



DEKALB COUNTY DISTRICT 5 NEWSLETTER

AUGUST 2009

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LEE MAY
COMMISSIONER

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Commissioner May Appointed to Key Position within NACo

During the 2009 National Association of Counties (NACo) Annual Conference, DeKalb County Commissioner Lee May was appointed to a key leadership position within this very important national organization.

During a special ceremony Commissioner Lee May was honored by NACo and was appointed chair of the Community and Economic Development Steering Committee, which focuses on all matters pertaining to general community development and redevelopment; residential, commercial, and industrial development; housing programs; building and housing codes; subdivision regulation; and

public works and economic development.

NACo's Annual Conference creates an environment in which county officials from throughout our nation can gather to learn from one another, network and to improve the effectiveness of their counties through educational workshops.

Several White House officials participated in this year's conference including Secretary of Transportation Ray LaHood, Deputy Secretary of Housing and Urban Development Ron Sims, Director of Urban Affairs Adolfo Carrion and Director of Intergovernmental Affairs Cecilia

Munoz.

NACo is the only national organization that represents county governments in the country. Within the United States there are over 3,000 counties and NACo is an essential platform organization for better servicing those counties. NACo advances issues with a unified voice before the federal government, improves the public's understanding of county government, assists counties in finding and sharing innovative solutions through education and research and provides value-added services to save counties and taxpayers money.

Groundbreaking Ceremony At Redan Park



Commissioner Lee May Speaks at Redan Park Community Center Groundbreaking Ceremony

Construction has begun on the Redan Park Community Center located at 1745 Phillips Road in District 5.

The groundbreaking ceremony, which was held on July 31st marked an important development milestone for this area of our community.

Redan Park Community Center is being constructed by the DeKalb County Park and Recreation Department to create additional recreational opportunities. The community center will encompass 24,000 square feet of space, including a gymnasium, indoor walking track, fitness facility,

multi-purpose rooms, game rooms, computer room, arts and crafts rooms, and an aerobics room. In addition, a 300 square foot concession stand will also support the ball fields located in the park.

For more information about the community center contact: John Bateman, Project Manager at 404-687-3542 or email at jwbakmani@co.dekalb.ga.us

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STRENGTHENING OUR COMMUNITY



Protecting our natural resources is an important part of building a strong community. It is our job as citizens of this earth to ensure that we protect it in order to ensure a viable planet for future generations. Many of us don't realize that things we do everyday at home or at our place of business threaten DeKalb County's rivers, lakes and streams. In the metro area nearly 98 percent of our water supply comes from surface water sources. However, many of our streams, rivers and lakes do not meet quality standards. Join The Clean Water Campaign in steps towards fixing this problem. Here are the top 10 things that you can do to help:

1. Never dump anything down a storm drain or drainage ditch.
2. Recycle motor oil and other vehicle fluids.
3. Throw litter in its place.
4. Clean up after your pet.
5. Check your vehicles for leaks (repair them!)
6. Reduce the amount of household hazardous wastes generated at home.
7. Compost yard clippings.
8. Use fertilizer and pesticide only when needed. (Read the label!)
9. If you wash your vehicle at home, do so on the lawn rather than on pavement.
10. Tell a friend or neighbor about how to prevent storm water pollution.

And... Sixth, seventh and eighth graders in Bartow, Cherokee, Clayton, Cobb, Coweta, DeKalb, Douglas, Fayette, Fulton, Forsyth, Gwinnett, Hall, Henry, Paulding and Rockdale counties are invited to participate in the annual essay contest promoting better water quality and water conservation practices in the metro Atlanta area. This is an excellent way to educate our youth on the importance of our environment. The youth are our future leaders, and it is important that they are educated on how to safe guard our planet, so that they don't make some of the same bad choices that previous generations have made concerning environmental policies.

ESSAY TOPICS

Students are to write a 300 - 500 word essay about how citizens can conserve water and protect water quality. The essay must answer one of the following questions:

1. What are the most important messages concerning water pollution and conservation? What would you want the public to do to prevent water pollution and promote conservation?
2. What kind of plan would you create to further the protection and conservation of our water resources at home?
3. What would you want elected officials to do about water quality and conservation? What concerns would you want to communicate to them?
4. What would our lives be like with very little water or very polluted water resources? What are the benefits of protecting the quality and quantity of our water supply?
5. What is the best way to encourage people to protect and save water?

Essay submissions are due by **August 25, 2009**. Please email your work to [cnjoroge@atlantaregional.com](mailto:cjnoroge@atlantaregional.com). Essays will be judged on content, creativity and organization. Essays should include discussion of both water quality and conservation. Essays without complete name and contact information will be disqualified.

THE PEOPLE'S VOICE



Commissioner May truly values your questions, comments and concerns. Therefore in an effort to make sure that he is better meeting the needs of District 5 constituents, Commissioner May will address a specific question or comment. This is your forum to be heard, The People's Voice. Please e-mail any questions, comments, or concerns to jkhockett@co.dekalb.ga.us

Question:

“Why am I paying more on my property tax bill this year?”

Commissioner May's Response

This year's tax bill was calculated a little different than from previous years. Previously, your tax bill included the Homeowner's Tax Relief Credit (HTRC), which was applied to your total tax expense, and typically enabled, on average, a \$300 savings on property taxes.

The HTRC was enacted by the Governor and the General Assembly of the State of Georgia in 1999. The grant, appropriated by the General Assembly and the Governor for the last several years to counties, cities and schools, had given tax relief to homeowners in the form of a credit on their tax bills. **For the 2009 tax year, the Governor and General Assembly did not fund the Homeowners Tax Relief Grant.** Declining state revenues during the current recession means there is no money for the State to give the tax relief to homeowners. Therefore, there was not a credit for this grant on 2009 tax bills on properties with homestead exemption. According to legislation passed in 2009 (House Bill 143), the grant will only be made available in the future if state revenues grow at least 3% plus the rate of inflation. As a result, many Georgia homeowners will see a property tax increase of \$200 to \$300 on their 2009 tax bills. I too have been affected by this change and saw an increase in my tax bill by nearly \$300.

Thank you for bringing up this very important issue, and make sure that all of you continue to send me your questions and concerns.

-Commissioner Lee N. May

SMALL BUSINESS FORUM

The Small Business Forum provides local business a chance to gain exposure and possibly new customers. It is also a great opportunity for the residents of Dekalb to learn about what offerings are available in the county, which will hopefully encourage residents to support businesses within our communities. The goal of the Small Business Forum is to help keep the DeKalb County small business environment flourishing.

Powerkicks Martial Arts

Owner	Master Adrian Spellen
Address	3026 Miller Road , Lithonia, GA 30038
Phone	(404) 421-2227
Website	Powerkicksmartialarts.com
Services Offered	Taekwondo, Aerobics, Kickboxing, Self Defense Training

Founded in 2003, by Master Adrian Spellen, Powerkicks Martial Arts has become a staple business within our DeKalb County Community. Master Spellen trains his students not only to defend themselves, but also emphasizes the principles of respect, discipline and hard work. Spellen is a top athlete in Taekwondo, ranked number 32 in the world. He most recently competed in the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games.

Precision Tune Auto Care

General Manager	Benny Evans
Address	2740 Wesley Chapel Road, Decatur, GA 30034
Phone	(404) 284-8863
Website	www.precisiontune.com
Services Offered	General Car Maintenance, Diagnostic Inspection, Repairs

Precision Tune Auto Care (PTAC) takes great pride in being located conveniently in your neighborhood. Because of this, they are able support the local community in variety of ways. Please contact PTAC with requests as they are always happy to entertain any ideas. Also make sure to check the website for the latest special offers available.

Smoothie King

Owners	Tina & Terrance Thornton
Address	3054 Panola Road, Lithonia, GA, 30038
Phone	(678) 518-8400
Website	www.smoothieking.com
Services Offered	Nutritional Drinks & Smoothies, Vitamin Supplements

Smoothie King is committed to becoming the healthy alternative to unhealthy food choices by providing a consistent, outstanding guest experience, great tasting nutritional smoothies and the highest quality nutritional products in a healthy, energetic environment. Come visit your neighborhood Smoothie King location today.

DEKALB AT A GLANCE

The DeKalb County Police Department has launched a new program to help deter crime within our DeKalb communities. The **Volunteers In Patrol (VIP)** program, as it is called, is a non-confrontational neighborhood patrol program that DeKalb County Police are implementing as part of the Department's Interactive Community Policing strategy.


This program is designed to deter crime, change the infrastructure of our communities by having citizens patrol their own neighborhoods, allow volunteers to report suspicious or criminal activity to Interactive Community Policing Officers (ICP) or 911 (if an emergency), improve the quality of life, and overall change the environments of our neighborhoods by making them safer.

Interested Persons must:

- Be at least 21 years or older
- Be a DeKalb County resident
- Possess a valid GA driver's license
- Complete a background check and have no criminal history
- Successfully Complete Training
- Show Proof of Auto Insurance

For more details and an application visit www.dekalbpolice.com/vip

DeKalb Police Cracking Down on Crime



DeKalb County Police Department
KEEPING "TRAC" OF DEKALB COUNTY WITH CRIMETRAC

It's as easy as 1, 2, 3!

- 1. Search**
 - By Address
 - By Crime
- 2. Focus**
 - Number of crimes within radius
 - Number of crimes near specific address
- 3. Obtain Report**
 - Date Range
 - Crime Type

- Innovative mapping system for citizens
- Provides accurate and timely crime data in the form of reports and maps
- Informs citizens of activities taking place in their own neighborhoods
- Citizen friendly and easy to use
- Easy as 1, 2, 3- just search, focus and obtain report on any area in unincorporated DeKalb County
- Log on to www.dekalbpolice.com

The CrimeTrac system is a newly adopted program by DeKalb County, which provides users with information regarding crimes that have occurred within a given area of DeKalb. This software is very useful for a variety of purposes including:

- Current residents who want to know what's happening in their communities.
- Residents who need information in order to form a neighborhood watch organization. CrimeTrac gives the time and dates in which crimes occurred, helping to establish trends in these activities.
- Future residents can now make an informed decision about the community in which they are moving into.

Overall this new software will do a lot of good for all those people who have interests within DeKalb. With this added tool, hopefully crime rates in DeKalb will continue to fall.

To utilize the CrimeTrac system, visit the DeKalb Police Department website at www.dekalbpolice.com

DEKALB AT A GLANCE

Creating a Neighborhood Association

Neighborhood organizations are a vital tool for communities within our District to become more unified. Creating a neighborhood association is advantageous because it allows for a highly organized system for dealing with issues in the community and for advocating for neighborhood improvements. Before you begin asking your neighbors to organize, you have to convince them of the benefit of forming a neighborhood association. Some of the points to be made to your neighbors are that neighborhood associations:

- Facilitate meeting the neighborhood's common goals
 - Empower a neighborhood to control what happens in the area
 - Provide the neighborhood with an effective communication link with local governments officials and other influential groups
 - Help members work for the preservation and improvement of the neighborhood
 - Let members take part in the decision making process that directs the neighborhood's actions
- Can plan social activities for the neighborhood.

Below is an outline of the steps to be taken in forming your neighborhood association:

1. Pique the interest of your neighborhood
2. Develop a Core Group of leaders
3. Call Commissioner May and an attorney for structuring advice
4. Meet with your Core Group to discuss goals, projects and concerns
5. Identify and recruit additional leaders
6. Determine special skills, talents, and willingness to participate amongst community members
7. Set a standard time for the neighborhood association meetings
8. Develop a neighborhood plan
9. Create a 1-year goal projection

For a detailed description of each of the previous steps, visit

www.leemaydistrict5.com

SAVE THE DATE

BOC Meetings

When: 2nd & 4th Tues.
Time: 9:00 AM
Where: Manuel J. Maloof Center Auditorium

BOC Work Sessions

When: 1st and 3rd Tues.
Time: 9:00 AM
Where: Maloof Auditorium
1300 Commerce Drive
Decatur, GA 30033.

Unbossed and Unbought:

Reverend Hosea Williams Exhibit
When: June 2 - August 28, 2009
Exhibit Hours: T-Th 10AM - 4PM
Sat. 10 AM - 4 PM

Where: Decatur Square
101 East Court Square
Decatur, GA 30030

Join us as we explore the legendary leadership/service work of The Honorable Reverend Hosea Williams.

Lee May to Host Community

Meeting to Discuss Neighborhood Planning Study
When: Tuesday, August 25, 2009
Time: 7:00 PM - 8:30 PM

Where: Cedar Grove UMC
3430 Bouldercrest Road
Conley, GA

For additional information, please contact Jessica Guinn at (404) 684-7031 or email at jguinn@thecollaborativefirm.com

Community Planning Study

Workshop
When: Tuesday, August 25, 2009
Time: 7:30 PM - 8:30 PM
Where: Cedar Grove Baptist Church

3430 Bouldercrest Road
Conley, GA 30288

Please come join us for information regarding the Moreland, Bouldercrest, Cedar Grove Planning Study.

Grand Opening of AJ Wright Store in Lithonia

When: Thursday, August 27, 2009
Time: 7:40 AM
Where: New AJ Wright Store
Stonecrest Marketplace
8150 Mall Parkway
Lithonia, GA 30038

The new AJ Wright store opens just in time for back-to-school and will create 50 new jobs in the area. AJ Wright is a huge supporter of the Boys & Girls Clubs and will make a **donation to the Boys & Girls Clubs of Metro Atlanta** on Thursday morning, followed by ribbon cutting ceremony.

Community Fun Day

When: Sunday, September 13, 2009
Time: 2:00 PM - 10:00 PM
Where: Bransby Outdoor YMCA
1185 Rock Chapel Road
Lithonia, GA 30058

.Please join us at the Bransby YMCA Community Center's **Annual Back to School Family Fun Day** a day filled with food, live entertainment, and activities for the whole family to enjoy. Commissioner Lee May and EPeriod, LLC will be hosting the upcoming community event at Bransby YMCA and it is sure to be a memorable event.

MADD Walkathon

When: Saturday, October 3, 2009
Where: Zoo Atlanta
800 Cherokee Avenue SE
Atlanta, GA 30315

The mission of Mothers Against Drunk Driving is to stop drunk driving and support the victims of this violent crime. MADD has been instrumental in passing more than 2,300 anti-drunk driving and underage drinking laws, which have saved an estimated 300,000 lives. MADD Georgia needs volunteers to help set up, work, and clean up the Walk Like MADD event.

Call: (770) 615-3737 for more details or e-mail precious.johnson@madd.org

Featured Date - Crime Prevention Tour

WHAT: DeKalb County Crime Prevention Tour

WHEN: Saturday, August 22, 2009

WHERE: New Birth Missionary Baptist Church
6400 Woodrow Road
Lithonia, GA 30038

TIME: 8:30 AM - 12:00 PM

Hosted by: Commissioner Lee May, District Attorney Gwen Fleming, Sheriff Thomas Brown, Solicitor Robert James

Workshop topics include:

Gangs • Juvenile Justice • Domestic Violence • Elder and Disabled Adult Abuse • Community Prosecution • Abandonment • Criminal Justice 101 • DeKalb County Police Department Interactive Community Policing

A MESSAGE FROM THE MAY FAMILY



As the summer winds down and the school year commences, come and enjoy the 2nd Annual Family Fun Day on Sunday, September, 13 2009 at the Bransby Outdoor YMCA . We request that guests bring school supplies to assist local students. With over 1,000 children, parents, and community members in attendance last year, this year's event is sure to be greater than ever. Horseback riding, face painting, moonwalks, and other games will be available throughout the day for kids to enjoy. The event begins at 2 PM and will include food, live entertainment, and activities for the whole family as well. We'll see you there.

Thank you once again for reading our newsletter, and I look forward to working with you to help make DeKalb County a better place to live, work and play.

Sincerely,

Lee N. May
Commissioner, District 5

Commission Office

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