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check it out



Check out these new e-books, and read from the comfort of your home, office, or mobile device! Visit digitalbooks.gwinnettpl.org/ to browse this exciting collection:

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Outliers: The Story of Success, by Malcolm Gladwell

239 Great Places to Escape to Nature Without Roughing It, by Fodor's

CNET Do-It-Yourself Home

## SPLOST: Sugarloaf Parkway Extension continues

Planning and construction activities on several sections of the Sugarloaf Parkway Extension from State Route 20/Grayson Highway to State Route 316 are ongoing. Construction on section one (Grayson Highway to New Hope Road) began early 2008 and is expected to be complete by early next year. Section two (New Hope Road to Martin Chapel Road/Bramlett Shoals Road) began in early this year and will continue through 2010.

Section three of the project will take the extension to Campbell Road. A construction contract for this section will be awarded by the end of this year.

Long-range plans call for wrapping Sugarloaf Parkway from State Route 316 in Dacula all the way to Peachtree Industrial Boulevard near Sugar Hill to facilitate movement through the eastern portion of the county. Gwinnett County is continuing to protect that route with appropriate land acquisitions. Funds for the extension are provided by the County's Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax, or SPLOST, program.

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county feature



## Meet Glenn Stephens, County Administrator



Glenn P. Stephens was appointed by the Gwinnett Board of Commissioners as County Administrator in September. Stephens had previously served as Director of Planning and Development since November 2006.

Chairman Charles Bannister said, "We're very fortunate to have Glenn lead our County through the turbulent times ahead. As Planning and Development Director for the past three years, he faced some of the sharpest declines in commercial and residential development we've ever seen and had to make significant staff cuts while maintaining the high service levels Gwinnett citizens expect. His leadership skills were refined during that challenging

period while is eight years as Assistant County Attorney gave him valuable background on the organization as a whole."

**Networking Projects**, by Dave Prochnow

**Act Like a Lady, Think Like a Man**, by Steve Harvey

**Speak Basic Spanish in No Time**, by Larry Rios

**True Detectives: A Novel**, by Jonathan Kellerman

**Point Blank (FBI Thriller Series)**, by Catherine Coulter

**Final Justice**, by Fern Michaels

**Breaking Point (Net Force Series)**, by Tom Clancy

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).

District 3 Commissioner **Mike Beaudreau** said, “Glenn led the creation of the 2030 Unified Plan that will guide future land use and community development decisions in Gwinnett for the next quarter century. This plan, which resulted from a great deal public and professional input, reflects in a way Glenn’s approach – considering many different angles and designing solid solutions to challenges.”

District 2 Commissioner **Bert Nasuti** added, “He also reorganized the department to consolidate development review services and personnel, and he implemented a new wireless system to improve efficiency. His proven track record will serve the county well as he moves into this new role.”

Prior to his appointment in Planning and Development, Stephens was Senior Assistant County Attorney specializing in land use, zoning laws, and litigation. His 22 years of experience includes some private practice, but the vast majority of his expertise comes from representing DeKalb and Gwinnett County governments and several area municipalities.

“Being a lawyer by training, he knows how to get issues resolved,” Commissioner **Kevin Kenerly** of District 4 said. “Those skills will help Gwinnett County move forward despite the many complicated issues on the table.”

Stephens’ five-year contract has a renewal option, an annual salary of \$228,000 and requires an annual market analysis of similar positions in Cobb and Fulton counties and the City of Atlanta. Gwinnett County government has almost 5,000 employees and an annual budget of about \$1.5 billion.

The newest commissioner, **Shirley Lasseter** of District 1, said, “I’m confident that Glenn is well prepared by his professional and educational experience plus a great working relationship with the commissioners to meet the challenges ahead and determine our county’s future success.”

Stephens graduated from Mercer University with a degree in political science and earned a J.D. degree from the Walter F. George School of Law of Mercer University in 1987. Stephens and his wife Carole have lived in Snellville since 1991. They have two sons.

## 2009 Gwinnett Reads takes citizens on a voyage

The Gwinnett County Public Library selected its 2009 Gwinnett Reads Selection: ***A Voyage Long and Strange*** by Pulitzer Prize-winner **Tony Horwitz**.

**Gwinnett Reads** is a communitywide initiative that encourages Gwinnett County citizens to share the experience of reading the same book. The Gwinnett County Public Library, sponsors, and partners seek to engage adults in the joy of reading and to generate dialogue about the book throughout Gwinnett County. Previous **Gwinnett Reads** authors include Charles Frazier, Ferrol Sams, and Rick Bragg.

In this new book, the bestselling author of *Blue Latitudes* and *Confederates in the Attic* takes us on a thrilling and eye-opening voyage to pre-Mayflower America. On a chance visit to Plymouth Rock, Horwitz realizes he’s mislaid more than a century of American history, from Columbus’ sail in 1492 to Jamestown’s founding in 1607. Did nothing happen in between? Determined to find out, he embarks on a journey of rediscovery, following in the footsteps of the many Europeans who preceded the pilgrims to America.

An irresistible blend of history, myth, and misadventure, ***A Voyage Long and Strange*** captures the wonder and drama of first contact. Vikings, conquistadors, French voyageurs—these and many others roamed an unknown continent in quest of grapes, gold, converts, even a cure for syphilis. Though most failed, their remarkable exploits left an enduring mark on the land and people encountered by late-arriving English settlers.

Tracing this legacy with his own epic trek—from Florida’s Fountain of Youth to Plymouth’s sacred Rock, from desert pueblos to sub-arctic sweat lodges—Horwitz explores the revealing gap between what we enshrine and what we forget. Displaying his trademark

talent for humor, narrative and historical insight, *A Voyage Long and Strange* allows us to rediscover the New World for ourselves.

### About the author

As a former *Wall Street Journal* reporter and current *New Yorker* staff writer, Horwitz has gone places most of us are either not brave or stupid enough to venture to and returned with a collection of absorbing, affecting, often hilarious tales set in locales from the Sudan to the American South.

Horwitz's intercontinental roamings started when he married fellow reporter Geraldine Brooks and followed her to her native Australia. His first book, *One for the Road*, recounts his adventures hitchhiking across the Australian Outback.

His second book, *Baghdad Without a Map*, zings around the Middle East, from a qat-chewing party in Yemen to a leper colony in Sudan, from the aforementioned ferry ride to an almost equally terrifying flight on Egyptair. It was a national bestseller.

After moving to Virginia in 1993, Horwitz embarked on a different kind of travel, producing another bestseller. *Confederates in the Attic* describes his journey across the South and his quest to understand the impact of the Civil War on contemporary America.

Horwitz will appear on Sunday, October 18 at 4:00pm at the Red Clay Theatre and Arts Center in Duluth. Tickets are \$12 at the door or \$10 in advance. Tickets may be purchased at any library branch or you may call 770.978.5154. The event is sponsored by the Georgia Humanities Council and the *Gwinnett Daily Post*.

## Georgia Energy Code enforcement expansion

The Gwinnett County Department of Planning and Development announces its commitment to increase efforts to promote energy conservation throughout the community as part of the countywide Gwinnett Environmental Sustainability Program.

Effective November 16, 2009, Planning and Development staff will expand the scope of energy code enforcement to include the inspection of the following supplemental items for single-family residential, commercial, and multifamily construction: roof/wall/floor insulation, windows, mechanical equipment, water-heating equipment, and sealing of air barriers.

For more information, please contact **Dana Baites**, Division Plan Review Manager, at 678.518.6041 or [dana.baites@gwinnettcounty.com](mailto:dana.baites@gwinnettcounty.com) with questions regarding changes in energy code enforcement. Get in touch with **Joel Rodriguez**, Building Inspections Manager, at 678.518.6035 or [joel.rodriguez@gwinnettcounty.com](mailto:joel.rodriguez@gwinnettcounty.com) with specific inspection-related questions.

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protecting our resources



## Composting and fall gardens workshop

Fall is a great time to prepare your garden for the year ahead. If you are considering adding fertilizer, a soil test is highly recommended. The soil test can help determine what type of fertilizer you need, if any. Although fertilizer can be very useful when applied properly, overusing fertilizer can cause water pollution. Determining the correct amount of fertilizer is beneficial for the environment and your wallet! Gwinnett Cooperative Extension Service Director **Robert Brannen** points out that, "A soil test can show you how much fertilizer you don't have to use." You can get your soil tested through the Cooperative Extension Service for a small fee.

Join us in November to learn more about how to get the most out of your garden this fall. The Gwinnett County Department of Water Resources Stormwater Management Division, in conjunction the Clean Water Campaign and Gwinnett County's Cooperative Extension Service, is hosting a free **Composting and Fall Gardening Workshop** on November 5 at 7:00pm. The workshop will take place in the GJAC Auditorium, 75 Langley Drive in Lawrenceville.

Workshop presenter Robert Brannen will speak about fall gardening activities including preparing plants and turf grass for the winter, methods to creatively reduce next year's landscape maintenance, pruning techniques, and how to create and manage a compost pile to save money and help protect our environment. Registration is required and space is limited. For more information or to register, please send an e-mail to the Stormwater Management Division at [dwrswreg@gwinnettcountry.com](mailto:dwrswreg@gwinnettcountry.com) with your name, address, and telephone number, or call 678.376.7126.

## Collins Hill Park stream restoration

### Join us for an informative public tour!

In 2007, Gwinnett County Stormwater Management completed a stream restoration project at Collins Hill Park. This restoration is part of **Gwinnett's Watershed Improvement Plan for the Upper Yellow River**. The park was selected as a project site because of severe erosion along the banks of local streams and the opportunity to improve stormwater quality in this area. Stormwater Management will host a public tour at Collins Hill Park on Friday, November 6 from 3:00pm – 4:00pm. Participants will learn about the purpose and function of the stream restoration and other water quality enhancements. The speakers will also share tips on how to apply simple yet effective stormwater management practices at your own home or business.

Registration is required and space is limited. For more information or to register, please send an e-mail to the Stormwater Management Division at [dwrswreg@gwinnettcountry.com](mailto:dwrswreg@gwinnettcountry.com) with your name, address, and telephone number, or call 678.376.7126.

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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.

## advice from the tax commissioner



## 2009 Property tax bills

Property tax payment installment dates are **October 15** and **November 15**.

The 2009 tax bill that property owners received is a temporary bill until a final millage rate is approved by the Board of Commissioners. Property owners must pay their temporary tax bills in full by November 15 to avoid interest and penalty charges. Once the final millage rate has been set, a re-billing may occur. Any difference in the temporary and the final millage rate may result in additional charges or refunds to property owners.

Homeowners across Georgia may see in an increase in their 2009 tax bills unrelated to the County millage rate. Since 1999, the Georgia General Assembly and the Governor have provided a credit on property tax bills called the **Homeowners Tax Relief Grant (HTRG)**. In recent years, that credit resulted in an \$84 – \$272 reduction to your property tax bill. Due to financial strains on the state budget, the Georgia General Assembly and the Governor did not fund this credit for 2009 property tax bills. While the HTRG credit may someday be reinstated by the General Assembly, it is not expected to be considered again until state revenues increase significantly. As a result, your tax bill may increase accordingly.

You can determine the exact amount you saved in 2008 by locating the **Tax Relief Credit** amount displayed on your 2008 tax bill. If your taxes are paid from an escrow account through your mortgage lender, you may want to notify them so the escrow payment amount can be adjusted.

In some cases, the fair market value of your property may have changed which impacted your assessment and the amount you owe.

“At a time when everyone is carefully watching their spending, an increase in property taxes is not good news,” said **Katherine Meyer**, Gwinnett Tax Commissioner. “Since much of that increase is coming from an action that was taken at the state level, not the county, we want people to have the facts.”

Visit [www.GwinnettTaxCommissioner.com](http://www.GwinnettTaxCommissioner.com) for more information.

## November holiday hours

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

**Thanksgiving is November Thursday, November 26, 2009**

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).

## Katherine Meyer, Tax Commissioner

75 Langley Drive, Lawrenceville, GA 30046

### Property Tax Customer Service

770.822.8800 • [tax@gwinnettcountry.com](mailto:tax@gwinnettcountry.com)

### Motor Vehicles Customer Service

770.822.8818 • [tag@gwinnettcountry.com](mailto:tag@gwinnettcountry.com)

[www.gwinnetttaxcommissioner.com](http://www.gwinnetttaxcommissioner.com)

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around gwinnett



## Outback Suwanee donates meals to benefit seniors

Outback Steakhouse donated 381 meals to benefit **Gwinnett County Senior Services**. This is the 10<sup>th</sup> year the restaurant has given back to the community to help provide meals to seniors.

Volunteers and members of Friends of Gwinnett County Senior Services (Friends) delivered meals consisting of beef, flame-grilled chicken, seasoned green beans, mashed potatoes, and a roll across Gwinnett County. The annual event has generated more than \$90,500 in the past 10 years.

“I wanted to give back to the seniors and thought this is a good way to do it,” said Outbacker staff member **Christi Solsbeery**.

Funds from the Outback at Work Charity lunch will help subsidize the 135,000 home-delivered and congregate meals that are prepared and delivered by Gwinnett County Senior Services annually.

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**Pumpkin Patch**  
**Weekends in October**  
**Saturdays - 10:00am – 4:00pm**  
**Sundays - noon – 4:00pm**

**Free admission!** Grab your camera and get some great fall shots of your family on the farm picking a pumpkin! Tour the farm and enjoy three miles of walking trails through the beautiful fall leaves. McDaniel Farm Park, 3251 McDaniel Road, Duluth. Call 770.814.4920 for more information.

**Mother/Son Halloween Dance**  
**October 16 - 7:00pm – 9:00pm**

Superheros, princesses, pirates, and other cute critters are all invited to dress up and enjoy this spooktacular event! Costumes optional. Ages 4 – 12; \$5/person including light refreshments. Pre-registration required, call 770.831.4173 and use code GPCC14300 to register. George Pierce Park Community Recreation Center, 55 Buford Highway, Suwanee.

**Haunted Night at the Museum**  
**October 16 - 7:00pm – 10:00pm**

Gwinnett County's ghosts come alive at the Gwinnett History Museum! Enjoy fun kids' crafts, face painting, storytelling, and more! All ages; \$5/person. Space is limited; pre-registration recommended. Call 770.822.5178 and use code FSHM10310 to register. Lawrenceville Female Seminary, 455 South Perry Street, Lawrenceville.

**Murder Mystery Theater**  
**October 16 - 7:30pm – 9:00pm**

When tempers flare at the opening of a new art exhibit, the remaining guests are left to uncover the truth behind The ART of Murder. Ages 18 and up; \$20/person, including hors d'oeuvres and dessert/coffee bar. Pre-registration required by October 9; call 770.417.2200 and use code PPCC14316 to register. Pinckneyville Park Community Recreation Center, 4650 Peachtree Industrial Boulevard, Norcross.

**See Gwinnett Gladiators with Friends**  
**October 17 - 7:05pm**

Be a spectator and cheer on the Gwinnett Gladiators. Get tickets for the game on Saturday, October 17 at a reduced price of \$15 each, and \$5 (less taxes) from each ticket sold will go to Friends of Gwinnett County Senior Services. Funds collected will be used to help support selected Gwinnett County Senior Services programs. Order online at [www.gwinnettgladiators.com](http://www.gwinnettgladiators.com), click on Special Ticket Offers, and enter the code FOGS1017 to get your discounted ticket. All orders must be placed by Wednesday, October 14, 2009. Tickets will be available for pick up on game night at the Gladiators' Will Call window in the Box Office at the Arena. You may also order tickets by fax. For questions, contact Keith Davis at 770.497.5112 or [kdavis@gwinnettgladiators.com](mailto:kdavis@gwinnettgladiators.com).

**Park'nership Volunteer Day**  
**October 17 - 9:00am – noon**

**Free!** Join the Gwinnett Parks Foundation in the "people in parks" event! There's no better way to give back to your community than volunteering for a park beautification project! Bring garden gloves and hand tools and join your friends, family, and neighbors in projects throughout the park. Bring a picnic and enjoy the rest of the day in the park. All ages welcome. Call 770.822.8873 for more information. Harbins Park, 2995 Luke Edwards Road, Dacula; Holcomb Bridge Park, 4300 Holcomb Bridge Road, Norcross; McDaniel Farm Park, 3251 McDaniel Road, Duluth.

**Crotoberfest**  
**October 17 - 10:00am – 5:00pm**

Have fun scrapbooking, networking, and getting your photos in order! Learn new and fun ways to display your family memories. Ages 50 and up; \$35/person including lunch. Pre-registration required; call 770.831.4173 and use code GPCC15375 to register. George Pierce Park Community Recreation Center, 55 Buford Highway, Suwanee.

**Murder Mystery Dinner**  
**October 17 - 6:00pm**

Enjoy an evening out with an entertaining tale and figure out who done it! Buffet dinner, drinks, and dessert will be served. Ages 10 and up; \$15/person. Pre-register early; call 770.723.9516 and use code MPAB14361 to register. Mountain Park Activity Building, 1063 Rockbridge Road, Stone Mountain.

### **Haunted Night at the Museum**

**October 17 · 7:00pm – 10:00pm**

Gwinnett County's ghosts come alive at the Gwinnett History Museum! Enjoy fun kids' crafts, face painting, storytelling, and more! All ages; \$5/person. Space is limited; pre-registration recommended, call 770.822.5178 and use code FSHM10311 to register. Lawrenceville Female Seminary, 455 South Perry Street, Lawrenceville.

### **Murder Mystery Theater**

**October 17 · 7:30pm – 9:00pm**

When tempers flare at the opening of a new art exhibit, the remaining guests are left to uncover the truth behind The ART of Murder. Ages 18 and up; \$20/person including hors d'oeuvres and dessert/coffee bar. Pre-registration required by October 9; call 770.417.2200 and use code PPCC14317. Pinckneyville Park Community Recreation Center, 4650 Peachtree Industrial Boulevard, Norcross.

### **Meteor Madness**

**October 21 · 5:00am**

See the Orionids meteor shower before you start your day. Continental breakfast will be served. All ages; \$5/person. Pre-registration required; call 770.614.2060 and use code BPCC14320 to register. Little Mulberry Park, 3855 Fence Road, Auburn.

### **Kids' Night Out**

**October 23 · 5:30pm – 9:00pm**

Splash the night away! Bring a swimsuit and towel! Ages 6 – 10; \$10/person. Pre-registration required; call 770.614.2060 and use code BPCC14398 to register. Bogan Park Community Recreation Center, 2723 North Bogan Road, Buford.

### **Halloween Costume Party**

**October 23 · 7:00pm – 9:00pm**

Fun Halloween party with games, candy, and costume contest. Prizes will be awarded for the best family costume, the funniest costume, the scariest costume, and more! All ages; \$3/person (2 and under free). Pre-registration required by October 16, call 770.417.2200 and use code PPCC14308 to register. Pinckneyville Park Community Recreation Center, 4650 Peachtree Industrial Boulevard, Norcross.

### **Halloween Dance**

**October 23 · 7:00 – 9:00pm**

Moms, grab your sons and a costume and join us for this fourth annual spooky dance! Dancing, games, prizes, snacks, and a commemorative keepsake photo are all a part of this fun event! Costumes are required to enter the dance! Ages 3 and up. Pre-registration required by October 9; call 770.822.5414 for more information. Fee is \$10 per person. Use code RJCC14307 when registering. Dacula Park Activity Building, 2735 Old Auburn Avenue, Dacula.

### **Pumpkin Patch Family Fun Day**

**October 24 · 10:00am – 2:00pm**

Enjoy this special celebration of our Pumpkin Patch with hayrides, petting zoo, games, and more! Admission is free; small fee for some activities. McDaniel Farm Park, 3251 McDaniel Road, Duluth. Call 770.814.4920 for more information.

### **Senior Health Fair**

**October 30 · 9:00am – noon**

Health screenings, demonstrations, fun activities, educational information, door prizes, goodie bags, and refreshments. Vendor spaces are \$25/each. Call 770.564.4680 and use code GCSC16355 for reservations. Ages 50 and up. Gwinnett Senior Center at Bethesda Park, 225 Bethesda Church Road, Lawrenceville.

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).

