



METRO ATLANTA / STATE NEWS 10:09 a.m. Monday, May 2, 2011

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# Actual Factual Georgia

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By Andy Johnston  
For the AJC

Q: I recently read in an AJC story that Monica Pearson on Channel 2 is going to retire next year. How long has she been in Atlanta and what is her background?

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A: Monica Pearson is as much a part of the lives of many metro Atlantans as [Coca-Cola](#) and the Fox. She's from Louisville, Ky., attended the University of Louisville and then stayed in her hometown, working at a newspaper and in public relations before moving in front of the camera as a reporter and anchor at WHAS-TV for three years. She headed south, joining Channel 2 in August 1975, where she has become an ever-present presence, anchoring the news, conducting in-depth interviews and winning Emmys. Pearson,

who will anchor Channel 2 Action News' 4 p.m. newscast – which debuts on May 26 – and continue with the 6 p.m. news, has said she will sign off sometime next year.

Q: What's the story with Georgia being the only state to be admitted to the Union three times and behind the two Reconstructions for Georgia after the Civil War?

–Joe Vignati, Decatur

A: Stan Deaton, the senior historian at the Georgia Historical Society, provided insight, and it's safe to say that Georgians weren't ready to stop fighting even though the Civil War was over. Georgia ratified the U.S. Constitution to initially enter the Union in 1788. The state rejoined the Union on June 25, 1868, after ratifying the 13th and 14th Amendments, but widespread violence and voter intimidation against former slaves, including the Democratic expulsion of all black (Republican) members of the state legislature in September 1868, and the Camilla Massacre on Sept. 19, forced Congress to reinstate Reconstruction in Georgia. The state was readmitted to the Union for the third time after ratifying the 15th Amendment in July 1870.

Q: What is the history of Chastain Park Amphitheater? Is it named for someone famous?

A: The quaint neighborhood venue, famous for its summertime concerts and often lively crowds, had a quiet start as 268-acre North Fulton Park in 1933. Eleven years later, Troy Chastain, who was Atlanta's supervisor of public buildings, unveiled the amphitheater, and when he died in 1945, the park was renamed for him. The 6,000-seat amphitheater underwent \$2.3 million in renovations in 2004 and often is filled with music lovers and their elaborate spreads. This summer's schedule certainly will hit a high note for folks of all musical tastes with a variety of concerts, from the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra to Rihanna and Cee Lo Green to Paul Simon to Bela Fleck & The Flecktones.

What do you want to know?

If you're new in town or just have questions about this special place we call home, ask us! E-mail Andy Johnston at [q&a@ajc.com](mailto:q&a@ajc.com).



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