

DEKALB COUNTY DISTRICT 5 NEWSLETTER

MARCH 2009

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LEE MAY
COMMISSIONER

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A Message From
Commissioner
May 8

Edited By:
Jamil K. Hockett
District 5 Intern

What's Up With MARTA???

The Metro Atlanta Rapid Transit Authority, better known as MARTA has been the primary source of public transportation to metro Atlantans for over 40 years. Over the years the company's service has been fairly consistent and currently more than 500,000 people depend on MARTA to get around every day. Like many other companies in recent months, MARTA has become victim to the troubling economy. MARTA officials cite the growing economic downturn as explanation to the company's profitability and operational deficit. State republican leadership however, have a different opinion of where MARTA's financial problems stem. They blame poor management, high salaries, and unearned bonuses as the foundation of MARTA's financial situation.

In recent months there have been several happenings within the legislature that were intended to assist in public transportation



Marta officials predict they may have to cut service and jobs.

needs. There have been two bills passed, both intending to assist MARTA in their efforts to climb out of their growing operational deficit. SB 120 allows for MARTA to keep all of its earnings. Previously MARTA was required to split 50% of their earnings between an operational budget and an investment budget. As a result, MARTA currently has over \$65M in investment reserves, which it currently is not allowed by law to allocate towards general operations.

The second bill passed was SB 39, to create a 1% tax allocation to increase funding on local area transportation pro-

jects.

State legislature has been wondering why MARTA couldn't have seen this financial situation coming. A spokesman for MARTA said "even Warren Buffet couldn't have seen this severe an economic shift coming, and we were making decisions based on current conditions, not based on the unforeseen future."

MARTA currently projects to see a deficit of \$24M in the next fiscal cycle and there is talk of calling the State Legislature to hold a special session to discuss the MARTA's situation and possibly lift the hold on the MARTA reserved investment funds.

Commissioner Lee May is working hard to do everything he can to lend assistance in this tough situation. Transportation is a top agenda priority for Commissioner May, and he is committed to improving the quality and availability of transportation to the citizens of DeKalb County.



Strengthening Our Community

Our youth face significant adversity in today's society. Commissioner Lee May, through his various youth initiatives, has made it his mission to affect positive change in the youth of DeKalb County. Commissioner May knows the importance of our youth, and has proven to be a strong role model and positive influence to our youth by sponsoring several youth summits throughout the county.

Commissioner May believes that "anytime you reach just one young person that is a success in itself." Commissioner May's proactive approach

towards reaching the youth is a great first step towards reaching our youth, but we must get involved. The events featured in this section are great opportunities to get involved.

Commissioner May and DeKalb County have also partnered with the YMCA to bring a state-of-the-art YMCA facility to DeKalb. This multi-million dollar project will allow for new jobs in the county as well as a much needed place for recreation and social gatherings, while also costing the tax-payers of DeKalb no additional money.

Upcoming Event

SAT vs. ACT Strategies Seminar

(Sponsored by Wave Bound & Kaplan)

Saturday, April 18, 2009

9:00 A.M. - 11:00 A.M.

Location: Manuel J. Maloof Center

1300 Commerce Drive

Decatur, GA 30030

Commissioner May to Host Family Fun Day

In an effort to continually serve the needs of the constituents of District 5, Commissioner Lee May alongside his District 7 colleague, Commissioner Connie Stokes have collaborated with the Mall at Stonecrest to provide an event for families within DeKalb County. This Family Fun Day event will emphasize the values of family, community and safety.

The community will gain valuable information about activities for children, resources for families, youth employment, skills training, and health and safety information.

"Our goal is to promote Stonecrest

Mall as a pleasant place for families to enjoy their shopping, dining, and entertainment experience," said Commissioner May. "More partnerships and events like this are needed since a strong community is a direct reflection of strong families."

The initiative will also bring together various local agencies, businesses and community leaders for a day of entertainment, activities, games, giveaways, educational resources, and much more.

For more information on Family Fun Day at Stonecrest please call Commissioner Lee May at 404-371-4745, or visit www.mallatstonecrest.com.

Event Details:

When: Saturday, May 2, 2009

Where: The Mall at Stonecrest
2929 Turner Hill Road
Lithonia, GA 30038

Time: 1:00 P.M. - 4:00 P.M.

Directions:

Stonecrest Mall is located off exit 75, when traveling on I-20. The mall is located on Turner Hill Road in Lithonia, GA.

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

This Edition's Question From: Angel Harris

Within DeKalb there are things that we are doing well and there are things that need improving. In South DeKalb, for example, we have had a continual problem with crime. Break-ins, armed-robbery, shootings & even murder are becoming more and more common in my

area of the county. I'm very concerned about the status of our communities, and want to know what solutions are being adopted to address these concerns.

I'm also concerned that our youth do not have the resources they need to occupy their free time. In the summer especially, I often see bored youth just hanging around in the

streets. Your office along with Ronald Ramsey and others do a great job of communicating to us about what's going on in our local government. Your approach to dealing with constituent concerns is refreshing. I appreciate your sincerity in making DeKalb a better place, and I look forward to your response towards resolving my issues.

"We as a team can combat the growing issues facing our community."

Commissioner May's Response

Angel Harris,

Thank you for your comment. I wish I could say that I had a quick fix to every problem that faces our district. I don't. But, what I can offer you is my commitment to ensuring that the policies I support will reflect the issues that you as a hard-working tax payer advocate for.

Recently, I have been devoting a lot of effort towards my youth initiative. This initiative will continue into the summer and will provide activities that youth can participate in. If you look at the "Save the Date" (p. 7) portion of this newsletter, you will also find local event dates that can help fill some of the down time that our youth often have. As far as safety is concerned, in the 2009 budget are funds allocated to hire 35 new police officers and 5 new code enforcement officers, which I believe will make a big difference.

These small steps will help, but in order to defeat the tough issues facing our community we must make a collective effort towards meeting our needs. This means that you have to get involved by volunteering for your school's PTA, participating in your neighborhood watch program, attending community meetings to learn what's available to you and letting your voice be heard by participating in surveys, writing letters, sending e-mails, and calling my office. Every little thing that you do will make a big difference collectively. This is but a part of the solution, but we as a team can combat the growing issues facing our community. Thank you and God Bless.

-Commissioner Lee N. May

DeKalb At A Glance

DeKalb County School system officials are committed to “forming a collaborative effort between home and school that maximizes students’ social and academic potential, preparing them to compete in a global society. “ The school system’s latest efforts to provide a diverse academic offering has raised a lot of attention and excitement within the county and around the nation.

DeKalb County school officials are forging-ahead with plans to open a two new schools, which will each be the first-of-their-kind. The first a military-style public high school, will com-

bine academics with a military-style regimen for as many as 650 9th through 12th graders. The idea of a military school has brought on a bit of controversy, however many are happy to see more options available to students within the county. The DeKalb Marine Corps Institute will be the first of its kind in Georgia and joins an expanding network of such schools nationwide, costs of the school will be shared by the United States Marine Corp. Enrollment would not require post-graduation military service or commitment. “My job is not to look after a portion of children but all the children,” said DeKalb

school Superintendent Crawford Lewis.

With the new “green” Arabia Mountain High School, the county seems to have the environment’s best interest in mind as well. Arabia Mountain is the first LEED Silver Certified Public High School in Georgia and aspires to achieve 40% Water Savings, 94% Recycling on Job Waste and 20-25% Power Consumption Savings. In addition the school will host the Medical Magnet Program and the Environmental Energy and Engineering Magnet Programs which are designed to support students interested in science and environmental professions.

Stonecrest Mall Limits Hours for Unaccompanied-Minors

The Mall at Stonecrest has become an economic anchor within DeKalb County, and has been a focal point of economic development for businesses and investors alike. Recently, however, the mall itself has seen diminishing profits and is performing below expectation. In an effort to create a more attractive environment for shoppers from around the county, the Mall at Stonecrest has instituted a new policy where the focus is placed on creating a family environment that will be able to create an enjoyable shopping experience for patrons of the mall.

On May 1, 2009, Stonecrest Mall will implement the new policy entitled the Parental Involvement Program. The hope of this new mall policy is to enhance the shopping experience at the mall, while simultaneously creating a platform where parents become more involved in their children’s lives. Since the mall opened in October 2001, it has become tradition for parents to drop off their children in order to provide their kids with a safe place to congregate and have fun with their friends.

The new policy will create a consistent and formal system that will be easy for youth patrons and their parents and legal guardians to understand

and abide by. The new policy states that any youth on the premises of the mall who is 18 years and younger must be accompanied by an adult after 4 p.m. on Fridays and Saturdays. The only exception are mall employees, who will have special passes. Mall manager Patricia Elmore Edge says “the new policy will help create a more family-friendly shopping experience.” The program was decided upon after a sufficient number of customers and merchants requesting the need for more strict youth guidelines. “We feel this effort will lead to positive results such as more families and business patrons coming to the Mall at Stonecrest to shop, dine and be entertained,” Edge says. One man commented, “the mall is a business put in place to facilitate commerce and the teens may be unintentionally driving away customers.”

The rise in youth escort policies is a national trend as retail centers seek to create family-friendly environments. In Georgia, the Mall at Stonecrest will join four other malls with similar policies, Arbor Place Mall located in Douglasville, Colonial Mall located in Macon, Colonial Mall-Glynn Place located in Brunswick, and Oglethorpe Mall located in Savannah. As part of the implementation of the PIP, there will be a community outreach effort to

educate the public about the new program’s restraints.

The Mall at Stonecrest falls within District 5, and it is up to all of us to make this new mall policy an easy transition. The policy is meant to bring a family atmosphere to the mall, and its not meant to be punishment to our kids. Commissioner May agrees that the policy is needed and will serve to bring back the financial health of Stonecrest Mall. In addition he believes that this new policy goes hand in hand with his youth initiative agenda. Commissioner May thinks that, “if done the correct way, it will be a positive for both the mall , our families, and the community.”

“We all know the situation at Stonecrest,” he says. “The mall is inundated with kids who are not spending a dollar.” The commissioner believes that “many of the kids misbehave not because they are bad, but because they are unsupervised.” “Unfortunately, you can’t force parents to spend time with their kids,” he said. “With Dunwoody incorporating and revenues on the decline for the county, the Mall at Stonecrest will be relied upon to provide jobs and income in the county, and we have to protect that.”

DeKalb At A Glance

According to a recent press release by the DeKalb County Police Department, DeKalb County experienced a drop in overall crime this past year of 2008. The report stated that, "The DeKalb County Police Department is pleased to announce a **Crime Reduction** for the County for 2008 compared to 2007. **Violent Crimes** in DeKalb

County were **down by 3%** and **Property Crimes down by 1%**. The areas that led to the reduction in violent crimes were **aggravated assaults, down 19%** and **theft, down 17%** for the year. The County also realized a **decrease** in the number of **homicides by 1%**. Out of the 110 homicides at least 50 of them were either domestic related or perpe-

trators knew their victim. The DeKalb County Police Department will continue to work with the community in 2009 to aggressively fight crime by instituting programs such as CrimeTrac (Shown Below) in order to make DeKalb County a safer place to live, work and play."

Commissioner May is committed to working alongside DeKalb Police to improve Public Safety.


Keep "Trac" of your Neighborhood With CRIMETRAC

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.

For more information about CrimeTrac, visit the DeKalb Police website at www.dekalbpolice.com



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

DeKalb At A Glance

The DeKalb County Police Department is encouraging the public to use caution when purchasing items from the online site **Craigslist**. Since January 2009, detectives have investigated 13 cases where victims have been robbed after meeting individuals to purchase items advertised on Craigslist. Although detectives do not believe

all the cases are committed by the same suspects, the items used to lure in victims have been similar. Investigation into these cases revealed that victims were responding to postings for I-Phones and the Sony PSP Gaming Systems. Those victims later met the suspects at various locations in DeKalb County at night. Once the victims arrived at the agreed upon area,

they were robbed.

The DeKalb County Police Department is urging you to use the following precautions when engaging in online transactions:

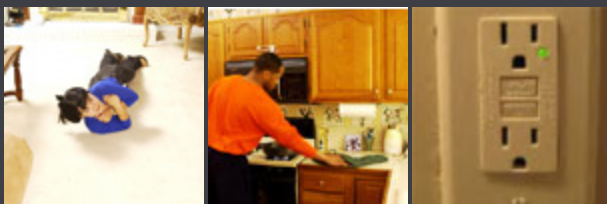
- Set meetings during daylight hours
- Meet in safe, public places
- Never meet alone
- Be aware of your surroundings at all times

DeKalb Police Graduate 22 New Officers

The DeKalb County Police Department will hold a graduation ceremony for the recruitment class of the 87th Academy. CEO Burrell Ellis and Acting Chief William O'Brien will present the 22 graduates with their badges during the ceremony. The new officers will hit the streets after completing 26 weeks of intensive training. These new officers play an important part in strengthening our police force and will help the Department to improve the quality of life in DeKalb County.

FIRE SAFETY TIPS

In DeKalb there have been more than 120 fires since the beginning of 2009. Of those fires, 44 were identified as being caused by cooking mishaps. To keep unintentional injuries out of your kitchen, the Home Safety Council suggests taking precaution while preparing food.



1. Always stay in the kitchen when cooking
2. Keep towels, grocery bags, and curtains away from the range top
3. Prevent grease build up on range top and inside of the oven.
4. Roll up your sleeves while cooking in order to prevent catching on fire. If your clothes do catch fire, STOP, DROP and ROLL, and seek medical attention immediately.
5. Always turn pot handles toward the center of the range to prevent spills.
6. Keep hot containers away from the edge of the counter tops.
7. Food cooked in microwaves can be dangerously hot. Be very cautious when handling these products.
8. Keep children and pets away from the kitchen when anyone is cooking.
9. All of your electrical outlets should be protected by Ground-Fault Circuit Interrupters (GFCIs).
10. For safer water temperatures set the hot water heater at 120° Fahrenheit or below.

Save the Date

Board Of Commissioners (BOC) Meetings

When: 2nd and 4th Tuesday of each month

Time: 9:00 AM

Where: Manuel J. Maloof Auditorium

BOC Work Sessions

When: 1st and 3rd Tuesday each month

Time: 9:00 AM

Where: Manuel J. Maloof Center Auditorium
1300 Commerce Drive
Decatur, GA 30033.

Earth Day 2009

When: Wednesday, April 22, 2009

Earth day is intended to aspire awareness and appreciation of the Earth's environment.

New Birth Miss. Baptist Church

RE|PPRESENT Youth Conference

When: June 15-17, 2009

Where: New Birth M.B. Church
6400 Woodrow Road, 30038

RE|PRESENT™ is designed to provide an environment where our young people will be equipped to radically transform the current status quo within our culture.

For more info call: 770-696-9672.

Community Development Grant

The DeKalb Community Development department is now accepting applications toward grant funds for the 2010 Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), Emergency Shelter Grant (ESG), and HOME/CHDO Grant. The deadline for submitting applications is **May 15, 2009**. There will several opportunities to become involved in this process, and the dates and times for those events are listed to the right of this paragraph. For More Information Call 404-286-3308.

Grant Writing Workshop

When: Thursday, April 16, 2009

Time: 10:30 AM - 12:00 PM

Where: Wesley Chapel Library
2861 Wesley Chapel Road, 30034

Community Needs Public Hearing

When: Thursday, April 23, 2009

Time: 6:30 PM

Where: Manuel J. Maloof Auditorium
1300 Commerce Drive, 30033

Proposed Budget Hearing

When: Thursday August 13, 2009

Time: 6:30 PM

Where: Manuel J. Maloof Auditorium
1300 Commerce Drive, 30033

Free Foreclosure Prevention Workshop

When: April 15 and April 16, 2009

Time: 2:00 PM - 8:00 PM

Where: GA World Congress Center
Building B, 3rd Floor
285 Andrew Young Intl Blvd.
Atlanta, GA 30313

This event will discuss the options available to protect homeowners from the growing foreclosure issue in our communities. The HOPE Now Campaign is designed to increase borrower awareness and has received partnerships with the Consumer Credit Counseling Service and other companies.

Quick Reference Information

DeKalb County

www.yourdekalb.com

www.leemaydistrict5.com

DeKalb Police Department

www.dekalbpolice.com

Information Line: 404-294-2000

DeKalb Watershed Management

www.dekalbwatershed.com

Information Line: 404-378-4475

DeKalb Recorder's Court

dklbweb.dekalbga.org/courts/

recorders

DeKalb Visitor's Bureau

www.dcvb.org

General Information: 770-492-5000

DeKalb Libraries

www.dekalblibrary.org

Reference Desk: 404-370-8450

A Message From Commissioner May



LEE MAY
COMMISSIONER, DISTRICT 5

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Search for: Commissioner Lee May

To My District 5 Constituents,

It is a privilege to represent you on the DeKalb County Commission, As your District 5 Commissioner, I am honored to be your active voice on the County Commission, but in order to represent you effectively first I need to hear directly from you. From your email messages to hand written notes, your feedback is invaluable.

I hope that you will use this newsletter as another link to me and that you find it to be a very useful tool in helping me better serve you.

Please continue to share your thoughts and ideas on how we can press forward to redefine policies that elevate the quality of life in District 5 and in DeKalb County.

I 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