



# county Line

a monthly publication of gwinnett county, georgia

september 2006 v14, n9



## Meet your County Extension Agents

by Tammy Gibson, Communications Division

Need to find out what type of weed or plant is growing in your yard? Have an odd looking insect that is bugging you? Not sure if the food hidden away in your freezer is still safe to eat? Since 1914, extension agents at the Gwinnett County Cooperative Extension Service have fielded questions just like these on a daily basis.

The Extension Service offers educational programs on a wide variety of subjects including horticulture, tools for providing positive guidance for children and teens, informed consumer and nutritional decisions, and safe food preparation and storage. They are an educational division of the Department of Community Services and oper-

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Gwinnett Extension staff: (from left to right) Agent Tim Daly, Program Assistant Norma Benitez, Agent Maria Abreu, Director Robert Brannen, and Agent Inez Betran.

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Around Gwinnett



## Mobile Operations Center takes E-911 on the road

by David Knope, Staff Writer

Gwinnett Police have a new tool to help deal with natural or manmade disasters – a mobile operations center called MOCI. The high-tech dispatch center contains work stations and communications gear that can operate seamlessly across various platforms used by local, state, and federal agencies.

The 41-foot vehicle, built by North American Catastrophe Services in Florida, "is truly state-of-the-art in terms of its capabilities," according to Major Tom Savage. "We researched

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The MOCI contains work stations and communications gear that can operate across various platforms used by local, state, and federal agencies.



## Advice from the Tax Commissioner: Trading, selling a vehicle to a dealer

There are several things to remember when you sell or trade in your vehicle to a commercial dealer. Below are some tips to help make the transaction go more smoothly.

When you sell or trade in a vehicle to a commercial dealer, you may be asked to provide proof that *ad valorem* taxes have been paid. A current vehicle registration card is proof of payment of *ad valorem* taxes as long as the registration has not expired. If the registration has expired, you can pay outstanding *ad valorem* taxes at your local tag office. Then, take the tax receipt to the dealer as proof of payment.

You will need to give the dealer either your vehicle's title, if there is no current lien on the vehicle, or the name of the lien holder or bank if you are still making payments. If you have the title, each owner listed on the front of the title must sign the back of the title as the seller(s). If there is a lien on the vehicle, the lien holder (lending institution) will have the title, in which case you need to provide the name, address, and phone number of the lien holder, along with the payoff amount.

Be sure to remove and keep your vehicle's current license plate (tag) when you sell or trade in the vehicle at a dealer. Do not leave the license plate at the dealership. To transfer the old tag to a new vehicle, go to your local branch tag office. If you do not plan to use the old tag, you should cancel the registration at the local tag office.

For additional information about what to do when selling or trading in a vehicle, send an e-mail to the Motor Vehicles Department at [tag@gwinnettcountry.com](mailto:tag@gwinnettcountry.com) or call Motor Vehicles Customer Service at 770.822.8818.

### Property tax bills mailed in August

Property tax bills for 2006 were mailed in August. You should have received two payment coupons and two reply envelopes. Be sure and return the payment coupons with your property tax payment(s).

Taxpayers choosing to pay in installments should pay the first installment amount by October 15. The second installment is due November 15. Bills not paid by the due dates will have a five percent penalty added to the installment amount. In addition, interest will begin to accrue at the rate of one percent per month beginning November 16.

For assistance or for more information, call 770.822.8800 or send an e-mail to [propertytax@gwinnettcountry.com](mailto:propertytax@gwinnettcountry.com).

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



## Holcomb Bridge Park opens, renovations to Best Friend Park highlighted

by Tammy Gibson, Communications Division

Norcross residents had a lot to celebrate on Saturday, August 26, with the grand opening of the Holcomb Bridge Park and a ceremony to highlight renovations to Best Friend Park.

Gwinnett County Parks and Recreation opened Holcomb Bridge Park on August 26. The 11-acre passive park, formerly home to the Pinckneyville Arts Center, includes two river overlooks at the Chattahoochee River, a wooden amphitheater, open space play area, picnic pavilion, playground, and a mulch trail. The Pinckneyville Arts Center was replaced by the Pinckneyville Community Center in 2002.

On the same day, GCPR celebrated renovations recently made to Best Friend Park, including a pavilion, concession stand, two baseball/softball fields with a football field overlay, and a one-mile paved multi-purpose trail. The leisure pool opened last year and has been a busy place, especially for those wanting to beat the summer heat.

*"Best Friend Park is one of the oldest parks in our park system, so we are glad that we were able to do a complete renovation on many of the amenities, including the pool and the tennis center,"* said **Sharon Plunkett**, director of GCPR. *"Holcomb Bridge Park is a great place*



The new Holcomb Bridge Park features two river overlooks at the Chattahoochee River, a wooden amphitheater, open space play area, pavilion, a playground, and a mulch trail.

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## Mobile command

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more than a dozen similar vehicles around the country back in 2003 and 2004 before deciding on final specifications for the MOCI."

**Sergeant Mike Sellers** is in charge of day-to-day vehicle operations and readiness. "If normal communications are knocked out," he said, "we can continue to operate over landline, cell, Internet, or satellite phone systems." Onboard radios have "interoperability" to allow various agencies to talk to each other – an important lesson learned from the September 11 terrorism attacks. Two generators allow the operations center to be up and running in remote locations for days at a time.

On the back of the vehicle, a 42-foot telescoping mast hoists a weatherproof video camera and various antennas. **Lieutenant Keybo Taylor** said the roof holds a work platform, a satellite dish antenna, lights, a weather station, and satellite radio antennas. An outside work station features a retractable TV screen, work desk, and awning.

The 33,000-pound vehicle is worth about \$750,000. All but approximately \$8,000 was paid by Homeland Security grants. MOCI is now available to agencies throughout the southeast whenever disaster or some other emergency strikes.

## Extension agents

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ate as part of the University of Georgia's College of Agricultural/Environmental Sciences and College of Family and Consumer Sciences. They also receive funding from the Gwinnett Department of Education.

Youth development is also a major focus with the 4-H Council. Over the years, as the challenges facing America's youth have changed, so have the programs offered by 4-H. Today's 4-H programs offer more than farming and sewing, and include creating websites, learning how to speak effectively, making wise consumer choices, and leading volunteer efforts.

"You name it, we get asked a lot of questions and hear a lot of stories," said **Robert Bran-**nen, Director of the Gwinnett County Extension Service. "One of the funniest was when someone put their turkey out to thaw on their back deck, and squirrels came along and chewed away a portion of it."

### Contact Your Extension Agents

678.377.4010

gc4u@uga.edu

750 South Perry Street, Suite 400  
Lawrenceville, GA 30045

## Hispanic Heritage Month Essay Contest

Write an essay, song, or poem portraying what the Hispanic/Latino culture means to you. The contest is open to Gwinnett residents between the ages of eight and 20. The essay may be written in English or Spanish. Contest winners will be notified in advance and awarded prizes at the Hispanic Heritage Celebration on October 14 in Lawrenceville.

E-mail [ivonne\\_mcnally@gwinnett.k12.ga.us](mailto:ivonne_mcnally@gwinnett.k12.ga.us) or call 770.638.2383 for more information.

### Check it out!

Everyone knows that Southerners tell the best stories, so kick back and enjoy the last days of summer with one or two of these popular new titles from Southern authors.

*When Light Breaks*, by Patti Callahan Henry

*One Mississippi*, by Mark Childress

*Between, Georgia*, by Joshilyn Jackson

*Can't Wait to Get to Heaven*, by Fannie Flagg

*New Stories from the South, 2006*, edited by Allan Gurganus

*The Pleasure Was Mine*, by Tommy Hays

*The Red Hat Club Rides Again*, by Haywood Smith

*The Three Mrs. Parkers*, by Joan Medlicott

*The Good Priest's Son*, by Reynolds Price

*Novel*, by George Singleton

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).

## Pet Corner



### Pet Corner

Pet Corner

You can find lots of adorable cats, dogs, puppies, and kittens at the Gwinnett County Animal Shelter at Highway 316 and Hi-Hope Road in Lawrenceville.

To see pictures of cats and dogs currently up for adoption, visit [www.gwinnettanimalcontrol.com](http://www.gwinnettanimalcontrol.com). For more information, stop by the shelter, or call 770.339.3200.





# WHAT'S HAPPENING AROUND GWINNETT

Clean out your garage and closets and bring your wares to sell at the **Shorty Howell Yard Sale and Craft Fair** on September 2 from 9:00am – 1:00pm. Reservations are required for sellers; 10' x 10' spaces are available for rent. Inside space: \$15 (includes a table; limit two spaces); outside space: \$10. Event will be held rain or shine – no refunds. Gwinnett right to disallow items found inappropriate during the event. Call 770.814.4914.

**Grab-A-Grandparent** for an hour filled with fun, crafts, and refreshments at Bogan Park on September 8 from 10:00am – 11:00am. The cost is \$5 for one adult and one child and \$1 for each additional person. For more information, call 770.614.2060.

Enjoy a night of pizza, games, and prizes and compete in an ultimate family challenge at **Family Game Night** at Rhodes Jordan Park on September 8 from 6:00pm – 8:00pm. The cost is \$10 for a family of four and \$3 for each additional person. Call 770.822.5414.

Explore interactive rhythms at the free **Milk and Cookies Concert** on September 19 from 11:30am – 12:15pm at Centerville Community Center. Call 770.985.4713 for more information.

**The Princess Camp and Tea** will be held September 21 and 22 at Bogan Park from 10:00am – 11:15am on September 21 and 6:00pm – 7:15pm on September 22. Wear your favorite princess gown while you dance, sing songs, make jewelry, and have a tea party! The cost is \$15 per person. For more information, call 770.614.2060.

Caldonia Swing will perform at the Gwinnett History Museum as part of the Coffeehouse Nights, **Coffee-Ceilidh**, on September 22. Doors open at 8:00pm and the music starts at 8:30pm. Starbucks coffee, drinks, and light desserts will be available for purchase. Admission is \$5. The museum is located inside the Lawrenceville Female Seminary at 455 South Perry Street in downtown Lawrenceville. Call 770.822.5178 for more information or to receive the monthly newsletter, *Java Jottings*.

Enjoy music under the stars on the lawn of the Gwinnett Historic Courthouse in historic downtown Lawrenceville on September 22 at 8:00pm. The **Moonlight and Music Concert** will feature the contemporary instrumental group *Montana Skies*. Concertgoers can bring a picnic or dine at one of the restaurants on the Square. Call 770.822.5450 or visit [www.visitlawrenceville.com](http://www.visitlawrenceville.com) for more

information on performers and table reservations.

Enjoy a night out as we entertain your kids with arts, crafts, games, and a hotdog dinner at **Kids Night Out** at Rhodes Jordan Park on September 22 from 5:30pm – 10:30pm. Pre-registration is required by September 19 and the cost is \$10 per person. For more information, call 770.822.5414.

The **I Spy With My Little Eye kid's photo contest awards ceremony** will be held on September 29 at 7:00pm at Bogan Park. Come see an exhibit of entries and take part in the awards celebration. Entries must be brought to Bogan Park by September 16. The cost is \$5 per entry. Call 770.614.2060.

The Pinckneyville Community Center sponsors **art exhibits** at the following locations:

The *Expo/Teacher Show* will be on display at Pinckneyville Community Center in Norcross through October 25.

The *Dunwoody Fine Arts Exhibition* will be on display at the Gwinnett Historic Courthouse in Lawrenceville through November 30. A reception to meet the artists will be held September 7 from 7:00pm – 9:00pm.

Exhibits and receptions are free and open to the public. 770.417.2200.

## Parks and Recreation

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where people can come out to enjoy a picnic, walk the trails, or just have a relaxing time enjoying the view of the Chattahoochee River.

Call 770.822.8840 for additional information about Holcomb Bridge Park.

### Football complexes and amenities open at Lenora, Bethesda parks

Bethesda Park has a new, lighted football field with bleachers, a concession and restroom facility, plaza area, a lighted walking track around the football field, playground, and a pavilion.

Lenora Park is home to Gwinnett County's second dog park, a 2.6-acre area where dogs can play off of their leashes. Other new features at the park include a lighted football field, a concession and restroom facility, a lighted walking track around the football field, and a mulch trail.

Later this year, Bethesda Park will open a new indoor aquatic center featuring an indoor competition pool and a warm water instructional pool. The new outdoor leisure pool will open summer 2007.

For more information on these parks and operating schedules, call 770.822.8840.

## countyline

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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 [tammy.gibson@gwinnettcounty.com](mailto:tammy.gibson@gwinnettcounty.com). The County Line is also available on the County's website, [www.gwinnettcounty.com](http://www.gwinnettcounty.com).