

# gwinnettcounty CONNECTION

a monthly publication of gwinnettcounty government

## JANUARY 2016



### County achieves PlanFirst designation

The Georgia Department of Community Affairs recently named Gwinnett County a PlanFirst Community. The honor recognizes and rewards communities that successfully implement long-range planning with public involvement, active engagement, and proven progress toward achieving stated goals.

Leaders from Gwinnett's Planning and Development, Transportation, and Community Services departments received the three-year designation at the December 15 Board of Commissioners meeting from DCA Outreach Coordinator Adriane Wood. They will also be recognized at the state Capitol in January.

In addition to statewide recognition, Gwinnett becomes eligible for reduced-rate loans from the Georgia Environmental Financing Authority, annual eligibility for community development block grants, and bonus points on applications for various DCA programs.

Gwinnett County Board of Commissioners Chairman **Charlotte Nash** said, "This honor recognizes our success in setting goals, providing leadership, encouraging community participation, and effectively implementing our plans. Congratulations to all the staff who earned this designation."

Register to vote in the March 1  
Presidential Preference Primary/  
Special Election by February 1.



## AROUND GWINNETT

### SPLOST: Traffic shifts along SR 20

The Gwinnett County Department of Transportation shifted traffic in December to widen the last two-lane section of State Route 20 in the county. The lane change shifts 1.5 miles of traffic along State Route 20 from Peachtree Industrial Boulevard to Arbor View, allowing crews to build the other two new lanes of the project.

"We are excited to reach another milestone in this construction," said **Jace Brooks**, District 1 Commissioner. "The cooperation between Gwinnett County, Sugar Hill, the Georgia DOT, and Forsyth County will make a real difference for drivers along this roadway." He also credited Gwinnett County voters for approving the SPLOST programs that got the project rolling.

The Gwinnett County construction stretches about four miles from Peachtree Industrial Boulevard to Burnette Trail. Georgia DOT and Forsyth County are working to widen the roadway from James Burgess Road to Samples Road.

Federal, state, and local dollars were used to fund these projects. Construction is expected to be complete in late 2016.

### Extension hosts annual plant sale

The Gwinnett Extension is offering varieties of blueberries, blackberries, raspberries, figs, apples, goji berry, native azaleas, and other landscape plants as part of its annual sale. Orders will be taken January 4 through March 8, 2016. Visit [www.gwinnettextension.com](http://www.gwinnettextension.com) or call 678.377.4010 to request an order form.



### FOCUS ON: Jury Division

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 Gwinnett County Jury Division, which manages the jury duty process. To read more, visit [www.gwinnettcounty.com](http://www.gwinnettcounty.com).

## County offices closed for MLK and Presidents Day holidays

All Gwinnett County government offices, with the exception of those operations required for the comfort and safety of residents, will be closed January 18 for the Martin Luther King Jr. holiday. Offices will reopen January 19. Offices also will be closed on February 15 for the Presidents Day holiday and reopen February 16. A Magistrate Court judge will be available at the Gwinnett County Detention Center on both holidays.

Explore Gwinnett is Gwinnett's official tourism agency and promotes Gwinnett as a place to meet, stay, and play.

View the complete events calendar at [www.exploreGwinnett.com](http://www.exploreGwinnett.com).

### Into the Woods

March 10 – April 17

Wednesday – Friday • 8:00pm

Saturday • 2:30pm and 8:00pm

Sunday • 2:30pm

Aurora Theatre

128 Pike Street, Lawrenceville

### Sleeping Beauty

March 11 – 13

Friday • 7:30pm

Saturday • 10:00am, 2:00pm, and 7:30pm

Sunday • 2:00pm

Infinite Energy Theatre

6400 Sugarloaf Parkway, Duluth

### Moonlight & Magnolias

April 14 – May 1

Thursday – Saturday • 8:00pm

Sunday • 3:00pm

Buford Community Center – Sylvia Beard Theatre

2200 Buford Highway, Buford

## gwinnettcounty connection

send questions or comments to  
[shaunieka.taste@gwinnettcounty.com](mailto:shaunieka.taste@gwinnettcounty.com)

Gwinnett County Communications Division  
75 Langley Drive • Lawrenceville, GA 30046  
770.822.7180 • [www.gwinnettcounty.com](http://www.gwinnettcounty.com)

Questions about your water bill? Call 678.376.6800.



## McDaniel Farm Park phase two construction adds amenities

Gwinnett's McDaniel Farm Park will get \$3.4 million in SPLOST-funded improvements after commissioners approved a phase two construction contract in December with low bidder Vertical Earth Inc.

The 134-acre park near Gwinnett Place Mall opened in 2004 and has been restored to depict a typical 1930s farm in Gwinnett with a furnished farmhouse, barn, blacksmith shed, carriage house, and tenant house. Other amenities at the park include a picnic pavilion and three miles of paved multi-purpose and soft surface trails.

Upgrades will provide a new northeast entrance that creates public access from McDaniel Road and Duluth Highway. Major phase two components include an open play area, new picnic pavilion, a farm-themed playground, dog park, trail extension, restroom building, landscaping, roadway, and parking.

## PUBLIC SAFETY

### Be prepared for winter weather

While most Georgians enjoy mild winters, the state has experienced significant snow and ice events in previous years. Snow and ice can disrupt transportation and cause power outages, making it important for Gwinnett County residents to be prepared. Here are some tips to help you prepare for potentially disastrous weather emergencies this winter:

- **Be informed:** Listen to a NOAA weather radio and monitor other media outlets for weather-related information. Learn about the terms used to describe winter hazards.
- **Make a plan:** Create an emergency plan for your family and be sure to prepare for your senior and disabled family members as well as your pets.
- **Build a kit:** Build an emergency kit for both your home and car. Include food, water, adequate clothing, and blankets for at least three days.

Learn more at [www.gwinnettsafety411.com](http://www.gwinnettsafety411.com).



## PROTECTING OUR RESOURCES

### Don't forget to mention detention

Detention ponds are an integral part of the stormwater drainage system. These ponds work to reduce the potential for downstream flooding and can enhance the quality of water discharged through them. Unfortunately, they are often forgotten until an inspection or pond failure occurs.

According to the Gwinnett County Development Regulations, it is the responsibility of the mandatory property owners association to maintain the operational characteristics of the detention pond. If there is no HOA, the responsibility of maintenance falls to the property owner.

These are a few things to consider:

- The outlet control structure needs to be kept free of debris and sediment so that water can be released at the designed rate.
- The dam wall should be kept free of trees; grass should be on the dam to prevent erosion.
- Each pond is designed to hold a certain volume of water. Trees, shrubs, sediment, and trash will decrease the capacity of the pond, thus reducing the its effectiveness.

Pond maintenance can be conducted by experienced individuals or contractors. Organized cleanups of the detention pond area by residents or employees can be effective in preventing large-scale failures and expensive repairs. Many ponds constructed since 2000 will have agreements that specify the maintenance requirements of the pond.

So at your next HOA meeting, don't forget to mention detention and take a proactive approach to managing and maintaining the detention pond. For questions about detention pond maintenance, call the Department of Water Resources at 678.376.7193 and select option 5.

Don't forget to attend our free workshop!

## TAX COMMISSIONER

### Emissions testing update

For 2016, all gasoline-powered and light-duty trucks 8,500 pounds or less with the model years 1991 to 2013 require an emissions test to register and renew. For testing locations and more information, visit [www.cleanairforce.com](http://www.cleanairforce.com).

Once your vehicle has been tested, please renew online at [www.GwinnettTaxCommissioner.com](http://www.GwinnettTaxCommissioner.com).

## CHECK IT OUT

Check out these listings just in time for the winter season. You can find them at your nearest Gwinnett County Public Library branch, [www.gwinnettpl.org](http://www.gwinnettpl.org).

*Winter Trees*, by Carole Gerber

*Snow Party*, by Harriet Ziefert

*Here Comes Jack Frost*, by Kazuno Kohara

*Annie and Snowball and the Wintry Freeze*, by Cynthia Rylant

Department of Water Resources • Free Workshop!  
**Cooking to Protect Water Quality**

February 11, 2016 • 7:00pm – 8:30pm  
Gwinnett Justice and Administration Center  
75 Langley Drive, Lawrenceville

Learn how fats, oils, grease, and rags from your kitchen can contribute to water pollution in nearby waterways. Attendees from unincorporated Gwinnett County, city of Lilburn, or city of Peachtree Corners may qualify for a maximum 5 percent credit toward their stormwater utility fee for the following year.

Presented by: James Jones and John Butler  
Gwinnett Department of Water Resources

Pre-register by emailing your name, address, and phone number to [dwrswreg@gwinnettcountry.com](mailto:dwrswreg@gwinnettcountry.com) or by calling 678.376.7193 (press 5).