

gwinnettcounty CONNECTION

a monthly publication of **gwinnettcounty** government

DECEMBER 2015



Budget proposal for 2016 invests in the big picture

Commission Chairman Charlotte Nash presented a proposed \$1.5 billion budget for fiscal year 2016 during a briefing in November. Residents will have a chance to provide input at a public hearing on December 7 and through the county's website throughout the month of December. Commissioners will finalize the budget during their first meeting of the year on January 5, 2016.

Common themes this year were continuing to restore funding for services cut during the recession, recruiting and retaining a high quality workforce, and making investments that improve essential infrastructure and support critical community needs. The resulting balanced budget proposal holds the line on property tax rates while investing more in police, fire and emergency services, the judicial system, and senior services. The proposed budget continues Gwinnett's commitment to maintaining and improving transportation and water resources systems, two strategic priorities named by commissioners this year.

The proposed budget for Gwinnett County is available online at www.gwinnettcounty.com and as a hard copy in the Department of Financial Services during regular business hours at the Gwinnett Justice and Administration Center, 75 Langley Drive in Lawrenceville.

AROUND GWINNETT

Holiday safety tips for sipping and serving

If you are hosting a party or other event to celebrate the holidays, it's imperative to recognize your responsibility in keeping others safe. Here are a few tips to help make hosting easier, safer, and more enjoyable for everyone. When hosting an adult party with alcohol, it's important to serve more than just alcoholic beverages; provide high-protein food, limit alcohol consumption, and encourage the use of designated drivers. If you are hosting a party for youth, do not serve alcohol. If you serve alcohol to anyone under 21, you could face criminal charges of up to 12 months in jail or a fine of \$1,000. Also, make sure you provide adult supervision to help prevent underage drinking and other risky behaviors from taking place. For more information, visit www.guideinc.org. We wish you a safe and healthy holiday season.

Drop off your Christmas tree for recycling

Gwinnett Clean and Beautiful, in partnership with Gwinnett County, will host the annual Bring One for the Chipper event. When the holidays are over, drop off your live Christmas tree at various locations in Gwinnett County between December 26 and January 16. These trees will be chipped into mulch and used for County parks, facilities, etc. Visit www.gwinnettcounty.com for a list of locations. Fire stations will accept trees 24/7 and other facilities will accept them during regular business hours.



FOCUS ON: Solicitor's Office

FOCUS ON tells the story of how your county government employees provide high-quality services to you each and every day. This month features the Solicitor's Office, which prosecutes misdemeanor crimes in State and Recorder's Courts. To read more, visit www.gwinnettcounty.com.

County offices closed Christmas, New Year's holidays

All Gwinnett County government offices, with the exception of those operations required for the comfort and safety of residents, will be closed December 24 and December 25 for Christmas and reopen on December 28. Offices will also be closed January 1 for the New Year's Day and reopen January 4. A Magistrate Court judge will be available at the Gwinnett County Detention Center on both holidays.

Christmas and New Year's Day are trash and recycling holidays in unincorporated Gwinnett County, so collections will be delayed by one day after the holidays. Visit www.sustainablegwinnett.com to view the holiday schedule.

Gwinnett County Government hosts many events, classes, and workshops for its residents. See these and more at www.gwinnettcountyevents.com.

Job Readiness Workshop • FREE!

January 9 • 10:00am to noon
Norcross Human Services Center
5030 Georgia Belle Court, Norcross
678.225.5400

Family Fitness Fest

January 16 • 10:00am to 1:00pm
Bogan Park Community Recreation and Aquatic Center
2723 North Bogan Road, Buford
678.277.0850 or 678.277.0853

Crafty Creations

January 20 • 6:15pm to 8:15pm
Pinckneyville Park Community Recreation Center
4650 Peachtree Industrial Boulevard, Berkeley Lake
678.277.0920

gwinnettcounty connection

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

Gwinnett County Communications Division
75 Langley Drive • Lawrenceville, GA 30046
770.822.7180 • www.gwinnettcounty.com

Questions about your water bill? Call 678.376.6700.

Poll officials needed for 2016 elections.

To apply, visit www.gwinnettelelections.com.



Board approves pedestrian and school safety projects

The 2014 SPLOST program will pay for new sidewalks, curb, gutter, and drainage improvements on Collins Hill Road and Plunketts Road.

The Collins Hill Road school safety project will construct a 5-foot wide sidewalk on the west side from the existing sidewalk north of University Center Lane to the Georgia Gwinnett College tennis facility at Countryside Place.

The pedestrian safety project on Plunketts Road will build new sidewalk on the east side of the road from the entrance to the Environmental Heritage Center to the existing sidewalk at the Woodward Crossing subdivision. Both projects are expected to be completed by mid-2016.

PUBLIC SAFETY

Be safe while shopping online during the holidays

Online shopping is a popular way to shop holiday sales. While you're enjoying online deals, be sure to protect your personal information. Consider these tips:

- Research online sellers before purchasing. It's as easy as typing in a seller's name in a search engine along with key words like review, complaint, or scam and reading the reviews.
- Use safe payment options such as a credit card. Credit cards give you protections like the right to dispute a charge and temporarily withhold payment during an investigation. Never mail cash or wire money to online sellers.
- Keep records of purchases and only provide the information necessary to complete the purchase.

If you plan to shop in local stores, the Police Department's Holiday Task Force will be active through December 31. This annual operation puts additional officers in shopping districts throughout the county with the purpose of reducing crime. Have a happy and safe holiday season!

Learn more at www.gwinnettsafety411.com.



PROTECTING OUR RESOURCES

Water Resources produces fun water education videos for kids

Gwinnett County Department of Water Resources produced a video series this summer called *Water Science with Wade* for third, fourth, and sixth grade students in Gwinnett County schools.

Inspired by the classic *Bill Nye* series, these videos use humor, animated graphics, and live action to engage students and teach the importance of protecting and conserving our water resources. All three videos align with Gwinnett's Academic Knowledge and Skills science standards for the targeted grade levels.

The series was produced by Biscardi Creative Media, a digital media production company located in Buford. Local actor Ian Gregg, a recent graduate of DeKalb School of the Arts, plays the role of Wade the Water Guy. Four students from Lanier High School worked as production assistants and made several cameo appearances in the videos.

The video series consists of three episodes, each one produced for a different grade level. *Protecting Our Watersheds* is geared toward third grade students and focuses on the effects of pollution. *Water's Amazing Adventures*, produced for fourth graders, explores the water cycle, weather, and the effects of drought. *Planet H2O* is intended for sixth grade students to take a closer look at all the ways we depend on water and realize that the amount water available for our use is extremely limited.

One of Lanier High School's science laboratories served as the main set and the Lanier Water Filter Plant served as the final shooting location.

To view these videos online or download them for use in your classroom, visit www.DWRconserve.com and select *Watch Water Science with Wade*.

TAX COMMISSIONER

Tax Commissioner's office Christmas holiday hours

All Tax Commissioner offices will be open Monday, December 21 through Wednesday, December 23, then closed Thursday, December 24 through Saturday, December 26 for the Christmas holiday. Offices will return to normal business hours Monday, December 28. For online services and to view the holiday schedule, please visit www.GwinnettTaxCommissioner.com.

CHECK IT OUT

Check out these listings, which were recently recognized as Georgia Children's Book Award Finalists for 2015 – 2016. You can find them at your nearest Gwinnett County Public Library branch, www.gwinnettpl.org.

The Fourteenth Goldfish, by Jennifer L. Holm

Half a Chance, by Cynthia Lord

Brown Girl Dreaming, by Jacqueline Woodson

Loot: How to Steal a Fortune, by Jude Watson

STAY INFORMED BY STAYING CONNECTED



gwinnettcountry.com



email newsletters



TV gwinnett