

# CHATHAM COUNTY CONNECTION

JULY 2008



Chairman



District 1



District 2



District 3



District 4



District 5



District 6



District 7



Chairman Pro Tem District 8 Vice Chairman

## Board of Registrars Encourages Voter Involvement

It is anticipated that the November 4, 2008 General/Nonpartisan Election will set national, state, and local records for voter participation in the electoral process. As of July 1, 2008, Chatham County has a total of 121,600 registered active voters and 30,516 registered inactive voters. The number of registered voters will continue to increase as the October 6, 2008 General Election Registration Deadline draws near. The Chatham County Board of Registrars encourages all county residents to inquire early to insure that they are aware of their voter registration status and current polling location.

Exercise your right - register and vote. Your vote is your voice in the governance of your city, county, state, and country. As a citizen, you declare your rights and privileges with your vote. To register to vote within Chatham County a person can select one of the following convenient methods:

- In person at the Registrars Office (1117 Eisenhower Dr, Suite E, behind the D.M.V.)
- "Motor Voter" (offered when you apply or renew your driver's license)
- Any of the public libraries
- Your local municipal town hall
- Mail-in registration (You can download an application using the Sec of State's website: [www.sos.state.ga.us/elections](http://www.sos.state.ga.us/elections))

Treat your voter registration card as an important documents same as your social security card, birth certificate, etc. Take proper identification with you to the poll. Keep your address/name changes up to date with the voter registration office. Look at a sample ballot before the

election. Know the candidates and know the issues before you go to the polls. Confirm your registration and polling place by utilizing the poll locator website at [www.sos.ga.gov/elections/polllocator/](http://www.sos.ga.gov/elections/polllocator/). You may also call the Voter Registration Office at 912-790-1520. Do this prior to Election Day. Phone lines on the day of the election are extremely busy.

Advance voting gives any registered voter the option to vote in person before Election Day simply as a matter of convenience. During the advance voting period registered voters will be allowed to cast a ballot - in person only/no reason required - at their county board of registrars' office or satellite site during normal business hours. This period is usually the week immediately preceding the date of an election (Monday - Friday).

Chatham County has added the Wilmington Island Branch Library as an additional advance voting site to service the eastern portion of the county. Other advance voting sites are the Voter Registration Main Office, Mosquito Control, and the Civic Center.

Requests for mail out absentee ballots may be submitted now, either by mail or fax to 912-790-1519. For additional information call the Voter Registration Office at 912-790-1520 or visit the website at [www.chathamcounty.org/voter.html](http://www.chathamcounty.org/voter.html). If needed, submit your request for an absentee ballot as soon as possible. In person absentee voting is available at the Voter Registration Main Office, 45 days prior to the election date.

Members of the Uniformed Services and their family members should submit a Federal Post Card Application, Standard Form 76. The SF 76 will serve as a registration form and request for absentee ballot. Service members may

acquire a SF 76 either from the unit voting assistance officer or download the form at [www.fvap.gov](http://www.fvap.gov). Additional information about the federal voting assistance program for military members can be obtained by calling toll free, 1-800-438-8683.

College students can obtain Georgia voter registration forms, or the necessary forms to register in any state in the U.S. from their school registrar's office or from the office of the Vice President of Academic Affairs. Going to be in school on election day? If you still maintain your registration in another Georgia county other than Chatham - please submit an application for absentee ballot to that county registrar. If you are registered in a state other than Georgia you must request an absentee ballot from your home state. Absentee ballot requests must be submitted in sufficient time to receive and return the ballot prior to the election date.

Please utilize the Georgia Secretary of State website at [www.sos.state.ga.us/elections](http://www.sos.state.ga.us/elections). Here you can access election information, download an absentee ballot request, or an application for registration. The Chatham County Board of Registrars emphasizes the importance of individual voter awareness in keeping your voter information current, timely submission of requests for absentee ballots, and checking on poll locations prior to Election Day.

## Chatham County Mosquito Control Aviation Operations

For over 30 years Chatham County residents have benefited from their aviation program. We've all seen the yellow aircraft (yellow for easy identification) flying around the county, effectively protecting us from mosquitoes, lawbreakers, and wild fires.

The job of keeping the county's four aircraft, two MD-500 helicopters, one Air Tractor 402, and one Piper Navajo Chieftain, safely in the air is the responsibility of just four aviation personnel: Pilots Scott Yackel and Mark Hansen, and Aircraft Mechanics Bo Payne and Russ Bacon. Both pilots are Certified Flight Instructors possessing impressive resumes with more than 12,000 flight hours and 30 years combined experience.

The original purpose for acquiring aircraft remains as the primary focus for the aviation program: mosquito control. But why use aircraft? Well, as the old saying goes; timing is everything. Using aircraft is the most effective way to control mosquitoes in a timely fashion due to the aircrafts' speed and load hauling capabilities.

Chatham County's aircraft are used in each of the three steps needed to combat nuisance mosquitoes after a larger scale rain event. The day after the rain stops, an inspection flight is undertaken in one of the helicopters to determine if a mosquito egg hatch occurred. During this flight, the pilot will land at over 100 locations across the county to allow inspection. This can be accomplished in four hours or less. To do so by ground vehicle would task far more employees and take days to complete, effectively eliminating the potential for a timely treatment. If the immature stages of mosquitoes are detected in standing rain water during the inspection flight, the Air Tractor 402 and helicopters are called into action for "larviciding." An environmentally friendly product is mixed with sand granules and applied to as many as 6,000 acres of breeding area. Over the course of 2-3 days, with each pilot flying 10 - 12 hours per day, the "larvae," or immature mosquitoes are eliminated. If it wasn't for the aircrafts' ability to make treatments at 70-130 mph, this would be all but impossible. The window of opportunity for all larviciding treatments is only about four days after the rain.

Inevitably, some areas cannot be treated with larvicide due to close proximity to houses or other sensitive areas. When this happens adult mosquitoes will emerge. Once again aircraft will be used, this time to control adult mosquitoes, commonly referred to as "adulticiding."

Peak biting time for most mosquitoes is at dusk; giving a narrow window for effective treatment as mosquitoes must be flying to be affected by the adulticide. In one hour, two Chatham county aircraft, the twin engine chieftain and one helicopter can treat 10,000-12,000 acres. Many residents ask why they don't see "the mosquito truck" anymore. Research has shown that aircraft are more effective for treating large areas. Since they aren't limited to roads, they can always spray with a direct crosswind. This moves the product further and reaches more

mosquitoes without being hampered by fences, houses, or other obstructions on the ground. Also, aircraft can be in and out of your neighborhood in seconds; you don't have to hear its engines all night long.

A testament to the effectiveness of using aircraft occurred in the 2007 mosquito season. A significant West Nile fever/encephalitis outbreak occurred in Georgia, resulting in 55 human cases, statewide. In fact, all counties submitting birds and mosquitoes that tested positive for West Nile virus reported human cases of disease; all counties except Chatham. Due to the superb job of Mosquito Control's disease surveillance personnel, aviation staff were assigned missions before mosquito populations grew to the point where human cases would occur. 170 mosquito adulticiding aerial missions were flown, covering over 800,000 acres.

Beginning in early 2007 the Air Tractor and helicopter were modified to be able to fight forest fires. Three fires were fought last year saving several homes and earning flight crews three certificates of appreciation from the Georgia Forestry Commission and the Chatham Emergency Management Agency. Already in 2008, the aircraft have fought two fires, assisting with the Imperial Sugar Refinery emergency and saving a Forestry Commission bulldozer. Chatham County Mosquito Control works closely with Savannah Chatham Metropolitan Police Department to combat crimes from the air. Either helicopter can be outfitted with a 30 million candle power spot light and Forward Looking Infra Red thermal imager. Police missions can occur 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

In the event a hurricane threatens the Georgia coast, Mos-

quito Control will transform into the Georgia A.S.O.C. - Aviation Support Operations Center. Coordinating with the Chatham Emergency Management Agency, the facility will become the nerve center for dispatching all aviation assets that will participate in the post storm recovery. The county's own aircraft will, of course, also assist with damage assessment, crime prevention, and bringing much needed supplies or personnel into the county.



Chatham County residents should be proud of the capability of their aviation assets and the achievements of Mosquito Control's aviation staff. Residents are invited and encouraged to call with questions or visit the facility. The entire staff is happy to show the aircraft and discuss our operations. The pilots especially enjoy reaching out to students interested in a career in aviation and



are sometimes available to give presentations outside of the facility. Mosquito Control is located at 65 Billy B. Hair Drive. Staff can be reached at 912-790-2540. Please remember to call if you have a mosquito problem. Your feedback is critical to the operation.



# Message from the Chairman

It's been another fantastic year for our Chatham county government. The financial solvency we achieved has been carried forward and has resulted in an environment where our staff and their departments are well prepared and have the resources to do their jobs.

This county is safe and solvent because of what has been accomplished over the last twelve months. Our response to the sugar refinery tragedy, the massive power outage on St. Patrick's day weekend and several close brushes with major storms have tested us and the excellent corps of first responders. With the proposed budget, Chatham County will be able to finish installation of all the necessary outdoor warning sirens to alert our citizens to approaching storms.

Further, a 7 million dollar interoperable communications grant will make it possible for first responders to communicate from South Carolina to the Florida border and west to Statesboro.

At the same time, we are becoming the greenest county in Georgia. We've authorized acquisition of a parcel in southwest Chatham County of approximately 660 acres. This, added to adjoining county-owned parcels, will allow the assemblage of 1,500 acres in a rapidly developing suburban area near the Ogeechee river. No other county commission in history has done this much for open space and the protection of our natural resources.

There is not a department in county government that has not responded to the encouragement of this commission to be innovative and creative. I refer to a section of the budget submittal enumerating accomplishments and innovations second to none.

There are 168 accomplishments and innovations that this commission has been responsible for. The copies are available at the side banister. The following are a few of those.

In 2008, the board completed a \$375,000 project for a landscaping/beautification project of Mother Matilda Beasley Park through a pilot project with the Savannah Tree Foundation. The success of this project will likely lead to two other tree planting and beautification projects at Placencia Canal and Talahi Island. Staff is also discussing with Savannah Tree Foundation a project to plant a cypress forest in a low-lying area of county land.

At the April 11 meeting, the board adopted the resource protection ordinance. The ordinance provides a procedure for the county to identify and rank for preservation natural land areas which meet criteria as environmentally, historically and culturally significant.

Implementing revised surveillance and control strategies, mosquito control completed calendar year 2007 with no reported human cases of West Nile fever/encephalitis.

Finance received the Distinguished Budget Award for the fiscal year July 1, 2007 to present and is currently working to document the county's internal controls over financial and compliance matters.

Finance has also worked to secure the services of an independent public adjuster to assist in filling and coordinating insurance and federal emergency management agency claims in the event of a declared disaster.

We have completed a \$4.6 million renovation of the Chatham County Aquatic Center in celebration of its 10th anniversary. We have

acquired and begun renovation of a records center to consolidate the location of all county records and documents, including many historical ones, in a single location. The 35,000 square-foot building, which is located 10 minutes from the courthouse, will meet wind conditions and storm surge to withstand a category 5 hurricane. The property's size and location also make it ideal as a staging area in preparation for recovery from natural disasters.

Our Chatham Emergency Management Agency successfully coordinated approval of emergency operations plans for all public schools.

The county attorney's office has been active, with considerable time required, during the legislative session in communication with the legislative delegation as to impacts of various tax reform measures.

Public improvements are seen in all parts of Chatham County due to a special purpose local options sales tax and the continuing overwhelming support of this initiative by the voters.

Our metropolitan police department and counter narcotics team serve as the front line in addressing the challenge of crime and apprehension. That, coupled with innovations in the overall criminal justice system, continues to focus on this board's priority for a safe community.

Specifically, our court system, in concert with law enforcement agencies and the clerk of superior court, are improving the flow of communications to better manage trial dockets and our jail population.

In the area of road and drainage construction, we are on course to complete some long-awaited projects. Shortly we will have final

plans and right-of-way acquired for Truman Parkway phase 5. Middleground road is near completion and we are in anticipation of what needs to be done on diamond causeway and our partnership with the Georgia Department of Transportation.

Many drainage projects have been completed or under design. Even though we dealt with lower amounts of rainfall in the last few years, we have not lessened our commitment to eliminate structural flooding for now and in the future.

So much can be said about what those having a vision and heart can do to improve our quality of life. I am bolstered by the cooperation from each municipality as we collectively look at future challenges. It is always reassuring to know that our local elected officials are in step and fully recognize that in unison there is power for good and the beneficiaries of this are the citizens of Chatham County.

We have made difficult decisions that may have been hard for some in the short term but have proven to be justified and wise in the long run and make us stronger going forward.

We continue to have excellent relations with our elected constitutional officers which helps them do their job for the people.

We have achieved unprecedented public success once again by following the tenets of this administration: Working together for the best interests of all our citizens;

- Putting aside political distractions that can result in inaction;
- Respecting each other's opinions and points of view;
- Trusting our professional staff to do their jobs;
- And most importantly, listening to our citizens.

The commission has brought us to the threshold of much good for our people who are facing difficult personal times with the rising costs of living and putting food on their tables and using their vehicles for work to support their families. We need to be even more mindful of their plight as we spend our resources during this current year.

The public defender participated in organizational planning to develop mental health court; joined mental health advisory board; and alleviate jail overcrowding.

Public works and parks services resurfaced all 18 county tennis courts in various locations and collected over 100,000 pounds of electronics at the electronic recycling event in March 2007. Public works and parks services also developed reuse recycle art program at drop off centers.

New recreational activities include: select softball leagues, cardiovascular training classes at Tom Triplet Park, monthly blood pressure/sugar screening at Frank Murray Community Center, co-sponsored a historic bicycle tour with Fort Pulaski, weekly nature programs with DNR incorporated in to summer camp, additional session (2 weeks) added to summer camp.

The Fourth Annual Savannah Children's Book Festival held on November 17, 2007 brought over 20,000 people of all ages to Forsyth Park to enjoy a multitude of local and international authors, illustrators, and performers to celebrate the joy of reading.

CNT completed investigations which dismantled nine mid-level and major drug organizations operating in Chatham County and assisted Savannah Chatham Metropolitan Police Department and the Bureau of Alcohol,

Tobacco, and Firearms in a very successful investigation in to a major drug-gang organization, code named "Operation Raging Waters", resulting in lengthy federal sentences on the main targets. This led to the arrest of 27 defendants.

Juvenile Court has a mentor volunteer program that closed out the year with 24 volunteers committed to working with the youth at juvenile court. Jimmy Deloach Parkway, phase 2 is under design.

Thirteen stop work orders were issued for violations of the land disturbing activities ordinance, storm water management ordinance and soil erosion and sedimentation control ordinance.

In 2007, as well as the two previous years, the county commission has sponsored pilot program to assist the less fortunate in our city and county. The program consists of training skills taught by Savannah Technical College. When the participant completes their training, they are employed in higher paying jobs.

I know I speak for all our commissioners and our staff when I say that your Chatham County government will be a strong light in the darkness that many feel, and will do everything we can to work in harmony to improve the safety of our people and their quality of life.

Chairman  
Pete Liakakis



## Step Up Savannah moving a step closer

The county-wide collaborative has incorporated as a non-profit organization and plans to target needed policy and procedure reforms

"Information and education equals motivation." Elder Willie Ferrell opened a Step Up Savannah community meeting last month with that key message. For too long, our community has been left out of the loop, Ferrell said. While encouraging families to work to move out of poverty, he acknowledged it requires both strong personal motivation and information about how to access the system's resources and benefits.

Business needs to be at the table, as well, and Hyatt General Manager Peter McMahon described his company's motivation to become part of the solution. A high turnover rate of front line workers—a significant percentage of whom have to leave their jobs because of a serious shortage of reliable, affordable childcare—has motivated the Hyatt to become a leader in advocating for a downtown childcare center.

Almost 100 residents gathered in the JEA auditorium in early June to learn about what Step Up Savannah has accomplished in the last year and talk about where it needs to go next. It was the first regular annual meeting of the city and county's poverty reduction partnership since it formalized its collaborative relationships this year. The agenda included reports from action team chairmen and women, followed by an interactive, small-group session where members prioritized issues

the collaborative needs to address.

Members of the collaborative joined with Step Up's action teams to set the course; job training and workforce development, education, wealth building and transportation were top issues identified. A critical function the group identified for Step Up: Target and work to reform specific policies and procedures that act as barriers



to families reaching economic self-sufficiency.

### The year's highlights

The Chatham Savannah Asset Development Coalition estimates that its Volunteer Income Tax Assistance sites handled more than \$3 million in refunds—money brought into the local economy—by offering free tax return preparation services to qualifying families and ensuring they applied for Earned Income Tax Credits.

Low-wage Chatham County employees working at the jail, the courthouse and in public works were surveyed by Step Up's Work Supports program, funded through the Families and Work Institute by the Ford Foundation to determine eligibility for public benefits, including PeachCare and

food stamps. More than 200 workers recently received packets stating their eligibility for additional benefits, which effectively translate into a boost in earnings.

The Chatham County Safety Net Planning Council, which functions as Step Up's healthcare action team, received a \$272,588 Department of Community Health grant to fund the exchange of health information among

its provider network. Its Care Navigator Program enrolled 1,486 patients with chronic illnesses and provided service to almost 7,000 uninsured and underinsured Chatham County residents.

The Workforce action team encouraged eight local employers to apply for the national Sloan Awards this year. Members of the team have also traveled to three sites around the country to assess a one-stop model for community centers to better serve residents by bundling access to job training, public benefits, career education and other services under one roof. The team has also targeted ex-offenders as a significant population of under and unemployed residents that need specific services to succeed once they come home to Chatham County.

### What's next?

Step Up Savannah, Inc. recently incorporated as a non-profit organization in the state of Georgia, providing a more stable structure for the collaborative as it moves forward. Its first formal board of directors will meet at the Department of Family and Children Services building at 6 p.m. on July 16. This group includes policy makers, social service agency directors and neighborhood leaders, thus ensuring it represents the depth and breadth of Chatham County's residents seeking to move families toward economic self-sufficiency.

## Department of Building Safety and Regulatory Services

### POST STORM PERMIT ISSUANCE PROCEDURE

The following procedure identifies the building permit and submittal requirements after a high-wind event. These procedures are applicable to emergency response for dwellings, accessory and commercial buildings, whether for manually or electronically issued permits.

### NO PERMIT REQUIRED

- Board up windows
- Repair siding/exterior cladding
- Place tarpaulin over roof
- Up to 50% roof shingle/exterior cladding replacement
- Non-structural repair
- Yard clean-up

### PERMIT REQUIRED/NO DRAWINGS NEEDED

- Repair of accessory buildings
- Window replacement
- Plumbing, electrical, heat/air repairs
- Demolition

### PERMIT REQUIRED/DRAWINGS NEEDED

- New structures
- Repair of structural damage
- Replacement of structural damage
- Drawings for Commercial buildings require a Georgia Architect or Engineer seal

### STATE LICENSE/OCCUPATIONAL TAX CERTIFICATE

- State license required for all plumbing, electrical, heat/air contractor for repairs and replacement work requiring a permit
- After July 1, 2008 all residential contractors doing work requiring a permit must have a State license
- All contractors and subcontractors doing repair, replacement or new work requiring a permit must have a County Occupational Tax Certificate



## CEMA WANTS YOU TO KNOW ABOUT...



**CITIZENS HURRICANE ACADEMY**  
Hurricane season is upon us and Chatham Emergency Management Agency (CEMA) wants you to stay informed and prepared. To assist residents with their hurricane preparedness plans, CEMA will be hosting their annual Citizens Hurricane Academy on Saturday, July 26th at Beach High School.

This year, representatives from the National Weather Service, The Georgia Insurance Commission, the American Red Cross, The Chatham County Department of Public Health, and the Savannah Chatham Metro Police Department will be teaching classes about hurricane awareness, home preparedness, evacuation and re-entry. In addition, the Saving Lives In Chatham County (SLICC) organization will be conducting free CPR classes.

The Citizens Hurricane Academy is free to the public and lunch will be provided. All are encouraged to take advantage of this unique educational opportunity that will further the safety and security of Chatham County residents.



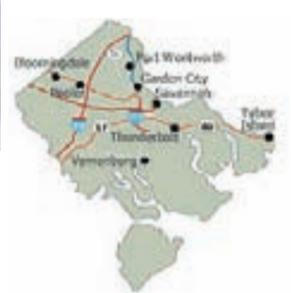
**EVACUATION**  
When a Hurricane WATCH is issued, conditions pose a possible threat to a specific area within 36 hours. Recommended actions to take:

- Monitor radio, TV, NOAA weather radios for information on storm progression.
- Fuel and service family vehicles.
- Inspect and secure mobile home tie-downs.
- Determine your evacuation destination.
- Prepare to cover window and door openings with protective materials. If you have not precut plywood for windows, do it now.
- Check food and water supplies. Have clean, airtight containers on hand to store water.
- Keep a small cooler with

- frozen jell packs for refrigerated items.
- Check supplies of prescription medicine.
- Check and stock up on radio, flashlight and lantern batteries.
- Secure outdoor lawn furniture and other loose, lightweight objects such as garbage cans, garden tools, potted plants, etc.
- Check and replenish first aid supplies.
- Have an extra supply of cash and coins.

When a Hurricane WARNING is issued, winds of 74 mph or higher are expected to affect a specified area within 24 hrs. This Warning is the signal to take immediate action to prepare for the full impact of a hurricane. The consequences for coastal communities could be devastating if proper emergency actions are not taken.

- Closely monitor radio and TV weather reports.
- Follow instructions from local officials.
- Leave immediately if ordered to do so.
- Rush to complete preparation activities.
- Evacuate.
- Leave mobile homes.
- Notify neighbors & family members outside the warning area of your evacuation plans.
- Stay with friends or relatives or at an inland hotel or motel outside the flood zone.
- Take your pet and its medical records. Take collar, carrier, dishes, medication, food & water. Public shelters do not allow pets but pet shelters are in every county.
- Public shelters will only be available for people who do not have a place to go. They should only be used as a last resort.



### When to Evacuate

Long before a hurricane becomes an immediate threat, you should have already decided where you will go if an evacuation is necessary: friends and relatives, motel or hotel outside the threatened area, or public shelter? Don't wait to decide. Use the following guidelines:

- The more hazards in your location, the more important it is that you leave even if it is only precautionary.
- If you live in a mobile home, even if it is well away from the coast and tied down, the wind can pose a threat to your safety.
- If you live in a hurricane evacuation zone you should

- leave as early as possible; preferably when the Voluntary Evacuation is announced.
- What to Take**
  - Wills, insurance policies, contracts, powers of attorney, deeds, appraisals, critical computer files, stocks & bonds.
  - Passports, Social Security cards, Military records.
  - Bank account records.
  - Credit card names & numbers.
  - Inventory & household goods' photos/video.
  - Important phone numbers.
  - Medical & dental records & prescriptions.
  - Birth certificates & citizenship info.
  - Adoption papers & court orders.



### Public Shelter

Shelters will be opened on an as-needed basis. Public shelters are basic; bring your own creature comforts. Shelter locations will be broadcast on radio and TV. Medical care is generally not available. Shelters will have food but it is best to bring your own. Do not expect a bed; be ready to set up a home away from home on the floor. Primary Shelters are located in Augusta, Macon, Douglas, Statesboro, Waycross, Dublin, and Tifton. **No more than TWO hand-carry bags per person. Consider:**

- Lightweight folding chairs, cots and bedding.
- Dry milk, fruit juice, canned meat/fish, canned beans, bread, crackers, peanut butter, dried fruit, granola bars, cookies, dry cereals & other non-perishables.
- Extra clothing, personal care items and toilet paper.
- Quiet games or toys for the children.
- Identification; to prove residency or ownership in order to gain reentry.
- Spare eyeglasses, prescription medicine, special diet and baby foods.
- Diapers, blankets, pillows and sleeping bags.
- Flashlights with extra batteries, cash or travelers checks.
- No Weapons, Alcohol or Illegal Drugs.

### No transportation to evacuate?

In the event of a Mandatory Evacuation, Chatham County residents will need to evacuate even if they do not have their own transportation. If you do not have your own vehicle, please observe the follow-

- ing:
  - Chatham Area Transit (CAT) will continue to operate its routine bus routes but all buses will go by the Civic Center.
  - Passengers with no other means of transportation who wish to evacuate will be taken to the Civic Center as their initial destination
  - No parking will be allowed in the vicinity of the Civic Center
  - If you drive to the Civic Center or ride with a family member or friend, DO NOT expect to board a bus.
  - Evacuation buses are for people with no other means of transportation.



### Getting to the Shelter

- Evacuees will be directed to a registration area at the Civic Center.
- Evacuees will be seated by bus assignment on Board of Education buses for transport to inland shelters for the duration of the evacuation.
- The earliest buses go to the closest shelters and therefore have the shortest trips.
- The buses will be crowded. Be reasonable with what you take; no more than two hand-carry bags per person.
- School buses are not air-conditioned; expect some discomfort.
- Several seats are left empty on each bus to accommodate stranded motorists.

### DISASTER SUPPLY KIT

After a disaster, local officials and relief workers will be on the scene, but they cannot reach everyone immediately. You could get help in hours, or it may take days. Basic services, such as electricity, gas, water, and telephones, may be cut off, or you may have to evacuate at a moment's notice. You probably won't have time to shop or search for the supplies you'll need. Your family will cope best by preparing for a disaster before it strikes.

Assembling the supplies you might need following a disaster is an important part of your Family Disaster Plan. Following a disaster, having extra supplies at home or supplies to take with you in the event of an evacuation can help your family endure an evacuation or home confinement.

Involve children in disaster preparedness. Ask children to help you remember to keep your kits in working order by changing the food and water every six months and replacing batteries as

- necessary. Children might make calendars or posters with the appropriate dates. Ask children to think of items that they would like to include in their own Disaster Supply Kit, such as books or games or appropriate non-perishable food items. There are six basics you should stock for your home: Basic First Aid Kit, Food, Water, Clothing and Bedding, Tools and Emergency Supplies. Keep the items that you would most likely need during an evacuation in an easy-to-carry container such as:
  - A large, covered trash container
  - Plastic or rubber boxes
  - A camping backpack
  - A duffel bag

Rethink your kit and family needs at least once a year and replace batteries, update clothes, etc.

The following items might be needed at home or for an evacuation. Keeping them in an easy-to-carry backpack or duffel bag near your door would be best in case you need to evacuate quickly, such as a flash flood or major chemical emergency. Store your kit in a convenient place known to all family members. Kit basics are:

- Wrench to turn off household gas and water. Keep it near the shut-off valves
- A portable, battery-powered radio or television and extra batteries
- Nonperishable food and water for five days
- Non-electric can opener, utility knife
- Flashlight and extra batteries
- First aid kit and first aid manual
- Supply of prescription medications
- Credit card and cash
- Personal identification
- An extra set of car keys
- Matches in a waterproof container
- Whistle
- Map of the area and phone numbers of places you could go
- Sturdy shoes or work boots
- One complete change of clothing for two days
- Bedding for each family member
- Toiletries
- Toilet paper, towelettes, facial tissues
- Soap, liquid detergent, wet wipes
- Hand sanitizer
- Feminine hygiene items
- Personal hygiene items
- Toothbrush / Toothpaste
- Razor & Shaving Cream
- Hairbrush
- Deodorant
- Contact lens solution & container
- Mirror
- Towel



### PETS

Chatham County is estimated to be home to well over 100,000 pets. These animals provide love and quality to our lives but not without a price; they depend on us for their care, feeding and well-being. Pets are a part of our family; with their ownership comes responsibility for ensuring their safety. When we are threatened so are our pets. If we face a potential danger that warrants our evacuation, so do our pets. Leaving pets behind, even if you try to create a safe place for them, could result in their being injured, lost, or killed. Animals cannot survive disaster conditions any better than humans; they must be included in your evacuation plans.

Do you have the following supplies and equipment to evacuate your pets?

- Extra collars and tags, harnesses and leashes for all pets
- Muzzles for aggressive dogs
- A manual can opener
- A supply of stored drinking water
- Food and water containers for each pet
- Fresh food and water for each pet (extra pet food to avoid diet changes in stressful situations)
- Paper towels, plastic bags & disinfectant for waste cleanup
- Copies of your pet's medical and vaccination records. Dogs must have proof of current vaccinations for rabies, DHLPP, Bordetella and corona. Cats require proof of current vaccinations for rabies, feline leukemia, and FVRCP
- If your pet is on medication, ask your veterinarian about an extra supply of medication or keep a copy of the prescription in your kit
- Include a recent photo of your pet
- Your crate should be easily accessible and large enough for your pet to stand up and turn around; include a blanket or sleeping mat. Label the crate with your pet's name, your name and where you can be reached. Ideally the crate will be lightweight and capable of being folded when not in use.

## Dance For Your Health During "Let's Dance, Savannah!"

Tired of the same, old exercise routine? It might be time to try dancing your way to a healthier lifestyle. That's why Coastal Health District, the Department of Health and Human Services' Office on Women's Health, and Wellcare will sponsor "Let's Dance, Savannah!" on Saturday, July 26th, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at Savannah Mall's Center Court. The day of free dance demonstrations and classes is being offered to encourage dancing as a legitimate form of exercise and to teach people about the importance of cardiovascular health. "For too many people, exercise feels like a chore," said Cristina Gibson, Director of Health Pro-

motion & Disease Prevention for the Coastal Health District. "We all know we should exercise, but it can be hard to stay motivated to climb onto a treadmill. Add a busy schedule, and exercise often gets marked off the 'to do' list." But dancing can be a lot of fun - and a great form of exercise. "If you're feeling burned out on the traditional exercise routines, start dancing," said Gibson. "You get your heart rate up, your body moving, but it doesn't feel like hard work. It feels like fun." Heart disease is the number one killer of American women. According to the American Heart Association, nearly 500,000 women die each year of cardiovascular disease. But regular

exercise (including dancing), a healthy diet, and controlling your blood pressure can greatly reduce your risk. The celebration will also feature performances and instruction by Abeni Cultural Arts, Moon River Dancers, Gretchen Greene Dancers, Lotus Dance Company, Armstrong Atlantic State University's cheerleading squad, Savannah Children's Theatre, and the Memorial University Medical Center's FitnessOne hip-hop dance class. The event will also include blood pressure screenings by the Chatham County Health Department, information on the signs and symptoms of stroke and heart attack, healthy snacks, Body Mass Index measurements, and a blood drive sponsored

by the Blood Alliance. Visitors will also receive details about dance opportunities through Chatham County's network of dance organizations and have the opportunity to win door prizes including an MP3 player and dance instruction videos. For more information, please call 484-1885.



## Conserving Outside Water

By David Linvill

Chatham County

Cooperative Extension

Horticulture Agent

Clean water is becoming more valuable and expensive as time goes on. Our population is increasing dramatically each year but the amount of water that exists on our planet always stays the same. Clean water is becoming more scarcer and more expensive.

Before we can conserve water, we need to know how much water plants use. Secondly, we need to know how much water the soil can hold. Third, we need to figure out how to prevent the loss of water or another way to say this is to become more efficient controlling water usage.

Our soil is basically 99% sand and very little organic matter. Yes, there are areas with a lot of gumbo clay and these areas should be handled differently in regards to irrigation. Plant roots of almost all plants (including trees and shrubs) are found in the upper 12 inches of the soil. A 99%

sandy soil can only hold one inch of water in the rooting zone.

We now know that we want to irrigate our yards with one inch of water per week. Since most irrigation systems are cheaply made, we need to split the irrigation to watering ½ inch of water twice a week. Call your local county agent to find out how to calibrate your irrigation system. An irrigation system is to supplement the lack of rainfall. If it rains ¾ an inch one day, this means we only need to run our system to put out ¼ inch of water for the rest of the week.

This means you need to know how much your irrigation system puts out each hour or more precisely the rate of water / hour your system puts out in each zone. I promise you that zone 1 will be different than zone 2 and etc.

The best time to water is one minute after midnight and finish by sunrise. You will save 25% of your water that you would lose to evaporation if you watered during the day. This also will cut down on fungus

problems (especially on grass). You can buy a new irrigation controller that has all the bells and whistles for less than \$100. You can buy a rain sensor for less than \$100.00 that attaches to the top of your rain gutter. It works on radio waves and will turn off your irrigation system if it rains. Think of all the money you will save with this handy device. You can buy a water timer (that starts

and stops) the watering for less than \$60.00. It screws

funguses from getting into your plants or molds into your house. All plants need fertilizer (no matter if the fertilizer is organic or manmade) which are broken down into ionic forms so that the nutrients can be absorbed by the plants. The nutrients are broken down by fungi and bacteria which we call microorganisms.

The microorganisms live in the mulch and can not live in pure sand. This is why mulch not only saves water but also provides the mechanics to allow the fertilizer to get into the plants. Plants breathe oxygen through their roots. That is why it is important not to make the mulch to thick. Also an added benefit

of mulch is that it reduces weeds by 70% and cools the soil in the summer and keeps the roots warmer in the winter.

Most people over fertilize their plants, which makes the plants grow bigger which then requires more water. Take a soil test to find out what nutrients are lacking. The soil test will tell you what fertilizer to use, how much to use, and when to use it. Call your local Extension Agent to find out how to do a soil test. In a drought situation, it is better not to fertilize and allow the plants to stay dormant which requires very little water.

Avoid pruning your shrubs

and trees. Every time you cut a plant, you stimulate the plant to grow which causes the plant to need more water. Save your heavy pruning till after the drought period if possible. Many people prune their plants because they think they need to. Many plants do much better if left alone.

One other water saving tip is to have a sharp lawn mower blade. A dull blade rips the grass and cause water loss. It also opens up the grass blade for fungus problems. A good sharp lawnmower blade saves water and disease problems.

The Chatham County Cooperative Extension Agent, David Linvill puts out a monthly email letter called Coastal Homeowner Landscape & Turf Update. This monthly update tells what garden activities you should be doing each month as well as updates on outbreaks of insects & diseases with pictures. Just email [dlinvill@uga.edu](mailto:dlinvill@uga.edu) and write subscribe in the subject line. You can also see previous copies by going to our website at [www.ugaextension.com/chatham](http://www.ugaextension.com/chatham). Click on agriculture and natural resources on the left hand side and you will see the newsletter.



## Chatham County Youth Commission Announces Graduates and Award Winners!

(Savannah, GA) On Friday, June 27, 2008, during the Chatham County Commission Meeting, the Chatham County Youth Commission presented their 2008 graduates, the recipients of the 2008 Beverly M. Whitehead Award and the recipient of the Brandon Brown Youth Commissioner of the Year Award. Using the cadence from the Kipling poem, "If", Alderman Van R. Johnson, II, Director of the Chatham County Youth Commission told the graduates, "If you can be leader at home, in your community and in school - you would have created a new definition of cool and you would have graduated from Youth Commission school!"

The Graduates are:		
SCHOOL		COLLEGE
Anthony Williams	Jenkins High School	Morehouse College
Jennifer Morse	Jenkins High School	Georgia State University
Stephanie Chu	Savannah Country Day	Emory University
Mark Stevenson	Savannah Christian	Auburn University
Wesley Stone	Benedictine Military	College of Charleston
Jameya Barnwell	St. Vincent's Academy	Shaw University
Morgan Gusby	Jenkins High School	Hampton University
Clint Middleton	Jenkins High School	Morehouse College
Alexis Proctor	St. Vincent's Academy	Savannah State
Telicia Thomas	St. Vincent's Academy	Armstrong Atlantic
Aysha Washington	Windsor Forest	Mercer University

The Youth Commission also presented the 2008 Beverly M. Whitehead Award, in memory of the former Chatham County Human Resources Director. This award is presented to individuals, businesses and agencies in the community

who have demonstrated excellence and commitment to youth in this community. The recipients were:

Mayor Otis S. Johnson  
Dr. Walter Evans  
Mr. Gene Slivka

The Youth Commission also presented the 2008 Brandon Brown Youth Commissioner of the Year Award to Youth Commissioner Erica Green.

New Officers for 2008-2009  
Chair-Elect: Sheray Franklin, Savannah Arts Academy  
Vice Chair-Elect: Desirae

Suggs, Savannah Arts Academy Secretary-Elect: Monique Pal, Savannah Arts Academy Parliamentarians-Elect: Shawn Knight, Jenkins High School Korbyn Mingleford, Early College Executive Members-Elect: Lauren Cummings, Jenkins High School Tilly Isaacson, Savannah Country Day Erica Green, Beach High School

The Chatham County Youth Commission was founded in 1992 by Commissioner Priscilla D. Thomas and is replicated in Fulton County (Atlanta), GA, Prince George's County, MD, Alachua County (Gainesville), FL, Cass County (Fargo), ND, and the Savannah Youth Council.

For more information on the Chatham County Youth Commission, visit their website at [www.ChathamYouth.com](http://www.ChathamYouth.com)



## Voting in Chatham County



2008 Voter Registration deadlines, election dates and advance voting dates are as follows:

### Primary Runoff August 5, 2008

Voter Registration Deadline: June 16, 2008  
Advance Voting Dates: July 28 - August 1, 2008

### Special Election September 16, 2008

Voter Registration Deadline: August 18, 2008  
Advance Voting Dates: September 8 - 12, 2008

### General Election November 4, 2008

Voter Registration Deadline: October 6, 2008  
Advance Voting Dates: October 27 - 28, 2008

### General Election Runoff December 4, 2008

Voter Registration Deadline: October 6, 2008  
Advanced Voting Dates: November 24 - 28, 2008

You may sign up to vote at any time, but you must register by the established registration deadline prior to an election if you wish to vote on Election Day. If you are not already signed up to vote please register today!

### Advance Voting Sites and Hours of Operation:

Voter Registration Office, 1117 Eisenhower Dr., Suite E  
8:00 AM - 5:00 PM (M,W,F)  
8:00 AM - 7:00PM (T, Th)  
Savannah Civic Center, Montgomery St.  
9:00 AM - 4:00 PM

Mosquito Control, 65 Billy B. Hair Dr.  
9:00 AM - 4:00 PM

Island Branch Library, 125 Wilmington Island Rd.  
10:00 AM - 5:00 PM

## Chatham County Commission 2008 Meeting Schedule

County Commission meetings are held in the Commission Meeting Room, second floor of the Old Courthouse, 124 Bull Street. The Pre-Meeting begins at 9:00 A.M. and the Call To Order is immediately following the Pre-Meeting.

The meeting are broadcast live on Channel 16 on Comcast. The meetings are re-broadcast on Friday and Monday at 6:00 P.M. and on Sunday at 3:00 P.M.

The meeting broadcasts are closed captioned and Chatham County would like to acknowledge Comcast for helping to provide this service.

- July 25
- August 8 & 22
- September 5 & 22
- October 3 & 17
- November 7 & 21
- December 5 & 19

