

CHATHAM COUNTY CONNECTION



January 22, 2012



Pete Liakakis
Chairman



Helen L. Stone
District 1
Chairman Pro-Tem



James J. Holmes
District 2



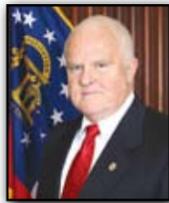
Patrick Shay
District 3



Patrick K. Farrell
District 4



Harris Odell, Jr.
District 5



David M. Gellatly
District 6



Dean Kicklighter
District 7



Dr. Priscilla D. Thomas
District 8
Vice Chairman

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRMAN



Pete Liakakis

On behalf of the Chatham County Commission I would like to wish all citizens best wishes for the year 2012. As I begin my last year as

Chairman of the County Commission I look forward to continuing a course of prudent planning and a strict adherence to financial policies grounded in fiscal discipline. This is the policy that this commission adopted when we began this term. A bias for action with a focus on improving the lives of all Chatham County citizens describes the legacy of this commission that has worked together for the past seven years. We've made representative democracy work while not succumbing to embittered and divisive conduct that impedes getting

the job done. Each commissioner must be recognized as integral to an exceptional group of elected officials. They continue to contribute as individuals and collectively to this legacy that makes Chatham County a better place to live and work.

Regardless of the challenges, the genuine worth of this County Commission and the quality of the county staff is an unbeatable combination. "Lame Duck" is not in my dictionary and you can expect me to work harder and better for all citizens.

Our goal is to remain in communication with each municipality to ensure proper representation for every citizen of Chatham County. Each municipality working together makes Chatham County as a whole the wonderful place we call home. I want to assure all citizens that I will always conduct the Office of Chairman with dignity, responsiveness and honesty. I am blessed with this responsibility and will continue to work diligently to serve you all. May you all be blessed and may Chatham County continue to prosper.



2012 Presidential Preference Primary

Election Date: MARCH 6, 2012

Voter Education- Things to Know:

THE REGISTRATION DEADLINE IS FEBRUARY 6, 2012

Prior to Election Day – confirm your registration and poll location by calling Voter Registration at 912-790-1520 or use the website poll locator at www.sos.georgia.gov/MVP. Be a responsible voter and insure that your voting status and information is kept current. Keep your residence and mailing address updated with the Voter Registration Office.

ABSENTEE VOTING BY MAIL VOTING BY MAIL 2012 PRESIDENTIAL PREFERENCE PRIMARY ELECTION:

Request for mail out absentee ballots may be submitted as early as 180 days prior to the Election. Request may be submitted either by mail or fax. The last day to submit an absentee mail out application is March 2, 2012. Please submit your application early. Mail out of absentee ballots will begin on January 21, 2012.

Locations	Address	Hours
Old Courthouse	124 Bull St	9:00 am – 4:00 pm (M-F)
Southwest Library (Sav Mall)	14097 Abercorn St	10:00 am – 5:00 pm (M-F)
Islands Library	125 Wilmington Island Rd	10:00 am – 5:00 pm (M-F)
Mosquito Control	65 Billy B. Hair Dr	9:00 am – 4:00 pm (M-F)
Voter Reg Main Office	1117 Eisenhower Dr, Suite E	8:00 am – 5:00 pm (M,W,F)
Voter Reg Main Office	1117 Eisenhower Dr, Suite E	8:00 am – 7:00 pm (T, TH)

ABSENTEE EARLY IN-PERSON VOTING: FEBRUARY 13, 2012 – FEBRUARY 25, 2012

Early Voting 2012 Presidential Preference Primary Election: Early in-person voting is available 21 days prior to the Presidential Preference Primary Election. Any eligible registered voter desiring to early vote during this period may do so in-person at the Voter Registration Main Office, 1117 Eisenhower Dr, Suite E, Savannah, GA 31406, Mon – Fri, 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. No reason is required for absentee early voting. Saturday Voting will be held on FEBRUARY 25, 2012, 9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

ABSENTEE ADVANCE VOTING: FEBRUARY 27, 2012 – MARCH 2, 2012

Advance Voting 2012 Presidential Preference Primary Election: The week prior to the election is referred to as Advance voting Week. Additional voting locations around the county will be opened for your convenience. See locations and times below.

CHATHAM COUNTY VOTER REGISTRATION OFFICE
1117 EISENHOWER DRIVE SUITE E,
SAVANNAH, GA 31406
MAIL: P.O. BOX 13757, SAVANNAH, GA 31416
PHONE: 912-790-1520 FAX 912-790-1519
Email: voter@chathamcounty.org
Website: <http://voter.chathamcounty.org>

2012 Election Event Dates:

Elections	Registration Deadlines	Election Dates	Early/Advance Voting Period	Saturday Voting Dates
Presidential Preference Primary	February 6, 2012	March 6, 2012	February 13 – March 2	February 25, 2012
General Primary	July 2, 2012	July 31, 2012	July 9 – July 27	July 21, 2012
General Primary Run-off (if Required)	July 2, 2012	August 21, 2012	August 13 – August 17	
General Election	October 8, 2012	November 6, 2012	October 15 – November 2	October 27, 2012
General Election Run-off (if Required)	October 8, 2012	December 4, 2012	November 26 – November 30	

MVP
My Voter Page

Log in to
www.sos.ga.gov/mvp

Use MVP to Check Your:

- Voter Registration Status
- Mail-in application and ballot status
- Poll location
- Early voting location
- Elected officials
- Registration information on file with the county office
- Sample ballot for the upcoming election

Georgia Voter Identification Requirements

Bring at least one to vote:

- A Georgia Driver's License, even if expired
- A valid United States military photo ID card
- A valid state of federal government issued photo ID, including a FREE Voter Identification Card
- A valid employee photo ID card issued by any branch, department, agency, or entity of the United States, Georgia, or any other county, municipality, board, authority or other entity of Georgia
- A valid United States passport
- A valid tribal photo ID card



\$30,873,000 Thank You

*We would like to thank the following individuals and organizations.
Due to your efforts, we were able to collect \$30,873,000
in 2011 for the Children of Chatham County.*

- SCMPD
- Chatham County Sheriff's Dept.
- Tax Commissioner's Office
- U.S. Attorney's Office
- Chatham County Commission
- Danny Powers, Tax Commissioner
- CrimeStoppers
- The Police Departments of
 - Tybee Island
 - Bloomingdale
 - Thunderbolt
 - Pooler
 - Pt. Wentworth
 - Garden City
- Pete Nichols – "The Producer"

Facts

In 2011, The Chatham County Child Support Office Accomplished The Following:

- Collected \$30,873,000.00
- Received 2,821 New Applications
- Established 1,489 Child Support Orders
- Conducted 1203 Paternity Tests
- Determined Paternity for 2,933 Children
- Arrested 482 Non-Paying Parents
- Jailed 365 Non-Paying Parents via Court
- Suspended 1,958 Driver's Licenses
- Seized \$ 68,632.56 From Bank Accounts
- Seized \$ 181,144.41 From Christmas Bonuses

Collections:

2009 - \$ 29,646,000.00
2010 - \$ 29,957,000.00
2011 - \$ 30,873,000.00

Staff Reductions Due To Budget Cuts:

Staff of Chatham County Child Support in 2005: 52
Staff of Chatham County Child Support in 2010: 40
Staff of Chatham County Child Support in 2011: 39

Chatham County Comprises 2.6% of the Population of Georgia.

In 2011, the Chatham County Child Support Office Collected 4.23% of the Child Support Collected in Georgia.

*-Thank You
The Staff of Chatham County
Child Support Services*

"A Helping Hand for Chatham County's Children"

Chatham County Cooperative Extension

The Chatham County Cooperative Extension has a variety of **educational programs** and **activities** available for your participation.

Contact the Chatham County Cooperative Extension office at 124 Bull Street, call 912-652-7981 or email uge3051@uga.edu for additional information. The website can be accessed by visiting www.ugaextension.com/chatham. Your Chatham County Extension Agents look forward to assisting you. County Extension Agents are available to present educational programs to community groups in the areas of horticulture, family and consumer sciences and 4-H. You are invited to visit the website for additional UGA Cooperative Extension research based publications. Listed below are several community programs scheduled during 2012 and you can contact the Chatham County Extension office or visit www.ugaextension.com/chatham to schedule or participate in an educational program during 2012.

2012 Educational Programs

2012 Master Gardener Extension Volunteer Program
Date: January 24th – April 24th (Registration Fee Required)
Time: 9:00 AM–Noon (Tuesdays and Thursdays)

February 1st- Free)
To Register for Walk Georgia go to www.walkgeorgia.org
12 week program designed to increase your physical activity

Location: Bamboo Farm & Coastal Gardens

So Easy to Preserve Foods

Date: Saturday, March 24th Time: 1:00 PM
Cost: Free

Location Bamboo Farm & Coastal Gardens

Master Naturalist 2012

Date: March 28th – June 6th (Registration Fee Required)

Location: Field Trips throughout Chatham & Coastal Counties

Early Child Care Institute (ECI)

Date: Saturday, May 12th (Training previously held in October)

Location: Savannah Technical College (Registration Required)

Money Matters: Basic Personal Finance for Aspiring Entrepreneurs
Date: January 31st (Registration Required-Free)
Time: 1:00–4:00 PM
Location: Bamboo Farm and Coastal Gardens

Walk-A-Weigh
(Learn how to change eating & physical activity habits.)

Date: February 12th–May 5th (Registration Required-Free)

Location: Several locations throughout Chatham County

Path to Home Ownership – Home-buyer Education Series
Dates: February 2nd and 9th (Registration Required-Free)
Location: Southwest Public Library-14097 Abercorn Extension

Wild Game and Fish Fry Supper

Date: Friday, February 24th Cost: \$25.00
Call: 912-921-5460

Location: Bamboo Farm and Coastal Gardens - #2 Canebrake Road

Walk Georgia: Move More. Live More.
Date: February 12th–May 5th (Registration Opens–

Spring Garden Festival

Date: Saturday, March 24th Time: 9:00 AM – 4:00 PM Cost: Free

Chatham County Park Services
2012 Activity Guide

For more information visit:
<http://parks.chathamcounty.org>

Special Events Winter/Spring



Frank Murray Community Center

FASHION SHOW

Lake Mayer SPRING Camp— Just because you are not going on vacation during spring break does not mean your child can't feel like they are on vacation! We will be swimming, playing sports and doing arts & crafts! Let the FUN begin!

Location: Lake Mayer
Dates: TBA
Fee: \$10/camper

February

3rd Annual Fashion Show: Get a glance of the latest fashion trends from **MACY'S**. Lunch included
Location: Frank Murray Community Center
Date: Thursday, February 9th
Fee: TBA *please RSVP

April

Easter Egg Hunt Extravaganza— Bring the whole family for this exciting event! Prizes will be awarded.

Locations: Tom Triplett Park & L. Scott Stell Park
Fee: FREE

March

Wearing of the GREEN Luncheon— Celebrate St. Patrick's Day with us! Wear your green hats, beads and festive costumes! Lunch will be served.
Location: Frank Murray Community Center
Fee: \$2.00/ person



Sheriff Improving Programs for Inmates, Reducing Recidivism

There are currently close to 1650 inmates in the Chatham County Detention Center. Most are awaiting trial, the rest are waiting to go into state system. The challenge the Chatham County Sheriff's Office is facing is how to have a positive impact on these detainees while maintaining a safe and secure facility. Since Colonel Terry Enoch took over the reigns as Jail Administrator this past summer he has challenged his employees to find ways to decrease the amount of idle time inmates have and help turn them into more productive citizens. "Improving our inmate programs at the jail is all part of our behavior management strategy," Enoch said. "It is a way to reduce the violence, give these men and women life skills and introduce them to religious programs." A large percentage of the inmates are recidivists—or career criminals. Enoch says if we show them a better way of living and help them get a job when they are released then that will reduce crime, reduce the number of inmates in the jail and reduce the amount of money taxpayers spend on running the jail. Members of the corrections staff have traveled to other facilities and are working closely with the Coastal State Prison in Savannah. "We are raising our level of professionalism among our officers, deputies and staff. Professionalism, Integrity and Accountability are the words we live by," said Enoch. Enoch has been working closely with Programs Director Angela Dorsey to make all of Unit 3 a Programs Unit. Inmates who volunteer and qualify to be housed in this unit will be eligible for Substance Abuse programs, GED classes, job training, chaplaincy programs and much more. One of the first new programs the jail is working to initiate is a literacy program. While the CCSO has offered GED programs for years, Enoch has found that many inmates read below a sixth grade levels and some cannot read at all. Sheriff Al St Lawrence said, "I agree with and support the proactive approach my staff is taking to reduce the recidivism rate promote literacy— which is fundamental to success."

D1 Boot Camp in the Park

LAKE MAYER	TOM TRIPLETT PARK
Mon. & Wed. 6:00 - 7:00 PM Meet at pavilion \$75 / month	Tue. & Thur. 6:00 - 7:00 PM Meet at pavilion \$75 / month

-OR- both Boot Camps for only \$100

For more details and registration info, visit D1Savannah.com

D1 The Place for The Athlete
5918 Ogeechee Rd. Savannah, GA 31419 | 912.920.8442 | D1Savannah.com



Chatham Area Transit Authority: Always on the Move!

In March 2005, the CAT Board approved and executed an architect/engineer services contract to begin the task of erecting the new CAT Downtown Intermodal Transit Center. The facility was needed to improve mobility within our community. The current Greyhound building has been selected and the necessary requirements for the construction have been met. The conceptual design, circulation plan and elevation illustration have been completed. The architectural and engineering designs are in place and are ready to be utilized!

Chatham Area Transit is now proud to announce that the ground-breaking ceremony for this new facility will take place on Wednesday, February 29, 2012 at 10:00 AM. It will be held at 610 West Oglethorpe Avenue, the current site of the Greyhound Bus Lines. In the future, the site will serve as the transfer center for local commuters, intercity transit and Greyhound Bus Lines. It will also make provisions for a taxi stand. It will serve as an efficient hub, in a centralized area, where passengers may take advantage of route-to-route transfers. The public will also benefit from a climate

controlled waiting area with restroom facilities. The intermodal center will be equipped with state of the art technology which will feature viewing monitors to showcase the arrival and departure times of route buses.

Chatham Area Transit continues to move forward in its pursuit of being the impetus for public transportation in this region.

Chatham County Board of Assessors Presents Its 2012 Timeline

The Chatham County Board of Assessors consists of a five member panel that is appointed by the Chatham County Commissioners. Each member serves a four year term and is required to attend classes conducted by the Georgia Department of Revenue. The current officers are as follows: Chairman Terry Tolbert; Vice-Chairman Tommy Boondry; Secretary Art Gunter; and Ms. Natalie von Loewenfeldt and Dr. Kathryn Martin are members. The Board of Assessors may be reappointed by the Chatham County Commissioners. The Board of Assessors' mission statement is to professionally create a yearly tax listing (digest) in accordance with Georgia Law and in a manner that will instill and maintain confidence in all property valuations. They have direct oversight of the Chief Appraiser.

The Chief Appraiser is directly responsible for the staff of the Board of Assessors. There are approximately sixty staff members that work towards the annual production of the tax digest. Within the office, there are five divisions that these staff members are assigned to. They are Administration, Real Property, Personal Property, Support Services, and IT Services. There are subsets within these divisions that help with the required operations necessary to complete the tax digest.

With a staff this size, it is important to keep in mind and identify the hard work that the Board of Assessors staff

perform. For 2011, Chatham County taxpayers took it upon themselves to acknowledge our staff. They wrote us numerous letters and e-mails recognizing and appreciating the difficult tasks that face our department. The list includes Lorenzo Albino; Deborah Beasley; Maryellen Burner; Andrea Butler; Dyanne Clay; Arthur Cummings; April Furman; Yourlinda Harris; Vernetta Harvey; Sandra Lamb; Albert Marcantonio; Carol Osborne; Victoria Schaffer; Sheryl Swint; and Mark Thomas.

Two of our supervisors; Stacey Scott, Personal Property Supervisor, and Angela Watkins, Homesteads & Transfers Supervisors, are recent graduates of the Management Development Program (MDP). MDP is a partnership with Chatham County and the Carl Vinson Institute of Government. As part of their final assignments, they chose innovative ways for our department to receive and process Personal Property returns and homestead applications. The projects will save our department over \$138,000 in the first year alone. The projects also are encouraging our department to be greener, which is a goal that all of Chatham County government has.

Our organization is mandated by legislation from the Georgia General Assembly, training from the Georgia Department of Revenue, rules and regulations from the Chatham County governing structure, and Board of Assessors policies and procedures. Legisla-

tive changes have been numerous in the last several years. One of the largest has been HB233 from 2009. HB233, also called the moratorium, mandated that all Assessors offices state-wide maintain a frozen value for three years (Tax Year 2009, Tax Year 2010, and Tax Year 2011) based on the values from tax year 2008. The only changes that could affect the property owner's value were for new construction, new permit activities, and land additions. The Assessors office could not raise values for any other reason. Another one that affected all components of the valuation process was SB346. This bill affected all statewide Boards of Assessors, Tax Commissioners, Clerks of Superior Court, and Boards of Equalization. A lot of the provisions became effective for Tax Year 2011 so our office had time to prepare and adjust to this sweeping legislation. Two of the big items that affected our department were the requirement to send Notices of Assessment (NOAs) to Real Property owners and the required application of foreclosures to establish fair market value.

NOAs are now a legislative mandate that we send to property owners whether the value is increasing, decreasing, or staying the same. Our department has never been required to send NOAs when the value stays the same. This resulted in almost 109,000 Real Property NOAs being mailed plus the over 7,000 NOAs that we mailed for

Personal Property. This was a huge undertaking, and we anticipated a high volume of appeals for Tax Year 2011. We were not disappointed! We had over 6,000 Real Property Appeals and over 440 Personal Property Appeals. Both these numbers were an increase from Tax Year 2010. We also looked at the number of people who appealed with their values not changing. This group made up approximately 50% of the property owners that appealed.

The other element was the required use of foreclosures in our sales ratio analysis. For Tax Year 2009 and Tax Year 2010, we had to consider foreclosures. If the foreclosures carried significant weight in our ratio work, we reduced the values in a neighborhood. When foreclosures became required for Tax Year 2011, our normal sales ratio processes had to be adjusted. Our staff worked to fulfill this legislative requirement, and we have learned many good tools to use when applying foreclosures to a neighborhood.

For Tax Year 2012, we have included a timeline with this article of very important dates for the citizenry of Chatham County. Our office is open from 8:00am to 5:00pm; Monday – Friday. Our staff is located at the Montgomery St. Courthouse; 133 Montgomery St., Rm. 503. You can access our website, boa.chathamcounty.org or e-mail us at boa@chathamcounty.org for further information.

Tax Year 2012 Board of Assessors Timeline

