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## CELEBRATING GWINNETT COUNTY'S BICENTENNIAL!

Gwinnett County is celebrating its 200th birthday this year. County government is taking time to mark the milestone in addition to all its usual activities, such as building roads, delivering clean drinking water and putting out fires. Gwinnett has almost one million residents now and our diversity makes this an exciting place to live, work and play. There's something for everyone to enjoy in the wide range of happenings that are taking place all year long.

It's a great year for history buffs and anyone who loves a big party, with educational displays, art exhibits, programs and festivals sponsored by public and private groups. The Bicentennial Celebration has its own website, [Gwinnett200.com](http://Gwinnett200.com), with an events calendar, photo and video galleries, and interactive maps – one with a suggested driving tour of historic sites and another that tracks the progress of the Bicentennial Torch Run all across our 437 square miles.

Read on for more from Gwinnett County Board of Commissioners Chairman about Gwinnett's 200th birthday celebration!

### GWINNETT 200 SOUNDS LIKE A BIG PARTY - TELL US MORE!

**Commission Chairman Charlotte Nash:** We set a goal to have 200 events for each of our 200 years in 2018, and the whole community is getting involved. Some events offer family-friendly fun with a bicentennial flavor, such as throwback nights at Coolray Field with the Gwinnett Stripers and pioneer-themed campouts in our award-winning Gwinnett County parks.

The Gwinnett Historic Courthouse in Lawrenceville is hosting many events, including concerts with crafts and trade markets. The Lawrenceville Female Seminary and other historic sites are also hosting activities with good old-fashioned fun, demonstrating historic games and other living history programs. Lectures sponsored by the Gwinnett Historical Society touch on many compelling topics, such as Union Civil War soldiers, slavery and the impact of World War I, all from a Gwinnett perspective. If you miss them, you can catch those lectures on video posted on the bicentennial website.



We're also encouraging kids to download, print and color Flat Button (Gwinnett), and post pictures of him around the community.

### RUMOR HAS IT THERE'S A BICENTENNIAL TORCH?

**CN:** Yes! It debuted last December at the first official event, *A Frontier Affair: Prelude to Gwinnett's Bicentennial* at the historic courthouse. Lawrenceville Mayor Judy Jordan Johnson championed the idea. The runners that she recruited from public high school cross country and track teams are covering more than 200 miles with the torch, visiting historic sites, public facilities and cities. There's also a traveling history exhibit that arrives with the custom-made torch at many locations. A map of the torch run itinerary and photos of previous stops are on the website.

### AND YOU'VE ASKED CITIZENS TO CONTRIBUTE TO SOMETHING CALLED A STORY VAULT?

**CN:** We're asking Gwinnettians from all walks of life to sit down with a friend and our video crew to talk about their memories of growing up in Gwinnett or how they came to live here, what they remember, and what they envision Gwinnett to be for future generations. So whether you are a member of one of Gwinnett's founding families or a more recent resident, we want to hear your story! Dozens of fascinating interviews are already posted on the Gwinnett 200 website along with other TV programs on historical topics, including the African-American experience in Gwinnett, the county today and the county's economic development over 200 years.

### WOW! SOUNDS LIKE AN OPPORTUNITY THAT ONLY COMES ALONG...WELL, EVERY 200 YEARS.



**CN:** That's right. This party will continue to grow until the celebration culminates at the Infinite Energy Center on December 15, 2018. That's exactly 200 years after the Georgia legislature created Gwinnett County in 1818. We're planning an amazing finale. I hope all of our one million+ citizens will attend.

### ONE MILLION CITIZENS?!

The first railroad came through Gwinnett in 1871. Congress created Lake Lanier in 1950. And the county built its major water and sewer lines in the 1970s. We were the nation's fastest-growing large county in the 1980s, reached half a million residents by 2000, and added 13,000 more just last year. And we are projected to have 1.5 million residents in 20 years.

So we must be doing something right because folks keep coming! The early pioneers probably would not recognize the county, just as today's pioneers likely would not recognize it two centuries from now. But I am certain of one thing: Gwinnett will continue to be a vibrantly connected community that is desirable to families and businesses.

For more information, please visit [www.Gwinnett200.com](http://www.Gwinnett200.com) or find us on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/gwinnett200](https://www.facebook.com/gwinnett200).