

JANUARY 2023

THE LATEST FROM THE OFFICE OF THE
DEKALB COUNTY SOLICITOR-GENERAL



YEAR IN REVIEW



IN THIS ISSUE

Committed
to Serving
DeKalb

Educating
the
Community

Empowering
the
Community

DEDICATED TO A BETTER, SAFER DEKALB

A Message from Solicitor-General Donna Coleman-Stribling

Happy New Year to you and your family! As we continue to address the challenges set by the pandemic, we have adapted and continue to effectively resolve our cases and engage the residents of DeKalb County.

The past two years have presented a unique set of challenges that we accepted and met with an open mind and dedicated work ethic. As COVID numbers declined I felt it was best to return to a work schedule that allowed our dedicated team of attorneys, investigators, trial assistants, and victim advocates the opportunity to fill the office space once again in person. Although virtual court is still in effect in some instances, most of our hearings are in person and we returned to the office ready to do what we do best, provide justice.

As we continue to grow and adapt, we continue to add new talent to our team. We have added attorneys, investigators, victim advocates, and trial assistants all equipped with diverse backgrounds and a wealth of knowledge. We also welcomed a new Chief Investigator who came to us with over two decades of experience in law enforcement.

Our commitment to building a better DeKalb continued as we returned to an active events calendar. We hosted major events this year and that gave us the opportunity to engage the residents of DeKalb and provide much-needed resources to our community.

Thank you for your ongoing support as we continue to build a better, safer DeKalb.



www.dekalbsolicitorgeneral.com

JANUARY 2023

THE LATEST FROM THE OFFICE OF THE
DEKALB COUNTY SOLICITOR-GENERAL

UPDATES FROM THE SOLICITOR



**DEDICATED TO A
BETTER, SAFER DEKALB**

DeKalb County Solicitor-General Secures Guilty Verdict and Jail Time in Street Racing Case

DeKalb County Solicitor-General Donna Coleman-Stribling announces a guilty verdict in four cases against street racer and promoter Kristopher Repka.

On May 31, 2021, and on multiple other occasions, Repka was observed by DeKalb County Police, via social media, on scene at various "Takeover" events throughout DeKalb County. Repka uploaded videos from the locations of these events capturing illegal street racing activities to his YouTube channel, "Dripmywhip". In the uploaded videos, Repka is seen encouraging drivers to block off the intersections and roadways to keep other uninvolved vehicles from entering the racing or drifting areas. Repka is also seen encouraging bystanders and other vehicles to block police vehicles as they arrive on the scene to end these illegal racing events. In one of the uploaded videos, Repka is seen striking an unknown bystander with his vehicle as they viewed the illegal racing activity.

Repka pleaded guilty to four counts of Promoting or Organizing Drag Races or Laying Drags Exhibitions, and one count of Reckless Driving.

A DeKalb County State Court Judge sentenced Repka to 48 months in jail with six to serve in custody and the remaining 42 months on probation. In addition, the defendant is required to complete defensive driving, and participate in Traffic Violators Program (TVIP), and his driver's license is suspended for 1 year. Fines imposed equaled \$5,000.00. He is also to have no contact with persons, or any individuals associated with any form of street racing, takeovers, promotions, etc., and banned from promotion or attendance in any form of street racing, takeovers, exhibitions, in-person or virtual.

"The individuals participating in these illegal street racing events must be held accountable for their careless and dangerous actions", said DeKalb Solicitor-General Donna Coleman-Stribling. "My hope is that this verdict makes clear that we will not tolerate this reckless behavior and cavalier disregard for the law."



Office *of the* DeKalb Solicitor-General

Donna Coleman-Stribling | DeKalb County Solicitor-General

JANUARY 2023

THE LATEST FROM THE OFFICE OF THE
DEKALB COUNTY SOLICITOR-GENERAL

UPDATES FROM THE SOLICITOR



DEDICATED TO A BETTER, SAFER DEKALB

Better Together: Community Resource Fair

On November 5, 2022, the DeKalb Solicitor-General's Office hosted its first ever "Better Together: Community Resource Fair". The purpose of the event was to educate and empower the community. As a law enforcement agency dedicated to building a safer DeKalb County through education and prevention, we sought to engage as many residents as possible and provide resources that empowered the residents of DeKalb.



In partnership with Peace Baptist Church- Decatur and with over 25 vendors, we were able to provide free groceries and resources to over 500 residents of DeKalb County. Resources included Rental Assistance, Record Restriction Applications, Career Readiness, Financial Literacy, Networking Opportunities, Shelter for Victims of Domestic Abuse, Youth Mentorship, Parent Engagement, Human Trafficking Prevention, Substance Abuse Treatment, Senior Primary Care, and Pet Care. We were also able to provide resources for mental, physical, and spiritual assistance.



"Our goal with this event was to serve as a one-stop-shop for resources offered by my office and our many partners. There is no reason residents in DeKalb County shouldn't have access to the resources they need" said DeKalb County Solicitor-General Donna Coleman-Stribling. "We understand that empowering the community with resources is a form of crime prevention and prevention is just as important as the prosecution aspect of what we do. I look forward to this being an annual event."

Animal Justice League: Animal Safety Event

After recognizing a significant need for education regarding animal safety and neglect the Solicitor-General took action. On September 17, 2022, the DeKalb County Solicitor-General's Office hosted the "Animal Justice League: Animal Safety Event".

The purpose of this event was to educate the residents of DeKalb County on the various actions that are considered animal neglect and animal cruelty and to also provide knowledge surrounding resources available for pet owners. The event was a one-stop shop. Not only was free pet food provided, but there was also a mobile veterinarian on site who provided free pet vaccinations for anyone who attended the event with their pet.

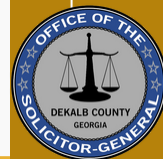
In addition to the mobile veterinarian, representatives from PAWS Atlanta, DeKalb Fire and Rescue, DeKalb Police, and the Atlanta Police Department were present. Jessica Rock, the animal neglect expert with the Georgia Prosecuting Attorney Council also attended and provided information regarding the types of animal neglect cases that she fights against and what residents can do to keep their animals safe.

"We receive a lot of animal cases, and we work hard daily to address each case. COVID has played a role in these cases and so has a general lack of knowledge. It is important that we educate the public on what it means to lawfully raise pets in a healthy manner. This event is an attempt to provide resources and knowledge so that pet owners in DeKalb County are better equipped with loving our four-legged friends" said DeKalb County Solicitor-General Donna Coleman-Stribling.

JANUARY 2023

THE LATEST FROM THE OFFICE OF THE
DEKALB COUNTY SOLICITOR-GENERAL

UPDATES FROM THE SOLICITOR



DEDICATED TO A BETTER, SAFER DEKALB

#NotInMyDeKalb Law Enforcement "Ready Bag" Drive

The Law Enforcement Essential Items DV Drive is another function of the #NotInMyDeKalb initiative. The drive is held quarterly and equips officers with essential items that can be provided to victims when they need them most. The bags provided to DeKalb County Police Officers contain essential items such as first aid kits, car chargers, blankets, document protectors, and toiletries.



"In the early morning hours of December 2021, an officer assigned to the DeKalb Police Department's South Precinct brought a victim of Domestic Abuse into the precinct after she had fled for safety. The victim's only possessions were the clothes on her back" said Brenda Puebla, Director of Victim-Witness Programs. "We have learned that it takes Domestic Violence victims at least 7 times to flee an abusive situation and when they do, they may leave with nothing but the clothes they are wearing. As first responders, our law enforcement officers constantly encounter victims in need."

"We must do our part to ensure that we bridge the gap between victim and survivor," said Solicitor-General Donna Coleman-Stribling. "By providing these items I believe that we are assisting victims of Domestic Violence in taking that next step towards justice and a new life."

During the October Law Enforcement Essentials Items DV Drive, the DeKalb County Solicitor-General's Office was able to deliver over 120 bags full of essential items to the DeKalb County Police Department.



2022 Events and Community Outreach

April :	Officewide Administrative Assistant Appreciation Event
July :	Back To School Community Giveback Event
August:	National Night Out Community Events
September:	Animal Justice League Event
October:	Breast Cancer & Domestic Violence Officewide Awareness
October – November:	Educational Neglect Prevention Countywide School Tour
November:	Better Together: Community Resource Fair & Feeding Our
December:	'Tis The Season Toy Giveaway Event



JANUARY 2023

THE LATEST FROM THE OFFICE OF THE
DEKALB COUNTY SOLICITOR-GENERAL

UPDATES FROM THE SOLICITOR



DEDICATED TO A BETTER, SAFER DEKALB

In Memoriam: Investigator Tessa M. Bowers (September 15, 1964- July 14, 2022)



On July 14, 2022, the DeKalb County Solicitor-General's Office suffered a tremendous loss. Investigator Tessa M. Bowers was traveling home as she had done many times before and was killed in a tragic vehicle accident.

With over three decades in the field of law enforcement, Investigator Bowers contributed a wealth of knowledge, experience, and guidance to her peers throughout the DeKalb Solicitor General's Office. Prior to serving there, Investigator Bowers had the opportunity to impact lives throughout the state of Georgia in various departments. Her law enforcement experience includes time at the Fulton County District Attorney's Office, Cartersville Police Department, Kennesaw College Police Department, Southern Tech Police, and the Cobb County Sheriff's Department. A well-decorated officer, Tessa was awarded the Cartersville Police Department Officer of the Year and Georgia Police Academy: Academic Excellence in Criminal Investigations award. She was recognized twice by the Fulton County District Attorney's Office as Trial Court Investigator of the Year and was awarded Investigator of the Year by the DeKalb County Solicitor-General. Tessa was also instrumental in beginning the Quality-of-Life Unit at the DeKalb County Solicitor-General's Office. She was devoted to this unit and was a proud member of this unit when they were awarded Unit of the Year.

A loving wife and avid animal lover, Tessa never missed an opportunity to express how much she loved her wife of over 20 years, Marsha. Her infectious smile, loving nature, and joyful sense of humor will be missed by the entire office. "Although we are sad, we will continue to push forward and continue to fight for justice because we know that is what Tessa would want. Fighting against injustice and crime is what she dedicated her life to, and we will continue that fight" said Solicitor-General Donna Coleman-Stribling.



JANUARY 2023

THE LATEST FROM THE OFFICE OF THE
DEKALB COUNTY SOLICITOR-GENERAL

UPDATES FROM THE SOLICITOR



DEDICATED TO A BETTER, SAFER DEKALB

2023 Events

Teen Dating Violence PSA Contest-
Dancing With The DeKalb Stars-
Back to School Supply Drive-
Animal Justice League: Animal Safety Event-
Better Together: Community Resource Fair-
"Tis The Season: Be Santa Clause for a Cause-
(Dates are planned but subject to change)

Deadline February 17, 2023

April 2023

August 2023

September 2023

October 2023

December 2023

