

Gwinnett; Gwinnett: Illegal immigrant receives 8 years on weapons charge

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Body

An **illegal immigrant** living in Lawrenceville was sentenced Tuesday to eight **years** in federal prison for illegally possessing a machine gun and re-entering the U.S. after being deported.

Aurelio Vargas, 32, had conspired to buy several firearms, including a machine gun, and then funnel the **weapons** into Mexico, according to the U.S. attorney's office in Atlanta. During a law enforcement sting in August 2010, Vargas gave \$5,750 in cash to an undercover agent to buy the firearms before he and a co-defendant were arrested, prosecutors said. BILL RANKIN

County Attorney Thomas leaves post

Gwinnett County Attorney Karen Thomas resigned effective May 13, the county announced Wednesday.

Thomas, who led the county law department since 1998, submitted her resignation in February but agreed to stay through mid-May to facilitate a smooth transition, the county announced. Deputy County Attorney Van Stephens will serve as acting county attorney. DAVID WICKERT

Norcross drama teacher **receives** honor for work

A Norcross High School teacher has **received** a state honor for her work with students and dedication to the performing arts.

Drama teacher Gina Parrish has been inducted into the Georgia Thespians Hall of Fame. **Gwinnett** Schools officials said Parrish has dedicated 19 **years** of service to Norcross High's fine arts department. D. AILEEN DODD

Commissioners OK Lilburn CID expansion

The **Gwinnett** County Board of Commissioners has approved an expansion of the Lilburn Community Improvement District. It was founded last **year** with 158 properties worth a combined \$123.6 million.

On Tuesday, county commissioners signed off on plans to add seven more properties valued at \$4.7 million to the district. DAVID WICKERT

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Man accused in killing testifies in own defense

A Loganville man **charged** with murder in a drug-related shooting testified in his own defense Wednesday. Prosecutors have rested their case against Omar Falay. Falay is **charged** with murder, aggravated assault and armed robbery. Zachary Bivens and Francelis Dorce are **charged** as co-defendants, but they will face separate trials. Robert Morales, 27, and Falay allegedly drove to Grayson on Dec. 23, 2008, to meet two men for a drug deal. Shots were fired in the car, killing Morales and injuring Falay. ANDRIA SIMMONS

Police search for driver in hit-and-run fatality

Gwinnett County police are looking for a hit-and-run driver involved in a fatal pedestrian accident late Tuesday night.

Thiago Campos, 25, of Suwanee was attempting to cross Sugarloaf Parkway between Cruse Road and Ga. 316 when he was hit by a vehicle believed to be a late-model Dodge Ram, **Gwinnett** police Cpl. Edwin Ritter said. Anyone with information can call investigators at 770-338-7430, Ext. 5670. MIKE MORRIS

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