

Senior News

Georgia

Providing Helpful Information for Mature Adults in GEORGIA!

*Calling All Seniors! It's Time
for the Pickleball Game!*

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July 2025 • Volume 39, No. 7



Andersonville National Historic Site is excited to launch Attention to Orders: A Family Field Guide Activity!

Submitted by Grace Surber
Visual Information Specialist
Andersonville National Historic Site

Andersonville National Historic Site is excited to launch **Attention to Orders: A Family Field Guide Activity** taking place **July 1 - 6, 2025**, from **10:00 AM to 3:00 PM** daily.

This self-guided experience invites visitors of all ages to use a compass and activity book to navigate key points around the historic prison site. Along the way, families will complete engaging, hands-on activities that highlight the stories of the Andersonville.

Participants who complete the activity will receive a special prize bag that includes a small folded American flag, two custom Andersonville patches, an Andersonville coin, and a drawstring keepsake bag.

We look forward to welcoming families for this new experience, we hope to see you there!

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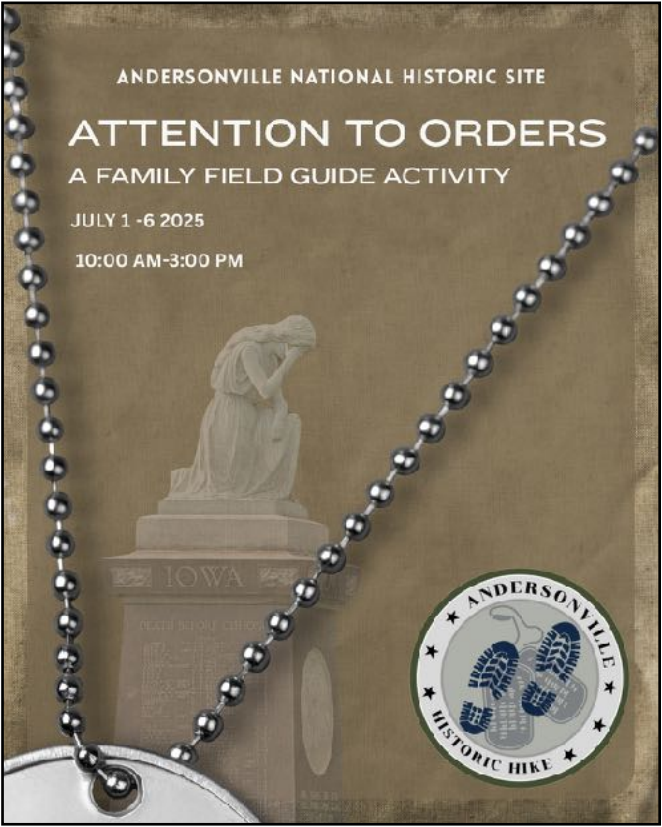
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Repticon Atlanta: A Walk Among the Wild Things!

Special to *SeniorNewsGeorgia*

Lawrenceville, GA – July 12 & 13, 2025

Repticon, a recognized leader in hosting reptile and exotic animal expos throughout the United States, is coming to Lawrenceville with an outstanding mixture of vendors and breeders. This family-oriented, fun-filled event offers guests the opportunity to learn about animals not normally seen in local pet stores. Breeder-vendors are always willing to teach in their field of herpetology.

Guests can also shop for a new family pet among the hundreds of reptiles, amphibians, invertebrates, arachnids, and small exotic animals. Repticon Atlanta is also the perfect place for them to get merchandise, cages, supplies, and both live and frozen feeders, as well as to get expert advice about caring for their new household member.

This event, held at the Gwinnett County Fairgrounds, 2405 Sugarloaf Parkway, Lawrenceville, GA 30045, offers a unique family outing suitable for all ages and for a very diverse range of enthusiasts.

Show Hours:

- Saturday: 9:00am - 4:00pm
- Sunday: 10:00am - 4:00pm

Ticket options (sold online only):

- \$20 Super Ticket (entry for both days)
- \$15 Saturday (all day)
- \$12 Saturday After 1 PM
- \$15 Sunday (all day)
- \$7 for children 5-12,
- children 4 and under are admitted free.

To purchase tickets or for more information about the show, please visit our website: <https://repticon.com/georgia/atlanta/>.

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Senior News & Views of Georgia

Taking Care!

Help A Disadvantaged Senior Enjoy The Summer!

By Lisa M. Petsche – lmepetsche@gmail.com

Many people look forward to the mild temperatures and increased daylight of summer, which can positively affect their mood and allow new opportunities for enjoyment. Unfortunately, though, seniors who are chronically ill, disabled or physically frail, may find it difficult to reap the benefits of the season on their own.

The good news is that there are numerous ways to help a relative in this situation partake of summer's pleasures. The following tips could also apply to a friend or neighbor, as well as a senior in your life who is relatively well but has limited social support.



**Lisa
Petsche**

Provide Practical Help

- Prepare extra foods or beverages to share with them – for example, iced tea, pasta salad, sliced watermelon or strawberry shortcake.
- Offer to help with gardening or lawn care.
- Take them out to the mall for shopping and lunch. If they can only walk short distances, park in a designated "handicapped" space and arrange to borrow a wheelchair at the mall. If they use a wheelchair for mobility, investigate accessible taxi options or help them register with the local accessible transportation service.
- Let the person know when you are heading out to the grocery store or on other errands, and ask what you can drop off or pick up to make things easier.
- If they don't drive (or you don't think they should be driving), offer the person transportation so they can get their hair done, do banking or attend a special event.

Do Some Pampering

- Share fresh fruit, vegetables or flowers from your garden or the market. Include a vase with the latter, so they're ready to display.
- Buy them some toiletries or home fragrance products in a summery scent.
- Get them a box of favorite ice cream treats the next time you're at the grocery store. Or take them out to the local dairy for an ice cream cone or sundae.
- Buy a seasonal outdoor gift for them to enjoy – for example, wind chimes, a hanging plant, decorative flower pots, a bird feeder or solar garden accents.

Ideas For Activities

- The following are some ideas for enjoying quality time together, as appropriate:
- Invite them over for a barbecue or to watch a favorite summer-themed movie.
- Have a picnic in their backyard or yours, or at a nearby park.
- Go for a stroll around the neighborhood.
- Take them to the local farmers' market for fresh fruits and vegetables, as well as favorite meat, cheeses and baked goods.
- Go to a park or other outdoor public space and people-watch.
- Take them to an outdoor concert or summer arts festival.
- Go for a drive in the country.
- Take turns reminiscing about summers from your youth.

Heatwave Hints

- Make daily checks during heatwaves to ensure the person is eating and especially drinking sufficiently. Buy them precooked foods that only require warming, and arrange for more groceries as necessary. Seek emergency medical attention if you have concerns about their physical or mental state.
- If they don't have central air conditioning, ensure they have in place – or help them to obtain – fans or window air conditioners. Encourage them to stay on the lowest possible floor of their home, preferably on the shaded side, and to open windows in the evening if there's a breeze.
- If their cooling system breaks down, arrange during a heatwave for them to stay with you, a relative or a friend whose home is climate controlled. If they decline, offer transportation to a cool public place – such as a seniors' center – so they can get some relief during the hottest part of the day.

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

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After the games, the group gets together!

Calling All Seniors... It's Time for the Pickleball Game!

By Carolyn Brenneman, Columnist
COVER: Carmen is ready for the game!

The other day, I drove through my old neighborhood in Augusta, passing by the quaint little park I used to visit. It had the usual features: a few swings for the kids and a small tennis court. But wait! It now had another large court. What I found wasn't the peaceful, quiet park I remembered... it was a lively gathering of adults... all ready to play pickleball!

For years, I've watched some of my neighbors

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Getting ready in Augusta!

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in my old neighborhood walking the streets to stay fit and healthy. But now, a different kind of fitness movement is quietly taking the neighborhood by storm; and, it's being led by none other than our silver-haired seniors. That's right, I'm talking about the pickleball movement.

Well, how did pickleball start? First of all, it began as a simple backyard game in the 1960s and now has morphed into a nationwide phenomenon. While it appeals to people of all ages, it's the senior community that has truly embraced the sport.

Pickleball is taking over retirement communities, senior centers, and fitness clubs across the country. Why are so many older adults flocking to the pickleball courts? It's more than just a passing fad—it's become a lifestyle.

So, what makes pickleball so special? It's a hybrid sport that combines elements of tennis, badminton, and ping-pong. Played on a smaller court with a lightweight paddle and a plastic ball that moves slower than a tennis ball, it's easy to learn and fun for anyone—whether you're a seasoned athlete or a complete beginner.

For seniors, this makes pickleball a game-changer. Unlike tennis, which requires fast movements and lots of running, pickleball is much less taxing on the body. It's an ideal low-impact sport for anyone with joint issues, arthritis, or mobility challenges. And since the court is smaller, you're not sprinting from one end to the other—instead, it's a more strategic game focused on placement and timing.

Pickleball doesn't take years to master either. The rules are simple, and with a little practice, anyone can

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Group of pickleball players waiting their turn!



Here they are excited to play!

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Pickleball doesn't take years to master either. The rules are simple, and with a little practice, anyone can become proficient. It's accessible and enjoyable right from the start. Just check out the pickleball court in Augusta.

So, the next time you find yourself with some free time and the weather's nice, why not give pickleball a try? It might be exactly what you need. Just be warned: once you start, it's easy to get hooked! Be sure to check out Part 2 coming up next month.



Carmen and her partner ready to play!



Prepare to start the games!

Be on the Lookout for Fake Passport Sites!

Submitted by Kelvin H. Collins, President/CEO, Better Business Bureau

Serving the Fall Line Corridor, Inc. • BBB.org/central-georgia • Office: 478.742.9034 (Direct)

OFFICES: Macon: 277 M.L. King Jr. Blvd, Ste 201, Macon, GA 31201. • Augusta: 119 Davis Road, Ste 3-B, Augusta, GA 30907
Columbus: 233 12th Street, Ste 911-B, Columbus, GA 31901

School is almost out, and summer vacation is just around the corner! If you’re gearing up for an international adventure, you may find you need to renew your passport first. While you’re getting ready to renew it, be extra cautious of fake renewal websites. These sites go to great lengths to trick you into thinking you're on an official government page.

The good news is that U.S. citizens can **renew their passports online with the U.S. Department of State** – if you meet the requirements. (If you don’t meet the requirements, you can still **renew your passport by mail**). The government doesn’t charge a fee to fill out the form – it’s available as a free download. You only pay for the passport renewal itself. So, if you come across a site asking for extra fees just to complete the form, it’s a warning sign that you’re dealing with an impostor or a third party looking to cash in on services you can do yourself.

BBB has tips to help you identify the legitimate sites, keeping your travel plans on track and avoiding the risk of handing over your personal and financial details to scammers.

First, here’s some examples of how the scam typically works:

You’ve planned an exciting international trip, so you go online and search for how to renew your passport. At the top of your search results is what appears to be the U.S. passport renewal website. The website may even be listed as "sponsored." The site tells you what forms need to be provided and that you can fill out the forms right there. You’re asked to provide your personal information, such as your social security number, home address, birth date, and much more.

After completing the form, you’re asked to pay a “processing fee” or an “application fee.” You’re then told that you’ll receive your completed form as a PDF in an email confirmation.

When you receive your confirmation email with your completed PDF form, you’re told that you still need to pay money for the actual renewal of your passport. At this moment, you may realize you’ve been scammed into paying to fill out a form instead of actually paying to renew your passport. On top of that, whoever is managing the site you were on now has very detailed information that could be used to steal your identity.

BBB Scam Tracker has received many reports of online passport renewal scams. One person shared the following experience last week:

“I was looking to renew my passport and this website first popped up. I filled in all my info (including SSN) since I thought the website was affiliated with (sic) the government. After submitting payment, I realized that they charged \$60 for them to fill out the form, which is free to do on the government website. Worried now that they have my credit card and SSN.”

Another person shared this experience: *“I went into the site assuming it was the State.gov site because it resembled it completely, including the URL. I did not notice that it ended as state.com, not state.gov. By the time I had submitted the application for my passport renewal and payment, I noticed that it was a fraud by the language on the confirmation page.”*

Here’s tips to help you avoid these types of scams:

- **Do your research.** Before renewing your passport, look up the most recent information on the renewal process. Start by checking with the **U.S. government**. Remember that you should not have to pay a fee to fill out the required forms for a passport renewal – you’ll only need to provide payment for the renewal itself. You can check the **costs of passport fees** in advance.
- **Give yourself plenty of time when renewing your passport.** Processing times for passport renewals can change often. In addition to the indicated processing times, you should also consider the time it takes for your passport to arrive at the passport agency and then be mailed back to your home address. Check **state.gov** to see current processing times and plan ahead. Giving yourself plenty of time may reduce your likelihood of searching for quicker options, some of which could be scams. You can expedite your passport renewal with the U.S. government for an extra fee, but it may still take several weeks.
- **Confirm the website’s URL before providing sensitive information.** It can be easy to click on an impostor website without noticing. Sometimes, the sponsored ads at the top of your search results can lead to these fake sites. Don’t always click on the first website you see. Remember, government websites end in .gov. Always take a closer look to be sure you’re visiting the correct URL. Scammers can trick you into thinking URLs look legitimate when they aren’t. Before typing in sensitive information, check that the website and link are secure. **Learn more about identifying fake websites.**
- **Be wary of third-party websites.** There are legitimate passport assistance services, but check with **BBB.org** and **BBB Scam Tracker** first to ensure you aren’t sharing your personal or financial information with a scammer.

BBB offers more about ways to **find secure websites and the importance of HTTPS**, and we also offer tips on **how to spot the red flags of common scams**.

Are you traveling soon? Let BBB help you prepare with these tips and watch out for **similar scams involving Trusted Traveler programs** like TSA Precheck, Global Entry, and NEXUS.

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Consumer Tips for Financial Wellness!


Submitted by Kelvin H. Collins, President/CEO, Better Business Bureau
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Achieving financial wellness is crucial for a secure and stress-free life. Whether you're looking to save more, reduce debt, or simply manage your better, practical and effective strategies can help you reach your financial goals. The following tips are designed to provide you with actionable steps to take control of your finances. By implementing these suggestions, you can build a solid foundation for financial stability, ensuring a brighter and more secure future.

- Build a Budget and Stick to It:** Creating a budget is the first step to managing your finances effectively. Use methods like cash envelopes to manage different spending categories, ensuring you stay within your means.
- Prioritize an Emergency Fund:** Start building an emergency fund to cover unexpected expenses. Even small contributions can add up over time to provide financial security when you need it most.
- Automate Your Savings:** Set up automatic transfers to your savings account to make saving effortless. Treat savings like a bill that needs to be paid each month, ensuring consistent progress toward your financial goals.
- Set Short-Term Goals:** Establishing short-term financial goals provides motivation and helps you stay focused on saving. Whether it's saving for a new gadget, having specific targets makes it easier to track your progress.
- Avoid Impulse Purchases:** Before making a purchase, wait 24 hours to determine if it's a necessity or an impulse buy. This simple strategy can reduce unnecessary spending and ensure your money is allocated wisely.
- Eliminate Credit Card Debt:** Carrying a credit card balance accrues interest and eats into your savings. Focus on paying off your credit cards in full each month to avoid unnecessary interest charges and improve your financial health.
- Protect Your Credit:** Freeze your credit to prevent unauthorized access and potential identity theft. This proactive measure adds an extra layer of protection and peace of mind.
- Evaluate Streaming and Cable Services:** Determine if you really need both streaming and cable services. Cutting back on unnecessary subscriptions can free up extra cash each month without sacrificing entertainment options.
- Plan Meals and Brownbag Lunches:** Planning a weekly menu reduces the temptation to dine out frequently, saving both time and money. Pack instead of eating out daily to cut down on food expenses and boost your savings.
- Shop with a List:** Make a list before heading to the store to avoid impulse purchases and stick to your budget. This simple practice helps you stay on essentials and prevents overspending on unnecessary items.
- Opt for Water at Meals:** Choosing water instead of pricey beverages at restaurants saves money and promotes healthier eating habits. Enjoying your meals reduces expenses while staying hydrated.
- Commit to Saving:** No matter how small, save something regularly. Consistent saving, even in modest amounts, adds up over time and contributes to financial stability and future goals.

Visit BBB Financial Wellness HQ at BBB.org for more tips to help take control of your finances, save money effectively, and work toward a brighter future.

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BBB Tip: Protecting older adults from scams, abuse!

Submitted by Kelvin H. Collins, President/CEO, Better Business Bureau

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Like many of us, older adults are often targeted by con artists. Many older victims don't ask for help until it is too late! Help your friends, family, clients, or patients avoid fraud by knowing the signs of current or impending fraud.

Warning signs that fraud may occur:

- **Frequent junk mail and spam calls.** Incoming junk mail (illegitimate sweepstakes offers, etc.) or receiving frequent calls from people offering valuable rewards or asking for charitable donations are signs that fraud could easily occur or may have already occurred.
- **Unfamiliar payments are being made.** Checks written or payments made to unfamiliar or out-of-state companies should be a red flag.
- **Acting secretly about phone calls or messages.** When someone hides or acts secretly about phone calls and messages, it could signify that they have engaged a scammer.
- **Sudden problems paying bills or buying food and other necessities.** A sudden lack of funds could mean an individual's money is being drained in some form of scam activity. The cause should be investigated to rule out fraud.

Tips for helping your loved one avoid fraud:

- **Become familiar with [common scams targeting older adults](#).** Knowing the most common tactics used to target older adults can help you more quickly identify when scams occur.
- **Emphasize the criminal nature of [telemarketing and email fraud](#).** Help your loved one learn how to identify it and help them understand that these tactics are illegal. In participating, it is possible they could be pulled into criminal activity unknowingly.
- **Encourage the person to ignore phone calls and messages that appear suspicious.** Don't reply to or click links within emails or text messages they are unfamiliar with.
- **Have a calm discussion about securing accounts and monitoring finances.** Helping older adults monitor their finances can be a great way to prevent scam activity and identify if it has occurred.
- **Help the person change their phone number.** If constant calls continue, changing the person's phone number may be worth changing. Registering the number with the [Do Not Call list](#) is a great first step, although scammers won't necessarily follow the Do-Not-Call list laws. If unsafe calls continue, it may be best to change the phone number.

The most common types of abuse are physical, emotional, financial, and verbal. The [National Council on Aging](#) says up to five million older Americans are abused yearly, and the annual loss by victims of financial abuse is estimated to be at least \$36.5 billion.

BBB recommends that family, friends, and caregivers learn the signs of abuse or neglect in older adults. Business owners dealing in the industry can share these signs with employees.

Signs of financial abuse or exploitation:

- **Lack of amenities the person could typically afford.** A sudden problem with affording the basics, especially if the person was able to in the past (with no change in income), is a sign of financial abuse or exploitation. This could be from a family member, caregiver, or con artist.
- **Giving excessive financial reimbursement or gifts for care and companionship.** Care and companionship are necessary and can take a financial toll occasionally. But if care costs drain an individual's bank account, it's time to investigate and re-assess.
- **The caregiver controls the person's money but fails to provide for their needs.** A sure sign of financial exploitation is when a caregiver fails to provide an older person with adequate supplies, food, clothing, or other necessities.
- **The caregiver is overly concerned about the person spending money.** Caregivers should be concerned with an individual's spending habits if it is damaging to their health or well-being. Still, average daily spending should not be of concern to a caregiver.
- **Unexpected or unexplainable property transfers such as a power of attorney or a new will.** These can be especially concerning when the person in care cannot comprehend the transaction or what it means. When in doubt, family and friends should look into these transactions carefully.

For additional resources for older adults and their loved ones, visit BBB's resources for older adults at BBB.org/all/older-adult-resources.

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Opinion

SEVENTY-FIVE YEARS AGO!

by Daniel W. Gatlyn, USN Ret, Minister/Journalist, dangatlyn@gmail.com

TODAY... Wednesday, June 25, 2025, the world marks a significant date – the 75th Anniversary of North Korea's invasion of South Korea. I remember well the time, and the events surrounding the perilous affair. I had recently finished two years of my three-year hitch in the Navy and was stationed in Corpus Christi, Texas. And, more recently, had helped paint the planes for the Blue Angels, who were then flying the F8F Bearcats, prop driven planes.

The news came of War Clouds in the Far East – with America making some rapid moves – the largest of which was to freeze all Active Duty Military. That meant that I was now stuck for the duration of hostilities.

This latest debacle would change my entire life... primarily meaning that I would somewhere and somehow be involved in War. And, secondly, my active duty would extend for "who knows how long?" I was faced with new decisions to make; and, I would make them forthrightly.

I immediately agreed to re-enlist for six years, in order to receive a guarantee of Tech or Service School in Memphis, Tennessee. That would mean a minimum of nine years in the Navy; or, halfway to the time of retirement. That is, if I survived the hostilities at hand. All of this, and much, much more, came to pass! Went to War more than once! And, at this writing, I am older than dirt! Wiser perhaps! Retired? Yes! But, wilted and worn beyond pleasure or treasure.

Technically, the Korean War never ended... in 2025 we, as a nation, are still entangled with perils and obstacles which haunt the most intelligent.

That's the way it was... SEVENTY FIVE YEARS AGO! AND, I WAS THERE!

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Open Streets Macon to Return This Fall!

Submitted by Kaylee Pruitt • kaylee@bikewalkmacon.com
Macon-Bibb County, Georgia

Bike Walk Macon is thrilled to announce the return of [Open Streets Macon](#) this fall with two community-powered initiatives that will temporarily transform local roads into car-free public spaces. On Sundays, [September 28](#) and [December 7](#), streets will close to motorized traffic and open to people of all ages and abilities for walking, biking, skating, playing, and connecting with neighbors. Open Streets Macon invites the entire community to reimagine how we use public streets - not just as corridors for cars, but as spaces for creativity, wellness, and togetherness. Participants are encouraged to bring bikes, skateboards, hula-hoops, pets, and a sense of fun to enjoy a day filled with music, art, fitness activities, and more.

In 2025, Bike Walk Macon is partnering with the Reimagining the Civic Commons Committee and Commissioner Paul Bronson to bring two exciting new routes to life:

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 28 | PLEASANT HILL TO BEALL’S HILL | 2 - 6 PM | 1.4 MILES

This route will connect historic neighborhoods along Monroe, Tattnall, and Oglethorpe Streets, highlighting key landmarks like the Booker T. Washington Community Center and Tattnall Square Park. The program is part of Macon’s broader Reimagining the Civic Commons initiative - a national effort to revitalize public spaces in ways that promote equity, civic engagement, and economic growth. The participating neighborhoods are central to the city’s vision of a more connected urban core.

“I’m excited that Open Streets will be returning to Pleasant Hill for the fourth time. It’s always such a fun opportunity to collaborate with our community members and enjoy our streets in a new way,” said Tonja Khabir, Pleasant Hill Neighborhood Champion.

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 7 | HOUSTON AVENUE | 2 - 5 PM | 0.8 MILE

Back by popular demand, Open Streets returns to Houston Avenue with an extended route from Newberg Avenue to Rocky Creek Road. This family-friendly celebration will spotlight community spaces like Pendleton Homes, Bruce Elementary, and several local churches and businesses - featuring live music, games, and interactive activities for all ages.

“As a commissioner, I’m proud to support organizations like Bike Walk Macon that are dedicated to pedestrian safety, enhanced mobility, and building a vibrant, healthy community through creative initiatives like Open Streets,” said District 2 Commissioner Paul Bronson.

GET INVOLVED

- **Host an Activity** - From fitness classes and dance sessions to basketball and sidewalk chalk art - community partners are invited to bring the fun! We’re looking for residents, local businesses, artists, schools, and churches to offer programming along the route. Sign up: www.openstreetsmacon.com/activitypartners.
- **Volunteer** - Volunteers make it possible to bring these streets to life! Help with setup, day of needs, community engagement, and more. Sign up: <https://www.openstreetsmacon.com/volunteer>.

For more information about Open Streets Macon and sponsorship opportunities, visit www.openstreetsmacon.com. For questions and media inquiries, contact Kaylee Pruitt at kaylee@bikewalkmacon.com or 478-832-3324.



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