Summer Wrap Up

I don’t remember ever having so much rain in one summer! It seems that over the course of the past couple of months we have had rain almost every day. I don’t want to complain because I remember a lot of summer droughts over the years. Due to the heavy rain and flooding we have experienced, our Public Works department has been very busy repairing roads and culverts. They have done a great job identifying problems and ensuring our roads are safe. They are often out on weekends, early in the morning or late at night. I want to personally thank our Roads Department for all their hard work, and I encourage you to do the same.

Despite all the rain, summer seems to have passed quickly. The temperatures have been cooler than usual and the lake level is higher. School will be starting back soon, so don’t forget the sales tax holiday on August 9-10, 2013 for those back-to-school items. Even though only certain purchases are sales tax exempt, Dawson County will still likely see an increase in sales tax due to people getting out and about to purchase items that are exempt. They will likely eat at our local restaurants, put fuel in their vehicles and purchase items other than the ones eligible for the sales tax exemption. Those sales tax dollars are put to good use by the County to provide services for our citizens such as public safety, recreation, and road maintenance and repairs. For a listing of tax exempt items, go to https://etax.dor.ga.gov/salestax/holiday/5-1513_Georgia_2013_Sales_Tax_Holiday_Fact_Sheet.pdf. Encourage your friends and family to shop local!

I always hate to see one season end but at the same time, I am refreshed by the opportunities that a new season brings. I hope you have all had a chance to take some time off work to spend time with your family, enjoy the summer season, and recharge yourself personally before the busy fall season begins.

Cindy Campbell,
County Manager
Another successful Search and Rescue for the Dawson County K9 Strike Team

The Dawson County K9 Strike Team added another success story to their album on Sunday, July 21st, after an elderly dementia patient was found alive and well. This made the second search and rescue call in less than two months that had resulted in the successful location of a dementia patient.

John “Bill” Gibbs was visiting with family in Rabun County when he reportedly wandered away from their residence around 3:30 p.m. on Saturday, July 20th. Gibbs, a Tift County resident, suffers from dementia and was not known to be familiar with the local territory. After an initial search, conducted by local authorities and family members failed to locate Gibbs, Rabun County Emergency Management Agency Director Marty Dixon contacted the Dawson County K9 Strike Team to request their assistance in the search for the 84 year old male.

The K9 Strike Team arrived on scene around 7:30 p.m. and began a “hasty search” that encompassed a 1 mile radius and concentrated around a nearby creek. “Our goal was to cover the area of highest probability and highest risk first, for a fast removal” shared K9 Strike Team member Danny Speaks. The greatest threat was a creek near the property that was fast moving and very cold, even for July. Speaks forged the middle of the creek with his dog ‘Liberty’ clearing a ½ mile to 1 mile stretch, while other team members searched along the creek banks.

After a thorough investigation of the immediate surroundings, the search was halted around midnight due to weather conditions and limited visibility. This was done to ensure the safety of the workers involved. The search promptly resumed at daybreak however and picked back up at the location where K9 Strike Team member Tim Satterfield’s dog ‘Maddie’ had lost the scent which had ended her track the night before.

On Sunday morning, a neighbor living near the area where the track had run out, notified authorities of suspicious activity around an outbuilding located on her property. The building was searched, and although Mr. Gibbs was not present, it was determined he had been there and had left his shoes behind. All individuals currently in the area were lined up for a “Scent Discrimination” conducted by Deb Walter’s dog ‘Finley’. This helped the K9 differentiate the patient’s scent from those of his searchers. Finley soon caught the scent and was off on a new track.

Mr. Gibbs was located just after 10:00 a.m. on Sunday morning. Although he was found confused and tangled in thick vegetation, he was alive and well; having suffered no serious injury during the 17 hours he had been missing.

Many of the Search and Rescue calls that the Dawson County K9 Strike Team is called to participate in often involves individuals with mental or physical disabilities, but the K9 Strike Team is well trained to handle such challenges. The K9 Team constantly trains and attends several forms of specialized training throughout the year; in addition, they cross-train with and offer training to other K9 organizations. They currently have up-coming training programs planned with the Department of Natural Resources and a Military-based K9 Team which participates in urban search and rescues, including decontamination procedures. The Strike Team also has plans for an upcoming class that will focus on Alzheimer’s patients.

DC K9 Strike Team members: Tim Satterfield & Maddie

DC K9 Strike Team members: Deborah Walters & Finley
DCES June Employees of the Month

Career - Lt. Jeff Banks

Career – Shaun Benfield

Lt. Jeff Banks has been nominated and selected due to his work with the Junior Fire Academy and the Fire Explorers Program. Lt. Banks has become very active in both these programs through the years and has taken an active role in the leadership of both programs. Banks began his career with Dawson County as a volunteer and has been employed for a number of years. “Jeff’s efforts are definitely impacting our young people’s opinion of DCES in a positive light”.

FF/EMT Shaun Benfield has been selected for his work with the current FF Recruit Class. “Shaun has stepped up and helped out with training” said Asst. Chief Danny Speaks. In addition to his normal duties, Shaun spearheaded the recent effort to recruit a team of employees and volunteers from Emergency Services and the Dawson County Sheriff’s Office to compete in the softball tournament at the Georgia Fire and Police Games held in Dalton. Chief Lanier Swafford said “I am proud of Shaun and everyone who competed on behalf of Dawson County, those guys had a ball”.

June’s Employees of the Month are actually shift partners at Station 7.

Lt. Jeff Banks instructs a cadet during JFA

Remembering Margie Weaver…
By Kristi Hudson

On July 25th, 2013, Dawson County came out in great support to show homage to an amazing lady ~ Ms. Margie Weaver. A dedication service was held in her honor on this date, as the Dawson County Senior Center was renamed the Margie Weaver Senior Center.

This was done in commemoration of the 30 years of service Margie had provided to the senior citizens of Dawson County and to the County as a whole. Several guest speakers spoke of her love, dedication, and her endless contributions. It was clear that anyone that had ever had the pleasure of spending time with this fine lady, could not help but be impressed by her character. As the speakers spoke and later, as guests mingled and chatted, her legacy was shared over and over again through tales of her strength, gentleness, caring ways and her faith. She was truly an inspiration to us all.

If you ever have the opportunity to visit the Margie Weaver Senior Center, and I hope you will, you will see several memorial totems both inside the center and throughout the outdoor gardens; all donated by family, friends, businesses, and organizations who have been touched by Ms. Margie’s love and support through the years.

Dawson County Government was pleased to add a memorial plaque and new business sign to the building and grounds to memorialize the Senior Center being renamed in her honor. The memorial plaque can be found on the outside wall, just right of the front entrance. The new building sign can be easily seen by guests, located at the front left side of the building.

Many other wonderful tributes sit tucked into the neatly landscaped grounds, that are carefully maintained by Dawson County Facilities. For instance, in the back garden you will find a circular planter that hosts a lovely Dogwood tree and memorial plaque surrounded by beautiful, bright annuals. This dedication was placed there by Legacy Link, an organization that works with the Center to offer support services to senior citizens.

Also ornamenting the back yard, are two new picnic tables that the Boy Scouts of America Troop 422 built and installed. You will find one table was designed specially to accommodate those in wheelchairs. They also put in bird feeders and hand-made bird houses around the yard, as a delightful source of natural entertainment for the seniors and staff to enjoy.

Ric Rack, a local charity thrift store and food bank, contributed a red bench dedicated “In Loving Memory of Margie Weaver.” The bench sits in the front side garden; in a quaint little nook where visitors are encouraged to stop, rest, and reflect.

So many hands and hearts have worked together to ensure that this amazing lady is properly recognized for the tremendous impact she had on our community, and fittingly so; for we hope that her legacy may live on for future generations to learn about and to admire.
Dance Classes!

We are happy to announce that Rock Creek Sports Complex will now offer dance classes. Register Today!

~ Higher Ground Dance Academy ~

Classes we offer...

- Twinkle Twos
- Creative Movement (age 3/4)
- Kinder-Combo
- Ballet
- Jazz
- Lyrical/Contemporary
- Tap
- Praise Dance

* Descriptions of all classes are on our website. Dance games and fun props are used for our younger dancers.

Come Dance with Us!

Higher Ground Dance and Performing Arts Academy is excited to bring high quality and affordable dance classes to Dawsonville. Dance students develop self-confidence, positive self-esteem, artistic abilities, grace, musicality, and are keeping physical fit! Classes have a friendly atmosphere encouraging fun and self-improvement.

We are registering now. Our dance classes start in September and finish in May with a beautiful dance recital. We look forward to seeing everyone in dance class. No prior experience necessary. All are welcome.

Registration fee waved for the first twenty-five students to sign-up! Tuition is $45 per month (multi-class/sibling discounts available.) Come join us!

Check out our website for the dance class schedule and more information
www.highergrounddanceacademy.com
Phone: 678-451-2024
E-Mail: HigherGroundDanceAcademy@gmail.com
The Marshal’s Office originated in Dawson County in 2009. The mission of the Marshal’s Office is as it remains today, to “Ensure the health, safety, and welfare of the citizens of Dawson County through proactive enforcement and effectively adjudicating all complaints from citizens and other departments regarding alleged ordinance violations without bias and serve as an educator and liaison between the county government and the general public to explain and effectively defend the ideals embodied in the ordinances of the county.” To simplify, the main focus for the department was code ordinance enforcement. These duties are carried out by the Marshal or a Code Enforcement Officer. The person in charge of that job today is Sergeant Robbie Irvin.

Robbie Irvin is a graduate of North Georgia College and State University. He graduated in 1999 with a Bachelor of Science in Criminal Justice. That same year, he began his work with the Dawson County Sheriff’s Office. In June 2000, Irvin graduated from the Northeast Georgia Police Academy. He continued his work with DCSO for the next three years as a Patrol Officer and Civil/Warrants Officer under Court Services. In 2003, Robbie accepted the position of Code Enforcement Officer.

In October 2006, Irvin obtained his Georgia Code Enforcement Certification thru the Georgia Association of Code Enforcement. He then continued on to complete the GACE Master Code Enforcement Program in 2007. These programs were offered with training thru UGA’s Carl Vinson Institute of Government.

When the Marshal’s Office was created, the position of Code Enforcement Officer was transferred over from Planning and Development and Irvin was given the rank of Sergeant under Chief Marshal Jeff Johnson.

Robbie wears many hats for his role with the Marshal’s Office. His job duties include, but are not limited to:

- Serves as the primary enforcement agent of County ordinances.
- Aids the Sheriff’s Office and Emergency Services in the enforcement of the ATV ordinance, the noise ordinance, and the fire lane and right of way ordinances.
- Ensures compliance with 911 addressing standards and assigns/corrects addresses as required.
- Assists Sgt. Moss with animal control as required.
- Assists other county government staff as required.
- Liaison with state agencies such as EPD and Environmental Health, and serves as a point of contact for any other state or federal agency seeking enforcement of regulatory violations.

“Dawson County is lucky to have such a good Marshal staff. Ken and Robbie often times are asked to attempt to gain compliance on issues that no one else wants to deal with. Both officers do their respected jobs without bias and are extremely fair. I am very thankful for the work they do on a daily basis.”

~ David McKee, Director
Dawson County Planning Development
In 2011, the division of Animal Control was moved from the Dawson County Sheriff’s Office to be merged with the Marshal’s Office and returned to the direction of Dawson County Planning and Development under Director David McKee. At that time, Animal Control Officer Kenneth Moss joined the team.

Kenneth Moss joined the Dawson County Sheriff’s Office in February 2002. He began his career as a Detention Officer and then later moved to serve several years as a Patrol Officer before accepting a position with Animal Control in 2007. In 2011, he was promoted to Sergeant of Animal Control.

Although the departments are combined, Sergeant Moss primarily oversees the Animal Control complaints and provides assistance with Code Enforcement issues as needed. For a county populated by over 22,000 residents, many of whom have some type of pet or livestock, or multiples of, it is easy to see how demanding his job can be. The number one culprit is the abandonment of animals, specifically dogs and cats. The expansion of unwanted animals mostly stems from pets not being spayed and neutered and left to breed unlimitedly; most often leaving several litters of kittens and puppies unwanted and uncared for.

“If I could encourage the public to do anything, it would be to have their pets spayed and neutered; it would be the greatest kindness that they could show to their pets.” ~ Sgt. K. Moss

Dawson County Animal Control works very closely with the Dawson County Humane Society; their mission is to provide shelter and basic needs to Dawson County’s homeless dogs and cats. Please check out our local Humane Society and learn how you may be able to provide a loving home to a pet in need, provide volunteer services, or offer support to those pets waiting for a new home. Shelter hours are Tuesday - Saturday, 11:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.; Sunday 1:00 p.m. - 4:30 p.m.; closed every Monday. Or visit the website at: www.dawsoncountyhumanesociety.org

To contact the Marshal’s Office regarding a Code Enforcement issue, please call: 706.344.3232

To contact Animal Control, please call: 706.265.PETS(7387)

To contact the Dawson County Humane Society, please call: 706.265.9160
August 2013
Employee Anniversaries

5 Years
Jennifer Alday

“Justice and Power must be brought together, so that whatever is just may be powerful, and whatever is powerful may be just.”
~ Blaise Pascal

Dawson County Extension Office
Annual Farmer’s Market

Open throughout the Summer
on Wednesday and Saturday mornings
beginning at 7:30 a.m.

Located in the Extension Office parking lot at 298 Academy Ave.
Offering a variety of fresh vegetables, fruits, & cut flowers.
For more information call: 706.265.2442

Easy Cheesy Baked Zucchini

Ingredients
- 2 large Zucchini’s, washed & dried
- 1 cup shredded Mozzarella
- 4-5 Cherry tomatoes, thickly sliced
- 1 tbsp. Parmesan, finely grated
- Extra virgin Olive Oil
- Garlic Salt to taste
- Salt & Black Pepper to taste
- Basil Leaves (optional)

Directions
1. Preheat the oven to 350F
2. Slice the zucchini lengthwise, brush with oil and place on a baking pan.
3. Sprinkle with salt, pepper, parmesan and garlic salt as desired.
4. Divide mozzarella evenly over the 4 halves
5. Place tomato slices on top.
6. Place in oven and bake for 20 mins or until toasted.
7. Garnish with Basil Leaves if desired

Enjoy the days of Summer...
FALL SPORTS PEP RALLY
AND Movies in the Park™- Dawsonville

NORTHSIDE HOSPITAL FORSYTH

AUGUST 16, 2013

Activities begin at 6:00PM
Movie begins at dusk
at Veterans Memorial Park
football field
FREE Admission

SPIN ART • PHOTO BOOTH • WRESTLING EXHIBITION

FOOTBALL & BASEBALL THROW COMPETITION

CONCESSIONS • OUTDOOR MOVIE

IN THE EVENT OF INCLEMENT WEATHER, EVENT IS SUBJECT TO POSTPONEMENT OR CANCELLATION.

Activities will end upon the start of the movie.
Concessions available for purchase.

Contact 706-344-3646 or visit www.dawsoncounty.org for more information.