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**DeKalb County Commissioner Gannon Cookin' With Seniors
Spends Thursday Morning with Area Seniors and Helps Out in Kitchen**

(Atlanta, GA, September 25, 2009) – DeKalb County Super 6 District Commissioner Kathie Gannon spent Thursday morning at Senior Connections “connecting” with area seniors on a number of key issues for older Americans.

Senior Connections is a leading provider of Meals On Wheels in DeKalb County. Commissioner Gannon started her morning in the kitchens helping to prepare some of the 2,000 meals served daily by the nonprofit organization under the direction of Executive Chef Malika Robins. Meals are delivered to area seniors by staff and volunteers. To many, this is the only hot meal they will have for the day and the only human interaction as well.

Senior Connections has the capacity to produce 5,000 meals daily and continues to seek grants, governmental funding and private donations to fill that capacity needed to meet the needs of local seniors.

“Spending the short time I did in the Senior Connections kitchen opened my eyes to the breadth of meal preparation, packaging and delivery that’s necessary to help some of our area seniors from going hungry,” Commission Gannon said after spending time on the line that readied individual meals for delivery on Friday. “The women I worked with on the lines spend hours every day preparing these meals and would be happy to spend even longer if the funding was available. With 1 in 9 seniors in America at risk for hunger, this is an issue all of us need to help solve.”

Following her stint in the kitchen, Commissioner Gannon took time to meet with area residents who visit the North DeKalb Neighborhood Senior Center, also located at 5238 Peachtree Road, headquarters for Senior Connections. The North DeKalb center is one of six area senior centers run by the

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organization. Classes, exercise, health and wellness activities are offered daily to visitors. The current location is a temporary one with the loss of the old center to new development. Commissioner Gannon reassured those present that the funding and plans were in place and on track for building the new North DeKalb Senior Center.

“Commissioner Gannon’s visit allowed some of our more faithful center visitors to voice their concerns about aging well in DeKalb County,” Debra Furtado, chief executive officer of Senior Connections offered after the discussion ended. “It’s important for our local elected officials to listen to their senior constituents and to participate in the meal preparation process. Over 17 percent of the DeKalb population is 55 years or older. That number is expected to double in the next 20 years.”

The visit with the seniors also encompassed Commissioner Gannon’s concern over environment issues and how it relates to seniors such as reducing utility and homeowner costs through weatherization and using newly available but inexpensive energy conservation tools. One of Commissioner Gannon’s recent projects has been sponsoring and coordinating the newly formed DeKalb County Green Commission and their challenge to county citizens has been: "DeKalb is going green..... and so can you."

Between discovering the scope of Senior Connections’ meal preparation and its ability to expand to additional meals, and the time spent with seniors over environmental and community outreach concerns, Commission Gannon’s visit to the North DeKalb location was helpful to everyone present.

"Senior services and environmental responsibility have long been personal passions for me," Commissioner Gannon said to staff and visitors. “Perhaps it's my social work background but I believe the quality of one's life is paramount. I'm excited to support this effort by Senior Connections to illustrate their commitment not only to providing nutritious meals to our senior citizens but also to doing it in an environmentally responsible way.”

About Senior Connections

Since 1973 Senior Connections has served the counties of the metropolitan Atlanta area with programs and services designed to help seniors "age in place" in the comfort of their own homes. The nonprofit agency provides Meals on Wheels, home repair, in-

home care and neighborhood centers to area seniors. As a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization headquartered in Atlanta, Georgia, services are available to anyone over the age of 60, regardless of income level. In 2009, Senior Connections began providing educational classes and travel excursions as well. Senior Connections also offers services and information to help families cope with the many dilemmas that can arise as parents, grandparents, friends, and loved ones "come of age."

About Commissioner Kathie Gannon

Commissioner Kathie Gannon has served on the DeKalb County Board of Commissioners since January, 2005 representing Super District 6, the western half of DeKalb County. Super District 6 includes portions of South, Central and North DeKalb County with approximately 350,000 residents. Commissioner Gannon has been actively involved in DeKalb County issues since the 1980's serving on DeKalb County's Planning Commission, Community Council and providing leadership to her community's 3,000 household civic association.

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