



county Line

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SPLOST: Road widening projects underway



your pennies for transportation

The Gwinnett County Board of Commissioners gave the green light to three new road construction projects in December.

Braselton Highway (State Route 124) will get an additional lane in each direction from Hamilton Mill Road east to Pine Road. The County will receive \$1.5 million in state funding for the project. "We really appreciate the efforts of State DOT Board member Rudy Bowen and Commissioner Linnenkohl for helping obtain funding for this much-needed project to deal with congestion in the growing Hamilton Mill area," said District 3 Commissioner **Mike Beaudreau**. G.P.'s Enterprises will begin the work early this year.

Upgrades to the intersection of Cooper and Rosebud Roads south of Grayson will include turn lanes and a new traffic signal, eliminating the current four-way stop.

The project will reduce congestion at this increasingly busy intersection and also around two new schools in the area, according to Beaudreau. The \$2.9 million contract, which includes turn lanes at Trip Elementary School on Cooper Road and Bay Creek Middle School on Rosebud Road, went to the lowest of 11 bidders, Gary's Grading, Inc. Funding comes from the 2005 SPLOST program.

A third project on Webb Gin House Road will upgrade the intersection with Scenic Highway (State Route 124) and will add a center turn lane and sidewalks from there to Ronald Reagan Parkway. The intersection will get additional turn lanes and a second through lane. G.P.'s Enterprises, the lowest of nine bidders, got the almost \$4.5 million contract that is also funded by the 2005 SPLOST program.

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Around Gwinnett



New Superior Court Judge takes the bench

Warren P. Davis was recently appointed by Governor Sonny Perdue to serve as the new Superior Court judge in Gwinnett County. Before his Superior Court appointment, Judge Davis served in Magistrate Court for 23 years, 20 of which were as Chief Magistrate. Prior to his judicial career, he served in the Gwinnett County Police Department.

Davis says his greatest accomplishment during his tenure in Magistrate Court was coordinating the ideas of the Police, District Attorney, Clerk of Court, and Magistrate Court into the development of the **Video Warrant Project**, which combines the use of video technology and electronic signatures to hear warrant applications online. "This project has changed Georgia law enforcement, as well as law enforcement around the country for jurisdictions that have followed our lead," Davis said.



Judge Davis is sworn in by Governor Perdue

In his new position, Judge Davis will focus on a variety of complex civil and criminal cases, ranging from divorce to personal injury lawsuits and real estate to felony crimes. He said that one of the challenges of this position will be to help with the backlog of criminal

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Advice from the Tax Commissioner

2008 Homestead Exemptions

Reminder: Applications for homestead exemptions must be received by March 1. You may apply in several ways: online, by telephone, by mail, or in person.

Regular homestead exemptions are automatically renewed each year unless there is a change in ownership or a name or spelling correction on the deed; the taxpayer seeks to qualify for a different type of exemption; or if the eligibility requirements can no longer be met by the homeowner. Only one person needs to apply if more than one name appears on the deed.

In addition to the regular homestead exemption, several special homestead exemptions exist for eligible seniors and certain disabled persons including veterans.

State vehicle registration computer shutdown

The North Gwinnett Branch Tag Office, at 2735 Mall of Georgia Boulevard, Buford, will be closed on Saturday, February 16, while the Georgia Department of Revenue conducts computer system maintenance.

The maintenance period will take place from Friday, February 15 beginning at 7:00pm through Monday, February 18 at 6:00am. During this period, Internet and telephone tag renewals will not be available.

2008 Mobile Home Taxes

Reminder: Mobile home tax bills were mailed on January 15. Payment deadline is May 1.

Facts about radon

Radon is a radioactive gas that is invisible, tasteless, and odorless, but it may be a problem in your home. Breathing the radioactive particles produced by radon is a major cause of lung cancer among non-smokers.

Testing is the only way to know if your home contains radon. Inexpensive, do-it-yourself test kits are available at home improvement stores. Free test kits are available from the County Extension Service.

For more information, contact the Extension Radon Specialist at 678.377.4010 or Ines.Beltran@gwinnettcountry.com, or visit the radon education website at county.ces.uga.edu/gwinnett/FCS/radon.htm.

State of the County Address on Web, TV

Check out Chairman Charles Bannister's State of the County speech on TVgwinnett (Gwinnett County cable channel 23) or as an on-demand video at gwinnettcountry.com.

Senior citizen emissions exemptions

If you are 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.

Seniors can apply for this waiver by completing a *Senior Exemption Application* form, available at all Gwinnett County Tax Commissioner tag offices and on the Tax Commissioner's website, as well as the Georgia Clean Air Force website at cleanairforce.com, or by calling the Tax Commissioner's Motor Vehicles customer service line.

Anyone eligible for the senior exemption must reapply each year.

Katherine Sherrington, Tax Commissioner
75 Langley Drive
Lawrenceville, GA 30045

Property Tax Customer Service: 770.822.8800
tax@gwinnettcountry.com

Motor Vehicles Customer Service: 770.822.8818
tag@gwinnettcountry.com

gwinnetttaxcommissioner.com

Poll workers needed

We need you... to be a poll worker! It's a presidential election year and the Office of Voter Registration and Elections needs patient, dedicated, detail-oriented individuals who take pride in their work, enjoy working with people, and take direction well. It is not a volunteer position; poll workers are paid for their service. Workers make \$110, which includes \$95 for working and \$15 for training (all poll workers are required by law to attend training before they can work). A typical poll worker's schedule is from 6:00am until 8:30pm, and the class is two hours. Qualifications for working at a Gwinnett County polling precinct include:

- Resident of Gwinnett County
- At least 18 years or older
- Cannot hold public office
- Cannot be a relative of someone on the ballot
- Cannot be convicted of a felony
- Cannot be adjudicated to be mentally incompetent

If you're interested in becoming a poll worker, contact Peter Combs in Voter Registrations and Elections at 678.226.7253.

Cold weather increases fire calls

Gwinnett County firefighters are readying for a busy winter season. "Home heating is a leading cause of residential fires in Gwinnett County," said Fire and Emergency Services Captain **Thomas Rutledge**. Many of these fires occur due to poorly maintained heating appliances or those that are placed too close to combustible materials.

Keep space heaters 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.

Only use a fireplace or properly installed wood-burning 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.

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.

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

Judge Davis ...cont'd from page 1

cases, resulting in a rise in population of inmates held in the county jail. He said that some serious criminal trials can last two to three weeks. "In order to make sure the cases are heard in an expedient manner, I must keep my nose to the grindstone," he said.

Davis earned his law degree from Columbia Southern School of Law. He is married to Elizabeth C. Belden and has four children and three stepchildren. He says he is proud

to be a part of Gwinnett County because "of the people who live and work here and the vision that the leaders of this community have for the future of the County. They have a pervasive mindset that they will continue to improve the quality of life, despite the many challenges that they may face. That's why I have stayed here this long."

Pet Corner

Napoleon, a nine-month-old pit bull, and Louis, a 10-month-old Presa Canario, were adopted from the Gwinnett Animal Welfare and Enforcement Center by Rebecca Carey. The inseparable pair are Carey's constant companions, whether just out running errands or taking a weekend hike. They have grown into obedient, fun-loving dogs and are always the first ones in bed at night!

You can find a companionable addition to your household like Napoleon or Louis by visiting the center located at 884 Winder Highway or gwinnettanimalcontrol.com. All cats and dogs are spayed and neutered before adoption.



Check It Out!

Get a dose of reality with these fascinating legal nonfiction and true crime stories:

Covert: My Years Infiltrating the Mob, by Bob Delaney

Hello Charlie: Letters from a Serial Killer, by Charlie Hess and Davin Seay

Storming Las Vegas: How a Cuban-Born, Soviet-Trained Commando Took Down the Strip, By John Huddy

The Good Rat, by Jimmy Breslin

The Echo from Dealey Plaza: The true story of the first African American on the White House Secret Service detail, and his quest for justice, by Abraham Bolden

Murdered by Mumia: A Life Sentence of Loss, Pain, and Injustice, by Maureen Faulkner and Michael A. Smerconish

The Fox and the Flies: the Secret Life of a Grotesque Master Criminal, by Charles von Onselen

Simon Says: A True Story of Boys, Guns, and Murder in the Rocky Mountain West, by Kathryn Eastburn

Smoke, Mirrors, and Murder and Other True Cases, by Ann Rule

Books on Trial: Red Scare in the Heartland, by Shirley and Wayne Wiegand

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 gwinnettpl.org.

"Love is the only force capable of transforming an enemy into a friend."

— Martin Luther King Jr.

WHAT'S HAPPENING AROUND GWINNETT

The **Daddy/Daughter Dance** is an event for daddy's little princess(es)! It's also a special time for you to spend with your daughter. Ages 4 and up; February 8 from 7:00pm to 9:00pm. Cost is \$20. Call 770.417.2200 for more information. Pinckneyville Park Community Center is located at 4650 Peachtree Industrial Boulevard, Norcross.

The **Daddy/Daughter Valentine's Dance** includes music, refreshments, and fun. February 8 from 7:00pm to 9:00 pm. Ages 5-12; cost is \$10 per couple. Call 770.831.4173 for pre-registration (required). George Pierce Park Community Center is located at 55 Buford Highway, Suwanee.

Leave the driving to us! Travel by van to one of Georgia's finest sights: the **20th Annual Southeastern Flower Show** at the Georgia World Congress Center on February 8. Pre-registration is required; 10:00am departure. Ages 12 and up; cost is \$10. Call 770.417.2200 for more information. Pinckneyville Park Community Center is located at 4650 Peachtree Industrial Boulevard, Norcross.

Come celebrate "**The Year of the Rat**" on February 9 from 7:00pm to 11:00pm. We will have traditional Chinese treats, crafts, activities for children, and a dragon parade. Bring the whole family; \$10 for the first person, \$5 for each additional person. Call 770.564.3060 for information. Lucky Shoals Park Community Center is located at 4651 Britt Road, Norcross.

Enjoy a night of dinner and dancing with your loved one February 9 from 6:00pm to 10:30pm. The **Valentine's Dinner and Dance** will feature a live band, catered dinner, door prizes, photos, and more. This is a non-alcohol event. Adults only; cost is \$75 per couple. Pre-register by February 1. Call 770.822.5450 for information. The Gwinnett Historic Courthouse is located at 185 West Crogan Street, Lawrenceville.

Come celebrate with your loved ones at the **Valentine's Social Dance** on February 14 from 1:00pm to 3:00pm. The event will feature entertainment, dancing, and light refreshments. Pre-register by February 11.

Ages 50 and up; cost is \$3. For more information, call 770.564.4680. The Gwinnett Senior Center is located at 225 Bethesda Church Road, Lawrenceville.

Celebrate the day of love with your favorite girl at the **Father/Daughter Valentine's Day Dance**, February 15 from 6:00pm to 9:00pm. Festivities include dancing, games, a keepsake photo, hors d'oeuvres, and desserts. Ages 3 and up; \$10 per person. Pre-register by February 11. Call 770.822.5414 for more information. Rhodes Jordan Park Community Center is located at 100 East Crogan Street, Lawrenceville.

Pack a bathing suit/towel and gear up for fun and games at **Kids' Night Out**, February 15 from 5:30pm to 9:00pm. Must be on time to be able to swim. Dinner will be served after swimming. Please give your child a light snack before arriving. Ages 6-10; cost is \$10. Pre-registration required; call 770.614.2060. Bogan Park Community Center is located at 2723 North Bogan Road in Buford.

We are hosting a party with Latin flair! Come out to the **Latin Dance Party** held on February 16 from 7:00pm to 11:00pm. Dance lessons during the first hour; mini-dance lessons taught throughout the night. Singles and couples are welcome. Refreshments provided. Cost is \$12; all ages. Workshops provided earlier in the day include dance admission. Call 770.564.3060 for information. Lucky Shoals Park Community Center is located at 4651 Britt Road, Norcross.

Entertainment, refreshments, and more will be featured at the **Mardi Gras Social**, February 19 from 10:00am to 2:00pm. Wear your costumes! Ages 50 and up; cost is \$7. Call 770.831.4173 for more information. George Pierce Park Community Center is located at 55 Buford Highway, Suwanee.

Mother/Son Dance: a dance for mother's little prince(s)! It's also a special time for mothers to spend with their sons. February 23 from 7:00pm to 9:00pm; cost is \$20 per couple. Call 770.417.2200 for more information. Pinckneyville Park Community Center is located at 4650 Peachtree Industrial Boulevard, Norcross.

Celebrate Black History Month

To commemorate the contributions African-Americans have made to our community, a Black History Month celebration will be held on February 3 from 3:00pm – 6:00pm at the Gwinnett Justice and Administration Center (GJAC). An exhibit will also be on display throughout the month of February on the first floor in GJAC.

Presidents' Day – February 18, 2008

All offices, with the exception of those operations required for the comfort and safety of the citizens of Gwinnett County, will be closed Monday, February 18, 2008, in observance of Presidents' Day. All offices will resume regular working hours on Tuesday, February 19, 2008.

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gwinnettcounty's information resources

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 770.822.7035 or e-mail heathersawyer@gwinnettcounty.com. The County Line is also available on the County's website, gwinnettcounty.com.