

gwinnettcounty connection

a monthly publication of gwinnettcounty government

County offices
closed for
Thanksgiving:
November
28 and 29

FEATURE

Help us meet our goal – volunteer this holiday season

Another holiday season is here and while we know that this is the season of giving, so many people are still in need during the holidays. While you may be short on funds this year, the gift of your time is just as valuable to charities and nonprofits in Gwinnett County. Whether you have just a few hours or lots of free time to spare, Volunteer Gwinnett can help you find the right volunteer opportunities.

Volunteer Gwinnett is a countywide volunteer program designed to involve more residents in volunteer activities associated with County government. The County expanded the volunteer program with a bold goal of reaching 1 million volunteer hours by 2015. Our goal for 2013 is 725,000 and we're almost there with 543,745 hours as of August. We can't reach our goal without you! Search for your next volunteer opportunity at www.volunteergwinnett.net.



PROTECTING OUR RESOURCES

When it rains, it drains!

Hazardous materials and other wastes are often dumped or discharged illegally into the stormwater drainage system. Hazardous materials include batteries, paint, automotive fluids, and biological wastes; household garbage, yard debris, appliances, tires, and furniture are examples of other kinds of wastes. All contain pollutants that can reach our waterways when rain washes through an illegal dump site or when discharge to a stormwater drain washes through the pipe system. The accumulation of these wastes in the stormwater system can cause water pollution because, unlike the regular sewer system, water that flows into a storm drain is not treated before being directed to rivers, lakes, and streams.



We create this pollution – and we can stop it. Let's make an effort to dispose of waste in an appropriate manner and report those who do not. Our actions will help protect the environment. If you are unsure how to properly dispose of waste, call the Solid Waste and Recovered Materials Division at 770.822.7141 or visit www.sustainablegwinnett.com. You may also report illicit discharges to the stormwater drainage system to the Gwinnett County Stormwater Management Division at 678.376.7193.

PUBLIC SAFETY

Safe cooking tips for the holidays

There will be plenty of meals to enjoy this holiday season, so remember to be safe in the kitchen. Most home cooking fires take place on Thanksgiving Day, so please let it be a day of thanks and not disaster. Try these tips in your recipes:

- Always stay in the kitchen when you are cooking on the stovetop, but keep kids out.
- Use a timer when you are using the oven, and turn off the oven if you leave the house.
- Keep kitchen floors clear to avoid tripping and spills.
- Make sure your smoke alarms and carbon monoxide detectors are working.
- If you plan to deep-fry your holiday bird, follow proper fire safety precautions and be sure to read the instructions.

For more holiday safety tips, visit the county's website at www.gwinnettcounty.com.

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CHECK IT OUT

The holidays are the perfect time to get busy in the kitchen with new recipes. Check out these delicious titles and others at the Gwinnett County Public Library, www.gwinnettpl.org.

Christmas Sweets and Treats, by Ruth Owen

Super Simple Holiday Treats: Easy No-Bake Recipes for Kids, by Nancy Tuminelly

Fix-It and Forget-It Christmas Cookbook: 600 Slow Cooker Holiday Recipes, by Phyllis Pellman Good

Christmas Cookies: 50 Recipes to Treasure for the Holiday Season, by Lisa B. Zwirn

SPLOST

More widening ahead on Buford Drive/SR 20

Gwinnett County will widen another section of Buford Drive/State Route 20 from four to six lanes with all of the work being completed within existing right-of-way. Commissioners approved the half-mile project from I-985 north to South Lee Street in the Buford area. The work will extend an earlier widening project from the Mall of Georgia to I-985 and will include turn lanes and some curb, gutter, and sidewalks. The intersections at South Lee Street and Satellite Boulevard will also get upgrades, including pedestrian facilities. Work is expected to be complete in the spring 2014.

G.P.'s Enterprises was the lowest of six bidders for the \$960,427 contract. Funding for the project comes from the 2009 SPLOST program (74 percent) and the Georgia Department of Transportation (26 percent).

"Buford Drive is a state highway, so we are once again partnering with the state DOT to get this much-needed widening accomplished," said District 4 Commissioner **John Heard**. That section of road now carries more than 58,000 vehicles each day.



County offices closed for Thanksgiving

Please note that all Gwinnett County Government offices except for those operations required for the comfort and safety of the residents will be closed Thursday, November 28 and Friday, November 29, 2013, in observance of the Thanksgiving holiday. All offices will resume regular working hours on Monday, December 2, 2013.

Thanksgiving is a trash holiday

Thursday, November 28 is a trash and recycling holiday. During the week of November 25 – 29, if your normal pickup day is Thursday, your pickup will take place on Friday, November 29. If your normal pickup day is Friday, your pickup will take place on Saturday, November 30.

EVENTS

Gwinnett County Government hosts many events, classes, and workshops for its residents.

See these great events and more at www.gwinnettcountyevents.com.

Pet Pics with Santa

December 7 • 10:00am to noon
Dacula Park Activity Building
2735 Old Auburn Avenue, Dacula
678.277.0850

Annual Christmas Tea for ages 50+

December 12 • 2:00pm to 4:00pm
Prime Timers Pointe at George Pierce Park
55 Buford Highway, Suwanee
678.277.0190

Breakfast with Santa

December 14 • 10:00am to noon
Centerville Community Center
3025 Bethany Church Road, Snellville
770.985.4713

Polar Express Party

December 14 • 10:00am to 3:00pm
Rhodes Jordan Park
Community Recreation Center
100 East Crogan Street, Lawrenceville
678.277.0890

American Red Cross Blood Drive

December 20 • 3:00pm to 7:00pm
Centerville Community Center
3025 Bethany Church Road, Snellville
770.985.4713

AROUND GWINNETT

Thaw your holiday turkey the safe way

The USDA recommends three ways to defrost turkeys: in the refrigerator, in cold water, or in the microwave. Never defrost a turkey on the counter!

- **Refrigerator:** For every 5 pounds of turkey, allow approximately 24 hours of thawing time in a refrigerator set at 40 F. After thawing, keep turkey refrigerated for only one to two days before cooking.
- **Cold water:** If you forget to thaw the turkey or don't have room in the refrigerator, don't panic. You can submerge the bird in cold water in its airtight packaging or in a leak-proof bag. Allow about 30 minutes of defrosting time per pound of turkey. Change the water every 30 minutes to be sure it stays cold. Turkeys thawed by the cold water method should be cooked immediately.
- **Microwave:** Read and follow the microwave oven manufacturer's instructions for the size turkey that will fit in your microwave, the minutes per pound, and the power level to use for thawing. Turkey thawed by this method should be cooked immediately.

For more information about thawing, cooking, and storing your turkey leftovers, contact Ines Beltran at the Gwinnett Cooperative Extension Service at inesb@uga.edu or at 678.377.4010. You can also visit www.gwinnettextension.com for charts on thawing your turkey.

FOCUS ON: Water Resources Preventive Maintenance Team

FOCUS ON tells the story of how your county government employees provide high-quality services to you each and every day. October features the Department of Water Resources Preventive Maintenance Team, a group that has the huge responsibility of keeping Gwinnett's water, wastewater, and stormwater systems operating at peak efficiency. To read more, please visit www.gwinnettcounty.com.

TAX COMMISSIONER

North Gwinnett tag office closed Saturday, December 14

The North Gwinnett tag office at 2735 Mall of Georgia Boulevard in Buford will be closed Saturday, December 14 while the Georgia Department of Revenue conducts computer system maintenance. The maintenance period is from 7:00pm Friday, December 13 until 6:00am Monday, December 16. During this period, Internet and telephone tag renewals will not be available. For all office locations and hours, visit www.GwinnettTaxCommissioner.com.

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send questions or comments to shaunieka.taste@gwinnettcounty.com

Gwinnett County Communications Division
75 Langley Drive • Lawrenceville, GA 30046 • 770.822.7180

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