

Brookwood family living



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Content Due	Issue Month
December 10	January
January 10	February
February 10	March
March 10	April
April 10	May
May 10	June
June 10	July
July 10	August
August 10	September
September 10	October
October 10	November
November 10	December

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Letter to the Residents

Happy Holidays, Brookwood Family! I can't believe it is the three-year anniversary of the Brookwood Family Living Magazine. I am grateful for the way that this magazine has made us more connected as a community, especially during the pandemic. I have had so much fun over the last year getting to know so many of the amazing families and businesses that call Brookwood home. I am so thankful each day that my family moved into this area. As we approach the holiday season, amidst all the gift buying, make sure to take some time for yourself to rest and relax. I hope that you are all able to enjoy time off this holiday season to spend time with the people who make you feel loved. Happy Holidays!

Jamie Parker
Publisher for
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The Little Gym



By Paul Mazurkewicz

The Little Gym of Snellville's environment is fun, but its purpose is serious: growing confidence and self-esteem in children from infancy through age 12. Located in The Shoppes at Webb Gin shopping center near Sprouts Farmers Market, the gym is in its 18th year of business, always owned and operated by the same husband and wife, Paul & Tammy Mazurkewicz. They were customers of The Little Gym first, becoming owners when they watched their daughter, Catherine, now age 25, blossom in the program. "She loved it so much, we bought a franchise and have been changing kids' lives ever since," said Paul. "For nine years now, Catherine has worked in the male-dominated sports production environment. She's currently the stadium DJ for Atlanta Braves, so virtually everything you hear at the stadium is her responsibility. She also works for the Atlanta Hawks as an audio technician. It takes confidence to do that," added Tammy, "and much of that confidence came from attending The Little Gym."

Perhaps not surprisingly, the gym's teaching philosophy is quite different from others. "We challenge children" to strive for success in a positive and nurturing environment," said Paul. "While we use a non-competitive gymnastics-based curriculum to grow each child's confidence and self-esteem, there are no

unrealistic expectations. No judging, no forcing, no put-downs, no punishment if they're not perfect. They are kids, not Marines; we allow them to be kids!"

This philosophy has proven to be successful. It was a unique and unheard-of concept when The Little Gym was founded in 1976. With locations in over 25 countries, millions of children have experienced the positive benefits since that time. The gym's programs have helped kids become more confident, readying them for new challenges with strong, proud smiles on their faces. "We call it 'Whateverready.' We see it every day. You should, too," said Tammy.

The Little Gym of Snellville offers a wide array of programs from parent/direct classes to advanced grade school gymnastics, as well as Wonder-Kids Club, which is best-described as an introductory Pre-K experience for 3-4 year-olds. The center also hosts Awesome Birthday Bashes and offers Parents' Survival Nights and seasonal half-day camps.

New lessons, new friends, and new accomplishments - it all adds up to "Serious Fun" at The Little Gym of Snellville. Contact the Little Gym at 770-982-0901 or visit its website at thelittlegym.com/snellvillega for more information. Of course, they're on Facebook and Instagram, too. ²⁹

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Easy Snicker Doodle Cookies

By Katie McNeil

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 cup (2 sticks) butter, softened
- 1 1/2 cups sugar
- 2 eggs
- 2 3/4 cups flour
- 1 tsp cream of tartar
- 1/2 tsp salt
- For Cinnamon Sugar
- 1/2 cup sugar
- 2 tsp cinnamon

DIRECTIONS:

1. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, cream together the butter and sugar until well blended and mix in the eggs.
2. Sift together the flour, baking soda, cream of tartar, and salt.
3. Gradually add dry mixture to the creamed mixture and mix until thoroughly combined.
4. In a separate bowl, mix together the 1/2 cup of sugar and 2 teaspoons of cinnamon.
5. Form into balls (I used my medium cookie dough scoop) and roll in the cinnamon-sugar mixture.
6. Place the dough balls on an ungreased cookie sheet about 2 inches apart.
7. Bake at 350° for 12 minutes. ³⁰



Brookwood Alumni Spotlight Tena Nguyen

By Holly Ramey

During my time at Brookwood, I had the privilege of serving as an SGA officer, and during my senior year, I helped lead the organization as the Executive Communications Director. As a part of SGA, I was able to help plan and participate in numerous school activities and fundraisers to benefit our local Brookwood Community. I also had the opportunity to serve as one of the Co-Presidents of the National Honor Society and participate in several other Honor Societies and clubs. After graduation, I pursued a degree in Biology with a minor in Health and Medical Sciences at Georgia Tech. At Tech, I continued my love for Student Government and mentorship by participating and serving as an advisor for the Freshman Student Government Association, where I was able to help plan the largest student-run event at Tech called the Final Stand and worked on several SGA benchmarking studies to better the Georgia Tech student experience. In addition, at Tech, I was able to further broaden my love for science through my research in the France's synthetic chemistry lab, resulting in a publication entitled "Catalyst-Controlled Chemodivergent Reactions of 2-Pyrrolyl- α -diazophenol-esters and Enol Ethers: Synthesis of 1, 2-Dihydro-1,4-dioxan Acetals and Highly Substituted Indoles" in the *Journal of Organic Chemistry*. During my time at Georgia Tech, I also had the privilege of being a TA for introductory biology courses, serving on the Biology Student Advisory Committee, volunteering at Children's Healthcare of Atlanta, and leading my sorority as the Vice President of Chapter Development. However, through my experiences at Tech, I found my passion for science and service intertwined in medicine, which was further solidified when I volunteered at mobile pediatric clinics in underserved areas of Vietnam. After graduating this past May, I am currently pursuing my M.D. at the Medical College of Georgia, where I hope to pursue a career in pediatric oncology. ²

Top: Tena dressed for Brookwood High School graduation. Right: Tena's white coat ceremony at the Medical College of Georgia.



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Renovation Loans: The Skies the Limit



By Jamie Parker, I/CON agent Exp Realty

Millions of Americans watch the housing reality TV shows. The hosts make it look so easy to flip a home or even buy one. While it may look all glamorous on TV, what is it like in real life? What if you could do the same thing you see them doing?

I am here to tell you that you can. With a renovation loan, you can take a home that needs some TLC, give it the love it deserves and have it all as part of your mortgage payment. Even in this tight inventory market, there are unupgraded that are still on the market that you could make your own by doing one of these loans.

How does it work?

It works just like a regular loan. I recently have someone do one these loans for the same amount down as they would have paid for a normal loan. Your credit does have to be a bit higher but that is about the only difference.

Once your contract is accepted, a licensed contractor comes out to the property to determine the scope of what needs to be done. Sometimes this is even done during the initial viewing of the home, utilizing video technology.

Now that the scope of the project is in, you close on the home and the attorney will pay the contractor after the loan closes in accordance to what they have agreed to.

WHY DOES THIS MATTER?

This is a slam dunk way to beat the tight market and still come out ahead.

For more information on this and other programs, contact Jamie at 404-483-7816. 📞



The Little Gym Celebrates 45 Years of Serious Fun

By Paul Mazurkewicz

The Little Gym, the world's premier enrichment and physical development center for children ages four months through 12 years, celebrates a milestone 45 years of playing a crucial role in the development of millions of children across the world.

The Little Gym was founded by Robin Wes in 1976, a South Africa native and innovative educator, musician and kinesiologist. Was wanted to create a safe place for kids to develop and express themselves with the spirit to achieve rather than the pressure to win. Since then, The Little Gym has honed its original teaching methods and structured them into an expanded curriculum with each class building on lessons learned in previous ones.

"The Little Gym was created as a safe place for kids to develop and express themselves. For 45 years we have kept a non-competitive approach to childhood development for millions of children across the world," said Nancy Bigley, Brand President and CEO. "What The Little Gym has accomplished throughout four and a half decades is nothing short of extraordinary and we are looking forward to continuing to be the springboard for life's adventures for generations to come."

The Little Gym prides itself on providing support to children in all areas of development. From motor and language development to social and emotional improvement, parents continue to bring their children to The Little Gym to hone the skills they may not learn elsewhere through three-dimensional learning.

"I just love how it feels like it's a family instead of just a business," wrote a

Lawrenceville mom about The Little Gym of Snellville. ("My son) LOVES coming here and the shyness he had is gone now because everyone makes him feel comfortable to relax and just be himself. The programs are definitely tailored to his age and I love how it challenges the munchkins in a way I wouldn't have thought of. It lets them know that they CAN do all things if they try and even the scary things are fun."

With nearly 400 locations across 31 countries, The Little Gym teaches kids social and physical skills appropriate to each stage of childhood by creating opportunities to experience achievement and build self-confidence. At the core of the international franchise's mission is becoming the foundation of a child's development that will set them up for success. Through three-dimensional learning including physical activities, cognitive skills and social and emotional learning, the core teaching methods create opportunities for children to experience achievement and build self-confidence.

For more information about The Little Gym of Snellville, please visit TheLittleGym.com/SnellvilleGA. You can also connect with them on Facebook and Instagram. 📷

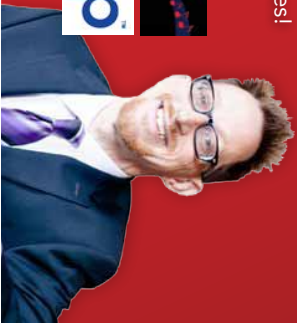
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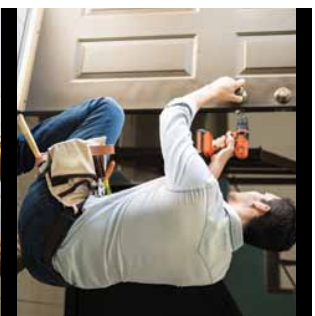
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Meet the Delgado Family

By Laura Delgado. Photos by Ginny Sealing Photography

My name is Laura Delgado. I'm 40 years old and a national of Peru. I have two wonderful girls named Valentina and Raquelle. Valentina is 15 years old, and Raquelle is 11 years old. I widowed back in 2013 and had to step up for my girls. I came to the US when I was 9 years old and resided in NJ. I went to Berkeley college and have an Associates degree in International Business. I have always had a passion for cultures and dreamt of traveling abroad to conduct business, respecting the different ways of doing it internationally. I am the youngest of four, and my older siblings came to GA first; never saw myself in GA. My idea was always to be in the international fashion industry world. I love fashion, cultures and traveling. As my family settled, my mother decided that it was time for us to go too. Not happy about the move, but I had to follow. I started to work with my older sisters in the legal world, and even though Spanish was my first language, legal terms in Spanish were new to me. I learned quickly and was a paralegal while I continued to push for my dream of being in the fashion industry. I enrolled in AIU and kept a 4.0, however, that did not last long. I was always more mature for my age and couldn't deal with the madness of college kids. I discontinued my attendance and started to work on my business. Long story short, I obtained my real estate license and now have my own brokerage. I have now been in the business 20 years. As a young kid, I have always loved sports and entertainment. My oldest daughter attends GAC and is part of the theatre group. She loves to perform and sing. She's a natural at writing and expressing it through music. Her writing is deep, and she has read me some amazing poetry. Then we have my fiery youngest child. She loves sports as much as I do. She has demonstrated an ability to display her competitive interest in almost every activity she's been involved in. She started with gymnastics, and her coach saw in her Olympic ability. Unfortunately, COVID took her out of her first athletic love. As time passed, we needed to get her in another activity and softball season was starting. She now plays for Brookwood, and has made amazing friends. Her coaches here couldn't be more awesome. I have really enjoyed meeting the parents and community members who are involved. I love living here because it's truly a big family. Nevertheless, meeting the folks in my subdivision at Flowers Crossing at the Mill has made it feel more like home. We moved into this subdivision practically when COVID had started in Jan of 2020. This gave us a lot of time to be around and focus on making changes to the house, as many of us probably did since we were home so much. During that time, I met most of my closest neighbors, and it made it very welcoming for me and my family. It has been a blast being a part of this neighborhood and fun to see new folks from all over the nation move in. I know I made a good decision by moving in here. If you're looking to find your nest and feel comfortable and at the same time safe for your kids, Brookwood has all that to offer and more! 🏡



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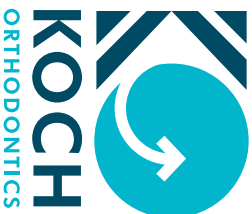
Holiday Word Search

By Jamie Parker

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WORLD SERIES CHAMPIONS!

By Holly Ramey

WORLD SERIES CHAMPIONS! It feels so good for greater Atlanta to break the curse and be on top of the sports world once again. Congratulations to the Braves organization and to all the fans that have stood by the team season after season. Here are the top five moments from watching the hometown team in the championship series.

5. Ian Anderson No-Hitter: Ian became the first rookie with five no-hit innings in the World Series since 1912. The performance led the Braves to their second win of the series and first in Atlanta in Game 3.

4. Soler Power: Technically this is a way to sneak in a few great moments: To start, Soler sets the tone in Game 1. The first at-bat, the third pitch, and it's a home run! Then, in Game 6, he absolutely blasts one. In total, Soler had three home runs in the series, tying a Franchise record.

3. Eddie Rosario Snag: It's the eighth inning in Game 4. Altuve gets a solid hit on the ball, but Eddie makes a spectacular catch to preserve the lead and the win! His body slams into the wall, and he comes off beating his chest. The crowd goes wild!

2. The Grand Salami in Game 5: It's hard to not put this at number one. There have only been two other first-inning

grand slams in World Series history. The last was in 1960. And we saw it: right here in Atlanta! Unfortunately, the Braves fell in game 5, but Adam Duvall's grand slam was something to witness.

1. Atlanta Boys Deliver: Everyone on the roster is part of Atlanta history, but it was special to see great moments from Dansby Swanson, a Kennesaw kid. Can you imagine growing up with the Braves in your backyard and coming full circle to hit home runs for that same team in a World Series? And then Freddie Freeman. He may not have been raised here, but his entire professional career has been in Atlanta. Freddie symbolizes the Atlanta Braves through and through. He waited a long time for this, and when he hit that home run in Game 6, we all smiled with him.

That doesn't even begin to capture all of it. From pearls to Blooper to a fast-moving parade, we will be talking about this team and this championship for the rest of our lives. Atlanta Braves are partying like it's 1995! We're champs baby!!



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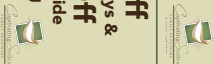
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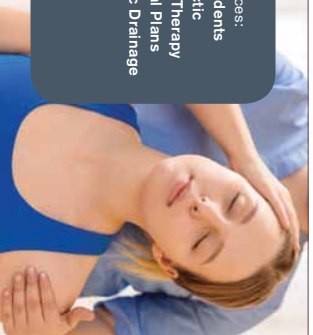


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Brookwood Orchestra Concert

Photos by Jim Knapp



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End of Year Tax Planning



By Robert L. Brown, CPA

End-of-year tax planning is crucial for both individuals and businesses. Proper organization and planning not only ensures that you are prepared going forward into the new year, but also that the current tax year concludes in the most beneficial way possible.

There are many steps that individuals, families, and businesses can take to ensure they are maximizing their tax benefit before the end of the year—here are some of the most common ones:

INDIVIDUALS AND FAMILIES

If you meet the threshold for itemizing, this is the time to make your year-end charitable donations and schedule any outstanding health care appointments or procedures. You should also make sure if you owe any state or property taxes that they are paid before year-end as the deduction can only be taken if paid in 2021. Ideally, you have been making regular payments throughout the year to

your retirement accounts, health savings accounts (HSAs), and education savings plans. While you do have until the April 15th deadline to make contributions to these accounts it is always a good idea to get these funded early. Additionally, pay special attention to employer flex spending accounts as they are often a "use it or lose it" type benefit that expires at the end of the year.

There are some changes specific to the 2021 tax year. For example, compared to 2020, most people with children will see a smaller refund due to the prepayment of the child tax credit from July 2021 through December 31. Also, in 2020 there was an exemption of \$10,200 of unemployment compensation (\$20,400 for married couples filing jointly) which will not be available in 2021.

BUSINESSSES

Similarly, there are strategies for business owners to maximize tax savings for year-end and set themselves up for

success in the beginning of the new year. For instance, many businesses can finance vehicles and equipment to take tax deductions due to accelerated depreciation for the current year for the full amount of their purchase. On building purchases that close by December 31st, there can be significant tax savings if it is a self-rental and the owner gets a cost segregation study performed in the early part of the next year. If you file on a cash basis, prepaying expenses such as rent or insurance can make a significant difference if you have the cash flow.

Another major year-end move is to make a late tax election to convert from a single-member LLC to an S Corporation. This will increase some reporting requirements but often can lead to some significant tax savings especially for those who are self-employed. It is always prudent to contact your tax advisor to review any of the moves you are going to make before year-end, and some require a tax professional to ensure they are done properly. ²⁹

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DBT Around the Christmas Tree (and other Family Holiday Events)

By Katie Herzer, LMSW, Hillside Therapist

While the holidays are some people's favorite time of year, they can be extra stressful or even dreadful for others. Whenever you fall on the holiday cheer spectrum, when getting together with family members who do not see eye to eye, missing loved ones, or feeling societal pressures to have your experience be a certain way, we can all benefit from some Holiday DBT (Dialectical Behavior Therapy) Skills.

First, start with a couple of Distress Tolerance Skills to help calm your emotions during trying times. Use the Brief Vacation skill to separate yourself from your family members or holiday duties when your stress is rising. Walking away or doing something different can allow you to take a break in order to bring down your emotions, feel refreshed, and be more effective when you return to the turkey-baking, latkes-making, or holiday gift exchange. Distract with Contributing can be a great way to distract yourself from holiday woes by turning your distressed energy into compassionate energy. Volunteer at your local soup kitchen, contribute to the nearest toy drive, create something special for someone, foster an animal or volunteer at a shelter.

Next, an Emotion Regulation skill can help make the holiday season less of an emotional roller coaster. Try incorporating Accumulating Positive activities into your schedule. These are not things you do to make others happy, but things

that you, yourself, truly enjoy and look forward to doing. Wear your favorite ugly Christmas sweater or fuzzy Thanksgiving socks, dance around to "Hanukkah, O Hanukkah", play tennis with friends, or go to the movies by yourself. Keep in mind, these could be things that take just a couple of minutes; they don't have to feel like another task on your holiday to-do list. It can be something as small as adding a candy cane to your hot chocolate to make it extra special.


When dinner table conversations turn to topics that are controversial, revert to your Interpersonal Effectiveness skills. The GIVE skill can help maintain relationships. Gently respond by keeping your volume appropriate and choosing a non-judgmental language. Show interest in what others are saying (even if you do not care about your cousin's family's trip to Kazakhstan) by making eye contact, nodding your head, and asking appropriate questions. Validate where the other person is coming from (even if you do not agree with your uncle's views) by stating why it makes sense that they have those thoughts. Use an easy manner to add appropriate humor and turn an uncomfortable situation into a more lighthearted interaction.

Finally, try a Middle Path skill to help change your "Bah-Hurnbug!" to "Happy Holidays!" You can use dialectics when things get tough. Recognizing the two seemingly opposing things that are true at the same time can help you gain a more

positive perspective when you're stuck in black and white thinking. For example, change "If my parents comment on me being single one more time this year I will scream," to "I feel annoyed when my parents ask me if I will ever find a spouse AND I know they are asking from love and showing me they care." Replace, "I cannot afford to buy presents this year" with, "I am sad that I could not afford the gift my loved one wanted AND they will still like what I have handmade for them as it came from the heart."

We hope these DBT tips help you make this a great holiday season! ³⁰






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Things to Look Forward to in Our Community

- DECEMBER 4 - 19 Gwinnett Ballet Theatre's 40th Annual Nutcracker at Gas South District Theatre
- DECEMBER 10 BHS Theatre Performance of A Christmas Carol at 7pm
- DECEMBER 11 Merry Little Christmas and Bicentennial Fireworks at Lawrenceville Lawn from 12-7pm
- DECEMBER 13 BHS Music Dept. Holiday Concert at 7pm Dogwood Pizza Night
- DECEMBER 16 Brookwood Elementary School
- DECEMBER 17 Last Day of Classes for the GCPS semester
- DECEMBER 18 Snellville Farmers Market at City Hall from 9am-12pm
- JANUARY 6 First day of classes for the GCPS semester
- JANUARY 8 Snellville Farmers Market at City Hall from 9am-12pm

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ADDRESS	SUBDIVISION	BD	BA	HB	YEAR BUILT	CLOSING DATE	PRICE
1285 Water Shine Way	Bright Water	7	4	1	2001	10/28/21	\$720,000
1988 Newstead Court	Havenstone	5	4	0	2007	10/29/21	\$546,000
2655 Mandarin Place	Montclair	4	3	1	1995	11/10/21	\$510,000
1514 Radstone Drive	Flowers Crossing At The Mill	5	3	1	1995	11/4/21	\$505,000
1351 Bramley Drive	Brookwood Manor	4	3	1	1987	11/8/21	\$492,000
836 Mill Red Street	Flowers Crossing At The Mill	8	4	0	1991	10/27/21	\$489,000
2903 Schooner Cove	Harbour Oaks	4	2	1	1975	10/26/21	\$435,000
1800 Hickory Lake Drive	Brookwood Plantation	5	2	1	1991	10/21/21	\$435,000
1621 Old Springs Court	Holly Springs	4	2	1	1991	11/12/21	\$406,100
1689 Holly Lake Cove	Holly Springs	4	2	1	1989	11/9/21	\$400,000
1240 Scenic View Trace	Scenic Overlook	4	2	1	2007	10/27/21	\$395,000
2942 Melton Court Sw	Brookwood Laurel	4	3	0	1985	10/25/21	\$394,900
1326 Jannet Road	None	5	3	1	1977	11/12/21	\$380,000
1979 Thongate Lane	Brookwood Village	4	2	1	2015	10/22/21	\$380,000
2841 Harlan Drive	Hollybrook Farms	4	2	1	1986	10/26/21	\$366,000
820 Providence Drive	Flowers Crossing	4	2	1	1986	10/20/21	\$364,500
1530 Leisure Lake Drive	Webb Gin Farms	3	2	1	2002	11/5/21	\$343,000
2518 Mountain View Road	Williams Down	3	2	0	1982	11/17/21	\$321,000
1172 Holly Hills Drive Sw	None	3	2	1	1976	10/29/21	\$302,500
1349 Birchwood Drive	Rainbow Forest	3	2	1	1975	10/25/21	\$287,000
983 Body Road	None	3	1	0	1965	10/26/21	\$240,000

Avg Price: **\$413,429**

Asking Price Received: **99.15%**

Days on the Market: **23**

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