



DeKalb firefighter Anita Horsley took home the world championship. Photo by Andy Phelan.

## Firefighter up to world championship challenge

by Andy Phelan  
Staff Writer

When a DeKalb County Fire & Rescue battalion chief came to Cpt. **Anita Horsley** and encouraged her to compete in the Scott Firefighter Combat Challenge, the World Cup of firefighting tournaments, little did he know how right he would prove to be.

In just her second year of competition, the eight-year veteran can now call herself world champion. She earned second in the tournament last year on her first try.

Competing against more than 1,500 women in the U.S. to get to the finals and more than 40 at the championships in Deerfield Beach, Fla., Horsley climbed stairs, heaved hoses, carried a "victim" out of harm's way and sprinted her way through the most brutal of obstacle courses in just 2 minutes, 14 seconds.

All while wearing a breath-

ing apparatus.

"I wanted to be a park ranger, but I live in the city so the urban equivalent is firefighter," she said, sitting in the break room of Station No. 3 in Avondale. "I've always been athletic and outdoorsy, so firefighting is a perfect fit."

Perfectly fit is more like it.

Horsley, 39, a resident of Decatur and personal trainer on the side, prepares all year round for the competition. Lifting weights, running suicides and practicing plyometrics—an exercise that rapidly stretches and contracts muscles—Horsley is relentless in her pursuit of physical fitness. To prepare for the five flights of stairs she must climb wearing a 40-pound vest and carrying a 45-pound hose during the competition, Horsley sprints up 33 flights of steps in training.

But Horsley said her recent promotion to captain and a pulled stomach muscle almost derailed her shot at firefighting

immortality.

"Being promoted was an honor but a huge stress because it entailed more responsibility and less time to train," she said. "And I was sidelined for two months with the injury."

For Horsley, who will become a health and safety officer in the new year responsible for keeping firefighters in shape, the way she met the challenge has left her more than satisfied.

"I'm very proud," she said, putting on a blue coat with patches and buttons that signify her championship status like Army stripes indicate a soldier's rank. "It's an elite honor, I feel like an Olympian. The athletes I competed against are amazing."

When asked if she feels like what she did was amazing, she shrugs and goes about her day.

"Health and physical fitness are what I represent," she said. "These are the things that are integral to my job."

## Infill

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"I'm disappointed with the whole process," said District 6 Commissioner **Kathie Gannon**, referring to the watered down version of the ordinance instead of the one recommended by the Infill Task Force in May. "The problems will remain, we're destabilizing existing neighborhoods and we're losing a variety of low-to-moderate income homes. We've allowed the building industry extra consideration and we don't have to ask why."

District 2 Commissioner **Gale Walldorff** summed up the conflict that's become increasingly bitter and divisive.

"The commission is very concerned," she said. "It's a national issue and we're struggling with this locally. We must find a way for new homes to be built and other homes to be remodeled rationally all within the context of an existing community."

**Ryan Brenny**, a home builder from Brookhaven, attended the zoning meeting to support the BOC's deferral in order to give the commissioners more time to consider their vote. He opposes infill regulation.

"No one is going to be 100 percent happy with this," he said. "Even if there is compromise, there is still going to be acrimony. To some degree I see their [people for infill regulation] point but for some people it's our livelihood, and for others it's a lifestyle."

As a member of CEO **Vernon Jones'** Infill Task Force, which worked on the issue for almost two years, **Harriet Hollis** said the time for consensus building and compromise happened months ago. Many in the pro-infill ordinance camp see the latest proposal as nothing more than developer interests hijacking the process.

"We had developers, realtors and residents come together from the beginning," she said. "We reached a compromise in May. What's being proposed favors developers. We've done all we can do. We've explained it, gone into every detail."

Hollis said the task force's original recommendations dealt much more stringently with height and grade issue. The ordinances on the table will do nothing to address this, she said.

The group's Web site states, "The Task Force cannot support these versions of the Quality of Life Ordinance or the Overlay Ordinance. While there are some positive aspects that were retained from the original Task Force recommendations, the controls that affect height and grade will not accomplish any significant change or provide relief to neighboring residents."

For more information on opposition to infill regulation, go to [www.truthaboutinfill.com](http://www.truthaboutinfill.com).

For more information on proponents of infill regulation, go to [www.dekalbinfill.org](http://www.dekalbinfill.org).

## Kwanzaa

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who need to know about the celebration. One of the things we want to do is make them aware and prepare them for Jan. 26." Wells said the one-month celebration at the library requires an entire year of preparation. When the festival concludes, Wells and her daughter **Tammy** relax by holding a family and friends celebration in their home on New Year's Day.

The library will hold Kwanzaa events throughout December. At the Kwanzaa reading and rhythm hut, patrons can visit a specially decorated area filled with bright images and books. The area has a heritage tree with words of wisdom from the elders. The African Drumbats exhibits is a virtual visit to the countries of Africa through the use of special displays in the library. Stamps about African festivals, art and culture from philatelist **Francis Mannah** also will be on display. At the First African Presbyterian Church in Lithonia, special Kwanzaa special ceremonies will take place beginning Dec. 26. The church holds such events as Ancestral Beads to Our Bio-Genetic Rope and Raising the name of our Ancestors. For more information visit: [www.dekalblibrary.org](http://www.dekalblibrary.org) or [www.fapconline.org](http://www.fapconline.org)

### Seven principles of Kwanzaa

Umoja (Unity)  
Kujichagulia (Self - Determination)  
Ujima (Collective Work & Responsibility)  
Ujamaa (Cooperative Economics)  
Nia (Purpose)  
Kuumba (Creativity)  
Imani (Faith)

### CITY OF CHAMBLEE NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARINGS 2006 OPERATING BUDGET, COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE, NEW ZONING ORDINANCE AND ZONING MAP

The Mayor and City Council of the City of Chamblee will hold a final work session on the proposed 2006 operating budget Thursday, January 5, 2006. The meeting will be held at City Hall, 5468 Peachtree Road, and will begin at 6:30 p.m. A public hearing on the proposed budget will be held at the beginning of the January regular council meeting Tuesday, January 17, 2006. The meeting will begin at 7:30 p.m., and will be at the Civic Center, 3540 Broad Street. The Council will hold a called meeting to adopt the budget Tuesday, January 24, 2006. The meeting will begin at 6:30 p.m., and be held at the Civic Center. A copy of the proposed budget will be available at City Hall on January 10, 2006.

The Mayor and City Council of the City of Chamblee will hold a public hearing on Thursday, January 12, 2006 on the Community Agenda portion of the comprehensive plan update to be submitted to the Georgia Department of Community Affairs. The hearing will begin at 6:00p.m., and will be held at the Civic Center, 3540 Broad Street prior to the work session for the January council meeting. A copy of the agenda is available at City Hall.

The Mayor and City Council of the City of Chamblee will hold a public hearing on Monday, January 16, 2006 for the following purposes: the adoption of a new zoning ordinance including a new official zoning map, the adoption of policies and procedures for calling and conducting public zoning hearings, and the adoption of standards governing the exercise of zoning power. The hearing will begin at 6:30 p.m., and will be held at the Civic Center, 3540 Broad Street. A copy of the proposed ordinance and map, procedures and standards will be available at City Hall, 5468 Peachtree Road, Chamblee, GA on December 29, 2005.

For more information, please contact the City Manager, Kathy Brannon, at 770-986-5018 or [kbrannon@chambleega.com](mailto:kbrannon@chambleega.com). Please note that all meetings of the Mayor and City Council are open to the public.

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