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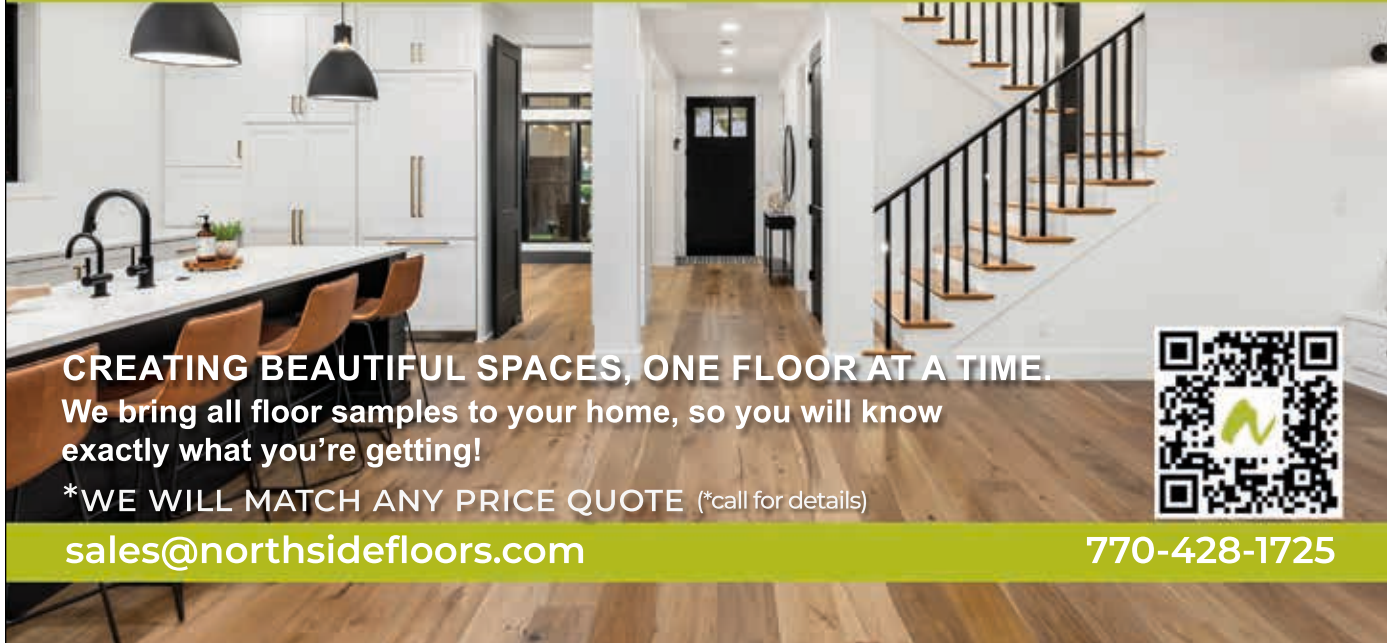
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Stephanie is an Atlanta-based photographer with over 14 years of experience capturing families, maternity, and newborns. A mother of three daughters, she brings patience, warmth, and an easy connection with children of all personalities.



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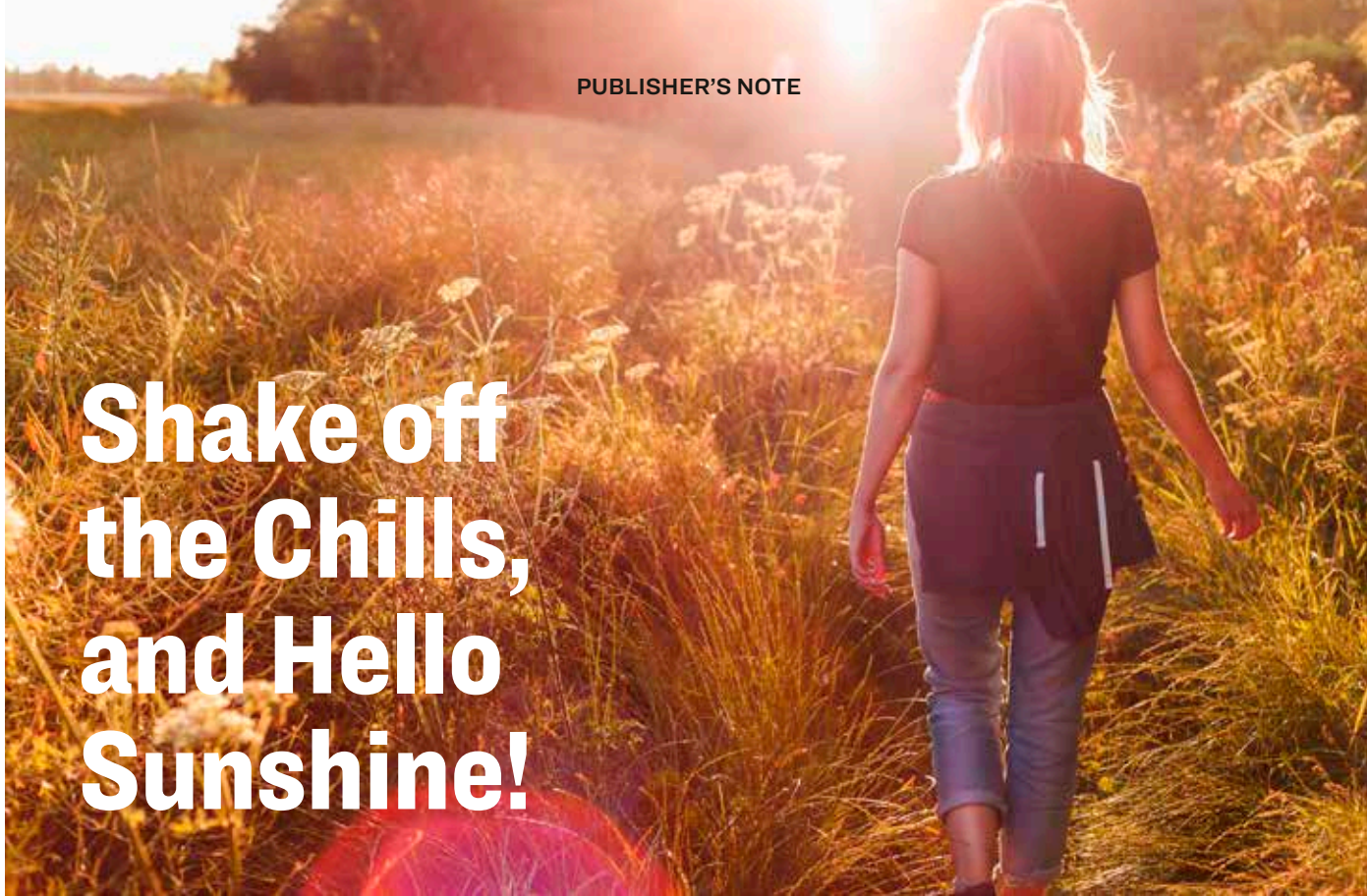
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Shake off the Chills, and Hello Sunshine!

With spring sports, family gatherings and graduation celebrations on the horizon, there is so much happening this month. This issue is filled with wonderful stories and memories, and we hope you find a quiet moment on a beautiful spring day to enjoy the April edition of *Stroll Vinings Estates*.

Graduation season is right around the corner, and many families are preparing to celebrate this exciting milestone. We invite you to send us your graduates' photos by May 1st, from Pre-K on up to high school and college! We look forward to featuring their photos and accomplishments in an upcoming issue.

As *Stroll Vinings Estates* continues to bring the community together through its pages each month, it has been a pleasure getting to know so many of you along the way. Building relationships with residents and business partners while sharing the stories that make this neighborhood, is truly one of the best parts of creating this publication.

A special thank you to all our business partners whose support helps make this magazine possible. We encourage our readers to learn more about them throughout the pages of this issue.

To all our readers, if we haven't had the chance to meet yet, I would love to connect. Feel free to reach out anytime!

Gratefully,

Lynda Arey

Publisher/Area Director



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MEET THE GUNN FAMILY



PHOTOGRAPHY
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FROM THE CLASSROOM TO THE SOCCER FIELD TO FAMILY TRIPS ABROAD, THE GUNN FAMILY VALUES LEARNING, TEAMWORK, AND TIME TOGETHER.

SUBMITTED BY: KELLY GUNN

Don't blink, or you might miss them! Between soccer matches, school activities, and planning their next travel adventure, the Gunn family stays happily on the go. Since moving here to Vinings Estates in 2013, the Gunns have embraced all that Vinings Estates has to offer, while building plenty of traditions of their own.

C.J. and Kelly first met at a mutual friend's wedding in Columbia, South Carolina. Although both grew up in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, they never crossed paths until that day. Over time, their shared circle of friends brought them closer together, and eventually the couple made their way to Atlanta, settling near that same friend and his family, who are now their son's godparents.

Before arriving in Vinings Estates, the couple spent time living in Cincinnati, Ohio, and in Atlanta's Grant Park neighborhood. But once they found their home here, they knew they had landed somewhere special.

Education and professional achievement are an important part of the Gunn story. C.J. earned his Bachelor of Science in Computer Science from Howard University and works as a Customer Engineer for a tech company. Kelly began her academic journey at Tennessee State University, earning a degree in English Education, before continuing her studies at LSU and later completing a Doctorate of Education in Urban Educational Leadership from the University of Cincinnati. Today, she serves as Executive Director for a network of Atlanta charter schools.

Their two sons, Tre and Camden, keep the household lively. Tre, a ninth grader in the Campbell High School IB program, made the varsity soccer team this spring, an impressive accomplishment as he was the only freshman! Camden, an eighth grader at Griffin Middle School, is a real math wiz, straight-A student, a voracious reader, and enjoys playing soccer and video games with friends. He also plays trumpet in two extracurricular music groups, Griffin Winds and Jazz Band.

Personality-wise, the family strikes a great balance. C.J. and Tre tend to bring the quick wit and humor, while Camden and Kelly describe themselves as the more sentimental, family-oriented duo.

When it comes to hobbies, C.J. is an avid golfer who often practices at the Dogwood driving range or polishes his putting skills on the family's backyard greens. Kelly loves reading, traveling, and the occasional tennis match with a neighborhood women's group. She recently joined the Vinings Estates Social Committee and hopes to help expand programming for families with teens.



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We moved here on Halloween Day in 2013. Our neighbors were so welcoming that day, and that night was filled with so much energy! Kids and families were all over and everyone was so kind.

Sports are a big part of life in the Gunn household, especially soccer. In fact, CJ and Tre just became certified soccer referees, enjoying some father/son time on the pitch, in an “official way”! Of course, they still root for the Saints and LSU, but they’ll cheer on the Atlanta Braves and especially Atlanta United!

Travel is another shared passion, as they treasure experiences over things. Last summer the family explored Barcelona and Madrid. They’ve spent the holidays in Cancun, Puerto Rico, the Bahamas, and France. Birthdays and anniversaries have been celebrated in the Dominican Republic, Barbados, Destin, Orlando, Savannah, St. Lucia, and even the UAE! One of their favorite traditions is an annual beach trip with their extended family down to Gulf Shores, Alabama.



Closer to home, they enjoy visiting Smyrna Market Village, spending time at the library, and walking or running along the Silver Comet Trail. Tokyo Steakhouse is a favorite lunch stop for the kids, often followed by dessert next door at Smallcakes.

The Gunns really enjoy the annual pool party. The social committee does a fantastic job of creating community through that event. When it comes to neighborhood traditions, Kelly shared a favorite memory: “We moved here on Halloween Day in 2013. Our neighbors were so welcoming that day, and that night was filled with so much energy! Kids and families were all over and everyone was so kind. I still really like Halloween traditions in our neighborhood. Of course, our kids also know which houses give what, from full-sized candy bars to popsicles.”

For the Gunn family, Vinings Estates is more than just a place to call home. It’s a place where neighbors, family, and lasting memories come together.

Want to be featured on the cover or in a spotlight story? Tell us about your family, hobbies and what you love most about living in VE. Email: lynda.ary@strollmag.com



MASSAGE MADE SIMPLE

Utopia Foot & Shoulder Massage offers a refreshing approach to wellness. Designed to help guests unplug and recharge, the welcoming space blends relaxation, hospitality, and thoughtful care.

Founder and owner Julie Stewart is a Georgia native originally from Rome who moved to Atlanta in 1996. She graduated from Georgia State University with a degree in Public Relations and a minor in Communication. Her career began in 1999 at The Atlanta Journal-Constitution, where she spent ten years in sales and marketing before working with several publishers and eventually launching her own digital media agency. After ten successful years, she sold the agency, transitioning her focus to opening **Utopia Foot & Shoulder Massage**. “I’ve always had an entrepreneurial spirit and usually a side hustle or two. That mindset eventually led to opening our first spa in Grant Park in 2020.”

A BUSINESS BUILT ON A CHALLENGE

The idea for Utopia began with a personal goal. “I’ve always enjoyed a challenge. At one point, I gave myself five years to invent something or open a business. After visiting a similar concept, I became fascinated with the business model and began researching how I could improve it. The timing, however, was far from ideal. We opened right as the world shut down during COVID, but we worked hard to build the business from the ground up.” Despite the difficult start, her mission remained clear. “Our mission is simple: provide an affordable massage in a welcoming environment with great service and genuine hospitality. We focus



“Sometimes taking an hour to relax, recharge, and reset can make a big difference.”

“I’ve had hundreds of massages all over the world, and my massage here was absolutely exceptional. Everything was one step above from the aromas, the ambiance, the warm blanket, the heat pack on my shoulders, and the incredible massage. Everyone was so kind and professional. Highly recommend this hidden gem.”
—KRISTIE E.

on creating a clean, inviting space where people can unplug for a little while. Our philosophy is “Massage Made Simple”.

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Utopia specializes in foot, back, and shoulder massage, focusing on the areas where people tend to carry the most tension. Guests can also add services such as scalp massage and foot sugar scrubs. They offer memberships, gift cards, and a curated gift shop. In addition to spa services, Utopia provides Mobile Chair Massage for corporate wellness programs, employee appreciation events, festivals, and

other gatherings. “Our concept is a little different from traditional full body massage spas. Instead of expensive services that require booking weeks in advance, we focus on affordable massage that targets the areas people need most.” The space is designed to be flexible and welcoming, so guests can relax alone or enjoy the experience with friends, family, or even a date. Many of our clients come in groups to celebrate birthdays, girls’ days, or simply to unwind together. Hospitality is at the heart of what we do, and we want every guest to feel comfortable and welcomed.”

A BUSINESS ROOTED IN COMMUNITY

“We strongly believe in supporting the community that supports us. We regularly contribute to local schools, nonprofits, and organizations through donations and gift cards.” Since opening the Smyrna location, Julie has become active locally and joined the Smyrna Business Association, the Cobb Chamber of Commerce, and Women of Cobb.

OVERCOMING CHALLENGES

Like many small businesses, Utopia has faced unexpected obstacles. “About two years after opening our Grant Park location, we experienced a devastating fire that destroyed the entire business. It took nearly a year to rebuild. While the experience was incredibly difficult, it also became a turning point. Rebuilding allowed us to refine the business and strengthen our operations. What meant the most during that time was all the support we received from the community. That helped us come back stronger and eventually led to the opening of our second location in Smyrna.”

LOOKING AHEAD

The plan is for thoughtful growth. “I try to stay present and focus on taking the next right step as opportunities arise. Ideally, we would love to expand to additional locations while maintaining the local feel that makes Utopia special. Growth is exciting, but keeping the experience personal will always be important to us.”

DON’T DISCOUNT THE POWER OF SELF-CARE

“Life moves quickly. Between work, kids, traffic, and everything on our schedules, it’s easy to forget to slow down. Self care doesn’t have to be complicated. Sometimes taking an hour to relax, recharge, and reset can make a big difference. Massage is not just relaxing as it can also help with stress relief, circulation, and overall well being.”

A PERSONAL COMMITMENT

“I truly care about our guests’ happiness. We strive to provide excellent service and are proud to have over 1,000 five-star reviews between platforms. If we ever fall short (and sometimes humans

do), I always encourage guests to reach out to me directly so I can make it right. I’m incredibly grateful to be part of the Smyrna community. Everyone has been so welcoming, and we’re excited to continue growing here.”

VE residents looking to relax, recharge, and unplug for a while are invited to visit Utopia Foot & Shoulder Massage and experience their welcoming approach to “Massage Made Simple.”

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Vinings Estates Swim Team



Vinings Estates Dolphins Swim Team Registration is Open!

Fun First. Fast Always. If your children love swimming, healthy competition and making friends in the community, then the **Vinings Estates Dolphins Swim Team** is for you! Open to children ages 5-18 who can swim the length of the pool unassisted, registration details are as follows:

- March 30 – Open to new swimmers who live in Vinings Estates (the property manager will email the registration link to residents)
- April 13 – If space allows, registration is then open to swimmers who live outside Vinings Estates (registration link will be posted on our website)
- April 17 – Registration closes

The Dolphins swim team season runs May 11 – June 24. The Summit and Ridge swimming pools are both open when the Dolphins are holding practice and home swim meets. Please note, this is a competitive swim team, not swimming lessons. All details about the swim season are on our website at <https://viningsestates.swimtopia.com/>

The team greatly appreciates the support of the Vinings Estates community!



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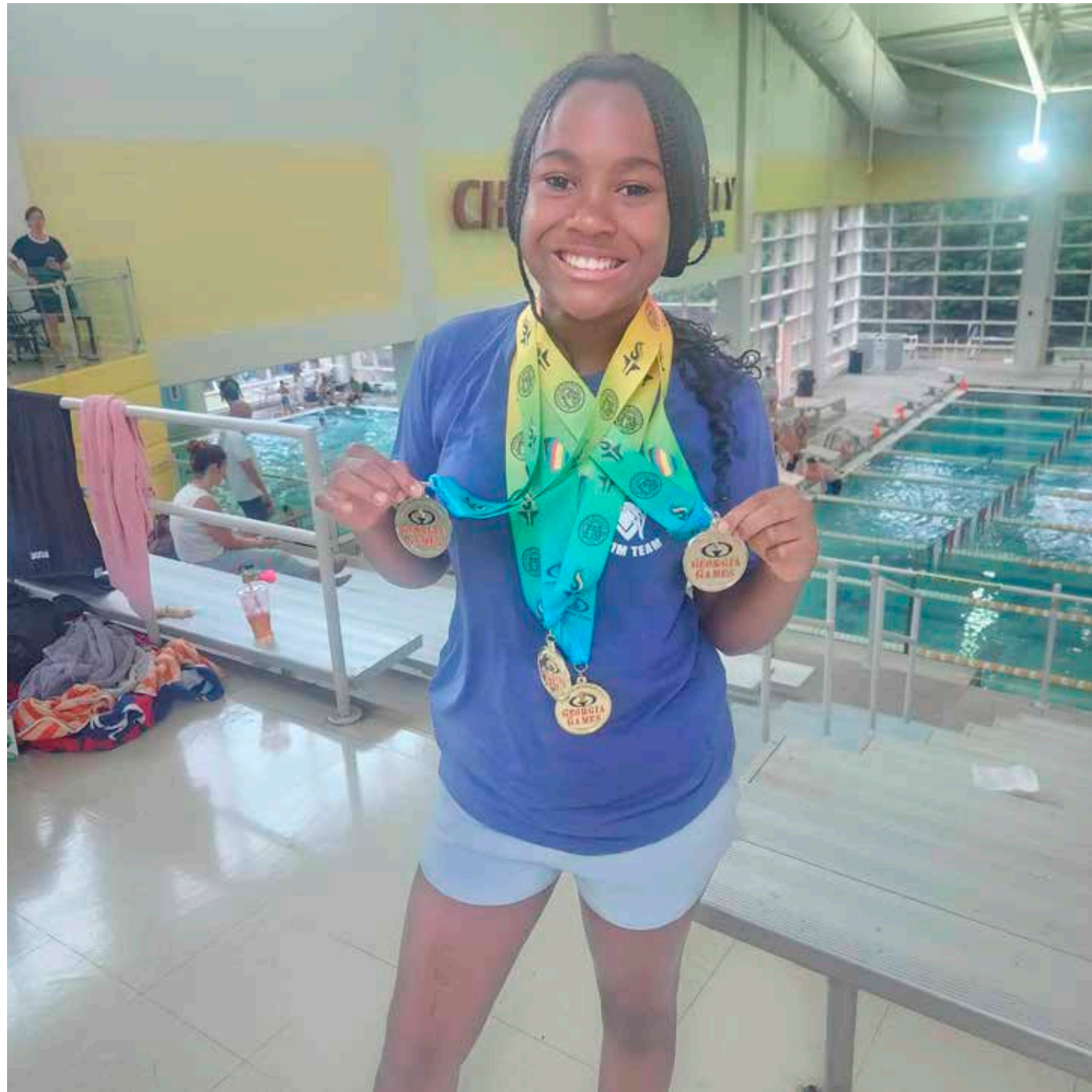
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Laila Hardy Swims Fast and Dreams Big!

With record-breaking relays, strong grades, and a passion for acting, this Vinings Estates sixth-grader is already setting her sights on an exciting future.



This month, we got to know a bit more about Laila Hardy, her achievements and aspirations. Her interests run the gamut, from psychology and meteorology, to athletics and theater.

At just 11, this Vinings Estates student has already tackled and triumphed, both at school and the pool!

During swim season, you'll find Laila with her summer swim team, the Vinings Estates Dolphins. Her four member relay team, AKA the "Pink Cap Crew," broke their own record three weeks in a row. She's obviously made waves there, impressing her peers and coaches enough to be selected as MVP in 2023 & 2025. That's no small feat, since the Pink Caps were recognized by the Cobb County Board of Commissioners AND the Mayor of Smyrna for their undefeated record in 2025! Laila says she could well see herself on the Olympic podium one day.





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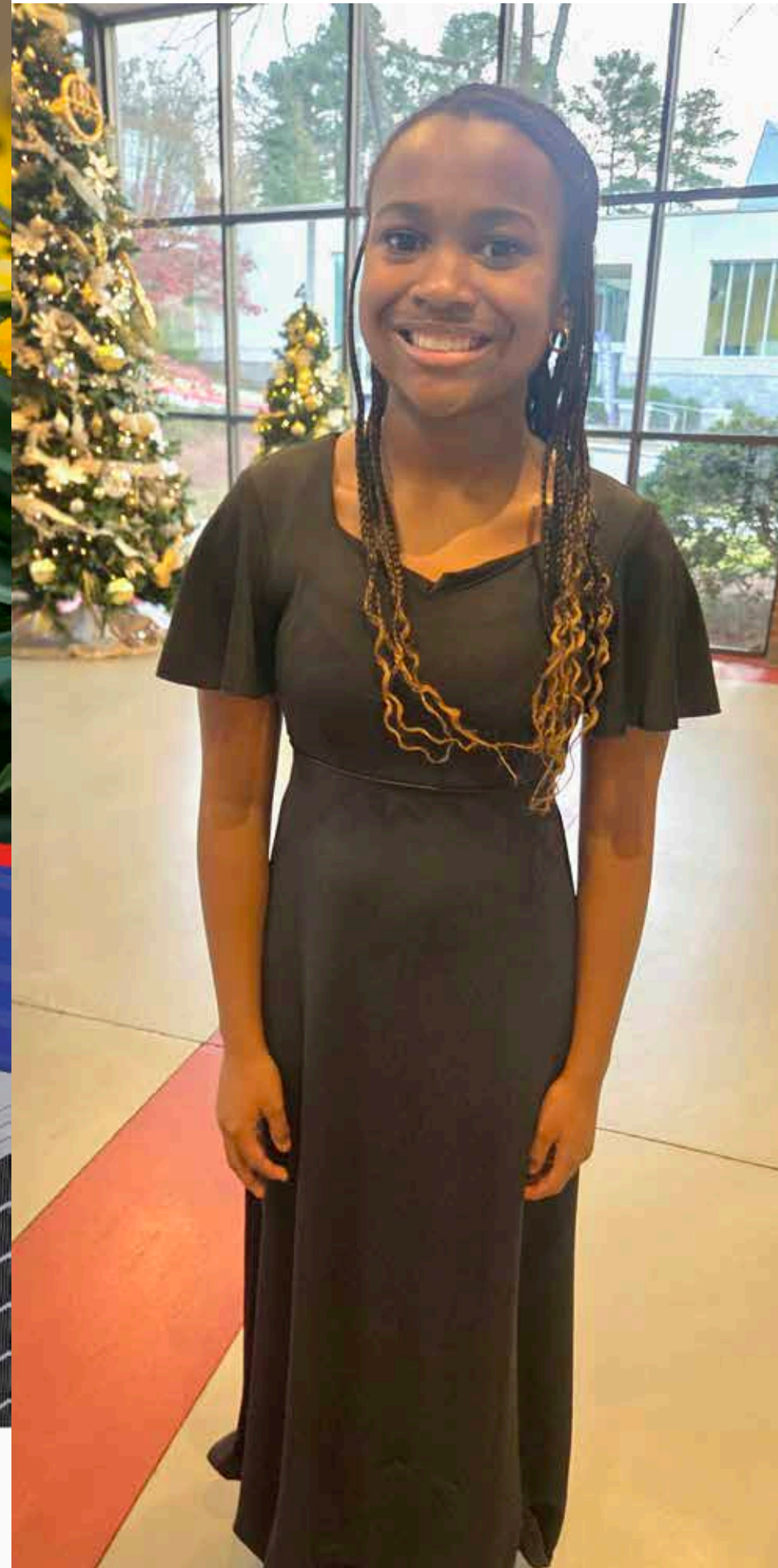
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“ **Be yourself, don't stress yourself out, and remember you can always try again!** ”

Laila's not one for resting on her laurels either. She's crushing the grades as well. She'd already made a name for herself as Student Ambassador and Cobb County Reading Bowl participant at her previous school. Now, she's a member of the Black Student Union, and a solid A student at Holy Innocents' Episcopal School, earning her a spot on both the Honor Roll & Principal's List this school year.

When she's not cracking the books or doing laps, she's busy earning badges as a Girl Scout Cadette and joining her friends and parents with volunteer work for local causes. That drive for giving back isn't surprising, given that her mom, her greatest role model, is in the business of helping others as a practicing therapist, and Laila could see herself walking that same path in her own career. She hopes to "help people who are having a hard time and make others feel special in their own way."

If it's not Gold Medalist Laila, or Dr. Hardy, perhaps she'd settle for Oscar Winner! Her love of acting has taken her on casting calls, with roles in summer camp plays, and acting classes. She was thrilled to see some Broadway plays on a trip to NYC, and could easily see herself living in New York one day. Of course, she'd miss Vinings Estates and her two favorite things about it: "The people and the pools!" she says with a smile.

Is it always smooth sailing with all this on her plate? No, she admits to facing challenges along the way, but assures us, "I learn from it, and then make tomorrow a better one!" Her advice in life is something we can all take a page from: "Be yourself, don't stress yourself out, and remember you can always try again!"

Celebrate your kid's big wins in school, sports or something cool your kiddo is doing! Email photos to: lynda.arey@strollmag.com

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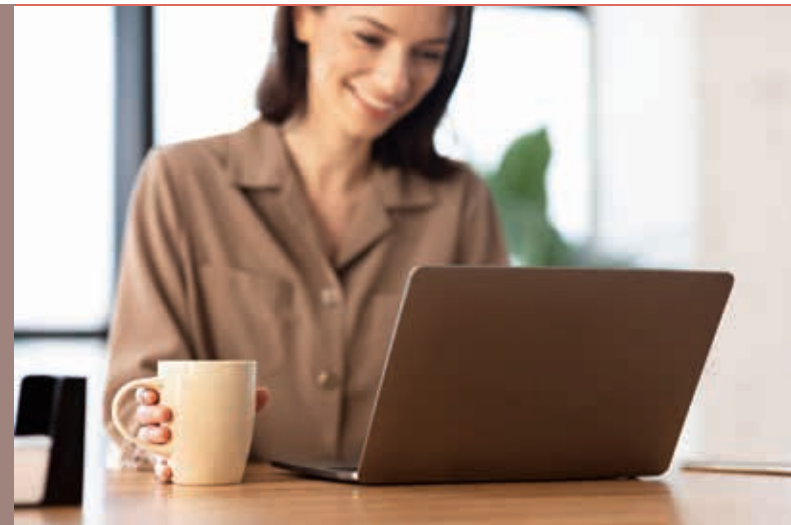
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MEET LEXI, THE DISNEY DOG WHO CHOSE US

With expressive eyes, a bouncy trot, and a nose for adventure, Lexi the Schnoodle keeps life entertaining with sniffing safaris, treat negotiations, and a Christmas-card starring role.

SUBMITTED BY: DODIE SNIDER

IN 2001, WE CHOSE this neighborhood because of its beautiful rolling landscape, the trees, and the unique character that makes this area feel so special. What we didn't fully realize then was how much more we would love it over the years. We stayed because of the people. Our great neighbors became friends and the sense of community here made it easy to put down roots. Looking back, moving here wasn't just about finding a house in a beautiful setting, it was about becoming part of a neighborhood that truly feels like home.



Nine years ago, we went to Angels Among Us Pet Rescue thinking **we** were picking out a dog. Lexi had other plans. At six years old, she calmly evaluated us, decided we were acceptable staff members, and chose her forever home. Now at 15 years young, our beloved Schnoodle runs the household with gentle authority, impeccable timing, and a nose that misses absolutely nothing.

THE DISNEY DOG

Our friend Holly gave her the perfect nickname: "Disney Dog." It fits. Lexi has that animated sparkle, expressive eyes, a bouncy little trot, and the kind of presence that suggests birds might land on her shoulder if she stood still long enough (which she most certainly will not). She doesn't just enter a room. She makes an entrance.

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“We operate on Lexi Standard Time (LST), which means progress is measured in sniffs per minute.”



Every mailbox holds secrets. We operate on Lexi Standard Time (LST), which means progress is measured in sniffs per minute. Car rides, however, are pure bliss. The world passing by, the breeze in her fur, she rides like a seasoned road-trip pro.

HIGHLY FOOD ORIENTED (UNDERSTATEMENT OF THE YEAR)

Lexi is what we lovingly call “food oriented.” She believes in working smarter, not harder, especially if a treat is involved. Food puzzles? Conquered. Treat ball? Mastered. Lick mat? Cleared with precision. All excellent for cognitive

skills... and for demonstrating her remarkable commitment to snacks. And of course, there’s the tennis ball: timeless, classic, and forever elite.

A LITTLE PUPPY LOVE

Then there’s Kirby, her boyfriend. When Lexi spots him on a walk, she transforms into a teenager at her first school dance. Tail wagging at warp speed, eyes sparkling, pure joy radiating from every whisker. At 15, she still knows how to fall head-over-paws in love. It’s puppy love in its most wholesome form.



“She may have chosen us nine years ago, but every single day since, we know we’re the lucky ones.”

CHRISTMAS CARD ROYALTY

Every year, Lexi is the undisputed star of our Christmas card. She carries the theme. She sets the tone. She is the moment. Getting her to actually pose for the photo? That’s another story. It usually involves bribery, creative angles, and a lot of patience. And thank goodness for Photoshop. A little editing magic goes a long way when your model has places to be and smells to investigate.

THE HEART OF OUR HOME

Lexi has filled our home with laughter, adventure, and more happiness than we ever could have imagined. From her sniffing safaris to her treat negotiations to her romantic reunions, she turns ordinary days into something extraordinary.

She may have chosen us nine years ago, but every single day since, we know we’re the lucky ones.

Have a furry, feathered, or four-legged friend, or know a neighbor who does? We’d love to feature them in our Precious Pets article! Send a photo to lynda.arey@strollmag.com or call 678-369-4465.

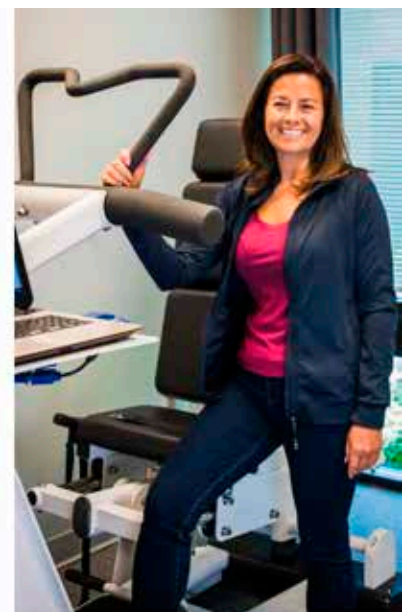
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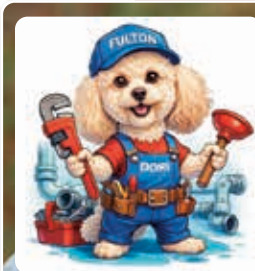
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