

## Neighbor Sports

Lions host volleyball tournament/1C



*2005 Chandy Springs Festival*  
Saturday September 17 - Sunday September 18 D1

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 14, 2005

## Neighbor P

Arts foundation holds flea market/1B



# NORTHSIDE NEIGHBOR

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# TO THE RESCUE

## Resident heads to Gulf Coast to help disaster relief

By Pasha Carroll

Neighbor Newspapers Staff Writer

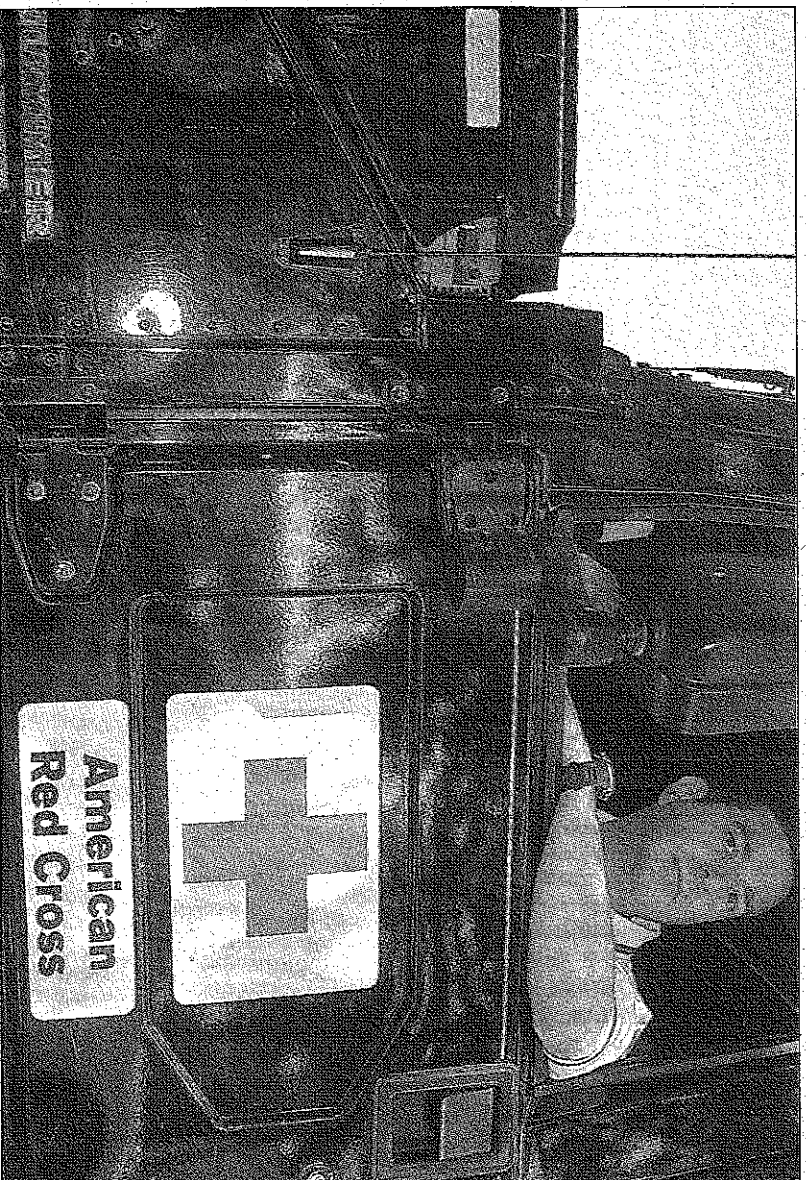
As evacuees continue to flood into Georgia, one Northside resident is heading south to communities that Hurricane Katrina so mercifully destroyed.

On Friday, Sept. 16, David LaMarca will kiss his wife and two children, climb into his 1997 H-1 Hummer and head to the gulf coast. Once there, he will help clear paths through debris and flood waters to help assessors from the American Red Cross get to otherwise unreachable areas of storm torn areas.

"David is a member of The HUMMER Club," said Brennan Robison, a fellow member of north Atlanta Rotary Club. "They take their H-1s and H-2s and H-3s and go to damaged areas to clear the roads so the Red Cross can get in."

LaMarca, along with a group of 10 other HUMMER Club members from across the nation, will convene at the Gerry Lane Hummer Dealership in Baton Rouge, La. where half a dozen Hummer owners are already camping out.

Hummer Owners Prepared for Emergency (HOPE) trained members of The HUMMER Club will be dispatched from the dealership to work with the Red Cross to help in relief efforts. HOPE was formed to train



Adam Bueb/Staff

David LaMarca is a member of the HUMMER Club's HOPE volunteer group. HOPE members are trained to use their Hummers to go deep into ravaged terrain. LaMarca will be working in the areas affected by Hurricane Katrina.

and certify HUMMER Club members as volunteers. HOPE volunteers use their bulky, powerful, resilient machines to go where most vehicles can't in disasters, such as storms, floods and fires. Certification training includes a disaster relief driving course and basic first aid training. HOPE volunteers receive physical and psychological training so they are prepared for the horrific scenes they will encounter.

"We will be trying to clear the streets so they can assess the

damage deep into the areas," LaMarca said. "They told us to prepare for the worst. I had to get a long list of inoculations."

LaMarca and the HOPE volunteers are going with MRIs, water and the knowledge that they will be encountering unimaginable destruction, death and disease.

"We are prepared with long rubber pants, boots, gloves and masks," he said.

"We were just supposed to be driving, but right now there is so much damage that we will have

to get out and use chainsaws to cut debris from the roadway," LaMarca said.

"New Orleans is really just a disaster," Eddy Vargas, the head of Operations at Gerry Lane Enterprises said. "It is shocking."

"Yesterday, two Coastguards came into the dealership and the smell coming off them was unbearable," Vargas said.

Hummer owners are also bringing nonperishable items to the dealership, where the HOPE teams will camp out while they are in the storm zone.

## Fulton County tax assessors' fates yet to be determined

By Pasha Carroll

Neighbor Newspapers Staff Writer

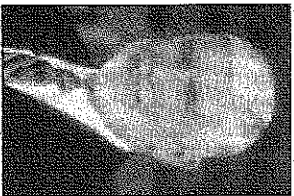
The secret is out, the audit is public record, and now the Fulton County Board of Tax Assessors will have a chance to plead its case.

A scathing report from the firm of Cherry, Bekkert & Holland, LLP showed the Fulton County Board of Tax Assessors to have 13 deficiencies, in the areas of ethics, assignment of appraisals and appraisal methods, among others. At the Sept. 7 Fulton County Board of Commissioners meeting,

Chairman Karen Handel proposed a resolution that requested each person on the five member board resign.

But opposing commissioners thought members of the board should have "their day in court."

"They will have the opportunity to respond, but the findings won't change," John Montoro, a partner at the auditing firm said. Montoro also said that there wouldn't be a



Tom Lowe

draft if the findings weren't there and that there is evidence and support for those findings.

Those findings, Handel said were "devastating."

District 7 commissioner Bill Edwards said, "Once again we have sensationalized another issue without having all the facts before us. We are already here asking them to quit, based on what?"

"We need more information before we ask people to resign."

District 4 Commissioner Tom Lowe agreed.

Giff Groover, a resident and business owner in Sandy Springs, agreed with those commissioners.

"It is another political mess we are getting into. Where are the facts?" he said.

The audit and facts will become final once the management response from The Board of Tax Assessors is complete. Determining the ramifications of the final report is slated for Oct. 5, at the next board of commissioners meeting.

## Councilmember to introduce housing ordinance

By Jessica Thomas

Neighbor Newspapers Staff Writer

Post 2 At-large Atlanta councilmember Mary Norwood introduce legislation that will develop in the city council meeting Monday.

The ordinance Mrs. Norwood has been a collaborative housing task force, the defining and community development groups gathered Sept. 7 at City Hall to evaluate as it is currently working.

Together the groups update and rework the ordinance from 1982 which is compared, Mrs. Norwood said.

The Infill Housing Task Force by the Atlanta City Council in 2003 to study the impact of infill housing on neighborhoods in the city of Atlanta.

During the past two years, the group has studied how other infill communities have addressed inappropriate infill and have worked toward creating appropriate infill development while protecting existing adjacent homes, said Mrs. Norwood.

Some infill houses that are smaller existing homes and not appropriate for she said. These larger homes as some call them a blight to the neighborhood, Mrs. Norwood said.

Through the creation of infill ordinance, the department of planning to build something that is compatible to the street allows for enough room want Mrs. Norwood said. Jim Brown, a Buckhead lives in Peachtree Hills satisfied with the ordinance, meeting that the ordinance be clearer.

"The new infill ordinance related to height will worry builders," he said. "Yet so ordinance still need slight adjustments."

The ordinance regulates infill homes at the vertical the existing grade of the infill at the center of the infill or structure to the lowest and highest point the highest story and add basement height and require demolition.