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**Veterans Day service honors military heroes**

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check it out



sales tax update



## SPLOST: Schools get new sidewalks

Gwinnett Commissioners awarded a construction contract for school safety and pedestrian safety improvements to the Dickerson Group, Inc., on October 6. The projects will provide sidewalk connectivity to schools in the area and are being funded by 2009 SPLOST revenues.

On Sever Road near Jackson Elementary School, sidewalks will be added from Lake Washington Drive south to existing sidewalks north of State Route 120/Duluth Highway. This project will also complete the sidewalk connectivity on the easterly side of Sever Road, from State Route 120 all the way to North Brown Road and beyond that, to Old Peachtree Road.

The construction of sidewalks on West Price Road from Suwanee Dam Road to Level Creek Road will complete connectivity at North Gwinnett High School.

The Dickerson Group, Inc., was the lowest responsive bidder out of 11 bids received for these safety projects in the amount of \$440,363. Construction is anticipated to be completed by mid-2010.

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county feature



## Community Garden: Our residents dig it

Last winter, Water Resources offered to make land and water available for a community garden. That simple idea produced a bountiful harvest.

The land was on the grounds of the Lanier Filter Plant near Buford. Using four days of inmate labor and \$4,460, Water Resources installed water pipes, gravel for parking, and tilled up enough soil for 40 garden plots. They even obtained a donated port-a-potty from Grogan's Sanitary Services.

Director of Water Production **Neal Spivey** said, "Many people like the idea of growing their own food but don't have the knowledge, the space, or enough sun exposure to be successful. Our land is ideal, except for the rocks!" Community gardeners provide their own seeds, materials, and labor. A padlock keeps out poachers but gardeners report that deer and field mice are getting their share.

Check out these selections for great ideas for holiday cooking:

**Gather: Memorable Menus for Entertaining Throughout the Seasons**, by Georgeanne Brennan

**Mother's Best: Comfort Food That Takes You Home Again**, by Lisa Schroeder

**New American Table**, by Marcus Samuelsson

**Jewish Cooking Boot Camp: The Modern Girl's Guide to Cooking Like a Jewish Grandmother**, by Andrea Marks Carneiro

**Ace of Cakes: Inside the World of Charm City Cakes**, by Duff Goldman

**The Flour Pot Christmas Cookie Book: Creating Edible Works of Art for the Holidays**, by Margie and Abbey Greenberg

**The New Thanksgiving Table: An American Celebration of Family, Friends, and Food**, by Diane Morgan

**The Amish Cook's Baking Book**, by Lovina Eicher

**The Healthiest Hedonists Holidays: A Year of Multicultural, Vegetarian-Friendly Holiday Feasts**, by Myra Kornfeld

**Peterson's Holiday Helper: Festive Pick-Me-Ups, Calm-Me-Downs and Handy Hints to Keep you in Good Spirits**, by Valerie Peterson

This list is provided by the Gwinnett County Public Library. Call or visit your local branch for additional selection assistance, or check out the GCPL website at [www.gwinnettpl.org](http://www.gwinnettpl.org).

Volunteers from the Extension Service's **Master Gardener** program helped local residents plan, plant, maintain, and harvest their gardens of vegetables, flowers, and herbs. Everyone who signed up for a free 20"x20" plot agreed to plant it by April 30 and to maintain it all summer. Some have replanted their gardens with fall crops like broccoli and cauliflower.

All community gardeners also agreed to participate in **Plant a Row for the Hungry**— a program that offers fresh produce to local food banks. Some church groups donate everything they grow to the needy. One Girl Scout troop grew 300 pounds of fruits and vegetables on two plots. Other rules include participating in a fall garden clean-up, gardens are for non-commercial use only, no pets or alcohol onsite, legal crops only, and you can pick only your own crops. Plots were available on a first-come, first-served basis until all 40 were taken.

Tall crops are only allowed where they won't shade other plots. Fertilizers, weed killers, and insecticides are permitted if they don't affect neighboring gardens. Special plots were set aside for organic gardening. Spivey hopes to make more plots available next year, including a children's garden, as part of Gwinnett County's Environmental Sustainability Plan.

"We believe that community gardens have a positive environmental, economic, and social impact on the surrounding area," says Spivey. "Gardening raises awareness of issues like water quality, erosion, and stormwater runoff that are a big part of our education message."

## Officials outline proposal to restore key services

Gwinnett County officials in October outlined a proposal that would restore some of the spending reductions made earlier this year to the county's public safety, parks and recreation, and social services programs. The new proposal would be funded by a 2.28-mill increase in county property taxes.

The proposal was developed by county staff in response to a request from District 4 Commissioner Kevin Kenerly and was unveiled at a press briefing by Board Chairman Charles Bannister, Commissioner Kenerly, County Administrator Glenn Stephens, and Chief Financial Officer Aaron Bovos. The details of the proposal were also posted to the county's [website](#).

Stephens said the county would hold three public hearings on the proposed property tax increase on **Monday, November 23, at 10:00am and 6:00pm**, and then on **December 1 at 7:00pm** at the Gwinnett Justice and Administration Center located at 75 Langley Drive in Lawrenceville. He said he expected the county commission would formally consider the proposal at a special called meeting following the 7:00pm hearing on December 1.

Visit the county's website at [www.gwinnettcountry.com](http://www.gwinnettcountry.com) for more information about the proposed millage rate increase, including a spreadsheet and presentation of the services that will be funded and a list of services that will not be funded through the proposed millage rate increase.

Watch TVgwinnett on demand at [www.tvgwinnett.com](http://www.tvgwinnett.com) for the Chairman's citizen review meetings for the 2010 budget.

## Changes to Quality of Life Unit

The Gwinnett County Police Department's Quality of Life Unit has been renamed the **Code Enforcement Unit** and consists of 13 full-time, non-sworn code enforcement officers. These officers are responsible for enforcing the County's occupational and business tax; property maintenance, sign, and solid waste ordinances; and the zoning resolution in unincorporated Gwinnett County. The Code Enforcement Unit's office is located in the East Precinct in Dacula.

Police officers will continue to identify and investigate quality of life issues to discover more serious crime and deter crime in the community. Sworn officers from the Quality of Life Unit have been reassigned to precincts throughout the county.

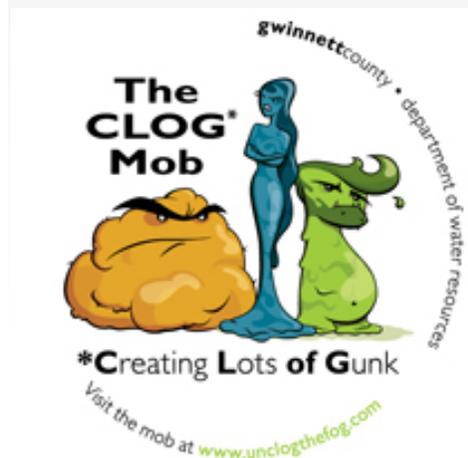
To report a code violation, contact the Code Enforcement Unit at 770.338.4170 ext. 5765 or complete a Code Violation Reporting form on the Code Enforcement Unit's webpage.

"The County's current financial situation has given us the opportunity to re-examine our everyday operations and this move was the wisest use of taxpayers' money. The Police Department will continue its efforts in providing the highest quality of law enforcement to the citizens of Gwinnett," Police Chief **Charles Walters** said.

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## WANTED for creating lots of gunk: The CLOG Mob



The holidays are a time for celebration, which generally involves cooking and eating a wide array of delicious foods. Many of these favorite dishes include rich ingredients such as cream, butter, and vegetable oil.

However, these ingredients must be disposed of properly in order to avoid unpleasant sewer drainage problems.

Once those fats go down the drain, they leave the realm of culinary delights and enter the dastardly underworld of the sewer-stopping **CLOG Mob!**

**Fats Fiend:** He comes from meat and dairy products. Fats is the muscle of the CLOG Mob and likes nothing better than clogging sewer pipes.

**Oil Offender:** She comes from plant sources such as vegetable, olive, and corn oils. She is often found aiding Fats the Fiend and the notorious Grease Goblin in creating blockages in the sewer system.

**Grease Goblin:** He's the ring leader of the CLOG Mob. He shows up when fats from food

melt under heat. He is deceptive because he is a liquid after cooking but will quickly solidify once he cools down.

The CLOG Mob is extremely dangerous. It is wanted for causing numerous sewer blockages in homes and contaminating the county's rivers and streams with sewer overflows. Make sure you "can" the Mob in your home. Never put oils and grease down the drain—pour them into a can instead—and scrape leftover food from dishes into the trash before you wash them. These simple steps will help put a stop to the Mob's plan of causing expensive damage to Gwinnett County's sewer lines.

You can find out more about the CLOG Mob at [www.unclogthefog.com](http://www.unclogthefog.com). Remember, only **YOU** can stop the CLOG Mob.

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If you are looking for a companionable addition to your household, you will find lots of adorable cats, dogs, puppies, and kittens at the Gwinnett County Animal Welfare and Enforcement Center.

Visit [gwinnettanimalcontrol.com](http://gwinnettanimalcontrol.com) to see photos of all the critters currently up for adoption or drop by the shelter located at 884 Winder Highway in Lawrenceville or call 770.339.3200. In an attempt to prevent pet overpopulation, all cats and dogs are spayed or neutered before adoption.



## Second property tax installment due

The second installment payments for Gwinnett County property taxes are due November 15, 2009. Because this date falls on a weekend, payments will be on time if they are paid or bills are postmarked by Monday, November 16. If taxes are not paid in full by this date, a five percent penalty will accrue on the unpaid amount. An additional one percent interest will accrue monthly on the unpaid amount until the account is paid in full. Visit [www.GwinnettTaxCommissioner.com](http://www.GwinnettTaxCommissioner.com) for more information.

## Who can help me: Tax Commissioner or Tax Assessor?

The Tax Commissioner is a constitutionally-elected official responsible for billing and collection of Gwinnett County property taxes and for administering homestead exemptions. Also serving as an agent for the State of Georgia, the Office of the Tax Commissioner registers motor vehicles and collects motor vehicle revenue.

The Gwinnett County Board of Commissioners appoints the Board of Tax Assessors for fixed terms. This board appraises property values, notifies property owners if property assessed values change, reviews property assessment appeals, and reviews and approves of homestead exemptions. General assessment information and answers to frequently asked questions can be found on the Tax Assessor's website at [www.Gwinnett-Assessor.com](http://www.Gwinnett-Assessor.com).

- For questions about assessed property values, contact the Tax Assessor's Office at 770.822.7200 or by e-mail at [assessor@gwinnettcountry.com](mailto:assessor@gwinnettcountry.com)
- For questions about your property tax bill or a homestead exemption, contact the Tax Commissioner's Property Tax Department at 770.822.8800 or by e-mail at [tax@gwinnettcountry.com](mailto:tax@gwinnettcountry.com)
- For questions regarding motor vehicle titles and registration, contact the Tax Commissioner's Motor Vehicles Department at 770.822.8818 or by e-mail at [tag@gwinnettcountry.com](mailto:tag@gwinnettcountry.com)
- For questions about County millage rates, contact the Board of Commissioners at 770.822.7000 or visit [www.gwinnettcountry.com](http://www.gwinnettcountry.com)
- For questions about School millage rates, contact the Board of Education at

678.301.6200 or visit [www.Gwinnett.k12.ga.us](http://www.Gwinnett.k12.ga.us)

You can also visit [www.GwinnettTaxCommissioner.com](http://www.GwinnettTaxCommissioner.com) for helpful information, to make property tax payments, or renew vehicle registrations.

## November holiday hours

**Veterans Day is Wednesday, November 11, 2009**

**Thanksgiving holidays are Thursday, November 26, 2009, and Friday, November 27, 2009. All Gwinnett Tax Commissioner's offices will be closed.**

Tag office work schedules are different during holiday weeks and the day following a holiday is typically very busy. Be sure to check the [holiday schedule](#) for changes.

Be first in line—every time; renew your vehicle online at [www.GwinnettTaxCommissioner.com](http://www.GwinnettTaxCommissioner.com).

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around gwinnett



## GJAC closed for November holidays

All offices, with the exception of those operations required for the comfort and safety of the citizens of Gwinnett County, will be closed on the following dates:

### **Veterans Day Holiday: Wednesday, November 11**

Normal hours resume Thursday, November 12; offices will be open Monday, November 9, and Tuesday, November 10.

### **Thanksgiving Holidays: Thursday, November 26 and Friday, November 27**

Normal hours resume Monday, November 30.

Please be reminded that GJAC is also closed on weekends and at 10:00pm most weekday evenings.

The annual **Veterans Day** commemorative service will be held on November 11 at 11:00am at the Gwinnett Fallen Heroes Memorial, 75 Langley Drive, Lawrenceville, GA 30046. Call 770.822.7180 for more information.

## Now is the time to prepare for cold weather safety

Gwinnett County firefighters are readying for a busy winter season. "During the cold weather months, home heating tends to be a leading cause of residential fires in Gwinnett County," said Captain **Tommy Rutledge**, Fire and Emergency Services spokesman. Many of these fires occur due to poorly maintained heating appliances or those that are placed too close to combustible materials.

Keep space or portable heaters away from combustible materials such as clothing, boxes, and furniture and out of the way of high-traffic areas. Allow three feet of open space around the heater in all directions. Keep children and pets away from any heat-producing

appliance, and turn the heater off if you leave your home for any period of time.

Only use a properly installed fireplace or wood stove that has been cleaned annually and inspected by a certified professional. The damper should always be open when the fireplace is producing heat. Use a glass or metal screen to keep hot embers or sparks from jumping out and igniting furniture or carpeting. Always make sure the fire in the fireplace is out before you to go sleep.

Never attempt to use a rangetop stove or an oven as a supplemental heat source. These can be a source of toxic fumes such as carbon monoxide, which can cause long-term health problems or death.

Finally, install and maintain carbon monoxide alarms and smoke detectors in your home. Smoke detectors should be installed in every level of your home. Be sure to develop a home escape plan and practice fire drills with your entire family. Purchase escape ladders for upper floors and have a multi-purpose, dry-chemical fire extinguisher to use on small fires.

For more information on fire safety, please contact the Gwinnett County Department of Fire and Emergency Services at 678.518.4850.



## Gwinnett senior clubs make a difference

It can be scary for a child to be admitted to the hospital. That's why members of Gwinnett County Parks and Recreation's Senior Recreation Clubs spent more than 1,000 hours this year working to provide handmade comfort for many of these young patients.

Seven volunteers packed up a 45-passenger bus and delivered items to Children's Healthcare of Atlanta in Duluth in October. "These items were made with love and we hope the kids at the hospital will enjoy them," said Coren Wheeler, Program Supervisor at Prime Timers Point Senior Center at George Pierce Park.

Members of eight Senior Recreation Clubs worked for months to hand make 23 crocheted afghans, 10 blankets, 606 surgical caps, 50 baseball caps, 95 crocheted cradle purse babies, 228 dolls, 100 headbands, and 78 knitted caps. The groups also provided 15 wagons for young patients to have a more kid-friendly way to get around the hospital.

The Senior Recreation Clubs meet monthly for social activities, special events, and community service projects. Visit [www.gwinnettparks.com](http://www.gwinnettparks.com) to learn more about our Senior Recreation Clubs and to find out how you can become involved.

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### **Harvest Dance**

**November 6 · 7:00pm**

Bring your friends and join us for our fall dance, light refreshments, and a live band! Ages 50 and up. \$10/person. Pre-registration required; call 770.831.4173 and use code GPCC15390 to register. George Pierce Park Community Recreation Center, 55 Buford Highway, Suwanee.

### **Flapjacks and a Flick**

**November 7 · 8:00am – 11:00am**

Come dressed in your pajamas! We will fix flapjacks (pancakes) and juice while you watch a movie. All ages; \$3/person. Pre-registration required; call 770.814.4914 and use code SHAB14304 to register. Shorty Howell Park Activity Building, 2750 Pleasant Hill Road, Duluth.

### **Holiday Window Contest**

**November 12 · November 27**

Get your family, friends, neighbors, and teams together for a friendly competition. Have some painting fun on the front windows of our building. Bring your creativity during our regular hours and we'll provide all the supplies! This year's theme is "Winter Wonderland." Prizes given for first and second place based on creativity and use of the theme. All ages; \$5/window (one window per group). To pre-register, call 770.723.9516 and use code LSCC14351. Lucky Shoals Park Community Recreation Center, 4651 Britt Road, Norcross.

### **Hometown Christmas Craft Fair and Potter's Gift Shop**

**November 14 · 10:00am – 4:00pm**

**Free admission!** Find that special holiday gift from a unique selection of pottery and crafts. Kids 12 and under can even make-and-take a gift. Crafters, \$25/table or \$40/two tables; vendors register by calling 770.417.2200. Use code PPCC14309. Pinckneyville Park Community Recreation Center, 4650 Peachtree Industrial Boulevard, Norcross.

### **Pioneer Day**

**November 14 · 1:00pm – 4:00pm**

It's a living history adventure. You can churn butter, spin yarn, make a cornhusk doll, hear exciting stories of early settlers, and more. All ages; \$6/person. To register, call 770.822.5178 and use code MDFP10305. McDaniel Farm Park, 3251 McDaniel Road, Duluth.

### **Elf Workshop**

**November 20 · 6:00pm – 8:00pm**

Calling all Santa's helpers! Come jingle your bells and make a masterpiece that can be used as a gift. Refreshments, games, and holiday fun. Ages 4 –10; \$7/person. Pre-register by November 6; call 770.822.5414 and use code RJCC14309. Dacula Activity Building, 2735 Old Auburn Avenue, Dacula

### **Line Dance-a-thon**

**November 21 · 6:00pm – midnight**

Can you boot-scoot your boogie? Join us for nothing but line dancing! Bring a snack to share; drinks will be provided. Ages 13 and up; \$5/person for early registration, \$8/person the week prior to the event. Call 770.814.4914 and use code SHAB14302 to register. Shorty Howell Park Activity Building, 2750 Pleasant Hill Road, Duluth.

### **Lighting of the Tree**

**November 26 · 5:30pm – 8:30pm**

**Free!** Gwinnett County Parks and Recreation's annual **Lighting of the Tree** in conjunction with the Lawrenceville Tourism and Trade Association in Historic Downtown Lawrenceville. Enjoy this traditional outdoor festival beginning with holiday entertainment in the gazebo by the Class Act Band, trolley rides, dancers, other exciting performances, and of course, Santa's big arrival! Bring your camera for a quick visit on the lawn in Santa's sleigh! Face painting and food vendors available for a fee. The Gwinnett Historic Courthouse, 185 Crogan Street, Lawrenceville.

### **Wreath Decorating Contest**

**November 28 - December 5**

Get in the holiday spirit by entering your special wreath in our friendly competition—you could win a prize. Voting is free and open to the public. All ages; \$5/entry. Pre-registration required; call 770.614.2060 for more information and use code BPCC14325 to register.

Bogan Park Community Recreation Center, 2723 North Bogan Road, Buford.

Sign up for these and other great activities at [www.gwinnettparks.com](http://www.gwinnettparks.com).

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**county line**

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The **County Line** is published monthly by the Gwinnett County Communications Division to inform residents about County services and items of interest. For more information or to submit newsletter suggestions, call 770.822.7135 or e-mail [shaunieka.taste@gwinnettcountry.com](mailto:shaunieka.taste@gwinnettcountry.com). The **County Line** is also available on the County's website, [www.gwinnettcountry.com](http://www.gwinnettcountry.com).

