



Congrats to All 2009 Graduates!

Graduation is one of the most memorable milestones in a young person's lifetime. Congrats to all graduates of Alexander, Chapel Hill, Douglas County, & Lithia Springs high schools! We wish you luck in the future.

Summer Issue 2009

Vacation & Your Vehicle: Maintenance Musts

Summer is quickly approaching, and you may be planning vacations and getting ready to travel a significant distance from home. General car maintenance is essential for your vehicle's maximum performance as well as your family's safety. We have listed a few useful tips from AAA South to ensure that your vehicle is travel-ready!

Your air filter should be checked each time you have your oil changed and replaced if you cannot see a bright light, such as the sun through the filter at all points. Oxygen is a necessity for proper fuel combustion and efficient engine performance, and it will increase the miles per gallon you receive and decrease the money spent out of pocket at the pump. Battery inspection and maintenance is also vital to your vehicle's operation. The battery

supplies all the power to the electrical components and, more importantly, sends the electrical current to the starter motor to start the engine. Remember to keep the battery case clean, check the electrolyte levels, and remove any corrosion that may have formed around the connections. Tires play a key role in your vehicle's performance, too: AAA suggests checking alignment every 12,000 miles and rotating tires every 6,000 miles for maximum lifetime usage. Improper inflation—too much or too little air in the tires—will affect the tire wear and can lead to blowout or a flat tire.

Remember, by spending the money on routine maintenance, you may prevent a much larger repair bill in the future. Always consult your owner's manual for proper maintenance guidelines and service suggestions. Happy traveling!

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Water, Water Everywhere: Summer Safety Tips

In Samuel Taylor Coleridge's "The Rime of the Ancient Mariner," shipmen were surrounded by water but could not drink any of it because it had been contaminated. While many of you will be heading to the water this summer looking to cool off and have fun, we want to ensure that your water experiences do not become "contaminated" by injury. Whether you are boating, swimming, or playing at water slides with your children, safety should come first. Included here are some essential safety tips for you and your family to practice in order to fill your summer with accident-free adventures.

Smart Swimming

When around water, you should exercise your swimming "smarts" as much as you exercise your legs. One of the most important "smarts"? Never swim alone. No matter where you are swimming or how strong a swimmer you are, you must always be aware of your surroundings and keep another person nearby. Designated and supervised swimming areas exist for a reason—staying within the designated boundaries may save your life. Be cautious when diving as well, again staying in areas designated for the activity. Never dive into murky

or dark water in which rocks or shallow areas may be hidden. Spinal cord injuries, paralysis, and even death can be direct results of diving in a hazardous area.

Watercraft Safety

When using personal watercrafts such as jet skis and boats, always wear a floatation device, notify



someone on land of your destination, and perform routine maintenance on your boat or jet ski to prevent unwelcome disasters. Ensure that you have plenty of fuel and that all components are working properly before you leave the dock area.

If provided with the opportunity, equip yourself further for water safety by taking classes in CPR and rescue techniques. Your doing so may save a life!

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Local Summer Events

Contrary to popular belief, summer is not necessarily the time of year in which you are the least busy. Though your calendar may be full throughout the coming months, we hope you'll find time to enjoy some local events that will relax you without emptying your pockets of spare change. Here are a few events nearby that you may wish to consider:

Outdoor Movies

Are you a Douglasville resident who loves baseball? Downtown's O'Neal Plaza is hosting a free showing of "The Sandlot" at the July 3rd session of "Friday Night Flicks." Pre-show activities begin at 8:00 p.m. with the movie starting around 9:00 p.m. Everyone planning to attend should bring a blanket, low back chair, or beanbag for comfortable viewing!

In Villa Rica, the Civic Center & Sports Complex invites you to attend its "Beach Blanket Theater: Movie in the Park" series, a free summer event including concessions, beach music, a moonwalk, inflatable slides, other kid-friendly activities and, of course, movies! On Saturday, June 20th, the movie of choice

is "Madagascar: Escape 2 Africa." Pre-movie entertainment will begin at 7:00 p.m. with a 9:00 p.m. movie showing.

Looking for a similar event in Atlanta?

Find out more about Centennial Olympic Park showings and poolside hotel showings at <http://atlanta.metromix.com>.

Independence Day Activities

Find your favorite float at the parade, view an impressive fireworks display, and enjoy an activity-filled festival this 4th of July near your home. The fun begins July 3rd at the Villa Rica Civic Center & Sports Complex with the largest fireworks display in West Georgia. Live music, face painting, bouncy slides, and tethered hot air balloon rides begin at 7:00 p.m. Enjoy the fireworks at 9:00 pm. The morning of July 4th, attend the downtown Douglasville parade at 10:00 followed by a festival with children's activities and concessions.

Music, Beach Party, & Carnival

What's summer without music? Smyrna doesn't want to find out: the Smyrna 2009 Summer Concert Series will take

place June 13th, July 11th, and August 1st and include selections of music from various artists. Table reservations are key, so visit www.smyrnavinings.com to ensure that you have a seat if you're interested in attending.

Do you like sand with your music? Yes, we said, "sand." At the annual Decatur Beach Party, the city of Decatur brings in 60 tons of sand, turning the square into a boardwalk and beach with games and live music. Bring your kids, a bucket, and pail, and enjoy the local beach from 5:00 p.m. to midnight on June 19th. Children ages 12 and under will receive free admission; the cost for adults is \$10.00 per person.

If your family prefers carnivals, Morrow Festival Park has just the right event for you. Saturday, June 27th, the city of Morrow is hosting "Summerfest on the Green," an event including live music, fireworks, and a children's carnival! Activities will take place from 6:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m.

Whatever you choose to do, we hope your summer is filled with fun, relaxation, and safe-but-exciting adventures!

Mistakes to Avoid After a Car Accident

Over the years of representing clients who have been seriously injured in car accidents, I have seen certain mistakes repeated over and over again. In response, I have written a short booklet that describes some of the mistakes and how to avoid them. Here is some information based on one of the tips in the booklet.

Mistake #1: Bad Photos

Perhaps the biggest mistake you can make after an auto accident is failing to take good photographs of damage to your vehicle or injury to your body. While property damage estimates are helpful, they do not have the

same effect as pictures that accurately and vividly portray the damage to a vehicle following a wreck. My experience with juries tells me that they will not believe that someone is actually hurt until they see if there is substantial damage to the vehicle. Photographs also play a key role in determining settlement amounts when battling with the insurance company during negotiations.

Aside from vehicle damage photos, insurance adjusters and jury members want to see proof of the injuries sustained by the victims of a car accident. Let's face it: many injuries heal over

time or become less visible to the naked eye. Your injuries are often most serious immediately following an accident. The best way to document the seriousness of your injuries is through good photographs. While medical records carry significant weight in car accident cases, they carry more weight if they are accompanied by vivid photos of the injuries they describe.

Take Action

The point is this: Please take good photographs, and lots of them. For more tips, call 1-800-503-7598 to order a free copy of "Mistakes to Avoid if You Want to Win Your Car Wreck Case."



If You Do Travel Far: Airline Travel Tips

Remembering to pack your toothbrush is no longer the hardest part of traveling: whether you're taking your kids to a tropical location or flying to another country for educational reasons, you must now comply with strict airport guidelines. Included here are a few travel tips provided by American Airlines to ensure that you have "smooth

sailing" during these busy travel months. First, *early* is the word to remember: book early to get the best deals on flights, rental cars, and hotels, and arrive early at the airport when it's time for your departure. Research the packing tips from the airlines in order to make it through security without a hitch, and ID your baggage to ensure you pick up the right piece of luggage after your flight. Also

bring an ID for yourself: you will need your driver's license at security checkpoints and during the boarding process. Make sure the name on your license matches the one on your boarding pass. Schedule your flight time during off-peak hours, such as mid-day, to avoid heavy crowds. Most of all, have fun, be careful, and enjoy your vacation!

DOUGLASVILLE CULTURAL ARTS CENTER: It's Smart to Appreciate the Arts

Whether you have a budding artist in your home or still find yourself drawing stick figures, visiting the Cultural Arts Center will heighten your appreciation of the arts and, possibly, trigger an excitement that will draw you to your paints and pencils. The mission of the Douglasville Cultural Arts Center is to "nurture, guide, and stimulate the enjoyment of and participation in the arts among Douglas County residents and visitors," and, with constantly changing exhibits, a wide range of impressive performances, and various art classes for all ages, the Center is achieving its goals. For more information on its summer arts camp, an afternoon with authors, or concerts on the plaza, visit www.artsdouglas.org. Color your children's lives with art education, fun classes, and opportunities to meet different people who have excelled in various types of the arts.