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SHOPPERS SPARK ECONOMY, 8B

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Page Editor: Laura Williams

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Funding flows to water projects

■ Gov. Nathan Deal announces a plan to address the water crisis Georgia is currently facing.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

ATLANTA — Georgia has awarded its first \$100 million to build new reservoirs and water supply projects across the state, officials announced this week.

The money is the first to flow

through a program launched by Gov. Nathan Deal. It is part of a four-year plan to spend \$300 million on projects expected to help boost Georgia's home-grown water supply.

The governor began the finance program amid an ongoing fight over water with Alabama and Florida.

Eight projects received funding out of 15 submitted for consideration for loans and grants to

plan, permit or build reservoirs or wells.

Nearly all of the money awarded in the initial round came in the form of loans to local governments and agencies, which will eventually have to repay the money.

Oconee and Walton counties will get two 40-year loans — one for \$20 million and another for \$12 million — for the new Hard Labor Creek reservoir.

Paulding County was awarded a 40-year, \$29.1 million loan for the new Richland Creek reservoir.

Newton County will get a 40-year, \$21 million loan for the new Bear Creek reservoir.

Three Georgia cities also received loans for water projects. Cornelia gets a 30-year, \$6.8 million loan to improve an existing reservoir. Hahira will get a 20-year, \$432,000 loan for a new

water supply well. And Vienna will get a 20-year, \$1.1 million loan for its water projects.

Just northeast of Atlanta, the Lake Lanier Islands Development Authority was awarded \$4.4 million in direct funds to buy and connect a supply well.

The Southwest Georgia Regional Commission has been awarded \$4.6 million in direct funds for test wells and storage.

COMMUNITY ENJOYS A NIGHT OUT



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Joseph Wagstaff, 4, tries his hand at a ball-toss game during the National Night Out celebration at Radium Springs Middle School Thursday. The Dougherty County Police Department, Dougherty County School Police, Dougherty County Sheriff's Office and the Albany Fire Department hosted the event which featured music, food, games and prizes for children and parents. See if you were SPOTTED at www.albanyherald.com.

National Night Out a success

■ The Albany version of the National Night Out attracts hundreds to Radium Springs Middle School.

PETE SKIBA
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ALBANY — Dougherty County public safety personnel pitched in to give local citizens a National Night Out to remember Thursday.

The event, held at Radium Middle School, was part of a national effort to promote community spirit and partnerships with police in the fight against crime.

"We decided to have it today because it falls with the school system's open-house plans," said Dougherty County Police Department Chief Don Cheek. "With school starting, kids can get their back-to-school supplies."

Participants started lining up at Radium Middle well before 5 p.m., and the lines soon grew quite long. They did move quickly, though, as parents picked up tickets and goody bags to hold the free school supplies.

Book bags in every color imaginable filled with pens, pencils, tablets and other back-to-school supplies were handed out by Ella Woodard and her friends from New Birth

Scan it! Use your smartphone to see video from Thursday's National Night Out on your mobile device.



Fellowship Church.

"We are happy to support this with the book bags," Woodard said, "especially because it is so hard to afford supplies in these hard economic times."

The need for the school supplies was a constant thread among people attending the event, which also featured raffles, games, bouncy houses, hamburgers and hospitable police. But it was the school supplies that mattered for most present.

Quatesha Williams, of Albany, won three dinners at Sonny's Bar-B-Q and tickets to Carmike Cinemas, but she couldn't stop talking about the school supplies.

"This is just such a good thing for people," Williams said. "I won the tickets, but it is good for people who can't afford the school

Please see **Night, 4A**

Mural to grace side of building

■ Steel has been delivered and a rendering completed for a planned art park on Pine Avenue.

First reported at
Albany
Herald.com

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ALBANY — Downtown officials have unveiled a rendering of what they hope the rear of one of the city's oldest commercial structures will look like later this year, once a painting that pays homage to an iconic Albany bridge is completed.

Downtown Manager Aaron Blair said Thursday that local artist Cameron Malphrus has offered a rendering that depicts a mural on the rear of the Art Park on Pine Avenue that shows the Broad Avenue bridge as seen from the north side of the bridge facing south.

The mural would stretch along the entire width of the back of the building.

The painting would serve as an homage to the bridge, which is slated for demolition. Work on tunneling under the river to allow for natural gas lines and other utilities to be reconnected should begin sometime this month, City Engineer Bruce Maples said.

The mural on the rear of the Pine Avenue building will accompany a more subtle mural on the front of the structure, Blair said.

"What we have going on the

Please see **Mural, 4A**



Special photo

This photo depicts artist Cameron Malphrus' rendering of what his Broad Avenue bridge mural will look like at the Art Park on Pine Avenue.

City's pension fund on 'solid footing'

■ The total accrued liability for the city of Albany's pension fund is \$158 million.

J.D. SUMNER
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ALBANY — The city's pension fund for retirees grew by 7.5 percent in the first half of the year, propped up partially by a strong bond market, a consultant told the pension board Thursday.

Growth in any kind of government-backed pension program has proven elusive throughout the country. The state of California, for instance, has seen its investments grow by only .03 percent this year, Warren Willis of Merrill Lynch said.

"This board has never been like some others and made a knee-jerk reaction, and it's paid off quite well," Willis said.

That doesn't mean the program hasn't made some critical changes; those changes have just come more deliberately and seem to be paying off, officials say.

Phil Roberson, the city's Public Works director and the chairman of the city's pension board, said the

board's decision in 2007 to require employee contributions helped keep the plan solvent without placing a larger burden on taxpayers.

The city's current actual accrued liability for its pension fund is \$158 million, which is down from \$181 million last year.

Last year, the city paid \$10.2 million to retirees, Roberson said.

"In the long run, I think that Albany's pension is in a lot better position than some of our sister cities," Roberson told the board. "We've avoided making any major asset shifts and haven't had to make any major changes in our money managers."

The city's retirement plan requires a split employee contribution. In total, non-public safety employees make an 8.9 percent contribution to the pension plan annually, which includes a mandatory 4 percent employee contribution.

Public safety employees have an 11.9 percent total contribution, which includes a 7 percent contribution from employees.

Please see **Pension, 4A**

CLASSIFIED **1C**

CROSSWORD **6C**

FEATURES **6B**

LOTTERIES **4A**

OBITUARIES **7B**

SPORTS **1B**



DAILY HERALD

DailyViews, 6A

Finally, something **both sides** agree on

Business, 6B

DOW:

High: 12,696.85
Close: 12,878.88
Change: -92.18

NASDAQ:

High: 2,934.65
Close: 2,909.77
Change: -10.44

S&P:

High: 1,375.13
Close: 1,365.00
Change: -10.14

PARTLY CLOUDY

**95°
74°**

Paige Williams



Corrections

■ This newspaper is committed to publishing fair and accurate information. Errors should be brought to the attention of Editor Jim Hendricks at (229) 888-9352. Corrections or clarifications will appear in this space.