

Homeowners associations and neighborhoods, along with city and county governments,

are encouraged to sponsor community cleanup days.

“Mosquitoes don't recognize property lines, so controlling their numbers has to be a collaborative effort among neighbors,” said Brenda Fitzgerald, commissioner of the Georgia Department of Public Health. “DPH is increasing mosquito surveillance and educating residents throughout the state, but the greatest impact will be when individuals take personal responsibility for their homes, yards and communities.”

It is also important to protect yourself from mosquito bites. Use EPA-registered

insect repellents containing 20%-30% DEET or Picaridin, IR3535, and Oil of Lemon Eucalyptus. Follow all label instructions for safe and effective use. Wear light colored clothing with long sleeves, long pants and socks to help prevent mosquito bites.

To learn more about Zika protection and prevention or Tip 'n Toss, visit

[dph.ga.gov/zika](http://dph.ga.gov/zika) or [cdc.gov/zika](http://cdc.gov/zika).

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# Caller ID Spoofing

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

As I make my rounds speaking to consumer groups, one question that I've noticed that frequently gets asked is, "why is my number calling me?" Unfortunately, scammers are using caller ID spoofing technology to impersonate the phone numbers of local businesses, neighbors and even you! Watch out for this wacky twist on the classic phishing phone scam.

Here is how this scam works. Your phone rings, and you look at the caller ID. You recognize the number. It may be from a local business or a neighbor down the street. But in a strange twist, you might even see your own name and phone number on the caller ID screen.

You answer the phone, and it's a robocall. Victims have reported several different phishing scams. In one common version, a recording prompts you to verify your credit card number under the guise of lowering your interest rates.

With many people rejecting calls from unfamiliar numbers, scammers are increasingly posing as familiar businesses, government organizations or people. Scammers purchase lists of phone numbers and use spoofing technology to trick potential victims into picking up the phone. Posing as your own phone

number is great for shock value, general curiosity and for ensuring the number isn't blocked. Who is going to block their own number?

## What to do if a scammer calls

Hang up, don't press any buttons and, if you received a voice mail message, don't call the scammer back. We all like to have the last word, but returning the phone call may just give the con artist information he can use.

Additionally, don't press a button to be removed from their calling list. This is typically just a ploy to see if there is a live person answering the phone and usually results in more unwanted calls.

Don't trust Caller ID. Scammers have technology that lets them display any number or organization name on your screen. If you are unfamiliar with the number calling, let it go to voicemail so you can decide if the call is important enough to return.

Never give out any financial information. If you did not initiate the call, do not provide bank account, credit card or Social Security numbers over the phone unless you have thoroughly done your research and verified the caller.

- Don't assume that your identity has been stolen. Scammers have the ability to spoof numbers very easily so unless you see unusual activity on your financial accounts, don't panic.
- Remember who owns the phone.

Stopping scammers from calling you is almost impossible but ultimately, remember that you own the phone so don't allow anyone to use it as a tool to steal your hard-earned money or identity. It isn't rude to hang up on a thief.

Caller ID offers a multitude of conveniences but like anything that is designed for good, others seem to find a way to use it for evil.

For more consumer tips you can trust, visit [bbb.org](http://bbb.org) and to report a scam in our BBB Scam Tracker, visit [www.bbb.org/scamtracker/central-georgia](http://www.bbb.org/scamtracker/central-georgia).

\*\*\*\*\*  
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 specif-

ic company or charity should be referred directly to the BBB at Phone: 1-800-763-4222, Web site: [www.bbb.org](http://www.bbb.org) or E-mail: [info@centralgeorgia.bbb.org](mailto:info@centralgeorgia.bbb.org) or [info@csra.bbb.org](mailto:info@csra.bbb.org).

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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](mailto:nancy.m.rowland@gmail.com).

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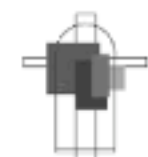
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