

McDonough Matters



www.mcdonoughga.org

Issue Twenty-Three

When Information Matters

February, 2009

Phase I of McDonough Intown Bicycle/Pedestrian Connectivity Completed at Alexander Park



On Thursday, September 18, 2008, a meeting was held at City Hall to celebrate the first phase of work that would soon begin on the Alexander Park Expansion Project.

That inaugural work would be on Phase I of the McDonough Intown Bicycle/Pedestrian Connectivity. To put it in layman's terms, it's the first 560 feet of the walking,

This 560 feet of trail comes with a price tag of a little over \$92,000. That figure also includes park benches, trash receptacles, signage and professional landscaping. A grant from the Department of Natural Resources Recreational Trail Program funded this portion of the addition.

Councilperson Gail Notti, who has been instrumental in the Alexander Park Expansion Project from its inception, is very excited to see this first of many tasks associated with the park completed and already adding so much to the quality of life in McDonough.



The trail's end affords users two benches for a relaxing breather, if needed, before heading back.

Mayor Billy Copeland noted that he has already walked this new trail and is very pleased with the quality of the trail, its beautiful surroundings and the workout it provides our citizens.

For Walking, Jogging and Bicycling ONLY

Project Coordinator Mac Cavender, with Moore Bros. Paving, reported that the path is seeded, covered with straw, and a total of 24 assorted trees were being planted along both sides of the path on that very day, Friday, January 30th. Nuttall Oaks, Hickory, Red Buds, and Dogwood trees were added at intervals along the entire length.

"Approximately 10 to 12 area residents have asked me what we are doing," said Mr. Cavender. "When I told them, all responses have been positive. They said it looks really good." He then added, "Working with the City of



McDonough has always proven to be a professional and enjoyable experience."

Project Coordinator Cavender stands at the end of the trail pointing in the direction of the starting point.

jogging and biking trail designed as part of this expansion project.

The contract on this trail addition had been awarded to Moore Bros. Paving located in McDonough. The actual work would commence within 30 days from the date of the Sep-



(L-R) Thomas Miranda, Michael Wanzer and Bairon Padilla gradually get all 24 new trees in the ground.

tember 18th kickoff meeting. The very first dirt was moved in October.

The trail itself is 12 feet wide and required 722 square yards of asphalt and gravel to complete. The path provides a picturesque walk, jog or bike ride amidst the beautiful woods that surround it. Site plans call for more than 3 miles of trails to be constructed within the park before this portion of the project is complete.



Pine trees will provide lots of shade along the trail — and needles too.

City of McDonough
BUDGET
2009

A city is much like a river, if you think about it. Over time, a city will ebb when it's in the midst of a downward spiral. Other times, you can catch the wave and the town, its businesses, its citizens and its government are running to the rhythmic beat of success. Merchandise is moving, contractors are building, taxes are being paid, new schools are opening and folks are prospering.

As a rollercoaster flies when it's headed down and creeps when it heads up again, so is the economy that governs each of us. Every person in this town, state, across these United States and in every major country on the planet has felt the effects of the current economic ride as it continues its path downward. Whatever the effects being imposed by this stagnant economy, everyone is staring down the tracks or following the ripples in the river hoping "up" is just around the next bend. Highs are always followed by lows as lows are always followed by highs. That ebb and flow is continually shifting and moving the tides of men's lives and fortunes.

We are a hardy bunch though, we "McDonoughians." There have been many prosperous times as well as some downright mean and lean ones too.

In the early 1830's, life was good in McDonough. It developed as a business, cultural and educational center maintaining that position for several years. But, alas, that rollercoaster ride of decline took control. Gold was discovered in north Georgia, and folks moved north hoping to find the mother load. Gold fever was too strong, and both Henry County and McDonough felt the effects.

A crushing blow occurred in 1833 when the major train lines of that era by-passed McDonough to converge in a city just to the north by the name of Marthasville, better known today as Atlanta.

In the late 1800's, McDonough became a cotton Mecca, that is, until a small bug reached Henry County in 1919. Boll weevils attacked and devastated the 1920 cotton harvest destroying a thriving economy and leaving many farmers destitute. Before the attack of the boll weevil, a different type of disaster hit this community. On June 23, 1900, the infamous train wreck at Camp Creek occurred at 9:30 p.m. killing many of the passengers on that ill-fated ride. Long rows of caskets turned local businesses and churches into mortuaries.

But McDonough stands today as a monument to the pioneers who would not give up on this little community. We still possess that same won't run spirit. We face the enemy, holding firm to our beliefs that a community that stands together will not be divided in difficult times. To that end, the City of McDonough continues to be a beautiful and historic phoenix rising out of the ashes from periodic times of devastation and disaster to reclaim the prosperity that

comes when "up" is discovered just around that next bend. With that same battle worn spirit, McDonough's Mayor and City Council have struggled to find answers to the massive blows this economy has unleashed on the City's budget. And to that end, the Mayor, Council, department heads and staff have gathered, weighted and measured all possibilities that would lead to that ultimate goal—a balanced budget for 2009.

After a long process, the final '09 budget figures were proposed to the Council by Mayor Copeland for their review and subsequent recommendations the latter part of 2008. Those figures were as follows:

GENERAL FUND REVENUE/EXPENSES.....	\$ 9,990,747
WATER & SEWER FUND REVENUE/EXPENSES.....	3,902,899
SANITATION REVENUE/EXPENSES.....	1,362,000
STORMWATER REVENUE/EXPENSES.....	504,500
TOTAL 2009 BUDGET.....	\$15,760,146

Mayor Copeland noted that each expense fund included a contingency. Contingencies were as follows:

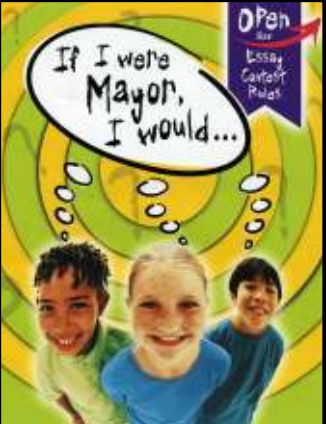
GENERAL FUND.....	\$ 387,106
WATER & SEWER.....	77,354
SANITATION.....	84,572
STORMWATER.....	47,471

On Monday, December 29, 2008, a balanced budget was passed with a unanimous vote by the City Council. Mayor Copeland has suggested that the entire budget be revisited and scrutinized carefully before the end of March to determine the fiscal status of the City at that time.

The City's budget will be monitored throughout the year with adjustments coming when and where needed to maintain a 2009 operating budget "in the black."



Figures used are from the Mayor's Quarterly Newsletter, January, 2009 issue.

**Georgia Municipal Association's
2009 Essay Contest**
For Georgia 6th Graders



Calling
All
6th
Graders

Calling
All
6th
Graders

For more information visit
[**www.gmanet.com**](http://www.gmanet.com)

Mayor Presents Badges To 10 Scouts

Tussahaw District Boy Scout Troop 1168 from McDonough attended the February 2nd McDonough City Council meeting as a requirement to earn their next badge, the Citizenship Merit Badge.

For ten of the young men present, this was the culmination of all their efforts and the final step in this particular process. Mayor Billy Copeland welcomed troop members and leaders to the meeting. He then called each of the ten scouts' names who were to receive badges asking them to join him in front of the Council Chambers. As each one passed before the podium, the Mayor shook the scout's hand and presented him with his brand new Citizenship Merit Badge.



Pictured with Mayor Copeland (Back, Right) following the presentation are the ten badge recipients (Front, L-R) Chris Dixon, Wes Munoz, James Marchant, Collin Leverette, Josh Katona, Quintin Gunn, Tucker Doyle, Josh Christian, Jeremy Burton and Tim Bell. The Scouts expressed great excitement at receiving their badges from the Mayor.

Georgia. Councilperson Riffey encouraged every sixth grader in the scout troop to read the information she handed out and to give serious thought to entering the contest adding, "I would love to see a top winner from McDonough." For more information on GMA's essay contest and the prizes to be awarded, visit www.gmanet.com.

Michael Katona, Scout Master of Boy Scout Troop 1168, explained that the scouts are supposed to write their respective Councilperson expressing any concerns they may have regarding actions or activities within the City's government from their perspective.

Councilperson Gina Riffey took the opportunity to inform the Scouts about Georgia Municipal Association's 'If I were Mayor, I would...' essay contest for sixth graders throughout the state of



Councilperson Gina Riffey (Standing, Left) addresses the members of Troup 1168 during the Council meeting explaining the 'If I were Mayor, I would...' essay contest and asked each Scout to consider taking time to write an essay and enter it in the Georgia Municipal Association's 2009 contest. Holding the sign is Councilperson Rufus Stewart.

Kudos, Gentlemen, For a Job Well Done!



Acting Community Development Director Rodney Heard (Left) recognized three of his employees during the February 2nd City Council Meeting for their outstanding work in organizing the archives files on the first floor and moving them to the third floor. The three employees are (L-R) Mark Dobson, Nick Nichols and Charles Hoffman.

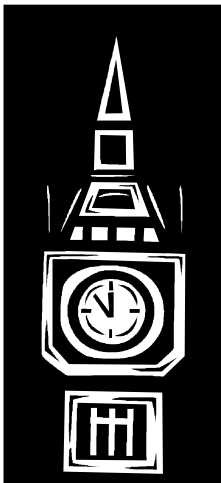


On March 3rd, McDonough Mayor Billy Copeland, Council members Gina Riffey and Monta Brown will join Southern Crescent Cycling Club

for the fourth annual "Georgia Rides to the Capitol."

The cyclists will pull into the side parking lot of City Hall on that Tuesday between 8:00—8:30 p.m. so that Mayor Copeland and Councilpersons Riffey and Brown can join them as they head out to the Capitol in Atlanta to meet other bike enthusiasts, totaling more than 1,000, for a press conference on the Capitol steps featuring several dignitaries speaking on the importance of funding bicycle infrastructure and other alternative forms of transportation. The ride is free and open to the public. Additional information is available at www.GeorgiaRidesToTheCapitol.org.

Sounds of the 60's British Invasion
Coming to Heritage Park
Jason T. Harper Event Center
Saturday, May 9, 2009 • 6:00 p.m.



- **Herman's Hermits**
with **Peter Noone**
- **Peter & Gordon**
- **Badfinger's**
Joey Molland
- **The Hollies'**
Terry Sylvester

Tickets Available at the McDonough Welcome Center

**New City Employee Hired
 In Water/Sewer Distribution**

Robert Lewis has been hired by the City of McDonough in Water/Sewer Distribution. Robert and his wife, Heather, recently moved from San Carlos, California to McDonough. When asked how the two cities compare, he said that living in California is much different than living here.

**WELCOME NEW EMPLOYEE
 ROBERT LEWIS**



Visit often for McDonough news, information and happenings. The web site is also home of the City's monthly e-newsletter, 'McDonough Matters.'

**Main Street McDonough Program's
 Annual Accreditation Certification
 is a Success Again!!**

Main Street McDonough Program Director Linda Schenk is always glad to have the Accreditation Certification, conducted each year by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA), behind her.

Ms. Schenk met with DCA's Martha Reimann on Tuesday, February 10th to go over the reports prepared monthly by Ms. Schenk that form the basis for the annual Accreditation Certification.

Following the review, Ms. Reimann stated that Main Street McDonough passed the evaluation and retains the designation as a Georgia Main Street City.

The program's Advisory Board members met Ms.

Schenk and Ms. Reimann for lunch at The Seasons Bistro to celebrate the results of this year's assessment.



(L-R) Advisory Board Chairperson Lee Freeman, DCA's Martha Reimann, Main Street Director Linda Schenk and Mayor Billy Copeland are pleased with the results of the Accreditation Recertification.



The Seasons Bistro was the site of the luncheon following the conclusion of the evaluation.

Mayor Billy Copeland was able to join the group for lunch.

"It looks as though you have been busy this past year," Ms. Reimann said to the group gathered. "Everything looks good."

Discussions during lunch included ideas on increasing foot traffic in the downtown shopping district as well as

some thoughts and suggests from Ms. Reimann.

"We are very proud of our local Main Street program," stated Director Schenk. She added, "We're especially proud of the local business men and women who give of their valuable time and energy on a voluntary basis to serve this program and our citizens through Main Street." For information on becoming a Main Street volunteer, call 770-898-9868.

Mayor Copeland visits with those remaining at the table following a delicious meal.





Georgia General Assembly

Henry County Day at the State Capitol

Wednesday, February 25th

Come out and meet your Henry County Legislators
Room 216 in the Capitol from 1 – 2 PM

Henry County Legislative Delegation

Rep. Steve Davis 109th, Chairman

Rep. John Yates 73rd
Rep. Howard Mosby 90th
Rep. John Lunsford 110th
Sen. John Douglas 17th

Rep. Glenn Baker 78th
Rep. Rahn Mayo 91st
Sen. Emanuel Jones 10th
Sen. Gail Buckner 44th

Contact: Rep. Steve Davis office 404-656-0254 or steve.davis@house.ga.gov



Happy
St. Patrick's Day
Tuesday, March 17th

First Day
of
Spring
Friday, March 20th

Main Street McDonough
presents the
**2nd Annual Spring
Classic & Open Car Show**
Saturday, April 25th
Noon—5:00 p.m.
Behind the Henry County
Judicial Center
John Frank Ward Boulevard
McDonough
770-898-9868
Music • Food • Fun

A **unified county-wide animal control code** has been adopted for Henry County. To review the complete ordinance, visit <http://www.municode.com/Resources/gateway.asp?pid=10910&sid=10>. Enter codes 3-4-1 and 3-4-50.

Taken from *Update*, Henry County's weekly newsletter.

**McDonough Water Rates
Going Up March 1st**

During the February 2nd City Council meeting, the Council approved a resolution to increase the monthly water and sewer rates between 5 and 7 percent. The new rates will go into effect on March 1, 2009.

“Due to the rising cost of chemicals, this is the cost of doing business,” stated Keith Dickerson, Walnut Creek Water Pollution Control Plant Operations Manager.

The rate breakdown is as follows:

Gallons Used Per Month	Old Rate \$	New Rate \$
Up to 3000	15.82 Flat fee	16.92 Flat fee
3001—9000	4.44 Per 1000	4.66 Per 1000
Over 9000	6.54 Per 1000	6.87 Per 1000

To put it in layman’s terms, if a customer averages using 6000 gallons of water per month, which is the current average usage for McDonough, the affect on that customer would be roughly a \$3.52 increase in his/her monthly bill.



Veterans or Veterans' families wanting additional information may call McDonough City Hall at 770-957-3915, ext. 2265.

OFFICE HOURS:
Tuesdays, 10am-12pm
Thursdays, 1-3pm

The City of McDonough is currently participating in a **Residential Toilet Rebate Program** on a first-come-first-serve basis while funds last. For more information visit <http://www.northgeorgiawater.com/html/315.htm>



Upcoming City Meetings & Events

Main Street McDonough Programs In RED

ALL DATES AND TIMES NOTED ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE.

FEBRUARY, 2009		
CITY COUNCIL WORKSHOP	2-26	5:00 P.M.
MARCH, 2009		
CITY COUNCIL MEETING	3-02	7:00 P.M.
P/Z WORKSHOP	3-10	6:30 P.M.
BOZA	3-12	6:30 P.M.
CITY COUNCIL MEETING	3-16	7:00 P.M.
HISTORIC PRESERVATION	3-19	7:00 P.M.
P/Z PUBLIC MEETING	3-24	6:30 P.M.
APRIL, 2009		
CITY COUNCIL WORKSHOP	4-02	5:00 P.M.
CITY COUNCIL MEETING	4-06	7:00 P.M.
BOZA	4-09	6:30 P.M.
P/Z WORKSHOP	4-14	6:30 P.M.
HISTORIC PRESERVATION	4-16	7:00 P.M.
CITY COUNCIL MEETING	4-20	7:00 P.M.
MAIN STREET'S CLASSIC & OPEN CAR SHOW	4-25	NOON—5:00 P.M.
P/Z PUBLIC MEETING	4-28	6:30 P.M.
CITY COUNCIL WORKSHOP	4-30	5:00 P.M.

For additional information on:

Events – call the McDonough Welcome Center at 770-898-9311.

Meetings – call McDonough City Hall at 770-957-3915.

**TOP 8 EMPLOYERS
IN
HENRY COUNTY
AS OF SEPTEMBER, 2008**

1. Henry County Board of Education	5. Georgia Power Company
2. Henry Medical Center	6. SunTrust Services Corporation
3. Henry County Government	7. Snapper, Inc.
4. Federal Aviation Administration	8. Southern States, LLC

Henry Co. Development Authority

Sign up at clacey@mcdonough-ga.gov for notice when the latest issue of *McDonough Matters* is posted on www.mcdonoughga.org.