



Atlanta Church of Christ ⁱⁿ Gwinnett

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The birds of the air come and perch in its branches.

- Matthew 13:32

Issue 26
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Serving those in need

Shannon Andrews leads the MyAbilities Network at Comcast, an employee resource group that focuses on individuals with disabilities. On Saturday, April 21st, the Andrews family group teamed up with Comcast to participate in Comcast Cares Day. They shared these pictures with us and noted, "We joined in a beautification project for Easter Seals of North Georgia. They have many facilities across the U.S. that help children with disabilities and their families get the resources they need for free." As all our family groups find ways to serve our communities, please send in pictures and we'll feature them in future newsletters.



With thanks to the Andrews for sharing information and pictures!

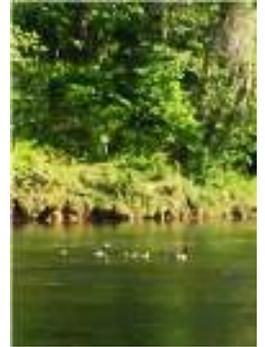
Here are a couple of pictures that show some of the day's activities—



Taking it all in stride!

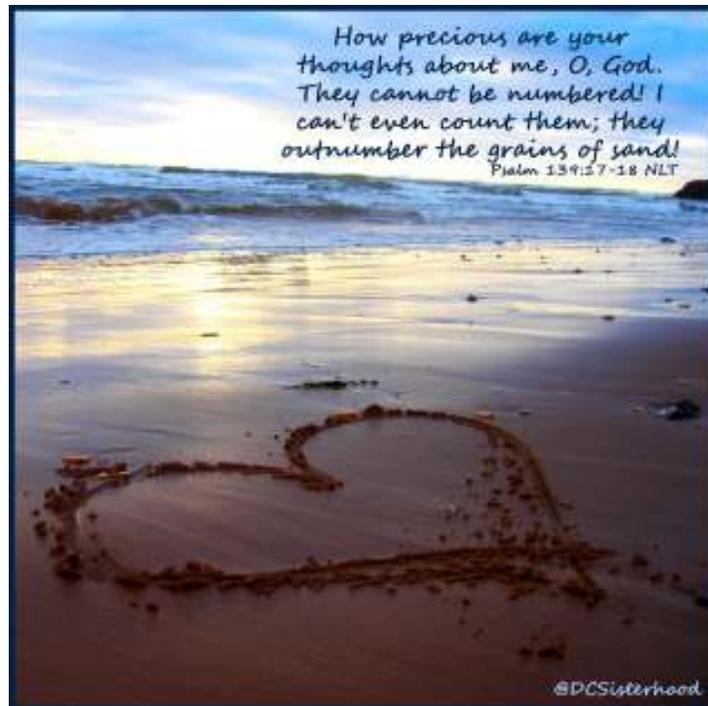
On May 6th, the Hepburn Family Group gathered to celebrate birthdays of four of their members at Lake Lanier. The women and kids walked the Laurel Ridge trail while the men stayed behind to watch the food and enjoy less mobile fellowship. It was a great time for all! Take a look –







With thanks to the Rouses for sharing information and pictures!



Special recognition for a special teen!

AcoCG teen disciple Briani Netzahuatl was recently selected as an outstanding servant-leader by electric power cooperative Jackson EMC. The company chose her as one of four delegates to represent them at "a week-long leadership experience in Washington, D.C.," as their press release states. 1,700 high school students across the country were selected by electric co-ops to serve for the 2018 Washington Youth Tour, and Briani was one of only two students chosen from Gwinnett County schools—the largest school system in the state! Below you see the cover of this month's Jackson EMC magazine, and Briani's part of the coverage inside. Congratulations on this recognition of the way you let your light shine, Briani!

The image shows a page from a magazine with a large header that reads "MEET YOUR 2018 WASHINGTON YOUTH TOUR DELEGATES". There is a circular logo on the right side that says "WASHINGTON YOUTH TOUR 2018". The main text of the article reads: "Each year, Jackson EMC selects four high school students to participate in a weeklong leadership and learning opportunity in Washington, D.C. This year's Washington Youth Tour delegates have diverse backgrounds and interests, yet they share our values of teamwork, integrity and community service." Below this, it says: "This June, Eburn Ajayi, Luke Bell, Andie Ellett and Briani Netzahuatl will join more than 1,700 Washington Youth Tour participants from electric co-ops across the country in the nation's Capitol." The article then introduces Briani Netzahuatl from Mountain View High School. A photo of Briani is shown next to a quote: "I love community service work where I can see the people we are helping and serving." The word "EXCELLENCE" is visible in the background of the photo.

MEET YOUR
**2018 WASHINGTON YOUTH
TOUR DELEGATES**

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Briani Netzahuatl MOUNTAIN VIEW HIGH SCHOOL

Briani, a rising senior, is passionate about the Student Leadership Team, where she serves as communications chair, and its impact on students and the community. "It's a great opportunity to collaborate as a team in creating monthly projects that benefit our community and help students get involved," Briani said. Each month the team selects a big project. They have organized a donation drive for personal hygiene items for the local women's shelter, a blood drive, and an international night for the entire community to celebrate different cultures. Briani said she values quality over quantity in all her endeavors and strives for an inclusive, community-wide, service-oriented atmosphere where students can grow and meet others while volunteering.

"My favorite project this year was the Prom Promise," she said. Briani led the communication effort in bringing a nationally-known speaker and creating a week of programming before prom. "Many people in our community have been affected by drunk driving and recklessness or know someone who has," she continued. "Students sign a pledge not to drink at prom, and I think we are making a difference in saving lives."

Additionally, she serves as a volunteer at the North Gwinnett Co-Op, where she organizes, sorts and stacks food and clothes for the pantries and at the Planned Parenthood Animal Shelter. "I love community service work where I can see the people we are helping and serving," she said. Briani plans a career in journalism.

"I love community service work where I can see the people we are helping and serving."

Catching up with...



Steve and Roxanne Galbreath (pictured here with Ben, Efen, Kevin, Kristen, Stephanie, daughter-in-law Sara, and granddaughter Rory)

Where are you from originally? What would you like people to know about where you're from?

Steve: I was born in Victoria, Texas. My mother and dad were living in Athens, Georgia, where Dad was in school, but my mom couldn't bear to have a baby so far away from her mom, so she went back there to have me. My grandparents lived there, so it was a fun place to visit; my Poppa took me on fishing adventures in the Gulf of Mexico and taught me to play golf. One of our favorite things about Victoria was eating Mexican food, which was not available in Georgia or New Jersey at that time.

Roxanne: I was born in Atlanta and grew up in the Virginia-Highlands area – I'm a true Atlanta native, and I've never lived more than 60 miles from where I was born. I had the same bus driver from first grade through high school. There's something sweet about staying put!

Steve: When we were out on dates in town and even in Gwinnett, we always bumped into someone she knew, and it drove me nuts!

How did you come to live in the Atlanta area?

Steve: When we were first married, we both worked for Georgia Public Television, when it was a part of the University of Georgia. In order to alleviate a duplication of efforts and save tax dollars, the Governor of Georgia made an executive order which shut us down and moved daytime programming to the Atlanta facility. We both lost our jobs! We loved the church in Athens so much and tried so hard to get another job there, but no luck! Roxanne applied to work with Channel 8 in Atlanta and was one of two folks from the old GPTV to move to the new GPTV!

Roxanne: As newlyweds it was fun working at the same TV station! I worked in the traffic department and Steve was a cameraman! It was easy to sneak down the hall and say "hi!" from time to time during the day! Surprisingly, even though we both had the same major (Radio-TV-Film) in college, that's not how we met!

Steve: Roxanne was vice president of her dorm, Creswell Hall. One quarter she decided to throw a big dance for the 3 high-rise dorms (on her 20th birthday no less). Since she wanted the UGA housing department to keep giving her money for future dances, she wanted to make sure it was a success! I heard there was a big party and decided to check it out. As I walked through the Brumby rotunda, she stopped me and asked me to go back to my dorm and bring back more guys!! We ended up talking and dancing and I asked her out again for the next night. I was only 18 and the rest is history!!

What do you do for a living? How did you choose/come to be in that field?

Steve: After a few employment zigs and zags, I finally went back to work in my field. Unfortunately, it was a low-paying field and for years Roxanne was the primary breadwinner. This put an incredible strain on our relationship and family! After becoming a disciple and being willing to repent in every area of life, I started working on this area too. With much prayer and hard work God allowed me to

move up at Turner and make the move to Training and finally manager of HR Analytics. There I learned many marketable skills. After 25 years with Turner Broadcasting, they decided to reduce their workforce by offering a package to the "old-timers." I took it, and who knew God had a plan to give me a new job analyzing workforce data for more than 70,000 employees for Anthem corporate and all from the comfort of my home office! God also had a plan to allow Roxanne to stay home so she could help Efren, Stephanie, my dad and grandmother! He is always right on time!

Roxanne: When I was young I really bought into the world's idea that a career was more important than being home and raising a Godly family. As I studied God's word, I came to the conviction that there was no more important job than being my husband's helper and training our kids to love the Lord. Early in our marriage I was leading at work and at home! That was mostly due to fear and arrogance! The transition from me primarily supporting the family to Steve filling that role and me filling mine took many years, but it was worth it! I had more jobs than you can imagine, but every one of them was purposeful and selected to either get me closer to home, more flexible or help the kids be where they needed to be.

Tell us how you first got involved with disciples – what was your first impression of them?

Steve: I grew up in the traditional Church of Christ and thought I became a Christian at 13. I lived an OK life, but the older I got the further I got away from the Lord! By the time I started my freshman year at Georgia, I had "walked on" the football team and was living a wild life! How in the world did I get here? Out of habit I showed up at church on the very same Sunday the new campus minister arrived! Once again God's timing is perfect! He took over a small campus ministry and it was the first time that I had seen college students trying to live out the Bible! I didn't understand discipleship or repentance but being around them made me want to change and I got more serious. I tried to live the life for years but something was wrong—by 1988 I realized that my baptism at 13 was not a complete conversion, and I was baptized into Christ—

Roxanne: —and he really changed!

Steve: We moved from Athens to Atlanta and were members of the Lenox Church of Christ before Sam Laing came—Guy Hanson (our campus minister in Athens) connected me with Andy Van Bueren who showed up there the exact same Sunday we did. They disciplined us as young marrieds and when our kids were tiny. We've been in Atlanta/Gwinnett since 1982.

Roxanne: When I first met disciples, I thought they were weird and self-righteous! I was an atheist at the time and I remember persecuting them for walking around with their "little Bibles" in the dorms. Then I met Steve and started visiting the church. Steve was not spiritually strong at that point or he wouldn't have asked me out—

Steve: That's true, but I wanted to do better.

Roxanne: Initially I came to church just as a date with Steve, but shut down any of his attempts to have a spiritual conversation. The UGA quarterback at the time was a disciple, and he confronted me about pulling his brother away from the Lord! He challenged us to go to Soul Talk, which is what Bible talks on campus were called then. My reaction was, "Who do you think you are?" but we went—Steve went to the one in the athletic dorm and I went to the one in my dorm and the girls I had made fun of were there. The first time I went I was getting ready early, much earlier than we would have started getting ready to go out to a bar; my friends asked me where I was going and I said Bible study, shut up and leave me alone, and I went to Soul Talk.

I think some of the sisters were a little afraid of me, so they didn't ask me to study the Bible that whole school year, but I begin coming to church regularly. I was an atheist because I thought I was too smart to believe in God. That year I read a Time Magazine article about life-after-life—coming back from death experiences—and it made me realize that possibly I didn't know and understand everything (duh), and I needed to search out God. I was interested, but not committed at that point. I thought about God all summer and in the fall of '77, I told Steve that I wanted to go to everything that the church did, every time the doors were open! I kept struggling with the temptation to go out drinking and all, but I studied with Maureen Hanson and was baptized that October. It changed our dating life – we had to undo things we'd done before, now that we were trying to live as disciples. We were married in June 1980 – and one of the girls I had persecuted wound up being in our wedding!

What has surprised you most about life as a disciple?

Steve: It's become more real now, that the scriptures say God prepares good works in advance for us to do—works that are unique to us at any given point in our lives. I didn't aspire to be an elder or to take in kids, but as disciples we prayerfully make ourselves available, and God puts us in situations that can be scary but you find the things you can do where you're at. I never dreamed about being a caregiver, except

God prepared and enabled us to do that – even now, we pray a scary prayer: "God, what do you want us to do?"

Roxanne: When faced with the choice, you can do what God puts in front of you to do, or walk away. We had to do the hard things God put in front of us—we were compelled to do it. We studied out everything thoroughly and were convicted about what God wanted us to do.

What lesson have you learned as a disciple that continues to help you every day?

Steve: You really have to nurture your relationships. It can be hard at different stages, investing in old friendships and making new ones. I found myself getting into functional relationships as we served together, but God calls us to deeper relationships than just sharing activities.

Roxanne: Continuing to learn to deal with fear, being able to trust God in difficult circumstances. Fear makes me want to try to control everything! Turning the reins over to Steve and letting him lead was a hard heart-battle but it changed our marriage. Over the years we started listening to God and when he called, we did it. I was so afraid to take care of Gammy and Steve's dad until they passed in our home—we had to study to build conviction, pray and then go for it. When we got started I began to see that God had been preparing us for years in advance, that helping my mom and then my dad in their later years had left us totally equipped. God had provided! Watching God at work is a huge lesson—He will give you what you need to accomplish what He calls you to. It makes trusting Him easier when you see Him act—even the way Steve took the severance package and at the right time he got a work-from-home job.

Steve: The size of our house didn't make sense till it was filled with family.

Roxanne: God knew we'd need it (we had seven people in our home at one point) – He does amazing things, and it can be overwhelming to see how He's moving!

What is your favorite scripture?

Steve: This morning I was reading Ephesians 1, how God predestined us from the beginning; maybe I'd say verses 4-6, but the whole chapter is so encouraging!

Roxanne: I've had different ones at different times in my life; one that helped me understand that God is real after reading that magazine article was Romans 7:19-20. When I read about the struggle with the good I wanted to do, I thought, "How could God so perfectly describe how I felt at that time, long before I read it"? It's so true – it's exactly how I felt at the time, and reading it was incredibly pivotal, because I saw that God knew ME!

What do you enjoy doing in your spare time—interests, hobbies, organizations you belong to?

Roxanne: Just being with family and friends and playing with our grandbaby Rory, who is 10 months old.

Steve: I love/hate working out with Alex at the gym at about 6 a.m. It's my favorite and most difficult thing to do – it's fun to do with a good friend.

What might someone be surprised to know about you?

Steve: I had a pet penguin when we lived in Tierra del Fuego in South America. Penguins would come up on the beach, but they make terrible pets. You couldn't touch them. But this one hung around the house for a while.

Roxanne: I was a DJ at two college radio stations, WUOG at UGA and WRAS at Georgia State.

If you could speak to yourself as you were ten years ago, what advice would you give yourself?

Roxanne: "This too shall pass" – ten years ago I was in the thick of things, and you wonder in the hard times, "Will this ever end?" It does and God sees you through!

Steve: That was a decision-making time – I think I'd say, "God will give us the ability to do what we need to do."

Roxanne: You told me that at the time, and He did, and it's still true!

We welcome news and pictures on interesting personal stories, family group activities, and more. Please send them to Nancy Berry, nberry2@gmail.com. Thank you!

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