



county Line

a monthly publication of gwinnett county, georgia

november 2008 v16, n11

SPLOST: County's first green library

Gwinnett County officials held a groundbreaking ceremony on Tuesday, October 21 to kick off construction of the Hamilton Mill library at 3690 Braselton Highway, adjacent to the new Duncan Creek Park.

Located on a five-acre site, it will be the county's 15th branch library. Precision Planning, Inc., of Lawrenceville designed the 20,000-square-foot building to meet Silver LEED energy efficiency and sustainability standards, making it the first green library in the county and third in the state. Some of the environmentally-friendly design elements include a pervious parking lot, recycled brick, and an irrigation system that will use stormwater runoff.

The building will also include an "Art in Architecture" feature consisting of specially-designed window glass depicting themes of water, earth, sun, and the use of language in our culture, designed by Atlanta artist and sculptor Maria Artemis. The library will offer up to 75,000 books and other items for checkout, including adult, teen, and children's collections. "Our libraries are



a great source of pride for our community and deservedly so," said Commission Chairman **Charles Bannister**. "Gwinnett libraries currently lend about seven million items every year, making it the busiest library system in the state."

Garrard Construction Group will construct the \$7.4 million facility. The 2005 SPLOST will pay for \$5.4 million of the total cost and the rest of the funding will be provided by a state grant from the Georgia Public Library Service. The new library will open in the winter of 2010.

contents

Advice from Tax Commissioner



Grease Goblin



Book Drive



Pet Corner



Check it out!



Around Gwinnett



Big Haynes Wetland and Stormwater Ponds

Protecting drinking water sources

The Big Haynes Wetland and Stormwater Pond project in Snellville is part of a larger effort to protect a drinking water supply watershed. The project is a partnership between the Gwinnett County Department of Water Resources and the US Environmental Protection Agency, Region Four. Using the site of a former wastewater treatment facility, this \$841,000 project now improves water quality within Gwinnett County and for those downstream.

The Big Haynes Wetland and Stormwater Pond project involves diverting a portion of stormwater flow away from a Big Haynes Creek tributary and providing extended detention and water quality enhancement using a series of water quality treatment pools and constructed wetlands. Stormwater often contains sediment and pollutants; this stormwater detention structure traps and removes sediments from the creek during storms.



Big Haynes Stormwater Pond

The completed project also includes a walking path, which makes it an amenity for recreation, bird watching, nature study, and other community activities.

The project is part of the County's efforts to improve water quality and aquatic habitat through the Watershed Improvement Program. These efforts support several permit requirements.



Advice from the Tax Commissioner

November holiday hours

In observance of the Veterans Day holiday, all five of the Tax Commissioner's Motor Vehicle tag offices will be closed Tuesday, November 11, 2008. The Lawrenceville, Norcross, Peachtree Corners, and Snellville locations will reopen on Wednesday, November 12, 2008. The North Gwinnett tag office will reopen Thursday, November 13, 2008, and be open through Saturday, November 15, 2008.

All tag offices will be open Monday, November 24, 2008, through Wednesday, November 26, 2008. All tag offices will resume the 40-hour, four-day Energy Conservation Hours schedule on Monday, December 1, 2008, at 8:00am.

To view a detailed tag office schedule, please visit the Tax Commissioner's website.

***Skip a trip... save gas; renew your vehicle online.
Visit the Tax Commissioner's website for details.***

Verification of your vehicle's insurance

Georgia motor vehicle owners and lessees are required to maintain Georgia vehicle liability insurance coverage to legally drive a vehicle in the state. To ensure compliance with insurance coverage requirements, the state developed an online insurance database that informs tag offices and law enforcement officers to determine whether you have valid insurance. Your insurance company is required to electronically submit your insurance information to the state insurance database. Tag offices use the state database to verify that you have valid Georgia insurance coverage before they can register your vehicle, issue new tags, renew, or transfer your existing tags.

- You can easily verify your insurance status by visiting <https://mvd.dor.ga.gov/vincheck/VinCheck.aspx>, the Georgia online database; or at the Tax Commissioner's website; click on the *Vehicle* tab on the left, then on *Vehicle Insurance*
- You will need your Vehicle Identification Number (VIN) and title/control number. The VIN is a 17-digit number located at the top of your renewal notice; the title number is the first 15 digits of the number located at the bottom right of your renewal notice. This information can also be found on your tag receipt or title
- If you check the database and do not find information on your vehicle, contact your insurance company right away. Only your insurance company can add, delete, or modify insurance information in the state database. This information must appear in the database as we do not accept faxed copies from your insurance company
- Vehicles covered on a fleet policy or on a self-insured policy are not transmitted to the insurance database. Please visit our website for information on using a fleet or a self-insured policy

Remember: To avoid insurance lapse fees when you sell or dispose of your vehicle, you must cancel your vehicle's registration before you cancel your vehicle's insurance coverage.

You can learn more about insurance issues, including penalties, fines, lapse of insurance coverage, registration suspensions, or registration reinstatements by contacting the Tax Commissioner's office.

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@gwinnettcounty.com

Motor Vehicles Customer Service
770.822.8818 • tag@gwinnettcounty.com

www.gwinnetttaxcommissioner.com

Beware of the Grease Goblin!

There is something lurking beneath your house, yard, and road that can't wait to cause problems. It is present year-round, but it especially enjoys the holiday season when many of us unwittingly feed it more than usual. It's the Grease Goblin, or FOG, short for fats, oils, and grease. It clogs sewer pipes, fills lift stations, and builds up at treatment plants. FOG comes from food waste that is washed down the drain.

Make sure you scrape food waste from plates and utensils into the trash before you wash them. Food grinders just feed the goblin, so don't use them unless you have to. Wipe off excess grease or liquid waste from dishes with a paper towel. Also, pour fatty waste from cooking into a container. You may be surprised how much FOG is generated by a few slices of bacon, let alone an average-sized turkey. If you fry food, never empty the waste grease down the drain.

Make sure you're not feeding the grease goblin this holiday season because a sewer overflow in your neighborhood or yard is not the kind of gift anyone wants to receive.

Book drive at County fire stations

Reading Tree is partnering with Gwinnett County Fire and Emergency Services to hold a book drive for local nonprofits that provide books to needy children and adults. Drop your new or used books in the blue collection bins at select fire stations throughout Gwinnett County. The books will be donated back to local students through Gwinnett County Public Schools, Gwinnett County Fire and Emergency Services Youth Training Facility, preschool programs, Boys & Girls Clubs, Communities in Schools, and the NBA *Read to Achieve* program.

Participating Stations

Station 1

165 Lawrenceville Street
Norcross, GA 30071

Station 2

12 Harmony Grove Road
Lilburn, GA 30047

Station 3

4394 Five Forks Trickum Road
Lilburn, GA 30047

Station 4

5550 Spalding Drive,
Norcross, GA 30092

Station 6

3890 Johnson Drive
Snellville, GA 30039

Station 8

2295 Brannan Boulevard
Grayson, GA 30017

Station 9

1900 Five Forks Trickum Road
Lawrenceville, GA 30044

Station 12

2326 Lenora Church Road
Snellville, GA 30078

Station 20

1801 Cruse Road
Lawrenceville, GA 30044

Station 22

2180 Stone Drive
Lilburn, GA 30047

Station 23

4355 Steve Reynolds Boulevard NW
Norcross, GA 30093

Station 28

3725 Rosebud Road
Loganville, GA 30045

For more information
about **Reading Tree**,
visit www.readingtree.org.

Coming soon!

Save time, pay your water bill online starting January 1, 2009. See the December *County Line* for more details.



Check It Out!

Check out these cookbooks for some great ideas for your holiday feasts:

The Bon Appétit Fast Easy Fresh Cookbook, by Barbara Fairchild

Desserts: Over 300 Classic Recipes from Around the World, by Ting Morris, Carla Bardi, and Rachel Lane

Chocolate Holidays: Unforgettable Desserts for Every Season, by Alice Medrich

Baking for all Occasions: A Treasury of Recipes for Everyday Celebrations, by Flo Braker

Healthy Cooking for the Jewish Home: 200 Recipes for Eating Well on Holidays and Every Day, by Faye Levy

Weight Watchers in 20 Minutes, by Weight Watchers

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.

Facts about radon

Radon is an odorless, tasteless radioactive gas. It kills more people in the US than drunk drivers. In Georgia, an estimated 600 people die each year of radon-related lung cancer, the second largest type of lung cancer in the nation.

Radon is a problem in Georgia because of its geology. Much of the soil and rock in Georgia contains widespread uranium, especially in the Piedmont area of north and northeast Georgia. Many homes in Georgia have enough radon to pose a serious health risk to the occupants after years of exposure.

Radon can be controlled. The most important way to protect your family is to test your

... cont'd on page 4

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.

WHAT'S HAPPENING AROUND GWINNETT

Join other seniors for a **Spaghetti Dinner and Movie**, November 2, 5:30pm – 9:30pm. Ages 50 and up; \$5 per person at Shorty Howell Park Activity Building, 2750 Pleasant Hill Road, in Duluth. Call 770.814.4914 for additional information.

The Portrait Society of Atlanta Art Exhibit will be held at the Pinckneyville Park Community Recreation Center from November 3 to January 23 during center hours. A reception will be held November 5 from 7:00pm to 9:00pm. Center is located at 4650 Peachtree Industrial Boulevard, Norcross. For more information, call 770.417.2200.

Home schoolers, come hang out with Bogan for an **Early American Art Class**, November 6 from 10:30am to 11:30pm. Ages 5 – 12, \$2/person. Bogan Park Aquatic Center is located at 2723 North Bogan Road, Buford. Call 770.641.2060 for details.

Join the **Crop Club**; pull out your photos and create scrapbook pages to preserve memories. November 7, 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 additional information, call 770.564.3060.

AARP will offer a two-day classroom refresher course as part of its **Driver Safety Program**, November 12 – 13. \$10/person; ages 50 and up. Lucky Shoals Park Community Recreation Center, 4651 Britt Road, Norcross. For additional information, call 770.723.9516.

Free admission to the **Hometown Christmas Fair and Santa's Gift Shop**, November 15 from 1:00am to 2:00pm. Craft table rental: one table/\$25 or two tables/\$40. Pinckneyville Park Community Recreation Center, 4650 Peachtree Industrial Boulevard, Norcross. Call 770.417.2200 for details.

Van Go! to the *Michael C. Carlos Museum of Wonderful Things: The Harry Burton photographs and the Discovery of the Tomb of Tutankhamen*, November 18 at 10:00am. Bring \$7 for museum donation and money for lunch. Ages 12 and up. Van will leave from the Pinckneyville Park Community Recrea-

tion Center, 4650 Peachtree Industrial Boulevard, Norcross. Call 770.417.2200 for additional information.

Beat the holiday rush! Spend a **leisurely day shopping** in the Mall of Georgia on November 19. Lunch in the food court. Ages 50 – up; \$8/person. Meet at the Gwinnett Senior Center, 225 Bethesda Church Road in Lawrenceville. For additional information, call 770.564.4680.

Calling all Santa's helpers: come and make a masterpiece at the **Elf Workshop**, November 21 from 6:30pm to 8:30pm. Pre-register by November 7. Ages 4 – 10; \$7/person. Dacula Park, 205 Dacula Road, Dacula. Call 770.822.5414 for more information.

Take a trip to see the Tony Award®-winning Broadway musical **Wicked** at the Fox Theater. Witness the untold story of the witches of Oz, November 25 at 9:00am. Ages 50 – up; \$50/person. The group will leave from the Gwinnett Senior Center, 225 Bethesda Church Road, Lawrenceville. For details, call 770.564.4680.

Sign up your family or group now for a window to decorate for the annual **Holiday Windows Decorating Contest**, November 29 – December 6. Paint and supplies will be provided. The theme is "Home for the Holidays;" judging December 8; prizes for first through third place. Windows will be on display until January 2. Pre-register by November 28; \$25/window. Lucky Shoals Park Community Recreation Center, 4651 Britt Road, Norcross. For more information, call 770.723.9516.

Come out for the **21st Annual Lighting of the Tree** at the Gwinnett Historic Courthouse, November 27 from 5:00pm to 8:00pm. Tree lighting ceremony begins around 6:00pm. Santa arrives approximately 6:45pm. Carriage rides available from 5:00pm – 8:30pm (last ride at 8:20pm). Fee charged for carriage rides. Gwinnett Historic Courthouse, 185 West Crogan Street, Lawrenceville. Call 770.822.5450 for more information.

Join us as we **Tune in to the Holidays: Decorating with Nature**, December 13 from

10:30am to 1:00pm. We will provide living, edible, natural decorations for our wildlife friends. Attend a holiday concert by **Ritmo Blu World Percussion Trio** and receive eco-friendly decorating tips. \$25 per family, GEHC members \$15; limited to 60 participants, please register by December 1. For more information, call 770.904.3503.

November 2008 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:

Veterans Day

Tuesday, November 11

Thanksgiving

Thursday, November 27

Friday, November 28

Radon...cont'd from page 3

home's radon levels. Radon testing kits are inexpensive and easy to use. Once you've tested your home and determined if the radon levels in your home are too high, you can reduce them by performing some improvements, such as installing a vent pipe system and fan, which pulls radon from beneath the house and vents it to the outside.

For more information on radon testing, contact your radon educator at the Gwinnett Extension Service at Inesb@uga.edu or 678.377.4010.

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.