

CHATHAM COUNTY CONNECTION



July 2009



Pete Liakakis
Chairman



Helen L. Stone
District 1



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
Chairman Pro Tem



Dr. Priscilla D. Thomas
District 8 Vice Chairman

Message from the Chairman

County residents are no strangers to difficult circumstances. Our character if forged from colonial times, through wars, great hardships and economic setbacks. Like so many, I am a son of an immigrant, and by the grace of God, born in Savannah, blessed in the freedom and prosperity of our great democracy.

Our economic, cultural and ethnic diversity have always made Chatham County unique when compared to most of Georgia. We are a community of firsts, and have a resolve to overcome! 2009 has started on anxious footing because of state, national and international economic uncertainty. Though ever conscious of how these forces can

alter our quality of life, we can not ignore the countless blessings showered on a coastal community with a rich natural bounty, primed for economic rebound. We place hope and are focused on a busy port, and a pent up demand to live and thrive in excellent residential communities.

In private business and even family life, when money is tight, it can surely lead to strained relations and anxious moments. The business of government is open, and no doubt in the tugging that will be brought about by fewer dollars, we will experience strained relations and anxious moments with other governments.

The County Commission, in 2005, put in place a City/County Coalition, consist-

ing of Garden City, Port Wentworth, Bloomingdale, Pooler, Tybee, Thunderbolt, Savannah and Vernonburg made up of all municipalities within in Chatham County with a unified purpose of working together for the mutual benefits of our citizens, and for the improvements of services and overall progress. The County continues to support this coalition on all issues that will benefit our citizens. Though dollars are tight, we plan to build and rely on this partnership in these hard times.

For years, the state has looked to local governments to solve "Atlanta" problems. This situation has worsened because of the state's fiscal hard times. It's never easy trying to focus on the

broadest of views to benefit the most citizens. Chatham County unlike any city, however, has responsibility to the largest constituency and greatest geographic area. What is best for County residents is more broadly defined.

Elected officials and constitutional officers have pulled as one in these difficult times. Their budget discipline reflects the tight economy. It does not go unnoticed. I would like to thank County Manager Russ Abolt, Assistant county Manager Pat Monahan, all the department heads and employees who've shown their loyalty, discipline and dedication to outstanding public service. Also, it is important to reaffirm my appreciation for Commissioner Helen Stone, Commissioner James Hol-

mes, Commissioner Patrick Shay, Commissioner Patrick Farrell, Commissioner Harris Odell, Commissioner David Gellatly, Commissioner Dean Kicklighter and Commissioner Priscilla Thomas. They are an exceptional group of elected officials!

To conclude, I paraphrase from "A Prayer for Our Nation," quoted a few months ago at a board meeting by Commissioner Farrell. God our Father, Giver of life, we entrust the United States of America to Your loving care. Reclaim this land for Your glory and dwell among Your people. Send Your spirit to touch the hearts of our nation's leaders.

Open their minds to the great worth of human life and the responsibilities that accompany human freedom.

Remind Your people that true happiness is rooted in seeking and doing Your will.

May you all be blessed, and may Chatham County continue to prosper.

Chairman
Pete Liakakis



"One-Stop Shop" Health Care Website is Launched.

The Chatham County Safety Net Planning Council celebrated the launch of the website, www.chathamsafetynet.org during their strategic planning session on May 6, 2009. The website serves as a "one-stop shop" to find health care resources for Chatham County citizens who have no health insurance or not enough insurance to meet all of their health care needs. In response to the current economic climate, the ability to expand healthcare capacity to serve a growing number of uninsured citizens will be the first priority

of the council in the coming months. As health services are added and clinic hours are extended, www.chathamsafetynet.org will be updated with latest information. The website also features an up-to-date printable brochure which serves as a handy pocket guide. Visit the site often to learn about health care, health services, recent news and the activities of the Council providers.

The Chatham County Safety Net Planning Council serves as a countywide planning group for health care for the un- and underinsured citizens of Chatham County. The Safety Net Provider Network is composed of both primary care providers and other agencies which support the delivery of healthcare by targeting a specific population or service. The

key primary healthcare providers include both hospital emergency departments and five primary care clinics, Curtis V. Cooper Primary Health Care, Community Health Mission, J.C. Lewis Health Care, Good Samaritan and St. Mary's Health Care. The Council is made up of representatives from these providers along with others from local agencies, governmental bodies and community stakeholders such as Medbank, United Way, Union Mission, Community Cardiovascular Council, Georgia Medical Society, Department of Family and Children Services, City of Savannah, Chatham County, Eastside Concerned Citizens, StepUp Savannah, Armstrong Atlantic State University, Savannah Business Group and 100 Black Men. The Chatham

County Health Department acts as a neutral convener of the Council. Created in 2004 to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the local health care delivery system and to assist the County Commissioners in better meeting the health care needs of uninsured and underinsured constituents, the Chatham County Safety Net Planning Council's goals are to strengthen the health care infrastructure, build capacity within the community, improve access to health care for the uninsured and underinsured, and improve health outcomes.



No Health Insurance? Need Care?

Visit:

www.chathamsafetynet.com

The gateway to your medical home

Aquatic Center



The Chatham County Aquatic Center is more than just a place to swim. There are two beautiful indoor pools that cater to the swimming community but the best program is Water Aerobics. Classes are offered in the morning and in the evening for the convenience of County residents. Water

Aerobics classes are offered in both the shallow pool and in the deeper lap swimming pool. Exercising in the water is a great alternative for people who have had surgery, joint or muscle pain or find other exercises too intimidating. The water makes your body buoyant and therefore reduces the risk of injury to joints. Water Aerobics classes are good for any age. In fact most 45 minute classes can burn between 450 - 700 calories. Classes at the Aquatic Center are taught by certified water aerobics instructors.

One of the most popular classes is the Arthritis class which is approved by the Arthritis Foundation. Instructors are certified to teach through the Georgia Arthritis Foundation. This is a 45 minute warm exercise program which concentrates on flexibility, mobility and

joint range.

If you want a more intense workout, then you need to try the new Aquatic Center Boot Camp. This is a high energy, interval based workout that tones the entire body. Typical exercises included are push ups, lunges, sprint running, squats, deep water running, jumping jacks, squat thrusts, bear crawls and crab crawling. Classes are held outdoors weather permitting and then a quick transition into the pool.

Getting started in water aerobics is easy. Anyone can join a class at anytime since classes are offered year round. Proper swimming attire is required for the class. Some members elect to wear a water shoe while taking the class. It is also recommended that you bring bottled water to make

sure you stay hydrated. The Aquatic Center has showers and lockers for your convenience.

You do not need to be a member to come to a class.

A trial class is \$5.00. For more information contact the Aquatic Center at 912-652-6793.



CHATHAM COUNTY



- Adopted a plan to become "The Greenest County in Georgia." Based on the Commission's challenge, the Chatham Environmental Forum developed "A Road Map for Chatham County for its Journey in Becoming the Greenest County in the State of Georgia." The road map provides an action plan for sustainability by focusing on 36 goals, 69 objectives and 188 action items. Chatham County and the CEF will focus on implementing the goals, objectives and action items within the plan to become a sustainable community and reverse the environmental, economic and social threats to our community: pollution and greenhouse gas emissions from fossil fueled vehicles and electrical generation; waste generation and its impact on land use and groundwater; water consumption in a community threatened by salt water intrusion; stormwater runoff and other pollution as a threat to water quality; and loss of green space. This plan recognizes that unless the community begins a concerted effort to shift away from wasting resources and their current and long term effect on the community's health and economic viability, the ability of future generations to meet their own needs would be compromised.

meets green space goals but also supports the County's commitment to Hunter Army Airfield and Fort Stewart.

- A mitigation banking instrument, which the Corps of Engineers must approve with federal agencies' concurrence, provides a savings account for future projects. It yields value not only in the availability of salt marsh but also a savings in the time required for each individual project to identify and acquire property, develop a creation/restoration plan and obtain necessary federal approvals.

- Completed a stabilization project of the western section of McQueen's Trail to restore eroded sections through an innovative system of oyster shell encased bulkheads. The natural wall not only promotes oyster reefs, which help purify water, but also helps to promote growth of marsh grass as habitat and shoreline protection. The 6 mile trail, a conversion of an historic railroad bed into a hiking, biking and walking trail through pristine marshland, became the first Rails to Trails project in Georgia.

- Acquired a 50 acre parcel adjoining the Detention Center to provide off site retention and for relocation of the Communications Tower. Off site retention makes more land available for expansion. In addition, space will be sold on the tower to generate revenue. The County is also looking at use of the remaining vacant land for a solar field.

- Worked with the Savannah Bicycle Campaign and volunteers to replace four timber bridges for the bicycle trail at Tom Triplett Community Park. The County provided materials and inspection services, while the volunteers provided labor.

- Approved a \$2.3 million bond issue to acquire property from Union Mission to help restore the agency's financial stability and ensure continued service. In addition, the County will enter into a one time service contract for \$200,000.
- Partnered with the United Way and Project Step Up to create a Tool Bank, a national program to increase the capacity of communities to serve their citizens. Under the program, a charitable organization can borrow tools for volunteer projects, facility maintenance and improvement, community projects and special events.

- Managed a construction project for a training center for the Savannah Chatham Metropolitan Police Department. The County's Construction Superintendent supervised workers from Project Step Up as a hands on experience to teach construction skills.

- Despite a 20% reduction in personnel due to budget cuts, the Child Support Office set a new collection record in

2008 of \$30,679,000.

- Probate Court began the process of scanning documents that are filed into the office on a daily basis.

- Probate Court updated the public computer in the record room by adding additional estate proceedings and marriage license information to the database.

- Public Works and Park Services have a new database for the pavement condition of all unincorporated County roads.

- Public Works and Park Services relocated the sign shop and carpenter shop to a leased building on President Street.

- Public Works and Park Services started an "in-house" paper, plastic and aluminum can recycling program.

- Public Works and Park Services replaced a pavilion at Runaway Point Park.

- Public Works and Park Services constructed a new maintenance/storage building at Triplett Park.

- Public Works and Park Services constructed a new maintenance/storage building at the Soccer Complex.

- Public Works and Park Services constructed a new maintenance/storage building at Brooks Park.

- Public Works and Park Services replaced the electrical wiring for the Lake Mayer Tennis courts lighting.

- Public Works and Park Services replaced roofs on the pavilions at Kings Ferry Ramp Park.

- Public Works and Park Services installed new lighting at Ambuc Sports Complex with MUSCO system.

- Public Works and Park Services replaced playground equipment at Hodges Turner Young Community Center Park and resurfaced basketball court.

- Public Works and Park Services renovated office at Lake Mayer into a Community Center with in-house staff.

- Public Works and Park Services installed new energy saving mechanical pump with VFD drives.

- Public Works and Park Services installed Ultra-Violet Sanitation system, reducing chemical costs.

- Public Works and Park Services re-wired cables for scoreboard for swim meets.

- Public Works and Park Services purchased new robotic pool vacuum.

- Public Works and Park Services installed a new heat exchanger for the lap swimming pool.

- Public Works and Park Services installed new air release valves on filters for both pools.

- Public Works and Park Services installed two new HVAC units for locker rooms and office areas at the Aquatic Center.

- Public Works and Park Services purchased new bikes and treadmills for cardio workouts at the Weightlifting Center.

- Public Works and Park Services added additional recycling services at Sharon Drop off Center and Chevis Drop off Center. And just opened a recycling & education center on Eisenhower Drive.

- Public Works and Park Services collected approximately 9,000 lbs of televisions for "Big Switch" recycling event.

- Public Works and Park Services implemented a used oil program at the Wilmington

Island Drop off Center.

- Public Works and Park Services received approval from the State for the Solid Waste Management Plan.

- Public Works and Park Services replaced eight tide gates throughout unincorporated County.

- Public Works and Park Services entered into an Inter-governmental Agreement with Thunderbolt to accept recyclables at the Wilmington Island Drop off Center.

- In 2004, recognizing the impact of the growing number of uninsured and rising costs of healthcare delivery, the Chatham County Commission authorized the formation of a Council to serve as a countywide health systems planning group.

- The Chatham County Safety Net Planning Council is a collaborative representing consumers, physicians, dentists, local hospitals, and non-profit and governmental entities providing healthcare and related support services to the uninsured and underinsured. The Chatham County Health Department serves as the neutral convenor on the part of the County.

- With the support of the County, an Executive Director was hired in December 2008. The Council will independently submit its accomplishments and budget request for the coming year. The CCHD continues to Chair the Council and provide considerable administrative support.

- 33,973 unique clients were seen, and 60,210 visits provided, in clinics during the nine month period ending March 31, 2009:

- Administered 4,750 flu shots, and provided outreach clinics in area nursing homes, senior centers, public and private companies; in October 2008, over 100 doses of Flu-mist (nasally delivered flu vaccine) were given to children at the EOA center in Savannah.

- Worked in Collaboration with Board of Education to offer employee flu shots

- Completed school immunization audits in the fall 2008 with a 99% adequacy rate for Kindergarten students, and a 98% adequacy rate for 6th graders, both well above the State average. In January 2009, the CCHD hosted an event to honor and celebrate the Chatham County Public School nurses for their hard work and effort in achieving these high rates -

- Compared to last year, the Chatham County Health Department has seen on average a 19% increase in WIC voucher issuance

- Two WIC nutritionists were accepted and enrolled in the states highly competitive Diabetic Internship program.

- Participated in several community events/ outreach including:

- Amerigroup Community Health Fair held at Chatham County Health Dept.

- Congressman John Barrow's Health Fair on April 13, 2009

- Screenings and immunizations provided at the Savannah Gay Pride event

- Prostrate Awareness Health Fair

- EOA Health Fair

- Savannah Tech Health Fair

- Back to School Health Fair

- Wesley Community Center

- Safe Kids Savannah awarded the 2008 Coalition of the Year Award.

- Dr. Weems recognized by the Georgia Medical Society with the 2008 Dr. John B. Rabun Community Service Award, and by 100 Black Men of Savannah with the President's Award for Excellence in Health and Wellness.

- CCHD is represented and active on many community collaboratives including the Youth Futures Authority, Step-Up, Chatham County Safety Net Planning Council, and others.

- Environmental Health (EH) Staff continues to assure clean, healthy and safe food providing 2,751 food inspections through March 2009.

- Safe Kids Coalition partnered with the County Recreation Department to

promote boating safety and have children's life vests available at selected boat ramps in Chatham County.

- Managed the only Adolescent HIV Clinic in this region serving teens born with HIV and newly infected teens.

- In collaboration with volunteer local specialist MDs, operate the only HIV/Hepatitis B or C clinic on-site.

- In collaboration with Curtis V. Cooper Primary Health Center (CVC), provide pharmaceuticals, lab monitoring and dietitian services to patients receiving primary care at CVC.

- In collaboration with Union Mission, operate HIV clinic inside Phoenix House residential HIV shelter and provide transportation, dietitian services and food vouchers.

- Conducted Jail Project, HIV education and testing to male and female detainees at the Chatham County Detention Center.

- Facilities: Dedicated and named the Eisenhower facility the Dr. Martha B. Fay Public Health Center on November 19, 2008 in recognition of the numerous contributions of Dr. Fay to promote the health of the Chatham County community.

- Partnered with Union Mission to facilitate the relocation of the Chatham CARE Center, providing comprehensive HIV/AIDS services, to the 107 Fahm location as a strategy to realize cost savings and improve efficiencies for both J. C. Lewis Health Center and CCHD. Planning in progress with a projected move in date of July 1, 2009.

- State Vital Records initiated a test program utilizing the CCHD Vital Records office as the pilot to allow for the processing of Paternity Acknowledgement applications at the local level through a special VEIS program. All requests have traditionally been required to be processed through the State Vital Records Office. The pilot provided for the completion of the application within 2-3 weeks instead of the typical 8-12 week processing time. This has been a valuable tool in assisting families in the processing of insurance policies and legitimizing children born out of wedlock.

- Provided over 33,000 HIV tests.

- Passed the CCHD's first FDA inspection for the DNR shellfish testing, a program begun in November 2007.

- In October 2008, began shellfish testing for Georgia College and State University.

- Partnered with the Skidaway Institute to develop a Dog Beach Study at Tybee Island to begin April 2010.

- Passed the CLIA inspection for the clinical laboratory with no deficiencies.

- Partnered with G-CAPP & Advocates for Youth and formed the Savannah CAMI (Cultural Advocacy & Mobilization Initiative), comprised of 4 young people (high school & college-aged), to make a case for the replacement of abstinence-only sex education with more effective & evidence-based curriculum in the Savannah-Chatham County Public Schools System (SC-CPSS). Currently, those young people are part of the SCCPSS Sex Education Committee - the committee brought together to evaluate curriculum.

- The Chatham County Safety Net Planning Council continues to build on the Council's work to strengthen the infrastructure for primary care and improve access to and the quality of care for our un- and underinsured citizens.

- In February 2009, CCSNPC received a two year, \$200,000 grant from Healthcare Georgia Foundation for Chatham CAN (Creating Access Now). This program will engage local specialty care providers and track specialty care referrals for patients who receive primary care at all five CCSNPC provider sites.

- Our website, www.chathamcountyga.gov

chathamcountyga.gov, is up and running. This site will allow a visitor to explore all services available to the un- and underinsured helping those who are facing financial setbacks or unemployment to find options for healthcare. This site is also designed to be used by 211 and other health or social service organizations to help callers and clients locate services and providers.

- Recognizing the need for permanent administrative staffing for CCSNPC, the County Commissioners approved funding for an Executive Director in 2008. The position was filled in December 2008.

- Savannah Chatham Metro PD fully staffed at 603 sworn officers by July 2009.

- Officers created Jeopardy which emphasizes officer safety techniques on foot and with a vehicle.

- Law Enforcement driving emphasizing everyday driving skills - Classroom and practical.

- Noted reduction in at fault accidents from 95 in 2007 to 79 in 2008.

- Precinct realignment to maximize staffing and development.

- CNT received 469 drug complaints (from all sources: Hotline, Crime Stoppers, etc) and investigated 423 of these complaints. 248 of these complaints came from Crime Stoppers alone.

- CNT had 8109 active criminal investigations, 40 of which were joint investigations with other agencies as the GBI, NCIS, DEA, ATF and US Customs (ICE).

- CNT seized over 1.7 million dollars worth of drugs, 101 firearms, \$250,000 in currency and 15 vehicles.

- CNT added additional investigative personnel from Richmond Hill Police Department and the Board of Education Campus Police.

- CNT completed a joint investigation with DEA which led to 10 arrests, seizure of 10 kilograms of cocaine, \$30,000 in cash, vehicles, and the dismantling of several drug distribution organizations in Chatham County and Atlanta.

- CNT and DEA conducted a very successful joint investigation which led to the Federal indictments and arrests of 34 drug violators, seizures, of over \$70,000, vehicles, guns, and 5 kilograms of cocaine. This investigation dismantled several drug distribution organizations.

- CNT dismantled four Methamphetamine Labs in Savannah, Effingham County, and Bulloch County. This led to 10 arrests.

- CNT completed two joint investigations with the Naval Criminal Investigative Services (NCIS) that led to 20 arrests.

- CNT successfully passed the evaluation and audit of the Evidence and Property Room conducted by outside auditors.

- The Finance Department received the Distinguished Budget Presentation award from the Government Finance Officers Association for the fiscal year July 1, 2008 to June 30, 2009.

- The Finance Department received the Certificate of Excellence in Financial Reporting award from the Government Finance Officers Association for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2008.

- The Finance Department prepared the 2009 Capital Improvement Plan workbook that consolidated departmental capital requests into one document. Over \$123 million in projects are listed in the workbook.

- The Finance Department continued its work on documenting internal controls within the Coun-

ACCOMPLISHMENTS!

ty's court system and administrative functions. This documentation is in accordance with recently issued Statements of Auditing Standards from the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants.

- The Risk Manager has applied for workers compensation reimbursement through the State of Georgia's subsequent injury trust fund. To date, over \$800,000 in claims are scheduled for reimbursement.
- Chatham Area Transit Authority ordered 11 hybrid buses to be paid for with grant money that would have lapsed.
- Chatham Area Transit Authority purchased fleet maintenance, inventory software to implement in 2009 to increase efficiency and accountability.
- Operation of new downtown bus service - DOT Shuttle Service.
- CAT provided St. Patrick's Day Shuttle service (this was done through coordination and contracts with the City of Savannah) Service provided to and from designated points.
- Re-aligned routes for better service and increased efficiency. Presented Chatham County Commissioners projected routes adjustments, including routes interlining.
- Worked with Teleride's Director to select a suitable Scheduling (Route Match) system for Para transit.
- CAT provided St. Patrick's Day Shuttle service (this was done through coordination and contracts with the City of Savannah) Service provided to and from designated points from 9:00 pm until 2:00 am.
- Conducted annual bus Rodeo, participated in the State Rodeo (Atlanta MARTA).
- Worked with Teleride's Director to select a suitable Scheduling (Route Match) system for Para transit.
- CAT facilitated the training seminar on "Implementation of Contactless Fare box system", a two day intensive training seminar attended by Transit Authority staff from all locations in the South East.
- The Ferry service carried 533,151 passengers in 2008, which is our highest total in our history of operation.
- Conducted active promotion to employers of fare media sales and Commuter Choice Benefit program. Recently signed on are the City of Savannah, St. Joseph's/Candler Health System, The General Store at Oglethorpe Mall. Currently in discussion with Chatham County, Hyatt Hotel, Memorial Health, South University, Savannah State University, Live Oak Public Libraries, and Gulfstream Aerospace.
- Through a contract established with the Department of Human Resources (DHR), provided swipe cards to eligible consumers of the Department of Family and Children Services
- Coordinating on an ongoing basis with the City of Savannah to support implementation of an accessible taxi program.
- Partnered with the Metropolitan Planning Commission to complete all aspects of the Coordinated Public Transit - Human Services Transportation Plan for the Savannah Area; plan necessary to be eligible for New Freedom and Job Access/Reverse Commute grant funds.
- Construction Apprentice Program managed 128 students through Life Skills/Work Ethics.
- Construction Apprentice Program graduated 103 students.
- MPC Coordinated Local Update of Census

Addresses (LUCA) and Participant Statistical Areas Program (PSAP) for Census 2010.

- MPC designated Pin Point as first Local Historic District in unincorporated County.
- MPC achieved Silver Level Partner Status through GA EPD-P2AD for the work done on the MPC 2010 Sustainability Plan.
- MPC implemented an Electronic Agenda system for MPC meetings.
- MPC led effort to establish Chatham County Neighborhood Association.
- MPC completed the Environmental Protection Division Best Management Practices Coastal Stormwater Supplement Project/Grant.
- MPC researched areas in the county that fell under the affordable housing guidelines.
- MPC updated the Master Address Database for addressing of Multi-family housing units for Chatham County.
- MPC prepared a Comprehensive Plan Amendment for Hunter/Fort Stewart Operations in Chatham County and related Memorandum of Understanding.
- MPC fully implemented the Traffic Impact Analysis process.
- MPC prepared an education film for Channel 16 on the historic resources of Chatham County.
- MPC completed the Resource Protection Commission site ranking manual.
- MPC organized and staffed two County-wide E-Cycling events.
- MPC began meeting with public officials to inform them of the Unified Zoning Ordinance.
- MPC staff completed drafts of various sections of the Unified Zoning Ordinance with anticipated completion in July, 2009.
- MPC secured annual transportation planning grants totaling \$775,225 and additional funding to develop the 2035 Long Range Transportation Plan update (\$500,000), strategic transportation studies (\$125,000) and the Congestion Management Process update (\$50,545).
- MPC completed an update of the MPO 2030 Long Range Transportation Plan to bring the financial plan into the concurrent year of expenditure dollars as required by federal regulation, thus maintaining Chatham County's eligibility for federal transportation funding.
- Juvenile Court conducted 354 Citizen Panel reviews.
- Juvenile Court completed digital recording courtrooms 1 and 3.
- Staff from Juvenile Court and the Public Defender's office moved into the 8400 square feet of temporary modular office space added to alleviate overcrowding in the current Juvenile Court-house.
- The Family Dependency Treatment Court began in January of 2008 and has served 13 parents with long-term chronic and severe drug abuse issues. The participants have a combined total of 44 biological children and 4 grandchildren whose lives were positively affected by the progress participants made in the program.
- The Juvenile Court Judges and staff from the Court, the DA's office and the Public Defender's Office made 2 presentations at local high schools.
- 490 youth under the jurisdiction of Juvenile Court completed 3,430 hours of Community Service work in the local area.
- The Court collected \$54,515.40 in restitution owed to victims.
- Live Oak Public Libraries continues to provide quality services to the community by offering diverse, vibrant programming for children and adults; fresh, dynamic collections; and innovative technology in welcoming facilities.
- The fifth annual Savannah Children's Book Festival held on November 15, 2008 brought over 22,000 people of all ages to Forsyth Park to enjoy a multitude of lo-

cal and national authors, illustrators, and performers to celebrate the joy of reading.

- Georgia's annual statewide Summer Reading Program continues to be one of our most popular and well-attended programming events for families. During summer 2008, over 11,600 children and teens signed up to read during the summer and attended over 390 entertaining and educational programs.
- Our collections were retrofit with RFID (radio frequency identification) technology to speed up our circulation processes.
- Our newest Library will open early in FY10. This state-of-the-art facility on the south side of the County near Savannah Mall will bring library services to an unserved area. Our 50,000 sq ft facility will be the first LEED certified county facility. With a LEED Silver designation, and possibly Gold, the building will consume 30-35% less energy and will harvest natural light to provide a warm, welcoming atmosphere. Technology will be leveraged to require a smaller staff than a traditional facility of similar size. This new civic facility will be a showcase for the county not only as a contemporary library but also as an excellent example of the benefits of LEED design.
- The Library continues to foster opportunities for successful partnerships within the community. Some of our valued community partners include Savannah Chatham Public Schools, Savannah State University, Armstrong Atlantic State University, Parent University, Union Mission, Housing Authority of Savannah, Chatham-Savannah Authority for the Homeless, Music Alive!, Poetry Society of Georgia, the Johnny Mercer Centennial, Chatham Area Transit, Chatham County Health Department, Chatham County Courts, the Elections Board, and Voter Registration.
- Web Master in ICS created the following:
 - Building Safety - Building Permit Lookup System - <http://permits.chatham-county.org/>
 - Board of Assessors - Property Sales Search System - <http://propertysales.chathamcounty.org/>
 - Department of Engineering - Application Lookup System - <http://engineering.chathamcounty.org/>
 - Sheriff's Office - Sex Offender Registry - <http://sort.chathamsheriff.org/>
 - Chatham County Intranet - <http://intranet>
 - Ask Jims v2 - <http://askjims.chatham-county.org>
 - Sheriff's Office - New Website - In Development - <http://new.chathamsheriff.org>
- The Engineering Department Reports:
 - Truman Parkway Phase 5. Right of way acquisition complete and certified. Final Field Plan Review (FFPR) held March 11, 2009.
 - Whitefield Avenue (Old Whitefield to Hayner's Creek Bridge). Preliminary Field Plan Review (PFPR) completed. Right of Way acquisitions should be complete by January 2010.
 - Jimmy DeLoach Parkway, Phase 2. Concept Report approved. Under design.
 - Jimmy DeLoach/US 80 Interchange. Concept Report approved. Under design.
 - Middleground Road/Montgomery Cross Road widening. Substantially complete.
 - Resurfaced 4.35 miles of County roads with Local Assistance Road Program (LARP).
 - Completed intersection improvement project at US17 and Little Neck Road.
 - State Park Road / Diamond Causeway intersection improvements scheduled to be complete by March 2009.
 - Design and acquisitions complete on Brandy Road and Pyeland Avenue. Solicitation of bids for construction contracts should occur in April 2009.
 - The process (analyses, de-

sign, permitting, ROW acquisition, construction) to improve twenty drainage systems for the 1998-2003 SPLOST, and five drainage systems for the 2003-2008 SPLOST were well underway.

- Completed the Fawcett Canal, Village Green, and Golden Isles drainage improvement projects.
- Completed construction of the Walthour Canal at Offshore drainage improvement project.
- Placed under construction the Kings Way Canal, Dundee Tide Gate drainage improvement projects (expect completion by July 2009).
- Removed undersized bridge at GPA over Pipe-makers Canal (part of Pipe-makers Canal Drainage Improvement project).
- Started construction of culvert upgrades on the Chevis Canal at Hodges (Ogeechee Farms) drainage improvement project.
- Issued 23 Land Disturbing Activities Permits.
- Issued 13 stop work orders for violations of the Land Disturbing Activities Ordinance, Storm Water Management Ordinance, and Soil Erosion and Sedimentation Control Ordinance.
- Responded to 69 requests for flood zone determinations so far in FY 08/09, of which 20 were via email. The availability of flood zone information on the County web site and on SAGIS.org continues to decrease the number of requests sent directly to staff.
- Updated flood zones based on revised FIRMS.
- Wetlands enhancement and restoration requirements completed (270 credits released thus far). Credits used for eight County projects. Wetlands creation phase is underway with preparation of 15 acres for planting and reclamation in the fall 2009. Development of the recreational area continues with construction of the berm on west side, enlargement of ponds and creation of a picnic area. Continuing coordination with Bamboo Farm and UGA to integrate the Bank into the Bamboo Farm Strategic Plan and into the Coastal Georgia Greenway.
- Chatham Emergency Agency completed Critical Workforce Shelter Plan and began coordinating out of area sheltering planning.
- Chatham Emergency Agency finalized Local Special Needs Evacuation Plan.
- CEMA developed a Fuel Plan for Fuel Shortages.
- CEMA finalized an Evacuation Assembly Area Plan for Public Transportation.
- CEMA developed a Draft Animals in Disaster Plan.
- CEMA completed county-wide submission for NIMS reporting.
- CEMA assisted fourteen area businesses with continuity planning.
- CEMA established three Memoranda of Understanding for the provision of barge ferrys and bridging in the event of disruption of the Skidaway Narrows Bridge.
- CEMA activated the Chatham County Emergency Operations Center for 11 events.
- CEMA installed amateur radio, satellite phone and satellite internet capability at the Alternate EOC.
- CEMA assisted Tybee Island in expanding emergency warning program.
- CEMA assisted JCB in becoming the first Storm Ready Supporter in the State of Georgia.
- CEMA reorganized and rejuvenated the Chatham County Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) which now includes approximately 170 Chatham County volunteers.
- CEMA conducted training for 30+ persons in Community Emergency Response Teams.
- CEMA coordinated 14 CERT members to become CERT Trainers.
- CEMA organized the Chatham County Citizens Hurricane Academy resulting in approximately 200 residents in attendance.

- The Chatham Emergency Management Agency has successfully doubled Chatham County's Emergency Warning System with the installation of 33 new sirens. Added to the 27 existing sirens, the overall Emergency Warning System is designed to target areas where citizens engage in outdoor activities. This system is an invaluable asset to the County and the protection of Chatham County residents.
- The Sheriff's Department is mandated by State and Federal law to monitor registered sex offenders. We have pursued and received a Federal Grant which allows for the enhancement of our Sex Offender Registry Tracking Unit. We have been able to increase personnel, add needed equipment and upgrade technology. This allows us to take a more aggressive approach toward the monitoring and apprehension of predatory sex offenders. Through conference attendance geared towards sex-offender tracking, we have been advised that our unit is among the top in the Southeastern United States. We continue to be proactive in our approach, and take our responsibility to the community very seriously. Our S.O.R.I. Unit is manned with devoted officers that work tirelessly to stay ahead of the ever-increasing number of sex offenders in our area.
- The Sheriff's Department website has been revamped to make it more informative and user friendly. With the addition of a new map, the public can now check for sex offender residents in their neighborhoods. We have a "most wanted" list with photos on the website, enabling citizens to be a part of the process by providing location information to law enforcement.
- Superior Court established the Mental Health Court, targeting adults seventeen years of age or older, who have been diagnosed with a mental health disorder, and who are charged with non-violent misdemeanor or felony offenses. The court receives referrals from the Chatham County Detention Center, the District Attorney's, the Public Defenders, Defense Counsel, and the Probation Office for a five phase treatment that lasts 24 months designed to stabilize the participant's lifestyle. Mental Health Court currently has 29 participants, and have screened 91 candidates. 25 are on the referral list, and 50 were denied access to the program.
- Superior Court Drug Court is a 24-month, intensive outpatient chemical dependency treatment program for non-violent criminal offenders to provide substance abuse treatment to criminal offenders who suffer an addiction to drugs and/or alcohol. To date, Drug Court has had 95 participants this year. Superior Court wrote and was awarded 2 grants totaling \$213,482 to help underwrite the costs of the Chatham County Drug Court.
- Superior Court worked with ICS, the Clerk of Court, and Probation to design a new automated plea agreement form which will allow information to be entered one time and be accessible to all parties with need to that information and will automatically generate the plea order from the plea agreement.
- Superior Court handled 3,180 indictments, 1608 Domestic cases, and 2452 civil cases, with 105 criminal trials and 53 civil trials.
- Jury Services summoned 30,781 jurors in Superior Court. Superior Court also furnishes all jurors to State Court.
- Alternative Dispute Resolution processed 1356 cases, mediated 719 cases, came to full agreement in 502 cases with 12 cases in partial agreement, and 205 in impasse status. 250 cases were settled prior to mediation. ADR handles all Standing Orders Mandating Alternative Dispute Resolution for all contested domestic and civil matters prior to a re-

quest for a pretrial conference or a trial date.

- ADR provides civil and domestic training classes for people interested in becoming registered mediators within the state.
- CrimeStoppers Number of solved cases in 2008 increased to 117, an increase of 11 from 2007.
- Amount of rewards paid out in 2008 equaled \$27,150 Note: Taxpayer dollars not used in the payment of rewards. Reward funds are generated through annual fund-raisers and contributions.
- "CrimeStoppers Focus" radio program and the video program concluded the production of programming on the Chatham County Superior Court's Administration as well as the Federal Bureau of Investigation's Criminal Justice Information Services Division Programs in Clarksburg, West Virginia, with respect to their 21st Century capabilities for identification processes to combat crime and terrorism worldwide.
- The CrimeStoppers website was enhanced to allow for video linking as well as audio. The production studio capabilities were also enhanced to allow for more efficient production and editing of the final products.
- The State Court Clerk's Office has experienced a 40% increase in case filings (a 51% increase in civil filings and a 32% increase in criminal filings) since 2005. The Clerk's Office has absorbed this increase by evaluating processes and making changes to these processes without hiring additional employees.
- Between 01/01/08 and 12/31/08, Savannah-Chatham DUI Court received 148 new participants in the DUI Court program, conducted 938 home visits, performed 4,579 drug test, and graduated 110 participants.
- The State Court of Chatham County judiciary sentences individuals to perform community service work. In 2008, probationers performed approximately 48,818 hours of community service for various government and non-profit agencies. This is an increase of 7,041 hours over the previous year and the result of a new initiative by the probation provider, PRIDE, to gain greater compliance.
- Mosquito Control Staff published a descriptive article of Chatham County's mosquito control program in Wing Beats, a technical journal of the American and Florida Mosquito Control Associations.
- Mosquito Control staff published a scientific article on the finding of a new mosquito species in Chatham and Jasper Counties in the Journal of the American Mosquito Control Association. Mosquito Control staff made an oral presentation highlighting our aviation operations at the national meeting of the American Mosquito Control Association.
- Mosquito Control Aviation staff assisted in controlling three fires: one along the Chatham/Effingham County border, another on a CSX Railroad track line, and a third at Bell's Landing.
- Building Safety completed the "ACS" software project. Phase two contract; application download and inspection results via the internet.
- Building Safety completed the Ralph Mark Gilbert Civil Rights Museum addition.
- Building Safety completed the expansion of the inspection services contract with the City of Tybee Island.
- Building Safety completed the initiation of "Predictable Permitting" re-engineering project, including MPC and County Engineering Department.

CHATHAM COUNTY YOUTH COMMISSION ANNOUNCES GRADUATES AND AWARD WINNERS!!

(Savannah, GA) On Friday, June 26, 2009, during the Chatham County Commission Meeting, the Chatham County Youth Commission presented their 2009 graduates, the recipients of the 2009 Beverly M. Whitehead Award and the recipient of the Brandon Brown Youth Commissioner of the Year Award. 2009 boasts one of the largest graduation classes in the 17 year history of the Youth Commission. The Graduates are:

SCHOOL COLLEGE

Sheray Franklin Savannah Arts Academy Oklahoma City University
Desirae Suggs Savannah Arts Academy Union University

Monique Pal Savannah Arts Academy United States Air Force Academy

Shawn Knight Jenkins High School Bethune Cookman University

Lauren Cummings Jenkins High School Georgia State University

Erica Green Beach High School Vadolsta State University

Asia Calhoun Beach High School Claflin University

Brandi Chaney St. Vincent's Academy Vadolsta State University

Angela Coleman St. Vincent's Academy Paine College

Rajan Dulamal Benedictine Military Academy Mercer University

Jamesha English St. Andrew's Agnes Scott College

Keyuanna Green

Jenkins High School Georgia Southern University

Samone Hagins Jenkins High School Howard University Kendra Johnson

State University

Kathryn Pinckney Groves High School University of Georgia

Shaniqua Purvis



St. Vincent's Academy Albany State

Sherelle Jones St. Vincent's Academy Georgia State University

Priscilla Peay St. Andrew's Vadolsta

Groves High School Georgia State University

Byron Spellman Jenkins High School Savannah Technical College

JaLisa Williams Johnson High School Savannah State University

The Youth Commission also presented the 2009 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:

Ms. Marty Johnston Darius Goes West

The Youth Commission also presented the 2009 Brandon Brown Youth Commissioner of the Year award to Youth Commissioner Samantha Schikowski.

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

For more information on the Chatham County Youth Commission, visit their website at www.ChathamYouth.com

CHATHAM COUNTY SPECIAL NEEDS HURRICANE EVACUATION GUIDELINES



Special Needs is defined as a population requiring specialized assistance in meeting daily needs and may require special assistance during emergency situations. Individuals may need specially trained health care providers, special facilities equipped to meet their needs, and specialized vehicles and equipment for transport.

The Chatham County Special Needs Plan will be implemented by the Director of the Chatham Emergency Management Agency (CEMA) with the approval of the Chatham County Chairman, Board of Commissioners in concurrence with the Mayors of the Municipalities and the Director of the Coastal Health District.

1. Persons with special needs are encouraged to be prepared for an evacuation. The following steps are considered a last resort when no other evacuation alternatives are available:

DO NOT WAIT TO REGISTER REGISTRATION IS TAKEN THROUGHOUT THE YEAR

A. Call the Special Needs Coordinator (SNC) at the Chatham County Health Department, (912) 356-2441.

B. The SNC will request your mailing information.

C. The SNC will send you a Special Needs Enrollment Form to complete and return to the Health Department.

Or, the Application can be downloaded from the Coastal Health District website at: www.gachd.org/emergency-preparedness and mailed to:

Chatham County Health Department Attn: Special Needs Coordinator 1395 Eisenhower Drive Savannah, GA 31406

2. Once the SNC receives the completed Enrollment Form, they will pass the information to the Chatham County Health Department Nursing Section for screening.

A. Special Needs persons are categorized into 5 levels. If

you meet the criteria of Level 3, 4, or 5 special needs, you will be entered in the Special Needs Registry. You will be notified by phone and in writing of the Care Level you have been assigned.

B. If you are not accepted into the Special Needs program, you will be immediately called by the Health Department and advised to make other arrangements for evacuation and sheltering.

C. The Special Needs Registry does not include Level 1 or Level 2 clients. If a County Mandatory Evacuation is ordered, Level 1 and 2 clients who do not have personal transportation will be advised to go by any CAT bus to the Civic Center for evacuation to a public shelter.

D. If accepted into the Special Needs Registry at Level 3, 4, or 5, you will be advised by the SNC.

E. If a mandatory evacuation order is about to happen, you will be advised by the United Way 2-1-1 staff to prepare. As the evacuation begins, you will be called a second time by the United Way staff and told the specific time you will be picked-up by Teleride or ambulance.

1) Level 3 and 4 clients will be taken to a Special Needs Center for evaluation and transportation to a Special Needs shelter.

2) If the Special Needs Center evaluation results in a designation of Level 1 or 2, you will be taken home where you may take a CAT bus to the Civic Center for transportation to shelter.

3) If the evaluation process results in your being designated at Level 5, you will be taken to a local hospital or inland shelter.

F. Clients accepted at Level 5 will be told that in the event of an evacuation you will be called by the United Way 2-1-1 staff and told the time of pick-up. When you receive the call, you will be told to be prepared to evacuate immediately and will be given a list of things that you must take to the hospital.

3. During an evacuation or unexpected emergency, when there is not enough time for normal registration:

A. All requests to be placed on the Special Needs Register will be recorded by the SNC.

B. The SNC will refer you to Public Health Nursing for telephone screening.

C. When the screening is done, if you are evaluated at Level 1 or 2, you will be told to take a CAT bus to the Civic Center for transportation to shelter.

D. If accepted into the Special Needs Registry at Level 3, 4, or 5, you will be told by the SNC

and asked to await instructions from United Way 2-1-1.

4. Persons registered in the Special Needs Database will be contacted twice a year to verify their medical condition and update their information.

5. When a storm is about three days (72 hours) from Chatham County, you will be called by United Way 2-1-1 and told:

A. That an evacuation is possible.

B. To prepare your essential items' kit that includes medications and important documents.

C. Be prepared to evacuate within one hour of the next call.

6. You will be picked up by Teleride or by ambulance and taken to a Special Needs Center or local hospital where you will be given a document pouch for use during transportation to your destination.

A. Your Registration Form, medical history, allergies record and medications list will be placed in the document pouch.

B. Your name will be placed on a Special Needs Tracking Form and you will be given an Identification number. This number, and your name and destination will be placed on a bracelet that you will wear to your destination during the evacuation.

7. Pets will only be allowed at the Special Needs Center if they are in a carrier and you have your pet's current immunization records; or if they are service animals assisting disabled persons (these animals must remain with their owner at all times).

8. Animal Control will provide staff and equipment to temporarily care for animals that are brought to the Center.

9. When reentry is authorized, the evacuation process will be reversed and you will be returned to your home.

NOTE:

In the event that a storm is expected to make landfall as a Category 4 or higher hurricane, local hospitals will be forced to evacuate.

Hospital procedures will require they concentrate on the evacuation of existing critically ill patients. They will not accept Level 5 clients. Available assistance will be provided through the Chatham County Emergency Operations Center and both state and local resources will be arranged to evacuate Level 5 clients to inland facilities that can provide the necessary level of care.

Hurricane Evacuation Routes Now on SAGIS.ORG

By Jason Lee, SAGIS

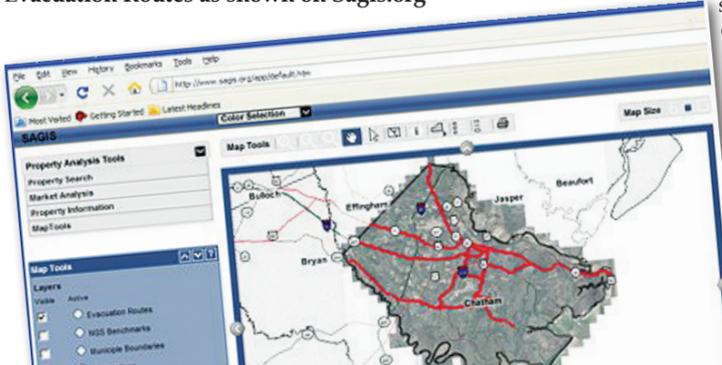
The Atlantic hurricane season began officially on June 1, and the peak season of August through October is only a few weeks away. In order to keep our community as safe and as prepared as possible, your local government has fully developed contingency plans in place for all possibilities that may arise, with hurricane preparedness being one of the top concerns.

Perhaps the most vital aspect of hurricane preparedness is leaving the area when and evacuation has been ordered- and now Savannah Area GIS (SAGIS) has you covered. In cooperation with Chatham County and the Chatham Emergency Management Agency (CEMA), the Chatham County Evacuation Routes are now posted on www.sagis.org.

To access them, simply go the 'Layers' option of 'Map Tools' and select the 'Visible' box next to 'Evacuation Routes'. The Routes will appear in red, labeled appropriately. You may zoom in to any area to get an exact idea of the best route for you, and print out a copy for your records.

During an actual emergency, the Evacuation Routes will be turned on permanently, and the previous steps will be unnecessary. At that time, CEMA will provide the community with current evacuation details.

Evacuation Routes as shown on Sagis.org



Chatham County Public Works and Park Services Promotes Fitness

In order to better serve citizens, Park Services offers an array of exercise classes at the Frank Murray Community Center in Whitmarsh Island, the Tom Triplett Community Park in Pooler, and fall classes are set to debut at the Lake Mayer Community Center located on Montgomery Crossroads.

Featured are two of our most popular ongoing classes.

Pilates Class: Jodi Grayson, Pilates Instructor, at the Frank Murray Community Center, encourages all to try Pilates. Pilates can be an excellent stand alone exercise or a superb compliment to any other activity. Jodee says this is a class for everybody and you can expect to feel better after participating. (Tuesdays, 9:30 AM)

The Frank Murray Community Center hosts vari-

ous types of ongoing exercise classes, weekday mornings. {Low Impact Exercise, Yoga, Line Dancing, Chair Aerobics, Zumba, and Tone & Stretch} For more information, call (912) 898-3320.



Fitness Boot Camp: Rodney Helaire, Boot Camp Instructor, at Tom Triplett Park says his class is designed to help motivate, encourage, and jump start individuals of all ages to be pushed to their maximum potential. This Boot Camp focuses on cardio respiratory, strength, and endurance training. (Tuesdays/Thursdays, 5:30 PM)

For more information, contact the Park Services Administrative Office at (912) 652-6780.

Beginning this fall, the newly renovated Lake Mayer Community Center will be offering the following fitness classes:

Yoga Flow: Basic to intermediate poses focusing on alignment and breath control, allowing participants to work at their own pace.

(Wednesdays/Fridays, 10:00 AM & Wednesdays, 6:00 PM)

Cardio Salsa: Dance fitness class with Latin based rhythms allowing participants to build cardio endurance through fun physical movements. (Mondays/Thursdays, 2:00 PM)



Awesome Abs: A thirty minute workout targeting the abdominal muscles, this class will target different abdominal and core muscles. (Mondays/Wednesdays, 7:00 AM)

Ladies Boot Camp: Slim down, end the effects of stress, and get into top shape! Perform at your own level. (Starting in September, days and times TBA)

Senior Trek: Designed to improve health and wellness, including the options of monthly hikes, 5K, 10K, and half marathon training. (Mondays, Wednesdays, &

Thursdays, 9:00 AM)

For additional information, call 652-6782.

Additional Fall Park Service Activities:



Youth Football (4 & under, 6 & under, 8 & under, 10 & under, and 12 & under) Enter your team by August 31st. League play begins the week of September 14th.



Adult Fishing Tournament: Coming this October at the Tybee Pier & Pavilion

Youth Holiday Activities: Halloween Haunted House, Candy Cane Hunt, & Christmas Camp at Stell, Triplett, & Lake Mayer Community Parks.

For more information on these programs, contact the Park Services Administrative Office at 652-6780.