

Chairman's Update – Week of May 28th, 2007

During this time of year when school is out and high school seniors graduate and prepare for the next step of their lives, we find our community focused very intently on young adults and children. April was Child Abuse Awareness Month in Georgia and I was honored to be able to speak at the candlelight vigil which capped off the month on April 26th. It was a joy to see all of the concerned parents and citizens in attendance at that event.

May was also dedicated to children's welfare. On any given day there are approximately 15,000 children in foster care in Georgia – children who find themselves in state's care because of abuse and/or neglect. Governor Sonny Perdue designated the month of May as "Foster Care Month in Georgia," and local DFCS offices throughout the state stepped up campaigns to recruit more foster parents. On May 1st, I had the privilege to sign a proclamation supporting and encouraging adoption and foster care in Fannin County. I cannot stress strongly enough how important these programs are in our area. With the ever increasing cases of child neglect due to methamphetamine addicted parents, the need for foster parents has never been greater. Currently there are approximately 4,200 active foster homes in the state but more families are needed to care for the 15,000 children currently living in foster care. Throughout May DFCS county offices across the state sponsored foster parent appreciation activities, family activities, information fairs, seminars and training sessions. You can get more information about adoption or foster care contact your local DFCS office or call 877-210-KIDS, that's 1-877-210-5437 or visit www.dfcs.dhr.georgia.gov.

Please remember that Fannin County remains in a no burn status as designated by the Georgia Forestry Commission. We continue to find ourselves in an "Extreme" fire danger rating area due to winds, low humidity and, of course, lack of rainfall. This ban will remain in effect until rainfall and humidity conditions have improved enough to reduce the danger of wildfires.

Our county road paving program is gearing up and ready to go. As I write, we are awaiting final contracts for state assistance to pave in the Holly Hills subdivision area and then on Jones Road in Epworth. We will move on to Mercury Lane soon after completion in those areas and then pave a short portion of the road in Ron Henry / Horseshoe Bend Park. Your Commissioners hope this paving will greatly enhance your enjoyment of the Ron Henry / Horseshoe Bend Park area. Requests for state assistance for Bullen Gap Road and bridge have been submitted and are being processed by the state DOT. Resurfacing of old Highway 76 from Morganton to the Union County line has been completed as well. I will be sure to update you as our county road paving progresses.

On a sad note, I would like to take a brief moment to remember John Wilson of the Second Chance animal rescue organization. Mr. Wilson passed away

unexpectedly earlier this week. His hard work and dedication to the care of all animals will truly be missed.

Congratulations to our local high school graduating seniors. I wish them health, prosperity and wisdom as they enter a new era of their lives.

As always, you can visit www.fannincountyga.org for additional county government information.