

Friends of Chattahoochee Hills – July 19 Update

CITY UPDATES

- **Franchise Fees Explained**

Chattahoochee Hills residents recently received notice from Greystone Power that a 4 percent franchise fee has been added to their electric bill, beginning in July. In order to help residents understand franchise fees, the City posted information on their Web site in an FAQ (frequently asked questions). The gist of the FAQ is that franchise fees are paid to cities by utility providers in exchange for their use of public right-of-ways. All 529 cities in Georgia have them. They are not considered taxes, but fees charged to utility providers; however, most (all?) providers pass that fee onto their customers. See: http://www.chatthillsga.us/community/2008/franchise_fees.htm

- **Correction to City's FAQ on Special Services Fund**

A resident wrote in with a correction to an answer posted to a Frequently Asked Question on the City's Web site. The correction is made below in bolded text.

Given these events, why does the City trust Fulton County to collect our property tax on the City's behalf?

The SSD funds distribution was a decision made by the Board of County Commissioners. The Fulton County Tax **Commissioner**, who is an elected official independent of the County Commissioners, will be responsible for the billing and collection of the City's property taxes. The office of the Tax **Commissioner** has a positive reputation for a transparent and objective business process to accurately collect and remit property tax revenue for cities throughout the county.

See: http://www.chatthillsga.us/community/2008/special_services_district_funds.htm

NEWS

- **Commissioners Approve \$275 Million Price Tag for Upcoming Library System Bond Referendum**

The Fulton County Board of Commissioners voted July 16th to let county citizens decide in November whether or not the county will borrow \$275 million to expand and refurbish the county's libraries.

Several months ago, the commissioners approved a plan for building five new libraries and renovating several others. Last week's vote included the commissioners' decision to fold into a bond referendum's price tag some of the added costs for building a new Central Branch Library (replacing the one downtown).

The original library master plan has been changed as follows:

- 1) Chattahoochee Hills new library has been reduced from 25,000 sq ft to 10,000 sq ft
- 2) Central branch renovations have been changed. Instead of renovations, now a new Central branch library has been added
- 3) Total estimate for master plan covering 10 new libraries and renovations of others cost \$275,000,000 (The original price tag was \$111,729,194)

Read what others area saying:

Blog Post: Dead on Arrival: <http://www.chatthills.org/foch/LibraryPost1.pdf>

Blog Post: Commissioners Approve \$275 Million Price Tag:

<http://www.chatthills.org/foch/LibraryPost2.pdf>

Letter to Commissioner from Laurie Searle:
<http://www.chatthills.org/foch/LibraryPost3.pdf>

- **Results of the Community Forum hosted by the Civic League for Regional Atlanta**
The Civic League for Regional Atlanta convened a Neighborhood Forum on July 7 in Chattahoochee Hills. This forum was in support of the Atlanta Regional Commission's Fifty Forward visioning initiative and was focused on a major question facing the region in the next 50 years: How can we have growth and a clean and healthy environment? Fifty-three people participated in the Chattahoochee Hill Country forum. In the course of two hours, participants worked in small groups of 8 to 10 on a series of questions that helped them think about how the region can accommodate growth and a better environment. By the end of the evening, they had recorded 203 ideas, which are listed later in this report.

Read meeting notes by Tom Reed: <http://www.chatthills.org/foch/CommunityForum-070708.pdf>

Read Regional Civic Leagues' Report from Chatt Hills:
<http://www.chatthills.org/foch/RegionalCivicMeeting.pdf>

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FROM OUR FRIENDS

- **Hill Country Montessori Receives Grant**
Clifford Blizard reports: Hill Country Montessori is delighted to announce that we have received a 2008 GreenWorks! Community Action & Service Learning Grant in the amount of \$1000 from Project Learning Tree. This grant will help fund a Rain and Pollinator Garden which students will be constructing and planting this fall on our school grounds, with assistance from Mike Cunningham of Country Gardens in Newnan. We intend to hold a garden dedication ceremony in Spring 2009, followed by a rain garden workshop open to the community (to be offered by the Southeast Institute for Place-Based Education at Hill Country Montessori).
- **Chattahoochee Hills Historical Society**
Hugh Tyer, resident arborist, spoke at the July 17 meetings about Heritage Trees. These special trees of historical significance include trees that are associated with historical event, or are located on a historical site, or are 100 years or older. If you know of any such trees, or trees that are exceptionally unusual contact Sandra Huffmaster, historical committee chair at huffmasters@excite.com.

The Historical Society has added six new stories to its Web site: See:
<http://www.chattahoocheehillshistoricalsociety.org>

1. The Hopkins Homeplace
2. The Jarrard Homeplace
3. The Smith Family Album
4. The Goodes Community
5. Sardis Baptist Church History
6. Providence Baptist Church History

The Historical Society is doing a research project and wants to know if anyone in the community knows the location of "Jakes Fish Camp." If so, please contact Sandra Huffmaster at huffmasters@excite.com.

- **Serenbe**

Check out their new photo albums from:

July 4th Parade: http://www.serenbecommunity.com/album_july4th.html

Atlanta Symphony Orchestra Dinner:

http://www.serenbecommunity.com/album_july5th.html

- **Committee Minutes**

Check out the Friends of Chattahoochee Hills Web site for the following committee minutes:

Business & Commerce Committee (new name is Sustainable Economic Development Committee.

See: <http://www.chatthills.org/foch/BussinessCom-062808.pdf>

Public Safety

<http://www.chatthills.org/foch/PubSaf-062408.pdf>

Chatt Hills Historical Society

<http://www.chatthills.org/foch/HistorySociety-071708.pdf>

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Regards,

Laurie Searle, interim chair

Communications Committee

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