

# Where the girls

What was the hottest event happening in Gwinnett County, Georgia for high school girls this summer? The girls that participated in the MAGIC\* (\*Mentoring a Girl in Construction) Summer Camp discovered the answer, as they learned to weld and use a cutting torch on the fourth day of camp. "The best part of camp was welding, but I enjoyed learning it all," said Jessica Kirkland, a student at Dacula High School. Welding was featured on one day of instruction in this one-week summer camp designed to introduce high school girls to the world of construction. The girls also spent two days learning to master the basics of carpentry and electrical. Camper Abby Johnstone said, "I really enjoyed the electrical, but everything was so much fun. I never realized how much fun construction work could be."







**T**he National Association of Women in Construction (NAWIC) hosted the event partnering with Maxwell High School of Technology. Camp was offered free of charge to any interested Gwinnett County high school girl. Sixteen business and industry associations sponsored the event by donating the funds to operate this camp. "Without our sponsors this camp would never have happened," said Camp Director, Renee Conner. Conner and her husband Kim, co-own Precision Tapping, Inc., a company that performs hot taps on water lines for contractors in the Southeast. Conner is vice-president of the local Sug-

arleaf Chapter of NAWIC and a gold level sponsor of MAGIC. She added, "Our gold level sponsors trusted us to give the girls a hands-on real life experience in construction. I think we accomplished that goal and so much more. The girls learned that they could do anything they set their minds to."

Gold level sponsors included Mike Attaway, owner of Southeastern Excavators, Starlight Homes, owned by Tiffany Hudson, Precision Tapping, Inc., and Quimby Enterprises, a welding subcontractor specializing in foundation drilling equipment repair. Another gold sponsor was The Construction Education Foundation of Georgia (CEFGA). "The construction industry needs skilled workers, and

MAGIC camp is a great way to introduce girls to the opportunities available in the construction industry," said CEFGA Executive Director, Scott Shelar.

The first day of camp introduced Rosie the Riveter, with girls learning about the history of women in construction. Guest speakers, Drs. John and Fran Carter, presented a seminar on World War II and the women that worked on the home front. Dr. Fran Carter, who riveted planes during World War II and founded the American Rosie the Riveter Association (ARRA), explained, "Six million women went to work during the war,

then. Fran gave each participant a Rosie "We can do it" t-shirt.

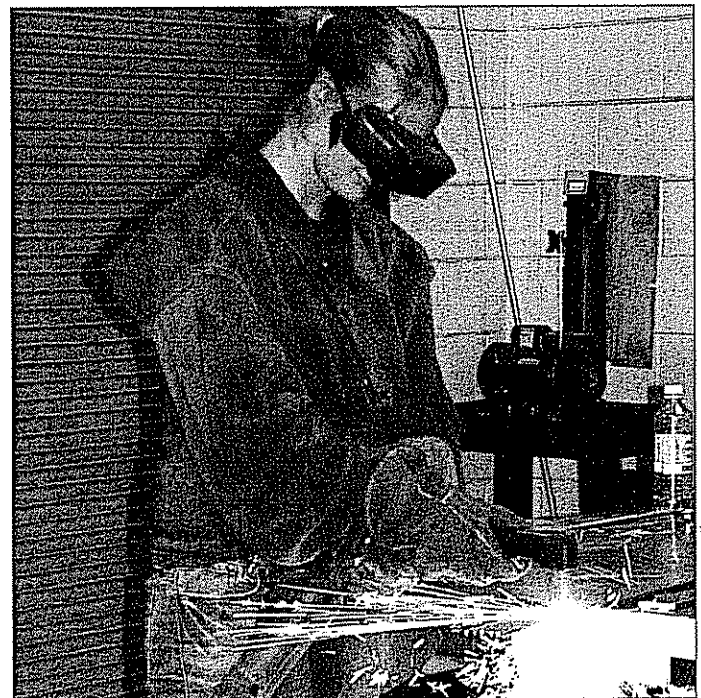
Monday afternoon was devoted to construction safety with Pam Fisher, vice-president of PROSAFE solutions explaining that safety is a core principle of the construction industry. Girls tried on safety equipment and were awarded safety stickers for their pink hard hats as they performed tasks safely throughout the week.

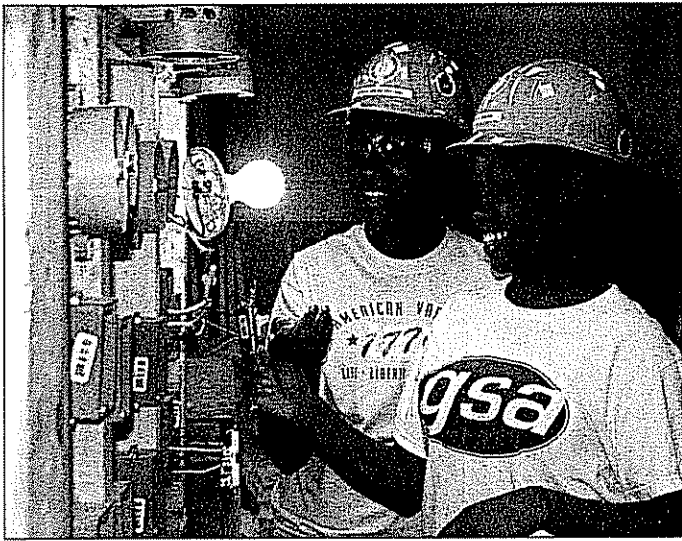
Maxwell High School construction teacher Tony Shore team-taught with journey level electrician and assistant business representative, Bea Andrews from the International

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Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local #613 during the day of electrical training. Girls built and decorated a lamp to take home after they learned to run various electrical circuits.

Carol COUNTER, President of





NAWIC Sugarloaf chapter, team-taught with Mr. Shore on the day of carpentry. Counter works with Ralph's Cabinets, based in Buford, Georgia and designed the toolboxes that the girls cut, assembled and decorated as a part of learning basic carpentry skills. The toolboxes were built from plans that Ms. Counter provided to each camper.

Maxwell welding teacher John Jacobs team-taught the welding class with Cassie Lewis, a former Maxwell welding student, and recipient of the award for Best Overall Welding student at Maxwell High School for the 06-07 school year.

On the final day of camp, the girls rode in a stretch hummer limousine for their job site tour of homes under construction by camp Gold level Sponsor Starlight Homes. Owner Tiffany Hudson, acted as tour guide showing girls various homes in different phases of construction. Upon completing the tour the girls returned to Maxwell High School for a catered luncheon with their parents and participated in the camp completion ceremony. Girls were pinned with NAW-

IC Tradeswomen Pins, received a certificate of completion and a pink tomboy tool hammer donated by STI Trucking.

Shirley Lasserer, Mayor of Duluth welcomed the girls and guests that included NAWIC National President Chris Wigginton, NAWIC Executive Director Dede Hughes, and NAWIC regional director Susan Carson to the completion luncheon. Maxwell High School Principal Donna Powers and vice-principal Dr. Judy Buck were also in attendance.

Campers' parents enjoyed viewing their daughters' projects and beamed with pride when they were pinned and received their certificates.

Chris Wigginton announced that the MAGIC Summer Camp in Gwinnett County is the beginning of a national MAGIC summer camp initiative. Camp director Renee Conner, camp founder Diane Quimby, and NAWIC national president Chris Wigginton will present two seminars on MAGIC summer camp at the NAWIC annual convention in Orlando, Florida, in September. ❖

