

# county Line

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## SPLOST: Second phase of Sugarloaf Parkway construction begins

Construction of the second section of the Sugarloaf Parkway Extension south of Lawrenceville officially got underway in December when the Gwinnett Board of Commissioners awarded a \$24.8 million contract to start building. Work will begin where the current construction ends at New Hope Road.

Sunbelt Structures, Inc., of Tucker, the lowest of six bidders, will build retaining walls and four bridges along the two-mile section ending with a diamond interchange at Martins Chapel Road. The four-lane roadway with a 44-foot median is the first major entirely new limited access road to be built in Gwinnett in a decade. A third section will eventually continue the road to State Route 316 near Dacula. Gwinnett Transportation Director **Brian Allen** said it will take about 30 months to complete the second section, funded by the County's Spe-

cial Purpose Local Option Sales Tax, or SPLOST, program.

Long-range plans call for wrapping Sugarloaf Parkway from State Route 316 in Dacula all the way to Peachtree Industrial Boulevard near Sugar Hill to facilitate movement through the eastern portion of the county. Gwinnett County is continuing to protect that route with appropriate land acquisitions.

Section one construction began about a year ago and will be completed in early 2010. The third section is currently being designed and construction should get underway in late 2009.



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Around Gwinnett



## Chairman Bannister delivers annual State of County address

Gwinnett Commission Chairman **Charles Bannister** presented his annual State of the County speech to a gathering of community and business leaders on January 15 at the Gwinnett Center in Duluth. The County has now put a video recording of the speech on both the County's website and on its cable TV channel.

At [www.gwinnettcountry.com](http://www.gwinnettcountry.com), computer users can view the entire speech on demand at any time. It will also be shown frequently on television over the County's government-access channel, TVgwinnett, which is channel 23 on all cable systems in Gwinnett.

*"All over the world, this has been one of the toughest economic years most of us have ever lived through. But as I stand here today and say with the utmost confidence that—considering the times—the state of Gwinnett County is not only strong, it's remarkably strong,"* he said.

He acknowledged that Gwinnett is feeling the effects of the current economic downturn. The interim budget adopted by commissioners earlier this month cut \$26 million in spending, eliminated more than 100 full-time positions, postponed adding 88 new court and public safety positions, and extended a hiring freeze. *"While these decisions give us some real breathing room on our fund balance, more difficult decisions lie ahead,"* said Bannister.

Not all was gloom and doom, however. Bannister also pointed out many of the County's accomplishments from the past year, such as a reduction in violent and property crimes. Additionally, the National Association of Counties awarded Gwinnett County the **National Gold Medal Award** for the park system and two large corporations moved to Gwinnett creating several hundred new jobs.

department of water resources

## Protecting Our Resources

### Eye-opening facts about waste oil

Improper disposal of used motor oil can contaminate the environment in several ways. Used oil dumped in storm drains pollutes our streams, rivers, and lakes. When poured on the ground, oil can contaminate ground water supplies through infiltration and it can also be carried into waterways by rainfall runoff. Waste oil placed in household drains enters sewage treatment systems, but home septic systems and municipal sewage treatment systems are not designed to handle oil, which can disrupt bacterial action. The result can be costly sewer system failure or the discharge of untreated, oil-contaminated wastewater into nearby waterways.

When used oil enters our rivers, lakes, and streams, it creates a sun-light-blocking film on the water's surface, causing detrimental effects on organisms in the water. Oil also feeds certain bacteria, leading them to multiply too rapidly and deplete dissolved oxygen—oxygen needed by fish and other living things that comprise the aquatic food chain. Additionally, toxins from used oil can accumulate in plankton

and other tiny organisms at the base of the food chain. These organisms are eaten by fish and shellfish, which in turn are eaten by larger fish, which are later eaten by humans. Through a process known as biomagnification, toxicity increases as contaminants move up the food chain.

Used oil is an excellent source of energy, but this source is wasted when the oil is simply discarded. Recycling is efficient: one gallon of motor oil can be refined from 67 gallons of crude, while in contrast, refining only 1.6 gallons of used oil produces one gallon of motor oil.

For pollution prevention information from Gwinnett County Stormwater Management, call 678.376.6826. To report instances of pollution, call 678.376.7000 (24 hours).

## Advice from the Tax Commissioner

### Motor vehicles February office hours

In observance of the Presidents' Day holiday, all five of the tag offices will be closed Monday, February 16, 2009. The Lawrenceville and Norcross locations will reopen on Tuesday, February 17, 2009. The Peachtree Corners, North Gwinnett, and Snellville locations will reopen on Wednesday, February 18, 2009.

Due to routine state computer maintenance, the North Gwinnett tag office will be closed on Saturday, February 14, 2009. Please note that during this period, Internet and telephone tag renewals will also be unavailable from 7:00pm Friday, February 13, 2009, to 6:00am Monday, February 16, 2009.

The Gwinnett County tag offices operate on a staggered 40-hour, four-day work week except for holidays or during state computer maintenance periods. To view the standard schedule, click on the **Contact Us** tab on our website.

The day following a holiday is typically very busy, so please plan your visit accordingly.

**Reminder:** The deadline to apply for homestead exemptions is March 2, 2009

### 2009 Mobile home taxes

Mobile home property tax bills were mailed on January 15, with payments due on May 1. Mobile home decals will be issued when taxes are paid in full. Customers may make payments at the main property tax office at the Gwinnett Justice and Administration Center, or at any one of our five tag office locations. For locations and operating hours, please visit the **Contact Us** page on our website.

Mobile home tax payments received after May 1 are subject to a 10 percent penalty, and after July 1, interest will begin to accrue on any unpaid balance at a rate of one percent per month. For questions regarding mobile home bills, contact the Tax Commissioner's office.

**Katherine L. Meyer**  
Tax Commissioner

**Property Tax Customer Service**  
770.822.8800 • tax@gwinnettcountry.com

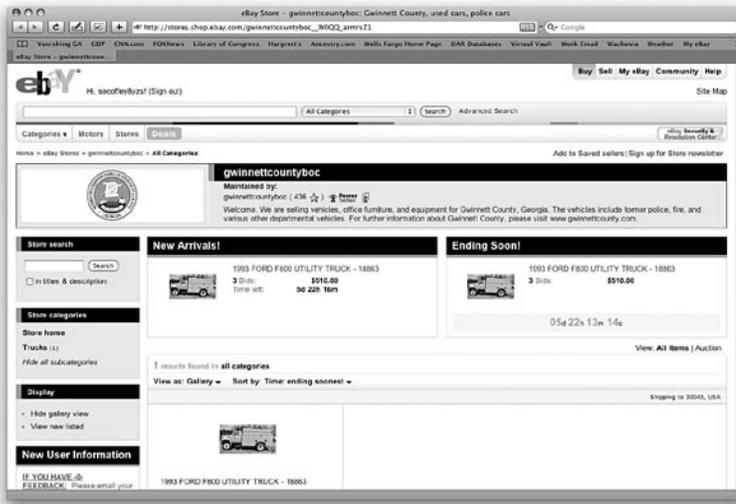
**Motor Vehicles Customer Service**  
770.822.8818 • tag@gwinnettcountry.com

**www.gwinnetttaxcommissioner.com**

## County vehicles for sale on eBay®

Preparation for a traditional vehicle auction in early 2005 required 600 hours of employee time. When it was over, Gwinnett County's fleet management staff realized that most vehicles had sold below market value, and the County had paid an eight percent commission to the auction company. So the fleet staff began a quest to improve this process and looked to the most popular online auction site to achieve this goal.

In October 2006, the County created its eBay store, **gwinnettcountyboc**, accessible from the eBay site or from the County's e-Government page. The store has had over a million visitors since it began and recorded revenues of \$1.3 million on the sale of 489 vehicles since the program began, according to **Michael Lindsey**, the director of fleet management.



The County's eBay store, **gwinnettcountyboc**

Since then, the County's online store became a qualified eBay **PowerSeller**, and hundreds of satisfied customers have expressed their pride that the County is demonstrating progressive thinking. The County has also benefited from the prestige of being innovative for the benefit of local residents while conducting business more efficiently.

The eBay store also earned the County an Achievement Award from the National Association of Counties in 2008.



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!

Gwinnett County Public Library now offers an even broader selection of e-media, including the following new additions to our e-book collection:

*The Busy Family's Guide to Money*, by Sandra Block

*Home Buyer's Answer Book: Practical Answers to More Than 250 Top Questions on Buying a Home*, by Diana Brodman Summers

*The Girl's Guide to Kicking Your Career Into Gear: Valuable Lessons, True Stories, and Tips for Using What You've Got (A Brain!) To Make Your Worklife Work for You*, by Caitlin Friedman

*Guide to Internet Job Searching 2008 – 2009*, by Margaret Riley Dikel

*Get That Job: Interviews—How to Keep Your Head and Get Your Ideal Job*, published by A&C Black

*175 Biggest Myths about College Admissions: Stand Out from the Pack, Avoid Mistakes, and Get into the College of Your Dreams*, by Jerry Israel

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**.

## Fire Station 7 Ribbon Cutting

March 3, 2009 • 3:30pm  
3343 Buntun Road, Duluth

Call 770.822.7180  
for more information.

# WHAT'S HAPPENING AROUND GWINNETT

Using mixed media, artist Denise Hall offers an eclectic arrangement of children, animals, and landscapes that are a part of her world in the **Through My Eyes art exhibit**, open now through April 22 during regular hours of operation at the Gwinnett Historic Courthouse, 185 East Crogan Street, Lawrenceville. Call 770.822.5450.

Daddies, celebrate Valentine's Day with your little princess at the **Daddy-Daughter Dance**. Swing her around the dance floor at either of the three scheduled dances from 7:00pm to 9:00pm. Pre-registration is required; please use the GCPR code when registering. February 6: George Pierce Park, 55 Buford Highway, Suwanee. Girls ages 5 – 12; \$10/per couple. GCPR code: GPCC14101, 770.831.4173. Pinckneyville Park, 4650 Peachtree Industrial Boulevard, Norcross. Girls ages 4 and up; \$10/person. GCPR code: PPCC14100, 770.417.2200. February 13: Rhodes Jordan Park, 100 East Crogan Street, Lawrenceville. Girls ages 4 and up; \$10/person. GCPR code: RJCC14112, 770.822.5414.

Join us for nothing but line dancing at the **Line Dance-a-thon**, February 7, 6:00pm – midnight. Bring a snack to share; drinks will be provided. Early registration is \$5/person; \$8/person the week prior to the event. GCPR code: SHAB14102. Shorty Howell Park Activity Building, 2750 Pleasant Hill Road, Duluth. To pre-register, call 770.840.4914.

Bake, decorate, and taste cupcakes at **Cupcake, Bake, and Decorate** on February 7, 11:00am – 1:00pm. All ages; \$2/person. Mountain Park Activity Building, 1063 Rockbridge Road, Stone Mountain. To pre-register, call 770.723.9516, GCPR code: MPAB14190.

Relax and enjoy live music with Bill Kahler at **Grounds 'N' Sounds**, February 13 from 8:00pm – 10:00pm. Coffee, drinks, and desserts available for purchase. Public admission \$5/person; Gwinnett History Museum member admission \$4/person. Lawrenceville Female Seminary, 455 South Perry Street, Lawrenceville. Call 770.822.5178 for more information.

We invite you to participate in a day of activities celebrating **Arbor Day** and birds. On

February 14 learn first-hand about tree care by assisting staff as they plant trees on the Gwinnett Environmental and Heritage Center campus, 2020 Clean Water Drive, Buford. Each family will leave with its own tree to grow. Visit [www.gwinnetteh.org](http://www.gwinnetteh.org) for the event schedule. \$25 per family (GEHC members \$10) and includes center admission. Call 770.904.3503 for more information.

Romance is in the air with good food and great music at the **Valentine's Dinner and Dance**, February 14 from 7:00pm – 10:00pm. Guests will receive a souvenir photo and a chance for special giveaways. \$75/couple; pre-registration required and space is limited. Call 770.822.5450 to pre-register; GCPR code: GHCH14101. Limited seating for two available and will be assigned in order of registrations received. This is a non-alcoholic event. The Gwinnett Historic Courthouse is located at 185 East Crogan Street.

Capture the moment and create a memory at the **Mother/Son Dance**, February 20 from 7:00pm – 9:00pm. A fun atmosphere with dancing, a keepsake photo, and refreshments! Ages 4 and up; \$10/person; pre-registration required, call 770.417.2200 to pre-register; GCPR code: PPCC14101. Dance will be held at the Pinckneyville Park Community Recreation Center, 4650 Peachtree Industrial Boulevard, Norcross.

Learn about African-American culture and traditions while you're having fun with stories, music, and fun kids' crafts at the **Black History Celebration**, February 21 from 1:00pm – 4:00pm. Ages 5 and up; \$5/person. Pre-registration is required so call 770.822.5178 to pre-register; GCPR code: FSHM10192. Lawrenceville Female Seminary, 455 South Perry Street, Lawrenceville.

Enjoy the performance of **Barney's Goat's Celtic and Scotch-Irish music** on February 27 from 8:00pm – 10:00pm. Coffee, drinks, and desserts available for purchase. Public admission \$5/person; Gwinnett History Museum member admission \$4/person. Lawrenceville Female Seminary, 455 South Perry Street, Lawrenceville. Call 770.822.5178 for more information.

Kurt Sutton returns for an exciting performance blending **Mark Twain stories** and live music, February 28 at 7:30pm. Cake, coffee, and other refreshments available for purchase. Ages 10 and up; \$10/person; pre-registration recommended, call 770.822.5178 to pre-register; GCPR code: FSHM10193. Event held at the beautiful Gwinnett Historic Courthouse, 185 East Crogan Street, Lawrenceville.

## Presidents' Day February 16, 2009

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 16, 2009, in observance of Presidents' Day. All offices will resume regular working hours on Tuesday, February 17, 2009.



## 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 770.822.7135 or e-mail [shaunieka.taste@gwinnettcounty.com](mailto:shaunieka.taste@gwinnettcounty.com). The County Line is also available on the County's website, [www.gwinnettcounty.com](http://www.gwinnettcounty.com).