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Georgia State University College of Law

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Understanding the registration controversy

"Class reserving" framed by issues of ethics, notice and technological limitations

By Andy Hagenbuch, 2L

Registration for second year law students at Georgia State University for Spring semester 2010 opened up at Noon on October 27th, 2009. Hoping to get the few remaining spots in the classes of their choice, 2Ls crammed into any available classroom, most at least 15 minutes before noon, repeatedly refreshing the registration website. Within a minute after registration opened, many of the classes were already filled and some students had to resort to their second or third choices in many classes, including some very inconvenient hours for some litigation sections.

However, for those 2Ls who worked with a 3L to hold the classes they wanted, there was never any doubt they would be able to register for their classes.

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Additional security added for students leaving Urban Life after dark

By Kevin Jaszczuk, 1L

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The program is an extension of the campus' existing safety escort service. The service currently provides two escort vans on call 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. They pick up students and take them to or from any campus building, to any nearby parking lots, GSU or Five Points MARTA station, or other destinations near campus. The Escort Vans can be reached by calling (404) 413-2100 or 3-2100 from a university phone.

According to GSU Police Sergeant Kristal Perkins, the additional escort will be stationed outside the building each day between 5 p.m. and 10 p.m. to serve as a crime deterrent—specifically as an escort to students leaving night classes or the late evenings in the library from 8:45 to 10 p.m.

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Governments and humans: An insider’s view of the EPA

By Jane Stebbins, 2L

Comments made by employees of the EPA in this article are personal views and do not reflect the official positions of the EPA or the United States.

To many Americans, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) represents the epitome of bureaucratic government—something from Douglas Adams’s The Hitchhiker’s Guide to the Galaxy, an undefined entity lurking in the background of their lives, without much thought of its presence, until they need it. The EPA has garnered this reputation from media coverage of the agency’s actions. It reports on health hazards, translates them into numbers, and issues warnings about their dangers. It is the EPA that we turn to when we want to know the levels of pollution in our drinking water, or we want to know the levels of air pollution in our front yard. It is the EPA that we read about when a government agency is in the news.

Yet the EPA is more than just a media spectacle. It is an agency that affects our daily lives, whether we realize it or not. To many Americans, the EPA is a hero or a villain, depending on the story and the slant of the media outlet. To many others, the EPA is a hornet’s nest. It’s just part of the territory we navigate in a contentious environment.

Many EPA decisions are thrust into the public eye, and the agency receives news coverage. The EPA has been portrayed as a bloated federal government agency—some from losing faith in the great governmental machine. But they help to humanize the agency. Their comments may not prevent EPA decisions from being made, but they help to personalize the EPA. Their comments may not prevent us from losing faith in the great governmental machine, but they help to humanize the agency.

The full interview with Scott Schwartz can be found online at www.law.gsu.edu/thedocket.

Schwartz is a veteran EPA attorney. Unlike many attorneys, Schwartz works forty-hour weeks. Schwartz primarily works with the Clean Water Act. His daily activities include analysis of complex statutory legal issues, client communication and preparation for potential litigation. Schwartz rarely has to wear a tie, but takes the responsibility seriously and knows his work is important.

Environmental matters will always be a flash point for controversy. Schwartz said, “because controlling pollution can be very costly, or can disrupt a status quo. That someone is heavily invested in and because there are a lot of people who are very passionate about protecting the environment, sometimes to a degree that the law doesn’t necessarily validate. So a lot of times when you work on something it’s like poking a hornet’s nest. It’s just part of the territory and you have to develop skills at navigating in a contentious environment.

As one of about 75 attorneys in the Southeast branch, Schwartz said the majority of what he does is help keep the agency out of trouble, which involves ensuring the EPA’s actions fall within the constraints of several federal laws and state laws and regulations.

Scott’s work with the agency involves elements of bankruptcy, tax, corporations,property and even criminal law. Her research included “a lot of Tennessee corporation law,” Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations and the Clean Water Act. She also worked on the Rule Against Perpetuities.

“It seemed like everything I worked on,” Scott said, “led to some different area of law that was unexpected. A lot of the projects that I worked on were originated on a national level, but the determining issue was usually something completely different—which was both fun and frustrating at times.”

Scott not only worked with a broad range of laws, but she also collaborated with several different attorneys—benefiting from their experiences while they benefited from hers.

Jane Stebbins is interested in land use and environmental law. When she is not frantically pouring knowledge into writing or editing prose, she can be seen rocking the bass with her band, The Jane and Scott Show. Jane is Managing Editor and a featured blogger for The Docket. Her other blog can be found at www.js-show.com.
Better Know a Legal Profession: Employment Law

An Interview with Tony Ventry of King & Spalding

By Janet Hardman, 2L

To some, their job is just the place they report to in the morning. For most of us in law school (at least lately), a job is anything but that. Every day is something new to learn. According to Sobelson, the school should do three things it currently does not: 1) prevent students from registering for classes if they have not met the pre-requisites, 2) prevent students from retaking courses and 3) allow only those on a waiting list to register for a recently dropped class spot (in its current form, any student could sign up for an open spot). Had these safeguards been in place, the class registration controversy in question would not have occurred.

Solving these technological limitations is difficult because the College of Law is tied to the registration software of the University and cannot acquire better software on its own. Even so, Sobelson noted, "the first two problems have since been solved: the Dean and Registrar are currently solving the third issue using manual methods.

A common student feeling is that the Honor Code might circumvent the shortcomings in technology and provide an easier registration process.

The system was designed to ensure everyone had an equal chance at registering for a class. Those [those involved] circumvented the system and...because some professors give out higher grades than others, not getting into a particular class definitely can affect your grades.

One second year student, who wished to remain anonymous, said, "There's a reason why dorms are the way they are. The system was designed to ensure everyone had an equal chance at registering for a class. Those [those involved] circumvented the system and...because some professors give out higher grades than others, not getting into a particular class definitely can affect your grades.

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The new service was spurred by student concerns voiced at a Dean’s Forum late last semester regarding the long waits experienced by those using the service. Other students complained that it was inconvenient because the police balked at allowing students to use university services to contact the police department. As they approached so that the student could meet them outside the building without having to wait outside the building having to wait outside the building because there was no notice of any wrongdoing.

Sobelson is not persuaded by the "mandatory" argument. He reasons that the argument "that virtue of being mentioned in the honor code means [the practice] is allowable" doesn’t stand up in light of the structure of the Honor Code. In addition, the section on pre-professional misconduct, a catch-all provisions stating, "by workers...is being truthfully in violation of code," provided sufficient notice. The Dean argues that these students “must have known” their actions were not indicative of true pre-professional misconduct. Despite that, the Dean said everyone he spoke to was "open and honest" and freely acknowledged that punishment: being withdrawn from those "reserved" courses. The Dean dispelled any rumor of an individual “mastermind” behind “class reserves,” although he believed many more individuals were involved than he is aware of.

According to Sobelson, the lesson gleaned from the controversy is that “if there is a problem, it is beneficial to bring it to [the Deans’] attention—we cannot fix problems we are unaware of.”

Andrew Hagenbush received a degree in industrial engineering from Georgia Tech. He is the News Editor for The Docket, Vice President of the Environmental Law Society and a member of Student Trial Advocacy, Sport & Entertainment Law Society and the Oglethorpe Society.

Since other faculty members and I don’t subscribe to any of these services, we would rather rely on students’ input than that which is supplied by the university when determining how best to serve our students," he noted. “It helps when students contact us with reports of positive or negative experiences.

While the on-call officer will be able to assist students exiting small classes, which end at 8:45 p.m., as well as the many stragglers exiting their law school holes after dark, Sergeant Perkins encourages all students, male or female, to utilize the service whenever they feel they need it.

"The best way for students to ensure their safety is to always be conscious of their environment," Perkins said. "Students need to use the escort service, and always walk in groups of two or more. Don’t take a short cut down a back alley. Make sure to use two minutes; stay in well-lit areas. You can program the emergency numbers, (404) 413-2100, into your phone.

While males are typically resistant to accepting assistance in getting across campus, Perkins pointed out that, statistically, men are victims of more crimes, so they shouldn’t hesitate to call a safety escort if they are heading out of the Urban Life building late at night.

With the existing Escort Vans and new on-call officer, the university and GSU police department are working to prevent other thefts or assaults against stu-

kevin Janssens is a graduate of the University of Georgia College of Journalism and spent his time between college and a new law school as an editor of various trade publications covering the commercial real estate industry. Kevin is the Associate Editor of The Docket.
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Additional security added for students leaving Urban Life after dark

By Kevin Jeselnik, 1L

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Governments and humans: An insider’s view of the EPA  
By Jane Stebbins, 2L

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To many Americans, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) represents the quintessential monolithic government agency—something from Douglas Adam’s Vorgon planet: mindless, bureaucratic, irritating, but lovable. The EPA has perhaps garnered this reputation from media coverage of the agency’s actions. It represents a hero or a villain, depending on the story and the slant of the media outlet.

Many EPA decisions are thrust into Americans’ collective consciousness because of mounting concerns of global warming, water shortages, pollution and the responsive “green movement.” Recently, I had a chance to look beyond the machinery of the EPA.

Last semester, the possibility of an externship with the EPA gave me the opportunity to learn a little more about the agency and its inner workings. Just visiting the EPA office invokes the burdens inherent in security procedures. The EPA’s Region Four headquarters in Atlanta houses little to shed the typical atmosphere of government bureaucracy. Guests hoping to visit these offices must sign in, navigate security and locate the appropriate elevator in the dim, cavernous lobby of the federal building. Upon reaching the correct floor, the guest must sign in again and stare into a computerized camera for photo documentation of their visit.

Beyond the necessary security procedures, however, the bureaucratic stereotypes start to crumble. When I visited the EPA for an externship interview I was greeted by a middle-aged man with fuzzy gray hair, glasses sliding down his nose and sleeves rolled to the elbow. He led me to a comfortable, somewhat worn meeting room.

There I spoke with a group of equally comfortable, casually dressed attorneys, all of whom knew their assignments inside and outside of the EPA. The lawyers working at the EPA are people. They have opinions, they care and they wear blue jeans.

Inspired by my experience during this interview, I decided to peek further into the EPA. Sarah Scott, 2L, a former intern from Georgia State University’s College of Law and Paul Schwartz, an experienced attorney with the EPA, provided me with a perspective largely unrepresented in media coverage of the EPA—a human perspective.

After she interned at the EPA in the fall semester of 2009, Scott recognized the burdens inherent in security procedures. After her internship, Scott gave her “official” badge. The check-in process added 10 minutes to her commute every day. She says that one of the most unchanging aspects of the ETPA for her was how laid back the attorneys were.

“I was also relieved,” Scott said, “to see how much common sense and compassion they used in dealing with different sites. Some of these environmental laws can be pretty strict.”

Schwartz is a veteran EPA attorney. Unlike many attorneys, Schwartz works forty-hour weeks. Schwartz primarily works with the Clean Water Act. His daily activities include analysis of complex statutory legal issues, client communication and preparation for potential litigation. So, he rarely has to wear a suit, but takes the responsibility seriously and knows his work is important.

“Environmental matters will always be a Flash point for controversy,” Schwartz said, “because controlling pollution can be very costly, or can disrupt a status quo that someone is heavily invested in and because there are a lot of people who are very passionate about protecting the environment, sometimes to a degree that the law doesn’t necessarily validate. So a lot of times when you work on something it’s like poking a hornet’s nest. It’s just part of the territory and you have to learn to navigate in a contentious environment.”

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“It seemed like everything I worked on,” Scott said, “led to some different area of law that was unexpected. A lot of the projects that I worked on were originally based on environmental law, but the determining issue was usually something completely different—which was both fun and frustrating at times.”

Scott not only worked with a broad range of cases, but also collaborated with several different attorneys—benefiting from their experiences while they benefited from her.

Scott summarized her favorite aspect of the position, “Getting to work on several different projects with several attorneys and having my opinions/advice given much consideration as a ‘real’ employee.”

“I was also allowed to sit in on both client and opposing party meetings,” Scott said, “which was interesting to get a fuller picture of how some of these environmental sites are dealt with.” Her position with the EPA also satisfied Scott’s needly childhood dream: she received her very own cubicle.

Schwartz has passed the point of excitement over his cubicle, but he reflected Scott’s satisfaction regarding his work with the EPA.

He began his career at a larger firm, which he said, “Didn’t interest me very much and didn’t mesh with my life in a rock band.” He eventually joined the EPA where he has been since.

Schwartz’s band, The Big Fish Ensemble, is largely inactive these days, but Schwartz remains intensely interested in his work while maintaining a life outside of the Agency.

“There are some exceptions,” Schwartz said, “but usually I take my kids to school in the morning and am home for dinner.”

When President Obama took office in 2009, some EPA employees expected major adjustments in agency policies and practices. Schwartz said that his day-to-day experience has not changed much, but it is early.

“I’d say there is a greater focus on following science,” Schwartz said, “and sort of a renewed effort to address some problems that have seemed intractable—figuring out how to deal with climate change, how to better address storm water and agriculture-related pollution, nutrient pollution of waters and coal mining impacts. It’s still early in the administration so policies in these areas are still emerging.

Paul Schwartz and Sarah Scott’s experiences help to personalize the EPA. Their comments may not prevent many from losing faith in the great governmental machine, but they help to humanize the agency.

The full interview with Paul Schwartz can be found online at www.law.gsu.edu/thedocket.
Better Know a Legal Profession: Employment Law
An Interview with Tony Ventry of King & Spalding

By Janet Hardman, 2L

Tony Ventry is just the place they go everyday in between the "real" parts of their lives. For others, work is the College of Law. For most of these young lawyers, the workplace is fraught with legal issues and is fertile breeding ground for lawsuits. Regardless of where you are on this spectrum, work is one of the common denominators in human experience. Until people stop needing jobs, employment law will continue to be a thriving and relevant practice.

To find out more about what to expect from a career in employment law, I took the opportunity to interview University of Georgia College of Law graduate Tony Ventry. Ventry is now an associate at King & Spalding, specializing in labor and employment law.

Why employment law?

Employment cases typically present an extensive sampling of factual situations and legal questions. Not surprising-ly, day-to-day practice is likewise varied. Ventry explains that employment practice affords opportunities to get hands-on experience with all phases of the litigation process. He notes that the Employment law firm, the EEOC, will draft a complaint or answer, working on discovery requests and responses, drafting dispositive motions and even taking depositions, participating in mediation or arguing a motion at a hearing. Although cases are often resolved through settlement or at a summary judgment, trial opportunities do arise. Employment associates' workloads may also involve preparing for depositions, reviewing employment manuals or draft-ing employment-specific contracts, like non-compete or severance agreements. Ventry says that although many of these commercial matters usually have several associates working on each case, employment law groups are usually smaller and their cases are typically staffed lower, when compared to other practice areas.

Therefore, he says, employment associates need to have great computer skills to get in-depth, qualitative experience on each case, including taking ownership of the legal issues and the client management aspects. "There is a lot of direct work with clients. Often the associate is the client's primary contact at the firm with respect to a specific matter," Ventry says.

I got a job! But is it in employment law, Now what?

Because employment sections in firms that do not exclusively practice employment law tend to be relatively smaller compared to other practice groups, there are not always going to be as many associate opportunities for an employment associate. If you have a chance at such a firm, Ventry advises making it known that you are particularly interested in employment law.

He says a smart move can be to introduce yourself to the partners and let those specializing in employment law know of your interest. Volunteering to write research papers for one of their articles is a simple way to stay on your targeted partner's radar.

"With the success of your area of specialty, Ventry stresses the importance of finding the right mentor.

Ventry stated that though GSI College of Law has a great reputation in the area for producing lawyers who adapt to practice quickly, careers in law are still very much an "apprentice-type" system. Finding someone whose judgment you trust to show you the ropes is invaluable.

Janet Hardman is interested in employment law. She enjoys working as President of the Labor and Employment Law Society and with Jennifer Ann's Group. Contact her at janethardman99@gmail.com.

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The new service was spurred by student concerns voiced at a Dean's Forum late last semester regarding the long waits experienced by those seeking the safety escort service. Other students complained that it was sometimes difficult to contact the police at calling the students on their cell phones as they approached that the students could indeed experience an outstanding response time without having to wait out the entire time.

"While the original safety escort service has been around for years," explained Sobelson, who initiated the new program alongside Police Chief Ronnie Sampson, "students don't use it as much as they should." I would prefer our students use an escort when leaving the building after dark instead of walking out by themselves.

"The reason I asked for this specific arrangement is that students have complained that the police have at times taken as long as an hour to respond. In an opinion out of and outside of the building with waiting to have students on campus. By utilizing the services students, male or female, to utilize the service whenever they feel they need it.

"The best way for students to ensure their safety is to always be conscious of their environment," Perkins said. "Students need to use the escort service, and always use in groups of two or more. Don't take a short cut down a back alley or service thoroughfare just to save two minutes; stay in well-lit areas. You can program the number, (404) 413-2100, into your phone.

While males are typically resistant to accepting assistance in getting across campus, Perkins pointed out, that statistically, men are victims of more crimes, so they shouldn't hesitate to call a safety escort if they are heading out of the Urban Life building late at night.

With the existing Escort Vans and new on-call officer, the university and GISP are working to prevent any further thefts or assaults against stu-dents on campus. By utilizing the services and the building in groups, students can play a part in ensuring safe travels to and from the College of Law.

Kevin Jasonik is a junior at the University of Georgia with a degree in Business Administration. He spent his time between college and law school as an editorial writer for a college newspaper, interned with the commercial real estate industry, Kevin is the Associate Editor of The Docket.

Andrew Hagenbuch received a degree in industrial en-gineering from Georgia Tech. He is the Docket, Vice President of the Environmental Law Society and a member of Student Trial Lawyers Association, Sports & Entertainment Law Society and the Oglethorpe Society.

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Spell Check vs. law students: Microsoft's attack on our right to freely associate...words

By M. Christian Clark, J.D.

For countless law students, Spell Check and AutoCorrect functions are not only a hassle, but destructive. Students are forced to either use a single spell check function or two. I decided to use Spell Check my first semester.

I completely install of Windows 7, I realized that Word and One Note had only the default dictionary lists for the Spell Checker. All of the exceptions and words I added had vanished, leaving my notes and writings peppered with jagged, red lines.

I determined to find a solution. I searched the Internet as one of Microsoft's labyrinthine web site. I found that the Internet, with its seemingly infinite information, has no site with a complete list of words for law students. So, for others like me, the following steps are a simple solution to end the struggle with Office's proofing functions.

How Spell Check operates is simple. Office checks a built-in dictionary and flags any unlabeled words. AutoCorrect may make changes automatically to commonly mistyped words. AutoCorrect also capitalizes words after a period unless an exception is added. This can be a major hassle with abbreviations and legal terms, especially Latin phrases.

Changes made to most proofing options in Word, apply to all other Office programs.

In modern versions of Word, there is a custom dictionary option. You have likely used this right by clicking a misspelled word and selecting "Add to Dictionary." This option adds an exception to Office's Spell Check.

In Word 2003 or earlier, click on Tools, Options and then Spelling & Grammar. In Word 2007, simply click the Office logo at the top left, Word Options at the bottom and the Proofing tab on the left. All versions have this proofing menu, with minor variations. AutoCorrect and other spelling functions can be changed from within this menu as well.

To change Spell Check, click "Custom Dictionaries" from within the proofing menu. This opens the "Dictionary List," which contains all the custom dictionaries Office uses for Spell Check. The document listed as "custom dic" contains any words you may have added to the dictionary. "dic" is the file extension (type) used for Office dictionaries. By highlighting "custom dic" and clicking the "edit word list" option, users can view any words added and also manually add words one-by-one. This is cumbersome, though, and not recommended.

The best method is to download or create a new dictionary file and add it to the menu. Simply click add and then select the file of your choice. Googling the words "list legal terms" will generate sites with lists ranging from specific to broad. Wikipedia has two lists that I used to create a dictionary file of 3880 legal words/terms and a file with over 350 Latin terms. The files are posted online at gea.edu/bedrock and can be used by following the steps above. Once added, users can check, uncheck or remove a dictionary. The check box in the proofing menu, "suggest from main dictionary only" must be unchecked to use custom dictionaries.

Another issue students have is the AutoFormat function and Styles option of Word. This affects any bullet/multi-list levels for outlines created by a user. AutoCorrect options can be changed by clicking on the "AutoCorrect" button in the proofing menu. From this menu you can add exceptions for text replacement and auto capitalization after a period.

Unfortunately, I am unaware of any way to save an exceptions or list replacement menu. The "AutoFormat As You Type" and "AutoFormat" tabs have several options that are not intuitive. Users can simply uncheck any bothersome options. Options checked in the Spell Check menu can also affect Word's reaction to hitting enter.

For more information, Google "Word [year] styles tutorial."
The Honor Code: Fooling others or fooling ourselves?  
*By Drew Crecente, 2L*

This incident has been labeled as trivial, as exploiting a "loophole," and even as a "non-violation" in some quarters. The arguments are incorrect and I address them here.

While this issue may be trivial for some students, it ignores the effect on others. Our behavior and the consequences of our actions is necessary not just as law students but as members of a society. It is important to recognize that these improper actions have adversely affected students.

Our law school was recently recognized for its outstanding part-time program. Part of the success in the area is the ability to accommodate the schedules of such working students. If a necessary time slot was taken through the dishonest acts of fellow students, those with time con­­flicts are adversely affected. These students are forced to adjust their work schedules and do not see this as a trivial issue.

The adjunct professors teaching litigation have a variety of backgrounds that are clearly important to their respective students—so important that the school provided a webpage providing such details. A student interested in Entertainment Law might want to enroll in the section taught by Monika Emmings Ewen, a "top entertainment attorney." Unfortunately for such students, this section had more than half of its positions filled by the time registration began for the 2Ls. Students that missed "but on their only opportunity to take litigation from an instructor with entertained experience" law school experience likely do not see this as a trivial issue.

Other students have positioned this incident as a utilized "loophole." Those students should re-evaluate their understanding of the term loophole. A loophole, at its core, requires an ambiguity or omission which is then circumvented in some manner. Without the ambiguity or omission, the loophole does not exist and there is no ambiguity or the loophole, the loophole does not exist and there is no ambiguity or omission. The Code does not preclude this argument: the Code does not prevent this loophole does not exist and there is no ambiguity or omission. The Code states that "[i]t shall be a violation of the Code for any student to engage in any conduct in connection with any activities of the College of Law which raises a substantial question as to that student's honesty, trust­worthiness or moral fitness to practice law, or become a member of the legal profes­sion." (emphasis added)

As unfortunate as this situation has been, the subsequent conversations have been even more unfortunate. Those who insist that no wrong has occurred due to lack of the sufficiently "men's rea" ignore that ignorance is both implicitly and explicitly not an excuse. Yes, errors which fail the inadequacy of the Code demonstrate their inability to parse rules and regulations properly—that very skill set that is one of the most important for an attorney to possess.

I am hopeful that the administration does not modify the Code as the result of this incident. To do so would reflect a lack of faith in the student body, a lack of our ability to align our own moral compasses properly and a lack of our core capability—as future attorneys—to properly understand and respect the relationship between the "letter" and the "spirit" of the law.

Drew Crecente is the executive director of "Jennifer Ann's Group," a nonprofit char­ity dedicated to prevention of teen dating violence; and co-founder of the Legal society of Intimate Violence Education, a new organization at GSU focused on integrating "domestic vio­lence" education into Law schools.

The Docket Online  
Read more original news stories, opinions, blogs, and much more every week at law.gsu.edu/thedocket
The Public Interest Law Association is a student organization that seeks to promote the goals of public interest law. Public Interest Law is a broad field covering various types of work that aid the public or community at large. Typically, such positions serve those members of society whose rights go unprotected because of economic disparity, lack of education or some form of prejudice.

The PILA Auction is a high-class event attracting more than 500 attendees, including members of the Atlanta public interest legal community, students, faculty, staff, and alumni. The auction raises funds to assist selected students who undertake unpaid summer internships at public interest organizations. Last year, through the Auction, PILA awarded six, full-time fellowships of $3,000 to students working in varying placements.

The auction includes dinner and drinks, which begin at 7:00 p.m. Accompaniment will be provided by the Atlanta Musicians' Orchestra. The Silent Auction will continue until 9:30 p.m., featuring such items as tickets to the High Museum, a digital camera, and dinner with select professors. The Live Auction will open just after 9:30 p.m. for bidding on the top twenty items, including vacation packages, BarBri, and a custom made suit. Also, look out for surprise performances by your favorite professors!

PILA would be honored by your presence at the event! Tickets go on sale beginning Tuesday, January 19 in the Urban Life Building lobby or on our website, www.law.gsu.edu/pila/auction.php.

We are currently accepting both financial and item donations for the silent and live auctions.

Please consider posting a financial donation to our account at www.law.gsu.edu/pila/auction.php or contact Nicole Motter, our PILA Donations Chair, at nicole.motter@gmail.com.
Jennifer Ann's Group: Bringing awareness to teen dating violence

By Madeleine Peake, 2L

Whether you are a 1L, 2L or 3L, you have likely encountered a case involving domestic violence. It may have been in torts when you studied assault and battery, in criminal law when you discussed punishment, or in family law when you learned about the crime itself.

If reading about domestic violence in class was your first time learning about the crime, consider yourself lucky. The U.S. Department of Justice reported in 2001 that approximately 4.8 million intimate partner rapes and physical assaults were perpetrated against women annually. More likely than not, you know someone (whether personally, or through a friend) who has been a victim.

Drew Crecente, a Georgia State University 2L, is the founder and executive director of Jennifer Ann's Group, a nonprofit charity dedicated to stopping teen dating violence.

"Abusers at the age of 15 will likely be abusers at the age of 35 if nothing is done to educate them or their partners about the effect of their behavior," Crecente said.

Not only does intimate partner violence affect teens and adults, it also affects children. The U.S. Advisory Board on Child Abuse and Neglect reported that 50 percent of men who regularly assault their wives also assault their children.

By increasing awareness and education about teen dating violence, Jennifer Ann's Group is helping teenagers identify abusive relationships as early as possible. Crecente states, "By working with schools, churches, police, hospitals and other organizations we can help teens (and "tweens") identify and exemplify healthy relationships.

He said their goal is for this information to become as commonplace as knowing to look both ways before crossing the street.

In order to stop the domestic violence we read about in our casebooks, we must address intimate partner violence at an early age. You can help by volunteering with Jennifer Ann's Group.

Making a difference can be as simple as joining Jennifer Ann's Group on Facebook and/or following them on Twitter.

"Those that have limited time and a difficult schedule can help us out tremendously online," Crecente said.

"Through our online presence we can always use people that can locate current stories related to [teen dating violence], post them, comment on them and spread the word about how common and tragic these stories can be, both on our Facebook page as well as through our online forum."

National Teen Dating Violence Awareness Week is the first week of February. By becoming a member of Jennifer Ann’s Group on Facebook, you will have the opportunity that week to change your profile image to one that reflects Jennifer Ann's Group supplies and become eligible to win an Amazon gift certificate.

Take a stand to stop teen dating violence and intimate partner violence by volunteering with Jennifer Ann's Group today!

For more information, go to jenniferann.org.

Pro Bono Calendar

Students who are looking to get out of the law library for a few hours and help the community this semester are in luck. Pro bono projects are happening all over Atlanta and they provide a wonderful opportunity for students to improve their resumes while giving back to the greater Atlanta area. Need more of an incentive? GSU College of Law graduates who have completed 50 hours or more of pro bono service "pro bono distinction" at graduation. The Docket has compiled a calendar of upcoming pro bono projects, however there are always more becoming available... take a study break and start working toward your "pro bono distinction" today!

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<td>National Teen Dating Violence Awareness Week begins (ends Feb. 6)</td>
<td>6 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.</td>
<td>Atlanta Community Food Bank Sort, inspect and pack donated food, beverages and health products.</td>
<td>7 p.m. to 10:30 p.m.</td>
<td>Children's Healthcare of Atlanta Attend &quot;Tweet of Durwntown.&quot;</td>
<td>10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.</td>
<td>East Atlanta Kids Club Tutor and/or play games, lead art and educational projects, and get to know kids from ages 7-13.</td>
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<td>6:30 p.m. to 8 p.m.</td>
<td>Backhead Health &amp; Rehabilitation Play RINGO and socialize with seniors.</td>
<td>3 p.m. to 5 p.m.</td>
<td>Atlanta Children's Shelter Sort and organize donations.</td>
<td>9:45 a.m. to Noon</td>
<td>Glassob Elementary Volunteers are needed to help tutor first and second graders with their reading and math skills.</td>
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<td>Volunteer Tip: Make homemade valentines and deliver them to your local hospital or nursing home!</td>
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<td>6:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.</td>
<td>East Atlanta Kids Club Became part of a one-on-one mentoring program that allows an adult to get to know a particular child.</td>
<td>3 p.m. to 5 p.m.</td>
<td>Children's Miracle Network and Children's Healthcare of Atlanta Volunteer at &quot;Dance Marathon&quot; at Georgia Tech.</td>
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<td>7 p.m. to 9 p.m.</td>
<td>Atlanta Community Food Bank Attend &quot;A Night of Low Country Cooking Simple Abundance Class&quot;</td>
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<td>3 p.m. to 5 p.m.</td>
<td>Atlanta Children's Shelter Sort and organize donations.</td>
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Pro Bono Calendar

February

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<td>Sort, inspect and pack donated food, beverages and health products.</td>
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<td>Atlanta Children’s Shelter</td>
<td>Sort and organize donations.</td>
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<td>Healthcare of Atlanta</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>Attend &quot;Take of the Dragons.&quot;</td>
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State of the Student Bar Association

By David Purvis, 3L

There are over twelve million unmarried partners living together in the United States. Social trends indicate that this number will continue to increase. Couples choose to live together without getting married, for a variety of reasons. Sometimes it is too expensive to tie the knot, others either do not want to marry or are unable to do so.

At the present time, same-sex couples can only marry in Connecticut, Iowa, Massachusetts, New Hampshire and Vermont. Thus, for attorneys who do not live in states that have effective legal recognition of same-sex partnerships, it is becoming increasingly important to learn how to mimic the privileges and obligations associated with the legal recognition of marriage.

Last Fall, the Estate Planning and Wealth Management Society and OUTLaw co-sponsored a presentation on replicating the benefits associated with marriage for those who either are incapable of being married under our current laws or who choose not to get married.

Some of the legal rights afforded to married couples include: the right to receive a property settlement and/or support in the event of divorce, the right to receive survivor’s benefits from Social Security and retirement plans, the right to file joint tax returns, the ability to obtain “family” insurance benefits, a spousal exemption from gift taxes and an automatic share in a deceased spouse’s estate in the event of his or her death without a will.

Law schools have a unique opportunity to send a signal to the community that they are teaching future attorneys how to mimic the relationship.

Last Fall, law students organized the Legal Society of Intimate Violence Education (L.I.V.E.), a new student organization at GSU focusing on integrating domestic violence education and awareness into the study of Law.

In 1998, the U.S. Department of Justice Office on Violence Against Women released the first round of grant awards to support programs providing civil legal assistance to those who have been affected by “domestic violence” (DV).

Although the funding provided the abused with greater access to legal aid, more work needs to be done to provide assistance in finding legal counsel that fully understands the complexities of abusive relationships and the difficult decisions faced by those affected.

Law schools have a unique opportunity to send a signal to the community that they are teaching future attorneys how to mimic the relationship.

While teaching future attorneys how to respond safely and effectively to an issue that has such a profound impact on all areas of law, by incorporating much needed information about DV law and practice into their curricula, law schools can effectively use their education to combat domestic violence.

In recognition of this role of law schools, the American Bar Association adopted an official policy in 2003 encouraging law schools to promote awareness of DV through law school activities and programs. Despite this resolution, professors and students alike have shown resistance to DV education. Faculty members may fear mischaracterizing the subject because they may not feel knowledgeable enough about the issue or be intimidated by it. Many law schools still offer adjunct professors to teach courses or seminars that are dedicated solely to the issue, further restricting it from the required core curriculum.

Students may also feel uncomfortable addressing the issue due to stereotypes about victims of DV or due to a mistaken belief that it is a feminist issue or something that only arises in the context of family, and is not a legal issue in its own right. DV affects virtually every area of the law. Lawyers who practice tort law, corporate law, property law, immigration law and tax law, for instance, all represent both the abused and the abusers of DV. Core curricula courses such as civil procedure, contracts, torts, property, constitutional law, evidence and professional responsibility provide an excellent opportunity to teach students about DV.

Seminars and courses are not the only opportunities to educate students about these important issues. Following the American Bar Association’s resolution, many schools have modified their curricula to include DV courses. Some schools have created DV clinics. Students involved in these clinics benefit by learning the substantive law governing their cases while at the same time gaining valuable client interviewing skills that are often neglected in today’s law schools.

Law schools stress need for intimate violence education in curriculum

By Kristen Scalzitti, 2L

Law school stresses need for intimate violence education in curriculum

By Lindsey Harrison, 3L

A durable power of attorney is effective immediately and allows the agent to act concurrently with the principal. In contrast, a springing power of attorney only grants power to the agent once the principal or grantor has become disabled.

Choosing the type of power of attorney is vital because, if neither is elected, the agent will be empowered to act while the principal is capable of acting. This would prevent the power of attorney from being active when the principal or grantor is incapacitated. Included in an advance directive for health care or a living will is also essential. This document provides specific instructions of who should be named as the agent once the principal or grantor has become disabled.

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Winter Soulstice brings the gift of music
Music and arts festival raises money to benefit children's education
By Robert Bailey, 2L

Downstairs at Smith's Old Bar, art-works were on display and local artists for a silent auction. While browsing the various drawings, paintings, photos and jewelry, handcrafts a cozy, relaxed atmosphere to mingle or simply chill on the comfy couches and chairs.

Upstairs, other local bands plug in and blast the audience's ears with raucous rock while artists paint live on the side of the stage.

While picking the ticket booth and hawking t-shirts is Beth Bachman, 2L, the event organizer.

In 2007, Bachman created Groove-muse, an Atlanta-based organization dedicated to bettering their community and the lives of those within it by encouraging the arts while providing non-profit to raise fund and awareness. Every December, Groove-muse organizes Winter Soulstice, a live music concert and silent art auction to benefit local arts and music-related charities. Their beneficiary for the past two years has been WonderRoot.

WonderRoot is an Atlanta-based non-profit organization committed to uniting arts and education in the community with positive social change. One of the organization’s core programs is Creativity for Kids, a youth arts-enrichment program in which WonderRoot partners with community organizations and schools that serve low-income and at-risk youth to fill the void created by budget cuts to arts education.

Since the first Winter Soulstice in 2007, Bachman and fellow organizers, Shira Blank and Johnny Maron, have raised over $8,500 dollars for Atlanta’s local arts and music communities.

This year proved to be the most successful Winter Soulstice yet. Combining ticket sales, auctioned artwork, a raffle, and silent and poster sales, the event pulled in more than 4,300 dollars, more than the prior two years combined.

As a way to notice the exceptional turnout this year, organizers brought together a wide variety of entertainment and artists. The artwork included innovative jewelry by Lizzy Peters, paintings by Puja Chauhan, and an assortment of framed photos and digitally manipulated images.

While the artwork enticed the eyes, the music was the star of this show. On the Main Stage upstairs, Asherel, a band of ten wunderkinder whose friends could not even come see them play at the 21- under venue showed the older rockers how to bring the noise. Not to be outdone, The Brotherhood and Lost City gave especially memorable performances and knew how to play to the packed house. For those in the mood for something a little more relaxed, the Atlanta Room downstairs showcased a variety of folk and local and alternative musicians, local and perennial favorites The Jane & Scott Show (featuring Jane Stebbins, 2L), and Zeroes. The room had a funky jam band, playing non-stop for half-an-hour.

Bachman and her co-organizers certainly made every effort to ensure that there was entertainment available for everyone. Despite the economic recession, the Atlanta community showed its generosity by showing up in droves to bring art and music into the lives of children through WonderRoot.

To learn more about WonderRoot or to make your own charitable donation, please visit www.WonderRoot.org.

Sports and school: How students make it work
By Stephanie Stewart, 2L

With all of the pressures surrounding law school, it is amazing when students find a way to enjoy extracurricular activities, especially when they are not academic in nature. Sports are just one of the many types of activities that GSU students partake in as a way to take a break from school. However, sports are an especially interesting choice because sometimes they can be equally as demanding as school. A sports and school, both Sam and Gino Emanuel, 2L, (who plays flag football on Team Harvey Woodley and cheerleaders.

Sam Gunnison and Fallon, competing in Comets

much as she could before the competition, the experience made her realize that in the future she wants to put more into her life and riding competitions second. She said that for her this year she has already started changing her priorities and plans to focus primarily on school and only ride on the weekends until graduation.

Despite the difficulties of balancing sports and school, both Sam and Gino Emanuel, 2L, (who plays flag football on a GSU intramural flag football team) agreed that finding a healthy balance is active is a way to keep themselves from going crazy during law school, and having non-scholastic goals puts things into perspective.

Sam Gunnison, 2L, who rode on the equestrian team at UGA and now rides for UGA as an alum. Sam said that she made the choice to continue participating in equestrian competitions during law school because horses are her life and she loves everything about the competition including "the thrill, the feel of the horse, and the fun!"

Of course these benefits do come at a price. For Sam, time management took a hit during her 1L year. Unfortunately (or fortunately) on how you look at it), she qualified for the equestrian national championships which took place in Tennessee two days before her Torts final. Throughout the semester, she struggled to prepare for Torts while she tried to prepare for torts as be translated into moot court. Whether it was getting an RWA paper time-stamped before the switch to online assignment drops, picking up dry cleaning, handing in red ink, or signing up for your jury slot during litigation mock trials, chances are you will have come across Robin Simpson, the receptionist on the fourth floor of the Urban Life Building. Armed with chocolate, I asked if she would take a few minutes out of her busy day to talk about her job.

Q: Tell us what your role is here at GSU.
A: You probably know me as the receptionist on the fourth floor. I’ve been at GSU since 2005. I started as a temp in the Dean’s office when I was nineteen. Right now, I work two jobs and attend night school at Atlanta Metropolitan College. I’m a psychology major, and I want to be a life coach for middle and high school students. I pay all my school expenses out of pocket, and I’m on track to graduate without any debt.

Q: Debt free, huh? That’s an accomplishment.
A: Yes, I’m very proud of myself. Of all the law school classes here at Georgia State. I’ve always been a big pet person, and I have two dogs: a Chihuahua and a poodle. I eventually learned that just because you like animals doesn’t mean you don’t want to operate on them.

An interview with Robin Simpson of the 4th floor

By Eli Bennett, 2L

Every student has had to go up to the fourth floor for one reason or another. Whether it was getting an RWA paper time-stamped before the switch to online assignment drops, picking up dry cleaning, handing in red ink, or signing up for your jury slot during litigation mock trials, chances are you have come across Robin Simpson, the receptionist on the fourth floor of the Urban Life Building. Armed with chocolate, I asked if she would take a few minutes out of her busy day to talk about her job.

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Q: What is the best thing about your job?
A: I actually really like my coworkers. I work in a very laid-back but responsible environment with no drama. Coming to work is like coming home; I feel very comfortable here. Working at the law school makes for good social networking, too.

Q: Good point. You’ll always have a fresh supply of lawyers for all your legal needs. What do you like do on your off-time?
A: I am a book nerd, I would rather read than go to a movie. I’m finishing a book today my friend wrote called “Soul on Fire.” I’m a bigger nerd than people might think I am.

Q: Do you have trouble remembering people’s names? Does all the people you meet as a receptionist?
A: Well, I learned from my grandma to just say, “Hey, Sweetie,” if you can’t remember someone’s name.

Q: I’d have to try that. Since your job involves RWA, you get to work around a lot of stressed-out people. How do you cope with the stress of school?
A: Honestly, waiting until the last minute to get a few minutes. I do my best work when a deadline is coming up. As for studying, I prefer to study up here on the fourth floor; the library is rather desolate. Plus, you have to be extremely quiet, and I like to talk. I’ve heard that people get report for tapping pens. One more thing: this might sound a little strange, but every morning before I get to work, I think about what I’m thankful for. It makes you realize there is so much more out there to be thankful for. You’re lucky that you woke up.

Q: Is there anything you have to have some perspective. Thanks for letting me interview you! A: No problem. Thanks for the hot chocolate!
Lawyers gain from Georgia’s water issues

From the blog "What’s Happening Around Atlanta" by Robert Dukes, 2L

Since the mid-1970s.

From the blog “The Law Student in the New Economy” by Laura Ng, 2L

If you've read anything about Mr. Dukes’ legal career, you may have noticed that he is very passionate about the environment. He believes that lawyers can play a crucial role in protecting our natural resources and ensuring that our state’s water supply is safe and accessible to all.

I’ve been following Mr. Dukes’ work closely for the past few years, and I’m impressed by his dedication to this issue. He has been a vocal advocate for the need to address water issues in a more coordinated and effective manner, and he has been working with a group of local lawyers to develop creative solutions.

One of the biggest challenges we face in Georgia is the ongoing dispute over water rights. This issue has been contentious for years, and it has the potential to affect the quality of life for millions of people. But Mr. Dukes and his colleagues are working hard to find a way to resolve this conflict in a way that benefits everyone.

In addition to his work on water issues, Mr. Dukes has also been involved in a number of other environmental cases. He has represented a number of clients who have been affected by pollution and other environmental problems, and he has been successful in securing significant victories for his clients.

I think Mr. Dukes’ work is a great example of what lawyers can do to make a difference in our communities. By working together, we can find creative solutions to problems that affect us all. I’m looking forward to seeing what he will do next, and I hope that his work will inspire others to take action as well.

Robert Dukes has worked as an environmental commentator for the Georgia Department of Natural Resources and enjoys reading and writing about emerging technologies and social movements.

Snap out of your false sense of security

From the blog "The Law Student in the New Economy" by Laura Ng, 2L

Many pessimistic journalists failed to scare me with their dreary articles of impending doom and gloom, but now, I no longer feel secure about the connection between their reports and my life.

The past year, I have seen a law school classmate (Envy Law) who emerged from a state of confident bliss at receiving an associate offer from a large Boston law firm in August 2008, into various stages of anxiety. Unfortunately, I was not immune to this wave of intergalactic conflict and negotiation with water issues (as reported by Dave Williams, “Water Cases Send Dollars Flowing to Lawyers,” Nov. 6, 2009 at IA).

Due to the breadth of issues that come with water conflict or any natural resource, there are a number of potential opportunities that students can seek out to get ready for a career in the area of environmental law with a focus on water or natural resource management. Some of the issues that are relevant to this area include:

- Take a class in environmental law
- Take a negotiation course. Most of the issues that arise in this area require negotiation skills, as well as the ability to work with and communicate with different stakeholders. A lot of issues involving local and state governments usually get appealed. I think it’s important to work with them effectively.
- Taking a class with a focus on the environment, economics, and politics. Many of the issues that arise in this area are complex and involve issues of both law and policy.
- Take a course on natural resource management. In addition to the societal impact of these issues, there is also a significant financial impact. Many of the issues that arise in this area involve complex legal and economic issues.
- Take a class on environmental justice. This is an area that is increasingly being recognized as important, and it involves issues of both law and policy.
- Take a class on emerging technologies and social movements. This is an area that is constantly changing, and it involves issues of both law and policy.

GSU College of Law is within a short five minute walk from the Gold Dome so you don’t have to worry about the commute from campus. Also, Jim Martin is teaching legislation this year so you could talk to him about the questions about the Georgia Assembly that you always wanted to know but cannot find on the Internet.

Take a class on natural resources. Georgia is full of minerals and there are a number of legal issues around the state that deal with surface mining, property, and environmental issues. The best part of this program is that you cannot be outsource and all the material is here in Georgia.

Robert Dukes has worked as an environmental commentator for the Georgia Department of Natural Resources and enjoys reading and writing about emerging technologies and social movements.

A hidden danger in “domestic violence”

By Drew Creason, 2L

On October 9, 2009, like every October since 1987, was Domestic Violence (DV) Awareness Month in the United States. Organizations worked on various initiatives to increase awareness and education about DV in their efforts to mitigate a problem that affects over 3 million women and women in every month. Web sites such as abovebrow.com, law.com and lawjournal.com religiously kept track of “DV” news. In the past, such

Economy” by Lauri Ng, 2L

quickly acquire a ton of litigation experience, which could help strengthen a resume. I know a high-powered attorney who started her legal career as a public defender intern and later moved on to become a Super Lawyer, an adjunct professor at Emory Law, an editor for the International Bar Association, and a regular commentator for CourtTV.

While you may not land the job with merely clarity of thought and directness out of law school, not all hope is lost. There is still light at the end of the tunnel.

Laura Ng studied Neuroscience and Behavioral Biology at Emory and is currently a clinician for an intellectual property law firm and writing appellate briefs and memos for the Appalachian Division of the Georgia Public Defender Standards Council.
Live Music Review: The Jane & Scott Show  
By Ben Marlin, 2L  

Jane Stebbins, 2L, can be seen around campus carrying the various organic desserts she makes, but at night Stebbins unchains her wild side as vocalist and bass player in The Jane and Scott Show. The alt-folk band, which performs as a duo or three piece, and includes the aforementioned Scott on guitar and “featured drummer” Gvondix Ditz.

On November 10, 2009, the band ran through a set of ten humor-charged, rocking originals, including songs from its album Expectations for an enthusiastic crowd at the 10 High Club in Virginia-Highlands.

On stage, Stebbins served as the de facto leader of the group between songs, telling jokes, offering anecdotes about her songwriting inspirations, and generally keeping the crowd entertained. Her voice times along Scott’s to create beautiful harmonies.

Scott was generally restrained on guitar, playing rhythms that intertwined with Stebbins’ bass lines but he was not afraid, as illustrated by the rocking rhythms that intertwined with Stebbins’ bass lines and include the aforementioned Scott on guitar and arid bass player in The Jane and Scott Show. The alt-folk band, which performs as a duo or three piece, and includes the aforementioned Scott on guitar and “featured drummer” Gvondix Ditz.

Stebbins also doubles as Stebbins' vocalizing songs from its album Expectations for an enthusiastic crowd at the 10 High Club in Virginia-Highlands.

Humor and warmth can be found in the lyrics, and many of the songs aptly sum up the ecstasy and frustration that sometimes has the bizarre effect of making them run in one direction and back in the opposite direction, sometimes an aspect of texts? If it has been going on long enough and has turned into a pseudo relationship, you definitely have the right to define what it is doing on the band’s upcoming shows. Additionally, there is a link to itunes where you can purchase Expectations, which is also available on Rhapsody and Amazon. The Jane and Scott Show can also be followed on Twitter, MySpace and Facebook.

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The group moved through the songs at a well-measured pace, giving the songs time to breath and allowing the sweetness of the melodies to come through. With lyrics that range from the,</p>
The PATH to compromise: Greenspace can increase property values

By Jane Stebbins, 2L

A few blocks away from the frequently car-clogged junction of North Decatur Rd. and Clairmont Rd., deceptively calm after the storm of controversy that culminated in a settlement last December, there is a section of trail. A pedestrian can begin in the Medlock neighborhood and wander into a section of boardwalk and concrete path near PATH trails enhances that property's value, property owners who have portions of their backyards might disagree.

PATH proponents maintain that they are preserving greenspace and promoting environmental awareness by giving people an opportunity to be out in the woods. In addition, finished trails provide an efficient alternative to Atlanta's constant traffic problem.

PATH's long term goals are to connect the entire city with a web of pedestrian friendly trails. When Phase 2 of the South Peachtree Creek trail has finished, bicyclists and walkers will have a healthier option for commuting in the Clairmont Rd. area. Every cyclist winding through Mason Mill on his or her way to Emory is one less car on the narrow, two-lane road, providing a little more space and a little less pollution on a daily basis.

Please visit www.pathfoundation.org for more information.

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