



# DEKALB COUNTY DISTRICT 5 NEWSLETTER

FEBRUARY 2010

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**LEE MAY**  
COMMISSIONER

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## Why I Can't and Won't Support a Tax Increase



By Commissioner Lee May

The original 2010 budget proposal offered by DeKalb County CEO Burrell Ellis anticipated a revenue shortfall of more than \$50 million. Recently, the DeKalb County Board of Commissioners (BOC) received information that suggests that the County may actually face an even greater revenue shortfall of approximately \$84 million for 2010.

CEO Ellis's proposed budget would cover a sizeable portion of the revenue shortfall by increasing property taxes. As it stands today, I am against any proposed tax increase. I cannot support a tax increase on the backs of DeKalb County citizens without a strategic plan for how we do business. As a result of the revenue shortfall, we in county government must do what every American has been forced to do in today's tough economic times; tighten our belts, and do more with less! To do so, DeKalb County must cut expenses by restructuring, reorganizing, and even downsizing our government. We cannot raise additional revenue, through tax hikes, on an already antiquated and borderline broken system. The CEO's

proposed tax increase is a short term fix, which only solves our problems for this year, making future tax increases inevitable. This is an unacceptable proposition.

Instead of simply opposing the CEO's proposal and offering no solutions, I have several practical suggestions for the CEO to consider that would assist him in better managing the budget while maintaining quality services for our citizens.

### *Initiate Personnel Staffing*

**Study** - The BOC has engaged Georgia State University to conduct the first staffing study in recent years to see from a professional perspective if our staffing level is appropriate for a county the size of DeKalb. We should do this every 3-5 years to ensure that our county government is lean and efficient.

### *Performance Based Budgeting*

- This would allow the CEO to evaluate our efficiency by setting goals and objectives and measuring results to determine if county operations are achieving these goals. This promotes more efficient and effective budgeting and delivery of services.

### *Approve Budgets in 3Year*

**Windows** - This practice would allow the CEO and BOC to see the effect that current budgetary decisions would have in following years.

We can cut the budget in a sensible manner that would maintain the integrity of

DeKalb's Public Safety and other essential services, while also protecting the pocket books of its residents. This is even more important since DeKalb County is not the only governmental entity contemplating a tax increase this year. Both the DeKalb County School Board and the State are considering new or increased taxes. Below is a hypothetical example of what all three tax propositions would look like:

CEO Proposed Property Tax Increase (1.86 mills)

\$ 140 (on \$200K Home)

School Board Proposed Property Tax Increase (.5 - 2 mills)

\$ 140 (on \$200K Home)

New Regional Transportation Sales Tax (1-penny sales tax)

\$150 (on \$15K HH Spending)

*(These numbers may vary based upon the actual millage rate, value of the home, and total household expenditures)*

Possible Dollar Amount of Proposed New or Increased Taxes

\$430 per year

*(This is on top of what you already pay in taxes)*

Your county government cannot operate within a vacuum. DeKalb County Government, DeKalb County Schools, and the State of Georgia all pull from the same pocket book... YOURS! I say no to a tax increase. I hope you will, too!

## STRENGTHENING OUR COMMUNITY



### FEBRUARY IS AMERICAN HEART MONTH

Cardiovascular disease, including stroke, is our nation's No. 1 killer.

In a study conducted in 2006, the American Heart Association, estimated that over 80 Million Americans suffered from some form of Cardiovascular Disease. That equals out to about 1 in 3 Americans, or 33% of the population who suffers from some form of this disease.

To help fight the possibility of developing Cardiovascular Disease, it is important that you make informed, proactive and smart lifestyle decisions. Proper diet and regular exercise can tremendously cut your risk for developing heart disease.

Here are some helpful tips for making smarter lifestyle decisions:

#### Exercise & Fitness

Swimming, cycling, jogging, skiing, dancing, walking and dozens of other activities can help your heart. Whether it is included in a structured exercise program or just part of your daily routine, all physical activity adds up to a healthier heart.

#### Healthy Diet

Good nutrition is essential for your family's heart health. Browse the American Heart Association's Nutrition Center and start making small changes in your diet. Before you know it, you'll be on the road to healthier hearts and longer lives!

**Being a healthier you in 2010 is a great start towards Strengthening Our Community.**

#### Heart Attack Warning Signs

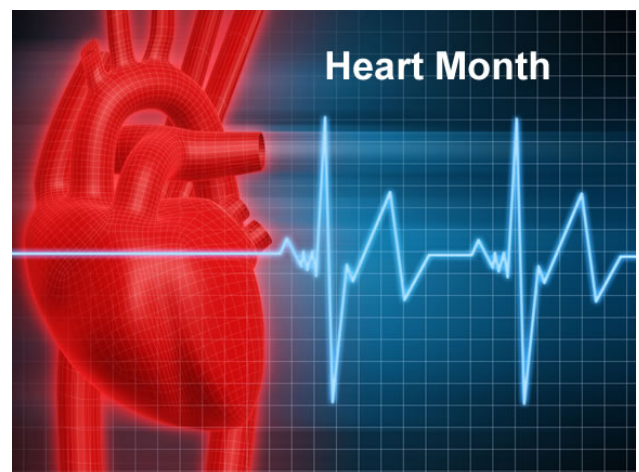
If you ever feel like you are experiencing any of the conditions below, call 911 immediately

Chest Discomfort: Most heart attacks involve discomfort in the center of the chest that lasts more than a few minutes, or that goes away and comes back. It can feel like uncomfortable pressure, squeezing, fullness or pain.

Discomfort in other areas of the upper body: Symptoms can include pain or discomfort in one or both arms, the back, neck, jaw or stomach.

Shortness of breath with or without chest discomfort

Other signs may include breaking out in a cold sweat, nausea or lightheadedness.



Note: These tips were provided from the American Heart Association.

# THE PEOPLE'S VOICE



Commissioner May truly values your questions, comments and concerns. In an effort to ensure that he is better meeting the needs of District 5 constituents, Commissioner May will address a specific question or comment. This is your forum to let your voice be heard, The People's Voice. Please e-mail any questions, comments, or concerns to [jkhockett@co.dekalb.ga.us](mailto:jkhockett@co.dekalb.ga.us)

November's Question

"My street has pot-holes and is becoming unsafe to drive on,  
How can I get my street resurfaced?"

## Commissioner May's Response

Dear District 5 Residents,

This question has been coming up a lot lately. My goal is to ensure that we keep our DeKalb County infrastructure strong, and I know keeping our roadways safe is an important step in accomplishing this goal. In DeKalb County we are aggressively planning resurfacing projects to ensure that we are able to provide residents with the best roadways possible, however, with budget constraints, it is important to ensure sound fiscal policy management as well.

Each year a DeKalb County road rating engineering technician inspects approximately 2,115 miles of county roadways (over 8,000 total streets) using elements of the Georgia Department of Transportation's (DOT) pavement condition rating system to evaluate the structural condition of these specific roadways. There are 12 different kinds of pavement distress patterns evaluated and each road is issued a score between zero and sixty based on that specific rating. Those streets with ratings higher than thirty are eligible for submission to the Georgia DOT for resurfacing under their areas specific LARP (Local Assistance Resurfacing Program). The specific level of funding that is allocated to a LARP organization determines the actual number of streets that will be resurfaced during a given fiscal period and this amount varies from year to year. Recently, contractors estimated costs to resurface a square mile of asphalt between \$300,000 - \$400,000.

For a list of current resurfacing projects in your area visit [http://www.co.dekalb.ga.us/publicwrks/roads\\_drainage/pdf/pavingList.pdf](http://www.co.dekalb.ga.us/publicwrks/roads_drainage/pdf/pavingList.pdf). For more information call the DeKalb County Department of Roads & Drainage at (404) 297-3840.

Commissioner Lee May

# DEKALB BUSINESS FORUM

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

## Smoothie King

Manager	Jessiah
Address	3054 Panola Road, Lithonia, GA 30038
Phone	678-518-8400
Website	<a href="http://www.smoothieking.com">www.smoothieking.com</a>
Services Offered	Smoothies, Juice, Healthy Products

Smoothie King is committed to become THE healthy alternative to unhealthy food choices by providing a consistent, outstanding guest experience, great tasting nutritional smoothies and the highest quality nutritional products in a healthy, energetic environment.

## Eat Right Carribean Restaurant

Address	7173 Covington HWY, Lithonia, GA 30058
Phone	770-482-8313
Website	<a href="http://www.eatrightrestaurant.com">www.eatrightrestaurant.com</a>
Services Offered	Caribbean Cuisine, Dine-in, Take-out

Eat Right Caribbean Restaurant was started by two enterprising food lovers who knew the business and wanted to share exciting Caribbean cuisine with the Atlanta area community. Catering to the distinguishing needs of the local Jamaican population and the taste buds of those wanting to experience authentic Caribbean flavors, they have expanded to two locations in Atlanta, Georgia. The restaurant continues to receive excellent reviews from customers and national media. With our commitment to exceptional customer satisfaction, we continue to provide some of the best home-cooked Caribbean meals for the community with the expected great service.

# DEKALB AT A GLANCE

## DeKalb County Police Department Awarded Grant

For each and every DeKalb County resident, public safety is a top priority. As your District 5 leader, Commissioner Lee May is committed to making you aware of all of the various happenings related to this issue, and he is happy to report that, the DeKalb County Police Department has been awarded a major public safety partnership H.E.A.T. grant totaling \$63,620.00 from the Georgia Governor's Office of Highway Safety (GOHS) in Atlanta. H.E.A.T. stands for *Highway Enforcement of Aggressive Traffic*. The primary goals of the H.E.A.T project are to: (1) reduce impaired driving crashes; (2) reduce excessive speeding; (3) in-

crease the safety belt usage rate; and (4) educate the public about traffic safety.

The DeKalb County Police Department H.E.A.T. Unit will develop and implement strategies to reduce crashes, injuries, and fatalities from drugs and alcohol, speed and aggressive driving, and non-use of safety belts within their jurisdiction in the GOHS Ten Traffic Enforcement Network.

GOHS Director Bob Dallas said, "This H.E.A.T. grant expresses our thanks for joining the GOHS enforcement team and for the dedication and support of the DeKalb County Police Department for their efforts to protect Georgians from

speeders and impaired drivers. Impaired driving related crashes killed 416 persons in Georgia in 2008. The chance of a crash being fatal here was almost six times higher for crashes related to alcohol or drugs than crashes not related to driver impairment."

"The H.E.A.T. project aims to increase the impaired driver apprehension rate, reduce speeders, educate the public about DUI laws and provide a higher traffic enforcement profile in the community," said GOHS Director Dallas.

For more information about HEAT, visit the DeKalb Police website at: [www.dekalbpolice.com](http://www.dekalbpolice.com).

## DeKalb Police Warn of Increased Auto Theft

Where can you find a place where people leave their wallets, purses, cell phones, navigation systems, or cars unattended and ripe for theft? The answer won't surprise you; it happens every time they pull off the road to get gas or grab their favorite drink from a convenience store and leave their keys in the ignition or their doors unlocked. More and more over the last year, gas station safety has moved to the forefront of crime prevention. There has been a dramatic rise in gas station theft over the past year. Entering auto's and auto theft for the East Precinct year to date from 2008 are both down -25%, however; we have noticed a significant increase in the last couple of weeks! PLEASE ensure you are mindful of auto safety tips even if your car is parked in your driveway.

Most of the time, gas station customers leave their car doors unlocked. This enables a thief to drive up next to the victim's car, open an unlocked door, and grab any valuables within reach. Then, the thief quickly drives off. It's a crime of opportunity that takes only a few seconds to commit. Gas station thefts can be easily prevented. You can keep from becoming a victim of gas station theft by keeping the following tips in mind.

- Pick gas stations that are well-lit and have video surveillance.
- Always remove your keys, close the windows, and lock the doors while you are pumping gas.
- Keep valuables out of plain view in your vehicle and lock the doors even if you are going inside for just a moment.

- Pay attention to your surroundings.
- Don't let your cell phone distract you.

"Too often residents become the victims of crimes of opportunity. We hope that through this educational effort, customers pumping gas or running to the convenience store will think twice before leaving their keys in the car or their windows down."

Please learn how you can keep these crimes of opportunity from happening to you! Visit the DeKalb Police East Precinct at 2484 Bruce Street, Lithonia, 30058; or call 770-482-0300. Visit the DeKalb Police South Precinct at 1816 Candler Road, Decatur, 30032; or call 404-286-7900.

The previous information is from a recent DeKalb County Police press release.

# DEKALB AT A GLANCE

## CELL PHONE DONATION PROGRAM

The DeKalb Police Department has launched a cell phone donation program.

You will be able to donate your old or damaged cell phones to be recycled or refurbished by the 911 Cell Phone Bank. In return, the DeKalb Police Department can request the refurbished phones to be distributed to those citizens in need of a phone for emergency purposes.

All money generated by recycling the phones will be donated to the DeKalb Police Alliance, a non-profit organization supporting police officers and their families.

### To Participate:

- Gather your old cell phone(s).
- Remove the SIM card if it contains one. All other information can be removed by the 911 Cell Phone Bank.
- Include the battery, if available.
- If phone has a lock code, unlock the phone or tape the code to the phone.
- Drop the phone(s) off at any DeKalb County Police Precinct, or the Maloof Building.
- A donation receipt may be obtained if needed.



## PHONES CAN BE DROPPED OFF AT THE FOLLOWING LOCATIONS:

- CENTER PRECINCT  
1960 W. EXCHANGE PL.  
TUCKER
- TUCKER PRECINCT  
4451 LAWRENCEVILLE HWY.  
TUCKER
- NORTH PRECINCT  
4453 ASHFORD DUNWOODY RD.  
ATLANTA
- SOUTH PRECINCT  
1816 CANDLER RD.  
DECATUR
- EAST PRECINCT  
2484 BRUCE ST.  
LITHONIA
- MANUEL MALOOF BUILDING  
1300 COMMERCE DR.  
DECATUR

If you have any questions or concerns about the program, please feel free to email or call following personnel:

SIA Stephanie Evans  
sievans@co.dekalb.ga.us  
770-724-7580

SIA Yvette Hairston  
ymhairston@co.dekalb.ga.us  
770-724-7561

MPO D.D. Evans  
ddevans@co.dekalb.ga.us  
770-724-7614



**FEBRUARY**

Tax Help

Time: 10:00 AM - 2:00 PM

Where: Stone Mountain Library  
952 Leon Street  
Stone Mountain, 30083

Where: Decatur Rec. Center  
231 Sycamore Street  
Decatur, GA 30030

**FEB 16<sup>th</sup>**

Committee of the Whole Meeting

Time: 9:00 AM

Where: Manuel J. Maloof Building  
1300 Commerce Drive  
Decatur, GA 30030

**FEB 23<sup>rd</sup>**

DeKalb County Symphony Orchestra

Time: 8:30–10:30

Where: Marvin Cole Auditorium  
555 N Indian Creek Drive  
Clarkston, GA 30021

Enjoy an evening of classical performances by the DeKalb Symphony Orchestra featuring Martin Chalifour, violin. For ticketing information please call 1-866-5252, ext. 3351.

**FEB 23<sup>rd</sup>**

Regular BOC Meeting

Time: 9:00 AM

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

**FEB 23<sup>rd</sup>-24<sup>th</sup>**

Asylum the Ballet

Time: 2:00 PM and 4:00 PM

Where: Porter Stanford Arts Center  
3181 Rainbow Drive  
Decatur, GA 30034

This is sure to be an exciting performance. For tickets visit [www.phusionpaa.org](http://www.phusionpaa.org), or call 404-298-3332.

**JAN 1<sup>st</sup>-MAR 7<sup>th</sup>**

Snow Mountain Winter-land

Time: Weekends

Where: Stone Mountain Park  
1000 Robert E. Lee BLVD  
Stone Mountain, GA

Come play in the snow as Stone Mountain Park is transformed into a winter wonderland. A Snow-Zone filled of activities will make your snow-filled experience complete.

Featured Event

**Greater Hidden Hills  
Overlay District Meeting**

Time	Begins promptly at 6:30 PM
Date	Thursday, February 25, 2010

This meeting is for the business owners and commercial property owners whose property is located within the proposed Overlay District boundaries. I will send a letter of invitation to all stakeholders. Please call (404) 371-4745 for more details.

## HAPPY VALENTINE'S DAY FROM THE MAY FAMILY



Happy Valentine's Day! May you enjoy this season with your family and loved ones.

Attention all Home Owner's Association members, I would like to attend your next HOA meeting. Please e-mail my office coordinator, Latrese Young, at [ldnyoung@co.dekalb.ga.us](mailto:ldnyoung@co.dekalb.ga.us) with the details.

Thank you once again for reading our newsletter, and I look forward to working with you to help make DeKalb County District 5 the best place to live, work and play.

Commissioner Lee N. May, District 5

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