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today's focus

Being a librarian brings several distinct advantages

By Jo Ann Pinder
Special to GwinnettForum

(Editor's Note: Having seen Atlanta native Vernon Jordan on C-Span addressing the Public Library Association in convention, we asked former Gwinnett librarian Jo Ann Pinder, now of Baltimore, Md., if she had heard him speak. She had not been at that session, but sends in this report.-eeb)

BALTIMORE, Md., Aug. 29, 2008 -- Being a librarian has many advantages. Some, but by far not all, include:

- advance knowledge of your favorite author's newest book;
- advance publishers' galleys of books months before they are released;
- access to many authors at library and bookseller events.

When serving as president of the Public Library Association, the president's program featured Margaret Atwood. From picking her up at her home, to spending time in the Green Room and sharing a podium with her, I had one of the best afternoon's of my life. I have been fortunate to share meals with Chris Bohjalian, Ridley Pearson, Miss Manners (before which my mother felt the need to impart many coaching sessions), Helen Thomas and Diana Gabaldon. During my years as executive director of the Gwinnett County Public Library, Gwinnett Reads gave me the opportunity to spend time with Clyde Edgerton and Rick Bragg.

Among many of the books I have read before their release are several by Anita Shreve, this summer's sleeper *The Story of Edgar Sawtelle* by David Wroblewski and the new book by the author of *Marley and Me* due out this fall. My nephew was the envy of his friends, several years ago

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Luther King, Jr.

Dr. Rafshoon says: "The bombers had intended to intimidate Jews, who were seen as co-conspirators along with blacks in the civil rights struggle, but this act of terror had the opposite effect. When Rabbi Rothschild returned to his office the day after the bombing, he was greeted with mailbags filled with sympathetic messages from Atlanta and from across the nation."



Rafshoon

The display, which includes letters, photographs and published clippings, will show how Rabbi Rothschild worked openly to build support for desegregation among Atlanta's religious and civic leaders. The overwhelming support extended to The Temple's congregation gave Atlanta Jews the confidence to become more active in bridging the divide between blacks and whites, Dr. Rafshoon further commented.

In addition to the exhibit, on October 12, Dr. Rafshoon will present a slide show about the exhibition at The Temple, located at 1589 Peachtree Street, NE in Atlanta. She will be joined by the Rabbi's widow, Janice Rothschild Blumberg and other Temple congregants who will share their memories of the attack.

CORRECTION: Reading Festival set for Saturday, Oct. 18

The Gwinnett County Public Library will present the second annual Gwinnett Reading Festival on Saturday, October 18 from 10 a.m. until 4 p.m. at the Gwinnett County Fairgrounds. The date was previously incorrectly reported.



❖ notable

Gwinnett Place CID seeks optimization of traffic signals

While there are no quick-fix solutions to traffic congestion, the Gwinnett Place CID and Gwinnett County Department of Transportation are working to introduce new relief measures in Gwinnett's central business

district.

CID leaders recently authorized a project to optimize the traffic signal timings at 45 intersections throughout greater Gwinnett Place. The CID contracted with Wolverton and Associates, a local transportation consulting firm, to independently evaluate the signals and supply their findings to county transportation officials for final implementation.

The work will primarily address Pleasant Hill Road, Steve Reynolds Boulevard and Club Drive, according to Joe Allen, CID executive director.

"This process is centered on getting the most capacity possible out of existing roadways," Allen says. "With increasing numbers of drivers visiting the area, we believe we can improve transportation infrastructure performance on our busiest streets through this partnership."

The CID's funding commitment for the project will be matched by Gwinnett County resources and other efforts. The public-private partnership is facilitating the retiming years ahead of time.

The evaluation process and resulting changes should be completed in advance of the busy holiday shopping season.

Study to consider options for bringing Suwanee together

Downtown Suwanee is a bit like the ancient Chinese symbol yin-yang. Quaint, historic Old Town and the newly constructed, bustling Town Center represent contradictory yet complementary aspects of downtown Suwanee. The City of Suwanee is poised to update its 2002 Old Town Master Plan in order to determine how best to create a unique synergy for its dual-personality downtown area.

Planning Director Josh Campbell says: "We want to find a way to merge these two areas. Our desire is that both of these areas - these two sides of downtown Suwanee's personality - be compatible and tied to one another."

The City of Suwanee will contract with Ecos Environmental Design, an Atlanta-based landscape architecture, urban design, and planning services