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— Deanna, *Executive Professional*

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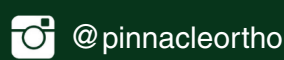
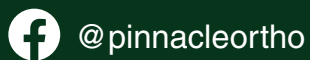
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Letter from the EDITOR

Growing up, both of my parents were teachers so my summers were surrounded by swimming pools, bicycles, grilled hot dogs and a lot of family time. Probably too much family time, at least on the days when my mother told me and my brother to go visit our neighborhood friends and not come back until the sun went down. Those early years didn't afford us lavish vacations, so we had to get creative with our summer amusements. The "OG Staycations," if you will.

Today, "Staycations" take on a bit of a different meaning, with the coronavirus still alive and well in the world and other factors making the idea of staying close to home much more appealing. Our staycation feature on page 34 provides you with some ideas, but here are some of my favorite things to do in my own backyard:

- **Walk the Mountain River Trail and visit the Marietta Square.**

I'm biased because I live less than a mile from the Square and could throw a rock at the trail but, no matter how much time I spend there, I always find something new and old. A new dish, an old friend, and a great deal of beauty and history.

- **Visit other downtown areas.** Have you been to downtown Kennesaw or Acworth lately? Their transformations are amazing! Not your grandma's dusty downtown areas anymore, both are thriving with new developments, new restaurants and new energy.

- **Hike Kennesaw Mountain.** Look, it's hot as blazes here in the summer. I know. But the trees and beauty of Kennesaw Mountain make that world-famous Georgia humidity a little easier to bear, and it still beats going to the gym.

- **Cool off at Acworth Beach.** Did you know we even had a beach? Well, you're not going to find palm trees and tiki bars at Acworth beach, but you will find a neat place to lay out, cool off and spend time with friends at our own kind of, sort of, (lake) beach.

HAPPY STAYCATIONING!

Katy Ruth Camp

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EITHER WAY YOU SLICE IT, SCOTT GRIEVE'S NEW SHOP, THE BUTCHER ON WHITLOCK, HAS WHAT YOU NEED FOR SUMMER GRILLIN' AND SIPPIN'

BY KATY RUTH CAMP AND HUNTER RIGGALL

Where can you find A5 Wagyu beef, foie gras, Osetra caviar and organic, Georgia-grown mushrooms in one place? The answer, for Cobb County residents, is The Butcher on Whitlock, which opened its doors in the Burnt Hickory Village shopping center earlier this year.

The store sells high-end beef, pork, chicken, seafood, lamb, game birds and charcuterie shipped from around the world. Also on offer are local craft beer, wine, seasonings, marinades, charcoal, kitchen accessories and a limited selection of produce.

"We wanted to create a spot here that gives people the opportunity to get the highest quality products — the stuff that they would get at the best steak houses in America," said owner Scott Grieve.

Grieve, who has worked in the food industry since he was a 15-year-old dishwasher, is betting his store becomes a one-stop shop for home chefs seeking to entertain guests or cook up a memorable date night. Since they opened their doors in February, Grieve said he has been pleasantly surprised by the number of customers — and returning customers — the shop has seen, and only expects that to grow during Father's Day and summer festivities.

After climbing the ladder in the restaurant business and working as a chef at places like Hotel Nikko (now the Grand Hyatt Atlanta in Buckhead) and the Occidental Grand Hotel (now the Four Seasons Hotel Atlanta), Grieve left the kitchens in 2005. He worked for himself, selling and brokering food products around the southeast.

His business, Preferred Fine Foods, was a wholesale dis-



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tributor, with “98 percent” of its clients being event-driven facilities, particularly hotels. Many of its products were handmade, “labor-intensive” hors d’oeuvres sold to hotels, Grieve said.

“Come March ... COVID really decimated our business,” Grieve said. “We were down well over 80 percent ... although some restaurant business is kind of coming back, hotels are really struggling.”

Friends of Grieve had opened similar high-end butcher’s shops in Jacksonville, Florida and Spartan-



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burg, South Carolina and been successful. Realizing he had to get out of hotel industry, and after much research, Grieve decided to go the high-end grocery route.

A steady stream of customers files in and out of the store at almost all hours. Grieve assists with cutting and weighing meats, but also uses his status as a gourmet chef to recommend pairings, such as advising one customer to purchase some membrillo — a sweet jelly made from quince fruit — to accompany the Manchego cheese he was buying.

Grieve said food education was part of his goal with the store.




“Whether you’re super knowledgeable about what’s in here or you know nothing, we want everyone to be comfortable,” he said.

Philadelphia native Grieve and his wife, mortgage loan officer Nancy Grieve, have spent time in Vermont, where Scott taught at the New England Culinary Institute. They moved to the Atlanta area, where Nancy grew up, in 1990. The couple raised their children in Gwinnett and moved to Marietta four years ago. It was important to the Grieves to open the store within Marietta city limits.

“We love the community here. We spend a lot of time up on the Square, we know a lot of people,” Nancy Grieve said.

Scott Grieve said his products are worth the price because of their quality and consistency. The shop’s products will come from the same trusted supplier, not change from week to week. Grieve also stresses the importance of properly aged beef. He has a policy that no meat is sold without at least 21 days of aging, which tenderizes and creates flavor.

“If you were to come here and want a ribeye, and my ribeye doesn’t have enough age on it, I’m not going to sell you a ribeye,” Grieve said. “I’m going to get you to buy something else, because I don’t want you to have a bad experience.” 

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From Butcher on Whitlock customer Jon Styf of Marietta:

"From premium steaks to large portions of pork to Key West shrimp or tenderloin kabobs, The Butcher on Whitlock is our go-to spot before cookouts. I haven't lived here long, but it's already one of my favorite spots to stop.

The staff knows the business inside and out and have a great rapport with customers. They're helpful and the back-and-forth is always fun.

They also have the extras we're looking for, like truffle butter to go with baked potatoes, fresh mushrooms and veggies and craft beers.

We already have a lot of fun family memories that The Butcher has played an important part in and I can only imagine more of those in the future."



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MAPLE SUGAR BBQ PORK RIBS RECIPE

ERICA KEY is a Smyrna resident and loves having dinner at C&S Seafood & Oyster Bar, enjoys brunching at Paces & Vine, and relishes in sipping a cocktail or two at Elevation Chophouse. Erica regularly features restaurants, wine, chefs, and entertaining tips on her food blog, *Eating with Erica*. Visit eatingwithERICA.com for more recipes and metro Atlanta foodie news.

Summertime is my favorite time to grill. There is nothing better than long summer nights, cold drinks, hot ribs and entertaining with friends to set the scene for an ideal Georgia summer barbecue.

I personally enjoy cooking with pork for a couple of reasons: first, the flavor of the meat. Its natural flavor is so delicious, it doesn't require much seasoning. Second, pork is convenient to cook and can be easily prepared. Its versatility allows for the use of different cooking methods to fit any lifestyle.

I love this maple sugar BBQ pork ribs recipe because pork ribs are so tender. The meat will definitely fall right off the bone, and the barbecue sauce is sweet and savory. These ribs pair really well with corn on the cob, macaroni and cheese and/or salad.

This recipe provides the best combination of salty and sweet, so make sure you bookmark this recipe for all your summer entertaining needs.

MAPLE SUGAR BBQ PORK RIBS

Ingredients

4 pounds pork ribs
1/3 cup maple syrup
3/4 cup brown sugar
1/2 teaspoon chili powder
1 teaspoon paprika
1/2 teaspoon salt
Salt and pepper (to taste)
1/2 teaspoon mustard powder
1 tablespoon apple cider vinegar
2 tablespoons Worcestershire sauce

DIRECTIONS

- Place ribs in a large pot and cover with water, then simmer for one hour or until the meat is tender.
- Drain. Transfer the ribs to a shallow dish.
- In a small saucepan, stir together maple syrup, brown sugar, ketchup, vinegar, Worcestershire sauce, salt, and mustard powder.
- Bring to a low boil and cook for five minutes, stirring frequently.
- Cool slightly, then pour over ribs and marinate in the refrigerator for two hours.
- Prepare grill for cooking with indirect heat.
- Remove ribs from marinade.
- Transfer marinade to a small saucepan and boil for several minutes.
- Lightly oil grill grate. Cook for about 20 minutes and baste with the cooked marinade frequently until nicely glazed.
- Serve and enjoy!



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PLEASE TAKE YOUR SEATS

***Is intermission over
for Cobb's entertainment
venues? Leaders are
optimistic, but cautious***

BY CHART RIGGALL AND KATY RUTH CAMP



The Earl and Rachel Smith Strand Theatre has yard signs reading "I support the Strand" for sale to help bolster struggling revenues during the pandemic.

PHOTO SPECIAL TO COBB LIFE

THE LAST 14 MONTHS HAVE BEEN DARK DAYS FOR LOCAL THEATERS.

Literally.

The lobby chandeliers have not been able to illuminate friends and fans during an intermission popcorn break. The spotlights have collected dust. The bright stage lights that once illuminated performers could very well be dead. With no one needing them to guide their way, the aisle floor lights have lost their use.

The coronavirus pandemic caused a great deal of uncertainty for nearly everyone and every industry. Once flourishing businesses and restaurants and Mom-and-Pop stores had to close their doors for good, unable to withstand the financial hit of having to close those doors to customers for an undetermined amount of time.

In the past few months, however, those who have been

able to reopen their doors have done so, with (some) still following safety guidelines such as keeping customers 6 feet apart and sanitizing their spaces thoroughly and often. But what does a business whose entire business model is dependent upon many people being in one space, at the same time, in close proximity to one another, do to thrive and survive?

That is the problem many local theaters and live performance venues have faced and, in the same vein as their industry, have had to get creative to solve.

One of those venues is the Earl and Rachel Smith Strand Theatre, the beloved historic theatre on the Marietta Square. At this point, Strand General Manager Andy Gaines said he is done making predictions.

"One thing I have learned during this time is not to try to figure out what's going to happen," Gaines said.

And he doesn't expect the loosening of COVID-19 restrictions by Gov. Brian Kemp in April to change that

DESPITE AN END TO THE GATHERINGS BAN, STRAND GENERAL MANAGER ANDY GAINES SAID THERE'S A LONG WAY TO GO BEFORE MARIETTA'S HISTORIC VENUE RETURNS TO ANYTHING RESEMBLING NORMAL OPERATIONS.



Strand Theatre General Manager Andy Gaines has adopted the mantra on his theater's marquee that "This is just intermission."

PHOTO BY MANDA COSTOULAS



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overnight. The latest executive order, which took effect April 8, ended the statewide ban on large gatherings and reduced many of the social distancing requirements for restaurants and venues.

Despite an end to the gatherings ban, Gaines said there's a long way to go before Marietta's historic venue returns to anything resembling normal operations.

"I don't want to put a date on anything, because we don't know what's going to happen," he said. The Strand's board is still actively reviewing Kemp's order and coordinating with local public health officials to determine which guidelines are most appropriate for their business.

"Now, one says three feet (of distancing) if you're a movie theater, one says six feet if you're a live performance venue," he said. "We're going to stick with the more restrictive (guidelines) in that fashion, until we feel comfortable changing it."



Michele Swann, general manager of the Cobb-Marietta Coliseum and Exhibit Hall Authority, poses for a photo at the Cobb Galleria Centre.

PHOTO SPECIAL TO COBB LIFE

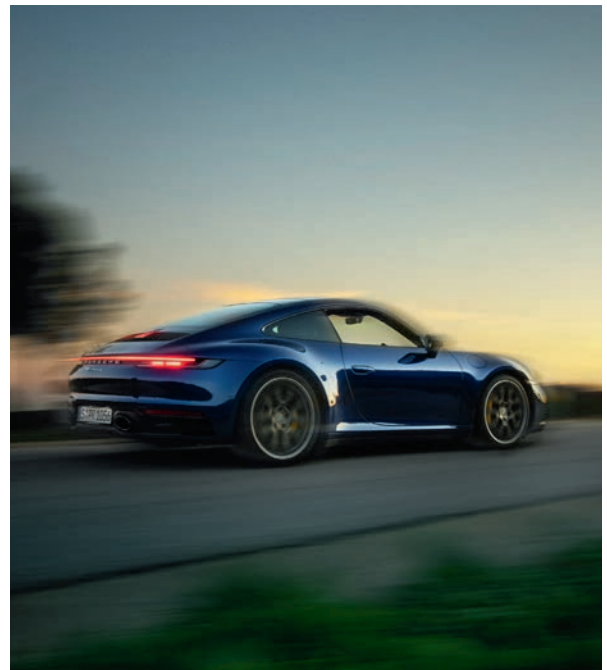
Across Cobb, venue operators shared a similar message—while they're glad to have the opportunity to ramp up operations, they're wary of rushing back to full capacity.

"You have to really drill down to discern which sections really apply to what we do," said Michele Swann, general manager of the Cobb-Marietta Coliseum and Exhibit Hall Authority, which oversees the Cobb Galleria Centre and Cobb Energy Performing Arts Centre.

Throughout its 41 events from last July to this April, Swann says the Galleria had been stringent about its health and safety protocols, and was heavily promoting those efforts to try to boost confidence from clients and patrons.

The Coca-Cola Roxy, owned and operated by Live Nation, started holding socially-distanced, limited capacity concerts last October.

"Coca-Cola Roxy was the very first Live Nation venue in the country to reopen for live music," said Karen Abernathy, marketing director for The Battery Atlanta. "They were the test for the entire Live Nation company ... and hopefully, we'll get back to the big shows later this year."



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Vickie Hubbard and Tom Rowland of the Cobb Energy Performing Arts Centre pose before the venue's 2,750 seats, which have sat empty for the past year. Rowland said he hopes their reputation as a top-notch venue will help attract top-notch talent when CEPAC reopens some time this fall.

PHOTO BY CHART RIGGALL



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Over at the Performing Arts Centre, things have moved a bit more slowly. Swann and her team have set a rough goal to resume indoor, in-person events in the fall, but that remains an ever-moving target.

"We could open up our doors tomorrow," Swann said. "But is there anybody that is touring, that we would book in our space right now? Probably not."

Aside from the disadvantage of being an indoor operation, another complicating factor is the sheer number of people it takes to put on a large-scale musical or theatrical production.

"Ballet dancers belong to a union, musicians belong to a union, then you've got stage hands. So you've got a lot of different layers of approval that have to all come together, not to exclude the artists themselves," Swann said.

In the meantime, the Performing Arts Centre has played host to the Atlanta Opera's outdoor productions of "The Threepenny Carmen" and "The Threepenny Opera," held under a large, open-sided circus tent.

Tom Rowland, the Performing Arts Centre's



Raul Thomas, owner of Marietta's New Theater in the Square
PHOTO SPECIAL TO COBB LIFE

marketing director, said the venue's reputation among performers as a top-notch facility for its size should ensure a steady stream of artists as the venue reopens.

While many operators said they're still taking things one day at a time, Raul Thomas—owner of Marietta's New Theater in the Square—is feeling more confident than ever.

"We are going to open up, hell or high water, June 4," Thomas said. He believes increasing vaccination rates and a hunger for live entertainment will allow the theater to ride a wave of demand through the summer.

"We're going to open up with Motown Motor City Revue. Instead of doing multiple shows, as we've done in the past, we're going to run that for three months," Thomas added. "The idea is if we get restricted, or we get pushed back ... we don't take the hit as hard as we've been taking it."

Ideally, Thomas wants to have at least 75% capacity, but he's not about to cut corners on his safety protocols either.

"It's all about gaining the confidence of the client," he said, "being able to make sure that they feel comfortable." ■



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HIDE AND GO FORTH

MARIETTA LEATHER GOODS PURVEYOR GO FORTH GOODS CERTAINLY DEALS IN THE GOOD STUFF (ESPECIALLY HIDES)

BY KATY RUTH CAMP | PHOTOS BY HADLEY(S) PHOTOGRAPHY

IN LATE APRIL, Go Forth Goods Founder Nathan Martin was sitting behind his desk at his office in Marietta, typing furiously with a sense of urgency.

“You’re not going to believe this, we just launched our spring and summer colors and the thumbnails for the colors aren’t even up yet and people have already bought a ton! I’ve got to get these colors up,” he said.




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The fact that his loyal following of leather goods lovers were quick to jump should come as no surprise. Martin said the company is grossing, on average, \$100,000-plus a month. The only problem Martin has these days is hiring people to help him keep up with the demand.

"Good problem to have, I suppose," he said, smiling.

But Martin wasn't smiling in 2014 when the leather strap on his cheap duffle bag from Target broke on him, just days before a family vacation. He tried to find a replacement, but couldn't find anything American-made that was also durable enough to last him for many, many years.

"So I figured, you know, I could probably make a better bag than this. Find good American leather, figure it out and make my own. So I did," he said.

And with that, a business was born.

In March of 2014, Martin had spent 15 years working in marketing when he started his side hustle, making leather goods by hand from his home in Marietta. By June, Martin said he was selling \$4,500 a month in leather goods. That December, he sold \$15,000 worth of goods and was able to buy a small hydraulic press to cut the leather.



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"I invested every dime I made right back into it," he said.

That May, he was able to hire his first employee and by May 2015, Martin said he was doing \$30,000 a month in sales.

He opened his first brick-and-mortar shop off Whitlock Avenue in November of 2016, where he was able to hire more staff, get better equipment, set up a storefront and have more space to make the goods.

At the time, Martin said he was traveling a lot, selling his work at shows, but decided to shift his focus to the digital space to spend more time with his family and create an easier business operation.

"I'd say, like, 97% of our sales are online. It's crazy. But we put a ton of money into marketing. We had our biggest year yet during the pandemic

because we were focusing on online sales way before that. By the end of 2019, we were probably at 60 percent online and 40 percent retail and shows. But I was done with shows, they're exhausting. So I had to figure it out," he said.



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**“I have learned
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In September of 2020, Martin moved his operation from the 1,500-square-foot Whitlock Avenue space to a 4,000-square-foot space off of Franklin Road. And, although most people become Go Forth Goods followers online, the space is open to shop and Martin will even give you a tour of the space so you can see the magic happen.



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Go Forth Goods, which Martin derived from “Go Forth and Do Good,” honors others who do good by giving back 10% of its profits to nonprofits. The collection includes purses, duffle bags, wallets, brief cases, belts, watch straps – essentially, if it’s something that can be made with leather, he probably has it. The company uses only the best full-grain, American-sourced cow leather and hand-peened solid brass and copper rivets. The goods are also hand-stitching with waxed thread, to make sure they last for years to come.

“I loved the idea of bringing back good, old-fashioned American goods, stuff like our grandparents used,” he said. “I want it to last and get better with time, not break on you when you need it most. Although I guess that worked out pretty well for me.”

For more information on Go Forth Goods, visit the online shop at goforthgoods.com or the actual shop at 810 Franklin Court, Suite H, Marietta, GA 30067. 

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BY KATY RUTH CAMP

PHOTOS BY KATY RUTH CAMP AND ALEKS GILBERT

It's a tale of two lows for Cobb County's housing market right now – low inventory and low interest rates. The two lows have combined to create an all-time high for residential real estate, one that has created a seller's market this summer like no one has ever seen before.





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MARIETTA - CITY OF AUSTELL - SOUTH FULTON

"Sellers are getting the best prices they ever could have even dreamed of getting right now," said Wendy Bunch, the broker and owner of Re/MAX PURE on the Marietta Square. "I've been an agent for 25 years and I've never seen a market like this. No agent has ever seen a market like this."

According to data supplied by Bunch from the Multiple Listing Service in late April, only 14 homes were on the market in Cobb County for under \$200,000. And only 50 homes in Cobb were listed for under \$250,000.

"Usually, that number would be in the thousands. The thousands! As the seller's agent, I've seen contracts go for as much as \$70,000 over the listing price with no contingencies – not on inspections, appraisals, nothing. They just want to get to closing, and will pay the difference between the contract price and appraisal if that's what it takes. They just figure because interest rates are so low, they can make up the difference over time," Bunch said.

According to W.D. Little Mortgage Owner/President Mary Ansley Southerland, who has been a mortgage broker for the Marietta-based firm for



“Sellers are getting the best prices they ever could have even dreamed of getting right now. I’ve been an agent for 25 years and I’ve never seen a market like this. No agent has ever seen a market like this.”

Wendy Bunch

*Broker and owner of Re/MAX PURE
on the Marietta Square*

nearly 40 years, now is also a good time to buy or refinance - if you can get under contract. Southerland said that, in late April, 30-year fixed rates were hovering around 2.75% while 15-year rates were as low as 1.75%, with good credit (740 or higher).

“We’re refinancing people who refinanced just last year,” Southerland said, while advising that anyone with a 30-year rate above 3.25% should look into refinancing.

According to data supplied by Carson Matthews, senior vice president and broker of Vinings-based Dorsey Alston Realtors, Cobb’s housing market is seeing record lows in inventory, while houses are on the market for about half the time as they were last year and are selling for more money.

Matthews said Cobb’s active listings over the first three months of 2021 were down 61% from the same time frame in 2020, while homes were on the market an average of 49 days in 2020 compared to 27 days year-to-date with a 17% increase in average sales price year-to-date.

Southerland said the issue of low inventory could be attributed to a number of reasons. Some who were

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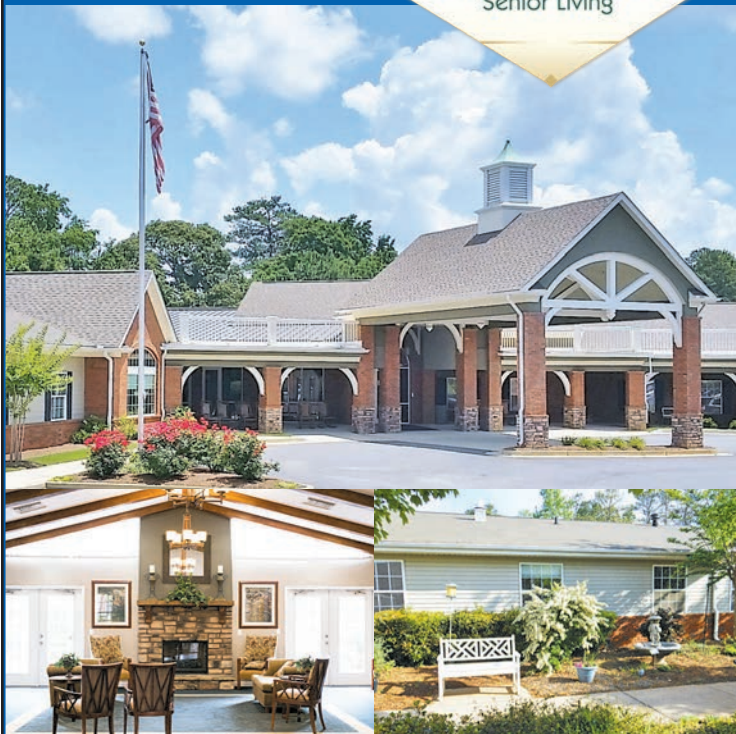


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upside down on their mortgages before or after the Great Recession could be weary of jumping into another high-debt situation. Others may have just renovated their homes to fit their needs and therefore do not want to move. But the biggest issue, she said: “If you sell, where do you go?”

She described the seller’s dilemma like “the cat chasing its tail.” Although sellers can get unbelievable prices on their homes, they will then enter the same seller’s market they just took advantage of if they are looking to buy another home.

Bunch said she has advised some of her clients who have wanted to sell without immediately having a contract on another home to enter into short-term rental agreements, especially in areas of metro Atlanta where they might be wanting to move or have always wanted to live.

“Some of my clients have rented an Airbnb for a few weeks or months so, as soon as they see something and put in an offer, they’re ready to close. Right now, I’ve got one family in Smyrna, one on Lake Allatoona and one in Buckhead. It makes you more aggressive and appealing as a buyer. No one is going to take a contingency on selling your home right now. A lot of people aren’t even taking loan offers – they’re



WENDY BUNCH

Owner of Re/MAX PURE on the Marietta Square



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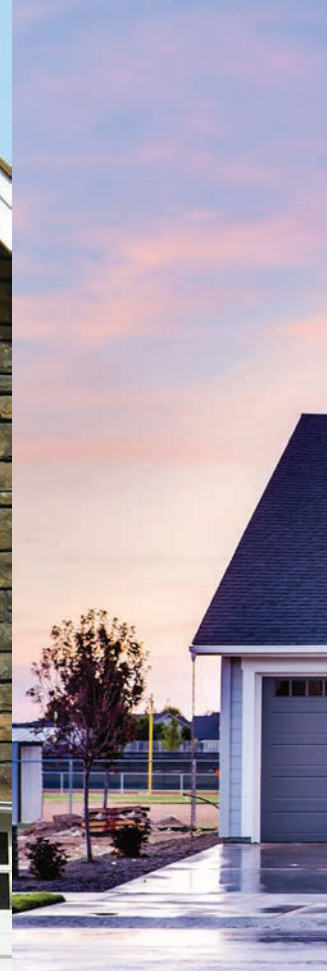
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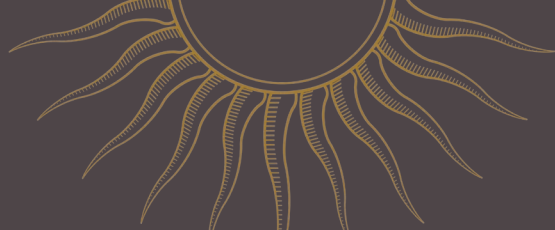
getting into bidding wars with full cash offers," Bunch said.

Both Southerland and Bunch advised prospective buyers – especially first-time homebuyers – to use seasoned brokers and agents and have a pre-qualification from a strong lender.

"I'm seeing every butcher, baker and candlestick maker getting into real estate or mortgages right now, but you really don't need some novice person helping you with your financing or contracts. That's disaster soup," Southerland said.

"You have to have someone who can write the right contracts and have a good plan and strategy for your contracts," Bunch added. "I've had a lot of buyers call us because they felt their agents weren't aggressive enough, but you have to expect to lose out on offers right now. You might see a dozen houses before you get an offer accepted. We've written contracts and didn't get them – everyone has – so just be patient. You'll find the right house. But you need someone who knows what they're doing to get you there because it's like the Wild Wild West out here."

And, unlike the Great Recession, both Bunch and Southerland said this market boom is not going to lead to a horrible crash. At the end of April, local



“I’m seeing every butcher, baker and candlestick maker getting into real estate or mortgages right now, but you really don’t need some novice person helping you with your financing or contracts. That’s disaster soup.”

Mary Ansley Southerland
W.D. Little Mortgage Owner/President

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economist Roger Tutterow predicted interest rates will stay low until at least the third quarter of 2022.

“The crash was caused by lot of people who got into houses with no down payments and didn’t have anything to lose by walking away or jumping ship and allowing the home to foreclose when they got upside down,” Southerland said. “I don’t see that happening right now. There’s too much equity at play here, too much money tied up in it. Buyers are putting real money into it, so they’re not going to walk away from real money that they’ve forked over, and definitely not an incredibly low interest rate.”

“We will never go back to where we were in the recession,” Bunch added. “Rent has gotten so high, some people figure they can pay \$30,000 over asking price at 2.5% and their payment will still be cheaper than renting. I’ve been through it all – short sales, foreclosures, high rates, low rates – and I tell anyone who bought a house for under \$300,000 to keep it as long as they can. We’re fortunate that our county is so strong with great schools and amenities, people will always be moving into Cobb. But whatever you’re in right now, you better like! Because you’ll never get an interest rate like this, ever.” 

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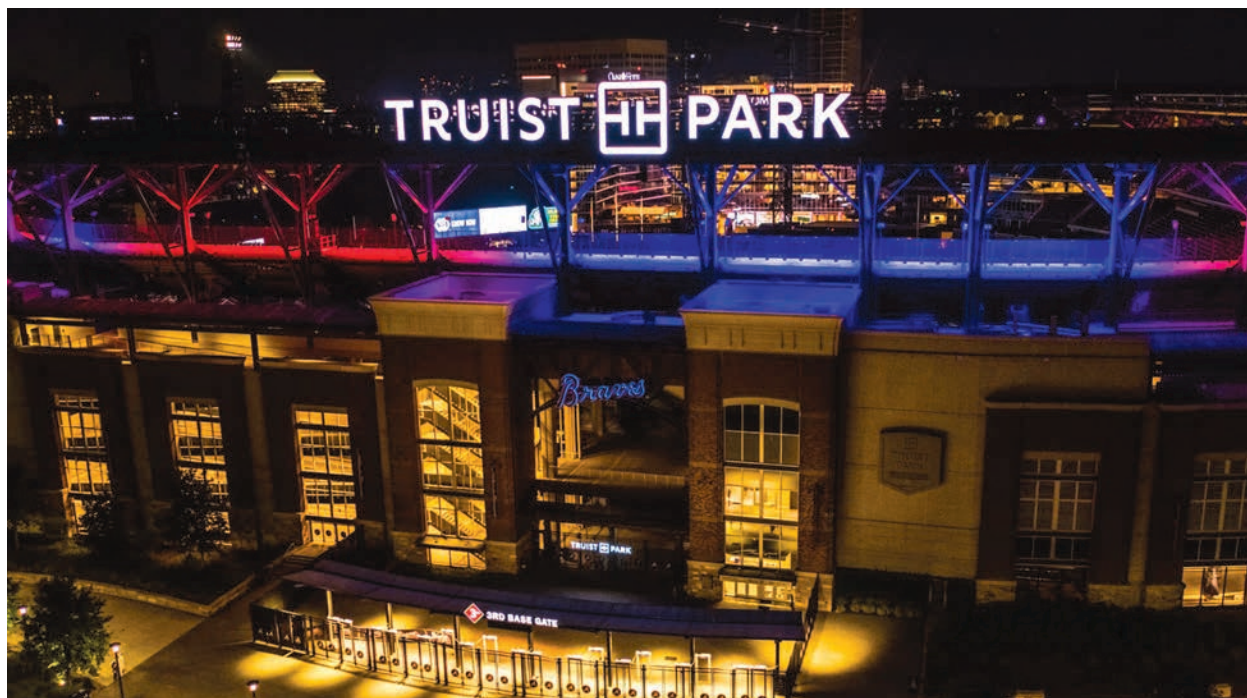
Although vaccinations have brought some ease to travelers, many Cobb residents might still be looking to their own backyards for fun, easy “getaways.” Vacations at home, also commonly nicknamed “staycations,” are growing in popularity as safe, easy, cheap and fun alternatives to the typical out-of-state trips.

Luckily, Cobb is Atlanta’s sweet spot for restaurants, entertainment, and attractions that are perfect for singles, couples, families and friend groups of all ages and sizes. Planning a staycation in Cobb? Be sure to check out these ideas for an extra sweet experience:



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at **Truist Park** and the **Battery Atlanta**, home to the Atlanta Braves, this state-of-the-art 41,000-seat ballpark offers stunning views, food-worthy concessions, and lots of fun activities for the entire family. It truly is the perfect marriage of classic ballpark feel, modern amenities and southern hospitality.

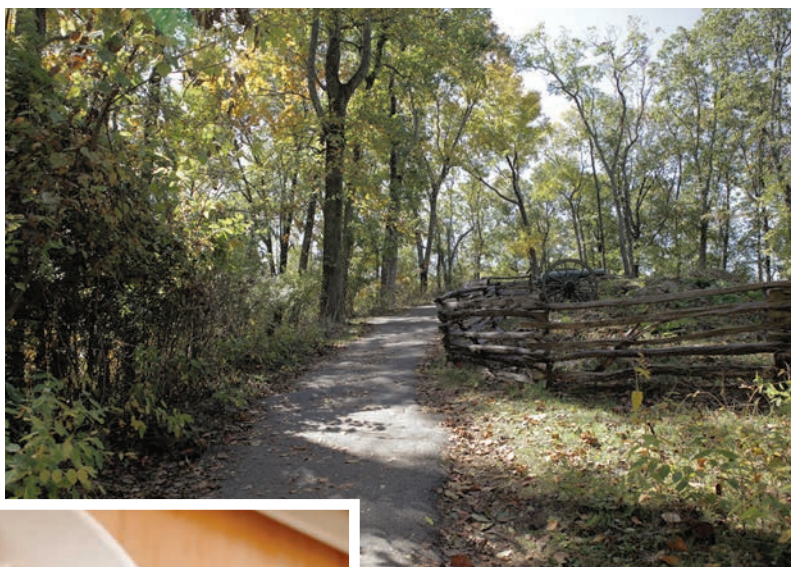




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the 3,000+ plant species on display at **Smith-Gilbert Gardens**, visitors can enjoy bonsai trees, roses, crevices and a seasonal Butterfly House. Spend the day exploring nature – perfect for the whole family.

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Top Free Things TO DO IN COBB

Nothing's sweeter than experiencing the authentic character of Cobb County, Ga. without spending a dime. Here are just a few free ideas of what you can do in your free time.



HOW TO SHOOT THE HOOCH

Want to "Shoot the Hooch" this summer but not sure how? Or have you already been tubing but want some secret tips? Whether you decide to B.Y.O.T. (bring your own tube) or use a rental service, this guide will equip you with everything you need to know for a fun-filled journey along Cobb County's eastern border, The Chattahoochee River.

GUIDE FOR SELF-SERVICE TUBERS

Shootin' the Hooch is a must-do experience for anyone visiting Atlanta or just encountering the South's notorious summer heat. The most popular entry and exit points surrounding Cobb County are Johnson Ferry, Powers Island, and Paces Mill. These are all part of the Chattahoochee National Recreation Area and provide other recreation opportunities (hiking, biking etc.) as well.

POPULAR ROUTES:

Johnson Ferry to Powers Island – 3.5 miles or 4-5 hours. Drift through a cool, gentle current alongside colorful granite outcroppings and wooded banks.

Powers Island to Paces Mill – 2.5 miles or 3-4 hours. Known for a faster current, some gentle class 2 rapids and landmarks like Jump Rock and Sandbar Beach.

Johnson Ferry to Paces Mill – 6 miles 6-7 hours. Combine the best of both floats on this all-day adventure.

**Note that time does vary based on water conditions and stops you make along the way.*

WHAT YOU WILL NEED:

The Tube – You can get your own gear for practically the same price as a one-time rental. Opt for a classic tube or go fancy with extra features and cool designs! A double tube instantly creates a fun date activity. Some tubes even have built-in coolers for your drinks (It also helps to have a pump to fill your tube quickly.)

Life Jacket (PFD as the pros call it) – You MUST have one with you. It's the law and the river is patrolled. Anyone over 13 isn't required to wear one but you still need to have it with you.

A Second Car – You will need a way to get back to the entry point, so make sure you drop off a car at the endpoint before you start your journey.

\$5.00 – Parking at Chattahoochee National Recreation Areas costs \$5.

Water (and maybe some snacks) – Depending on the route you decide to take, you could be spending the majority of the day on the river. Stay hydrated and energized!

Sunblock/Sunglasses – The water may be cool, but the sun is hot! Keep yourself protected from harsh rays.

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Top Free Things TO DO IN COBB

HOW TO SHOOT THE HOOCH

GUIDE FOR RENTERS

Renting is a great option for visitors or first time floaters. Nearby rental companies provide a plethora of options including tubes, kayaks, paddleboards, rafts and more! They also provide convenient shuttles to take you back to your car at the end of the trip.

Nantahala Outdoor Center – NOC rents dual-chambered and closed-bottom tubes at Johnson Ferry and Powers Island. Both Atlanta tubing trips showcase the Chattahoochee's colorful granite outcroppings, wooded banks and cool, gentle current. Each tube accommodates one person and is offered in a small or large size. Tube rental includes tube, shuttle, and personal flotation device (PFD).

WHAT YOU WILL NEED:

\$5 – Parking at Chattahoochee National Recreation Areas costs \$5.

Water (and maybe some snacks) – Depending on the route you decide to take, you could be spending the majority of the day on the river. Stay hydrated and energized!

Sunblock/sunglasses – The water may be cool, but the sun is hot! Keep yourself protected from harsh rays.

Tips from The Hooch Experts

- The National Park service will not allow anyone under the age of five on the river.
- Water temps are a tad chilly, usually between 55 and 65 degrees. Great for summer, but not so great for spring or fall.
- No glass or Styrofoam is allowed on the river.
- Check and double check the weather.
- Leave your towels and dry clothes in the car (at the end point if you took two cars).
- Don't forget to bring the car keys (both sets if you have an end-point car)!
- Rope will be handy to tie your tubes together.
- Water shoes are not required, but are helpful.
- Check for bacteria levels before you head out.
- The water levels change constantly. Call 1-855-DAM-FLOW to check first.
- Be mindful of your exit point. No one wants to be "rescued."

With accommodations ranging from full-service high-rise hotels and comfortable suite properties to friendly motels and quaint bed and breakfast inns, residents interested in planning their staycation can play all day and rest easy for the next adventure. For more information or staycation ideas, visit travelcobb.org.



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Test your endurance by biking, running, or in-line skating the 60-mile trail. This trail runs through the southern part of the county, beginning in Smyrna, and follows the abandoned railroad line once traveled by the Silver Comet passenger train.



RELAX IN HISTORIC MARIETTA SQUARE

Anchored by Glover Park, Marietta Square is a great place to have a picnic lunch or relax and read a good book. Free concerts are held here throughout the summer. The Marietta Square farmer's market is open Saturday mornings during the months of May-August. Find great deals on fruits, vegetables, jellies, flowers, local honey and much more. Roaming around Marietta is a fun and free way to spend an afternoon.

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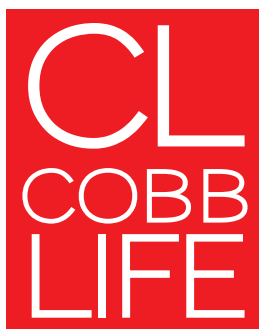
ENJOY A DAY AT THE LAKE

Lake Acworth is a popular site for walking, biking, picnics, live music, canoing, and much more. Unwind from a busy day of sightseeing on Acworth Beach.



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Take advantage of the Cobb County Historic driving tour Brochure, which consists of three separate routes that take you through historic Cobb County.



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July 2021 - Food & Drink Issue	6/27/2021	5/19/2020
Football Kickoff 2021	8/15/2021	7/7/2021
September 2021 - Fall Issue	8/29/2021	7/28/2021
2021-2022 Cobb Factbook	9/26/2021	8/23/2021
November 2021 - Pets Issue	10/24/2021	9/25/2021

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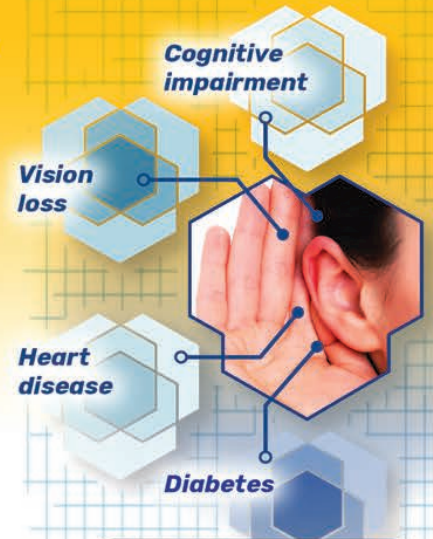
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ALBUMS

★ ROCK CANDY SWEET

Lana Del Rey
June 1

Fresh off the release of her sixth studio album, *Chemtrails Over The Country Club* — a meditation on fame, suburbia, being wild, falling in love, and more — singer-songwriter Lana Del Rey revealed she already had her eyes set on new music. As much as Del Rey loves California, love, and Americana, she has a bone to pick with music media. Music critics have drawn the ire of Del Rey, especially in the past two years. “Just want to say thank you again for the kind articles and for reminding me that my career was built on cultural appropriation and glamorizing domestic abuse,” she wrote on her Instagram story. “I will continue to challenge those thoughts on my next record June 1 titled *Rock Candy Sweet*.”

★ HARDWARE

Billy F. Gibbons
June 4

ZZ Top frontman Billy F. Gibbons has announced details of his third solo album,

Hardware. Guns ‘N’ Roses, Velvet Revolver and The Cult drummer Matt Sorum plays on the album as part of a core band featuring guitarist Austin Hanks. There’s a guest appearance on the standout track “Stackin’ Bones” by soulful rock duo Larkin Poe. “We holed up in the desert for a few weeks in the heat of the summer and that in itself was pretty intense,” Gibbons said. “To let off steam we just ‘let it rock’ and that’s what *Hardware* is really all about. For the most part, it’s a raging rocker but always mindful of the desert’s implicit mystery.”

★ FRONT PORCH SINGIN’

Oak Ridge Boys
June 11

Grammy Award-winning and Country Music Hall of Fame members The Oak Ridge Boys announced their new album, *Front Porch Singin’* — their fourth collaboration with Grammy Award-winning producer, Dave Cobb. *Front Porch Singin’* draws optimism to both the present and the future while showcasing many of the simple things in life that may have been taken for granted until recently. “We were sitting in the studio when David Cobb walked in and asked, ‘If you were sitting on the front porch, just singing songs you know, what might you sing?’ Well, we started singing ‘The Unclouded Day’ ... and

he said, ‘Let’s go to the microphones.’ That’s how this album was recorded,” said lead singer Duane Allen.

STREAMING & MORE

★ THE CONJURING: THE DEVIL MADE ME DO IT

June 4
HBO Max

The Devil Made Me Do It reveals a chilling story of terror, murder and unknown evil that shocked even experienced real-life paranormal investigators Ed and Lorraine Warren. One of the most sensational cases from their files, it starts with a fight for the soul of a young boy, then takes them beyond anything they’d ever seen before, to mark the first time in U.S. history that a murder suspect would claim demonic possession as a defense. Patrick Wilson and Vera Farmiga will be reprising their roles. The film will serve as a sequel to 2013’s *The Conjuring* and 2016’s *The Conjuring 2*, and as the eighth installment overall in the franchise.

In The Heights

TURN UP THE VOLUME ON YOUR DREAMS



★ IN THE HEIGHTS

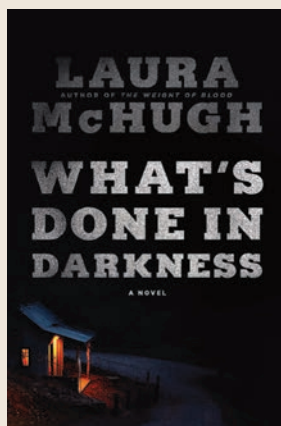
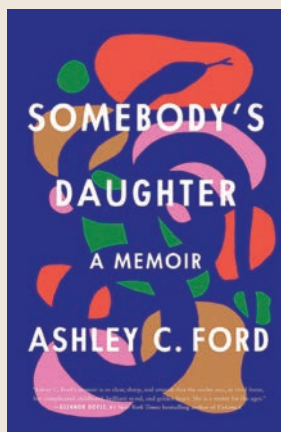
June 11
HBO Max

In the Heights centers on a variety of characters living in the neighborhood of Washington Heights on the northern tip of Manhattan. At the center of the show is Usnavi, a bodega owner who looks after the aging Cuban lady next door, pines for the gorgeous girl working in the neighboring beauty salon and dreams of winning the lottery and escaping to the shores of his native Dominican Republic. Ultimately, Usnavi and the residents of the close-knit neighborhood get a dose of what it means to be home. In the Heights is based on the 2007 stage musical of the same name by Hudes and Lin-Manuel Miranda.

★ LOKI

June 11
Disney+

After stealing the Tesseract during the events of Avengers: Endgame, Loki is brought to the mysterious Time Variance Authority organization and their Time-Keepers, and is forced to fix several timelines he broke, while traveling through time altering human history, ending up trapped in his own crime thriller. Tom Hiddleston reprises his role as Loki from the film series. Owen Wilson, Gugu Mbatha-Raw and Wunmi Mosaku also star.



★ OUR WOMAN IN MOSCOW

By Beatriz Williams

June 1

In the autumn of 1948, Iris Digby vanishes from her London home with her American diplomat husband and their two children. The world is shocked by the family's sensational disappearance. Four years later, Ruth Macallister receives a postcard from the twin sister she hasn't seen since their catastrophic parting in Rome in the summer of 1940, as war engulfed the continent and Iris fell desperately in love with an enigmatic United States Embassy official named Sasha Digby. Within days, Ruth is on her way to Moscow, posing as the wife of counterintelligence agent Sumner Fox in a precarious plot to extract the Digbys from behind the Iron Curtain.

★ SOMEBODY'S DAUGHTER: A MEMOIR

By Ashley C. Ford

June 1

For as long as she could remember, Ashley has put her father on a pedestal. Despite having only vague memories of seeing him face-to-face, she believes he's the only person in the entire world who understands her. She thinks she understands him too. He's sensitive like her, an artist, and maybe even just as afraid of the dark. She's certain that one day they'll be reunited again, and she'll finally feel complete. There are just a few problems: he's in prison, and she doesn't know what he did to end up there. As Ashley battles her body and her environment, she provides a poignant coming-of-age recollection that speaks to finding the threads between who you are and what you were born into, and the complicated familial love that often binds them.

★ WHAT'S DONE IN DARKNESS

By Laura McHugh

June 22

Seventeen-year-old Sarabeth has become increasingly rebellious since her parents found God and moved their family to a remote Arkansas farmstead. She's all but given up on escaping the farm when a masked man appears one morning and snatches her out of the cornfield. A week after her abduction, she's found alive alongside a highway in a bloodstained dress, but her family treats her like she's tainted. Five years later, Sarabeth is struggling to keep her past buried when investigator Nick Farrow calls. Convinced her case is connected to the similar disappearance of another girl, Farrow wants Sarabeth's help, and he'll do whatever it takes to get it, even if that means dragging her back to the last place she wants to go.

BOOKS



Above: The Roswell location of Mac McGee Irish Pub.

Roswell-based Irish pub expanding with Battery location

BY HUNTER RIGGALL

Roswell's Mac McGee Irish Pub announced it will be opening a second location at The Battery Atlanta this summer.

Mac McGee's offers traditional, "from-scratch" pub fare such as fish and chips, shepherd's pie and bangers and mash, along with American favorites such as burgers and fried chicken. There's also dozens of beer and whiskey options.

Sean Callan, Mac McGee's general manager, said the Battery location will feature the same food and drink menu for lunch, dinner and late-night.

"Our entire staff is like family, we've all worked here many, many years together" Callan said. "We're all super excited."

The roughly 3,700-square-foot Battery location will be located on Battery Avenue between One Medical and Jeni's Splendid Ice Cream.

The space will be semi-outdoor with garage-style doors that open up to the street. Plans also include live music on the weekends.



"Braves fans, Atlanta locals and traveling guests will take to the restaurant's charming and community-centric qualities and soon be able to share a pint together over authentic Irish cuisine," said Jeremy Strife, executive vice president of development for the Braves Development Company, in an announcement.

Mac McGee's Roswell first location is on Canton Street in the heart of Roswell. The bright-red pub opened in 2013.

The development centered around Truist Park has continued to add eateries and bars this year, including Fat Tuesday, 26 Thai Kitchen & Bar and ASW Distillery. Another restaurant, EATaliano Kitchen, was set to open at the Battery in late spring.



DOMINIC BELLI AND JONATHAN DISSER, BROTHERS-IN-LAW, CREATED NEIGHBORHOOD QUARANTINE CATERING, SELLING PREPARED, FAMILY-SIZED MEALS THAT ONLY REQUIRED POPPING A TRAY IN THE OVEN.

Left: Dominic Belli, left and Jonathan Disser pose outside their new restaurant, Neighborhood Cuisines & Provisions, located on Powder Springs Street off Marietta Square.

PHOTO BY HUNTER RIGGALL

Neighborhood Cuisines & Provisions brings ready-made meals, lunch cafe to Marietta Square

BY HUNTER RIGGALL

An April 20, 2020, report from the National Restaurant Association estimated that more than 8 million restaurant workers were laid off or furloughed across the country. Dominic Belli and Jonathan Disser, brothers-in-law who both live in Smyrna, were part of that toll.

But like so many others, they pivoted to adjust to the times. They created Neighborhood Quarantine Catering, selling

prepared, family-sized meals that only required popping a tray in the oven.

"Parents were working from home, kids were home from school, everybody's in their house 24/7," Disser said. "They didn't have time to cook, or they didn't want to cook at the end of the day."

The duo, both veterans of the hospitality industry with a combined 50 years of experience, produced higher quality meals that were ready in 30 minutes.

"It was a lot better than going to the grocery store and buying a frozen Stouffer's lasagna," Disser said.

Their plan had been to continue that concept for the time being, but now, a year

later, Belli and Disser are now partners in the rebranded Neighborhood Cuisines & Provisions. They still offer catering and takeaway meals, but now have a storefront on Powder Springs Street, a block south of Marietta Square.

"I think a lot of people would say 'You're crazy trying to open a restaurant during the pandemic,'" Belli said. "But, you know, in hindsight I think it was the right move. I always say, some things happen for a reason ... I wouldn't say being laid off is a great thing, but a lot of things developed from that."

Oven-ready meals come with sides, feed four to six people and can be had in the



Pictured is a rendering of the new theater coming to The Battery Atlanta. PHOTO PROVIDED BY SILVERSPOT CINEMA

“AS WE PREPARE TO JOIN THE ENTERTAINMENT OFFERINGS AT THE BATTERY ATLANTA, WE LOOK FORWARD TO PROVIDING GUESTS A TRULY UNIQUE EXPERIENCE THAT ENHANCES THEIR FAVORITE CINEMATIC SCREENINGS WITH OUR FIRST-CLASS OFFERINGS.”

Gonzalo Ulivi, managing partner of SilverSpot Cinema

\$40-\$50 price range. They run the gamut — Italian (lasagna, gnocchi, spinach and chicken manicotti), Cuban (mojo pork), Mexican (chicken enchiladas), Indian (butter chicken), Cajun (jambalaya) and traditional fare such as pork chops, barbecue or salmon.

The diverse menu came out of customers, themselves a mix of cultures, requesting different things in the early days.

“And we try to stick to as much authenticity as possible,” Disser said. “You know, try not to Americanize it too much, but keep it within the parameters of what people are used to seeing.”

For in-person dining, the menu features many of the same dishes, scaled down for individuals, as well as sandwiches, salads and sides.

The “provisions” part of the business are for sale in a deli counter — homemade pickles, pimento cheese, pomodoro sauce and spicy carrot hummus.

The hours are geared toward lunch, but there’s also four-course Saturday dinner pairings. Tickets will be sold online with limited seating to produce an intimate setting.

“That kind of allows us to get kind of to our roots with a little bit higher end, gourmet [meals]” Belli said.

On top of the ready-made meals, which are also available in smaller, two-person portions, they’ll continue to offer catering. It’s all about flexibility, they said.

Belli and Disser are both area natives. Community support has been “huge” in getting the business off the ground, the partners said. Early in the pandemic, they forged bonds with clients by delivering meals themselves. Their initial success was through plain old word-of-mouth. They, in turn, gave back by donating meals to families that suffered job loss. Customers started writing checks, asking that it go toward a meal for a family in need.

“It was 100% grassroots, I mean, we started off as simple as using MailChimp and just sending out emails trying to get a database going for our consumers,” Disser said.

Belli and Disser had both worked for a hospitality group with 23 restaurants across the southeast. There was a stability in working their corporate jobs, where they were assigned concepts and brought new restaurants to fruition. But every chef, Belli said, dreams of “rolling the dice” and having their own place one day.

“Our confidence comes from the fact that we’ve done this for so long,” Disser said. And working for themselves, “it’s a big weight lifted off your shoulders.”

Neighborhood Cuisines & Provisions is located at 34 Powder Springs Street, open Tuesday-Friday, 11 a.m.-6 p.m. and Saturday, 11 a.m.-3 p.m.

Luxury, dine in movie theater at the Battery slated for May opening

STAFF REPORTS

Three years after it was first announced, a movie theater with all the bells and whistles is coming to The Battery Atlanta.

Silverspot Cinema, which bills itself as a “one-of-a-kind boutique dine-in theater experience,” was set to open in May, according to a news release from the company.

The two-story, 50,000-square-foot facility includes 10 auditoriums and 588 fully reclining seats. On offer are “Hollywood productions,” but also “independent films, operas and ballets, concerts and a variety of special in-house cultural events,” such as annual celebrations and corporate functions.

The company describes the food as modern American cuisine. There is also a standalone bar and cocktail lounge offering cocktails, craft beer and wine.

The Braves Development Company, which owns and operates the Battery, announced the theater in 2018 and said at the time it would open in 2019, according to a 2018 Marietta Daily Journal report. Another MDJ article, in February 2019, said the theater would open in the first quarter of 2020, quoting a Braves Development Company official.

A representative for the company said that “with COVID, the team just felt the timing wasn’t right until now.”

Silverspot has implemented a number of public health measures to reduce the risk of infection. According to a reopening plan on the company’s website, tickets can be purchased ahead of time online. Food and drinks will be brought to your seat. Silverspot’s bars and lounges are open with limited seating and dining rooms are closed. To reduce contact, the menu offering is limited to the company’s most popular items.

The auditoriums are operating with “dynamic seating” — when tickets are purchased, the two seats to the left and right of you are automatically blocked

off, the website says. Distance between rows exceeds the state’s social distancing requirements. Sanitation and disinfection has been increased and the theater is designed to reduce touching of shared surfaces. Hand sanitizer is available.

All employees are required to wear masks, the site says. Guests are asked to use face masks but can remove them while seated to eat and drink.

This is Silverspot’s first foray into Georgia and its seventh theater nationwide. The company operates theaters in Chapel Hill, North Carolina; Beachwood, Ohio; Brookfield, Wisconsin; and three in Florida: Naples, Coconut Creek and Miami.

“We’re excited to open our doors soon to the Atlanta community,” said Gonzalo Ulivi, managing partner of Silverspot Cinema, in the release. “As we prepare to join the entertainment offerings at The Battery Atlanta, we look forward to providing guests a truly unique experience that enhances their favorite cinematic screenings with our first-class offerings.” 



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Big Shanty Festival

Kennesaw played host to thousands of festival-goers ready for some fresh air and camaraderie on April 17 and April 18. The festival was one of the first to take place since pandemic restrictions were lifted.

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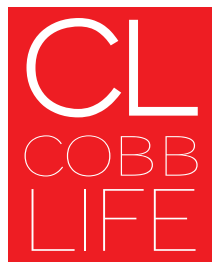
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A Glorious Restoration

After six months of hard work and a combined effort from the city, its residents, parishioners and local historians, Acworth Christian Church in downtown Acworth has been restored to its former glory. The group effort led to \$250,000 being raised to restore and save the church, which was built in 1901 and had not been renovated in more than 30 years.

PHOTO BY THOMAS HARTWELL

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