



THOMAS HOEFER/DAILY NEWS

Supervisor for the local school system's transportation system, takes a group of school bus drivers to practice what they learned that day.

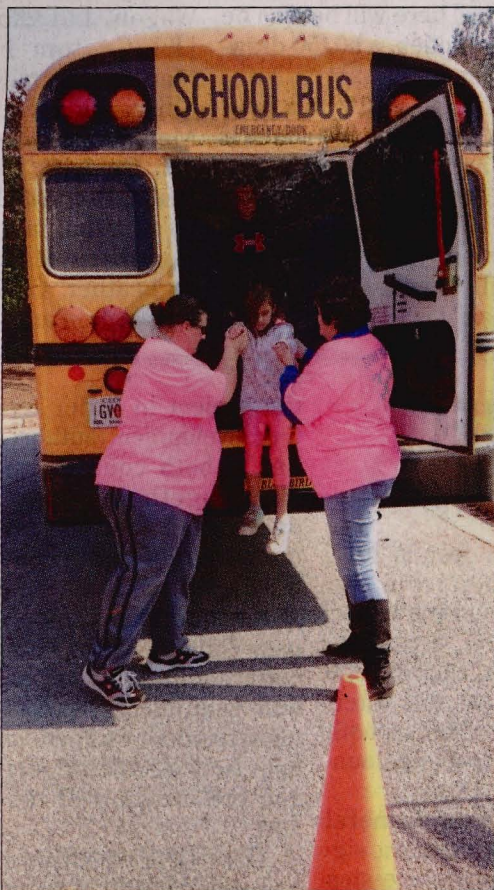
Parents get involved in school bus safety

Instead of video presentations, we do it where parents can really practice. The transportation director Todd Harry says parents pay a lot better attention, and it's more fun.

Presentations took each about 30 minutes and were comprised of information on danger signs — such as blind spots on a bus — morning and afternoon crossing procedures and emergency evacuations. The last part of the day students review the information and pledge to follow the school bus rules. They practice what they learned.

He pointed out that there have been 15 student deaths in Georgia related to school bus procedures in the last two years.

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Futral Road Elementary School students practice an emergency evacuation through the back door of a school bus, as school bus drivers assist. The exercise was part of SOAR (Safe, Orderly And Respectfully), a program by the local school system's transportation department to illustrate to elementary school students the importance of school bus safety.

BY RAY LIGHTNER
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The Southside Riders Association is holding its 17th annual Marie Ussery Toy Run and Scavenger Hunt on Saturday.

All proceeds from the ride,

scavenger hunt and car/bike show benefit Southside Children's Charities, helping to provide Christmas cheer to foster children in Spalding, Pike, Henry, Butts, Lamar and Upson counties.

SEE TOY/PAGE A2



SUBMITTED

Pictured are local officials from the Joint Development Authority of Butts County and Spalding County as well as local officials from both counties who attended the ceremonies Monday. Chuck Copeland, Tom Gardner, Robert Parker, Dick Morrow, Kenny Smith, William Wilson and David Luckie attended the luncheon from the Spalding County side. In attendance from Butts County were Bryan Bush, Laura Hale, Bart White, Alicia Washington, Bruce Bartholomew and Butts County Commissioner Roger McDaniel.

Dollar General project is named Regional Deal of the Year

BY RAY LIGHTNER
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The Georgia Economic Developers Association recognized the Joint Development Authority of Butts County and Spalding County (JDA) "outstanding achieve-

ment in the location of business in Georgia" with a regional impact.

The JDA was recognized at ceremonies Monday for the Dollar General Regional Distribution Center.

SEE PROJECT/PAGE A2

Raffle to benefit The Village at Christian City

participate
\$10

A Rotary Car Raffle was launched during a kickoff event at Infiniti of South Atlanta in Union City on Sept. 14. Since then, everyone in the communities that are part of the raffle can buy raffle tickets.



PROJECT

FROM THE FRONT PAGE

Expected to open in 2017, Dollar General will create 535 jobs at the under-construction, 1,000,000 square foot, \$85,000,000 facility along the Interstate 75 corridor in both Butts and Spalding counties.

"The Dollar General project represents a significant and positive step forward for the economy of our region," said Bryan Bush, chairman of the Joint Development Authority of Butts County and Spalding County. "We thank the Georgia Economic Developers Association for recognizing the impact that collaboration and teamwork can have on our community."

JDA member and Griffin-Spalding Development Authority Chairman Chuck Copeland said "it is certainly an honor to receive statewide recognition for this project. The two economic development professionals from our respective counties, David Luckie of Griffin-Spalding and Laura Sistrunk of the Butts County IDA, certainly did the heavy lifting on securing this project."

Copeland said, "while the level of cooperation between the two county governments helped keep the project moving forward, the most exciting aspect of the project will be the addition of some 500 new jobs to our community."

The new JDA was formed to accommodate

the project in order for the development authorities of both counties to work together on this one project that sits on the border of both counties on Jackson Road. The JDA required extraordinary cooperation of both county commissions as well, with intergovernmental agreements signed to help facilitate the project and the creation of the JDA.

The JDA includes four members from each county, with Copeland, Luckie, Tom Gardner and David Parker from Griffin-Spalding Development Authority, and Bush, Sistrunk, Bart White and Alicia Washington from Butts County

Development Authority.

The Deal of the Year Awards recognize outstanding achievement in the location or expansion of new businesses in the state of Georgia that meet community economic development goals and involve significant community program support, such as financial or permitting assistance, workforce development, state financial support, etc., according to the Georgia Economic Developers Association.

The Georgia Economic Developers Association is a nonprofit association of professionals, volunteers and supporters. The association provides networking and professional

development opportunities for its members, and supports public policies that promote quality job creation and sustainable economic development throughout the state.

This is now the ninth year that GEDA has recognized the major projects from the previous year. In what has become a major portion of the Annual Awards Ceremony, GEDA recognizes recipients in four categories: Small — a county with population 50,000 and under; Mid-size — a county with population 50,001 — 100,000; Large — a county with population over 100,000; and Regional — any multi-county effort.

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