

**TELEVISION STATION WSB-TV / ATLANTA
QUARTERLY LISTING OF LOCAL PROGRAMS REFLECTING CONCERNS
AND/OR NEEDS OF THE COMMUNITY
JANUARY 1, 2010 – MARCH 31, 2010**

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(Mini-Series Documentaries are produced by WSB-TV's News Department and appear within the newscasts as a public service to the community. The Action News "mini-series" are aired one to four times daily Monday -Friday from 5am-7am; 12-1:00pm; 5-7pm; 11-11:35pm; 1:35-2:05am (repeat). On Saturdays, Action News is aired from 6-9am; 12-12:30pm; 6-6:30pm; and 11-11:35pm. Sundays: 7:30-11am; 12-12:30pm; 6-7pm; and 11-11:35pm. Segments are generally 1:00-6:00 minutes in length. The following, in date order, are the reports broadcast during first quarter, 2010)

QUARTERLY ISSUES / PROGRAMS LIST

- EDUCATION / YOUTH
 - HEALTHCARE
 - ECONOMY
- TRAFFIC / TRANSPORTATION
- LAW ENFORCEMENT & CRIMINAL JUSTICE
 - POLITICS/GOVERNMENT
- COMMUNITY/NEIGHBORHOODS

Parents Fight Cell Phone Tower on School Property

Date: 01/13/10 11pm

duration :20

Fred Blankenship

Tonight the city of Milton will hold a hearing about a cell phone tower controversy. Neighbors are protesting a proposal to build a 15 story tower on Seven Gables Farm. People can learn at an informational meeting tonight at 7pm at Milton City Hall. Two other towers may also be built. We're told there won't be a vote before February.

Date: 02/14/10 11pm

duration :37

Carol Sbarge

Parents are making their case to keep cell phone towers off school campuses. "I am begging you not to do this because you don't know. You can't give parents a 100 percent guarantee that these kids are going to be safe." The proposal could generate \$1 million dollars for Forsyth County's school. T-Mobile approached the district about three schools, in areas where the cell phone provider claims there are holes in coverage. Vickery Creek and Riverwatch Middle Schools and the yet to be built Kelly Mill Elementary. Representatives set up a display with information reassuring parents their kids are safe. The district has not yet decided whether to go with the plan.

Legislature Considers School Start Date Law

Date: 03/08/10 5pm

duration :34

John Pruitt

Later today a state house committee is planning to debate changing school start dates. A new bill would prevent Georgia schools from starting before the third week in August. Supporters say each school district could save at least \$5 million dollars for every day classes are moved out of August. Lane Holt: "We feel like the savings in doing away with running the air conditioners in August and other expenses that are equated with that, we feel like the savings would be enough to save teacher jobs." Opponents, including Georgia's Superintendent of Schools, say school calendars are a *local* school board issue.

DeKalb Parents Question School System Budget

Date: 01/20/10 6pm

duration :20

Richard Belcher

The new contract for DeKalb's school superintendent has angered some school employees because it gives Dr. Crawford Lewis a \$15,000 raise at a time when the system is facing budget cuts. But unnoticed in the controversy is a clause that makes it much easier – and less expensive – to fire the superintendent.

Date: 01/29/10 5pm

duration :33

Justin Farmer

Many DeKalb county parents are questioning the school budgeting process. Hundreds turned out for a meeting last night. Some say they'd prefer a tax increase to cutting teacher salaries or key programs. Others had a list of ideas to save money. Parent Molly Bardsley: "We have an enormous number of surplus properties we ought to be selling. Under enrolled schools that need to be consolidated. Horrible administrative bloat. DeKalb schools are very top-heavy." Many parents also questioned the superintendent's recent raise. Crawford Lewis told us he's given up \$30,000 in compensation in the last budget year.

Date: 01/29/10 6am

duration :44

Fred Blankenship

Hundreds of parents packed a DeKalb County school board meeting, hoping to put the brakes on proposed cuts to school programs and teacher pay. Parents complained information about this public meeting was buried on the district's website. They came offering alternatives. Some even lashed out at the superintendent. "Giving yourself a pay raise in these times is completely unacceptable and sent a message to all parents and teachers that demoralized everyone beyond what words could say." Crawford Lewis: "You should know that in the last eight months I also gave up \$30,000 dollars that, for whatever reason, the media has chosen not to report." Some parents say they would be more open to a millage rate increase. School board members say they are months away from making any decision.

Push to Expand School Voucher Program

Date: 02/03/10 6pm

duration :27

John Pruitt

Tonight some lawmakers are pushing a bill to expand the school voucher program. Right now, only parents of children with special needs can qualify to get state money for private school. State senator Chip Rogers would like the program to include military families and foster children. Eric Johnson: "We have got to personalize education. Every child needs to be in the best environment for them." Critics say this bill would take money *away* from public schools at the worst possible time. Supporters say it creates competition. Students would get between \$5,000 – 9,000 ... depending on where they go to school and how old they are.

CRCT Cheating Investigation

6pm

duration :25

Richard Elliot

We are now hearing from Governor Sonny Perdue about the controversy surrounding a statewide standardized test. His Office of Student Achievement found an unusually high number of wrong answers changed to right ones on the Criterion Reference Competency Test. Four metro Atlanta school districts are now investigating. Richard Elliot spoke to the woman in charge of the investigation.

"Cash for Gold" Fundraiser at Gwinnett School Draws Concern

Date: 03/19/10 5pm

duration :37

Carol Sbarge

A Gwinnett county mother is questioning a school's decision to host a 'cash for gold' event. Deloyce Dhoruba says the flyer for the fundraising event at Norton Elementary came out with not enough time to object. Dhoruba: "Will there be additional security, considering that whoever is coming in .. they're bringing large amounts of cash because they're hoping for a big turnout, they're gonna give out cash." We asked school officials. A spokesman said Norton Elementary researched the company doing the gold exchange and decided to use the, since it has worked well at other schools. The school is trying to raise money to purchase pieces of instructional technology.

Poor Economy Impacts Georgia Colleges

Date: **03/04/10 5pm**

duration **1:10**

Carol Sbarge

When her field shrunk in the bad economy, Ashley Clark went back to school to be a teacher. Now she's worried about cuts and fee increases. Clark: "It's very disheartening. I'm unemployed." It's quiet in the library at Georgia Highlands College in Cartersville. Outside in the courtyard, students and teachers are raising their voices. They are rallying against big budget cuts for Georgia's public colleges and universities. Protestor: "Don't be apathetic. Don't let these people take things away from you." Georgia has announced in the past week what it might cut. Georgia Highlands College is talking about eliminating the dental hygienist program and phys ed. Professors like Kathleen King would be laid off. King: "It would leave me without a job. I've got a child still in college." Students and faculty are also concerned about cuts in the materials budget. That could mean there wouldn't be the purchase of new books in the library. Students are fighting the cuts and likely hikes in tuition. Student: "I'm barely getting by on my tuition as it is." A lot of students won't be able to come to school.

Healthcare Reform Reaction

Date: 03/22/10 5pm duration 1:28 Richard Elliot

State Republican leaders predict dire economic consequences because of the passage of health care reform. These lawmakers are worried health care reform will devastate small businesses and kill jobs. While State Senator Chip Rogers believes the law will cost Georgia \$500 million dollars, Governor Sonny Perdue believes it will cost more than that. In a statement, the Governor said, "this vote will force an additional billion dollars or more in Medicaid spending per year, requiring a tax hike or offsetting cuts to public safety, education, or other core services." State Senator Tyrone Brooks applauds health care reform and believes it critical for the country – even if he admits it's not perfect. Even though another attempt at a constitutional amendment to allow Georgians to opt out of health care failed, State Republicans promise to continue the fight.

Concern Over Pain Clinic Opening in Kennesaw

Date: 03/10/10 11pm duration :26 **Monica Pearson**

Tomorrow, Kennesaw's police chief and other law enforcement leaders will go to the state capitol to support a new law to track prescriptions written in Georgia. The city is dealing with a new clinic that gives pain medication to mostly out-of-state patients. Two brothers currently are under investigation in Florida and own the Kennesaw Clinic. Thirty-eight states have laws tracking prescriptions but some Georgia lawmakers believe those laws violate patient privacy.

Grady Hospital Outlook

Date: 03/11/10 6pm duration :22 **Justin Farmer**

Grady Hospital has struggled to stay afloat for years. We have more details. In 2007, Grady offered employees buyouts, and eliminated several hundred positions. More than 90% of Grady's patients cannot pay for their care. Grady came under fire in the past year for ending its dialysis treatment. Hospital officials say they were losing \$4 million dollars a year at the dialysis clinic.

Feral Cat Colony Poses Health Risk

Date: 03/29/10 11pm duration 1:35 Diana Davis

A colony of cats living in a Lake Lanier park has to go. The Army Corps of Engineers says they're dangerous. Dozens of feral free-roaming cats live off Buford Dam Road in Cumming. Hidden in the brush, a colony of up to 50 cats roams the woods of Lake Lanier's West Bank park. They are what we call feral cats, or free roaming cats. They will not approach a person. As a volunteer for the SPCA, retiree Carmela Quinlan has been feeding and rescuing feral cats in the park for several years. Quinlan: "I just love animals and I think they have just as much right to be here as we do." But the Army Corps of Engineers that manages Lake Lanier says the cats are out of control. They have a plan to trap and remove the cats from the park. Corps Official: "These are humane traps. They are live traps, obviously." Some of the cats were once pets, abandoned by their owners years ago – no longer domesticated, they've bred again and again and are no longer socialized. Rangers worry someone will get hurt. Chris Lovelady: "They carry diseases that are harmful to pregnant women; they are a vector for rabies." Quinlan and the SPCA want the cats trapped, neutered then released and returned to the park. Quinlan: "My concern is when they trap them, they'll take them to animal control and they will all be killed." Joan Sammond, SPCA: "Why

harm them if you can manage them?" The Army Corps says it's not in the business of cat management, but says it is willing to work with the SPCA if it can come up with a better solution.

WSB-TV Local News of Public Interest:

Economy

Unemployment in Georgia

Date: **01/15/10 5pm**

duration **1:00**

Justin Farmer

"Unfortunately, I was laid off in my current job, so I'm taking advantage of the situation looking for a paralegal position." Robert Scott clings to optimism in the midst of being part of the nearly 101,000 Georgian's laid off in December. It's a trend Georgia's Labor Commissioner says proves the recovery has been a jobless one. Thurmond: "For working men and women in Georgia and across the country, this is still a difficult, difficult economy." Corey Williamson was hoping to find a welding job here in Atlanta after leaving Indiana five months ago. Now, he's less particular. Williamson: "Right now, the bills are piling up. I'll take anything I can get, but welding would be perfect, 'cause that's what I'm trained to do. But right now I'll take anything." Commissioner Thurmond will lead a King Day summit Monday at the Georgia Tech Hotel and Conference Center trying to create a fertile ground here for hiring. Thurmond: "One of the problems I see is we've looked to Washington for too long for the solution. I believe the solution to the crisis here in Georgia, is in Georgia.

Date: **01/18/10 5pm**

duration **1:19**

John Bachman

Michael Thurmond: "There are people in this room who've been unemployed for months, years." Georgia's Labor Commissioner didn't break any news to the unemployed people at Georgia Tech Monday when he said times are tough. Right now, Georgia's unemployment rate is 10.2%, and Tuesday when the state releases the latest figures, that number will likely go up. "Expect to see an increasing unemployment rate in Georgia. This is a sad testament to the dire situation that GA's economy is in." The Georgia Jobs Summit at Georgia Tech was full of people looking for work. Job Seeker: "Job market is just so competitive, doesn't seem like a lot of jobs out there for amount of people looking for jobs." Jeff Lu is a student at Tech. He's slowed his job search because it is too discouraging. "How are you able to support yourself in the meantime? My wife." He hopes this summit will help. The Labor Commissioner called for the summit to develop a strategy to spur job creation in Georgia. Part of that strategy will be to identify the people like Lu who are unemployed or underemployed, and encourage them to take advantage of money available for job training programs. "Statistics show that unemployed workers who get access to new training, new skills, have significant increase in earnings and opportunities to find new jobs."

Date: **04/05/10 6pm**

duration **1:30**

Diana Davis

The sentiment among the unemployed at the Georgia Department of Labor on North Druid Hills was pretty much the same. Unemployed person: "I don't know what they think in congress how people are going to survive." Just before the Easter recess, an Oklahoma Senator blocked a \$10 billion dollar piece of legislation that would extend jobless benefits. The stalemate: over how to pay for it. It's the second time it's happened in just two months. Michael Thurmond, Ga Labor Commissioner: "Today, some 5,000 Georgians who were otherwise eligible lost their benefits, and an additional 5,000 will continue to be ruled ineligible as long as the stalemate continues." Trisha Reynolds has been out of work for a year. She learned Monday morning she's one of thousands who won't get a check. Reynolds: "I would hope congress and the government would really understand what Americans are going through." Georgia's unemployment rate remains at 10.5% - higher than the national average. About 40% of unemployed Georgians have been out of work at least six months though there are signs the economy is improving ... most experts believe jobs will lag behind. Thurmond: "The good news is the economy appears to be gaining traction, but the reality is we have over 500,000 Georgian's who are still unemployed." If and when Congress does pass the extension, Labor Commissioner Thurmond predicts it may be the last time.

Atlanta Based Financial Firm to Close

Date: **01/30/10 6pm**

duration :20

John Pruitt

The struggling economy has forced an Atlanta based financial services company to close several offices. CompuCredit Corporation will close offices in Georgia, North Carolina and Utah. That will put about 740 people out of work. The closures affect offices in Duluth and Sandy Springs. CompuCredit offers credit cards and car loans to people with bad credit.

Energy Rebate for Georgia Appliance Consumers

Date: **02/15/10 5pm**

duration 1:36

Jim Strickland

Georgia has \$8.6 million dollars worth of EnergyStar rebate money to dole out, despite a snowy past weekend, they say \$300,000 is already gone. The showroom's got folks in it; there's a buzz; people are interested. One of these people is Knox Steinbrecher of Marietta drawn by the energy rebates to buy both a refrigerator and a dishwasher. Steinbrecher: "Any time a discount is offered, that's a good thing, and I certainly hope it stimulates the economy. it's gotten me here." The rebate money is part of the Obama stimulus program. An EnergyStar fridge is good for a \$50 dollar rebate; dishwashers can get you up to \$99 dollars, depending on how much water and electricity they've saved. "If I can find something that's 307 kilowatts or under, then I can get the \$99 dollars, which will probably cover an installation cost." Bigger ticket items like tankless water heaters – good for \$199 dollars. Officials say it's a double shot for the economy. You have to purchase the appliance with the retailer, then you have the consumer who's gonna get \$25-199 on a rebate card that they'll put back into the economy as well. The final benefits come with lower utility bills, and a dent in Georgia's carbon footprint. At this pace, the state figures the remaining rebate money will be gone in less than three weeks. They're urging people that are in the market for a new appliance to shop early before they get shut out.

State Layoffs a Near Certainty

Date: **03/01/10 5pm**

duration 1:27

Lori Geary

Chip Rogers: "Yeah, there will be massive layoffs." Senate budget leaders say there's no way to cut at least another billion dollars without some sort of mass layoffs. Hembree: "You use the word 'mass layoffs' and I think that's wrong." I learned today that House Republicans are on a much different page. Hembree: "I'm not an advocate of layoffs. I think we can use the furloughs and I think it accomplishes what we've been trying to do." Late this afternoon, House Rules Chairman Bill Hembree offered up another proposal – across-the-board salary reductions for all state employees. Hembree: "If I were chancellor of the University system, I would ask all of my employees who make more than \$50,000 a year to take a 10% cut." Senate leaders favor permanent reductions to state government. They tell me some 8,000 state employees are eligible for retirement or early retirement. Rogers: "You could call it a layoff, you could call it an encouragement to go ahead and take retirement, but reducing the work-force is one of the main focuses." House and Senate leaders do agree that this is not the year to raise taxes. Rogers: "We're not looking at any tax increases at all. We're looking at cuts, cuts, cuts." Senator Rogers says there's a reason Georgia may be lagging behind when it comes to economic recovery. Rogers: "You still have big issues in the commercial real estate market, you still have major banking issues to deal with and Georgia's economy has to diversify itself instead of being so dependent on real estate and construction."

Change in Airspace Regulations Could Impact Northern Suburbs

Date: 01/12/10 5am

duration :39

Carol Sbarge

A plan to help Hartsfield Jackson International airport has homeowners all the way in the north metro area worried about how it will affect them. Last night, homeowners from DeKalb County met with DeKalb Peachtree airport officials about a federal plan to give Hartsfield Jackson more airspace. The feds would take away airspace from airports like PDK, which means more planes closer to the ground. Dunwoody homeowner Bob Lundesten: "I think it's a problem. You affect the second largest subdivision in the city that's Dunwoody North with these flights coming over the top into PDK." The FAA will take public comments March 1 at the Chamblee Civic Center. For more information go to wsbtv.com.

Date: 02/18/10 6am

duration :36

Carol Sbarge

Some DeKalb residents are speaking out about possible FAA changes that could affect DeKalb Peachtree airport. The met to learn more about it last night at Clairmont Baptist church. The FAA wants to dedicate more airspace to commercial traffic for Hartsfield-Jackson airport. And that would lower the ceiling over PDK. Morc Sorenson is concerned. "All these planes like the one we just saw would have to fly lower, so its more noise more pollution closer to the ground." The FAA is asking for public input in a series of meetings that start next week. You can find that information in the links on our website at wsbtv.com.

Date: 02/17/10 11pm

duration :14

Linda Stouffer

Some DeKalb residents are speaking out tonight. They are concerned their neighborhoods could get noisier if the FAA changes airspace rules. The new plan would affect DeKalb Peachtree Airport.

Transportation Bill Aims to Ease GridlockDate: **02/14/10 7am**

duration :36

Erin Coleman

Georgia's Governor, Lieutenant Governor, and Speaker of the House stand behind a single plan, to ease traffic gridlock across the state. They're backing a statewide vote in 2012 for new roads and possibly mass transit. Under the plan, the state would be broken into regions. Voters would have to approve a .01 cent sales tax, and the list of projects for that region. Gov Perdue: "I know there's been some debate about the date but I believe that our economy must be given time to recover." The Governor's plan also gives MARTA more flexibility to use reserve funds to help it stay afloat. The transit agency is facing a \$120 million dollar shortfall.

Manhole Cover Theft Poses Traffic Safety Hazard

Date: 02/04/10 5pm

duration 1:19

Tom Regan

They're disappearing from highways all over the metro area – iron storm drain grates, some weighing 200 pounds or more and man hole covers. Mike McKenna, Georgia DOT: "We have lost 645 grates since July. Total cost to taxpayers at this point? You're looking at over half a million dollars." The Georgia Dept. of Transportation doesn't know who is stealing the grates, or whether it's a coordinated effort. They *do* know the cost to replace the larger grates is about \$450 dollars; manhole covers are somewhat less. But thieves hoping for a good rate of return at the scrap yard will be disappointed. "We know the going rate for a 200 pound grate is about \$10 bucks. It's a lot of labor for a little bit of money and also a risk of jail time." The missing grates also pose a public safety hazard. Imagine if you were forced to pull off the highway in an emergency, only to hit a big hole like this. The DOT believes the thieves may be selling the iron grates to scrap yards outside the metro Atlanta area. The rather unusual crime is possibly a consequence of the tough economy. McKenna: "We believe it's someone trying to make money to make ends meet. But it's not the way to do it." The DOT is resorting to welding the grates, to prevent thieves from pulling them out of the pavement.

Governor Blasts Transportation Department

Date: 01/28/10 6pm

duration :30

Richard Belcher

Governor Sonny Perdue is accusing the Department of Transportation board of costing the state \$22 million dollars in savings on bond interest payments. The board today refused to back off its challenge, to the way the state accounts for state highway contracts. The Governor says that action "exhibits a clear defiance of state law and a frightening lack of concern for our state's financial systems." In his statement, the governor also accuses the DOT of ignoring the advice of state auditors and its own legal counsel.

Georgia House Approves New Crime Scene Photo Restrictions

Date: 03/16/10 6pm

duration :26

John Pruitt

Just about an hour ago, the Georgia House *approved* a bill to restrict access to crime scene photos. The move follows an attempt by Hustler magazine to get crime scene pictures of murdered hiker Meredith Emerson. The bill would revise the open records law to ban the release of photos showing dismembered victims or some nude body parts. A DeKalb judge temporarily *barred* the release of photos in the Emerson case. The *permanent* ban is now headed to the senate.

Death Row Inmate's Execution Delayed

Date: 03/17/10 6am

duration :39

Fred Blankenship

The mother of an 11-year-old girl, murdered 24 years ago, says she was shocked when the state put off the killer's execution, because of a vacancy on the parole board. Cindy Griffith: "I was devastated, I had the phone call at work and it just knocked me to my knees." Griffith says she got the word five days before Melbert Ray Ford was scheduled to die for the murder of her daughter Lisa Chapman, and sister-in-law Martha Matich. Ford was Matich's ex-boyfriend. A parole spokesperson says for legal reasons, a full board is needed for clemency votes. A spokesman suggested, with several qualified candidates for the post, he thinks the Governor wants to give each appropriate consideration.

Cobb Mother Wrongfully Arrested

Date: 03/17/10 6pm

duration :23

Tom Jones

The Department of Driver Services tells Channel 2 Action News it wants to help clear up an arrest controversy. Cobb County police put a woman in jail for having a suspended license, yet a few hours later a records check showed her license was *not* suspended. Jessica Hines says her arrest in front of her children was humiliating.

Execution Controversy

Date: 03/16/10 5pm

duration 1:37

Mark Winne

Cindy Griffith: "Every time one of my kids would get married or a grandchild would be born (*sobbing*) i would think of Lisa and what she missed." Cindy Griffith says her 11-year-old daughter Lisa Chapman was studying how the law works for her fifth-grade social studies class on March 6, 1986 – which was the day she was shot. Now, Ms. Griffith says she's shocked how the law worked to halt the execution of the man convicted of murdering Lisa and her aunt, Martha Matich. Griffith: "I was devastated, I had the phone call at work and it just knocked me to my knees." She says after weeks of preparing emotionally for the execution of Melbert Ray Ford scheduled for February 23rd, she got a call saying it was postponed. Griffith: "Instead, we're the ones being punished." ...because the Governor had not named anyone to fill a vacancy on the parole board. Manny Arora, legal analyst: "Typically the Governor is supposed to appoint these open positions in an expeditious fashion, however there is no penalty if the governor takes a month, two months, six months." We're told Buddy Nix's term expired December 31st and his seat is still vacant – a problem, since the parole board, normally with five members, decides whether to grant clemency to death row inmates like Ford. A statement read "the only previous clemency considered by a

board of four members of a death case was held by the judiciary to violate the Georgia constitution.” Governor’s spokesman Bert Brantley acknowledges one candidate for the vacancy is State Rep Terry Barnard, who’s helping the Governor shepherd a bill to merge parole officers into the department of corrections. But he says the Governor’s not simply waiting for lawmakers to recess. Brantley: “With the number of qualified candidates that we have i think the governor wants to give each one of them the consideration that they deserve.” Cindy Griffeth: “Our family needs closure.”

Lobbyists, Governor Differ on Department of Corrections Restructure

Date: 03/17/10 6pm

duration 1:46

Mark Winne

A spokesperson for the parole association of Georgia PAOG says the non-profit employee group hired a lobbyist to oppose house bill 1030, which would merge parole officers into the Department of Corrections, which already oversees probation officers. But the spokesperson says the Governor’s office, which favors the bill, has lobbied ranking parole officials to lean on the employee association to get rid of its lobbyist. There are two sides to the merger. Brian Owens, Corrections Commissioner: “The intent is actually to enhance public safety. As you see probation supervision has exploded. It’s really the most dangerous and most challenging population. We think by merging the two operations together we can put hundreds more officers on the street. A former high-ranking official at both corrections and parole says he fears the merger will make the public less safe by fixing a parole system that’s not broken. The PAOG spokesperson says the association hired reputable lobbyist Wendy Clifton. A March 9 e-mail from parole board chair Gale Buckner to a key aide in the Governor’s office says, “I have personally notified the president of PAOG that the Governor’s office would prefer the services of their paid lobbyist to be discontinued.” She suggested, however, interference by the board could create legal problems. Documents indicate twice this month aides at the Governor’s office brought up the issue. The status of Wendy Clifton? Bert Brantley: “We’re all on the same team. The parole board is part of the executive branch. And what we had hoped was we would craft a bill that everybody could go and support.” We’re also told emails to legislators by two parole officers from home computers created a stir. And another email to parole officials from a gubernatorial aide had a list of answers to the officers’ concerns and the suggestion a retraction ‘needs to go out’ asap. Brantley: “Our concern was that legislators would vote on a bill based on bad information.”

Canton to Evaluate Expanded Alcohol Sales

Date: 03/05/10 5am

duration :47

Carol Sbarge

Another north Georgia city is reconsidering its rules on alcohol sales, to bring new business. The city of Canton held its first public hearing about a proposal to extend drinking hours from midnight to 2am. Business owners say it is money the city is missing out on. Customers can drink in unincorporated Cherokee County. Some people say the law, as it stands, keeps Canton safe. Jack Goodwin: "And if those restaurants don't stay open or babysit those people and send them home in a cab, then you could have some serious accidents." Bob Rush: "I received a letter today from a local preacher saying it's going to be harmful to our folks, and DUI's, and people getting killed, and all the rest of that. But that's all emotion. That's not supported by facts." The city council is expected to vote on the issue after another public hearing later this month.

Lawmaker Proposes Drug Tests for Benefits Recipients

Date: 03/16/10 6pm

duration :38

John Pruitt

Out of work Georgians may have to take a drug test if they want an unemployment check. A state lawmaker is sponsoring a bill that requires random drug tests for anyone getting unemployment benefits or welfare. Those who fail would be cut off. The bills' sponsor says its an idea whose time has come for taxpayers. Rep Michael Harden: "They want to know without a doubt that their tax dollars are not going to support illegal drug activity." Unemployed citizen George Lawson: "I think its an invasion of privacy. It's an unnecessary burden on the people who are trying to find work." The Georgia Drug Use Prevention Coalition and the AFL-CIO are against the bill. The ACLU says drug testing of welfare recipients may be unconstitutional.

Fairburn Mayor Faces Council Push-Back

Date: 01/12/10 5am

duration :45

Carol Sbarge

The first day on the job for Fairburn's first African-American mayor came with tension and controversy. Just last night, the city swore in Mayor Mario Avery. But when the new mayor attempted to move forward with his appointments, the ceremony took a noticeable turn. Some council members wanted to table the mayor's appointments. Hurst: "What has just happen is typical.. I don't want to make a big issue with this., don't show out in front of company,.clapping..." We're told it's normally protocol for the new mayor to make appointments upon swearing in.

All White Basketball Team Proposed, Sparks Controversy

Date: 01/22/10 6am

duration :31

Carol Sbarge

A proposed new basketball team is causing controversy off the court. Creators want to start an "all white" pro basketball league. The "All American Basketball Alliance" is looking to target southern cities such as Augusta and Albany to form a team. But one city official is dismissing those plans. Mayor Deke Copenhaver: "Basketball is played in a bunch of different fashions. You have five different positions. You have a point guard who distributes the ball, so I think basketball is basketball." The commissioner says his league is needed because the NBA has "shut out" white players.

Cobb Construction Project Using Undocumented Workers

Date: 02/10/10 6pm

duration :24

Monica Pearson

Our phone lines are lighting up with construction workers reacting to our story about the Cobb County courthouse project. County officials confirmed today, some undocumented bricklayers were found working on the construction site ... and they say the contractor has removed them from the project. Ross Cavitt reports.

Date: 02/23/10 6pm

duration :23

Justin Farmer

New developments today in the growing controversy over undocumented workers found at Cobb County's new courthouse work site. A state representative and candidate for Attorney General wants someone held responsible for the hiring of illegal workers, and is requesting a grand jury investigation. At least one prosecutor says a grand jury might not make any difference.

Community Voices Traffic Concerns if Islamic Center Opens

Date: 01/11/10 5am duration :25 Carol Sbarge

Tonight, a large crowd is expected at a Lilburn city council meeting. It all surrounds a zoning issue involving a mosque. An opponent to a mosque e-mailed us saying the plan is to call for the mayor and city council to resign. The council denied a request for expansion of the mosque. Those opposed say their opposition has nothing to do with Islam, instead they say it's about traffic and congestion. The Muslim congregation is suing the city.

Date: 03/16/10 11pm duration :38 John Pruitt

Right now, neighbors in Alpharetta are getting more information about an Islamic center's plans for their community. The Islamic Center of North Fulton looks like this right now; it sits along busy Rucker Road. There are plans to turn the building into this – a building that's nearly 18,000 square feet. Neighbors say they are not sure if the area can handle any more traffic. The Center is holding an informational meeting tonight. The Alpharetta planning commission takes up the proposal April 1.

Gwinnett Residents Try to Block Pawn Shop Opening

Date: 03/23/10 12pm duration :37 Carol Sbarge

Some residents in Gwinnett County are hoping to convince the commission to keep a pawn shop from opening near their homes. A business owner wants to open a 5,500 square foot pawn shop on land near US 78 in Snellville. But the folks who live in the Summit Chase subdivision do not like the idea. They're also worried the city will not listen to their concerns. Council Member Kautz: "I've heard the mayor is not going to take public comment, that surprised me. You know we postponed it last time so that the owner can get out and talk to the residents to get some support, it seemed it just stirred up more controversy." Kautz says she is not sure how she will vote.

Walton County Residents Oppose Drag Racing Strip

Date: 01/25/10 11pm duration :20 Fred Blankenship

A proposal to build a drag racing strip in Walton county comes up for debate again this evening. A group of residents in Social Circle has mobilized against the idea. The controversy centers on a request to rezone land north of I-20 near Willow Springs Rd. The city planning and zoning commission will take up the issue again at a public hearing tonight at six.

Habitat Home Recipient Claims Over Charge

Date: 02/09/10 6pm duration :40 John Pruitt

A southwest Atlanta resident is claiming she is paying too much for her Habitat for Humanity home. The Habitat organization built Michelle Evans' house on Fulton Boulevard. Habitat Atlanta offers a 0% interest loan to low-income qualified residents. Evans says she was told the house would cost about \$100,000 dollars. Evans: "At the closing table what happened? That's when we were given the price of \$145,000, and one of the residents asked if we chose not to close were told they would have to vacate the property immediately." Evans says her mortgage is \$100 dollars more a month than she expected. Habitat officials told us they could not discuss specifics about the case, but would be happy to meet with Evans.

Female Pastor Goes Up Against Southern Baptist Officials

Date: 03/29/10 6pm

duration :33

Monica Pearson

The Southern Baptist convention could cut ties with a local church, because it has a female co-pastor. Reverend Mimi Walker and her husband serve as co-pastors of Druid Hills Baptist Church. But, the state group associated with the Southern Baptist convention says that is against their rules. The church could lose its affiliation with the convention, but Walker is *not* backing down. Mimi Walker: "I suppose I felt more like a rebel a number of years ago at this stage of life I feel this should already be ok " The full Southern Baptist Convention is set to take up the issue when it meets in November.