



## Walk to school day...

On a cold and wet Wednesday morning in mid-October, several Norcross volunteers convinced about 50 kids from Summerour Middle School to bag the bus and walk to school. Summerour was one of over 100 Georgia elementary and middle schools with students participating in an International Walk to School Day.

Safe Routes to School is a National Department of Transportation Program promoting a healthier lifestyle by encouraging children to walk or bike to school. Opting out on a bus ride not only helps fight obesity and diabetes but also reduces fuel consumption, air pollution and asthma.

At first, the early morning mood was quiet, as kids gathered at their regular bus stop. With the chilly temperatures and

drizzle, kids admitted to being surprised that these “crazy adults” seriously wanted them to walk instead of ride in the dry warmth of a bus. But they had been encouraged in advance by their parents and Summerour teachers, so when the bus arrived, the whole group turned and headed off down the sidewalk instead.

“Actually, we weren’t sure if they were going to do it,” laughed Denis Rowe, one of the adult volunteers. “But then one of the older girls started teasing the boys that they were wimps if they didn’t walk, and then no one would get on the bus!” Participating schools follow a program sponsored by the Georgia

DOT’s Safe Routes to School (SRTS) Resource Center. Locally, Summerour’s SRTS Task Force was selected by Georgia’s SRTS as only one of six in the state to receive professional assistance from national transportation experts to create an actionable transportation plan that includes better sidewalks, crosswalks and more speed zones along areas where children are walking to school. This plan will be the basis of funding requests to remove barriers that might impede safely walking and biking within a 2 mile radius of Summerour.

The walking team included volunteers from Sustainable Norcross, Norcross Cluster Schools Partnership and the City of Norcross. These groups are all key members of the SRTS Task Force that originated in March as part of the Atlanta Regional Commission’s certification process that recognized Norcross as a Green Community. The Kick Off event was a Walk and Bike to School Day in May followed by a Bike Rodeo conducted by the Norcross Police Department. The spring event will be held in March in conjunction with Georgia Walk to School Day.

Arriving in the warm Summerour cafeteria where juice and fresh muffins were provided by Brian Mock of the Hampton Inn, the mood was much more energetic. Rosy cheeks and an obvious sense of accomplishment marked the kids who had made the trek – an added perk being they got to be a bit late for class so they could eat their muffins. When asked if they’d walk to school every day though, only a few kids raised their hands. “It was cold and the girls walk too slow,” explained one seventh grade boy. “But when it gets warm again, I’ll think about it for sure.”



**Mayor**  
Bucky Johnson

**Mayor Pro Tem**  
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**City Council**  
Andrew Hixson  
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Craig Newton  
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**City Manager**  
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**City Clerk**  
Susan B. Wuerzner

**Deputy City Clerk**  
Monique Lang

**City Hall**  
65 Lawrenceville Street  
Norcross, GA 30071  
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8am — 5pm  
770.448.2122  
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## HISTORY FINDS A HOME...

One hundred forty-three years of Norcross’ rich history have been encapsulated in a new exhibit at the Norcross Welcome Center. Nine panels weave stories and photos that begin in 1870 when John J. Thrasher auctioned off plots of land surrounding the railroad and end with the modern day branding of Norcross as “a place to imagine.”

These nine panels compose the first phase of an exhibit which will be permanently housed in the center’s Norcross History Room. The second phase, which

depicts Norcross’ famed baseball history, is underway and according to Welcome Center Coordinator, Cate Kitchen, should be completed by the first part of December. “[Resident] Carl Garner has been very graciously working with me to create this new tribute to Norcross’ baseball history,” she explained. “There will be five more panels that tell the history of area baseball, as well as a display of the baseball artifacts that are currently in City Hall. Mr. Garner and I are both excited about the opportunity to create a permanent home for this collection.”

While there will be a grand opening celebration once the full exhibit is complete, visitors are invited to stop by beforehand and see the panels currently in place.



Located by the fire station at 189 Lawrenceville Street, the center is open Monday through Friday from 8am to 5pm. For more information, contact Cate Kitchen at 678.421.2049 or ckitchen@norcrossga.net.

A scene from "Mutant," a truly unique movie shot in Historic Norcross. Credit Courtesy of the Norcross Welcome Center.



## FILMED IN NORCROSS:

# The Worst B Movies Ever

By Meg Donahue, courtesy norcrosspatch.com

Atlanta has become a mini-Hollywood of late. Movies like "Due Date" and "The Blind Side" have been filmed in the capital city, not to mention television shows like AMC's "The Walking Dead" and CW's "Vampire Diaries." Small towns like Cleveland, Juliette and Zebulon have stood in for towns as far afield as Jackson, Mississippi or Providence, Rhode Island.

Norcross has also had a small taste of fame or, rather, infamy in regard to films shot on location. While other towns and communities take a certain bit of pride in award-winning films produced in their neighborhood, Norcross takes a certain bit of pride in the fact that perhaps the worst B movies in history were made here.

Norcross' interesting filmography stretches back to 1972 with a film called "J.C.," according to Cate Kitchen, the museum coordinator for the Norcross Welcome Center. The film concerns Jesus Christ reborn on earth and heading up a motorcycle gang. Slim Pickens, of "Doctor Strangelove" fame, played the town sheriff with Norcross Councilman Don Deleon taking a small part as deputy sheriff. "It was really neat," says Deleon, "They did a lot of filming over at the [train] depot and used the jail."

Deleon remembers a stunt he had to perform where he had to pretend to shoot an actor off his motorcycle. Originally, the stunt man was to fall off his bike and to fall in such a way that stopped the motorcycle from going forward without the driver. The stunt didn't go according to plan and the rider-less bike continued down the street until it ultimately smashed into the main window of Johnson's Store. Deleon chuckles when he recalls the finished product, which he sums up in one word: "horrible."

In 1984 a film called "Mutant" was shot in downtown Norcross. In the film, mutant zombies had been created by toxic waste in the environment and were attempting to overrun the town. Dr. Woods' Veterinary Clinic was featured in the film as the main character's office.

Norcross' most recent brush with Hollywood came in 1992 when scenes from the Emilio Estevez/Mick Jagger film "Freejack" were shot in town. The film centered on a racecar driver in 1992, time traveling moments before his death to 2007 New York where his brain would be transplanted with that of a dying billionaire. Estevez predictably escapes and Jagger, playing a bounty hunter, must return him to New York. The film received a 17 percent on the movie review website "Rotten Tomatoes." *Entertainment Weekly* film critic Owen Gleiberman said of the film, "...the lack of a budget is so glaringly apparent...that it becomes downright touching."

Why have all of these "B" movies been shot here? Kitchen believes that the small-town look of Norcross is the reason. With Norcross' quaint feel it is easy to see why sci-fi and horror film producers are drawn to the town. After all, you rarely see zombies or bounty hunters or motorcycle gangs terrifying the citizens of large cities like Boston or New York. It seems to be a film staple to terrify the citizens of small, southern towns. If that's the formula, Norcross fits the bill. Perhaps one day an Oscar-winning, big-budget movie will be shot here, but until then Norcross will have to be proud of the fact that some of the worst movies ever made were shot on our home turf.

## BACK 2 SCHOOL ~ Snacks 4 Kids Drive a Success

By Philomena Robertson

The September "CAN" Do food drive with the theme of "Back 2 School ~ Snacks for Kids" was a huge success. Once again Norcross has shown we really are A Place to Imagine.

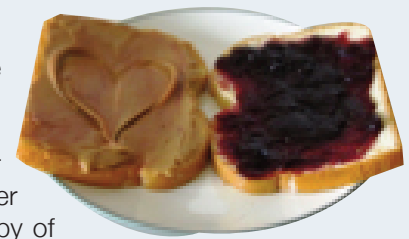
The donation bin in the lobby of City Hall reached full capacity more than once during the month-long drive. Many businesses, schools and civic groups held their own drives. For this drive alone, we collected \$250 and 6,792 canned and non-perishable food and snack items. 100% of the money and goods were donated to the Norcross Co-operative Ministries where they will be put to good use helping children and families in our community.

On behalf of the City of Norcross, I want to thank everyone who donated to this drive and made it such a huge success. We would also like to thank the following for organizing their own "in-house" Back 2 School ~ Snacks 4 Kids Food Drive in conjunction with the City of Norcross drive:

Ace Trucking, 45 South Café, RockTenn, Bank of Georgia, Norcross Masonic Lodge, Fowler YMCA, Norcross Elementary School, Stripling Elementary School, Norcross Christian Academy, Norcross Business Association and the Gwinnett County Gangs Investigations Unit. We say "Together We 'CAN'

Make A Difference" and the generosity shown for this food drive proved we did!!

NOTE: The donation bins for the 2011 "CAN" Do for Hunger Campaign will remain in the lobby of City Hall. Look for our November/December drive: "Put A Little Happy In The Holidays – Give A Can – Give Thanks."



## Holiday Yard Decorating Contest!

Help make Norcross shine for the holidays! In a contest sponsored by the shops of Downtown Historic Norcross, judges will pick the best and most creative front yards, looking for Best Overall, Most Creative, Most Whimsical and Best Traditional. Set your stage for a beautiful holiday – the judges will be out on December 10th. Prizes go to the winners in each category, so pull the stops and let's make outdoor Norcross a holiday place to imagine!





**Residents who get home via Valley Road can be reassured that the drainage repairs project will soon be completed!** Several rain delays and the discovery of a gas line where one wasn't supposed to be have delayed the project; however, Public Works has been diligently working to keep things moving. According to Public Works Director Craig Mims, "When crews discovered the location of the gas line had been mismarked by the gas company, we had a choice.

We could either relocate the line or re-engineer the project. Re-locating would have taken several weeks and additional dollars; re-engineering significantly reduced that delay and will still provide successful results. It still took time to adjust, but we're making every effort to minimize any inconvenience to area residents. The project is currently online for completion in mid-November."

## 2011 Cox Conserves Heroes - Help Connie Weathers Win for Sustainable Norcross!

Want to help win \$5,000 for Sustainable Norcross? It's as easy as the click of a mouse. Cox Conserves Heroes has opened voting for its annual contest, which awards \$5,000 to a "hero" in the Atlanta area who promotes sustainability. Norcross resident Connie Weathers has been selected as one of the finalists, ensuring that she will take home at least \$1,250 for the Sustainable Norcross, her selected non-profit. Connie founded Sustainable Norcross, a volunteer environmental advisory and action group. She also serves on the city's Greenspace Commission and chaired the citywide Parks Master Plan Task Force. Connie is a constant advocate for greenspace, recycling and sustainable activities such as community gardens, rain barrels and invasive plant removals. Councilmember Ross Kaul was in a video produced by WSB, telling viewers about the hard work Connie dedicates to the Norcross community. "If I have an idea, I call Connie and she'll think for a minute and then say, 'here's what we could do.' Her creativity and energy is amazing – we've only had a sustainability effort for two years and already Connie has helped Norcross achieve a silver level award for sustainability and now she's working to help us earn the gold. Connie's my hero – she's the City of Norcross' hero."

While Ms. Weathers admits she commits long hours to the local sustainability cause, she credits the whole community for Sustainable Norcross' success. "It's because of the public-spiritedness of the Norcross citizens and all the hard work of the volunteers, that we have this opportunity," said Ms. Weathers. "And while Sustainable Norcross has achieved a great deal, there is still so much more that we envision for the community. If we win this award, the \$5,000 will go a long way to helping us achieve our goals."

The Atlanta-area finalists are: Connie Weathers (Sustainable Norcross); Greg Burson (Park Pride); Lane Hurst (Elachee Nature Science Center); Malcolm Barnard (Johns Creek Community Wildlife Habitat); Na'Taki Osborne-Jelks (West Atlanta Watershed Alliance). Just go to [www.coxconservesheroes.com](http://www.coxconservesheroes.com) to cast your vote before November 7th; the winning hero and the recipient of the \$5000 prize will be announced on November 18th. The contest is sponsored by Cox Enterprises and The Trust for Public Land.



On September 13th, Norcross resident Mrs. Evelyn Fern Ginan Dray celebrated her 100th Birthday! The remarkable occasion was recognized by the Mayor and Council with a formal proclamation. Mrs. Dray, who has lived in Norcross since 1985, is the mother of two children, Patricia Evelyn Schuler and Russell Charles Dray, 5 grandchildren and 15 great grandchildren.

## Toys for Tots Golfers Call!

November 14th is the 4th Annual Toys for Tots Golf Tournament at Berkeley Lakes Country Club. Sponsored by the Greater Norcross Golfer's Association, this fun tournament kicks off the Marines' annual holiday drive in Gwinnett County. Last year, their Gwinnett drive collected over 715,000 toys; Marines handed them out to needy families and supported organizations throughout the entire metro Atlanta area. Hosted by Norcross resident Tom McDermott, this golf tournament is a super fun, very relaxed opportunity to play for a good cause. It's open to everyone regardless of handicap (it's a scramble) – there are always lots of great prizes, bad jokes and hot food 'n toddies to round out the day. To sign up for this year's tournament and support a gratifying cause, email [tommcdermott@bellsouth.net](mailto:tommcdermott@bellsouth.net).

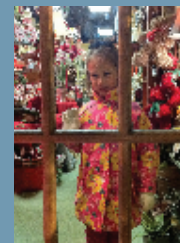


## Time for a Date Night!

November 12th is Date Night Downtown, offering grown-ups a last breather before the holidays hit. Enjoy dinner downtown, then stroll over to Lionheart Theatre, where Pearl Cleage's "Blues for an Alabama Sky" is on the playbill (for details, visit [www.lionhearttheatre.org](http://www.lionhearttheatre.org)). During the intermission, check out The Nest next door, Norcross' newest art center. Afterwards, visit the Vargas & Harbin Studio Gallery, there's live music at 45 South Café and karaoke at the Iron Horse Tavern. Make it a date to unwind in the heart of our romantic old town.

## Shop. Savor. Sip. Save!

What sparkles, beckons and begs to be wrapped? It could be a necklace to put on Santa's list, or a darling elf to set on your mantle. November 19th is the merchant's annual Holiday Open House, the official beginning of holiday shopping! Get a relaxing head start on your gift giving lists, support locally-owned businesses and save yourself the headaches of the malls. From 10am to 8pm, Norcross shops will be offering samples to nibble on as you wander through, door prizes and discounts and lots of other open house treats. There is beautiful jewelry in all price ranges, home accents, aromatherapy goods, art and antiques and fabulous gift baskets. From hostess gifts to that "perfect something" for those you love best, downtown shops will offer a plethora of holiday choices. Enjoy breakfast, lunch, a snack and dinner with lots of great shopping in between.



## Retail Therapy for the Post-Turkey Blues

If you have family in town for Thanksgiving, why not treat them to a post-turkey day in downtown? On Friday and Saturday after the feast, several shops will be open until 8pm. Take a break from turkey leftovers – the restaurants will be open, and downtown will be festive with holiday decor and music.

# Property Maintenance Ammendment

On October 3, 2011, the City Council voted to make some changes to city codes regarding property maintenance. The City has had property maintenance regulations for years, but Council decided to update those codes to allow for a more pleasing visual environment and for a higher quality of life for all residents.


There are two additions to Norcross' property maintenance code. One addition states that all clotheslines, racks and similar devices are not allowed in front or side yards but only in the rear yard and five (5) feet from any property line. Hanging clothes on natural objects such as shrubs, trees and similar objects is not allowed. If a resident claims that this causes them unnecessary hardship or is otherwise unable to hang clothes as code requires, then that resident can apply for a waiver. Waivers will be reviewed and approved or denied by the Community Development Director.

The second addition to code states that the unpaved areas of front yards shall be maintained with grass, ground cover or other type of landscaping to such an extent that the soil is not subject to erosion. This is to ensure that our neighborhoods look as good as possible, and it also minimizes runoff that can clog storm water systems.

According to Community Development Director Chris McCrary, "We understand that these changes may be confusing and cause some inconveniences as corrections are made. Our staff is here to help, and we encourage people to call us with questions. Additionally, if you do get a visit from our Code Enforcement Officers, you will be given a warning and time frame to correct the problem. As long as the problem is corrected within that time period, you will not be issued a citation, and therefore no fine."

**Updated code information can be found online at [www.norcrossga.net](http://www.norcrossga.net) under "Municipal" then under "Code Enforcement." In addition, questions can be directed to the department by calling 770.448.7327.**

## Harvest Homecoming – Dance for Our Kids!



The Norcross Cluster School Partnership (NCSP) invites you to attend their second annual benefit, the Harvest Homecoming Dance, Saturday, November 12, 2011, at 7pm. The event will be an exciting and festive evening at the newly remodeled Racquet Club of the South. "Shangri-La" will be live, performing cover tunes from the 60's to present.

There will be plenty of tasty food to eat

and a cash bar. A silent auction will offer an amazing collection of vacation getaways, sports tickets, dining coupons, arts and crafts treasures and more.

Come to the Harvest Homecoming Dance and join the NCSP in making a difference for Norcross' schoolchildren and the community's future.

For more info and tickets, visit [www.norcrosscsp.org](http://www.norcrosscsp.org). Tickets also on sale at 45 South Café.

**Community Updates:** This year's tax bills and storm water fees were mailed out to the community on September 15, 2011. The payment due date is November 15, 2011, by 5:00pm (postmark date does not apply – they must be received at City Hall by this date). Even if you do not receive a bill, you are responsible for payment, so please be sure to call the city administration offices at 770.448.2122 if you don't have the bills or have any questions.



**The city's administration offices will be closed on November 17th from 11:30am to 1:30pm for an employee Thanksgiving luncheon.** Holiday hours for City Hall are as follows: the City will be closed on November 11th in honor of Veteran's Day. Thanksgiving holidays will be celebrated with closings on November 24 – 25. The City will be closed December 23 – 26 in observance of Christmas, and January 2nd for New Year's celebration. Although city administration offices will be closed at these times, emergency personnel and public safety officials will remain on duty and on-call 24/7.

**Election Update:** Don't forget to vote in the city elections! November 8th is election day; Craig Newton, Councilmember (incumbent) is opposed by Greg McFarland. Electors may cast a ballot in person in the second floor community room of the City of Norcross, Georgia. Early voting began on October 17th and continues through election day on November 8th. Polls are open Monday through Friday from 8:30am to 4:30pm. If you have any questions, please call the City Clerk's office at 770-448-7086.

## Happenings

**November 4 - 20**

"Blues for an Alabama Sky"

Lionheart Theatre

[www.lionhearttheatre.org](http://www.lionhearttheatre.org)

**November 5th – 6th**

Norcross Welcome Center  
presents Jewelry Artists Debbie  
Calvert and Susan Lynch

**November 11th**

Veteran's Day (City Hall closed)

**November 12th**

Date Night Downtown

**November 14th**

Annual Toys for Tots Golf  
Tournament

**November 19th**

Downtown Merchant's Annual  
Holiday Open House

**November 24th**

Thanksgiving (City Hall closed  
today and Friday)

For event details, visit  
[www.aplacetoimagine.com](http://www.aplacetoimagine.com)



## CITY NUMBERS

Business Licenses 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