

Students place in Young Ga Authors writing competition

NORTH FULTON, Ga. - Three students from North Fulton schools took top honors in the annual Young Georgia Authors writing competition, co-sponsored by the Georgia Department of Education and the Georgia Council of Teachers of English.

The winning students were kindergartner Borntini Chandra of Medlock Bridge Elementary with "The Lonely Cat," first-grader Chase Mahoney of Lake Windward Elementary with "A Sweet Sugary Surprise" and second-grader Isabella Szabo of Sweet Apple Elementary with "I'm a Square!"

The Fulton County School System was the only school district in Georgia with mul-

iple winners.

The Young Georgia Authors writing competition seeks to encourage students to develop enthusiasm and expertise in their writing, to provide a context to celebrate their writing successes and to recognize student achievement in arts and academics.

There are no parameters for submissions and students may submit short stories, poetry, essays/literary criticism/analysis, journalism, academic/research reports, personal narratives or any other original student writing.

Writings are entered in the state-level competition by first winning a system-level competition. Additional students who

represented Fulton Schools at the competition included:

- Grade 3 - **Varsha Holsambre**, Shakerag
- Grade 4 - **Julia Haley**, Roswell North
- Grade 5 - **Riyaq Jaamac**, Findley Oaks
- Grade 6 - **Marianne Lamarche**, Holcomb Bridge
- Grade 7 - **Lauren Garrett**, Autrey Mill
- Grade 8 - **Tarun Ramesh**, River Trail
- Grade 9 - **Connie Xiao**, Northview
- Grade 10 - **Di Xia**, Northview
- Grade 11 - **Olivia Duan**, Northview
- Grade 12 - **Peggy Xu**, Northview

City of Johns Creek Notice of Property Tax Hearings (Millage Rate)

The City of Johns Creek announces it is currently in the process of establishing its 2013 millage rate. The City, incorporated in December 1, 2006 has published their Five-Year History of its Tax Digest, Property Revenues and Millage Rate as required.

Before the City of Johns Creek sets the final millage rate for 2013, Georgia law requires a public hearing(s) to be held to allow the public an opportunity to express their opinions on this tax increase. All concerned citizens are invited to attend and participate in the Public Hearings which will be held in the Council Chambers at Johns Creek City Hall which is located at 12000 Findley Road, Suite 300, Johns Creek, Georgia 30097 at the following dates and times:

- »First Public Hearing Monday, July 8, 2013 at 11:30am
- »Second Public Hearing Monday, July 8, 2013 at 6:00pm
- »Third Public Hearing Monday, July 22, 2013 at 7:00pm

Action to adopt the final millage rate for 2013 is scheduled to take place at the Council Meeting on July 22, 2013 which begins at 7:00pm or as close thereafter as possible after the final Public Hearing.



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Local author adds depth to villains in new novella

Izmaylov publishes book with help of Salman Rushdie

By **SHAUYAN SAKI**
shauyan@northfulton.com

ALPHARETTA, Ga.— Michelle Izmaylov was longing to find her own justification between hero and villain and ultimately decided to write and publish "Ricochet."

That justification of a hero and a villain has been a question that has consumed Izmaylov for many years. She rarely found literature that examined the core question of how a villain justifies his or her actions, and Izmaylov decided to leave her mark on the little-discussed subject.

During her sophomore year at Emory University, Izmaylov conceived a 25-page short story in a creative writing class but she later decided to expand it into a novella.

Izmaylov, now a medical student at Vanderbilt University, used the novella that became "Ricochet" to gain entrance to an elite writing program at Emory taught by the famous author, Salman Rushdie.

This class taught by Rushdie is extremely competitive. Only nine students were selected to be a part

of the program.

Izmaylov said that getting into the program using the excerpt felt like a ringing endorsement for her to finish the book.

"As part of the competitive application process to study under Rushdie in his creative writing master class, I was required to submit several writing samples," said Izmaylov. "One of my samples was an excerpt from the original short story that has now given rise to 'Ricochet.' Since Rushdie selected me for his class, I guess this means the sample was a good one."

"Ricochet" took Izmaylov five months to write. She organized her senior year so she would have ample time to finish the book.

She said that there were many distractions that she decided to avoid, and she offered advice to aspiring writers.

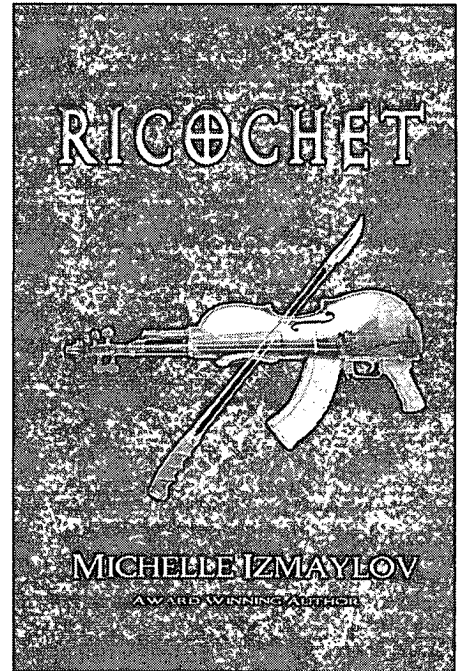
"Personally, my biggest problem in writing is how easy it is to get distracted by the Internet."

She typically writes in places with no Internet access so she is forced to work exclusively on her book.

"It's also important to me to have at least a general sense of where I'm going before starting a story. That way I don't completely derail and end up completely having to start over," she said. "Don't be afraid to experiment."

Personally, my biggest problem in writing is how easy it is to get distracted by the Internet."

MICHELLE IZMAYLOV
Author of Ricochet



JOHNS CREEK 2013 TAX DIGEST AND LEVY NOTICE

The City of Johns Creek, Georgia City Council does hereby announce that the millage rate will be set at a meeting to be held at the City Hall building located at 12000 Findley Rd., Suite 300 on July 22, 2013 at 7:00PM and pursuant to the requirements of O.C.G.A. Section 48-5-32 does hereby publish the following presentation of the 2013 tax digest and levy, along with the history of the tax digest and levy.

CURRENT 2013 TAX DIGEST AND HISTORY OF LEVY

Description	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Real & Personal	4,182,875,998	4,161,164,131	4,036,193,971	3,864,776,391	3,769,838,987	3,687,153,682
Motor Vehicles	257,655,650	267,843,670	234,501,440	233,172,030	246,471,400	276,044,730
Mobile Homes	0	0	0	0	0	0
Timber - 100%	0	0	0	0	0	0
Heavy Duty Equipment	0	0	0	0	0	0
Gross Digest	4,440,531,648	4,429,007,801	4,270,695,411	4,097,948,421	4,016,310,387	3,963,198,412
Less M & O Exemptions	372,334,710	388,557,248	401,513,668	394,616,032	390,804,326	389,764,914
Net M & O Digest	4,068,196,938	4,040,450,553	3,869,181,743	3,703,332,389	3,625,506,061	3,573,433,498
Gross M & O Millage Rate	8.111	8.711	8.205	8.752	8.756	9.267
Less Millage Rate Rollbacks	3.497	4.097	3.591	4.138	4.142	4.653
Net M & O Millage Rate	4.614	4.614	4.614	4.614	4.614	4.614
Net Taxes Levied	18,770,661	18,642,639	17,852,405	17,087,176	16,728,085	16,487,822
Net Taxes \$ Increase	1,281,517	(128,022)	(790,234)	(765,229)	(1,124,320)	(599,353)
Net Taxes % Increase	7.33%	-0.68%	-4.24%	-4.38%	-6.43%	-3.19%

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JCHS students build braille nature trail

JOHNS CREEK, Ga. — As part of Global Youth Service Day, a group of students from Johns Creek High School gathered April 27 at the Gwinnett Environmental and Heritage

Center to help design a braille nature trail for the visually impaired.

Led by 15-year-old Evan Barnard, who is vision impaired, the students took turns

wearing blindfolds and writing down comments as they tested proposed sites for braille signage along the trail.

A braille nature trail is an outdoor nature trail with

special features that allow the trail to be used by the visually impaired.

The trails have guide ropes and posts so visitors can run their hands along them to follow the trail, as well as informative signs about the trail in both braille and English print.

Adding these features to existing nature trails improves the accessibility of trails so that visually impaired people can experience and learn about nature. Barnard's goal is to build these trails in communities all over Georgia, and raise awareness of the need to provide increased access to the outdoors to those with disabilities.

"Many of the students were surprised at how difficult it was to walk along the trail when they were blindfolded. But they also realized how the interesting trail features, such as touching bark from different trees and listening to birds, can be appreciated without seeing them," said Barnard. "They also realized how dif-

ficult it would be if they were visually impaired and wanted to go outside and enjoy nature. This is why we are building this trail - to increase access for the visually impaired to enjoy the outdoors."

Barnard first had the idea to create a braille nature trail when he was volunteering for the Nature Conservancy in Rome at the Marshall Forest's Big Pine Nature Trail, the state's only braille nature trail. Unfortunately, the trail had been vandalized and its braille signs stolen, so Barnard helped install new signs and repair the trail.

He began working with the Georgia Council of the Blind, and soon learned how much the visually impaired loved the opportunity to have a place where they could go outdoors and safely enjoy nature.

Barnard plans to create more braille nature trails in Georgia to increase access to more people and find funding for more potential trail locations.



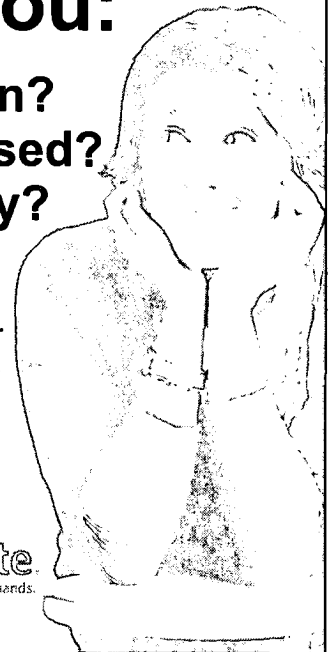
Evan Barnard, center, and friends from Johns Creek High School work on a braille nature trail at the Gwinnett Environmental and Heritage Center. From left are Setha Pulavarty, Alex Yang, Rohan Rao, Malcolm Barnard, Sriram Pulavarty, Kevin Buck, Meredith McCain, Leigh Healey, Elizabeth Hislop, Alda Rassam and Alex Resnick.

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PRESS RELEASE CITY OF JOHNS CREEK NOTICE OF PROPERTY TAX HEARINGS

The City of Johns Creek announces it is currently in the process of establishing its 2013 millage rate. The City, incorporated in December 1, 2006 now has a published their Five-Year History of its Tax Digest, Property Revenues and Millage Rate.

Each year, the Board of Tax Assessors is required to review the assessed value for property tax purposes of taxable property in the County. When the trend of prices on properties that have recently sold in the County indicate there has been an increase in the fair market value of any specific property, the Board of Tax Assessors is required by law to re-determine the value of such property and adjust the assessment. This is called a reassessment.

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