

City of Norcross

Monthly Newsletter

February 2011



Mayor

Bucky Johnson

Mayor Pro Tem

Ross Kaul

City Council

Andrew Hixson
David McLeroy
Charlie Riehm
Craig Newton

City Manager

Rudolph Smith

City Clerk

Susan B. Wuerzner

Deputy City Clerk

Monique Lang

City Hall

65 Lawrenceville Street
Norcross, GA 30071
Mon.—Fri. 8a.m.—5p.m.

Iron Sky Software Gives Norcross PD the Edge on Crime

A city-wide wireless surveillance project dubbed “Iron Sky” is being implemented in the City of Norcross as part of the Norcross Police Department’s (NPD) aggressively pro-active approach to public safety. Named after the Texas-based company that developed the project software, Iron Sky’s turnkey, wireless surveillance platform is comprised of off-the-shelf cameras and surveillance equipment, using innovative, customized software to record high resolution images.

According to NPD Chief Dallas Stidd, the goal is to “build a net” of surveillance equipment throughout the Norcross community, so that there is thorough, continuous monitoring of heavily trafficked areas. “This is very high-tech software that basically serves as another set of ‘eyes’ for us,” explained Chief Stidd. “In addition to monitoring problematic areas, this system will also help us apprehend criminals, as having high-quality recorded video will let us review activity after the fact if need be. We can zoom in on license plates, get a closer look at faces, and in short retrieve a lot of valuable information that we might not otherwise have access to. Iron Sky technology lets us do that in real time as well as when reviewing archived video.”



Norcross Police Chief Dallas Stidd plans to create a network of technology that protects law-abiding citizens.

Another benefit of the new system is a faster response time when an incident is reported. Every NPD patrol car will have transmitters that identify where they are in relation to the incident, so dispatch can see the closest patrol car and send it to the site. The system can also be manipulated to assess the geographic layout of the site and surrounding areas, allowing the police to make more informed decisions when responding to emergencies. The system can also be used to keep emergencies from occurring in the first place. “This will be a great way to monitor large crowds, like the ones Norcross experiences annually during Art Fest, and some of its other large events,” commented Stidd. “We can survey crowds in real time and identify areas where a problem might be developing, such as traffic intersections. That way, we can

send in the manpower to alleviate the situation before it becomes an actual safety issue.”

Video is recorded at 20-30 frames per second, 24 hours a day, and provides real-time surveillance capabilities as well as a recorded history. Activity can be viewed by officers in the field using wireless laptops. The cameras will be integrated to create “zones” that can each be surveyed at a potentially 360 degree radius. Using joysticks, the cameras can be manipulated by remote computer to zoom in, tilt and rotate to best view the area. *(continued on page 4)*



Iron Sky cameras record activity in high traffic areas for added police support.

Community Briefs

- **SAVE THE DATE: The 2011 State of the City Address** is scheduled for March 8th. Mayor Johnson will present a review of 2010 and provide an update on the community goals and status for the new year. This presentation will be held at 7p.m. in the Community Center ballroom in conjunction with the monthly Norcross Neighbors meeting.
- A \$5 service charge will be added to all credit card payments made online or called into the City of Norcross (there is currently no charge to walk-ins who pay with a credit card). This charge was effective as of January 1, 2011. Citizens have payment options that do not incur services fees; for more information, contact City Hall at 678.448.2122 or visit www.norcrossga.net and look under “General Government”.
- The fall schedule for leaf pick up services has changed, effective January 31, 2011. For an updated schedule of yard debris collection, visit www.norcrossga.net under Public Works & Utilities.



Together, We “CAN” Make A Difference in February!

This February, the City of Norcross is kicking off its first in a series of month-long campaigns designed to fill the shelves of local food pantries. It's part of the Gwinnett Municipal Association's annual "CAN" Do for Hunger project, where the county's 13 cities team together to meet the needs of hungry Gwinnett families. The goal is to support local food co-ops and pantries by collecting canned foods/dry goods at City events throughout the year.

For the first drive of 2011 in February we are asking everyone to "Open Your Heart" by donating to the "CAN" Do for Hunger. There will be a number of ways to support the "CAN" Do collection for Norcross' food pantries.

There will be a drop off box in City Hall and other city facilities for the entire month of February. On February 14th Norcross residents can leave their donations either on their porch or at their mailbox by 10:00am and the donations will be collected that day.

Also on February 14th, the City will sponsor special Valentine's Day events such as carriage rides and renewing of wedding vows downtown, and we ask that those participating bring a canned good or two as a donation to support the food drive.

Civic organizations, businesses, churches, schools, scout troops and individual citizens are encouraged to help with the collection of canned goods. Please get together with your neighbors, home owners' associations, family, friends and co-workers to collect canned goods and show that *the City of Norcross has an Open Heart!*

For further information or help in organizing your "CAN" Do food drive, please contact Norcross Code Enforcement Supervisor Philomena Robertson, Norcross' "CAN" Do Ambassador at [770-448-7327](tel:770-448-7327) or probertson@norcrossga.net.



Happenings

Current Exhibits

"Parallel Journeys" on exhibit through Feb 26

February 10, 6:30p.m.

A survivor of the Holocaust offers a message of hope

Train Artist Robert West exhibit includes

"A Norcross Love Affair"
Norcross Welcome Center

"A Room with A View"

Local artists explore different views from their own lives, as well as what is around us.

Exhibit runs through Feb 26
Kudzu Art Zone

Norcross is for Lovers

February 14th

Downtown Historic Norcross

Lionheart Theatre

"In Lieu of Flowers"

The perfect romantic tale for Valentine's Day

Feb 3 - 13

College Street Playhouse

For details and schedule info regarding all events, visit www.aplacetoimagine.com



Norcross is for Lovers: Enjoy a Downtown Valentine's Treat

White lights glitter in an avenue of trees. Soft music fills the air, as a white horse pulls a carriage for two along a glowing path of candles. Champagne and roses at dinner, a shared dessert and a gift, a chance to say "I do" all over again....imagine!

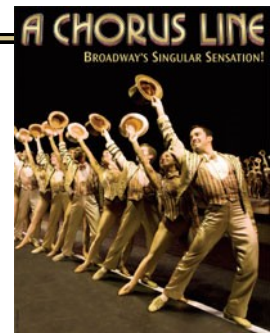
Historic Norcross embraces romance this Valentine's Day, offering a delightful experience for couples. It's "Norcross is for Lovers", when you can celebrate your special relationship by coming downtown for a delicious dinner for two, and shop for a special gift that says, "I love you". The carriage rides and chance to renew your vows are free from 7p.m. – 9p.m., and throughout the evening, restaurants are offering savory dinner and dessert specials. Norcross offers the perfect Valentine's "date night", whether it's the first one or one of many! It's also a chance to give a little love to others by donating a canned good to Norcross' "Open Your Heart" food drive. All donations will go to help fill the shelves of local food pantries.

For details, and a list of the heart-warming specials being offered by our local restaurants and shops, please visit www.aplacetoimagine.com.

Win Tickets to "A Chorus Line"

Sign up for emails from the city—everyone on the list by March 1st will be entered into a drawing for two tickets (and great seats!) to "A Chorus Line", part of Gas South's Broadway Series at the beautiful Cobb Energy Performing Arts Centre. All you need to do is go to aplacetoimagine.com and click on the sign up link. If you win, we'll notify you via email on March 2nd—the show runs March 17—20th.

These tickets are just one of the many benefits of the alliance between Gas South and the Norcross community. For the lowest published rates on natural gas in Georgia, plus a two cent discount for Norcross residents and businesses, simply go to www.gas-south/norcross.com and sign up today. And since you'll be on the city email list now, you'll be getting regular updates on local events and activities, including more contests with exciting awards, courtesy of Gas South!



GAS SOUTH

Keeping Down the Decibels

While no one wants to stop their neighbor from having a good time, it is important to remember to be courteous to those who live around you. The City of Norcross has a noise ordinance that prohibits excessively loud music and noise, especially during the hours of 11p.m. to 7a.m. The ordinance reads as follows: "It shall be unlawful for any person to make, continue or cause to be made or continued any loud, unnecessary or unusual sound or noise which unreasonably annoys, disturbs, injures or endangers the comfort, repose, health, peace or safety of others in the city, and which is audible to a person of normal hearing ability more than 50 feet from the point of origin of this sound or noise." A good volume check is to see if the music is turned up to a volume that is "louder...than is reasonably necessary for convenient hearing for the person who is in the room... and who is a voluntary listener."



When the good times are underway, it's often hard to think about the impact on others living nearby. But if you're hosting a party this year, please be considerate and remember, "what goes around comes around". While *that* isn't a city ordinance, it's a good thing to keep in mind - if you ever need a cup of sugar, you'll be glad you did your part in keeping the peace with neighbors!



Nixle Users Knew!

No question that the city got socked in big time in what has been unofficially dubbed, "Snow Daze 2011". If you were a Nixle user, you were alerted in advance that the massive weather system was headed our way, as well as were kept alert of most local road closings due to icy conditions. This was an excellent example of how useful and pro-active the Nixle public safety alert system is for local residents and business owners. In addition to weather-related alerts, Nixle also gives users a heads up if there are public safety concerns, as well as educates citizens about programs and services offered by the Norcross Police Department. Nixle is free to use, secure to use, and alerts can be directed as a text message to your cell phone, as well as via email. The city is working to develop this strong communications tool that gets information regarding public safety out to as many people in the community as possible, as quickly as possible. Make sure you and your family are "in the know" and sign up for Nixle today at www.nixle.com.

Holocaust Survivors Offer Message of Hope

The message behind the current exhibit at the Norcross Welcome Center & History Museum is one meant for the world. The exhibit is called "Parallel Journeys" and recounts the lives of dozens of teenagers--not all of them heroic--who were witnesses, participants, and often victims of World War II and the Holocaust. While its stories and visuals are specific to that time and place, its significance transcends time, conveying an urgent and relevant point to young people of today.

The exhibit is based on a book which was born of an unexpected partnership. As a teenager, German-born Alfons Heck was an active member of the Hitler Youth. In "Parallel Journeys" his co-author is Helen Waterford, a German-born Jew whose family fled to the Netherlands to escape persecution, but were turned in to the Gestapo and taken to the concentration camp at Auschwitz.

The two met decades after the war. Alfons had become disillusioned by the ideology of the Third Reich and arrested by the French for wartime activities. He later immigrated to Canada and wrote about Hitler Youth, before becoming a U.S. citizen in 1963.

Helen endured Auschwitz for over a year before the camp was liberated by Soviet troops in 1945; while there, she became friends with Margo, Edith and teenager Anne Frank, whose diary posthumously became one of the most widely-read books in the world. Helen came to the U.S. in 1947 but it wasn't until 1980, when Helen saw Alfons's articles on Hitler Youth, that the two met and initiated a partnership resulting in the book "Parallel Journeys".

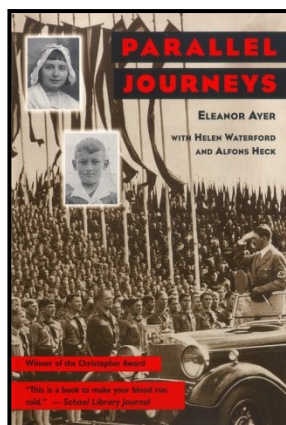
In the introduction of the book it reads, "Laws will not keep people from hating; the healing must come from the human soul." The exhibit offers a fresh and intriguing perspective of the powers of both evil and the healing that can come from understanding. The message is one of hope, that through remembering and sharing experiences, the world can learn to embrace diversity and promote social justice. The exhibit is designed to speak to our youth, for it is our children who hold the future. Yet its ultimate message is universal, and will speak to the hearts of all who will listen and see.

The Norcross Welcome Center & History Museum will have "Parallel Journeys" on exhibit through February 26th. The exhibit is considered appropriate for middle-school children ages 11 or 12 and older (content maybe considered "too much" for younger children). **On February 10th, from 7pm – 8:30pm, Holocaust survivor Herbert Kohn will present at the Welcome Center**, as part of the "Parallel Journeys" program offered by The William Breman Jewish Heritage & Holocaust Museum.

Both the exhibit and the speaker's presentation are free to the public. Regular center hours are 8a.m. – 5p.m. Monday through Friday. For more information about the center and scheduled activities and exhibits, please visit www.norcrossga.net or call the Center Coordinator, Cate Kitchen, at 678.421.2049.



The Norcross Welcome Center & History Museum, 189 Lawrenceville Street (where it's always spring from the looks of it!)





Project Iron Sky (continued from page 1)

The planned network of fixed surveillance cameras, which is being paid for with funds from the sales of seized drug property, will be implemented in two phases. The first set of cameras will be installed in Norcross' Thrasher Park, the 4.2 acre Lillian Webb Park, and along the Buford Highway corridor where it passes through city limits. "This will create a grid that we can tie the next phase of equipment into," explained Chief Stidd. "In the next phase, we plan to integrate Beaver Ruin Road and eventually, the Brook Hollow area. We'll be able to observe everything from someone spraying graffiti to observing traffic incidents and burglaries. It's a very positive and innovative way to serve and support Norcross' law-abiding citizens."

With a population of well over 10,000 citizens, the City of Norcross covers an area of approximately 4.5 square miles. Implementing the Iron Sky surveillance solution will allow the NPD to significantly expand its public safety capabilities without increasing manpower. The NPD has a consistent record of employing pro-active public safety measures that are supported by the community. Technology-based platforms such as Nixle and crimereports.com are already used to alert citizens to potential safety concerns in the area and to keep them informed of situations arising from weather or traffic issues. The NPD is CALEA certified and rated at the "Flagship level", identifying it as one of the top 1% of the top 5% of all law enforcement agencies in the U.S.

The City of Norcross is one of only a handful of metro Atlanta municipalities to integrate Iron Sky platforms into their security program. Success with the program has been reported by other cities such as Lilburn, Decatur, MidTown Atlanta and College Park. For more information about Iron Sky's map-driven surveillance platform, go to www.ironsky.com. For more information about the Norcross Police Department and The City of Norcross, please visit www.norcrossga.net.

CITY NUMBERS

Business License
678.421.2061

Community Center
678.421.2025

Courts & Tickets
770.448.2173

Economic Development
678.421.2023

Yard Debris Pick-up
678.421.2057

Permits & Signs
770.449.4062

Police Non-Emergency
770.448.2111

Property Tax
678.421.2061

Street Lights
678.421.2000

Streets & Paving
678.421.2018

Trash Pick-up
770.448.3447

Utilities Service
770.448.2122

PR/Downtown Manager
678.421.2033

In late November, a public Town Hall meeting was held to communicate the facts and goals of the annexation proposal. To see the presentation and review the related facts, please visit www.norcrossga.net and click on "Municipal", then "Community Development". You can also contact City Development Director, Chris McCrary, at cmccrary@norcrossga.net, or 678.421.2067. A map of the proposed area is also available online or at City Hall, 2nd floor.

New Public Works Facility Streamlines Services

Huge changes recently took place for many Norcross city support departments. They all moved! These include the power, water and sewer, storm water, highways and streets, and parks and recreation departments. Prior to this building on Lively Street being finished, Norcross' public works and utilities offices were scattered in buildings and lots around the city, a result of the fast growth this department has experienced as the quality and quantity of city services continues to expand.

This new consolidated facility cost \$2.2M and took approximately five and a half months to complete. It has successfully replaced and centralized all of those departments under one roof and is under the direction of Mr. Craig A. Mims. The city initially had identified another potential site, but it came with a much higher price tag, approximately \$3.6M. With a bit of creative thinking and thorough research, the site on Lively Street was determined to offer the best value in terms of cost and location.

The funds for this project were generated through the Special-Purpose Local-Option Sales Tax (SPLOST) program. According to Mr. Mims, the construction ran very smoothly with very few challenges and remained on-time and on-budget. For the citizens of the city of Norcross, there are substantial savings to be realized over the long term that will be tallied in terms of improved customer service, inventory control and employee accountability.

Residents are encouraged to call Mary Beth Bender at 678-421-2000 to schedule touring the complex but may also come by anytime during business hours, 8a.m. – 5p.m. Monday through Friday. For more information about the services offered by Norcross' Public Works and Utilities Department, visit www.norcrossga.net.



City of Norcross Public Works & Utilities now headquartered at 345 Lively Street

For current community news, alerts and events updates, visit www.norcrossga.net