

County Line

a monthly publication of gwinnett county, georgia

april 2009 v17, n4

SPLOST: Fire Station 7 gets a new home

Gwinnett officials opened the doors to the new Fire Station 7 in Duluth last month. The fire station was re-located from its former site on Duluth Highway (Hwy 120) to the new location at 3343 Bunten Road.

Chairman **Charles Bannister**, along with District 1 Commissioner **Shirley Lasseter** and Duluth Mayor **Nancy Harris** were present to express their excitement about the new fire station that will serve the surrounding residential and Gwinnett Arena area. *"Station 7 is part of our vision for the future to provide vital fire protection and emergency services in the City of Duluth and the rapidly growing heart of Gwinnett County,"* said Chairman Bannister.

Ward General Contractors completed the project seven weeks ahead of schedule at a total cost of \$2.6 million, 12 percent below the original projected budget cost.

The new station measures 12,300 square feet and is approximately three times larger than the old facility.



It features 14 individual bunk-room cubicles for fire-fighters, an exercise room, kitchen, three drive-thru bays, office space, and a community room. The funding to relocate and expand the station was provided by the Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax (SPLOST).

"We thank the citizens for their continued support of the SPLOST program, which has funded new and improved community facilities throughout the county such as this fire station," said Commissioner Lasseter.

contents

Protecting Our Resources



Advice from Tax Commissioner



Courts working to integrate technology



Pet Corner



Check it out!



Around Gwinnett



SPLOST: County opens largest park

On March 21, Gwinnett County Parks and Recreation celebrated the grand opening of Gwinnett's largest park to date: Harbins Park. The festivities included kids' activities, pony rides, and bike safety demonstrations.

"This is a great addition to this community and to Gwinnett County's number one park system," said District 3 Commissioner **Mike Beaudreau**, who also held his monthly **Meetings with Mike** that day at the park. *"It is amazing and a testament to the citizens' dedication to preserving greenspace that we were able to preserve this property that offers miles and miles of all types of trails in Gwinnett."*

Harbins Park totals 1,960 acres, with this first phase encompassing the 1,289-acre passive portion of the park. It features a 4.35-mile paved multi-purpose trail and miles of soft surface trails that include seven miles

for horseback riding, seven miles for mountain biking, and 4.5 miles for hiking enthusiasts to enjoy. The park also has a tri-level playground, a large, rustic pavilion that will be available for rentals, restrooms, and an equestrian-only parking area.

"There has been a lot of interest and enthusiasm over Harbins Park," said **Sharon Plunkett**, Division Director of Operations for Gwinnett County Parks and Recreation. *"Everyone—from hikers to equestrians to mountain bikers—has been eagerly awaiting the opening."*

Phase I of the park's design and construction totaled \$4.5 million and was made possible through the 2001 Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax (SPLOST). Construction was managed by Moreland Altobelli and As-

... cont'd on page 3

department of water resources

Protecting Our Resources

Free detention pond maintenance workshop

The Stormwater Management Division, in conjunction with the Cooperative Extension Service, is hosting its second annual **Detention Pond Maintenance Workshop** on April 16, 2009. Detention ponds are stormwater control structures that provide both retention and treatment of stormwater runoff.

"Like a lawn, a community detention pond is a living thing that flourishes and best serves its purpose when kept healthy. Neighborhood detention ponds serve an important role for Gwinnett County's storm sewer system, which includes protecting the water quality in our lakes and streams," said presenter **Robert Brannen**, director of the Cooperative Extension Service. The workshop will cover simple methods on how to

keep detention ponds safe, how to help them functioning effectively, and ways to make them attractive additions to our communities.

The workshop will also include a presentation by **Eric Swett**, an environmental engineer in the Stormwater Management Division. Swett spends much of his time inspecting detention ponds around the county.

This educational event will be held in the Gwinnett County Justice and Administration Center Auditorium, 75 Langley Drive. The presentation begins at 7:00pm; please arrive by 6:45pm to sign in. For more information or to register, please send an e-mail to the Stormwater Management Division at dwrswreg@gwinnettcounty.com with your name, address, and telephone number, or call 678.376.7126.

Advice from the Tax Commissioner

Senior citizen emissions exemptions

If you are 65 or older and are a registered owner of a vehicle 10 model-years and older, and if you drive less than 5,000 miles per year, you may be eligible for a senior emissions exemption.

Seniors can apply for this waiver by completing a Senior Exemption Application available at tag offices and on the website, as well as the Georgia Clean Air Force website at www.cleanairforce.com, or by calling the motor vehicles customer service line.

Completed applications should be submitted with your vehicle tag renewal notices either by mail or at a tag office. Anyone eligible for the senior exemption must reapply each year.

Peachtree Corners Tag Office relocation on schedule

The new Peachtree Corners Tag Office will move just 1.5 miles from 5270 Peachtree Parkway in Norcross to 6135 Peachtree Parkway, Suite 201B in the Market Place shopping center at the corner of Holcomb Bridge Road and Peachtree Parkway in Norcross. The new location will open in early April 2009.

The current location has been in operation since 1990. The new location is expected to serve around 82,000 customers in its first year. For customers' convenience, the new office will include eight front-line customer service workstations, a handicapped-accessible workstation, and a customer service desk. Please check the website for updates.

May holiday hours

Please note the changes below and plan ahead. To view the complete tag office 2009 holiday schedule, please visit the Tax Commissioner's website. The opening day following a holiday is typically very busy so please plan your visit accordingly.

Lawrenceville and Norcross Tag Offices

Closed: Monday, May 25, 2009, and Friday, May 29, 2009

Peachtree Corners and Snellville Tag Offices

Closed: Monday, May 25, 2009, through Tuesday, May 26, 2009

North Gwinnett Tag Office

Closed: Monday, May 25, 2009, through Wednesday, May 27, 2009

Skip a trip and save gas:
renew your vehicle online.

Katherine L. Meyer, 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

Library earns public relations award

The Gwinnett County Public Library was awarded the 2009 John Cotton Dana Public Relations Award in January. The announcement was made at the American Library Association (ALA) Mid-Winter Conference in Denver.

*"We are very proud and honored to be a recipient of the **John Cotton Dana Award**. It is a tribute to the success of the 2008 Gwinnett Reading Festival and to the hard work of our new public relations director, Michelle Long. We look forward to another great festival this year.*

This accomplishment was possible because of the enormous support received from Library staff and volunteers, partners and sponsors, and the community," said **Nancy Stanbery-Kellam**, library director. The award is sponsored by the H.W. Wilson Company, the H.W. Wilson Foundation, and the Library Leadership and Management Association, a division of the American Library Association.

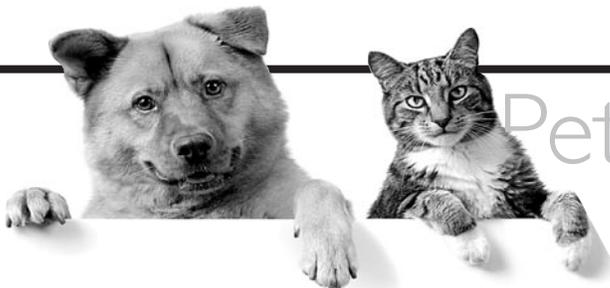
Courts working to integrate technology

A community of interested parties from courts and public safety came together in September 2003 to create the Criminal Justice Information Systems (CJIS) Community of Interest for Gwinnett County. Since its inception, the group has worked to put together a strategic plan, obtain funding, and secure a vendor to access and exchange vital information that supports its operations.

The Community of Interest consists of the following agencies: Administrative Office of the Courts, Clerk of Courts, Corrections, District Attorney, Fire and Emergency Services, Information Technology Services, Juvenile Court, Magistrate Court, Police, Probate Court, Recorder's Court, Sheriff, Solicitor's Office, State Court, and Superior Court.

According to Chief Magistrate **George Hutchinson**, who also serves as the CJIS Chairperson, the program will allow various agencies within the county that have a criminal justice role to share information, reduce repetitiveness, improve the reliability of the data, increase the speed with which information is communicated, and serve to streamline the criminal justice system.

"As agencies begin sharing information, resources that might have otherwise been devoted to reentering data can be reallocated to other criminal justice needs. Officers will spend less time at a computer keyboard and more time serving and protecting the community," said Hutchinson, *"As the CJIS project progresses, we will begin exploring opportunities to share information with criminal justice agencies outside of Gwinnett County."*



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!

Plan now for a beautiful spring garden and check out these great new books on vegetable, organic, and flower gardening:

P. Allen Smith's Bringing the Garden Indoors, by P. Allen Smith

Rodale's Ultimate Encyclopedia of Organic Gardening: Edited, by Fern Marshall Bradely, et al.

A Backyard Vegetable Garden for Kids, by Amie Jane Leavitt

A Backyard Flower Garden for Kids, by Amie Jane Leavitt

The Complete Illustrated Book of Herbs, by Reader's Digest

.....
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.

Harbins ... cont'd from page 1

sociates and the contractor was PatMac Contracting Company. A second, future phase is in the master planning stage and will include more active elements of a community park. *"Once again, we need to thank Gwinnett voters for allowing us to preserve valuable greenspace throughout the county,"* said Board Chairman Charles Bannister.

Harbins Park is located at 2995 Luke Edwards Road in Dacula. For more information, call 770.822.8840 or visit the Gwinnett Parks website, www.gwinnettparks.com.

"Spring is nature's way of saying, 'Let's party!'"

— Robin Williams

WHAT'S HAPPENING AROUND GWINNETT

Join us for **Letters to the Earth**, a special program on nature writing, April 8 from 10:00am – 10:50am and 11:00am – 11:50am. Learn how you can keep a journal as you check out the environment. All supplies will be provided. Register early; sessions limited to 30 participants, second through eighth grades. Gwinnett Environmental and Heritage Center, 5050 Clean Water Drive, Buford. Call 770.904.3503 for more information.

Bring the family out to **Family Game Night**, April 10, 7:00pm – 9:00pm, and play a board game, trivia game, or bring your favorite game to share. Pinckneyville Park Community Recreation Center, 1063 Rockbridge Road, Stone Mountain. Ages 4 – up; \$3/person; call 770.417.2200 to pre-register and use code PPCCI4103 to register.

You're invited to **A Surprise to Die For: A Mystery Dinner Theatre** on April 10 from 7:00pm – 9:30pm. Buffet-style dinner will be served. George Pierce Park Community Center, 55 Buford Highway, Suwanee. Ages 12 – up; \$25/person; pre-registration required; call 770.831.4173 and use code GPCCI4103 to register.

Relax at **Grounds 'N' Sounds**, April 10 from 8:00pm – 10:00pm and enjoy live music with **The McKinney Wash tub Two**. Coffee, drinks, and desserts available for purchase. Public admission \$5/person; museum members \$4/person. The Lawrenceville Female Seminary, 455 South Perry Street, Lawrenceville. Call 770.822.5178 for more information.

Take a tour of the **King Tut Exhibit and Egyptian artifacts** at the Atlanta Civic Center on April 16, 9:00am – 3:00pm. Transportation is included, so space is limited. Shorty Howell Park Activity Building, 2750 Pleasant Hill Road, Duluth. Ages 13 – up; \$35/person plus money for lunch; pre-registration required by April 2; call 770.814.4914 and use code SHAB14410 to register. Ask about senior discounts.

Bring money for lunch and shopping and enjoy a day at the **Dogwood Festival**, April 17 at 10:00am. Transportation is included, so space is limited. Pinckneyville Park Community Recreation Center, 1063 Rockbridge Road,

Stone Mountain. Ages 12 – up; \$10/person; pre-registration is required; call 770.417.2200 and use code PPCCI4111 to register.

Join us for family activities at the **Earth Day Event**, April 18 from 9:00am – 5:00pm at the Gwinnett Environmental and Heritage Center, 5050 Clean Water Drive, Buford. Bring your used electronics and plastic bags to recycle. Come meet the mascots including Buster the Brown Thrasher and our very own GwinAnt. Food will be available for purchase. Call 770.904.3503 for more information.

Sign your child up for a fun etiquette lesson at **Spring Tea**, April 18 from noon – 1:15pm or 2:00pm – 3:15pm. The Lawrenceville Female Seminary, 455 South Perry Street. Ages 5 – up; \$35/person; pre-registration required, call 770.822.5178 to register.

Celebrate **Spring into Dance Day** and learn ballet, tap, and jazz, and make a craft, April 18 from 2:00pm – 3:30pm. Bogan Park Community Recreation Center, 2723 North Bogan Road, Buford. Ages 3 – 10; \$12/person; pre-registration required, call 770.614.2060 and use code BPCCI4015 to register.

Delight in the beautiful blooms as you tour the **State Botanical Gardens of Georgia** in Athens on April 24. Pick up at George Pierce Park Community Recreation Center, 55 Buford Highway, Suwanee, at 8:30am; Gwinnett Senior Center at Bethesda Park, 225 Bethesda Church Road, Lawrenceville at 9:00am. Ages 50 – up. \$20/person plus lunch money; call 404.831.4173 for reservations and use code GPCCI5166 to register.

Enjoy the live performance by Brian Sullivan, Celtic and Scotch-Irish music at **Coffee-Ceilidh**, April 24 from 8:00pm – 10:00pm. Coffee, drinks, and desserts available for purchase. Public admission \$5/person; museum members \$4/person. The Lawrenceville Female Seminary, 455 South Perry Street, Lawrenceville. For more information, call 770.822.5178.

April is **Fly a Kite Month**. April 25 from 9:00am – 1:00pm. Bring your own kite to fly or make one here for only \$3. Professional

kite enthusiasts will be holding kite-flying demonstrations. Prizes will be given. Shorty Howell Park Football Field, 2750 Pleasant Hill Road, Duluth. All ages; free; pre-registration required; call 770.814.4914 and use code SHAB14404 to register. Rain date April 16.

Whoever said, "*Don't play with your food*" must have never heard of **Edible Craft Day**, April 25, 10:30am – 11:30am. Bogan Park Community Recreation Center, 2723 North Bogan Road, Buford. Ages 5 – 12; \$5/person; pre-registration required; call 770.614.2060 and use code BPCCI4017 to register.

Two-Step your way into an evening of nothing but **Line Dancing**, April 25 from 6:00pm – midnight. Bring a snack to share; drinks will be provided. Shorty Howell Park Activity Building, 2750 Pleasant Hill Road, Duluth. Early registration is \$5. Price goes up to \$8 per person one week prior to the event; call 770.814.4914 and use code SHAB14103 to register.



**gwinnettcounty
parks & recreation**

Many themed camps
to choose from at
convenient locations!



Register online at
www.gwinnettparks.com

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.