

- [Home](#)
- [About Peach Pundit](#)
- [News Tip Line](#)
- [Media Contact](#)
- [Archives](#)
- [Sponsorships](#)
- [Feed](#)

[Peach Pundit](#)

Fresh Political Pickins From The Peach State

No Longer Time To Ignore Energy Independence

February 25, 2011 13:00 pm

by [Charlie](#) · [3 comments](#)

Today's Courier Herald Column:

It's Friday again, so we've all made it through another week. And as usual, I'll continue my Friday tradition of venturing away from Georgia politics. I spent two days this week in Detroit. It was 5 degrees and snowing, so please try not to be jealous.

The location did have me thinking a bit about our auto industry as I literally watched gas prices rise. Prior to the recent bankruptcies and bailouts, the US manufacturers produced their largest cars here, and generated much of their profits from large truck and SUV sales.

When gas prices spiked a few years ago, the quickly changing customer tastes for hybrids over trucks was one of the many straws that broke the camel's back. Republicans responded with "drill here, drill now", while Democrats offered us CAP and Trade. All talk, much of it loud, but no action. [[click to continue...](#)]

{ [3 comments](#) }

Paul Broun's Statement On The Obama Question:

February 25, 2011 12:14 pm

by [Charlie](#) · [4 comments](#)

From the office of Congressman Paul Broun, who still claims he has been sworn in:

"Tuesday night at a town hall meeting in Oglethorpe County, Georgia an elderly man asked the abhorrent question, "Who's going to shoot Obama?" I was stunned by the question and chose not to dignify it with a response; therefore, at that moment I moved on to the next person with a question. After the event, my office took action with the appropriate authorities. I deeply regret that this

Indiana have joined Democratic lawmakers from Wisconsin by seeking refuge across state lines to avoid allowing Republican majorities a quorum in their respective legislatures. In both states, lawmakers who have sided with those who tried to brand Republicans as “the party of ‘No’” have turned themselves into “the party of no-show”.

Wisconsin and Indiana, like Georgia and most other states, are facing real, structural financial problems. States are in danger of cutting essential services. And beyond the angry signs and shouts at various protests, there is actually a sincere if not seemingly bizarre conversation going on about what services states can afford to provide, and how states will pay to offer them.

In Georgia, that conversation took the form of rebuilding the HOPE scholarship, which is facing increasing expenses due to tuition increases which are outpacing inflation. Governor Deal laid out his plan this week, in which he proposes to cover only 90% of tuition for most students, with some exceptionally high achieving students to continue to receive 100% of tuition from newly named “Zell Miller Scholarships”. Money for fees and books will also be stripped for HOPE recipients. [[click to continue...](#)]

{ [8 comments](#) }

Georgia Tech Grad to Land a Great and Historic Honor

February 24, 2011 18:02 pm

by [Nathan](#) · [0 comments](#)

At 4:53 PM EST, the Space Shuttle Discovery (STS-133) lifted off of the launch pad to pass from Earth's blue skies to the darkness of space. At the helm of that amazing piece of machinery is [Colonel Eric A. Boe](#), a graduate of Henderson High School and the Georgia Institute of Technology. He will pilot Discovery on a 12-day mission to visit the International Space Station delivering payloads and a new crew and bring her back home for the final time on March 7th.

Our space program has always captivated me. I hate to see the Space Shuttle program ending, but I hope that its end opens up a new chapter and a new interest in our travels to space. I hope that we'll have that spark once again in the areas of science, technology, and engineering as we did back during the '50s and '60s.

Godspeed, Colonel Boe. We hope that you and the rest of the crew of Discovery make it home safely.

H/T: [That's Just Peachy](#) and [WSB Radio](#)

{ [0 comments](#) }

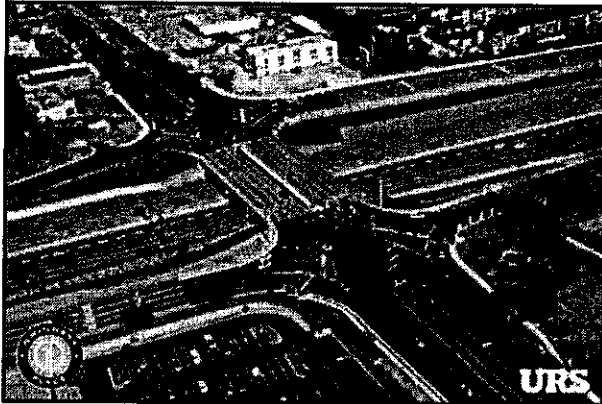
Diverging Diamonds: Drivers' Best Friends?

February 24, 2011 14:09 pm

by [Mike Hassinger](#) · [32 comments](#)

This is a diverging diamond, a innovative traffic relief solution that takes advantage of existing infrastructure and is quicker and cheaper to build than traditional lane-widening. (You should be able

to click on the image for a larger view.)



Proposed Diverging Diamond at I-85 and Pleasant Hill

There are only 5 of these in the country right now, but two more are under consideration for Gwinnett County, one at Pleasant Hill and I-85, the other at Jimmy Carter and I-85.

UPDATE! Apparently there are also DDIs under construction at [Ashford-Dunwoody and I-285](#) and someplace called "Cobb County." More "how they work" details on that project are available at [John Heneghan's Dunwoody blog](#) and "where the money comes from" details at [State Rep. Mike Jacobs' blog](#).

Brian Allen, director of the Gwinnett County Department of Transportation, said the DDI projects are much-needed improvements that should increase capacity and help ease traffic congestion in two of the county's busiest travel areas.

"We are pleased with the successful collaboration of state and local transportation with the CIDs to conduct this innovative work that is entirely funded by SPLOST and CID money." Allen said. "It's much less expensive than traditional interchange reconstruction because we're using the existing bridges in a new way."

The Gwinnett Place CID and the Gwinnett Village CID, in collaboration with County and State transportation departments, can fund the project through existing SPLOST revenues and CID taxes.

"The DDI is truly a revolutionary system that allows drivers to cross over to the 'opposite' side of the road as they access the interstate, and because the new interchange uses the existing infrastructure, these DDI's construction time and dollars needed are dramatically less than building a new interstate crossing," said Mark Williams, Chairman of the Gwinnett Place CID Board of Directors.

"Relieving congestion has been one of our top priorities since the CID was formed in 2006," said Chuck Warbington, executive director for the Gwinnett Village CID. "The Jimmy Carter Boulevard and I-85 interchange is a major point of entry to our district and our goal with the Diverging Diamond redesign is to enhance accessibility to local businesses and to reduce overall congestion in the corridor."

Open houses for public input and commentary will be held Thursday, Feb. 24 – 4 p.m. to 7 p.m. Atlanta Marriott Gwinnett Place (1775 Pleasant Hill Road, Duluth) for the Pleasant Hill Road DDI, and Tuesday, March 1 – 4 p.m. to 7 p.m. at the Gwinnett CID offices (5855 Jimmy Carter Boulevard Suite

122, Norcross) for the Jimmy Carter Boulevard DDI.

I don't know how these things work, but they seem to be pretty cutting-edge. Kudos to the respective CIDs for pushing forward -the drivers of Gwinnett thank you.

Here's a [video](#) of one in action. I still don't get it.

{ [32 comments](#) }

Georgia Ranked 32nd in the Nation for Highest Tax Burden According to the Tax Foundation

February 24, 2011 12:38 pm

by [Nathan](#) · [3 comments](#)

Tennessee's 47th, New Jersey 1st, and the folks cyphering at the University of Alabama are using their fingers and toes to count up to their ranking of 36. We're even getting bested by South Carolina who ranks 43rd. I say that this should be considered as a challenge for the Republicans in our state legislature. Tennessee steals our water, and come on...Alabama?! Seriously, we can't get beaten by those two states.

It's not as exciting as a FairTax Friday, I'm sure, but when you're getting beat by Tennessee and Alabama, it's almost as depressing as Bank Failure Friday. Anyway, [there's a map](#) for your viewing pleasure over at the Tax Foundation.

Happy Thursday (and Friday)!!!

{ [3 comments](#) }

Morehouse to Play in "Nation's Football Classic" in DC

February 24, 2011 10:57 am

by [Ed](#) · [4 comments](#)

The "Classic" is a game between two HBCUs and the inaugural installment will see Atlanta's own Morehouse College squaring off against the District's Howard University.

Details of the gridiron bout were announced yesterday in Washington D.C.

Hizzoner Kasim Reed, an alum of Howard and a Board of Trustees member, was present for the announcement. In typical politician fashion, he would not pick a side. One assumes this was done out of deference to his alma mater and constituents.

A wager was made with his D.C. counterpart, Vincent C. Gray. Should HU emerge victorious, Reed will feast at Ben's Chili Bowl (make a stop if you are passing by. Seriously.) and if Morehouse does, Gray will make a stop at The Varsity. What'll he have remains to be seen.

Both schools will compete in the match until 2013. After that, other schools may be invited.