



county Line

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SPLOST: New park coming to Pleasant Hill area

Gwinnett County Parks and Recreation will hold a ribbon cutting ceremony on December 2 at 11:00am for the new Club Drive Park.

The six-acre tract was donated to the County in the 1970s. The park features a boardwalk structure with a gazebo on a fishing lake, a 13,000-square-foot playground, two 20' x 20' shelters/pavilions, a restroom building, one-third mile of asphalt multi-use trail, and two half-court basketball courts.

Designed by Lose and Associates, Inc., and completed by Astra Group, Inc., the \$2.6 million Club Drive Park was funded by the 2005 Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax (SPLOST).



Club Drive Park is located at 3330 Club Drive in Lawrenceville and will be open daily from dawn to dusk. For additional information, call 770.822.8840 or visit www.gwinnettparks.com.

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Around Gwinnett



Success plays and wins here

Gwinnett County Parks and Recreation (GCPR) was recognized as the number one park agency in the nation at the National Recreation and Park Association Congress and Exposition in Baltimore on October 15. GCPR received the coveted National Gold Medal Award for Excellence in Park and Recreation Management from the American Academy for Park and Recreation Administration and the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA).

"This award validates what we already knew," said **Lois Allen**, Gwinnett County Recreation Authority chairman. *"The winners are Gwinnettians whose lives are enriched because they have spent time in Gwinnett County's parks."* Allen was on-hand to accept the award at NRPA's 2008 Congress and Exposition in Baltimore.

In May, GCPR was named one of four finalists for the award in the Class I category (population 250,000 – up). Finalists submitted master/strategic plans and videos featuring the agency's achievements. *"I am proud to receive this national award on behalf of the citizens of Gwinnett who support and recognize the importance of quality of life and for the dedicated County parks and recreation staff who work hard every day to provide a world-class*



parks and recreation department," said GCPR Operations Director **Sharon Plunkett**, who also accepted the award.

The most prestigious award of its kind, the Gold Medal honors park systems and communities throughout the United States.

"This is literally the gold standard in national recognition for our outstanding parks and recreation division and for all the people who work so hard every day to make our facilities and programs absolutely top-notch," said Commission Chairman **Charles Bannister**. *"We must also thank Gwinnett voters for approving the SPLOST programs that have made this recognition possible."*



Advice from the Tax Commissioner

2009 Vehicle emission requirements

In 2009, all 1985 to 2006 model year gasoline-powered cars or light trucks (up to 8,500 lbs.) need to have a valid Georgia emission inspection completed before registering or renewing tags.

What you need to know

- **Where to Go:** Newer vehicles can be inspected at any emission inspection station. Vehicle models 1995 or older can only be inspected at stations marked "All Vehicles Welcome"
- **Inspect Early:** Get your vehicle inspected four to six weeks before the registration renewal date (the first vehicle owner's birthday), in the event that repairs need to be made. An emission inspection is valid for 12 months or for one registration renewal by the same owner
- **Senior Exemptions:** If you are age 65 or older and are a registered owner of a vehicle 10 model years old or older, and if you drive less than 5,000 miles per year, you may be eligible for a senior exemption. You can apply by completing a Senior Exemption Application, available at any Gwinnett County tag office or Georgia Clean Air Force Waiver Center
- **Out-of-Area-Extensions:** If you (or a family member) and your Georgia-registered vehicle are temporarily located well outside the 13-county emission testing area due to school, military, or business obligations, you may qualify for an out-of-area extension. Complete the application at any Gwinnett County tag office or Georgia Clean Air Force Waiver Center
- **Repair Waivers:** If your vehicle requires a repair waiver, you will need to apply at a Georgia Clean Air Force Service Center prior to registering or renewing tags. Additional paperwork may be required

You can find out where Georgia Clean Air Force Waiver Centers are located along with information on new Georgia resident registration, repair waivers, alternative fuel vehicles, or what to do when you sell your vehicle by visiting www.cleanairforce.com or contacting the Tax Commissioner's office.

Motor vehicle tag offices holiday operating hours

In observance of the upcoming Christmas and New Year's holidays, the Gwinnett County Tax Commissioner's tag offices will be following a revised holiday schedule:

Christmas Holiday Hours

All tag offices closed Thursday, December 25 through Saturday, December 27

New Year's Holiday Hours

Lawrenceville and Norcross Tag Offices

Closed: Thursday, January 1, 2009 and Friday, January 2, 2009

Peachtree Corners, Snellville, and North Gwinnett Tag Offices

Closed: Monday, December 29, 2008 and Thursday, January 1, 2009

Tag office closed for computer system maintenance

The North Gwinnett Tag Office, 2735 Mall of Georgia Boulevard, Buford, will be closed Saturday, December 13 while the Georgia Department of Revenue conducts computer system maintenance.

The maintenance period will take place from 7:00pm on Friday, December 12 until 6:00am on Monday, December 15. During this period, Internet and telephone tag renewals will not be available. Contact the Tax Commissioner's office for more information.

Katherine Sherrington
Tax Commissioner

Property Tax Customer Service
770.822.8800 • tax@gwinnettcountry.com

Motor Vehicles Customer Service
770.822.8818 • tag@gwinnettcountry.com

www.gwinnetttaxcommissioner.com



Detention pond maintenance for HOAs

by Eric Swett, Stormwater Management Division

Homeowners' associations (HOA) have many responsibilities, including detention pond maintenance. Knowing what to do with the pond can be a big challenge for an HOA.

According to the *Gwinnett County Development Regulations 8.2.6.(b)*, "In a residential subdivision, it shall be the responsibility of the mandatory property owners' association to maintain the operational characteristics of any facility constructed on its property for stormwater detention pursuant to County requirements, to keep the access drive free of obstructions, and to maintain the facility free of obstruction, silt, or debris."

The operational characteristics simply means the ability of the detention pond to accumulate storm runoff and then drain. To keep the facility functioning properly, it is very important to keep trash and debris out of the pond. This can be a major challenge because litter from the road often washes into the detention pond. Keeping trash out of the streams requires periodic pond maintenance.

The County also requires that the detention pond's access drive, or easement, is kept clear at all times as annual inspections are conducted at random. The access easement is recorded on the final plat for every subdivision.

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Save time: pay your water bill online

Beginning January 1, when you place a bid on eBay, chat with your friends on Facebook, or check Blackboard for assignment due dates, you can also visit www.gwinnetth2o.com and pay your water bill online. The Gwinnett County Department of Water Resources will offer commercial and residential customers the opportunity to save time with this new online feature.

"Online bill payment has become one of the fastest growing applications on the Internet and we are pleased to offer this enhancement to our customer service. Our customers have been anticipating more payment choices and the ability to view their account history when they need it," said Acting Water Resources Director **Lynn Smarr**. Customers will be able to log into the secure website and pay their bills online either from checking accounts—

or with Visa®, MasterCard®, or Discover® credit or debit cards. Customers will be able to review a 16-month bill history in the same format as their paper bills and also add as many accounts to their profiles as they wish, making it easy to manage multiple accounts.

Residents can take the first step in creating an online account now by visiting the County's home page at www.gwinnettcountry.com. Go to the upper left-hand corner of the homepage and select *Register Now* in the *mygwinnett* section. Once online bill pay becomes available, customers can add the *Pay Your Water Bill Online* feature to their profile using information from a recent bill. "We hope that our customers will take advantage of this fast, free, and convenient service," Smarr said.

Maintenance for HOAs ...cont'd from page 2

Finally, the dam of the pond must remain free of trees. Fallen trees can cause dam failure. Plants that grow at the bottom of the detention pond should be cut if they obstruct water flow.

The aesthetic aspects of a detention pond are at the discretion of the homeowners' association. The most important piece of advice is not to forget about the pond. If routine landscaping and trash pickups are conducted, there is a better chance of passing

the annual inspection with no problems. If you have any questions or concerns regarding any detention pond, call 678.376.7000.

"Goodness is the only investment that never fails."

— Henry David Thoreau

Pet Corner



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 www.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.



Check It Out!

Check out these great cookbooks for traditional (or non-traditional) holiday meals:

Autumn Gatherings: Casual Food to Enjoy with Family and Friends, by Rick Rodgers

Kids in the Holiday Kitchen: Making, Baking, Giving, by Jessica Strand and Tammy Massman-Johnson

Jacques Torres' A Year in Chocolate: 80 Recipes for Holidays and Special Occasions, by Jacques Torres

Christmas Cookies: 50 Recipes to Treasure for the Holiday Season, by Lisa Zwirn

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.

Project AWARE

Be a part of Project AWARE (Added Warmth Assistance for Residences of our Elderly) and assist Gwinnett seniors in staying warm this winter. Many seniors struggle to pay their escalating heating bills in addition to paying for food and prescriptions. Please consider making a tax-deductible donation of a new portable electric heater for a local senior.

All Gwinnett County fire stations will be accepting electric heaters from December 1, 2008, until February 15, 2009.

Project AWARE is sponsored by Gwinnett County Senior Services and the Gwinnett County Department of Fire and Emergency Services.

Contact Melanie Miller at 770.822.8842 or melanie.miller@gwinnettcountry.com for more information about this program or other ways you can help seniors in need.

WHAT'S HAPPENING AROUND GWINNETT

Get ready for your holiday parties and the New Year with **Holiday Party Dance Workshops**, December 4, December 11, or December 18 from 6:45pm – 8:15pm. Pre-registration required. Ages 14 and up; \$48/person. Workshops will be held at the Bogan Park Aquatic Center, 2723 North Bogan Road, Buford. For more information, call 770.614.2060.

Bring your child to **Winter Wonderland** and get in the holiday spirit, December 5 at 6:30pm. Make holiday cookies and crafts wrap presents, and much more. Pre-registration required. Ages 4 and up; \$5/person. Event will be held at George Pierce Park Community Recreation Center, 55 Buford Highway, Suwanee. Call 770.831.4173 for information.

Join the **Crop Club**; pull out your pictures and create scrapbook pages to preserve memories. December 5 from 6:00pm – 11:00pm. Light refreshments provided. Ages 18 and up; \$15/person. Mountain Park Aquatic Center and Activity Building, 1063 Rockbridge Road, Stone Mountain. For more information, call 770.564.3060.

There will be 250 fine and craft artists at the **Sugarloaf Craft Festival**, December 5 at 10:00am. Admission is \$8; ages 12 and up. Pinckneyville Park Community Recreation Center, 4650 Peachtree Industrial Boulevard, Norcross. Call 770.417.2200 for additional information.

The Centerville Community Center and the MOMS Club of Snellville invite you to come have **Breakfast with Santa**, December 6 from 9:00am – 11:00am. Come have your picture taken with Santa, complete a craft, and eat breakfast. Cost: \$3/person. The Centerville Community Center, 3025 Bethany Church Road, Snellville. Call 770.985.4713 or visit www.centervillecommunitycenter.com for more information.

Make special Christmas crafts and take a tour of the farm to experience **A Civil War Christmas**, December 6 at 10:00am. Ages 5 and up; \$5/person. McDaniel Farm Park, 3251 McDaniel Road, Duluth. For more information, call 770.814.4920.

Come to the **Perfect Present Party** to make holiday gifts, December 6 from 10:00am to noon. Pre-registration required. Ages 4 – 10; \$5/person. Bogan Park Aquatic Center, 2723 North Bogan Road, Buford. For more information, call 770.614.2060.

Hang out at Bogan Park and make paper presents, December 11 from 10:30am – 11:30am. Ages 5 – 12; \$2/person. Bogan Park Aquatic Center, 2723 North Bogan Road, Buford. Call 770.614.2060.

Join us for our annual **Senior Christmas Tea**, December 12 at 2:00pm. Refreshments, tea, and music. Ages 50 and up. George Pierce Park Community Recreation Center, 55 Buford Highway, Suwanee. For information, call 770.831.4173.

Share a special evening with your little girl at the **Father/Daughter Winter Wonderland Dance**, December 12, 6:00pm – 9:00pm. Dancing, hors d'oeuvres, dessert, games, and a keepsake photo included. Pre-register by November 28. Ages 3 and up; \$10/person. Rhodes Jordan Park Community Recreation Center, 100 East Crogan Street, Lawrenceville. For more information, call 770.822.5414.

Shop 'Til You Drop for the holidays and drop your kids off with us for a fun day of crafts, pizza, and games, December 13 from 10:00am to 2:00pm. All ages; \$12/person. Pinckneyville Park Community Center, 4650 Peachtree Industrial Boulevard, Norcross. Call 770.417.2200 for more information.

Come dressed in your pajamas and enjoy **Dancing with the Sugar Plum Fairy**, December 13 from 2:00pm to 3:30pm (ages 3 – 5) or from 4:00pm – 5:30pm (ages 6 – 10). We will read the story of the Nutcracker, make a keepsake ornament, and learn the dance of the Sugar Plum Fairy. Pre-registration required. Ages 3 – 5; \$12/person. Bogan Park Aquatic Center, 2723 North Bogan Road, Buford. For more information, call 770.614.2060.

Experience eight million lights at **Callaway Gardens Fantasy in Lights**, the brightest holiday light show in the southwest, December 17. Buffet-dinner included. Ages 50 and up; cost

is \$45/person. Gwinnett Senior Center, 225 Bethesda Church Road, Lawrenceville. Call 770.564.4680 for more information.

Discover unique qualities through artistic expression at the **Winter Break Camp**, December 29 – January 2. Snacks and juice provided. Ages 4 through 12; \$110/person. Shorty Howell Park Activity Building, 2750 Pleasant Hill Road, Duluth. For more information, call 770.814.4914.



gwinnettcounty's information resources

Upcoming Holidays

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

Christmas Eve
Wednesday, December 24

Christmas Day
Thursday, December 25

New Year's Day
Thursday, January 1

countyline

Gwinnett County
75 Langley Drive
Lawrenceville, GA 30045
770.822.7135
www.gwinnettcounty.com

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@gwinnettcounty.com. The County Line is also available on the County's website, www.gwinnettcounty.com.