

CHATTAHOOCHEE HILLS WEEKLY READER

January 1, 2010

Promoting active and informed citizenship in Chattahoochee Hills



The Stephens Celebrate a New Year and a Long Life

By Laurie Searle

The year was 1941. Thomas Earl Stephens, known to his friends as T.E., had helped pick cotton on the family farm all day before walking the three-mile stretch on Upper Wooten Rd to the school on Rico Rd. There was to be a *Cake Walk* – one of the few organized social activities back then.

Dorothy Melear, known to her friends as Dot, had a shorter walk to the social from her family home at the corner of Rico Rd and Upper Wooten Rd, which was a good thing. Having grown up with sidewalks and paved roads in Newnan, she was still unaccustomed to walking the dirt roads of Rico, which could quickly turn into a muddy mess after an unexpected shower.

They arrived at the *Cake Walk* with expectations of fellowship and confectionery treats. Little did they know that after meeting each other, they would leave with something far sweeter – they would become sweethearts for life.

Continued . . .



The Weekly Reader is a publication of the Chattahoochee Hills Civic Association.

To receive print copies, mail a book of stamps to:

Chattahoochee Hills Civic Association
Attn: Weekly Reader
P.O. Box 204
Chattahoochee Hills, GA 30268

To receive electronic copies or to share news, please contact: info@chatthills.org or call 770.463.5169 or 770.463.0100.

The Chattahoochee Hills Civic Association works in partnership with citizens, businesses, organizations, and government to protect and promote the health, safety, and welfare of the citizens and land of Chattahoochee Hills, GA.

Officers:

Tom Reed, President
Laurie Searle, Vice President
Ruby Foster, Treasurer
Adria Whitford, Secretary

The Stephens Celebrate a New Year and a Long Life

Dot and T.E. married in 1942 while T.E. was home on furlough, but then like many couples of the time, T.E. had to return to military duty. He spent two and a half years in the Seabees, the Construction Battalions of the United States Navy, and recalls the day he received notice of his first born child, while he was in a foxhole.

“There was a Red Cross girl, who crawled a half of mile or better to tell me I had a baby girl,” he said. “That was in Guadalcanal during our first invasion. I never knew if that Red Cross girl made it back or not.” Dot had given birth to Elaine, their first born, in her mother’s home in Rico, with Dr. Tanner attending. It was two years, one month, and three days before T.E. saw Elaine.

When T.E. got out of the service, the young couple settled in their house on Rico Rd, where they raised their children Elaine, Tommy, Nina, and Nancy. The home was typical of the homes in the Rico area at that time. Its kitchen had an ice box, which was replenished with a block of ice each week, kerosene stove, and a two-eye burner for cooking. The Stephen’s home was notable for being the first in the community to have indoor hot water, an exterior security light (that cost \$7 a month) and one of the first telephones.

Dot and T.E. have been active civic leaders in the community most all of their lives. They both served as officers in the Rico Civics Club and helped the community by raising funds and support to pave the roads, install telephone service, make improvements to the community center, and raise funds for students to go to Washington D.C.

Dot’s brother, Bill Melear, was also active in the Rico Civics Club and was instrumental in advocating for the South Fulton Parkway. Dot and T.E. worked with other local civic leaders and Fulton County Commissioners to recognize Bill’s efforts by naming a portion of South Fulton Parkway after him. The portion of the Parkway from Rivertown Rd to Cochran Mill Rd has been designated the Bill Melear Parkway.

The Chattahoochee Hills Historical Society has honored Dot and T.E. Stephens for their years of service to the community by documenting their life in our Oral History Project, which is available on our Website at: www.chattahoocheehillshistoricalsociety.com.



CIVIC UPDATES

Taxation Input Request

Contributed by Fulton County Commissioner Lynn Riley

County Resident and Taxpayer,

Thank you very much for providing feedback on how your tax dollars should be spent in Fulton County. As a Commissioner, I represent the interests of the citizens, and this is best done through an open communication process.

I invite you to attend any of the next Commission meetings to directly express your comments on the 2010 budget to us.

- Wednesday, January 6, 2009 at 10:00 am.
- Wednesday, January 20, 2009 at 10:00 am.

The meetings are held in the Assembly Hall, Fulton County Government Center, 141 Pryor St. SW, Atlanta, GA 30303.

They are also video conferenced from the North Annex on Roswell Road in Sandy Springs and the South Annex on Stonewall Tell Road in Fairburn. Public comment can be made directly to the Board of Commissioners from either Annex.

I encourage you to share your thoughts and suggestions with every member of the Fulton County Board of Commissioners. E-mail may be sent to:

- John Eaves, Commission Chairman John.Eaves@FultonCountyGA.gov
- Robb Pitts, Commissioner at large Robb.Pitts@FultonCountyGA.gov
- Lynne Riley, Commissioner – District 3, Lynne.Riley@FultonCountyGA.gov
- Tom Lowe, Commissioner – District 4, Tom.Lowe@FultonCountyGA.gov
- Emma Darnell, Commissioner – District 5, Emma.Darnell@FultonCountyGA.gov
- Nancy Boxill, Commissioner – District 6, Nancy.Boxill@FultonCountyGA.gov
- William Edwards, Commissioner – District 7, William.Edwards@FultonCountyGA.gov

Thank you again for your involvement in the delivery of effective government services.

Lynne Riley

Commissioner - District 3

2010 U.S. Census Reminder: Security-related Hills

Forwarded Tom Reed

As you have read here previously, the first phase of the 2010 U.S. Census is underway: census workers are knocking on doors to verify address information and official census forms are scheduled to be mailed in March 2010.

The U.S. Census Bureau and Better Business Bureau ask you to be aware of potential census fraud and keep the following security-related information in mind during this important, year-long process:

- Any request for census information from the Census Bureau will be delivered by the U.S. Postal Service and clearly marked as coming from the U.S. Census Bureau and as OFFICIAL BUSINESS of the United States.
- The U.S. Census is NOT conducted by e-mail; DO NOT open any e-mails or attachments that appear to be census related. If you receive a fraudulent census e-mail, forward it to itso.fraud.reporting@census.gov.
- An official census worker will show you Census Bureau identification; ask to see it before answering any questions.
- Census workers will NOT ask for your Social Security number, bank account, or credit cards and will NOT solicit donations. You are under no obligation to answer any questions about your salary or financial situation.
- If you suspect that the census worker is not genuine, call the Atlanta Regional Census Center at 404-335-1555 to confirm the person's identity.

=====

Public Safety Notices

From the Chattahoochee Hills Public Safety Department

Copper Thefts

From Chief Jones

Copper Wire theft is a huge problem throughout the US. Because of our city's rural nature, it has become a very appealing area for copper thieves. A new trend has led thieves to begin stealing aerial phone lines. These phone wires are about four inches in diameter, and basically all copper. When these lines are cut, it causes loss of phone and internet service to all surrounding customers. The lines are expensive and very hard to repair, and there is an obvious safety concern when people don't have telephone access.

We are looking for is any unauthorized people climbing telephone poles. Greystone Power Company and AT&T Technicians should be the only people servicing utilities in our area and therefore the only people climbing the telephone poles. Greystone Power and AT&T employee's are typically in a large bucket trucks and wear similar uniforms consisting of navy blue pants and a light blue shirt. When not working out of a bucket, they use fiberglass yellow ladders.

Along with phone lines, we are looking for large amounts of electrical wires, pipe, air conditioner parts and even the stems of a fire hydrant that are being transported or stored. Most electrical and phone wires are burned to remove the plastic coating.

If anyone notices this type of activity, please call 911.

=====

First sobriety checkpoint of 2010 is set for New Year's Weekend

When: Thursday, December 31, 2009 to Friday, January 1, 2010 5:00 PM - 3:00 AM

Why: The purpose of the sobriety checkpoint is to reduce the number of traffic collisions involving intoxicated drivers and hit and run collisions. The checkpoint will educate the community to use designated drivers and not drink and drive. Our message is simple: If we catch you drunk, you will be arrested.

The Chattahoochee Hills Police Department will focus on alcohol related offenses through very visible and active law enforcement. Officers will stop vehicles passing through the checkpoint and ask for driver licenses. The exact location of the checkpoint is NOT being released to the public. Any driver suspected of operating a vehicle while under the influence of drugs or alcohol will be directed to a safe area off the roadway for further observation and possible testing for intoxication.

It is the Chattahoochee Hills Police Department's goal to continue providing public awareness on the dangers of drinking and driving, and the laws concerning driving without a valid driver's license. Motorists approaching a checkpoint will observe traffic signs, information and police officers advising that a checkpoint is ahead. Once diverted into a lane, each motorist will be detained momentarily while an officer explains the purpose of the checkpoint. The Chattahoochee Hills Police Department attempts to conduct at least one sobriety checkpoint each month.

The minimum jail sentence for a first offense DUI conviction is ten days and the maximum jail sentence is 12-months. The minimum fine for a first offense DUI conviction is \$300 and the maximum fine can go as high as \$1,000. A DUI conviction will result in a 6-12 months suspension of your drivers' license.

We can all help make our streets safer, please report Drunk Drivers – Call 911.

=====

The Chattahoochee Hills Police Department Reminds Drivers to Slow Down and Be Careful of Rain Slicked Roads

The Chattahoochee Hills Police Department would like to remind drivers, to slow down, take their time and give themselves some distance between cars during this period of heavy rains.

“The rainy season can be especially treacherous,” says Uniform Division Commander Michael Vogt. “During the dry season, oils, fluids, and gasoline accumulate on the streets and freeways, making them exceptionally slippery at the beginning of the rainy season. It doesn't take much to lose control when you hit the brakes or are in a turn.”

“Remember basic driving habits and practice common courtesy. Leaving enough space between you and the car in front of you can prevent you from rear ending someone or being rear ended if traffic suddenly stops. Give people the room they need to maneuver and by all means, take your time. We would much rather you get where you are going a little late, than not at all.”

Contact Information: Michael Vogt, Uniform Division, 770-463-8881, michael.vogt@chatthillsga.us

Both of the above messages were transmitted via text by Nixle. To set up your own Nixle account to receive announcements from the Chattahoochee Hills Public Safety Department, please visit <http://local.nixle.com/register/>

=====

Metro Water District and the Governor’s Water Contingency Task Force

Contributed by the Metropolitan North Georgia Water Planning District

Governor Sonny Perdue announced the members of the water contingency task force in early October. The task force consists of business, government and environmental leaders from around the state. The Metro Water District is well represented on the Governor’s Contingency Task Force:

- Kit Dunlap, Metro Water District Chair
- Sam Olen, Metro Water District Vice Chair
- Burrell Ellis, CEO, DeKalb County
- Jack Smith, Chair, Fayette County Board of Commissioners
- Charles Bannister, Chair, Gwinnett County Board of Commissioners
- Brad Currey, Metro Water District Board Member
- Shirley Franklin, Mayor, City of Atlanta
- John Eaves, Chairman, Fulton County Board of Commissioners
- Suzanne Sitherwood, Atlanta Gas Light
- Mike Thomas, Clayton County Water Authority

The Water Contingency Task Force met December 11 and recommended a mix of actions the group has dubbed the “3Cs”:

- Conserve -- aggressive conservation measures and leak reductions
- Capture – expansion of existing reservoirs and construction of new ones
- Control -- restrictions on outdoor water use and requirements for plumbing upgrades

After receiving a final round of feedback on the draft recommendations, the task force will present final recommendations to the Governor later this month.

=====

Future Palmetto water source in jeopardy

By Alex McRae of Newnan's *The Times-Herald*

A future water source for the city of Palmetto is in jeopardy following a Friday ruling by U.S. District Court Judge Thomas Thrash that effectively halts land acquisition and construction of a major south Fulton County reservoir designed to supply water to Palmetto, Fairburn and Union City.

Thrash's ruling affects actions of the South Fulton Municipal Water and Sewer Authority, which was formed by legislation in the early 2000s. The authority was formed without objection by the city of Atlanta.

The authority subsequently issued bonds for the acquisition of land for a proposed reservoir on Bear Creek in south Fulton County. Atlanta did not object to that move, either, according to court documents. The bonds were issued and millions have been spent on land acquisition. More land for the reservoir is under contract.

Currently, Union City and Fairburn purchase water from the city of Atlanta. Palmetto purchases water from Coweta County and has its own water supply, according to Ellis Cadenhead, General Manager of the Coweta County Water and Sewerage Authority.

But Palmetto had planned to provide water for future growth from the new Bear Creek reservoir, and the loss of that source could hamper Palmetto's growth.

"I'm sorry to hear this has happened," Cadenhead said. "The state needs more reservoirs and the Bear Creek facility would have been a perfect fit for south Fulton."

The motion filed by Atlanta said the city wanted the reservoir halted because Atlanta did not want to lose the current revenue from the cities involved. According to the filing, Atlanta hoped stopping the reservoir construction would also halt plans for expansion of water delivery infrastructure by Fairburn and Union City.

Atlanta revealed in court plans for a five-year, \$50 million expansion of water mains through south Fulton. The filing said construction of the Bear Creek reservoir plus independent expansion of south Fulton municipalities would decrease revenues Atlanta needs to comply with an existing consent order in the Upper Chattahoochee Riverkeeper sewage cleanup case. In the filing, Atlanta also said paying debt service on bond obligations is dependent upon water revenue from south Fulton.

Currently, Atlanta is trying to identify new potential water customers and sources even as officials from Georgia, Florida and Alabama work to reach an agreement on control of water in the Chattahoochee River, with special attention to Georgia's Lake Lanier. The outcome of the case will determine how much water from Lake Lanier Atlanta will be allowed to use for drinking water.

A federal judge has already said that if the three states do not reach agreement, it is possible water releases from Lake Lanier could be reduced to mid-1970s levels, according to an official familiar with the case.

NEIGHBOR TO NEIGHBOR

President's Message

From Tom Reed

It seems amazing to me that we are already at the start of another year – apparently I have finally reached that age where the flow of time just seems to accelerate...

It's been another amazingly busy year here in the new city of Chattahoochee Hills – a year full of struggles that always seem to be outmatched by the energy and determination of the citizens, officials and staff of the city. 2009 was a year that many of our friends, neighbors and businesses suffered from the fallout of the financial crisis and the poor economy. People have had to deal with unemployment, flooding damage and other crises, but in every case, the outpouring of support, physical, financial, and emotional has been an amazing thing to witness.

Things have been busy for the city's government well – I'm not sure if everyone realizes just how big a deal the move away from contracted services was – how much extra work has had to go into maintaining services while bringing them all in-house. And it's the people of Chattahoochee Hills that have made it all happen.

People like *volunteer!* (former) City Manager Bob Simpson, and Larry Parrott and Damon Jones and all of the public safety team who worked ceaselessly (and often 'off the clock') to get the physical plant ready in time for the new staff. People like Carol Wolfe, who was able to keep the finances in line through the whole process, and in her new role as City Manager, and who has added to our talented staff of good people working to make things happen.

Also, the folks like our elected officials, who have continued to gel into a leadership *team* – sometimes having to make tough and even unpopular decisions – but always with the long-term good of the city in mind.

And we have so many amazing volunteers – all of the people who have come out to help their neighbors during the floods, or to help move the library, or to beautify the grounds of City Hall, or to redesign a home to accommodate an injured neighbor, or to help bring our churches together to coordinate their community services, or just to step in and help a neighbor in need – I could go on and on (and on...)

Look at all that we have done in just two short years – it simply amazing when you think about it. We all know how easy it can be to fall into the trap of being critical (it's always easier to be a critic than a chef) and making things (whether it is a city or a cake) is always harder than it looks. For my part, I think that we have a lot to be proud of, and if the past two years are any indication of our future, a lot to look forward to.

The people of our little city – the 'city that isn't a city' – have such a unique opportunity to protect and preserve the physical quality of our environment, the local lifestyles, and a real sense of community that has fallen by the wayside in so many places. Together, we are doing the work to make sure that it happens. I am proud to be a part of it, and proud to be your neighbor. On behalf of the entire Civic Association, I want to wish everyone a Happy New Year. Be safe, be well, and be ready – we'll need your help again next year!

Childhood Memory now a part of the Smithsonian

Contributed by Laurie Searle

You know you're getting old when...the train you used to take as a kid shows up in the Smithsonian. During a holiday visit to Washington D.C. imagine my surprise when I rounded a corner and bumped into the Chicago "L" train from the Ravenswood Line? I used to take that train as a kid and now it's in a museum. Geesh!

=====



New Years Activities at Serenbe

Contributed by: Tucker Berta

Looking for a great meal around the New Year Holiday? The Restaurants at Serenbe are having a number of special meals and events tonight and through the weekend – for more information, please visit:

http://campaign.constantcontact.com/render?v=001SbPU0nO9dPCCO-iLKb4XONth6loZOo6IWwg0wsdaEepseBiqc4SgyFOdVbPRK0aCWv7bHN8mgoj39o7jMIwSngJKW7zLg2H2LJ_om4n9LAU%3D

=====

Yoga with Stephanie Pearce – Tuesdays, Noon – 1:15 p.m.

Contributed by Tucker Berta

Please join us for Yoga with Stephanie Pearce (one of Serenbe's organic farmers) at the Serenbe Institute Studio every Tuesday. Please bring your own yoga mat & water. Classes are Drop-in, and cost \$12. If you have a family of 4 or more, each additional person is \$8. Contact Stephanie Pearce for more information: 678-772-5192.

=====

Event Schedule for Chattahoochee Hills Eventing at Browns Lake Farm

Contributed by Melissa Syfert

Chattahoochee Hills Eventing has just released the schedule for their 2010 season of horse events. These events are open to the public, and are a great place to watch beautiful horses put through their paces.

- **April 9-11:** Chattahoochee Hills Horse Trials: USEF / USEA recognized: A,I,P, USEF endorsed / USEA recognized: N,T,BN
- **May 14-16:** Area III Championships: USEF / USEA Recognized: CIC*,CIC**,A,I,P, USEF endorsed / USEA recognized: N(Ch), T, BN(Ch)
- **June 12-13:** Chattahoochee Hills Hunter Jumper Series: 26 Hunter Pace
- **August 14-15:** Chattahoochee Hills Hunter Jumper Series: 21 Hunter Pace
- **September 9-12:** American Eventing NATIONAL Championships
- **October 29-31:** Chattahoochee Hills Horse Trials: FEI / USEF CCI**, CIC*, OI, OP, USEF / USEA T, N, BN
- **November 13-14:** Chattahoochee Hills Hunter Jumper Series

Directions: From South Fulton Parkway: NW on Rivertown Rd. Go for 2 miles then right at 4-way stop on Cochran Mill Rd. Go for 3 miles then left at 4-way stop on Cedar Grove Rd. Competition entrance will be 1.5 miles on right. From Smith's Store: Drive NE on Campbellton-Redwine – Signs will mark the entrance on your left about 1.5 miles before Cochran Mill Rd.

We appreciate all the volunteers who donate their time and know how to help make each event successful. It would be impossible to run these events without volunteers. Some of our volunteers help several times a year; others are available only once or twice a year. Whatever your schedule, we are happy to work with you. If you love horses and like to spend time outdoors in a relaxed and wholesome atmosphere, we invite you to join our volunteer list. Horse or riding knowledge is not required; give us an idea of your skills and we'll place you in an appropriate job. A signup form is available here: <http://www.chatthillseventing.com/>

Cross Country Schooling is also available all year, weather permitting – call 703-727-4894 for an appointment.

Details on each event will be published here in the weeks preceding – for more details now, email: chatthills@aol.com, or phone (404) 931-3544 or (703) 727-4894. Chattahoochee Hills Eventing, 9445 Browns Lake Road, Fairburn, GA 30213

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

For more community events, check out these other Chattahoochee Hills Websites:

- Civic Association Calendar: <http://www.chatthills.org/Calendar.htm>
- CHC Community: <http://www.chccommunity.com/whatsnew.html>
- Serenbe Community: <http://www.serenbecommunity.com/calendar.html>
- Cochran Mill Nature Center: www.cochranmillnaturecenter.org

UPCOMING EVENTS	
Friday, Jan 1 New Year's Day	City Hall Closed (City Hall will also be closed for Martin Luther King Jr. Day on January 18)
Tuesday, Jan 5 City Council Meetings	City Council 3:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.: City Council Work Session 6:00 p.m.: City Council Meeting At City Hall – 6505 Rico Road
Tuesday, Jan 12 Planning & Zoning	Planning & Zoning The Planning & Zoning board will meet at City Hall at 6:00 p.m.

Do you have an event you want to add to our calendar? We're happy to list local events, articles and other submissions of general public interest to Chattahoochee Hills' residents. Please submit your information in advance so people have an opportunity to see it! We will post it as soon as possible after we receive your request.

Please remember – any contributions to the Weekly Reader must be sent to info@chatthills.org NO LATER THAN WEDNESDAY for inclusion in the current week's edition (although earlier is certainly OK!)