



# county Line

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## Gwinnett's EXCEL class helps build a dream

by Tresmond Murphy, Communications Intern

The 2008 Gwinnett County Executive Competence, Excellence and Leadership (EXCEL) class identified, designed, and fulfilled a big dream for **The Dream House** this summer. The 153-hour program, required for current and future Gwinnett County management employees, helps the participants refine their leadership skills. In addition to normal coursework, the EXCEL program features a number of extracurricular activities, one of which is a community service project to be completed outside of work hours.

The Dream House is designed to provide support in a loving home environment for medically-fragile children, their parents, foster families, and others in the community who are interested or involved in their welfare. One of Dream House's most important elements is its use as a transition home for children from hospitals or adult nursing homes to their permanent home.

**Dennis Baxter**, EXCEL class project manager, met with **Kim Marks**, the Development Manager for the Dream House, to discuss options for a service project. The meeting concluded with the decision to redesign and



Sandbox pavilion for Dream House residents

renovate the seldom used and somewhat inaccessible sandbox and turn it into a sandbox pavilion. "We wanted to provide a quality product to the Dream House that would enhance its ability to care for the children," Baxter said.

The EXCEL class raised a total of \$12,500 (50 percent cash and 50 percent in-kind donations), most of which was acquired from private business donations. The group designed the sandbox pavilion to provide accessibility

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Around Gwinnett



## SPLOST: Construction to begin on Police Annex and E-911 Center



Gwinnett officials held a groundbreaking ceremony on September 16 for a new E-911 communications center, emergency operations center, and backup data center adjoining the Gwinnett Police headquarters on Hi-Hope Road in Lawrenceville. The annex will also house police technical support and professional standards units.

The one-story, 45,000-square-foot annex building with associated parking will accommodate 180 employees and allow much-needed additional offices to be built later in vacated space at the current headquarters. Construction began in September and is expected to be completed in early 2010. Leading the design team for the building is architect Michael Katzin of HOK (Hell-

muth, Obata, and Kassabaum, Inc.). The general contractor for the \$15.2 million project is Manhattan Construction Co. Funding for the project is provided by the Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax (SPLOST) and police capital project funds.

### Veterans Day Ceremony

November 11, 2008

1:00pm

Gwinnett Fallen Heroes Memorial  
75 Langley Drive, Lawrenceville



# Advice from the Tax Commissioner

## Save time and gas:

### Renew your tags through the mail

By using the mail, you can renew your vehicle tags and save time, effort, and gas. Simply mail in your renewal notice with your payment and you will receive your tags and/or decals within seven business days. Using the mail to renew your tags is convenient and easy:

- Check the vehicle information on the renewal notice that you receive in the mail to be sure it is correct. If it isn't, please contact the Tax Commissioner's office or visit any Gwinnett tag office
- Be sure that your vehicle has passed any required emission test. Since emission test results are electronically reported to the state, the tag offices are automatically notified that a vehicle has passed an emission test. For emission requirements, please visit the Georgia Clean Air website, [www.cleanairforce.com](http://www.cleanairforce.com)
- Verify that your vehicle insurance coverage is current and valid, and that your insurance company has electronically transmitted it to the state database. You can do this by visiting the Tax Commissioner's website, clicking on the *Vehicle* tab located on the left-hand side of the page, then on *Vehicle Insurance*. You will need the Vehicle Identification Number (VIN) and the title number for each vehicle. 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. We can't process your renewal if your insurance information is not in the state database
- Mail in your renewal notice and payment using the envelope that you received. You can pay by check, money order, VISA®, MasterCard®, or Discover®. Be sure to fill in all credit card information on the return payment portion of the renewal notice

With your renewal notice, you should have received a flyer with important renewal requirement information. Please read this information before mailing your renewal.

If you need more information about Georgia vehicle registration procedures or insurance and emission requirements, please contact the Tax Commissioner's office.

### Reminder: 2008 property tax payments

Second installment due November 15. Penalties and interest apply for late payments. Payments may be made online, by mail, telephone, or in person. You may also pay by check using the drop-off boxes, accessible 24-hours-a-day at all Tax Commissioner's Offices.

For office locations and hours, contact the Tax Commissioner's office.

**Katherine Sherrington**  
Tax Commissioner

**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)

## Gwinnett real estate records have moved

The official records of real estate deeds, plats, and liens for Gwinnett County have moved to a new space at the Gwinnett Justice and Administration Center in Lawrenceville. A brief ribbon-cutting ceremony was held on Tuesday, August 19 and hosted by Clerk of Court **Tom Lawler** to officially open the new Real Estate Division space. It is located on the first floor of the west wing, next to the Tax Assessor's office.

After handling more than a quarter-million filings last year, the Real Estate Division has more space, better tools, and many additional public search terminals to handle the steadily increasing workload for the real estate records staff. Gwinnett's property records date back to September 26, 1871; a courthouse fire destroyed earlier files.

The public is invited to use the new facility that is open Monday through Friday from 8:00am to 5:00pm. The counter for recording new filings closes at 4:30pm. Most recent records are also available online at [www.gsccca.org](http://www.gsccca.org).

## High voter turnout expected

Advance voting is available in Gwinnett until October 31. Registered voters may cast their ballot on voting machines at the Elections office, 455 Grayson Highway in Lawrenceville between 9:00am and 4:30pm on weekdays. There will also be four satellite locations open starting October 27.

Voters who want to vote early using a paper ballot may request an absentee ballot by mail or fax. Marked ballots must be returned by mail or by the voter in person in time to be counted on Election Day, November 4. All votes will be tallied after the polls close at 7:00pm.

Heavy turnout is expected for this election due to the presidential and congressional races on the ballot along with local issues such as the SPLOST renewal in Gwinnett.

Georgia requires voters to show an acceptable form of government-issued photo ID such as a driver's license (except absentee). Free photo IDs can be issued at the Elections office or state Department of Driver Services offices. Voters who come to the poll without a photo ID can still cast a provisional ballot that will be counted if they bring acceptable ID within 48 hours.

To reduce long lines at the polls, Elections Director Lynn Ledford suggests voters make their choices ahead of time using sample bal-

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## Park'ner with Gwinnett

**Looking for volunteers...  
Join us in beautifying  
Gwinnett's parks!**

Park'nership offers many exciting and rewarding opportunities for the community to come together and serve with other volunteers to enhance Gwinnett's beautiful parks.

Bring the family and join us for some planting, mulching, and fun.

To volunteer, register online at  
[www.gwinnettparksfoundation.org](http://www.gwinnettparksfoundation.org).  
For more information,  
call 770.822.8848.

**Saturday, October 18  
9:00am – noon**

**Tribble Mill Park**  
2125 Tribble Mill Parkway  
Lawrenceville, GA 30045

**Best Friend Park**  
6224 Jimmy Carter Boulevard  
Norcross, GA 30071

**DeShong Park**  
2859 North DeShong Road  
Stone Mountain, GA 30087

## EXCEL project...

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to children in wheelchairs and shade for children who may have slight sensibility to sunlight.

Members of the EXCEL class tackled the project in phases which included building a retaining wall, paving sidewalks, staining deck furniture, framing, and constructing a pavilion and new sand boxes, landscaping with trees, shrubs and flowers, conducting a final inspection, and obtaining a Completion Certificate from the Gwinnett County Planning and Development Department.

Working together and on their own time, the class finished the project in seven weeks. EXCEL construction expert **Michael Jenness** said, "This project has made a tremendous impact on the lives of these children. This project was more than just building a sandbox; it was about giving children a place where kids can just be kids. It was a very rewarding experience."

Jenness, whose own personal struggle with his seven-month-old daughter's heart condition connected him to the Dream House, went on to say, "The EXCEL class' creativity and resources gave the Dream House something that will be used for years and years for the children who come in and out of this facility."



## Check It Out!

Check out these great new reads on making the most of your work:

*Get to the Top on Google: Tips and Techniques to Get Your Site to the Top of the Search Engine Rankings—and Stay There*, by David Viney

*Saving the World at Work: What Companies and Individuals Can Do to Go Beyond Making a Profit to Making a Difference*, by Tim Sanders

*The Smart Cookies' Guide to Making More Dough: How Five Young Women Got Smart, Formed a Money Group, and Took Control of Their Finances*, by The Smart Cookies with Jennifer Barrett

*Who: The A Method for Hiring*, by Geoff Smart and Randy Street

*Dealing with Darwin: How Great Companies Innovate at Every Phase of Their Evolution*, by Geoffrey A. Moore

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



The dogs and cats at Gwinnett's Animal Welfare and Enforcement Center will soon be eating higher quality pet food that will keep them healthy and adoptable. Hill's Pet Nutrition, Inc, will donate its Science Diet® pet foods to the shelter for an entire year.

Visit [www.gwinnettanimalcontrol.com](http://www.gwinnettanimalcontrol.com) to see photos of all the critters currently up for adoption or drop by the center at 884 Winder Highway, Lawrenceville. In an attempt to prevent pet overpopulation, all cats and dogs are now either spayed or neutered before adoption.



## Elections...cont'd from page 2

lots that are available online. Voters can also check registration and their poll location online. Go to [www.gwinnettelections.com](http://www.gwinnettelections.com) for links.

Gwinnett voters who have moved within the county but have not changed their registration are allowed to vote at their old poll location.

Early morning and late afternoon are usually the busiest times at the polls on Election Day. Voters who are in line when the polls close will be allowed to vote.

# WHAT'S HAPPENING AROUND GWINNETT

Check out the **Karen Orellana and Judy Mizel Art Exhibit** on October 1 through November 17 at the Lawrenceville Female Seminary, 455 South Perry Street, Lawrenceville. For more information, call 770.822.5178.

Bring your camera and join us for a free **Photography Workshop**, October 6 and 20 from 7:00pm – 8:00pm at Lucky Shoals Park Community Recreation Center, at 4651 Britt Road, Norcross. Call 770.723.9516.

Experience **Coffeehouse Nights** this fall. Bill Kahler will perform on October 10 for the Grounds 'N' Sounds series and Ian O'Donnell will perform October 24 for the Coffee-Ceilidh series. Doors open at 8:00pm; music 8:30pm – 10:00pm. Admission \$5/\$4 for museum members. The Lawrenceville Female Seminary is located at 455 South Perry Street, Lawrenceville. Call 770.822.5178 for details.

Come check out **Van Go! Atlanta Botanical Garden Sculpture in Motion: Art Choreographed by Nature** on October 10 at 10:00am. \$12 (plus tax); bring money for lunch. Ages 12 and up. Pinckneyville Park Community Recreation Center is located at 4650 Peachtree Industrial Boulevard, Norcross. Call 770.417.2200 for more information.

Start fall off on a high note at the **Fall Fling Festival**, October 10 from 4:00pm – 7:00pm. Pre-registration required. All ages; cost is \$5/person. The Bogan Park Aquatic Center is located at 2723 North Bogan Road, Buford. For information, call 770.641.2060.

Take a scenic ride up to the mountains during the **Georgia Mountains Day Trip** on October 15. Ages 50 and up; cost is \$8/person; attendees will leave from the Gwinnett Senior Center. Be sure to also attend the free **Senior Health Fair** on October 31 at the Gwinnett Senior Center, located at 225 Bethesda Church Road, Lawrenceville. For information, call 770.564.4680.

Pack a swim suit and towel and for fun and games at the **Kids' Night Out**, October 17 from 5:30pm – 9:00pm. Ages 6 – 10. Pre-registration is required and cost is \$10. Bogan Park is located at 2723 North Bogan Road in Buford. For information, call 770.614.2060.

Join us for line dancing at the **Shorty Howell Line Dance-a-thon**, on October 18 from 6:00pm – midnight. Bring a snack to share, drinks provided. Early registration is \$5 per person, \$8 after October 11. Shorty Howell Park Activity Building is located at 2750 Pleasant Hill Road in Duluth. Call 770.814.4914.

Come to the **Grandparents and Me Fall Festival Day** on October 18 from noon – 3:00pm to enjoy the indoor water park and fun activities. The Bethesda Park Aquatic Center is located at 225 Bethesda Church Road, Lawrenceville. Call 770.564.4680 for more information.

Join us for the **Mystery Shopper Workshop** on October 23 from 6:30pm – 8:30pm. Learn how to find the companies that are hiring mystery shoppers. Ages 18 and up; cost is \$25/person. The Shorty Howell Park Activity Building is located at 2750 Pleasant Hill Road, Duluth. For details, call 770.814.4914.

The **Harbins Community Park Master Plan Public Input Meeting** will be held on October 23 at 7:00pm at Grayson High School, 50 Hope Hollow Road, Loganville. The input meeting for **Mountain View Community Park** will be held October 30 at 7:00pm at Mill Creek High School, 4400 Braselton Highway, Hoschton. Call 770.822.8864.

Moms, grab your sons and a costume and join us for this "spooktacular" dance, the **Third Annual Mother/Son Halloween Dance**, on October 24 from 6:00pm – 9:00pm. Ages 3 and up; cost is \$10/person. Costumes are required to enter the dance. Pre-registration required by October 17. Rhodes Jordan Park Community Center is located at 100 East Crogan Street in Lawrenceville. For information, call 770.822.5414.

The **Halloween Costume Carnival** on October 24 from 7:00pm – 9:00pm will have prizes for the best costumes. Tickets are \$10 for a family of four, plus \$3 for each additional person age 4 and up. Pinckneyville Park Community Center is located at 4650 Peachtree Industrial Boulevard, Norcross. For details, call 770.417.2200.

Fall festivities at **Farm Fest**, October 25 from 10:00am – 3:00pm. Vendor booths are \$50. Free for all ages. McDaniel Farm Park is located at 3251 McDaniel Road, Duluth. Call 770.814.4920 for details.

A perfect crime... or is it at the **Mountain Park Murder Mystery Dinner**, October 25 from 6:00pm – 9:00pm. Must pre-register by October 17. Ages 13 and up; cost is \$15/person, \$25/couple, and \$40 for party of four. The Mountain Park Activity Building is located at 1063 Rockbridge Road, Stone Mountain. For information, call 770.564.3060.

Come check out **Bat Basics** on Saturday, October 25 from 6:00pm – 7:30pm at the Gwinnett Environmental and Heritage Center, 2020 Clean Water Drive, Buford. \$5/person, \$15 for a family of four. Get the scoop on what bats are really like and search the grounds for real bats with a bat detector. Enjoy bat brownies, too. Call 770.904.3500.

Bring your grandchild and enjoy **Pumpkin Carving**, October 26 at 2:00pm. Supplies and cleanup provided. Cost is \$5/person. George Pierce Park Community Recreation Center is located at 55 Buford Highway, Suwanee. Call 770.831.4173.

For more information about the events and services sponsored by Gwinnett County Parks and Recreation or Health and Human Services, visit [www.gwinnettcounty.com](http://www.gwinnettcounty.com) under *News and Events* to download the *Gwinnett Life*® and *One Stop* newsletters.

## countyline

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