

Board of County Commissioners

"Moving Camden Forward"



2008 Annual Report *to the Citizens* of Camden County

Photo Submitted by Cheryl A. Conner, Winner of the 2008 Showcase Camden County Photo Contest - Common Great Egret in flight over the marsh at Beach Creek

Laying The Foundation

Camden County Board of County Commissioners

WORKING TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE IN THE COMMUNITY

The Camden County Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) are voted for by and represent citizens in five commission districts. Serving four-year, staggered terms, the Board serves as Camden County's legislative body serving as fiscal representatives of the county.

The Board currently meets regularly at the Camden County Annex in Kingsland on the first and third Tuesday of each month. Beginning January 2009, meetings will be held at the new Government Services Building in Woodbine. Minutes are recorded of all Commission meetings and public hearings and are made part of the record in the County Clerk's Office.

The Board of Commissioners also serves as your ambassadors or liaisons to many local, regional and state boards and committees. These boards and committees cover a variety of important matters that affect Camden County residents and businesses including: the economy, transportation, regional and local planning, the environment, tourism, juvenile issues and the arts. The Board of Commissioners is actively engaged in working for the good of the community.



Pictured from left to right: Stephen Berry – Commissioner, District 3, Katherine Nisi Zell – Vice-Chair, Commissioner, District 2, Preston Rhodes – Chair, Commissioner District 1, Charlene Sears – Commissioner, District 4, and David L. Rainer – Commissioner, District 5

A MESSAGE FROM YOUR COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR

Steve L. Howard

“Moving Camden County Forward”

I am pleased to present the 2008 Annual Report, which highlights some of the key accomplishments of Camden County Government over the past year. I am pleased with the progress we have made as a team by accomplishing over 100 tasks utilizing a team approach.

While the year 2008 presented many challenges, it afforded us the opportunity to demonstrate our optimism. The development of our new Strategic Plan allowed us to evaluate ourselves and embark on a fresh course for an even brighter future. The County's Strategic Plan has led to many positive changes in the way we operate. The new Strategic Plan will identify additional, more relevant areas for improvement and create a dynamic organization that can be proactive and flexible to meet future challenges. This new plan involved the community and County Commissioners. With your help, we finalized the vision, mission and

values as well as identified strategic priorities and focus areas. The 2008 Annual Report is designed around these strategic priorities.

I trust you will find the organizational accomplishments throughout this report a testament to the hard work and dedication of Camden County employees, as we continue to work as a team to make our community a better place to live and work. I am confident that we will achieve organizational excellence through teamwork. I look forward to working with you in 2009 as we continue to *move Camden County forward*.

Sincerely,

Steve L. Howard, CPM, CPPO
County Administrator



Steve L. Howard, County Administrator

Laying The Foundation

Election 2008

The Elections of 2008 proved to be of high significance not only on a national level, but on the local level as well, as Camden County had three commissioners whose terms were expiring in 2008. On July 15th current County Commissioners for District 3, Steve Berry, and District 5, David Rainer, retained their seats by defeating their challengers in the primary election. However, the person who would challenge Preston Rhodes in District 1 would not be decided in July as a run-off was deemed necessary. On August 5, 2008 Willis “Chip” Keene, Jr. defeated Craig Brack in the run-off election and Mr. Keene would face incumbent Preston Rhodes in November.

The General Election on November 4th proved to be one that would change the composition of the Board of County Commissioners. While Commissioners Steve Berry and David Rainer retained their seats, Willis “Chip” Keene, Jr. defeated incumbent Preston Rhodes in a very close election race.

Preston Rhodes served Camden County with pride on the Board of County Commissioners during 1987 – 1990 and for two consecutive additional 4-year terms from 2001 – 2008. As Chair of the Board for two years during 2007 and 2008, Commissioner Rhodes took great effort in providing strong leadership by helping to create policies to ensure the integrity and future of Camden County as well as effectively using County staff to save taxpayers money and time.

Beginning in January 2009, Willis “Chip” Keene, Jr., will take office as County Commissioner for District 1. As a current bank vice-president, Commissioner Keene is qualified to make tough financial decisions that will likely affect the County due to the economical hardships that face the citizens and their government.



Chip Keene

Other races that are a part of Camden County Government that were decided include: District Attorney of the Brunswick Judicial Circuit – Stephen Kelley, Clerk of Superior Court – Susan L. Waldron, Sheriff – Tommy Gregory, Tax Commissioner – Beth Soles, Coroner – L.W. Bruce, Probate Court – Martin O. Gillette, and Chief Magistrate – Jennifer Lewis.

With the elections behind us we anticipate another productive year as we continue to move Camden County forward.



Camden County Board of County Commissioners 2009 Calendar

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| January 1, County Business Offices are closed. |
| January 6, Commissioners' Meeting, 6 PM |
| January 19, County Business Offices are closed. |
| January 20, Commissioners' Meeting, 6 PM |
| February 3, Commissioners' Meeting, 6 PM |
| February 16, County Business Offices are closed. |
| February 17, Commissioners' Meeting, 6 PM |
| March 3, Commissioners' Meeting, 6 PM |
| March 17, Commissioners' Meeting, 6 PM |
| April 7, Commissioners' Meeting, 6 PM |
| April 10, County Business Offices are closed. |
| April 21, Commissioners' Meeting, 6 PM |
| May 5, Commissioners' Meeting, 6 PM |
| May 19, Commissioners' Meeting, 6 PM |
| May 25, County Business Offices are closed. |
| June 2, Commissioners' Meeting, 6 PM |
| June 16, Commissioners' Meeting, 6 PM |
| July 3, County Business Offices are closed. |
| July 14, Commissioners' Meeting, 6 PM <i>(only one meeting will be held in July)</i> |
| August 4, Commissioners' Meeting, 6 PM |
| August 18, Commissioners' Meeting, 6 PM |
| September 1, Commissioners' Meeting, 6 PM |
| September 7, County Business Offices are closed. |
| September 15, Commissioners' Meeting, 6 PM |
| October 6, Commissioners' Meeting, 6 PM |
| October 12, County Business Offices are closed. |
| October 20, Commissioners' Meeting, 6 PM |
| November 3, Commissioners' Meeting, 6 PM |
| November 11, County Business Offices are closed. |
| November 17, Commissioners' Meeting, 6 PM |
| November 26 and 27, County Business Offices are closed. |
| December 1, Commissioners' Meeting, 6 PM |
| December 15, Commissioners' Meeting, 6 PM |
| December 23, 24 and 25, County Business Offices are closed. |

(Board of County Commissioners meetings are held in Woodbine in the Government Services Building. This calendar does not include any work sessions, public hearings, or special called meetings that are currently scheduled or that may be scheduled in the future.)

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Growth and Development

Unified Development Code, UDC

The Camden County Board of County Commissioners recently adopted the Unified Development Code (UDC) for the unincorporated areas of Camden County. The purpose of the UDC is to promote the health, safety, morals, aesthetics, convenience, order, prosperity and general welfare of the community. A sampling of some of the issues it is intended to address include:

- Implementing the County's Comprehensive Plan
- Sustaining the character of the County and its suitability for particular uses, to promote desirable living conditions and stability of neighborhoods
- Securing safety from fire, panic and other dangers
- Encouraging the most appropriate use of land,

buildings and other structures throughout the county.

- Encouraging the development of an economically sound and stable community so as to help conserve and protect the natural, economic and scenic resources of Camden County
- Assuring the provisions of the required streets, drainage, utilities, and other facilities and services in new land development to help prevent and reduce traffic

These are just a few of the areas addressed in the Unified Development Code, many of which had not been updated in 20 years and were necessary to continue the proactive efforts of planning for the future of Camden County.

Camden County Community Housing Team

Camden County currently has two members on the Camden Community Housing Team. One of the goals of the Housing Team is to educate the community, local leaders, homebuilders, residents, and others on the existing state of affordable housing conditions within Camden County, Kingsland, St. Marys, and Woodbine. We have learned that there is much that a community can do to promote good, quality affordable housing options, but it takes a comprehensive and cooperative effort by governments, civic groups, non-profit agencies, developers, contractors, realtors, and others to facilitate this housing development.

Without affordable housing options, we limit the quality of life that our residents can enjoy here in

Camden County, and thereby hinder our ability to successfully market our communities and the region as a location for economic and community development opportunities. We also hinder our ability to retain the youthful knowledge base, coming from our school system, which is a prime consideration by economic development opportunities that are considering Camden County as a location.

The Housing Team also promotes homebuyer workshops to residents to educate them on first time home buying, the importance of managing finances and credit.

Our hope is that we can work cooperatively as we focus to maintain and encourage affordable housing choices in Camden County.

Joint Comprehensive Plan

Comprehensive Plans throughout the State of Georgia are required to be updated every ten years by the State. This year, Camden County worked in cooperation with the Cities of Kingsland, St. Marys and Woodbine to prepare a Joint Comprehensive Plan for submission to the State of Georgia.

The purpose of the Comprehensive Plan is intended for the following reasons, among others:

- (1) To guide and direct growth and development in Camden County;
- (2) To protect, preserve and enhance the county's cultural, environmental, economic and social

resources

- (3) To identify current land uses in order to assist the county in making budgetary, utility and other resource allocations;
- (4) To enable Camden County to predict future land uses for planning purposes;
- (5) To assist the county in fulfilling its statutory and other legal obligations; and
- (6) To provide a public document which will serve as a means of general information on land use and development for the citizens of Camden County and other interested parties.

Impact Fees

What are Impact Fees?

- Under State law, the County can collect money as a one-time "impact fee" from new development based on that development's proportionate share – the "fair share" – of the cost to provide the public facilities it needs.
- Impact fees are authorized by the Development Impact Fee Act (DIFA), and any impact fee program must meet all provision of that law.

What are the eligible costs?

- Impact fees can be used to fund what are defined by DIFA as "system improvements" and are prohibited from funding what are called "project improvements."
- Impact fees can only be used to fund public facilities with a useful life of at least ten years that serve the community at large.
- Population, housing and employment forecasts quantify the future demand for public facilities.

What are the adopted Impact Fee Categories:

- Fire Protection Services
- Emergency Management Services (EMS)
- Sheriff's Office
- Road Improvements
- Emergency Management Agency (EMA)
- Libraries
- Parks & Recreations

What are the Impact Fee Assessments?

- The total impact fee for a building project is the sum of the Fire Protection Services, EMS, Sheriff's Office, Road Improvements, and EMA fees, as well as Libraries and Parks & Recreation for residential projects.
- The adopted level of service does not have to be the same as the current level of service. The same level of service must be provided to both existing development and new growth.

What's Next?

Impact Fees will be implemented January 1, 2009.

For further information or to download the fee rate schedule, please visit the county website at www.co.camden.ga.us.

Service Delivery Strategy

Every 10 years the Service Delivery Strategy (SDS) must be updated for Camden County and is necessary in order to be eligible for many grant opportunities and projects through the State of Georgia. The SDS includes the many services provided by Camden County as well as the Cities of Kingsland, St. Marys and Woodbine. The County and all the cities worked cooperatively to update the SDS this year, saving all those involved approximately \$30,000 by preparing this document in-house.

Growth and Development

Camden County Public Works

The Camden County Department of Public Works puts forth great effort to keep our highways and byways open to the public. Camden County has 611 miles of public roads, of which 126 miles are state maintained, 185 are city streets, and we are responsible for maintaining the 300 miles left over. Of that 300, 164 are paved, and 136 are dirt surface. The Department of Public Works assists residents with drainage, signage, lighting, culverts, and right-of-way access. The Department also contracts out the construction of new roads and inspecting new development infrastructure.

New and recent successes of the Department of Public Works include the paving of Bass, Bream, Bluegill, and Shellcracker Streets in Browntown, and the super elevation section of Old Jefferson Hwy in Colesburg. Current and ongoing projects include the paving of

Ella Park Church Road, which is 4 miles of paving from Horse Stamp Church Road to Dover Bluff Road. The paving of Ella Park is related to the Department's future project of a new interchange on I-95 at Horse Stamp Church Road, which will serve as an economic upgrade as well as an aid in hurricane evacuation. There is also a long range project for constructing the Kingsland By-Pass, which will act as an aid in hurricane evacuation routes for the south end of Camden County.

As a division of the Department of Public Works, the Mosquito Control Division is dedicated in providing the County the most environmentally safe and efficient control of mosquitoes. This includes spraying and applying mosquito growth regulator to the areas of Kingsland, Woodbine, St. Marys and public roads countywide. In August 2008, the division took great

steps to becoming more environmentally friendly in its Mosquito Control Division by converting from gas-powered mosquito control sprayers to electric sprayers that are more eco-friendly. Some of the eco-friendly qualities of the new mosquito sprayer/fogger include zero exhaust emissions, no motor oil required, and has a low maintenance cost. A part-time position has been added, enhancing the service delivery of this division.

All County residents are encouraged to call the Department of Public Works at (912) 576-3028 with all roadway needs and comments. Their dispatcher, J. D. Strickland, will be more than happy to get all information in the right hands. For mosquito control needs and comments, please contact the mosquito control division at (912) 729-4823.

Leisure Services and Public Transportation

Camden County's Public Service Authority (PSA) provides a wide variety of high quality leisure opportunities, services and facilities for the citizens of Camden County to enjoy and enhance their quality of life.

Camden Community Recreation Center

The Camden Community Recreation Center is the central hub for the PSA. Inside, there is a fully equipped work out room, a group exercise room, two racquetball courts, a basketball court, a gymnasium for gymnastics, a "Tot Drop" facility, locker rooms, a fully equipped kitchen, and a community room. The kitchen and community room are available for the public to rent for various functions. Behind the building, there is an Olympic size pool. The Recreation Center also houses office staff, along with many departments: Health & Fitness, Athletics, Gymnastics, Aquatics, Programs, and Transportation. At this same address, there are also several facilities surrounding the building. Across the parking lot, there is a newly resurfaced ¼ mile track. To the side, there is a football stadium that seats up to 8,900 people and has newly installed artificial field turf. Out back, the PSA has Phase II – a four field baseball/softball complex complete with concession stand and seating for fans. And behind Phase II, there is a model plane run-way. The PSA is responsible for the maintenance of all of these facilities, inside and out. The Recreation Center's hours of operations are Monday – Thursday, 5:00 a.m. – 9:00 p.m.; Friday, 5:00 a.m. – 7:00 p.m.; Saturday, 8:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m., and Sunday, 12:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.

Parks

Besides the Recreation Center and its surrounding facilities, the PSA Leisure Services Department is responsible for the maintenance of 22 other parks and recreation facilities in Camden County and for scheduling reservations of the facilities for public use.

PSA Projects in 2008

- Currently, the PSA is in the process of installing a screened pavilion at the Mary B. Smart Park located on Old Post Road in Woodbine, or Tarboro. This park sits on 17 acres and offers Baseball field, Basketball court, Tennis Court, playground and restroom facilities.

- The PSA is compiling plans for the Woodbine Lions Club Park. This park is located on the corner of Brewster Avenue and Crestview Drive and offers a large baseball field.

- The PSA is currently constructing a skate park area in addition to the park located on Hwy 110 in Woodbine. This popular community park offers baseball field, football field, lighted tennis court, basketball courts, a playground, and restroom facilities.

- PSA recently installed a boat dock at Spring Bluff. The next step is to pour the concrete for the boat ramp.

- In 2008, PSA completed the installation of lighting along the new park of the walkway in Woodbine.

Public Transportation

The PSA is proud to offer transportation services to residents of Camden County for a flat rate of \$6.00 per round trip to anywhere in Camden County that they



Camden County Leisure Services Community Recreation Center.

need to go. In order to utilize this service, residents need to call (912) 729-5600 and give the department 24-hour notice of when and where they need to go. Availability is offered first come, first served. The Transportation Department operates Monday thru Friday, 8:00 am – 5:00 pm. Wheelchair accessible transportation is also available. Please call (912) 729-5600 for additional information.

Nearly 23,000 people have utilized the PSA's public transportation service since January 1, 2008. For more information, contact PSA at (912) 729-5600.

Growth and Development

Capital Improvement Projects

Reorganizing to Create Greater Efficiency

In September 2008 a County Engineer was hired to serve as a technical advisor on public works projects included but not limited to roads, storm water management, construction management, and/or water/wastewater future planning. As a result of his hire, County Administrator, Steve L. Howard, reorganized one department and two offices keeping in mind that certain functions and services are more compatible for consolidation in an effort to maximize impact, provide higher degree of focus, and enhance effectiveness. The divisions of Facilities Management and Capital Improvements have been transferred and are now supervised by the Office of the County Engineer.

The Office of the Management Analyst was consolidated into the Office of Strategic Planning. This aligned functions of these offices that were logical to work together to achieve greater effectiveness.

Our highest priority should always be to deliver efficient and effective services to the citizens of the County. This reorganization will remain true to that mission.



Government Services Building.

Camden County Government Services Building

The new 30,000 square foot Central Office with occupancy to start in late December is the heart of the Camden County Government Services Complex in Woodbine. The new building will result in greater convenience for County residents as it will consolidate offices now spread out over several buildings into a new, modern, efficient facility. The building will be the home of general government, tax commissioner, tax assessors, voter registration, information technology, the office of the County Administrator, and other governmental functions. It will also provide spaces for the Board of Commissioners, including a large, user-friendly and citizen-friendly Commissioners' Board Room.

Gateway Training Center

The Gateway Training Center in Woodbine - slated for completion of renovation in April - will become the new home of the County's Gateway Mental Behavior Program. This program provides meaningful work to handicapped members of the community affording them the opportunity to continue to be productive citizens of Camden County. Cost of the renovation is \$870,000.

Woodbine Community Center

This renovated facility - upon its completion also in April - will center around a large, multi-use auditorium for use by County residents for a wide array of programs such as the Small Business Incubator program. Cost of this renovation is \$670,000.



Steve L. Howard, David L. Rainer, Dennis Gailey, Robbie Cheek and Preston Rhodes break ground.

Fire Station 19

Fire Station 19, now under way off Dover Bluff Road at the far north end of the County, will serve the existing and developing communities there. In 2006 the Creekside Development donated Camden County property at 4911 Dover Bluff Road for the purposes of constructing a fire station. In 2007 the site work began to include clearing of the land and elevating the property. On Tuesday, October 28, 2008 at 10:00 a.m., a ground breaking ceremony was held where Fire Station 19 is to be constructed. The station's location will support the County's goal of providing a fire station within a 5 mile radius of all County buildings. With stations so located, not only will citizen peace-of-mind increase, but insurance rates for residents should come down. This additional fire station will provide a reduction in response time by more than 50% and lower the

current ISO rating (10) to equal at least 50% insurance savings for the residential and commercial businesses in the Dover Bluff area. This fire station could also improve the presence of law enforcement through collaboration and potentially serve as a voting precinct for Camden County. The contractor for this project is W. H. Gross Construction Company. Planned completion of the station is in June at a cost of \$740,000.



Preston Rhodes and Emma Rogers cutting the ribbon.

Ralph J. Bunche Complex Ribbon Cutting Ceremony & Open House

The Camden County Board of County Commissioners reopened the newly renovated Ralph J. Bunche Complex. A Ribbon Cutting Ceremony and Open House was held at the complex on Thursday, May 1, 2008, at 6:00 p.m. in the courtyard. The Ralph J. Bunche Complex is located at 1501 Georgia Avenue, Woodbine.

The renovation of the Ralph J. Bunche Complex began in March 2007, as part of Camden County's lead paint and asbestos abatement program. Renovations were funded through Special Local Option Sales Tax funds and a \$500,000 Community Block Development Grant.

The newly renovated complex continues to house the Camden County Health Department, the Coastal Georgia Area Community Action Authority's Head Start and daycare programs, and the Public Service Authority's Seniors program. All three departments resumed services at the Ralph J. Bunche

Growth and Development

Promoting Smart Growth

In the 2008 – 2013 Strategic Plan for Camden County, one of the key focus areas is Growth & Development. While developing the goals which Camden County hoped to achieve within this five year plan, a major component centered in on Smart Growth. Smart Growth means adding new homes, offices and businesses and jobs to Camden County's economy in a way that enhances the communities in which we live – without requiring higher taxes, adding to our road and traffic woes and without consuming or polluting our remaining marshes, rivers, green space and open spaces.

Smart Growth has two primary features: the “where” and the “how”. It happens “where” development can be accommodated with minimal adverse impact to the environment, and in places where development takes maximum advantage of public investments already made. Smart Growth also addresses “how” the finished development will work with neighboring development to restore choices that are missing in places marked by sprawl; such as the choice to walk, ride bicycles or drive, the choice to meet neighbors in attractive common spaces, or the choice to live in an apartment, house or condominium. Some general criteria looked for when determining Smart Growth includes:

- Located near existing development and infrastructure;
- Increases the range of housing options for different age groups, incomes and household sizes allowing people to remain in the same neighborhood through different stages of life;
- Protects green space and natural areas such as wetlands, marshes, rivers, green space, timber and critical environmental areas
- Creates or enhances a vibrant mix of uses (residential, retail, office)
- Accessibility: Increases transportation choices (e.g. walking, bike riding)
- Respects community character, design and historic features

In working toward establishing Camden County as a Smart Growth Community, we have included this aspect in our Joint Comprehensive Plan to be approved at the State level. Once this Plan is approved, Camden County can then move forward in this quest. In the meantime, Camden County has already begun to endorse projects that are conducive to the establishment of Smart Growth including the Rails-to-Trails/East Coast Greenway Project and the

Affordable Housing initiative as well as beginning to develop a Smart Growth Scorecard.

The Rails-to-Trails/East Coast Greenway Project is a perfect example of this initiative. The Rails-to-Trails/East Coast Greenway Project could provide safe routes to schools as well as connect neighborhoods, schools, parks and business districts to each other without the need for motorized transportation. This program also promotes health and wellness through walking and cycling. Such a program is also designed for personal interaction by creating alternate means of connecting places with increased potential for social interaction through walking and cycling thus bringing forth a sense of community. Camden County has an amazing opportunity, with its existing abandoned rail corridor, to enable this vision to become a reality. The endorsement of the Rails-to-Trails/East Coast Greenway Project brings a sense of credibility to Camden County's plan to promote Smart Growth while at the same time providing our community with a trail system that can be used now and for future generations to come.

Camden County understands the need to balance housing choices within our community, thus bringing affordable housing to the forefront. Camden County has partnered with the Camden County Community Housing Team to take on the issues regarding affordable housing, including establishing means to entice affordable housing developers to Camden County, providing the public with resources to promote owning their own home and researching and applying for grant opportunities.

A Smart Growth Scorecard is in the developmental stages for implementation once Camden County reaches the standards necessary to be designated a Smart Growth Community. The Smart Growth Scorecard will be completed by all applicants for Commercial Permit, Industrial Permit, Mobile Home Park Permit, Subdivision Permit, Rezoning, Preliminary Plat Approval and/or Final Plat. This Scorecard will address areas of significance regarding developmental growth in order to assist in communicating Camden County's vision for implementing Smart Growth.

Camden County is well on its way to instituting its vision of Smart Growth and fostering a healthy and economically viable community while maintaining a sustainable balance with our natural resources and providing a high quality of life for our citizens and guests.

Camden County's Emergency Management Agency (EMA)

In 2008 the Emergency Management agency completed many goals and began new projects to contribute toward success in achieving Organizational Excellence. These accomplishments have strengthened the mission of EMA in Camden County.

The EMA mission can be dissected into four major areas consisting of preparedness, awareness, education, and coordination. The first area consists of preparedness efforts.

The preparedness of Camden County was greatly enhanced this year by expediting the approval of construction plans for an Emergency Operations Center. Construction is slated to begin in January and be complete by midyear. This location will serve as the Emergency Operations Center where all activities will be coordinated during an incident that requires its activation. Such incidents include but not limited to severe weather events, civil unrest, large fires, hazardous material spills, epidemics, and large planned events. In addition it will also serve as the EMA office for daily operations.

To facilitate preparedness at the work place level an employee handbook and an employee preparedness committee was established to assist in engaging county employees on how to be prepared and react to emergencies that occur in the work place. Each committee member will also serve as their department liaison in the event of an emergency to assist in coordination with emergency responders and the employees affected.

To assist the public in awareness, Camden County EMA hosts the Code Red notification system. This is an automated system that allows emergency officials to notify residents by telephone of potential dangers. This notification tool affords the county the opportunity to make hundreds of phone calls simultaneously and the calls can be limited to specific areas of the county if necessary. Please take time to register for Code Red on the Camden County Website home page. In addition to Code Red the county has established an automated emergency phone messaging system. This allows the public to call a number (912) 576-3800 to get information and instructions. This will certainly improve communications by providing follow-up and post instructions as a situation or event occurs.

Camden County EMA delivers educational and preparedness lectures to local organizations and assist in providing educational opportunities to the county employees about safety and incident management. Another element of education comes from exercising plans and resources. Camden County EMA is responsible for the planning of some exercises to evaluate plans and coordinate feedback of the exercises. Camden County EMA participates in several exercises with Kings Bay Naval Base, public safety agencies, and health agencies in and around Camden County.

Camden County general government and public safety are coming together to form an organized structure to support the Emergency Operations Center functions. This will ensure smooth transition as the county moves from an everyday business operation in to an emergency response operation utilizing various existing county employees working side by side with public safety employees to fulfill all the necessary positions required to operate the Emergency Operations Center.

Camden County EMA has been working with each of the Cities to implement a county-wide Debris Management Plan. The plan outlines how storm debris will be managed and disposed of after a large scale event. The plan will encourage sharing of resources and coordination between the municipalities and county. The next step in this process will be to implement a pre-event contract with a Debris Removal Contractor.

Fiscal Sustainability

Camden County's Shining STARS Employee Program

In March, 2008, the Camden County Board of Commissioners adopted its first ever 5-Year Strategic Plan. Two key focus areas for the Strategic Plan are Fiscal Sustainability and Organizational Excellence. Camden County worked to identify strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats, developed a vision for the future, developed strategies designed to realize the shared vision, formulated an action plan and timeline, identified responsible parties, and established methods to measure progress and success in achieving the desired outcomes in these strategic focus areas.

Fiscal Sustainability will develop revenue sources and partner with other entities to (1) ensure that growth and change pay their way, (2) fund achievement of the Strategic Plan's goals, and (3) financially sustain services valued by the community. Organizational Excellence realizes the need to better serve the community and accept responsibility within our means to utilize public resources efficiently, ethically, and intelligently while always providing open government trusted by the people. It is also understood that in order to achieve the standard of service expected by its citizens, the employees of Camden County must be presented with all means necessary to complete their tasks. By providing optimal services to its citizens and cultivating a work environment that supports and provides for its employees, Camden County can fulfill our motto of being Georgia's Coastal Community of Choice.

In June, 2008 Camden County launched the Suggestions To Assist in Reduced Spending (STARS) Program which incorporates both aspects of Fiscal Sustainability and Organizational Excellence. The Shining STARS Program recognizes and rewards employees who submit suggestions that enhance productivity, cut costs, or improve the operations of County government. All current employees of the Board of County Commissioners are eligible to participate as teams or individuals. Employees can gain recognition and credit for individual achievement, have a voice in improving County operations, become eligible for cash awards ranging from \$25.00 - \$2,500.00 for each adopted suggestion and attain satisfaction from knowing that their idea brought about improvement. County employees can submit new and original ideas or a new application of an old idea such as improving methods or procedures to increase efficiency, saving time, materials, labor money or energy, improving administrative or operations techniques and practices, eliminating unnecessary procedures, records or forms, improving service(s) to the public or reducing cost, downtime or waste within

County government.

Upon approval by the County Administrator, the person(s) who submitted the suggestion will then be presented with an award and recognized in the employee newsletter.

Awards to employees range depending on how the suggestion affects County government. Adopted suggestions that demonstrate cost savings or increased revenues are eligible for a cash reward of 10% of the first year's projected net savings or generated revenue with a maximum of \$2,500 and minimum of \$50. Suggestions that demonstrate productivity improvement of cost avoidance are eligible for a cash reward of 5% of the first year's projected cost savings attributable to the cost avoidance with a maximum of \$1,000 and a minimum of \$25. Employee suggestions that improve customer service, safety, quality and the like, but with no measurable cost savings or cost avoidance, are eligible for a cash reward of \$25.

The STARS Program fulfills several goals within the strategic focus areas of Fiscal Sustainability and Organizational Excellence including the pursuit of alternative revenue sources and enhancing employee

Surplus Property

Camden County has joined the over 600+ governments across the country which has adopted GovDeals.com online auction solution that delivers pre-screened and qualified buyers, which translates into higher prices for auctioned equipment and assets. The County offers surplus items to literally the entire world by utilizing the enormous reach of the Internet. This service will help get the most money out of surplus equipment by offering them to a wider base of buyers through the Internet. The bottom line is more money returned to our citizens. Items for sale will be posted continuously on the web and a link can be accessed through the Camden County Website or directly through GovDeals.com. Registration is required for bidding and is free of charge at the GovDeals.com. All items are sold "as is," and the acceptable methods of payment are cash, money order, and cashier's check. To find out what surplus items the County has available for auction, visit www.govdeals.com, use the advanced search option, and select Camden County, Georgia from the list of sellers. If Camden County is not listed, there are no surplus items currently available for auction at that time. In 2007-2008, the County has sold a total of 26 wrecked and out of service surplus vehicles which have been stored for months at the MSW Landfill and has recovered over \$18,000 for the citizens. Our Purchasing Department is currently researching environmentally safe

CAMDEN COUNTY'S SHINING



development while delivering efficient and effective programs/services for Camden County. The STARS Program offers Camden County employees the opportunity to bring their innovative ideas and visions to the forefront and to be rewarded for their forward thinking, giving each of them a true voice in establishing the most efficient and effective means of government.

ways to dispose of electronics, computer and toner which could possibly bring funds back to the citizens as well.

Grants

In the 2008-2013 Strategic Plan for Camden County, one of the key focus areas is Fiscal Sustainability. While developing the goals which Camden County hoped to achieve within this five year plan, a major component centered on pursuing alternative revenue sources to support County services. In this respect, one aspect of the position of the Director of Strategic Planning is to assist in the writing of grants for Camden County Government.

In 2008 Camden County has applied for the following grants:

- Fire Fighters Assistance Grant - \$272,460.00
- Federal Emergency Operations Center Grant - \$250,000.00
- Ash Institute - Innovations in American Government - \$100,000.00
- Pandemic Flu - Department of Health - \$3,000

Camden County is in the process of applying for an Environmental Protection Division - NonPoint Source Grant which will be approximately \$180,000.00.

It is the intent of Camden County to continue its efforts in applying for grants applicable to its vision in the Strategic Plan of Camden County.

Fiscal Sustainability

Camden County's Going Green Initiatives

Camden County has made great strides in 2008 to become more environmentally friendly. Whether it is recycling, cutting energy costs by shutting down equipment and lights at night, switching to energy efficient light bulbs, or encouraging employee car pooling every little bit helps, and it is easy to see why we need to make some changes. Making green decisions can make a huge difference to Camden County's overall eco-impact. Even if the change is only very slight, doing something is always better than doing nothing at all.

In August 2008 Camden County Public Works Department took great steps to becoming more environmentally friendly in its Mosquito Control Division. The Division switched from a gas-powered mosquito control sprayer to an electric sprayer that is more eco-friendly. Formally called Dyna-Jet L30, some of the eco-friendly qualities of the new mosquito sprayer/fogger include zero exhaust emissions, no motor oil required, and has a low maintenance cost. The electric sprayer will save the County an average of over \$1,000 a year in gasoline. Also, it is much quieter than the gas-powered sprayer. The blower-type motor has a high output of 1,350 cubic feet per minute (38.2 cubic meters per minute). Another great quality of the Dyna-Jet L30 is it is compatible with a GPS data recording system.

Also, in August 2008, the Department of Solid Waste refurbished its second bulldozer tractor instead of buying a new one. The first bulldozer was 12 years old and refurbished for less than \$140,000, which included a 3 year extended warranty. This cost saving effort saved taxpayers over \$250,000. A brand new bulldozer would have cost the County \$390,000.00. After searching for more cost saving alternatives, Solid Waste Director, Lannie Brant, found that by having the old one rebuilt it would not only prove more cost effective, but more eco-friendly as



Robbie Nettles, Mosquito Control and Steve Howard

well. In November 2008 the second bulldozer, a 7 year old tractor was rebuilt saving tax payers over \$97,000.00. The bulldozers are used for clearing the land and spreading the waste at the landfill. By refurbishing the two old bulldozers more waste was eliminated from Camden County's carbon cloud.

In late 2008, County Engineer John Stokes began working with Georgia Power to participate in the "Lighting Retrofit Rebate Program" for governmental users of electric power. Camden County will receive a rebate up to 20% of the cost of energy-efficient light bulbs and ballasts in as many as five County buildings per year. In Camden County's case, since the savings on electric bills appear to dwarf the cost of the bulbs and ballasts, and also the amount of the rebate; the County plans to retrofit as many buildings as possible in 2009. It is projected that Camden County expects to save approximately \$11,000.00 yearly on electric bills on the five buildings currently planned for retrofit.

Another initiative Camden County has begun in

2008 is the introduction by the Communications Committee of an "Energy Saving Think Tank Campaign". The cCommittee will launch the first monthly campaign in January 2009, "Lights Out Camden County". The Committee's desire with this campaign is to encourage staff to turn the lights out in County offices when not needed to save energy. The Communications Committee will be promoting more creative and innovative ways to encourage employees to reduce Camden County's carbon footprint throughout 2009 such as, energy vampires in your workplace, introducing recycling schemes, cutting down on paper usage, and gas saving tips for field personnel. These campaigns will not only save the County money, but promote a way of working that is conducive to preserving our environment.

The outcome Camden County hopes to have with all of these efforts is to inspire the creative spirit in Camden County employees, to consider how your everyday decisions affect life on the planet. No single thing that we do in itself will make a large effect one way or the other, but there are hundreds of people that work for Camden County that cumulatively can make a difference. If you are surrounded in an environmentally responsible work environment, and make green choices in how you work there, it becomes more natural to extend the way you work into the way you live.

Go Green Camden County!

Get a handle on your waste by knowing what is appropriate to recycle.

Not every paper-related item can be recycled. Sort carefully and fill your recycling bin with: Plastic 1 and 2, glass bottles and jars, brown bags, metal cans, aluminum cans, newspapers, telephone books, and corrugated cardboard.



Fiscal Sustainability

Serving Efficiently and Effectively

Cost Saving Solutions and Finding Ways to Save Money were Key Strategies in 2008

In support of the Strategic Plan, a Management Analyst for Performance and Process Improvement was hired. The Analyst is responsible to undertake the work of focusing on process improvement and cost avoidance within the organization.

This position also conducts organizational effectiveness reviews and the resulting analysis is used to eliminate redundancy, and increase effectiveness by

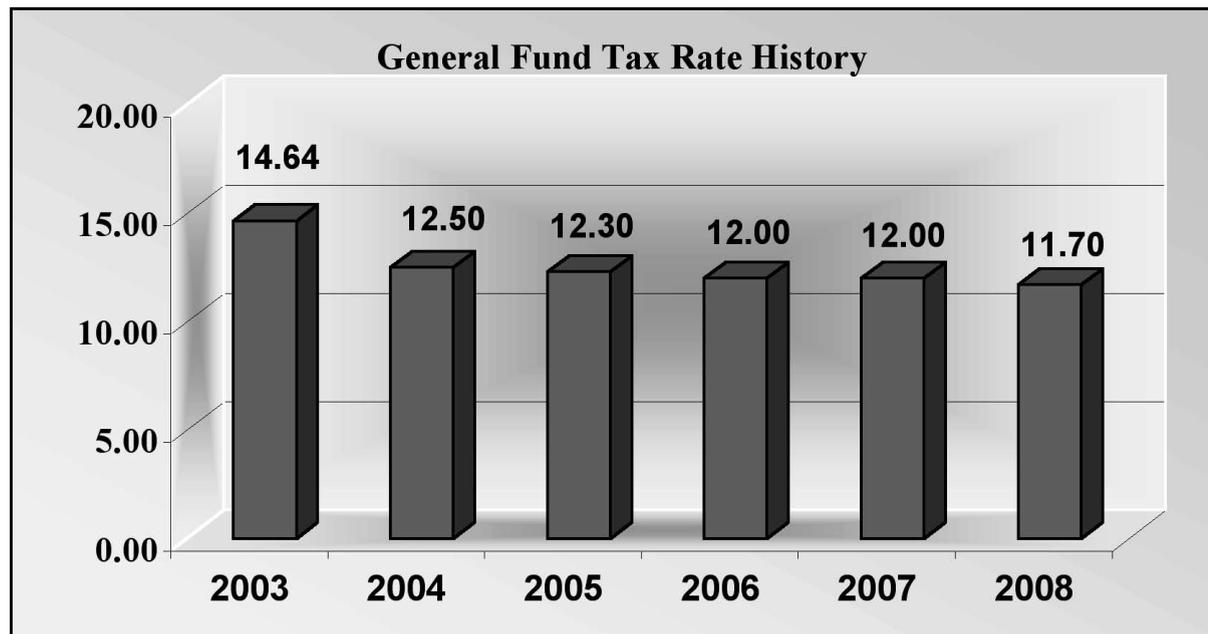
better incorporating technology into daily operations saving money and improving management and performance across the organization.

Searching for better ways of doing business: This initiative has been a huge success! To date, one time Countywide saving initiatives have totaled over **\$1 million dollars** and recurring savings have totaled

over **\$70,000 annually**.

Departments under the supervision of the County Administrator have begun developing performance measurements which will assist in measuring the results/outcomes of countywide programs. This new process will be introduced during the preparation of the FY 2010 Budget.

Board of County Commissioners Reduce Millage Rate in 2008



Cooperative Purchasing

As tough economic trends continue and we are attempting to do more with less, this presents a unique opportunity for a potential cooperative bid among the governmental entities of Camden County to save costs on supplies or like items (i.e. fuel). Past experience of establishing cooperative purchasing among multiple governmental entities has achieved great cost savings as a result. In November 2008, County Administrator, Steve L. Howard, reached out to the cities of Kingsland, St. Marys, and Woodbine, as well as the Board of Education in efforts to begin taking advantage of cooperative purchasing

opportunities. This idea was well received by all entities, in which they are ready and willing to participate. The beginning of this process requires each entity to gather a listing of their purchases and forward that list to the Department of Finance and Budget, the County will compile a master list of items that we all use to begin the idea of cooperative purchasing.

The bottom line... the teamwork approach of all governmental entities working together results in a win-win situation for everyone... and the biggest winner of all-THE CITIZENS!



Co-habitation at Fire Station 3

Camden County Fire Rescue partnered with the City of Kingsland to provide co-habitation for the county ambulance at Kingsland's Fire Station 3. The advantages of co-habitation are two-fold. The advantage for Camden County comes from the cost savings achieved by not renting the building formerly occupied by Camden County Fire Rescue on Thrift Street. The City of Kingsland provides fire response in the area formally covered by the County fire station in that area of Kingsland. The advantage of the City of Kingsland is due to the fact that the County has agreed to cover Highway 40 West including the newly annexed property on Highway 40 West with the County fire station in Browntown. We will continue to work with all the cities to increase efficiencies and lower response time.

Paying Your Taxes Online Is Now Available

Paying bills online has become a way of life for many people. In recognition of this preference, the Camden County Tax Commissioner's Office has a website for property owners who wish to pay their bill online. In addition to property taxes, vehicle registrations are also online so you can save some time and a stamp. More importantly, if you wish to charge the payment to a credit card instead of paying by check, you now have the opportunity. To date, over 1,000 citizens have taken advantage of the online services offered for Tax and Motor Vehicles combined.

Fiscal Sustainability

Technology Enhancements

One of the key focus areas addressed in the Strategic Plan is Organizational Excellence which addresses the need to better serve the people of Camden County and accept responsibility within our means to utilize public resources efficiently, ethically, and intelligently while always providing open community communication by a government trusted by the people. In order to achieve the standard of service expected by its citizens, the employees of Camden County must be presented with all means necessary to complete their tasks. In the past year Camden County implemented two key tools pertaining to improved technology: Microsoft Exchange Server and redesign of the County's website.

Exchange Server

E-mail is a mission-critical communications tool that allows Camden County to produce better results. This greater reliance on e-mail has increased the number of messages sent and received, the variety of work getting done, and even the speed of day-to-day business itself. In March 2008 the IT Division installed Microsoft Exchange Server to address the needs of the variety of County departments whose main tool for communication is through electronic mail. The new capabilities of Microsoft Exchange Server deliver the advanced protection the County demands, the anywhere access the County wants, and the operational efficiency Camden County needs. With Exchange Server, employees get anywhere access to their e-mail, voice mail, calendars, and contacts from a variety of clients and devices.

Exchange Server also offers built-in protective technologies to keep Camden County Government moving, reduce spam and viruses, enable confidential communications, and stay in compliance with ever-changing regulations. Some of the key benefits of Exchange Server include:

- Keeping communication alive and e-mail flowing with enterprise-class availability and reliability
- Helping safeguard users and Camden County's valuable data from the harmful effects of spam and viruses
- Provides trusted communications within the organization automatically and without added cost or complexity
- Simplifies regulatory compliance in a way that supports the different needs of employees, compliance managers, and messaging administrators

Camden County's Website

In December, 2007, Camden County launched its new county website that is second to none in terms of providing information to its residents, visitors and

employees on all aspects of county government. While Camden County's new website was launched in December of 2007, it has been enhanced dramatically over the past year and will continue to improve as new ideas, programs and initiatives are developed. In 2008 the Camden County website experienced 343,368 hits.

Camden County's website, www.co.camden.ga.us, provides extensive external and internal communications. Residents and visitors have the ability to view County agendas and minutes, view all county press releases, review ordinances, and review new resident requirements and information. The Camden County website now has applications and documents online to facilitate a paperless initiative. Examples of this include; the curbside pick up application, speaker request form for Board of County Commissioners meetings, animal complaint form, and a "Fix It" or "Report a Concern" which anyone can submit to address any issue ranging from pot holes to abandoned vehicles to dogs barking. Additionally, the Camden County website offers a "Notify Me" link on its homepage, which offers the ability to receive real time notifications of Board of County Commissioners agendas and meetings, delinquent property tax sales, hazardous weather notifications and election training. It also offers the ability to receive job posting notifications from all Board of County Commissioners departments.

In an effort to provide the most up-to-date information to residents in the event of an emergency situation in Camden County, such as a hurricane, "CodeRED" has been established. CodeRED is a geographically based notification system wherein residents provide their address and contact information for notification of the latest information and county recommendations to its residents in the event of an emergency.

The Camden County website also links other governmental agencies on its website such as constitutional offices, court offices and independent boards, as well as the municipalities within Camden County, the Leisure Services Department and the Chamber of Commerce. The Tax Commissioner's Office webpage provides online services such as property tax payments and motor vehicle registration, voting precinct maps, and absentee ballots. Voter registration applications can be accessed on the Registrar's Office webpage. Magistrate Court provides numerous forms online such as Military Affidavits, Answer forms and Designation of Agent forms along with many others. Probate Court also provides an overview of the services they offer as well as a sample ballot for upcoming elections.

Internally, County employees can access an "Employees Only" section on the Camden County website where they are able to view their e-mail away from the office, access policies and forms electronically, and review archived editions of the employee newsletter. Employees are also able to review in-house career openings, employee policies and forms, and access links to health insurance information including the benefits booklet, a listing of healthcare providers and their personal health insurance claims. The Employees Only section of the website supplies a resource to communicate effectively with all County employees through one mechanism. In order to achieve Organizational Excellence it is imperative that employees are supplied with the ability to keep up-to-date on the inner happenings within their organization.

It is the goal of Camden County Government to continue to find new and innovative avenues of delivering information in an efficient and timely matter to its employees and the public.

Staffing Solutions

Camden County Fire Rescue implement TeleStaff software to help with staffing and scheduling. TeleStaff is an innovative software solution designed to help automate and manage department staffing needs. It combines the power of the computer with the simplicity of the telephone to help ensure that the department is accurately and fairly staffed. TeleStaff has powerful and unique features that separate them from other staffing solutions. Rather than making general assumptions, TeleStaff uses specific guidelines when accepting requests and making staffing decisions. With TeleStaff, employees can make scheduling requests using a TeleStaff PC or any touch-tone telephone. When a vacancy needs to be filled, TeleStaff actually places outbound phone calls to appropriate employees to offer the work opportunity. TeleStaff can deliver messages by pager, on answering machines, by fax, e-mail, and by PC. And since TeleStaff can make multiple phone calls simultaneously, it is the ideal solution for emergency and other staffing recalls. TeleStaff produces payroll, FLSA, and other management reports over any time period. Now, all the information required to monitor and analyze the department's staffing activities is a mouse click away. The technology that this software brings will make Camden County Fire Rescue more efficient in time management, reduce payroll submission errors and improve our staffing system for our employees.

Organizational Excellence

Openness in Government

The Camden County Board of County Commissioners passed a new ordinance that increases public participation in meetings. The new ordinance went into effect during the first regular meeting in June 2008. Now, citizens have a number of ways in which to address the Board; during one of the two public comments sections of a meeting, on a specific agenda item at the time of its consideration, or by a written statement which will be read into the record by the Chairman or his appointee.

In order to ensure everyone is given an

opportunity to speak, the Board implemented the use of a new form to assist in this process. This form allows the Board to hear from citizens in an orderly manner. It also provides the Commissioners or staff with the ability to follow up with a commenting citizen on his or her concerns. Of course, if a citizen does not complete the form, he or she will not be barred from speaking. County staff is available, acting as ambassadors, to assist citizens with this new process and answer any questions. The form is available in advance upon request from the County

Clerk's office and is made available at each meeting. The form is also available online on the County's website.

The adoption of this ordinance is one of the many steps the County is taking in achieving its goal of Organizational Excellence under the adopted Strategic Plan. It addresses the goal of ensuring an open government is being provided to the citizens of Camden County and the business of the County is being conducted in an efficient and professional manner.

Legislative Profile

As part of the Strategic Planning initiative, we are taking measures to stay informed and monitor legislative matters. To this end, our office creates an annual Legislative Profile in accordance with the Association of County Commissioners of Georgia (ACCG) Platform regarding issues that could directly affect Camden County. Each year we focus on key issues which could have state and federal impacts on Camden County and

ensure that our voice is heard from Camden County to Washington D.C. Four key issues focused on in 2008 included, House Resolution 900, Kingsland bypass, Horsestamp Church Interchange and a 700 or 800 MHz Communications System. The Legislative Profile is provided to each of Camden County's local and state representatives, the Georgia Department of Transportation Commissioners, as well as to the Cities of Kingsland, St.

Marys and Woodbine and the Camden County School Superintendent. It is also available to the public through the County's website. The key issues are addressed each year during the annual Washington Fly-In.

As we research 2009 legislative matters that could potentially impact our citizens as well as our local government.



Camden County Washington Fly In 2008 Delegation

Organizational Excellence

Camden County Prescription Drug Discount Program Widely Used in First Six Months

Citizens Have Saved Over \$9,000

County Residents Take Advantage Of Free Discount Cards To Save Money On Prescription Drugs

During the first six months since the introduction of the Camden County free prescription drug discount program, county residents filled 786 prescriptions with the cards.

Camden County launched the program to help consumers cope with the high price of prescription drugs. The county is making the free prescription drug discount cards available under a program sponsored by the National Association of Counties (NACo) that offers average savings of 20 percent off the retail price of commonly prescribed drugs.

Best of all, there is no cost to county taxpayers for NACo and Camden County to make these money saving cards available to our residents.

The cards may be used by all county residents,



regardless of age, income, or existing health coverage, and are accepted at 100% percent of the county's pharmacies. A national network of more than 59,000 participating retail pharmacies also honors the NACo prescription discount card.

County residents can call toll free 1-877-321-2652 or visit www.caremark.com/naco for assistance with the program.

"Using the NACo prescription discount card is

easy," said Steve Howard. "Simply present it at a participating pharmacy when buying prescriptions not covered by a prescription drug benefit plan so that you will receive the lowest price available from the pharmacy for that prescription medicine on that day. For example, for generic medicine on the Wal-Mart list, you will pay either \$4 or the prescription discount card price, whichever is lower. There is no enrollment form, no membership fee and no restrictions or limits on frequency of use. Cardholders and their family members may use the card any time their prescriptions are not covered by insurance."

The discount card program is administered by Caremark Rx, Inc. For more information regarding the free prescription drug discount card, please contact the Camden County Board of County Commissioner's office at (912) 510-0464.

Pharmacies

Cards may be utilized at the following pharmacies in Camden County:

- CAMDEN PHARMACY INC**
214 B Professional Cir. S, St. Marys, GA 31558
Phone: (912) 673-8280
- PUBLIX PHARMACY**
1601 GA Highway 40 E., Kingsland, GA 31548
Phone: (912) 729-1457
- CVS PHARMACY**
2603 Osborne Road, Ste. B, St. Marys, GA 31558
Phone: (912) 882-4841
- WAL-MART PHARMACY**
6586 GA Highway 40 E., St. Marys, GA 31558
Phone: (912) 510-9221
- CVS PHARMACY**
1351-13 E. Boone Road, Kingsland, GA 31548
Phone: (912) 729-6227
- WINN-DIXIE PHARMACY**
1351 Boone Road E., Kingsland, GA 31548
Phone: (912) 729-6450
- KMART PHARMACY**
1601 Highway 40 E., Kingsland, GA 31548
Phone: (912) 729-6170
- WOODBINE PHARMACY INC**
908 Georgia Ave. # 1, Woodbine, GA 31569
Phone: (912) 576-6998

Card Pickup Locations

Cards may be available for pick up at the following locations in Camden County:

- **CAMDEN COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OFFICE**
200 East 4th Street
Woodbine, GA 31569
Phone: (912) 576-5601
- **CAMDEN COUNTY FIRE RESCUE STATION 10**
125 North Gross Road
Kingsland, GA 31548
Phone: (912) 729-3911
- **CITY OF KINGSLAND (CITY HALL)**
107 South Lee Street
Kingsland, GA 31548
Phone: (912) 729-5613
- **CITY OF ST. MARYS (CITY HALL)**
418 Osborne Road
St. Marys, GA 31558
Phone: (912) 882-5516
- **CITY OF WOODBINE (CITY HALL)**
310 Bedell Avenue
Woodbine, GA 31569
Phone: (912) 576-3211
- **CAMDEN COUNTY LIBRARY**
1410 Highway 40
Kingsland, GA 31548
Phone: (912) 729-3741
- **CAMDEN COUNTY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE**
2603 Osborne Road, Suite R
St. Marys, GA 31558
Phone: (912) 729-5840
- **CAMDEN COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH DEPARTMENT**
(Kingsland)
600 N. Charles Gilman J. Avenue
Kingsland, GA 31548
Phone: (912) 729-4554
- **CAMDEN COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH DEPARTMENT**
(Woodbine)
1501 Georgia Avenue
Woodbine, GA 31569
Phone: (912) 729-4554
- **CAMDEN COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH DEPARTMENT**
(St. Marys)
905 Dillworth Street
St. Marys, GA 31558
Phone: (912) 729-4554
- **CAMDEN COUNTY PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT**
107 Gross Road
Kingsland, GA 31548
Phone: (912) 729-5603
- **CAMDEN COUNTY PSA LEISURE SERVICES**
1050 Wildcat Drive
Kingsland, GA 31545
Phone: (912) 729-5600
- **DEPARTMENT OF FAMILY & CHILDREN SERVICES**
Kingsland, GA 31548
Phone: (912) 729-4583
- **SALVATION ARMY**
1909 Osborne Road
St. Marys, GA 31558
Phone: (912) 882-2200
- **HABITAT FOR HUMANITY OF CAMDEN COUNTY**
100 Miller Street
St. Marys, GA 31558
Phone: (912) 729-3633
- **GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF LABOR**
1712 Osborne Road
St. Marys, GA 31558
Phone: (912) 673-6942

Organizational Excellence

Communications Committee

In accordance with our Strategic Plan regarding establishing community communications, one of the action steps was to develop a Communications Committee. The purpose of the Communications Committee is to help guide and facilitate communications between employees within our organization as well as the people of the County by disseminating information in a consistent and accommodating manner to achieve open government and ensure that Camden County remains Georgia's Coastal Community of Choice. Since its establishment in May 2008, the Communications Committee has taken on many projects, to include an employee newsletter, a photo contest, surveys, and a citizen's academy.

One of our first priorities was to send out a quarterly newsletter to all of the employees of Camden County. The newsletter serves as a communication tool to keep employees better informed on matters of professional interest, special announcements and opportunities for professional development. Upcoming events, departmental updates, and personnel accomplishments are also published in the newsletter every quarter. Employees have the opportunity to provide information regarding what is going on in their respective departments. The first newsletter was released in July 2008, and the second in October 2008.



(Photo submitted by Anthony Garner, 2008)

The Communications Committee launched the 1st Annual "Showcase Camden County" Photo Contest which ran from July 2008 to December 1, 2008. This project serves as great external communication by allowing the community to be involved in a County function. The contest calls for amateur and professional photographers to submit their best

photos of Camden County, Georgia and its activities, attractions, and events, as well as historic and scenic locations. Camden County's natural landscapes and unique events provide limitless creative inspiration to individuals that enjoy seeing the world through the lens of a camera. Example subjects might include downtown areas, museums, historical markers, parks, and activities such as boating, biking, and hiking. Also, local festivals and fairs would be ideal subject matter to share through pictures. These photos will be used by the Camden County Board of County Commissioners in its ongoing promotions and publications. Appropriate credit will be given to photographers when their photos are used. The winning photographs will be showcased at Camden County's new Government Services Building as well as various other locations throughout Camden County. The 2nd Annual "Showcase Camden County" Photo Contest will launch January 2009. For more information and to view all photos that were submitted for the 1st annual photo contest, please visit www.co.camden.ga.us.

The Communications Committee utilizes a program called "Survey Monkey" to create professional online surveys in order to gather the opinions of the employees and the citizens of Camden County. With this tool, any type of survey may be conducted for any/all departments. The committee is able to view the results of a survey as soon as they are collected, watch live graphs and charts, and apply filters to the results. Data collected can be analyzed and taken to the Board if need be.

Currently, the Committee is planning their participation for the "Key Ingredients - America by Food - The Georgia Tour" exhibit which will be in May 2009. This exhibit is sponsored by the Smithsonian and Georgia Humanities Council. The County's theme for the event will be "Peaches On My Mind".



(Photo submitted by Elaine Powierski, 2008)



Pictured left to right: Susan Conaway, Chair of the Employee Recognition committee, J.D. Strickland, 1st Employee of the Quarter and Steve Howard, County Administrator.

Employee Recognition Committee

In accordance with our Strategic Plan regarding retaining highly qualified personnel and productive employees, one of the actions steps was to institute an Employee of the Month and an Employee of the Year program; therefore, an Employee Recognition Committee was established. The purpose of Camden County's Employee Recognition Committee is to provide management tools to recognize ongoing employee dedication, a means to reinforce and acknowledge significant contributions, and retain employee commitment. It is also the Committee's desire to educate Camden County citizens about the significant contributions County employees make to the quality of our lives, encourage camaraderie among government employees, and promote careers in local government.

Current projects of the Employee Recognition Program:

- Award Recognition
 - Employee of the Year
 - Employee of the Quarter
 - Super Star Award (Most Dedicated)
 - Shining Star Award (Customer Service)
 - Rising Star Award (Future Leader)
 - "On the Spot" Awards
 - Various other awards
- Annual Awards Ceremony
- Annual Employee Family Picnic
- Volunteer Program

Organizational Excellence

Promoting Effective Partnerships with the Community

In an effort to promote strong, effective relationships with members of the business community the Board of County Commissioners works very closely with the Camden County Chamber of Commerce. In 2008 the Board of County Commissioners partnered with the Chamber of Commerce on several events. County Administrator, Steve L. Howard, made a presentation at the Chamber's Summer Quarterly Luncheon where he highlighted what he refers to as "Laying the Foundation", a systematic approach to "County Government" with an emphasis on efficiency and effectiveness. "Laying the Foundation" encompasses the key organizational accomplishments for 2007 - 2008. Working together as a team, employees and commissioners were able to achieve many of the goals established within the County's 5-Year Strategic Plan. "A continued commitment of utilizing a team approach will ensure the future success of Camden County as it expands its strategic horizon," said Howard.



In December 2008 the Board of County Commissioners hosted Leadership Camden's "Government Day". Leadership Camden is a group sponsored by the Chamber of Commerce that is designed to educate up and coming leaders in the community. This was the inaugural event in the Commissioners Meeting Room of the new Government Services Building. County Administrator, Steve L. Howard, gave a brief introduction and discussed the history of county government, the commission-administrator form of government and the many hats of county government. Presentations from all other Board of County Commissioner departments were given and included: strategic planning, performance/ process improvement, finance and budget, support services, public safety, planning and development, county extension services,

capital improvements, public works and solid waste. Vice Chair Katherine Nisi Zell, Commissioner – District 2, provided the closing remarks for this event.



It is important that we as county government take advantage of every opportunity to educate our citizens on how their tax dollars are being spent. Leadership Camden is an excellent forum and an invaluable tool with which to conduct this type of communication. In the future we will be creating some of these opportunities ourselves through programs such as the Citizen's Academy. The Citizen's Academy is a free interactive program designed to familiarize the general public with the roles, services and operations that comprise Camden County Government. The program

will focus on educating residents, business owners, and interested persons who work in Camden County on how daily County Government operations contribute to building a better community. Classes will begin in March 2009. Individuals must be willing to commit to 1 half day per month for 7 months. Classes will be held on the last Wednesday of each month from 8:30 AM to 11:30 AM at various County facilities. Citizens from all segments of the community are encouraged to apply.

All interested individuals can submit an application online. The online application can be found on the County's homepage: www.co.camden.ga.us, under News & Announcements. If you are online at a public computer and would prefer to submit a paper application, please contact the County Administrator's Office at 912-510-0464 and an application will be mailed to you. Completed paper applications can be mailed to the Camden County Board of County Commissioner, Attn: Communications Committee, P.O. Box 99, Woodbine, GA 31569, or faxed to 912-576-5647.

Classes are limited to a maximum of 20 people, so don't miss out on learning more about your county government. The deadline to submit your application is January 16, 2009.

Institute of Organizational Excellence

The goal of the Institute of Organizational Excellence (IOE) is to establish an award winning training and development program in order to enhance the skills of our workforce. The success of our organization is interdependent upon realizing our vision and mission and the success of our workforce. The components of the IOE include a Professional Enrichment Program, an Employee Tuition Assistance Program, and the Scholarship Program.

The Professional Enrichment Program includes in-house training opportunities available to our employees, such as Customer Service, Computer (i.e. Microsoft Office applications) and Harassment raining. All Board of County Commissioner's employees have already completed the initial customer service training course. During this course, each employee also signed a "Standards of Behavior" contract that covers areas such as citizen relations, customer service, general etiquette, commitment to co-workers, telephone etiquette, and e-mail etiquette.

The Employee Tuition Assistance Program will reimburse eligible employees for tuition expenses (not including fees, books or supplies) paid to accredited schools, colleges and universities, as set forth in this policy. In order to achieve the level of customer service our citizens expect and deserve, we must as an organization not only encourage our employees to continuously strive to better themselves but also provide the tools with which to do so whenever possible. Therefore, employees are encouraged to improve themselves by participating in in-service training programs and by taking outside courses.

The Employee Scholarship Program is one of the many examples of Camden County's commitment to employee development and offers multiple opportunities to our diverse workforce. Employees compete for scholarships by writing a 2-3 page essay (500 – 1,000 words) on how the course or program will benefit them as well the County and its citizens. The essays are reviewed and scored by the Scholarship Committee and awarded annually. Currently, the scholarships available include EMT, Leadership Camden, and the Management Development Program for Local Government through the Carl Vinson Institute of Government.

Organizational Excellence

Camden County Employees Give Back to the Community

The Camden County Government Charity Committee is comprised of employees of the Camden County Board of Commissioners, Tax Commissioner's Office and Magistrate Court with support from all County offices. The purpose of the Charity Committee is to actively make a difference by supporting local community and charitable events in Camden County. Some of the fundraisers that this committee supports include, Toys for Tots & Camden House, the American Cancer Society's Relay for Life, United Way of Camden County, and the Muscular Dystrophy Association (MDA) in partnership with Fire Rescue.

The Charity Committee most recently accepted donations for local children this past holiday season through Toys for Tots and the Camden House. Anyone was invited to place their donations in one of the many decorated boxes that could be found at various County departments through mid-December. Accepted donations included unwrapped toys, books, clothing, etc. for children of all ages. The committee achieved their goal by collecting over 700 toys for this event.

During the 2008 American Cancer Society's Relay



Pictured from left to right: Bobbie Jo Davis, Chris Goebel, Norette Goebel, Julie Swick, Carol Daley, Diana Smith, Keri Moreland, Katie Bishop and Lannie Brant

for Life, the Charity Committee raised over \$2,300 through various fundraising events. Some of the fundraising events included, selling tickets to win one of several gift baskets filled with donated items, "Get Flushed" wherein County employees could send a

decorated toilet seat to another County employee to be displayed in their office as well as setting up at local festivals to raise money. The event was topped off with the actual Relay for Life, an all night event that began at 6:00 p.m. and ended at 6:00 a.m. Employees also have the opportunity to participate in the payroll deduction program in which they can donate as little as \$1.00 a pay period to the American Cancer Society.



Pictured from front row left to right: Julie Swick, Susan Conaway and Staci Bowick; back row left to right: Keri Moreland, Scott Brazell, Loretta Riggins-Hylton, Diana Smith and Dusty Copeland.

Camden County Employees Pick Up Trash During Great American Cleanup

Each year from March 1 to May 31, millions of Americans and tens of thousands of people from Georgia and our area volunteer to help beautify highways, waterways and communities during the annual Great American Cleanup. On April 19, 2008, volunteers from Camden County Government joined together to pick up trash alongside streets of Old Still Road and Harrietts Bluff Road in the unincorporated areas of Camden County to raise awareness about litter during the annual Great American Cleanup and the Keep Georgia Beautiful campaign. "The trash cleanup on April 19th was a great opportunity for people and organizations to help make a real and visible commitment to the cleanliness of our community," said County Administrator Steve Howard.



The Charity Committee recently partnered with the Fire Rescue Department to raise money for the Muscular Dystrophy Association (MDA). Fire fighters and committee members collected donations from passersbys at Winn-Dixie, Wal-Mart, and Woodbine Grocery on August 1-3, 2008. The Charity Committee also sold \$1 and \$5 boot & hat mobiles to help raise funds. This year's boot drive brought in \$4,950 for MDA making it a record breaking year!

Most recently, the Committee has taken on the initiative of raising funds for United Way of Camden County. Employees have the opportunity to participate in the payroll deduction program each pay period or simply donate a set amount for the year.

The Camden County Charity Committee is dedicated to increasing its goals for each event in 2009 as well as adding additional initiatives throughout the year including setting up boxes throughout County offices for a food drive for local food banks. After its first year in existence, the Camden County Charity Committee is looking forward to helping more residents in various aspects of charitable giving in 2009. We are proud to be Camden County employees actively making a difference in the community.

Organizational Excellence

2008 Camden County Extension Office Program Highlights

On February 11, 2008 The Camden County Blueberry Field Day gave Extension users the opportunity to see a commercial production of blueberries firsthand. The day started with a classroom session, led by Dr. Gerard Krewer, on cultivation and blueberry installation. The event then moved to Ken Murray's field where participants got harvesting instructions from a local farmer and Dr. James Dutcher expounded on the insects that were captured on site over a period of four months. The event had 27 farmers present and was supported by 3 UGA Faculty and one County Agent.

The spring section of Walk Georgia was promoted by the Camden County 4-H program through sharing the PowerPoint presentation at the 4-H middle school and high school club meetings, along with Extension Leadership System 4-H Program Development Team meetings. Walk Georgia flyers and pamphlets were sent to each of the nine elementary schools, two middle schools, high school, and ninth grade center to the faculty and staff by way of teacher's lounges and school nurse stations.

Camden County had 34 people enrolled in the Walk Georgia program, of which 23 actively participated. Of the active participants, 11 did so as individuals and 12 as a member of a team. Ten participants representing 43.48% of the enrollees from Camden County reported physical activity during at least 6 of the program's 8 weeks. Overall, participants from Camden County logged 3,655 miles of physical activity. The average weekly mileage reported among individual adult participants was 20 miles per week. The average weekly mileage reported among team adult participants was 20 miles per week. Participants reported that they exercised more during the Walk Georgia program than they did prior to the program with 25% exercising a lot more and 75% exercising a little more.

At the end of the program, 100% of participants



Blueberry pollinators captured in Camden County.

from Camden County reported that they were satisfied or very satisfied with the Walk Georgia program, strongly agreed or agreed that Walk Georgia encouraged them to exercise, and reported that they were likely or very likely to recommend Walk Georgia to friends, family and/or co-workers. One of the top participants was an active 4-H member who felt that the Walk Georgia program was educational and interesting. It helped her to learn dedication and discipline. She participated in the program because she liked to exercise and wanted to get her family involved in exercising. This 4-H member logged most of her miles by playing softball and walking with her grandmother, who was also a top participant. Another participant's program success story included, "I am a mother of four and the last one was born three months ago and so I am tired all the time. This program helped me see my progress other than on the scale and I now feel like my energy level is high enough that I can now keep up with the rest of my kids".



Dr. Gerard Krewer Program Director of Georgia Blueberry Growers Association.

2008 Georgia Youth Summit Helps Youth and Adults to Address Local Issues

Representatives from Camden County, including Commissioner Charlene Sears, volunteer Linda Nugent, and three youth: Helen Clark, Dylan Cole, and David Myers, attended the fourth Biennial Georgia Youth Summit that was held at the Rock Eagle 4-H Center in Eatonton, Georgia this year during September.

Nearly 700 participants from 137 counties attended the three day event which provided county teams of youth and adults with educational opportunities designed to increase awareness of state and local issues, enhance youth-adult partnerships on the local level and equip youth to become active locally in the betterment of their community.



The Georgia Rural Development Council contracts Georgia 4-H to organize the Summit, because of their statewide network of county offices and experience in developing research-based Citizenship programs. However, the Summit was open to any youth or adult interested in working to address local issues. The Summit Planning Committee included members of a variety of organizations including 4-H, The Fanning Institute, Boys and Girls Club, and Association of County Commissioners of Georgia's Civic Awareness Program for Students.

In addition to the county over 70 volunteers helped to make the Summit a success. College students from around Georgia served as classroom facilitators and resource specialists from a variety of organizations worked with county teams to enhance their county action plans. Resource specialists included staff from the Georgia Department of Community Affairs, Family Connections, Carl Vinson Institute of Government and government officials from counties all over Georgia.

While at the Summit, participants discussed community challenges and assets and developed an action plan to address a local issue. Connecting county teams with resources and potential collaborators was a key goal of the Summit. Camden County volunteer Linda Nugent, who also serves as a 4-H Advisory Board Member and a teacher in the Camden County School System, served as a classroom facilitator and a resource to the students during the Summit. County Commissioner Charlene Sears also guided the students to explore many opportunities during this time. Due to such a high concern, the students from Camden County decided to focus on the issue of teen pregnancy prevention and education.

Commissioner Mike Beatty, of the Department of Community Affairs, challenged county teams to take what they learned at the Summit back to their counties and work to make Georgia a better place to live. Once the representatives from Camden County develop an action plan, the issue of teen pregnancy prevention and education will be presented by the students locally to the first 4-H Advisory Board meeting in January 2009.

Supporting Our Military Family

Camden County Hosts Georgia Flag Ceremony

On January 14, 2008, Governor Sonny Perdue and the USS GEORGIA (SSGN 729) Return to Service Committee began the USS GEORGIA Flag Project, an effort to take the Georgia state flag across the entire state and to all 159 Georgia counties. The purpose of this project was to provide a mechanism that would inform the people of Georgia that the USS GEORGIA was returning to service with new capabilities and to educate our citizens about the capabilities of this submarine and our U.S. Navy as a vital part of our national defense system. Another important motive behind this project was to demonstrate to crew members, as well as others in uniform, that the people of Georgia appreciate their sacrifice and service. This project established a closer kinship of our citizens with the State's namesake U.S. Navy submarine being home-ported in Georgia at Naval Submarine Base Kings Bay. The project provided a permanent reminder to the crew and future crews by the permanent display of this special Georgia flag aboard the submarine.

County Administrator Steve L. Howard was selected to chair the Georgia Flag Ceremony event in Camden County. On Thursday, March 27, 2008 a flag ceremony was held at the USS George Bancroft Sail Exhibit in front of Naval Submarine Base, Kings Bay. This ceremony represented the final stop for the Georgia flag, completing all 159 counties. During the ceremony, many dignitaries spoke including CAPT Wes Stevens, USN Commanding Officer, Naval Submarine Base, Kings Bay, and CAPT Brian McIlvaine, USN Commanding Officer, USS GEORGIA (SSGN 729). "This event gave Camden County residents a chance to be a part of a historical event and an opportunity to show how appreciative they are of the military while celebrating the USS GEORGIA homecoming," said Howard.

During the ceremony, Preston Rhodes, Chair of the Board of County Commissioners; Mayor Buford Clark, City of Woodbine; Mayor Kenneth Smith, City of Kingsland; Mayor Rowland Eskridge, City of St. Marys; and Herbert Rowland, Chair of the Camden County Board of Education, all signed the Georgia flag logbook for the purpose of being able to hand it over to Governor Perdue at the Return to Service ceremony which was held on Friday, March 28, 2008.

At the ceremony, Governor Perdue presented the flag and logbook to CAPT Brian McIlvaine, USN Commanding Officer, USS GEORGIA (SSGN 729) for permanent display aboard the submarine.



PICTURED FRONT ROW, left to right: CAPT Brian McIlvaine, USN, Commanding Officer, USS GEORGIA (SSGN 729) and MTCM(SS) Gary Aston, USN, Chief of Boat, USS GEORGIA (SSGN 729). Pictured second row, left to right (standing behind the US Flag): Col Vernon Martin, USAF (Ret) Immediate Past Executive Director Coastal Georgia Regional Development Center and Steve L. Howard, County Administrator - Camden County, GA. Seated and Center: Chair Preston Rhodes, Camden County Board of County Commissioners. Pictured third row, left to right: Debra Carter, City of Woodbine; Marty Klumpp, Co-Chair for Development (RTS Committee), CFRE Executive Director, The Camden Partnership, Inc.; Sandy Rayson, City Manager, City of Woodbine, GA; Commissioner Charlene Sears, Camden County Board of County Commissioners; Max Tinsley, Former Assistant Manager, City of St. Marys, GA; Sheila McNeill, Chairman of Return to Service Committee, Past National President Navy League of the United States; Christine Daniel, President/CEO Camden County Chamber of Commerce (RTS Committee); Commissioner David Rainer, Camden County Board of County Commissioners; Walt Natzic, Camden-Kings Bay Navy League of the United States (RTS Committee). Pictured back row, left to right: Bill Shanahan, City Manager, City of St. Marys, GA; Mayor Rowland Eskridge, City of St. Marys, GA; Keith Post, Co-Chair for Logistics (RTS Committee), President Camden-Kings Bay Council Navy League of the United States.



During a community that Cares brunch at Naval Submarine Base Kings Bay on October 27, 2008, Buford Clark, Mayor of Woodbine; Kenneth Smith, Mayor of Kingsland; Keith Post, Navy League President; Admiral Thad Allen, U.S. Coast Guard Commander; Rowland Eskridge, Mayor of St. Marys; and Preston Rhodes - Chair, District 1 County Commissioner, were recognized as Admiral Allen was honored as the event's guest speaker.

Moving Camden Forward

Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting

In August 2008 the Camden County Department of Finance and Budget received the Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting from the Government Finance Officers Association of the United States and Canada (GFOA) for its comprehensive annual financial report (CAFR). The Certificate of Achievement is the highest form of recognition in the area of governmental accounting and financial reporting, and its attainment represents a significant accomplishment by a government and its management. This is the 8th Consecutive year the Department of Finance and Budget has received this prestigious award. Mike Fender, Director of Finance and Budget said of

receiving the award, "This award sends a good message to our readers that they can trust the information in our annual report. It is truly an honor to receive this award."

The CAFR is judged by an impartial panel to meet the high standards of the program including demonstrating a constructive "spirit of full disclosure" to clearly communicate its financial story and motivate potential users and user groups to read the CAFR.



Katherine Nisi Zell pictured with ACCG awards.

Camden County Commissioner Wins Awards at ACCG Fall Policy Conference

On October 9, 2008 at the Association of County Commissioners of Georgia's (ACCG) 2008 Fall Policy Conference in Atlanta, District 2 County Commissioner, Katherine Nisi Zell, graduated from the Certified Commissioners Advanced Program (CCAP) after completing all the requirements in August. She became the first Camden County Commissioner to complete this program. All programs for this certification are offered through the University of Georgia, the Carl Vinson Institute of Government, and the Association of County Commissioners of Georgia. Commissioner Zell took it upon herself to complete this program and pay for it out of her own pocket. She was also recognized for another program, the Academy for ACCG Leadership, in which she completed in September 2008. Commissioner Zell has been appointed to the 2008 ACCG Resolutions Committee as a representative to the Health and Human Services Committee.

Fire Rescue Recruit School

This year Camden County Fire Rescue held two Recruit Classes. The first class graduated in February yielding 9 firefighters. The second class graduated in October yielding 13 firefighters. These 22 Rookie Firefighters filled existing vacancies and 6 new positions. Recruit school was designed to bring everyone together to learn on a consistent platform. It's imperative that our operations have consistency and accuracy.

Recruit school consists of:

- Basic orientation to equipment and operations
- Confidence building

- Physical and mental stress exposure
- Customer service
- Physical fitness
- Consequence and value
- Lessons learned
- Camaraderie, respect, and tradition

What is expected of a firefighter?

All of that and more is necessary to prepare them to be a firefighter because your expected to fix or return the situation to normalcy no matter the problem.



"Georgia's Coastal Community of Choice"

Showcase Camden Photo Contest Winners

2nd Place Winner...



*Sunrise, Downtown St. Marys
Submitted by Elaine Rose Powiersk of St. Marys*

The Camden County Board of County Commissioners is pleased to announce the winners of the 1st Annual "Showcase Camden County" Photo Contest. The contest called for photographers to submit their best photos of Camden County, Georgia and its activities, attractions and events as well as historic and scenic locations. A total of 55 entries were submitted from 21 contestants. Overall the contest was a huge success!

The winning photographs will be showcased at Camden County's new Government Services Building as well as various other locations throughout Camden County. The photos will be used by the Camden County Board of County Commissioners in its ongoing publications and promotions. Appropriate credit will be given to photographers when their photos are used.

The 2nd Annual "Showcase Camden County" Photo Contest will launch January 2009. Information can be obtained by visiting to www.co.camden.ga.us under "News and Announcements".

3rd Place Winner...

*Get out
and take your
best shot of
Camden County!*



*Sunset in St. Marys
Submitted by Marci Koll of St. Marys*