



Clarkston Mayor Ted Terry, Councilmember Awet Eyasu and City Manager Keith Barker meet, at Refuge Coffee Truck in downtown Clarkston, with an International delegation from 7 European countries to discuss refugee resettlement issues and build diplomatic ties between each of our communities.

Clarkston in the International Spotlight

By Mayor Ted Terry

If you have read the headlines over the last few months, you know Clarkston has been in the news lately in major part because of the Syrian refugee crisis that has left millions of families who fled famine, violence and terror without a home. In 2014, the Clarkston City Council and I officially declared Clarkston a welcoming and compassionate community, and unlike many cities, we carried this principled stance with us in the face of the unprecedented humanitarian crisis in Syria.

This shift in tone and attitude towards our international neighbors translates to more than just news headlines though. At a granular level, I believe this compassion message began a collective healing process that has encouraged our new Americans to take pride in Clarkston and work even harder to make our community great. At the broad level, we

have received meeting requests from international delegations ranging from Asia and Europe to Africa, who want to learn about what we are doing here to create such a peaceful, close knit community in spite of numerous religious, ethnic and language barriers.

As the Governor of one of the largest states in Kenya told me during his delegation visit, Clarkston is on the tongue of people back home. Earlier this year, when seven European nations came to meet with me and other city leaders at Refuge Coffee, they were eager to uncover what it is that makes Clarkston work as harmoniously as it does. Our discussion covered everything from refugee resettlement issues and lessons learned during our time in office, to how we can stay connected to better solve the challenges each of our communities face.

As we talked, a unifying message started to emerge — a belief that the core American principles of freedom and liberty are key in helping our new refugee neighbors transition into integrated hard-working citizens who help our economy. By contrast, many European countries have a mixed record of ethnic intolerance and hyper-secularism that limits entrepreneurial opportunities.

As the refugee crises around the world show no signs of ceasing anytime soon, Clarkston will likely remain in the headlines. Our city is by no means perfect, and we have many challenges left to work through, but we remain committed to making our Clarkston a world-class community. We represent the best of what America has to offer. Thank you for being a model resident of our small town and continuing to help us grow and prosper.

Dare 2 Be Aware

Dare 2 Be Aware (D2BAware) is the City of Clarkston's youth education and development program. D2BAware is the result of an ongoing need to address many problems faced by the young adults in their homes, schools, and social communities. These issues include addressing: youth violence, cultural diversity, health inequities, and obstacles to educational attainment. D2BAware aims to serve not only youth, but the greater community in various ways that will build a capacity for opportunities for engagement and prosperity in Clarkston among community members, small businesses, and city officials. D2BAware aims to empower youth by fostering their development into knowledgeable, productive citizens and future community leaders who will become an asset to the environment in which they live.

D2BAware
 Youth Citizen Education and Development Program

Saturday Field Trips

Meet new friends



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A Visit With An Afghan Family

In April Sgt. Pritchett visited with an Afghan family at 1000 Montreal Road. The father was a journalist working with the US Military when they had to flee Afghanistan due to threats made by the Taliban. There are 3 teenagers and 2 smaller boys in the home with mom and dad. The family has been in the US for 8 months and adjusting to their new life.

Sgt. Pritchett was introduced to the family through good friends, Camila and Shah Zolfaghari. Shah's goal in having Sgt. Pritchett meet the family was to teach and show them that law enforcement in this country are friends and that they are there to be of service for them. Sgt. Pritchett hopes that her visit will ease some fears they may have of American law enforcement and government.

Shah Zolfaghari was tragically shot and killed in Atlanta on June 1st. Outreach



to refugee families was in Shah's heart. He often visited families in Clarkston and rallied to meet their needs in this community. In fact, the night before he

was killed, "he was trying to find a donation for a hot water heater for another refugee family," according to Camila.

Clarkston Senior Connection

By E. Randi Brown

The Clarkston Senior Connection was established in August 2015, thanks to the Clarkston City Council, the City Manager, Mayor, and the City of Clarkston for awarding us the Opportunity to form our group. Once we got started we hosted a meet and greet and a Veterans Day program with Judge Scott from the DeKalb County Court as our guest speaker. The R.O.T.C. Honor Guard from Clarkston High School performed. At a later date we had a representative from Marta speak to us about the changes to take place in 2016.



Kristy Hill from Fire and Rescue was another guest speaker who came to speak about Disaster and Preparedness. Two of Clarkston's finest, C.S. Parks and W. Davis visited along with Vice-Mayor Robert

Hogan. We are doing some exciting things. We've put together a garden behind the Clarkston Community Center. We've had Classes on the Smartphone and the Computer with Justin Okelo from the Community Center. We have future plans to go bowling, take short trips, go to the movies, play games, do arts and crafts, along with various other activities.

Currently we are having a Membership Drive. Come on and join us. Fun !! Fun !! Fun !!

For more information call Gwen Clark at 404-296-8418 or e-mail her at gclark.csc@gmail.com

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Ms. Irvin's Child Seat Safety

In partnership with the DeKalb County Board of Health and Friends of Refugee's Mommy and Me program, Clarkston Community Relations, assisted in the facilitation of a child passenger safety education class. Stephanie Irvin, DeKalb County Board of Health's Public Health Educator, educated over 60 mothers on how to safely restrain their children while driving. The class included a demonstration of how to properly secure children into a booster seat and the weight requirements for different kinds of seats. At the end of the class Ms. Irvin was able to provide car seats to some of the participating mothers, free of charge and provided information about follow up classes.

Child Passenger Safety Classes are available on the second Thursday of every month located at:

The DeKalb County Board of Health

445 Winn Way

Decatur, GA 30030

For more information or to register call (404) 294-3261

Ms. Irvin's Child Seat Safety Tips

- For the best protection, keep your baby in a rear-facing car seat for as long as possible – usually until about 2 years old
- When your children outgrow a rear-facing seat around age 2, move them to a forward-facing car seat.
- When your child is seated in the booster seat, make sure the lap and shoulder belts fit.
- Do not place the shoulder belt under the child's arm or behind the child's back.
- Children under the age of 8 need to sit in the backseat and be placed in some sort of car seat.

Community Relations Specialist, in collaboration, with Detective McKinney successfully gathered the apartment managers of 15



communities located in and outside of Clarkston. Det. McKinney engaged them in conversation regarding the police department's efforts to increase public safety and community engagement. Topics surrounding the ongoing efforts to eliminate crime in Clarkston were discussed and there were opportunities for the apartment managers to ask questions and hear safety tips as summer approaches.



Detective McKinney speaking to apartment managers about community public safety

Milam Pool Season Opening Celebration



Clarkston Partners Engage Children and Their Families in Learning

By Roberta Malavenda, Executive Director, CDF Action

My child learns to get along with others and enjoys coming to the READY School. His attending the program has made a difference. He is “ready” to go to Pre-K now,” said one of the mothers at the first year anniversary celebration and open house for the Clarkston READY School, a free part day early learning and family engagement program located in the Clarkston Oaks Apartments and staffed by multi-lingual teachers from the Scottdale Early Learning, Inc.

During the open house, a teacher printed a three year old’s name using chalk on the walk way outside the READY School. The little boy took a piece of chalk and began to make large straight lines similar to the ones in his name, smiled because he was proud of himself, and then went to join his friends.

Learning and fun, lots of language, stories and songs in multiple languages, and making new friends happens at the READY School, attended by 3 and 4 year olds from Somalia, Syria, Burma, and Iraq. The READY School, funded by United Way of Greater Atlanta, is an initiative of CDF Action, in partnership with Scottdale Early Learning, Inc., R. James Property Management, and Early Learning Property Management. Watch for the opening of a second Clarkston READY School this fall in the City of Clarkston!



Learning is also fun at Indian Creek Elementary School. This spring, parents, teachers, community representatives, and youth worked on a Welcoming Mural Project. The mural was unveiled at a small ceremony in front of the school, where the mural now hangs for all to see.

The mural project was sponsored by CDF Action. Families and teachers were invited to a meeting to discuss ideas that would benefit the school, and the welcoming mural is the resulting art piece from that consensus. Shannon Willow,

Clarkston artist, was invited to present a design for the mural ...a welcoming tree. The group identified and prioritized over 40 words that described Indian Creek Elementary School values, words like learning, do your best, quality, feliz (happy in Spanish) and Namaste (welcome in Nepali). The words became the trunk of the tree. Art teacher Zully Conde and her students helped paint the mural and added their own touches – flowers and bumble bees ---to the design.

Thank you to principal Dr. Antonette Campbell for her leadership and to the teaching staff members, families, and youth at Indian Creek Elementary School who participated in the project. A special

thanks to City of Clarkston Council members Beverly Burks and Dean Moore, who joined us for the unveiling ceremony.

The READY School and the Indian Creek Elementary School Mural Project are the result of residents and partners coming together, transforming ideas into actions, creating community processes and projects that make a difference.

City Completes Church Street Beautification Project

For almost two years, the City of Clarkston worked to obtain free trees through the DeKalb County Reforestation Program. This is a program that requires developers to donate and install trees as a replacement for those removed as a result of a particular development. After a lot of back and forth and some considerable persistence, this project is nearing completion.

The City obtained a total of 48 “tree form” white (Natchez) Crape Myrtles from the DeKalb County Program and Boos Development Group. The value of the trees is approximately \$25,000. The trees are all 3” caliper and will reach a height of 12 -15 feet at maturity. 50 trees will be provided through the Reforestation Program.

The City purchased 20 additional trees to complete the project. The trees have been installed on Church Street along the Rail Road side of the curb, from Market Street down to Erskine Street.

In order to complete the Church Street Beautification Project, the City will install rows of Clarissa Hollys and Ruby Loropetalums at staggered intervals between the trees in order to create a pleasant aesthetic look.

The Trees were installed by Bolin Landscaping and the shrubs were installed by Pattillo Landscaping.



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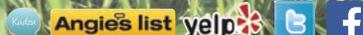
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