

"My Perspectives"
November Newsletter

Well, we all made it to November and we still have our sanity, but it looks like the world is collapsing before us. If we have a change at the top (the president's race), then we can start concentrating on more fruitful matters, like interest rates, home foreclosures, the jobless rate and our deteriorating economy.

Last month we heard our tax assessor mention there are 800-1000 foreclosed homes and other distressed properties in our county. This is sobering news. We must all cut the fat out of our lives and dig in for the long haul.

We do have encouraging news that has come this month.

**On November 20, 2008 at the oak Hill Elementary School, between the hours of 4:00 pm to 7:00 p.m., the Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) will be presenting a public information open house concerning the widening of Highway 212 from the Intersection of County Road 8/Bethany Road to the Intersection of County Road 19/Oak Hill Road. The speed limit will be 45 mph.

** The Library board has issued a revised plan for the Porter Memorial Library at Oak Hill. The architect will render a schematic design plan in late November-early December 2008. After a series of other tests, the state will approve the drawings and the plans will be viewed and evaluated by the Fire Marshall. By June of 2009 the library board will begin the process of looking for a contractor. By late 2009 to early 2010 we will begin the bidding process, followed by the groundbreaking ceremony. If all the plans go smoothly we will be opening the library in September 2010. This is a long wait, but the library board is moving as quickly as possible to get this project done right.

**In another four months we will begin our budget process for Newton County. If the economy continues to slide into a deep recession, I will be forced to cut down on some of my initiatives for district two. This may include shelving my plans for a tax satellite office. This is something that may have to wait until the economy gets better. I still want a sub-station for the sheriff patrol officers, and I will continue to look for ways to make our district cleaner, safer and greener.

Lastly, I want to warn everyone about making sure all your valuables are locked up. Several teenagers from a nearby neighborhood stole my riding lawnmower last month. It was very frustrating as we found the owner of the truck used to haul my lawnmower away to be 16 years old. Unfortunately, he would not tell us who his "friend" is that took the lawn mower. Again, please be very careful to lock your doors and put all valuables under secure conditions so that you won't wind up as a victim.

Wishing you an early “Happy Thanksgiving”...

Commissioner Simmons