



the ECHO

SEPTEMBER 2025
COVER: VICKI SELLERS

**A BENT TREE
PUBLICATION**



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About DR. MICHELLE F. IRELAND



For over 20 years, Dr. Michelle F. Ireland has perfected the smiles of thousands of patients. Dr. Ireland graduated with her Doctorate of Medicine in Dentistry (D.M.D.) from the University of Alabama at Birmingham (UAB) in 1994 and became licensed to practice as a general dentist. Upon graduation, she completed additional educational requirements and specialized training at the UAB School of Dentistry to become a prosthodontist.

Dr. Ireland has served as a professor at UAB School of Dentistry in the Department of Prosthodontics, where she enjoyed teaching crown and bridge prosthodontics and

removable prosthodontics with an emphasis on esthetics, occlusion, and implant restoration.

Over the years, Dr. Ireland has counseled former students, general dentists and their patients, and continues to receive extensive training in the field of dentistry and prosthodontics. Dr. Ireland has built a reputation as a caring, compassionate, and competent dental practitioner. Her additional expertise is a blessing and is evident in the way patients are accepting of her recommendations.



Bent Tree Golf

By Jim Pryor, General Manager

One of the many great amenities of Bent Tree is the Golf Course and the 19th Hole Pro Shop. The Bent Tree Golf staff focus on organized play of the course, tournaments, events, operation of the pro shop, and outside operations such as maintenance of the carts and the driving range. Bent Tree golf has a great history, and we have had a couple of high-quality professionals like Russell Smith and Patrick Higgins serving as leaders in the role of Head Golf Professional.

2025 has been a transition year of sorts where we have identified new leadership for our golf program. This new leadership combined with several rock steady residents that have worked with Bent Tree golf for several years has created a team I am very excited to have serving our membership.

Rob Spiars is our new Head Golf Professional. He started with us at the beginning of summer. Rob emerged from a nationwide recruitment we conducted with the assistance of the PGA. Rob has 30 years of experience in the PGA program, is a Class A teaching professional and brings a wealth of knowledge to Bent Tree. He came to us from the Tampa/Clearwater/St Pete area of Florida where he served as Head Golf Professional a couple courses throughout that area. Rob was a collegiate player at the University of Louisiana-Lafayette where he received a bachelor's degree in Business Management. I am super excited to work with Rob and his ideas of enhancing our golf program.

Bobby Gracey moved into the role of Assistant Golf Professional this spring. Bobby was previously a member of our Golf Maintenance team for 6 years. He has a lot of knowledge about our golf course and a great ability to bridge the gap between operations and maintenance. Bobby has entered the PGA professional program in search of working toward obtaining his credentials.

Kathy Craig and Brad King continue to work in part-time roles within the pro shop. They both offer a wealth of knowledge and a social link to the Bent Tree community.

Tim Lester and Dave Stewart serve in part-times roles with outside operations primarily focusing on our cart fleet and driving range. Both Tim and Dave are big supporters of our golf program and bring a great work ethic to our team.

For the busy summer months, we have 3 great young professionals that plug into any area of our operations needed as seasonal support staff. Sisters Brooke and Lauren Quarles are college students who have worked with us for the past 4 summers. They have experience working in the pro shop, outside operations, and have even bolstered our new beverage cart service program. Wyatt Jones joined our team this summer working with outside operations.



With the recent improvements to the 19th hole facility and our practice facilities, Bent Tree definitely has a quality amenity that serves residents and guests. And I believe we have a great team in place to enhance the operation of the amenity.

If you are an avid golfer and use the facility regularly, thank you. If you are a resident that would like to become more involved in golf either through play or lessons, please stop by the pro shop and talk to Rob on ways you can get plugged-in to Bent Tree golf. If you don't play golf, but would like to get some Bent Tree swag or gifts for others, please stop by the pro shop to see the new line of logoed apparel and golf equipment we have to offer.



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Pickleball Happenings

Summer in Bent Tree is always an exciting and busy time of year. Be careful to stay hydrated when playing either tennis or pickleball. Water is your best friend during these hot, humid, dog days of summer. Pay close attention to what your body may be telling you. In addition to your water and electrolyte intake, take breaks in shaded areas between games, adding breaks if you become overheated, don't push yourself too hard. Our goal is for everyone to be safe and enjoy Pickleball for many years to come.

Would like to set the record straight regarding a few Pickleball myths...

1. Sidelines, Center line, and base line are all “in” should the ball land on one of those during a serve. The “kitchen” line, also known as the “No volley zone” line is the only “out” line should the ball land on the line during a serve.
2. I can never step into the “kitchen”. Until the ball bounces. Not true. You may step into or even stand in the “kitchen” as long as you do not strike the ball from the air (the ball must bounce first), but get out quickly. Or else the next shot will come right at you. Remember, the point is over should the ball strike any part of your body, beyond the hand holding your paddle.
3. When playing doubles, you are not obligated to stay on your side. Once the ball is served, returned, and play begins, the entire court is available to both players on your side of the net. Just remember to communicate with your partner when encroaching on their side to make the shot.

Continue to play and be safe. I challenge all players to expand your game by playing in other areas near to us here in Bent Tree. Practice, practice, practice. Every team, most every individual, practices their trade, honing their skills in search of perfection (or at least improvement). So, find a partner or partners and conduct drills.

ALWAYS PLAY THE STRONGER PLAYER ACROSS THE NET! If you want to improve your game. We've all were beginners not too long ago. How were you received by others? Did someone show you the ropes or just pounce on you? Be hospitable, welcoming to new players. It's no fun of them to lose every single game. And truthfully, this should be no fun for the player “pouncing”.



Public Safety Stats from 7/1/25 – 7/31/25

By Michael Koorey - Director,
Donnie Arp - Fire Chief,
John Hawkins - Assistant Director

Call Responses

Fire	23
Medical	27
Resident Complaints	3
Resident Assists	5
Property/Resident Checks	2
Animal Calls	19
Public Safety Calls	42
Total	121
2025 Total	724

Patrol Mileage

Total Patrol Mileage (7/1 – 7/31)	3,184
2025 Total	16,195

Violations

Written Citations	45
Warnings	13
Total (7/1 – 7/31)	58
2025 Total Written Citations	209

40 Little Pine Mountain Road
Jasper, GA 30143 • 770-893-2628
publicsafety@bent-tree.com



GPS Directions to Bent Tree

Please give your visitors the following address (1 Little Pine Mountain Rd, Jasper, GA) to gain access into the front gate on Bent Tree Drive, which will alleviate GPS systems from sending them to the back gate off Grandview Rd.



We Want You...

- ...to email us short stories, interviews, poetry, and articles of general interest to our residents.
- ...to tell us what articles you would like to see.
- ...to share with us some of your amazing Bent Tree related images.

Thanks.

echo Editorial Committee

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Contact the Editor of the *echo* at
btecho@etcmail.com

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Reservations will conclude on Sept. 15 at 10:00 pm

- **Make reservations at: infor@benttreefoundation.org indicating the names of the attendees**
- **Pay by Sept. 16 via check/cash at the Admin Building or via PayPal on the Foundation's website: <https://benttreefoundation.org/donate/>. Then click on Donation Options and choose "Wines"**

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Join us for delicious food and wine as you enjoy the beautiful music of Andy and Mary Ada Kidd. Also, there will be many great raffle items!

Supporting scholarships and classroom grants for Pickens County students!



Bent Tree Rules and Regulations Amendments

By Michael Koorey, Director of Safety and Emergency Management

Several amendments and additions to the Bent Tree Rules and Regulations related to firearms, wildlife protection, gate entry requirements, and alterations to common property were finalized by the Board of Directors in July. A small addition to architectural documents was also made and will be detailed here. We want to ensure all avenues of notification are utilized to inform the community of these amendments, some of which carry large fines. Please review the official version of the new rules below and feel free to email michaelkoorey@bent-tree.com with any questions.

V, C, 2 – Entrance to Bent Tree - \$25 Fine for Repeated Violations in Six Months

“Daily Guest – Property Owners/Designated Members must authorize entry of Guests by notice to Public Safety prior to Guests’ arrival. A telephone call to Public Safety that establishes satisfactory identification of the caller as a Property Owner/Designated Member will be sufficient. Property Owners/Designated Members may also use the GateHouse app to input guests without contacting Public Safety. A vehicle pass that displays the last day of authorized entry will be issued to the Guest. The pass must be displayed in a way that makes it clearly visible from outside the vehicle.”

Based on some concerns raised regarding the above rule, it is worth noting that the old rule allowed residents to be fined \$100 for failure to notify Public Safety of guests in advance, and no warnings were required. The changes made in July were a major improvement for residents and mainly done to enhance clarity.

VII, E, 3 – Weapons - \$1,000 Fine

“1. No person shall brandish any firearm, pistol, rifle, shotgun, air gun, or like instrument on BTCI common property.

2. No person shall shoot or discharge any firearm, pistol, rifle, shotgun, air gun, bow, or like instrument within Bent Tree.

3. The Public Safety Director is authorized to approve exceptions to the Weapons Policy.”

Changes to the weapons policy were also made to enhance clarity. The fine was increased from \$100 to \$1,000 based on the seriousness of the offense.

VI, F. Wildlife Protection and Preservation Policy - \$1,000 Fine

“Bent Tree’s abundant wildlife is one of the community’s most cherished features, deserving of respect and protection. Care and awareness must be exercised to ensure dangerous conflicts with wildlife do not occur. This policy is intended to ensure there is accountability when wildlife is unnecessarily harmed through intent, negligence, or any violations of Bent Tree rules, policies, covenants, conditions, and restrictions. The Public Safety Director is authorized to approve exceptions to the Wildlife Protection and Preservation Policy.

1. Except for fishing and legal pest control activities, hunting, trapping, wounding, or killing wildlife by intentional or negligent acts is strictly prohibited.

2. Illegal or improper use of rodenticides, poisons, or herbicides is prohibited.

3. Glue traps shall not be used outdoors or in other locations accessible to non-target wildlife.

4. Any violation of BTCI Rules and Regulations, CC&Rs, or Architectural policies that reasonably results in harm, injury, wildlife being orphaned, or death to wildlife shall be a violation of this policy in addition to the other related violation.”

VI, E – Wildlife Feeding Policy - \$100 Fine, Subsequent Violations \$500 Fine

There were no changes to the Wildlife Feeding Policy other than the fine for all violations included in the policy is now \$100 for initial violations and \$500 for subsequent violations.

VII, E, 10 – Alterations to BTCI Common Property - \$100 to \$1,000 Fine

“No one shall make any alterations to Bent Tree common property without an express written approval from BTCI. Any willful or negligent alteration of common property shall result in fines as listed in the Schedule of Fines. In addition to the fines, further remedies for an alteration shall be pursued through the Board’s right to assess the Property Owner responsible for all costs to restore the common property.

When a request is made to alter common property, a council consisting of the Architectural Coordinator, the Board Liaison to the AC Committee, and the General Manager or his designated representative will determine whether the alteration is Major or Minor. The Architectural Committee may authorize alterations which are determined to be minor. Major alterations will be evaluated by the Architectural Committee and forwarded with its recommendations to the Board of Directors for a final decision.

Alterations include but are not limited to:

- Interference with the possession or use of BTCI property
- Cutting/topping/trimming of trees or brush
- Building or placement of any permanent structures
- Dumping of any materials
- Alteration of any watercourse
- Destruction of fixtures, accessories, furnishings, inventory or infrastructure
- Placement or removal of any stone or other natural materials
- Planting or removal of plant material
- Placement of any temporary items or ornamentation
- Storage of materials either permanently or temporarily
- Traversing common property for construction access”

Decorative Appurtenances/Yard Art – AC Standard Policies and Construction Handbook

“Yard art and outdoor ornamentation that are hazardous to wildlife, including but not limited to balloons, netting, and small pails or buckets that may become lodged on animals’ heads or appendages, are not permitted.”



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Lake & Wildlife volunteers supported Youth Fest 2025

By Brian Vassar

Lake & Wildlife volunteers supported Youth Fest 2025 with seven different classes: Magic and Mystery of plants, Hike at Beaver Run, Sallie Doss Nature Walk, Meet the Creek intro and advanced, Are you a Dragon Fly, and Leaf Packs.

Dara Sinclair led the hike and explanation of plants, their leaves, ID and native and invasive species and how they help our environment we live in at Bent Tree.

Hiking club members led a hike up Beaver Run Trail and allowed our youth to see Long Swamp Creek and the area around it and plants and animals that depend on it.

Sallie Doss Nature Walk was the scenario for volunteers to explain the types of birds and trees we and even beavers and deer that live around Sallie Doss. And of course MS Sallie Doss was on hand to explain the history of the trail, her home, family, the lake, and Bent Tree.

Kim Stalzman, Brian Vassar, Mason Holland and Jim White helped the kids learn about our creeks MACROs that live there and how chemical analysis is done to determine the water quality of our lake and streams that go into it.

Our 'Adopt a Stream' Regional Manager Lori Forrester taught the Dragon Fly class so kids could learn about them and even make a custom dragon fly they could take with them. She also taught the leaf pack class where students could identify what MACROs are; and where to find them in the Coffey Cove creek.





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15th Annual Bent Tree Tennis & Pickleball Scholarship Tournament

Our 15th Annual Bent Tree Tennis & Pickleball Scholarship Tournament is being held on Saturday, Sept 27th beginning at 9am. In partnership with Bent Tree Foundation, Inc., this annual event raises money for Pickens County graduating seniors to assist with accredited college, trade or technical continuing education. We anticipate awarding several scholarships again this year as there is a large number of seniors playing on the tennis team. We are asking for the many businesses located within Bent Tree to please consider supporting this endeavor. With your donation, you receive lots of advertising through several outlets. Each year a new banner is displayed in The Courts indoor facility, naming the sponsors and level of sponsorship. In addition to the banner, an article will be published in our very own ECHO along with an article in the Pickens Progress newspaper. We hope to see your name on the new 2025/2026 banner. To the many that have contributed already, thank you. Your past and future support is greatly appreciated.

Sponsors will be recognized as follows:

- In our Bent Tree community publication “The Echo”, and “The Pickens Progress”
- On a large 4’ x 9’ banner, which will be displayed at The Courts indoor facility for twelve months

Tournament sponsorship is tiered at the following levels. Please circle appropriate level and submit this form **no later than September 19th, 2025**.

☐ **Diamond \$500 +** ☐ **Gold \$300** ☐ **Silver \$200** ☐ **Bronze \$100**



Name/Company: _____

Phone No: _____ E-Mail: _____

Checks should be made payable to Bent Tree Foundation and with “The Courts Scholarship” in the memo line. Please leave your form and check at The Courts in Bent Tree or mail to:

Bob Coleman, Courts Professional
72 Villa Road, Box 20065
Jasper, GA 30143

Questions: Call or text Bob Coleman at 770-877-0884.

Sincerely, Bob Coleman, Courts Professional
Bent Tree Courts Scholarship Committee

Saturday, September 27th, 2025
9am-4pm

REGISTRATION FORM

Name: _____ Phone Number: _____

Address: _____ City, State and Zip: _____

Email Address: _____ Gender: ☐ Female ☐ Male

Fee/Donation (includes lunch): Choose the Sport in Which You Would Like to Participate. No need to secure a partner as the play will be round robin format. You'll play with multiple partners. All players must register by September 19th.

<input type="checkbox"/> Pickleball (9:00 am - noon) \$50	<input type="checkbox"/> Tennis (noon - 3:00 pm) \$50	<input type="checkbox"/> Both \$75*
Level: <input type="checkbox"/> 2.5	Level: <input type="checkbox"/> 3.0 and below	
<input type="checkbox"/> 3.0	<input type="checkbox"/> 3.5 and above	
<input type="checkbox"/> 3.5		
<input type="checkbox"/> 4.0		
<input type="checkbox"/> 4.5		

Make checks payable to: Bent Tree Foundation, Inc

Note: Entry fee is tax deductible and all proceeds will raise money towards scholarships for college-bound seniors, either Pickens High tennis squad members or BT Tennis Program members.



For more information, contact
Bob Coleman, Courts Professional
BTennis@bent-tree.com
770-893-2623
Cell# 770-877-0884



A Trip to Big Canoe and Other Fun Tournaments in June, July

By Wendy Kaplan

The Niners kept their game light this past month, with just a few fun rounds, so we thought it was the perfect time to introduce one of our fabulous new members.

Say hello to Paula DeArtiaga.



Paula DeArtiaga and friend Paula Poorman enjoy a laugh on the golf course

A Huntsville native with an impressive culinary resume, Paula has spent much of her life in the food and restaurant world. She's done it all — from running an event planning business and gourmet market/bistro, to teaching at her own cooking school and heading up a successful catering company. Her talents have taken her across the country, managing ventures in Miami, Big Bear, California (yes, that's a real place!), Houston, Nashville, and Guntersville, Alabama — often thanks to the career moves of her husband, Leo.

When COVID hit and with the arrival of her beloved grandchildren — one in 2019 and twins in 2021 — Paula made the bittersweet decision to close her cooking school in 2020. But her passion for food never took a backseat. These days, she still whips up gourmet meals in her outdoor kitchen and hosts lively dinners on her spacious deck, where she holds court at a table for 12.

And now, she's making time for golf.

Although Paula first picked up the game in her 30s, the demands of work and family kept her off the course more often than she'd like. But when she and Leo moved to Bent Tree in December 2023 — and with another golf course near their other home in Boynton Beach — she knew the time was right to finally join the Niners.

What does she love most about the group? "The fellowship with the other women — getting to know everyone and the fact that we have lunch afterward," she says. "I'm a real social person, and I like the socialization."

She also appreciates the long game — literally. "Golf is something you can do into your 90s, as (Niner) Laura Dutton has shown, and I like getting out there and practicing."

We're so glad you're here, Paula. Welcome to the Niners!

July Game Highlights & Winners

July 10 – Low Gross / Low Net

Gross Winners:

- 🏆 1st – Arlene Scott
- 🏆 2nd – Laura Dutton
- 🏆 3rd – Ellie Girard

Net Winners:

- 🏆 1st – Susan Paul
- 🏆 2nd – Dianne McMullen
- 🏆 3rd – Linda White

July 17 – Puttless

- 🏆 1st – Arlene Scott
- 🏆 2nd – Ellie Girard
- 🏆 3rd – Michele Shaeffer

July 24 – Odd Holes

- 🏆 1st – Ellie Girard
- 🏆 2nd – Ursula Chapman
- 🏆 3rd – Arlene Scott

Aug. 7 – Jokers Wild

- 🏆 1st – Ellie Girard, Susan Paul, Donna Stapleton
- 🏆 2nd – Wendy Kaplan, Janet Vardeman, Michele Shaeffer

Golf Tip: "Talk to your ball — it listens better than your playing partners."

On a serious note:

Try humming during your swing (not too loudly, though), it helps you stay relaxed and maintain tempo. If your hum wavers, you're probably tensing up. Smooth hum = smooth swing!



From left Jokers Wild winners Janet Vardeman, Susan Paul, Donna Stapleton, Michele Shaeffer and Ellie Girard



Michele Shaeffer, Ellie Girard and Arlene Scott score big in the Puttless game

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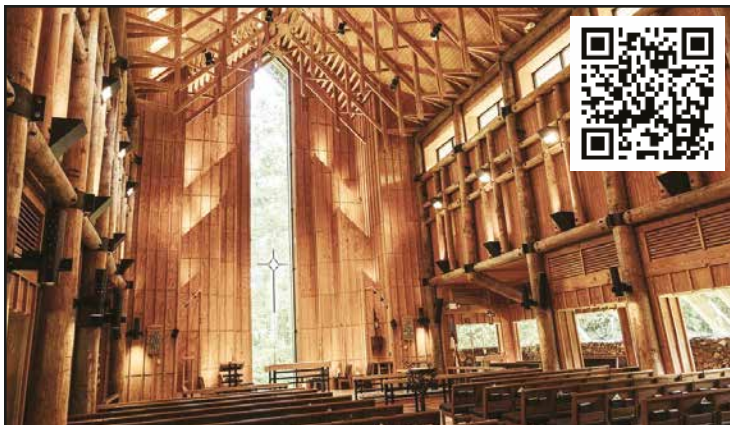
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Happy 16th Anniversary to the Bent Tree Foundation!

By The Bent Tree Foundation Board of Directors

The **Bent Tree Foundation**, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit since **July 2009**, celebrates **16 years of community service**. Over this time, the Foundation has received **\$1,331,240 in donations**. For this tremendous success we wish to express our gratitude to the generous donors in our wonderful Bent Tree community as well as generous sponsorships from Jasper businesses.



In accordance with the Foundation's mission statements, these donations have been used on the following initiatives: Scholarships and Classroom Grants; Animal Care/Animal Shelter; and Community Enhancements.

As of July 2025, the Bent Tree Foundation has awarded **\$391,500** in student scholarships and classroom grants. We look forward to continuing to contribute to the educational journeys of Pickens County students.

Thanks to numerous Bent Tree donors and volunteers, the Bent Tree animal shelter was completed in September 2012. To date, we have cared for hundreds of animals temporarily housed at the shelter, as well as several long-term residents who are still awaiting adoption. To run this volunteer-based animal shelter takes extensive hours of caregiving by our great volunteer Animal Care Team as well as compassionate and generous donations for the veterinary care, medicines, food and necessary supplies. These expenses are not part of the BTCI budget but are totally funded by the Bent Tree Foundation via donations.

Over these 16 years the Bent Tree Community has been enhanced by the Bent Tree Foundation in multiple ways. Through estate donations, the Bent Tree Foundation was able to donate these enhancements to the Bent Tree community: the beautiful new clock tower, the extension of the driving range and the new chipping green at the wonderful Bent Tree golf course; the restoration of the fishery in Lake Tamarack (along with many volunteer hours); and the playground equipment at the beach.

General donations have also contributed to more enhancements including multiple items for Bent Tree's Public Safety Department: 4 firefighting masks, 9 portable Motorola radios, 4 thermal cameras, 2 gas detectors, 4 Halligan tools, 3 ladders and a new ladder rack. Also, the Foundation provided the gazebo at the beach and 2 Automated External Defibrillators.

Additionally, through specific donations and partnerships with BTCI and BTCI committees, such as the Lake & Wildlife Committee, the Bent Tree Foundation assisted in funding the All Access Walkway in the Sallie Doss woodland by Lake Tamarack, the landscaping project at the Administration Building, the Front Gate Project, the Paws 'n' Play Dog Park, the Lady Niner's Golf Course Landscape Project, the Equestrian Center's newest building/fencing and the Bocce Court at the beach.

The Bent Tree Foundation expresses deep gratitude to its donors and volunteers for enabling its missions of supporting students, caring for animals and enhancing community life. Your continued support is encouraged to sustain and expand these efforts.

For further details of our successful missions, please navigate our website at <https://benttreefoundation.org/>

2025 Fall Festival Coming in October!

By Miguel Rodriguez

The Bent Tree Activities Committee is dedicated to planning recreation, learning, well-being and social activities for our community throughout the year. Most of these events and activities are funded through your attendance at our principal fund-raising event: the Fall Festival.

But it's not just about raising funds; it's about bringing our community together to celebrate and support our way of life. Whether you're a long-time resident or new to the area, this is the perfect opportunity to meet your neighbors, make new friends, and enjoy a wonderful afternoon out.

The Fall Festival will feature a variety of exciting activities like voting for your favorites at the much-anticipated Chili & Soup cookoff, the first ever Bent Tree Wacky Olympics, sweet goodies baked by our neighbors, a football-watch party packed with ways to win, and our main attraction which this year promises to be one of a kind: the silent auction! We will be auctioning exciting vacation opportunities, local artwork (created by our own neighbors!), special events and activities (group dinners, cocktail parties) prepared by our neighbors. Don't miss out on the chance to win big while supporting our community!

The Fall Festival is a fantastic way to give back. It's not too late to get involved in the planning. Contact us to volunteer! Remember, all proceeds from the event go to fund activities that make a real difference in our Mountain Living lifestyle. By attending, you're not just having a great time; you're making a positive impact. Tickets will be on sale soon and you can read about all the planned Fall Festival fun in Friday News and BTAC News & Happenings between now and October 17th.

So mark your calendars and spread the word! Invite your friends, family, and colleagues to join us at the Fall Festival fundraiser. Together, we can make this event a huge success and create lasting memories while supporting a cause that truly matters. We can't wait to see you there!

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Keep The Kitties Safe!

By Veda L. Wohlford, Photos by Veda L. Wohlford

Happy September from your Bent-Tree Animal Shelter!

Did you know that many of the items that are unsafe for our Canine pets are also unsafe for our Feline friends? We all know that grapes, chocolate, caffeine, and human medications are super toxic for dogs, but turns out they are also incredibly unsafe for our cats! Here's a list of some things that you should keep away from all your furry friends to keep them safe*:

Food Items: Chocolate – the darker the more toxic it is, grapes – as well as raisins, onions and garlic, caffeine, raw bread dough, alcohol

Human medicines – both prescription and over-the-counter, even acetaminophen can cause liver damage in our kitties

Household items - cleaners and chemicals, including ammonia, bleach, rubbing alcohol, essential oils...and keep the washing machine and dryer lids closed when you're not there! They love to sleep in there!

Outside items – Antifreeze/coolant (even a teaspoon can be toxic, and it tastes and smells sweet, so they are super attracted to it), pesticides of any kind

Many house plants can be toxic to cats as well – Azaleas, daffodils, hyacinths, jade, mistletoe and poinsettia, to name a few. And the #1 in toxicity would be true Lilies (Easter, Tiger, etc.). And it isn't

only if they chew on the leaves or petals; the pollen from true lilies, whether ingested directly or if the pollen gets on their fur and they clean themselves, can lead to kidney failure!

If you think your furry friend has been poisoned and is showing signs of distress (seizures, loss of consciousness, difficulty breathing), take your pet immediately to your vet or an emergency pet medical center. If you want to talk to an expert about pet poisoning, if you think your buddy may have been exposed but is not in immediate distress, you can call the ASPCA Poison Control hotline at 888-426-4435. They are available 24/7/365.

Interested in adopting a new feline friend into your family? We have a kaboodle of kitties at the Animal Shelter, all wanting to become your furry best friend! Below are just a few that are available for adoption...

Remember, all our cats and dogs are fully vetted medically and spayed or neutered before being eligible for adoption. Ready to come by and meet these sweet babies? Bent-Tree's Animal Shelter has so many friendly felines available for adoption, kitties of all personalities, shapes, and sizes, and all of them just want a fur-ever home with you and your family! If you would like to visit any of our kitties to see if you're a match made in heaven, please contact LuAnn Chambers at 678.414.1047.

**Some information borrowed from www.catster.com*



Beyond bears...

By Miguel Rodriguez

North Georgia, with its stunning Blue Ridge Mountains, is a haven for wildlife enthusiasts. This region boasts a rich tapestry of flora and fauna, making it a prime location to immerse ourselves in nature.



Mammals. The forests and valleys of North Georgia are home to a variety of mammals.

Among the most notable are the American black bears, which can often be seen wandering through the woods. Coyotes, bobcats, foxes, and white-tailed deer are also common sights. Smaller mammals such as raccoons, opossums, rabbits, bats, squirrels, and chipmunks add to the region's biodiversity.

Birds. Our skies are filled with majestic birds like the red-tailed hawk, owls, and the occasional bald eagle. We also have an abundance of wild turkey, and our backyards are home to a variety of songbirds, including the northern mockingbird and the blue jay.

Reptiles and Amphibians. The reptile and amphibian population among us is equally impressive. The region is home to several species of snakes like the Eastern Rat Snake, the Garter Snake, black racers, and the Eastern Kingsnake. Additionally, the Copperhead, the eastern diamondback and the timber rattlesnake - all venomous species - are also frequently seen in the region. Turtles, such as the bog turtle and the eastern box turtle, can be found in the area's wetlands. Amphibians like the eastern tiger salamander and the spotted salamander thrive in the moist environments of the forests.

Aquatic Life. Our streams and Lake Tamarack are teeming with aquatic life. Anglers can find a variety of fish species, including trout, bass, and catfish. The river otter is a playful resident of our waterways, and beavers can often be seen building their dams along the streams.

Rare and Endangered Species. Although less publicized than other areas, North Georgia is also home to several rare and endangered species. The Appalachian cottontail, the northern pine snake, and the tricolored bat are just a few of the species that are under threat. Conservation efforts are ongoing to protect these animals and their habitats.

Conclusion. We live in the middle of a treasure trove of biodiversity, offering a unique opportunity to experience - and be stewards of - a wide range of wildlife in their natural habitats. Let's ensure we do our part (and then some!) to pass it on to generations to come, as good as we found it - or better!

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The Mountains of North Georgia Are Alive with the Sound of Music

By Calvert Johnson, Jasper Muse, Inc.

Pickens County has three concert series featuring excellent classical chamber music, jazz, and traditional music. Sponsoring organizations are Casual Classics Concert Series with programs at Fellowship Presbyterian Church of Jasper GA, Big Canoe Chapel, and Holy Family Episcopal Church in Jasper GA. The concerts feature members of the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra, Atlanta Opera Orchestra, and Atlanta Pops Orchestra, as well as members of music faculties of metro colleges and universities, such as University of Georgia, Kennesaw State University, Emory University, Georgia State University, Morehouse College, Agnes Scott College, and Columbus State University.

Concerts at all three series are free, although contributions are gratefully received to fund the programs.

Classical music offerings in 2025-2026 include:

The Summit Piano Trio featuring music faculty from Kennesaw State University, the strings of which are also first-stand members of the Atlanta Opera Orchestra (Casual Classics Concert Series, Fellowship Presbyterian Church, 389 Bent Tree Dr, Jasper, Monday September 15, 2025, at 7 pm);

The Ramirez string quartet from the Atlanta Symphony led by violinist Juan Ramirez with organist Calvert Johnson (Big Canoe Chapel, 226 Wolfscratch Village Circle, Big Canoe, Sunday October 19 at 4 pm);

Saxophonist Dr. Nathan Nabb, the Director of the School of Music at Kennesaw State University (Casual Classics Concert Series, Fellowship Presbyterian Church, 389 Bent Tree Dr., Jasper, Monday November 17, 2025, 7 pm);

Guitar Duo Dr. Andrew Zohn of Columbus State University with Erdong Li, an alumnus of Columbus State (Casual Classics Concert Series, Fellowship Presbyterian Church, 389 Bent Tree Dr., Jasper, Monday February 23, 2026, 7 pm);

Trumpeter Yvonne Toll, Principal Trumpet with the Atlanta Opera Orchestra, with organist Calvert Johnson (Big Canoe Chapel, 226 Wolfscratch Village Circle, Big Canoe, Sunday March 8, 2026, 4 pm).

Jazz concerts will include:

Julio Baretto Percussion Ensemble, featuring members of the Atlanta Pops Orchestra and pianist Julio Baretto (Big Canoe Chapel, 226 Wolfscratch Village Circle, Big Canoe, Sunday September 28, 2025, 4 pm);

Atlanta Ragtime Band (Big Canoe Chapel, 226 Wolfscratch Village Circle, Big Canoe, Sunday May 3, 2026, 4 pm);

Traci Wynn Jazz Quartet (Casual Classics Concert Series, Fellowship Presbyterian Church, 389 Bent Tree Dr, Jasper, Monday May 18, 2026, 7 pm).

Christmas Concerts include:

Big Canoe Chapel Choir with guest instrumentalists (226 Wolfscratch Village Circle, Big Canoe, Tuesday December 9, 2025 at 5 and 7:30 pm; free tickets are required for this popular annual event);

Nine Lessons and Carols with the choir of Holy Family Episcopal Church (202 Griffith Rd, Jasper, Sunday December 14, 2025 at 4 pm).

Donations can be mailed to:

Casual Classics Concert Series, P O Box 67, Marble Hill GA 30148.

Big Canoe Chapel, 10455 Big Canoe, Big Canoe GA 30143.

Holy Family Episcopal Church, 202 Griffith Dr., Jasper GA 30143.

Casual Classics was established in 2007. Over the years, the series has recently featured Atlanta Symphony Concertmaster David Coucheron with pianist Julie Coucheron; Principal Oboist Elizabeth Tiscione and Acting Principal Trumpet Michael Tiscione; a program of Impressionists with Principal Flute Christina Smith, Principal Viola Zhenwei Shi, and Principal Harp Elisabeth Remy Johnson; Atlanta Symphony Woodwind Quintet; the Vega String Quartet; pianist Robert Henry of Kennesaw State University; pianist Dr. David Fung of UGA, pianist Portia Hawkins of Agnes Scott College, Morehouse College tenor Dr. Mel Foster with harpist Ellen Heinicke Foster, Atlanta Guitar Trio, Ensemble Chaconne of Boston, and the Eurasia Piano Trio. Jazz artists have included trumpeter Joe Gransden and pianist Kenny Banks; Joe Alterman Jazz Ensemble; and an ensemble comprised of college jazz instructors Gary Motley of Emory University, Emrah Kotan of Agnes Scott College, Billy Vann Thornton of Georgia State University with cornetist Ali Barr.

The Music in the Mountains series began in 2023, and has featured the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra's Brass Quintet and Peachtree String Quartet, Atlanta Mandolin Orchestra, soprano Wanda Yang Temko with guitarist Nic Deuson, Dr. Carol Williams (San Diego civic organist at Balboa Park), pianist Dr. Elena Dorozhkina of Agnes Scott College, violinist Judith Cox of the Atlanta Symphony with organist Julie Ryder of the Episcopal Church of the Epiphany, Celtic Fire, and Agnes Scott College's Joyful Noise Gospel Choir.

For additional information about Casual Classics Concert Series or about Music in the Mountains of Big Canoe Chapel, contact Concert Manager Calvert Johnson at calvertjohnson@gmail.com or 404-373-0748. For information about concerts at Holy Family Episcopal Church, contact Organist/Choirmaster John King Carter at johnkingcarter@yahoo.com or 205-520-4789.

Book Lovers Rejoice!

By Peggy Bennett, Library Committee

For all of you who have gone through most of your library books stored up for Summer reading, the end of the book drought is in sight! Bent Tree is in the final stages of the Cottage renovation, and our beloved Library, the source of many good reads, is tentatively scheduled to reopen on September 1st. Because we all know that weather & other pesky circumstances can change deadlines, the working opening date could slightly change. Any changes will be sent out for your information.

The Library Committee has plans in place for the huge job of restocking all of the existing books that have been stored by Bent Tree during the remodeling, and we are excited to be able to have a fresh, lovely environment to house our great reads! To that end, we will be working Aug 18-31 to have everything in place by opening day.

Many of you availed yourselves of a stack of summer books before the library was closed, and you are probably eager to get that stack out of your home & replaced with new books. In order for us to have everything ready to receive your returns and new donations, we ask that you not begin to return them before September 20. This will be a great help to us. Remember, no books with a copyright earlier than 2016, and in good shape please.

In this Issue of the ECHO, you will find a flyer announcing the grand Re-Opening of the Library. We encourage you to come see for yourself this wonderful amenity available to all of us here in Brent Tree!



MUSIC & CIGARS

SEPT 4 | 6:30PM

THE TAVERN AT THE 19TH HOLE

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terriloon@bellsouth.net



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DON'T MISS THIS!




CIGARS & GOLF
Thursday Night Scramble
 September 4th

Rolling Smoke
 mobile cigars

MOBILE CIGAR BAR LOCATED IN TAVERN PARKING LOT FROM 6-9
 COME FOR THE SCRAMBLE OR JUST COME FOR A COCKTAIL AND
 DINNER

NOTICE



Bent Tree Activities
 Committee will hold their
 annual Executive Committee
 Elections on Tuesday,
 September 9th at 6:00 PM in
 Club Tamarack Rec Room
 All residents are welcome to attend

**Bent Tree
 Seniors
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 Painting Workshop**



Wednesday, September 10
 2:00-4:00 pm
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"...living according to God's Word. (Psalm 119:9)"

by Dennis J Mock

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More Bent Tree Invaders

By Dara Sinclair

Several months ago we started an article series on invasive species. The first installment featured one of the worst and most pervasive Bent Tree invasive plants, Japanese stilt grass, and also two of the scariest invasive animal species, feral hogs and European and Asian hornets. As a reminder, an invasive species is officially defined as species that is: 1) non-native (or alien) to the ecosystem under consideration and, 2) whose introduction causes or is likely to cause economic or environmental harm or harm to human health. Our role in battling invasive species involves two key focuses: **knowledge and vigilance**. Knowledge of what is invasive and how to identify the species, and vigilance to be part of the solution minimizing damage to the Bent Tree ecosystem. In this article we will focus on Joro spiders, Spotted Lanternfly and Kudzu.

What is there to say about kudzu that you don't already know? The 'vine that ate the south' is a well-known cautionary tale about unintended consequences. Two points you might not yet be familiar with are that it is edible, and that it is in Bent Tree. WHAT? Yes, look it up - kudzu is edible. So don't be so alarmed about possible food shortages; if you can get to the S curve you won't starve. And it IS in Bent Tree, in several locations. Lake & Wildlife will be hosting a work day this fall to stop these small infestations before they get out of hand. Be on the lookout for the dates and be part of the solution.

Now onto Joro spiders and Spotted Lanternfly. Both of these species are from east Asia and came to the United States the same way most items that make our modern lives convenient did - compliments of container ships and global trade. Here in Bent Tree the large spiders with the strong webs have been making their presence known for several years. I venture to guess that most of us have come face to face, literally, with a Joro that seems to be able to weave massive webs on our porches and decks in a matter of minutes. UGA has published a thorough article on Joro spider control options, just Google 'UGA extension managing Joro spiders' for the link. Key takeaways from this article are

1. For those homeowners who are somewhat tolerant of spiders, our recommendation is to remove and kill any spiders that build webs on or adjacent to porches, walkways, decks, and doorways (Figure 7)—in other words, anywhere contact with the webs is inevitable. On the periphery of the yard, or in shrubbery beds where people do not walk, these spiders can be left alone. The two places where no one should allow the webs to remain are around pollinator or flower gardens and bee hives.
2. Remember that area-wide sprays and fogging will kill many other insects, including pollinators, beneficial predators, and beneficial parasites that help keep pest insects in check. Scale insects in particular have been shown to increase in number and damage after these treatments.

Now enter the Spotted Lanternfly. As far as I am aware, these have not been found (yet) in Bent Tree. But they have been found in nearby Fulton County, so it is likely just a matter of time. This extremely damaging invasive insect sucks the sap from fruiting vines and trees and is expected to cause significant damage. Here in Bent Tree we do not have tree-of-heaven, which is its preferred food but we do have wild grape vines, which is also an attractant.



Joro Spider feeding on Spotted Lanternfly



A thick patch of kudzu off Old Highway 5 headed to Nelson. The electric company spends man power and money every year to mitigate the invasive plant.

Again, relying on UGA, Google 'UGA news spotted lanternfly' for more information and pictures and what to do if you see one. An interesting twist involving the Joro and the Lanternfly is that, in their native territory, they are mortal enemies. Consider the ironic possibility that Joro spiders become an unexpected partner in the fight against the latest invader, the Spotted Lanternfly!

These are a few of the invasive species you might encounter in Bent Tree. We'll highlight more in future articles. A greater, and wider, array of information can be found at:

- **EDDMapS** - A web-based platform and mobile app for submitting and viewing reports of invasive species, helping to identify and map their distribution.
- **NISIC** - A central resource for information on invasive species, offering a wide range of educational materials, fact sheets, and links to other resources.
- **USDA Forest Service** - Conducts research and provides resources on invasive species ecology, management, and control.
- **USGS** - Conducts research on invasive species and provides data, tools, and strategies for their management.
- **Cooperative Extension Services** - Offers local expertise and guidance on identifying and managing invasive species.

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18 OCTOBER 2025
 Bent Tree Activities Committee

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- Free grilled hot dogs @ 12 PM - First 200 people
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- See our fire trucks and rescue vehicles up close
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- Put out simulated fire with a real fire hose
- Enter Pickens County's Fire Safety House (kids only)
- Test your running speed on the speed trailer
- Learn valuable emergency prep info
- Obtain a Vial of Life for medical emergencies

Hiking Club Flotilla Event on July 8

By Stephanie and Mason Holland



As the tradition continues, the Bent Tree Hiking Club recently held their annual "Flotilla Event" on our very own Lake Tamarack.

On a beautiful evening in July, boaters of all varieties, paddleboards, kayaks, canoes, and even a Jon boat, launched from the white sands of Lake Tamarack at the beach pavilion and paddled to the dam and back again. With the Cajun Navy and his skipper on board, how could one not feel safe out on the water? Prior to the water activity, master grillers served up sizzlin' hamburgers and hotdogs at the Beach Pavilion Bistro with a multitude of delicious "sides" provided by all. It was a festive evening accentuated by delicious food, beautiful weather, smooth water and was well attended with approximately 26 or 27 attendees.

Should you want to join us next year, please be sure to note this event on the 2026 Hiking Club schedule (to be published early next year) and mark your calendar. Come join us!



Tamarack Treasures Boutique

Holiday Edition

a Bent Tree Lake and Wildlife Fundraiser

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NOVEMBER 2025

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TUE 4	
WED 5	
SAT 8	SALE 9:00 - 2:00
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Plumbing

Bryan Plumbing Services	770-826-5277
Greenlee Plumbing	678-386-7513
Robinson & Family Plumbing	770-873-3202
Rooter Pro Plumbing GA	470-600-5146

Propane Service

Gas Incorporated	770-720-1378
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Real Estate

Atlanta Communities-Elizabeth Martin	678-373-9342
Atlanta Communities-Jennifer and Associates ..	770-403-5639
Classic Luxury Real Estate-Lisa Hughley	678-923-5152
Compass Realty-Natalie Gregory Team	404-373-0076
Cory & Co. Realty	404-564-5561
Domo Realty	404-556-1733
Georgia Real Estate Depot-Nix	770-401-4932
Harry Norman Realtors-Pam Hughes	404-626-3604
JW Collection Brokers LLC-Melo	678-672-2878
Keller Williams-Linda Jacobs	770-337-2006
Remax Around Atlanta-Falkin	770-330-2374
ReMax-The Melissa Bailey Group	678-535-8979
Robin Martin and Associates	678-665-0202

Remodeling

Diversified Contracting Group	770-329-9112
GCI Basements	404-569-8794
Nadal Capital	404-446-6146

Restaurants

Luna Maya	770-720-4999
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Roofing

Atlanta Roofing Specialists	770-419-2222
DJK Restoration, Inc.	773-531-9080
Earthly Matters Painting and Contracting	770-346-0203

Schools-Private

McGinnis Woods Country Day School	770-664-7764
Woodward Academy	404-765-4001

Security Systems

Classic Entry Systems	678-330-1111
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Travel Agencies

Travelmation-Rachel Spain	678-316-0314
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Window Replacement

Davis Window & Door	678-379-1629
EntryPoint Doors & Windows	770-904-0094
North Georgia Replacement Windows, Inc.	770-888-1604

Wine

Grapes & Grains Wine & Spirits	770-884-2450
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88 Bee Tree Ridge Court
\$649,000 | 4BR/3.5BA



71 Cutthroat Ridge
\$625,000 | 4BR/3.5BA



572 Cutthroat Ridge
\$625,000 | 3BR/3.5BA



270 Sleepy Hollow Circle
\$599,000 | 3BR/3BA



213 South View Trail
\$599,000 | 3BR/3BA



272 Bee Tree Ridge Court
\$575,000 | 3BR/3.5BA



605 Denny Ridge Road
\$574,900 | 3BR/3FBA/2HBA



469 Moss Patch Trail
\$529,000 | 3BR/3BA



354 Starcross Lane
\$479,000 | 3BR/3.5BA



222 Mulligan Way
\$455,000 | 3BR/2.5BA



112 Tamarack Drive
\$424,900 | 3BR/3BA



1379 Little Hendricks Mountain Road
\$385,000 | 3BR/2BA



255 Sunset Court
\$379,400 | 3BR/2BA



214 South View Trail
\$365,000 | 3BR/2BA



304 Sunset Court
\$329,900 | 3BR/2BA



784 Fairway Drive
\$314,000 | 3BR/2BA



193 Valley View Trail
\$284,900 | 2BR/2BA

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